

# Student, Academic and Pastoral Support Handbook

QMUL Malta 2022/23



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## The Student Academic and Pastoral Support Office (SAPS)

The Student Academic and Pastoral Student Support Office is responsible for student support throughout the undergraduate programme. It plays a key role in student welfare, including the management of physical and mental illness, and the relationship of the School with the Students' Association. At any time, students can make appointments with the Academic and Pastoral Support Office staff, who are available to listen and give advice.

**For an appointment**, please email [student-support-malta@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:student-support-malta@qmul.ac.uk) or utilise our booking link: <https://bit.ly/SAPSMaltabooking>

We have a highly developed network for pastoral and academic support, with links back to the Barts and London School of Medicine in London. This network is a vital resource for Medical students, who take much of the responsibility for their own learning during their challenging courses. At every stage, you will receive support from staff who are experienced in helping and advising students.

### **Information about Confidentiality**

The Student Academic and Pastoral Support office takes the confidentiality of students very seriously. When

accessing SAPS services, student sensitive information will **only** be shared on a need-to-know basis and the SAPS office will always try to contact students first to get their permission to share information. **However**, it is important to note that in order to protect your safety and the safety of others, there may be cases where information may need to be shared more widely e.g. in cases where there is concern of risk of serious harm to self or others, court order, safeguarding or professionalism concerns.

Medical students are offered pastoral support throughout the course. We aim for this support to be a valued part of the course where students are able to build up a good relationship with the team providing it. The Student Support Office adheres to the GMC guidelines on Pastoral Support.

Staff members who provide pastoral support have been selected for the role based on the skills and personal qualities that the role requires and have undertaken the necessary training.

It is important that the Head of the Student Academic and Pastoral Support Unit is not in a position to make decisions on academic progression and assessment. Therefore, we have made this separation of function to allow students to have a safe environment in which they can raise concerns without worrying that there will be any impact on their academic progression.

## Meet the team



**Aimee Dent** - Head of SAPS

[a.dent@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:a.dent@qmul.ac.uk)

*A big hello and welcome to QMUL, Malta. We (SAPS) are available to support you at all times. We enjoy going above and beyond for our students, to support your transition into Gozo and guide you through your journey with us. Never hesitate to get in touch, no matter how small your query.*



**Malcolm Casha** – Mental Health Officer

[m.casha@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:m.casha@qmul.ac.uk)

*Hi Everyone, it is very nice to welcome you to QMUL! I am sure that you are embarking on an incredible journey which will be enriching but also challenging. That is why it is important that should you be in need of support, please do not hesitate to reach out. I will do my best to support to the best of my abilities. Take care and hope to see you around campus! 😊*



**Tina Andersen** – Student and Academic  
Pastoral Support Coordinator

[Tina.andersen@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:Tina.andersen@qmul.ac.uk)

*Hello to you all and welcome to Gozo and QMUL. We hope you have a fantastic time here and that we get to know all your friendly faces. If you every need help, support or a friendly chat please don't hesitate to stop by our office.*

## Why come and see us?

- Mental health concerns and sessions with our Mental Health Officer
- Health Problems
- Family problems
- Financial struggles
- Referral for specialised services
- Pregnancy
- Workload and motivation
- Exam Access Arrangements guidance
- Interruption of studies and return to studies
- Occupational health
- Study skills support / referral
- Disability and Dyslexia guidance
- General Guidance
- A friendly chat

## Opening hours:

We are open for bookings **Monday- Friday 8:30am-5pm.**

To book an appointment please follow this link:

<https://bit.ly/SAPSMaltabooking>

Alternatively, you can pop by with a quick query Monday to Friday between the hours of 8:30am-5pm.

## Senior Tutors

Each year group has a Senior Tutor who is on hand to support any student who encounters academic difficulties with their studies. The academic progress of all students is reviewed throughout the year and any student who is identified as struggling can request a meeting with their Tutor. The tutor will, in conjunction with the student, explore specific areas of difficulty and put together a plan to help address these until the student is back on track. A Senior Tutor may identify issues of pastoral care affecting academic performance and make appropriate referrals to other support groups within the School i.e. SAPS.

In addition to the academic and personal support, which you will receive within the School, there are many other support and advisory services available.



We offer additional support for students who feel they are struggling academically and to help students to become more effective in their academic work. We have an external training consultant who can meet with students individually and help develop skills such as reading effectively, writing, exam technique, revision, note-taking, time-management, critical thinking, avoiding plagiarism, presentation skills and organising group work.

Throughout the year, as requested by the Head of Student Academic and Pastoral Support, she may run one-to-one tutorials, drop-ins, retreats and various workshops as well as help students whose first language is not English to develop their English language skills.





## Study Skill Support

We offer additional support for students who feel they are struggling academically and to help students to become more effective in their academic work. We have an external training consultant who can meet with students individually and help develop skills such as reading effectively, writing, exam technique, revision, note-taking, time-management, critical thinking, avoiding plagiarism, presentation skills and organising group work.

Throughout the year, as requested by the Head of Student Academic and Pastoral Support, she may run one-to-one tutorials, drop-ins, retreats and various workshops as well as help students whose first language is not English to develop their English language skills.



## Academic Advice Service

The academic advice service is an independent, free and confidential service open to all Queen Mary students.

Through this service, you can obtain confidential advice and representation on a range of academic issues including:

- Applications for extenuating circumstances
- Requests for a review of an exam board decision
- Allegations of plagiarism or an examination offence
- Allegations of breach of the Code of Student Discipline
- Appeals against the outcome of a disciplinary hearing, either under the examination offences regulations or the Code of Student Discipline
- Appeals against de-registration from a module or course
- Complaints regarding a member of staff / course delivery
- Bullying or harassment by a member of staff or student
- Fitness to practice issues
- Advice on statements and accompany students to hearings either to represent the student or to provide moral support. We also act as a referral point on matters such as immigration, finance or mental health.

<https://www.qmsu.org/advice/academic/>

## Disability and Dyslexia Service

The University offers support to students with disabilities and dyslexia. Support and guidance is also offered to students who do not necessarily consider themselves disabled, for example those with long-term or short-term medical conditions, or other conditions, which may have an impact on studies.

Sometimes, a condition, which might not be considered a disability in daily life, can become a substantial difficulty when studying in higher education. Staff will assist you in finding strategies to help overcome the impact of a particular disability or learning difficulty on studies. Our Disability and Dyslexia service can be reached at [dds@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:dds@qmul.ac.uk) (please discuss with SAPS first).

## Lecture Capture

Queen Mary University of London has an in-house lecture capture system called 'Q-Review', which uses the Echo 360 system.

<https://elearning.qmul.ac.uk/learning-applications/q-review/>

## QM Plus

Queen Mary University of London's virtual learning environment is called 'QM Plus', which is our branding on the Moodle system. Staff utilise this resource by uploading documents such as lecture slides in advance of lectures and allowing students to post questions to staff.

<https://qmplus.qmul.ac.uk/>

### **Reading Lists Online – *available on request***

Our colleagues in Library Services manage a resource called Reading Lists Online that allows staff responsible for teaching modules to upload the reading lists for their subject, along with a commentary on the most relevant sections of text. This is particularly helpful for our visually impaired students who may require texts in an accessible format. The Disability and Dyslexia Service are currently working on a specialist project with Library Services to increase the number and scope of those reading lists available to the students that we support.

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## Careers Advice

Students can receive consultations on the same basis as UK-based medical students. Students can call the careers advice information desk and book an appointment (online or phone) at a time that suits them. Contact details: Telephone: 00 44 20 7882 8533 Email: [careers@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:careers@qmul.ac.uk)

## Occupational Health

We have an Occupational Health team who see students on arrival to assess their health status and to whom we refer students to when we are concerned about their health.

Our in-house GP also sees students periodically to ensure they are safe and fit for placement in the later academic years.

## Finance

**UK students studying in Malta are unable to apply for a student loan via the Student Loans Company. International students will need to check whether a student loan is available from their home country.**

If you have exceptional or unforeseen costs or you are in financial hardship, you could be eligible for help. We have a small fund (max. 750 euros per student) to help students in emergencies. The fund is there to help any eligible student who has a particular financial need but we cannot meet every application we receive. An independent panel assesses each application. The fund cannot be used to pay your tuition fees. For further information, please contact the SAPS Unit.

## Mental Health Officer

Malcolm Casha, our Mental Health Officer, is based at the Medical school and offers support to students throughout the course. Malcolm will work to meet the needs of students with complex or enduring mental health problems by facilitating and coordinating access to appropriate mental health services.

Mental health conditions are a normal part of life, in fact they are more prevalent among medical students than among the general population. Studying medicine at university is an intense experience and the course is a demanding one. It is expected that some students will struggle with university life. However, students:

- Can develop mental health conditions
- Can recover from mental health conditions
- Can continue with their medical degree, and practise medicine, despite declaring that they have a mental health condition
- Will be fully supported by the medical school

[https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/supporting-students-with-mental-health-conditions-0816\\_pdf-53047904.pdf](https://www.gmc-uk.org/-/media/documents/supporting-students-with-mental-health-conditions-0816_pdf-53047904.pdf)

## HELP IN A CRISIS

**If your life is in danger or if you have a medical emergency (including mental health) call 112**

For help and support at times of personal crisis:

Once you have had immediate support with your crisis using some of the options below, please arrange an appointment to see the **Head of Student Academic and Pastoral Support – Malta**, so that any follow up care and support can be put in place to help you manage your studies alongside any mental health issues. Please contact the Pastoral Support Office for an appointment via [student-support-malta@qmul.ac.uk](mailto:student-support-malta@qmul.ac.uk)

### Accident and Emergency Department (Gozo Hospital)

Gozo General Hospital will be able to assist you in a Mental Health crisis. If you do not need an ambulance but you might be at risk of harming yourself or others, you can simply travel to and walk in to GGH, A&E department for help. Professionals will be able to skillfully manage your situation and refer students to local psychiatrists, counsellors and group support if necessary.

<http://gozo-hosp.com/>





## Victoria Health Care Centre/Walk in Clinic (Victoria)

If you have noticed changes in the way you are thinking or feeling over the past few weeks or months that concern you and cause you distress, you should consider going to see a doctor at the Victoria Health Care Centre.

The Health Centre is open daily from 7am to 8 pm for walk-ins. Doctor's here will also be able to refer students to local psychiatrists, counsellors and group support if necessary.

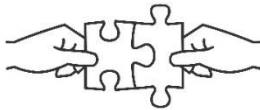
<https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/phc/Pages/Health-Centres/Victoria-Health-Centre.aspx>



**Address:** Victoria Health Centre, Triq Enrico Mizzi,  
Victoria-Gozo, Gozo VCT 2041, 22 156 820

## Support

At university, it is important to understand that although you are responsible for yourself, there is plenty of support available.



Here are a few useful links to both internal and external facilities that can help with a variety of problems:

### **Crisis Intervention Service**

Operating from the Accident and Emergency Department of Mater Dei Hospital, Malta. This service is available from Monday to Sunday from 7am till 5.30pm. The service provides various crisis support relating to mental health issues. Please see link for more information

<https://deputyprimeminister.gov.mt/en/mch/Pages/Community-Services/crisis-intervention-service.aspx>

## **Samaritans - someone to talk to 24 hours a day**

The Samaritans is a free service offering email, telephone listening and support **every day of the year**. Although you are not currently based in the UK, the Samaritans are accessible to you. For more information, please visit their website for more information.  
<https://www.samaritans.org/>

## **Supportline 179**

This is the national helpline for anyone finding themselves in times of difficulty or crisis. It offers support, information and referral services to callers who require assistance.

The supportline is available 24/7 and all calls are free both from landlines and mobile phones.



## **Richmond Foundation**

Richmond Foundation endeavours to provide optimal community mental health services that promote mental wellbeing, address the prevention of mental health problems and provide a counselling service and support for a good quality of life.

Self-referrals can be made and counselling appointments can be arranged face to face on Malta or else online.

Richmond foundation **24/7 support helpline** can be called on **1770** for those experiencing mental health difficulties. You will be in contact with professionals who can offer emotional support as well as practical guidance.

**Olli** chatroom is also available 24/7 run by Richmond Foundation for anyone who would prefer to communicate online. There you will be equally supported emotionally or offered practical guidance. - <https://olli.chat/>

Please visit their website for more information. <http://www.richmond.org.mt/>

## **Kellimni**

Kellimni is a 24-hour confidential support line based in Malta for young people aged 13-30 years. Kellimni's mission is to offer one-on-one online support services to service users, mainly youth who are suffering from any form of social exclusion, abuse, neglect, and/or psychological difficulties and/or are in need of emotional, moral and social support.

Please visit their website for more information <http://kellimni.com/>

## Other Useful Information

EU students can access free medical care or can access private healthcare for approximately €15 per appointment with a local GP. There are some conditions that can be diagnosed and treated by a family doctor, however they also provide referrals to other [medical professionals](#).

<https://www.pharmacy.com.mt/practitioners/family-doctors-gps/>

Remember your European Health Insurance Card and Passport. Non-EU students are required to have private health Insurance. You are legally obliged to apply for residency of Malta if you stay here for more than 90 days. Then you can no longer use your European Health Card. As you are not paying social security in Malta you are required to take out private health care insurance.

Course info links:

<https://qplus.qmul.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=3055>

There is a training area to help you navigate:

<http://qplus.qmul.ac.uk/mod/scorm/view.php?id=543003>