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**Student Support and Wellbeing Committee**

Tuesday 08 June 2015

14.00 – 17.00

SALC 10, Sherfield Building, South Kensington Campus

**Minutes**

**Present:** Professor Denis Wright (Chairman), Dr Simon Archer, Dr Sharon Bolton, Mrs Mary Bown, Mr Nigel Cooke, Dr Sarah Freedman, Mr Gerry Greyling, Professor Joanna Haigh, Mr Christopher Kaye, Ms Rosie Summerhayes, Miss Kelly Swaby, Dr Lynda White, Dr Lorraine Craig, Mr Colin Kerr, Mr Andrew Keenan and Dr Joanne Harris

**Apologies:** Dr Michael Emerson, Mr Neil Mosley, Rev Andrew Willson, Mr Brett Harmony (Mr Malcolm McClean attending in lieu) and Dr Arash Mostofi (Mr Daniel Balint attending in lieu)

1. **Apologies for absence**

The Chair read out apologies from those listed.

1. **Welcome to new members**

The Chair welcomed Dr Joanne Harris to the committee.

1. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

The Committee confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting were accurate.

1. **Matters Arising**
	1. Minute 3: Draft student-centric mental health policy and procedure document
		1. Background: College is reviewing its existing staff policy, there are also plans for a new public facing high level statement on the College’s website and this draft paper focusing on students.
		2. Colin Kerr summarised the first draft of the student-centric mental health policy.
		3. It was agreed that a process algorithm/flowchart would be useful to simplify the process for students and that the ICU should be consulted to ensure appropriate language is used.

**ACTION: CK**

* + 1. Members have been asked to review the draft and provide any comments to CK. It was agreed that extensive consultation should be had once SSWC members have commented.

**ACTION: ALL**

* 1. Minute 6.3: The Chair summarised the new process and advised that the policy will go to the Provost Board for Chair’s actions in anticipation for the new academic year.
	2. Minute 6.4: The Chair confirmed that this item had been merged with Minute 3 above.
	3. Minute 6.5: The Chair confirmed that this item will be deferred until after the outcome of the planning round before taking further action.
1. **Student Welfare Seminar**

The Chair summarised the activities of the day, confirming a good level of attendance. Included in the seminar were presentations by the Head of Counselling at Oxford University regarding the mental health issues students face during their studies. A panel discussion followed which covered a rich range of topics. The ICU presented findings from their Student Mentality campaign that was followed by a discussion about potential future developments of student support at Imperial.

The committee discussed how to increase the promotion of the seminar and the level of support from senior College management. The Chair welcome suggestions for future events.

1. **Student Support Fund**

Mr Greyling summarise the number of applications received and awards made. The number of awards made are down from previous years but the average value of awards have remained broadly consistent. Year 5 and 6 medical students were the main benefactors of higher grants; reflecting their limited access to statutory financial support in those years. Financial support for children with childcare responsibilities was discussed and Mr Greyling confirmed an increase in applications and awards.

1. **Departmental Disability Officer forum**

DDO forums are continuing monthly. The last one was held on 13th May and Leyla Okhai, Equality and Diversity Manager, spoke about the support and services the College provides for disabled staff. The next meeting will be on the 17th June on the ICU’s Mentality Survey. Forums will continue and additional disability awareness sessions are planned for September.

1. **Disabled Students Allowance**
	1. Mrs Bown reported that BIS has decided that non-medical healthcare support will have to be bid for in future by two providers. This introduces some complications for College due to its in-house services. There remains some uncertainty how BIS will select the best quote.
	2. It was reported that BIS had less funding available for supporting disabled students. As a consequence there has been a number of funding policy changes such as, students will have to pay the first £200 for any equipment needed and no additional financial support for students who have on-suite accommodation needs will be available.
2. **Student – Tutor (Starfish) Pilot**

The Chair summarised the functionality of Starfish. Three departments have been piloting the tutoring system with generally positive feedback, specifically referencing the ability for departments to highlight issues with attendance earlier. It’s been reported that half of departments are in the process or considering to adopt Starfish.

1. **Residential Life Committee**
	1. Mr Balint reported that the first meeting of the Residential Life Committee (a sub-committee of SSWC) had taken place where each Hall reported on welfare and discipline issues over the past year. Generally there had been a decrease in major welfare issues but an increase in drink-related issues had been reported.
	2. The committee had also discussed the challenges around transport for students living in Woodward Hall. The Chair agreed to discuss the issue further with ICU.

**ACTION: DW**

* 1. The committee discussed transport arrangements for students who would live in Woodward Hall. The Chair commented that College could not logistically provide transport for students to attend 9am lectures and that students would have to make their own arrangements. It was recommended that issues around transport are highlighted to applicants prior to their arrival. Mrs Swaby confirmed that these issues have been flagged but that she will review communications again.

**ACTION: KS**

* 1. A further recommendation was made to allow students to select their roommates. Some complexities would exist with such an arrangement and the Chair agreed to raise the issue with the Student Hub.

**ACTION: DW**

1. **Warden Appointments**
	1. The College has appointed two new wardens and 12 sub-wardens at Woodward Hall in addition to up to 35 hall seniors.
	2. The committee discussed security issues and the Chair confirmed that there would be a 24/7 security reception with two people managing it overnight.
2. **International Student Support**
	1. Dr Bolton updated the committee on changes introduced by UKVI. Students are now required to pay an Immigration Health Surge Charge of £150 per year for each year of study in addition to any visa application fees.
	2. New visa arrangements have also been announced. Going forward, student will receive a 30 day clearance visa to enter the country. Once arrived, students have to visit their local post office to collect a driver’s licence style Biometric Residence Permit (BRP). Imperial has been given permission to issue the BRPs themselves and Registry is currently finalising the process to manage this in a secure and auditable way.
	3. International Student Support Welcome events will be held on 4 October: Postgraduates in the morning and Undergraduates in the afternoon.
	4. The arrangements for Orientation may change and Mrs Bolton has been asked to remove any related information from the ISS webpage. Dr Bolton agreed to provide the Chair with more information so that he can follow this up.

**ACTION: SB/DW**

1. **Health Centre News**
	1. Dr Sarah Freeman commented on how College currently manage students who return from Interruption of Study (IoS) in order to take exams. Instead of students visiting the Health Centre before their planned return to be assessed fit to sit exams, students attend emergency clinics; which they also increasingly do for mitigating circumstances assessments. The emergency clinic isn’t the appropriate setting to attend.
	2. Dr Craig confirmed that faculty committees’ paperwork for IoS cases would not be complete if they don’t receive medical reports three weeks before exams. It was agreed to review communication about required paperwork and highlight requirements at the three week review date.

**ACTION: LC/DW**

* 1. Dr Freeman also commented on students going on internships. These students need medical assessments but are not always made aware of the timeframes associated with these assessment appointments. It was agreed to clarify the need for students to visit the Health Centre earlier with the various faculty teaching committees.

**ACTION: DW/LC**

1. **AOB**
	1. The committee discussed the durations of appeals. The importance to have an appropriate turnaround time for appeals was highlighted. Some recent examples of longer periods taken to complete reviews, communicating outcomes and the impact on students’ mental health were mentioned.
	2. The Chair noted that Dr Bolton was leaving Imperial to become the Dean of Students at International Student House and that Mr Kaye was nearing the end of his tenure as Deputy President (Welfare) at Imperial College Union. The Chair thanked them for their contributions to the committee.
	3. It was agreed at the last Tutor’s meeting to clarify College personal tutor roles and responsibilities. A draft is currently being produced to go to the next tutor’s meeting.
	4. The committee meetings for the next academic year are

Tuesday 13/10/2015 at 2-4pm

Tuesday 02/02/2016 at 2-4pm

Tuesday 07/06/2016 at 2-4pm

GG

06/2015