

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

COUNCIL

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting held 2-4pm on 13 November 2019

Present: Professor Frances Corner (in the Chair), Professor Michael Archer, Dr Clea Bourne, Mr Timothy Chapman, Dr Debbie Custance, Professor Mark d'Inverno, Dr Henrike Donner, Dr Jasna Dragovic Soso, Ms Sara Ewing, Dr Iris Garrelfs, Professor Dimitrios Giannouloupoulos, Dr Stephen Graham, Ms Alison Griffiths, Mr Conrad Heyns, Professor Elisabeth Hill, Ms Wei Jin, Mr Kevin Jones, Dr Rodger Kibble, Dr Pdraig Kirwan, Professor Frank Krause, Mr Joseph Leam, Dr Ben Levitas, Mr Gerald Lidstone, Dr Jo Lloyd, Dr Dagmar Myslinska, Professor Daniel Neyland, Professor Richard Noble, Dr Tara Page, Dr Rajyashree Pandey, Ms Maggie Pitfield, Dr John Price, Dr Wood Roberdeau, Dr Martin Savransky, Professor Cris Shore, Dr Naomi Thompson, Dr Ragupathy Venkatachalam, Professor Mike Waller, Professor Joanna Zylinska.

Apologies: Professor Michael Banissy, Ms Lauren Corelli, Mr Adrian De La Court, Professor Anna Furse, Ms Annie Guo, Dr Ayesha Hameed, Mr Steve Keirl, Dr Rebekah Lee, Mr Kierin Offlands, Professor David Oswell, Professor Alan Pickering, Professor Lauren Stewart, Professor Robert Zimmer.

In attendance: Mr Leo Appleton, Mr Gareth Bodrell, Mr Matthew Brooks, Ms Amanda Cater, Mr Ben Fowler, Ms Louisa Green, Ms Wendy McDonald, Mr Chris Robson Ms Helen Watson, Ms Sally Priddle and Mr Gareth Bodrell (Joint Secretary).

OPEN BUSINESS

1 CHAIR'S ACTION

Noted:

Details of action taken by the Chair since the last meeting (19-176)

2 MINUTES

Noted:

- (i) It was clarified that REF Code of Practice had been approved at the last meeting of the Board but, as it had been circulated as a late paper, it had not been referenced in the normal way. The minutes reflected the approval of the Code of Practice.

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019 be approved.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Noted:

- (i) Item 23 – Access and Participation Plan (19 September 2019). The Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2020-25 had been signed off by the Office for Students, with reporting on 2018-19 and 2019-20 APP continuing this year and next.
- (ii) Item 19 – Departmental Strategy Review (19 September 2019). The Department Strategy Review for the Department of Social, Therapeutic and Community Studies had been postponed. A new date for the review would be arranged.

4 UPDATES ON ACTIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING(S)

Noted:

- (i) Following UCU's announcement that industrial action would begin in November, a planning group of senior staff had been constituted to adopt appropriate measures to mitigate the anticipated disruption to the College's day-to-day working. Departments would be contacted shortly to set out the College's position and to request details of actions being taken at departmental level to minimise the impact on students' learning.

5 APPROVAL OF ITEMS FOR FORMAL DECISION

Noted

- (i) Minor amendments had been made to the Procedure for the Investigation of Research Misconduct (18-424R and 18-425R) subsequent to its circulation. A revised version would be circulated to members.

Resolved:

To approve:

- (i) Terms of Reference and Membership of Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee (19-41R) were approved.
- (ii) Revised Admissions Policies and Entry Requirements (19-150) were approved.
- (iii) The Research Integrity Annual Statement 2018-19 (19-114R) was approved.
- (iv) The Procedure for the Investigation of Research Misconduct (18-424R and 18-425R) was approved.

6 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES**Noted:**

- (i) The revised policy for Extenuating Circumstances had been approved in the previous academic year and now formed part of the College's contract with new and continuing students. The information derived from the process would allow the College and departments to gain a better understanding of the scale of extenuating circumstances and their cause which, in turn, would allow them to be addressed more effectively.
- (ii) It was emphasised that departments needed to ensure that they were compliant with the new policy. If they were not, this would inevitably lead to an increase in student complaints and associated problems.

7 WARDEN'S REPORT**Received:**

A report from the Warden on issues of concern and interest to the College (19-179).

Noted:

- (i) Campaigning for the forthcoming General Election was underway. Although neither of the major parties had formally announced their position on tuition fees it seemed credible that the Conservatives would hold them at the current level whilst Labour would abolish them. Whatever the outcome it could not be assumed that there would be any additional funding for Higher Education. The ongoing uncertainty of Brexit also continued to make any kind of prediction difficult.
- (ii) The current financial position was challenging but Goldsmiths was a resilient institution and there was conviction that, with the right curriculum, it could emerge

successfully from this period. Moving into the forthcoming recruitment cycle, conversion would be crucial. Colleagues were encouraged to share any ideas for enhancing and improving the process.

- (iii) A number of exciting and positive developments were taking place under the Green New Deal both internally and externally which would be announced over the coming weeks and months.
- (iv) Negative experiences of BAME students within higher education and issues of attainment were being discussed more broadly across the sector. The GARA occupation and the Insider-Outsider report were an uncomfortable reminder to Goldsmiths of the work that it had to do. However, the College was acknowledging its responsibility in a way that some others in the sector were still struggling to do.
- (v) Significant thought had gone into enhancing the interaction between Council and Academic Board. The joint meeting that was planned for April would be a very positive development which would enable a discussion of academic quality across the College.

8 PUBLIC INTEREST GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Received:

A Briefing on Public Interest Governance Principles (19-180).

Noted:

- (i) Part of Academic Board's responsibility was to assure to Council that the College was compliant with the Public Interest Governance Principles. The paper summarised the principles and set out how Goldsmiths complied with them. Although the College was compliant there were areas in which improvements could be made.
- (ii) In terms of student engagement, the Office for Students had made clear that one student perspective alone was not sufficient and the College would need to go beyond its current practice and increase student involvement in its governance processes, drawing from a broader base. It was recognised that this would not be an easy task.

9 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS

Received:

A briefing on Office for Students (OfS) requirements (19-181).

Noted:

- (i) All Higher Education Institutions had to apply to be placed on the OfS register and, in so doing, were required to demonstrate that they satisfied the conditions of registration. Goldsmiths had been successful in its registration. However, the OfS had identified that there was a risk of the College not complying with its Access and Participation Plan and it had therefore been placed under enhanced monitoring.
- (ii) This meant that the OfS could require the College to provide additional information or data beyond the minimum requirements of general monitoring. However, the actual form it would take had not yet been clearly defined. When more detail became available this would be reported to the Board.
- (iii) It was possible that the College would also be subject to enhanced monitoring in relation financial viability and sustainability (Condition D) once the current shortfall was reported.
- (iv) Although exact figures were not available, it appeared that a large number of institutions were subject to some form of enhanced monitoring. Nonetheless, the consequences of not meeting the conditions were serious and it was important that Academic Board challenged academic departments and professional services to ensure this did not occur.
- (v) It was asked whether the OfS had the resources necessary to follow through with threatened interventions. It was explained that the onus lay with institutions to self-report issues to the OfS. The guidance made it clear that its role was that of a regulator which monitored outcomes and identified problems but which did not offer solutions: this would be the responsibility of the HEI. It was noted that its subscriptions budget was much higher than that of HEFCE which it had replaced.

10 ANNUAL QUALITY REPORT 2018-19**Received:**

The Annual Quality Report for recommendation to Council prior to submission to the Office for Students (19-107R).

Noted:

- (i) The new approach to quality assessment and monitoring adopted by the OfS, the publishing of a revised Quality Code and the development of the Goldsmiths Framework for Maximising Student Outcomes, which had been approved at the last meeting of the Board, meant that the format of the Annual Quality Report would be reviewed for future years to reflect these changes.
- (ii) The RAG rating approach that had been adopted in the report was felt to be a helpful addition. The areas of high risk identified by the report related to Student Experience

and Retention. It set out the actions being taken to address them and other areas of risk.

- (iii) It was explained that a single methodology had not been adopted in the calculation of risk across the report: it was not based purely on metrics but included a range of relevant factors that would vary according to the area under consideration.

Resolved:

That the report be approved.

11 COMPLAINTS REPORT

Received:

The Academic Appeals, Student Complaints, Academic Progress and Student Discipline Report 2018-19 (19-100R).

Noted:

- (i) The report provided an outline of appeals received during the Summer 2019 appeals period and an indication of complaints received during 2018-19 together with a brief analysis of themes and an outline of other matters dealt with by Appeals and Complaints in the period.
- (ii) Future reports would include a greater focus on qualitative data and would consider any themes and trends that became apparent through the termly consideration of complaints and appeals that would now take place at the Quality and Standards Sub-Committee.

12 ORDINANCES

Received:

Revised Departmental Boards Ordinances (19-182).

Noted:

- (i) The changes to the Departmental Board Ordinances did not contradict any of the existing ordinances. Rather, they aimed to provide clarification. Departments had been asked to comment on the proposals and the feedback received had been positive.
- (iii) The new proposed changes strengthened the reporting processes through the inclusion of a termly report from each Departmental Board to Academic Board. It was added that there would also be a review of the way Academic Board reported back to

departments. Feedback on discussions and decisions made at the Board would be provided to the termly School meetings and also separately to Departmental Business Managers. The School meetings could discuss whether this process was working effectively.

Resolved:

That the changes to the Departmental Board Ordinances be approved.

13 DIGITAL RECORDING OF 'LIVE' EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES POLICY

Received:

The Digital Recording of 'Live' Educational Activities Policy 2019 (19-52R).

Noted:

- (i) The draft policy was the fruit of two years of discussions and consultations. It was underlined that the Board was being asked to approve the policy rather than the question of digital recording as this had already been agreed. The policy referred to digital recordings made of events at which students were present. This would not affect activities such as the practice of recording screencasts which could be made available to students in the same way as other materials on the VLE.
- (ii) The policy had incorporated feedback from all stakeholders and care had been taken to ensure that the provisions did not conflict with other relevant policies. It was intended to be a short and pithy document that would interactively link to further advice. The Students' Union were helping in the production of material for students.
- (iii) There was no obligation on staff to make digital recordings in this way and the recordings could not be used as a replacement for teaching during industrial action, for the purposes of performance management or for internal disciplinary proceedings.
- (iv) It was explained that the exemptions set out for students holding RASAs were in line with the requirements of current Inclusion legislation.
- (v) It was queried how points 3.2 and 3.3. of the policy, which prevented the redistribution of material recorded by students and required its ultimate deletion, could be enforced. It was explained that there was currently no statement on this matter within the College's regulations and policies so formally setting out the principle was a step forward. It would form part of the contract between the College and the student and, if someone was discovered to be in breach of this, it would be possible to remove the material and take disciplinary action.
- (vi) It was asked why other limitations placed on the use of recordings made by staff were not applied to students. It was explained that any live recording, whether made

by staff of students, would be subject to the same restrictions.

- (vii) It was asked whether the policy should place any limitations on the ability to edit recordings. Specifically, it was asked whether there was an ethical question to be addressed around the possibility of removing opinions expressed within a recording that did not support a particular view. It was agreed that this was a valid consideration which could be dealt with in the associated guidance.
- (viii) Dr Custance was thanked for her work on the digital recording project and policy which was an important development that would be welcomed by students.

Resolved:

That the Digital Recording of 'Live' Educational Activities Policy be approved.

14 INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY UPDATE

Received:

An update on Recent International Activities (19-183).

Noted:

- (i) The paper focussed on several aspects of Goldsmiths' international activities.
- (ii) The achievements in increasing international student recruitment were a cause for celebration. However, as with home students, the ability to continue to convert offers into firm acceptances would be very important.
- (iii) Following their enrolment, it was essential to ensure that international students received effective support from the College. The intersectionality of factors affecting the international student community was underlined. This was accepted although it was pointed out that this extended to the whole student body.
- (iv) The concerns many staff felt regarding the use of league tables were recognised. However, a good position within the QS ranking system was an important lever in developing collaborations with overseas partners. Goldsmiths had improved its position steadily over recent years, rising from a position of 501 in 2015 to 396 in 2019. However, this had fallen back to 419 in the latest rankings. Departments were urged to work with IDAP to increase the number of good quality nominees undertaking the reputation surveys. It was explained that the decision not to purchase detailed analysis of Goldsmiths' results from QS was made on the basis of value for money.
- (v) Distance learning would continue to grow as the technology developed, colleagues were encouraged to consider how their work might also be delivered in this way. The success of the BSc Computer Science offered through the University of London

Worldwide in collaboration with Coursera demonstrated the potential offered by this form of delivery.

- (vi) The collaboration with the University of London Institute in Paris was an opportunity to ensure an intellectual and physical presence in Europe post-Brexit. The paper mentioned a number potential activities that could arise from the partnership but further suggestions would be welcome. It was also planned to look at opportunities in other European cities where the College had strong links.

15 DEPARTMENTAL BOARDS

Received:

Reports from Departmental Boards outlining activity, impact and risks for escalation (19-184).

Noted:

- (i) As outlined in the revised ordinances for Departmental Boards (item 9 above), Academic Board would now receive impact reports from these meetings. This meeting of the Board had received reports from, Computing, Educational Studies and Music.
- (ii) The main risk highlighted within the Music Board report was the related to the difficulties encountered in identifying someone to lead anti-racist workshops.
- (iii) Educational Studies noted that it needed to adjust to the new system and the way in which discussions were recorded. The main issue that the department wished to raise related to the organisational and accommodation problems experienced during the enrolment of students on ITT programmes who had an earlier start date than other students. This could be amounted to approximately 400 students on one-year programmes who didn't frequently come to the campus and who could therefore be left with a negative impression which was hard to alter. It was agreed that the department should meet with the new Director of Estates and Facilities and the Director of Student Experience and Academic Registrar to discuss how enrolment arrangements could be improved for these students.

16 ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Received:

A Report from Academic Development Committee (19-185).

Noted:

- (i) The Chair noted that the first meeting of the year had focussed on enrolment and the

sustainability of Goldsmiths' offer. Given the shortfall in student recruitment in 2019, discussions concerned the way in which numbers had been predicted and how recruitment could be tracked more effectively in the future.

17 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

Received:

A Report from Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee (19-186).

Noted:

- (i) The Chair reported that the committee had reconsidered its schedule of business and terms of reference following the approval of the Framework at the previous meeting of Academic Board and had considered progress against the Learning, teaching and Assessment Strategy. No risks had been identified that needed to be elevated to the Board.

18 RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE

Received:

A Report from Research and Enterprise Committee (19-187).

Noted:

- (i) The Chair of the committee was unable to attend this meeting of the Board. It was requested that any comments or queries on the report be directed to the Secretary to the Board who would pass them on.

19 GOLDSMITHS' MODULE EVALUATION PROCESS

Noted:

Module Evaluation Guide including core and additional optional bank of questions and the Student Module Evaluation Response Form (SMERF) template (19-188).

20 UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE CLASSIFICATIONS REPORT

Noted:

The Undergraduate Degree Classifications Report 2018-19 (19-99).

21 DEPARTMENT STRATEGY REVIEW (DSR)

Received:

An update on the roll-out of the DSR process (19-189).

22 PERIODIC REVIEWS

Noted:

Periodic Review Reports and Action Plan updates of:

- a) Graduate School, 29 March 2019 (19-101)
- b) Department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies, Undergraduate Programmes, 8 May 2019 (19-102)
- c) Department of Social, Therapeutic and Community Studies (STaCS), Therapeutic Studies, 1 May 2019 (19-103)
- d) The English Language Centre, 5 February 2018 (19-104)
- e) Department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies, Postgraduate Programmes, 6-7 December 2018 (19-105)
- f) Department of History, 3 May 2018 (19-106)

23 FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted:

The dates of remaining meetings in 2019-20 as follows:

14.00-16.00 on Wednesday 18 March 2020

14.00-16.00 on Wednesday 3 June 2020

All meetings will take place in the Professor Stuart Hall Building, room 326.

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November 2019