Imperial College London

Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)
Confirmed Minutes from the meeting held on
Thursday 19th September 2017

Present
Professor Simone Buitendijk –Vice Provost (Education) – Chair
Mr David Ashton – Academic Registrar
Mr Nicholas Burstow – ICU Deputy President (Education)
Ms Emma Caseley – Head of Strategic Projects, Education Office
Dr Malcolm Edwards – Director of Strategic Planning
Professor Sue Gibson – Director of the Graduate School
Dr Martyn Kingsbury – Director of Educational Development
Professor Omar Matar – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering
Dr Edgar Meyer – Interim Business School rep
Professor Alan Spivey – Assistant Provost (Learning & Teaching)
Ms Judith Webster – Head of Academic Services

In attendance
Mr Matt Robinson – Strategic Planning Officer (for item 5)
Mr Andrew Peat – Strategic Planning Officer (for item 8)
Ms Sophie White - Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance & Enhancement).

Apologies
Professor Des Johnston – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Medicine
Mr Martin Lupton – QAEC representative
Professor Emma McCoy – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Natural Sciences

1.   **Welcome and Apologies**
     The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting, noting there were a number
     of new representatives for the new academic year, and apologies as listed
     above, were noted.

1.1 Professor Buitendijk explained that the Learning & Teaching Committee (LTC)
     must play an important role in the implementation of the new Learning &
     Teaching Strategy and that Committee representatives would be responsible
     for disseminating information down to their departments.

2.   **Minutes**   LTC.2017.01
     The Committee confirmed the minutes from the meeting held on Thursday
     29th June 2017.

3.   **Matters Arising**

3.1 Further to minute 5.3.3, Faculty and student representatives were asked to
     submit their nominations for the proposed new Surveys Working Party to Ms
     Emma Caseley within the next two weeks.   It was agreed that it would be
     helpful to have some continuity between the old working party and the new
     one.
                                            Action: Faculty and ICU Reps

4. **Learning and Teaching Committee, Terms of Reference, Constitution and** LTC.2017.02
Membership for 2017-18
The Committee received the revisions to the Learning and Teaching
Committee terms of reference, constitution and membership for 2017-18,
noting that the Assistant Provost (Learning and Teaching) had been added to
the constitution.

4.1 The Committee also recommended that the term of reference "*To ensure
alignment of the ASF with the SIMP process, specifically, but not limited to the
Academic Programme Lifecycle (APL) work stream*" should be amended to
"T*o ensure alignment of the ASF with the SIMP process, and the student and
applicant journey work streams*" to reflect the change in terminology used by
SIMP.

5. **NSS 2017 Results**

5.1 The Committee considered the latest NSS results. LTC.2017.03

5.1.1 The results were presented by Mr Matt Robinson, Strategic Planning Officer.
Mr Robinson explained that a number of changes had been made to the
survey and this had impacted the ability to make comparisons with previous
years. Furthermore, due to a NSS boycott of the survey, a number of the
College's competitor institutions did not have full institutional results, this
meant that caution should be used when interpreting the results and, in
particular, the institutional rankings.

5.1.2 The take home message from the results was that, overall, the College had
performed better than the previous year but not significantly. As in previous
years, low satisfaction scores were received for Assessment and Feedback
and the qualitative comments again pointed to lack of academic feedback,
poor timeliness of academic feedback, variation in marking, a heavy
workload and pockets of poor quality teaching. The positive messages were
around academic support, learning opportunities, learning community and
also teaching quality.

5.1.3 It was noted that the Learning and Teaching Strategy aimed to address the
areas of concern and build on the positive outcomes of the survey. It was
acknowledged that there was a significant amount of work to be done and
that the College must therefore support departments to do better.

5.2 The Committee considered a response from the ICU to the latest NSS results. LTC.2017.04

5.2.1 Mr Nick Burstow presented the ICU response and explained that the
Students' Union recognised that the College was already committed via the
Learning and Teaching Strategy to address the main negative themes of the
survey including assessment and feedback, teaching and workload and
therefore, the Union saw this as an excellent opportunity to work in
partnership with the College to address those areas.

5.2.2   Mr Burstow further explained that, during the autumn term, the Union would be carrying out a College-wide audit of the timeliness of academic feedback on undergraduate programmes and that by Christmas the Union would be able to share their results with the Learning & Teaching Committee. This would be first time such an exercise had been attempted and the Committee felt that this would be a helpful snapshot. It was noted that at this stage the Union would only be addressing timeliness and that work around the quality of feedback would come later.

Action: Mr Burstow

5.2.3   Mr Burstow explained that the Union would also be looking at UCL's Change Maker Programme with a view to implementing a similar scheme for championing student-led initiatives and ideas at Imperial.

5.2.4   The Committee welcomed the Union's stance and agreed that a College-wide approach in partnership with students was needed to ensure improvements across the board. The Union was also thanked for producing the ICU NSS response so quickly and noted it would be discussed further at the next Provost's Board.

6.   Learning and Teaching Strategy Implementation Plan   LTC.2017.05
The Committee received an update on the L&T Strategy Implementation Plan from the Head of Strategic Projects.

6.1   Ms Emma Caseley reported that a new Project Manager, Ms Sugra Bibi, had been appointed to oversee the implementation of aspects of the Learning and Teaching Strategy. Ms Bibi would initially focus on overseeing the departmental review process.

7.   Implementation Priorities

7.1   Curriculum Review   LTC.2017.06
The Committee received a progress update and considered a proposed timeline for Curriculum and Assessment Review.

7.1.1   Professor Alan Spivey presented the paper and explained that a key priority for Curriculum Review would be to ensure there was sufficient support, guidance and resource for departments to enable them to design programmes of the highest quality. To this end, Professor Spivey and Dr Martyn Kingsbury had started talking to departments and explaining the process for requesting extra funding. A number of departments had indicated they would be recruiting additional staff, such as Teaching Fellows, or back filling posts so existing staff could support the review. It was agreed that it would be helpful to develop a Teaching Fellow network to support the recruitment and retention of these staff (see minutes 7 and 9).

7.1.2   Professor Spivey explained that other themes emerging from the initial departmental discussions were the possibility of making a pre-sessional maths online course available for all students and the use of curriculum mapping software. The possibility of extending the use of Sofia, the Faculty

of Medicine's curriculum mapping software, further or adopting another solution would be investigated.

7.1.3   The Committee considered the proposed timeline for the review and noted that a significant amount of change was required across the board and some departments would need to fundamentally re-think their provision. However, it was noted that some departments were further along on the modularisation path than others and in a good position to act.   The Committee heard that it was intended that the first revised programmes would be introduced for AY 2019-20.   This meant that the programme proposals would be required by the March 2019 Programmes Committee at the latest.   Professor Spivey explained that he thought the paperwork should focus on getting the first year of undergraduate programmes approved in the first instance with full detail of later years coming later.   The College would have to be mindful of CMA guidance and therefore the wording around course changes to students and applicants in the prospectus and other media would need to be reconsidered and revised.   It was also agreed that a section in the prospectus on the Learning and Teaching Strategy would be necessary.

Action: Professor Buitendijk

7.1.4   Professor Spivey explained, in most cases, that it was likely that the penultimate and final year undergraduate and Master's programmes would not be the focus of the initial curriculum review activity as many programmes shared modules at FHEQ Level 7.   These years would be considered in 3 to 4 years' time.   However, it was confirmed that, as the Business School did not offer undergraduate programmes, they could modularise and review their Master's provision early on.

7.1.5   It was acknowledged that the Programmes Committee would not be able to cope with the expected volume of modification and it was proposed to schedule additional meetings prior to March 2019.

Action: Quality Assurance & Enhancement Team

7.16   It was also noted that bespoke modification templates would be drawn up to rationalise the amount of documents viewed by the Committee.   The modification paperwork would be devised in consultation with the Chair of the Programmes Committee.   Furthermore, before being submitted to Programmes Committee, all proposals would be reviewed by the FECs and, prior to this, the paperwork would be scrutinised by a small sub-panel to ensure the quality and consistency of the programmes.

Action: Professor Spivey

7.1.7   It was also acknowledged that departments may need help in understanding the implications of adopting a modular structure as well as the benefits which could result from this.   It was confirmed that modular programmes could include synoptic assessment but this would have to be designed into the programme from the outset. An example of synoptic assessment on modular

programmes was the capstone project which is used widely in the Business School.

7.1.8 The Committee approved the proposal and timeline for Curriculum and Assessment Review.

7.2 **Pedagogy transformation** LTC.2017.07

The Committee considered a proposed bidding process for pedagogy transformation.

7.2.1 Professor Spivey explained that a fundamental goal of the new Learning and Teaching Strategy was the evidence-based transformation of pedagogy in order to make the College's teaching more innovative and interactive.

7.2.2 It was further explained that funding to support pedagogy transformation would be allocated following a proposal submission process which would be run on a rolling basis over the next three years. Funding would be allocated in two streams and bids would be accepted to either support whole departments or groups of departments (Stream A) or to support small and medium sized initiatives (Stream B). The first call for proposals was imminent and it was felt that not many departments were in a position to make Stream A bids for large cohesive projects at the present time but that a number of smaller, local Stream B bids could be expected.

7.2.3 The Committee approved the proposed bidding process.

7.3 **Reward, retention and recognition frameworks for teaching staff**

The Committee received a verbal update from the Vice Provost (Education).

7.3.1 Professor Buitendijk reported that the new working party looking into reward, retention and recognition for teaching staff had now met twice. They had been discussing how to make careers in the Learning and Teaching job family more attractive and clear and were developing a framework to ensure that teaching staff would be able to access promotion on the basis of their contribution to the College's educational mission through their achievements in educational leadership and educational research. It was noted that, it was intended to take the first proposal to Provost's Board in October 2017 with a view to implementation in January 2018.

7.3.2 It was agreed that engagement in the new Learning and Teaching Strategy would provide opportunities for staff who wished to focus on teaching and educational research. Ultimately, it was hoped that professorships in

educational research and professorships in practice in education would be created. The aim was for teaching to be considered as important as research and to be rewarded accordingly.

7.3.3 Dr Malcolm Edwards reported that there would have to be a cultural change in institutional thinking in the use of teaching contracts verses research contracts. He would therefore present a proposal on this to a future meeting of the working party.

Action: Dr Edwards

7.3.4 Dr Edwards further reported that there would need to be a plan for how pedagogical research is presented in future REF returns.

Action: Dr Edwards

8. **Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) 2015-16** LTC.2017.08
The Committee considered the results from the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education Survey (DHLE) for 2015-16.

8.1 Mr Andy Peat presented the results and explained that:
- The percentage of College leavers in work and/or study was 90.8%, a decrease of 0.3% compared to 2014-15;
- The College saw a decrease of 2.7% in the proportion of employed leavers (all UG and PG) in full time work (89.8%) compared to 2014-15;
- The percentage of leavers in study who were studying for a higher research degree (63.8%), was 1% lower than in 2014-15;
- There was an increase in the average starting salary (£30,593) of first degree graduates compared to 2014-15 (£30,388).

8.2 It was agreed that the College could not afford to be complacent. It was noted that starting salary was only one metric and that Longitudinal Education Outcomes (LEO) data would be used in future iterations of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and that the College does not perform so well in LEO.

8.3 It was agreed that these results were another reason to embrace the Learning and Teaching Strategy with its focus on 21st century skills and diversity which were attractive propositions for employers.

8.4 It was agreed that the results, with a supporting commentary from Professor Buitendijk, should be widely circulated.

Action: Dr Edwards

9. **Education Evaluation**

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

9.1 Dr Malcolm Edwards reported that more information on the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) was emerging. The key elements in future iterations would be continuation of students, degree outcomes (including measures to prevent grade inflation), attainment gaps for students with protected characteristics and employability. The focus would eventually move from just programme level to programme and module level data and it would be challenge for the College to produce robust data at module level. Dr Edwards was therefore pursuing this with ICT and would also be liaising with the Head of Student Records and the Quality Assurance Team to ensure there would appropriate data capture and reporting to inform both the College's existing and future (e.g. HESA's Data Futures Project) reporting obligations as well as the College's quality assurance processes.

Action: Dr Edwards

9.2 It was agreed that Dr Edwards should give a full report on HESA's Data Futures Project at a future meeting.

Action: Dr Edwards

10. **Educational Research**

The Committee received a verbal update from Director of Educational Development.

10.1 Dr Kingsbury reported that the EDU would receive two fully funded educational research studentships to help with the evaluation of the L&T Strategy. One studentship had already been filled and the remaining studentship might be split into two part-time positions which would be suitable for existing EDU staff already working in the educational support roles.

10.2 It was reported that the EDU would also refocus and re-launch the existing internal Educational Enquiry Network (EDEN). The refocused network would be a means for staff interested in educational research to connect and share experiences and findings. EDEN would hold regular meetings.

10.3 It was further reported that the EDU would also build a source of resources to equip staff with an interest in teaching and educational research with the tools and support they would need to develop and thrive.

10.4 It was also noted that the EDU had recruited a post-doc researcher, Dr Bianca Wilson, to carry out research into equality, diversity and inclusivity in the curriculum.

11. **Online Learning and Innovation Group (OLIG)** LTC.2017.09

The Committee noted a report from OLIG from the meetings held on 19th June and 15th August 2017.

11.1 It was agreed that significant progress was being made and that the Director of the Digital Learning Hub should be invited to a future meeting to give a report.

12. **Quality Assurance & Enhancement Committee (QAEC)**
The Committee received a verbal report from the Academic Registrar from the QAEC meeting held on 12th September 2017 and noted the minutes from previous meetings could be found at: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/senate-subcommittees/quality-assurance-enhancement-committee/

12.1 Mr David Ashton explained that QAEC had approved the first draft of the annual Quality Assurance Report and approved a College level response to External Examiners.

12.2 It was further reported that QAEC had agreed some changes to the General Regulations for 2018-19 as well as some new policies and procedures as proposed by the Admissions Task and Finish Group. However, QAEC wanted longer to consider regulations and policy around attendance and this would therefore be discussed further at the next meeting. Also, at the next meeting, QAEC would be considering a first draft of the single set of regulations prior to a wider consultation phase. The timescale for implementation of the single set of regulations was now predicated to be 2019-20 entry. However, the policies and procedures developed by the Complaints and Appeals Group would be sent for College-wide consultation via the Faculties shortly with a view to adopting them for 2018-19.

13. **Senate**
The Committee noted the latest minutes from the Senate which were available at: http://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/senate/

14. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

14.1 **TEF Panel Recruitment**
Dr Edwards reported that HEFCE had opened recruitment for approximately 100 panel member roles on the TEF Subject Pilot panels and for a small number of roles on TEF Year Three for applicants with Higher Education experience. The deadline for applications was 6th October 2017.   Full details were available at: https://tef.hefce.ac.uk/recruitment

14.2 It was agreed that members should circulated the link widely and encourage colleagues to apply.

15. **Dates for Meeting 2017-18**
Tuesday 31st Oct 2017 at 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Level 4, Faculty Building
Tuesday 28th Nov 2017 at 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Level 4, Faculty Building
Thursday 19th Dec 2017 at 10:00-12:00, Drawing Room, 170 Queen's Gate
Tuesday 23rd Jan 2018, 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Level 4, Faculty Building
Tuesday 20th Feb 2018, 10:00-12:00, Boardroom, Level 4, Faculty Building

Thursday 13th March 2018, 10:00-12:00, Ballroom, 58 Prince's Gate (TBC)
Thursday 15th May 2018, 10:00-12:00, Ballroom, 58, Prince's Gate (TBC)

16.   **RESERVED AREA OF BUSINESS**
There was no reserved business.