

Dear colleague,

I hope this email finds you well. This week, at Queen Mary we have the Festival of Education to enjoy, which has a fantastic programme. At the Festival, we launched a [digital publication](#) to describe our educational approach. Do have a look! If you were not able to join all the sessions at the festival, recordings will be available on the [Queen Mary Academy website](#). There are also some stellar research publications featured on our website this week: have a look at [this Nature paper](#) on genetic insights into severe Covid-19, and [this one](#) on early indicators for Parkinson's disease. Keep an eye on [the website](#) for all the latest news. Finally, in terms of Queen Mary updates, I am delighted to report the excellent news that we have been successful in achieving our second Institutional Athena Swan Silver award. We heard this news yesterday, which was particularly timely as it was International Women's Day. This success is testament to the great work on gender equality going on across the University – well done all.

Sector update

There is a lot going on across the sector at the moment, with the Government response to the Augar report finally published that includes a 'shake up' to the student finance system. We now know that tuition fees for UK undergraduates will be frozen until 2025, which is a significant cut of 20% in real terms to our income since 2012. There are also important government consultations that we will be responding to on setting minimum entry requirements for undergraduates, student number controls for degrees that do not deliver "good" outcomes and the lifelong learning entitlement. There is a lot of change ahead; however, our University Strategy, coupled with careful financial planning, means we are well placed to respond to the challenges and opportunities that we are facing.

Conflict in Ukraine

News headlines continue to be dominated by the terrible conflict in Ukraine. As a University, our first priority is the safety and wellbeing of our communities. If you are personally affected by this conflict, or by conflict or humanitarian issues elsewhere in the world, please remember we are here to support you. There is a range of support available to staff, including our [employee assistance programme](#). In addition, please look out for each other: it is in these times that the strength of our communities is really important. We are a diverse community and we ask everyone to continue to support and respect each other at this time. If anyone experiences bullying or harassment, or witnesses any examples of bullying or harassment, please either speak to your line manager or report it via [Report + Support](#).

As well as looking after our communities, we are working through our sector body Universities UK with Government and other partners on a sector-wide response to the crisis.

Industrial action

I would like to thank colleagues across the University for working together to mitigate the impact of the industrial action on our students.

I am very sorry to tell you that a further five days of strike action has been announced at all universities where the trade union UCU holds a mandate, with all universities being re-balloted for continual industrial action throughout the year. At Queen Mary, these latest strikes will be from 28 March to 1 April. Industrial action is focused on a small number of areas within our University, with most Schools and Institutes seeing little or no disruption and others seeing a significant amount. We

continue to ask colleagues taking industrial action to prioritise educational activities, and accept in the areas that are affected there will be significant disruption to all non-educational activities.

I greatly appreciate the work of colleagues across the University to protect our students' education and to deliver the education promised. Please see our [FAQs](#) if you have any questions.

This is a busy time of year at our University, and with the continual industrial action and so much conflict across the world everyone can feel under a lot of strain. Do please look after yourselves and each other, and reach out for help if you need it.

I will write to you again when there is a further update to share.

Best wishes,

Colin

Professor Colin Bailey, CBE, FEng, BEng, PhD, CEng, FICE, FStructE, MIFireE
President and Principal | Queen Mary University of London | Mile End Road | London | E1 4NS



Email to students:

Dear student,

I hope this email finds you well, and you are enjoying Semester 2. I hope you are taking advantage of all our University and campuses have to offer, and enjoying the wide range of [social and sporting activities available](#), alongside your academic work. Remember you have free access to [LinkedIn Learning](#), which will enable you to gather new skills and knowledge at your own pace.

Conflict in Ukraine

News headlines continue to be dominated by the terrible conflict in Ukraine. As a University, our first priority is the safety and wellbeing of our communities. If you are personally affected by this conflict, or by conflict or humanitarian issues elsewhere in the world, please remember we are here to support you. There is a range of [wellbeing support](#) available for you. If you have financial concerns related to the Ukraine conflict, please speak to Student Wellbeing services in the first instance.

Please also support each other: these times are when our strong sense of community at Queen Mary is really important. If you are worried about a friend, reach out to them, or speak to your Advisor or contact Student Wellbeing. We are a diverse community and we ask everyone to continue to support and respect each other at this time. If you experience or witness behaviour that makes you feel uncomfortable, or bullying or harassment, please report it using [Report + Support](#).

As well as looking after our communities, we are working through our sector body Universities UK with Government and other partners on a sector-wide response to the crisis.

Industrial action

We are working hard across the University to do everything we can to mitigate any impact of the ongoing industrial action on your education and experience. We are asking colleagues taking part in industrial action to prioritise educational activities, above all their other duties.

If there has been any disruption to your education so far, your School/Institute will be in touch to tell you how the learning will be made up. Please do look out for messages. Please do contact your School/Institute if you have not heard anything.

I am very sorry to tell you that a further five days of strike action has been announced at all universities where the trade union UCU holds a mandate. At Queen Mary, the strikes will be from 28 March to 1 April. Industrial action is focused on a small number of areas within our University, with most Schools and Institutes seeing little or no disruption, and others seeing significant disruption taking place. If you are in a School/Institute where there is disruption, you will receive messages locally about what that will entail. I'm so sorry if you have experienced disruption. Your School/Institute is doing all it can to ensure that any education missed is made up.

If you have any questions about the industrial action, have a look at the [FAQs](#), contact the [Student Enquiry Centre](#) or me at the address below.

Please do enjoy your time with us, and remember we are here to support you. I will write again when there is a further update to share.

Best wishes,

Colin

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