

SENATE

Minutes of Meeting held on 23 March 2022

Present: Professor Ian Walmsley (Chair); Professors Buluwela, Craster, Distaso, Green, Hanna, Haynes, Jardine, Johnston, Lindstedt, Meeran, Thompson, Xu; Drs Costa-Pereira, Field, Fobelets, James, Malhotra, Rutschmann; Ms Makuch, Mr Lo, Mr Lupton, Mr Tebbutt, Mr Ashton (Secretary), Ms Webster (Minute Secretary).

In attendance: Professor Jason Riley for Professor Brandon

Apologies: Professors Brandon, Evans, McCoy, Kinsbury, Spivey, Veloso, Weber; Dr Craig; Mr Lupton; Ms Bannister

2626 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were noted as above.

2627 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 8 December 2021 were confirmed as an accurate record.

2628 Matters Arising

There were no Matter's Arising not otherwise covered on the Agenda.

2629 Chair's Action

There was no Chair's Action to report.

2630 Provost's Business

Received: A verbal report from the Provost.

Reported (1) That a further five days of strike action were taking place following a decision of the joint negotiating committee to accept the 2020 USS pension valuation. This was considered to be a negative step in terms of the overall pension but would maintain a cost within the agreed boundaries. The College was continuing to urge for further exploration of feasible alternative approaches.

(2) That in respect of the Ukraine crisis the College had made a number of statements setting out its concern. Support was being provided to support individual students who had been affected by the crisis. Arrangements to provide financial support for students were being set in place as well. A partnership with a majority Russian state-owned entity had been ended.

(3) That the College would move to a lower level of Covid testing on Campus from the beginning of April. The College approach would be to encourage good public health practices on campus, for example staying away if ill or showing symptoms of illness.

2631 Developing an Education Strategy

Received: A presentation from the Academic Registrar on behalf of the Vice-Provost (Education)

Reported (1): That ideas on the early formation of an education strategy had been drawn from initial discussions at the Education Committee and with the Vice-Deans (Education). The work is a natural progression on from the Learning and Teaching Strategy and takes on board the inclusion of the wider student experience. Over the past two years the College had adapted significantly and this provided an opportunity to consider what went well and what expectations may have changed as a result. It also provided a chance to consider how a refreshed education strategy could support the aims of the College's academic strategy, as well as the impact of the changing requirements from the Office for Students. The Vice-Provost (Education) planned to engage with the community over the summer and bring a more detailed, worked-up strategy back to Senate.

(2) That the College had been giving consideration to the development of life-long learning offerings ahead of the government initiative to provide a life-long learning loan entitlement to support economic growth and to give greater parity between HE and FE as well as providing individuals with greater autonomy over their own skills development. There are two aspects to this; opportunities for graduates to remain engaged academically with the college. The second aspect would be to offer opportunities for people to reskill or upskill. Consideration would need to be given to whether provision is credit bearing or non-credit bearing and whether certificated or not.

(3) That the areas of development in terms of community engagement and outreach were likely to be offered levels four and five with the possibility of the College developing PG taught modules, programmes or apprenticeships at Level seven. It was hoped that this would provide a compelling offer to students. Further consideration would need to be given to how the College would deliver teaching and how it meets the base of what students need to be successful in their ongoing research or employment. There is a need to ensure that the work of the Student Lifecycle Administration Board was aligned to support these developments and the development of the student record system to be able to support different categories of learners.

(4) That in terms of learning from the pandemic, the College needs to extend the benefit of close working with the student body as evidenced in ESOG. Consideration will be given to the wider student experience through the establishment of the Student Experience Committee which is co-chaired with the Imperial College Union.

(5) That consideration of how technology supports learning and teaching is being undertaken with the Learning and Teaching Product Line Board overseeing this work. There are initiatives such as the College's and the Technology University of Munich seed fund for initiatives in online experimental education such as virtual labs and field trips. Work is also underway on developing new scholarship strategy with the Scholarships Steering Committee.

(6) That a focus for the current year will be on assessment which is an ongoing area for consideration evidenced through internal and external student surveys with projects in place to consider the 'Anatomy of Assessment' and ensure that authentic and inclusive assessment methods are in place with constructive alignment in our assessment to the learning outcomes and that further consideration is given to the assessment

Considered in discussion: (1) That it was good to recognise the load on staff as well as students in terms of assessment and that staff, who had faced an additional burden of hybrid delivery this academic year, would be keen to understand what the staffing resource will be to take these new lines of work forwards. It was noted that the understanding of experience from other institutions was that the delivery of apprenticeships could be very resource intensive. The Chair reported that he had

discussed with the Vice-Provost (Education) the need to ensure that resources are in place to deliver the Education Strategy and that consideration could be given to areas workload could be reduced through other things. The impact on resources of additional student numbers on taught programmes was also noted.

(2) that increasing research was still an important strategic move for the College and so any new initiatives under the education strategy would have to be at a scale that was manageable. It was noted that much of the College's education provision is drawn from research capabilities and that new developments would need to be pitched at the right level, for example apprenticeships offered at level 7 or advanced summer schools.

(3) that it was interesting to hear new endeavours outlined but would there be a continuation of the work done under the existing Teaching and Learning Strategy – that momentum needs to be sustained. It was not obvious how this relates back to what we have already done and how the progress already made would be maintained. It was also noted that the new undergraduate curricula had not worked fully through yet and that the impact of the curriculum review needed to be monitored and evaluated. The Chair noted that hybrid learning was now embedded and has an impact on space and the provision of technology within it. There were enhanced capabilities of the Edtech teams in Faculties. Student and staff involvement in shaping the delivery of the College's provision was also embedded through the new governance structures.

2632 Office for Students Consultations

Received: The Colleges responses to the Office for Students consultations on Student Outcomes and the Teaching Excellence Framework (**Paper Senate/2021/15**)

Reported: (1) That the College's consultation responses to the TEF, regulation of student outcomes(condition B3), and the construction of the indicators are provided for information as the timing of this consultation meant that we were not able to put the College's response through the normal governance structures. However, the draft, which was prepared by the Strategic Planning Division, was considered by the Vice Provost Education, the Vice Deans (Education), QAEC members and the President and Deputy President (education) of the Imperial College Union. This consultation completed the consultation on the Quality and Standards conditions of registration.

(2) That under the Regulation of Student Outcomes (OfS Condition B3) proposals are set out for a new approach to the setting of minimum standards for student outcomes for undergraduates, postgraduate taught and research students. The proposals included numerical thresholds for the proportion of students the OfS expects to continue with, complete and progress from higher education into professional jobs or postgraduate study (Annex D of the document). It also set out how it would take action if the thresholds were not met. The College's response is broadly supportive of the proposals.

(3) That in respect of the TEF, the proposals have been developed following the independent Pearce Review and the subject level pilots. The TEF will operate at institutional level and currently relates to undergraduate students only. There has been a shift in weighting away from the TEF metrics to the written provider submission in order to determine the overall provider rating. The stronger emphasis on a provider's own evidence means preparation of a submission will be more resource intensive.

(4) That the last document on Constructing Student outcome and experience indicators for OfS regulation was a technical consultation on how the indicators would be constructed.

Considered in Discussion: (1) That the general sense of how the regulator interacts with the College is important. B3 conditions likely to inform what the next Access and Participation Plan would look like. There was a need to show broader engagement across the landscape at the input and output stages. There seemed to be some new strategic priorities around improving school partnership and improving attainment and the College

was already doing some work in these areas so was in a reasonable position to respond to these.

(2) That members were supportive of the College response to the consultation

2633 Impact of world events on education

Received: A paper from the Academic Registrar (**Paper Senate/2021/16**)

Reported: (1) That the paper set out the steps being taken to manage education and the student experience for students affected by the Ukrainian war. In February, students from Ukraine, Belarus and Russia were identified either by nationality or residence and Faculty Senior tutors were provided with information in order to manage reaching out to the specifically to ensure that they were aware of the support available to them, in respect of well being and financial support.

(2) That consideration had been given to whether this could have an impact on recruitment and whether the College could support affected students being able to transfer into the College. It was noted that there were a small number of Ukrainian students holding offers and further consideration would be given to whether there are other mechanisms by which they could be considered for entry if they haven't been able to complete the requirements for admission as a result of the war. A Ministerial HE Task Force had been established and would consider whether UCAS could support late applications from the region.

Considered in discussion: That consideration should be given to students who have met the entry requirements but are unable to travel on study on the Campus? It was noted that the College was planning to return to fully on-Campus delivery from 2022-23 and so it might be that a deferral would need to be considered or Interruption of Studies for continuing students who are unable to return to Campus, although it was noted that the majority of these were currently in London.

2634 Update on Student Disciplinary Procedures Review

Received: A report from the Academic Registrar (**Paper Senate/2021/17**)

Reported: (1) That the Group reviewing the Student Disciplinary Procedures had been convened and started meeting at the end of January. The Terms of Reference set out a broad remit for the Group with areas to consider and review. Evidence groups for the Review Group to consult with had been identified plus the Groups was also taking account of guidance and good practice documentation published by external bodies including the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, the Office for Students and Universities UK. The Group was referring to the internal staff Disciplinary Procedures run by Human Resources.

(2) That the Review Group have agreed some principles which should underpin the revised procedure and these which will be tested by the information which comes in from the evidence groups. There would also be an opportunity for anonymous feedback to be provided to the Review Group through a Qualtrics feedback form. A webpage would be set up to enable staff and students to understand what the Review Group is doing and progress made.

Considered in discussion: (1) That the Imperial College Union were supportive of the recommendations about raising the profile of the work of the Group and encouraging staff and students to engage with the review. Already seeing are a combination of policy issues and operational issues too and that the latter are carried on in addition to any changes made to the Ordinances themselves.

(2) That the membership of the Review Group now included representation from directors of Undergraduate Studies and Directors of Postgraduate Studies as suggested at the previous meeting.

(3) that consideration was given to the purpose of the Student Disciplinary Procedures. _ and how these sit alongside other related policies and procedures, such as Fitness to Study and Fitness to Practice in particular. There was a sense of a lack of awareness of the guidance that was already in place to support the implementation of these procedures. There was a need to make sure that students are supported through these processes and to be able to continue with their education but also that a part of the purpose of the procedures was also to ensure the protection of the College community as a whole in respect of some of the most serious cases. It was noted that there was already provision for a risk assessment and a variety of actions which are taken to safeguard the students concerned and the community more broadly. This aspect of the procedure is being considered as part of the Review.

2635 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee

Received: A report from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (**Paper Senate 2021/18 and Paper Senate 2021/19**)

Reported: (1) That at the January meeting, QAEC considered a report on academic misconduct allegations covering the period 1 January to 11 October 2021. QAEC noted the challenges of a large increase in the numbers of allegations and considered recommendations for enhancements to ensure that the procedures could be enacted effectively whilst still maintaining academic integrity and standards.

(2) That QAEC had also discussed the provision of in-year resits and agreed that the College should continue to provide opportunities to students for in-session resits, which had been introduced as a requirement in 2020-21 as a Covid mitigation. QAEC agreed to revisit this to agree a position for the 2022-23 academic year.

(3) That at the March meeting of QAEC, the Committee considered the Curriculum Review Proposal for the MBA full time programme which had been referred from the Programmes Committee. The Business School had proposed modules with a credit value of 2.5 ECTS which was outside the size permitted in the College's academic regulations. The School set out three reasons for the proposal which included their accreditation status, pedagogy and competition. QAEC members discussed the proposals at length with the Business School as set out in the report and agreed the proposal to include the smaller credit sized modules on the basis of pedagogy and agreement that grouping the remainder of the core modules into larger modules would lead to counterintuitive subject groupings.

(4) That QAEC also considered a summary of the Module Evaluation Questionnaire (MEQ) which ran for the first time on the new platform and with the refocussed questions. The response rate was lower than in previous years. As part of the survey, students were asked to provide feedback on the survey itself and identified some technical enhancements and some suggestions for additional areas for the survey to cover. QAEC agreed to some recommendations for future improvements.

Considered in discussion: (1) That the Business School extended their thanks to QAEC and Programmes Committee for all their hard work in completing the approval of the MBA (Full-time) programme. All PGT involves a much deeper level of study whereas the MBA is about taking students to a more generalist role and therefore needs a broader range of subject areas covered.

(2) That in respect of the Module Evaluation Questionnaire there was significant concern expressed about the late delivery of the results from the Autumn Term MEQ to Departments. The Head of Academic Services apologised for this and explained that there had been some technical difficulties with the new platform which had not been anticipated. However, it was planned that the results would be delivered to Departments within the next 2 days.

(3) That the Faculty of Engineering were not happy with the new Module Evaluation Questionnaire and considered that the level and nature of academic consultation had not been good enough before. There had been a misunderstanding about the nature of the pilot that had run in the summer of 2021 and whether this was piloting the platform or the new set of questions.

(4) That the College should scrap the new Module Evaluation Questionnaire as the Deans and the academic promotions panel did not agree with the removal of the lecturer evaluation which had been a feature of the previous SOLE survey. The new MEQ was an example of the centre imposing something on Faculties that they did not want. Senate was told that Departments needed feedback on individual lecturer for consideration in the academic promotions process. The argument that other Universities no longer do this was not considered to be valid as there are examples from other global universities which regularly use detailed feedback on lecturers in their appointments process.

(5) That it was acknowledged that SOLE had not been fit for purpose and that the platform on which it had been delivered was out of support and had to be changed. It was suggested that it could be premature to make judgements when Departments haven't seen the results yet. A Head of Department reported that the free text comments which he had seen from the Autumn MEQ would not be appropriate to support the promotions process.

(6) That there were two different purposes that were being discussed. One was the need for module evaluation for quality assurance purposes and the other was lecturer evaluation for academic promotions. It was suggested that the Assistant Provost (Academic Promotions) should meet with the Vice Provost (Education) to discuss a solution and report back to Senate.

ACTION: For the Vice Provost (Education) and the Assistant Provost (Academic Promotions) to meet and discuss the issues raised.

2636 Appointment of External Examiners

Received and noted (Paper Senate/2021/20): the names and affiliations of External Examiners for undergraduate and Master's degrees appointed since the last Senate meeting.

2637 Dates of Terms

Received (Paper Senate/2021/21):

Senate **confirmed** the dates of terms for session 2023-2024, and to **approved** proposed dates for 2024-2025

2638 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 18 May 2022 at 3.10 pm on Microsoft Teams