Imperial College London

Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
Minutes from the meeting held on
Thursday 14 May 2020

Present

Professor Simone Buitendijk – Vice Provost (Education) – Chair
David Ashton – Academic Registrar
Ashley Brooks – ICU Deputy President (Education)
Emma Caseley – Head of Strategic Projects
Dr Malcolm Edwards – Director of Strategic Planning
Leila Guerra - Associate Dean of Programmes, Imperial College Business School
Professor Martyn Kingsbury – Director of Educational Development
Professor Omar Matar – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering
Professor Emma McCoy – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Natural Sciences
Professor Alan Spivey – Assistant Provost (Learning & Teaching)
Judith Webster – Director of Academic Quality and Standards
Professor Yun Xu – Director of the Graduate School
Scott Tucker – Deputy Director (Academic Quality and Standards) – Secretary

In attendance

Chris Banks, Assistant Provost (Space) [Item 4]
James Medler, Education Office [Item 4]
Helena Smith, Director of Central Timetabling [Item 4]
Professor Paul Lickiss, Academic Leader in Sustainability [Item 5]
Andrew Stevenson, Strategic Planning Officer [Item 7]
Hailey Smith, Project Manager (Learning and Teaching Strategy)
Rachel Witton, Executive Officer for the Vice-Provost (Education)

Apologies

Martin Lupton – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Medicine

1. Welcome and Apologies

1.1   The Chair welcomed attendees and noted apologies, as above.

2. Minutes

2.1   The Committee confirmed the minutes from the previous meeting held on Thursday 2 April 2020 as an accurate record.   LTC.2019.27

3. Matters Arising

3.1   There were no matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

4. Occupancy Insights

4.1   The Committee received a presentation on the work being undertaken as part of the College's Space Sharing Programme. The Space Sharing Programme is looking at a range of ways to use campus space more efficiently and appropriately, whilst supporting the best possible teaching and learning experience for students and staff. Part of this work is to build a picture of the extent to which shared spaces are currently used.

4.2   As part of the Occupancy Insights Project the College has rolled out software which uses wifi to gather real time anonymised data in 15 buildings on the South Kensington Campus. This occupancy data will be available for staff to develop insights which can inform proposed resolutions to space constraints.

4.3   The Committee received an update on the Space Analytics Project. At present, underlying data held on teaching, meeting and seminar space resources, availability and utilisation are underdeveloped. Currently, limited analysis is manually produced on each dataset in isolation, on an ad hoc basis. In order to inform decision making and future planning on maximising teaching space utilisation across the College, analysis of existing datasets, combined with relevant datasets held elsewhere (e.g. student programme details) is being carried out.

4.4   The Space Analytics Project will deliver flexible management information and statistics on teaching space utilisation via an intuitive interface that end users can access as and when information is needed, promoting actionable insights. As additional data sources are identified and become available, they will be considered for incorporation into the reporting suite to further enrich the information available.

4.5   The Faculty of Natural Sciences has been exploring dynamic timetabling and how projected room occupancy, based on the learning and teaching activity planned at a given stage of a programme, can lead to informed room bookings.

5.   Sustainability in Education

5.1   The committee received a presentation on the College's engagement with sustainability in education.

5.2   The Academic Leader in Sustainability reported on the latest People and Planet University League Table, compiled by a student-led network. Institutions are scored on criteria such as environmental audits and management systems, the number of staff working on the issues, ethical investment, carbon management, waste and recycling, and sustainable food. Although it was acknowledged that there are flaws in the methodology (e.g. Institutions are awarded '0%' in a category where data is not publicly available), it was still a concern that the College was the only Russell Group University to be awarded a 'fail' and is ranked 130th out of 154 universities assessed, scoring 20%.

5.3   The following areas were highlighted as requiring improvement in order to increase the College's percentage in the People and Planet University League Table:

Commitment and governance
- Education for Sustainable Development should be mentioned in a high-level university document to be awarded full score

Progress on teaching and learning goals
- Strategy Framework addressing Education for Sustainable Development

Supporting Academic Staff
- Suitable support and training for Education for Sustainable Development

Coursework and the campus
- Evidence of student coursework linked to sustainability projects to improve the environmental management of the university

Research
- Evidence of auditing, supporting or highlighting school, faculty or re research team projects for Sustainable development, including the pedagogy of sustainability.

5.4 The Academic Leader in Sustainability is developing a College Sustainability Strategy and highlighted the following areas being addressed:

- Future sustainability agenda
- Curriculum and Sustainable Development Goals
- Carbon and waste reduction targets (Lab Efficiency Assessment Framework Project, Estates etc.)
- White City campus development
- Greening physical space
- College consultation and strategy document

Further information can be found at https://www.imperial.ac.uk/sustainability/

5.5 The Academic Leader in Sustainability confirmed that meetings will be set up with Vice Deans (Education) to discuss how sustainable development can be further embedded into the curriculum.

6. Graduate Outcomes Survey Report 2017-18 LTC.2019.28

6.1 The paper provided a summary of the results from the first iteration of the Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS). The College has received its results under embargo ahead of publication expected in June. The College does not yet have sight of competitors' results.

6.2 GOS captures the perspectives and current status of graduates 15 months after they have completed their studies and is published by HESA. GOS replaces the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey carried out since 1994 following a full review of DLHE carried out in 2016.

6.3 It was noted that GOS percentage of leavers in employment or further study following graduation was 93%, compared to DLHE at 92%. However, it was highlighted that the GOS data is currently being treated as experimental and the fundamental differences between it and DLHE make comparisons between the two inappropriate.

6.4 In future HESA may move to using HM Revenue and Customs data (in contrast to the current system of self-reporting). When the College modelled employability based on tax records, the percentage has been employability percentages are significantly reduced so further work will be carried out to explore the reasons behind this. It is likely to be connected to graduates moving between tax jurisdictions. If there are no tax records at all then a graduate will be excluded. However, if UK tax record exists for one year only, then the graduate record will show as having no sustained employment.

6.5   The Committee welcomed the report and agreed that PGT and PGR analysis would also be insightful.

7.   Widening Participation Flag: Pilot Outcomes   LTC.2019.29

7.1   The Committee received a paper on Widening Participation criteria, and other measures, applied in the 2020-21 application cycle, and impact on WP applicants.

7.2   The paper set out the Widening Participation (WP) criteria, and other measures, applied in the 2020-21 application cycle, and their impact on the number of WP applicants and the proportion receiving an offer from the College. These were compared with the 2019-20 application cycle data.

7.3   Schemes put in place for the 2020-21 admissions cycle to support the application process for those flagged as WP applicants included guaranteed interviews, guaranteed offers, guaranteed standard minimum offers, and contextual offers.

7.4   It was noted that it is widely anticipated that the coronavirus will impact the desire from students to attend university next year – in particular, there is a risk that WP students will be disproportionately discouraged. As such, the Outreach team will be looking to engage WP offer holders at the earliest opportunity.

7.5   The group discussed areas of the College that were successful in increasing the proportion of WP applications but agreed that pinpointing the reasons behind such increases were difficult. Although policy plays a key role, it was acknowledged that individual Admissions Tutors can also have a significant positive influence.

7.6   The group unanimously agreed that the same approach to WP admissions should be adopted for the next cycle.

8.   Interventions to support students from under-represented groups

8.1   The Committee discussed interventions to support students from under-represented groups.

8.2   Following the College's success in increased WP offers, the Committee discussed the support in place and where further developments were needed. It was noted that significant work is being undertaken on the student experience to addressed remote or multi-mode learning, which will take WP students into account.

8.3   The Committee agreed that it is important to understand the needs of WP students and ensure that, when proving support, this group is not 'labelled' in a way that could have a negative impact, albeit with positive College intentions.

It was confirmed that responsibility for taking this agenda forward sits within the Learning and Teaching Strategy.

9.   Education Evaluation

9.1   The Committee received a verbal update from the Director of Strategic Planning

9.2   It was noted that the Strategic Planning Division has appointed a new Education Evaluation Manager, Amy Maddin. In the short-term, the Education Evaluation Manager will further develop the College's differential outcomes data. It was confirmed that this will include data for annual monitoring.

10.   Educational Research

10.1   The Committee received a verbal update from the Director of CHERS on the following:
- Educational Ethics Process (ERCs)
- The move from face to face to remote interviews
- CHERS collaboration with Chemical Engineering

11.   Online Learning Innovation Group (OLIG)

11.1   It was confirmed that an OLIG meeting has not taken place since the previous LTC, so no significant updates were reported.

12.   I-Explore Module Innovation Group (IMIG)

12.1   The Committee received a verbal update from the Assistant Provost (Learning and Teaching). It was noted that:

- The coronavirus has had a significant impact on the rollout of I-Explore modules
- I-Explore modules could still be offered online, but this will require resource including additional work from module conveners
- A College announcement on 2020-21 provision is required before I-Explore communications are drafted and circulated to students.

13.   Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee

13.1   The Committee received a verbal update from the Academic Registrar. The following points were noted:

Academic Regulations and Policy
- Following QAEC comments, draft policy to revised and considered by FECs. Faculty responses will be considered before final version considered at QAEC

Student Surveys
- Spring SOLE to continue (with 4 weeks extension)
- Summer SOLE to run within agreed survey window
- PTES to be within agreed survey window

PGT Annual Monitoring
- Only departmental action plans to be updated and submitted. It was agreed that this was a proportionate approach to monitoring within the current climate

PGT External Examiner Summary Report
- A number of recommendations considered

Major programme modifications as a response to COVID-19
- The Quality Assurance Team is receiving proposed major modifications, which are being collated. These will be considered by QAEC through Chair's action with the outcome communicated to Departments

Regulations and Policy Review Committee
- At the next meeting, draft guidance for Boards of Examiners is being considered.

14.   Any Other Business

14.1   No other business reported.

15.   Meeting dates for 2019/20

15.1   The Committee noted the following meeting dates, all scheduled from 15.00-17.00:
- Thursday 4 June 2020
- Thursday 30 July 2020