

SENATE

CONFIRMED Minutes of Meeting held on 20 May 2020

Present: Professor Ian Walmsley (Chair); Professors Buitendijk, Buluwela, Chilvers, Craster, Distaso, Dougherty, Green, Haynes, Kingsbury, Lindstedt, McCoy, Openshaw, Spivey, Trotta, Xu; Drs Costa-Pereira, Craig, Field, Fobelets, Gounaris; Mr Brooks; Mr Devgan, Mr Tebbutt; Mr Ashton (Secretary); Ms Webster (Minute Secretary).

In attendance: Mr John Neilson, Ms Milena Radocheya for Item 7 (Minute 2438)

Apologies: Professors Brandon, Eisingerich, Veloso, Weber; Drs, Malhotra; Mr Lupton; Mr Sood; Ms Bannister; Ms Makuch;

2430 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 18 December 2019 were confirmed as an accurate record.

2431 Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising not otherwise covered by the agenda.

2432 Provost's Business

Received: A report from the Provost (**Paper Senate/2019/27**)

Reported: (1) That Professor Peter Haynes had accepted an extension to his appointment as Head of the Department of Materials until 30 June 2023.

(2) That Professor Eric Yeatman had accepted an extension to his appointment as Head of the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering until 31 August 2020.

(3) That Dr Ana Costa-Pereira has accepted appointment as the Director of the Centre for Languages, Culture and Communication with effect from 1 July 2020 for a period of 5 years.

2433 Chair's Action

Received: Covid-19 Response – to receive a report on decisions taken in response to the move to remote teaching and assessment from 15 March onwards (**Paper Senate/2019/28**)

Reported: (1) That a series of decisions had been made in respect of the need to assure the academic quality and standards of the College's provision whilst still supporting students in response to the Covid-19 pandemic and the decision to move to remote working and delivery.

(2) That the College instituted its emergency procedures and established a revised governance structure, including Gold and Silver groups to manage the impact whilst still

ensuring the College was able to deliver its business. A number of groups were then established under the gold and silver command groups to take forward various aspects of the college's functions. These included a Student Recruitment Operational Group chaired by Professor Maggie Dallman, established to review and manage the needs for recruitment and admissions and a Research Group, chaired by Professor Nick Jennings to consider in particular financial support for research degree students. Groups to consider Education and Online Readiness for 2020-21 has also been established and would be reported on further down the agenda.

(3) Student engagement in the response had been secured through the representation of the President, the Vice President (Education) and the Vice President (Welfare) of the Imperial College Union (ICU) on the Education and Student Recruitment Groups. The Imperial College Union had been surveying students and using the wider representation network to seek and test student views.

(4) The College had established a set of Principles, set out in section 3 of the paper, to guide the response that was made. Senate considered the summary of decisions taken to 15 May 2020 which included the development of additional guidance to Mitigating Circumstances Boards to deal with circumstances students may be experiencing difficulties as a result of the pandemic. The Programme and Module Modifications Procedure was reviewed to allow for local approval of in-year minor modifications by Departmental Teaching Committees, thus removing one stage of the approval process. A new Safety Net Policy was developed through the Education Group in direct response to a survey run by the ICU which demonstrated significant discomfort with the College's decision to move to timed remotes assessment. The move to Safety Nets was largely adopted across the UK HE sector. The policy has been designed to augment the current academic regulations and requires that the processes and methods for marking assessments will be conducted in the normal way and that students must satisfy the usual requirements for progression and award in order for the safety net to be applied. Finally, a Postgraduate Registration Policy was also approved to set out the different options available for PGT to complete their programmes.

(5) The Chair thanked all staff for their hard work during an intense and challenging time for the College and all its staff and students.

Covid-19 Response: Education 2019-20

Received: An presentation from Professor Emma McCoy, Chair of the Education Group on ongoing work for 2019-20

Reported: That the Education Group had focussed on work needed to secure the academic quality and standards of the Colleges awards and student experience for the remainder of the 2019-20 academic year and had worked on the key areas of new and augmented policy detailed in the Chair's Action report. The Group had a significant amount of work in progress which was being taken forward by the core members of the group and supported by specialist expertise where needed. The Group was also mindful of the external guidance from the Office for Students as the regulator for the sector and guidance from bodies such as the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies and the Quality Assurance Agency.

(2) The Group was looking at issues related to examination boards, progression, award and transcripts and the complaints procedure as well as the impact of the pandemic on admissions, research degree students, student financial support and study abroad opportunities for students.

Considered in discussion: (1) That the Imperial College Union reported that the student engagement in discussions about the taught programmes had been very good but could improve for the research programmes, although it was noted the focus hitherto had mainly been on the taught programmes. The Union reported that communication around the funding

for PGR students could have been better but noted that this was a complex area and considered that the policy arrived at was fair.

(2) In respect of UROP, all departments had been asked to agree what could be run remotely and that some of the funding had been held back before the final allocation of bursaries in case it was possible to return to labs.

2435 Covid-19 Response: Education 2020-21

Received: A presentation from Professor Omar Matar, Chair of the Student Recruitment Strategy Group

Reported: (1) That a mixed-mode delivery was being planned for at least the autumn term of the 2020-21 academic year with students being able to experience some on-campus activities, such as practicals and labs, subject to social distancing rules, with lectures, tutorials and other non-lab based activity to be delivered remotely. There were a total of 3041 modules, plus a number of College-wide modules, to prepare for mixed-mode delivery, with the majority of these planned for delivered in the Autumn Term.

(2) That consideration was being given to staff resources and that Departmental Working Groups (DWGs) had been established to take forward the preparatory work with an interface to the Faculty EdTech teams, Education Managers and the ICT Digital Partners. Student Representatives were also involved and the groups hoped to learn from the delivery of the Timed Remote Assessments delivered this term, as well as from the online degrees already running in the Faculty of Medicine and the Business School. The Educational Development Unit and Centre for Education Research Studies would also be involved in supporting the DWGs.

Considered in discussion: (1) That there would be considerable constraints placed upon on-campus delivery through social distancing and members queried whether the Group had identified any principles to prioritise which students should have access to the Campus. Senate was told that the Assistant Provost (Space) and the Central Timetabling Support Office were modelling the space constraints to enable departments to establish the feasibility of their offer. Space sharing across the Campus would be crucial to be able to effectively deliver the mixed-mode offer.

(2) That contingency planning in the event that a return to a full lockdown and entirely remote delivery, was being undertaken. In response to questions about differential student experiences and tuition fees, it was reported that departments were looking at programmes in terms of how they could deliver the learning outcomes for students and preserve the academic standards of the awards so students were not disadvantaged.

(3) That there were still a number of areas under consideration, including health and safety on campus and how to secure some aspects of the on-campus student experience for students.

2436 Covid-19 Response: Education Quality Assurance Issues

Received: An oral report from, Mr David Ashton, Academic Registrar

Reported: (1) That the Office for Students had published guidance on how to maintain academic quality and standards during the pandemic which set out the expectations of the regulator for institutions. It requires institutions to make all reasonable efforts to enable students to complete their studies, for their achievement to be reliably assessed, for qualifications to be awarded securely and to enable a fair and robust admissions process for entrants to programmes of study in 2020-21.

(2) That the approach taken by the College had been to augment existing academic regulations and policies to ensure a consistency of practice in line with the principles that had been established to guide the College in its response to the pandemic.

2437 Covid-19 Response: Draft response to Office for Student consultation

Received: A Draft Response from the Director of Strategic Planning (**Paper Senate 2019/29**)

Reported: (1) That the Office for Students had issued a consultation on the introduction of a new ongoing condition of registration and other associated changes. A draft response had been prepared which set out the College's disagreement with the proposed changes on the basis that it considered that this may prevent institutions from undertaking activities that were rational and proportionate responses to the pandemic, for example keeping in closer contact with offer-holders or pro-active marketing activities in relation to overseas students.

(2) That the College did not make unconditional offers to students and that the College's admissions round was well-advanced by the time the pandemic struck as many students apply in October. The proposals would give the power to the OfS to fine any institution which they considered post-hoc had been deemed to have undermined the sector.

Approved: Senate approved the draft response to the consultation document. It would be considered by the Provost's Board before submission.

2438 Student Disciplinary Procedure

Received: A response to Senate queries from the 18 December 2019 meeting (minute 2426 refers)

Reported: (1) That the Director of Legal Services had been asked to consider the issue of the confidentiality of student disciplinary procedures after concern was raised that a complainant could not be told the full outcome of any action taken by the College in respect of the respondent. Senate was advised that this issue had been considered during the review of the Student Disciplinary Procedure undertaken in the summer of 2019 and that the Review Panel had followed the advice the Office of the Independent Adjudicator's (OIA) Good Practice Guide.

(2) The Director of Legal Services advised Senate that there were two areas to consider. The first was a complaint from a student against a member of staff where the staff disciplinary procedure would be used which has agreed clauses on confidentiality (based on ACAS Guidance) which would be breached if the outcome was shared with the complainant. Secondly, where a student complains about another student, there are data protection issues to consider unless there was a legitimate reason to let a student know aspects of the outcome, for example where there was a direct impact on them or conditions placed on the respondent that the complainant needed to be aware of. The need to support both sides was known and understood but the position taken by the Review Panel had been to align to the OIA guidance.

Considered in discussion: (1) That this was an issue that had been discussed extensively by the College Consuls who felt that this position was against natural justice for a complainant to not be able to know the outcome of their complaint and that this was seen to place control with the respondent. The Consuls had considered the outcomes of the 1752 Report which had not agreed with the OIA's guidance on this issue ~~which had also aligned with the OIA~~ but had recommended that outcomes should be shared with the complainant in order to give some resolution to the process. Senate members expressed support for a more 'humane' approach and suggested that the College should push for sector-wide change to resolve this. The strong feeling of the Consuls on this issue was re-iterated and a request was made to check what legal advice had been sought by the 1752 Group. It was however also noted that it would not be in the College's interest for its procedures to depart from the OIA's guidance, and then for College decisions to be overturned by the OIA on appeal.

(2) Summing up the Chair said it would be very risky for the College to depart from the OIA's guidance. However, given the views expressed the College's guidance produced to support the Student Disciplinary Procedure should clearly state what flexibility there could be that would still be consistent with the Ordinance on Student Discipline and the law.

Secretary's Note: Subsequent to the meeting, a further request was made to the Chair of Senate to consider the legal advice received by the 1752 Group to help understand their conclusions and the context in which they were made. This was agreed to and referred to the Central Secretariat for their consideration and to report back to the Senate.

2439 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee

Received: A report from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (**Paper Senate 2019/31**)

Reported: That the Committee had considered the following items of business at its previous meeting:

- Draft Taught Student Attendance and Engagement Policy
- Student Survey arrangements
- Undergraduate Annual Monitoring Faculty Reports
- A revised deadline for PGT Faculty Annual Monitoring Reports
- PGT External examiner Summary Report
- Programmes Committee Report
- Faculty Education Committee Reports.

2440 Learning and Teaching Committee

Received: A report from the Learning and Teaching Committee (**Paper Senate 2019/32**).

Reported: (1) That the Committee had considered the following items of business at its previous meeting:

- An update on academic planning
- An update on the vision for learning and teaching spaces
- Admissions Research Project
- Academic Prizes Framework.
- A Road map for Inclusive and Diverse Classrooms and Culture
- Success Criteria and targets for the Learning and Teaching Strategy.
- Update on PGT Curriculum Review

2441 Dates of Terms

Received: A note from the Academic Registrar (**Paper Senate 2019/19**)

Approved: a) the dates for Session 2021-2022.
b) the proposed dates for Session 2022-2023

2442 Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 24 June 2020 at 3.00 pm