

QUALITY ASSURANCE & ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Confirmed Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 11 November 2014

Present:

Professor Debra Humphris, Vice Provost (Education) - Chair
Professor Sue Gibson, Director of the Graduate School
Mr Pascal Loose, Imperial College Union Deputy President (Education)
Ms Nida Mahmud, Graduate Students' Union President
Ms Diane Morgan, Associate Dean of Programmes, Business School
Mr Phil Power, Education Coordinator, Faculty of Engineering
Professor Sue Smith, Chair of the Medical Studies Committee, Faculty of Medicine
Professor Alan Spivey, Director of Education, Faculty of Natural Sciences
Ms Sophie White, Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance & Enhancement)

In attendance:

Mr Chris Harris, Quality Assurance & Enhancement Manager, Faculty of Medicine
Dr Jane Saffell, Academic Lead for Taught Postgraduate Education, Faculty of Medicine (for item 5)
Dr Sophie Rutschmann, Summer School Academic Coordinator and Course Director, FoM (for item 5)
Mr Daniel Smith, Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance & Enhancement) - Secretary

Apologies:

Professor Peter Cheung, Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering
Dr David McPhail, Deputy Director of the Graduate School
Mr Dean Pateman, Academic Registrar
Professor Richard Thompson, Senior College Consul
Professor Denis Wright, Director of Student Support

1. Welcome and Apologies

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

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 7 October 2014 were confirmed with no amendments.

QAEC.2014.24

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

3.1 Further to minute 5.2, it was noted the Academic Registrar had confirmed with the Faculty of Medicine that the academic content and structure of their summer school programme would be approved by QAEC. [See Paper QAEC.2014. 31]

3.2 Further to minute 5.3, it was confirmed that the Academic Registrar had agreed the Business School could advertise their summer school programmes.

3.3 Further to minute 15.2, it was noted that strategic approval had been given for the new MSc in Sustainable Retirement Management and Investment proposed by the Centre for Environmental Policy (CEP). The programme had now been considered by the Master's Quality Committee (BEPS) and would be recommended for Senate approval in December 2014.

3.4 Action Log Item 'Apr 14 – 9.5' (Competence Standards)

This item was outstanding and it was agreed that it would be addressed and reported to the Committee on 22 January 2015. Professor Alan Spivey requested that competence standards for both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes should be covered in the discussion.

Action: Mr Dean Pateman

3.5 Action Log Item "Jul 14 – 8.4 (Level 7 Pass Mark in the Faculty of Natural Sciences)

It was noted that students in the Faculty had now been informed of the changes and the item could be considered addressed.

3.6 It was noted that all other items in the action log were in progress.

4. Periodic Review Reports

4.1 Periodic Review of Undergraduate Teaching Provision in the Department of Life Sciences (6 May 2014) QAEC.2014.25

The Committee considered the reviewers' reports, Chair's summary and departmental response.

4.1.1 The review panel made 19 recommendations for the Department and the Chair of the panel confirmed he was satisfied with the Department's response to these.

4.1.2 The Committee were pleased to learn that since the report the Department had provided training in the use of Panopto and that there was progress in the Faculty of Natural Sciences to trial TESTA methodology (Transforming the Experience of Students through Assessment) and that the Department was actively engaging in this process.

4.1.3 The Committee requested that the department report progress on addressing all the recommendations from the review to the Committee in November 2015.

Action: Department of Life Sciences

4.1.4 The Committee was satisfied with the review and the Department's response and agreed to recommend to Senate that the next periodic review take place in academic year 2018-19.

4.2 Periodic Review of Undergraduate Teaching Provision in the Centre for Co-Curricular Studies (26 June 2014) QAEC.2014.26

The Committee considered the reviewers' reports, Chair's summary and

departmental response to the above periodic review.

4.2.1 The review panel made 13 recommendations to the Centre and the Chair of the panel confirmed he was satisfied with the Department's response to these.

4.2.2 It was further noted that Professor Humphris was carrying out a review of the Horizons programme as part of the College's strategic planning process, this would be completed by 2nd February 2015. A number of the recommendations from the review are included in the terms of reference. Professor Humphris agreed to report back to the Committee in March 2015 on the outcomes.

Action: Professor Debra Humphris

4.2.3 It was also confirmed that there were no plans to change the name of Centre for Co-Curricular Studies.

4.2.4 The Centre was praised for the format of its response to the panel's recommendations and it was agreed that it would be recommended the format should be adopted for future reviews.

Post Meeting Note

An action plan template has been implemented by the Senate and Academic Review Team.

4.2.5 The Committee requested that the Centre report progress on addressing recommendations from the review to the Committee in November 2015.

Action: Centre for Co-Curricular Students

4.2.6 The Committee was satisfied with the review and the Centre's response and agreed to recommend to Senate that the next periodic review take place in academic year 2018-9.

4.3 Periodic Review of Postgraduate Teaching Provision in the School for Professional Development (13 May 2014) QAEC.2014.27

The Committee considered the reviewers' reports, Chair's summary and departmental response to the above periodic review.

4.3.1 The review panel made four recommendations to the School and the Chair of the panel confirmed he was satisfied with the School's response to these.

4.3.2 It was noted that with regard to the recommendation concerning IT provision, the School would be investing additional resource in this area.

4.3.4 The Committee requested that the School report progress on addressing recommendations from the review to the Committee in November 2015.

Action: School for Professional Development

4.3.5 The Committee was satisfied with the review and the School's response and agreed to recommend to Senate that the next scheduled periodic

review take place in academic year 2018-19.

4.4 Periodic Review of Postgraduate Teaching Provision in the School for Public Health (18 July 2014) **QAEC.2014.28**

The Committee considered the reviewers' reports, Chair's summary and departmental response to the above periodic review.

4.4.1 The review panel made seven recommendations to the School and the Chair of the panel confirmed he was satisfied with the School's response to these.

4.4.2 It was noted that with regard to the recommendation regarding closer co-ordination of teaching and streamlining delivery, the Faculty's project to harmonise modules across all programmes would address this.

4.4.3 It was noted that with regard to the recommendation concerning the training of GTA, this would be considered as a Faculty-wide issue and would be considered by the Faculty of Medicine's Postgraduate Strategy Committee and the involvement of the EDU would be sought.

Action: Mr Chris Harris

4.4.4 The Committee noted that there had been significant attempts to enhance student integration and develop a school identity and recognised that lack of allegiance to the School would remain an inherent issue where there were part-time students on busy programmes which were run across different campuses.

4.4.5 It was noted that with regard to the recommendation regarding disparity between the physical environments offered at South Kensington and St Mary's, there had now been significant refurbishment at St Mary's.

4.4.6 The Committee requested that the School report progress on addressing recommendations from the review to the Committee in November 2015.

Action: School for Public Health

4.4.7 The Committee was satisfied with the review and the School's response and agreed to recommend to Senate that the next periodic review take place in academic year 2018-19.

4.5 Timescale for Reporting Outcomes of Periodic Reviews 2013/14 **QAEC.2014.29***

The Committee received a verbal report on the time taken for periodic reviews carried out in 2013-4 to reach Senate. It was noted that reviews carried out from March 2014 onwards often did not reach Senate until the following academic year. This was often due to delays in receiving reports from all reviewers and the fact that there were no Senate meetings between mid June and October 2014.

4.5.1 The Committee recommended that one summary report should be collectively produced by the panel. To facilitate this it was recommended that the panel should be given the opportunity to agree the main themes and recommendations at a meeting at the end of the review day, this

could then be circulated to members to review and finalise any changes with the chair of the panel.

Post Meeting Note

This is under active consideration by the Senate and Academic Review Team who are piloting methods for producing a single report for further reviews.

4.5 Periodic Review Schedule

QAEC.2014.30

The Committee approved the proposed review schedule for the academic years 2014-15 to 2019-2020 and agreed the consultation with departments had proved very productive for all concerned.

4.5.1 The new School of Design Engineering would be added to a future schedules as its first review would take place in 2020-2021.

4.5.2 Arrangements for collaborative programmes were still to be confirmed.

5. Proposal for a Faculty of Medicine Summer School

QAEC.2014.30

The Committee considered a proposal from the Faculty of Medicine to establish a 3 week, summer school in *Revolutions in Biomedicine* with effect from summer 2015. The Committee were reminded that strategic approval for the summer school had been given and the Faculty now sought approval for the structure and academic content of the course. It was further noted that regulations governing short courses, including summer schools, were currently in development and that they should be ready for approval by Senate early in the new year.

5.1 The Committee asked for further information on the assessment structure which would allow students to successfully pass the programme without passing each individual assessment. It was clarified that the written examination, weighted at 60%, covered the learning outcomes for the whole course and it would not be possible to pass the course if this assessment was failed. However, it was possible to fail either the individual experimental design plan or group presentation and still pass overall. To ensure that students did not opt to miss either of these assessments and associated work, an attendance requirement would have to be met. Students would be required to attend at least 80% of the programme in order to pass the course. Students who failed the course would receive a certificate of attendance if they had attended at least 80% of the programme.

5.2 The dates of the summer school had been planned to dovetail with those of the second week of the Business School summer school programme so that students would have the opportunity to attend both. Discussions were underway with Registry concerning the possibility of providing a joint transcript for students who might attend both.

Post Meeting Note

The Registry Records Team confirmed that currently, due to the two different admissions processes in operation, it would not be possible to

provide a joint transcript in the first instance.

- 5.3 The Faculty of Medicine were actively engaged in obtaining scholarship funding for summer school applicants and they hoped to be able to offer at least four scholarships in the first instance.
- 5.4 The Committee were satisfied with the academic content of the course and agreed to recommend the summer school for Senate approval, subject to clarification of the attendance requirement on the course specification, with effect from summer 2015.

6. Short Course Quality Committee

QAEC.2014.32

The Committee received a proposal to establish a Short Course Quality Committee which would be responsible for the quality assurance of the teaching provision offered outside of degree provision including, but not limited to, CPD courses, summer schools, outreach and stand-alone modules. The Committee also heard that, it was also proposed to transfer the responsibility for the quality assurance of the Centre for Co-Curricular Studies, Horizons and Business for Professional Engineers and Scientists (BPES) modules from QAEC to the new committee.

- 6.1 As part of this a short course catalogue, a responsibility of the committee, would be developed to capture the range and variety of provision across the College.
- 6.2 The new committee would be a sub-committee of QAEC and would replace the existing CPD Quality Committee. QAEC would report the actions of the committee to Senate as an appendix to the QAEC Senate report.
- 6.3 New regulations governing the above provision were currently under development and that these would include a definition of "short courses".
- 6.4 The chair was pleased to report that Professor Emma McCoy, Department of Mathematics, had agreed to Chair the new committee.
- 6.5 The Committee approved the terms of reference and constitution for the new committee and agreed to recommend it for Senate approval.

Post Meeting Note

Following discussion with the proposed SCQC Chair, Chair's Action was taken to amend the constitution to the following:

Professor Emma McCoy (Chair); a senior representative for educational leadership from each faculty nominated by the Dean; Head of the Centre for Continuing Professional Development, Head of Educational Development Programme, Head of Centre for Co-Curricular Studies; the Director or Deputy Director of the Graduate School; a student representative nominated by the ICU, the Academic Registrar (or nominee), an Assistant Registrar as secretary; with power to co-opt.

7. Review of Student Engagement KPI's **QAEC.2014.33**
The Committee considered a report from the Imperial College Union (ICU) monitoring student engagement key performance indicators.

7.1 It was explained that the development of KPIs and annual report for student engagement had been an action on the ICU agreed by QAEC following consideration of the revised chapter B5: Student Engagement of the UK Quality Code.

7.2 The Committee recommended that the ICU include the KPIs as an appendix to their annual Student Impact Report and that trends were monitored over time, and that it would be helpful to give Faculty level detail in the KPIs.

Action: Mr Pascal Loose

7.3 The Committee also recommended that the PRES and PTES question “My institution values and responds to feedback” was included as a KPI in future reports.

Action: Mr Pascal Loose

7.4 The Committee agreed that, rather than consider KPIs in isolation they would consider the ICU’s annual Student Impact Report on an annual basis.

Post Meeting Note

The [2014 Impact Report](#) was circulated to members after the meeting.

8. World Class Research Supervision Project **QAEC.2014.34/
QAEC/2014.
34a**
The Committee considered a proposal from the Graduate School to run a survey of research degree students on world class research supervision in mid November – mid December 2014.

8.1 The Committee recommended that the Graduate School pre-load the data for questions 1-8 and that if they do so, they should describe the survey as confidential, rather than anonymous.

8.2 The Graduate School were asked to enhance the preamble to the survey to explain the broad topics covered in the survey (e.g. admissions) and that there should also be more information on what the survey hoped to achieve.

8.2 Mindful that the survey questions had been received late, the Committee were given until Friday 14th November to provide feedback to the Graduate School on the survey content and structure.

8.3 The Committee approved the running of the survey for 2014-5 only, subject to the Graduate School considering the recommendations of the Committee.

Post Meeting Note

The Graduate School made changes to the survey as suggested but opted not to pre-load student data to preserve anonymity. The survey was launched on 19th November 2014.

9. Centre for Co-Curricular Studies

9.1 Annual Monitoring Report 2013-4

QAEC.2014.35

The Committee considered the annual monitoring report for the Centre of Co-Curricular for 2013-4 and agreed that the Centre had satisfactorily responded to the comments of the External Examiners and that there were no issues which needed to be addressed.

9.2 Appointment of External Examiners 2014-5

QAEC.2014.36

The Committee approved the appointment of External Examiners for 2014-5.

10. Chair's Action

QAEC.2014.37

The Committee noted actions taken by the Chair since the previous meeting.

11. Academic Standards Framework

The Committee noted that Professor Humphris and Mr Pateman were in the process of consulting on a new Academic Standards Framework with departments and it was hoped to bring a paper on this to the January QAEC meeting.

Action: Professor Debra Humphris

12. Active Student Exchange Links 2014-5

QAEC.2014.38

The Committee noted the active student exchange links for 2014-5.

13. National Student Survey (NSS) Action Plans 2014-5

QAEC.2014.39

The Committee noted the departmental action plans made in response to NSS 2014 as received by the Vice-Provost's Advisory Group (Education) and Provost Board.

13.1 Professor Humphris reported that she would be taking a paper to College Council on 21st November 2014 concerning student satisfaction which would include reference to NSS, PTES and PRES results.

14. Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Updates

14.1 Publication of Revised Subject Benchmark Statements

The Committee noted the QAA had now published a revised benchmark statement for Earth Sciences, Environmental Sciences and Environmental Studies. This had been highlighted with the relevant departments.

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=2836>

14.2 Consultation on Subject Benchmark Statements

The Committee noted the Quality Assurance Agency is currently carrying

out a consultation on subject benchmark statements in Business & Management and Engineering. The Business School and Faculty of Engineering have been informed.

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/newsroom/consultations/consultation-on-nine-revised-subject-benchmark-statements>

Post Meeting Note

The Faculty of Engineering had discussed this at their Faculty Teaching Committee on 7th November 2014 and would not be making a response. The Business School had indicated that they would be responding.

14.3 HEFCE Consultation on the Future of Quality Assurance Arrangement

It was noted that the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has informed the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) that it intends to consult on the future of its quality assessment arrangements in fulfilment of its current statutory responsibilities, and then to put its contract for quality assessment out to competitive tender. <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/Newsroom/Pages/future-of-quality-assessment.aspx>

- 14.3.1** It was noted that although new arrangements may be in place by the time of the College's schedule review in 2016-7, the College would continue to prepare as if for the QAA Higher Education Review (HER) style review. Preparation would start around Christmas 2014.

15. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

16. Dates of meetings 2014-15

Thursday 22 January 2015, 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Faculty Building
Tuesday 3 March 2015, 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Faculty Building
Tuesday 28 April 2015, 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Faculty Building
Tuesday 2 June 2015, 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Faculty Building
Tuesday 14 July 2015, 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Faculty Building

17. Reserved Area of Business

There were no items of reserved business.