Imper

**Before proceeding to consider actions to improve Imperial's culture and ways of working, here are the 32 themes identified with a brief description below, with some example quotes from the sessions:**

1. **Social opportunities**: requests for more staff and student meeting spaces, funds and encouragement for community building events and departmental retreats
   – *Impe ial must c eate envi onments whe e 'social integ ation' app oaches suppo t optimum lea ning and teaching fo  students* .

2. **Actively cultivating collaboration**: interest in more active and intentional collaboration on problems and challenges facing the College, including building networks of colleagues to share good practice. Links collaboration to promotion (also mentioned in 4, below)
   – *develop netwo ks fu the   so people know who is doing simila  wo k and sha e good p actice* .

3. **Managing workload**: the impact of high workload was one of the most commonly mentioned issues, ranging from this being generally too high to it creating a pressurised environment that fosters competiti

13. **A sense of belonging to College community**: related to 6, above, the experience of College community seems to be fractured and siloed, with students expressing a sense of marginalisation – *there is a fundamental gap in the public face of Imperial's representation of its perception and treatment of students and the actual reality* with a *'them and us' culture needs addressing*.

14. **Transparency**: a feature of 6, above, there is interest in greater consultation with the College community and more openness in decision making – *especially when implementing new management and governance structures, consideration should be given to transparency*.

15. **Leadership style**: colleagues' feedback offers a comprehensive description of the leadership that Imperial needs now, ranging from psychologically informed, to facilitating open conversations, to developing talent with *kindness and compassion*.

16. **A clear and unifying College purpose**: points 6 and 13 would be facilitated through the development of a cohering mission. What does Imperial stand for and what is the College now ambitious to achieve overall? The College needs *a clear and distinct position on what Imperial stands for to all stakeholders and a joined up approach to delivering that*.

17. **Leadership development**: leaders are recognised as local cultural enablers who need appropriate development to demonstrate the kind of leadership that colleagues are looking for, at point 15, above. There was agreement that there is a *lack of training, support and supervision for managers of people with management level responsibilities*.

18. **A college leadership community**: could build a sense of College cohesion, creating connections and building alignment through *encouraging Forums so that groups working together can discuss matters*.

19. **Decision-making**: who and how decisions are made and how they can be influenced needs to be clearer – *when people are under pressure or in a hurry... Clear terms of reference is an important part of the process*.

20. **Processes for raising concerns**: the College needs to introduce ways of speaking out that feel safe to staff; speaking out is currently avoided for fear of retribution. There is a need for *feeling safe raising concerns* and for *explicit mechanisms to raise complaints without fear of retribution*.

development **courachesandv of of 5 (s)**

8. **Pedagogy and approach to education:** students are looking to explore course structures that facilitate breadth of learning rather than pressurised regurgitation – *some unde g aduate students thought that Impe ial places ma ked emphasis on 'memo y ecall and exams' to assess lea ning. Howeve , this method of assessment means that students a e being 't ained' to achieve deg ees, athe than to become adept in the application of the subject unde stud y .*

29. **Policy implementation:** a sense that policies are developed rather than implemented and that implementation needs to be more disciplined – *O ganisational integ it y would be inc eased if an exte nal independent o ganisation held esponsibilit y to ove see the implementation of Impe ial College policies .*

30. **Importance of values:** a recognition that values underpin but won't change anything without related practice and action – *the e was a high level of doubt f om attendees that having defined values alone would make an y diffe ence to College cultu e .*

31. **Supporting structures for research funding:** reducing pressure on academics by providing additional support for the project management aspects of research funding – *p ovide additional mechanisms to suppo t the p oject management aspects of esea ch funding to educe p essu e on academics .*

32. **Reducing complexity:** colleagues aren't clear about the structure of who is responsible for what and systems and processes take excessive amounts of time to manage owing to their complexity – *avoid doing mo e wo k adding complexit y as a default esponse to eve y issue that a ises. This adds st ess and does not lead to bette inte actions and collabo ations .*

**The following charts introduce the themes and their importance to staff and students, both as barriers to and enablers of effectiveness.**

## Figure 2. Number of comments citing theme as an enabler for either the College or themselves (leaders only)
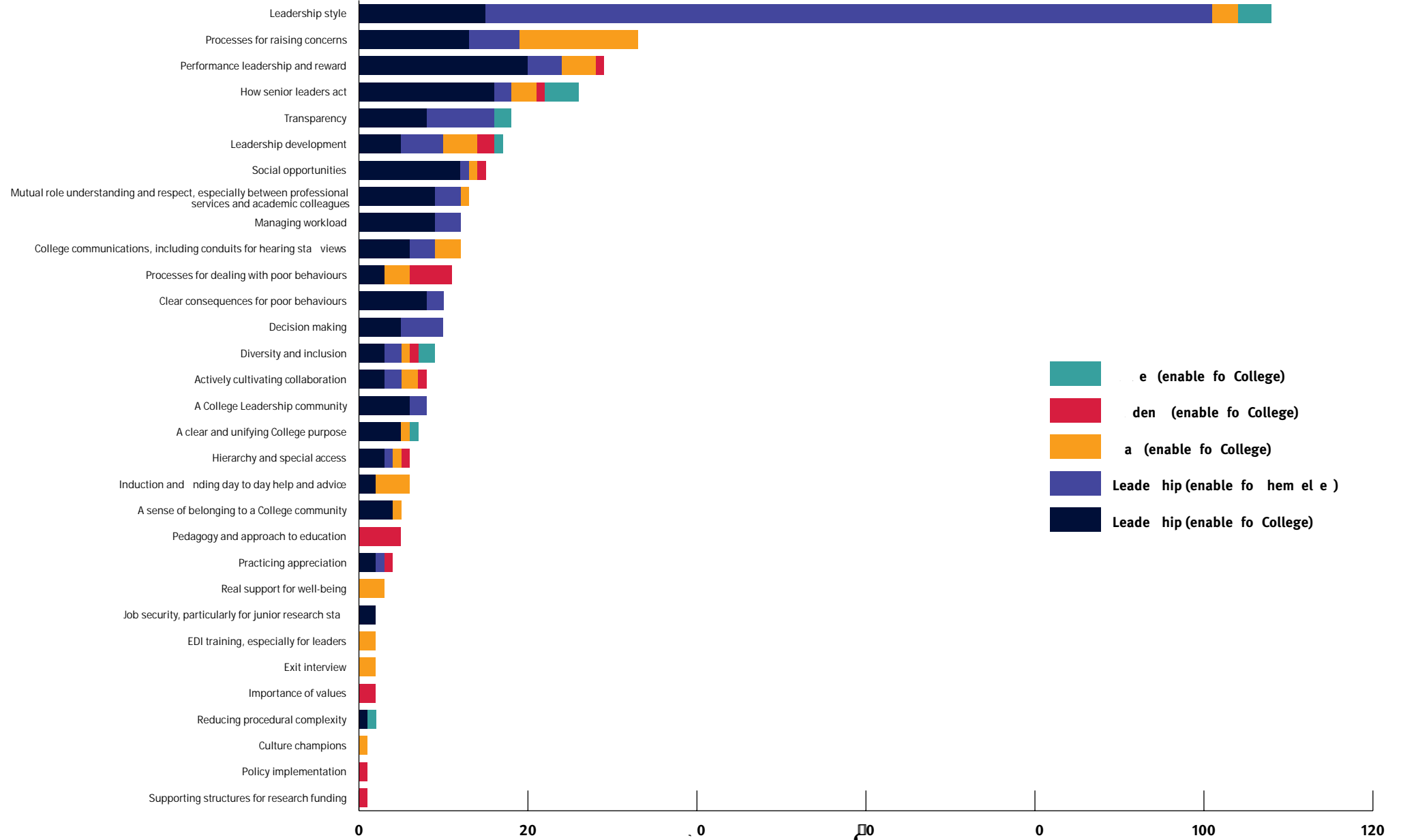
# Taking action

Imperial wants to take real and practical steps to improve College culture, in the longer term intending to be as ambitious for the working environment as for academic excellence. For now, the College needs some solid starting points that can be implemented and that deliver visible impact. And these starting points are just that; culture cannot be treated as a technical problem that can be mechanically fixed but rather needs to be approached as a

# Recommendations

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|---|---|---|
| 4. **Reward, recognition and recruitment** | As culture and ways of working become more important to Imperial, **both need to be integrated throughout College reward and recognition mechanisms**. From now on, valued behaviours need to be integrated throughout performance and promotion conversations. For example, questions such as 'how have you shown respect and encouraged collaboration?' need to become the norm. Similarly, Imperial recruitment materials need to emphasise College culture and induction could be reframed as a College Welcome with culture being emphasised. Exit interviews need to record the importance of culture to staff turnover. | |
| 5. **Leadership style** | Imperial must help leaders to lead well, many of whom are promoted with little leadership experience or development. To address this, Imperial should **develop a statement of College Leadership Principles and Practice** to inform and guide leaders' style and stance. Offering guidance on approaches to team and 1-2-1 meetings, the guide should stress the importance of the leaders' role in shaping local culture, in transparent communications and **particularly in managing workload, which was the most frequently cited barrier. Senior leaders need to demonstrate this guide in practice as critical role models.** | |
| 6. **Leadership development** | As culture shapers and makers, leaders also need developmental support, starting with a **required 'Orientation/Induction to Leadership'** on appointment and being more extensively available to existing leaders. All leadership development needs to ensure leaders reflect on the power inherent in their position, leadership styles, communications, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, addressing poor behaviours and performance under pressure. Leaders also need to receive regular 360 feedback on their impact to inform their development, reward and recognition. <br><br>3(d), above, could also be facilitated by the creation of a ' Forum' in which leaders regularly convene to discuss College challenges as a basis for agreed staff communications. | |
| 7. **Enabling speaking up** | Whilst developing leaders to address poor behaviours will enable speaking up, taking action on poor behaviours does need to be strengthened, potentially by **developing the existing role of Harassment Advisor into that of a Culture Champion**. Skilled in encouraging colleagues to speak up, the lead Champion would report to the senior leadership team and provide data to the wider College community. This would need to be accompanied by the development of new or existing straightforward policies for addressing poor behaviours. | |

*We  ecognise the e a e diffe ent levels of leade ship and the actions will need to be app op iate and tailo ed to these diffe ent g oups,
we do not expect eve ʃ action will be fo eve ʃ leade ship g oup

# Conclusion

We recognise that this report is the beginning of our
work as leaders and as a community. It will take time
to embed the change in culture that we all wish to see.