

## Master's Quality Committee Medicine, Life Sciences and School of Professional Development

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**28 January 2014**  
**Confirmed Minutes**

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### Present

Professor Sue Gibson (Chair)  
Dr Christine Franey (School of Public Health)  
Dr Niki Gounaris (Department of Life Sciences)  
Professor Kate Hardy (Department of Surgery and Cancer)  
Professor Debra Humphris – Vice Provost [Education]  
Dr Martyn Kingsbury (School of Professional Development)  
Professor Myra McClure (College Consul (non-clinical) Faculty of Medicine)  
Dr Kevin Murphy (Department of Medicine) – *representing Professor Simon Taylor-Robinson*  
Professor Andrew Parry (College Consul, Faculty of Natural Sciences)  
Mr Dean Pateman (Academic Registrar)

### In Attendance

Ms Sally Baker (Senior Assistant Registrar, Senate and Academic Review)  
Mr Colin Bicknell (Department of Surgery and Cancer) – for item 6.1  
Professor the Lord Ara Darzi (Department of Surgery and Cancer) – for item 5.1  
Ms Susan Farrell (Department of Surgery and Cancer) – for item 5.1  
Sir Tom Hughes-Hallett (Department of Surgery and Cancer) – for item 5.1  
Professor Nigel Gooderham (Department of Surgery and Cancer) – for items 6.2 – 6.4  
Dr Jason Hodgson (Department of Life Sciences) – for item 5.2  
Dr Julie King (Director of the English Language Support Unit) – for item 8  
Professor E.J. Milner-Gulland (Department of Life Sciences) – for item 5.2  
Mr Richard Monk (Assistant Registrar, Senate and Academic Review – Secretary)

### Observing

Ms Kirsty Ellinor (Quality Assurance Administrator, Registry)

## 1. Welcome

The Chair welcomed Dr Christine Franey as the new representative for the School of Public Health (replacing Professor Marjo-Riitta Jarvelin).

The Committee also welcomed Mr Dean Pateman who had recently been appointed as Academic Registrar, succeeding Mr Nigel Wheatley.

## 2. Apologies for absence

Dr Mick Jones (College Tutor)  
Ms Natalie Kempston (ICU Deputy President, Education)  
Dr David McPhail (Graduate School Deputy Director & Deputy Chair)  
Dr Duncan Rogers (NHLI)  
Ms Marta Sawicka (Academic and Welfare Officer – Life Sciences)

Professor Simon Taylor-Robinson (Department of Medicine)  
Mr Andreas Thomik (GSU President)  
Professor Denis Wright (Director of Student Support)  
Ms Nuha Yassin (Academic and Welfare Officer – Medicine)

### **3. Minutes of the last meeting**

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2013 were approved.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/17**

### **4. Matters arising**

#### **4.1 Minute 5.2 – Periodic Review [Department of Surgery and Cancer]**

Members were reminded that, resulting from the periodic review the Committee had requested that the Graduate School investigate the possibility of extending free EndNote access to Master's students. The Chair reported that Education and Research Support within the College library had investigated the possibility of extending EndNote to Master's students. Under the terms of the College licence agreement, EndNote could only be downloaded to College owned PCs. Some Departments had purchased individual licences for their students at a cost of £102 per licence. Given the terms of the licence agreement it was not going to be possible to extend free EndNote access to all Master's students. The Chair suggested the following alternative options:

- Master's students can access EndNote on library cluster PCs;
- Use other free web-based platforms such as REF Works or Mendeley;
- Departments consider purchasing individual EndNote licences at £102 each.

#### **4.2 Minute 5.7 – Reporting of Minor Course Modifications**

It was noted that this action was ongoing. The process for obtaining details of minor modifications and reporting them to Committees would be considered as part of a wider review of the College course modification procedure, necessitated by the recent publication of Section B8: Programme Monitoring and Review of the UK Quality Code by the QAA.

**ACTION: Registry [Quality Assurance]**

- 4.3 The Committee noted that the remaining items were either included on the agenda or that appropriate action had been taken since the last meeting.

### **ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

#### **5. New Programme Proposals**

##### **5.1 PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc in Philanthropy (Department of Surgery and Cancer)**

- 5.1.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to introduce a new PG Cert, PG Dip and MSc in Philanthropy with effect from October 2014. The PG Cert programme will be offered on a part-time only basis over 8 months. The PG Dip programme will be offered on a part-time only basis over 16 months and the MSc on a part-time only basis over two calendar years.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/18**

The Committee welcomed Professor the Lord Ara Darzi (proposed Course Director), Sir Tom Hughes-Hallett (proposed Course Organiser) and Ms Susan Farrell (Postgraduate Education Manager) who had been invited to present the proposal.

- 5.1.2 Lord Darzi explained that there was limited provision of programmes in philanthropy, social enterprise, non-profit management and fundraising, with the main gap in these areas currently being philanthropy. The main emphasis of courses elsewhere was towards fundraising rather than encouraging and enhancing philanthropy. The proposed programme would therefore be a unique offering in an under-provided area, focusing on the science and history of philanthropy rather than on fundraising. The programme was primarily aimed at individuals who were currently working within the area of philanthropy but also to individuals who might be considering starting their own social enterprise. The Committee also learned that the programme was an initiative developed by the Institute for Global Health Innovation, working together with the Imperial College Business School. The programme would be based in and managed by the Department of Surgery and Cancer.

In discussion between the Course Team and the Committee, the following points were raised:

- 5.1.3 The Committee was concerned that the proposed MSc course structure, in particular the proposal to split the research project equally across both years, could potentially disadvantage some students. It was noted that the taught component was designed to last 8 months in each year, with research project work taking up the other 4 months of the year. This structure, the Committee felt, was inimical to a student that applied for the PG Dip award and then latterly decided that they wished to complete the MSc, as they would not have undertaken the 4 months of research project work in year one. The Committee also expressed the view that splitting the research project over two years could potentially disadvantage a student whose particular interests were addressed in the taught modules in year two as they would have to commence their research project in the first year.
- 5.1.4 The Committee noted the potential breadth of experience of the proposed intake to the programme and was concerned that the provision of research skills training to assist students in completing a substantial research project was not evident in the proposed curriculum. The Course Team informed the Committee that it was likely that the students recruited to the programme would previously have accrued the necessary research skills through other study, often at postgraduate level. The Committee further learned that students would be in attendance every 4-6 weeks which would include a session with their supervisor. The Course Team indicated that such sessions could include additional research skills training for students that required such additional support and agreed to make this aspect more explicit in the programme outline.
- 5.1.5 The Committee noted that the programme would be reliant on a number of sessional academic staff and sought reassurance from the Course Team that there would be adequate capacity to provide students with suitable supervisors for their research projects. The Course Team informed the Committee that project supervision would predominantly be provided by academic staff from the Department. The Institute of Global Health Innovation also had a cohort of associates of the Institute such as visiting Professors and research fellows who would also be able to act as project supervisors. There were currently approximately 22 adjunct professorships within the Institute. The Committee reminded the Course Team of the requirement outlined in the Master's level precepts that inexperienced supervisors and supervisors new to Imperial must attend the appropriate workshops provided by the Educational Development Unit.  
<http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/registry/proceduresandregulations/qualityassurance/approvalandreview/postgraduateresearchprogrammeapprovalandreviewprocesses/masterslevelprecepts>
- 5.1.6 In discussion the Committee learned that students may be engaged in research projects based outside the College. The Committee reminded the Course Team of the requirement outlined in the Master's level precepts that a co-supervisor from within the College should be appointed where a project was based outside the College and that it was important to ensure that regular contact was maintained. The Course Team confirmed that where a project was to be conducted at a location external to Imperial, the student would also have an external supervisor based at the external institution and that during this time, regular contact would be maintained with the Programme Director.

5.1.7 After detailed discussion with Professor the Lord Darzi, Sir Hughes-Hallett and Ms Farrell, the Committee was reassured on a number of issues which had been raised for discussion. Some issues remained to be addressed as follows:

- (i). The Committee noted that comments were still required from one of the nominated external reviewers. The Committee advised that these comments must be received and that the Department must formally respond to them prior to presentation of the proposal to Senate.
- (ii). The Committee considered it important that the programme structure and pattern of delivery be outlined more explicitly, particularly the elements of the programme that would be delivered 'virtually' via blended or on-line learning activities. The Committee felt that there was some conflation of part-time and distance learning in the delivery pattern as currently described. In clarifying the delivery pattern the Committee also advised that the Course Team include further details of the arrangements for research skills training within the programme [see paragraphs 5.1.3 and 5.1.4 above].
- (iii). The Committee advised the Course Team to give further consideration to the proposed course structure, in particular the separation of the research project across both years of the programme, with possible consideration to the benefits of identifying 'core' and 'optional' modules.
- (iv). The Committee considered the progression route from PG Cert to PG Dip to MSc as described in Section 36 of the proposal to be unclear, as it appeared to imply that students would receive a separate award on completion of each stage of the programme. The Committee therefore requested that the Course Team clarify the progression route.
- (v). The Committee considered it important that the status of the programme as a 'joint venture' between the Department of Surgery and Cancer and the Business School be identified clearly and explained in greater detail within the proposal.

**ACTION: Course Team**

5.1.8 The Committee was supportive of the initiative and requested that the Course Team be asked to address the matters outlined above. The Committee agreed that the responses could be considered by members of the Master's Quality Committee outside the meeting and that, if appropriate, Chair's action could be taken to approve the new programme proposal to go forward to Senate.

**ACTION: Committee Members and Chair**

**Post-meeting note:** following the meeting responses were received from the Course Team to address the matters detailed in 5.1.7 above. This included revised documentation where appropriate. The responses and revised documentation were reviewed by the Chair who considered them to be satisfactory. The PG Cert / PG Dip / MSc Philanthropy was therefore approved for onward submission to Senate at its meeting of 26 February 2014.

## **5.2 MRes Grand Challenges in Ecosystems and the Environment (Department of Life Sciences)**

5.2.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Department of Life Sciences to introduce a new MRes in Grand Challenges in Ecosystems and the Environment (GCEE) with effect from October 2014. The programme will be offered on a full-time basis over one calendar year and on a part-time basis over two calendar years.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/19**

The Committee welcomed Professor E.J. Milner-Gulland (Director of Grand Challenges) and Dr Jason Hodgson (proposed Course Director) who had been invited to present the proposal.

- 5.2.2 Professor Milner-Gulland explained that the objective of the proposed MRes GCEE programme was to provide a cutting-edge interdisciplinary programme that would attract and train highly able students who were interested in pursuing a research career that addressed grand challenges in ecosystems and the environment. The programme would provide students with high-level research training in the latest developments in ecosystems and the environment, covering the physical, life and social sciences and an understanding of how to ensure that research had real-world impact. The MRes programme would be hosted within the Grand Challenges initiative, which was cross-Departmental, and based at the Silwood Park campus. The Department had also formed collaborative relationships with other Departments that offered relevant courses and whose course leaders had committed to teaching modules or lectures to the GCEE students.
- 5.2.3 The Committee enquired about the proposed leadership of the programme and sought assurances that the proposed Course Directors were both full-time appointments. Professor Milner-Gulland confirmed that both identified Course Directors, Professor Araujo and Dr Hodgson, were full-time appointments at the College. In addition, Professor Milner-Gulland, who was currently the Course Director for the MSc in Conservation Science, would act as a mentor to both Course Directors during the first year of the programme.
- 5.2.4 The Committee was interested to learn about the potential market for the programme and the market research that had been conducted by the Course Team. The Course Team informed the Committee that the Grand Challenges initiative had been launched in October 2013 and that the launch event had attracted a number of industry representatives and potential employers. The Course Team had consulted the industry representatives and potential employers on the proposed MRes programme and had received positive feedback. In addition, current students at the Silwood Park campus had been consulted on the development and the Course Team had delivered a presentation on the proposed MRes at the recent Silwood open-day. There had been a strong and positive response from current and prospective students, resulting in a number of expressions of interest. Other market research had been conducted both within College and externally to identify the market for the programme. The Course Team was confident of the market for the programme and that there would be sufficient demand from prospective students and that it would not detract from recruitment to existing programmes.
- 5.2.5 The Committee enquired about the economics content of the curriculum, noting that one of the external reviewers had suggested a need for sessions on economics within the programme. The Course Team responded that economics was taught within the curriculum but that there was a very limited teaching period within an MRes programme which precluded a distinct module on economics. Aspects of economics would, however, be addressed in the *Social-Ecological Systems* module in week 7 and the *Policy Analysis* module in week 8. It was further noted that the Centre for Environmental Policy included academic staff with expertise in environmental economics, thereby ensuring that there was sufficient provision within College to address these aspects of the curriculum.
- 5.2.6 The Committee requested further details on the proposed volume of assessment within the programme. The Course Team explained that students would be expected to complete two coursework tasks in weeks 4 and 10 of the programme. The first coursework task would be a practical exercise, such as data analysis and interpretation, reflecting on the quantitative skills covered in modules 2 and 3 and providing students with the opportunity to consolidate the skills based theory. The second coursework task would be based on the conceptual modules that followed and would take the form of a science communication exercise with students potentially producing a blog, video, podcast, poster or other similar output. The mid-project report would be a formative assessment task of approximately 5000-6000 words and would provide students with helpful feedback on their progress.
- 5.2.7 The Committee noted that there appeared to be a limited number of potential projects for the MRes GCEE programme when compared to the list of academic staff within the Grand Challenges initiative. The Course Team informed the Committee that 17 new academic staff, ranging from research fellows to Professors, had recently been appointed to the Grand Challenges initiative. Academic staff within the Department were expected to supervise

between 4 and 6 postgraduate students each. The MRes GCEE was also a cross-Departmental programme and students would therefore have access to projects and supervision outside the Department. The Department had devised an on-line project proforma which facilitated a system through which students could apply for project supervision across the Department. The Course Team was confident that there would be a sufficient number of projects and adequate supervision available to students.

5.2.8 The Committee was interested to learn about the funding arrangements for students wishing to study the programme. It was noted from the proposal documentation that students would be self-funded initially. The Course Team explained that once the programme was established additional funding opportunities would be explored, such as the European Commission and charities. In discussion the Committee was informed that the College was currently looking to develop a central database of scholarships.

5.2.9 After detailed discussion with Professor Milner-Gulland and Dr Hodgson, the Committee was reassured on a number of issues which had been raised for discussion. One matter remained to be addressed as follows:

- (i). The Committee noted that comments were still required from one of the nominated external reviewers. The Committee advised that these comments must be received and that the Department must formally respond to them prior to presentation of the proposal to Senate.

**ACTION: Course Team**

5.2.10 The Committee was supportive of the initiative and requested that the Course Team be asked to address the matter outlined above. The Committee agreed that the response could be considered by members of the Master's Quality Committee outside the meeting and that, if appropriate, Chair's action could be taken to approve the new programme proposal to go forward to Senate.

**ACTION: Committee Members and Chair**

**Post-meeting note:** following the meeting additional documentation was received from the Course Team to address the matter detailed in 5.2.9 above. This included comments from the final external reviewer and a response from the Course Team to those comments. The documentation was reviewed by the Chair who determined that the Department had satisfactorily responded to the reviewer's comments. The MRes Grand Challenges in Ecosystems and the Environment was therefore approved for onward submission to Senate at its meeting of 26 February 2014.

## **6. Course Modifications**

### **6.1 MSc in Health Policy (Department of Surgery and Cancer)**

6.1.1 The Committee received an updated request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to change the mode of delivery for one module and change the examination format in four modules, retrospectively with effect from October 2013.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/20**

The Committee welcomed Mr Colin Bicknell (Module Leader for *Leadership in Healthcare*) who had been invited to present the proposal.

6.1.2 Members were reminded that Change Request 1, to change the designation of the *Innovation in Healthcare* module from optional to core and to change the designation of the *Leadership in Healthcare* module from core to optional, had been agreed at the previous meeting. Members were further reminded that the current students had agreed to all three proposed modifications to the programme.

- 6.1.3 The Committee welcomed the additional information provided in the course modification proposal which sought to clarify the issues that had been raised by the Committee at the previous meeting. Members were reminded that, in relation to Change Request 2, it had been unclear who would be teaching the *Leadership in Healthcare* module once the teaching moved in-house or how the previous relationship with UCL for the provision of teaching had been formally ended. The Committee had previously supported the proposal to bring the teaching of the *Leadership in Healthcare* module in-house but had been unclear as to the role of Dartmouth College academic staff in curriculum development and delivery. The updated course modification proposal further described the role of Dartmouth College staff in developing the module, which would be led by Mr Bicknell and Lord Darzi. The teaching content and structure of the module would be based on a similar course currently offered by Dr Wiley Souba at Dartmouth College. Dr Souba and two further academic staff from Dartmouth College would be visiting Imperial to deliver the week-long module. Imperial College staff would plan part of the curriculum including organising 'key note lectures' from individuals in the healthcare profession. The Committee further learned that the arrangement with UCL had not been subject to on-going contract and that the financial arrangements were based solely on student numbers. There were therefore no outstanding financial obligations. Additionally, there were no continuing students that would be affected by the transition of teaching from UCL to Imperial. The Committee was reassured by the additional information provided and approved the proposed change to the mode of delivery.
- 6.1.4 The Committee was reminded that four modules of the MSc in Health Policy were currently assessed by examination and six by extended essay and that members had previously expressed reservations about the use of coursework as the sole method of assessment. The Committee discussed the additional information submitted in support of Change Request 3, to change the method of assessment from examinations to coursework (essays) in four modules. The Committee was informed that the change had initially been recommended by the External Examiner who considered the essay format to require more critical thinking, analysis and creativity compared to a written examination. Coursework was also considered more appropriate for the students of the programme who were often at an advanced stage in their career where it was necessary for them to demonstrate their ability to solve problems and apply critical thinking. Following the previous meeting the Course Team had reviewed the assessment criteria and considered other alternative forms of assessment and had come to the conclusion that the essay format was the most appropriate method to test the specific learning objectives (outcomes) of the programme. The Committee considered the rationale for the change in assessment format to be appropriate but considered it important that the Course Team seek to ensure that the work submitted for assessment was the student's own work. The Committee therefore insisted on the routine use of Turnitin for submission of assessed work. The Committee also determined that routine programme review would provide a mechanism to monitor the robustness of the revised method of assessment.
- 6.1.5 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed modifications to the programme be approved by the Senate, retrospectively with effect from October 2013.

## **6.2 MRes in Biomedical Research [Microbiome in Health and Disease] (Department of Surgery and Cancer)**

The Committee welcomed Professor Nigel Gooderham (Course Director) who had been invited to present the proposals for three new streams within the MRes in Biomedical Research.

- 6.2.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to introduce a new stream [Microbiome in Health and Disease] within the MRes in Biomedical Research programme, with effect from October 2014. The new stream will be offered on a full-time (1 calendar year) basis.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/21**

6.2.2 The Committee noted that the proposed stream in Microbiome in Health and Disease would be identical to the existing streams of the MRes in Biomedical Research in terms of structure, timetabling, organisation, contact hours, scheme of assessment and ECTS and participation in the Graduate School's transferable skills programme. In all of the activities undertaken by students there would be an emphasis on the gut microbiota and its association with health and disease, which would distinguish this stream from others of the MRes programme.

6.2.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed new stream and award title **MRes in Biomedical Research [Microbiome in Health and Disease]** be approved by the Senate, with effect from October 2014.

### **6.3 MRes in Biomedical Research [Epidemiology, Evolution and Control of Infectious Diseases] (Department of Surgery and Cancer)**

6.3.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to introduce a new stream [Epidemiology, Evolution and Control of Infectious Diseases] within the MRes in Biomedical Research programme, with effect from October 2014. The new stream will be offered on a full-time (1 calendar year) basis.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/22**

6.3.2 The Committee noted that the proposed stream in Epidemiology, Evolution and Control of Infectious Diseases would be identical to the existing streams of the MRes in Biomedical Research in terms of structure, timetabling, organisation, contact hours, scheme of assessment and ECTS and participation in the Graduate School's transferable skills programme. In all of the activities undertaken by students there would be an emphasis on infectious disease epidemiology, which would distinguish this stream from others of the MRes programme.

6.3.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed new stream and award title **MRes in Biomedical Research [Epidemiology, Evolution and Control of Infectious Diseases]** be approved by the Senate, with effect from October 2014.

### **6.4 MRes in Biomedical Research [Anaesthetics, Pain Medicine and Intensive Care] (Department of Surgery and Cancer)**

6.4.1 The Committee received a request from the Department of Surgery and Cancer to introduce a new stream [Anaesthetics, Pain Medicine and Intensive Care] within the MRes in Biomedical Research programme, with effect from October 2014. The new stream will be offered on a full-time (1 calendar year) basis.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/23**

6.4.2 The Committee noted that the proposed stream in Anaesthetics, Pain Medicine and Intensive Care would be identical to the existing streams of the MRes in Biomedical Research in terms of structure, timetabling, organisation, contact hours, scheme of assessment and ECTS and participation in the Graduate School's transferable skills programme. In all of the activities undertaken by students there would be an emphasis on anaesthetics, pain medicine and intensive care, which would distinguish this stream from others of the MRes programme.

6.4.3 The Committee further noted that the entry requirement for the proposed new stream of an MBBS degree in medicine from a UK University or equivalent from outside the UK differed from the other streams within the MRes in Biomedical Research. Professor Gooderham informed the Committee that approximately six students had been admitted to the programme with an MBBS degree from a UK University in the past two years. It was agreed that the entry requirement would be amended to 'candidates will *normally* be expected to hold an MBBS degree...'.

6.3.3 The Committee agreed to recommend that the proposed new stream and award title **MRes in Biomedical Research [Anaesthetics, Pain Medicine and Intensive Care]** be approved by the Senate, with effect from October 2014.



## **7. Follow up from Periodic Review**

### **7.1 Department of Surgery and Cancer**

- 7.1.1 The Committee received a report from the Department of Surgery and Cancer on progress with the review and restructuring of its taught postgraduate provision.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/24**

- 7.1.2 Members were reminded that the Committee had considered the periodic review of the Department of Surgery and Cancer at the meeting of 29 July 2013. The Committee had agreed that the Department would be asked to report back in 6 months' time on progress with the review and restructuring of its taught postgraduate provision.

- 7.1.3 The Committee noted that the Department had withdrawn the MSc in Surgical Technology and the part-time option of the MSc in Surgical Sciences, with a view to withdrawing the full-time option for 2014-15 if possible. The Department was also developing a new modular MSc in Surgery which, it hoped, would be able to start in February 2015. The decision to seek a February start date was intended to allow medical trainees who moved post in August sufficient time to obtain funding and/or permission to attend a Master's course. At present medical trainees moving post in August had to wait until the following October to commence a Master's programme. The Committee was supportive of the proposal to seek a February start date, provided that the necessary support services and induction arrangements would be available and that the academic timetable was achievable.

## **8. English Language Entry Requirements for International Students**

- 8.1 The Committee considered a proposal from the Director of the English Language Support Unit to align the IELTS and TOEFL scores to ensure an agreed and consistent minimum entry level for English language proficiency for international students. The Committee welcomed Dr Julie King (Director of the English Language Support Unit) who had been invited to present the proposal.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/25**

- 8.2 The Director of the English Language Support Unit informed the Committee that the current equivalencies used by the College differed for undergraduate and postgraduate study, were inconsistent with guidance provided by the company that produced the TOEFL test and differed from the equivalencies set by most Russell Group institutions. Consequently the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee requested that a working group be set up to align the IELTS and TOEFL scores to ensure that the College had an agreed and consistent minimum entry level for international undergraduate and postgraduate students. The paper included proposals for revised equivalencies for implementation for 2015-16 entry.

- 8.3 The Committee welcomed the proposals and was content to approve them as presented in the paper. It was noted that all Departments should use standard text to describe English language entry requirements.

## **9. Appointment of External Examiners for 2013-14**

- 9.1 The Committee received the nominations to be considered for the Boards of Examiners in the 2013-14 session.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/26**

- 9.2 The Committee approved the appointment of the new external examiners as presented in paper 26 [see appendix 1, not published with the minutes]. The Committee was satisfied that the new external examiners thus approved had sufficient postgraduate teaching experience and sufficient external examining experience. Where an external examiner did not have sufficient external examining experience the Committee was satisfied that the Department had made appropriate arrangements for them to be supported by an experienced external examiner.

## **10. Reports from External Examiners 2012-13**

- 10.1 The Committee received the external examiner reports to be considered for taught courses for 2012-13.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/27 and 27(i)**

- 10.2 The Committee reviewed the comments from External Examiners, together with the responses to the comments from departments. In discussion, the Committee noted issues which were raised as needing attention and took particular note of areas of good practice which were highlighted in the reports. The discussion is reported in Appendix 2 [not published with the minutes].

## **11. Research Integrity**

- 11.1 The Committee considered a report from the Research Integrity Working Party containing proposals to enhance plagiarism awareness for Master's students.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/28**

- 11.2 The Committee noted that the Graduate School had developed an online plagiarism awareness course that was currently aimed at Doctoral students. It was intended that this be adapted and a new version created specifically for Master's level students. The working party had further recommended that, from October 2014, the new Master's plagiarism awareness online course be made compulsory for all Master's level students.

- 11.3 The Committee supported the proposals and was content to approve them as presented in the paper.

## **12. Application Statistics**

- 12.1 It was noted that consideration of the postgraduate application numbers had been deferred to the March 2014 meeting.

**No papers MLSPD/2013/29 or 30**

## **13. Student Enrolment Numbers**

- 13.1 The Committee considered postgraduate enrolment numbers for 2013-14 compared with figures for the previous two years.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/31**

- 13.2 The Committee noted that the number of full-time postgraduates had increased by 9.8% between 2011-12 and 2013-14. The overall ratio of male and female students had remained relatively static over the period at c60% male and c40% female. The overall number of students classified as overseas had continued to rise year on year over the period with a 23.2% increase in overseas postgraduate students between 2011-12 and 2013-14.

#### **14. Higher Degrees Obtained 2009-10 to 2012-13**

- 14.1 It was noted that consideration of the report on the number and award of higher degrees obtained and on the number of failures had been deferred to the March 2014 meeting.

**No paper MLSPD/MQC/2013/32**

#### **15. Joint Management Committee Annual Reports or Minutes**

Members were reminded that the Joint Management Committee Annual Reports or Minutes from collaborative postgraduate programmes listed in the College's register of collaborative provision should be reported to the Master's Quality Committee as follows:

##### **15.1 MRes Biosystematics [Partner Organisation: Natural History Museum]**

- 15.1.1 Members noted that this is a collaborative joint Master's degree programme with Imperial as the awarding body and that responsibility for academic standards and the quality of education provided to students rests with Imperial.

- 15.1.2 The Committee received the minutes of the Joint Management Committee held on 7 August 2013. It was noted that this was the first meeting of the Joint Management Committee and that a further meeting had been scheduled for February 2014. The Committee was also responsible for the other joint programme [MSc Taxonomy and Biodiversity] with the Natural History Museum. It was intended that the membership of the Committee would be expanded to include the Head of the Department of Life Sciences (Imperial College) and two members of teaching staff from the programme.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/33**

##### **15.2 MSc Taxonomy and Biodiversity [Partner Organisation: Natural History Museum]**

- 15.2.1 Members noted that this is a collaborative joint Master's degree programme with Imperial as the awarding body and that responsibility for academic standards and the quality of education provided to students rests with Imperial.

- 15.2.2 The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Joint Management Committee held on 7 August 2013 [see 15.1.2 above].

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/33**

#### **16. Reports from Departmental Representatives**

- 16.1 The Committee did not receive any further reports from Departmental Representatives not otherwise appearing on the agenda.

#### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION AND/OR DISSEMINATION**

##### **17. Action taken on behalf of the Committee**

- 17.1 The Committee noted action taken by the Chair to approve the closure of the part-time option of the MSc in Surgical Sciences [Department of Surgery and Cancer], retrospectively with effect from October 2013.

- 17.2 The Committee noted action taken by the Chair to approve a modification [change to examination format] to the MSc in Reproductive and Developmental Biology [Department of Surgery and Cancer], retrospectively with effect from October 2013.

## 18. QAA – UK Quality Code for Higher Education

### 18.1 Consultation on draft guidance for UK higher education providers on education for sustainable development

The Committee noted that the College was preparing its response to the QAA's consultation on the draft new guidance for UK higher education providers on education for sustainable development. Further information can be found at the following link:

[www.qaa.ac.uk/Newsroom/Consultations/Pages/Consultation-ESD.aspx](http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Newsroom/Consultations/Pages/Consultation-ESD.aspx)

## 19. HEFCE – UK performance indicators valued by the higher education sector

### 19.1 The Committee noted that a fundamental review of the UK Performance Indicators for higher education (UKPIs) has been published.

The report, 'How should we measure Higher Education? A fundamental review of the Performance Indicators', was commissioned by the UK Performance Indicators Steering Group (UKPISG). It shows that UKPIs are valued as a way to measure the nature and performance of higher education in the UK, and concludes that the current approach to UKPIs is appropriate and should be retained. Further information can be found at the following link:

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2013/news85258.html>

## 20. Reports from key College Committees

### 20.1 **Senate:** Members were reminded that the latest Executive Summaries from the Senate were available [here](#).

### 20.2 **Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee:** Members were reminded that the latest Executive Summaries from the QAEC were available [here](#).

## 21. Postgraduate Professional Development Committee

### 21.1 The Committee received and noted the minutes of the Postgraduate Professional Development Committee meeting held on 5 December 2013.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/34**

## 22. Any Other Business

### 22.1 The representative from the Department of Surgery and Cancer highlighted the importance of robust course organisation arrangements and the potential need for contingency arrangements in situations such as a Course Organiser being unwell and un-contactable. It was suggested that contingency arrangements could include the identification of Deputies for Course Organisers. It was agreed that a paper should be submitted to the next meeting to enable the Committee to discuss the matter further.

**ACTION: Department of Surgery and Cancer Representative**

## 23. Dates of meetings in 2013 – 2014

Dates of meetings in 2013 – 2014 were noted as follows:

Meeting Date	Deadline for submission of papers
Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2014 – 2pm – 5pm	Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2014
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2014 – 2pm – 5pm	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> May 2014
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> July 2014 – 2pm – 5pm	Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> July 2014

All meetings will take place in the **Ballroom** at **58 Prince's Gate**, South Kensington Campus

**24. Reserved Business** (not circulated to student members)

**24.1 Special Cases Panel 2013-14**

24.1.1 The Committee received the updated membership of the special cases panel for Master's programmes for the 2013-14 session.

**MLSPD/MQC/2013/35**

**24.2 Special Cases Reports**

24.2.1 The Committee received reports on special cases considered by the special cases panel for Master's Level students.

**Special Cases for Admissions – MLSPD/MQC/2013/36**