

Summary of action taken to address recommendations from the QAA Institutional Audit 2010

Recommendation		Progress – Nov 2012	Progress - May 2013	Progress – April 2015
Advisable	1 Ensure that Senate, or the relevant committee reporting to it, is provided with sufficient information on external examiners' reports to discharge responsibility for the oversight of academic standards.	This recommendation has been addressed	This recommendation has been addressed	This recommendation has been addressed
	2 Consider the appropriateness and use of the Diploma of Imperial College as both an academic award and a 'post nominal' title.	This recommendation has been addressed	This recommendation has been addressed	This recommendation has been addressed
	3 Expedite its review of assessment procedures to ensure consistency in the management of academic standards within and across its degree structures, and ensure parity of treatment for examination candidates.	Further work is needed to address this recommendation	Further work is needed to address this recommendation	Action to address this recommendation is part of the Academic Standards Framework
	4 Provide a full and consistent level of student representation in all its deliberative academic committees.	Action to address this recommendation is on-going	This recommendation has been addressed	This recommendation has been addressed
	5 Review its procedures for the approval and oversight of collaborative provision to ensure that relevant sections of QAA's Code of Practice are taken into account.	Action to address this recommendation is on-going	Action to address this recommendation is on-going	This recommendation has been addressed
Desirable	6 Extend the existing opportunities for student access to external examiners' reports.	Action to address this recommendation is on-going	This recommendation has been addressed	This recommendation has been addressed
	7 Strengthen the procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning materials for programmes which have e-learning/blended learning elements.	Action to address this recommendation is on-going	This recommendation has been addressed	This recommendation has been addressed
	8 Draw more systematically upon the education developments and good practice evident within its faculties and departments to enhance the support for student learning.	Action to address this recommendation is on-going	This recommendation has been addressed	This recommendation has been addressed

Actions taken to address recommendations

Advisable Recommendations

Recommendation 1 – *Ensure that Senate, or the relevant committee reporting to it, is provided with sufficient information on external examiners' reports to discharge responsibility for the oversight of academic standards.*

External Examiner Reports – completed action

Enhanced annual External Examiner Summary Reports for have been produced for consideration at both QAEC and Senate since 2010-11 (Master's level programmes) and 2011-2 (undergraduate programmes). The summary reports ensure that themes with College-wide implications are highlighted. This process has also been honed further over recent years.

Summary reports are available at:

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

Changes to the external examiner process intended to expedite the receipt of reports and improve detail in the departmental responses have also been introduced for Master's level programmes from March 2015 and for undergraduate programmes from 2015-6.

Recommendation 2 - *Consider the appropriateness and use of the Diploma of Imperial College as both an academic award and a 'post nominal' title.*

Diploma of Imperial College (DIC) – completed action

The 12-month DIC as a standalone award was withdrawn: In May 2011 Senate approved, with immediate effect, amendments to the Regulations for the Award of the MPhil Degree. The amendments included a change to the minimum length of study for the MPhil from 24 months to 12 months for full-time study (or the equivalent in part-time study), and the consequent withdrawal of the 12-month Diploma of Imperial College London (DIC) as a standalone academic award. Provision was made for students currently registered for the DIC award to transfer onto the MPhil degree. The Diploma of Imperial College as a post nominal was retained.

Recommendation 3 - *Expedite its review of assessment procedures to ensure consistency in the management of academic standards within and across its degree structures, and ensure parity of treatment for examination candidates.*

Conduct of Boards of Examiners' Meetings - Completed action

Undergraduate: Procedures for Faculty of Engineering were agreed at the June 2013 Senate and took effect from 2013-4. Senate also agreed that Faculty of Natural Sciences could trial the new procedure in 2013-4 and implement it fully in 2014-5.

The *Conduct of Undergraduate Examiner Boards* procedures is available at:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/policiesandprocedures/examinationassessment>

Master's Level - The Graduate School were been given longer to consult on PG procedures and developed a procedure during 2013-4 which took effect from 2014-5. The procedure includes a mechanism for programmes which want to request a dispensation from the anonymity requirement.

The *Conduct of Master's Level Examination Boards* is available at:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/policiesandprocedures/examinationassessment>

Viva Voce Examinations – Completed action

Senate approved revised guidance for viva voce examinations in February 2014 and October 2014.

The document *Conduct of Oral Assessments (including Viva Voce Examinations) for Undergraduate and Master's Level Programmes* is available at:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/policiesandprocedures/examinationassessment>

MSci/MEng final year pass mark vs stand-alone MSc pass mark – Ongoing action

The Faculties of Engineering and Natural Sciences were asked to address current differences in pass marks for level 7 awards where in cases the MSci/MEng year is marked to 40% pass whereas the pass mark for stand-alone Master's programmes is 50%.

The Faculty of Natural Sciences have taken the following actions for students starting programmes from the 2014-5 session onwards.

Chemistry: Years 1 to 3 of the MSci program would comprise of only B Level modules and each element will have a pass mark of 40%. Year 4 will comprise only M Level modules with each element having a pass mark of 50%. For re-sit purposes individual B Level modules will have a pass mark of 40% and individual M Level modules will have a pass mark of 50%.

Physics: Modules will be designated as B and M level. In Year 3, all elements, including those containing M Level modules, will have a 40% pass mark, however, for re-sit purposes, any individual M Level module must be passed at 50%. In Year 4, all elements, including those containing B Level module, will have a 50% pass mark (and for re-sit purposes, any individual B Level modules will also have a pass mark of 50%).

Mathematics: Modules were not designated as B or M Level during 2013-4. In Year 3 elements will have a 40% pass mark, for re-sit purposes all individual modules will also have a pass mark of 40%. In Year 4, each element (including the element containing the Mastery paper which covers some Year 3 material) will have a 50% pass mark. For re-sit purposes all individual modules, including the Mastery paper, will have a 50% pass mark.

Life Sciences: There are no MSci programmes in Life Sciences

The Faculty of Natural used the academic year (2013-4), to progress towards splitting the B-Level and M-level between Years 3 and 4 further with a view to standardising the pass mark for all Level 7 material at 50%. Progress will be reported to QAEC. The above actions were approved by Senate in October 2013.

The Faculty of Engineering will continue to consult with their departments and will discuss the issue at their Faculty level meetings.

This action will now be taken forward under the auspices of Academic Standard Framework project established in March 2014

Undergraduate Year Weightings – action completed.

The Faculties of Engineering and Natural Sciences agreed to harmonise their weightings within their Faculties, the weightings were approved by Senate in June 2013 with effect from 2013-4.

The document Undergraduate Year Weightings can be found at:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/policiesandprocedures/examinationassessment>

The Faculty of Medicine implemented harmonised weightings with effect from 2014-5 entry. These can be found at:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/policiesandprocedures/examinationassessment>

Borderline mechanisms used at Master's Level – ongoing action.

This action will now be taken forward under the auspices of Academic Standard Framework project established in March 2014.

Classification decisions – ongoing action

This action will now be taken forward under the auspices of Academic Standard Framework project established in March 2014.

Late Submission of Assessed Work – completed action

Senate approved at its meeting on 27 February 2013 a revised policy in respect of the penalties to be imposed for the late submission of assessed work. The policy was further refined in February 2014.

See *Penalties for the Late Submission of Assessed Work* at:

<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/policiesandprocedures/examinationassessment>

Recommendation 4: *Provide a full and consistent level of student representation in all its deliberative academic committees.*

Student Representation on Committees – completed action

There is student representation on all deliberative College and departmental strategic and quality committees.

Recommendation 5 - *Review its procedures for the approval and oversight of collaborative provision to ensure that relevant sections of QAA's Code of practice are taken into account.*

Collaborative provision procedures – completed action.

Ad hoc revisions to procedures were made throughout 2010-11, 2011-2 and 2013-4. With the publication of the revised chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others in UK Quality Code for Higher Education, a Working Party was established to review, revise and develop the College's policies and procedures for the approval, management and review of collaborative degrees, collaborative modules and placements. Revised procedures were agreed by Senate in February 2014 and implemented with immediate effect.

Desirable Recommendations

Recommendation 6 - *Extend the existing opportunities for student access to external examiners' reports.*

Student Access to External Examiner Reports – action completed

External examiner reports

Examiner reports received for the 2011/12 academic year onwards have been published in full on the College's intranet along with the departmental responses to them. A separate Serious Concerns Report Form is also available should an external examiner wish to raise a serious concern with the President. Serious concerns reports are not published on the website. See:

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

Consideration of External Examiner Reports by Staff-Student Committees:

The Staff-Student Committee Good Practice Guidelines state that external examiner reports, and the departmental responses to them, should be included on the agenda for Staff-Student Committees.

See:

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

Recommendation 7 - *Strengthen the procedures for checking the quality of teaching and learning materials for programmes which have e-learning/blended learning elements.*

Quality Assurance of e-learning/blended learning provision – action completed

During 2013-4 explicit reference to the approval and review of the College's e-learning/blended learning provision was incorporated into the College's programme approval and review procedures.

In addition, a further recommendation was made to QAEC in March 2013 concerning developing central guidance on the development and management of e-learning provision and it was agreed that action would be taken forward under the auspices of Quality Assurance Framework project. The Quality Assurance Framework project was later incorporated into the Academic Standards Framework project.

Recommendation 8 - *Draw more systematically upon the education developments and good practice evident within its faculties and departments to enhance the support for student learning.*

Enhance the support for student learning - action completed (and under continuous consideration)

Since the 2010 audit the following action has been taken to enhance the College's arrangements for the collection, consideration and dissemination of good practice:

- An annual report of good practice identified during periodic reviews is considered by QAEC, the Studies Committees and Master's Quality Committees.
- The good practice identified in the annual external examiner summary reports prepared for QAEC/Senate is circulated for consideration by the Studies Committees and Master's Quality Committees as appropriate.
- The addition of internal staff members on periodic review panels has enabled departments to gain further insight into each other's processes. A student periodic review panel member has also been added.