

ROYAL HOLLOWAY
University of London

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board, held on 6 March 2013

Present:	Professor P Layzell (In the Chair) Dr S Ansari Mr K Aruwa Dr B Baker Professor C Bradley Professor B Cowan Professor R Deem Professor J Fiadeiro Professor A Gange Dr N Gascoigne Mr D German Professor D Gilbert Dr A Gupta Professor P Hogg Dr J Hughes	Professor A Kahane Professor R Kemp Professor P Leman Dr J McKee Professor B O'Keefe Professor J Powell Professor D Rebellato Professor A Sheppard Mr J Tuck Professor J Unerman Dr A Varty Professor J Wann Dr N Widder Professor J Zanker
With:	Ms A Sendall (Secretary)	
In attendance:	Mr S Higman Ms J Roberts Mrs D Salsbury Ms E Johnstone (Item 7 only) Mr W Jukes (Item 7 only) Mr M Websdane (Item 7 only) Ms A Uttley (Item 7 only)	Registrar and Secretary Director of Strategic Development Academic Development Officer Senior Executive Manager, Principal's Office Architect, Associated Architects Project Manager, Estates Department Head of Corporate and Internal Communications
Apologies:	Dr F Fordham Ms L Gibbs Professor J Johnson Professor K Normington Ms S Simon Ms S Waud Ms E Wilkinson	

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Board received the membership list (AB/13/01). 13/001
- 1.2 The Board welcomed Dr Jon Hughes, as Head of School of Modern Languages, Literatures and Cultures, to his first meeting as a Representative member. 13/002
- 1.3 The Board noted that this was the last meeting as a representative member before the current term of office expires for Professor Jeff Frank as Head of Economics. Professor Mike Spagat would be succeeding Professor Frank as Head of Department and will attend future Academic Board meetings in this capacity. 13/003

1.4 The Board received a paper outlining the review of the College governance and statutes (AB/13/02). The Registrar and Secretary reported that a Project Board has been established to oversee the College governance arrangements which would include a review of Council effectiveness. Council members have recognised that Academic Board has an important role in governing the College in a bicameral system, so it was recommended that the review be extended to consider Academic Board and its interface with Council. The changes in the senior management team which had taken place since the last meeting of Academic Board had resulted in a slight imbalance between the number of elected and ex-officio members and the representative members, with fewer ex-officio members. Though the meeting could be used to discuss how to redress the balance, it was recommended that it would seem prudent not to hold elections immediately given that a thorough review of the statutes and the effectiveness of Academic Board would take place as part of the review project. It was noted that the meeting was quorate. Stakeholders would be invited to take part in a consultation to review the governance arrangements for Academic Board. There were no objections to the proposal and it was noted that the intention was to become compliant with the statutes as soon as the review had been completed. 13/004

2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on **Wednesday, 28 November 2012** (M 12/123 - M 12/197) were confirmed as an accurate record. 13/005

3. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising from the Minutes. 13/006

4. ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CHAIR

The Board noted that the Principal, on behalf of the Academic Board, had approved the undergraduate entry requirements for 2014-15 (AB/13/03). 13/007

5. UNSTARRING OF ITEMS

The Board noted that the following item in part C was unstarred for further discussion during the meeting: Item 17 – the minutes of the meetings of the Research Committee held on 6 December 2012 (AB/13/15b). 13/008

6. FORMAL REPORTS

6.1 Principal's Report

The Board received a written report from the Principal (AB/13/04). Colleagues in the Department of Music were congratulated on the award of the Regius Chair. The position has now been advertised. The Board was invited to send suggestions for how to formally celebrate the award to the Head of Music or to the Vice-Principal (Staffing) and Dean (Arts and Social Science). 13/009

The UK Border Agency continues to send contradictory messages about its policies. UUK is still pressing the Government to address the difficulties caused by the UKBA and the negative impact on international student recruitment. It was recognised that the restrictions on recruiting international staff were also damaging. The proposal for an insurance scheme for universities in the event of an institution failing had been rejected for a broader scheme which is based on the actions taken following the London Metropolitan situation. 13/010

6.2 Reports from the Deputy Principal and the Vice-Principals

The Deputy Principal reported on the following:

- (i) The Deputy Principal will be consulting with Heads of Departments to find a solution to the teaching space shortage on campus. Various options to address the situation had been considered including lengthening the teaching day and designating more rooms as centralised space. These options would not be necessary during the next session with the addition of a 250-seat lecture theatre, for which plans were currently being evaluated. It was, however, stressed how important it is for departments to be flexible as much as possible. Members were reminded that the core undergraduate teaching day is from 9am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, except on Wednesday when the teaching day is from 9am to 1pm. The full week was still not being fully utilised with space available in particular Monday mornings and Friday afternoons. Heads of Departments were asked to remind staff that all full-time academic staff should be available to teach within these hours. 13/011
- (ii) The Board received an update on discussions held since the last meeting of the Academic Board on the lease of Gower Street. One option is to utilise teaching space in Senate House. However, there was very little support for using Senate House as an alternative to Gower Street. A final decision has yet to be made. The University of London will be asked to confirm whether it is prepared to renew the lease for Gower Street, and to provide details of the cost and duration. 13/012

The Vice-Principal (Education) reported on the following:

- (i) The College had not submitted any nominations for the Higher Education Academy National Teaching Fellowship Scheme for three years, but one had just been submitted from the Department of English. To encourage and support further applications a workshop will be run in future for staff who have been awarded a College teaching prize. 13/013
- (ii) The Vice-Principal (Education) provided an update on teaching posts which had been discussed at the previous meeting of the Academic Board. A number of applications for the roles have been received which confirmed that there was a significant number of staff who were interested in these positions. 13/014

The Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) and Dean (Science) reported on the following:

- (i) The preparations for the REF are proceeding according to the schedule. An initial categorisation of the staff who are to be entered into the REF has been carried out. Letters will be sent to staff in May to notify them of the outcome of this process. The letters will be drafted in consultation with Heads of Departments. 13/015
- (ii) The income from research grants awarded across the College will exceed the amount received last year. 13/016
- (iii) One of the College's preferred strategic partners, the National Physical Laboratory (NPL) in Teddington, is looking to run the Laboratory via a consortium and is keen to have an academic presence on the site. The College is in discussions with the National Measurement Office (NMO) to form part of this consortium. The College already works closely with NPL and this would open up the possibility of running courses from the Teddington site. The decision should be known by the Autumn. 13/017
- (iv) The College is introducing a new PGT programme from this September, an MSc in Project Management. The programme is designed to be a professional development course and will be taught by external experts. It was noted that if the programme is successful the College will need to consider its organisational structure in order to house programmes of this nature. 13/018

The Vice-Principal (External Engagement) and Dean (Management and Economics) reported that a range of good practice had been identified in departments for promoting student employability. A report would be brought to the next meeting of Academic Board. 13/019

The Registrar and Secretary reported that a record number of students were facing disciplinary action for non-payment of fees for campus accommodation and for academic poor performance. Furthermore, more students than ever have been referred for counselling. It was suggested that it might be useful to discuss the matter at the next Senior Management Team Away Day. A report of any such discussions would be made to the next meeting of Academic Board. 13/020

6.3 Report from the Council

The Board received the minutes of the Council meetings held on 11 October 2012 (AB/13/05). One member of the Board stated there were some discrepancies in the minutes. These would be reported to the Secretary who would pass them on to the secretary for Council. 13/021

7. **NEW LIBRARY AND STUDENT SERVICE CENTRE**

The Board received a presentation on the new development by Mr Warren Jukes from Associated Architects. The Principal introduced the presentation, and explained that the Library Service urgently required additional space and development, and this had been reflected in NSS satisfaction scores for a number of years. It was noted that the presentation is not the finished design, but provides an illustration as a result of the findings of the first stage of the project. As sponsor of the project the Registrar and Secretary explained that, subject to detailed design work and planning permission, it was hoped that work would start on the site in early 2014. 13/022

The Principal thanked everyone who had been involved in the project, in particular Kenny Aruwa, Simon Higman, Mel Loizou, John Tuck, Anne Varty, Nathan Widder, and Elizabeth Wilkinson. 13/023

Mr Jukes presented an overview of the library provision feasibility study which Associated Architects carried out for the College last year. The brief was to increase the number of study spaces from 825 to 1250. Various sites on campus had been explored to determine the location and size of the new building. The site selected was the current Crosslands Bungalow area owing to its proximity to the Founders Building, location on campus, connection with the Windsor Building, and accessibility for deliveries. The site would offer the opportunity to create a new square connecting the new building with the Founders building. The new building would house the Library, Careers Service, Student Services, study spaces, the bookshop, the bank, a café, and shops. There would also be a dedicated postgraduate academic research space. The building height would be on three levels, using the site slope for a fourth lower ground level. Any development would have to be respectful in terms of proximity to protected tree zones and the Founders building to gain planning permission. 13/024

The next stage in the project (Gateway 3 document) would be considered by Council at its meeting in November 2013, with final approval to proceed expected from Council in February 2014. The budget for the project is £35million, and will be largest building on campus since the Founders building. 13/025

The Deputy Principal reported that Bedford Library would be empty on completion of the new building, and he would be consulting with Heads of Departments on how to make best use of the space. 13/026

8. ROYAL HOLLOWAY STRATEGIC PLAN OUTLINE

The Board received the updated Royal Holloway Strategic Plan outline from the Deputy Principal and the Director of Strategic Development (AB/13/06). Final sign-off by Council of the new Strategic Plan is expected in June 2013. The Board was invited to consider the draft and provide further feedback to the Deputy Principal and the Director of Strategic Development before the next meeting of Council on 20 March 2013. 13/027

9. STUDENT RECRUITMENT

9.1 *Report on student intake numbers for 2013-14*

The Board noted student intake targets for 2013-14 (AB/13/07). 13/028

9.2 *Report on UG and PG applications received to date for admission in 2013*

The Board considered a report on UG and PG applications received to date for admission in 2013 (AB/13/08), based on the SNAPPS report of 1 March. Overall applications had increased compared to last year, although there was some concern in relation to individual departments. At this stage in the application cycle the emphasis was on conversion. 13/029

The Principal thanked everyone involved in completing the 2014 UG prospectus. The prospectus had been completely rewritten and it was a significant improvement on the previous version. 13/030

10. COLLEGE BOARD OF EXAMINERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Board received a report on the key areas of business which have been considered by the College Board of Examiners Executive Committee (CBEEC) during 2012-13 (AB/13/09). The Vice-Principal (Education) explained that CBEEC is responsible for overseeing the institution-wide examination and assessment process and has the power to grant waivers to academic regulations. The Committee is increasingly playing a significant role in reviewing issues and developing policy to enhance the examination and assessment process. An annual report will be made to the Autumn Term Academic Board in future in addition to the Board receiving the minutes of CBEEC. The high number of requests to waive regulations continues to be a matter of concern. 13/031

One member of the Board queried the statement under the Equal Opportunities section of Appendix B, that 'there have been no major issues of concern identified this year'. The Vice-Principal (Education) explained that CBEEC examines the data in detail every year to identify if there are any issues which need exploration. In previous years there had been issues which had been followed up in more detail, however, the analysis of the data for this year had revealed there were no issues requiring further review. 13/032

STARRED ITEMS

11. AMENDMENT TO CRITERIA FOR MPhil/PHD DEGREES IN CREATIVE WRITING

The Board approved the revised criteria for PhD and MPhil degrees in creative writing (AB/13/10). 13/033

12. PUBLICATION

12.1 The Board agreed that no papers required broad dissemination around the College. 13/034

12.2 The Board confirmed that no papers needed exemption from the Freedom of Information Act requirements. 13/035

13. AMENDMENTS TO RESEARCH DEGREE REGULATIONS

- 13.1 The Board noted that the additional outcome allowing examiners to require a student resubmit the thesis within nine months came into force for students whose applications to be examined were received after 1 January 2013. 13/036
- 13.2 The Board noted the revisions to the guidance for examiners in relation to the examination outcomes in light of feedback from Academic Board (AB/13/11). 13/037

14. FACULTY BOARDS

The Board received a combined report from the meetings of the Faculty Boards held in February 2013 (AB/13/12). 13/038

15. ACADEMIC BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Board received the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board Executive Committee held on 18 February 2013 (AB/13/13). 13/039

16. ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Academic Planning Committee held on 19 November, 10 December 2012 and 23 January 2013 (AB/13/14a, b, c). 13/040

17. RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Research Committee held on 8 October and 6 December 2012 (AB/13/15a, b). The minutes from 6 December (AB/13/15b) were unstarred. Clarification was sought on what was meant by 'there was no real gender bias' and the apparent bias against black and ethnic minority staff in minute M/11/536, item 8. The Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) and Dean (Science) explained that this related to the equalities impact assessment for the REF. This assessment looked at the percentage of staff eligible. Some departments had a higher female percentage whereas other departments had a higher male percentage. Overall there was a difference of 4-5% in favour of males which was not significant. There was, however, a more notable difference with regard to ethnicity with 65% white staff compared with 45% black and ethnic minority staff. This was significant though not a reflection of the REF process. It may reflect a structural issue which the College would need to examine. It was noted that another equalities impact assessment would take place next month. 13/041

18. LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

The Board received the minutes of the meeting of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee held on 21 November 2012 (AB/13/16). 13/042

19. CONFERRMENT OF TITLES

The Board noted a paper on the conferral of honorary titles and the award of titles to Royal Holloway staff (AB/13/17). 13/043

20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Academic Board will take place on **Wednesday 29 May 2013 at 3pm in MBLT**. 13/044

Anna Sendall
Academic Registrar and Deputy Director of Academic Services
08 March 2013