

Term 1 is always a very busy time of the academic year. The sixth form has been a hive of activity during the first few months of autumn, as returning students adjust to a very different life in post-16 education, and joining students adapt to a new environment altogether. It is a time for consolidating old relationships and for making new ones: it is a really exciting time for everyone involved.

We want to let you know what we have been doing in the sixth form since September, in order to give you a flavour of what it is like to be part of the QMHS Sixth Form community, and to show you that there is much more to sixth form life than just the academic studies. We are also keen for you to celebrate in our successes, so we have also included updates about some of our events.

September

Induction Day



Our Head Girl Team 2020: Destiny, Mia and Mehar

Our Year 12 students and Head Girl Team took part in the induction day on Thursday 3rd September.



The day was an opportunity for our returning and joining students to get to know one another, meet their form tutors, the members of their Houses and some of their teachers. It also gave the joiners the chance to familiarise themselves with their surroundings. After form time and a welcome assembly, they had a busy day establishing their new bubbles with

their form tutors and form mates, taking part in socially distanced activities and workshops, and finally creating a mural to represent them as individuals and as a collective form.

On Monday 7th September, we welcomed our Year 13 students back to school into a refurbished, brighter and more spacious Sixth Form Centre. It was wonderful to have our sixth form family back together again after such a long time, even if it is now a more socially distanced sixth form.

Prefect Team 2020

The application process for our prefect team of 2020 started during lockdown, but it was not until we all started back at school in September that we finally announced our subject prefects and ambassadors, along with our duty, pastoral and community prefects for 2020-2021. They have joined our Head Girl, Mia, the Deputy Head Girls, Destiny and Mehar, and our House Captains Sami (Austen), Eve (Bronte), Abi (Elliot) and Krisztina (Shelley) to form a formidable, enthusiastic and motivated team.

We look forward to all of the events and activities they will organise and take part in during the school year. Well done to you all.

October

Early Entry Deadline Day!

Lockdown did not stop us from holding our annual UCAS preparation day with Year 12 (the now current Year 13). This year, we just did it virtually. The two-day event was designed to support QMHS students and their parents through the UCAS application process, and gave students a comprehensive insight into all aspects of student life, including:



- Registering with UCAS Apply
- Completing the UCAS online application form
- Making good course choices and drawing up a shortlist
- Highlighting key dates in the process and deadlines for application
- Guest speakers to support students applying to medicine and dentistry
- UCAT training for relevant courses (see below)
- Outreach teams to talk about student finance, accommodation and budgeting when at Uni
- Selling themselves in the perfect personal statement
- The rise of degree-apprenticeships (by PWC).
- Applying to Oxbridge (by Oriel College, Oxford)

The two-day programme ensured that all of our students applying to early entry courses such as medicine or dentistry, or to study at a conservatoire, Oxford or Cambridge submitted their applications well in advance of the deadline date of 15th October.

All our students applying to courses in the main stream wave have also been given a good head-start on their application process, and will submit their applications ready for the January deadline.

UCAT training

At QMHS we support all our students in securing a place on the university course of their dreams, and many of them aspire to careers in medicine and dentistry. This month our Year 12 students hoping to become doctors and dentists of the future all completed that UCAT tests after having virtual training during lockdown with Anna from E-Medica.



November

The Senior Maths Challenge

Tuesday 3rd November saw the mathematicians in the Sixth Form take on the Senior Maths Challenge, run by the UKMT. This involved all the students in Key Stage 5 studying Maths at QMHS competing under exam conditions against other mathematicians all over the country in the hope of being awarded certificates in the bronze, silver and gold categories.

The top 1000 students nationally are given the opportunity to compete in the first round of the Maths Olympiad. Good luck to all our students in being selected for this enrichment opportunity!

Religious news

In the very different and challenging world we live in these days, religion can give many the strength to get through. Mrs Daniels, Head of Religious Studies, invites you to read the views of the American President elect and Kamala Harris in these interesting article, giving his take on the role of faith in the restoration of the soul:

<https://religionnews.com/2019/12/29/faith-to-restore-the-soul-of-our-nation/?fbclid=iwar0qjksroyuwm8qysuzperfwdojhcpgvldyv4ttkoei1zlydih2e5a0gg>

https://religionnews.com/2020/10/28/kamala-harris-talks-about-her-own-faith-and-how-it-might-influence-a-biden-harris-white-house/?fbclid=iwar0_tygbivver7hls7beyiamf2izqz5xapmx9smav_ha7bxxbusymfj9nw

Young Professionals' Conference

This virtual tour was held in school on 12th November. A number of our Year 12 students had the opportunity to attend interactive seminars, workshops and QandA sessions with representatives from industry in order to help them better understand the avenues available to them via the degree apprenticeship route.



Companies presenting at the event included PwC, GSK, Vodaphone, Capgemini and HSBC.

Engineering Education Scheme at QMHS



Industrial Cadets is an industry-led quality standard, whose patron is HRH The Prince of Wales. The scheme is designed to address skill shortages in industry and prepare the future workforce. Students gain industry exposure and access to the Industrial Cadets network including careers information and opportunities. Young people have the opportunity to get a unique insight into industry with Industrial Cadets. Skills and knowledge are built and enhanced whilst being mentored by industry role models.

For the last three years QMHS has supported teams of students to complete the industrial projects. Students who successfully completed Engineering Education Scheme (EES) graduated as Industrial Cadets at Gold Level.

Zaynab Abrar, Mehar Kular, Sonya Kainth, Lana Ahmed, Eisha Masood and Sophie Phung were the last year winners. They designed and built the required model, wrote the detailed report and presented them for the assessment by judges



In November 2020 we will launch the new exciting projects.

Mrs M. Glazewska

Sixth Form Open Evening

Open Evening, like many events in this very different world of ours, has ended up going virtual, but it is, as always, a wonderful celebration of all we do in the Sixth Form here at QMHS. The event can be accessed via our website (www.qmhs.org.uk) so you can get to see what post-16 academic and non-academic opportunities are available, both to our current Year 11 and to students considering joining us from other schools.

As part of the virtual event, see interviews with Dr Bruton, Dr Darwood and the Head Girl Team, the House Captains and some current students from both Year 12 and 13, who share the reasons why they are so proud to be QMHS sixth formers. They also share their reasons for choosing our school and their positive experiences of life in the Sixth Form since joining us.

The online application form can be accessed directly from the website, or by using the QR code in the prospectus pack. The deadline for applications is Friday 8th January, 2021.

Enrichment

Friday afternoons in Sixth Form means enrichment. During these sessions, all Year 12 and 13 students have the opportunity to take part in a number of activities that enhance and enrich their education, and give them the chance to try something new and perhaps a little out of their comfort zone. Already this year, we have tried a huge range of activities including:

- Yoga
- VESPA workshops
- Community projects
- European Culture and Language
- Photography
- Creative writing
- Debating Society

Future activities will feature First Aid with St. John's Ambulance Service, British Sign Language, Kissing it Better, Mock United Nations, Sports Leaders' Award, more work in the local community and workshops led by a selection of University Outreach teams.

Sport at QMHS

Physical Education and sport play an integral role in the life of the students at Queen Mary's High School.

Students in Years 12 and 13 have the opportunity to undertake a double Physical Education session each week. This allows students the chance to participate in recreational sport to help maintain a healthy balanced lifestyle whilst studying for their A-Levels.

For students who wish to enhance their skills further, netball training occurs weekly for our 1st and 2nd netball teams.



Queen Mary's High School places a huge emphasis on extra-curricular sport; in terms of recreational participation and competitive fixtures. We compete at a local, regional, and national level. Just recently we won the U16 South Staffordshire Netball Competition and continued onto the regional level of the national schools' netball competition.

Sixth Form Sports Ambassadors

Being a part of the Sports Prefect and Ambassador team comes with great responsibility. Activities which the team of leaders organise include such things as running a PE-based after school club for the younger years, delivering house sport related competitions (such as house netball or benchball) and advertising the department and sport at QMHS through reporting in newsletter articles, speaking at school events and presenting in assemblies.

The Sports Prefect team consists of sixth form students who strive to be role models to the younger year groups. As a sports ambassador, you require skills such as leadership, teamwork and organisation. I applied for this role because I wanted to help the younger pupils at QM. I wanted to spend time with them and to be a friendly face that they saw so that they have a friend in the older years and hope that they might aspire to be a sports ambassador when they get older too.

Leisha Mistry, Vice Sports Prefect

Senior Netball

The QMHS senior netball teams are made up of students from Year 11 up to Year 13. There are two senior netball teams, both competing in many competitions and against many schools at a high level of netball.

Our senior teams have both been able to secure many wins, and both teams have shown a vast improvement coupled with the dedication and determination shown by all players, which has resulted in one of the best years of netball QMHS has seen so far.

Our netball team is of a very high standard, as shown by our U16s and U19s netball teams both qualifying for the South

Staffordshire County schools' netball tournament 2019 alongside the U14s, with the U16s winning and carrying on to participate in the Regional schools' competition in Bromsgrove later in that year.

Many of our players come from highly recognised local netball clubs, such as Barr Beacon



Netball Club, Parkside and Sutton Royals Netball Club, which provides the school with close links to help girls advance in netball if they choose to do so. Furthermore, many of our team have even been accepted into local county academies, with a few getting into Superleague netball academies such as Severn Stars and Wasps, which is a great achievement.



Throughout the years, our netball teams have been able to participate in many netball experiences with the Superleague team, Wasps. This year was no different

as some of our players had the chance to participate in two training sessions led by Tamsin Moala from Wasps netball, all organised by Mrs Turner, in preparation for the County tournament. These valued experiences offered to our netball teams allow our girls to improve their skills as well as gaining the advantage of learning them from professional netballers.

Finally, the QMHS Senior Netball Team is a family and this is shown through the teamwork and effort the players put in and the friendships formed between the girls from playing and training together.

Neave Russon, Sports Prefect

Forthcoming Events

Carol Service

While we will not get to celebrate the festive period with our usual service in Walsall Town Hall this year, there are plans afoot in the Music Department to put together a virtual extravaganza to celebrate Christmas at QMHS. Rumour has it that Mrs Watson, Head of Music is cooking up a storm as I write!



Watch out for these events on our website.

Best wishes,
Dr Darwood