SENATE

Minutes of Meeting held on 13 December 2006

Present:  
Professor Borysiewicz (Deputy Rector) (in the Chair), Professors Brinson, Buckingham, de Belleruche, Eisenbach, J Higgins, Isham, Johnston, R Kitney, Laycock, Lloyd Smith, Morley, Nethercot, Rawlings, Richardson, Sinden, Thompson, Warwick, Welton, Wright; Drs Berkshire, Broda, Craig, Leevers, McPhail, Schachter, Thomas-Betts, Tippins; Mrs Cunningham, Ms Higham, Ms Jenkins; Mr Collins, Mr Harris, Ms Rahman (student representatives); with Mr McClure (Academic Registrar), Mr Wheatley (Deputy Academic Registrar), Ms Taylor (Management Trainee).

Apologies:  
The Rector, Professors Begg, Cheung, Elgin, Kramer, Saklatvala; Drs Nixon, Shah, Spivey.

958 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 1 November 2006 were confirmed and signed.

959 Matters Arising

Considered:  Paper Senate/2006/27.

Senate Minute 926: Senate Committees

Approved:  (1) A proposed amendment to the Terms of Reference of the Engineering Studies Committee, the Medical Studies Committee and the Science Studies Committee to remove the requirement that they communicate the [examination] marks and final recommendations [of Boards of Examiners] to the Academic Registrar.

(2) Amendments to the Constitution of the Recruitment and Admission Policy Committee: (i) the addition of the Director of Access; (ii) the removal of the Delegate for Europe; (iii) the addition of one member of the academic staff nominated by the Graduate School of Engineering and Physical Sciences to represent the Humanities Programme and the Tanaka Business School for postgraduate matters.

(3) Appointments to the Membership of the College Libraries Committee: Professor Ritter (in the Chair); Professors MacCulloch, Robb, Warwick; Ms Carden; Mrs Doolan; Mr Collins, Mr Harris (student representatives).

Senate Minute 934: Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership of the Senate 2006-7

Reported:  That Dr Craig had been appointed to the Senate by the Engineering Studies Committee and Dr Spivey had been appointed to the Senate by the Science Studies Committee.
Further Reported: That Dr Lawton did not wish to sit on the Senate and the Science Studies Committee was in the process of appointing an alternative representative.

Rector’s Business

Received: A report from the Rector (Paper Senate/2006/28).

Reported:

(1) Joint Heads of the Division of Biology

That Professor M Buck, Professor of Molecular Microbiology in the Division of Biology, and Professor I Owens, Professor of Evolutionary Ecology in the Division of Biology, had been appointed Joint Heads of the Division of Biology in the Faculty of Natural Sciences with effect from 1 October 2006.

(2) Acting Director of the Centre for Environmental Policy

That Professor J Mumford, Professor of Natural Resource Management in the Centre for Environmental Policy, had been appointed Acting Director of the Centre for Environmental Policy in the Faculty of Natural Sciences with effect from 1 October 2006.

(3) Campus Deans

That Professor D Johnston, Professor of Clinical Endocrinology in the Division of Medicine, had been appointed Campus Dean for the St Mary’s campus with effect from 20 October 2006.

That Mr M Burke, Medical Director of the North West London Hospitals Trust and Consultant Surgeon at Northwick Park Hospital, had been appointed Campus Dean for the North West London Hospitals campus with effect from 1 August 2006.

(4) Professorial Appointments

That the following had been appointed to the Chairs indicated below:

Professor N M Alford, currently Professor of Physical Electronics and Materials and Pro-Dean Research in the Faculty of Engineering, Science and the Built Environment at the London South Bank University, to the Chair in Materials in the Department of Materials in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 January 2007.

Dr G M Mace, OBE, FRS, formerly Director of Science at the Zoological Society of London, to the Chair in Conservation Science and Director of the Centre for Population Biology in the Division of Biology in the Faculty of Natural Sciences with effect from 1 November 2006.

(5) Change of Professorial Title

That Professor E Gelenbe, formerly Professor of Computer and Communication Networks in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering, had had his title changed to the Denis Gabor Professor of Electrical Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006.
(6) **Visiting Professors**

That the following had accepted association with the College as Visiting Professor:

Professor R F Berry, formerly Chief Technology Officer for Messaging at IBM, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Computing in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of three years.

Dr G Dounias, currently Partner at EDAFOS Ltd, Athens, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of three years.

Dr A Ezekowitz, currently Senior Vice President at the Merck Research Laboratory, Rahway, New Jersey, as Visiting Professor in the Division of Cell and Molecular Biology in the Faculty of Natural Sciences with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of three years.

Dr N Hoose, currently Director at Bittern Consulting Ltd, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of three years.

Dr S Ion, OBE, currently Group Director of Technology, BNFL, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Materials in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of three years.

Professor K M Krushelnick, currently at the University of Michigan, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Physics in the Faculty of Natural Sciences with effect from 1 September 2006 for a period of three years.

Dr P H W Leong, formerly Reader in Computing in the Department of Computing at Imperial College, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Computing in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of three years.

Professor B Nuseibeh, currently Professor in the Department of Computing at the Open University, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Computing in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of three years.

Dr N P O'Dowd, currently holding the Chair in Mechanical Engineering at the University of Limerick, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Mechanical Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 September 2006 for a period of two years.

Dr D Oxenham, currently Senior Programme Leader, integrated Weapon Systems and Strategic Technologies, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, Ministry of Defence, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Computing in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of three years.

Professor K Palem, currently Director of the Centre for Research in Embedded Systems (Computer Engineering) at the Georgia Institute of Technology, as Visiting Professor in the Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering in the Faculty of Engineering with effect from 1 October 2006 for a period of two years.

(7) **Awards Ceremonies**

That the Postgraduate Awards Ceremonies in 2006-7 would be held on

That the Commemoration Day Ceremonies in 2007-8 would be held on Wednesday 24 October 2007.

Further reported: That attendance by academic staff at the Commemoration Day Ceremonies in October 2006 had been very poor, and steps should be taken by Faculty Principals and Heads of Department/Division to improve attendance in the future.

Agreed: (1) That a central notice should be sent from the Rector to all academic staff regarding attendance at Postgraduate Awards Ceremonies and Commemoration Day Ceremonies.

(2) That Communications should circulate names of academic staff who have signed up to process at Postgraduate Awards Ceremonies and Commemoration Day Ceremonies to Faculty Principals in advance of the ceremonies.

(3) That all Faculty Principals and Heads of Department/Division should encourage academic staff members to attend Postgraduate Awards Ceremonies and Commemoration Day Ceremonies.

961 Pro Rector (Educational Quality)’s Business

Reported: That the Student OnLine Evaluation (SOLE) software had been updated and the Autumn 2006 non-clinical questionnaire had gone live on 4 December 2006. At 9.30am on 13 December 2006 the average participation rate across the College had been 37%, with seven departments over 40% and four departments over 50%.

962 Review of Research Training in the Division of Neuroscience and Mental Health

Considered: A report by the Quality and Academic Review Committee (Paper Senate/2006/29).

Reported: (1) That the Review Panel, chaired by Professor F Leppington, had agreed research training in the Division was very good.

(2) That the Review Panel had recommended the following:

(i) Completion rates be improved; (ii) the transfer report be shortened to ensure that transfer examinations were completed within 15 months; (iii) the staff-student Committee be more widely publicised; (iv) social cohesion across the Division be improved.

(3) That the Division had already determined to reinstate regular seminars where research students could discuss their research with other students.

Approved: The recommendation of the Committee that the Division report on its progress in relation to the issues raised by the review to the Quality and Academic Review Committee in 12 months’ time.
Considered: A Report by the Quality and Academic Review Committee (Paper Senate/2006/30).

(1) Follow Up Reports of the Reviews of Undergraduate Programmes in the Department of Physics and of Service Teaching in the Department of Mathematics

Reported: That the Departments of Physics and Mathematics had presented satisfactory reports to the Committee on the action they had taken in response to the recommendations of the review panels.

(2) Invigilation of Examinations

Reported:

(i) That, following an instance in 2006 when an undergraduate examination had had to be cancelled and rescheduled due to students being given an incorrect paper when the member of academic staff responsible for setting the paper had been unavailable for consultation, the Committee had been informed the current instructions for invigilation put no obligation on the member of staff who set the paper being available during the examination.

(ii) That the Committee proposed amendments to the current instructions to ensure the member of staff responsible for setting the paper was present in the examination room 10 minutes before the start of the examination and for 30 minutes after the start of the examination, and was on site for the entire period of the examination.

Further reported: (i) That it was possible the member of staff responsible for setting the paper might be unable to attend the examination for a valid reason, for example illness, transport problems or if the member of staff had retired.

(ii) That in some cases more than one member of academic staff was responsible for setting an examination paper.

Agreed: That the wording of the amendment be altered to read:

Normally the academic staff member responsible for a written examination, or another appropriate member of academic staff, should invigilate at each written examination. Additional invigilators need not be members of the academic staff.

The member of academic staff responsible for a written examination, or the appropriate alternative, must be in the examination room at least ten minutes before the examination is due to begin. If not acting as the invigilator, he/she must then remain in the room for a further thirty minutes after the start of the examination.

Before the examination begins the member of academic staff responsible for it, or the appropriate alternative, must check his/her paper for any errors. If any amendments are necessary he/she shall inform the invigilator on duty (if not themselves) and ensure that the required announcements are made to all students (including those sitting the examination in alternative venues).
Before leaving the examination the member of academic staff responsible for it, or the appropriate alternative, must ensure that arrangements have been made for him/her to be immediately contactable in the event of any further questions from candidates on the paper. They should normally remain on site for the duration of the examination.

Approved: With the wording above, the recommendation of the Committee to amend the current instructions for examination invigilation.

(3) Eligibility for Research Degree Supervision

Reported: That the Committee had considered a recommendation from the Graduate Schools that the Eligibility for Research Degree Supervision document be amended to prevent co-supervision by co-supervisors related by marriage or who were partners.

Further Reported: (i) That in some cases it was felt spouses or partners were natural co-supervisors and to prevent all co-supervision by spouses or partners might cause difficulties in individual cases.

(ii) That the mentor role, recently made mandatory, could be used to prevent conflict of interests in situations where co-supervisors were partners, but mentors and supervisors should not be related by marriage or be partners.

Agreed: (i) That the wording of the amendment be altered to read:

A research student should not have a supervisor and a mentor who are related by marriage or who are partners

(ii) That where a relationship existed between two supervisors the supervisors must have alerted their department (s) to ensure a mentor was carefully chosen who could play an active and clear role during the period of research study.

Approved: With the wording above, the recommendation of the Committee to amend the Eligibility for Research Degree Supervision document.

(4) Attendance Requirements for Research Students

Reported: (i) That the Committee had considered a report by a Working group established by the Strategic Education Committee to investigate attendance requirements for those students working away from the College on split PhD or PRI schemes.

(ii) That the Working Party recommended standardising the various requirements:

- PRI students should attend the College for 2 months per year, to ensure that the quality of Imperial College degrees was upheld, to stay in keeping with Imperial’s status as a residential university and to safeguard the University now that other universities and hospitals were included in the PRI scheme

- MPhil/PhD transfer examinations should take place on a College campus in the UK;

- part-time students should attend the College for a minimum of 30 days per year;
• part-time students must be registered at part-time fees for a minimum of 48 months.

**Further Reported:** That some PRI students would find it difficult to attend for 2 months per year, especially if they were employed by another institution or if the equipment necessary for their research was housed elsewhere.

**Agreed:** (i) That the attendance requirement should be fixed at 2 months per year but departments/divisions could take exceptional cases to the Quality and Academic Review Committee for consideration.

(ii) That the Graduate Schools should investigate the possibilities of defining the outcomes and objectives of split PhD and PRI schemes, and should ensure that the definitions and criteria of the PRI scheme were still valid given the recent extension of the scheme.

**Approved:** With the alterations above, the recommendation of the Committee to amend the attendance requirements for split PhD and PRI schemes to read:

1) The current Public Research Institutions/Industrial Research Laboratories (PRI/IRL scheme) will be replaced by a Partner Research Institution scheme;

2) The Partner Research Institution scheme will include universities and hospitals;

3) The split PhD attendance requirement of at least 12 months attendance at the College will remain in place, but the requirement that the first 3 months and last 3 months must be spent at the College will be removed. Departments must explain how they will handle the induction and initial research plan arrangements for a student who will not be present during the first 3 months.

4) The attendance requirement for a PRI student will be 2 months a year. Any Departments wishing for a lower annual attendance requirement for a specific student must present the case to the Quality and Academic Review Committee for consideration;

5) The MPhil/PhD transfer examination must take place at a College campus in the UK;

6) The prescribed minimum registration period for all truly part-time, including PRI students will be 48 months and the part-time fee will be charged;

7) PRI students pursuing their studies on a full-time basis should be prescribed a minimum registration period of 36 months and charged the full-time fee;

8) The minimum attendance requirement at the College for all truly part-time students will be set at no less than 30 days per year.

(5) **Annual Evaluative Report of the Centre for Educational Development**

**Reported:** (i) That the Centre for Educational Development had received a positive annual evaluative report.

(ii) That the Quality and Academic Review Committee had decided to initiate quinquennial reviews of the Certificate of Advanced Study in Learning and
Teaching, teaching offered by the Centre for Educational Development and the courses offered by the Centre for Professional Development.

964 **Engineering Studies Committee**

Considered and approved: A Report by the Engineering Studies Committee (Paper Senate 2006/31).

(1) **BEng degree in Mechanical Engineering**

Reported: That the Department of Mechanical Engineering wished to reinstate its BEng degree programme, which would be a non-accredited three year degree, with effect from October 2007.

Further reported: That this BEng degree would assist the Department in compliance with the Bologna requirements.

Agreed: The proposed reinstatement of the BEng degree in Mechanical Engineering as a non-accredited programme.

(2) **In memoriam**

Reported: That the Committee paid tribute to Professor John Lever, Head of the Department of Bioengineering, who died during the summer.

Further reported: That the College was in the process of establishing a scholarship in memory of Professor Lever.

965 **Medical Studies Committee**

Considered and approved: A Report by the Medical Studies Committee (Paper Senate/2006/32).

Reported: (1) That the Committee had considered a proposal for the creation of a Graduate entry MBBS programme with effect from October 2008, to assist the College in providing high quality training for clinical scientists and to enable the College to remain competitive with other institutions providing Graduate entry MBBS programmes.

(2) That the external reviewers, Dr D Wood, University of Cambridge, and Dr J Dacre, University College London, had viewed the course favourably and suggested some improvements which had been taken on board by the Faculty of Medicine.

(3) That the General Medical Council had given approval to proceed with the arrangements for the course, subject to final approval in March 2007.

Further reported: (1) That the Senate was asked to approval only the principle of the Graduate entry MBBS programme, and the content of the course would be reviewed in more detail at a subsequent meeting.

(2) That a number of undergraduate courses at the College were natural feeders into a Graduate entry MBBS programme, including Biomedical Science, Biomedical Engineering, Biology and Biochemistry.

(3) That the Committee wished to thank Dr A Warrens for his work in preparing the
paperwork for the Graduate entry MBBS programme.

(4) That the Committee was aware that social facilities on the Hammersmith campus were in need of improvement, and the Faculty of Medicine was working towards improving these in advance of the first cohort of Graduate entry MBBS degree students.

Agreed: The proposed establishment of a Graduate entry MBBS degree programme, subject to final approval of the course content, with effect from October 2008.

966 Science Studies Committee

Considered and approved: A Report by the Science Studies Committee (Paper Senate/2006/33).

(1) New courses

Reported: That the Committee had considered proposals to establish an MSci in Chemistry with Molecular Physics and a Year in Industry and a BSc in Ecology and Environmental Biology.

Approved: In accordance with paragraph 1.3 of the Requirements for the Award of Degrees of BSc and MSci, an additional new field of study for the MSci degree: Chemistry with Molecular Physics and a Year in Industry (5 year course), and an additional new field of study for the BSc degree: Ecology and Environmental Biology.

(2) Wye Campus

Reported: That the Committee was concerned about the pastoral support that would be available to students at Wye once Imperial College no longer had an academic presence there.

Further reported by the Chair: (i) That the College was committed to the retention of an academic Campus Dean on the campus, at least until the current cohort of Applied Business Management students had completed their degrees.

(ii) That some honorary Imperial staff would act as personal tutors.

(iii) That part-time student counselling and pastoral posts would be retained on the campus for the immediate future.

(3) Humanities Programmes

Reported: That the Committee had considered proposals for the establishment of a new suite of combined studies of Chemistry with a language (French, German or Spanish for Science).

Further reported: (i) That the suite had received strong support from external reviewers.

(ii) That the Chemistry component was as thorough and taxing as in pure Chemistry degrees.
(iii) That the current languages had been chosen because it was felt students would have an A or AS level in them, but other languages could be added in the future.

Approved: In accordance with paragraph 1.3 of the Requirements for the Award of Degrees of BSc and MSci, additional new fields of study for the BSc degree: Chemistry with French for Science, Chemistry with German for Science and Chemistry with Spanish for Science.

(4) Revisions to the BSc and MSci Degree Regulations

Reported: (i) That the Committee had accepted the recommendations of its Working Group on course unit structure that, from 2008, students must pass all courses rather than 75% of courses.

(ii) That some departments were concerned about the viability of completing more than 60 ECTS credits in any one academic year.

Further reported: (i) That the Committee was concerned about publishing a target of 240 credits for Masters courses in 2008-9 prospectuses and then publishing a target of 270 credits for Masters courses in 2009-10.

(ii) By the Chair, that the Bologna Task Force would report to the next meeting of the Senate about ECTS targets, in time for the next Bologna Ministerial Summit, chaired by the UK, in May 2007.

(iii) That many other UK universities were seemingly uninterested in the demands of the Bologna process.

Agreed: To defer discussion about ECTS credits until the receipt of the report from the Bologna Task Force.

967 Graduate School of Engineering and Physical Sciences Management Committee

Considered and approved: A Report by the Graduate School of Engineering and Physical Sciences Management Committee (Paper Senate/2006/34).

(1) New Degree Programmes

MRes in Synthesis in Medicine

Reported: That the proposed course had the potential to leverage the College’s world-class expertise in synthetic Chemistry.

Approved: On the recommendation of the Committee, the establishment of an MRes degree in Synthesis in Medicine in the Department of Chemistry and the related degree requirements with effect from October 2007.

MSc in Sustainable Energy Futures

Reported: That the proposed course reflected the development of the Energy Futures Lab.

Further reported: That all students would be given a common base in the Department of Chemical Engineering to ensure they would have a sense of
common identity and unity.

**Approved**: On the recommendation of the Committee, the establishment of a cross-Faculty MSc in Sustainable Energy Futures and the related degree requirements with effect from October 2007.

(2) **Joint report by the Graduate Schools**

Reported: That the Graduate Schools had won the Times Higher Award 2006 for Outstanding Support for Early Careers Researchers.

Further reported: (i) That the Graduate Schools wished to thank and congratulate Professors Ritter, Higgins and Morley and their teams for the work that had been put in to ensure success at the Times Higher Awards.

(ii) That the Postgraduate Open Day 2006 had had 750 pre-registrations.

968 **Graduate School of Life Sciences and Medicine Management Committee**

Considered and approved: A Report by the Graduate School of Life Sciences and Medicine Management Committee (**Paper Senate/2006/35**).

(1) **Amendments to the MSc in Applied Entomology**

**Approved**: On the recommendation of the Committee the amendment of the title of the MSc degree in Applied Entomology to that of MSc in Entomology with effect from October 2007.

(2) **Discontinuation of Postgraduate Diploma Courses**

**Reported**: (i) That, following the College’s secession from the University of London in July 2007, it would not be able to award University of London Diplomas in Cardiology or Thoracic Medicine.

(ii) That, on the determination of the Strategic Education Committee, the Faculty of Medicine had decided to discontinue these diplomas of 9 months’ duration with effect from October 2007.

969 **Recruitment and Admission Policy Committee**

Considered and approved: A Report from the Recruitment and Admission Policy Committee (**Paper Senate/2006/36**).

(1) **Overseas applications**

**Reported**: (i) That the Committee and the Undergraduate Admission Committee had discussed numbers of overseas applications and felt that, although the College was receiving stable numbers of overseas applications, it was experiencing some difficulty in turning those applications into acceptances. A number of overseas students had not taken up their places in 2006-7.

(ii) That the Committee had reason to believe this trend was mainly a result of financial factors.

Further reported: (i) That the Committee advocated support for the Centenary Scholarships appeal and, should funding permit, were in favour of awarding a large number of smaller awards rather than a small number of large awards.
(ii) That the Committee recommended a review of how overseas fees were set, and felt that more stable basic fees with larger premium fee margins was preferable to substantial annual increases in basic fees.

Agreed: That the Senate endorsed the Committee’s view that the mechanism for setting overseas fees should be reviewed by the Management Board in advance of the 2008-9 overseas fees being decided upon.

(2) Access Agreement

Reported: That the College’s Access Agreement had been revised.

Further reported: (i) That of the £900,000 set aside for Student Study Support Bursaries, £714,000 plus the gross costs of the salary of the Director of Access had been spent to date. Some students had not yet been through the system, because they had not supplied the necessary information to the Student Loans Company, and as a result the College believed it would spend close to the £900,000 by the end of the financial year.

(ii) That, of those students receiving Study Support Bursaries, more were collecting the larger sums than expected, but fewer were collecting the smaller sums, thereby showing that the College had managed to reach those who most needed the funding.

(3) Alternative A-Level Qualifications

Reported: (i) That the Undergraduate Admission Committee had agreed the College would not accept International Baccalaureate (IB) Standard Level Mathematics as a sufficient level for science and engineering courses.

(ii) That the Committee had confirmed the Cambridge Pre-University qualifications currently out for review should be regarded as acceptable alternatives to A-levels and other qualifications, but should not be regarded in preference to them.

Further reported: (i) That it would be difficult for many state schools to teach the IB Higher Level or Pre-University qualifications, and as a result the College would have applicants with a variety of educational levels applying for places in the coming years.

(ii) That the College must accept all qualifications of sufficient standard on a par, to ensure no good students would be disadvantaged during the admissions process.

970 Humanities Programme

Considered and approved: A Report by the Humanities Programme (Paper Seante/2006/37).

Reported: (1) That numbers taking Humanities courses had stabilised, although the majority of courses remained very popular. However, as in previous years, the number of Year in Europe students had declined.

(2) That the Distance Learning MSc in Translation had suffered a setback when University of London funding was withdrawn as a result of the College’s decision to secede, and other funding streams were currently being sought.
Further reported: That, following the establishment of a Working Group to investigate the need for essay writing and comprehension classes for foreign students, many departments had raised their English Language requirements. Because any funding given to such classes would have to be vired from elsewhere, the Working Group had decided to see if the higher requirements had any impact on the need for classes before making any recommendations.

971 Examination Offences Policy and Procedures

Considered: A Paper by the Academic Registrar (Paper Senate/2006/38).

Reported: (1) That, as a College of the University of London, Imperial had a dual system for dealing with alleged offences, with minor cases dealt with through the Academic Registrar and Boards of Examiners and all other cases sent to the University of London.

(2) That, as a result of the College’s secession from the University of London, the College had to implement its own examination offences policy and procedures, to be initiated from January 2007.

(3) That plagiarism would be discussed separately over the next few months.

Further reported: (1) That the procedures had been modelled on the University of London procedures, with one of the major changes being the removal of an academic lawyer from the hearing panel.

(2) That the student body had had concerns originally but had been satisfied by amendments to the draft procedures.

(3) That it was hoped the local procedures would accelerate the process of dealing with examination offences, although due process would still have to be ensured.

Approved: The introduction of the Imperial College Examination Offences Policy and Procedures (Paper Senate/2006/38) with effect from January 2007.

972 Amendments to the Student Withdrawals and Appeals Procedure and the Procedure for Consideration of Representations concerning Decisions of Boards of Examiners

Considered: A Paper by the Academic Registrar (Paper Senate/2006/39).

Reported: That the 2005 annual report from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) had recommended all university complaints procedures include a time limit of three years after which the university could reasonably refuse to deal with complaints.

Approved: The amendment of the Student Withdrawals and Appeals Procedure and the Procedure for Consideration of Representations concerning Decisions of Boards of Examiners to include the phrase:

The College reserves the right to reject a complaint when it is issued more than three years after the substantive event(s) to which it relates.

973 Academic Titles

Considered: A Paper by the Senior Dean (Paper Senate/2006/40).
Reported: (1) That the Deans had been asked to discuss the potential of changing academic titles from Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Reader and Professor to Assistant Professor, Associate Professor and Professor.

(2) That Warwick University and some other Russell Group universities were contemplating changing, or had decided to change, their academic titles in this way.

(3) That, after long discussions, the Deans had decided they were not in favour because: (i) current titles were widely understood, even by most of the American community; (ii) the words “Assistant” and “Associate” could be easily dropped and, as a result, the title of Professor would be devalued; (iii) a mixed model of Lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Associate Professor and Professor was not felt to be worth the effort.

(4) That the Deans felt the issue should be discussed again only if Oxford or Cambridge contemplated altering their titles.

Endorsed: the view of the Deans on academic titles, to be reviewed as and when appropriate.

974 Research Degree Submission Rates

Considered: A Paper by the Academic Registrar (Paper Senate/2006/41).

Reported: (1) That submission rates (defined as presenting a thesis for examination within 4 years of commencement date) were important because they were one of the performance indicators used by Funding Councils to measure the “efficiency” of an institution.

(2) That the College had set the target of 75% for departmental/divisional and College rates but this target was not been achieved across the College, although the overall submission rate had increased from 61% to 64% since last year.

(3) That Departments and Divisions had not yet been asked to review and comment on individual cases and the position in respect of overall submissions might change marginally when these comments had been received.

Further reported: (1) That, following the last review of the figures within Departments/Divisions, the Graduate Schools had implemented a number of changes to try to improve the submission rate, but these changes would take some time to have an effect. This time lag existed especially because many of the changes related to the early part of a PhD.

(2) That the College must improve its submission rate if it wanted to continue to be awarded money, especially post-RAE.

(3) That the submission rate for overseas students was lower, partly because (i) funding either extended beyond three years, thereby reducing the impetus to complete research within three years, or because funding was cut and as a result students could not afford to continue with their studies; (ii) students often returned to their own countries before the completion of their PhD, making it more difficult for the College to put pressure on them to complete.
Scholarships, Prizes and Medals Established/Amended

Considered: Paper Senate/2006/42.

Approved: (1) The establishment of the Association of Mining Analysts Prize for the best dissertation by a student enrolled on the MSc in Metals and Energy Finance; the Geoffrey Osborne Scholarship for the best first or second year student in Civil Engineering; the Gloucester Research Ltd Prizes for academic excellence in the Departments of Computing, Mathematics and Physics; the Peter Harding Memorial Prize for the student demonstrating sustained commitment and outstanding contribution to the Royal School of Mines, Faculty of Engineering or the College; the PSI Prize for academic excellence in Statistics; the RW Barnes Educational Fund for candidates living near Beckington, Somerset from disadvantaged backgrounds who hold offers for courses in Engineering, Mathematics or Physics.

(2) The amendment of the Burhouse Bursary to support two overseas undergraduates on an annual basis; the title of the David Smith Prize for Physics Applied to Medicine to the David Smith Prize for Medical URI and Ultrasound.

(3) The disestablishment of the Tanaka Business School Prize for best examination performance on the MSc Management.

Scholarships, Prizes and Medals Awarded

Reported: the 2006-7 Scholarships and 2005-6 Prizes and Medals, as detailed in Paper Senate/2006/43.

Undergraduate Examination Failures 2005-6

Received: The table of statistics related to undergraduate examination failures for 2005-6, as detailed in Paper Senate/2006/44.

Student Appeals against Withdrawal Decisions

Reported: The results of the appeals procedure in science and engineering, as detailed in Paper Senate/2006/45.

Research Council Studentships 2006-7

Reported: The allocation of studentships and studentship awards by Research Councils, as detailed in Paper Senate/2006/46.

Suspension of Academic Regulations

Reported: The action taken on behalf of the Council by the Chairman to suspend the Academic Regulations in two cases, as detailed in Paper Senate/2006/47.

Award of Degrees and Diplomas

(i) First Degrees in Engineering

Reported: Under the provisions of University of London Ordinance 13(2) and in accordance with the powers delegated by the Council and with the terms of SM 8 of October 1998, that the Academic Registrar had acted on behalf of the Senate in approving the award lists for first degrees in Engineering for candidates who have
satisfied the examiners in the examination and satisfied all other necessary requirements for the award of the degrees, and that degrees had been conferred on these candidates, the date of award being as indicated on the award lists.

(ii) Postgraduate Taught Degrees

Reported: Under the provisions of University of London Ordinance 13(2) and in accordance with the powers delegated by the Council and with the terms of SM 8 of October 1998, that the Academic Registrar had acted on behalf of the Senate in approving the award lists for postgraduate taught degrees for candidates who have satisfied the examiners in the examination and satisfied all other necessary requirements for the award of the 4 degrees, and that degrees had been conferred on these candidates, the date of award being as indicated on the award lists.

(iii) Diploma of the Imperial College (DIC)

Reported: In accordance with the powers delegated by the Council and with the terms of SM 8 of October 1998, that the Academic Registrar had acted on behalf of the Senate in approving the award lists for the above Diploma.

Resolved: That the Seal be affixed to the Diplomas, and that this action be reported to the Council.

(iv) Diploma of Associateship of the Royal School of Mines

Reported: In accordance with the powers delegated by the Council and with the terms of SM 8 of October 1998, that the Academic Registrar had acted on behalf of the Senate in approving the award list for the above Diploma, subject to the classification being identical for the Associateship and the Degree where appropriate.

Resolved: That the Seal be affixed to the Diplomas, and that this action be reported to the Council.

[The award lists are published in annual bound copies of the Senate Minutes.]

982 Revocation of Degrees

Reported: The action taken on behalf of the Senate by the Chairman to revoke a degree, as detailed in Paper Senate/2006/48.