

# The Graduate Attributes Project

## **Student Consultation Report**

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## Executive Summary

Queen Mary, University of London has developed a statement of graduate attributes as a vehicle for enhancing the student experience. The statement makes explicit through a hierarchically organised series of descriptor statements the behaviours, values, attributes, skills and knowledge that could be expected of a Queen Mary graduate. The University is currently consulting widely on the statement and this report presents the outcomes of the consultation event held with 34 Queen Mary students on 17<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

The issues addressed during the consultation and the outcomes identified were:

1. To what extent students expect the curriculum to deliver more than subject knowledge and skills

In looking to a future curriculum it was clear that students recognize the centrality of 'subject knowledge' & 'skills specific to the discipline'. However, the development of transferable skills and individual attributes are recognised as very significant elements of the future curriculum at Queen Mary.

2. To determine if students associated their overall student experience more closely with developing subject knowledge and skills or personal attributes.

A majority of students held the view that developing 'a unique range of attributes' better captured the essence of the Queen Mary student experience rather than subject knowledge and skills.

3. Which distinctive attributes students believed should be shared across the institution, regardless of discipline.

Overall students selected Communication (selected by 74% of participants), Rounded Intellectual Development (71%), and A critical engagement with knowledge (59%).

4. To assess the extent to which the graduate attributes statement provided a useful framework for exploring the learning achieved while at Queen Mary.

Students were asked to map the most important differences that they identified in themselves as arising during their time at Queen Mary into the statement themes, using the detailed descriptors as prompts. Encouragingly, the participants were able to associate the overwhelming majority of such 'differences' with one or more of the statement themes.

## **Background**

The Graduate Attributes project is an important Queen Mary learning and teaching initiative, led by Professor Morag Shiach the Vice-Principal for Teaching and Learning. Progress with this project can be tracked on the Graduate Attributes Project page located at: <http://www.esd.qmul.ac.uk/sande/projGA/index.html>.

The distinctiveness of Queen Mary as a learning community derives from a complex interplay of factors, most notably: staff and their vision for learning, a commitment to high quality research, a multicultural context and diverse student body, and a rich range of formal and informal learning opportunities.

This distinctiveness has recently been captured in an institutional Queen Mary 'graduate attributes' framework (QMGAF). The QMGAF makes explicit through a hierarchically organised series of descriptor statements the behaviours, values, attributes, skills and knowledge expected of a Queen Mary graduate. There are currently 3 institutional and 4 disciplinary attributes in the draft statement (Appendix 1).

Queen Mary is committed to the development and embedding of an institutional statement of graduate attributes in this form. Such an approach can act as a stimulus for curriculum enhancement and development of teaching innovation as evidenced by the outcomes of the Queen Mary Leadership Foundation for Higher Education project 'Managing Teaching Performance'<sup>1</sup>.

A small representative working group produced the draft statement, which formed the basis for an extended consultation across the College.

## **Consultation Purpose**

This report details the results of the consultation held with current Queen Mary students on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at the Mile End campus. The consultation was opened by Professor E.S. Davenport, Institute of Dentistry, and the main activities were led by Dr Graham Thomas and Dr Caroline Walker (Educational and Staff Development). The working groups were facilitated by Dr Jo Cordy (Educational and Staff Development), and Ms Shelly Donaghy and Mr Denis Shukur (The Students Union).

The event was aimed at exploring student views on what it could mean to be a future graduate of Queen Mary. In particular the event was used to assess the extent to which the draft statement of graduate attributes provided an appropriate vision for 'shaping' the educational experiences that form the basis for the overall student experience. The event also provided an opportunity to examine student use of the framework for integrating the learning achieved through both their curriculum and non-curriculum activities.

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<sup>1</sup> Shiach M, Ketteridge S, Williamson M, Ward L (2008) Managing Teaching Performance 36p. Queen Mary University of London and the Leadership Foundation  
URL <http://www.lfhe.ac.uk/supportteam/lffellowship/2006/mshiachrep.pdf/> (accessed 13.01.09)

## Participants and Session Format

In total, 34 students attended the event – 9 participants from School of Medicine and Dentistry, 11 from Humanities and Social Sciences, and 14 from Science and Engineering. Participants included 20 female students and 14 male students. Where students' year groups were known, 7 first-year, 6 second year, 10 third year, and 5 fourth year students attended. The list of participants is included as Appendix 5.

Participants were assigned to one of six groups such that there was a mix of degree disciplines. All students were provided a workbook to record their thoughts on the specific tasks. Students completed an icebreaker based on 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire' quiz featuring different facts about Queen Mary graduates. Subsequently the groups were facilitated in completing each of the following 6 tasks. A complete description of outcomes for each task can be found in appendices 2-4.

## Task 1: Enhancing the Future Curriculum

The purpose was to assess the extent to which students expect Queen Mary to use the curriculum to deliver more than disciplinary knowledge and skills. For this task each student was asked to individually rank on a 4-point scale the importance that Queen Mary should attach to providing opportunities in the curriculum to develop the following elements:

- Subject knowledge (for example the key concepts, theories and methods of a discipline)
- Skills specific to a discipline (for example specific analytical or technical skills)
- Transferable skills (for example communication, team working, information technology, problem solving, numeracy)
- Career management skills (for example understanding yourself, exploring career options, setting career objectives)
- Personal and professional attributes (for example, capacity to influence and lead, intellectual integrity and ethical action, respect and tolerance of others opinions)
- Second language skills (i.e. opportunities to develop or improve capability in a second language)

The following table presents the aggregated results. Not surprisingly there was maximum agreement that the curriculum should deliver core knowledge and skills appropriate to the discipline. However, transferable skills (97%) and personal and professional attributes (85%) had high levels of importance attached to their development. There is also a growing expectation that the curriculum should contain integrated, explicit career management skills. The most controversial element was second language skills where a small majority held the view that these should not be an important curriculum element.

Curriculum Element	Very Important	Important	Of little importance	Unimportant	Not ranked
Subject Knowledge	25 34 (100%)	9	0	0	0
Skills specific to the discipline	25 34 (100%)	9	0	0	0
Transferable skills	19 33 (97%)	14	1 1 (3%)	0	0
Personal and professional attributes	14 29 (85%)	15	4 4 (12%)	0	1 1 (3%)
Career management skills	8 26 (76%)	18	5 6 (18%)	1	2 2 (6%)
Second language skills	2 14 (41%)	12	17 20 (59%)	3	0

## Task 2: Capturing the Student Experience

The focus of this task was on the wider student experience rather than solely the curriculum. The purpose was to assess if students identified this experience more strongly with aspects of knowledge and skills, with the development of individual attributes or with preparation for work.

Participants were asked to consider the following prompt: Suppose Queen Mary was looking for a single sentence to capture the essence of the Queen Mary student experience and you were provided with the following statement and options to complete. What would you choose and why?

'Queen Mary offers learning opportunities that help develop\_\_\_\_\_ in its students'

- core disciplinary knowledge and skills
- a range of unique attributes
- knowledge and skills appropriate to working in a modern economy
- your own suggestion

Working individually students were asked to rank their choices and the number of responses for each category are summarised below:

Descriptor	Rank			Not Ranked
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	
Core disciplinary knowledge and skills	10	13	8	0
A range of unique attributes	17	7	8	0
Knowledge and skills appropriate to working in a modern economy	5	11	16	0
Own choice or not ranked			2	2

The development of a 'range of unique attributes' had the highest number of counts as the first ranked descriptor. Students also provided the following statements to capture the essence of the Queen Mary experience from an individual perspective.

- core skills and unique attributes
- basic knowledge related to my subject
- abilities to their full potential
- the ability to make the most of opportunities available in the world
- a range of independent and critical skills for a diverse and changing world
- the individual
- knowledge and life skills
- individuality
- an awareness of degree subject and its impact on society
- learning financial management and contributing back to society in some way
- knowledge, skills and the individual as a whole
- a range of unique attributes and core disciplinary skills

### Task 3: What is the purpose of University?

This task was aimed at encouraging participants to think more broadly about their student experience and to see how far beyond the attainment of subject knowledge and skills they believed attendance at university took them.

Working in their groups, participants were asked to spend a few minutes discussing the question 'What is the purpose of University?' and each student was asked to record the key points of their discussions. 167 responses were recorded and are detailed in Appendix 3.

A qualitative analysis of the responses was undertaken such that a number of key themes were identified by repeated inspection of the responses. Each response was then coded with the main themes. The results of the coding, included in the Appendix, are presented below.

Theme	Count	Theme	Count
<u>I</u> ndividual	59	<u>R</u> esearch	9
<u>K</u> nowledge and <u>S</u> kills	34	<u>T</u> ransition	8
Career/World of Work	17	Economy/Society	7
<u>L</u> earning/Teaching	12	Culture	6

NB Underlined letters form the codes in Appendix 2

Again a large proportion of the statements reflect beliefs about the importance of university for the development of knowledge and skills (both discipline and transferable), mainly in the individual but also for the wider benefit of society. However, overall the responses are dominated by statements about individual personal development, phrased in terms of a range of attributes. Confidence, independence and maturity were especially prevalent, but also participants offered a number of statements indicating a more holistic view of their own personal development. Another important theme was that of the role of university in providing a transition from school to the workplace. Also important were statements about future career and preparation for the world of work. A number of individuals phrased the purpose of university more in terms of the overall economic and social benefit. Other significant themes were culture, learning, and research.

### Task 4: A Game of Words

Participants were introduced to the concept of a statement of Graduate Attributes, and how it might encourage them to think more broadly about the educational experiences provided both through the curriculum and through engaging in extra-curricular activities.

In introducing students to the details of the QMGAF, students were initially only made aware of the 7 graduate attribute themes and without any hierarchy evident by presenting the themes in a random arrangement on a PowerPoint slide. Students were asked to select three which they considered to be more broadly desirable to be shared by all students at institutional level.

The number of times each attribute theme was selected as being more broadly institutional is provided in the following table.

Attribute	Aggregated Votes	H&SS	SMD	Sci/Eng
Communication	25	9	6	10
Rounded intellectual development	24	7	8	9
A critical engagement with knowledge	20	7		11
Learning for a changing world	17	7	5	
Research & scholarship	8			
International perspective	4			
Information expertise	3			

H&SS = Humanities and social sciences, SMD = School of Medicine and Dentistry, Sci/Eng = Science and Engineering

The aggregated results show rounded intellectual development, a critical engagement with knowledge and communication as institutional attributes. Given the results of the previous tasks selection of the former two attributes is perhaps not surprising, while communication features strongly in all surveys of the expectations of employers of graduates.

There was some variation by sector in identification of institutional level attributes. Science & Engineering participants selected a critical engagement with knowledge, communication and rounded intellectual development. Humanities & Social Science students selected communication, learning for a changing world, a critical engagement with knowledge and rounded intellectual development. The students from SMD selected rounded intellectual development, communication and learning for a changing world.

## **Task 5: How have I changed whilst studying at Queen Mary?**

This task aimed to determine how well individual student's understandings of their own development while studying could be related to the themes in the graduate attributes statement, using the attribute descriptors as guidance.

Participants were asked to spend five minutes thinking about some of the significant experiences they have had, both from study (e.g. seminars, group projects, oral presentations) and extra-curricular activities (working part time, volunteering). Students were then asked to record on separate post-it notes brief statements of up to 5 ways that describe how they think they would be different by the time they left Queen Mary. Each group was supplied with an A1 sheet featuring the attribute descriptors. Participants placed their post-its with the theme they felt best reflected their own statement. If no theme matched, participants were asked to label their statements as unclassified.

The responses from each group were then aggregated and the results presented in the following table. Following the previous discussions the emphasis on individual development is perhaps not surprising. Only 5 statements did not fit any of the themes.

<b>Attribute Theme</b>	<b>Associated number of statements</b>
Rounded intellectual development	38
Communication	32
Learning for a changing world	24
A critical engagement with knowledge	19
International perspective	18
Research & Scholarship	10
Information expertise	11
Unclassified experiences	5

## **Task 6: What am I taking away from this?**

The final task provided an opportunity for students to provide any key insights they wanted to share on the process that they had just been taken through. The individual responses are available in Appendix 4.

In reviewing the individual responses it is clear that many students were prompted by the exercise to reflect on the need for Queen Mary to provide more opportunities to allow the types of development explicit in the statement to be accomplished. The 2<sup>nd</sup> language capability also generated some key insights, with some students recognizing both the value but also the difficulty of achieving this. Other students recognized the



value of developing a 2<sup>nd</sup> language capability but thought this was more an individual decision.

A number of comments indicate that Rounded Intellectual Development was considered to be one of the strengths of the statement. Several students offered critiques of the statement themes and descriptors. In particular elements identified as requiring improvement were Information Expertise and International Perspective.

Finally consideration of the statement prompted some students to reflect on the quality of recycling opportunities across the College!

## **Summary and Conclusions**

The consultation event encouraged the student participants to think in terms of the future curriculum at Queen Mary and was aimed at considering the extent to which the draft statement of graduate attributes provided an appropriate vision for 'shaping' the educational experiences afforded through curriculum and non-curriculum activities. The event also provided an opportunity to examine student use of the framework as a basis for integrating the learning achieved through both their curriculum and non-curriculum experiences.

In looking to a future curriculum it was clear that students recognize the centrality of 'subject knowledge' & 'skills specific to the discipline'. However, the development of transferable skills and individual attributes are recognised as very significant elements of the future curriculum at Queen Mary. There is also a clear expectation by a majority of students that career management skills should feature more directly in the curriculum. In relation to developing a 2<sup>nd</sup> language capability, a small majority did not consider this a significant feature of the future curriculum.

An interesting outcome of the consultation was a majority view that developing 'a unique range of attributes' better captured the essence of the Queen Mary student experience rather than knowledge and skills. However, considering the well formed and sophisticated views offered by the participants of the purpose of university, this outcome is not surprising.

Asking the students to identify 3 attributes that should be more broadly institutional resulted in the selection of Communication (voted for by 74% of participants), Rounded Intellectual Development (71%), and A critical engagement with knowledge (59%). Although only 1 appears as institutional in the actual draft statement, the reasons for the selection seem logical.

In one of the key tasks in the consultation, students were asked to map the most important differences that they identified in themselves as arising during their time at Queen Mary into the statement themes, using the detailed descriptors as prompts. Encouragingly, the participants were able to associate the overwhelming majority of such 'differences' with one or more of the statement themes. This provides an important indication that the framework provides a logical basis for supporting a student's exploration of their own development while studying.

Finally, students were given the opportunity at the end of the consultation to influence the statement by providing any key insights they had gained during the consultation. The students offered a number of critiques of the statement, but also identified particular strengths. Written ('this has been very insightful from a student perspective;' 'the draft statement is thorough and thought provoking - well done and thank you for this opportunity') and verbal feedback during the event suggests students welcome the development of a Queen Mary Graduate Attributes statement and framework.

## **Acknowledgements**

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Dr Caroline Walker  
Dr Graham Thomas  
ESD, June 2009

## Appendix 1 Draft Queen Mary Graduate Attributes

### Disciplinary Attributes

#### Institutional Attributes

##### A Critical Engagement with Knowledge

Queen Mary graduates will:

- demonstrate rigour, confidence and autonomy in the acquisition and deployment of knowledge
- be capable of generating, interrogating, synthesising and critically evaluating disciplinary understandings
- be able to transfer and adapt their knowledge and understandings to the wider community

##### International Perspective

Queen Mary graduates will:

- be prepared to embrace actively their social, professional and civic responsibilities
- be capable of, and committed to, working effectively within diverse communities
- be able to operate in more than one language

##### Learning for a Changing World

Queen Mary graduates will:

- apply a range of learning approaches as appropriate
- be committed to individual and collaborative learning that is responsive and appropriate to their evolving needs and contexts
- have capacities to lead and influence
- recognise the impact of the human on the natural world
- be open to the application of new technologies to familiar and emerging contexts

Please forward any comments to Dr Caroline Walker, ESD,  
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**FOR INTERNAL CONSULTATION**

**Rounded Intellectual Development** – *Queen Mary graduates will be self-aware, responsible and independent learners. They will:*

- have a commitment to continued, flexible and self-directed learning appropriate to their current and future needs
- develop a set of transferable skills applicable to the management of their career goals, productive employment, continuing education and constructive community action
- be able to undertake realistic self-appraisal and demonstrate initiative and resilience in meeting challenges
- be curious, adaptive and open to change
- develop judgment and wisdom
- be socially responsible, and committed to a global perspective
- actively seek to develop their own learning and actions
- demonstrate respect for and tolerance of the opinions of others and be inclusive in their actions

**Communication** – *Queen Mary graduates will communicate effectively and fluently with a range of audiences, demonstrating advanced written, verbal and other communication skills as appropriate. They will:*

- possess a high standard of oral and written communication skills in English
- be able to communicate ideas, concepts and judgments clearly and concisely to a range of audiences
- understand the strengths and limitations of various forms of communication and the ability to deploy an appropriate form for a given audience, task and cultural context
- appreciate the essential contribution of effective communication to successful teamwork and collaborative activities in settings of social, professional and cultural diversity
- be competent users of appropriate communication technologies

**Research and Scholarship** – *Queen Mary graduates will be able to further their understanding of new contexts through the application of research and scholarship. They will:*

- comprehend the principles, practices and boundaries of their discipline or field of study
- be able to apply analytical and cognitive skills to identify, investigate and solve unfamiliar problems
- be able to produce and present evidenced judgments
- have a strong sense of intellectual integrity and ethical action
- be able to work both autonomously and collaboratively
- be able to acquire substantial new bodies of information in a changing world

**Information expertise** – *Queen Mary graduates will be able to deploy information constructively and critically to support specific needs. They will:*

- be able to identify information needs appropriate to different situations
- use appropriate technologies to locate, access and interpret information effectively from a variety of sources
- be able to evaluate critically the sources, values, validity and currency of information
- be able to deploy information for evidence-based decision-making, advocacy and creative/critical thinking

## Appendix 2 Student Responses to the prompt 'What is the purpose of University?'

Codes applied to each statement: I = Individual, R = Research, KS = Knowledge and Skills, T = Transition, WW = Career/World of Work, C = Culture, LT = Learning/Teaching, E = Economy/Society, F = Fun

### Comments from SMD students:

- Develop your knowledge and skills in a certain field – something that you are passionate about (KS)
- Experience different cultures, meet various people and shape your personality (C,I)
- Before coming to university, you are in a very sheltered environment. University creates a good link between education and working life (T)
- Gives you a secured future (?)
- A place to learn and develop oneself (LT, I)
- Grow as an individual e.g. skills of self-discipline (I)
- To allow me to be the best I can be in my career (WW)
- Broaden knowledge of/view of people from other cultural backgrounds (C)
- Allow an opportunity for research and gaining transferable skills (R,KS)
- Allow me to gain transferable and analytic skills e.g. to be able to critically analyse a journal – so can keep up with evidence-based medicine as a doctor (KS)
- Secure future (?)
- Further develop skills, individual, fields (KS)
- Teach core knowledge and skills (KS)
- Opportunity to meet new students – diplomacy (I)
- Independence (I)
- Maturity (I)
- Building confidence (I)
- Exposure to new ideas and concepts (KS)
- Budgeting – money management (?)
- Learn how to cook! (?)
- Have fun! (F)
- Learning how to learn (LT)
- Build confidence (I)
- Opportunity to try new things (?)
- Budgeting/money management skills (?)
- Opportunity to find oneself (I)
- Meet people from all walks of life/culture (C)
- Balanced individuals (I)
- Confidence (I)
- Knowledge (KS)
- Diplomacy (I)
- Maturity/independence (I)
- It is important the University experience helps a person to develop personally and professionally by acquiring the relevant educational skills as well as life experiences (KS,I)

- The University can help facilitate this by helping to have more interactive experiences and group work within each course allowing students to build a rapport with each other (I)
- Innovation in research (R)
- Pioneers and leaders in the field (E)
- Advance and further knowledge in each discipline (K)
- Creative opportunity (I)
- Philosophy, professionalism and ethics (I)
- To develop an individual at a personal level and as a potentially useful unit for the workplace; somewhere to learn what cannot be learned elsewhere (I, LT, WW)

### **Comments from Humanities & Social Science students:**

- Furthering one's own knowledge (KS)
- A transition from teenager to adult (T)
- Hardships – independence (I)
- One's own personal growth (I)
- Furthering country's and individual's economic means/ability to earn (E)
- Science research (R)
- Centre of knowledge (KS)
- Community based themes – social aspect (E)
- Professional qualifications – individual/field/country/community (?)
- An avenue where learning can take place (LT)
- Research (R)
- Learning/gaining personal knowledge (L, KS)
- Knowledge (K)
- Fun (F)
- Maturity/independence (I)
- Budget (?)
- Building confidence (I)
- Explore curiosity (I)
- To learn new skills (KS)
- Get involved in new activities (I)
- To enjoy your degree (F)
- Diplomacy (I)
- Learning, teaching, exploration, expand your own knowledge base (LT, KS)
- University – idea of oneness – working with others (I)
- Provide a platform (?)
- Innovation (E)
- Facilitate development and learning and improvement of skills (I, KS)
- To increase knowledge & teach knowledge (KS)
- Pushing boundaries of knowledge (KS)
- Competence in life (I)
- A stepping stone to graduate jobs, postgraduate jobs (WW)
- Specialization in a subject (KS)
- Social skills (KS)
- Sustain the future (?)
- Developing the self (I)

- To teach/deliver knowledge (LT, KS)
- Gaining independence (I)
- Enhance career opportunities (WW)
- Provides resources to help achieve personal goals (I)
- Provide a wider view of the world (I)
- Puts a person on a career path (WW)
- Postpones full time employment (?)
- Opportunity to get low interest (?)
- Teach disciplinary knowledge – help turn smart kids into well-rounded adults (KS)
- Teach you how to function in the real world (E)
- Maturity and independence (I)
- Exposure/galvanising (?)
- Curiosity (?)
- Build confidence (I)
- Diplomacy (I)
- Budgeting and money management (?)
- Fun (?)
- University should culture a bright child into an economically savvy, intelligent, well-rounded, sociable, confident, diplomatic independent adult...with a lot of good memories! (T)
- Developing students (growing into an individual) (I)
- Self discipline (I)
- Teaching (LT)
- Enhancing career opportunities (WW)
- Providing the resources to reach your goal (or if you don't have one, giving you one) (I)
- Getting to know the wider world, learning things from different cultures for example (C)
- Avoid working, have fun (F)
- To serve as a transition from the sheltered school life to the real world, through teaching, learning, research and exploration of both new cultures and yourself (T)

### **Comments from Science & Engineering students:**

- To get in-depth knowledge (KS)
- Transition between the protective environment of secondary school and the outside world (T)
- Gives people the opportunity to specialise in the areas that they are interested in (KS)
- Acts a transition between the protected environment of schools and the real world (T)
- Self-satisfaction (I)
- Developing yourself (I)
- To teach students (LT)
- Improve career opportunities (WW)
- Providing resources to reach your goal (I)
- Providing you with a goal (I)

- Broad view (I)
- Puts you on a career path (WW)
- Opportunity to get low interest (?)
- Developing yourself (I)
- To teach (LT)
- Study on one's own (I)
- Enhance career opportunities (WW)
- Reach a goal or find one (I)
- To know people from wide backgrounds – multi-cultural (C)
- Fun and meeting people (F)
- Research (R)
- Learning & research (LT,R)
- Gain competence (I)
- Going through the motion – BSc to Masters (?)
- Learn new skills (KS)
- First opportunity to live independently (I)
- Stepping stone to a career specification (WW)
- Developing social skills that interact within core subject skills in order to enhance potential (KS, I)
- Transition from high school education to a real world environment (T)
- Coming together of cultures/philosophies (C)
- Coming out of your comfort zone and even sometimes a lifestyle change (I)
- Depends on personality (?)
- Confidence (I)
- Preparation (?)
- Knowledge (KS)
- Fun (F)
- Find yourself (I)
- Independence (I)
- Develop maturity (I)
- Finances (?)
- Explore curiosity (I)
- Passing advanced knowledge to students (KS)
- Preparing students for advanced industrial world (WW)
- Teaching students how 'to learn' (LT)
- Research (R)
- Development of personal levels and confidence (I)
- Providing qualification – benchmark of person's skills and abilities (KS)
- Research within society for the economy (R, E)
- Qualifications for the working world (WW)
- Substantial part of business and economy (E)
- More of a product over enlightenment, most desirable jobs require a degree now (WW)
- Status in society, some activity/recognition (?)
- Blend of research/education (R)
- Transition makes a child into an adult (T)
- Further my career (WW)
- Learn about the world (LT)

- Centre of knowledge for students, professors and the community (KS)
- Furthering knowledge (KS)
- Smarter population (?)
- If knowledge is power universities make individuals, communities and countries more powerful (KS)
- To gain knowledge from different disciplines (KS)
- Allows you to socialise (?)
- To link you to the real world (WW)
- To develop skills (KS)
- To maintain and help develop the community and the country as a whole (E)
- To gain financial stability and a secure job (WW)



## **Appendix 3 Student knowledge, skills and attributes mapped to the QMGAF**

Students associated the following with each attribute:

### **A critical engagement with knowledge**

- More critical
- More intellectually mature and critical
- Developed methods to attain knowledge
- More confident about my knowledge and skills (and so that someone else may learn from me)
- Dissection of human cadaver – better understanding of anatomy
- An increased awareness of knowledge and theory specific to my desired specialism (law)
- Be more knowledgeable and experienced in my field
- More equipped with expertise and knowledge
- I have a bigger scope of experience
- Be able to apply all the skills I've learnt effectively
- More experienced
- Closer to a goal in life
- Have a different approach to thinking about current affairs and what this means for me
- More confident about my personal capability
- Work more efficiently, with rigour
- Skilled at effective decision making
- Organising
- Better equipped to achieve future goals
- Apply what I've learnt to subject specific situations

### **International Perspective**

- More cultural
- Better organized (including multi tasking and time management)
- More aware of other cultures
- Better understanding of different cultures and beliefs
- I feel I will be more enthusiastic about charitable work
- I feel I will have a greater understanding of other people's ideas and beliefs
- Foreign culture
- I have met people from various backgrounds at university and this helped me appreciate and respect other cultures and traditions
- Culturally aware
- More aware of differing cultures and backgrounds
- More culturally aware
- Broadening my mind
- More involved in volunteer work, something I usually wouldn't or my family wouldn't (those who didn't go to University)
- Broad minded
- Bilingual
- Experienced medicine abroad
- Have wider experience

- Better awareness of others and surroundings

## **Learning for a changing world**

- More focused and better informed on future career
- More spiritual
- Leadership capabilities
- Management skills – time/people/project
- Optimistic about my future
- Not backing out from analytical problems in difficult situations
- More confident
- I know who I want to be
- Greater understanding of the world
- More tolerant
- Aware that there is a lot I still don't know
- More skilled in my field
- Eager to enter the real world and explore more opportunities
- Prepared for life is to throw at me
- Better understanding the changing world
- I'll be more determined to succeed in life
- More aware of news/events around the world
- Show initiative beyond what is required
- More aware of environment and the world
- Prepared and aware
- Aware of needs in changing world and able to address them
- More organized
- More aware of realities that will and do apply to me

## **Rounded intellectual development**

- Refreshed and excited to move onto the next stage of my life – a rite of passage/an achievement
- Better organized/time management skills
- More discipline
- Well-grounded individual and intellectually rounded
- Reaching cup final with football team, better understanding of how successful team works
- Skills on engineering software
- University helped me become more disciplined. I like to think I'm much better at managing my time now.
- Able to handle situations with a better judgment
- Team working
- Be more prepared to tackle difficult situations in the future
- More focused and driven
- More competent
- Be organized and able to plan
- Gain confidence to understand the knowledge that I have gained and apply it in my profession
- More ambitious
- Be part of a professional body and accept the responsibilities that come with that
- Be ready to face any problems that may occur in my life – e.g. financial problems

- More confident
- I have better time management
- Focused on life's more important things
- Prepared for life
- Decide on my own
- Now prepared to be an independent and successful adult
- Better at taking care of myself/managing my own life
- Improved time management, self organized, learned to meet deadlines
- I'll be more hardworking – since the start of my study at QM, 1 ½ years ago, I have become more self disciplined. This could be attributed to working part time and studying.
- Change my perspectives about the world
- More focused
- More independent
- Independent
- More disciplined
- More comfortable with myself
- Self reliant
- More focused on what I want to do with my life
- Fuller
- Start to do more sports
- More organized/better time management
- Different perspective of what I want to achieve in my life – besides getting a job also engage in some charity
- More assured as to future plans
- More sure and clear of future

## **Communication**

- Good network of friends
- Better able to cope and resolve difficult interpersonal situations in the workshop
- Community awareness and social responsibility
- Confident personality
- Confidence and humility
- More confident in dealing with the wider public
- I feel I will be capable in terms of communication skills, whether it is general or through a new language
- More confident and outgoing
- Communication
- I have 'stage frights' and I think coming to university helped increase my confidence. At university, I performed on stage on 4 occasions and I now enjoy it
- To be able to express myself concisely and effectively
- Better at explaining my thoughts and views
- Be able to communicate with people of different ages and walks of life as well as different qualifications
- Be able to use my key skills that I have learnt with volunteering – e.g. communication skills
- More easy-going
- More understanding

- Share ideas
- Present my opinions
- Able to work individually and better at coping with my dyslexia
- I have met many people who have influenced my life
- Confident
- I will be more likely to take part in out of 'curricular' type activities, like community decisions etc
- I would be more confident in myself due to the vast knowledge I would have gained, academic and non-academic
- Able to work individually and better at coping with my dyslexia
- I have met many people who have influenced my life
- Confident
- I will be more likely to take part in out of 'curricular' type activities, like community decisions etc
- I would be more confident in myself due to the vast knowledge I would have gained, academic and non-academic
- Effective communication
- Think differently about how to engage/communicate with people
- More confident with oral presentations
- More ready to listen to others' ideas/perspectives
- Team work in an academic setting
- Better communication skills
- Present oneself better/self oneself better to employers
- Better communication skills
- Communicate awesome genius – share and develop said attribute

## **Research and Scholarship**

- Professional networks and lots of friends
- Up to date with modern perspective of biomedical science
- I feel I will have grown as a person, more able to learn by myself and conduct research
- I am better at research
- Skilled to enter a research pathway
- I now do not like reading as much I did before University
- Interested in research and improvement of people's quality of life
- I will have been more involved in research (final year project)
- Specialized skills
- Be better prepared for employment/further education

## **Information expertise**

- To be able to know how to access sources of information to continue lifelong education
- More technical
- I have more conviction in my knowledge
- Adapt better to many situations
- More aware of the connectivity of the world
- I would be more prepared for any obstacles I may face
- Manual dexterity and professionalism & how to handle patients
- Technical lab skills

# The Graduate Attributes Project

- Translate textbook learning to actual situations
- Better at associative thinking – outside the box application
- More observant

## Appendix 4 Responses from the Key Insights Exercise

### Key insights from Science & Engineering students:

- Provision of more practical experience/opportunities
- I think the University should provide opportunities for practical hands-on experience on respective area of study.
- Unfair to be required to be able to operate in more than one language.
- Recognise the impact of the human on the natural world – QMUL does not do this e.g. no recycling
- QMUL should take more efforts in rounded intellectual development – especially for self-directed learning.
- Should provide opportunities for teamwork in different ways
- Provide more information on top technologies
- More tips on research skills
- I don't think it's necessary to be able to operate in more than one language
- Leadership skills should be taught
- QMUL students will be able to – on the student graduate attribute you can include being independent in their further research/career and to develop to a professional level
- More opportunities for inter-departmental learning – e.g. someone in science taking courses in Maths or English
- This has been very insightful from a student perspective. I do believe that more time needs to be allocated to such important and fundamental attributes. Perhaps I would be more useful for a full day workshop.

### Key insights from Humanities & Social Science students:

- International perspective should be moved to the disciplinary section – people do not come to the University for this reason
- You could merge learning for a changing world with international perspective.
- Rounded intellectual development – key focus
- Unrealistic for students to operate in more than one language – however this is desirable, but not necessarily achievable
- The statement needs to be more accessible i.e. more aesthetically pleasing and user friendly but on the whole I agree with its goals
- Maybe not use 'will' as it is unlikely every graduate will obtain these goals
- The disciplinary column seems more basic and institution-level – the three under 'institutional' are more developed, advanced versions of the basic attributes, and these are what graduates should ideally come out with
- The international perspective sounds contrived and too much like a liberal world ideal.
- 'Information expertise' could be assimilated into 'Research and Scholarship' and 'Rounded intellectual development' as it seems weak/insubstantial on its own
- 'Recognise the impact of the human on the natural world' - really? Sure this is for ourselves to learn and not for QM to educate us on
- International perspective – QM will always be culturally diverse, but you can experience this elsewhere, I don't know many people that have learnt a language by being here.

- Learning for a changing world is good but we don't recognise the impact of the human (unless we do geography) for example QMUL doesn't even have recycling bins – poor image
- It is very good at making them self-aware and communicative
- The only concern is 'to be able to operate in more than one language'. I strongly believe in the importance of a second language. However, I am not sure it should be compulsory. Perhaps very strong encouragement would be more appropriate, considering some students will already know multiple languages or have very full schedules – because of society/club involvement. Personally I would love the opportunity.
- Perhaps some opportunity for applying skills practically

### **Key insights from SMD students:**

- Developing effective communication and helping in character building/strengthening
- There is nothing on the statement about developing as an individual e.g. learning about me as a person – a key factor in university life
- Under learning for a changing world – know the important news happening around the world
- Communication – able to handle stressful situations and voice up if needed
- Research – given a chance to engage ideas/carry out research
- Merge together rounded intellectual development and information expertise and should be important as an institutional priority
- Learning for a changing world and international perspective should be merged
- The draft statement is thorough and thought provoking. Well done and thank you for this opportunity.
- Agree with the desire to have students speaking more than one language – don't think it is a realistic aim however.
- Wholeheartedly agree with the rounded intellectual development aims.

## Appendix 5 Participating Students

Oluwadamilare Michael Adaralegbe, Electronic Engineering  
Venus Ameen, Medicine  
Margaret Anthony, Maths  
Leila Avtayeva, Medical Engineering  
Mediha Aziz, Biology  
Hamid Azizi, Biomedical Science  
James Barker, English Literature  
Sophie Boden, Spanish/European Studies  
Emma Buckley, Law & Politics  
Moumita Chakraborty, History & English  
Sarah Ann Filson, Medicine  
Terrick Graham, Engineering  
Olivia Hinde, Drama  
Anna Hiscocks, History  
Tim Kingswell, Medicine  
Adriana Kostopoulous, Biomedical Sciences  
Joseph Toku Larbi, Biomedical Material Science & Engineering  
Jason Lizarraga, Engineering  
Minal Madhvani, Dentistry  
Jennifer Motwani, Medicine  
Ajay Pandya, History  
Dixsha Patel, Law  
Pierre-Jean Pintard, Biomedical Sciences  
Mohammed Qureshi, Engineering  
Aisha Raheem, Economics  
Pooja Ramburrun, Dentistry  
Tobias Richter, Economics, Finance & Business Management  
Syed Rizvi, Medicine  
Sarene Saw, Dentistry  
Shawon Senjuti, Engineering  
Sanjeev Sharma, Dentistry  
Rajendra Singh, Computer Science with Business Management & Accounting  
Beatriz Ungerer Dal Poz, History  
Stephen Waggett, Law  
Qian Wang, E-Commerce with Law