

QMUL Sikh Society

**Annual Report
2023-2024**

The QMUL Sikh Society promotes activities that appreciate the culture, history and ideology of the Sikh way of life.

OUR VISION

- Provide opportunity for Sikh students to socialise and build friendships, including Sikhs across the London Sikh societies.
- Provide effective opportunities to engage with Sikh practice, in both learning and activity. Ensuring members are welcomed to be active members within the community.
- To welcome a diverse range of people, regardless of beliefs and ideas, so all may be welcome to participate in friendly environment without discrimination.

OUR VALUES

At QMUL, our principles are very much aligned with the Sikh ethos of equality and service. We believe that the treasure contained within Sikhi can be experienced through a variety of mediums and is accessible to everyone. Recognising that the One exists within all, we hope to encourage people to develop a personal relationship with Sikhi through which they can find purpose, direction and ultimately peace in their life.

OUR AIMS

- Professional - Provide networking opportunities to help further the career-based endeavours of those within our society.
- To ensure all our events follow relevant safeguarding measures so as to protect the welfare of all potential members, as well as guaranteeing maximum accessibility for our events.
- Social – Hosting events where people can get to know each other, relax and have fun in a friendly environment as well as gaining an insight to their interests and backgrounds which can be used to inform our future programs.
- Spiritual – Allow members to experience spiritual connection via different forms, such as Kirtan, Seva and Simran.

INTRODUCTION

Queen Mary Sikh Society (QMSS) aims to foster a sense of community and learning among Sikh students by promoting Sikh culture, history, and values through various events. This year saw a blend of spiritual, cultural, and social activities designed to engage students, build networks, and offer opportunities for personal growth and experiences.

MEMBERSHIP & OFFICERS

SELECTION PROCESS

Each year, during the end of the second semester, there is an election hosted for each role present on the committee for each society. The primary roles required for a society to run are that of the president, treasurer, and welfare officer – these must be filled for the SU to formally recognise the society for the academic year. There is no limit to the number of people that can run for each role. To stand for a role you must submit a manifesto before the required deadline and members of the society can then vote on these roles.

SOCIETY OFFICERS

President x1 – Jagandeep Boora
Treasurer x1 – Puneet Heer
Secretary x1 – Gurkirat Sangha
Welfare Officer x 1 – Harjaap Singh

SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Membership price = £5
Members: 50
STUDENT SERVICES

ACADEMIC STUDIES

None

WORKSHOPS

None

ASSISTANCE

Nishaan cooperated with us to host a Langar program at Shepherd's Bush Gurdwara, followed by a kirtan darbar. In particular, they helped us with enlisting kirtanis.

Throughout the year, QM was able to attend and support events at other London unis, thanks to the Nishaan network. These include: SOAS, Imperial and UCL kirtan darbars, KCL langar on campus.

ACTIVITIES

SPORT

None

ARTS

None

WELL-BEING

Our welfare and well – being officer, Harjaap Singh was elected for this responsibility. Thankfully, there were no concerns raised by any of the members.

SOCIAL LIFE

FRESHERS WEEK

At the Freshers Fair, we welcomed new students, signing them up for our WhatsApp group and promoting our society's events for the year. Positioned alongside other faith-based societies, we shared information about our Sikh Society's mission and activities. Freshers packs, provided by the Sikh Education Council, Naujawani, Sikhsoc.com, and BOSS, added a warm and welcoming touch for newcomers.

Our first event of the year was a Meet and Greet, featuring engaging and competitive games that encouraged everyone to jump in and get involved. With pizza and juice afterwards, it was a great opportunity for new and returning members to connect, have fun, and learn more about our society's mission and plans for the year.

CELEBRATIONS

Langar and Kirtan Darbar held in collaboration with Nishaan at Shepherd's Bush Gurdwara, in celebration of Vaisakhi

EXCURSIONS

Organized trips to local gurdwara Singh Sabha Seven Kings allowed students to engage in Seva, Sangat, and Langar, fostering a deeper understanding of Sikh practices

Visit to V&A Museum with students, exploring the recent Sikh history of Maharaja Ranjit Singhs' rule.

CAMPAIGNS & EVENTS

MAJOR EVENT

None

ACTIVISM

None

COMMUNICATING WITH STUDENTS

MODES

A WhatsApp group chat (which must be recreated yearly, as to comply with safeguarding measures) and an Instagram page (@QMULSikhSoc, which has been the society's permanent social media page) were used as to communicate with students ensuring members were kept informed about upcoming events, changes, and collaborations. This approach allowed for quick and effective engagement, encouraging higher participation.

The committee, especially the welfare officer, should also ensure they are contactable as to further tend to query from members. Future committees may wish to expand into more social media platforms, namely 'TikTok', as to advertise the Sikh society further.

The society utilised sign-up links to manage attendance and prepare resources, ensuring organized and well-planned events.

PARTNERSHIPS

WITHIN QMUL

Although we didn't directly collab with other societies this year, good relations were maintained with related societies, namely Bhangra and Punjabi societies. One of our committee members was also president of Bhangra society, so we were able to accrue greater engagement with our events.

NATIONAL BODY

BOSS provided support with handouts and resources during freshers' fair Nishaan, as mentioned above, helped with organising events such as kirtan darbars.

EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Invited Basics of Sikhi speaker Mandeep Singh to deliver a talk on Sikh Raj, which was well received by attendees.

Jasmeet Singh, from Khalsa Panth UK, also delivered a talk on 'The Foundations of Sikhi'.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

SUMMARY

Queen Mary Sikh Society qualified for £800 of funding from the SU due to reaching the 50 member threshold. This was used to reimburse the committee of necessary purchases once the academic year had finished, furthermore, social events were self-sustaining with ticketing paying the costs required to run the event.

Income: £800 Expenditure:

- Bowling - £250 (self financed through ticket sales)

- Lazertag - £395 (self financed through ticket sales)
- Food - £200 (reimbursed by the SU)

Total expenditure: £845

ACCOUNTS

See above

THE FUTURE

The committee must keep a tight control on finances as to secure the sustainability of the society, there are certain measures that future committees are encouraged to take as to secure this:

. Monitor emails frequently from the SU, there are multiple deadlines per semester which must be attended to; if they are not met, the society will be disqualified from requesting funding until the next available opportunity – which could be months. Ensure the treasurer is supported in this, and all are able to collaborate on a plan for the year so that SU funding requests are manageable ahead of time.

. For events which require a down payment from the committee (bowling, Lazer tag, etc.), ensure they are promoted ahead of time, with a deadline on ticket sales, so that you may receive the necessary funds from these purchases first before placing a large payment when booking the event. This ensures the event is self-sustaining, and keeps the finances manageable, the SU may not often be generous when it comes to funding such events, so a self-sustaining model is necessary.

. For speaker events, ensure to fill out all necessary forms at least two weeks in advance before hosting, and gauge clearly whether a speaker will require a fee or not. If they are traveling from far especially, it is courteous to offer assistance in the travel expenses.

Future committees should hope to acquire sponsors also and engage with organisations that provide ample opportunity to students and societies. The SEC is generous in this regard, and future committees are encouraged to engage with such organisations.