**Education Committee – summary of meeting held on 20.01.22**

1. **Assessment**

The Committee discussed some guidance and considerations which had been put together by the In-Person Exam Group for departments on planning assessment in 2022, including the possibility of in-person exams from March onward.

The guidance recommended that careful consideration should be given to the running of both in-person and remote exams alongside each other in the same department, and that the following should be ensured:

* A logical framework is in place to support the running of in-person and remote exams (i.e. a single approach by dept, faculty or even cohort).
* Resourcing is reviewed with adequate lead time.
* Recognition is given that there might still be a need for flexibility, depending on the guidance by Government / DfE / College at the time.

The group approved the guidance document.

1. **Covid-19 and education update**

The group received the latest Covid case numbers in the Imperial community and noted that the majority of cases of transmission were off-campus. It was reported that discussions had taken place around arrangements for Covid-related guidance going forward, in light of the Government announcement on easing restrictions. Among the factors considered by the Covid Operations Group (COG) were the use of face-

masks, ventilation in teaching spaces, and messages around testing and vaccination.

1. **Resits**

The group agreed a proposal that in-session resit opportunities should be provided to PGT students for the 2021/22 Academic Year.

In-session resits were introduced in the previous academic year as a result of the impact of the pandemic. Given that Covid has continued to have a significant impact on education this year, as demonstrated by the increasing number of Covid-related mitigating circumstances claims reported by Faculties, the Committee felt that the College should be consistent with last year and provide an opportunity for in-session resits this year.

The group recognised that there might be some concern about the additional workload on staff and students associated with the setting of an extra paper during the same academic year, especially if students are already engaged in finishing dissertations or project work. However, feedback from ICU student representatives indicated that students are strongly in-session resits, especially as enabling this would ensure that all students are able to graduate with their cohort. Provision of in-session resits will also provide a timely opportunity for those who are unable to take the assessment at the first sitting due to mitigating circumstances.

The decision to provide an opportunity for in-session resits currently relates to this academic year only (2021/22). Further discussion will be required at Education Committee, QAEC and RPRC about the College’s approach in the longer term with regards to in-session resits.

1. **PhD student stipend extensions**

The Committee approved the following recommendations regarding PhD student stipend extensions and mitigations against the impact of the pandemic on research:

* In cases where a stipend extension has been awarded but no tuition fee-free programme extension was recorded, Registry should contact the relevant department administrator and invite a fee-free programme extension to be added to the student’s record. This fee-free programme extension would be equal to the length of the stipend extension or 6-months, whichever is least.
* If similar cases arise over the coming years, a similar process should be followed, providing evidence can be given that a COVID-related stipend extension has been secured.
1. **Upcoming reviews related to student experience**

The group was informed about the upcoming review into the student disciplinary procedures. This review will be chaired by Professor Terry Tetley and will aim to update the current disciplinary procedures in time for the 2022/23 academic year.

It was also noted that a review will shortly be launching which focuses on the frontline support services available to students.

1. **Action Short of a Strike (ASOS) terms**

It was noted that, in addition to the existing ASOS, UCU was now calling on its members to take two additional forms of ASOS: to not cover for absent colleagues, and to remove uploaded materials related to lectures or classes which would or had been cancelled as a result of strike action. The group was informed that these two forms of ASOS would last until 3 May 2022. At this stage, UCU had not given notice of a marking and assessment boycott.

It was reported that departments would use amounts obtained from the withholding of pay for strike action to support activities that would benefit education/student experience during the 2021-22 financial year, in consultation with SSCs (e.g. additional UROPs, departmental societies, events, etc.). In Support Services and Operational departments, these funds will be incorporated into the Student Support Fund.

The next meeting of the Education Committee will be held on **17 February 2022**.