

# IMPERIAL

## SENATE

### Minutes of Meeting held on 15 October 2025

**Present:** Professor Peter Haynes (Chair); Professors Ashby, Bluck, Constantinides, Craig (D), Ferguson, Gandy, Kingsbury, Lupton, Muggeridge, Riley, Spivey, Todd; Wiesemann; Drs Costa-Pereira, Craig, Rutschmann, Tennant, Keeling, Tsiampousi; Ms Hogas, Mr Henry, Ms Bannister, Ms Burrows, Mr Ashton (Secretary), Mr Tucker (Minute Secretary).

**Apologies:** Professors Ashby, Brandon, Craster, Jenkins, Matar; Ms Webster.

**In attendance:** Ms Anna Shierson (for minute 2944)

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| <b>2952</b> | <b>Minutes</b><br><br><u>Received and confirmed:</u> The minutes of the Senate meeting held on 25 June 2025 were confirmed as an accurate record (Paper Senate/2025/01).                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| <b>2953</b> | <b>Apologies for Absence</b><br><br><u>Reported:</u> The Chair welcomed members to the first Senate meeting of the academic year. Apologies for absence were noted as above.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>2954</b> | <b>Senate Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership 2025/26</b><br><br><u>Received:</u> Proposed updates to the Senate Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership 2025/26 (Paper Senate/2025/02).<br><br><u>Noted:</u> (1) Updates had been made to the membership and to the Powers and Functions of the Senate to strengthen the link between the Senate and Council. The proposed changes to the membership included adding the Registrar and University Secretary, the Academic Registrar, and the Chief Marketing and Recruitment Officer as ex-officio members.<br><br>(2) The clause on reserved business, which would have excluded student representatives from some discussions, had been removed to align with its deletion from the Council constitution. In practice, this clause had not been applied for many years.<br><br><u>Considered in discussion:</u> (3) Members discussed the explicit reference to ‘teaching’, and the absence of ‘research’, in the proposed updates to the Powers and Functions of the Senate. It was confirmed that the University Management Board (UMB) oversaw matters related to research. |

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|             | <p><u>Recommended:</u> (4) The Senate recommended to Council the proposed changes to the Senate Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership 2025/26. The changes would be reported to Council through a revised Ordinance 7 and Regulation 3.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Secretary</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>2955</b> | <p><b>Chair's Action</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> No Chair's actions had been made since the previous meeting of the Senate.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>2956</b> | <p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> All matters arising were covered on the agenda.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>2957</b> | <p><b>Provost and Deputy President's Report</b></p> <p><u>Received:</u> A verbal report from the Provost and Deputy President.</p> <p><b>Office for Students Consultation on Quality Assessment</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (1) The Office for Students (OfS) was consulting on a new quality assessment system which aimed to provide students with a clear view of the quality of teaching and learning delivered by every registered provider. The proposals aimed to integrate the OfS' existing assessment activity with a revised Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). The revised TEF would assess how each registered provider met the OfS' quality requirements and how they exceeded those expectations in delivering high-quality teaching and learning for students.</p> <p>(2) The OfS would publish a rating for each provider to give students clear information about the level of quality delivered. The revised TEF would operate on a cyclical basis, with the frequency of assessment determined by the provider's rating and ongoing risk monitoring. The OfS stated that this approach would reduce burden on providers delivering the highest-quality education and achieving good outcomes for students. The first cycle of assessments would focus on undergraduate provision, with plans to include postgraduate taught provision from the second cycle onwards.</p> <p>(3) The consultation would close on 11 December 2025 and the university's response would be developed by the Director of Planning and Insight in collaboration with colleagues. Members of the Senate were advised to provide any feedback via their Vice Dean (Education).</p> <p>(4) The Russell Group was developing a joint response to the consultation.</p> |
| <b>2958</b> | <p><b>Office for Students Survey and Condition E6</b></p> <p><u>Received:</u> Office for Students Sexual Misconduct Survey 2025 and Condition E6 paper presented by the Chief Student Services Officer (Paper Senate/2025/03).</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |

Reported: (1) The OfS conducted a survey on sexual harassment and misconduct in January 2025. It was noted that Condition E6, effective from 1 August 2025, required higher education providers to prevent and respond to incidents, maintain clear policies, and provide comprehensive information on support and reporting.

(2) Survey results showed that 25% of Imperial students experienced sexual harassment and 16% experienced sexual assault/violence, with women and LGBTQ+ students disproportionately affected. Confidence in knowing where to seek support was below the national average.

(3) Imperial's provision to meet Condition E6 included:

- Consent Matters online training for students.
- A central Preventing Harassment and Sexual Misconduct site.
- Clear policies through the Student Code of Conduct, Sexual Misconduct Policy, and Personal Relationships Policy.
- Trauma-informed support via the Student Support Service, including a dedicated advisor for responding students.
- Disclosure through Report and Support.
- Management of disciplinary cases by the Student Casework Team, with internal investigations and Panel briefings.

(4) Participation in the Consent Matters online training was 82% in 2025, which the Senate agreed was encouraging given that completion was not mandatory. It was reported that the training could take up to an hour per module if completed diligently, although the average completion time was approximately 20–25 minutes.

Noted: (5) It was confirmed that the training product, delivered through a third-party provider, would be supported as the university transitioned from Blackboard to Canvas.

(6) It was confirmed that the training included information on how to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the university, and that accompanying support information could be adapted, as necessary.

Considered in discussion: (7) Members discussed options to increase participation and considered whether access to certain services or tools could be made contingent on completing the training. Members commented that restricting access to Students' Union facilities would be complex due to automatic membership, although restricting participation in student committees might be feasible. Overall, it was acknowledged that restricting access to services would introduce significant operational and pastoral complexities and was therefore not considered the most effective method for increasing engagement. Instead, a targeted communications approach was recommended; faculties could receive data on students who had not completed the training to enable departments to achieve higher participation than could be secured through generic reminders from central services.

(8) Members discussed linking completion of the training to PGR progression. It noted that PGR students were already required to complete compulsory training through their Early Stage Assessment (ESA) and Late Stage Review (LSR), and that work was underway to

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|             | <p>explore essential training for students more broadly. The Consent Matters online training could therefore be considered within this review.</p> <p><u>Agreed:</u> (9) It was recommended that onward distribution of information via senior tutors would be an effective approach to gain further feedback. An update would be provided at Council, including what steps would be considered to increase student participation in the Consent Matters online training.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Action: Chief Student Services Officer</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>2959</b> | <p><b>Mitigation for the Disruption to Taught and Research Programmes of Study</b></p> <p><u>Received:</u> An updated paper on the university's approach to mitigating disruption to teaching, learning and assessment, presented by the Academic Registrar (Paper Senate/2025/04).</p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (1) The paper expanded earlier mitigation principles, which had focused mainly on disruption to assessment, to incorporate disruption to the delivery of teaching. The guidance aimed to ensure that students were not disadvantaged, that academic standards were maintained, and that regulatory expectations were met.</p> <p>(2) Departments were expected to deliver teaching as scheduled wherever possible. Where this was not achievable, departments should consider appropriate alternative methods and ensure that students were assessed only on material that had been delivered. Significant gaps in essential teaching would require further delivery to ensure that students are effectively supported to demonstrate the intended learning outcomes.</p> <p>(3) In line with existing principles, clear, timely and accurate communication with students remained essential, and records of communications were required to be retained. For assessment disruption, heads of department were expected to plan early, adjust assessment content where teaching had been affected, and consult external examiners where possible. Boards of Examiners could apply cohort-wide or, where justified, targeted mitigation, and were required to record the rationale for all decisions, including those taken where marks were missing. Progression and award decisions could be made provisionally where marks were unavailable, in line with the Senate's previous agreement that provisional classifications should not be lowered once confirmed. Boards affected by the unavailability of external examiners were required to follow existing guidance and seek advice from the Quality Assurance Team where necessary.</p> <p>(4) PGR students might also experience disruption, including to supervision, facilities, or review/progression processes. Mitigating actions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• alternative supervisory arrangements;</li> <li>• rescheduling reviews; and</li> <li>• providing alternative ways for students to undertake their research.</li> </ul> <p>A record of any impact and mitigation for PGR students was required to be maintained.</p> <p><u>Noted:</u> (5) The Vice Provost (Education and Student Experience) had been liaising with heads of department regarding the disruption to taught and research programmes.</p> |

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|      | <p>(6) Members were reminded that, when recording the impact of disruption and the mitigation put in place, the university must comply with the ERA 1999 (Blacklists) Regulations, which make it unlawful to compile, use, or supply lists of workers involved in trade union activities for the purpose of discriminating against them in employment. Consequently, university records must state teaching <i>events</i> and not named individuals.</p> <p><u>Approved:</u> The Senate approved the updated guidance with immediate effect and confirmed that it would be circulated to departments and relevant service providers.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Action: Academic Registrar, Vice Provost (Education and Student Experience)</b></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| 2960 | <p><b>Academic Regulations for Short Courses 2025/26</b></p> <p><u>Received:</u> Updates to the Academic Regulations for Short Courses and further actions, presented by the Academic Registrar (Paper Senate/2025/05).</p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (1) A review of short course approval processes was undertaken in 2024/25 to support the development of the Institute of Extended Learning (IEL) and streamline the approval of short course provision. Recommendations for amendments to the approval process and short course regulations were endorsed by QAEC in June 2025.</p> <p>(2) The Academic Regulations for Short Courses had been updated to reflect current and forthcoming arrangements, including the development of a Micro-credential Framework presented to QAEC on 24 September 2025. Further updates would be required in the next academic year to accommodate ongoing work, including programme annual monitoring and review arrangements.</p> <p>(3) Substantive changes to the Academic Regulations for Short Courses included: setting upper and lower credit limits for micro-credentials; re-categorising courses; replacing 'delegate' with 'learner'; referencing the policy on criminal convictions and DBS checks; updating approval, monitoring and assessment arrangements; clarifying the scope of the student complaints procedure; providing for flexible assessment; recognising digital badges; and confirming fee arrangements for dual-purpose provision.</p> <p>(4) RPRC reviewed the updated Academic Regulations for Short Courses at its meeting on 3 September 2025 and considered the associated guidance, policy, and processes. It was noted that the majority of points raised did not necessitate amendments to the Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study.</p> <p>(5) QAEC, at its meeting on 24 September, recommended the updated Academic Regulations for Short Courses to Senate, subject to clarification that safeguarding applies to adults at risk as well as those under 18.</p> <p><u>Noted:</u> (6) That 'DTCs' referred to Department Teaching Committees, which had been reinstated into the formal academic governance structure (approved by the Senate on 30 April 2025).</p> <p>(7) It was acknowledged that further iterations of the regulations would be required as the IEL was formally launched and new short course types, including micro-credentials, were</p> |

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|      | <p>developed. It was noted that further clarity was also required on how outreach courses were categorised in the taxonomy.</p> <p><u>Approved:</u> Senate approved the updated Academic Regulations for Short Courses 2025/26.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 2961 | <p><b>Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee</b></p> <p><u>Received:</u> : A Report from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee held on 24 September 2025, presented by the Academic Registrar (Paper Senate/2025/06).</p> <p><b>Committees Terms of Reference</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (1) The 2025/26 terms of reference and memberships for QAEC, and the Regulations and Policy Review Committee (RPRC), were approved. The terms of reference were also approved for the reconstituted Departmental Teaching Committees (DTCs), or equivalent committees where faculty/school structures varied.</p> <p><b>Staff Student Committee Good Practice Guidelines</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (2) QAEC approved the Staff Student Committee Good Practice Guidelines, which had been updated by the Imperial College Union (ICU) in consultation with faculties and Registry.</p> <p><b>Micro-credential Framework</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (3) A working Group had been established in April 2025 to discuss a range of areas to support the positioning and delivery of micro-credentials by the university. This included potential markets for courses and how the university would define, design, structure and quality assure micro-credentials and related learning experiences. QAEC endorsed the proposed framework, which also included sections on recognition, portability, stackability and partnerships. QAEC also endorsed areas where further work was required to support the development and operation of micro-credentials.</p> <p><b>Short courses Approval Process</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (4) QAEC approved the Short Course Approval Process, which was welcomed by members, noting that further updates would be required as the Institute of Extended Learning evolved. QAEC also recommended that further work was needed to develop a proportionate monitoring and evaluation process for short course provision.</p> <p><b>Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (5) Following submission of a report from the Mitigating Circumstances Working Group in June 2025, work had been undertaken to address three actions in the report around the purpose and tone of the procedure, provide clearer definitions of terms in the procedure and to standardise terminology. QAEC welcomed the student-focussed language of the document but agreed that further clarity was required in some areas. Additional work would be undertaken on revisions of the policy and on addressing the remaining actions identified in the report.</p> |

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|             | <p><b>Postgraduate Taught Annual monitoring</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (6) QAEC considered faculty postgraduate taught annual monitoring reports and the university level summary report, which noted challenges in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Administration and processes</li> <li>• ICT systems</li> <li>• Student casework</li> <li>• Recruitment</li> <li>• Academic regulations</li> <li>• Student support</li> </ul> <p><b>Student Survey Outcomes</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> (7) QAEC noted outcomes from the Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ), Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) surveys. It was noted that PowerBI dashboards for PTES and PRES were being developed by the Planning and Insight Division.</p> |
| <b>2962</b> | <p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p><u>Noted:</u> That no other business was reported.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>2963</b> | <p><b>Dates of Next Meetings</b></p> <p><u>Reported:</u> That the following meeting of the Senate would take place in 2025/26:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wednesday 10 December 2025 (15:00-17:00)</li> <li>• Wednesday 25 February 2026 (15:00-17:00)</li> <li>• Wednesday 22 April 2026 (15:00-17:00)</li> <li>• Wednesday 24 June 2026 (15:00-17:00)</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |