Imperial College London

Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
Confirmed Minutes from the meeting held on
Thursday 20 December 2018

Present
Professor Simone Buitendijk – Vice Provost (Education) – Chair
Mr David Ashton – Academic Registrar
Ms Emma Caseley – Head of Strategic Projects, Education Office
Professor Martyn Kingsbury – Director of Educational Development
Mr Martin Lupton – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Medicine
Professor Omar Matar – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering
Professor Emma McCoy – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Natural Sciences
Dr Edgar Meyer – Business School representative
Professor Alan Spivey – Assistant Provost (Learning & Teaching)
Ms Lucy Heming – Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance and Enhancement) - Secretary

In attendance
Mr Mike Streule – Director of Imperial Student Shapers (for item 3.1)
Ms Hailey Smith – Project Manager (Learning and Teaching Strategy), Education Office

Apologies
Dr Malcolm Edwards – Director of Strategic Planning
Professor Sue Gibson – Director of the Graduate School
Mr Alejandro Luy – ICU Deputy President (Education)
Ms Judith Webster – Head of Academic Services

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees and apologies, as listed above, were noted.

2. Minutes   LTC.2018.24

2.1 The Committee confirmed the minutes from the meeting held on Thursday 29 November 2018.

2.2 Minute 3.1.5 refers: the proposal to undertake risk work on Education will be followed up in the Spring

2.3 Minute 6.5 refers: Work on the next iteration of the academic calendar and future communications on this are ongoing. There are some College principles that need to be developed to underpin the calendar and these are being taken forward with the relevant parties.

2.4 Minute 13.1 refers: SIMP Boards (Student Information Management Project) have been moved where they would clash with Committee meetings.

2.5 There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

3.   StudentShapers   LTC.2018.25

3.1   The work on StudentShapers was driven by various factors including the Learning and Teaching Strategy, external research and literature reviews and the work of Imperial College Union (ICU) on the pre-existing academic representation network. The principles to ensure success include inclusivity, flexibility, authenticity and equity of partnership. The Scheme is focussed on projects around Learning and Teaching Scholarship and Research and Curriculum Development and Pedagogic Enhancement and Innovation.

3.2   A core aim was to support authentic student engagement; this meant that staff members looking to engage students might be directed towards other sources of funding or encouraged to use their own funds. In some instances, Student Shapers was taking ownership of educational research which otherwise would have been pursued under UROP (Undergraduate Research Opportunities Programme).

3.3   11 projects were funded during 2017/18, involving 36 students. For 2018/19 assessment panels had been formed and were working to formalised criteria to provide a robust framework for evaluating proposals and promoting authenticity of partnership. The Panels were currently approving projects for non-summer partnerships; 22 February was the deadline for submitting proposals for summer projects.

3.4   As StudentShapers further developed, it was anticipated that there could be alignment with other Learning and Teaching Strategy related activities, such as the design of learning spaces, development of I-Explore modules and development of a teaching assistant role for Education PhD students.

3.5   The Committee acknowledged the need to ensure people understood the remit of StudentShapers. As projects completed, they could be showcased through student symposia. Further efforts could be spent communicating at local levels about the type of work underway, for example, through presenting at Faculty Education Committees, Departmental meeting and the Heads of Departments lunches.
        ACTION: Chair to enquire about arranging a presentation on Student Shapers at a Heads of Departments meeting

4.   Learning and Teaching Strategy

4.1   Update on Curriculum Review   LTC.2018.26

4.1.1   The Committee noted the schedule for Curriculum Review provision in 2018/19, subject to one amendment; the suite of Finance programmes in the Business School would be going to the March Programmes Committee meeting.

4.1.2   The Committee noted the hard work by many contributors to the Curriculum Review process. The Committee recognised the particular contributions of Reference Panel Chairs, members from the Quality Assurance team and Educational Development Unit and the Education Office. The Committee

welcomed the fact a number of examples of good practice had been identified through the Curriculum Review process.

4.1.3 A number of curriculum review proposals would be going forward for consideration at the Faculty Education Committees in January (Engineering) and February (Natural Sciences). Two undergraduate curriculum review proposals had been approved by their Reference Panels and Faculty Education Committee and would be considered at Programmes Committee in January 2019.

4.1.4 Due to the confidence which could be placed on the work taking place at the Reference Panels, Programmes Committee would be able to stick to its planned approach of focussing on programme rather than module information.

4.1.5 Remaining issues to be resolved included implementation, engagement of the wider staffing team within programmes and updating externally facing programme information.

4.2   Plans for postgraduate taught Curriculum Review   LTC.2018.27

4.2.1 During Autumn 2017 discussions were held with all Faculties (and with each Department in Engineering and Natural Sciences) to plan the review and redesign of curricula and assessment across taught programmes. During those discussions, it became clear that most Departments wished to review postgraduate taught (PGT) curricula for 2021 entry, to align with the third year of their new UG curricula (to coincide with the offer of shared Level 7 modules as electives in MSci/MEng programmes). The main exceptions are CEP (Centre for Environmental Policy) and PGT Medicine, which are working to meet the March 2019 deadline and the Business School, which is taking a phased approach, starting in 2019.

4.2.2 A large number of modules are shared across UG and PGT programmes, and as a consequence transition to the new version of the module will need to be carefully co-ordinated. There may be a scenario in which Departments have to run modules in more than one version in parallel. There is the potential for slippage over time as some modules get updated before a programme itself is updated. As well as leading to inefficiencies, this could result in students not having sufficient credits to graduate where they are following programmes with a mix of old and new modules. To fully understand the potential impact, details would need to be collected at a programme and/or pathway level.
> **ACTION: Head of Strategic Projects (Education Office) to undertake audit of risks for PGT provision once UG Curriculum Review information is available**

4.2.3 The Committee acknowledged there were a range of potential issues regardless of when PGT Curriculum Review took place, i.e. undergoing review earlier could create a different set of problems. The College could take various steps to manage these risks, this could include having back up versions of modules available (e.g. recorded lectures with tutor support) and introducing open modules (e.g. project modules which could be offered in a range of sizes to plug any gaps).

4.2.4 The timing of Curriculum Review for PGT provision was influenced by other factors, including whether the Academic Model Project (AMP) had identified

issues with existing provision and whether PGT programmes were standalone or closely related to other provision (whether UG or PGT). Due to concerns raised about the accuracy of information on programmes going through Curriculum Review during the Admissions cycle, there could be a rationale for going through the process earlier even if the changes to the programme were not delivered until a later date. Furthermore, there were concerns about being able to keep up the level of motivation needed to maintain the Curriculum Review process over a number of years.

4.2.5   Given the different factors involved which could influence when Departments would be best placed to go through PGT Curriculum Review, Departments would be encouraged to identify whether they would prefer to go through the process in 2019/20 or 2020/21.
ACTION: Assistant Provost (Learning and Teaching) and Vice-Deans to liaise with Departments to identify year for PGT Curriculum Review

4.2.6   A 'lessons learned' exercise would be carried out to draw from the experience of running Curriculum Review in 2018/19 and to ensure the right model of support and assurance was in place in future years. While most Strategic Teaching Fellows were appointed on a four-year basis and therefore would be in place for PGT Curriculum Review, resourcing of other support (including Panel Chairs) would need to be considered. It was agreed discussion should be held with Departments to better understand how Curriculum Review had been resourced to date.
ACTION: Assistant Provost (Learning and Teaching) / Director of Educational Development to follow up with Departments

4.2.7   When the new single set of regulations were approved by Senate for 2019/20 implementation, it was not agreed whether these would apply to all or some PGT programmes from 2019/20 as well. Consultation was taking place with Faculties to understand their preferred approach and a recommendation would be referred to QAEC in January 2019. Whatever decision was reached, communications to students would need to be clear and consistent. The Quality Assurance Team would support Departments in articulating this and ensuring implementation was done smoothly.

4.3   Areas of work for the Regulations and Policy Review Group (RPRG)   LTC.2018.28

4.3.1   RPRG had been set up to do detailed work on the regulations ahead of putting forward changes or additions for approval at QAEC and Senate. Concerns had been raised about the membership of the Group; Faculties had been invited to recommend additional members to join the Group and identify additional parties within Faculties to be involved in consultations.

4.3.2   It was noted the process of Curriculum Review was raising a number of difficult questions which needed broader College discussion before an answer could be reached.

4.3.3   The Head of Strategic Projects (Education Office) agreed to circulate to the Chair of RPRG a list of live issues arising from Curriculum Review to cross-reference with the agenda for RPRG meetings.
ACTION: Head of Strategic Projects

4.4 **Outline of the work following Curriculum Review for 2019/20** LTC.2018.29
Implementation

4.4.1 Most of the issues raised in this paper had been covered in the previous discussion. In terms of space and time-tabling, it was clear that this was an ongoing issue and would require creative approaches and increased co-operation as there was a concern that there was not enough space to operationalise the proposals being approved via Curriculum Review. While there was some space-sharing in place across the College, this was not sufficient or transparent; this would need to change.

ITEMS TO NOTE

5. **Educational Research**

5.1 New research associates were in the process of being appointed; they would be working on cross-College themes such as student agency and belonging; student mental health; online provision). This research would be valuable in terms of the new way in which the College would report on the outcomes of the bursary scheme.

5.2 There was an increasing uptake in the recruitment of PhD students shared between the Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship and other academic departments. While this was a good model, clear ground rules needed to be set out prior to recruitment on the expectations and responsibilities of all parties.

5.3 Interviews for a new Assistant Professor post would take place in the New Year; five candidates had been shortlisted and the interview process would involve a number of formats to test a range of skills and approaches.

6. **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC)**

6.1 The Committee had recently considered the new QAA Quality Code Advice and guidance and College reports for 2017/18 on Undergraduate External Examiner reports, student exchange partnerships and Undergraduate appeals.

6.2 It was noted a new Sub-Group of QAEC was being set up to focus on Collaborative provision; it was queried whether this would also look at collaborative exchanges. At present the terms of reference did not cover this area of work and it need to be considered going forward as to whether it was best overseen via this Sub-Group or an alternative forum.

7. **Senate**

7.1 The minutes from Senate can be accessed at:
http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/senate/

8. **Any Other Business**

8.1 No other business was raised.

9.   Dates for Meetings

9.1   Thursday 24 January 2019, 15.00-17.00
Thursday 28 February 2019, 15.00-17.00
Thursday 28 March 2019, 15.00-17.00
Thursday 16 May 2019, 15.00-17.00
Thursday 20 June 2019, 15.00-17.00