

Council

Academic Board

24 March 2020

Minutes of the meeting held 2-4pm on Microsoft Teams

Present: Professor Frances Corner (in the Chair), Professor Michael Archer, Dr Clea Bourne, Ms Lauren Corelli, Dr Debbie Custance, Professor Mark d’Inverno, Dr Henrike Donner, Dr Jasna Dragovic Soso, Ms Sara Ewing, Professor Anna Furse, Dr Iris Garrelfs, Professor Dimitrios Giannouloupoulos, Dr Stephen Graham, Ms Alison Griffiths, Dr Ayesha Hameed, Mr Conrad Heyns, Professor Elisabeth Hill, Ms Wei Jin, Mr Kevin Jones, Mr Steve Keirl, Dr Rodger Kibble, Dr Pdraig Kirwan, Professor Frank Krause, Dr Rebekah Lee, Dr Ben Levitas, Mr Gerald Lidstone, Dr Jo Lloyd, Ms Mona Mounir, Dr Dagmar Myslinska, Professor Daniel Neyland, Professor Richard Noble, Professor David Oswell, Dr Tara Page, Dr Rajyashree Pandey, Professor Alan Pickering, Ms Maggie Pitfield, Dr John Price, Dr Wood Roberdeau, Dr Martin Savransky, Professor Cris Shore, Dr Naomi Thompson, Dr Ragupathy Venkatachalam, Professor Mike Waller, Mr Shai Zhao, Professor Robert Zimmer, Professor Joanna Zylinska.

In attendance: Mr Nirmal Borkhataria, Mr Matthew Brooks, Mr John Dickinson-Lilley, Ms Carol Ford, Ms Louisa Green, Ms Sally Priddle, Ms Melanie Rimmer, Ms Helen Watson and Mrs Cathryn Thompson (Secretary).

Apologies: Professor Michael Banissy, Mr Timothy Chapman, Mr Adrian De La Court, Mr Joseph Leam, Mr Kierin Offlands, Professor Lauren Stewart.

Open Business

1 Announcements

Noted:

- 1.1 The Warden thanked all colleagues for their hard work, commitment and invention when moving teaching, learning and assessment, and College services, online in under a week. It was noted that the scale of this task should not be underestimated, particularly when juggling a number of different aspects at the same time, not only at Goldsmiths but personally with family and friends health and well-being.

- 1.2 It was acknowledged that this was an extremely difficult situation for the HE sector with huge amounts of uncertainty. In the light of the current pandemic it was confirmed that whilst Department Business Managers continued to feed into proposed line management changes, no changes would take place prior to the April Academic Board meeting. The extraordinary meeting of the Board, to take place on or around 27 April, would focus on the single item of Evolving Goldsmiths in advance of Council on 11 May 2020.

2 Chair's Action

Noted:

- 2.1 Details of action taken by the Chair since the last meeting (19-327)

3 Minutes

Resolved:

- 3.1 That the Minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2019 be approved.

4 Updates on actions from the previous meeting(s)

Received:

- 4.1 Updates on action from previous meeting(s) (19-328).

5 Term Dates

Resolved:

- 5.1 That the standard term dates for 2022-23 and non-standard term dates for 2020-21 and 2021-22 (19-329) be approved.

6 Change of Department name

Resolved:

- 6.1 That the change of name of the Department of English and Comparative Literature (19-330) be approved.

7 Moderation arrangements for validated provision

Resolved:

- 7.1 That the moderation arrangements for validated programmes at LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore, during 2019-20 in the light of the COVID-19 virus (19-331) be approved.

8 Covid-19

Received:

- 8.1 Update on sector-wide issues (19-374), matters pertaining to the Board for consideration and approval (19-375), and items related to validated programmes (19-376).

Reported:

Sector wide issues

- 8.2 Goldsmiths had been pushing Government hard on a number of areas in order to obtain answers and share information. Discussions with Alistair Jarvis at UUK and members of the S10 Group had also taken place.
- 8.3 It remained unclear how A-Levels would be graded and what the impact on admissions information would be. However, a clear steer had been given by the Department for Education (DfE) and the Office for Students (OfS) about not moving to a position of making unconditional offers. It was essential that Goldsmiths continued to look after its applicants and offer holders.
- 8.4 In relation to the closing of College campuses, as some students were unable to travel home there was currently a partial opening of campus. Goldsmiths had approximately 400 students who remained on campus, whom it was trying to relocate safely into Loring Halls. With regards to prospective students, the College was currently exploring what the start of the next academic year might look like and how to make it as safe and simple as possible for students to attend, which might include students joining in staggered intervals.
- 8.5 The seriousness of the College's current financial position was noted, along with the additional loss of income from students not remaining in halls of residence. Goldsmiths was working closely with the DfE, OfS and Student Loans Company in relation to this.
- 8.6 The need to balance regulatory requirements whilst maintaining high standards was paramount, so the College continued to feed back to regulators when any aspect of its provision was problematic. The Board were informed that the OfS had suspended its current consultations, however, HESA continued to collect data returns at this

point in time.

- 8.7 Another key priority for Goldsmiths was to support colleagues at this very difficult time. Its civic responsibilities remained a priority during a period of national crisis, with the NHS and Lewisham Borough having made contact to ascertain whether any assistance with accommodation could be provided. Ways in which Goldsmiths might assist were currently being explored and would be shared in due course.
- 8.8 Members of the Board would continue to be kept informed of developments as they evolved along with any other opportunities which might also come forward. The Goldsmiths Leadership Group was another forum for further discussion.

On campus matters pertaining to the Board

- 8.9 The OfS remained very clear that regardless of the extraordinary situation, all higher education providers were expected to maintain quality and standards and positive student outcomes throughout.
- 8.10 The paper highlighted where approval by Academic Board was required. This included the Board being asked to give delegated responsibility to Quality and Standards Sub-Committee (QSSC) and Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee (LTEC) when considering practical and regulatory items on the ground. Other instances included where Academic Board was being asked to suspend regulations or make amendments to them.
- 8.11 A decision had been taken the previous week, in consultation with Heads of Department, to designate it a reading week to enable staff to move programme delivery and assessment online. Term dates had previously been approved by the Board, however, members were now asked to approve a revised start to the next term to Monday 20 April 2020. It was acknowledged that students might have had other commitments during this time (working etc), however, teaching staff were encouraged to record all sessions so students could engage with sessions at a more convenient time.
- 8.12 The Board was informed of a suggestion from the Government that Clearing could be brought forward. No decision would be taken on the start of the next academic year until there was a clearer picture on which to base it on. Heads of Department would be consulted on the options available for 2020-21 delivery.
- 8.13 As previously mentioned, Higher Education Institutions had been discouraged by Government (and informed not to by the OfS) to increase the number of unconditional offers being made. Goldsmiths intended to run its admissions cycle as usual and in accordance with its Admissions Policy, with an emphasis on dynamic remote working. Should the Admissions Policy need subsequent amendment, it would be considered by LTEC.

- 8.14 Members of the Board were asked to consider three items which had been outlined in the paper. The first related to the College's programme amendment process and a request to suspend and introduce a temporary amendment process which had been outlined in the paper. The second request was to suspend the College's attendance policy and attendance monitoring, and move the focus onto student engagement instead. The final item for consideration related to assessment and a new temporary process set out in the paper for moving sat examinations online. It was noted that further amendments to assessment, such as arrangements for Boards of Examiners meetings and results release, would be determined and rescheduled once details on changed assessments had been received and approved. QSSC or LTEC would then be asked to consider any additional suspension or amendment to the progression and award process.
- 8.15 The College had also summarised some key points for students, including the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and specifically the suspension of the requirement to provide medical evidence for those impacted directly by Covid-19. However, Academic Board was now asked to extend this self-certification process to cover all medical circumstances, not just those Covid-19 related, on the basis that it would be difficult for students to obtain information from GP surgeries.
- 8.16 The Board were informed that Academic Links and the Academic Partnerships Team had worked closely with the College's academic partners. Nordoff Robbins had successfully moved all assessment online and placement activities had been suspended. LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore, had agreed arrangements for the May Boards of Examiners meetings to take place remotely.

Noted:

- 8.17 The Students' Union welcomed the changes to the Extenuating Circumstances (EC) process but suggested a further extension to the policy to include the impact the current pandemic was having on those who were carers and/or parents who might be finding it difficult to complete assessments and submit on time. A further example included those in difficult living environments and therefore a broadening out of the trauma category to include domestic violence (etc.) would also be welcomed. The Academic Registrar agreed that, whilst there had been a focus on not requiring evidence to support EC claims, there was now a need to look at further extending what might be included as an extenuating circumstance to include those with caring responsibilities and/or other dependents, those who were key workers etc. This would be clarified and communicated in due course. Another member of the Board queried whether consideration might be given to departmental discretion around the length of extension granted under ECs, beyond the current 2 week maximum permitted. Members of the Board were invited to send any outstanding queries to the Academic Registrar directly.
- 8.18 The Students' Union queried what was meant by students being required to 'engage' as part of the Student Attendance Policy, particularly when considering those who might now be studying in different time zones. Consideration needed to focus on

those students who did not have the necessary technology at home in order to be able to engage with a different mode of delivery. It was noted that the Library self-serve closed the previous day at 5pm, so the Critical Incident Group would consider how students might access resources without access to the required technology. It was confirmed that departments had been advised to record any 'live' delivery sessions through Panopto, so students could engage in different ways and timeframes. The College was thinking about how students would be supported to do this, although it was acknowledged that any support might be bespoke due to it being dependent on individual staff and student circumstances, and in turn how each module/activity was created online. Supporting everyone to do this in a flexible way was essential under the circumstances. Members of the Board were informed that the learn.gold forums were a useful tool for staff and fellow students to keep in touch, and that each module page had a 'participants' section which contained information on when someone last engaged with the page.

- 8.19 Any implications on visa requirements were also asked to be clarified, with one member of the Board enquiring whether departments were still required to formally 'monitor' student engagement. It was confirmed that this would need to be logged in some way. From a UKVI point of view, the College would need to be in a position to access records should the Home Office require information, which was different to the active monitoring that would normally be undertaken as standard.
- 8.20 With regards to the programme amendment (minor/major) policy, the Students' Union requested that department representatives be included in conversations on programme changes to ensure inclusion of the student voice. The Deputy Warden and Academic Registrar agreed to follow up on this with the Students' Union at their meeting scheduled for the following day. It was noted that a number of students were raising concern with the Students' Union about how they were going to be assessed, particularly in the light of the impact of two periods of industrial action this academic session.
- 8.21 It was suggested the College developed its own English language test, given that IELTS testing in China, for example, had ceased. The Board was informed that the English Language Centre was currently looking into this and liaising with the College's Immigration team accordingly. It was noted, that a further 6-9 months extension to IELTS dates, normally only valid for 2 years, was proposed. The College did, however, already accept a number of alternative tests, and should it still wish to develop its own test, there were ready made, off-the-shelf tests which could be used if needed. Creating a Goldsmiths' test would clearly take longer to develop. The latest advice would be sent out shortly to Goldsmiths Admissions Tutors so that they could advise applicants as required.
- 8.22 It was recommended that the proposed temporary suspension, extension and/or amendment to regulations be agreed for a specific timeframe, i.e. to the beginning of the next academic year and then renewed if required at that point. It was agreed that a time limit be specified on the extension of the regulations, which would be until the end of the academic year and including late summer resits. It was noted that

Goldsmiths did not currently have emergency regulations to work within, but that these were in development to ensure a clear framework to work within was available in future.

- 8.23 The delayed timing of Boards of Examiners was discussed, with a request for even greater flexibility for some departments beyond this to mid-July, given the considerable changes being made. The Academic Registrar confirmed that flexibility in relation to Boards of Examiners meetings was needed. Once all programme delivery and assessments changes had been received and approved, the College would have a better picture of what was required and what the schedule might look like. Additional internal and external factors, such as information from the Student Loans Company, would also need to be considered. It was noted that finalists would be prioritised in the Board of Examiners schedule, in order to support these students to complete their programme and receive a final award decision at the earliest opportunity.

Resolved:

- 8.24 That matters pertaining to the Board deriving from Covid-19, outlined in paper 19-375, were approved to remain in force until the end of the academic year (including resits).

9 Review arrangements and QA process review

Received:

- 9.1 Confirmed external review arrangements and review of internal quality assurance processes (19-315).

Noted:

- 9.2 Three areas of work to be taken forward were considered by the Board. The first related to a review of internal quality assurance procedures to bring Goldsmiths in line with new UK Quality Code. It was noted that staff would be consulted on proposed revisions. The second outlined requirements relating to the new review method by the OfS and preparatory work the College needed to undertake for a future Quality and Standards Review. The third and final piece of work related to the new requirement for providers to review their degree outcomes and to publish a Degree Outcomes Statement on its website.

10 Research Excellence Framework (REF)

Received:

- 10.1 Update on preparations for Goldsmiths' submission to REF 2021 (19-346).

Noted:

- 10.2 It was noted that there was likely to be a delay to the submission, with a new timeline to be published. The census date for the REF had not changed. The REF submission remained governed by the REF Strategy Group.
- 10.3 The Code of Practice had been revised following queries from the REF team at Research England, which had now been accepted by the REF team nationally.
- 10.4 The College continued to support individual staff with regards to units of assessment and to gather information and ascertain whether Goldsmiths was in a position to make a case on individual circumstances. Equality Impact Assessment would also take place as required.
- 10.5 The mock REF in December and January involved day-long meetings to go through submissions for all units of assessment (including output data and impact case studies, and units of assessment environment statements). These had proved to be very fruitful events for all concerned, giving a clearer sense of where Goldsmiths stood and whether systems and processes were working well, but the mock event also allowed academics to receive external comment on their individual submission and gain an understanding of where they were positioned. External scrutiny on the College's submission as a whole was also valuable. The Board was reminded that internal reviews of REF data tended to be more positive than actual outcomes and that REF2021 would be very competitive. However, Goldsmiths had some very strong departments which were expected to perform well.
- 10.6 The next steps for REF continued to be business as usual but with an acknowledgement that, in the light of the pandemic, individual staff priorities were now very much different, such as looking after family and friends, students, and the delivery of Goldsmiths' programmes. It was understood that some disciplines would have difficulties working remotely. The Pro-Warden (Research and Enterprise) had recently written to Research England raising concerns around practice-based disciplines and Covid-19, specifically raising issues of equality and diversity, which the national REF team needed to be aware of.
- 10.7 Today, Research England had confirmed the REF submission deadline of 22 November 2020 would be amended and that an eight-month notice period would be given in advance of any revised deadline and that the full impact of Coronavirus would be taken into account. As an institution, this allowed Goldsmiths to focus on its priority areas relating to the pandemic.
- 10.8 The next steps relating to REF would be communicated to departments in due course. One member of the Board raised concerns on behalf of colleagues with health concerns who were struggling to keep up with the pace of the output requirements, and sought advice on their behalf. It was confirmed that information and advice would be communicated shortly via the governance groups for practice-based provision. Goldsmiths needed a clear understanding of the issues so they

could be fed back to REF nationally, as an indication of where amendments might be needed.

11 Knowledge Exchange Framework

Received:

11.1 Update on the Knowledge Exchange Framework (19-347).

Noted:

11.2 The Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) referred to the contribution universities could make to society and the economy locally, nationally and internationally. This would include an assessment of the College's civic work, short courses, IP and commercialisation, business partnerships, consultancy, contract research, and public and enterprise engagement.

11.3 The majority of the metrics drew upon existing measures which reduced the burden that the institution had been expecting. Institutions would not receive a single ranking but would be assessed in and ranked in clusters of institutions.

11.4 KEF provided an opportunity for Goldsmiths to demonstrate some of its unique and innovative work. To assist in the KEF submission, a social and economic assessment was currently being undertaken; once published, the findings would be shared across the community.

12 Warden's Report

Noted:

12.1 Report from the Warden on issues of concern and interest to the College (19-332).

13 Access and Participation Plan monitoring

Noted:

13.1 Update on implementation and progress (19-333).

14 Department Boards

Noted:

14.1 Reports from Department Boards outlining activity, impact and risks for escalation:
a) Art (19-336)

- b) Confucius Institute (19-337)
- c) English and Comparative Literature (19-338)
- d) Institute of Management Studies (19-339)
- e) Law (19-340)
- f) Media, Communications and Cultural Studies (19-341)
- g) Music (19-342)
- h) Politics and International Relations (19-343)
- i) Sociology (19-344)
- j) Visual Cultures (19-360)

15 Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee

Noted:

- 15.1 Report from Learning, Teaching and Enhancement Committee (19-345).

16 Research and Enterprise Committee

Noted:

- 16.1 Report from Research and Enterprise Committee (19-348).

17 Academic Development Committee

Noted:

- 17.1 Report from Academic Development Committee (19-349).

18 Draft schedule of delegation

Noted:

- 18.1 Draft schedule of delegation (19-351).

19 Provisional Committee Calendar 2020-21

Noted:

- 19.1 Provisional dates of Academic Board and its committee meetings 2020-21:
<https://www.gold.ac.uk/governance/committees/schedule/#d.en.656057>.

20 Student Retention Metrics

Noted:

20.1 Update on student retention metrics (19-352).

21 Department Strategy Review

Noted:

21.1 Update on the roll-out of the DSR process (19-353).

22 Goldsmiths Employability Strategy and Careers Service Annual Report

Noted:

22.1 Update on progress on Employability Strategy (19-311) and Careers Service Annual Report (19-312).

23 Academic Appeals, Student Complaints, Academic Progress and Student Discipline Report

Noted:

23.1 An update on student complaints and appeals 2018-19 (19-265).

24 Postgraduate Taught Degree Classifications Report

Noted:

24.1 Postgraduate Taught Degree Classifications Report 2017-18 to 2019-20 (19-263).

25 Annual Assessment Reports

Noted:

25.1 Annual Assessment Reports 2018-19 relating to:

- a) Goldsmiths assessments process (19-261)
- b) Programmes delivered at LASALLE College of the Arts and Nordoff Robbins (19-262)

26 External Examination Summary Reports 2018-19

Noted:

26.1 External Examination Summary Reports for:

- a) Goldsmiths (19-257)
- b) Programmes delivered at LASALLE College of the Arts and Nordoff Robbins (19-258)

27 Periodic Reviews

Noted:

27.1 Periodic Review Reports and Action Plan updates of:

- a) Department of Anthropology – final update (19-267)
- b) Department of STaCS (Therapeutic Studies) (19-268)
- c) Postgraduate Research provision (19-269)

28 Graduation Ceremonies

Noted:

28.1 Dates of the Graduation Ceremonies for Summer and Winter 2019-20 at Goldsmiths, as follows:

Summer Ceremonies in July 2020 have been postponed

Winter Ceremonies currently scheduled for Wednesday 16 and Thursday 17 December 2020

29 Future meetings of Academic Board

Noted:

29.1 The Joint Council and Academic Board meeting (originally scheduled for this afternoon) had been postponed.

29.2 A further extraordinary meeting of Academic Board would be organised on or around 27 April 2020, and an extraordinary meeting of Council would be scheduled in May.

29.3 The next scheduled meeting of Academic Board would take place at 1.30-4.00pm on Wednesday 3 June 2020. This would likely take place via Microsoft Teams.