

GRADUATE SCHOOL
MASTER'S QUALITY COMMITTEE
(BUSINESS, ENGINEERING & PHYSICAL SCIENCES)
The minutes of the Graduate School Master's Quality Committee
(Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences)
held on
Thursday 11 July 2013

Present:

Dr David McPhail, Graduate School Deputy Director & Department of Materials (Chair)
Professor Denis Wright, Director of Student Affairs
Professor Richard Jardine, College Consul for Engineering & the Business School
Mr Nigel Wheatley, Academic Registrar
Dr Rob Dickinson, Department of Bioengineering
Professor Amparo Galindo, Department of Chemical Engineering
Professor Bassam Izzuddin, Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering
Dr Fariba Sadri, Department of Computing
Professor Andrew Holmes, Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering
Dr John Gibbons, Department of Mathematics
Professor Lesley Cohen, Department of Physics
Dr Marco Mongiello, Business School
Mr Doug Hunt, ICU Deputy President (Education)
Mr Nicholas Ng, Student Representative for Engineering
Mr Ross Webster, Student Representative for Physical Sciences

In attendance:

Professor Dorothy Griffiths, Business School (for item 4.1)
Ms Sophie White, Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance and Enhancement)
Mrs Clare Scheibner, Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance and Enhancement), (Secretary)

Apologies:

Professor Andrew George, Director Graduate School
Professor Debra Humphris, Pro Rector (Education)
Professor Richard Thompson, College Consul for Natural Sciences
Dr Simon Archer, College Tutor
Professor Sergei Chernyshenko, Department of Aeronautics
Professor Kang Li, Department of Chemical Engineering
Professor Howard Johnson, Department of Earth Science & Engineering
Dr Pat Leever, Department of Mechanical Engineering
Dr Laura Barter, Department of Chemistry
Dr Nick Voulvoulis, Centre for Environmental Policy
Ms Maryam Habibzay, GSA President
Mr Simon Schillebeeckx, Student Representative for the Business School

Minutes

1. Welcome and Apologies

Dr David McPhail welcomed members to the meeting and apologies as listed above were noted.

- 1.1 Dr McPhail noted that Dr Laura Barter, Director of Postgraduate Studies (MRes Programmes) for the Department of Chemistry, would replace Dr Tim Albrecht as member of the Committee. It was further noted that Mrs Clare Scheibner would be taking over from Ms Sophie White as Committee Secretary.

2. Committee Minutes

Paper A

2.1 Master's Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences)

The Committee approved the minutes from the Master's Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences) held on 23rd May 2013, subject to the correction of item 8.6 to read "MSc in Biomedical Engineering". The minutes would be amended accordingly.

3. Matters arising from the minutes

Matters arising not appearing elsewhere on the agenda were discussed.

- 3.1 Further to minute 3.2 regarding the review of the definition of double marking, the Committee noted that this had been approved by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) on 1st July 2013. (See paper U).

- 3.2 Further to Minute 3.6 regarding the MSc in Management, MSc in International Health Management and MSc in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management it was noted that the Business School were in the process of discussing the use of free choice examination questions. The Committee noted the following response from the MSc Management and MSc Innovation, Entrepreneurship & Management Programme Team. *"Exam format was discussed at the MSc Management and MSc IEM Annual Review meetings. The external examiners comments will be considered by individual academics and balanced with the need to allow breadth of opportunity to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes. It should be noted that several academics already ensure breadth of knowledge is tested through compulsory multiple choice questions, in addition to setting long answer questions which can be used to test depth of knowledge."* It was further noted that the International Health Management Annual Programme Review meeting was still to take place and their response would be submitted to the next MQC on 5th November 2013.

Action: Business School

- 3.3 Further to minute 4.1 regarding the new course proposal, MRes in Catalysis, the Committee noted that this had been approved by Senate in July 2013.

- 3.4 Further to minute 4.2 regarding the new course proposals for MSc in Finance & Accounting and MSc in Investment & Wealth Management the Committee noted that these were approved by Chair's action and further approved by Senate in July 2013.

- 3.5** Further to minute 8.2.2 regarding the appropriateness of postgraduate students marking student assignments from on MSc in International Health Management, Dr David McPhail informed the Committee that he would be in discussion with the Business School over the summer.

Action: David McPhail

- 3.6** Further to minute 8.3.2 regarding the scaling system used on MSc in Quantum Field and Fundamental Forces, the Committee noted that the Department had agreed scaling would no longer be used in the 40-50% band.

- 3.7** Further to minute 8.8.3 regarding the Physics Departments booklet "*Good Practice Guidelines for External Based placements*", the Committee noted that this had been circulated to Master's Course Organisers and Directors of Postgraduate Studies. It was also noted that case studies of where good practice had been shared across courses and departments would be welcomed in preparation for the College's next QAA Institutional Review and these should be forwarded to Mrs Clare Scheibner c.scheibner@imperial.ac.uk

Action: All Committee Members

- 3.8** Further to minute 9.8 regarding recommendations of what information should be provided for Master's external examiners from 2013-14, the Committee noted recommendations from the MQC had been considered and approved by QAEC July 2013.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

4. New Course Proposal

Paper B

4.1 Global MBA

The Committee considered a proposal from the Business School for a new Distance Learning Global MBA to be introduced from September 2014.

- 4.1.1** Professor Dorothy Griffiths presented the proposal for an MBA programme to replace the current Distance Learning MBA programme (DLMBA). The DLMBA was started in 2002 as a University of London distance learning programme and was moved to Imperial in 2007 when the College left the University, the programme was withdrawn after the 2012 intake.

- 4.1.2** The Committee noted that the Global MBA had the same objectives and purposes as other current Business School MBA programmes. Students would be provided with an understanding of the core principles and concepts which underline modern business practice.

- 4.1.3** Mr Nigel Wheatley highlighted to the Committee that the current College Strategy states 'The College will remain primarily a residential university' therefore a change to the College Strategy and College Regulations would need to be considered by the new Provost Board. It was agreed that the Committee would be able to consider the proposal on academic grounds only with the distance learning implications being addressed by Provost Board and Senate.

- 4.1.4** The Committee noted that the degree programme was designed to take 3 years; however, flexibility would be built into the design to enable students to complete

the programme in a minimum of 2 years and a maximum of 4 years.

4.1.5 The Committee raised concern that the Global MBA may have a detrimental effect on application rates of the current MBA programmes offered by the Business School. Professor Griffiths stated that there was a growing number of on-line MBA programmes offered by universities across the world. Data on changes in application volumes 2012 vs. 2011 indicated that whilst applications for full-time MBA programmes were flat or falling in over half the Schools surveyed, in over two thirds applications to on-line programmes were increasing. Professor Griffiths further stated that the target audience was different to the full-time MBA and hoped to attract applicants from within industry.

4.1.6 Professor Griffiths told the Committee that the entry requirements for the Global MBA would be a UK 2.2 or its international equivalent in any subject. The Committee raised concern that the Business School expects at least a 2.1 or equivalent for all of its current Master's degrees. Professor Griffiths explained that the entry qualification was reduced to a 2.2. for the Global MBA as both first degree and subsequent professional development would be taken into account. The Committee agreed that the entry requirement should be amended from a 2.2 to 'normally at least a 2.1', to bring this in line with the requirements of other Business School Master's admission requirements.

4.1.7 The Committee raised various concerns regarding the examination process which included locations, invigilation and time zones. Professor Griffiths explained that the core courses would be assessed by a mixture of examinations and coursework. Examinations would be time zone based and have different papers in the different time zones. Professor Griffiths further explained that negotiations were currently underway with British Council to host the examinations and provide invigilation. Students would be expected to travel to their time zone examination centre which would be held twice per year in March and August.

4.1.8 The Committee approved the academic proposal with the following caveats.

- Confirmation from the new Provost's Board that Distance Learning Programmes were part of the College's overall Education Strategy.
- If that Board gives the go ahead then a working group would meet over the summer to look at current College regulations and ensure that they are modified where appropriate so as to be inclusive of distance learning. This would be organised by the Registry.
- The admission requirements be amended from a 2.2 to 'normally at least a 2.1', to bring this in line with the requirements of other Business School Master's admission requirements.
- The Committee would recommend the Global MBA for Senate approval subject to the above.
- As soon as [but not before] the Provost's Board has given direction then the course may be advertised with the caveat, "subject to Senate approval".

5. Course Modification

Paper C

5.1 MSc in Physics with Nanophotonics (Department of Physics)

Professor Lesley Cohen presented a proposal from the Department of Physics for a new course stream, MSc in Physics with Nanophotonics. The Committee heard that

the Department introduced the MRes in Plasmonics and Metamaterials in 2011 as a standalone Master's course, aimed at students looking to develop their research interests and skills in the field of nanophotonics. With the College and Department wanting to streamline its Master's provision it was proposed to offer the key material taught in the MRes as a stream in the existing MSc in Physics, as the MSc in Physics with Nanophotonics.

- 5.1.1** The Committee noted that the MSc would consist of four of the five taught courses currently on the MRes, with a significant project element hosted by the research groups active in nanophotonics. The students would also be part of the much larger cohort of postgraduate students on the MSc in Physics. The Committee further noted that first term taught modules would be available to 4th year MSci students.
- 5.1.2** The Committee further noted that the objective of the revised MSc was to build on the Bachelor's level education of the students through establishing a solid academic base in the theoretical and mathematical aspects of nanophotonics. The students would then be able to apply and extend their knowledge during the project, which would likely be theoretically and/or computationally based.
- 5.1.3** The Committee approved the course with effect from 2014-15 and agreed to recommend it for Senate approval.

**5.2 Marking Scheme/Bologna template – MSc in Metals and Energy Finance Paper D
(Department of Earth Science & Engineering)**

The Committee considered a new marking scheme/Bologna assessment template for the MSc in Metals and Energy Finance in the Department of Earth Science & Engineering with effect from 2012-3 subject to student consent. It was noted that the existing marking scheme had more than the recommended three elements making it difficult for students to achieve merits or distinctions. The Committee approved the marking scheme with effect from 2012-13 providing the Department gained student consent.

Post Meeting Note

There were no objections received from current students on the MSc in Metals and Energy Finance to the amended marking scheme. The following amendment to the marking scheme was also made, "Metals & Energy Project Appraisal and Finance, Resource Evaluation paper (2 hours)" was amended to "Metals & Energy Project Appraisal and Finance, Resource Evaluation and Mining Engineering paper (3 hours)".

**5.3 MSc in Management and the MSc in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Paper E
Management (Business School) – September start**

The Committee considered a proposal from the Business School to allow the MSc in Management and the MSc in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management programmes start and finish a month earlier with effect from 2014-15. The start date would be 1 September 2014.

- 5.3.1** Dr Marco Mongiello presented the proposal and explained that this would enable students to meet the early application deadlines of top employers. Dr Mongiello further stated that a similar early start had already been rolled out across the MSc Finance and MSc Risk Management and Financial Engineering (RMFE) programmes

which had been extremely successful.

5.3.2 The Committee approved the September start date with effect from 2014-15 and agreed to recommend it for Senate approval.

5.4 MSc in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management

Paper F

The Committee considered five changes to the MSc in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management with effect from 2013-4.

5.4.1 Dr Mongiello presented the following proposed changes to the MSc in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management.

5.4.1.1 Change the name of the Entrepreneurship course to “Entrepreneurial Journey Part 1”.

5.4.1.2 Change the name of the Business Plan course to “Entrepreneurial Journey Part 2”. The Committee noted that the Entrepreneurship and Business Plan courses are strongly linked and the revised names would better reflect this and the content of the courses.

5.4.1.3 Change the format of examination for the Innovation Management course from long answer questions only, to a mixture of multiple choice questions, short answer questions and long answer questions. The Committee noted that multiple choice questions would allow students to be assessed on the breadth of their knowledge of the subject matter, the short answer questions would enable them to synthesize some key issues addressed in the course, and the long answer questions would allow them to demonstrate some depth of understanding of the topics covered.

5.4.1.4 Addition of an optional work placement. Dr Mongiello told the Committee that since the abolition of post-study work visas, more companies insist that they would only recruit graduates who had completed an internship with them. Dr Mongiello further stated that several competitors such as CASS Business School had already embedded internships into their programmes. The Committee noted that optional work placement had already been successfully run as part of the MSc Finance and MSc Risk Management and Financial Engineering programmes since 2011.

5.4.1.5 Change the examination format of the Strategic Management course. The Committee noted that the current examination format for Strategic Management module comprised of 5 compulsory long answer questions. The proposed change would be a combination of 20 multiple choice questions and 1 out of 2 essay questions. The Committee further noted that a greater breadth of knowledge would be tested more effectively by carefully crafted multiple choice questions, combined with a single longer essay to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the programme. Dr Mongiello highlighted that the Strategic Management course change was part of the MSc in Management and not MSc in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management as stated in paper F.

5.4.2 The Committee approved the course changes with effect from 2013-14 and agreed to recommend them for Senate approval.

- 5.5 MSc in Management (Business School) Paper G**
 The Committee considered a proposal to add an optional work placement module to the MSc in Management with effect from 2013-14. Dr Mongiello presented the proposal and informed the Committee that the introduction of an optional work placement module was necessary for the same reasons as already stated earlier for the MSc in Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management. The Committee approved the proposal with effect from 2013-14.
- 5.6 Business School courses – January re-submissions Paper H**
 The Committee considered a proposal from the Business School to allow a January re-submission date for their students who fail their final essays.
- 5.6.1** Dr Mongiello presented the proposal and explained that an External Examiner of the MSc in Management recently raised the issue of final essay resubmission, who had thought it unreasonable that students who failed the final essay should wait a full year to re-submit.
- 5.6.2** Dr Mongiello further explained that the Business School's Quality Committee recently agreed that it would be sensible to introduce an earlier submission date at the end of January, in addition to the current September date. This would be in line with the September re-sit opportunity offered to students who failed an examination. Students would be advised individually if a January resubmission date would be appropriate in their case. Students who submitted early would also be asked to sign to say that they recognised that this would be their one and only re-sit opportunity as was current practice for September re-sits.
- 5.6.3** The Committee approved the proposal subject to the following caveats.
- It is made explicitly clear to students that they had one resit opportunity and that they were counselled appropriately.
 - All submissions in January must be examined by, preferably, the full Examination Board but, if this was not possible by at least a sub board including one External Examiner.
- 6. Course Suspensions**
- 6.1 MSc in Computing (Creative Industries) (Department of Computing) Paper I**
 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Computing to suspend for one academic year, 2013-14, the MSc in Computing (Creative Industries).
- 6.1.1** Dr Fariba Sadri presented the proposal, informing the Committee that the course would be suspended due to a core module of the degree being withdrawn because of the departure of the lecturer teaching it. Dr Sadri explained the Department had not accepted anyone on the degree for the forthcoming academic year. All suitable applicants for the programme had been advised of the possible suspension of the degree and encouraged to consider other similar Master's programmes in the Department.
- 6.1.2** The Committee agreed to recommend the suspension for one academic year, 2013-14, for Senate approval.

7. Course Withdrawal

7.1 MSc in Computing (Architecture) (Department of Computing)

Paper J

To consider a proposal from the Department of Computing to withdraw the MSc in Computing (Architecture) with effect from October 2013.

7.1.1 Dr Sadri informed the Committee that the Department were in the process of consolidating and re-structuring the MSc in Computing (Specialism) courses. MSc in Computing (Architecture) had only three students since it started in 2009, and no applicants had been accepted for the forthcoming academic year.

7.1.2 The Committee agreed to recommend the course withdrawal with effect from October 2013 for Senate approval.

8. Follow up from Previous Course Reviews

Paper K

8.1 MRes in Green Chemistry: Energy and the Environment (Department of Chemistry) – Improving Applications Case Study

The Committee considered a case study from Dr James Wilton-Ely, Course Director of the MRes in Green Chemistry: Energy and the Environment, regarding improving application numbers. The Committee agreed that the case study was an example of good practice and agreed to circulate it to their departmental Course Organisers. The Committee noted that any further examples of good practice should be forwarded for dissemination through the Committee structure.

Action: All Committee Members

9. Course Reviews

9.1 MSc/MREs in Advanced Computing

Paper L

The Committee considered the course review for the MSc/MREs in Advanced Computing in the Department of Computing for 2011-2.

9.1.1 It was noted that the course had been reviewed by Professor Andrew Holmes who had rated it as "Good". Professor Holmes had cited several instances of good practice which included:

- The provision of personal tutors for MSc students which should help to improve pastoral care and early identification of problems.
- Regular meetings between the student representatives and the Course Director which should help to maintain good communication links between the student body and the academic staff.
- Student representation on the Academic Committee.
- Extensive use of an effective online tool for managing coursework and projects which could save a large amount of time and improve the quality of the teaching provision at the same time.
- Appointment of dedicated Teaching Fellows. Having members of staff with a primary focus on coordination of the courses could enhance the student experience and help to maintain high quality.

9.1.2 The Committee endorsed the rate as "GOOD" and agreed the programme would be reviewed in three years' time.

- 9.2 MSc in Composites: the Science, Technology and Engineering Application of Advanced Composites**
The Committee noted that the course review for the MSc in Composites: the Science, Technology and Engineering Application of Advanced Composites in the Department of Aeronautics would be presented to the MQC in November 2013.
- 9.3 MA/MSc in Innovation Design Engineering - Royal College of Art review for 2011-2** **Paper N**
The Committee considered the Annual Programme Review of the MA/MSc in Innovation Design Engineering 2011-12 by the Royal College of Art. The Committee noted that the overall report was positive. The Committee further noted that several actions had been set for the next academic year which included, improvement of technical support and communication and improved space for assessment.
- 9.3.1** It was further noted that Dr David McPhail was following up the comments and recommendations made following the course review by Imperial College with the Department.
Action: David McPhail
- 10. Student Exchange Partner Agreements** **Paper O**
The Committee approved the renewal of the student exchange partner agreement between Ecole Nationale D'Ingénieurs de METZ, France with the Department of Physics (MSc in Physics with Shock Physics).
- 10.1** It was noted that the student exchange agreement for the MA/MSc in Global Innovation Design Engineering with the University of Keio, Japan, was close to signing.
- 11. External Examiners' Reports (2011-12)** **Paper P**
The Committee considered reports from External Examiners for the 2011-12 session.
Discussion reported in Appendix 1 [not published with the minutes]
- 12. Conduct of Examination Boards for Master's Level Courses** **Paper Q**
The Committee considered a paper concerning the conduct of examination boards for Master's level courses.
- 12.1** The Committee noted that at undergraduate level, on the recommendation of QAEC, Senate had approved a standard framework for the conduct of Undergraduate Examination Meetings. The new arrangement would allow Faculties to operate their own procedures according to a set of common principles, including anonymity for examination candidates. The Faculty of Engineering would adopt the new arrangements from 2013-14. The Faculty of Natural Sciences would harmonise their procedures and trial the new arrangements during 2013-14 with a view to implementing them in full in 2014-15. The Faculty of Medicine already adopted an anonymous approach to Examination Boards.
- 12.2** The Committee further noted that QAEC had also discussed arrangements for postgraduate examination boards and considered responses from departments to the Graduate School Consultation. QAEC had agreed that the Graduate School could have longer to consult with departments as not all had responded. It was noted

that if the Graduate School rejected the proposal for anonymity then there needed to be clear rationale for why there was a difference between undergraduate and postgraduate examination boards.

- 12.3** Professor Amparo Galindo informed the Committee that the Department of Chemical Engineering had trialled anonymity within their postgraduate examination board this year and it had worked well.
- 12.4** Professor Richard Jardine suggested that in order to establish the extent of support for or against anonymity, Directors of Postgraduate Studies (DPS's) and Course Organisers should cast a vote. It was agreed that a vote by e-mail would be circulated and any further written feedback for consideration by the Committee could be submitted.

Post Meeting Note

An e-mail vote for or against anonymity was circulated to all DPS's and Course Organisers and further feedback collated. All responses would be submitted to the next MQC in November 2013 for consideration.

- 13. Chair's Report** **Paper R**
The Committee noted a report of actions taken since the last meeting.
- 14. Minor Course Modifications** **Paper S**
It was noted the minor course modifications made to courses during the 2012-13 academic session. The Committee further noted that outstanding course modifications from departments would be submitted to the MQC November 2013. A copy of the levels of approval document can be found at: <https://workspace.imperial.ac.uk/registry/Public/Procedures%20and%20Regulations/Quality%20Assurance/Course%20Approval%20and%20Review/Levels%20of%20approval%20for%20course%20modification.pdf>
- 15. Programme Specifications**
It was noted that the Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee (QAEC) had requested that all programme specification should be updated by the start of next session.
Action: All Committee Members
- 16. Accreditation Reports**
- 16.1 Association of MBAs (AMBA)** **Paper T**
The Committee noted that the AMBA had accredited the Business School's full-time MBA, Executive MBA, Weekend MBA and MSc in Management programmes for a period of five years. The programmes would next be reviewed by the AMBA in May 2018.
- 16.2** It was further noted that the Distance Learning MBA (DLMBA) was not included in the MBA portfolio for re-accreditation as it had stopped admitting students from the end of 2012. However, all students currently enrolled would gain an AMBA-accredited degree upon completion of their studies, under the 2008 AMBA accreditation of the DLMBA programme.

17. Procedures for providing External Examiners with Examination scripts, Evidence of double marking and change the Examination Regulations

The Committee noted the procedures for providing External Examiners with examination scripts, ensuring evidence of double making and changes to examination regulations which would take effect from 2013-4.

18. QAA – UK Quality Code for Higher Education

18.1 Part A: Setting and Maintaining Academic Standards, Chapter B1: Programme design and Approval, Chapter B6: Assessment of students and Recognition of Prior Learning and Chapter B8: Programme Monitoring & Review

The Committee received the consultation questions on the draft versions of Part A: Setting and maintaining academic standards, Chapter B1: Programme design and approval, Chapter B6: Assessment of students and recognition of prior learning, and Chapter B8: Programme monitoring and review of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. For further details regarding the consultation please see:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Newsroom/Consultations/Pages/qc-consultations.aspx>

It was noted that the consultation was open until 1 August 2013 and that QAEC were leading the response. All Committee members were requested to forward any comments to Sophie White (sophie.white@imperial.ac.uk).

Action: All Committee Members

18.2 Higher Education Review Handbook

It was noted that the “*Higher Education Review Handbook*” for Higher Education Review had now been published. For further details please see: www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/HER-handbook-13.aspx

The Committee further noted that the handbook drew on the results of a formal consultation. A report which presents the outcomes of the consultation was also available at:

www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Pages/HER-consultation-outcomes.aspx

19. Senate Executive Summary

It was noted that the latest executive summaries from Senate were available [here](#).

20. QAEC Executive Summary

It was noted the latest executive summaries from QAEC were available [here](#).

21. Any Other Business

The Chair gave a vote of thanks to Mr Nigel Wheatley, Professor Andrew George, Mr Doug Hunt, Mr Nicholas Ng, and Mr Ross Webster as this was their final meeting.

22. Dates of next meetings 2013-4

22.1 Master’s Quality Committee (Business, Engineering & Physical Sciences)

Tuesday 5th November 2013 at 10am – 1pm, Ballroom, 58 Prince’s Gate

Friday 24th January 2014 at 10am – 1pm, Council Room, 170 Queen’s Gate

Friday 21st March 2014 at 10am – 1pm, Ballroom, 58 Prince’s Gate

Friday 16th May 2014 at 10am – 1pm, Ballroom, 58 Prince’s Gate

Friday 11th July 2014 at 10am -1pm, Ballroom, 58 Prince's Gate

22.2 The dates and deadlines for all other College meetings can be found at:
<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/committees>

23. Reserved Areas of Business
There were no reserved areas of business.