

**ROYAL HOLLOWAY**  
University of London

**ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board, held on 5 March 2014**

Present:	Professor P Layzell (In the Chair)	Dr J McKee
	Ms S Bertrand-Shelton	Dr A Miskimmon
	Dr K Brickell	Professor S Murphy
	Professor J Crampton	Professor K Normington
	Professor R Deem	Professor B O'Keefe
	Professor S Downes	Professor J Powell (Classics)
	Professor T Evans	Professor J Powell (Media Arts)
	Professor J Fiadeiro	Professor E Schafer
	Professor A Gange	Professor A Sheppard
	Ms L Gibbs	Ms S Simon
	Professor D Gilbert	Dr G Smith
	Mr J Green	Professor M Spagat
	Professor P Hogg	Professor M Thirlwall (for Professor P Burgess)
	Dr J Hughes	Mr J Tuck
	Professor A Kahane	Professor J Unerman
	Professor R Kemp	Professor J Wann
	Professor P Leman	Dr D Watling
With:	Ms A Sendall (Secretary)	
In attendance:	Dr A Bradshaw	Trade Union Observer (UCU)
	Mr M Johnson (Item 7 only)	Director of Student Experience
	Dr R Meek	Head of Criminology and Sociology
	Ms J Roberts	Director of Strategic Development
	Mrs D Salisbury	Academic Development Officer
Apologies:	Professor C Bradley	
	Mr S Higman	
	Mr A Singh	
	Ms E Wilkinson	

**1. MEMBERSHIP**

1.1 The Board received the list of members of the Board (AB/14/01) and noted apologies. 14/001

1.2 The Board welcomed the following Representative and Elected members to the first meeting in their current capacity: 14/002  
Professor Stephen Downes as Head of Department of Music;  
Professor Jonathan Powell from Department of Classics, Elected Member;  
Dr Katherine Brickell as Representative member for the Department of Geography.

It was noted that the Department of Geography may nominate an additional representative member while its Head of Department is a member in another capacity. Dr Brickell is the additional representative member while Professor David Gilbert is the elected member of Academic Board to serve on Council. 14/003

The Board also welcomed the Head of Department of Criminology and Sociology, Dr Rosie Meek, who has been invited to attend the meeting as an observer. 14/004

## 2. MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on **20 November 2013** (M 13/099 - M 13/153) were confirmed as an accurate record, subject to a number of changes reflected in the tabled list of corrected minutes. Minute 13/117 was amended further at the meeting. The final versions are detailed below: 14/005

### Min 13/117

14/006

It was contended that it might be short-sighted to suggest that mentoring was the only solution to the issue. The Vice-Principal (Staffing) and Dean (Arts and Social Science) reported that mentoring was just one of a number of measures which had been highlighted in the proposal. A further issue was raised that the 2012 Equal Pay Review indicates a possible glass ceiling for women at the top of the readership scale in the form of a gender gap in pay favouring women in that pay scale: there is therefore no shortage of women who could be promoted. It was explained, however, that the proposed scheme was not aimed solely at readers, but for all women capable of promotion to professor in the next two to three years. The Principal asked the Vice-Principal (Staffing) and Dean (Arts and Social Science) and the Director of Human Resources to reflect further on how other issues raised by members of the Board could be addressed. The Principal asked the Board to approve the proposal subject to the changing the aim of the project to increase the percentage of women professors at the College to 35%. A member of the Board called for a vote to be taken. The Principal declined to take a vote on the grounds there was a consensus within the room and that this was a strategic plan for which the Board was invited to provide a steer so a vote was not appropriate.

### Min 13/132

14/007

Members of the Board welcomed the principle of holding a revision session in the summer term. However, there was concern that shortening the Christmas vacation or the Easter vacation would put stress on students who were trying to complete course work or exam revision during the vacation. It was also noted that beginning the spring term a week earlier may be problematic for international students returning from overseas so soon after the Christmas and New Year period. Concern was expressed that shortening the summer vacation by one week would reduce the time available for research, but the general consensus was that the priority should be to support the students by extending the summer term and one week would have minimal impact on time staff had for research. It was noted that it would be preferable to review the proposal together with the option of running an additional round of formal examinations at the end of the Autumn Term teaching.

### Min 13/133

14/008

On a show of hands, 27 members supported the principle to extend the summer term by one week, with 3 indicating they did not support the principle. The student representatives opposed the suggestion that the additional week might be accommodated by shortening Christmas or Easter vacations. The Board recognised that in supporting the principle, there were implications which would affect both the College finances, if the summer term extends into the conference season, and student finances, possibly requiring an extra week's rental for accommodation to be paid. In light of this, the College's Council would be asked to consider the matter before implementation of the proposal could be planned.

### Min 13/146

14/009

The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Collaborative Provision Committee held on 22 January and 16 May 2013 (AB/13/67). A question was raised about the costs of the College collaborations listed in the minutes. The Deputy Principal and Chair of the Collaborative Provision Committee reported that there was no net cost to the College as the income created from collaborative arrangements exceeded expenditure. Moreover, the

financial position of individual collaborations was monitored by the Committee. It was agreed to summarise the principles applied to collaborations at the next meeting of the Collaborative Provision Committee.

### 3. MATTERS ARISING

#### Minute 13/135 Academic Board Effectiveness Survey

14/010

The Secretary reported that the results of the survey would shortly be published on the Governance webpage and that members would be notified once this had happened. The survey feedback was considered at the first meeting of the Academic Board Working Group and a number of possible changes to the way in which Academic Board might operation were agreed which will be reported to the Project Board in due course once finalised. A number of immediate changes had already been put in place in response to the survey which included providing tea and coffee beforehand to allow for informal networking and creating time on the agenda for an open discussion about a strategic matter. Members of the Board who had not completed the survey were invited to email any further comments to the Academic Registrar.

#### Min 13/117 Enabling Women through Promotion Process

14/011

The Vice-Principal (Staffing) and Dean (Arts and Social Science) reported that the discussion at the previous meeting of Academic Board had indicated some objection to a mentoring scheme. However, there are currently around 14 women on the scheme and many have said they feel honoured to be chosen and have welcomed the opportunity. If members of the Board had any the comments on the scheme these should be passed to the Vice-Principal (Staffing) and Dean (Arts and Social Science) after the Board meeting.

#### Min 13/143 Exemptions from anonymous marking in the Science Faculty

14/012

The Vice-Principal (Education) as Chair of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee reported that the Committee had reviewed the apparently comparatively high number of exemptions from anonymous marking in the Science Faculty in relation to the other two faculties. The Committee was satisfied that the exemptions were appropriate and that in the majority of cases these were already covered by the exemptions included in the policy on anonymous marking. The number of exemptions in the Science Faculty was not therefore significantly greater than the other two faculties.

#### Min 13/131 Additional week in the Summer Term

14/013

The Vice-Principal (Education) reported on the decision to add an additional week in the Summer Term for revision classes before the formal examinations. This was being considered alongside the possibility of having two exam periods.

#### Min 13/104 Minutes of the Last Meeting of Academic Board

14/014

It was questioned by one member why the minutes of the Academic Board were not publicly available. The matter would be investigated.

### 4. ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CHAIR

The Board noted that the Principal, on behalf of the Academic Board, approved the proposed progression requirements for students on the International Foundation Programme for 2014-15 (AB/14/02).

14/015

### 5. UNSTARRING OF ITEMS

The Board noted that the following items in Part C and D had been unstarred for further discussion during the meeting:

14/016

Item 15.1 Terms of Reference of the Academic Board Executive Committee (AB/14/14)

Item 18 Academic Board Executive Committee Minutes (AB/14/17)

## 6. FORMAL REPORTS

### 6.1 Principal's Report

The Board received a written report from the Principal (AB/14/03). The Principal highlighted the following:

*Higher Education Environment* – The Government has announced that the cap on student number controls will be lifted from 2015. Whilst this is a welcome announcement, there are concerns about how the student number expansion will be funded. There were also questions about how the Government had concluded that 60,000 students were denied places at UK universities given that UCAS have reported that approximately half the students who do not enter university in one year enter the following year. It was also noted that the numbers quoted relate to UK students, whereas BIS controls English student numbers and therefore the number of students without places in England would be approximately 20,000. There was also concern about the change in student loan provision, and the College will press for the existing terms and conditions of loans to be honoured and guaranteed. 14/017

*Student Recruitment and Admissions* – Undergraduate applications to the College have increased by over 10% against a national average of around 4%. The Principal offered thanks and congratulations to all staff and students who had worked hard to increase the number of application. 14/018

*Estates and Space Matters* – The Library will be holding open meetings about the new library and student services building development for staff and students; the dates will be published soon. 14/019

The Deputy Principal reported on the proposal to develop new student residences on the estate north of the A30. The College has a commitment to guarantee accommodation to all first year students and overseas students, however there is limited on-campus accommodation. 14/020

*Medium Term Financial Plan* – The Vice-Principal (External Engagement) reported that a working group had been set up to consider the proposal to offer an undergraduate degree programme in Law, and progress is being made towards validating a Law programme for 2015 entry. It is proposed that Law will sit in the Centre of Criminology and Sociology, and the Centre will be renamed the School of Law and Criminology to reflect this. A postgraduate degree in Forensic Psychology is also under consideration for the School of Law and Criminology. 14/021

The Deputy Principal reported that working groups had been set up for the following new programme proposals: (i) Natural Science, led by Professor Patrick Leman; (ii) Liberal Arts, led by Dr Jennifer Neville; (iii) Digital Communication, led by Mr Adam Ganz. The new programmes would be offered for 2015 entry. 14/022

### 6.2 Reports from the Deputy Principal and the Vice-Principals

The Board received a written report from the Vice-Principal (Education) (AB/14/04a). The Vice-Principal (Education) encouraged the Board to attend the lecture from Stephanie Marshall, newly appointed Chief Executive of the HEA, on Monday 17 March 2014. 14/023

The Board received a written report from the Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) (AB/14/04b). The Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) noted that the range of funding sources was encouraging. The Principal congratulated the award holders. It was also noted that the College is in line with the REF submission rates. 14/024

### 6.3 Report from the Council

The Academic Board representative on Council did not have anything to report in addition to the minutes of the Council meeting held on 2 October 2013. 14/025

The Board received the minutes of the Council meetings held on 20 March and 2 October 2013 (AB/14/05a,b). 14/026

## **7. STUDENT EXPERIENCE**

7.1 The Board received a progress report from the Director of Student Experience (AB/14/06), out-lining the objectives for enhancing the student experience outside of teaching and learning for 2014-15. The Director of Student Experience explained that the intention was to provide a personalised student experience, not a prescribed student experience. It was noted that a single calendar of events was planned to coordinate campaigns, themed events, and other activities. 14/027

Since producing the paper a further development has been a collaboration with IT and Estates to provide additional study space for postgraduate research students which is ongoing. 14/028

7.2 The Board noted that the College no longer had a bookshop on campus. It was noted that the level of business on campus for a bookshop was insufficient to support a commercial operation, however the College is continuing to work with John Smith's who are interested in providing pop-up shops and pick-up points on campus to reduce the postage costs of online orders. Furthermore, discussions are taking place with Runnymede Borough Council about the provision of a bookshop in Egham. 14/029

## **8. ESTATES MASTERPLAN**

The Board received an oral report from the Deputy Principal on the development of the estate. The Deputy Principal reported that the Estates Masterplan had been submitted to Runnymede Borough Council for approval. 14/030

## **9. LIBRARY AND STUDENT SERVICE CENTRE DEVELOPMENT**

The Board received a progress report on the new Library and Student Services Building development. It was noted that delivery plan was working towards an opening of the building between March-July 2017. 14/031

## **10. DOCTORAL SCHOOL**

The Board received a report from the Vice-Principal (Education) on the development of a Doctoral School (AB/14/08). It was noted that unlike the previous Graduate School there would be dedicated administrative team which included support for postgraduate studentships and the Doctoral School Training Partnerships. 14/032

It was reported there may possibly be a joint social and computer space available by the end of this academic year, and there might also be space available in central London. It would be necessary to examine the demand for space against availability. 14/033

The Board approved the recommendations to establish the Doctoral School with effect from 1 August 2014 and to appoint an Associate Dean (Research Students) from August 2014. 14/034

## **11. STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

11.1 *Report on student intake numbers for 2014-15*

The Board considered a report on the student intake numbers for 2014-15 provided for information (AB/14/09). 14/035

11.2 *Report on UG and PG applications received to date for admission in 2014*

The Board considered a report on UG and PG applications received to date for admission in 2014 (AB/14/10), based on the SNAPPS report of 14 February. It was reported that the more recent SNAPPS report dated 2 March confirmed that the increase in undergraduate applications had been maintained. Undergraduate applications for the sector had increased by 4% on this time last year, whereas undergraduate applications to the College had increased by 11%. The priority now would be to convert the applicants to enrolled students. The Director of Recruitment and Admissions reported that the Applicant Visit Days had been very successful and thanked all involved for their hard work. 14/036

The Chair reported that Professor Madeleine Atkins, Chief Executive of HEFCE, had noted that it was difficult for home students to secure funding for postgraduate taught studies, and there are now more Chinese students than UK students on postgraduate taught programmes in the UK. 14/037

It was highlighted that the results of the Student Barometer survey revealed that the on-campus experience was one of the top scores, illustrating the importance of Applicant Visit Days. An Applicant Visit Day is planned for April to focus on the student experience. 14/038

## **12. COLLEGE BOARD OF EXAMINERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Board received a report on the key areas of business considered by the College Board of Examiners Executive Committee during 2012-13 (AB/14/11). 14/039

## **13. PERIODIC DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW**

The Board considered the Periodic Departmental Review report, together with the updated Action Plan following the Educational Development Periodic Departmental Review held in December 2012 (AB/14/12). The Vice-Principal (Education) reported that the Educational Development Unit had made good progress in implementing the action plan. The Educational Development Unit is working towards developing a system of HEA accredited Continued Professional Development which could be built into the reward and promotions criteria for teaching staff. 14/040

## **14. DATES OF TERM**

The Board considered the proposed dates of terms for 2015-16 and provisional dates for 2016-17 and 2017-18 (AB/14/13). The Board deemed the proposed start date for the 2015-16 spring term of 4 January 2016 too early, since this did not allow any time for preparation after the Christmas vacation for the start of the term. It was suggested that the term should start a week later and end the day before Good Friday, with discretionary days moved to the week following the Easter weekend. The Academic Registrar reported that she would consult with Heads of Departments and Professional Services and report back to the Board. 14/041

## **STARRED ITEMS**

## **15. PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONSTITUTIONS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE**

15.1 The Board approved the Terms of Reference of the Academic Board Executive Committee (AB/14/14) which had been amended to stipulate that members could only sit on Academic Board Executive Committee for as long as they are members of Academic Board. The question of how the membership of the Academic Board Executive Committee reflects the composition of Academic Board was raised. The Board observed that the Secretary and Registrar is not a member of Academic Board, however, he is a member of the Academic Board Executive Committee. It was agreed that the Academic Registrar would raise the question of the composition of the Academic Board Executive Committee for consideration at the Academic Board Working Group. 14/042

15.2 The Board approved the proposed changes to the membership and terms of reference for College Board of Examiners Executive Committee (AB/14/15). 14/043

15.3 The Board approved the proposed amendments to the membership and terms of reference for Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee (AB/14/16). 14/044

## **16. PUBLICATION**

16.1 The Board agreed that no papers required broad dissemination around the College. 14/045

16.2 The Board confirmed that no papers needed exemption from the Freedom of Information Act requirements. 14/046

## **18. ACADEMIC BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The Board received the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board Executive Committee held on 17 February 2014 (AB/14/17). It was queried why the timings of the Academic Board meetings for 2014-15 discussed by the Academic Board Executive Committee were out of line with the timings of the Council meetings which Academic Board should report to. It was explained that the autumn term meeting of Council had to be early in order to meet the requirements of the Funding Council. It was challenging to schedule Academic Board meetings before the Council meetings since other committees have to have time to meet and formulate recommendations for the Academic Board. However, since there are now more Council meetings it is still possible to carry business forward. 14/047

## **19. ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Academic Planning Committee held on 25 November and 12 December 2013 (AB/14/18a,b). 14/048

## **20. COLLABORATIVE PROVISION COMMITTEE**

The Board received the minutes of the meeting of the Collaborative Provision Committee held on 3 October 2013 (AB/14/19). 14/049

## **21. RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Research Committee held on 25 September and 11 December 2013 (AB/14/20a,b). 14/050

## **22. LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE**

The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee held on 6 November 2013 (AB/14/21). 14/051

## **23. CONFERMENT OF HONORARY TITLES**

The Board noted a paper on the conferment of honorary titles (AB/14/22). 14/052

## **24. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of Academic Board will take place on **Wednesday 4 June 2014 at 3pm in MX034**, with tea and coffee served in the foyer outside the room from 2.30pm onwards. The Board was asked to send feedback about the change of venue to the Academic Registrar. 14/053

*Anna Sendall  
Academic Registrar  
10 March 2014*