

## Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC)

Confirmed Minutes from the meeting held on

Wednesday 30 January 2019

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### 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

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

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

Scott Tucker, Assistant Registrar (Monitoring and Review) – for item 8

### Apologies

Alejandro Luy, ICU Deputy President (Education)

Ute Thiermann, GSU President

Martin Lupton, Faculty of Medicine Representative

Professor Anthony Magee

Dr Edgar Meyer, Chair of Programmes Committee

## 1 Welcome, apologies and announcements

- 1.1** The Chair welcomed the attendees to the meeting and apologies, as listed above, were noted.
- 1.2** The Committee was informed that the representative from the Faculty of Natural Sciences, Professor Richard Thompson, would be standing down from his role as Faculty Senior Tutor, and therefore his successor would be the representative for Natural Sciences for future meetings. Professor Thompson was thanked for his work and support of the Committee.

## 2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

QAEC.2018.36

- 2.1** The Committee confirmed the minutes of 19 December 2018 with the following amendment:
- Improve the clarity in minutes 4.1 and subsection paragraphs when referring to the Committee (QAEC) and to the Regulations and Policy Review Group (RPRG).
- 2.1.1** It was also confirmed that constituent Faculties, Departments or Directorates of RPRG may consider including additional members on the Group in order to meet their specific needs.

## **2.2 Review of Committee Actions**

QAEC.2018.37

The Committee noted the status of the points of the action sheet. It was noted that a number of actions had been superseded and are no longer relevant. In particular the Committee discussed the following actions:

### **2.2.1 Admissions and Registration Task and Finish Group (September 2017, 6.2.2)**

It was agreed that development of an attendance policy would not be taken forward, and therefore this action was now superseded.

### **2.2.2 Writing up period (September 2017, 12)**

This action will be incorporated into the greater review of research regulations that would initially be considered by the Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (PRQC).

## **3 Matters arising from the Minutes**

**3.1** There were no additional matters arising from the minutes.

## **4 Academic Regulations and Policy**

QAEC.2018.38

**4.1** The Committee considered the update from the Regulations and Policy Review Group (RPRG). It was noted that following the previous meeting of QAEC there had been a greater circulation of information for consultation prior to each meeting.

**4.2** It was noted that there was a finite period in which agreement and approval of the Academic Standards Framework (ASF) Regulations needed to take place, and that there would need to be regular review in order to be sure that they remained fit for purpose. It was also recognised that the regulations needed to be agreed in order that appropriate supporting guidance and documentation could be developed.

**4.3** The Committee noted that, subject to the outcome of the sector degree classification consultation, the agreed regulations might need to be updated to meet any new requirements.

## **5 Academic Calendar**

QAEC.2018.39

**5.1** Draft 2019/2020 undergraduate and postgraduate provision academic calendars were presented to the Committee. It was noted that another version might be required for 'long year' programmes; however, there was a need to provide consistency in the main areas to ensure a good student experience.

**5.2** The representatives on the Committee fed back the comments from their areas. It was accepted that it was necessary to develop an academic calendar; however, there was concern as to how this would be implemented and staff supported in order to achieve the deadlines on the calendar which were considered challenging. It was considered appropriate to make clear what the drivers for the deadlines were and that the calendar presentation be reviewed to take this into account.

**Action: Secretary**

**5.3** The Committee discussed the period for postgraduate results management and release to students. It was noted that this period needed to be as short as possible in order that

potential graduates could go on to further study or into employment without undue delay, but there also needed to be sufficient time to enable the marking and Board of Examiners procedures to take place. It was agreed that data was needed to identify the potential barriers to earlier completion of the results process.

**Action: Secretary and all faculty representatives**

**5.4** In addition to the consideration of timely results for postgraduate students the Committee discussed the support needed for students with re-sit dates, publication of results and when reassessment would be considered by a re-sit Board.

**5.5** It was noted the Board of Examiners for the Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication (CLCC) should be listed at week 30, in order for this to feed into the students' programme Boards of Examiners.

**Action: Secretary**

## **6 Academic Appeal Undergraduate Reports**

QAEC.2018.40

**6.1** The Committee was presented with the report which detailed the undergraduate academic appeals for the previous academic year, benchmarked where possible against previous year's data. In the discussion it was noted in particular that the report was limited due to the availability of data in relation to the other stages of the appeals process and further consideration of cases by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator. It was agreed that this would be taken forward for the report for the next year.

**6.2** The Committee considered the role of College Consuls in the appeals and other casework processes. It was noted that the agreement for Consuls to support the consideration of student casework was temporary and had led to a significant increase in workload which was potentially unsustainable. It was agreed that as the ultimate confirmation of panel membership of panel was the role of Senate that this would be raised there.

**Action: Deputy Secretary/ Secretary for Senate**

**6.3** It was noted that the College needed to follow up on areas of procedural irregularity appropriately; whilst the individual departments received the outcome, greater learning at a broader level could be achieved.

**6.4** The Imperial College Union Deputy President had provided his comments to the Secretary in advance of the meeting. These comments were shared with the Committee. In particular it was noted that there was strong support for recommendation 3 of the report which related to ensuring that students were given clear explanations of the decisions that had been made, such as where and how mitigating circumstances had been taken into consideration.

**6.5** The Committee endorsed all the recommendations in the report, except for the changes to the deadline for submitting a request for an arithmetical marks check.

## **7 Student Surveys**

**7.1 Faculty Reports on Department Action plans in relation to Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) results** QAEC.2018.41

**7.1.1** The Committee noted the reports that had been provided for consideration and approved the action plans. It was noted that the reports for Medicine, CLCC and the Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship (CHERS) would be presented at the next meeting.

**7.2 AdvanceHE report on the results of the PTES 2018**

QAEC.2018.42

- 7.2.2** The Committee noted the report which provided analysis of the sector results for the PTES survey in 2018.
- 7.3** **The Office for Students (OfS) research survey of postgraduate taught students** QAEC.2018.43
- 7.3.1** The Committee noted that the College had committed to be involved in the survey, though full details were yet to be provided. The Committee raised concerns regarding potential survey fatigue in students and the potential overlap with other current internal or external surveys.
- 8** **Annual Monitoring Reports**
- 8.1** **Faculty Annual Monitoring Reports** QAEC.2018.44
- 8.1.1** The Committee welcomed the Assistant Registrar (Monitoring and Review), Scott Tucker, to the meeting.
- 8.1.2** The Committee noted the reports and no particular items were raised.
- 8.2** **College level summary report** QAEC.2018.45
- 8.2.1** The Committee received the College summary report. Particularly highlighted to the Committee was the useful feedback that had been received in relation to the process, and that the process confirmed academic standards were being maintained.
- 8.2.2** The reports highlighted areas of good practice for wider dissemination across the College, but also highlighted those areas in which improvements could be made to improve the experience of students on their programmes of study. These included:
- Constraints to available space
  - Management of cross department module provision
  - Assessment and feedback development
  - Personal tutoring support
- 8.2.3** The members of the Committee were requested to provide feedback on the process particularly in relation to:
- Data for the process
  - Engagement of students in the annual monitoring process, what the expectations and how they might be efficiently and effectively utilised without causing an undue burden.
  - Feedback and further development and monitoring of actions.
- 8.2.4** Professor Craig offered to share with the Committee the approach her Faculty was considering in relation to student involvement in the annual monitoring process.  
**Action: Professor Craig/Secretary**
- 8.2.5** The Committee agreed that where items were raised in the reports that fell under the remit of the Learning and Teaching Committee they would be referred on by QAEC. It was agreed that those items that did not fall under the remit of Learning and Teaching or QAEC, such as building management should be considered using the appropriate procedures within the College.

- 8.2.6** It was noted that the annual monitoring process would be reviewed to consider how departments could effectively prepare for TEF submissions.
- 8.2.7** The Committee agreed that the action plan would be monitored by QAEC, referring to Senate where this was deemed appropriate.
- 8.2.8** In the discussion on annual monitoring the representative from CLCC raised concerns regarding the treatment of their staff by a small minority from other departments. The Committee shared the concerns raised which indicated a lack of respect and was not acceptable. The Committee encouraged the reporting of inappropriate behaviour through the relevant College procedure, and where possible the inclusion of staff on active bystander training.

## **9 Programmes Committee**

QAEC.2018.46

- 9.1** The Committee noted the report of the last meeting of Programmes Committee held on 8 January 2019. It was reported that Programmes Committee had considered the first programmes that had undergone curriculum review and were satisfied that the process was working appropriately. It had been fed back to panels that the content of the papers was good and that the work that had been undertaken was recognised.
- 9.2** The following redesigned programmes were approved following curriculum review with effect from October 2019:

### **Faculty of Engineering (Undergraduate)**

#### UG Chemical Engineering

- MEng Chemical Engineering
- MEng Chemical Engineering with a Year Abroad

#### UG Civil Engineering

- MEng Civil Engineering
- MEng Civil Engineering with a Year Abroad

### **Faculty of Medicine (Postgraduate)**

MRes Experimental Neuroscience

MSc Genes, Drugs and Stem Cells- Novel Therapies

MSc Molecular Medicine

MSc Translational Neuroscience

- 9.3** The following major modifications were approved:

#### **UG Physics (Modification 1)**

To make in-session changes to the progression regulations of the below suite of programmes to be implemented with immediate effect from January 2019.

- MSci Physics
- MSci Physics with a Year Abroad
- BSc Physics with Theoretical Physics
- MSci Physics with Theoretical Physics

#### **UG Physics (Modification 2)**

To make in-session changes to the assessment for the module 'Complexity and Networks' within the below suite of programmes to be implemented with immediate effect from January 2019.

- BSc Physics
- MSci Physics
- MSci Physics with a Year Abroad
- BSc Physics with Theoretical Physics
- MSci Physics with Theoretical Physics
- BSc Physics and Music Performance

### **UG Chemistry**

To make in-session changes to the assessment for the lecture series part of the module 'Strategies in Drug Discovery' within the below suite of programmes to be implemented with immediate effect from January 2019.

- BSc Chemistry
- BSc Chemistry with Management
- BSc Chemistry with Management and a Year in Industry
- MSci Chemistry
- MSci Chemistry with Research Abroad
- MSci Chemistry with a Year in Industry
- MSci Chemistry with Research Abroad and a Year in Industry
- MSci Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry
- MSci Chemistry with Medicinal Chemistry and a Year in Industry
- MSci Chemistry with Molecular Physics
- MSci Chemistry with Molecular Physics and a Year in Industry
- MSci Chemistry with French/German/Spanish for Science

### **MSc Advanced Materials Science and Engineering**

To include additional text of 'Specialising in Nuclear Engineering' on the certificate for students who meet the criteria for this specialisation with effect from October 2019.

### **MSc Chemical Engineering with Process Systems Engineering**

To make an in-session change to replace the core module CE4-33 Molecular Modelling of Fluids with CE4-08 Dynamic Behaviour of Process Systems to be implemented retrospectively from October 2018.

**9.4** The following Suspensions and Withdrawals of existing programmes were approved:

#### **MSci Petroleum Geoscience**

To withdraw the programme above with effect from October 2019 (to close 2020/21 recruitment cycle).

**10 Collaborative provision** QAEC.2018.47

**10.1** The Committee noted the membership of the Collaborative Provision Sub-Group.

#### **11 Faculty Education Committee**

**11.1** The Committee received reports from the following Faculty Education Committees:

- Medicine Education Committee – 24 September and 10 December 2018 QAEC.2018.48a
- Engineering Education Committee – 7 and 28 November, 12 December 2018 QAEC.2018.48b
- Business School Education Committee – 27 November 2018 QAEC.2018.48c
- Natural Sciences Education Committee – 28 November 2018 QAEC.2018.48d

**12 Learning and Teaching Committee**

**12.1** The Chair provided a verbal report to the Committee. This provided an update on the Student Shapers project which was now in place and proceeding well and the recently-implemented Student Support Strategy. It was agreed that the papers for the Learning and Teaching Committee would be shared in the same way as that for Senate with the Committee, and that details of the Student Support Strategy and Digital Learning & Teaching Strategies should be shared with Committee members.

**Action: Secretary**

**13 Senate**

**13.1** The Committee noted the papers for Senate.

**14 Any Other Business**

**14.1** No other matters of business were raised.

**15 Dates for Meetings**

**15.1** Wednesday 13 March 2019  
Wednesday 10 April 2019  
Wednesday 5 June 2019

**16 Reserved Areas of Business**

**16.1** There was no reserved business