

Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
Confirmed Minutes from the meeting held on
Wednesday 27 June 2018

Present

Professor Simone Buitendijk – Vice Provost (Education) – Chair
Mr Nick Burstow – ICU Deputy President (Education)
Ms Emma Caseley – Head of Strategic Projects, Education Office
Professor Sue Gibson – Director of the Graduate School
Professor Martyn Kingsbury – Director of Educational Development
Professor Omar Matar – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering
Professor Alan Spivey – Assistant Provost (Learning & Teaching)
Ms Judith Webster – Head of Academic Services
Ms Lucy Heming – Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance and Enhancement)
- Secretary

In attendance

Ms Laura Lane – Head of Strategy and Operations, Graduate School (for item 7)
Ms Hailey Smith – Project Manager (Learning and Teaching Strategy), Education Office
Mr Craig Walker – Interim Director CTSO (for item 4.1)
Ms Rachel Witton – Executive Office to the Vice-Provost (Education)

Apologies

Mr David Ashton – Academic Registrar
Dr Malcolm Edwards – Director of Strategic Planning
Professor Des Johnston – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Medicine
Mr Martin Lupton – QAEC representative
Professor Emma McCoy – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Natural Sciences
Dr Edgar Meyer – Business School representative

1. Welcome and Apologies

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

2. Minutes

- 2.1** The Committee confirmed the minutes from the meeting held on Thursday 16 May 2018. LTC.2017.53

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1** There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

4. Learning and Teaching Strategy

4.1 Implementing the Vision for Learning and Teaching Space

LTC.2017.54

- 4.1.1** The Committee received a presentation on the plans for implementing the vision for Learning and Teaching space, with specific focus on works planned for summer 2018. It was noted the College senior management had signed off on the vision for the space.
- 4.1.2** Taking the Strategy as its starting point, the focus was on enhancing existing space to ensure greater enablement. This meant the initial works would be remediating the worst teaching spaces in the College with a view to having them operational for 2018/19. Alongside this, works were underway on producing spaces for teaching experimentation and curriculum innovation. It was expected these would be completed for January 2019. Some of the bigger works needed, such as addressing ventilation and retrofitting traditional lecture spaces would be addressed in summer 2019. Building on work already done, the College had a good understanding of the condition of the estate.
- 4.1.3** A student and academic led-process had identified 61 rooms as needing urgent remedial action. The intention was to bring these rooms up to at least a minimum standard, making them serviceable, modern and flexible and with a highest common standard of audio-visual technology. A number of the planned fixes were small but would address large irritants and overall the works should generate an observable step change in how the physical environment felt. The budget for refurbishment of these rooms was £2.49 million and was approved; some of this had been allocated from existing budgeted works.
- 4.1.4** As part of the plan for these works, it was intended to move to a greater commonality and quality of furniture, both in terms of function and durability. Future planning would also need to address what learning and teaching might look like in the future; an example of this was whether providing spaces for desktop computers was a long-term need. Simple and cost-effective solutions would be used where possible, such as a greater provision of white-boards which could transform a space without requiring too much work.
- 4.1.5** A project manager had been appointed to oversee the works and contractors would be appointed shortly. It was intended the works would take place over July to September, with a couple of weeks built in for contingency before the start of the new term. If the works overran, it was hoped the impact would be minimal as the works were focussed on rooms which tended to be avoided by room bookers as a result of the problems due to be rectified.
- 4.1.6** At a recent Conference attended by the Director of Educational Development, information had been shared about how similar estate problems were being addressed by other institutions. Examples included the University of Eastern Finland, which was undertaking innovative refurbishment of spaces to reflect the greater use of technical solutions for assessment; and Dartmouth College which had set out an ongoing process of evaluation and support to ensure everyone use refurbished spaces knew how to use them, including both educators and operational staff such as cleaners. It was intended that the move to greater AV commonality at Imperial would help usage as it would mean that once staff were

familiar with using the technology in one room, they would be able to use it in others.

4.1.7 The impact of the work being undertaken on learning and teaching spaces would be explored through a research degree project underway at the College.

4.1.8 An update on the implementation of the vision for learning and teaching space would be provided to the Committee in the Autumn term.

ACTION: Secretary

4.2 Curriculum Review

4.2.1 The first briefing session for members of the Curriculum Review Reference Panels had been held, with the second one taking place on 19 July. Members had been sorted into teams and nominally assigned to programmes but these might change depending on when particular programmes/departments aimed to undertake the bulk of their curriculum review work. Following the second briefing session, the convenors of the Reference Panels would start to make contact with their selected departments.

4.2.2 The paperwork for capturing programme and module information for Curriculum Review was being amended following greater clarity from the Student Information Management Project on the data needed for the new Student Record system and to reduce any inefficiencies between data collection and data input. The revisions were being finalised and the final paperwork would be shared soon along with exemplars in the new format.

ACTION: Education Office

4.3 Learning and Teaching Strategy Risk Log

LTC.2017.55

4.3.1 The Committee received an updated risk log. One risk had been reduced as sufficient agreement on the single set of regulations for 2019/20 had been reached to enable curriculum review to move forward. However, the risk of departments not engaging sufficiently with curriculum review within the expected time-frame remained red.

4.3.2 Based on the discussions which had taken place with departments about their engagement, it was expected this risk could be downgraded in future as a number of departments were further along in the process than they had realised; a metric had been developed to show the extent of progress made and this illustrated that many were making good progress. However, a big push was needed to ensure not all review changes were taken through the last possible Programmes Committee meetings. This message was beginning to permeate across staff. It was recommended that Vice-Deans for Education work with their Departments to set their own deadlines for submission to FECS so as to spread the activity out across the next nine months; this was happening already in some areas.

ACTION: Vice-Deans (Education)

4.3.3 A concern was raised about whether there was sufficient resource to manage the post-approval build work in Banner so as to enable the programmes to be operational for 2019/20. It was noted that the SIMP Design Authority were aware

of these requirements and they were within scope and on the plan. However, this risk would be kept as red for the time-being.

- 4.3.4** The risk log would be kept under review and would be a standing item on agendas for the Committee. Members were asked to inform the Head of Strategic Projects (Education Office) of any changes to be incorporated into the log.

ACTION: Members

- 4.3.5** It was queried to what extent the Learning and Teaching risk log was reflected in the overarching College risk log. The Head of Strategic Projects (Education Office) agreed to follow this up.

ACTION: Head of Strategic Projects (Education Office)

- 4.3.6** There were no specific sanctions for departments which failed to engage in the curriculum review process but the risks to the College were significant if it failed to re-frame the curriculum in a way which both would benefit the student experience and also would allow for programmes to be recorded and managed in such a way as to meet the requirements of the Office for Students and the Higher Education Statistics Agency in its new role as the Designated Data Body.

- 4.3.7** This message about the external risk had been clearly articulated to a range of staff but there would need to be an ongoing communications effort to ensure all areas were on board. This would be spearheaded through the outreach work by the Vice Provost (Education) visiting all departments.

- 4.3.8** It was reiterated that the development of the Learning and Teaching Strategy and the drive for Curriculum Review were coming from the College as a whole and that a range of staff across departments had been involved in the decision-making processes for the Review. However, it was recognised that this would be an iterative process and for many it would require a culture change and therefore it was important to support all parties throughout the process.

5. Office for Students Registration

- 5.1** The College was aware of the drive at the Office for Students around widening participation and access and the need to improve the College's performance in these areas, as currently the College was not meeting its benchmarks. Concrete steps were being taken to increase the percentage of widening participation students and to reduce differential attainment gaps; initial focus for widening participation would be on black applicants and those from POLAR quintiles 1 and 2.

- 5.2** The Learning and Teaching Strategy was important for improving the experience and performance of all students once they were in the College but could be used to particularly address the needs of students from WP backgrounds.

- 5.3** The Director of Strategic Planning was working with the Director of Outreach and Recruitment and the Vice-Provost (Education) to develop a strategic plan to address these issues.

- 5.4 Due to the absence of the Director of Strategic Planning, a more detailed update would be requested at a future meeting.

ACTION: Director of Strategic Planning

6. Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

- 6.1 The College had received the outcomes from the recent pilot subject-level TEF but due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the pilot, these were not being communicated widely. The College also had provided feedback to the Office for Students on the process of being involved in the pilot.
- 6.2 The Committee affirmed the importance of the College continuing focus on the National Student Survey (NSS) and the student experience more widely. Discussions were underway in the College on the response to the upcoming NSS results for 2018; as there would no longer be a gap between the private and public release of the NSS results, it was important the College was prepared for managing external communications on this. Any response would highlight the important work being done through the Learning and Teaching Strategy to improve the student experience.
- 6.3 A recent Quality Enhancement Network (QEN) meeting had provided feedback on factors which TEF Panels were looking for in TEF narrative statements. It has been emphasised the narrative should be tied to the institutional mission, clear on any weaknesses as well as highlighting strengths.

7. Assistant Supervisor Scheme

LTC.2017.56

- 7.1 The Committee received a proposal to establish a President's Award for Assistant Supervisors to recognise the contribution of post-doctoral researchers to PhD supervision. The proposed award would sit within the Education suite and would fulfil a recommendation made in the world-class supervision project to better recognise the contribution of assistant supervisors. While there was a specific award for Early Career Researchers in the Research suite, there was no similar award for which these staff members would be eligible for in the Education suite.
- 7.2 The Assistant Supervisor scheme had been running since December 2017. Work had been led by the Graduate School in partnership with the Education Development Unit, Human Resources, supervisors and the Post-Doctoral Network to develop the framework for the Assistant Supervisor role including a roles and responsibilities document and mandatory training.
- 7.3 All departments were engaging with the scheme and as numbers grew, it was intended to make some enhancements, such as offering face-to-face training alongside the online version.
- 7.4 The eligibility criteria for the proposed award would be carrying out the roles and responsibilities and showing evidence of innovative practice. While there would be a relatively small pool of eligible Assistant Supervisors to being with, approximately 95, adding the award now would set a trajectory for the future and ensure those already engaged could be recognised.

- 7.5 The Committee supported the proposal and the Chair agreed to recommend it to the President.

ACTION: Chair

ITEMS TO NOTE

8. Learning and Teaching Strategy Implementation Plan

- 8.1 The committee noted the updated Learning and Teaching Strategy Implementation Plan.

9. Education Evaluation

- 9.1 As the Director of Strategic Planning was not present, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

10. Educational Research

- 10.1 The Director of Educational Development provided a verbal update and noted the following:

- i. He had given a presentation recently at the International Confederation of Education Developers, which would be included in the abstracts publication. The Conference had demonstrated the similarity of the trajectory the College was on to many of its fellow institutions and had shown that there was considerable international interest for seeing the outcome of the initiatives being introduced at Imperial;
- ii. Following the publication of interesting data on student health and well-being by the Amsterdam Group at a recent conference, the College would be following up with other institutions in London including UCL to consider undertaking a similar survey, interventions and research. By having multiple institutions involved, it would provide sufficient data for review and comparison.

11. Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee (QAEC)

- 11.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the QAEC meeting on 22 May 2018. Key points covered included:

- i. Graduate Teaching Assistants: changes to the framework and programme
- ii. Updates to the statement on the College's policies and procedures for assuring Quality and Standards in light of the revisions to the Quality Code
- iii. Changes to the 2018/19 regulations
- iv. Updates to the proposed Academic Calendar
- v. Review of postgraduate annual monitoring reports and consideration of changes for the next round of annual monitoring
- vi. Review of External Examiner reports 2016/17
- vii. Imperial College Union/Graduate School Union audit of Wednesday afternoon timetabling for PGT students
- viii. Summary report on the response to the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2017
- ix. Proposal to set up a Collaborative Provision Sub-Group

11.2 A joint meeting between QAEC and the Vice-Provost's Advisory Group (Education) had taken place on 14 June 2018 and progress had been made on agreeing some key elements of the single set of regulations for 2019/20.

12. Senate

12.1 The Committee noted the minutes from Senate could be accessed at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/senate/>

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Representatives from Imperial College Union and the College had attended a recent conference on students as partners in Toronto. As well as attending a number of lectures, the team took advantage of a facilitated workshop to take forward the Student Shaper Scheme and presented posters on ways in which students had contributed to new developments and improvements, such as the MEng common room and the Medicine glossary. The latter had been well-received and the team felt that the workshop had put the team in a much better position. Based on their experiences, attendees had recognised the extent to which the College had managed to embed already student partnerships compared with other institutions.

13.2 The Committee thanked the Deputy President (Education) for his contribution over the past year.

14. Dates for Meetings

14.1 Thursday 13 September 2018, 15.00-17.00
Thursday 18 October 2018, 15.00-17.00
Thursday 22 November 2018, 15.00-17.00
Thursday 20 December 2018, 15.00-17.00
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