

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC)

Confirmed Minutes from the meeting held on

Wednesday 19 December 2018

Present

David Ashton, Academic Registrar – Chair

Dr Lorraine Craig, Faculty of Engineering representative

Professor Peter Lindstedt, Senior College Consul

Professor Richard Thompson, Faculty of Natural Sciences representative

Martin Lupton, Faculty of Medicine Representative

Dr Edgar Meyer, Chair of Programmes Committee

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

Rob Tomkies, ICU President (in place of Alejandro Luy & Ute Thiermann)

Kirstie Ward, Assistant Registrar (Academic Standards) - Deputy Secretary

Apologies

Alejandro Luy, ICU Deputy President (Education)

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. Minutes of the Previous Meetings

QAEC.2018.20

- 2.1 The Committee approved the minutes with correction to 2.2.1 to clarify the reason for the correction to Faculty Senior Tutor in the Constitution for Programmes Committee.

Action: Secretary

2.2 Review of Committee Actions

QAEC.2018.21

The Committee noted the status of the points on the action sheet. In particular the Committee discussed the following actions:

2.2.1 Personal Tutor Roles and Responsibilities (October 2018 17.2)

The Committee expressed concern for the welfare of students and how the role of the personal tutor contributed the greater student support mechanisms within the College. It was noted that the updated version of the paper should be distributed to the members.

Action: Secretary

2.2.2 Criminal Convictions Policy (October 2018 4.1)

The Chair informed the Committee that Universities UK (UUK) were taking up the concerns on behalf of the sector with regards to addressing safeguarding issues. It was noted that within the sector some institutions had taken the steps of requesting information of criminal convictions as part of the application process for direct applications at Postgraduate Taught level. Further updates would be provided to the Committee in due course.

2.2.3 Timetabling on Wednesday afternoons (May 18 10.3)

The Committee agreed that feedback on this item be moved to the March meeting. The paper on the audit of current teaching on Wednesday afternoons would be circulated to the Committee.

Action: Secretary

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

3.1 There were no additional matters arising from the minutes.

4. Academic Regulations and Policy

4.1 Update from Regulations and Policy Review Group (RPRG)

QAEC.2018.22

4.1.1 The Committee discussed the remit of the Group which was confirmed to be an advisory group to QAEC considering the development of College academic regulations and policy. The recommendations of the group would be provided to the Committee for approval. As such the Committee had been provided the recommendations in the update paper.

4.1.2 The Committee expressed concern that in some cases the representatives on the Group were not taking the matters to their respective areas for consultation. It was also recognised that the College needed to take forward these issues in a timely manner as they impacted on curriculum review and the SIMP project. It was agreed that the points presented for approval would be taken back for further consultation. It was also agreed that each Faculty would provide to the Secretary the names of a wider consultation circulation list for RPRG. In addition the Committee would be provided with a brief executive summary providing the rationale and main discussion for each item.

Action: Secretary and all faculty representatives

4.1.3 The Committee discussed particular points in the paper. These included compensation for MRes programmes. It was agreed that MRes should be removed from point 10.2. It was noted that an MRes should be referred to in full as a Master rather than Masters. It was confirmed that the weighting of years abroad was still being discussed. It was also confirmed that exit awards would only be given where the student has met the requirements stipulated and has exhausted their opportunities to complete the target award. The Committee was informed that additional clarity of point 11.3 would be reported back for consideration through RPRG.

4.1.4 It was noted by the Committee that RPRG was considering the process by which postgraduate taught programmes would 'transfer' to the Academic Standards Framework (ASF). This was a complex issue as programmes share modules that may mean that part of the programme had been through curriculum review, and the remainder had not, leaving students in different regulatory regimes for the same module.

4.1.5 The Committee noted the reported work streams from RPRG.

4.2 Quality Code

QAEC.2018.23

4.2.1 The Committee was provided details of the recent launch of advice and guidance for the updated QAA Quality Code, which had been published in March 2018. It was noted that the Quality team would be reviewing the current College policies and procedures in relation to the changes that have been made, to bring to the Committee as needed. It was not expected that this would require a significant number of changes as the College had used previous guidance from the QAA in developing policy. It was confirmed that the Code applied to all Higher Education provision regardless of mode, location or level of study by institutions in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. It was confirmed that the QA team would ensure that external guidance, such as that from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education would be considered at the same time.

4.2.2 An area of the code that was highlighted was the role of periodic review in the quality assurance and enhancement cycle; this had recently been raised by the College's internal auditors as well. The Committee endorsed a review of the process to ensure that it was sufficiently flexible to support departments to complete the aims of periodic review and to support other processes such as external accreditation or other statutory review procedures.

5. Academic Calendar 2019/2020

5.1 The Chair provided an update to the Committee with regards to the development of the Academic Calendar. It was noted that the Calendar included internal and external drivers to improve the student experience but also to meet statutory returns. It was agreed that further refinements would include where events were externally or internally set, if they were considered compulsory or best practice, and where events fed upwards from department, to faculty and College level. It was noted that once the Calendar was agreed the Student Records System could be developed to support process and procedure in this

area. The Chair extended an offer to meet with any specific groups to discuss the development of the Calendar.

6 External Examiners

6.1 External Examiner UG report 2017/2018 provision

QAEC.2018.24a

6.1.1 The Committee noted the report which provided institutional level themes arising from the UG External Examiners reports for 2017/2018. Individual programmes/departments would respond to the reports individually and would be expected to take action where improvements were required. It was noted that whilst the External Examiners had agreed that they had confidence in the College provision and the integrity of its awards, there were areas in which the College could improve.

6.1.2 One area highlighted to the Committee was the process for considering marks obtained whilst studying at another institution. It was agreed by the Committee that best practice should be explored in the College and the sector, utilising the rich data already available. This would include consideration of this issue at the point of agreeing and reviewing partnerships. It was agreed that the Committee would consider this at a meeting later in the academic year.

Action: Secretary, QA team

6.1.3 The Committee agreed that, for the reports yet to be received, the QA team would contact the department, copying in the Faculty QAEC representative. The department would then contact the examiner in question to seek the report. If the report still was not received the committee would then consider the next action to be taken.

Action: Secretary

6.1.4 The Committee noted that a review of External Examiner remuneration, roles and responsibility was required, particularly in the light of changes that would need to be made following curriculum review. This would be presented to the Committee in due course for approval.

Action: QA team

6.2 Update on the External Examiner Report Action plan 2016/2017

QAEC.2018.24b

6.2.1 The Committee was provided with an update on the actions from the previous year's report. It was noted where items from 2016/2017 had arisen again in the report for 2017/2018.

6.2.2 The varied practice of scaling was one such area that had been raised repeatedly by the External Examiners. In some areas this was recorded as good practice, but in others concerns were being raised. It was agreed that supporting guidance for departments with regards to scaling should be provided as part of the wider review of marking and moderation procedures.

- 7. Undergraduate Academic Appeals 2017/2018** QAEC.2018.25
- 7.1** The Committee noted that the full report regarding Academic Appeals (undergraduate) would be presented at the next meeting, with a report for postgraduate taught provision to follow around Easter. These reports would provide statistical and contextual data for the Academic Appeals that had been received. It would also seek to consider any themes arising from the analysis of the reports, identify areas of best practice and make recommendations for change where identified.
- 7.2** The Committee was presented with some basic data of the appeals received to date and how many were considered eligible by programme. The Committee was also provided with a breakdown by department of outcomes for eligible appeals in relation to those related to procedural issues or late notification of mitigating circumstances.
- 7.3** The Committee considered the increase in appeals on the grounds of late notification of mitigating circumstances, acknowledging the work of the Imperial College Union in raising awareness and supporting students. There was discussion regarding the potential barriers to students reporting their difficulties within the timeframes stipulated in the procedure.
- 8 Student Exchanges** QAEC.2018.26
- 8.1** The Committee noted the range of opportunities available to students as evidenced in the report and acknowledged the support and resources that enabled this to take place. The importance of maintaining these relationships post-Brexit was highlighted. It was agreed that in addition to the number of partners, future versions of the report should include the number of students taking up the opportunity to study elsewhere.
Action: Assistant Registrar (Placements)
- 8.2** The Committee noted the concerns raised by the Business School in relation to supporting incoming students to take I-explore modules, including timely notification and selection of modules.
- 8.3** A breakdown of the partnerships by EU, Commonwealth and Asia would be provided following a request from the Committee.
Action: Assistant Registrar (Placements)
- 9 Collaborative Provision**
- 9.1 Periodic Review process for LKC Singapore Medicine programme** QAEC.2018.27
- 9.1.1** The Committee agreed the proposal to amend the 'Periodic Review of Taught Programmes Policy, Procedure and Guidance' to enable LKC to use this to meet its external Department of Health requirements for programme review.

- 10 Masters' Experience Working Party preliminary report and recommendations** QAEC.2018.28
- 10.1** The Committee considered the proposal to amend the template for annual monitoring in the light of the findings of the working party. It was noted that there were also recommended changes to the programme documentation templates which were being considered separately by the Programmes Committee.
- 10.2** The Committee agreed the changes with the following amendments:
- The term 'wellbeing' is used consistently rather than welfare
 - Imperial College Union (ICU) are 'looped' in to support postgraduate taught students
- 11 Programmes Committee update** QAEC.2018.29
- 11.1** The Committee noted the update from the Chair of Programmes Committee of the last two meetings, which included the acknowledgement of how busy the Committee would be in the new year with curriculum review.
- 11.2** The Committee was informed of the approval of the Global Master in Public Health (MPH). This was an online programme, delivered by Coursera from which a number of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) with or without credit would be offered. It was noted that there needed to be confirmation of the Accreditation for Prior Learning (APL) opportunities where a MOOC had been taken for credit.
- 11.3** It was reported that Programmes Committee was considering a proposal to amend the approval process for non-credit bearing short courses, to make this Faculty based.
- 11.4** The Committee noted the concern raised over whether the campus development plan would be sufficiently advanced to provide the physical resource to teach the updated curriculum following curriculum review.
- 11.5** The following new programmes were approved:
- MSc Artificial Intelligence, Department of Computing, effective 2019/20
 - MSc Advanced Materials for Sustainable Infrastructure, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, effective 2019/20
 - Global Master of Public Health, School of Public Health, effective 2019/20
- 11.6** The following programmes were approved through Curriculum Review for 2019/20:
- Imperial Horizons, Centre for Languages, Culture and Curriculum
 - BSc Medical Sciences with Specialism, Faculty of Medicine
 - MRes Biomedical Research, Department of Surgery and Cancer
 - MRes Cancer Biology, Department of Surgery and Cancer
 - MSc Immunology, Department of Medicine
 - MSc Paediatrics and Child Health, Department of Medicine

- 11.7** Major Modifications to the following programmes were approved:
- MA / MSc Innovation Design Engineering, Department of Design Engineering, effective 2018/19
 - Executive MBA, Imperial College Business School, effective February 2019
 - PG Advanced Chemical Engineering, Department of Chemical Engineering, effective 2018/19
 - MSc Environmental Technology, Centre for Environmental Policy, effective 2019/20
 - MSc Mathematics and Finance, Department of Mathematics, 2019/20
 - Business Summer School, Imperial College Business School, effective summer 2019

- 11.8** In-year minor modifications to the following programmes were approved with immediate effect:
- UG Aeronautical Engineering, Department of Aeronautics
 - MSc Finance; MSc Finance and Accounting, Imperial College Business School
 - MSc Finance; MSc Investment & Wealth Management; MSc Risk & Financial Engineering, Imperial College Business School

- 11.9** The following short courses and summer schools were approved:
- Climate Change: Financial Risks and Opportunities (online MOOC), effective October 2018
 - Entrepreneurship & Innovation (summer school – University of Navarra), effective May 2019
 - ‘Agents for Change’ Women’s Leadership Programme (short course), effective September 2018

- 11.10** The following programmes were withdrawn with immediate effect:
- MSc Concrete Structures & Sustainable Development (1YFT), (2YPT) & (3YPT)
 - MSc Structural Steel Design & Sustainable Development (1YFT), (2YPT) & (3YPT)
 - MSc Environmental Engineering & Sustainable Development (1YFT) & (2YPT)
 - MSc Hydrology & Sustainable Development (1YFT) & (2YPT)
 - MSc Soil Mechanics & Sustainable Development (1YFT) & (2YPT)
 - MSc Transport & Sustainable Development (1YFT), (2YPT) & (3YPT)
 - MSc Engineering Geology for Ground Models (1YFT) & (2YPT)
 - MSc Engineering Geology for Ground Models & Business Management (1YFT) & (2YPT)
 - MSc Engineering Geology for Ground Models & Sustainable Development (1YFT) & (2YPT)
 - MSc Theory and Simulation of Material & CDT
 - MRes Controlled Quantum Dynamics & CDT

- 11.11** The following programmes were suspended with immediate effect:
- MRes Biomedical Research (Toxicological Sciences)
 - MSc Conservation Science

12 Chair’s update to the Committee

- 12.1** It was agreed to circulate the planned verbal update to the Committee via email.

Action: Chair, Secretary

13 Admissions

- 13.1** The Committee noted the end of year report for 2018 entry (UG, PGT, MRes). QAEC.2018.a-c
- 13.2** The Committee noted the undergraduate admission statistics for 2019 entry. QAEC.2018.31

- 14 Annual Quality Assurance Report** QAEC.2018.32
- 14.1** The Committee noted the updated Annual Quality Assurance report that had now been presented to Senate.
- 15 Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (PRQC)** QAEC.2018.33
- 15.1** The Committee noted the report from the PRQC meeting held 24 October 2018
- 16 Faculty Education Committees (FEC)**
- 16.1** The Committee received reports from the following Faculty Education Committees:
- CHERS/CLCC Education Committee – 25 September 2018 QAEC.2018.34a
 - Natural Sciences Education Committee – 26 September 2018 QAEC.2018.34b
 - Engineering Education Committee – 26 September 2018 QAEC.2018.34c
- 16.2** It was noted that that the FEC minutes/papers could be found at:
[..\..\..\..\10.Committees\FEC.](#)
- 17 Learning and Teaching Committee Report**
- 17.1** It was agreed that the summary of the Learning and Teaching Committee would be circulated to the Committee.
- Action: Secretary**
- 18 Chair's Action**
- 18.1** It was agreed to circulate the Chair's Actions that had been taken for approval by the Committee.
- Action: Secretary**
- 19 Any Other Business**
- 19.1** No additional items were raised.
- 20 Dates for Meetings**
- 20.1** 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
- 21 Reserved Area of Business**
- 21.1** There was no reserved business.