

## SENATE

### Confirmed Minutes of Meeting held on 13 October 2021

**Present:** Professor Ian Walmsley (Chair); Professors Buluwela, Craster, Distaso, Green, Haynes, Jardine, Johnston, Kingsbury, Lindstedt, McCoy, Thompson, Xu; Drs Costa-Pereira, Craig, Malhotra, Rutschmann; Ms Bannister; Mr Lo Mr Ashton (Secretary); Ms Webster (Minute Secretary).

**In attendance:** Professor Des Johnston for Professor Weber, Professor Jason Riley for Professor Brandon

**Apologies:** Professors Hanna, Veloso, Weber; Dr Fobelets; Ms Makuch Mr Tebbutt

#### **2601 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were noted as above.

#### **2602 Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership of Senate**

Received: A note from the Academic Registrar (**Paper Senate 2021/01**)

Reported: That the paper set out the Terms of Reference and Constitution for Senate for the 2021-22 academic year. There were no changes to the Terms of Reference. The Chair welcomed Professor Richard Jardine as the Senior College Consul and Professor George Hanna as the Head of Department representative for the Faculty of Medicine. Dr Lloyd James, Imperial College Union President and Mr Daniel Lo, Deputy President (Education) were also welcomed to the Senate.

#### **2603 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 16 June 2021 were confirmed as an accurate record. Subject to amendments of the date in 2539 and to minute 2546 to reflect that it was ICT who undertook the support for secure submission sites and not the Library.

#### **2604 Matters Arising**

There were no Matter's Arising not otherwise covered on the Agenda.

#### **2605 Chair's Action**

There was no Chair's Action to report.

#### **2606 Provost's Business**

Received: A verbal report from the Provost

Reported: (1) That the National Student Survey results for 2021 had reflected the progress the College had made over the past year and were testament to the hard work of the Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience) and the Vice-Deans (Education) in

transforming the education and the student experience. There will be further discussion of the results and identified further action. Further information on the results can be found at <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/strategic-planning/statistics/nss/>

(2) That Professor Peter Haynes had been elected as a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering, as had Professor Daniele Dini, Professor Aimee Morgans and Professor Yanghua Wang. Congratulations were extended to them all.

(3) That the planning for the current academic year and the current safety protocols in place had been carefully and thoughtfully deliberated upon at great length to try and get an appropriate balance for the delivery of education and support for the broader student experience.

(4) That there was a new Education Secretary in Government. The Chair noted that Nadim Zahawi had previously been a champion of international students.

(5) That changes to the governance arrangements would be discussed later in the meeting but that the role of Senate was emphasised as being crucial in the strategic oversight of education and the mission of the College. Changes to governance arrangements reflected upon the best of what the College had learned during the response to the Pandemic and new ways of working together.

## **2607 Academic Governance**

**Received:** A report on the updated Governance Structure for 2021-22 (**Paper Senate/2021/02**)

**Reported:** (1) That Senate and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (QAEC) remain unchanged in terms of their terms of reference and purpose in maintaining academic quality and standards. Changes had been made to the governance structure under the Provost's Board, which would allow expert discussion on items before they are considered by Provost's Board. The Education Committee and the Research Committee will provide strategic direction for education, research and infrastructure. The Education Committee will work in tandem with QAEC and will oversee the education and student experience focus of the College's strategy and Academic Strategy.

(2) That in considering the revised governance structures, the College was keen to embed learning from structure of ESOG which had brought colleagues together to manage the response to the pandemic and had students at the centre of decision making. The Student Experience Committee, which looks at the experience outside the classroom, will be co-chaired by the Imperial College Union's Deputy President (Welfare). The Guild which looked at the delivery of online education is being replaced by the Teaching and Learning Product Board, which largely retains the same remit but will have more direct responsibility for the prioritisation of technology delivery through the ICT product line.

(3) That the Student Administration Lifecycle Board will take over the functions of the now ended SIMP project under business as usual and will bring system requirements from start to end of the student journey under one umbrella. It was noted that the structure of these two Boards were predicated on ICT splitting their current product line into two and this is reflected in the new Structure in ICT which will be in place by the end of the calendar year.

(4) That Senate and Council have the oversight roles and this would need to be respected within the new structure. Senate is the body which can challenge against provision and quality on that strategy and that this was in parallel to the role of Council in having oversight of the executive.

## **2608 Covid-19 Response**

**Received:** A report from the Education and Strategy Operations Group (ESOG) (**Paper Senate/2021/03**)

**Reported:** (1). That the report covered the period July to September 2021. The key decisions to note included the agreement that taught students should be in the UK to study and on campus when teaching was scheduled but in recognition of the difficulties some students may experience, an exceptional circumstances policy was put into place and a two-week leeway period for the start of the year. There had been much hard work in departments to put in place the start of the year arrangements including the OfS/CMA letters. There would be reduced capacity in teaching space but the switch to online delivery in 2021-22 would be driven by pedagogy rather than space constraints.

(2) That arrangements for Contact Tracing in teaching spaces has moved on considerably since the paper was written to reflect the need to balance the student experience against transmission. It had been agreed following extensive discussion with ICU representatives, that timetabling should be undertaken with the expectation of no social distancing. It was also agreed that consideration was given to the provision of space on campus to students who needed work or access online teaching in between in-person teaching events. ESOG also discussed how student spaces would transition back to their original uses to ensure access to catering and event spaces. These arrangements had now been agreed by Operations Committee and agreed by CoG today and will be communicated to named contacts. There will be a meeting dedicated to arrangements in place and how this might impact on the Spring Term delivery of programmes. It was acknowledged that this was a difficult balance as need data from having an increased population on campus.

**Considered in Discussion:** (1) That undertaking local assessment of teaching spaces was difficult without that data and so that would make it easier to categorise rooms. Members requested understanding of departmental timescales in terms of timetabling for Spring Term and that there was a need for this as soon as possible. It was noted also that cases reported indicated that transmission is occurring outside the classroom and in social environments.

(2) That Government guidance was provided really late and that institutions were still waiting for the Plan B guidance so the College had needed to be very flexible in its approach to the academic year. The impact on staff workloads had been significant and it was recognised that this was not sustainable.

## **2609 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee**

**Received:** A report from the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee (**Papers Senate 2021/04 and 2021/05**)

**Reported:** (1) That QAEC had held an extraordinary meeting in July 2021 at which it had considered the following items:

- Requests for programme specific regulations for PGT programmes in Business and Aeronautics.
- Recommendation to join the QAA's TransNational Education scheme
- The outcomes of the SOLE Survey pilots which were conducted in parallel to procure a new platform on which to deliver the module level evaluation. QAEC approved a new set of Core survey questions and some additional banks of questions which could be used.
- An initial look at the National Student Survey outcomes for 2021.

(2) That at its September meeting QAEC had reconsidered the recommendation approved by Senate that all postgraduate taught programmes should only include Level 7 modules with effect from October 2022 to allow departments time to either complete curriculum review or make modifications to affected programmes. Concerns had been raised via the Vice-Deans (Education) about the timing and practical implications of this decision. QAEC

considered this and recommended that implementation of this decision is deferred to allow for further consultation. Senate approved this recommendation.

(3) That there were ongoing discussions about requests for exemptions from the academic regulations specifically over the algorithm. This would be addressed through the Regulations and Policy Review Committee

(4) That at its meeting in September, QAEC had considered the following items:

- Further information on the PGT programme specific regulations requests.
- Admissions Policies and Procedures for 2021-22
- Updates to the Academic Misconduct Procedure
- Updates to the Mitigating Circumstances Procedure
- Updated Policy on Conducting Online Assessment
- LKCMedicine in-course transfers
- Update on the replacement of the platform to deliver SOLE
- UG SOLE Results from summer 2021
- Report from the Programmes Committee.

(5) That the replacement of the SOLE Survey platform was underway and that a new set of core questions had been agreed following a pilot survey undertaken in the Spring 2021. The new survey would focus on gather student feedback and evaluation on the module to support the College's quality assurance procedures. It was noted that a Working Party had been convened to consider how lecturer evaluation could be undertaken to support the academic promotions process.

Considered in discussion: (1) That for Mitigating Circumstances, the College could revert to its standard procedures. Guidance would be updated.

(2) That in respect of the exceptional circumstances policy, it was intended to be a short-term solution for students unable to start at the beginning of the academic year. UK Government visa regulations now required students have to be in the UK in April in order to qualify for the Graduate Worker Route.

(3) That in respect of examinations, students have been told they will Timed Remote Assessments in December/January but that departments have told students that think they will be in-person, invigilated examinations in the summer. It was acknowledged that there were concerns about academic integrity for remote examinations but that there was a need to design fit for purpose assessments to meet the learning outcomes and that this was a bigger question which was not entirely covid related.

## **2610 Senate Committees**

Received: The Terms of Reference, constitution and membership of the Senate's Sub Committees (**Paper Senate/2021/06**)

Approved: Senate approved the Terms of Reference, constitution and membership of the Sub-Committees

## **2611 Appointment of External Examiners**

Received and noted: the names and affiliations of External Examiners for undergraduate and Master's degrees appointed since the last Senate meeting.

## **2612 Office for Students Consultation on Quality and Standards**

Received: the response made to the July 2021 consultation on the B conditions of registration (Paper Senate/2021/07)

Noted: Senate noted the response and that there would be a further consultation on Condition B3 on student outcomes and the Teaching Excellence Framework.

**2613**     **Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 8 December 2021 at 3.10 pm