

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC)

Confirmed Minutes from the meeting held on

Wednesday 3 October 2018

Present

David Ashton, Academic Registrar – Chair

Alejandro Luy, ICU Deputy President (Education)

Dr Lorraine Craig, Faculty of Engineering representative

Professor Peter Lindstedt, Senior College Consul

Martin Lupton, Faculty of Medicine Representative

Professor Anthony Magee, Deputy Director of the Graduate School (from item 5.1)

Dr Edgar Meyer, Chair of Programmes Committee

Rebecca Middleton, Faculty of Natural Sciences representative (in place of Richard Thompson)

Claire Stapley, CLCC/CHERS representative

Karen Tweddle, Business School representative

Judith Webster, Head of Academic Services

Lucy Heming, Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance and Enhancement) - Secretary

In attendance

David Parrott, Admissions (for item 9)

Apologies

Professor Richard Thompson, Faculty of Natural Sciences representative

Ute Thiermann, GSU President

1. Welcome, Apologies and Announcements

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

2. QAEC Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership and Schedule of Delegation

- 2.1 To approve: the revised QAEC terms of reference, constitution and membership and the revised schedule of delegation. QAEC.2018.01a

- 2.1.1 The Committee agreed to recommend to Senate the revised Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership subject to updating the representative from the Faculty of Natural Sciences to Professor Richard Thompson.

ACTION: Secretary

- 2.1.2** The Committee agreed to recommend to Senate the revised Schedule of Delegation but noted the need to complete the section on responsible owners.
ACTION: Secretary
- 2.2** To approve: the revised terms of reference for Programmes Committee and Postgraduate Research Quality Committee. QAEC.2018.01b
- 2.2.1** The Committee noted the following amendments to the paperwork:
- To remove the reference to College Tutors in the Constitution for the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee
 - To remove the reference to Director or Deputy Director of the Graduate School in the Constitution for the Programmes Committee; this had been agreed with the Director of the Graduate School
 - To ensure the correct terminology with reference to Faculty Senior Tutors was used
- 2.2.2** The Committee discussed the role of Programmes Committee in considering non-credit bearing provision and whether this could be delegated to Faculty Education Committees; it was agreed that this would be considered outside the meeting.
ACTION: Chair of Programmes Committee
- 2.2.3** Subject to the amendments noted above, the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Memberships were agreed to be recommended to Senate.
ACTION: Secretary
- 3. Minutes of the Previous Meetings**
- 3.1** The Committee approved the minutes from the Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee (QAEC) held on Tuesday 23rd May 2018 and the joint QAEC/VPAGE meeting held on 14 June 2018. QAEC.2018.02a & b
- 4. Matters arising from the Minutes** QAEC.2018.03
- 4.1** The Committee noted the updates to the action log, including the decision not to develop a policy on Criminal Convictions following advice from Legal Services. The Chair agreed to circulate the reasoning behind this decision to Committee members.
ACTION: Chair
- 5. Academic Regulations and Policy**
- 5.1 2019/20 Academic Regulations** QAEC.2018.04
- 5.1.1** The Committee considered the proposed 2019/20 single set of Academic Regulations. These were the result of an extensive consultation process through Task and Finish Groups, facilitated discussions and a joint meeting of this Committee and the Vice Provost's Advisory Group (Education).
- 5.1.2** The primary driver behind moving towards a single set of regulations was to improve the student experience, for example by addressing inconsistencies in the treatment of

students and drawing on learning gained through student casework procedures and feedback raised through the National Student Survey (NSS). The regulations had been drafted to help with Curriculum Review and the further roll out of the Learning and Teaching Strategy. Other drivers included the expectations of the Office for Students (OfS) and Higher Education Statistics Agency's (HESA) Data Futures project.

5.1.3 There was a raft of academic policies sitting alongside the existing regulations. Part of the next stage of development would involve determining what would remain as policies, what was no longer needed and what was missing. This 'mapping and gapping' exercise would be undertaken by the Quality Assurance Team and considered by a newly-constituted Regulations and Policy Review Group, which would also finalise remaining areas within the new regulations which needed more work, such as external examiners. This 'mapping and gapping' work had already started in relation to the Admissions policies, which were being picked up under item 9.

5.1.4 It was noted that the regulations would be kept under review through the new Regulations and Policy Review Group. The College would use data sources as new students progressed through the regulations to ensure there were no unintended consequences or misinterpretations. The Academic Registrar would be the final interpreter of the regulations.

5.1.5 The Committee went through the regulations and noted a small number of editorial changes to be made before the regulations were presented to Senate, including an addition to 1.6 to enshrine the responsibility of the College to signpost students to the relevant regulations. A number of recommendations were made for additions to the Glossary.

ACTION: Quality Team

5.1.6 The Committee agreed the wording around Exit Awards should be made clearer so departments were aware the College was expecting exit awards to be offered as standard. This message would need to be circulated via Curriculum Review Reference Panels.

ACTION: Chair of Programmes Committee

5.1.7 Concerns were raised over the following two items:

- The use of integers at module level and the effect of rounding up at module, year and final degree level
- The move to a 1% boundary for considering borderline classification cases

5.1.8 It was confirmed the June QAEC/VPAGE meeting had agreed the use of integers and the protocols for rounding but colleagues had interpreted the meaning of this outcome in different ways. The 1% boundary had been agreed by the Assessment Task and Finish Group. Although these had been considered previously, it was agreed to refer them for final consideration via a new Regulation and Policy Review Group.

ACTION: Head of Academic Services

5.1.9 The Committee agreed to recommend the 2019/20 regulations to Senate for approval.

ACTION: Secretary

- 5.10** The Committee thanked the Quality Team for its work on the regulations and the Faculty representatives for their involvement in the drafting and consultation process.
- 5.2** **2018/19 Undergraduate Academic Regulations** QAEC.2018.05
- 5.2.1** The Committee considered the revised 2018/19 undergraduate Academic Regulations for i) the Faculties of Engineering and Natural Sciences (including BSc Medical Biosciences) and ii) the Faculty of Medicine.
- 5.2.2** The Committee noted that, while the change in reducing the number of different sets of undergraduate regulations looked significant, the meaning of the content within the regulations was unchanged.
- 5.2.3** The Committee agreed to recommend to Senate the 2018/19 undergraduate Academic Regulations for the Faculties of Engineering and Natural Sciences (including BSc Medical Biosciences) and the Faculty of Medicine for immediate implementation.
ACTION: Secretary
- 5.3** **Summary of minor to revisions to 2018/19 General, Student, Academic and Examination Regulations** QAEC.2018.07
- 5.3.1** The Committee endorsed a summary of minor revisions to the other 2018/19 regulations approved by Chair's Action.
- 5.4** **Mitigating Circumstances Policy** QAEC.2018.07
- 5.4.1** The Committee considered revisions to the Mitigating Circumstances policy, noting the policy had previously been approved to go to Senate but that changes had been made to deal with concerns raised regarding extensions.
- 5.4.2** The Mitigating Circumstances Policy had been mapped against the Late Submission Policy and additional text on extensions had been drafted; this would be added into the Mitigating Circumstances policy subject to the addition of the word 'normally' in point one and a change from a reference to Personal Tutors to more broadly refer to a departmental contact.
- 5.4.3** A concern was raised by the Business School over the Late Submission Policy and how it related to part-time students. The policy would be reviewed as part of the 'mapping and gapping' exercise in relation to the 2018/19 regulations and this could be considered as part of that review.
- 5.4.5** It was suggested that Consuls could be invited to attend Faculty oversight boards for Mitigating Circumstances but it was acknowledged this might not be feasible in all circumstances.

5.4.6 It was reiterated that, while all Mitigating Circumstances Claims should be considered, if students had passed, it was not necessary to take action, although it could be reasonable to do so in some circumstances.

5.4.7 The Committee agreed to recommend the policy to Senate for approval and implementation with immediate effect.

ACTION: Secretary

5.5 Student Surveys Policy QAEC.2018.08

5.5.1 The Committee agreed the revisions to the Student Surveys Policy to take account of advice on Data Protection from the Data Protection Officer, subject to a further revision to point 1.3 to note that 'normally' Qualtrix should be used for surveys.

5.6 Approved Policies on Academic Misconduct, Complaints and Student Discipline 2018/19 QAEC.2018.09

5.6.1 The Committee noted the approved policies on Academic Misconduct, Complaints and Student Discipline being implemented for 2018/19.

6. Annual Quality Assurance Report QAEC.2018.10

6.1 During the transitional period in which the Office for Students (OfS) was taking over the core responsibilities previously held by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), it was anticipated that Council still would be required to sign off on the College's quality assurance arrangements as part of the Annual Accountability Review (AAR). Therefore, as with previous years, a report had been produced to demonstrate the operation of the College's processes for assuring quality and standards and to confirm that the College could have confidence in the outcomes of those processes.

6.2 Due to the timing of the report, some information related to the 2016/17 academic year and some to the 2017/18 academic year. This followed the practice in previous reports. A couple of sections of the report and/or appendices were to be added prior to the report going on to Council.

6.3 The report confirmed that there was evidence the College was continuing to maintain standards and assure and enhance the quality of its provision and the student experience.

6.4 The Committee agreed to recommend the report to Senate with a proposal for consideration by Council, subject to the remaining sections and appendices being completed prior to the Council meeting.

ACTION: Secretary

- 7. Working Party for Strengthening Discussion of Postgraduate Issues at Staff-Student Committees (SSCs)** QAEC.2018.11
- 7.1** In February 2015, an extraordinary meeting of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) and chairs of Staff-Student Committees (SSCs) took place to review issues raised at SSCs. The content of this meeting focussed mainly on undergraduate matters so it had been agreed that the Graduate School, the Faculties and the Imperial College Union (ICU) should work together to improve the representation of postgraduate issues at SSCs. A Working Party was established to take this forward.
- 7.2** The Working Party for Strengthening Discussion of Postgraduate Issues at Staff-Student Committees, was co-chaired by the Director of the Graduate School and the ICU Deputy President (Education), and comprised representation from all four Faculties, the Union, the Graduate Students' Union (GSU) and the Graduate School.
- 7.3** The Committee considered the third and final annual report of the Working Party for Strengthening Discussion of Postgraduate Issues at Staff-Student Committees and approved the proposed minor amendments to the Good Practice Guidelines for Staff Student Committees, subject to clarification of the wording in point 1.4.
- ACTION: Secretary**
- 8. Surveys** QAEC.2018.12
- 8.1** The Committee noted the outcome of the summer SOLE (Student Online Evaluation) survey and the introduction of new way of presenting SOLE data via Imperial College Analytics (ICA).
- 9. Admissions**
- 9.1** The Admissions team had undertaken an annual review of all the Admissions policies to ensure they were fit for purpose, transparent and supported fair admissions. As well as some more substantive changes (noted below), the policies were also updated to reflect changes in job titles, cross-references and terminology. The policies would be reviewed again once the new Quality Code advice and guidance on Admissions had been launched, expected on 29 November 2018.
- 9.2** The policies included new sections on data protection, which was linked to the privacy notice, and applicant conduct as well as an addition to the section on feedback to applicants.
- 9.3** The Committee approved all the changes to the policies with immediate effect: QAEC.2018.13a, b, c, d & e
- Undergraduate Admissions Policy
 - Postgraduate Taught Admissions Policy
 - Postgraduate Research Admissions Policy
 - Minors Policy
 - Special Cases Policy for Admission to Postgraduate Programmes of Study (2019 Entry)
- ACTION: Secretary, Deputy Head of Admissions**

9.4 Undergraduate Admissions Policy

9.4.1 The Committee noted the additional specific changes to the Undergraduate Admissions Policy:

- Clarification on the use of departmental tests
- Clarification that exceeding qualification requirements would not make candidates more qualified for admissions purposes
- Clarification around information on criminal convictions, following the data protection guidance that there was no legal basis for processing this information. It was noted that sector discussions were ongoing around how this would be managed in terms of sexual offenders, particularly where minors were admitted

9.5 Minors Policy

9.5.1 The Committee noted the additional specific changes to the Minors Policy:

- Clarification that the College was not in loco parentis
- Clarification that UCAS applicants should be thirteen or older
- Clarification about the College's online application platform

9.6 Special Cases Policy for Admission to Postgraduate Taught and Research Programmes of Study

9.6.1 The Committee approved the proposal to remove information on the process for considering Special Cases from the Policy and to remove the requirement for a narrative case to be presented for special cases for admissions to the MBA.

9.7 2020 UG entry requirements and selection criteria

QAEC.2018.13f

9.7.1 The Committee noted updates to the 2020 UG entry requirements and selection criteria.

9.8 Revised entry requirements for 2020 Undergraduate entry due to changes to the International Baccalaureate Maths

QAEC.2018.13g

9.8.1 The Committee approved the revised entry requirements for 2020 undergraduate entry due to changes to the International Baccalaureate Maths, noting three late changes presented at the meeting:

- Department of Mathematics: would consider both syllabi for 'Analysis and Approaches' and 'Applications and Interpretations', with a preference for 'Analysis and Approaches'
- Department of Mechanical Engineering: would consider both syllabi for 'Analysis and Approaches' and 'Applications and Interpretations', with a preference for 'Analysis and Approaches'
- Department of Aeronautics: would consider both syllabi for 'Analysis and Approaches' and 'Applications and Interpretations', with a preference for 'Analysis and Approaches'

10. Collaborative Provision

10.1 The Committee approved changes to the approvals process for curriculum changes, namely Learning Outcomes, for the LKC Medicine programme, which had been supported by the Chair of the Medicine Faculty Education Committee. QAEC.2018.14

10.2 The Committee considered the proposed Terms of Reference and Constitution for the Collaborative Provision Sub-Group. Members were asked to provide feedback on the proposals to the Secretary outside the meeting. QAEC.2018.15

ACTION: Members, Secretary

11. Programmes Committee (PC)

11.1 The Committee considered the latest report from the Programmes Committee from the meeting held on 11 September 2018 and approved the following: QAEC.2018.16a

11.1.1 The new programme MSc Management, Imperial College Business School, effective 2019/20.

11.1.2 Major modifications to the following:

- MRes Biomedical Research, Department of Surgery and Cancer, effective 2018/19
- MRes Nuclear Energy, Department of Materials, effective 2019/20 (2018/19 recruitment cycle)
- MRes Advanced Computing, Department of Computing, effective 2019/20 (2018/19 recruitment cycle)
- MSc Engineering Fluid Mechanics for the Offshore, Coastal and Built Environments, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, effective 2018/19
- MSc Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Management, Imperial College Business School, effective 2018/19
- MSc Climate Change, Management & Finance, Imperial College Business School, effective 2018/19

11.1.3 Late minor modifications to the following:

- MSc Environmental Engineering Suite, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, effective 2018/19
- UG Physics, Department of Physics, effective 2018/19

11.1.4 It was noted that the full Programmes Committee minutes/papers could be found at: <..\..\..\..\10.Committees\PC>.

11.2 The Committee noted the Terms of Reference for the Curriculum Review Reference Panels and anticipated schedule for submission to Programmes Committee. QAEC.2018.16b

- 12. Academic Calendar** QAEC.2018.17
- 12.1** The Committee noted the 2018/19 Academic Calendar. It provided a guide as to what the 2019/20 Calendar would like look and would be used to determine what processes and deadlines would need to be changed to meet the deadlines in the future.
- 12.2** It was agreed to update the calendar with details of the Horizons examination and enrolment periods which were different than that for other provision.
ACTION: CHERS/CLCC representative, Secretary
- 12.3** It was noted the ICU would need to continue to be involved in discussions around deadlines which affect students, including module selection timing.
- 13. Student Protection Plan**
- 13.1** Faculties and Departments were asked to consider the Student Protection Plan at their local quality committees. The Plan is available at:
https://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/admissions/19-entry/ConditionC3_SPP_10003270.pdf
ACTION: Faculty Representatives
- 14. Faculty Education Committees (FEC)**
- 14.1** The Committee considered the reports from the following Faculty Education Committees: QAEC.2018.18a
- Business Education Committee – 17 April 2018 QAEC.2018.18b
 - Natural Sciences Education Committee – 18 April 2018 QAEC.2018.18c
 - Engineering Education Committee – 16 May 2018
- 14.2** It was noted that that the FEC minutes/papers could be found at:
<..\..\..\..\10.Committees\FEC>.
- 15. Learning and Teaching Committee Report**
- 15.1** This item was deferred until the next meeting.
- 16. Chair's Action**
- 16.1** Chair's Action had been taken to approve the recommendations from the June meeting of Programmes Committee.
- 17. Any Other Business**
- 17.1** The Committee considered the revisions to the Personal Tutors' Roles and Responsibilities document, which had been updated to reflect the expectation agreed during the review of Personal Tutoring that tutors should meet with students twice a term. QAEC.2018.19

17.2 The Committee agreed that the question over whether this requirement included postgraduate personal tutoring would be referred back to the Education Office for clarification.

ACTION: Secretary

17.3 Members noted the importance of having clarity over what was expected in personal tutoring meetings and suggested further work was needed on this.

18. Dates for Meetings

18.1 Wednesday 19 December 2018, 10.00-12.00
Wednesday 30 January 2019, 10.00-12.00
Wednesday 13 March 2019, 10.00-12.00
Wednesday 10 April 2019, 10.00-12.00
Wednesday 5 June 2019, 10.00-12.00

19. Reserved Area of Business

19.1 There was no reserved business.