1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed new members to the meeting: Professor Andrew Parry, College Consul for Natural Sciences (replacing Professor Robin Leatherbarrow); Professor Simon Taylor-Robinson, representative for the Department of Medicine (replacing Professor Steve Gentleman). Mr Calum MacLeod, Management Trainee in the Registry, was welcomed as an observer to the meeting.

The Committee also welcomed Professor Sue Gibson who had recently been appointed as Graduate School Director, succeeding Professor Andrew George. It was noted that Professor Gibson would be assuming the role of Committee Chair from the next meeting in January 2014.

2. Apologies for absence

Professor Marjo-Riitta Jarvelin (School of Public Health)
Dr Mick Jones (College Tutor)
Dr David McPhail (Graduate School Deputy Director & Deputy Chair)
Mr Andreas Thomik (GSU President)
Ms Nuha Yassin (Academic and Welfare Officer – Medicine)
3. Terms of Reference and Membership

3.1 The Committee received the updated terms and reference and membership of the Master’s Quality Committee [Medicine, Life Sciences and School of Professional Development] for the 2013-14 academic session.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/02

3.2 It was noted that the Strategic Education Committee had been disbanded in August 2013 and that the Master’s Quality Committee would now advise on quality assurance and enhancement policy and strategy relating to postgraduate education at Master’s level, whilst the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee would have that role in respect of postgraduate research education.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

4.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2013 were approved.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/01

5. Matters arising

5.1 Minute 4.7 – Periodic Review [Department of Surgery and Cancer]
Members were reminded that the periodic review assessors had considered the transferable skills programme to be lacking, in particular for MRes students, when compared to provision for PhD students. It was reported that the Graduate School Deputy Director [Professional Skills] had responded that the level of the Masterclasses suited a wide range of students based on feedback from Course Directors and students. It was, however, recognised that the level may not be correct for all students. In order to address this the Graduate School had started to implement a programme of courses more suited to MRes students which would be titled accordingly, though all Master’s students would be eligible to attend. Details of the courses had been made available on the website from the start of the Autumn Term. The Committee was satisfied that the action taken by the Graduate School had addressed the recommendation of the periodic review panel.

5.2 Minute 4.15 – Periodic Review [Department of Surgery and Cancer]
Members were reminded that, resulting from the periodic review the Committee had requested that the Graduate School investigate the possibility of extending free EndNote access to Master’s students. The Graduate School Director reported that the Team Leader [Education and Research Support] within the College library was investigating the possibility of extending EndNote access to Master’s students on behalf of the Graduate School. The matter would also be discussed at the next meeting of the Postgraduate Professional Development Committee. It was agreed that the Graduate School Director would report on progress at the next meeting.

ACTION: Graduate School Director

5.3 Minute 4.16 – Periodic Review [Department of Surgery and Cancer]
It was agreed at the 29 July 2013 meeting that the Department of Surgery and Cancer would be expected to report on progress with the review and restructuring of its taught provision 6 months after that meeting. This action would therefore be carried over to the January 2014 meeting.

ACTION: Department of Surgery and Cancer

5.4 Minute 6.2.3 – Course Closure (MSc in Surgical Sciences, part-time option)
At its previous meeting the Committee had agreed that the request to close the part-time option of the MSc in Surgical Sciences with effect from October 2013 could be approved by Chair’s Action, on the condition that the Department provide confirmation that the student holding an offer of a place and the one deferred student were both willing to accept a suitable
alternative option. The Department had subsequently received confirmation that the student holding an offer of a place was willing to transfer to the full-time option. The Department had attempted to contact the deferred student on a number of occasions to ascertain whether he wished to continue, and if so, whether he would be willing to transfer to the full-time option. As the student had not been officially withdrawn, or confirmed his willingness to transfer, the closure of the part-time option had not been formally approved by the Committee or Senate. It was agreed that the Secretary would work with the Department to finalise the closure of the part-time option as matter of urgency.

**ACTION: Secretary and Department of Surgery and Cancer**

Post-meeting note: confirmation was subsequently received from the Admissions Team in Registry that the deferred student had also agreed to transfer to the full-time option. As previously agreed, the Chair approved the closure on behalf of the Committee for onward submission to Senate. The closure was formally approved by Senate at its meeting of 11 December 2013. This action is therefore completed.

### 5.5 Minute 7.1 – External Examiner re-appointments

It was noted that the Secretary had contacted Departments to inform them of the Committee’s decision that the ten external examiners that had not submitted a report on the 2011-12 academic session would not be considered for re-appointment for 2013-14. Three examiners (Dr Thomas Micklem, Professor Joan Curzio and Professor Marco Novelli) subsequently submitted reports and the Chair agreed that they could therefore be considered for re-appointment in 2013-14. One examiner (Professor Ivan Gout) had not submitted a report on 2011-12 but had recently submitted a report on 2012-13. The 2013-14 session would be his final year if re-appointed. The remaining six external examiners were either replaced for the 2012-13 session or completed their four year term at the end of 2012-13 and would not therefore need to be considered for re-appointment in 2013-14.

### 5.6 Minute 8.2.1 – Application Statistics

It was noted that this action would be addressed when application statistics were next submitted to the Committee.

**ACTION: Secretary**

### 5.7 Minute 12.1.1 – Reporting of Minor Course Modifications

It was noted that this action was ongoing. Further discussion was required in the Quality Assurance team within Registry to establish the most appropriate method for obtaining details of minor course modifications and presenting this information to the Master's Quality Committees. It was agreed that it was important for the Committees to receive an annual report of minor modifications approved by Departments over the year. The Registry would provide an update on progress at the next meeting.

**ACTION: Registry [Quality Assurance]**

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

### 6. Course Modifications

#### 6.1 MRes in Biomedical Research [Microbial Pathogenesis] (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

6.1.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to change the name of the Microbial Pathogenesis pathway of the MRes in Biomedical Research, with effect from October 2014.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/03
6.1.2 The Committee noted that the MRes in Biomedical Research was a large programme with a number of different pathways. The Department proposed to change the name of the award from MRes Biomedical Research [Microbial Pathogenesis] to MRes Biomedical Research [Bacterial Pathogenesis and Infection]. The Committee further noted that the new title was intended to better reflect the focus of the Master’s course on bacterial pathogenesis and bacterial infection, and the training mission of the MRC Centre for Molecular Bacteriology and Infection where the students were based during the course, and that there were no proposed changes to the content of the programme.

6.1.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed change of award title of the MRes in Biomedical Research [Microbial Pathogenesis] be approved by the Senate with effect from October 2014.

6.2 MSc in Health Policy (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

6.2.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to change the designation of two modules, change the mode of delivery for one module and change the examination format in four modules, retrospectively with effect from October 2013.

6.2.2 The Committee noted that the Department wished to change the designation of the Innovation in Healthcare module from optional to core and that the Leadership in Healthcare module would change from core to optional [Change Request 1]. This was intended to recognise that the Innovation in Healthcare module was a unique selling point of the programme and should therefore be classified as a compulsory module. The second proposed change involved bringing the teaching of the Leadership in Healthcare module in-house, to be taught by Imperial academic and clinical staff [Change Request 2]. Teaching of the module was currently outsourced to UCL but the costs were considered to be prohibitive, particularly as student numbers increased. The Department also proposed to change the examination format of four modules, replacing examinations with coursework [Change Request 3]. This change was intended to bring the modules in line with the other six modules that were currently assessed via coursework. Coursework was considered by the Department to be more appropriate for graduates and students of the programme. The Committee further noted that current students had been consulted on the three change requests and almost unanimously supported the proposals. Only four of thirty nine students did not support the proposal to bring the teaching of the Leadership in Healthcare module in-house.

6.2.3 In relation to Change Request 2, the Committee was unclear who would be teaching the Leadership in Healthcare module once the teaching moved in-house. The proposal form suggested that it would be taught by Imperial College staff with the module lead identified as Dr Colin Bicknell. The Committee was, however, confused by the reference to Dr Wiley Souba and the ‘unique collaboration between Imperial College and Dartmouth, USA...’ and how it related to the teaching of the module. The Committee also considered the proposed module descriptor to be unclear, particularly the role of Dartmouth staff. The Committee was also interested to know how the collaborative relationship with UCL for the provision of teaching would be formally ended.

6.2.4 In relation to Change Request 3, the Committee expressed some concern about the use of coursework (essays) as the sole method of assessment. The Committee felt that the Department should give further consideration to introducing a variety of assessment methods including (but not limited to), Vive Voce examinations, presentations and examinations as part of the assessment scheme for the programme as a whole.
6.2.5 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed change to the designation of the Innovation in Healthcare and Leadership in Healthcare modules be approved by the Senate, retrospectively with effect from October 2013. The Committee agreed that the Department should provide further information to the January 2014 meeting in support of the other two change requests before recommending approval to Senate. The Committee made the following recommendations:

Change Request 2:
- Provide a more detailed explanation of the revised Leadership in Healthcare module, to include details of all of the staff that will be teaching the module. An updated draft timetable with the names of the Imperial College teaching staff leading each session was suggested by the Committee.
- Provide an explanation of the collaboration with Dartmouth and how it relates to the Leadership in Healthcare module and its teaching, particularly if any academic staff from Dartmouth will be involved in teaching or supporting the module.
- Provide further information to explain how the relationship with UCL was formally ended.

Change Request 3:
- Give further consideration to introducing a greater variety of assessment methods across the programme as a whole.

**ACTION: Course Director – MSc Health Policy**

6.3 MRes in Clinical Research [Diabetes and Obesity] (Department of Medicine)

6.3.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Medicine to introduce a new pathway [Diabetes and Obesity] within the MRes in Clinical Research programme, with effect from October 2014.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/05

6.3.1 The Committee noted that the proposed pathway in Diabetes and Obesity would provide students with a thorough grounding in cutting edge clinical research, with a strong focus on diabetes and obesity. The pathway would introduce students to modern investigative techniques including MRI and metabolomics. Students would obtain knowledge of research methodology used in clinical studies, and would gain an appreciation of the regulatory frameworks with which they were required to comply. The pathway would be added to the existing programme structure, with students taking the three core modules in common with the other pathway and one specialist module in diabetes and obesity. The new pathway would be equivalent to the existing pathways in terms of contact hours, project time, methods of assessment and ECTS assignment. The Committee further noted the Department’s request that the course title MRes in Diabetes and Obesity be awarded to students who follow this pathway.

6.3.2 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed new pathway and award title MRes in Diabetes and Obesity be approved by the Senate, with effect from October 2014.

7. Course Suspensions

7.1 Department of Life Sciences

7.1.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to extend the course suspensions of the MSc Conservation and Forest Protection, MSc Entomology, MRes Integrated Crop Pest and Disease Management, MRes Entomology and MSc Integrated Pest Management for a further academic year, 2014-15. The Committee noted that the programmes had been suspended since entry October 2012.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/06
7.1.2 The Committee agreed to recommend that the Senate approve the suspension of the listed programmes for a further academic year, 2014-15. This would be the final year that the courses could be suspended, after which they must be permanently withdrawn or reinstated.

7.2 Department of Medicine

7.2.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Medicine to extend the course suspensions of the MRes Experimental Physiology and Drug Discovery and PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc Infection Management for Pharmacists for a further academic year, 2014-15. The Committee noted that the MRes in Experimental Physiology and Drug Discovery had been suspended since entry October 2012 and that the PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc Infection Management for Pharmacists had been suspended since entry October 2013.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/07

7.2.2 The Committee agreed to recommend that the Senate approve the suspensions of the listed programmes for a further academic year, 2014-15. This would be the final year that the MRes in Experimental Physiology and Drug Discovery could be suspended, after which it must be permanently withdrawn or reinstated.

7.2.3 The Committee considered a further proposal from the Department of Medicine to re-open the currently suspended PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc Infection for entry in October 2014.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/07

7.2.4 The Committee noted that the PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc Infection had been suspended since entry October 2013. It was further noted that the course committee members from the MSc in Infection and the MSc in Infection Management for Pharmacists (IMP) had worked together to discuss the future of the two programmes and had agreed that the preferred solution was to merge the content of the two programmes and re-launch as the MSc in Infection in October 2014. A course modification would be submitted to the Committee for approval in due course.

7.2.5 The Committee agreed to recommend that the Senate approve the request to re-open the currently suspended PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc Infection programme for entry in October 2014.

8. New course progress reports [new in October 2012]

The Committee had received verbal reports on courses new in October 2012 at the July 2013 meeting. Following the completion of the first cohort, the Committee now received entry and exit qualification data in respect of these courses.

8.1 MSc Applied Biosciences and Biotechnology [new in October 2012]

8.1.1 The Committee received a data report showing the entry and exit qualification data in respect of the 2012-13 intake.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/08

8.1.2 The Department of Life Sciences representative reported that four students had been admitted to the course in its first year, all of whom had entered with either a 1st or 2:1. Student performance had been strong with two of the students exiting with a Distinction and two with a Merit. 24 students had been admitted to the second intake of the course in 2013-14, 15 overseas and 9 home students. All of the students had entered with either a 1st or 2:1. The Committee was satisfied with this report.

8.2 MRes Biodiversity Informatics and Genomics [new in October 2012]

8.2.1 The Committee received a data report showing the entry and exit qualification data in respect of the 2012-13 intake.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/09
8.2.2  The Department of Life Sciences representative reported that five students had been admitted to the course in its first year, four of whom had entered with a 1st and the other student with a 2:1. Student performance had been extremely strong with all five students exiting with a Distinction. Recruitment had improved for the 2013-14 intake with 9 students admitted, which was close to the desired target of 10-12 students. The Committee was satisfied with this report.

9.  Follow up from Course Reviews [2011-12 cohort]

9.1  MSc Medical Ultrasound and MSc Medical Ultrasound [Echocardiography]

9.1.1  It was noted that the course review had been considered at the June 2013 meeting at which the Committee agreed that some follow-up action was required. The Committee had noted the reviewer’s concerns that there was no student representation on the NHLI PGT Committee, despite students having been invited to attend. The Committee suggested that the Department should additionally consider using videoconferencing or Skype to encourage students to participate and requested an update on progress made on this issue in Autumn 2013.

9.1.2  The NHLI representative reported that the Institute had been contacting students using Doodle as a mechanism to improve the scheduling of meetings and improve student participation. The PGT Committee meetings would also be rotated across the three sites to provide all students with greater opportunities to attend meetings. Videoconferencing was also available at one of the sites and could be used when required. It was further reported that student representatives had attended meetings during the 2012-13 academic year. The Committee was satisfied that the Department had made satisfactory progress in addressing the issue identified in the course review.

9.2  MRes Biosystematics and MSc Taxonomy and Biodiversity

9.2.1  It was noted that the course reviews had been considered at the March 2013 meeting at which the Committee agreed that some follow-up action was required. When considering the course reviews the Committee had stressed that the completion of the collaborative degree programme agreement between Imperial and the Natural History Museum (NHM) should be accelerated and that a Joint Management Committee must be in place and active before the start of the 2013 academic session.

9.2.2  The Department of Life Sciences representative reported that a Joint Management Committee had been set up and had held its first meeting on 7 August 2013. At present the Committee had a limited membership, including the Director of Postgraduate Studies from the Department of Life Sciences, the Dean of Postgraduate Students at NHM and the Course Director. It had been agreed, however, that the membership of the Committee should be expanded. It was further reported that the collaborative agreement had been finalised by the Department and NHM and was currently with the Director of Science at NHM for approval, after which it would require approval from the respective legal teams of the two institutions. It had been drawn up as an interim agreement for two years as NHM had instituted a review of the programmes. Recruitment to the programmes had decreased recently and consequently the NHM wished to complete its review before signing the standard 5 year collaborative agreement. This was likely to be completed in the near future. The Committee was satisfied that the Department had made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues identified.

10.  Good Practice Highlighted by Periodic Reviews

10.1  The Committee received and noted a report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Senate and Academic Review) on good practice highlighted by periodic review panels in reviews which were reported to Senate during the 2012-13 academic session.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/10
11. **Appointment of External Examiners for 2013-14**

11.1 The Committee received the nominations to be considered for the Boards of Examiners in the 2013-14 session.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/11 and 11(i)

11.2 The Committee approved the nominations for Board Chairman as presented in papers 11 and 11(i). It was noted that the Board Chair for MSc in Applied Biosciences and Biotechnology was incorrectly listed as Professor Anne Dell and should be amended to Dr Niki Gounaris.

**ACTION:** Registry

11.3 The Committee approved the appointment of all the continuing external examiners as presented in papers 11 and 11(i) [see appendix 1] and was satisfied that all continuing external examiners thus approved had submitted a report in respect of the 2011-12 examination [see also minute 5.5 above].

11.4 The Committee considered the appointments of Mr Paul Wade and Dr Fiona Cooke as new external examiners for the PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc Infection Management for Pharmacists programme. It was noted that Mr Wade had no prior experience as an external examiner and Dr Cooke had current, but recent, experience of external examining. The Department explained that both examiners would be provided with training and given details of the expectations of external examiners at the College. In addition, the Department would be asking the previous external examiner, Professor Jonathan Cooke, to act as a mentor to Mr Wade. The Committee was satisfied by the arrangements proposed by the Department to support the two new external examiners and therefore agreed to approve their appointment.

Post meeting note: Professor Cooke was subsequently reappointed exceptionally for a fifth year to act in this capacity.

11.5 The Committee noted that the nominees Dr Robert Wilson for MSc in Conservation Science, Professor Daniel Pennington for MSc in Immunology and Professor John Monaghan for MSc in Medical Ultrasound did not have prior experience as external examiners for taught postgraduate programmes. The Committee did, however, note that all three nominees would be working alongside at least two experienced external examiners and was therefore content to approve the appointments on that basis.

11.6 The Committee noted that the nominee Professor Mark Jobling for MSc Human Molecular Genetics was from the Department of Genetics at the University of Leicester, whilst the existing examiner appointed to that programme Dr David Lodwick was from the Department of Cardiovascular Sciences at the same institution. The Committee did not consider there to be any risk associated with the appointment of Professor Jobling and was therefore content to approve the appointment.

11.7 The Committee approved the appointment of all remaining new external examiners as presented in papers 11 and 11(i) [see appendix 1]. The Committee was satisfied that all new external examiners thus approved had sufficient postgraduate teaching experience and sufficient external examining experience. Where an external examiner did not have sufficient external examining experience the Committee was satisfied that the Department had made appropriate arrangements for them to be supported by an experienced external examiner.

12. **Conduct of Examination Boards for Masters Level Courses**

12.1 The Committee considered a paper concerning the conduct of examination boards for Master’s level courses.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/12
12.1.1 The Committee’s discussion focused on the matter of anonymity of candidates in postgraduate (Master’s level) examination boards. Committee members supported the proposals outlined in the paper to introduce anonymity wherever possible, with Departments permitted to opt out where there was an appropriate case for doing so. It was noted that anonymity of candidates was already standard practice in some Departments. It was however noted that anonymity was more difficult to achieve in certain types of assessment, such as viva voce examinations.

13. Reports from Departmental Representatives

13.1 The Committee received verbal reports from Departmental Representatives not otherwise appearing on the agenda.

13.2 School of Professional Development

13.2.1 It was reported that the Provost Board had agreed that fees would not be charged for the PG Cert in University Learning and Teaching with effect from the 2014-15 academic year. It was further reported that the College would be required to return data to HESA on the number of qualified teachers across the institution.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND/OR DISSEMINATION

14. College entry requirements for Indian students

14.1 The Committee received and noted a proposal to review the entry requirements for Indian students applying for Master's Courses.

14.2 The Committee noted that a working party had been set up by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Admissions) to address the recommendations made in the paper and that it had met for the first time recently. There would be sufficient time to amend the entry requirements for 2014-15 entry if considered appropriate to do so. Committee members were invited to send any comments on the recommendations directly to the Senior Assistant Registrar (Admissions).

15. Action taken on behalf of the Committee

15.1 The Committee noted action taken by the Chair to approve three late external examiner reports on the 2011-12 session [see minute 5.5 above for details].


16.1 The Committee noted that the MSc in Quantitative Biology in the Department of Life Sciences and the PG Cert/PG Dip/MSc in Preventive Cardiology in the NHLI were due for review during the 2013-14 academic year, focusing on the 2012-13 cohort.

17. Postgraduate Surveys

17.1 The Committee received and noted a paper detailing the postgraduate surveys planned for 2013-14. It was further noted that the response framework for national surveys such as the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) would, in future, follow the same format as for the National Student Survey for consistency.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/13

MLSPD/MQC/2013/14
18. **QAA – UK Quality Code for Higher Education**

18.1 **Good practice case studies**
The Committee noted that, in addition to the examples of good practice identified in the QAA review reports, the QAA have published several case studies supplied by higher education providers. The QAA hope that these will stimulate discussion among practitioners and students in higher education, and promote enhancement of the learning experience. 
www.qaa.ac.uk/ImprovingHigherEducation/GoodPractice/Pages/Good-Practice-Case-Studies-.aspx

18.2 **Higher Education Review themes announced**
The Committee noted that in preparation for the launch of its new review method, Higher Education Review, QAA has published further information and guidance about the thematic elements for 2013-15. The themes for 2013-15 are Student Involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement, and Student Employability. For more information see 
www.qaa.ac.uk/InstitutionReports/types-of-review/higher-education-review/Pages/default.aspx

19. **Reports from key College Committees**

19.1 **Senate**: Members were reminded that the latest Executive Summaries from the Senate were available here.

19.1.1 The Chair reported that it had been agreed that the Senate would, from its next meeting, include key academic debates. The potential use of a Grade Point Average system would be included for debate at the next meeting of Senate in December 2013. The Chair agreed to circulate the Russell Group and ICU papers on GPA to members for information.

**ACTION: Secretary**

19.2 **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee**: Members were reminded that the latest Executive Summaries from the QAEC were available here.

20. **Any Other Business**

20.1 No other items of business were noted.

21. **Dates of meetings in 2013 - 2014**

Dates of meetings in 2013 – 2014 were noted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Deadline for submission of papers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday 28th January 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday 14th January 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 18th March 2014</td>
<td>Tuesday 4th March 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday 3rd June 2014</td>
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<td>Tuesday 15th July 2014</td>
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All meetings will take place in the **Ballroom at 58 Prince’s Gate**, South Kensington Campus.
22. **Reserved Business** (not circulated to student members)

22.1 **Special Cases Panel 2013-14**

22.1.1 The Committee received the updated membership of the special cases panel for Master’s programmes for the 2013-14 session.

MLSPD/MQC/2013/15

22.1.2 It was agreed that Dr Niki Gounaris and Professor Andrew Parry should be added to the membership. Subject to the two additions the Committee was content to approve the membership for 2013-14.

22.2 **Special Cases Reports**

22.2.1 The Committee received reports on special cases considered by the special cases panel for Master’s Level students.

Special Cases for Admissions – MLSPD/MQC/2013/16