


A guide to organising your bespoke reunion





Alumni take a step back in time and celebrate 125 years of Electronic Engineering at Queen Mary

Any section of this publication is available in large print upon request. If you require this publication in a different accessible format we will endeavour to provide this where possible. For further information and assistance, please contact: hr-equality@qmul.ac.uk; Tel: +44 (0)20 7882 5585.

The information given in this guide is correct at the time of going to press. We reserve the right to modify or cancel any statement in it and accept no responsibility for the consequences of any such changes. For the most up-to-date information, please refer to the website www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni/events/bespokereunion



Contents

Five steps to your bespoke reunion	5
Step 1	6
Step 2	9
Step 3	10
Step 4	10
Step 5	10
Useful contacts	12
Term dates	14
Checklist	15

RUSSELL
INTERNATIONAL
EXCELLENCE
GROUP

Maths graduates enjoy their 50th anniversary reunion outside the Mathematics Building at Mile End



Five steps to your bespoke reunion

Reunions are a great way to gather all your friends together, to catch up and reminisce about your days at university. We know that organising such an event can take a lot of time and effort, so we have put together this guide to make things a little easier for you.

We appreciate that all reunions are unique and can take many different forms. Whether a casual lunch, a formal dinner or a whole weekend of activities, we hope our guide will provide some useful information on how to get the ball rolling. Although we do not have the capacity to organise your reunion fully, we will be more than happy to assist you with the logistics. We can recommend venues, send out invitations on your behalf, process bookings through our Alumni Portal and provide you with any additional information or advice that you may need.

We look forward to working with you on your event and we hope it will be a memorable and enjoyable occasion.

Five steps to your bespoke reunion

Step 1. Planning ahead

(12-18 months before)

Get organised

Put together a small active team of your fellow graduates to help you with the planning and to share the workload. Draw up an action timetable with deadlines and agree who is doing what. If you are in touch with some of your friends from university, please encourage them to update their contact details with us via our online Alumni Portal at www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni/portal. Here you can set your communication preferences, search for your classmates and send each other messages (provided they are registered users), book on to events and make a gift.

Decide on your audience

Do you want to invite everyone from your year? Do you want to extend the invitation to the year above and below? Don't forget that those who started university with you but who did not graduate at the same time for whatever reason, are equally keen to attend reunions! Do you want to invite spouses and partners too, or will the event be for alumni only?


Find your friends

Although we hold records of alumni from across the years, our lists are not always comprehensive and there may be some missing links. We can look at our database

to see whom we have recorded from your year group and who is contactable, and we can provide you with a list of names. You may need to track down some of your contemporaries if we do not have their details, this can be time-consuming, even though many people now have an 'electronic' presence. Please factor in time to build your invite list and encourage people to spread the word amongst their contacts and to update their details with us. Unfortunately we do not have the capacity to search for missing individuals; instead, we recommend that your working group makes creative use of search engines such as Google, and social media platforms, such as LinkedIn or Facebook, or that you look at publically available records such as the Medical Directory, to try and locate your contemporaries. Please note that we cannot give out personal information without prior consent, in line with the Data Protection Act currently in place.

Decide on the format of the event

Would you prefer to hold a black-tie formal dinner, a buffet, a casual lunch with a campus tour, or just drinks in a bar? Or would you be prepared to organise a two-day programme with various activities? We can recommend some activities in the local area, but you will need to make the arrangements/bookings yourselves. If you would like to see how the university



Electronic Engineering alumni enjoy a meal in the Octagon amongst old friends

Five steps to your bespoke reunion

has changed since you were last here, we can organise a campus tour for your year group, led by a current Student Ambassador. The format of your event will have a significant impact on the efforts and costs involved.

Decide on the date

Is there a significant, meaningful date that you have in mind already? Is it the 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, 25th, 30th, 35th, 40th, 50th anniversary since you graduated or qualified? Anniversary years often provide an incentive to attend or organise a reunion. In order to pick a suitable date, you may wish to consider avoiding bank and school holidays, or the summer months, to ensure maximum commitment. Whatever date you decide upon, please bear in mind that people may need plenty of notice, especially if they will be travelling from overseas. We ideally recommend a lead time of 12-18 months. We also recommended that you check with the Alumni Relations team to ensure that there are no other reunions being planned for your year group.

Decide on the budget

You will need to bear in mind any venue hire charges, the cost of food and drinks, plus any additional charges for entertainment, AV, accommodation and the cost of publicity materials (if required). Have you accounted for VAT charges in

your budget? We suggest you work out a minimum number of participants, which will give you a break-even point and set the fee a little higher to provide contingency. Decide on a deadline for bookings and on the refunds policy. Consider what payment options you are going to offer. Do you want people to pay in advance, by cash/card, or on the day? This may be determined by your venue and the format of your event. Decide what will happen to any surplus – you may wish to use it as class gift (see page 11).

Decide on the venue

Do you want to hold your event on campus or further afield? Queen Mary has a variety of venues suitable for alumni reunions and events which our Hospitality team provides catering for. Please check the Events and Hospitality website at www.qmhospitality.co.uk/venues for detailed information about the venues available. We can make or facilitate bookings of a university venue on your behalf, in which case venue hire costs are usually waived. Remember that during term-time, there may be limited availability. Many people tend to hold their reunions at the weekend which generally offers more flexibility. We are happy to discuss the options with you and give you information about our venues, catering and the other costs involved (e.g. portering, cleaning and AV). On-campus catering can be exclusive to your group over the weekend

and in the evenings but a minimum number of attendees is usually required. On weekdays we can usually provide space for small groups at lunchtime in one of our catering outlets, however this may not suit your plans. Alumni get 10% discount off university accommodation, but please bear in mind that if residential accommodation is required, it will have to be outside of term time. Campus or departmental tours can also be difficult to arrange during examination periods (semester 3), so do consider our term dates. Should you wish to use an external venue for your event, you will need to book and liaise with the venue directly.

Step 2. Inviting people to your event (6-12 months before)

‘Save the date’

We recommend that you get the date in people’s diaries as early as possible. This can be via the initial email/letter to your contemporaries which we can send out on your behalf, encouraging them to pass the message on to others with whom they are in touch and asking them to update their contact details with us via the Alumni Portal.

Publicising your event

We can include a note about your event in our regular Alumni e-Newsletter, or in our annual magazine (published in the Spring),

if it’s planned well in advance. We can also advertise the event on our social media sites (Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn) and list it on our events page on our website.

Sending out formal invitations

As mentioned in Step 1, please note that under the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, we are not permitted to give out contact details; we can, however, send out the invitations on your behalf, by email, letter, or via social media. We can monitor responses and any dietary requirements, and keep you up-to-date with the attendee list. Guests can also RSVP to you directly once we have put you in touch with each other. Your contemporaries should be encouraged to provide their email address and to join the Alumni Portal, to ensure they are kept up-to-date with current and future reunion plans. Their information will be stored securely on our central alumni database.

Taking bookings

We can set up an online booking page for you within our Alumni Portal. Attendees will need to register on the Portal in order to book their place. Alternatively, they can call our office and make bookings by credit or debit card over the phone, or they can send us a cheque by post.

Five steps to your bespoke reunion

Contacting your department/School

We can contact your former department/School on your behalf, and can invite present or former staff to get involved with your event.

Sending out reminders

Please bear in mind that not everyone will book straight away, so you may need to prompt your invitees to book (several reminders may be necessary) in the run up to your event.

Step 3. Event preparation

(3-6 months before)

Our Hospitality team will work with you to put together your menu and event format. You will need to communicate final numbers to them 1-2 weeks prior to the event, to ensure that any increases or decreases to your initial numbers have been noted.

You may also want to put together a seating plan in advance and order any publicity materials, posters or signage as required.

Step 4. The event

Arrive at the venue early to check the set up is as you require and to display any publicity materials, posters or signage. Introduce yourself to the event manager and go through the running order of the event.

Be ready to welcome guests as they arrive and encourage them to sign the visitors book. Take lots of photographs and enjoy yourselves.

Step 5. Post event

Send us your final list of attendees

We expect you to send us a final list of attendees so that we can ensure that this information is recorded on our alumni database. Knowing who attended which events and when will help us when planning future alumni events or reunions.

Write an event review

We would appreciate if you could provide us with a short review of your event and some photographs for inclusion in our Alumni e-Newsletter, on our website and/or on our social media pages. Sharing your stories and photos could also help track down those who missed the event and encourage those who could not attend to try and make it next time.

Send out a thank you letter and feedback form

We can send out a thank you letter or email on your behalf. We can include a link to your review and to the page where your photographs are posted. Via feedback, we can find out what people thought of the event, how it can be improved and if they are interested in making it a regular occasion.

Class gift

By making a class gift, you will join over a thousand people like you who have chosen to support the University. You can give back to the place that brought you all together and make a difference to the lives of our students. The most effective way to give back is via the Annual Fund

which widens opportunities for students at Queen Mary and Barts and The London through financial support, employability and community projects. Combining your gift with others makes a powerful impact. For example, just four alumni giving £17 per month (with gift aid) could provide a scholarship for a talented student each year. To find out more, please visit www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni/supportingqm

Keeping in touch

Collect and share contact details from attendees so that we can update our records, or encourage your friends to do so themselves via the Alumni Portal. This will help you or a future organiser with arrangements if you intend to hold another reunion in 5 or more years' time.

Useful contacts

Alumni Relations Team

Development and Alumni Directorate
Queen Mary University of London
Mile End Road, London E1 4NS
email: alumni@qmul.ac.uk
Tel: +44 (0)20 7882 6468
www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni

Events and Hospitality Team

Queen Mary University of London
Mile End Road, London E1 4NS
email: enquiries@qmhospitality.co.uk
Tel: +44 (0)20 7882 8174
www.qmhospitality.co.uk

How to find us

Queen Mary has five campuses in London, with our main campus located at Mile End, in east London.

- **Mile End:** Queen Mary University of London, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS
- **Whitechapel:** Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Garrod Building, Turner Street, Whitechapel, London E1 2AD
- **Charterhouse Square:** Barts and The London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Charterhouse Square, London EC1M 6BQ
- **West Smithfield:** St Bartholomew's Hospital, Barts and The London NHS Trust, West Smithfield, London EC1A 7BE

- **Lincoln's Inn Fields:** Queen Mary University of London, 67-69 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3JB

Useful links

- Alumni Portal: www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni/portal
- Alumni events listing (including bespoke reunions): www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni/events
- Previous event reviews: www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni/events/previousevents
- Campus map (Mile End): www.qmul.ac.uk/docs/about/26065.pdf
- Supporting Queen Mary: www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni/supportingqm
- Queen Mary venues: www.qmhospitality.co.uk/venues
- Great Hall, The People's Palace (Mile End): www.qmgreathall.co.uk
- Great Hall, St Bartholomew's Hospital (West Smithfield): www.bartsgreathall.com
- Catering outlets on campus: www.catering.qmul.ac.uk
- Accommodation on campus: www.qmhospitality.co.uk/about/accommodation
- QMUL's Data Protection policy: www.arcs.qmul.ac.uk/information_governance/dp/data_protection.html

Alumni gather in the recently refurbished People's Palace. Though modernized, it maintains its original art-deco grandeur.



Term dates

	Semester 1	Semester 2	Semester 3	Graduation week
2014-15	15 Sept – 12 Dec 2014	12 Jan – 2 April 2015	20 Apr – 5 June 2015	mid-July 2015
2015-16	21 Sept – 18 Dec 2015	11 Jan – 1 April 2016	25 Apr – 10 June 2016	mid-July 2016
2016-17	19 Sept – 16 Dec 2016	9 Jan – 31 March 2017	24 Apr – 9 June 2017	mid-July 2017
2017-18	18 Sept – 15 Dec 2017	8 Jan – 29 March 2018	23 Apr – 8 June 2018	mid-July 2018
2018-19	17 Sept – 14 Dec 2018	7 Jan – 29 March 2019	23 Apr – 7 June 2019	mid-July 2019
2019-20	16 Sept – 13 Dec 2019	6 Jan – 27 March 2020	27 Apr – 12 June 2020	mid-July 2020
2020-21	14 Sept – 11 Dec 2020	11 Jan – 1 April 2021	26 Apr – 11 June 2021	mid-July 2021

Checklist

Step 1.	Plan ahead	12-18 months before
	Put together a working team	
	Draw up an action timetable	
	Decide on your audience	
	Find your friends	
	Decide on the format of the event	
	Decide on the date	
	Decide on the budget	
	Decide on the venue	
Step 2.	Invite people	6-12 months before
	Send 'save the date' emails/letters	
	Publicise your event	
	Send out the formal invitations	
	Take bookings	
	Contact your department/School	
	Send out reminders	
Step 3.	Event preparation	3-6 months before
	Draw up seating plan	
	Communicate final numbers to venue	
Step 4.	On the day	
	Check venue set up	
	Write in the visitor book	
	Take photographs	
	Enjoy yourselves	
Step 5.	Post event	
	Send us your final list of attendees	
	Write an event review	
	Send thank you messages and feedback form	
	Make a class gift	
	Keep in touch	



Barts and The London
School of Medicine and Dentistry



Queen Mary
University of London

For further information contact: Development and Alumni Directorate
Queen Mary University of London
Mile End Road, London E1 4NS
Tel: +44 (0)20 7882 6468
email: alumni@qmul.ac.uk
www.qmul.ac.uk/alumni