

**EDUCATIONAL QUALITY COMMITTEE  
MEETING 16 – 29 October 2020 – UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

Name of Member	Mtg 9 18.09.19	Mtg 10 31.10.19	Mtg 11 30.01.20	Mtg 12 21.04.20	Mtg 13 28.05.20	Mtg 14 23.06.20	Mtg 15 03.09.20	Mtg 16 29/10/20
Professor David Bolton (Chair)	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Professor Susan Blake	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Dr Margaret Carran	√	√	A	√	√	√	√	√
Dr Anton Cox	---	---	√	√	√	√	√	√
Dr Irene Ctori	√	√	√	√	A	A	√	√
Liam Devine	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Yewande Akindele	√	A	√	√	√	√	A	√
Dr David Flinton	A	√	√	√	√	A	√	√
Dr Anna Gaio	A	A	A	√	√	√	A	√
Mary Ann Kernan	A	A	√	√	√	√	√	√
Professor Rachael-Anne Knight	√	A	√	√	√	√	A	A
Dr Lauren Knott	√	√	---	√	√	√	√	√
Saqlain Riaz (SU VP Education 2019/20)	√	√	√	√	√	A	√	---
Ruqaiyah Javaid (SU VP Education 2020/21)	---	---	---	---	---	√	√	√
Lucy Myers	√		A	√	√	√	√	√
Professor Pam Parker	√	A	√	√	√	√	√	√
Dr Simon Parker	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Dr Deborah Rafalin	---	---	√	√	√	√	A	A
Dr Martin Rich	√	√	A	√	√	√	A	√
Dr Lara Silvers	√	√	A	√	A	√	√	A
Professor Stuart Sime	√	A	A	√	√	√	√	A
Katherine Reece Thomas	A	A	√	√	√	A	√	√

√ indicates attendance    A indicates apologies have been provided  
 --- indicates a period when the member is on extended leave/when the person was not a member

**In attendance:**

Helen Fitch, Assistant Registrar (Quality) (Secretary)  
 Steve Stanbury, Director of Internal Audit  
 Malgo Chrzan, Quality and Standards Officer (minutes)

<b>Part 1 - Preliminary Items</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The Chair <b>welcomed</b> attendees to the second meeting of 2020/21. Apologies were received from Deborah Rafalin, Lara Silvers, Stuart Sime, and Rachel-Anne Knight.</p>
<b>2.</b>	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>The minutes of the meeting on 3 September 2020 were <b>approved</b>.</p>
<b>3.</b>	<p><b>Matters Arising</b></p> <p>The Chair <b>noted</b> that the actions and matters arising had either been completed or would be discussed as part of the main agenda or would be considered at a future meeting.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<p><b>Chair's Business</b></p> <p>The Chair <b>reported</b> on the preparations made for ending the emergency period on 26 October 2020 and the Governance updates for 2020/21, which included the reinstatement of the traditional roles of Educational Quality Committee and Education and Student Committees which would be focused on the consideration of longer-term business going forward.</p> <p>The Chair also thanked colleagues involved in the Programme Redesign work in preparation for 2020/21.</p>
<b>Part 2 – City Developments, Priorities, and Reports</b>	
<b>5.</b>	<p><b>Education and Student Committee</b></p> <p><b>a) Update on key developments</b></p> <p>The Chair <b>reported</b> that the last meeting of ESC had taken place on 30 September 2020. The committee had been updated on some wider themes from meetings with other universities in the sector including planning for Term 2, that student behaviour in social settings/accommodation had improved once teaching started, and that students were broadly feeling safe at university.</p> <p>ESC had received an update on announced changes to the NSS.</p> <p>The main item of discussion for ESC had been the proposed approach to governance and management of the educational offer, student experience and quality assurance 2020-21. It had been agreed that the committee would refocus on longer term aims while a Task and Finish Group would be established to deal with day to day educational issues in relation to Covid-19. The committee had endorsed the approach, with further work being noted as required to ensure that work was joined up and governed efficiently. The proposed changes had been reported at the Executive Board during the week of 5th October and at Senate on 7th October 2020.</p> <p><b>b) The Student Experience Task and Finish Group</b></p> <p>The Chair <b>reported</b> that the Group, which would be meeting every week in Term 1, had met twice this term. The meetings had focused on the NSS response, student</p>

	<p>engagement, experiences of students and teaching and support staff, as well as agreeing principles for teaching, learning and assessment, and timetabling for Term 2. The experience of ‘information overload’ had been identified as an emerging common theme following reports from students who had been finding the signposting to the various online materials unclear.</p> <p>At its next meeting in October, the Group would focus on the early student feedback collected by the Schools and the Students’ Union and programme re-design.</p>
<p><b>6.</b></p>	<p><b>Students’ Union Report</b></p> <p>The VP Education <b>noted</b> that the Union had launched a project titled ‘Student Check-ins’, which involved calling students to ‘check-in’ and see how they were settling into Term 1 as well as signposting key students’ services. The Union had also been working with Schools to facilitate the online election of 1<sup>st</sup> Year Programme Representatives.</p> <p>The VP Education also relayed the Union’s concern over student complaints relating to consumer rights and value for money in the context of online teaching and Covid-19. The Union was awaiting further guidance from the OIA and OfS in this area.</p> <p>Priorities for 2020/21 would include focus on work on Islamophobia Awareness, Digital Inclusion and Assessment and Feedback.</p>
<p><b>7.</b></p>	<p><b>Student and Academic Services Standing Report</b></p> <p>The Head of Quality and Academic Development <b>reported</b> on the following developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Welcome week for Doctoral Researchers had taken place week commencing 5th October with sessions for both new and returning students for the first time. 85 new researchers had attended (up 30 from last year).</li> <li>ii. The Emergency Period had ended on 26 October 2020</li> <li>iii. City’s revised Policies and Regulations had come into effect on 26 October 2020. Thanks were extended to colleagues and SU members who had taken part in the consultations.</li> <li>iv. QUAD had been working with IT and Schools to develop Extenuating Circumstances e:Vision approach. The interim solution had been finalised for 26<sup>th</sup> October and intention is that the permanent solution would be in place in November.</li> <li>v. QUAD had held 3 Extenuating Circumstances Briefing sessions for Schools and Professional Staff. Over 80 staff members had been trained. Feedback provided had indicated that the training had met all or most of their needs. 3 more sessions were planned in the coming weeks.</li> <li>vi. QUAD had been finalising the transitional arrangement guidance for Schools but had continued to support Schools with student/case specific matters.</li> <li>vii. Counselling had continued to work with professional staff and Schools on operationalising the approach and policy for Reasonable Adjustments.</li> <li>viii. The department had published the new student facing policies and regulations webpage. Feedback had been overwhelmingly positive.</li> <li>ix. Quality Manual was being tidied up for staff.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>x. QUAD, with the support of colleagues in Schools, had continued to observe Assessment Boards following the second assessment period.</li> <li>xi. Online Module Evaluation Project had continued with various consultations and workshops taking place for colleagues to feedback and input. The project was in line for the scheduled Term 2 delivery.</li> <li>xii. QUAD and LEaD continued to work with ADEs on Principles of L&amp;T student evaluations for Term 1 and were in the process of mapping each school's approach to identify any gaps.</li> <li>xiii. APEs 2019/20 - In light of current circumstances and the impact Covid-19 had had on the academic year 2019/20, revisions to the APE paperwork and process had been made which had sought to be light touch whilst still capturing key information. The Undergraduate and Postgraduate Research deadlines had been postponed to February 2021. The Postgraduate Taught April deadline remained unchanged.</li> </ul>
8.	<p><b>LEaD Standing Report</b></p> <p>The Deputy Director of LEaD <b>reported</b> that online workshops were being held to support colleagues in the development of online content and delivery.</p>
<b>Part 3 – Educational Quality</b>	
9.	<p><b>Senate Regulations and Policies</b></p> <p><b>a) Lecture Capture Policy</b></p> <p>The Assistant Registrar (Quality) <b>reported</b> that consultations on the new Lecture Capture Policy had taken place last academic year, led by the Chair of the Learning Environment Committee (LEC). Whilst it had been agreed that a finalised new policy focussing on recording of classroom-based sessions would return to EQC in October, this had been overtaken by the temporary policy for recordings which had been put in place over the summer. The temporary policy incorporates the approach for recording of both in-person classroom and online teaching sessions. There is now an opportunity to decide which aspects of the temporary policy should be included in the permanent Lecture Capture Policy.</p> <p>These key questions were posed for EQC members to consider and provide feedback on following the meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Should the permanent policy include all forms of recording, rather than just lecture capture (e.g. asynchronous materials, synchronous online sessions)?</li> <li>ii. Given the opt out nature of the temporary policy, should the permanent policy move to opt out?</li> <li>iii. Do the timescales set out in the revised policies (i.e. 48 hours to upload recordings, or before the next teaching session) now feel more realistic in light of our changed practices for synchronous sessions during the pandemic?</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: EQC members to provide feedback to the Chair of LEC on the three questions relating to the Lecture Capture Policy (November, 2020).</b></p>

EQC noted that the proposed tight turnaround time for publishing lecture capture would be challenging to achieve should captioning be required. It was also queried whose responsibility it would be to ensure that captions were accurate.

**Action: Chair of Learning Environment Committee to provide guidance on captioning (December, 2020).**

Next steps

A revised policy would come to EQC in February or March, depending on how similar it would be to the temporary policy, based on answers to the above questions.

#### **b) SMCSE Programme Regulation**

EQC **received** a proposal for a minor amendment to regulation in relation to the MSc Aviation Management programmes:

- i. MSc Aircraft Maintenance Management
- ii. MSc Air Transport Management
- iii. MSc Air Safety Management
- iv. MSc Airport Management

It was proposed to allow students whose project proposal had been approved before 31 July 2019 to receive an extension to their maximum period of registration of up to one year. This was in light of the fact that the students had not received the correct advice and information regarding deadlines and timeframes for completion of the project. Approximately 20 students had been affected.

This programme regulation proposal was separate from the additional year of registration permitted under the contingency regulations for 2019/20 in place during the COVID-19 emergency period.

EQC **endorsed** the proposed regulation for recommendation to Senate.

#### **10. Online Learning Experience Survey.**

EQC **received** a report on the results of the Online Learning Experience Survey (OLES) which had taken place in July 2020. It illustrated the context for the conduct of the OLES in lieu of module evaluation, discussed the response rates achieved, and provided a summary of student comments on the aspects of online learning that had worked well for them and the areas that could be improved. The paper also listed 6 recommendations for Programme Teams to carry out.

The purpose of the survey had been to give students an opportunity to share their experience of online learning and assessment. Four Schools and LEaD had taken part in this exercise while the Business School PG Programmes and the City Law School had chosen to conduct School-led surveys.

The analysis of free text comments had revealed that the student experience of online learning and assessment had been determined by:

- i. the format of online teaching (preference for live lectures over lecture capture and lecture notes from previous years)
- ii. clarity of assessment criteria and assessment timetable;
- iii. communication received from the University and Programme Team and ease of contacting lecturers;
- iv. reliable technology and availability of study materials;
- v. ability to maintain the sense of student community.

The feedback from the CLS Online Snapshot Survey and Business School PG Module Evaluation had aligned with the feedback from the Online Learning Experience Survey.

EQC recommended drawing comparisons between the outcomes of the OLES and the School-led Term 1 surveys which were taking place at that time. This would be shared with the Task and Finish Group alongside feedback being received through other channels.

It was agreed that Schools should be disseminating the actions being taken in response to students' feedback to close the feedback loop and avoid reoccurrence of the same issues being raised.

It was also noted that in some circumstances conducting live lectures via videoconferencing software could be unachievable which should be reflected in Recommendation 1.

**Action: The Quality and Standards Officer to draw comparisons between the outcomes of OLES and the School-led Term 1 surveys (February-April 2021).**

**Action: The Quality and Standards Amend Recommendation 1 to reflect the possibility that in some circumstances conducting live lectures via videoconferencing software could be unachievable.**

#### 11. Examinations 2019/20

EQC **received** a paper providing a review of City's examinations in 2019/20 and outlining some of the challenges faced and how they had been addressed. The paper also included reference to some of the more significant issues to be faced by the Exams Office in the immediate future and explained how the Exams Office intended to mitigate these challenges. The following key points were covered in the paper:

- i. 13.9% increase in January exam sittings from 2018/9 to 2019/0
- ii. All Period 2 and Period R exams moved to alternative assessments and remote exams.
- iii. Remote Exams Review.
- iv. Successes in planning and implementing exams in difficult circumstances to enable students to meet the requirements of their courses.
- v. Overview of risk and updates to examinations

EQC commented that the University had successfully handled the move to online exams in Term 2 although some concerns over potential grade inflation in some areas had emerged. The Committee noted that more even distribution of exams over the January and May exam periods and/ or postponement of graduation to later in the summer Term could have a positive impact on student satisfaction and assessment feedback

	<p>turnaround times. It was requested that steps should be taken to ensure that the exam timetable was released to students at an earlier point in the academic year than it was customary where possible to respond to student feedback.</p> <p>It was recommended that the paper be revised to reflect the undiluted commitment of School teaching and professional staff and the extraordinary amount of work that had gone into the exam preparation to prepare to deliver them in an online environment in Term 2 of 2020.</p> <p><b>Action: Exams Office to explore the possibility of early release of exam timetable to students.</b></p> <p><b>Action: The report to be revised to reflect the extraordinary amount of work that had gone into the exam preparation in Term 2 of 2020.</b></p>
12.	<p><b>Periodic Review Report</b></p> <p>EQC <b>received</b> the Periodic Review Annual Report for 2019/20. The document provided context as to the impact of the ongoing pandemic on Periodic Reviews in the reporting period, a summary of Periodic Review activities which had taken place in 20019/20, and the approach to undertaking Periodic Reviews in 2020/21, including how identified risks would be managed.</p> <p>The Head of Quality and Academic Development explained that due to Covid-19, only five Periodic Reviews (across three Schools) had taken place during academic year 2019/20. As City continued to respond to the impact of the pandemic on the educational offer to students, a decision had been taken by Education and Student Committee to suspend Periodic Reviews in 2020/21. However, it had been agreed that Reviews would take place where these were specifically requested by a School and/ or needed to complement a Professional Body Review.</p>
13.	<p><b>Annual Assurance Report 2019/20</b></p> <p>The Head of Quality and Academic Development <b>noted</b> that the Annual Assurance Report 2019/20 would be circulated to EQC members for consideration and endorsement the following week. The report would provide an overview of quality and standards at City, including a discussion on the impact of the Industrial Action and Covid-19.</p>
14.	<p><b>Programme Developments 2020/21</b></p> <p>EQC <b>received</b> a summary of the Programme Re-Design activity for 2020/21 (UG, PG &amp; PGR), centred on programmes impacted by Covid-19. The paper also included each School's approach to updating programme and module specifications and programme suspensions and/ or postponement of intakes in 2020/21. The Programme Re-Design proposals had been approved by the Chair of EQC by Chair's Action on 19 October 2020.</p>
15.	<p><b>Internal Audit</b></p> <p><b>a) The Personal Tutoring Report</b></p> <p>EQC <b>received</b> the outcome of the internal audit of Personal Tutoring. ADEs, personal tutors and LEaD had been consulted during the audit process. The report had been</p>

	<p>widely circulated to ADEs and feedback and comments had been obtained. The key issues identified related to the ability of applying the Personal Tutoring Policy across Schools and the tutee to tutor ratio.</p> <p><b>b) Schedule of audits for 2020/21</b></p> <p>EQC <b>received</b> a list of proposed audits for 2020/21:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Programmes and Partnerships;</li> <li>ii. Student Voice;</li> <li>iii. Programme Development;</li> <li>iv. Widening Participation</li> <li>v. PSRBs</li> </ul> <p>Members were invited to highlight any areas they wished to receive the reports on.</p> <p><b>Action: Members to inform the Director of Internal Audit of the reports they wished to receive.</b></p>
<p><b>16.</b></p>	<p><b>Degree Outcomes Statement</b></p> <p>EQC <b>received</b> a draft Degree Outcome Statement for comment. The content of the document had been drawn from City’s APEs, the Access and Participation Plan and TEF preparation, as well as City’s regulations and collaborative arrangements.</p> <p>The Degree Outcome Statement was a brief, high-level report that followed the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment’s (UKSCQA) recommendations covering the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Institutional degree classification profile</li> <li>ii. Assessment and marking practices</li> <li>iii. Academic governance</li> <li>iv. Classification algorithms</li> <li>v. Teaching practices and learning resources</li> <li>vi. Identifying good practice and actions</li> <li>vii. Risks and challenges (optional section)</li> </ul> <p>The document had been drafted in response to the UK Standing Committee for Quality Assessment who, in 2019, published a <a href="#">Statement of Intent</a> proposing that every HE provider across England produced and published a Degree Outcomes Statement analysing their degree classification profile and arrangements for teaching, learning and assessment of students, academic regulations, and academic governance. City was required to publish our Degree Outcome Statement by December 2020.</p> <p>EQC recommended that the Risks be reviewed to ensure that the Employability section fitted with the rest of the Statement. Following feedback from EQC, the Statement would be updated and recommended to Senate for approval.</p> <p><b>Action: Head of Quality and Academic Development to review the Employability section of the Statement</b></p> <p><b>Action: Members to provide feedback on the draft Degree Outcomes Statement</b></p>

## 17. Interim Summary Report on Degree Outcomes

EQC received an interim summary report providing an overview of Undergraduate degree outcomes for the 2019/20 academic year based on degrees conferred by Senate as of 1 October, 2020. In total, 2,450 Undergraduate students had been included in the report.

The tables in this report showed the proportion of first class, upper second class and lower second-class degrees awarded by each School in 2019/20 (third class and fails were not included).

The report indicated that degree outcomes had been impacted by the pandemic, both in terms of mitigating actions taken to avoid disadvantage to students and the student results achieved. A further, more comprehensive analysis would be undertaken at subject level to gain more in depth understanding of the data. This would include degrees conferred during October 2020 following the reassessment period and would explore:

- i. Departmental variations within and across Schools, and with previous years to identify consistencies and inconsistencies
- ii. combinations of factors impacting on degree outcomes where percentages in each class had been significantly higher or lower than for other Schools, or compared with previous years
- iii. the distribution of degrees at each level awarded by each School
- iv. analysis of the data by gender, BAME students and those with protected characteristics

This analysis would be undertaken by QUAD in liaison with Schools and LEaD.

A Postgraduate report would also be provided once 2019/20 degrees were conferred.

EQC noted that to some extent the identified degree inflation had been influenced by the assessment structure. Student engagement with assessment had been positively impacted by the move to online exams.

The Associate Dean Education (CLS) noted that the degree inflation identified at CLS had not been due to mitigation against Covid-19 but rather reflected an intentional action taken by the School to achieve better degree outcomes, which had been accomplished without compromising the School's standards.

## 18. Collaborative Provision Committee

The Head of Quality and Academic Development **reported** that CPC had not met since the end of last term. The first meeting of the new academic year was due to take place on the 2nd November.

Following approval from Senate and EQC last term, the new Partnership Approval policy had come into force with the first 'USPARC' meeting (University Strategic Partnership Approval Committee) held on the 27th October. At that point, one proposal for a franchise arrangement from CLS had been tabled, but it was expected that the second meeting in early November would have a fuller agenda.

New joint programme proposals had been suggested for development by SMCSE and City Business School with links to institutions in India, South Africa, and Cyprus which looked likely to be put forward for approval in Term 1 for a potential launch in 21/22.

<p><b>19.</b></p>	<p><b>Doctoral College of Studies</b></p> <p>The Head of Quality and Academic Development <b>reported</b> that the DC Board of Studies had met on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2020. Discussions had focussed on the ongoing impact of COVID-19, several temporary policy changes made such as online submission of thesis and online examination had been recommended for permanent approval to EQC, acting under temporary delegated authority from Senate. A number of policy changes in relation to the implementation of Research Manager (replacing RaP) had been proposed (withdrawal procedure, submission of thesis above word counts, viva submission which does not proceed to examination). These changes had been endorsed and would be consulted on with Schools prior to returning to the Board and Senate.</p> <p>The Board had also agreed to consider a range of performance indicators for PGR programmes, to be proposed to a future meeting of Senate, and noted the enhanced Researcher Development.</p>
<p><b>20.</b></p>	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p> <p>None</p>

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<sup>1</sup> City, University of London’s Publication Scheme, produced in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000, makes clear that the papers and minutes of meetings of Council and Senate and their committees are routinely published on the web. Restricted and closed papers are exempt under the Scheme. All other papers are Open and are published without hesitation on the web. “Restricted” papers are made available to staff. Staff should treat “Restricted” papers as confidential and not to share or discuss them with anyone other than City staff.<sup>2</sup> Recommendations included in papers not starred and not discussed will be taken as approved.