

**SENATE**

**Confirmed Minutes of Meeting held on 9 December 2020**

**Present:** Professor Ian Walmsley (Chair); Professors Buluwela, Chilvers, Craster, Distaso, Eisingerich, Green, Haynes, Kingsbury, Lindstedt, McCoy, Meeran, Openshaw, Spivey, Thompson, Xu; Drs Costa-Pereira, Craig, Fobelets, Gounaris, Malhotra, Rutschmann; Ms Bannister, Ms Flegrova, Ms Makuch; Mr Lupton, Mr Sood, Mr Tebbutt, Mr Wang; Mr Ashton (Secretary); Ms Webster (Minute Secretary).

In attendance: Professor Haskard, Ms Chris Banks, Ms Amy Maddin, Mr Jason Yarrow

**Apologies:** Professors Dougherty, Veloso, Weber; Dr Field

**2514 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were noted as above.

**2515 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 14 October 2020 were confirmed as an accurate record.

**2516 Matters Arising**

**Supporting Trans and Non-Binary Gendered Students: Policy and Guidance  
Minute 2510 refers)**

It was reported that following the discussion at the previous meeting of the Senate, the policy and guidance had been amended. The revised version would be circulated to members after the meeting with an opportunity to suggest final amendments to the policy before it was submitted for approval by Chair's Action. Members would be asked to send comments directly to the Director of Student Services.

**2517 Chair's Action**

**Student Disciplinary Procedure**

**Reported:** That amendments had been made to the Student Disciplinary Procedure to covers incidents of behaviour related to Covid-19. Permission was sought and granted from Council to add an additional penalty to the list of those which could be applied as part of the Summary Procedures of the Student Disciplinary Procedures. The additional penalty was "restriction of access to the College or a specified part thereof for a period of up to 2 weeks (exclusion). A student who receives such a penalty will have restricted rights to enter College premises and/or to participate in College activities or access to College services, the terms of restriction being notified to the student in writing". Full details were reported in Paper Senate/2020/09.

**2518 Provost's Business**

Received: A verbal report from the Provost

Reported: (1) That the Colleges response to the Covid-19 pandemic had been effective and that it was a testament to the very hard work of staff across the College that the multi-mode delivery had worked well and that outbreaks of the virus on Campus had been relatively low. The multi-mode delivery had shown real innovation in the teaching and delivery of programmes. Particular thanks were paid to Professor Emma McCoy and David Ashton for their leadership and ability to respond to government and Office for Students interventions and to the staff in Student Services, the Wardens and Campus Services staff who would be continuing to support students over the Christmas break. The Chair extended gratitude on behalf of the College to those staff who would not be able to take their full Christmas break.

**2519 Covid-19 Response**

Received: A report from the Education and Strategy Operations Group (ESOG) (**Paper Senate 2020/09**)

Reported: (1) That the report provided an update on activities since the report to the previous meeting of Senate. Professor McCoy extended her own thanks to staff in Registry and to the Student Representatives for their support and work in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

(2) That the UK Government had established a set of tiers to determine the delivery of teaching in the light of Covid-19 case numbers which allowed HEI's to determine what could be delivered within each tier. The College had remained within Tier 1 given the low number of positive cases at the College. It was noted that the College had responded to the Universities UK guidance on supporting students who were required to self-isolate by identifying central and departmental responsibilities for communicating with students.

(3) That end of term planning had considered the Governments decision that in-person teaching should cease from 9 December and that there should be a staggered end of the in-person teaching from 2 December. The College's planning focussed on the ability to deliver learning outcomes for programmes with this move to remote learning. There had been some dispensation to STEM subject areas about clinical teaching and research activities with students being allowed to return earlier in the Spring term to allow for scheduled lab sessions and placements to take place. Senate was also advised about the support for students that was being put in place over the Christmas vacation period.

**2520 OfS Consultation on Regulating Quality and Standards in Higher Education: Raising the Bar**

Received: A paper from the Head of Academic Services (**Paper Senate/2020/10**)

Reported: (1) that the consultation on Quality and Standards has been launched in the context of the OfS having also launched a root and branch review of the National Student Survey and proposals to reduce the burden on bureaucracy on higher education institutions. It was also noted that the Pearce Review, looking at the future of the Teaching Excellence Framework was yet to be published. Members noted the four areas covered by the proposals in the consultation. Members commented on the clarity of the wording on the proposed definitions of quality and standards in the document, and the difference between successful outcomes for an individual student and for an institution, the range of external benchmarking data that was already available through the College's external examiners, Professional and Statutory Bodies and the UK Quality Code including Subject Benchmarks. The need for robust data in the Graduate Outcomes Survey, which is relatively new and the LEO data being benchmarked to location which would need to be contextualised was also noted as a particular concern.

(2) That the formal response to the consultation would be finalised and agreed with the Chair of Senate and circulated to members.

Considered in discussion: Members raised a number of points in respect of institutional performance against individual student outcomes, taking the range of sector performance into account and how this could be interpreted by the public in terms of being an indicator of good quality provision, the use of comments made about an institution via social media and the need for a robust response on grade inflation.

## 2521 **Library Services Annual Report**

Received: A report from the Director of Library Services (**Paper Senate/2020/11**)

Reported: (1) That the report included the highlights from the 2019-20 academic year and set out the response to the Covid-19 Pandemic. It was reported that the Library buildings had to close from mid-March to the end of July but noted that there is a low reliance on the print collection because of the subject mix at the College. Remote online services were quickly established to respond to queries, active loans were extended to support students, reservations were cancelled and fines were waived. 98% of the libraries budget for content is spent on online content which supports parity of access for students regardless of their location. Other areas covered in the report included the planned refurbishment of the basement areas to provide an additional 200 study spaces, consideration of service provision to medical students and to the White City Campus and open access to Imperial College research. Senate thanked all members of library staff who had been designated as key workers and had worked tirelessly to keep the service going

## 2522 **Careers Service Annual Report**

Received: A paper (**Paper Senate/2020/12**)

Reported: (1) That the report covered the 2019-20 academic year which saw a move to offering a remote careers service in response to the Pandemic. The Service had been able to offer 9 careers fairs but had needed to cancel the annual PhD and summer recruitment fairs as these could not be adapted to an online format given the speed of the campus closure. Students were offered 1-2-1 appointments using Microsoft teams and the CV online checking service also continued remotely. Seminars on Developing Your Career During Covid-19 were offered and very well attended. The Service continued to engage with students to review the online offer and to curate events for the LGBT+ community and for women. Senate thanked all members of the Careers Service for their hard work and the remote delivery of the service during the year.

## 2523 **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee**

Received: A report from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (**Paper Senate 2020/13**)

Reported: (1) That QAEC had approved a proposal to undertake a review of the academic calendar with proposals to be made by a small working group and considered at a future meeting of QAEC.

(2) That the SOLE survey was being reviewed as the Student Viewpoint platform was out of support and that the questions would also be reviewed alongside this. QAEC had also considered the Imperial College Union response to the National Student Survey 2020 and that named task leaders had been allocated to take recommendations forward.

Considered in discussion: The value of student feedback and comment on their experience in enhancing provision at the College but there were concerns about bias in

the feedback in the light of the use of the SOLE feedback in the promotions process. It was also felt that Promotions Panels found it useful to have a steer on teaching quality and tended to consider numerical data rather than free text comments. Members considered that it was helpful, in respect of the NSS to have the Union and the College aligned with a clear implementation plan for the recommendations.

**2524 Date of Next Meetings – 2020-2021**

Wednesday 17 March 2020

Wednesday 19 May 2021

Wednesday 16 June 2021