Election candidate statements

Shahrar Ali, Assistant Institute Manager (Quality and Research), Institute of Health Sciences Education, School of Medicine and Dentistry

What competencies and experience can I bring to the role?

1. **DUTIES.** I’ve experience of performing duties, ranging from the more enjoyable (graduation platform parties) to the more challenging (complex disciplinary hearings). I’ve gained experience in maintaining high standards of probity within our workplace. I’ve also served on panels for Educational Excellence and QM Ethics of Research.

2. **TEAMWORK.** I’m able to demonstrate a high level of interdepartmental co-working to progress common strategic aims: from quality enhancement of student and educational experience; to accountability and cost control in libraries; to managing student support and governance teams.

3. **BLACK LIVES MATTER.** Financial pressures dominate day-to-day executive decisions; now magnified by COVID. Yet, we mustn’t lose sight of our ultimate, human resource. On Council, I’d like to facilitate a renewed commitment to overcoming racial barriers to staff retention or progression and student achievement. Having participated in EDI fora, and as a campaigner against racial injustice in society, I believe an emergency committee may be required – to implement system change and together lance the boil of institutional racism in the best tradition of QM.

I understand the time commitment. *Should an election be held, I would be honoured to receive your first preference!*

James Cornewall-Walker, Head of Catering and Hospitality, Estates and Facilities

I have unique insight into the life of Queen Mary through the students and staff who use our outlets and my interaction with them. By bringing this to Council, I would be a force for promoting welfare and champion of the benefits that commercialism brings. Through contact with academia, professional services and the student union, I am a source of knowledge for the reality of the University on the ground, and would represent the unrepresented. I am taking advantage of training and development courses to develop and communicate with colleagues across Queen Mary to understand their roles and also share the role of my team. I have in-depth experience of challenging demanding trustees and board members and this resilience would be an asset within this role. In my role as head of a team, I am the least important member of it; my role is to represent, nurture and develop the team and these skills would enable me to be a strong member of Council. By having the opportunity to have a voice at Council I would be passionate about Queen Mary and its many successes, while not being afraid to communicate where it could adapt and evolve.

Sarah Cowls, Director, Student and Academic Services

Thank you for taking the time to read my statement and for voting in the Council elections.

I have been a member of the Queen Mary community since 2004 when I joined what is now ARCS. Since then I have been fortunate to work in central professional services, academic
schools and at faculty level. I am deeply committed to Queen Mary, its staff, its students and its history. We have a fantastic community and I have made many dear friends during my 16 years here.

I can bring to Council a wide range of knowledge about both Queen Mary and the sector. I know the people of Queen Mary and I am deeply committed to ensuring the best for our students. Undoubtedly there are going to be tough times ahead in the fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic and Council’s role in navigating the waters ahead will be of utmost importance.

In terms of time commitment I have attended every Council meeting in the past four years and I commit to doing to same for the next four years if I am fortunate enough to be re-elected.

Thank you and I wish everyone a happy and healthy summer.

Sharon Ellis, Director, Research and Business Development

I’ve been at Queen Mary University of London for 18 months. I believe I have made a strong strategic, collegial and “can-do” pragmatic contribution and would bring those qualities as your non-academic staff member of Council.

For those who know me, I am known for making a difference and being someone who will constructively challenge at all levels of an organisation.

Examples that demonstrate my experience and character include:

1) Reopening of our research laboratories following the Covid-19 pandemic. I brought together colleagues from right across the University to complete risk assessments, prioritise returners, address practical issues of car parking and induction. To have the majority of our labs opened safely over June speaks to my colleague’s skills and determination and my abilities to support and challenge upwards to SET and into the University centre.

2) Strategic leader. I was a SET member in 2019. I worked with colleagues on identifying barriers to achieving our new Strategy, bringing ideas/plans of doing new or existing things differently (DORA, PGR review, CPD, consultancy and short courses policies).

I will make time to be an active Council member and find effective ways of understanding the issues you feel are not being addressed.

Tim Hubbard, Rewards and Benefits Manager, Human Resources

I have over 30 years’ experience in Human Resources in a variety of roles across organisations that span the private, public and not-for-profit sectors. I also have experience as a school governor. I bring with my experience a broad knowledge of how organisations operate and the importance of having clear organisational values and strategic direction. I have worked with a range of senior managers in these organisations on new initiatives. I have advised, supported and challenged managers at all levels. I have a particular interest in helping Queen Mary to become the most inclusive university as I believe it is through employing people of diverse backgrounds that we are best able to serve our students and the local community. During the present time whilst we are coping with the Covid-19 crisis it is also critical that Queen Mary manages its finances in a way that is sustainable and at the same time keeps both the students it serves and the people it employs at the forefront of its
mind. If elected, this is how I will support the Council in enabling the university to achieve its goals.

Natalie McCloskey, Blizard Institute Manager, School of Medicine and Dentistry

I would be very proud to be a representative member of non-academic staff on Council. If elected I will contribute to the membership of council by ensuring that QM’s governance is upheld at all times while being developed for the benefit of all staff and students. I would act to ensure that public money is used as effectively as possible in achieving the best development of QM with the voice of non-academic staff being a key contributor. I have a breadth of knowledge in both research, administration and management. I am well versed in QM policy having been employed at QM for 12 years as a manager at both Centre and School/Institute level. I am also deputy chair of the School of Medicine Athena SWAN SAT and a member of the Professional Services EDI Committee. I have a very strong commitment to enacting the EDI strategy and will press QM to continually improve. The next few years will be a particularly challenging time for QM and the sector as a whole. Council will have a pivotal role to play in ensuring a successful future for QM and I am more than willing to commit the time required. If elected I will devote myself wholeheartedly to this endeavour.

Javier Ron, IT Research Officer, IT Services

I have worked for Queen Mary for over 6 years in a non management position & in various IT departments, having worked in the IT industry for over a decade & in the security industry for a decade before that.

I fully appreciate & celebrate the diversity at Queen Mary, this is why we must do more, as a world leader there is room for improvement.

The ability to take stock of public opinion is key in this role & never to be overlooked. My adaptability ensures that assessing the best course of action for all concerned is my focus & I thrive in these scenarios. My experiences as a mental health first aider at QM has led me here.

I am approachable outgoing & a team player.

For the people at large in solidarity.

Alfred Sam, Capital Projects Health and Safety Manager, Estates and Facilities

I intent to contribute to the membership of the council by ensuring the agenda stays focus on the University Strategy always in the pursuing of the 2030 vision. I would also like to be a voice in reminding the university to stay on course to provide ‘hope and opportunity’ for the less privileged population in east London and the suburbs of the City of London.

I have the expertise, skills, experience and knowledge of Health and Safety in infrastructure development and working internationally in the private sector most of my career. This will be a useful additional knowledge to the council in its role to advice the university as it pursues the vision of being a global educational institution.

I am willing to meet the required time commitment as I see it as a privilege and an honour to serve in contributing to higher education.
Bahar Shahin, Head of Procurement, Finance

As an experienced procurement professional and a member of the Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply there are a number of ways I am able to contribute as a member of the Council. This includes, ensuring that there is thorough and positive scrutiny in order to achieve maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

As an Alumnus of Queen Mary I have an understanding of the students view point together with the attitude of making things progress successfully with good assurances. I have a genuine interest to ensure that we succeed in everything we do.

I am an elected Executive committee member of the London Universities Purchasing Consortium (LUPC) and assist with setting the direction of the consortia’s strategic objectives whilst ensuring that it serves the wider membership.

As the Head of Procurement at Queen Mary I am involved in procurement across the university, which helps to understand and appreciate the challenges and opportunities.

I have good relationship with senior management which allows me to have discussions to advise of risks/ issues and work with senior colleagues to ensure that we find solutions which do not affect the overall objective of the organisation and always protect Queen Mary’s reputation and commercial position.

Dimitrisz Sopisz, Grounds and Garden Supervisor, Estates and Facilities

As a member of the council I would always be constructive and supportive for the benefit of the University. Efficiency and effectiveness are the keys world in everything I do in my life.

I tend to look at every matter from different angles and have an `out of box` thinking. I am also very disciplined, self-motivated, a real team player and most importantly impartial. Moreover because of my position I am open and welcoming towards everybody. I am also a great communicator, leader and motivator.

During my studies I have learned a wide range of knowledge including accounting, marketing and law. This combined with the over 17 years of people and management experience makes me a strong candidate for the position.

Throughout my carrier I have worked a number of different places where I gained a lot of experience and built a strong professional network. Some of the places where I worked before were charities therefore I have a good understating of the principals of them.

Finally I am a strong believer of supporting the future generation as many ways as possible.

Sergei Tregub, Catering Assistant (SCR), Estates and Facilities

I am an experienced with 24 years for Queen Mary, University of London Catering sector. I has passion and effort to helping professional service stand out from crowd.

EDUCATION: MSc degree as a Management over Drilling equipment

ECDL(ITQ) Level 2 in IT user skills

Fluently speaking four languages
INTEREST and ACTIVITIES:
Since 1997 regular cycling to QMUL. Every Friday getting swim at Mile End Leisure Centre.
Member of Leigh-on-sea Sailing Club
Years 2018 and 2019 nominated Awards Ceremony:
“In recognition of Going the Extra Mile”, “In recognition of the completion ten following trainings”. As Award winner 2019 invited at lunch reception hosting by our Principal, Professor Colin Bailey. I feel justifiably proud of my success recognition. I have received to demonstrate my own personal commitment to Queen Mary University of London.
As a member of Council I would bring my experience to try and ensure that the best interest of the College.