

Glossary of terms (A-Z)

A

Academic Adviser/Personal Tutor – the point of contact within your School or Institute, who provides a pastoral role throughout your degree. Your adviser may give you advice about which elective modules to choose, write you a reference for job or postgraduate study applications or give you advice on personal matters that might be affecting your studies.

Academic year – runs from September to August.

Accredited degree – an accredited degree is recognised for meeting specific educational standards, which have been set by an accrediting agency. Choosing an accredited degree ensures its acceptance by other recognised institutions and organisations and potential employers, for example, the BSc Biomedical Sciences is accredited by the Institute of Biomedical Sciences.

Advice and Counselling Service – the Advice and Counselling Service offers a free and confidential service to all Queen Mary students.

Alumni – graduates and other former students of the university.

Associate and Erasmus students – QMUL runs a Study Abroad programme which allows students at overseas and EU institutions to study at Queen Mary for one or two semesters before returning home to complete their degree.

B

BA – Bachelor of Arts

BEng – Bachelor of Engineering

BSc – Bachelor of Science

C

Campus – the building and grounds of a university. QMUL has three main [campuses](#) at Mile End, Whitechapel and Charterhouse Square as well as campuses at Lincoln’s Inn Fields and West Smithfield.

[Careers and Enterprise](#) – this is a free service for students from all year groups and courses at Queen Mary. They provide advice on gaining work experience, opportunities to network with employers and alumni, information and advice on starting your own business. They also help with applications and interviews for part time work, internships, graduate schemes and further study.

[Charter and Ordinances](#) – the primary governing instruments of QMUL, and the framework within which the governance structure operates and the high-level principles of its academic and executive structure.

Core/Compulsory module – a module that is selected for you by your School or Institute based on your degree title/accreditation. You cannot change or choose which core modules you complete.

Core and compulsory modules – a compulsory module is a module that must be taken. A core module is a module that must be taken and passed. Both have to be taken and therefore you will not be able to opt out of these modules during module registration. Your School or Institute will be able to confirm which modules are core and compulsory.

[Council](#) – is the governing body of QMUL, responsible for overseeing the strategic mission, direction and affairs of the institution.

Course code – a number and letter code that is specific to each module offered by Queen Mary.

[Course Representative](#) – Course Reps seek out students’ views and represent them at Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings, and work in partnership with staff to improve their course and resolve any course-related issues as they arise throughout the year. Course Reps work closely with the Students’ Union to campaign for change and make things better for students.

Credits – the number of credits the module is worth in the Queen Mary credit system. This will usually be 15 credits for a semester-long module and 30 credits for a year-long module, although this can vary between School or Institute. Each 15-credit module is equal to 150 notional study

hours. These 150 hours include all lectures and tutorial time plus personal study time such as preparatory reading, essay writing and revision work. One 15 credit module is equal to 7.5 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits.

CV – this is a shortened term for the Latin, 'Curriculum Vitae' known as a Resume in the United States of America. This is a document that has concise information about your education, work experience and skills written to show employers that you have the ability to do a particular job. Each time you send a CV it should be amended for the specific role you are applying for, so you can sell your experience in a way that demonstrates your suitability for the position.

D

Director of Taught Programmes – the highest point of contact for any matters relating to the quality of teaching within your School or Institute.

DDS/Disability and Dyslexia Service – the Disability and Dyslexia Service offers support for all students with disabilities, specific learning difficulties and mental health issues.

Dissertation – a long report completed (generally) in the final year of a degree. This may not be applicable to some degree programmes.

DSAs/Disabled Students' Allowances – are paid on top of your other student finance. They help you pay the extra costs you may have because of your disability. They don't have to be repaid.

E

EC/Extenuating Circumstances – under QMUL's regulations, extenuating circumstances are: "Circumstances that are outside of a student's control which may have a negative impact on a student's ability to undertake or complete any assessment so as to cast doubt on the likely validity of the assessment as a measure of the student's achievement". The circumstances are usually personal or health problems (mental or physical). An EC form can be submitted for coursework or exams.

ECTS/European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System – enables students to transfer credits between universities within the European Union and other participating countries. One academic year corresponds to 60 ECTS credits.

Elective module – a module that you can choose from anywhere within Queen Mary or the University of London, subject to School or Institute approval and timetable constraints.

Employability – a way to describe work readiness. Taking part in work experience and extra-curricular activities, as well as gaining skills that employers look for. For example – IT Skills, leadership and problem solving, are ways to boost your employability.

Enrolment – the process of officially registering with the university, and it is compulsory that you do this during your first week here.

Erasmus – see Associate and Erasmus students

Executive Officers – the Students' Union's Executive Officers represent and work for Queen Mary students. They make sure students' voices are heard when decisions are made that affect them and raise issues and run campaigns on their behalf. They also direct the Union in the way students want it to be run and to suit their needs.

F

Faculty – a group of university Schools or Institutes concerned with a major division of knowledge. There are three Faculties at Queen Mary: Science and Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences, and the School of Medicine and Dentistry.

Formative assessment – takes place when the feedback you are given helps you learn and progress in your subject area and your skills. It is designed to help you take the comments forward and improve your work. You will probably not be given a grade for this work, but if you are, the grades are not part of your formal transcript or your end of year results.

Foundation programmes – are designed to prepare students for undergraduate study.

H

Halls/Halls of Residence – Halls of Residence are university-owned accommodation for students. Halls are managed by the Residential Services and Support department.

HE/Higher Education – a term for study at degree level or higher.

‘Home’ school (joint honours students only) – the main school you are registered with for your course.

Home student – students from the UK and EU generally have ‘home student’ status which is linked to fee status and eligibility for loans for study.

Honours degree – a qualification awarded by a higher education institution after the successful completion of a three-year full-time degree (or the equivalent part-time).

In-sessional programmes – help you to maximise your performance at university and improve the quality of your academic assignments. They are designed to help you increase your English language skills.

I

Institute – an organisational body created for a certain purpose. Institutes are often parts of a university that are dedicated to postgraduate study and research. Academic schools within QMUL’s School Medicine and Dentistry are called Institutes.

Intercalated degrees (intercalating students) – QMUL’s intercalated degrees provide an opportunity for in-depth study of selected biomedical technologies, health services research, and biomedical, and social sciences. They are aimed at those medical, dental or veterinary students wishing to undertake a year of research-orientated study.

Intercollegiate – relating to two or more colleges. Queen Mary is a college of the University of London, which is a federation of colleges. You may hear the word ‘intercollegiate’ in the context of the [University of London’s](#)

[Intercollegiate Halls](#), which provide accommodation for students of its member colleges.

[International airport collection](#) – we offer a free airport collection service by coach from London Heathrow Airport to our Mile End campus for international students arriving over Moving-in Weekend.

International exchange programme – enables students from Queen Mary to spend a year or the autumn semester at one of our partner institutions.

International student – students from outside the UK and the European Union who have a different fee status from home students, and who are usually governed by the [Tier 4 student immigration regulations](#).

[Internship](#) – a formal period of time in a work place where you have responsibility for completing work tasks. Normally, this takes place in the summer before your final year of study and last from 1-3 months, but now internships for graduates and shorter internships (known as insight weeks) aimed at first year students are available. Employers highly value previous work experience, as it provides evidence that the candidate is able to use their skills effectively in a work environment. Deadlines for internships can often be in the November and December of the year before. At Queen Mary, internship opportunities are provided by Careers and Enterprise.

[Interruption of studies](#) – when you are considering or intending to interrupt or suspend your study for a whole term, semester or year(s) but you intend to resume studies with the university at a future date. Before making your mind up, the first thing you should do is to speak to your personal tutor to discuss the situation.

L

Lecture – an educational talk delivered by a member of teaching staff. Lectures start at five minutes past the hour and are scheduled to finish five minutes before the hour (for example, on your timetable it may say you have Research Methods at 10-11am, but the lecture should start at 10.05am and finish at 10.55am). For lectures that last longer than an hour, it is normal for a five to ten minute break to be scheduled in the middle of the session. The purpose of a lecture is to gain the basic information that you need so that you can then carry out extra reading around the subject.

However, many lecturers welcome questions during a lecture if any information isn't clear.

Learning Development – this is a free service for students at any level from any subject discipline to become more effective in their academic work. Throughout the year they run one-to-one tutorials, drop-ins, retreats and various workshops and can help with reading, writing, revision, note-taking, avoiding plagiarism and other aspects of study.

M

Mature student – defined as someone who will be 21 or over on entry to university.

MA – Master of Arts

MEng – Master of Engineering

Module – a course that is offered by your School or Institute, as part of your degree, which (in most cases) will contribute to your degree credits.

Module leader/Module convenor – the point of contact for any queries relating to the organisation of the module.

Module registration – is the process of selecting the elective modules you intend to study in a particular academic year. Please note that not all programmes offer a choice of modules and therefore you might not have the opportunity to alter the modules that are allocated to you.

Moving-in Weekend – the weekend before Welcome Week. Students who have arranged accommodation in Halls collect their keys and move into their rooms during this period.

MSc – Masters of Science

MySiS – a repository of your personal details, funding and scholarship information, exam timetable and exam results. MySiS is also where pre-enrolment, enrolment and module selection must be completed.

N

NUS/National Union of Students – is a voluntary membership organisation which aims to advise and support students and its member students' unions. It is a confederation of 600 students' unions, amounting to more than 95 per cent of all higher and further education unions in the UK.

NUS Extra – the NUS Extra card is purchasable on the NUS website and offers 12 months of discounts from special online and in-store retailers.

O

Optional module – practical optional elements designed to enhance your skills and knowledge.

Oyster Card – is a travelcard produced by [Transport for London](#) (TfL) which can be topped up with cash or card for use (sometimes at reduced rates) on buses, Tube trains, the Docklands Light Railway, Overground and some national rail trains in the London area. Full-time students can apply for a student discount Oyster card.

P

Personal Tutor – see Academic Adviser

Plagiarism – is the inappropriate use of someone else's work, for example, copying or close paraphrasing from a book, website or another student where your use of this work is too substantial, too close and/or insufficiently referenced.

PhD/DPhil – Doctor of Philosophy

Pre-enrolment – pre-enrolment is the first part of the enrolment process. Once you have been accepted to Queen Mary, and have had your place confirmed, our Admissions and Recruitment Office will email you with details on how to pre-enrol.

Pre-Masters Graduate Diplomas – are designed to facilitate entry onto postgraduate degrees in a number of disciplines at QMUL and other leading UK institutions.

Pre-sessional programmes – are designed to develop your English language and academic study skills, and prepare you for your chosen undergraduate or postgraduate degree.

Principal – is the executive head of the university (often called vice-chancellor elsewhere). [Professor Colin Bailey](#) is the President and Principal of QMUL.

Programme – your degree of choice, which consists of credit-bearing modules that make up an award, eg BA Comparative Literature.

Programme introduction (formerly, school induction) – consists of a series of talks during Welcome Week to ensure you have the basic information required to successfully complete your degree and adhere to the academic regulations and rules.

Q

QMplus – the university's online learning environment (also known as the VLE or Virtual Learning Environment). Here you will find your teaching timetable, all of the information from your specific modules (which may include lecture notes, workshop schedules, etc), the QReview lecture capture system, and information from the administrative staff of your School or Institute. You will also find links to other departments and services such as Advice and Counselling, Teaching and Learning, and Queen Mary Students' Union.

QMSE/Queen Mary Senior Executive – is Queen Mary's senior management team and comprises the Principal, Vice-Principals and the Senior Officers in Professional Services. QMSE advises the Principal on the management of day-to-day university business as well as its long-term future.

QMSU – Queen Mary University of London Students' Union (see also Students' Union)

QMSU elections – the Students' Union runs elections in March so you can choose who should be the next group of students to run and lead the Students' Union. There are lots of positions you can nominate yourself for including full-time paid positions and part-time voluntary positions. Elected students then set the direction of the Students' Union, decide on student

policy and run campaigns and projects to improve students' lives and student experience.

QMSU Freshers – 'freshers' is a term used to refer to new students. QMSU Freshers is a fortnight of social events at the beginning of the academic year, organised by Queen Mary Students' Union.

QReview – a repository of recorded lectures.

R

Reading Lists/Recommended reading – recommended literature for your modules to guide your background reading and your work for assessment tasks.

Reading Lists Online – web-based system designed to manage reading lists through a single online application

Reading Week – Week 7 is reading week in Semester A and B in which there is normally a break in timetabled teaching to facilitate a space in the semester for a week of independent study. It is not the same as half-term at school because under some circumstances there may be lectures, workshops or assessment scheduled during this week. Therefore, it is advisable not to schedule a holiday during Week 7 and to use this time to catch up on any work from the previous weeks.

Residential Services and Support – manages QMUL-owned accommodation as well as providing support for those living on campus and help and support for those seeking alternative accommodation.

Russell Group – QMUL is a member of the Russell Group, which represents 24 leading UK universities which are committed to maintaining the very best research, an outstanding teaching and learning experience and unrivalled links with business and the public sector.

S

Sandwich year/Year in industry – a year-long placement in an industry related to your degree. Not all degree programmes offer a year in industry.

School and Institute – within a Faculty are a number of Schools (or Institutes in the School of Medicine and Dentistry) that focus on a specialised area of study, for example, within the Faculty of Science and Engineering, there are five schools: Biological and Chemical Sciences, Physics and Astronomy, Electronic Engineering and Computer Science, Engineering and Materials Science, and Mathematical Sciences.

Semester – an American word for ‘term’ used in Britain to describe how the academic year is divided up. At Queen Mary, there are three semesters: Semester A, Semester B and Exam Period. Semester A and B are 12 weeks long, and the Exam Period runs between the first week of May until the first week of June.

Seminar – the word seminar may mean different things across different Schools or Institutes. In general, a seminar is an opportunity to discuss a topic related to the teaching material in a module with an academic as well as with your peers. However, in some Schools and Institutes a seminar may take the form of a guest lecture with a question and answer segment at the end, or it may be a series of student-led presentations.

Senate – has main responsibility for overseeing QMUL’s academic activity, including academic standards, freedom and research.

Senior Tutor – the Senior Tutor acts as a secondary point of contact after your Academic Adviser/Personal Tutor. They will approve any changes to your programme of study or modules, and can offer advice on central university regulations, policies and procedures. They provide more specialist support for serious academic and personal problems.

Staff Student Liaison Committees – every School and Institute has a Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC). The role of the SSLC is to address matters relating to students’ learning experiences, ranging from teaching and learning, to assessment and feedback and learning resources.

Student Council – at least four times a year the Students’ Union’s Student Representatives and Part-time Officers meet to discuss and debate the things that matter to you – from fees and cuts to environmental impact and the Union’s direction. Any student can attend meetings, submit an issue or motion to be discussed and take part in the debate. It’s how you can get the Union to focus on your issues and change your student experience.

Student Finance – comprises a range of financial support that students may be able to access to help pay for tuition fees and living costs. If you're a student from England you can apply online for: Tuition Fee Loans; Maintenance Loans; Maintenance Grants (continuing students only); and Advanced Learner Loans. You can apply up to nine months after the start of the academic year.

Student Health Service – the Student Health Service is provided by Globe Town Surgery, an independent contractor to the National Health Service England operating as an unlimited liability partnership. Students living in QMUL accommodation at Mile End or Whitechapel and students living in the borough of Tower Hamlets (E1, E2, E3 and E14) are encouraged to register with the Student Health Service.

Student ID number – the 9-digit number written on the front of your student ID card.

Student Support – members of staff who have a specific role to support students and will often be the first person you should approach with questions or for information about School/Institute processes. They can provide general academic information, but you should talk to your Academic Advisor/Personal Tutor for specific queries about your programme.

Students' Union - [Queen Mary Students' Union](#) is a democratic membership organisation that is the voice of all Queen Mary students. The Union ensures that the university and the wider community are listening to what students want, and it works to improve students' experience. The Union is led by students across Queen Mary. Every Queen Mary student is automatically a member of the Union and has a say in how it is run through elections and their representatives. The Union provides a number of student-run activities, like sports clubs, societies, student media and volunteering, as well as student-led events and services in Mile End and Whitechapel, including a sport and fitness centre and several shops and venues.

Summative assessment – takes place when the feedback you are given helps you to learn and progress and provides you with grades towards your course or programme.

T

Transcript – a record of the modules you have taken and the grades achieved.

U

University of London – the University of London is a federal university and is one of the oldest, largest and most diverse universities in the UK. The teaching is carried out by the 17 colleges and nine specialist institutes that comprise the University. When studying with the University you belong to a particular college as well as the University of London itself. This allows students to have access to a wide range of facilities and services. By its legal status, Queen Mary is a college of the University of London.

Username – the alphanumeric username that enables you to log onto QMUL's online systems and computers.

V

Vice-Principal – QMUL's Vice-Principals are the academic heads for our three faculties (Humanities and Social Sciences; Science and Engineering; and Medicine and Dentistry or Health) and cross-cutting themes (Student Experience, Teaching and Learning; Research; Public Engagement and Student Enterprise; and International).

Viva – an oral examination which asks a PhD candidate to defend their doctoral thesis.

W

Welcome Week – the week before Week 1 of Semester A. During this week, various introductions are taking place across all Schools and Institutes for new students. The Students' Union also hosts activities to welcome new students.

Withdrawal of studies – a discontinuation of study, with no intention of returning to continue.

Work experience – traditionally used to describe an informal week or two observing and gaining exposure to a work place. Now ‘internships’ and ‘work experience’ are often used interchangeably, with work experience being used as an umbrella term that can describe any practical experience in a work environment – from part-time work through to a formal structured internship. Employers highly value previous work experience, as it provides evidence that the candidate is able to use their skills effectively in a work environment. At Queen Mary, work experience opportunities are provided by Careers and Enterprise