

SENATE

Minutes of Meeting held on 14 May 2014

Present: The Provost, Professor James Stirling (Chair); Professors Autio, Gardner, Gibson, Humphris, Magee, Matar, McGregor, Smith, Thompson, Welton, Wright; Associate Professor Miraldo; Drs Bradley, Buluwela, Fobelets, Gounaris, McCoy; Mr Andrew Tebbutt [from minute 1870] Mr Goldsmith, Ms Kempston (Student Representatives); with Mr Pateman (Academic Registrar), Ms Baker (Senior Assistant Registrar) and Mr Smith (Assistant Registrar).

Apologies: Professors Anandalingam, Cilliers, Gooderham, Kelleher, Riboli, Richardson; Drs Archer, McPhail.

In attendance: Mr Neilson [from minute 1870]

Salutation

The Chair welcomed Mr Andrew Tebbutt, Interim Director of Student Recruitment and Outreach, who had taken up his post on 1 May 2014. Mr Tebbutt joins the Senate as a member ex officio.

1854 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 26 February 2014 were confirmed.

1855 Matters Arising

Minute 1846: Dates of Terms

Noted: That, following discussion after the meeting, it had been agreed that the term dates for 2015-2016 would be:

- Autumn: Sat 3 October to Fri 18 December 2015
- Spring: Sat 9 January to Wed 23 March 2016
- Summer: Sat 23 April to Fri 24 June 2016

1856 Provost's Business

Received: A Report from the Provost (**Paper Senate/2013/59**).

(1) Director of the Energy Futures Lab

Reported: That Professor Tim Green, Professor of Electrical Power Engineering, had accepted appointment as Director of the Energy Futures Lab (EFL) with effect from 1 February 2014. Professor Green had succeeded Professor Nigel Brandon OBE FEng, who had led the EFL since its formation in 2005.

(2) Associate Provost (Academic Partnerships)

Reported: (i) That Professor Maggie Dallman had accepted appointment as Associate Provost (Academic Partnerships), reporting to the Provost.

(ii) That the process for selection of a successor to Professor Dallman as Dean of the Faculty of Natural Sciences was underway and that Professor Dallman would take up the part-time Associate Provost position when her successor takes up appointment as Dean.

(3) Dean of the Faculty of Engineering

Reported: That Professor Jeff Magee, FREng, had accepted an extension to his appointment as Dean of the Faculty of Engineering until 30 September 2017.

(4) Head of the Department of Aeronautics

Reported: That Professor Ferri Aliabadi had accepted an extension to his appointment as Head of the Department of Aeronautics until 31 August 2017.

(5) Head of the Department of Chemistry

Reported: (i) That Professor Alan Armstrong had accepted appointment as Head of the Department of Chemistry from 1 January 2015.

(ii) That Professor Armstrong would, with immediate effect, take responsibility for planning the future relocation of the Chemistry department before fully taking up the Headship in January 2015.

(iii) That Professor Tom Welton would retain overall and day to day leadership of the department until 31 December 2014.

(6) Grantham Institute – Climate Change and the Environment

Reported: (i) That Professor Joanna Haigh CBE FRS and Professor Martin Siegert had accepted appointment as Co-Directors of the renamed Grantham Institute - Climate Change and the Environment (formerly the Grantham Institute for Climate Change). The appointments were for five years, with effect from 1 May 2014, and were part-time positions, equivalent to 60% of full time employment.

(ii) That Professor Sir Brian Hoskins CBE FRS, formerly the Director of the Grantham Institute for Climate Change, had become Chair of the Grantham Institute - Climate Change and the Environment.

(7) Interim Director of Student Recruitment and Outreach

Reported: That Mr Andrew Tebbutt had accepted appointment as interim Director of Student Recruitment & Outreach from 1 May 2014.

(8) Order of the Garter

Reported: That Baroness Eliza Manningham-Buller had been appointed Lady Companion of the Most Noble Order of the Garter.

(9) Athena SWAN Awards

Reported: That Department of Materials and the School of Public Health had been successful in renewing their Silver SWAN awards, and that the Department of Computing had been successful in renewing their Bronze SWAN award.

1857 Vice Provost's Business

Received: A Report from the Vice Provost (Education) (**Paper Senate/2013/60**).

(1) Regulations for Students

Noted: That this item had been deferred for discussion at the June meeting of the Senate.

(2) National Student Survey 2014

Reported: (i) That the College's participation rate in the National Student Survey (NSS) 2014 was 83.6%, an increase of 2.9% on the previous year, as outlined in Appendix II of the Senate's paper.

(ii) That the HEFCE approved results from the NSS would be published in early August 2014 and that the College would then closely review the results.

(3) Education Day 2013

Reported: That Education Day had taken place on Thursday 27th March, and had been introduced by Professor Debra Humphris, Vice Provost (Education). The theme was 'Academic Transitions' designed to complement and extend discussions at the previous days' Student Welfare Seminar, which also looked at the important subject of transition to university.

(4) Education & Student Strategy

Reported: (i) That a Transitions working group had been set up, chaired by Professor Mary Morrell. The initial focus of their work would be to support the transition from school to university for new undergraduate students, spanning the period between acceptance of offer to exam preparation at the end of the first year.

(ii) That a Health & Wellbeing task group had been established to work over the summer. The role of the task group was to:

- Define and articulate a clear proposition for our students which sets out the level of support and the services provided by the College in all aspects of health and wellbeing
- Make recommendations about how health and wellbeing services for students should be provided. This will include services provided directly by the College, and those delivered on a contracted-out basis.

1858 Student Consultation Framework

Received: A Report from the Imperial College Union President (**Paper Senate/2013/61**).

Noted: (i) That the Student Consultation Framework had been developed by the Imperial College Union to act as a resource for departments, in order to provide a suggested approach for efficient and effective decision-making, with student consultation applied in a proportionate and relevant manner.

(ii) That the framework provided guidance on how best to communicate with students, particularly with regard to how their opinions were factored into the decision making process.

(iii) That the Union would provide support to individuals and departments in both the application of the framework and in the facilitation of the consultation process.

(iv) That the Union would train the network of student representatives in the use of the framework and would publicise good examples of how the process informs future effective student consultations.

Agreed: That the Union would distribute the framework document widely, including

sending copies to Heads of Department and to Directors of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Studies.

1859 **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC)**

Considered: A Report by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (**Paper Senate/2013/62**).

(1) English Language Entry Requirements for International Students

Reported: (i) That the QAEC had considered a proposal to introduce a new minimum English language entry requirement for undergraduate and postgraduate students at Imperial, with effect from entry in 2015-16.

(ii) That the proposal gave departments two options for their programmes: a minimum entry level of IELTS 6.5 [Minimum 6.0 in each element] and a higher entry level of IELTS 7.0 [Minimum 6.5 in each element].

(iii) That it was considered that most departments would set their English language entry requirement at the proposed new College minimum. In cases where a department believed a programme put greater linguistic demands on international students, they would have the option to set their requirement at the higher level.

Approved: On the recommendation of the Committee, new minimum English language entry requirement for undergraduate and postgraduate students at Imperial, with effect from entry in 2015-16, as outlined in section 1 of the Senate's paper.

Noted: That following the Home Office announcement that TOEFL is no longer accepted for the purpose of student visa applications under Tier 4, the College English Language Entry requirements would no longer make reference to TOEFL tests. However, TOEFL tests taken before April 2014 were still valid for Visa purposes, and tests would remain valid for 2 years. Thus it was possible that applicants may present with valid TOEFL tests for 2015 entry.

(2) Year Weighting – Faculty of Medicine

Reported: That the QAEC had supported a proposal from the Faculty of Medicine to harmonise their year weightings on the MBBS BSc and BMS BSc programmes. That the proposal would be considered by the Faculty Teaching Committee for Medicine and would come to Senate for approval in due course.

(3) Procedures for Checking the Quality of Teaching and Learning Materials for E-Learning/Blended Learning Programmes

Reported: That the QAEC had supported a proposal from the E-Learning Strategy Committee (ELSC) to commission help from external specialists to provide additional support in delivering online degree programmes. The ELSC and QAEC would be working together to formulate and enhance the College's policies and procedures covering e- and blended learning.

(4) Student Surveys

Reported: That the QAEC had considered the results of the UG and PG SOLE Autumn Term 2013 lecturer/module evaluations. The QAEC had also considered a report from the Students' Union on their Student Experience Survey (SES) which had also taken place during the autumn term.

(5) Competence Standards

Reported: That the QAEC had heard that the work on ensuring competence standards documents were in place across the College, and readily available to prospective students, was incomplete. It had been agreed that the Academic Registrar would work with the Disability Advisory Service to progress the matter further.

(6) QAA Consultation on Strengthening the Quality of Assurance of UK Transnational Education (TNE)

Reported: That following a period of consultation, the QAEC had submitted a response on behalf of Imperial to the QAA's consultation on TNE. The QAA will publish an overview of the planned process for the quality assurance of TNE by 31 May 2014. This will be followed by a prospective review programme commencing for 2014-5.

(7) Teaching Champions

Reported: That the QAEC had been advising on a proposal to introduce a network of teaching champions across the College. The role of the teaching champions would be to promote good practice and to act as advisors to the Educational Development Unit on education in their department/discipline. Whilst the QAEC had been supportive of the concept, it had been felt that more work was required to establish how the scheme could be sustained, formalised and ultimately add value. A more detailed proposal was expected in the summer.

1860 Review of Postgraduate Research Provision in the Department of Chemistry

Considered and Approved: A Report by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (**Paper Senate/2013/63**).

Reported: (1) That in its review of the Department of Chemistry the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee had been advised by five assessors who had visited the Department on 28 May 2013.

(2) That the reviewers had rated the Department of Chemistry "compliant" with each of the eleven precepts, and "compliant" overall.

(3) That the panel had been impressed with the research degree programme in the Department of Chemistry and had highlighted a number of examples of good practice. The panel considered the mentoring and student "buddying" schemes to be excellent. The academic and pastoral mentoring system was working very well with a very approachable Postgraduate Tutor and Director of Postgraduate Studies. The panel also highlighted the regular Friday discussion forum as an example of good practice. This initiative was highly praised by students who felt that it was a valuable opportunity to make connections and think beyond the sphere of their own research. The panel commended the Department on its feedback system, whereby the Head of Department acted upon student suggestions, which was praised by staff and students alike. The panel further commended the Department on its Athena SWAN initiative, which it considered particularly laudable.

(4) That the panel had observed that some students felt that some of the Graduate School courses were too generic to be applicable to students in Chemistry, particularly in terms of careers advice. The panel had therefore recommended that supervisors should assist students in choosing Graduate School courses that were appropriate in order to learn or confirm transferable skills. In response, the Department had reported that the Graduate School was working with them to make the transferable skills programme as useful as possible for students. Students were able to provide feedback to the Graduate School at the end of each course and it was reported that, generally, feedback received on individual courses had been very positive.

(5) That the panel had observed that some students had felt that they would like the opportunity to attend PhD discussion forums in other parts of the College or in other research groups within the Department, but did not know of any mechanism to find out when these were taking place. In response, the Department confirmed that it welcomed all students at departmental, sectional and cross-departmental research seminars. All were advertised to staff and students via regular e-mail and public notice boards. Additionally, the Graduate School website contained links to seminars in others parts of the College.
<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/graduateschool/events/researchseminars>

(6) That in relation to Precept 3 (induction programme) the panel had noted some concern that students who did not start in October had found “starter” information more difficult to access than those who started in October when a full induction fair took place. In response, the Department confirmed that it would ensure that the small number of students who started after October would receive the same level of induction as students commencing in October. This would be achieved through small group and individual induction meetings with the Director of Postgraduate Studies, the Postgraduate Tutor and the Postgraduate Administrator. From October 2013, all late starters had been required to attend a one-to-one induction meeting with the Postgraduate Tutor. This was explicitly stated in the student handbook which students were given upon arrival in the Department.

(7) That in relation to Precept 4 (postgraduate student handbook) the panel had noted that students would also like to receive a non-academic handbook with information on how to register for a GP, how to use the NHS, how to obtain a National Insurance number, etc. In response the Department had reported that much of the information was available via the International Office, the Graduate School and the Imperial College Union as well as other sources. The Department undertook to ensure that the availability of this information was highlighted in introductory presentations and the postgraduate handbook. The Department confirmed that the welcome pack now included information on Medical Services and National Insurance.

(8) That in relation to Precept 9 (Early Stage Assessment) the panel had observed that a significant percentage of students had not completed the Early Stage Assessment (ESA) within the 9 month deadline. The panel had also noted that some supervisors did not see the importance of on-time ESA completion, given that there were no penalties for late completion. The panel recommended that the Department should seek to improve its record on meeting the ESA deadline and impress upon supervisors the importance of completing the ESA in a timely manner. In response the Department committed to making every effort to improve on-time completion of the ESA as well as meeting other deadlines, and had reinforced the importance of adhering to these at a recent departmental staff meeting. The Department had further reported that whilst a significant percentage of students did not complete the ESA by 9 months, the vast majority of students had completed within the first 10 months. A significant factor affecting the timeliness of ESA completion was reported to be the heavy workload experienced by staff who were involved in undergraduate teaching and marking commitments at the same time as the ESA was due to be completed. The Department had taken further measures to alleviate this issue by introducing a more efficient ESA format. Initial results had been encouraging and the Department reported that the process would continue to be reviewed during the 2013-14 academic year.

(9) That the Committee had been pleased to note that the panel had considered the quality of research in the Department to be very high and that postgraduate students, in particular those registered for a PhD degree, were given every opportunity to carry out a significant piece of research that would prepare them well for a research career either in industry or academia. The Committee had congratulated the Department of Chemistry on its excellent review and noted that all points raised by the panel had been satisfactorily addressed by the Department in its responses.

Agreed: That the Senate was satisfied with the outcome of the review and approved the recommendation of the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee that the Department of

Chemistry should report to the Committee on developments since the periodic review as part of the next precept review in three years' time.

1861 Review of Postgraduate Research Provision in the Department of Mechanical Engineering

Considered and Approved: A Report by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (**Paper Senate/2013/64**).

Reported: (1) That in its review of the Department of Mechanical Engineering the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee had been advised by five assessors who had visited the Department on 5 July 2013.

(2) That the reviewers had rated the Department of Mechanical Engineering “compliant” with ten of the eleven precepts and working towards compliance in the other precept.

(3) That the periodic review had also incorporated a Collaborative Precept Review of the EngD in Non-Destructive Evaluation. The panel had observed that the EngD in Non-Destructive Evaluation followed the same academic assessment and progression procedures as the PhD programme, except that the first stage assessment was held at 12 months. The panel’s comments, observations and recommendations on the PhD programme therefore applied equally to the EngD programme.

(4) That the reviewers had rated the EngD in Non-Destructive Evaluation “compliant” with ten of the eleven precepts and working towards compliance in the other precept.

(5) That the panel had formed a very positive impression of the training that research students received within the Department of Mechanical Engineering. The panel had found the provision of postgraduate research training to be very good and were of the view that much of the programme was worthy of mention. The panel commended the Department on the quality of its research students, noting that students enjoyed the opportunities of working in world renowned and respected research groups and that they were proud to be members of the Department. The panel had also noted the Department’s positive response to previous reviews of its research degree training and complimented the Department on the significant improvement in its PhD completion rate since the previous review. The panel considered the awarding of College Awards for Excellence in Research Student Supervision to members of the Department to be indicative of a healthy culture within the Department. The panel had further noted the support that the Department gave to assisting and developing newer staff in their role as PhD supervisors and that the Department looked favourably on new staff when allocating studentships.

(6) That the panel had highlighted a number of examples of good practice. The panel had identified: the provision of Department funds for aiding students to attend conferences; the involvement of students in the design of the 6 monthly progress reports; the Department’s strong links with industry, leading to excellent support for students; allocation of resources to the Exceptional Overseas Student Scheme, the Bursary Guarantee Scheme and the Travel Support Scheme and the appointment of a Women’s Tutor to advise female students; as examples of good practice.

(7) That the panel had concluded that the Department was working towards compliance with Precept 6 (postgraduate committee). The panel had observed that the Department did not operate a postgraduate committee as described by the precept. The panel observed that the Director of Postgraduate Studies and the Postgraduate Tutor operated independently but met as required. Postgraduate matters were reported to the Departmental Management Committee, which met weekly. The panel noted that this arrangement was currently working but felt that managing postgraduate business along such lines would ultimately result in an absence of evidence-based quality assurance. The panel had therefore recommended that the Department consider formalising the business of a postgraduate committee with minutes for each meeting, which would achieve the

necessary evidence-based quality assurance. In response the Department had formalised the business of the postgraduate staff team in November 2013 with the establishment of a postgraduate committee with minuted meetings. The postgraduate committee met on a monthly basis and its core members were the Director and Deputy Director of Postgraduate Studies and the Postgraduate Administrator. The Postgraduate Tutor and Deputy Postgraduate Tutor would attend the meetings on a quarterly basis to discuss postgraduate matters that required a broader overview.

(8) That the panel had noted that whilst the Department was compliant with Precept 5 (academic mentors), the process appeared to be minimal and functioning as a safety net. The panel considered it pertinent that few students were aware of the academic mentor arrangements. In view of these observations the panel recommended that the Department should review the effectiveness of its arrangements and communicate the details more effectively to its students. In response, and in view of the recent Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2013 results, the Department had begun to review the effectiveness of the academic mentor scheme. It had been proposed that a number of eminent retired Professorial staff should act as academic mentors. The Department considered that their experience of dealing with postgraduate students made them ideally suited to helping identify and solve individual and/or group issues. It was intended that they would liaise directly with the Postgraduate Tutor or the Director of Postgraduate Studies and that their principal role would be to advise PhD students. The Department had further responded that the Postgraduate Tutor and Deputy Postgraduate Tutor had started a programme to conduct interviews with students from different groups selected at random every month to help to identify potential issues to be addressed with the assistance of the academic mentors.

(9) That the requirement that all students must have an academic mentor had been superseded since January 2013 by the requirement for Departments to make provision to allow research students to interact with their peers and to facilitate the existence of a collegial/scholarly community (Precept 5). To this end, the panel had recommended that the Department should continue to review and support inter-group, inter-division collaboration and networking with the aim of greater exposure and involvement of the PhD students. The panel had observed that for many PhD students inter-research group interaction was limited. The panel suggested a research symposium for research students with the opportunity for poster/oral presentations as an example of how this might be achieved. In response the Department had recently begun a series of initiatives to improve inter-research group interactions which included the provision of a fairly substantial budget to the Postgraduate Staff-Student Committee to organise social and research-related events open to the whole postgraduate student community. The Department was also further pursuing the recent initiative by the Graduate School Deputy Director (Professional Skills) to explore the possibility of implementing cohort-based activities. The Department was also investigating the option of formally establishing a Departmental research symposium. Various potential formats that would be appropriate to the size of the postgraduate community and variety of research areas to be covered had been proposed. Some would be trialled during 2014.

(10) That the panel had observed that the Department had undergone substantial refurbishment over the last few years, resulting in the relocation of research groups and facilities during the process. The panel had noted that the impact of these changes had significantly affected the postgraduate experience and that the substantial and prolonged changes were likely to have been destabilising and disruptive. Additionally, the issue of the lack of communal space for research students had been a persistent comment. The panel had recommended that the Department should consider this issue as its refurbishment programme proceeded. The Committee noted from the Department's response that senior academic and administrative staff had interfaced with the College/Faculty regarding future plans to ensure that the substantial changes did not affect the postgraduate experience and undermine the activities of the research groups directly affected by the works to be carried out. Heads of Division had been asked to review the specific requirements of their groups during the next refurbishment phase to identify potential issues and possible

solutions to emerging space/facilities problems. The Committee further noted that a postgraduate common room had been made available on the 7th floor of the building from October 2013. Provision had also been made for postgraduate students to be provided with significantly improved space after the building works had been completed.

(11) That In relation to Precept 4 (postgraduate student handbook) the panel had recommended that the Department should consider including explicit statements on plagiarism, ethical research, disability and supervisor/student expectations. The Department had accepted the panel's recommendation and confirmed in its response that these statements would be added to the revised version of the handbook.

(12) That the panel had observed that the percentage of students who had completed the Early Stage Assessment (ESA) within the 9 month deadline and the percentage of students who had completed the Late Stage Review (LSR) assessment within the 24 month deadline was extremely low. The panel had noted that the two precepts (9 and 10) were still bedding in and observed that ongoing refurbishment issues may have contributed to the poor statistics. The Department was aware of the low completion rates for the two milestones and a series of measures had been put in place to effect a significant improvement in the completion rates during the 2013-14 academic year. Those measures included: streamlining the reports submission process; monitoring and improving the ESA and LSR processes, including a more formal and organised system for notifying and reminding both the students and their supervisors. The importance of the ESA and LSR completion rates had also been emphasised at a recent Departmental staff meeting.

(13) That Committee had noted from the Department's written response that action was in the process of being taken to ensure that the Department was fully compliant with all of the precepts and therefore agreed that the Department of Mechanical Engineering, including the EngD in Non-Destructive Evaluation, was "compliant" overall.

(14) That the Committee congratulated the Department on its excellent review and noted that all the points raised by the review panel had been satisfactorily addressed by the Department in its response.

Agreed: That the Senate was satisfied with the outcome of the review and approved the recommendation of the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee that the Department of Mechanical Engineering should report to the Committee in 12 months' time on its progress with the establishment and implementation of a Postgraduate Committee, and otherwise should report to the Committee on developments since the periodic review as part of the next precept review in three years' time.

1862 Review of Postgraduate Research Provision in the NHLI

Considered and Approved: A Report by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (**Paper Senate/2013/65**).

Reported: (1) That in its review of the NHLI the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee had been advised by five assessors who had visited the Institute on 25 June 2013.

(2) That the reviewers had rated the NHLI "compliant" with nine of the eleven precepts and partially compliant with the remaining two precepts.

(3) That the panel had been impressed by the research degree programme in the NHLI and had identified a number of examples of good practice. Overall, the panel considered there to be a very strong general level of provision for postgraduate research students, who had the benefits of working in a prestigious environment with a very strong research reputation and with a large number of eminent senior staff. The panel had congratulated NHLI staff on organising and administering a particularly effective research education

provision. The panel highlighted the postgraduate research day as an example of good practice, noting that it was well received by students and provided them with an environment to present their results and opportunities for networking with other students, particularly those from other campuses where day to day interaction did not routinely occur. The panel had also highlighted the use of assistant supervisors as an example of good practice, noting that it had major benefits for the postgraduate experience and also had value in training the next generation of potential supervisors and principal investigators. The panel also considered the congratulatory e-mail sent to students upon graduation, with an invitation to provide confidential feedback on their experience, to be an example of good practice. The panel further praised the NHLI on the excellent student handbook and the impressive completion rates, which were above the College average.

(4) That the panel had concluded that the Department was partially compliant with Precept 10 (Late Stage Review). The panel had observed that a significant number of students had not completed the Late Stage Review (LSR) within the 24 month deadline. The panel had also observed that on-time completion rates were substantially lower than for the Early Stage Assessment (ESA) and that it appeared that the LSR milestone had not fully registered with supervisors. In response the NHLI had proposed to expand the induction slide relating to the LSR, to send reminders to all students, supervisors and assessors and to send an additional reminder in the ESA confirmation e-mail. The LSR would also be covered again during the Year 2 follow-up 'induction' event. The NHLI was confident that these additional measures would lead to an improvement in the on-time LSR completion rate.

(5) That the panel had concluded that the Department was partially compliant with Precept 11 (Staff/Student committee). The panel had observed that a Staff-Student committee had been recently re-established but that student attendance and willingness to take a lead had been poor. The panel had further observed that a lack of enthusiasm from students to become involved in quality enhancement initiatives perhaps reflected an already high degree of satisfaction with their educational experience. In response the NHLI took the view that it was the responsibility of the students to drive the Staff-Student Committee, with extensive encouragement and support, in addition to significant resource, provided by the NHLI. It was further reported that significant progress had been made since the periodic review with more involved and committed students and more regular meetings being held, the minutes of which were routinely submitted to the NHLI Higher Degrees Committee (HDRC). Improved student attendance at the HDRC also enabled greater input to the quality assurance and enhancement of postgraduate research provision.

(6) That the panel had concluded that there was a need for students to have access to a source of advice that was perceived to be separate from and completely independent of supervisors. The panel had noted that academic mentors were intended to provide this role, but that they were often appointed by supervisors and so were not seen as independent. In preparing its response the NHLI had consulted with the Graduate School and had been advised that, since January 2013, it was no longer compulsory for postgraduate research students to have an academic mentor. NHLI students would, in future, be given the choice as to whether or not to have an academic mentor, and if they chose to do so, they would be given some input to the selection process. The person appointed to act as mentor would not be a close colleague of their supervisor(s). The NHLI would also be providing training workshops for mentees and mentors and the mentor role would be detailed at the postgraduate research induction.

(7) That the panel had observed that some students would appreciate more detailed feedback from academic staff on their work. It was noted that certain supervisors and/or assessors were more explicit in the detail of their comments about student work. The panel considered it important that written feedback was sufficiently adequate to be of value to students and that it was either recorded on the relevant forms or as an appendix to the work. In response the NHLI had put in place various measures to address these issues. Forms had been revised with more space added for feedback. Assessors had also been reminded of the importance of feedback. The NHLI continued to work with students to set

clear expectations in terms of feedback.

(8) That in relation to Precept 1 (induction) the panel had observed that the induction days seemed to work well but that there was potential for students to be overloaded with information. The panel had also suggested that changes to the format of the induction which would make the information more accessible would be valuable, noting that the role of tutors and mentors in particular did not seem to be fully appreciated by students. In response the NHLI had undertaken to improve the postgraduate research inductions by organising the dates in advance, restructuring the slides giving clear headings, further clarifying the roles of mentor, tutor and supervisor and by introducing a Year 2 follow-up event to remind students of the relevant requirements at that stage.

(9) That in relation to Precept 6 (postgraduate committee) the panel had observed that some further work was required towards completing the committee terms of reference. The panel also suggested that, due to multi-site working, some innovation in scheduling might be needed to ensure good attendance. In response the NHLI confirmed that the terms of reference for the NHLI Higher Degrees Committee (HDRC) had been approved by the Head of Department and the HDRC. The installation of video-conferencing facilities to enable remote participation and the rotation of meetings between major sites would ensure good attendance. In addition, a new role description was being written for the Head of Section which would include responsibility and accountability for the HDRC.

(10) That the Committee had noted from the NHLI's written response that action had been, or was in the process of being, taken to ensure that the NHLI was fully compliant with all of the precepts and therefore agreed that the NHLI was "compliant" overall.

(11) That the Committee had congratulated the NHLI on its excellent review and noted that all the points raised by the review panel had been satisfactorily addressed by the NHLI in its response.

Agreed: That the Senate was satisfied with the outcome of the review and approved the recommendation of the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee that the NHLI should report to the Committee in 12 months' time on its progress with the development of the Staff/Student Committee, and otherwise should report to the Committee on developments since the periodic review as part of the next precept review in three years' time.

1863 Engineering Studies Committee

Considered: A Report by the Engineering Studies Committee (**Paper Senate/2013/66**).

(1) Reorganisation of Undergraduate Courses and Examinations

(i) Aeronautics

Approved: On the recommendation of the Committee, the establishment of a new five year degree programme: MEng Aeronautical Engineering with a Year in Industry, as outlined in section 1 of the Senate's paper, with immediate effect:

(ii) Chemical Engineering

Reported: That the Committee had approved the renewal of the Department's exchange agreement with Kungliga Tekniska Hogskolan, Stockholm.

(iii) Electrical and Electronic Engineering

Reported: That the Committee had approved the renewal the Department's exchange agreements with Ecole Polytechnique, Paris and KU Leuven, Belgium.

(2) Annual Monitoring Statements

Reported: That the Committee considered Annual Monitoring Reports from the Departments of: Computing and Mechanical Engineering together with the external examiners reports for Ancillary Mathematics, as outlined in section 3 of the Senate's paper.

(3) Revising Periodic Review and Programme Monitoring

Reported: That the Committee had considered a proposal for revisions to the existing periodic review and programme monitoring process, as outlined in section 4 of the Senate's paper.

(4) Undergraduate Examination Failures

Reported: That the Committee had considered the annual report detailing undergraduate examination failures in 2012/2013. The Committee had noted that all Departments within the Faculty had rates below 10%.

(5) Student Placement Learning Policies

Reported: That the Committee had considered proposed modifications to the Student Placement Learning Policies and Procedures, as outlines in section 6 of the Senate's paper.

(6) Survey Results

Reported: That the Committee had considered the results of the Autumn SOLE Survey.

(7) Accreditation Report – Computing

Reported: That the Committee had noted the accreditation report by the BCS, the Chartered Institute of IT and by the Institution of Engineering and Technology, as outlined in section 8 of the Senate's paper.

1864 Graduate School Quality Committees

Considered: A Report by the Postgraduate Quality Committees (**Paper Senate/2013/67**).

(1) New Course – MSc, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Process Automation, Instrumentation and Control

Reported: (i) That the Master's Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences) had received a proposal from the Department of Chemical Engineering to introduce a new MSc, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Process Automation, Instrumentation and Control with effect from December 2014.

(ii) That the programme, which would be part-time and modular, would be an Integrated Graduate Development Scheme (IGDS), a professional development scheme for experienced graduates which had previously been run successfully at Newcastle University. Subject to an agreement with University of Newcastle, some students may transfer to Imperial to complete their programme.

(iii) That the aim of the programme was to attract high calibre, highly motivated graduate students who wished to obtain an industrially relevant qualification in control and instrumentation.

(iv) That the programme would make use of the educational and training facilities of the

Chemical Engineering pilot plant and ABB Control Room.

Approved: On the recommendation of the Committee, the introduction of the MSc, Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate in Process Automation, Instrumentation and Control, with effect from December 2014, as outlined in section 1.1 and Appendix I of the Senate's paper.

(2) MRes in Neurotechnology

Reported: (i) That the Master's Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences) had received a proposal from the Department of Bioengineering to introduce a new MRes in Neurotechnology with effect from October 2014.

(ii) That the programme would be available on a full-time only basis over one calendar year.

(iii) That the programme would form the first year of a 1+3 programme in the new EPSRC Centre for Doctoral Training (CDT) in Neurotechnology for Life and Health and that, in the future, the MRes may also be offered as a standalone degree.

Approved: On the recommendation of the Committee, the introduction of the MRes in Neurotechnology, with effect from October 2014, as outlined in section 1.2 and Appendix II of the Senate's paper.

(3) MSc in Advanced Materials Science and Engineering

Reported: (i) That the Master's Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences) had received a request from the Department of Materials to make changes to the MSc in Advanced Materials Science and Engineering, retrospectively with effect from the academic year 2013-14.

(ii) That the changes had been proposed in response to recommendations made during the accreditation of the programme by the Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining (IOM3). To address the concerns of the accreditation panel and meet the accreditation standards, the Department proposed to introduce additional lectures, coursework elements and modifications to examinations.

Approved: On the recommendation of the Committee, changes to the MSc in Advanced Materials Science and Engineering, retrospectively with effect from the academic year 2013-14, as outlined in section 2 of the Senate's paper.

(4) Suspension of Courses

Considered and approved: (i) On the recommendation of the Master's Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences), the suspension of the MSc, PG Diploma and PG Certificate in Actuarial Finance, as outlined in section 3.1 of the Senate's paper, for one academic year in 2014-2015.

(ii) On the recommendation of the Master's Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences), the suspension of the MSc in Data Science and Management, as outlined in section 3.2 of the Senate's paper, for one academic year in 2014-2015.

(iii) On the recommendation of the Master's Quality Committee (Medicine, Life Sciences and Professional Development), the suspension of the MSc, PG Diploma and PG Certificate in Philanthropy, as outlined in section 3.3 of the Senate's paper, for one academic year in 2014-2015.

Agreed: That, where new programmes are suspended before having run, then the Senate

would seek to reconfirm programme approval before those programmes may recruit in the future.

(5) Minor Amendments to Existing Courses

Reported: That the Master's Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences) had approved minor amendments to the Global MBA, as outlined in section 4 of the Senate's paper.

(6) External Examiners' Reports 2012-2013

Reported: That the Master's Quality Committees had reviewed the comments received to date from External Examiners, together with the responses to the comments from departments. The Committees had pursued issues which were raised as needing attention and had taken particular note of areas of good practice which were highlighted in the reports. A copy of the minutes of these discussions would be presented to the Senate when the exercise had been completed.

(7) Master's Course Reviews

Reported: That the Master's Quality Committees were undertaking internal course reviews as scheduled and that a report would be presented to the Senate when the exercise had been completed.

(8) Revising Periodic Review and Programme Monitoring

Reported: That the Master's Quality Committees had considered a proposal for revisions to the periodic review and programme monitoring process.

1865 Report by the Undergraduate Admissions Committee

Received: A Report by the Undergraduate Admissions Committee (**Paper Senate/2013/68**).

Noted: That the application numbers for 2014 entry were presented as of 9 May 2014 and were compared to 9 May 2013

Reported: (i) That, College wide, 16848 2014/15 applications had been received, representing an increase of 7.2% on applications received in the previous cycle by the same day.

(ii) That, College wide, 7162 offers had been made, compared to 6538 made by the same date in the previous cycle, representing an increase of 9.5%.

(iii) That, as of 9 May 2014, 3497 offer holders had accepted their offer for 2014/15 entry, representing 48.8% of offers made. 1146 offers were awaiting an offer holder decision.

(iv) That, at the same point in the last cycle, 3118 offer holders had accepted their offer, representing 47.7% of offers made. At the end of the cycle, 3429 offer holders had accepted their offer.

(v) Further information on application numbers, offers and acceptances, was provided in section 1 and Appendix A of the Senate's paper.

1866 Distribution of Honours Degree Classifications

Considered: A Report by the Academic Registrar (**Paper Senate/2013/69**) giving statistics for the distribution of honours degree classifications by Department and Faculty

for the academic year 2012-13.

Reported: (i) That the combined percentage of firsts and upper seconds for the College as a whole was 87.5%.

(ii) That the combined percentage of firsts and upper seconds by Faculty was 90% for Engineering, 94.6% for Medicine (BSc) and 79.7% for Natural Sciences.

(iii) That across the College no Departments had fallen below the 70% threshold in 2012-13.

Agreed: That statistics showing the correlation between entry qualifications and exit degree classifications should be provided in due course so that the impact of increased entry requirements could be assessed.

Resolved: That members should advise the Academic Registrar with regard to the nature of the degree classification reports which would be useful for the Senate to receive in the future.

1867 Undergraduate Examination Failure Rates 2012-13

Considered: Statistics of undergraduate examination failures for session 2012-13 (**Paper Senate/2013/70**).

Considered: A Report by the Academic Registrar (**Paper Senate/2013/70**) giving statistics of undergraduate examination failures for session 2012-13.

Reported: (i) That across the College there are no Departments where the failure rate in a particular year of the course exceeds 10%.

Agreed: (i) That further analysis of the performance of candidates who had failed examinations would be necessary to fully understand the data.

Resolved: That members should advise the Academic Registrar with regard to the nature of the examination failure reports which would be useful for the Senate to receive in the future.

1868 Representations Concerning Decisions of Boards of Examiners 2012-2013

Considered: A report by the Academic Registrar outlining the representations concerning decisions of Boards of Examiners dealt with in 2012-13 (**Paper Senate/2013/71**).

Reported: (i) That under the *Procedure for Consideration of Representations concerning decisions of Boards of Examiners*, the College would consider representations made on the grounds of administrative error, where there was concern that the examination might not have been conducted in accordance with the relevant Regulations or where there was new evidence of circumstances which might have adversely affected a candidate's performance which had not been available to the Board of Examiners at the time it made its decision. For the purposes of this report, arithmetical mark checks (concerning possible administrative error), which were carried out by Examination Officers in each Department, were separated from full representations which were considered by the Board of Examiners.

(ii) That representations were submitted to the Registry and were initially considered by senior Registry staff. If it was agreed that there were sufficient grounds for appeal, the appeal was passed to the Chair of the Board of Examiners for consideration under the *Procedure for Consideration of Representations concerning decisions of Boards of Examiners*.

(iii) That the total number of representations had remained broadly similar to last year but that the overall numbers remained miniscule in relation to the total student population.

Noted: That the total number of postgraduate representations received in the Business School was comparatively high.

Agreed: That the Academic Registrar should explore this further with the Business School.

1869 Student Appeals against Withdrawal Decisions

Considered: A report by the Academic Registrar providing the results of student appeals dealt with in 2012-13 (**Paper Senate/2013/72**).

Reported: (i) That student appeals were considered in accordance with the *Student Withdrawals and Appeals Procedure for dealing with cases of unsatisfactory academic progress*.

(ii) That in accordance with paragraph 13 of the *Student Withdrawals and Appeals Procedure*, 3 appeals against withdrawal had been initially considered by senior Registry staff and it had been considered that there were insufficient grounds for appeal. Consequently, these appeals had not been passed to the Head of Department for reconsideration.

(iii) That the overall numbers were tiny in relation to the total student population.

Agreed: That it would be sensible to consider presenting data on student appeals alongside the examination failure rates.

Further agreed: That members should advise the Academic Registrar with regard to the nature of the student appeals reports which would be useful for the Senate to receive in the future.

1870 Office of the Independent Adjudicator and Completion of Procedures Letters

Considered: A Report by the Academic Registrar (**Paper Senate/2013/73**).

Reported: (i) That under the Higher Education Act 2004 Imperial College subscribed to the independent scheme for the review of student complaints. Once a student had exhausted the College's internal appeal or complaints procedures, the College was obliged to issue a completion of procedures letter which advised students how they could apply to the OIA for a review of their case providing it fell within OIA rules. Students had three months from the date of the completion of procedures letter to apply to the OIA.

(ii) That in 2010 the OIA had started to collect data from institutions on the number of completion of procedures letters issued by institutions during the calendar year. Data in respect of Imperial College for 2012 were presented in the Senate's paper, with the previous two years' data for comparison.

(iii) That as far as Imperial was concerned the number of letters issued had declined: 14 in 2013, 39 in 2012, 54 in 2010 and 52 in 2011.

(iv) That this decline may reflect a slight decrease in the number of appeals coupled with the increased detail that departments give in the early stages of consideration of appeals/complaints particularly in their responses to students. While numbers appeared to be in decline, individual cases continued to consume disproportionate amounts of time.

Agreed: That, in the future, the Senate might find it instructive to receive further detail on the cases for which completion of procedures letters have been issued.

Further agreed: That the Academic Registrar would provide a further verbal report to the June meeting of the Senate.

1871 Full-time Equivalent Student Loads 2013-14

Received: Statistics of the student load on all academic and academic service units at the College for the current session (**Paper Senate/2013/74**).

1872 Staff Matters

Received: A Note by the Provost (**Paper Senate/2013/75**).

1873 Appointment of External Examiners in 2013-14

Received: The names and affiliations of external examiners for undergraduate and Master's degrees in 2013-14 (**Paper Senate/2013/76**).

1874 DSc Committee

Received: a Report from the DSc Committee. (**Paper Senate/2013/77**).

Reported: That the DSc had been awarded in March 2014 to:

- Professor Gilbert Thompson, Emeritus Professor in Medicine, for his work in the field of Metabolic Medicine.

1875 Award of Degrees and Diplomas

Reported: That under the provisions of University of London Ordinance 9(2) and Imperial College London Ordinance B1(1), and with the terms of SM 8 of October 1998, that the Academic Registrar had acted on behalf of the Senate in approving the awards for research degrees for 219 candidates who have satisfied the examiners in the examination and satisfied all other necessary requirements for the award of the degrees appointed since the last Senate meeting, and that degrees had been conferred on these candidates, the date being as indicated on the award.

1876 Dates of Senate Meetings in 2014-2015

Reported: The following dates of meetings of the Senate in 2014-15:

Wednesday, 29 October 2014
Wednesday, 10 December 2014
Wednesday, 25 February 2015
Wednesday, 20 May 2015
Wednesday, 24 June 2015

All meetings will start at 3.00pm.

All meetings will be held in Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate, with the exception of the meeting on Wednesday, 10 December 2014 which will be held in Room G01, Royal School of Mines.

1877 Any Other Business

There was no other business discussed.

1878 Date of Next Meeting

Reported: The next meeting of the Senate would take place on Wednesday 18 June 2014, in the Council Room, 170 Queen's Gate, starting at 3.00pm.