Imperial College London

Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee
17 January 2013
10am
The Solar Room, 170 Queen's Gate
South Kensington Campus

Minutes

Present: Professor D Humphris (Chair) Dr S Archer, Professor A George, Professor N Gooderham, Mr D Hunt, Professor R Leatherbarrow, Professor O Matar, Dr D McPhail, Mr E Mohamed, Ms R Penny, Professor S Smith, Professor R Thompson, Mr N Wheatley, Professor D Wright.

Apologies: Professor N Bell, Professor G Gillies, Professor D Griffiths, Dr P Lickiss and Dr N Rogers.

In Attendance: Ms L McConnell (Secretary), Mr C Love (for item 8) and Mr C Harris.

The Chair extended the Committee's thanks to Ms R Penny and to Ms L McConnell for their excellent contribution towards the work of the Committee as this would be their last meeting.

1   Apologies

1.1   Noted: As above.

2   Minutes

2.1   Approved: Minutes of the previous meeting held on the 20 November 2012.

3   Matters Arising

3.1   Received and Noted: Actions from the previous meetings and progress made to address these (**Paper QAEC/2012/48**).

3.2   External Examiners (Paper QAEC/2012/49)

External examiners with Honorary College Contracts

3.2.1   Considered: Under which circumstances Imperial honorary Professors can act as external examiners for taught courses where the honorary association is for research unrelated to the taught course in question.

3.2.2   Reported: The College's taught course *Examination Regulations* make clear that certain individuals, including employees of the College, cannot act as external examiners. However, there is no explicit College policy on whether an individual holding an honorary contract with the College can act as an external examiner for a taught course where the honorary association is for research unrelated to the taught course in question.

3.2.3   Agreed: The College must maintain robust and rigorous external examiner processes to assure itself of the academic quality and standards of degrees awarded.   Therefore, from 2013-14, academics with honorary contracts will not be appointed as taught course external examiners.   Exceptions to this can only be approved by the Pro Rector (Education).   The *Examination Regulations* would be amended to reflect this and submitted to Senate.   **R. Penny**

3.2.4   Agreed: In order to review the impact of this new Regulation, the Registry would find out which existing external examiners hold honorary contracts with the College and the nature of each contract. The Pro Rector (Education) would consider this information and determine which external examiners can be re-appointed to act in 2013-14. In some

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cases, it may be appropriate to ask external examiners to relinquish their honorary contract for the duration of their external examinership to avoid any perceived conflict. This review would be carried out during the spring term to allow Departments time to seek alternative external examiners, where necessary. | **D. Humphris** **S. Baker**

3.2.5 Agreed: From 2013-14, a question asking Departments to confirm that proposed new external examiners do not have honorary contracts with the College would be added to the external examiner nomination form. Additionally, the external examiner appointment contract would ask external examiners to confirm that they do not hold honorary contracts with the College. | **S. Baker**

Information provided to undergraduate external examiners.

3.2.6 Reported: At its meeting on the 17 January 2012, the Committee considered what quantitative data should be provided to external examiners to support their evaluation of student performance. The Committee agreed that external examiners for undergraduate courses should be sent their respective Department's annual monitoring report.

3.2.7 Reported: The Business School originally expressed concern with this proposal and argued that the purpose of the undergraduate annual monitoring form was to provide an open and transparent internal report of a Department's activities. However, the Faculty Principal of the Business School has now agreed that the School will comply with this requirement from 2013-14.

3.2.8 Agreed: The Graduate School would make a recommendation to the Committee as to what comparable information could be provided to Master's external examiners from 2013-14. | **A.George**

Items for Consideration

4.   **Approval and Review of Courses**

4.1   Reported: The approval and review procedures for the College's taught courses have been divided into separate approval and review documents.

4.2   Considered: Revised *Procedures for the Approval of New Undergraduate Degree Programmes* (**Paper QAEC/2012/50**).

4.3   Agreed: The following amendments with immediate effect to be considered by the Senate: | **L. McConnell**

1. The title of the procedure would be amended to "Approval Process for New or **Substantially** Modified Undergraduate Degree Programmes". A definition of what constitutes a "substantial" change would be added as a footnote to the procedure.
2. Where a new programme includes e-Learning/Blended learning, Departments must provide details of their plans for producing the material and managing, monitoring and reviewing this provision as part of the proposal documentation.
3. Proposal documentation must now include a copy of the relevant Faculty Competency Standards and a draft KIS spreadsheet.
4. Question 23 of the New UG Programme Proposal form would be amended to "comments on how existing students have been consulted in curriculum design, learning outcomes and the design of assessment methods."
5. Questions which external reviewers would be asked to comment on when reviewing new programme proposals have been added to the procedure.
6. There is now a requirement for Departments to provide a sample of e-Learning material to the second stage review panel and information on how the Department manages, monitors and reviews this provision.
7. Departments will also be asked to provide a statement on succession planning and the on-going stability of the new programme as part of the material submitted for the second stage review.

4.4   Considered: Revised *Procedures for the Review of Undergraduate Programmes* (**Paper QAEC/2012/51).**

4.5	Agreed: The following amendments with immediate effect to be considered by the Senate:	**L. McConnell**

1. Where Departments have courses which include e-Learning/Blended learning, they will be required to comment on managing, monitoring and reviewing this provision as part of the annual monitoring process.
2. For Departments with collaborative courses, details of the areas of expertise of new partner teaching staff employed since programme approval or since the last annual monitoring exercise must be provided as part of annual monitoring and where the collaboration is with a non-UK university or private company, details of their qualifications should also be provided.
3. Periodic Review panels now include a student representative and for undergraduate medicine, a Foundation School Representative.
4. Where Departments have courses which include e-Learning/Blended learning, they are required to comment on managing, monitoring and reviewing this provision as part of the periodic review submission and a sample of this material must be made available to the panel on the day of the review.
5. Departments will also be asked to provide answers to themed questions as part of their periodic review submission. For 2012-13 the suggested topics are the first year student experience, monitoring retention and progression, student involvement in quality enhancement and welfare and links with industry/employers.
6. The template agenda for reviews would be amended to make provision for longer private meetings of the panel, although the Committee noted that times on the template agenda were indicative only and would be confirmed with the Department and internal Chair in advance of the review.

4.6	Agreed: The Committee would consider how the College can improve the way in which it monitors cumulative changes to courses.	**S. White**
4.7	Noted: The Graduate School's Master's Quality Committees invite Master's Course Organisers to submit an annual report on changes they have made to their courses.	
4.8	Considered: Revised *Procedures for the Approval of New or Radically Modified Master's (MSc, MRes, MEd, MPH, MBA), Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate Programmes (referred to as Master's programmes)* (**Paper QAEC/2012/52**).	
4.9	Agreed: Amendments to the procedures with immediate effect (changes agreed mirror those of the undergraduate approval procedure plus other minor amendments specifically related to Master's courses) which would be submitted to the Senate for consideration.	**L. McConnell**
4.10	Agreed: That the Graduate School would develop a New Master's Programme Proposal Form which would be appended to the procedure and submitted to Senate.	**S. Baker**
4.11	Agreed: Departments should be responsible for ensuring that any new programme fits with their Department's (and Faculty's, where appropriate) Strategic Plan and that the course is financially viable. The Director of the Graduate School would make additional amendments to the approval procedure to reflect this and submit the revised procedure to the Committee Secretary.	**A.George**
4.12	Noted: The revised *Procedures for the Review of Existing Master's Courses* (**Paper QAEC/2012/53**) would be deferred until the March meeting of the Committee.	**S. Baker**

5   **National Student Survey**

5.1	Considered: The ICU's response to the NSS 2012 (**Paper QAEC/2012/54**).
5.2	Reported: The document should be viewed as an "update" to last year's response as uncompleted recommendations still stand. Increased participation in NSS 2012 adds weight to the arguments set out in the report.
5.3	Reported: Outstanding recommendations for the College from 2011-12 are:

The College should:

1. Actively encourage and reward innovation in teaching
2. Provide transparent and formal training for lecturers with biennial review
3. Provide model example coursework for markers with weightings for students
4. Create an online automated feedback system to help to reform the personal tutor system
5. Ensure students are consulted on major changes
6. Use technology and social media to promote NSS and SOLE
7. Provide dedicated time and funding to "Mums and Dads" schemes
8. Introduce a UG Transferable Skills Programme integrated with the Union's representation system, clubs, societies and projects.

5.4   Reported: Additional recommendations for the College in response to NSS 2012 are:

1. To building on existing good practice in College and expand educational development unit training to Graduate Teaching Assistants
2. Departments should produce good practice reports annually which reflect on the changes they have made
3. To invest resources in communicating with students, not just the outside world.

5.5   Agreed: The ICU would ensure that the College is consulted on any recommendations made by the Union as a result of NSS. The ICU Deputy President (Education) would ensure that his successors are aware of this process when compiling nest year's response.   **D. Hunt**

5.6   Agreed: Some of the recommendations within the response do not relate to the results of the NSS.

5.7   Noted: The NSS 2013 opened on the 14th January 2013 and will run until the 30th April 2013.

6   **Staff Student Committees**

6.1   Considered: A proposal from the ICU on how to take forward matters arising from the minutes of Staff Student Committees (**Paper QAEC/2012/55**).

6.2   Agreed: All Staff-Student Committee minutes and agendas will be submitted to the ICU Representation Coordinator who will summarise these twice a year. The summaries will be presented to the QAEC, Studies Committees and to the Master's Quality Committees. The reports will also be distributed to Teaching Committees. QAEC will make an annual summary of these reports to the SEC and Senate.

6.3   Reported: An exercise to determine the organisers and the frequency of Staff Student Committees will be undertaken this month. A form will be pre-populated with information currently held on record and distributed by the Director of the Graduate School to DPSs and by the Dean of Students, Learning and Teaching to DUGS for correction and completion.   Heads of Departments will be informed by the ICU Deputy President (Education) that this exercise is taking place.   **D. Hunt**
A.George
D. Wright

6.4   Agreed: Chairs of Studies Committees and the Master's Quality Committees will be responsible for ensuring that their Departments provide minutes of Staff Student Committees to the ICU.

7   **Inconsistency of Assessment Practice**

7.1   Reported: In its 2010 Institutional Audit report, the QAA made an advisable recommendation for the College to "expedite its review of assessment procedures to ensure consistency in the management of academic standards within and across its degree structures and ensure parity of treatment for examination candidates."

7.2   Penalties for the Late Submission of Assessed Work

7.2.1   Considered: A report from the Chair of the Working Group established to review the

College's policy on penalties for the submission of late assessed work (**Paper QAEC/2012/56**).

7.2.2   Reported: In response to the recommendation made by the QAA, the QAEC agreed to establish a Working Party to review current arrangements within Departments with a view to streamlining processes and penalties, if appropriate. The Working Party, which met twice, comprised Chairs of the Studies Committees, a representative from the Business School, the ICU Deputy President (Education), a representative from the Graduate School and a representative from Registry.

7.2.3   Reported: Having reviewed the existing College policy on penalties for the late submission of assessed work, the Working Party propose the following revised policy to be implemented in 2013-14:

Late submissions will receive a mark of zero. This is the default penalty for late submissions of assessed work and should be deviated from only in exceptional circumstances at the discretion of the Senior Tutor (for undergraduate courses) or Course Director/Organiser (for taught postgraduate courses). For part-time students, the policy should be applied sympathetically and appropriately.

> *Following is a list of circumstances in which the default penalty may be amended. This list is not intended to be exhaustive:*
>
>   i)   *Legitimate mitigating circumstances which are declared by the candidate in writing. Mitigating circumstances must be independently corroborated and of sufficient severity to have affected the candidate's ability to meet the deadline, for example illness or family bereavement;*
>
>   ii)   *If, in the judgement of the Senior Tutor or Course Director/Organiser, the default penalty is considered unreasonably harsh in the circumstances, for example, where it will impact adversely on the progression or graduation of a candidate, or if one member of a group has submitted work late which impacts on the rest of the group through no fault of their own. Senior Tutors and Course Directors/Organisers may also wish to take account of whether this is a first offence by a candidate.*

It is left to the discretion of the Senior Tutor or Course Director/Organiser whether the appropriate action is to extend the deadline, to apply a reduced penalty, or to excuse the candidate from this assessment.

A record of all late submission cases and penalties applied should be kept by the Department and made available to the Registry on request. Where the default penalty has been amended reasons for the amendment should also be recorded. Progression and Award (PA) Examination Boards should receive a report of the total number of cases handled and the number of occasions in which the default penalty was amended. This information should be recorded in the Minutes of the PA Board Meetings.

7.2.4   Reported: The revised policy is supported by the Faculty of Engineering and by the Business School but the Faculties of Medicine and Life Sciences do not support it. The Faculty of Medicine favours a two-step process, with a significant penalty as the first step and zero marks as the second step and the Faculty of Natural Sciences state that although some Departments are happy with the recommendation of zero tolerance, other Departments within the Faculty were of the view that this was too draconian.

7.2.5   Agreed: The new policy would help to provide parity of treatment for all candidates and consistency in application of penalties between Departments. The Committee would therefore recommend to Senate that the new policy be implemented for the 2013-14 session with the option for Departments to introduce the new policy sooner if they wish.

7.2.6   Agreed: The *Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedures* would be reviewed to ensure that part-time students are considered fairly and sympathetically.   **D. Wright**

7.3 Model Answers to Questions

7.3.1 Considered: A draft policy on the preparation of model answers to questions (**Paper QAEC/2012/57**).

7.3.2 Reported: In response to comments made by external examiners, Senate asked QAEC to explore whether a College policy on the provision of model answers to questions could be developed. In March 2011, QAEC proposed that Departments should provide their external examiners with model answers to questions and agreed to add a question to the external examiner report form asking external examiners to comment on the quality of model answers they received. QAEC also proposed that Departments should develop their own policies on the provision of model answers to students which should be approved by Board Chairs and that there should be a minimum expectation that Departments should provide students with the previous three years' model answers.

7.3.3 Reported: Senate considered QAEC's proposals and whilst it was agreed that external examiners should be provided with model answers to questions, QAEC was asked to reconsider its proposed policy on the provision of model answers to students.

7.3.4 Reported: In light of this, QAEC revised its original policy and submitted it to the Studies Committees and the Graduate School's Master's Quality Committees for consideration. The following policy is supported by all College Departments, including the Business School, with the exception of the Department of Life Sciences:

As a minimum, Departments should provide their students with outline answers to specimen questions or illustrative examples, of how students might address the question. Where students are required to undertake MCQ examinations, Departments should provide examples of the format of such examinations and state whether the MCQ examination is negatively marked.

7.3.5 Agreed: Subject to Senate approval, the policy would be implemented for 2013-14. | **L. McConnell**

7.4 Conduct of Boards of Examiners Meetings

7.4.1 Considered: Amendments to the *Conduct of Boards of Examiners Meetings* (**Paper QAEC/2012/58**).

7.4.2 Reported: At its last meeting, as part of the Committee's consideration of the update to the College's 2010 QAA Institutional Audit action plan, it was agreed that the Registry would review the conduct of undergraduate Boards of Examiners meetings with a view to achieving better consistency in assessment practice and parity of treatment for candidates at Boards.

7.4.3 Reported: The Registry reviewed whether Boards are anonymous, if advocacy or algorithms are used to determine the outcome of borderline candidates, how marks were rounded and whether the marks of borderline candidates were adjusted prior to the Board meeting or during. The outcome of this review showed variation in practice across all Departments.

7.4.4 Reported: In light of this review and the QAA recommendation, the following amendments have been suggested to the *Conduct of Boards of Examiners Meetings* document:

1. The document covers undergraduate Board meetings only. A similar document for Master's Boards of Examiners meetings will be developed and presented to the Committee in due course.
2. Sub-Boards should receive marks to 2 decimal places and only the PAB meeting has the power to round to the nearest integer
3. A template for the minutes of PAB meetings has now been included.

7.4.5 Reported: The process for consideration and ratification of student marks at Boards has been clarified. The Mitigation Advisory Panel meets to consider individual cases and agrees additional marks to be added to student module marks or to awards overall. For medicine, this would be an additional attempt. This is followed by an anonymous Sub

Board meeting which considers the results of module marks for each candidate. After the Sub Board meeting, an administrator will use the module marks to determine the overall student marks for each year and identify any final year borderline candidates.

7.4.6   Reported: The Department then carries out their own processes for dealing with borderline candidates and agrees recommendations for additional marks. The anonymous Progression and Award Board (the PAB) will then meet to confirm awards and progression of candidates. The PAB will also confirm additional marks to be awarded as a result of mitigation and/or as a result of borderline processes. Re-sit requirements will also be agreed.

7.4.7   Reported: If necessary, a Re-Sit PAB will then take place. If re-sit PABS take place electronically, external examiners will be consulted.

7.4.8   Agreed: It is fairer for all candidates if College Sub Boards and PABs are completely anonymous. Advocacy of candidates occurs outside of Board meetings. The proposed new method for the conduct of Boards would allow more time for Boards to consider management information data and to have more detailed discussion with external examiners.

7.4.9   Agreed: The document would be clarified to indicate which parts of the process are anonymous. The document would be discussed with the Faculties before being re-submitted to the March meeting of the Committee with a cover note indicating which College Departments currently use anonymous Boards.   **L. McConnell**

7.5   Other Outstanding Assessment Practices Matters

7.5.1   Noted: Work is still being carried out on the following:

1. Undergraduate Year Weightings
2. Re-sit opportunities
3. MSci/MEng pass mark versus stand-alone MSc pass marks

8   **UK Quality Code for Higher Education**

8.1   Received and Noted: The QAA's UK Quality Code Implementation Timetable (**Paper QAEC/2012/59).**

8.2   **Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching**

8.2.1   Reported: The QAA has recently published Chapter B3 of the UK Quality Code: Learning and Teaching. This Chapter focuses on the learning opportunities that higher education providers make available to students and on the staff who teach and who support learning, including those staff who are not employees of the higher education provider and/or are not based at the provider. It applies to any learning opportunities that lead to a UK higher education award or award of credit, whether through short courses involving single modules or multi-year programmes of study.

8.2.2   Noted: The expectation of this Chapter states:

Higher education providers, working with their staff, students and other stakeholders, articulate and systematically review and enhance the provision of learning opportunities and teaching practices, so that every student is enabled to develop as an independent learner, study their chose subject(s) in depth and enhance their capacity for analytical, critical and creative thinking.

8.2.3   Considered: A report on the implications of this Chapter for the College (**Paper QAEC/2012/60**).

8.2.4   Agreed: In light of the indicators of this Chapter:

1. The Collaborative Provision Working Party will:
   - consider the mechanisms used to share the College's approach to learning and teaching with collaborative partners and placement

provides

- Consider how the College can assure itself that the learning and teaching practices of its collaborative degree and placement providers are informed by reflection, evaluation of professional practice and subject-specific and educational scholarship.
- Consider whether the College's current procedures for ensuring that staff at collaborative partners/placement providers are appropriately qualified, supported and developed could be enhanced.
- Consider the College's current procedures for ensuring the adequacy of the learning environment at collaborative partners and placement providers.

2. The College's approval procedures will:
   - Include a question which asks Departments to outline more directly their flexible and inclusive approaches to learning and teaching.
   - Include a request for details of how formative assessment is used to facilitate learning.

3. Further work will be undertaken by the EDU to introduce more flexible training opportunities for staff beyond induction and link the College's provision to the Higher Education Agency's Professional Recognition Scheme and the UK Professional Standards Framework for teaching and supporting learning in higher education. Further work is currently being undertaken to improve training provided to DUGS, DPSs Senior Tutors etc.

4. Departments will be asked to review and update their programme specifications at least annually. Where a substantial change to a course is approved with immediate effect, the programme specification must be updated immediately.

8.2.5   Agreed: The College's VLE is accessible to all students.

8.2.6   Agreed: Since the last Institutional Audit, the College has taken steps to ensure that Management Information data sets are shared with staff and students across the College.

8.2.7   Agreed: The College ensures that it involves students in making sure that it provides a fully accessible environment by liaison with student focus groups.

8.3   **Chapter B4: Supporting Student Achievement**

8.3.1   Received: The College's final response to the consultation on the draft Chapter B4, which was submitted to the QAA on the 3rd January 2013 (**Paper QAEC/2012/61**).

8.4   **Chapter B9: Complaints and Appeals**

8.4.1   Reported: The QAA has recently published a new Chapter on Complaints and Appeals. This is a revised version of *Section 5: Academic appeals and student complaints on academic matters* of the *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education*. The new Chapter sets out principles for addressing complaints on academic matters and the quality of learning opportunities, and appeals against academic decisions by students in higher education providers. It emphasises the need for procedures that are fair, efficient, accessible and timely and highlights the importance of learning from complaints and appeals and their role in enhancement.

8.4.2   Considered and Agreed: The consultation document and the College's draft response to this (**Paper QAEC/2012/62** and **63**).

8.5   **Chapter B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others**

8.5.1   Reported: The final Chapter B10 of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (now entitled 'Managing higher education provision with others') has been published on the QAA's website here.

8.5.2   Noted: The QAEC has already agreed to establish a Working Group to review the

College's procedures in light of this chapter.

9   Summer School

9.1   Considered: A proposal from the Business School to establish a pilot Summer School during summer 2013 (**Paper QAEC/2012/64**).

9.2   Reported: The Business School plan to pilot a Summer School during summer 2013. Leading institutions in the USA and others in the UK already offer such programmes for undergraduates and the Business School would like to enter this market by offering a pilot 4 week course.

9.3   Reported: The summer school would be an intensive residential course taking place in July and August with a full pastoral and social programme worth 7 ECTS credits. The content of the course would be based on existing material and would be taught by existing Business School academic staff. Students would receive a transcript of their results from the College and the credit would be awarded by their home institution. If the pilot is successful, the Business School would like to run 4 courses, commencing summer 2014.

9.4   Agreed: The Committee agreed this proposal and asked the Business School to report on the outcome of the pilot at the first meeting of the Committee next session. The Business School should also liaise with the ICU regarding the students' social programme.   **C. Love**

10   Cheating Offences Policy and Procedures

10.1   Considered: Minor amendments to the Cheating Offences Policy and Procedures relating to PGR students (**Paper QAEC/2012/65**).

10.2   Reported: A potential weakness has been identified in the section of the Cheating Offences Policy and Procedures covering plagiarism in a research degree thesis. Currently, all such cases are referred to the Pro Rector (Education), the Dean of Students, Learning and Teaching and the Academic Registrar, while appeals would be routed to the Deputy Rector and the Head of Central Secretariat. In cheating cases involving undergraduates and taught postgraduates the role of the Pro Rector (Education) is reserved for the final appeal process. It would seem sensible to harmonise the final appeal process for all categories of student.

10.3   Reported: It is proposed that to deal with this issue the Senior Dean should be substituted for the Pro Rector in the initial consideration of any allegation. This would leave the Pro Rector with a clear and consistent role in considering all appeals against punishments imposed by a review panel whether for UG, PGT or PGR cheating cases.

10.4   Reported: Where either the Dean of Students or the Senior Dean cannot act because they have a connection with the student against whom an allegation has been made, it is proposed that the Director or Deputy Director of the Graduate School shall join the review panel in their stead. Allegations of plagiarism at PGR level are very few and far between so this change should not unduly burden those who are members of the review panel.

10.5   Agreed: Amendments to the policy and procedure as described above.   **R. Penny**

10.6   Reported: Currently the procedure states the following with regard to the penalty for major plagiarism in a research degree thesis: *Plagiarism shall be identified as major where a relatively large component of the thesis has been plagiarised thereby normally indicating an intent to deceive. The only penalty appropriate for major plagiarism in a research degree thesis is expulsion from College and exclusion from all future assessment.*

10.7   Reported: Solicitors acting for the student whose case has prompted this review have written:

       We understand that many university plagiarism procedures focus largely on

undergraduate degrees and may not fully cover the complexities that can arise in research degrees. With that in mind we are extremely concerned that, if plagiarism is found, that only one sanction can be applied. This would be inherently problematic and most likely unlawful. It would be at odds with procedural fairness, the need to consider a range of sanctions, and to act in a manner that is proportionate to the individual case. It would also be applying a blanket policy (blanket policies are, of course, unlawful). Furthermore we hope the University will agree, putting itself in the place of a student who has worked very hard over a number of years that it cannot be right that if a Panel finds plagiarism, it then almost automatically infers "intent to deceive". Our client has very valid grounds of defence; it cannot be that if the Panel accepts some or all of these, yet still feels there is some plagiarism, that it can still only order expulsion on grounds of major plagiarism. This would be inherently and immediately challengeable.

10.8   Reported: While it seems unlikely that major plagiarism can appear in a final thesis without an intent to deceive on behalf of the candidate it would seem unwise to discount the possibility. Rather it would seem appropriate to allow the review panel a measure of flexibility when reaching a conclusion which should have regard to the facts of the case in question.   In the light of this, it is proposed the following revision to the penalty for major plagiarism [paragraph 20b] in a research degree thesis:

Major plagiarism with intent to deceive: expulsion from College and exclusion from all future assessments of College

Major plagiarism identified as poor academic practice: a formal reprimand, a reworking of the thesis to exclude all plagiarised material and a delay of 18 months before the thesis can be resubmitted for examination

10.9   Agreed: The penalty for minor plagiarism [Paragraph 20a] should remain unchanged.

10.10   Agreed: That the proposed penalties for major plagiarism seemed appropriate though there was concern as to whether sufficient measures were in place to train students in the understanding of plagiarism and thereby how to avoid plagiarism.   All Departments have responsibility for issuing guidance to all students on academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism and Departmental activities were complemented by the Library.   The Graduate School, in tandem with appropriate parties should review what was available and identify whether additional training could be put in place particularly for PGR students.   **A.George**

11   **Key Information Sets**

11.1   Received and Noted: A note from the Assistant Registrar (Quality Assurance) on amendments to the KIS submission for 2013 (**Paper QAEC/2012/66**).

11.2   Noted: HEFCE have selected the following courses to be reviewed as part of the January 2013 Pilot KIS Audit:

- BSc Zoology
- BEng Computing
- BSc Chemistry and Management
- MEng Computing (Games, Vision and Interaction)
- MSci Geology with a Year Abroad
- MSci Chemistry with Research Abroad and an Year in industry
- MEng Chemical Engineering
- MSci Mathematics with a Year in Europe

12   **QAA's Outcomes from Institutional Audit Series**

12.1   Reported: The QAA has published the next two papers from its Outcomes from Institutional Audit Series.   The papers look at the topics of assessment and postgraduate research students.   They draw on findings from 59 institutional audit reports published between September 2009 and July 2011. The paper on assessment presents findings from Institutional Audit on assessment in the context of programme design, approval, monitoring and review, use made of programme specifications, operation of examination boards, institutional policies and regulations, feedback arrangements and the

management of academic malpractice.

12.2 Received: The Outcomes from Institutional Audit Series paper on Assessment (**Paper QAEC/2012/67**).

12.3 Reported: The paper on postgraduate research students presents findings on the research environment, admission, induction and supervision of research students, progression and review arrangements, the development of research and other skills, feedback and assessment of research students, representation and appeal arrangements.

12.4 Received: The Outcomes from Institutional Audit Series paper on Postgraduate Research Students (**Paper QAEC/2012/68**).

13 **Any Other Business**

13.1 Reported: According to the recent BIS letter to HEFCE, it is likely that institutions will need to provide more information about how they have spent tuition fee income.

14 **Dates of Next Meetings**

14.1 5th March 10am – 1pm, Solar Room 170 QG
10th April 10m – 1pm, Solar Room 170 QG
30th May 10am – 1pm, Solar Room 170 QG
1st July 10am-1pm, Solar Room 170 QG