Student Experience Bulletin

August 2026

Update from Chris Shelley

Hi everyone,

This bulletin is shorter than usual due to the time of year, and I think that probably reflects how we are all feeling. For many of you this is as busy a time of year as it gets but for others it is an opportunity to take some leave and enjoy some relative calm. In recent weeks we have had the staff summer conference, which was a great success, lots of colleagues engaged in the organised activities and attended the morning session. We heard a valuable insight into Curriculum 2030 and Trudy Mason gave an update on the Queens' Building renovation, a pdf of which is attached, and mainly contains visuals shown as part of the fly through: the first one is an additional view of what the front of the Queens' building may look like, if the budget is approved for the works.

29 of our Student Experience colleagues have received a £50 Reward Voucher as part of the new scheme in recent months and I look forward to seeing many more of you rewarded via the scheme in the next 12 months.

Finally, we said goodbye to many colleagues at the end of July and focus now turns to the future in terms of prioritising activities, managing expectations of what can be done with reduced staffing levels and identifying new ways of working. This will be crystalised in a new Directorate Plan, which you will be able to help us refine and shape in the coming weeks and months.

Thanks

Chris

Welcome to:

Registry Services

Alina Liszewska (Degree Apprenticeship Compliance Manager)

Oscar Stephenson (Apprenticeship Operations & Data Manager) moved from Research and Innovation Services.

Valerie Powell (Timetable Officer, Timetabling team).

Library Services

Jenna Darby – Transition Programmes and Pass Support Officer

Kristen Nilsen – Library Assistant (Research Assessment)

Shelina Ahmed - Library Assistant (Research Assessment)

Events/Projects

Registry Services

The Student Financial Support Team are currently processing 350 Academic Prizes across the university and arranging payments to students which reward outstanding academic achievement.

We have also welcomed our students from Cambridge as part of the Cambridge Long Vacation Scholarship

The Financial Assistance Fund has also now closed, so we are following up on outstanding applications before reviewing and preparing for next year.

Careers and Enterprise

QTaster - our career insight visits programme for our UG students - has maintained strong participation numbers despite this being a particularly challenging year for extracurricular engagement. This academic year we have recorded **215 student attendances across visits to employers** including Expedia Group, Tower Hamlets Council, Department for Transport, ING Bank, Mulberry College of Teaching, Ipsos, Matchtech & SLPE, Publicis Groupe and RVU.

We are pleased that this year's cohort includes 34% QMUL bursary recipients and 63% of attendees identifying as BAME. **We are also beginning to receive encouraging recruitment outcomes**, with students reporting secured summer internships and graduate roles. For example, six students have secured summer internships at Expedia, which fast-track into permanent roles upon graduation.

School Partnership Agreements- This year we are piloting some changes within our school partnership agreements, where we plan out our delivery for the upcoming academic year and map out specific employability strategies, targeted career skills training, and graduate outcome goals. Taking a data driven approach we aim to boost the professional success of our students, and through our partnership agreements, we also aim to support academic schools with embedding employability into the curriculum, as part of the new Employability and Graduate Skills Strategy and framework.

Student Wellbeing

Do you know that our International Student Advice Team at Advice and Counselling Service has a QMUL International Advice blog written specifically for our international students? It covers a variety of content:

- Fun and social (Examples – monthly editions of Free fun in London , Global Café)
- Visa and immigration related (Examples – Upcoming change to Graduate visa from 2027 , EUSS Advice Surgery)
- From the student perspective (Examples – A QM international student perspective on wellbeing , Visas for working after studies – tips from experience!)

Subscribe to our blog to keep up to date with future content and events to include in your conversations with students.

Library Services

Launch of new Databases A-Z

Library Services is launching a new Databases A–Z on 27 July, replacing our current database list. This is part of our ongoing work to improve access routes to library resources, and offers:

- A cleaner, more intuitive interface for browsing and searching
- The ability to search by alternative names, keywords, and apply filters - making it easier to find the resource you are looking for
- Clearer, detailed information about each database
- Additional information for databases which have extra login requirements
- Highlighting of new and trial database subscriptions so you can discover the latest additions to our collections

You can access the new Databases A-Z under the 'Finding Resources' tab on our website.

Family Room at Mile End Library

Work is progressing on the implementation of the new Family Room on the second floor of Mile End Library, which now occupies the space that was previously Staff Meeting Room 2.22. Our aim is that this space will help to further support staff and students who may benefit from a more family-friendly study space on campus.

New furniture, toys and books have arrived and will be installed over the coming weeks as the space takes shape.

Introduction of Sanctuary Seeker Membership

On 26 June we introduced a new visitor membership for refugees and asylum seekers in our local community. The membership, known as Sanctuary Seeker Membership, offers reference-only library access at peak times across all three Queen Mary libraries.

Through new partnerships with organisations including Tower Hamlets Council, Praxis and Limehouse Project, applicants can be referred to us directly, making the process as accessible and straightforward as possible. This new membership is currently offered on a pilot basis, ending in July 2027. At this point, if the scheme is successful, we hope to renew it on an ongoing basis.

New Accessible Study Pod

The existing DDA study carrels at Mile End Library have now been replaced with a new, fully accessible study

pod. The pod will be available for users to book through LibCal and will be prioritised for registered Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS) users. The new pod includes:

- Noise-reducing design for improved concentration
- Adjustable lighting
- Height-adjustable desk to support a range of accessibility needs

We hope these improvements will provide a more comfortable, inclusive and accessible study experience for our students.

SE Staff Survey

Here you can follow the progress we're making from the staff survey. We'll share updates, showcase new initiatives, highlight data insights, and provide guidance as work continues.

Survey Insight

"Queen Mary's commitment to social responsibility (e.g. community support, sustainability, etc.) is genuine."

	Score
Student Experience Directorate	**40%**
Queen Mary Average	**56%**

While our result was below the University average, we are keen to increase awareness of the positive work taking place across Queen Mary and the opportunities for colleagues to support sustainability initiatives.

Supporting a More Sustainable Queen Mary: New Poster Tube Reuse Scheme

The Queen Mary Sustainability Team has launched a new **Reuse Scheme** in partnership with our printing provider, Apogee, helping to reduce waste, support the University's circular economy ambitions, and save money.

How it works

- If you order a poster to Mile End or Whitechapel, it will arrive in a reusable delivery tube.
- The tube will be labelled with a sticker asking you to return it for reuse.
- Dedicated collection bins are available in campus post rooms.
- Simply place your used tube in a collection bin rather than in the recycling.

Apogee will collect the tubes and reuse them for future Queen Mary deliveries, reducing waste and supporting our sustainability goals.

Get involved If you have questions about the scheme, or ideas for other sustainability or reuse initiatives, please contact the Sustainability Team at **sustainability@qmul.ac.uk**.

University Updates:

Applications are now open: Aurora Women's Leadership Development Programme 2026/27.

Find out more about the programme, eligibility criteria, cohort dates and how to apply on the

Aurora Women's Leadership Development Programme 2026/27 webpage

The deadline for applications is by end of day on Friday 14th August 2026.

Special Mentions:

Colleagues nominated for Rewards since May: Sonia Lassami, Naomi Hewston, Stefan Couch, Laura Davison, Gianluca Didino, Ewa Sienkiewicz, Jake Waddell, Lindsey Brett -O'Brien, Gianna De Salvo-Foulsham, Naomi Baguley, Victoria Adam, Carly Lockett, James Soderman, Rhianna Skeates, Jay Line, Hassan Mahmud, Suzanne Marsh, Samia Imran, Huong Hoang-Wilson, Charlotte Luscombe.

With thanks to this month's contributors: Ross Kelsey, Elise Wong, Lindsey Brett-O'Brien, Tilly Johnson

Please send feedback to Jane Wright, Operation's and Improvement team.