

Master's Quality Committee Medicine, Life Sciences and School of Professional Development

17 March 2015

Minutes

Present

Professor Sue Gibson (Chair)
Mr Mike Asavarut (Academic and Welfare Officer – Medicine)
Dr Christine Franey (School of Public Health)
Dr Niki Gounaris (Department of Life Sciences)
Professor Kate Hardy (Department of Surgery and Cancer)
Dr Martyn Kingsbury (School of Professional Development)
Mr Pascal Loose (ICU Deputy President, Education)
Professor Myra McClure (College Consul (non-clinical), Faculty of Medicine)
Professor Andrew Parry (College Consul, Faculty of Natural Sciences)
Mr Dean Pateman (Academic Registrar)
Professor Simon Taylor-Robinson (Department of Medicine)

In Attendance

Ms Sally Baker (Senior Assistant Registrar, Senate and Academic Review)
Ms Fiona Bibby (Department of Medicine) – for item 4.2
Dr Tim Ebbels (Department of Surgery and Cancer) – for item 4.3
Ms Susan Farrell (Department of Surgery and Cancer) – for item 4.1
Professor George Hanna (Department of Surgery and Cancer) – for item 4.1
Dr Mary Hickson (Department of Medicine) – for item 4.2
Mr Richard Monk (Assistant Registrar, Senate and Academic Review – Secretary)
Dr Sophie Rutschmann (Department of Medicine) – for item 5.1

1. Welcome

Professor Sue Gibson welcomed members to the meeting and apologies, as listed below, were noted.

2. Apologies for absence

Professor Debra Humphris (Vice Provost, Education)
Dr Mick Jones (College Tutor)
Ms Nida Mahmud (GSU President)
Dr David McPhail (Graduate School Deputy Director & Deputy Chair)
Dr Duncan Rogers (NHLI)
Ms Rachel Vaux (Academic and Welfare Officer – Life Sciences)
Professor Denis Wright (Director of Student Support)

3. Minutes of the last meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2014 were approved.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/29

4. Matters arising

- 4.1 The Committee received and noted an action list detailing matters arising from the previous meeting and containing updates on progress in completing the required action.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/30

4.1.1 Minute 5.1.7 – New Programme Proposal – PG Cert / MSc Advanced Therapeutic Strategies

It was noted that this action was ongoing. The Head of the Educational Development Unit (EDU) reported that discussions had taken place with the Programme Team regarding enhancement of the learning outcomes and their alignment with teaching and assessment within the programme. The Programme Team had produced a mapping document to demonstrate where the programme content was taught and assessed, in consultation with the EDU, and this was in the process of being finalised.

4.1.2 Minute 6.1.5 – New Stream – MRes Cancer Biology [Cancer Informatics]

It was noted that this action was ongoing. The Head of the Educational Development Unit (EDU) reported that discussions had taken place with the Programme Team regarding enhancement of the learning outcomes and their alignment with teaching and assessment within the programme. The Programme Team had produced a mapping document to demonstrate where the programme content was taught and assessed, in consultation with the EDU, and this was in the process of being finalised.

4.1.3 Minute 6.1.8 – Guidance on Curriculum Design

It was noted that this action was ongoing. The Head of the Educational Development Unit (EDU) reported that a new workshop, 'Focus on Curriculum Design' had been developed to assist staff who were intending to develop a new programme. The workshop would be available on request. The first workshop had been scheduled for 19th March 2015 and would be used as the basis for developing supporting documentary guidance on curriculum design.

4.1.4 Minute 8.1.4 – Appointment of External Examiners

It was noted that this action was ongoing. A complete list of all external examiner appointments would be uploaded to the relevant section of the Registry website for Departmental staff to access from June 2015.

Post meeting note: the list of external examiner appointments for 2014-15 was uploaded to the Registry website on 1 June 2015 and can be accessed via:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/qualityassurance/externalexamining>

4.1.5 Minute 9.3.3 – PTES 2014 – Departmental Action Plans

It was noted that this action was ongoing. It was agreed that the Director of Postgraduate Studies (Department of Life Sciences) would submit the Departmental action plan in response to the PTES survey results to the Registry Surveys team as soon as possible.

ACTION: Director of Postgraduate Studies [Life Sciences]

Post meeting note: the Departmental action plan was submitted to the Registry Surveys team in April 2015.

- 4.1.6 The Committee agreed that the remaining matters arising were either ongoing or that appropriate action had been taken since the last meeting.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

5. New Programme Proposals

5.1 PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc in Surgical Innovation (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

5.1.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to introduce a new MSc in Surgical Innovation with effect from October 2015. The programme would include a Postgraduate Certificate and a Postgraduate Diploma and modules would also be offered as standalone modules (both with and without assessment) via the continuing professional development route.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/31

5.1.2 The Committee noted that the proposal had previously been considered as the "MSc in Surgery" in July 2014. Following that meeting the proposal had undergone significant revision and was now being resubmitted as the PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc in Surgical Innovation.

5.1.3 It was noted that the programmes would be offered on a part-time only basis. The Postgraduate Certificate programme would be offered on a part-time only basis over 8 months (October to May). The Postgraduate Diploma programme would be offered on a part-time only basis over 16 months (PG Cert stage plus June to January). The MSc would be offered on a part-time only basis over 24 months (two calendar years). The programme would be based at the St Mary's, Hammersmith, Charing Cross and Chelsea and Westminster Campuses, dependant on the options chosen by each student.

5.1.4 All students would register for the Postgraduate Certificate in the first instance. Students who successfully complete the PG Cert programme would be able to transfer to the Postgraduate Diploma or the MSc programme at the appropriate point in the programme. Students who successfully complete the Postgraduate Certificate or the Postgraduate Diploma may return to the College in a later year to complete either the remaining Postgraduate Diploma or MSc modules (or both). In accordance with College regulations, these students must complete the Postgraduate Diploma within 4 years of registering for the Postgraduate Certificate or complete the MSc within 5 years of registering for the Postgraduate Certificate. The Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma would also be available as exit qualifications for students who do not successfully complete either the Postgraduate Diploma or the MSc but who meet the requirements for the lower award.

The Committee welcomed Professor George Hanna (proposed Programme Director) and Ms Susan Farrell (Postgraduate Education Manager) who had been invited to present the proposal.

5.1.5 Professor Hanna explained that the aim of the programme was to provide a solid academic foundation in both clinical and non-clinical topics relevant to modern surgical trainees, as well as other members of the multidisciplinary team and those interested in surgery as a field of study, with particular emphasis on how surgery had radically changed and would continue to advance in the 21st century. The modular nature of the programme allowed it to be tailored to the unique needs of individual students. Core modules were designed to equip the surgeon with essential skills in education, leadership and safety, quality and technological innovation in the current NHS environment. Elective modules would enable students to follow clinical specialty streams including; bariatrics, colorectal surgery, orthopaedic surgery, oesophago-gastric surgery and vascular surgery. These specialist streams were in line with the current trend in surgical subspecialisation.

5.1.6 The Committee noted that the MSc programme would consist of seven compulsory modules (four core modules completed during the Postgraduate Certificate stage, a Library Dissertation module completed during the Postgraduate Diploma stage and a Research Methods module during the MSc stage). Students would select from one of five clinical specialties and participate in two elective modules related to that specialty. Each student would also complete a compulsory 8 month Research Project, which would include the preparation of a written report. The Postgraduate Diploma would consist of five compulsory

modules (four core modules completed during the Postgraduate Certificate stage and a Library Dissertation module). Students would select from one of five clinical specialties and participate in two elective modules related to that specialty. The Postgraduate Certificate would consist of the four compulsory modules, as described above. The taught modules would be assessed by a combination of coursework and/or written examination. The research project would be assessed by a written report.

- 5.1.7 The Committee noted that, as the Surgical Innovation programme would offer five different speciality streams at Postgraduate Diploma and MSc level, it was intended that students should be awarded with the Postgraduate Diploma or MSc in Surgical Innovation in the name of specialism followed.
- 5.1.8 The Committee was interested to learn about the target market for the programme. The Programme Team explained that the programme was expected to attract applicants who were surgical trainees but also other members of the multi-disciplinary team, such as Clinical Nurse Specialists or other allied health professionals for whom a Master's qualification was a requirement for progression. Applicants would normally be expected to hold a degree in Medicine or at least an upper second class honours degree in a health-related science from a UK university or equivalent. Applicants would also be expected to have at least one year's clinical experience, preferably with some surgical training, or at least one year's experience in a relevant area related to surgery. Potential students who were in current employment would normally be expected to submit a letter confirming that their employing Trust (or employer) was willing to provide them with the necessary time to attend the mandatory teaching sessions. Applicants would also be required to satisfy the College's English language proficiency requirements at the higher level (IELTS 7.0, minimum 6.5 in each element).
- 5.1.9 The Committee was supportive of the initiative and was satisfied that the Programme Team had thoroughly addressed the comments made by the external reviewers' in its response. The Committee commended the Programme Team for the comprehensive and thoughtful revisions to the proposal since its previous submission in July 2014, which the Committee felt had significantly enhanced the programme. The Committee therefore agreed to recommend that the proposed PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc in Surgical Innovation be approved by Senate, to commence in October 2015.
- 5.1.10 The Committee agreed to recommend the award titles of Postgraduate Certificate in Surgical Innovation; PG Diploma in Surgical Innovation (specialism); MSc in Surgical Innovation (specialism) with the specialisms specified as Bariatric Medicine and Surgery; Colorectal Surgery; Oesophagogastric Surgery; Orthopaedic Surgery; Vascular Surgery.

5.2 MRes in Health Sciences Research (Department of Medicine)

- 5.2.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Medicine to introduce a new MRes in Health Sciences Research with effect from October 2015. The proposal included three new collaborative modules to be delivered by Brunel University and Buckinghamshire New University.
- MLSPD/MQC/2014/32**
- 5.2.2 It was noted that the proposed programme would be offered on a full-time basis over 1 calendar year (12 months) and on a part-time basis over 2 calendar years. The programme would be primarily based at the Hammersmith Campus.
- 5.2.3 The Committee noted that the proposed programme was allied to the existing MRes in Clinical Research with which it shared some modules but unlike the Clinical Research programme students would apply for, and exit with, the MRes in Health Sciences Research. The new programme would also include 3 collaborative modules; 2 from Brunel University and 1 from Buckinghamshire New University. As part of the proposal, the Committee was invited to approve the partnerships for the provision of collaborative modules towards Imperial awards with the appropriate Departments at Brunel University and Buckinghamshire New University. If approved, those Departments would be able to contribute further modules to future and/or existing Imperial awards.

The Committee welcomed Dr Mary Hickson (proposed Programme Director) and Ms Fiona Bibby (Postgraduate Administrator) who had been invited to present the proposal.

- 5.2.4 Dr Hickson explained that the programme had been designed to meet the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) Integrated Clinical Academic Programme MRes scholarship and had been submitted for tender for that scholarship. It would also be one of the first collaborative programmes under the auspices of the Health Sciences Academy, a collaborative venture between Imperial, Brunel University and Buckinghamshire New University. The Committee was further informed that the Department of Health had devised a strategy to develop clinical academic careers for all health professionals. The proposed programme was intended to meet the demand for the first step on a pathway to become a clinical academic and was aimed primarily at non-medics. The programme was expected to be particularly attractive to non-medical professions due to the collaboration with Brunel University and Buckinghamshire New University and their diverse expertise in non-medical health professions.
- 5.2.5 The Committee was unclear whether the development of the programme and its siting within the Health Sciences Academy had received approval at College level. Related to this, the Committee was also unclear whether the proposed collaborations with specific Departments at Brunel University and Buckinghamshire New University had received approval at College level. The Committee agreed that further discussion of the collaborative arrangements and confirmation of their approval by the College would be necessary before the programme could be considered for approval. It was agreed that the Academic Registrar would lead on these discussions with the Vice Dean (Education and Institutional Affairs) of the Faculty of Medicine.

ACTION: Academic Registrar

- 5.2.6 After detailed discussion with the Programme Team, the Committee determined that there were some further matters that would need to be addressed before approval of the proposed programme could be recommended to the Senate, as follows:
- (i) Admissions – The Committee considered it important that entry criteria and equivalence of qualifications must be explicitly stated in the programme documentation and rigorously assessed;
 - (ii) The Committee considered it important that the Programme Team should review and enhance the academic governance arrangements for the programme, with particular attention to the following:
 - Arrangements for the assessment of students – particularly in respect of the collaborative modules;
 - Ongoing management and monitoring of the programme (e.g. the role of the Programme Committee for ongoing management / monitoring of the programme)
 - Project supervision arrangements – particularly in respect of projects based at collaborative partner institutions;
 - Project selection arrangements (e.g. the arrangements in place to oversee proposals for projects from staff – particularly project proposals from staff at collaborative partner institutions).

ACTION: Programme Team

- 5.2.7 The Committee agreed that the matters detailed in 5.2.5 and 5.2.6 above would need to be addressed before the programme could be considered further for approval. Once resolved, a revised proposal could then be submitted to a future meeting for consideration.

6. Programme Modifications

6.1 MRes Biomedical Research [Data Science] (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

- 6.1.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to introduce a new stream [Data Science] within the MRes in Biomedical Research programme, with effect from October 2015. The new stream would be offered on a full-time only (1 calendar year) basis.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/33

The Committee welcomed Dr Tim Ebbels (Proposed Stream Director) who had been invited to present the proposal.

- 6.1.2 The new stream would be identical to the existing streams of the MRes in Biomedical Research in terms of structure, timetabling, organisation, contact hours, scheme of assessment and ECTS assignment. In all of these activities there would be an emphasis on the analysis of 'big' molecular data, with a focus on metabolic phenotyping, using computational, statistical and machine learning tools, which would distinguish this stream from others of the MRes programme.
- 6.1.3 The Committee was interested to learn whether discussions had taken place with Imperial's Data Science Institute regarding the proposed title for the new stream. Dr Ebbels explained that the Data Science Institute did not currently offer any taught programmes and therefore he did not consider the use of the title to be problematic. Following discussion, the Committee asked the Department to seek agreement from the Data Science Institute for the use of "data science" in the title for the new stream.
- 6.1.4 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed new stream and award title **MRes in Biomedical Research [Data Science]** be approved by the Senate, with effect from October 2015, subject to written agreement from the Director of the Data Science Institute to the use of the title [Data Science] for the new stream.

ACTION: Programme Team

Post meeting note: written agreement was received from the Director of the Data Science Institute to the use of the title [Data Science] on 30 March 2015. The new stream was subsequently approved by the Chair on behalf of the Committee for onward submission to Senate in May 2015.

6.2 MSc in Immunology (Department of Medicine)

- 6.2.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Medicine to modify the MSc in Immunology with effect from October 2015.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/34

The Committee welcomed Dr Sophie Rutschmann (Programme Organiser) who had been invited to present the proposed modifications to the programme.

- 6.2.2 Dr Rutschmann explained that the proposed modifications involved significant revisions to the structure and content of the existing programme. The aim of the proposed revisions was to better align the curriculum with the current research themes of the Department of Medicine. This had been achieved through a detailed review of the programme's scientific themes and learning outcomes, resulting in major revisions. The proposed modifications were also intended to create a modular structure and therefore align the programme with the expectations of the Faculty of Medicine harmonisation project.
- 6.2.3 The Committee noted that the main revisions to the programme were: the current taught component divided into 4 modules would be delivered in 5 modules instead; the credit structure (ECTS) had been re-defined in line with the Faculty of Medicine harmonisation project; the curriculum would contain fewer lectures on cancer and transplantation and would focus on autoimmunity and infectious diseases – in line with Departmental research strengths;

eight independent practicals would be replaced by a Mini-Research project module; the Division's external seminar series had been timetabled, giving students the opportunity to hear about research as it happened; a programme Journal Club had been timetabled, enabling students to present at least once in small groups; several new lectures had been timetabled for scientists to present their research interest.

- 6.2.4 The Committee noted that two of the current external examiners for the programme had, in their comments on the proposed modifications, recommended that the weighting attributed to the viva voce examination within the Laboratory Based Research Project (LBRP) module be reduced from 50% to between 10% and 15% of the overall assessment weighting for the module. The examiners had expressed the view that a weighting of 50% for the 30 minute viva voce examination was too high, when compared with a weighting of 50% for the 15,000 word written project within the same module.
- 6.2.5 The Committee was content to approve, in principle, the modifications to the programme but agreed that approval should be subject to the following:
- The weighting attributed to the viva voce examination within the LBRP module should be reduced to either 10% or 15% of the overall assessment weighting for the module, in line with the recommendation of the external examiners;
 - A review of the marking scheme detailed in the programme specification, particularly in relation to the LBRP module. Consider requiring students to achieve a mark of at least 50% in the research project once its weighting has been increased to 85% or 90%, in line with the suggested reduction above to the weighting of the viva voce examination;
 - The balance between formative and summative assessment should be described more clearly within the assessment strategy section of the programme specification;
 - Individual assessment tasks within modules and in the programme specification should be more clearly expressed to ensure that it is clear that all students will undertake the same assessment within a module;
 - Written confirmation of the arrangements to support existing students who may be required to re-sit, or any deferring students;
 - Written confirmation of the arrangements for communicating the changes to the programme to students currently holding offers of places following Senate approval.

ACTION: Programme Organiser [MSc Immunology]

- 6.2.6 The Committee approved the request to be effective for entry in October 2015, on the basis that current students enrolled on the programme would be supported to complete under the existing programme arrangements and that students currently holding offers would be advised in writing of the changes to the programme.

Post meeting note: In response to the above points the Department submitted revised programme documentation, including revised module outlines and a revised programme specification. Other points were addressed in writing as requested by the Committee. The revised documentation and written responses were reviewed by the Chair of the Committee who confirmed that all of the above points had been satisfactorily addressed.

7. Routine Programme Reviews 2013-14

7.1 MRes in Medical Robotics and Image Guided Intervention (Department of Surgery and Cancer)

- 7.1.1 The Committee considered the review of the MRes Medical Robotics and Image Guided Intervention programme in respect of the 2013-14 full-time cohort.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/35

- 7.1.2 The Committee noted the reviewer's comments that, overall, this was a good and relevant programme with high standards achieved by its students. Students were also included in ongoing research with a view to progressing to PhD study, which was viewed as a feature of good practice.
- 7.1.3 The Committee noted that the reviewer had highlighted a number of instances of good practice, including the tutorial format, the quality of the programme website and the collaborative projects between Engineering and Surgery which appeared to foster multidisciplinary projects of relevance and impact.
- 7.1.4 The Committee noted that the external examiner's report had been considered to be wholly positive. The examiner had made one minor point regarding the omission, in a small number of cases, of written justifications for the award of marks on some assessed work. This point had been satisfactorily responded to by the Programme Organiser.
- 7.1.5 It was agreed that the Programme Organiser's response had addressed the very small number of matters raised by the reviewer. The programme had been rated as 'Good' by the reviewer and this grading was endorsed by the Committee. It was noted that the programme would be subject to the new annual monitoring process in the future and confirmed that no follow-up action was required in the meantime.

7.2 PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc in Paediatrics and Child Health (Department of Medicine)

- 7.2.1 The Committee considered the review of the PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc Paediatrics and Child Health in respect of the 2012-14 part-time cohort. The review also incorporated the part-time PG Certificate and PG Diploma programmes.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/36

- 7.2.2 The Committee noted the reviewer's comments that this was a very well organised and supported programme. The reviewer further commented that the blended learning approach and very educationally positive use of the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) was a real strength. The reviewer considered the e-learning content to be very good and was designed to add to the learning rather than simply use the technology and was very well supported so that the whole teaching team were enabled to use it successfully and in an integrated way.
- 7.2.3 The Committee noted that the reviewer had highlighted a number of instances of good practice, including: the wide range of well-conceived and integrated e-learning activities in each module, including thoughtful use of video and animations, virtual patients and modelling, podcasts, forums and chat rooms for debate and discussion; the collaborative and inclusive approach to using student feedback and student representatives and the explicit use of student feedback to improve the programme.
- 7.2.4 The Committee noted that the external examiner's reports had been considered to be wholly positive. Both external examiners had commended various aspects of the programme and highlighted several examples of good practice, which included: the robustness of the dissertation marking and the viva process; the quality of the inter-professional education that the programme offers; the high standard of teaching and the appropriateness of the curriculum and the organisation and good management of the programme.
- 7.2.5 It was agreed that the Programme Organiser's response had addressed the very small number of matters raised by the reviewer. The programme had been rated as 'Good' by the reviewer and this grading was endorsed by the Committee. It was noted that the programme would be subject to the new annual monitoring process in the future and confirmed that no follow-up action was required in the meantime.

7.3 MSc in Health Policy

- 7.3.1 The Committee noted that the review of the MSc in Health Policy would be submitted to the meeting in June 2015.

8. Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2014

8.1 Imperial College Union Response

- 8.1.1 The Committee received and considered the Imperial College Union's response to the PTES 2014. It was noted that the response had already been considered by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee in January 2015 and would be considered again in June 2015. The Committee noted in particular the comments in the response document relating to assessment and feedback and organisation and management and the need for improvement in both areas.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/37

9. Reports from External Examiners 2013-14

- 9.1 The Committee received and noted a paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Senate and Academic Review) outlining a revised process for consideration of External Examiner's reports on Master's level programmes.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/38

10. Reports from Departmental Representatives

- 10.1 The Committee did not receive any further reports from Departmental Representatives not otherwise appearing on the agenda.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND/OR DISSEMINATION

11. Action taken on behalf of the Committee

- 11.1 The Committee noted action taken by the Chair to approve the appointment of one new external examiner for the following programme [2014-15 academic year]:

- MPH Master of Public Health (School of Public Health)

12. HEFCE Update

12.1 'PGT Choices' toolkit: Update on provision of guidance for prospective postgraduates

- 12.1.1 In April 2014 HEFCE announced that it would launch an online tool to support decision-making by prospective PGT students in 2015. The tool would help prospective students identify questions to ask when deciding what and where to study, and to signpost them to sources of relevant information. Ahead of the launch HEFCE shared the draft text with institutions, who may use it in their own guidance if they wish. It has been published under an Open Government Licence.

The draft 'PGT Choices' text can be viewed at:

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/crosscutting/pg/pgtinfo/>

13. Reports from key College Committees

- 13.1 **Senate:** Members were reminded that the latest Executive Summaries from the Senate were available [here](#).

13.2 **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee:** Members were reminded that the latest Executive Summaries from the QAEC were available [here](#).

14. Postgraduate Professional Development Committee

14.1 The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Postgraduate Professional Development Committee meeting held on 26 November 2014.

MLSPD/MQC/2014/39

15. Any Other Business

15.1 The Committee noted that Professor Simon Taylor-Robinson would be stepping down from the Committee with immediate effect and that Professor Steve Gentleman would be attending in his place. The Committee thanked Professor Taylor-Robinson for the significant contribution he had made to the work of the Committee in the last fifteen months.

15.2 No other items of business were noted.

16. Dates of meetings in 2014 – 2015

| Meeting Date | Deadline for submission of papers |
|--|--|
| Tuesday 9 th June 2015 – 10am – 1pm | <i>Tuesday 26th May 2015</i> |
| Tuesday 14 th July 2015 – 2pm – 5pm | <i>Tuesday 30th June 2015</i> |
| All meetings will take place in the Ballroom at 58 Prince's Gate , South Kensington Campus | |

Committee members were advised that the 9 June 2015 meeting would be the last meeting of the year at which any proposals requiring Senate approval for the 2015-16 year could be considered.