

Present

Professor Simone Buitendijk – Vice Provost (Education) – Chair
Mr David Ashton – Academic Registrar
Ms Emma Caseley – Head of Strategic Projects, Education Office
Dr Malcolm Edwards – Director of Strategic Planning
Professor Sue Gibson – Director of the Graduate School
Professor Martyn Kingsbury – Director of Educational Development
Mr Martin Lupton – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Medicine
Mr Alejandro Luy – ICU Deputy President (Education)
Professor Omar Matar – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering
Professor Emma McCoy – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Natural Sciences
Dr Edgar Meyer – Associate Dean (UG Programmes & Education Quality), Imperial College Business School
Professor Alan Spivey – Assistant Provost (Learning & Teaching)
Ms Judith Webster – Head of Academic Services
Ms Lucy Heming – Senior Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance and Enhancement)
- Secretary

In attendance

Ms Laura Bulmer, International Relations Officer (Mobility and Programmes) – for item 3
Professor Maggie Dallman, Vice President (International) / Associate Provost (Academic Partnerships) – for item 3
Ms Anna Shierson, Strategic Planning Officer – for item 5
Ms Ute Thiermann, President of the Graduate Students' Union – for item 4.2
Ms Hailey Smith – Project Manager (Learning and Teaching Strategy), Education Office

1 Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees and noted there were no apologies.

2 Minutes

LTC.2018.44

- 2.1 The Committee confirmed the minutes from the meeting held on Thursday 28 February 2019, subject to correcting the job title for Dr Edgar Meyer to Associate Dean (UG Programmes & Education Quality).
- 2.2 The Committee welcomed the news that a transformation milestone had been reached following the approval of all undergraduate Curriculum Review provision, subject to minor amendments, at Programmes Committee on 26 March 2019. It was noted that for most programmes this would not be an end point but represented a considerable distance travelled and ensured the provision was in good shape as further pedagogy transformation was planned for the future. There was still work to do on the single set of regulations and the implementation of the new student records system but the Curriculum Review process had been a great learning experience and the relationships formed and practice shared during this process would positively impact how these other elements were taken forward.

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

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

3 International Experience for Students at Imperial

LTC.2018.45

3.1 The International Relations Office was involved in a range of opportunities providing international experiences for students at Imperial and the benefits of these opportunities were demonstrable, particularly among Widening Participation students. Many institutions offered similar opportunities and had incorporated targets for students to have an international experience as part of their regular student offer. The College did not have a strategic approach to providing international opportunities for students.

3.2 The International Relations Office noted the benefits of and appetite for centralised activity in addition to international opportunities being operated locally. This could provide an important opportunity for students who currently may find their access to international experience affected by differential departmental engagement and funding.

3.3 There was a link between the proposal for greater international experience and the work underway on the Learning and Teaching Strategy and Access and Participation Plan. Greater alignment between these areas could lead to enhancement, for example, considering how pedagogy transformation could be enhanced through international experience.

3.4 Another important consideration was the experience of international students coming to study at Imperial. For a large number of students, their international experience was achieved through coming to the UK. It would be important to consider how their experience would inform their engagement with their studies and with other international opportunities and how it could also help provide an international experience for UK students studying alongside them.

3.5 It was acknowledged that finance could be a barrier to some students engaging in international opportunities, particularly those from Widening Participation backgrounds. The bursary for Widening Participation students was based on living costs during the academic year, so would not cover opportunities in the summer and Widening Participation students could be more likely to have to take up non-subject specific employment than pursue subject-specific extra-curricular work opportunities or internships. As well as considering additional funding sources to ensure a greater parity of opportunity, it would also be important to consider whether the type, duration and timing of opportunities could be extended so as to extend the range of ways in which students might engage in an international experience. There were examples of Faculty approaches to provide additional financial support for students who otherwise would not be able to take up international opportunities but some element of central support would be welcome.

3.6 If the College was to develop a strategic approach to international experiences, this would need to be considered alongside other strategic aims such as providing entrepreneurial experiences. It may be that students could be provided with a range of opportunities and choose a focus for themselves. A similar approach was being developed through the I-Explore offering,

where students could choose the type of co-curricular experience with which they wished to engage. It was suggested that students that might most benefit from an international experience could be directed towards these types of activities; this could include those without prior international experience or those whose prior international experiences had not had a transformative approach or effect.

3.7 The College defined itself as one of the most international institutions in the UK however a question remained over what it means to be an international university. The College needed to consider how it was cultivating an environment which maximised what students would get out of this international experience, both in terms of utilising students' own international experiences and ensuring students were stretched to look beyond the local to the global. This could be viewed through a number of perspectives; the Committee was particularly interested in how this could be developed through an educational perspective and noted the need for a long-term view, which might include the ways in which student's international experiences would continue after the completion of their studies at the College.

3.8 The Committee agreed that further work was needed to think about how to bring together these educational and international philosophies. This would need to consider practical implications as well as strategy; a range of stakeholders might need to be involved in this work. A paper would be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.

ACTION: Chair, Vice President (International) / Associate Provost (Academic Partnerships)

4 Student Experience

4.1 NSS/PTES Working Group

LTC.2018.46

4.1.1 The Group had been formed following consideration of the results of the 2018 National Student Survey and Postgraduate Taught Excellence Survey. It had been tasked with focussing on identifying actions which could lead to immediate improvements and had adopted the appreciative enquiry model, so facilitating the sharing of good practice. By convening this group at a College level, it was possible to consider parity of student experience which was an important factor in student satisfaction. The Group had identified a number of actions and would be holding a further meeting in the next few months to develop a vision and mission statement on parity of the student experience.

4.1.2 Feedback from the Faculties and students was mostly positive. In particular, it was seen as a positive that many of the actions were low resource but high return and had clear tangible benefits.

4.1.3 There remained concerns in the Faculty of Medicine that the commitment to parity of experience would not be reflected in what some students would receive in terms of services such as catering. This is why it would be important to identify a minimum standard which applied to all students.

4.1.4 The College was working on developing an Academic Strategy. This would cover the student experience broadly not just in terms of pedagogy and therefore would draw on the principles being developed by this Group.

4.1.5 A further report on the work of the Group would come to a future Committee meeting.

ACTION: Chair, Secretary

4.2 Outcomes of the Master's student experience project

LTC.2018.40

4.2.1 The Committee received the final report of the Working Party for Enhancing the Master's Student Experience, having previously seen an interim version. The Working Party had worked closely with stakeholders including the Imperial College Union and Graduate Students' Union.

4.2.2 A key development of the Working Party was a new document called 'Mutual Expectations for the Master's Student and Project Supervisor Partnership'. This was designed to prompt dialogue between Master's students and their project supervisors early on in the process and help manage expectations, timescales and ways of working so as to minimise the risk of dissatisfaction or lack of progress. It was intended that these Expectations would be signposted in student handbooks. It would be circulated to Vice-Deans (Education) and Master's course directors. It was noted that it would need to be embedded into processes as it would need to be addressed each year.

4.2.3 The Committee welcome the development of this document but proposed a number of changes:

- Remove the reference to Postgraduate Certificates and MBA programmes from the title
- Cross-reference this document with other relevant documents
- Note that it is best practice to make a record of meetings between students and project supervisors in some way so as to provide evidence of these discussions taking place
- Re-consider the amount of time allocated to supervisory meetings; it was thought one hour per week could be too much to provide to all students
- Include a referral contact for a student to follow up with in the event a partnership broke down
- Re-consider whether the supervisor would always be best-placed to meet all of the expectations laid out in the document

4.2.4 The Committee discussed the purpose of the document and whether it could be perceived as part of the formal contract with students. While it was intended to be a guidance document and facilitate discussions to establish effective partnerships without being too prescriptive, it was thought that it might be considered a formal document. A proposal was raised that it should be considered a formal document as this would better protect students and provide a resource for them in the event that these expectations were not met. However no consensus was reached on whether it should be viewed in those terms. It was agreed it would be discussed with Legal Services to ascertain any contractual status it might hold.

Action: Director of the Graduate School

4.2.5 Following updating to reflect the discussion at the Committee and receipt of advice from Legal Services, the document would be re-circulated to the Committee.

Action: Director of the Graduate School

- 4.2.6 The Committee endorsed the spirit of the document but noted there would be a considerable amount of work required to ensure it works for everyone.
- 4.2.7 The Committee noted the changes to the annual monitoring and programme proposal processes were being considered by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee and Programmes Committee respectively.
- 4.2.8 The Committee approved the new document titled 'Roles and Responsibilities for Main Project Supervisors'.
- 4.2.9 The Committee endorsed the new communications strategy and the further work to enhance the professional development opportunities for Master's students.

4.3 Module and Lecturer Evaluation Working Group

- 4.3.1 The Committee received a verbal update on the work of the Module and Lecturer Evaluation Working Group. The Group was focussed on looking at how to make the current module evaluation system more fit for purpose as an interim measure, including exploring existing alternative means used to obtain student feedback, as well as considering a bigger scale change to the whole approach to obtaining student feedback. A recent presentation on the system in place at the University of Helsinki was received positively but it would be a longer term piece of work to adopt something similar.
- 4.3.2 It was agreed that communications with key stakeholders such as Heads of Department should start soon. This would need to address how current SOLE data was used in promotions rounds as well as setting out the rationale for making changes to the evaluation approach, clarifying what the College is looking to measure and why and how the approach would address the biases identified in student evaluation results.
- 4.3.3 It was noted that as the new student records system was introduced, it would be possible to obtain other sorts of data on modules, including evidence of attainment gaps between different demographic groups.

5 **Access and Participation Plan**

LTC.2018.47

- 5.1 The College was in the process of developing a new Access and Participation Plan in line with the new guidance provided by the Office for Students (OfS). The OfS had set ambitious targets for the sector over the next five years and the Plan would need to demonstrate how the College would meet those targets. Failure to reach agreement on the Plan could have serious reputational and financial consequences. The Plan was being taken forward by the Access, Participation and Student Support Working Group (APSSWG).
- 5.2 The key performance indicators set by the OfS aimed to reduce the gaps in participation among different POLAR (Participation Of Local AREas) groups (over the next five years it was intended to reduce this from 5:1 to 3:1; Imperial currently had a participation gap of slightly more than 5:1) and among a range of different demographic groups in relation to non-continuation and attainment. Institutions with the biggest differential gaps would be expected to make the most progress as this would have the most

significant impact on the national targets. The OfS would be releasing data shortly which would help illustrate the scale of the issue.

- 5.3 A summary of the College's performance against these targets was provided. The main areas of concern were around participation, particularly among POLAR groups, and in attainment in relation to POLAR groups, students with disabilities and younger students (who appeared, in the data, to be under-performing in relation to mature students).
- 5.4 It was noted that the data may not reflect the full range of students with disabilities due to the self-reporting process, which tended to lead to under-reporting. It was recommended that as well as encouraging self-reporting on entry, discussions around reasonable adjustments could act as a prompt for students to self-report.
- 5.5 The College data showed that Widening Participation students tended to perform well when at the College. One concern was that given the current small numbers, as the work to widen access proved successful, this would not automatically mean that the continuation and attainment gaps would remain as low as currently recorded. It would be important to think about the support those students might need once they are at the College and the extent to which local and/or central support would be best-placed to eliminate any gaps in performance.
- 5.6 In order to increase the number of Widening Participation students entering the College, admissions would need to be done differently in future as recent admissions data showed disproportionate rejections of applications to students from Widening Participation backgrounds in comparison to students with similar grades. The fairness of the admissions process needed to be ensured and consideration of other admissions approaches, such as adjustment (as recently introduced at the University of Cambridge) were needed. Once Widening Participation students had received offers, it was also important to take steps to encourage them to make Imperial their first choice. This work would sit alongside outreach activities that were expected to have more longitudinal outcomes.
- 5.7 Many institutions would be looking at attracting the same small group of the highest performing Widening Participation students. The College would need to consider using imaginative approaches to widen the pool of students it was targeting and how to make Imperial the most attractive offer. This could include introducing a 'year zero' and/or online content.

6 Learning and Teaching Strategy

6.1 Update on Curriculum Review

- 6.1.1 An update on Curriculum Review had been provided earlier in the meeting (minute 2.2 refers).

6.2 Update on regulatory progress

LTC.2018.48

- 6.2.1 The Committee noted the update on the ongoing development of the single set of regulations for 2019/20 and the importance of the meeting on 1 April 2019 to seek resolution on some important issues. The Committee reaffirmed

the need for uniformity in the regulations and to be able to defend the College's regulations to students.

ITEMS TO NOTE

- 7 Learning and Teaching Strategy Implementation Plan and Risk Log** LTC.2018.49
a & b
- 7.1** The Committee noted the Learning and Teaching Strategy Implementation Plan and Risk Log.
- 8 Educational Evaluation**
- 8.1** Following a reorganisation, there were two dedicated members of staff working on educational evaluation. The Dashboards previously presented to the Committee were using a new software delivery package (PowerBI) which had made a big improvement; the dashboards would be re-presented to the Committee in May 2019 and it was anticipated that visualisation of data would inform quality processes, help illustrate the impact of curriculum and pedagogy change and assist with the Access and Participation Plan and the Teaching Excellence Framework.
- 9 Educational Research**
- 9.1** It was noted the Education Day (9 May 2019) was being advertised, the CHERS website was being redeveloped and the CHERS team had gained a new Associate Professor and new Research Associate staff.
- 10 Online Learning Innovation Group (OLIG)**
- 10.1** This item was deferred to the next meeting.
- 11 I-Explore Module Innovation Group (IMIG)** LTC.2018.51
- 11.1** The Committee noted the report from the most recent meetings of the I-Explore Module Innovation Group.
- 12 Any Other Business**
- 12.1** No other business was raised.
- 13 Dates for Meetings**
- 13.1** Thursday 23 May 2019, 15.00-17.00
Thursday 20 June 2019, 15.00-17.00
July meeting TBC