

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC)

Minutes of the meeting held on
Tuesday 10th November 2015

Present

Professor Debra Humphris, Vice Provost (Education) - Chair
Professor Peter Cheung, Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering
Professor Sue Gibson, Director of the Graduate School
Professor Tony Magee, Deputy Director of the Graduate School
Dr Edgar Meyer, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Programmes, Business School
Mr Chun-Yin San, Imperial College Union, Deputy President (Education)
Professor Sue Smith, Chair of the Medical Studies Committee, Faculty of Medicine
Professor Denis Wright, Director of Student Support
Ms Sophie White, Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance & Enhancement) - Secretary

In attendance:

Ms Liz Chang, University of Roehampton (visitor)
Mr Chris Harris, Quality and Educational Development Manager, Faculty of Medicine
Ms Sarah Henderson, Helix Manager (for item 6.1)
Dr Matthew Harris, Senior Policy Fellow in Public Health, IGHI, (for item 6.1)

Apologies:

Mr Liucheng Guo, Graduate Students' Union President
Professor Myra McClure, Senior College Consul
Mr Dean Pateman, Academic Registrar
Professor Alan Spivey, Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Natural Sciences

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting. It was noted that Dr Edgar Meyer, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programmes was replacing Ms Diane Morgan, Professor Anthony Magee, Deputy Chair of the Graduate School was replacing Dr David McPhail and Professor Myra McClure, Senior College Consul was replacing Professor Richard Thompson. The committee also welcomed Ms Liz Chang from the University of Roehampton who was work shadowing the Secretary. Apologies as listed above were noted.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The unconfirmed minutes from the Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee (QAEC) held on Tuesday 14th July 2015 were approved. The Committee also noted upcoming Committee Actions.

QAEC.2015.01

QAEC.2015.01a

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Academic Standards Framework

Professor Humphris provided a verbal update on the Academic Standards Framework (ASF). It was noted that in December 2015, Senate would be

asked approve a new committee structure from January 2016 and that work would continue throughout 2015-6 and 2016-7 with a view to establishing a single set of taught programme regulations with effect from 2017-8.

4.1 Professor Humphris confirmed that, from January, the new Programme Committee would make strategic academic approval decisions (a responsibility currently resting with QAEC) as well as the approval of the quality and standards of programme curriculum. It was noted that new programmes would not be considered by Programmes Committee unless they had first obtained College level approval via the Strategic Planning Round.

5. QAEC Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership

QAEC.2015.02

The Committee agreed to recommend for Senate approval the QAEC terms of reference, constitution and membership for 2015-6 post January 2016. The Chair of the new Programmes Committee and representative from the new Faculty Education Committee for the School for Professional Development were added to the membership.

6. Strategic Approval for Programmes

6.1 MSc in Healthcare and Design

QAEC.2015.03

The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Surgery and Cancer for a new part-time 2 year collaborative degree programme with the Royal College of Art (RCA).

6.1.1 It was noted that was the second time QAEC had considered this proposal. Originally it had been proposed as a joint MRes in Healthcare Innovation Design and this had been rejected by QAEC. The Department were now returning to QAEC with a revised proposal which aimed to address the committee's previous concerns (see QAEC minutes June 2015, 6.1- 6.4). It was noted that this would be a new type of collaboration for Imperial and, if approved by the Committee, the detailed programme curriculum would be considered by the MQC (MLSPD) on 12 November 2015.

6.1.2 The proposal was presented by Ms Sarah Henderson, Helix Manager and Dr Matthew Harris, Senior Policy Fellow in Public Health. It was explained that the RCA and Imperial would run two separate degree programmes in parallel. The programmes would share some joint teaching and potentially joint supervision of projects but each programme would be geared towards a different audience. Imperial would offer the MSc in Healthcare and Design and this programme would be open to clinicians and healthcare professionals. The RCA would offer the MRes in Healthcare and Design and this would be open to design graduates.

6.1.3 The Committee queried the timetabling arrangements for the programme and were satisfied with amount of face-to-face learning and teaching verses independent study per module and noted this format was currently used on other Faculty of Medicine Master's level programmes.

6.1.5 It was noted that the proposed timetable of one week of intensive face-to-

face teaching followed by a period of independent study leading to assessment was consistent with other programmes in the Faculty of Medicine geared to working medical professionals. However, it was also noted that the new MSc in Genomics which shared a similar structure had had difficulty recruiting and it was suggested that the Department may wish to reconsider whether this structure would be suitable to their potential audience.

6.1.6 It was also noted that each intensive face-to-face week would be supported by non-assessed e-learning activity. It was recommended that the Department should monitor the students' e-learning activity and use this to ensure student engagement and progress throughout the programme.

6.1.7 The Committee noted iTunes U would be used as the delivery platform for the e-learning material and it was recommended that the Department provide iPads for their students.

6.1.8 It was noted that students were expected to start their project in the second year and the Committee were concerned that there would be an uneven distribution of workload between the two years of the programme. It was therefore recommended that students should start their project earlier. It was noted that it was the intention that students should carry out their project in their own workplace and this may mitigate against the risk of overloading the second year.

6.1.9 It was agreed that, as the two separate programmes had the same degree title but lead to different qualifications (an MSc or MRes), both institutions must be very clear in their marketing and information regarding the differences between the programmes. It was clarified that as both programmes would have very different entry requirements it would not be possible for students to transfer between the programmes.

6.1.10 The Committee gave approval for the format of the collaboration and satisfied themselves that the arrangements set out in the Collaborative Modules Form would serve to secure the quality and standards of the Imperial award. The Committee agreed the programme could be put forward for consideration by the Master's Quality Committee (MLSPD) and that the Department should address their recommendations at this meeting.

7. Procedures for Consideration of Additional Examination Arrangements in Respect of Disability QAEC.2015.04

The Committee considered proposed revisions to the above policy.

7.1 The Committee were satisfied that the role of the Disability Advisory Service (DAS) in both helping students make their application for additional examination arrangements and in advising the Registry did not constitute a conflict of interest.

7.2 The Committee were satisfied that the involvement of the Departmental Disability Officer (DDO) in the process would ensure that arrangements

appropriate to the assessment criteria would be put in place.

7.3 The Committee recommended at the right to appeal should be added to the proposal. It was agreed Chair's Action would be taken to approve the appeal process following the meeting.

7.4 It would be clarified with the Students' Union whether they would be happy for the new procedure to come into effect from January 2016 or with effect from the next academic year (2016-7).

7.5 The Committee agreed some further minor amendments and it was agreed that, subject to the addition of an appeal process and clarification of the effect from date, the new procedure would be recommended for Senate approval in December 2015.

Post Meeting Note

Chair's Action was taken to recommend the policy for Senate approval with effect from 1st January 2016.

8. Working Party for Strengthening Discussion of Postgraduate Issues at Staff-Student Committees (SSCs) QAEC.2015.05

The Committee endorsed recommendations from the Working Party for Strengthening Discussion of Postgraduate Issues at Staff-Student Committees and agreed to report them to the next Senate.

8.1 It was noted that Faculty Education Managers would promote the revised guidelines for Staff-Student Committees annually.

8.2 It was further agreed that QAEC should ask the Working Party to report on the progress made to strengthen consideration of postgraduate issues the last QAEC meeting of the academic year.

9. Consultation on changes to the National Student survey, Unistats and information provided by institutions QAEC.2015.06

The Committee considered a draft response to the HEFCE consultation. It was noted that the deadline for responses is midday on Friday 4th December 2015 and that the consultation document could be found at: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2015/Name,105638,en.html>

9.1 It was agreed that no changes needed to be made to the response subsequent to the recent publication of the HE Green Paper.

9.2 It was agreed that, subject to strengthening the last paragraph on the need for contextualised data, the response should be submitted.

AoB BIS Green Paper on Higher Education in England, Fulfilling Our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Student Mobility and Student Choice

The Committee discussed the recently published HE Green Paper <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/student-choice-at-the-heart-of-new-higher-education-reforms>

- AoB.1** It was noted that the paper proposed the introduction of a Teaching Excellent Framework (TEF) based around metrics, CMA compliance, Widening Participation and review. Higher Education institutions providing high quality teaching would be able to increase tuition fees and those that failed to meet expectations would risk losing additional fee income. The paper sought to encourage use of Grade Point Average (GPA), advance the widening participation agenda and provide easier access to degree awarding powers. It was also proposed to merge HEFCE/OFFA to create Office for Students (OfS) and to separate research funding from funding for teaching.
- AoB.2** It was agreed that there were many worrying aspects to the proposal and that careful consideration should be given to the College level response. It was noted that Strategic Planning were in the process of drawing up the draft response and that the Committee would have the opportunity to feed into it. It was further noted that the deadline for responses would be 15 January 2016.
- AoB.3** Professor Humphris agreed to circulate a briefing note on the paper from the Russell Group for further information.

Post Meeting Note

The Russell Group briefing note was circulated.

10. Surveys

- 10.1 UG SOLE lecturer/modules and Business School PG MODES results for summer term 2015** QAEC.2015.07
 The Committee considered the summer term 2015 UG SOLE results for the Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Natural Sciences plus the results from the Business School PG MODES survey.
- 10.1.1** The Committee agreed that whilst the summer term SOLE participation rates were routinely lower than those for other terms, the rates were still good for this type of survey.
- 10.2 MODES End of Pilot Survey** QAEC.2015.7a
 The Committee considered a report from the Business School on their PG MODES survey (alternative to PG SOLE).
- 10.2.1** It was noted that, at their June 2015 meeting, QAEC had agreed that the Business School could continue with their MODES pilot for a further year (2015-6) but had asked to see more detail of the quality of the responses made in MODES.
- 10.2.2** QAEC were satisfied that the questions used in MODES were valid and agreed that a progress report should be submitted to the May 2016 QAEC meeting so that a decision could be taken on the future of survey in time for the 2016-7 academic year.
- 10.3 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2016**

10.3.1 The Committee discussed the start and finish dates for PTES 2016, noting that the operating window would be 1st February – 16th June 2015 and that PG SOLE will be open from 10th March – 13th April 2016.

10.3.1 It was recommended that PTES did not remain open for longer than one month and it was agreed that members should send their preferred dates to Ms Sophie White and the final decision would then be taken by Chair's Action following the meeting.

Post Meeting Note

Following the meeting the PTES dates were approved as Thursday 19 May – Thursday 16 June 2016.

10.3.2 The Committee agreed not to add any institutional questions to PTES 2016. QAEC.2015.08

11. Short Courses Quality Committee (SCQC) QAEC.2015.09
The unconfirmed minutes from the SCQC meeting held on 8th October 2015 were noted.

12. Chair's Action QAEC.2015.10
It was noted that Chair's Action had been taken to approve the recommendations of the Surveys and Student Feedback Working Party and the details of the new Student Experience Survey (SES) were received and approved by the October 2015 Senate.

13. List of Accrediting Bodies QAEC.2015.11
The current list of Accrediting Bodies was noted. Details of the accreditation of the Department of Chemical Engineering would be added when details were supplied by the Department.

14. Register of Collaborative Provision 2015-6
The Committee noted the Register of Collaborative Provision for 2015-6 which is available at: <http://www.imperial.ac.uk/media/imperial-college/administration-and-support-services/registry/academic-governance/public/academic-policy/register-of-collaborative-provision/Register-of-Collaborative-Provision.pdf>

14.1 It was noted that the College's collaborative provision taxonomy would be updated in line with the new guidance issued from the QAA (see 17.1).

15. Student Exchange Links 2015-6 QAEC.2015.12
The annual report on the number of exchange links in operation at the College was noted.

16. Surveys

16.1 Surveys Calendar QAEC.2015.13
The surveys calendar for 2015-6 was noted.

16.2 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2015
It was noted that departments had been submitting their action plans to the

Postgraduate Research Quality Committee (PRQC) who would report back to QAEC in due course.

17. Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Updates

17.1 It was noted that the QAA had published the following documents:

[Characteristics Statement: Qualifications involving more than one degree-awarding body](#)

[Characteristics Statement: Doctoral Degrees](#)

[Characteristics Statement: Master's Degrees](#)

[Mathematics, Statistics and Operational Research subject benchmark statement](#)

[Languages, cultures and societies subject benchmark statement](#)

[Economics subject benchmark statement](#)

17.2 It was noted that the following QAA consultation was now open:

[Creative Writing subject benchmark statement](#)

18. Update on HEFCE review of Quality Assessment Arrangements

It was noted that the QAA had published their response to the consultation at:

<http://www.qaa.ac.uk/publications/information-and-guidance/publication/?PubID=2971#.VikCBX6rSUM>

19. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

19.1 Vote of Thanks

Professor Gibson, on behalf of the Committee, thanked Professor Humphris for her valuable contribution to both the Committee and College during her term as Vice Provost (Education).

20. Dates of Meetings 2015-6

19th January 2016, 10:00 – 12:00, Gabor Seminar Room, Level 6, Electrical and Electronic Engineering – papers by 5th January 2016

15th March 2016, 10:00 – 12:00, Gabor Seminar Room, Level 6, Electrical and Electronic Engineering – papers by 29th February 2016

17th May 2016, 10:00 – 12:00, Drawing Room, 170 Queens Gate – papers by 3rd May 2016

19th July 2016, 10:00 – 12:00, Faculty Boardroom, Level 4, Faculty Building – papers by 5th July 2016

20.1 It was noted that dates for the student meetings would be scheduled shortly.

21. RESERVED AREA OF BUSINESS

21.1 Faculty of Medicine: Revolutions in Biomedicine Summer School Report 2015

The Committee noted a report on the pilot of the Faculty of Medicine's first summer school. It was further noted that the recommendations made in the report had been approved by the Short Course Quality Committee.

