IMPERIAL

Programmes Committee (PC)
Minutes from the meeting held on:
Thursday 23 October 2025 (confirmed)

Present
Dr Errikos Levis (Joint Chair), Dr Cloda Jenkins (Joint Chair), Mr Scott Tucker (Secretary), Dr Tiffany Chiu, Dr Michael Weatherburn, Ms Judith Webster, Dr Jeffrey Vernon, Dr Elaina McGinn, Dr Lorraine Craig, Dr Kate Ippolito, Ms Betty Yue, Dr Derek Huntley, and Dr Christopher Ford.

In attendance
Ms Amy Huynh, Professor David Ham, Professor Sonja Billerbeck, Dr Mark Wheelhouse, Professor Alison McGregor.

Apologies
Dr William Cox

1. Welcome and Apologies

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

The Chair led a discussion regarding the critical need for the committee to clearly distinguish between requirements (mandatory) and recommendations (negotiable) in all decisions. This distinction is essential to provide programme teams with clarity and consistency regarding expectations and what is open for negotiation. It was agreed that all non-negotiable items must be explicitly stated as requirements in the committee's formal outputs. Members were requested to contribute any essential, non-negotiable items for inclusion in the formal decisions to ensure programme teams can respond appropriately.

2. Terms of Reference 2025-26

The Committee noted that the Terms of Reference would follow, which will include specific reference to the Admissions Committee.

3. Report of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 22 May 2025 were confirmed as an accurate record.

4. Report on the minor modification audit

The Committee received a report on programme modifications, noting it was the second time this type of report had been presented.

4.1 It was noted that the current "light touch" process for approving minor modifications (e.g., via spreadsheets) is agile but does not capture sufficient data. This lack of data makes it difficult to analyse trends or the rationale behind minor changes.

4.2 A significant number of modifications in this reporting cycle were attributed to data quality issues and system errors from another administrative area. It was suggested that this year's high volume may not reflect a normal trend. An action was taken to follow up on whether the root cause of these errors had been resolved.

4.3 Data on modifications, once a classification scheme is developed, should be captured within the Annual Monitoring Review (AMR) process. This would integrate it into an existing structure, avoid a new reporting stream, and provide Faculty-level oversight.

4.4 The Committee supported integrating this data with AMR, stressing a wider need to connect different workstreams, such as the AMR review and the Assessment and Feedback working group. It was also noted that the ongoing project to reduce assessment workload will use the existing modifications process, and a significant increase in related modifications is anticipated.

4.5 A concern was raised regarding the significant duplication of effort in the current multi-stage committee review process. Members reported reviewing hundreds of pages of documentation "blind," with no visibility of the feedback, responses, or changes made at earlier stages (e.g., Departmental or Faculty committees). This was seen as inefficient and creating a risk of contradictory feedback.

4.6 The Chair confirmed that addressing this duplication and creating a more joined-up review process is a priority for the coming year. It was also noted that a new curriculum management system is being explored, which would allow changes to be tracked as they progress through the committee structure, providing clear version control for reviewers.

5. Matters arising from minutes

There were no matters arising.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

6. New programme proposals

Faculty of Engineering

6.1 PC.2025.04 Department of Bioengineering
MRes Alternative Protein

A new programme proposal from the Department of Bioengineering, with effect from October 2026.

6.1.1 The committee strongly supported the proposal, commending its innovative scope, interdisciplinary nature, and clear alignment with emerging global needs in sustainable food biotechnology. The panel welcomed the programme's integration of downstream processing, regulatory, and consumer-acceptance aspects, as well as its potential to attract students from diverse academic backgrounds.

6.1.2 PC agreed to recommend the proposals to QAEC for **approval**, subject to the following requirements and recommendations:

6.1.3 **Requirements**

- Clarify the overall assessment workload in the Autumn term to ensure it aligns with module credit values and avoids excessive weekly hours, particularly given the combined demands of Modules 1–3 alongside ongoing work for Modules 4 and 5. This issue is heightened for part-time students, and further clarity is needed on whether the current part-time structure requires students to take a block of time away from employment, or whether flexible timelines will be offered to support equitable workload distribution
- Review the exit-award structure to ensure that programme learning outcomes are appropriately aligned to each award, and consider other MRes programmes within the department to determine whether a consistent approach is desirable.
- Ensure that the requirement for interviews as part of the admissions process is included in the programme specification so that expectations are fully transparent to applicants.

6.1.4 **Recommendations**

- Consider designating the personal tutor as distinct from the project supervisor. Review the personal tutoring model to determine whether a cohort-based tutor system, supplemented by named individual contacts, could enhance pastoral support while maintaining manageable staff workloads.
- Provide clear guidance on how group-based assessments will be structured and standardised, including explicit information on marking approaches for group versus individual components, the management of peer-questioning activities, and the assurance of parity across student presentations. Review the sequencing and scheduling of the journal club assessments to ensure consistency, fairness, and mitigation of advantages arising from later presentation dates.
- Consider providing clearer guidance on how compulsory modules will operate for students entering from diverse disciplinary backgrounds, including any baseline content delivered to ensure all students begin with a shared foundation in this emerging field.

6.1.5 **PC provided the following feedback, which is not preventative in progressing the proposal:**

- Enhance clarity in marketing and promotional materials by clearly explaining the meaning of 'protein' in the context of the programme and emphasising its focus on evaluating novel protein sources using biotechnological and engineering approaches.

6.1.6 PC advised that the requirements and recommendations above be considered and that the updated documentation be submitted to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team. Subject to a satisfactory response, PC agreed to recommend the proposal via Chair's Action to QAEC for approval, with effect from October 2026.

6.2 **PC.2025.05 Department of Computing**

BEng Mathematics and Computer Science
BEng Mathematics and Computer Science for Artificial Intelligence
MEng Mathematics and Computer Science
MEng Mathematics and Computer Science for Artificial Intelligence

To consider four new programme proposals from the Department of Computing (in partnership with the Department of Mathematics), with effect from October 2027.

6.2.1 The Committee supported the proposal, commending its potential to strengthen and streamline the JMC degrees, provide a clearer programme identity, enhance student pastoral support, and promote peer interaction within the cohort. The panel also welcomed the strong intellectual foundations of the curriculum and the commitment to increasing staffing to maintain appropriate staff-student ratios

6.2.2 PC agreed to recommend the proposals to QAEC for **approval**, subject to the following requirements and recommendations:

6.2.3 Requirements:

- Better Articulate in the programme specification the distinctiveness of the new programmes and clearly describe what differentiates the degrees from other university offerings in mathematics, computing and AI. Include a more explicit emphasis on the programmes' professional-level programming components and the distinctive graduate profile, characterised by strong foundations in computer science and continuous mathematics.
- Streamline assessment volume and consider diversifying assessment types in Year 1 and Year 2 modules to ensure alignment with credit values and avoid duplication (e.g. Machine Learning in Action, Designing for Real People). Provide detail on the nature and scope of assessment types (e.g. where summative mentorship meetings exist).
- Programmes Committee noted that the Department of Mathematics had reduced the assessment load of Mathematics modules through the modification procedure and asked that this reduction should be reflected in the JMC documentation for the equivalent modules. However, the Committee also noted that the JMC team would need to await the Department of Computing's review of the assessment of Computing modules before these changes could be incorporated into the JMC documentation and expect those to be submitted via minor/major modification in due course.
- Provide clear mapping of transition arrangements to show how students on the current JMC programme would transition to the new programme structure. This should include alignment between 'old' and 'new' modules and an explanation of how progression would be managed for any student affected by the change.
- Programmes Committee noted that a bespoke Statistics module may be required, or that transition students may need to undertake the Year 1 Statistics module from the redesigned JMC programme as part of their Year 2. In the latter case, the appropriate FHEQ level would need to be considered.

6.2.4 Recommendations:

- Consider the addition of, or updates to, exiting learning outcomes, through the inclusion of a Level 7 programme learning outcome addressing the appraisal and critical

evaluation of academic and technical conventions, to complement the existing outcome that reflects the critical consideration of professional practice.
- Review the number of module learning outcomes to ensure that individual modules do not attempt to cover an excessive amount of content; for example, any module exceeding eight learning outcomes may warrant closer consideration.
- Clarify module oversight and quality assurance by providing information on the measures in place to maintain consistency, coherence, and standards across the very large number of elective modules available in Years 3 and 4, which are drawn from two departmental catalogues. This should include mechanisms for sharing good teaching, learning, and assessment practices among module leads.

6.2.5 PC provided the following feedback, which is not preventative in progressing the proposal

- Promote collaboration and information sharing among JMC personal tutors to enhance student pastoral support and facilitate professional development for tutors.
- Monitor student engagement with the full range of elective modules, including non-compulsory streams in Computational Science and Engineering (CSE), Statistics and AI (AIML), and Pure Mathematics and Theoretical Computer Science (PT), to ensure that cohort coherence and consistency of the student experience are maintained.

6.2.6 PC advised that the requirements and recommendations above be considered and that the updated documentation be submitted to the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Team. Subject to a satisfactory response, PC agreed to recommend the proposal via Chair's Action to QAEC for approval, with effect from October 2027.

Faculty of Medicine

6.3 PC.2025.School of Medicine
MSci Medical Science and Innovation

A new programme proposal from the School of Medicine, with effect from October 2027.

6.3.1 The committee were supportive in principle of the proposal, commending its approach to integrated cross-disciplinary design, and the avoidance of content silos and overassessment. The programme team is invited to address the requirements and respond to the recommendations before the proposal is considered by Programmes Committee through Chair's action.

6.3.2 The committee were supportive in principle of the proposal, commending its approach to integrated cross-disciplinary design, and the avoidance of content silos and overassessment.

6.3.3 The programme team is invited to address the requirements and respond to the recommendations before the proposal is considered by Programmes Committee through Chair's action.

6.3.4 Requirements:

- Update the documentation to demonstrate explicitly how innovation theories and frameworks are embedded within and across modules. Ensure this is reflected sufficiently in module learning outcomes to support the specification of 'and Innovation' in the programme title.
- Expand on the rationale for the use of 20 ECTS modules, including how this supports pedagogical integration and assessment balance. This rationale will be considered by the Regulations and Policy Review Committee (RPRC).
- Clearly articulate the distinction between the Level 6 (BSc) and Level 7 (MSci) learning outcomes to evidence progressive development in critical analysis, complexity, and mastery.
- Reassess the weighting and variety of assessments across modules to ensure alignment with credit value and learning outcomes. Clarify how individual performance is assessed within group work.
- Provide a clearer explanation of how the reflective diary contributes to progression and assessment (within the programme's modular structure), ensuring alignment with formal assessment criteria and progression regulations. Clarify the tutor's role in supporting, but not assessing, progression to avoid conflicts of interest (e.g. to provoke the students to think reflectively).

6.3.5 Admissions Committee requirements (if the programme team has already met the requirements, then these are for information only):

- Provide confirmation that the Faculty of Engineering supports the programme proposal and that sufficient differentiation with BSc Biomedical Technology Ventures has been confirmed.
- Evidence how concerns around the proposed campus location and space have been mitigated.

6.3.6 Recommendations:

- Provide a clear rationale for delivering the preparatory 5 ECTS 'Set-up for Year 4 Health Challenge' core module at the end of year 3 rather than at the start of year 4
- Ensure that the Level 7 characteristics of the 5 ECTS 'Breakthroughs' core module are explicitly demonstrated and distinct from earlier years' content.

6.3.7 The following additional feedback was received, which is not preventative in progressing the proposal:

- Consider whether the minimum frequency of one compulsory meeting with a tutor per term is sufficient.
- Consider the future provision for electives, either within the Faculty of Medicine or across the university, to enhance interdisciplinary exposure.
- Ensure that the Board of Examiners has clear criteria for the treatment of borderline candidates and that these are communicated to students (this can be a standalone document).

7. Major modifications

Faculty of Engineering

7.1 PC.2025.07 Department of Bioengineering
MRes Cancer Technology (A3CT)
MRes Neurotechnology (H6NU)

7.1.1 A major modification proposal from the Department of Bioengineering to make the following changes to the named programmes above, with effect from October 2026:

a) Introduce a part-time mode of study for the named programmes above with effect from October 2026.

7.1.2 **Consultation:** student consultation (including alumni), external examiners, Grantham Institute.

7.1.3 **Outcome:** PC agreed to recommend the proposal to QAEC for **approval,** subject to the following requirement:

- PC considered for supervision of projects in industrial settings and assumed these would be aligned with the full time programme

The programme team is invited to respond to the requirement before the proposal is considered by Programmes Committee through Chair's action.

Imperial Business School

7.2 PC.2025.08 Imperial Business School
Executive MBA (N1UA24)

7.2.1 A major modification proposal from the Imperial College Business School to make the following changes to the named programmes above, with effect from January 2026:

a) Withdraw the compulsory module 'Game Changing Technologies and Grand Challenges' (BUSI70357).
b) Add the new compulsory modules 'Leveraging Generative AI for Sustainable Business Value' and 'Emerging Tech for Executives: Quantum, Climate, Ledger & Beyond.'
c) Change the module designation from elective to compulsory, change the ECTS value from 15 to 10 and amend the teaching hours for 'Capstone' (BUSI70687).
d) Change the ECTS value from 15 to 10 and amend the teaching hours for the elective module 'Individual Project' (BUSI70355).
e) Change the module learning outcomes, content, learning and teaching approach, assessment strategy, assessments, and teaching hours for the compulsory module 'International Residences' (BUSI70354) and change the module title to 'Global Immersions'.

7.2.2 **Consultation:** student consultation, external examiner, university colleagues (for changes to Research Project requirements).

7.2.3 **Outcome:** PC agreed to recommend the proposal to the QAEC for **approval.**

7.3 PC.2025.09 Imperial Business School
MSc Financial Technology (N305 / N3052)
MSc Risk Management and Financial Engineering (N34G / N34G2)

7.3.1 A late major modification proposal from the Imperial Business School to remove the elective module 'Global Elective: Corporate Finance for Practitioners' (BUSI70098) from the MSc Financial Technology programme and add the module as an elective onto the MSc Risk Management and Financial Engineering programme with immediate effect

7.3.2 **Consultation:** student consultation, external examiner, Marketing, Outreach, Recruitment and Admissions (MORA) colleagues and approved by Admissions Committee (AC).

7.3.3 **Outcome:** PC agreed to recommend the proposal to QAEC for **approval.**

7.4 PC.2025.10 Imperial Business School
MSc Global Health Management (Economics and Data Science) (N1EGE / N1EGE2)

7.4.1 A late modification proposal from the Imperial Business School to update the assessments for the compulsory module 'Evidence for Policy and Social Impact' (BUSI70502) on the named programme above with immediate effect.

7.4.2 **Consultation:** student consultation, external examiner, MORA, and Registry colleagues.

7.4.3 **Outcome:** PC agreed to recommend the proposal to QAEC for **approval.**

PC provided the following feedback, which is not preventative in progressing the proposal:

- PC understood that assessing student participation was an established practice in the Business School, and that the associated component weightings reflected the pedagogical approaches of the modules. However, noting the comments of the students and external examiner as part of the consultation, PC encouraged the School to continue to ensure that students understood how the participation mark was derived.

7.5 PC.2025.11 Imperial Business School
MSc Management (16MFT) (N19J2)

7.5.1 A late modification proposal from the Imperial Business School to update the assessments for the compulsory module 'Evidence for Policy and Social Impact' (BUSI70502) on the named programme above with immediate effect.

7.5.2 **Consultation:** student consultation, external examiner, engagement with professional bodies and accreditor.

7.5.3 **Outcome:** PC agreed to recommend the proposal to QAEC for **approval**.

7.6 PC.2025.12 Imperial Business School

Weekend MBA (Saudi Aramco) (N1UC)

7.6.1 A major modification proposal from the Imperial Business School to remove the elective module 'Design for Strategic Transformation' (BUSI70149) and add the elective modules 'Strategic Leadership and Governance' (BUSI70465) and 'Consumer Behaviour' (BUSI70023) to the named programme above with immediate effect.

7.6.2 **Consultation:** student consultation and external examiner

7.6.3 **Outcome:** PC agreed to recommend the proposal to QAEC for **approval.**

8. Short Courses

Faculty of Natural Sciences

8.1 **PC.2025.13 Grantham Institute**
Powering the Future: Transforming Electricity Systems in the Age of AI and Climate Change

8.1.2 To consider a proposal from the Grantham Institute for the creation of the named short course above, with effect from January 2026.

8.1.3 **Consultation:** student consultation, external examiner

8.1.4 **Outcome:** PC agreed to recommend the proposal to QAEC for **approval**, subject to the following requirements:

8.1.5 **Requirements:**
Clarify which provider will issue the certificate of completion (Imperial, Apolitical, or jointly), and ensure this is explicitly stated in the documentation.

ITEMS TO NOTE

9. **PC.2025.14 Chairs Report**

The full Chairs Report would be considered at the next meeting of Programmes Committee.

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

PC noted the minutes from the previous QAEC, published on the university website: www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/senate-subcommittees/quality-assurance-enhancement-committee/

11. Any other business

11.1 No other business was raised.

12. Dates of future meetings

12.1 The next Programmes Committee meeting will be held online, scheduled for 27 November 2025.