1. Student-Staff Liaison Committees

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1.1 Purpose
The purpose of student-staff liaison committees (SSLCs) is to ensure that there is an effective channel for formal communication between students and staff in each school or institute, through which students can reflect and give feedback on their programme of study. SSLCs are an integral part of QMUL’s systems and procedures for assuring academic standards and enhancing the student learning experience.

1.2 Scope
This procedure covers all students, part time and full time, undergraduate and postgraduate, taught and research including those on distance learning or collaborative programmes. It does not cover non-award-bearing continuing education.

1.3 Associated documents
Associated documents can be accessed from the Academic Registry and Council Secretariat (ARCS) web page: http://www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/quality-assurance/student-feedback/

- Agenda template
- Minutes and action plan template

Students can also access comprehensive information, guidance and advice about the course representative system on the Students’ Union web page at http://www.qmsu.org/coursereps. The Students’ Union will provide newly appointed representatives with a comprehensive handbook and training session at the start of the academic year.

1.4 Terms of reference
The Student-Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) is constitutionally advisory to the Head of School/Institute or, in the case of the MBBS to the Dean (Education) and in the case of the BDS to the Head of the Institute of Dentistry.

SSLCs should have a clear remit. Senate recommends the following Terms of Reference:
To consider and discuss matters relating to:

- The content and organisation of programmes of study and any proposed changes;

- The provision of academic facilities and general school/institute/QMUL facilities;

- School/institute social activities;

- Provision for student welfare including the operation of the personal tutor system;

- Arrangements for induction and study skills provision;
• Local monitoring of academic standards through consideration of the School’s Taught Programmes Action Plan (TPAP) for undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, and discussion of student commentary (see: https://webapps2.is.qmul.ac.uk/apr/index.action)

• Consideration of external examiners’ reports, first destination statistics and results of module evaluation questionnaires and student surveys such as NSS, PTES and the Queen Mary Student Survey;

• Initial consideration of the commendations and recommendations of Periodic Review reports, followed by regular reports on action taken in response.

• Any other matters on which the SSLC wishes to express a view.

1.5 Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SSLC</th>
<th>Student membership</th>
<th>Staff membership</th>
<th>Chair</th>
<th>Secretary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
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<td>To be agreed by SSLC – students can perform this role if agreed and they undertake training from the SU</td>
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<td></td>
<td>UG – 2 per year of course</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>As above</td>
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<td>PGT – 1 per programme</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PGR – 1 rep (minimum)</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>As above</td>
<td>As above</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-medical</td>
<td>UG - 1 per year of course = &lt;20 students</td>
<td>Head of School / Institute Director or nominee (ex officio)</td>
<td>To be agreed by SSLC - consideration should be given to the appointment of a student co-chair (training is provided by SU)</td>
<td>To be agreed by SSLC – students can perform this role if agreed and they undertake training from the SU</td>
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<td>2 per year if course = &gt;20 students</td>
<td>Senior Tutor or equivalent (ex officio)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Joint Honours – 1 rep per year of each JH course with &gt;10 students or 1 per year if JH provision is low</td>
<td>Other academic staff as agreed by SSLC Other Professional Services staff (e.g. library) as agreed by SSLC</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGT – 1 per programme</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PGR – 1 rep (minimum)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1 Additionally, Joint Honours representatives should be invited to meetings of the SSLC in their partner School or to give their feedback via email.
1.6 Election of student members
Student members of an SSLC should be elected by the particular student constituency. Elections are organised by the Students' Union as follows:

1.6.1 Humanities and Social Sciences and Science and Engineering
- Course Reps for first years and PGT shall be elected at the beginning of semester 1.
- Course Reps shall be elected to serve for the duration of their course, unless:
  1) the Rep decides to resign, in which case the post will be put up for election, either during a designated period in semester 2, or at the beginning of semester 1 of the next academic year;
  2) any student on their course issues a challenge during a designated period in semester 2, in which case the post will be put up for election;
  3) a serving Rep fails to attend two consecutive SSLC meetings, in which case they shall be considered to have resigned and the post will be put up for election at the next Course Rep Elections.
- Whenever a position falls vacant, due to resignation, the relevant SSLC may co-opt a Rep to serve until the next Course Rep Elections.
- Elections for vacancies in continuing cohorts for the following academic year shall be held during semester 2 at a time decided by QMSU.
- Any un-filled positions at this point shall, in the first instance, be the subject of re-opened nominations at the beginning of semester 1 of the next academic year.
- Should a position still remain unfilled at this point, the relevant SSLC may co-opt a Rep to serve until the next Course Rep elections.
- Each School shall elect a Senior Rep to be a 'School Representative' to serve on a Faculty Forum to be chaired by the Faculty Representative (a part-time position elected annually during the QMSU elections).
- The position of School Rep shall be elected annually by and from eligible Course Reps within the School during semester 2 of the preceding academic year. (Eligible Course Reps being those continuing their term the following year i.e. not final year, nor those leaving office for other reasons).

Postgraduate Students (PGTs and PGRs)
- The majority of Postgraduate Taught courses at QMUL are one year full-time, therefore PGT Course Representatives shall be elected at the beginning of semester 1.
- Postgraduate Research students have varying terms of study, therefore PGR Course Representatives shall be elected at the beginning of semester 1.
- Each SSLC shall, where applicable, select at least one PGT Representative and at least one PGR Representative to attend the relevant Faculty Forum.
1.6.2 Medicine and Dentistry

Medicine

• There shall be 5 elected Pre-clinical Course Representative positions (years 1 and 2).
• Pre-clinical Course Representatives shall be elected at the beginning of semester 1.
• Post Clinical Course Representatives shall be elected during semester 3 for the following year.
• Intercalating Course Representatives shall be elected each year during semester 3 for the following academic year.
• All positions are elected for one year only.
• The annual Student Staff Conference replaces Faculty Forums within Medicine.

Dentistry

• Course Representatives for Dentistry are elected from within the Dental Society (DentSoc) in elections conducted under the rules for Societies.
• Elections take place in semester 3 for continuing students, for the following academic year, and at the beginning of semester 1 for new First Year (BDS1) students and Dental Hygiene Therapists (DHTs/DCPs – Dental Care Professionals).
• All positions are elected for one year only.

Further information on any of the above can be obtained from the Students' Union's Education Representation and Policy Coordinator.

1.7 Organisation of meetings

1.7.1 Briefing of student members

For SSLCs to be effective their role must be made known to the student community and their members must feel able to participate fully in meetings. The Head of School or delegated person should ensure that student representatives are provided with written and oral briefings; these briefings could involve participation by experienced student representatives. Details of the SSLC, including a description of the student representatives' role, should be included in locally produced student handbooks and reference should be made to the SSLC during student induction.

Training is also organised by the Students' Union; more information can be provided by the Students’ Union’s Research and Representation Coordinator.

1.7.2 Frequency and timing of meetings

SSLCs should meet at least once each semester with provision for further meetings if requested by members. Some SSLCs arrange their meetings to take place over a buffet lunch in order to encourage attendance and this practice, where possible, is commended.

Dates of meetings should be agreed by the SSLC and publicised widely in advance – normally by the Head of School and/or the Secretary to the SSLC.
1.7.3 Agendas
QMUL has an agenda template for use in SSLC meetings. This ensures that schools and institutes cover all the areas required by the university and external agencies such as the Quality Assurance Agency. All items should be included at every meeting, with the following exceptions:

- Approval of terms of reference and membership - first meeting of the year only
- New students’ arrivals experience – first meeting of the year. However, if there is a subsequent entry period, this item should be re-considered as appropriate

The agenda should be distributed to all members in advance of the meeting and displayed to all staff and students, e.g. via noticeboards or on QMplus pages.

Student representatives should be given sufficient time to canvas views and opinions from the cohort for the meeting as well as report back on outcomes. Schools and institutes should support this by giving representatives the opportunity to address students at the beginning or end of teaching sessions and allowing them to email students on issues – it is suggested that a distribution list is set up for each year to manage this.

1.8 Minutes, Annual Reports and Follow-up
1.8.1 Minutes and Action Points
The minutes should be completed promptly after the meeting and include an action points table – a template is provided by ARCS. Minutes should be sent to ARCS and the SU within four weeks of the meeting taking place.

It is expected that the minutes or an oral report from the SSLC are considered at the school or institute’s Teaching and Learning Committee (or equivalent) to ensure that SSLC’s recommendations can be reviewed and acted upon promptly.

The minutes of SSLC meetings are not deemed to be confidential. However where sensitive or confidential information need to be recorded these specific items may be marked as confidential. In this case a non-confidential version of the minutes of the meeting should be published. Where detailed discussion of the teaching of a particular module takes place, some SSLCs choose to exclude the identity of the teacher concerned from the minutes although the discussion should still be noted.

The SSLC Secretary should display minutes and the action plan of an SSLC meeting on school notice boards, on QMplus or the school / institute website or the minutes could be emailed to all students.

Students should be informed about the actions being taken to address the concerns raised. It is recommended that this is done via a ‘Tell us …we listen’ webpage or document. Faculty Deans for Taught Programmes will also monitor issues arising from SSLCs and their resolution, reporting back as necessary to the regular open sessions that they hold with students from their faculty.

1.8.2 Annual Report
At the end of the academic year each SSLC should produce a short annual report of its work. This report should consist of the following:

- Table showing all action points raised over the year and the current status of actions (e.g. closed, ongoing etc.) – this should be the collated actions points table from each set of minutes
• Short commentary on any actions that are incomplete or ongoing to explain why this is the case
• Any good practice or positive developments arising from the SSLC that the school/institute would wish to highlight

1.8.3 Internal reporting
The Students’ Union will produce an annual report providing an overview of the issues raised by course representatives in the previous year, examples of good practice, and track trends. This will be considered at the university and faculty advisory groups with responsibility for teaching, learning and the student experience. Following this consideration ARCS in conjunction with the Students’ Union, will produce a summary report of key issues and examples of good practice for consideration at Education Quality and Standards Board and Senate.