



QMUSU All Student Meeting 2021 – Student President’s Report

Introduction

Thank you for attending our 2021 QMUSU All Student Meeting. This is your opportunity to learn a little bit more about what work the Students’ Union does to ensure that you are fairly represented and that student needs stay at the heart of QMU.

The following report offers an overview of some of the key things I’ve been working on as your Student President this year. Because of Covid-19, we weren’t able to hold an AGM in 2020, so some information in this report refers to my previous year in post.

If you have any questions or comments, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

Chiara Menozzi

Student President 2019-21

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Elections

Thank you to everyone who participated in our 2021 Student Elections, both to those who ran for an Officer position and to all who voted. These were our first online elections and we’re very happy with how they went, but we’d love to get some feedback from the voters. I’m delighted to welcome **Aasiyah Patankar** as your new Student President and **Sophie Cunningham** as your new Vice-President. They’ll join the following students as your Officers’ Committee for 2021/22:

Communities Officer

Lucy Crouch

Events Officer

Findlay McAdam

Equality & Diversity Officer

Katie Hudson

Post-graduate Officer	Vacant
Societies Officer	Bethany Dunion
Sports Officer	Nicole Harkness
Student Engagement Officer	Sam Davie
Welfare Officer	Sarah Hemlock

A **by-election** will be held early next semester to open nominations and elect a new Postgraduate Officer to join the team.

Representation

Forums

Throughout the year, the Students' Union usually holds the following four representation forums and committees:

- Academic Council (for Class Reps)
- Equality & Diversity Forum
- Sports & Societies Committee
- Campus Life Forum

These forums are your opportunity to share your experiences as a student with the SU. From there, we share your feedback with the relevant areas within the university and work collectively to influence positive changes and developments.

This year, we didn't hold an Equality & Diversity Forum and a Campus Life Forum as they proved incredibly challenging to do online. We are reviewing the Forum structure as part of our Governance Review, which you'll hear about at this meeting. Minutes from the forums we did hold are available on the Students' Union website (www.qmusu.org.uk).

In Academic Council meetings, some of the recurring discussions were around WiFi in halls and a way for Class Reps to communicate with their whole class that doesn't involve social media. I am working with the IT Team to solve both issues.

Surveys

We ran two Learning & Teaching Surveys in May 2020 to gather students' feedback on the sudden transition to teaching online at the start of the UK lockdown, and then again in October 2020 to compare results with planned online teaching. We received 1033 responses to the October survey which was distributed to University staff, as well as Universities Scotland, Sparqs and NUS to inform sector discussions. This survey was our *Question of the Semester*, distributed mostly through Class Reps who have done a fantastic job of gathering and reporting students' feedback.

We have also recently run a Campus Life survey, also as our *Question of the Semester*, to help the Baxter Storey and Campus Services teams to improve catering and facilities.

Q&As

We have been working to improve communication between students and the University so we hosted Q&As with key staff members such as a Q&A with the Principal and one on Placements with the Dean of Health Sciences. I moderated all of these and collated questions from students both during and before the Q&As. We are looking to maintain these as it's a good way for students to get answers on issues quickly.

Boards and Committees

As Student President, I represent student views and feedback on a number of boards and committees within the University including: Court (the highest governing body of the University); Senate (the highest academic board); Student Experience Committee; Equality & Diversity Committee; Court's Nominations Committee; the Digital Learning Technology Working Group; and the NSS Working Group.

Andy White (VP), Kirsten Baird (SU General Manager) and I also meet regularly with the Deputy Principal and University Secretary for our Students' Union Partnership Group (SUPG), while Andy and I have regular meetings with the Principal. Regular contact with Senior Management allows us to raise and discuss important student issues and ensure that they are addressed appropriately.

Campaigns

Every year, the Officers' Committee runs campaigns to raise awareness of issues relevant to the student body. We have run 4 campaigns this year (Sustainability Week, 16 Days of Activism against

Gender-Based Violence, Dyslexia Awareness, and Scottish Parliament Elections) and have a few still to come. Our Officers have done an amazing job collating material for them and delivering them completely online.

We also raised the **LGBT+ flag** over campus for the 4th year in a row to mark the beginning of LGBT+ History Month and celebrate equality, diversity and inclusion at QMU.



Thanks to all your feedback, we're able to advocate to improve your student experience in different key areas.

Maybe the most controversial issue at QMU, and certainly the one we heard most feedback about pre-Covid, was the implementation of a **microwave** for students' use. We have continued the work of our predecessors and have been in discussion with the Campus Services team to introduce a microwave; we finally got confirmation on 09/03/2020 that one would be installed the week after. A couple of days after the microwave was installed, Scotland went into lockdown.

We have been assured that the microwave, as well as a hot-water point in the LRC (looking at the Pot Noodle lovers), should be operational by September (hygiene guidelines permitting).

I have also been working with the Campus Services team separately to install some **Gender-Neutral Toilets** on campus. These should be implemented by the end of this semester and we are currently deciding on signage.

Working with the University

SPA

We have just reviewed our Student Partnership Agreement, a document that outlines the work that the Students' Union and the University do in partnership to improve the student experience. The Principal and I have just signed the new version, which you can find on our website.

Feedforward Working Group

After the Assessment and Feedback Working Group finished its remit in AY 2018/19, the Feedforward Working Group was established to look at how to improve assessment feedback so that students can implement it easily into the successive assessment. I am part of the group to represent students' views, however it has paused its work during this Academic Year as the next step is to hold workshops with students, which wouldn't be as useful if done online.

Tackling Sexual Harassment and Violence Working Group

I continue to co-convene this group with the Assistant Secretary External Relations and Student Services. The group meets about 4 times a year and is working to implement the Equally Safe in Education Toolkit. In the past two years, we have overseen the implementation of a Report & Support form on the QMU website to report incidents of sexual harassment among other things.

Covid-19

The student voice has been very valued in QMU's response to Covid-19. Since the first lockdown a year ago, the SU General Manager and I have been part of the Business Continuity Group which coordinates QMU's adaptation to the Covid restrictions. As part of the BCG, different smaller work streams were created to tackle specific areas, and I co-convened the Student Experience one.

In these meetings and through other opportunities, we advocated for students' safety and, when allowed, for the option of having face to face classes so that students had an opportunity to socialise with peers. We were also involved in the review of the assessment regulations with the view of creating an interim version that wouldn't disadvantage students' achievements.

STaR Awards

The Student Teaching and Representation Awards recognise students and staff who make a positive difference to the student experience. This year we received 157 nominations which is amazing, so thanks to everyone who submitted one - it really does put a smile on the nominee's faces (and ours!). This year the STaR Awards are dedicated to **Douglas McBean**, a fantastic and valued lecturer who sadly passed away last year. We have also established the Douglas Award for Most Inspirational Staff member. Please join us at 4.15pm on Monday 26th April as we announce the winners and present the awards.

Food Pantry

This year I've been delighted to help set up the QMU Food Pantry. Student volunteers came up with the idea and run the Food Pantry weekly, providing healthy food for all QMU students. We have supported the Pantry with the Cyrenians and love to see students queuing outside Maggie's every Friday morning. Thanks to all the volunteers who dedicate their time to it!



Lastly...

I still have a few months left in post and things I want to achieve to improve the student experience at QMU. If you have any suggestions, questions or feedback just drop me an email at cmenozzi@gmu.ac.uk