

Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC)

Minutes from the meeting held on
Thursday 12 December 2019

Present

Professor Simone Buitendijk – Vice Provost (Education) – Chair
David Ashton – Academic Registrar
Ashley Brooks – ICU Deputy President (Education)
Emma Caseley – Head of Strategic Projects
Dr Malcolm Edwards – Director of Strategic Planning
Professor Martyn Kingsbury – Director of Educational Development
Professor Omar Matar – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Engineering
Professor Emma McCoy – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Natural Sciences
Dr Edgar Meyer – Associate Dean (UG Programmes & Education Quality), Imperial College Business School Professor
Martin Lupton – Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Medicine
Professor Alan Spivey – Assistant Provost (Learning & Teaching)
Scott Tucker – Deputy Director (Academic Quality and Standards) – Secretary

In attendance

Dr Julianne Viola - Research Associates, CHERS (Item 4)
Dr Eliel Cohen - Research Associates, CHERS (Item 4)
Dr Phil Ramsden - Director of Cross-Curricular Mathematics Education (Item 6.1)
Professor Maggie Dallman - Vice-President (International) (Item 6.2)
Laura Lane – Head of Strategy and Operations, Graduate School
Hailey Smith - Project Manager (Learning and Teaching Strategy)
Rachel Witton - Executive Officer for the Vice-Provost (Education)

Apologies

Judith Webster – Director of Academic Quality and Standards
Professor Yun Xu – Director of the Graduate School

1. Welcome and Apologies

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed attendees. Apologies, as listed above, were noted.

2. Minutes

LTC.2019.09

- 2.1 The Committee confirmed the minutes from the meeting held on Thursday 7 November 2019, subject to the following revision to 6.4:
- It was agreed that the proposed approaches to PGT curriculum review would be communicated to Senate for noting approval (6.4).

2.2 The Committee noted the summary against outstanding actions from 2019/20.

3. **Matters Arising**

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

4. **Learning Gain / Belonging and Engagement Project**

4.1 The committee received a presentation on the Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship's work on learning gain and the Belonging and Engagement Project.

4.2 CHERS Research Associates summarised the main work and projects being undertaken, including:

Student experience

- Sense of belonging (e.g. Belonging & Engagement Project)
- Wellbeing, inclusivity and diversity
- Agency and (professional/learner) identity development
- Financial and social experience

Data

- Surveys (with carefully-constructed open-ended questions)
- In-depth interviews (some longitudinal)
- Capturing variation by student background and discipline
- Collaboration and combining data within Imperial (and beyond)

Education research in context of L&T Strategy and Curriculum Review

- Facilitating evaluation within departments
- Educational Evaluation Toolkit (<http://www.imperial.ac.uk/education-research/evaluation/>)

4.3 It was reported that, as part of the Belonging and Engagement Project, surveys are underway and will be open until January 2020. Approximately 300 responses have been received to date. Respondents are predominately studying at UG and PGT level. Although PGR students have not been actively targeted, some have engaged in the survey. The Head of Strategy and Operations (Graduate School) highlighted that there could be an opportunity to link the research to PRES and so may explore this link further with the CHERS Research Associates. 80 survey respondents have indicated that they are willing to partake in follow up interviews from early 2020. Committee members commented that it will be interesting to whether any significant

differences exist with belonging between 3-4-year PGT students and those completing PGT programmes within 1 year.

Following further data collection, committee members welcomed an update on the Belonging and Engagement Project.

- 4.4** The educational research being conducted by CHERS was discussed in the context of the College's Learning and Teaching Strategy. It was noted that the Educational Evaluation Toolkit would be a useful tool to engender new projects.

Further cross-College projects are being undertaken including:

- Curriculum change and culture project
- Learning gain project
- Strengthening the communities in physics project

5. NSS/PTES Working Group

- 5.1** The Committee received an update from the Executive Officer for the Vice-Provost on the NSS/PTES working group.

The NSS/PTES Working Group reconvened on 30th October to consider the 2018 NSS results and ICU response to the NSS results. The purpose of the meeting was to identify actions which would have a positive impact on the results for 2019; actions which would be quick to implement.

These recommendations were approved by Provost's Board on 26 November and each recommendation has been further developed into specific actions, owners and timelines.

It was noted that the actions presented were only those agreed by the working group and that Departmental annual monitoring action plans contain actions that have been agreed as a result of survey data.

The Vice Dean (Education), Faculty of Medicine, felt that some NSS recommendations seemed to come up year on year. It was felt that the College should set a mandate to address the following recurring themes

- Issues around common space
- Issues around assessment and feedback

The Chair felt that the College was making progress in addressing issues raised in the NSS and PTES and, in addition, the Director of Strategic Planning commented that subject level TEF will play a key role in how the College responds to survey results. The committee agreed that it was also important to communicate College successes and to share and implement best practices.

The Director of Strategic Planning suggested that the College's Access and Participation Plan should be considered in conjunction with the College's

NSS/PTES actions to further understand what interventions are required at Department level.

The Executive Officer for the Vice-Provost confirmed that the NSS/PTES Working Group will next convene on 27 January 2020. Updates on the actions will be reported to the Committee at a future meeting.

6. Widening Participation

6.1 The Committee received a presentation from the Director of Cross-Curricular Mathematics Education on the College's work on widening participation in Mathematics

6.1.1 The group were provided with information on the College's 'mA*ths Online Programme'. The programme supports A-levels Mathematics students who are considering studying a maths-related degree at the College. The programme allows students to develop the skills required to achieve an A* in A-level Mathematics and build confidence to apply to universities that require an A* in Mathematics.

The committee discussed the difficulties in supporting WP students to progress from high grades to very high grades but that the intervention has been well received in terms of evaluation returns (although further data is required). It was noted that a more interventionalist model for GCSE.

The Director of Cross-Curricular Mathematics Education highlighted the Mathematics in Education and Industry (MEI) initiative. It was reported that mathematics poses a higher level of cognitive challenge than it did three years ago so the MEI initiative has sort to address this issue through 'Advanced Maths Support programme' by enabling consortia to take place.

It was reported that, at a strategic level, the College has discussed two options for improving equality of opportunity in higher education: 1. Decrease the A-level offer and invest resource to support students following entry and 2. Invest in interventions external to the College which will increase attainment for all. Despite being more resource intensive, the College has leaned towards the latter.

6.2 The committee received a presentation from Vice-President (International) on the College's work on delivering the Access and Participation Plan (APP).

6.2.1 The College is committed to close the access gap, as the five-year Access and Participation Plan begins.

The College is taking a whole-institutional approach, which has a number of advantages, including:

- Alignment of outreach activities with APP priorities
- Faculties involvement in decision-making
- The 5-year approach allows time to evaluate the impact and respond

6.2.2 A new governance model is being developed, including an Access Programme Board (APB), chaired by the Associate Provost (Academic Partnerships). The Board will perform functions including monitoring and evaluating programme entry.

The OfS has agreed targets (not quotas) for entry to the College by 2025 across the following target groups:

- Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Q1
- Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) 4 Q1 and Q2
- Black students
- Disabled students

The College performs relatively strongly in IMD Q1 but less so with black student entry.

6.2.3 Analysis of admissions data by Emma McCoy (Professor of Statistics, Department of Mathematics) demonstrates that the College is turning down WP applicants who go on to make our grades – the easiest way to meet our targets is to admit these students. It was not that this analysis was not conducted at departmental level.

6.2.4 The College has stopped the INSPIRE initiative, as not deemed the most effective use of College resource. The College has now moved to a CPD Approach.

New Access and Participation Plan models were noted including:

- Digital and Visits
- Imperial Fellow
- Cohorts
- London Intensive
- Collaborative
- Outsourced
- Sixth Form Maths School

6.2.5 It was noted that that the College not only needs to ensure that WP attainment levels are raised to reach the College's standard offer, but to ensure that WP students have a chance to receive the standard offer. It is envisaged that it will take five years in order to see outreach gains. It was highlighted that the College needs to expand its outreach operations outside of London and South East, where practical. Some outreach activities will be part of Horizons/I-Explore.

6.2.6 Overall, the Committee agreed that College support was essential to achieve the target set by the OfS.

7. Education Evaluation

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

- 7.1.1 The Education Evaluation Team has created a number of dashboards at programme level, which allows for attainment gaps to be identified. This will support the curriculum review. Module level data collected as part of SIMP will allow the College to provide data at a more granular level.
- 7.1.2 Further work is being undertaken by Strategic Planning to support the College's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives including an analysis on admissions data. This will allow the College to more accurately identify WP students.
- 7.1.3 A Bursary Recipient Analysis Project is being conducted as there is now a requirement to report this data to the OfS. The OfS has requested data on new recipients but the College is also able to provide information on existing recipients. The Director of Strategic Planning has highlighted to Provost's Board that financial support for students studying at the College on programmes with longer periods of registration also needs careful consideration.
- 7.1.4 The Committee received a brief update on Subject Level TEF. Criteria has not yet been published by the OfS. The Director of Strategic Planning commented that the College's supporting statement on TEF data should objectively highlight any data that is deemed misleading.

8. Educational Research

- 8.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the Director for CHERS (Centre for Higher Education Research and Scholarship)
 - 8.1.1 The Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE) conference was recently held. The Director for CHERS praised the number of Imperial College presentations at the conference, which were welcomed by the delegates.

9. Online Innovation Working Group (OLIG)

- 9.1 The Committee received an update from the Vice Provost (Education). It was reported that OLIG members discussed online digital at an away morning, which was productive and allowed OLIG members to gain a sense of direction.

10. I-Explore Module Innovation Group

- 10.1 It was reported that IMIG approved all BPES modules for inclusion in I-Explore. Horizons modules have already been approved. Progress is being made with the development of STEMM and Multidisciplinary modules. An analysis will be presented at a future LTC.

11. QAEC

- 11.1 The Committee was reminded the QAEC minutes were available at <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/senate-subcommittees/quality-assurance-enhancement-committee/>

11.2 The Academic Registrar reported on the following items from QAEC held on 20 November 2019:

(i) Fair Admissions Response to survey

QAEC received the College's draft response to the UUK call for evidence to support the UUK review of fair admissions. This was prepared using material provided by Registry (Academic Registrar and Deputy Head of Admissions) and having sought views from the Faculty Education Strategy Managers and Admissions Tutors, and the Director of Student Recruitment and Outreach. Views will also be sought from the Vice Deans Education, Vice Provost Education and the Associate Provost (Academic Partnerships). Having incorporated any further views, the final version will be discussed with the Provost and approval sought prior to submission to UUK.

(ii) Admissions Statistics

QAEC received admissions statistics for undergraduate, postgraduate taught, and postgraduate research. Overall undergraduate application numbers as at 10 December 2019 are up across all three faculties – up 13.4% as compared to the same point last year and in all three categories UK (+9.9%), other EU (+5.3%) and Overseas (+18.4%).

The Committee agreed that it would be informative for future admissions statistics to include WP data; a recommendation which will be communicated to the Director of Admissions.

Action: Secretary

12. Any Other Business

12.1 Student Status and Access

(i) The committee briefly discussed the implications of student status, as set in the College record system, and access to College spaces and systems. The Academic Registrar confirmed that a vision group within SIMP has been established to consider the implications.

13. Meeting dates for 2019/20

13.1 The Committee noted the following meeting dates, all scheduled from 15.00-17.00:

- Thursday 23 January 2020
- Thursday 5 March 2020
- Thursday 2 April 2020
- Thursday 14 May 2020
- Thursday 4 June 2020
- Thursday 30 July 2020