

GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE
University of London

COUNCIL

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (JCC)

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14 May 2007

Present: Mr Hugh Jones (Chair), Dr Philip Broadhead, Mr Chris Pearson, Dr Ben Levitas (UCU), Ms Pamela Beevers (UCU), Ms Suzanne Stead (UNISON)

Apologies: Professor Simon McVeigh

In attendance: Ms Johanna May, Mr Barry Douglas, Mr Ron Harley

1 ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed Mr Ron Harley (UNISON full time officer) who had joined the Committee for this one meeting

2 MINUTES

Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2007

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 CCTV in the Library

- Noted: 1 that the Registrar and Secretary had been advised there were no further concerns about the issue of the CCTV cameras in the library and that the wording of the Data Protection notices was being addressed
- 2 that the ongoing concern of the staff about access to the images since the screen was located in the Library Lending Office and could therefore be accessed by personnel other than authorised security staff
- 3 that the Director of Human Resources (DHR) would provide a written response to UNISON on this point

4 RECOGNITION/FACILITIES TIME AGREEMENT

Noted: 1 that since the date of the last meeting it had not been possible to arrange a joint meeting with UCU and UNISON to progress discussion on the draft procedures now presented by the respective unions but a joint meeting would be convened as soon as possible

5 FIXED TERM CONTRACTS

Noted: that the UCU did have comments on the draft procedure on the assimilation of temporary staff into fixed term

Resolved: that a separate meeting with UCU and UNISON representatives would

be convened to discuss this matter

6 HARMONISATION OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Noted: there had been two meetings with the unions on the issue of the harmonisation of conditions of service and a series of further dates were now being sought to continue discussions with the new representatives nominated by the unions

7 REVIEW OF ESTATES AND ESTATES STRATEGY

- Noted:
- 1 that the Registrar and Secretary had met with the Head of Estates to discuss the review and now wished to concentrate on nine priority areas including Reprographics and Security
 - 2 that the Registrar and Secretary and Director of Human Resources would be meeting shortly to discuss the Access and Security Working Party following which a full meeting of the group would be convened
 - 3 that the tendering of the cleaning contract had been temporarily stalled but that Finance, Human Resources and Pall Mall were currently meeting to try and address outstanding issues which included the impact (currently unknown) of the HERA evaluation of the cleaning staff and implications for pensions
 - 4 that the College was concerned to maintain the welfare of its current staff

8 REVIEW OF THE NURSERY

- Noted:
- 1 the report of the Pro Warden (Learning and Teaching) that the College was currently waiting for the results of four tenders to build a new 45 place nursery; within 3-4 weeks the College would be in a position to decide if it was able to open the Nursery in September 2007 which would be a very tight timescale; given that this was in the nature of a building project it could be that this timescale could not be met
 - 2 that the Nursery would be located in the gardens adjacent to the present Nursery site
 - 3 that it would not be an option to increase the nursery numbers without this new building
 - 4 that until the design had been selected by tender, the necessary planning permission could not be sought
 - 5 that it was recognised that it would essential to keep nursery users informed of progress on this matter as they needed to arrange childcare

9 REPORT BACK FROM PAY FORUM

- Noted:
- 1 the remarks of the Registrar and Secretary that recent meetings of the Pay Forum had not progressed matters as quickly as wished, it was hoped that the next meeting – in June - would enable matters to be moved on more rapidly

- 2 the comment of the UCU representation that the papers should be received a week in advance of the meeting to enable the union to consult adequately
- 3 that a communication on the implementation of HERA would be sent to all staff in their next payslip

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REVIEW OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Noted:

- 1 the comment of the Director of Human Resources that he was researching possible providers for an Occupational Health Service and looking at the provision in other universities; it was essential that the College managed health and safety issues proactively
- 2 that the Pro Warden (Students and Learning) had chaired a review of the medical centre in December 2006 and the College was seeking to relocate the medical centre in negotiation with the Primary Care Trust since the current premises were too small and unfit for use
- 3 that it was the College's wish to have a student medical service on or close to the College in the shortest possible time

FINANCIAL POSITION

Noted:

- 1 the report from the Director of Finance to the effect that student recruitment had been good and – given this student fee income - the latest forecast was for either a small deficit or break even situation; the unknown was the cost this year and next year of the implementation of the Framework Agreement
- 2 that next year's budget had been set by the Finance and Resources Committee with a projected deficit of £600K which would meet the £1.1 million budget for the Framework Agreement
- 3 that HEFCE were looking for the College to have a 3% surplus rising to 5%
- 4 that at the beginning of the year the College had made assumptions about what would be the tuition fee income but that as the actual replaced the estimates, this had been revised upwards by £1.5M; the year 2006 had been unknown territory since no one knew how student recruitment would be affected by variable fees
- 5 due to investment in recruitment for international students, this sector had also done better than anticipated.

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VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME

Noted:

- 1 the invitation to the unions to provide their feedback and comment to the Voluntary Severance scheme submitted to them in March 2007
- 2 the concern of the UCU representation that the workload of remaining staff would need to be addressed and the response of the Director of HR that the scheme was voluntary on both sides and there needed to be a good case to agree to a severance, including consideration of how to

distribute the work or how to work more efficiently

3 the request of the unions that payment of 12, rather than 8, weeks' pay should be made and that the payment for legal advice on Compromise Agreements should be increased from £250 to £350

4 the College's agreement to pay the increased level for the legal advice and its undertaking to consider the unions request for additional weeks' pay

5 that the Voluntary Severance scheme would be agreed by Council at the end of the June following which a general notice would be sent out to all staff

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AGEISM AND RETIREMENT POLICY

Noted:

the comments of the UCU representative that the Employment Beyond Retirement Age Procedure had not been passed by the unions before issue and was very prescriptive

2 the comment of the Director of Human Resources that the circular reflected the statutory provisions which were themselves prescriptive

the comment of the UNISON representative that the wording in the circular should refer to "normal retirement age"

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RESEARCH LEAVE

Noted:

1 the concerns of the UCU that the application of the policy on research leave was applied unsystematically across departments which led to inequality and inconsistencies.

that the UCU President had met with the Pro Warden (Research and Enterprise) to discuss this matter and the Pro Warden (Research and Enterprise) proposed to initiate a survey of heads of academic departments to ascertain their current procedures and to ask them to identify issues to be discussed in establishing a College wide policy

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RAE 2008

Noted

1 the concerns expressed by the UCU that non inclusion in the RAE could be prejudicial to their members' career advancement since it would be widely known that their research had not been put forward for assessment

2 the comment of the Director of HR that there had been a thorough selection process for RAE submission and staff had had the opportunity to put forward any reasons affecting their output; the whole exercise was being assessed for its impact in equality terms; exclusion would not involve any penalty – the College would continue to use its normal processes to assess performance and would not rely on the RAE outputs to judge this

3 that the practice related outputs in disciplines such as media and drama had been assessed in relation to the RAE, the understanding of such outputs being more sophisticated now than had hitherto been the case

4 that the Pro Warden (Research and Enterprise) had offered the UCU a

separate meeting on this matter if wished

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PROBATION

Noted

- 1 the comments of the UCU representative to the effect that the probation scheme for academic staff was seen to be both draconian and inconsistent with some probationary periods waived and some extended and that the ostensible aim of protecting people on probation from excessive burdens in administration and teaching was not often reflected on the ground
- 2 the comment of the Director of Human Resources that HERA was scoring some junior members of staff, who had an extensive range of duties, higher than senior lecturers since HERA was sensitive to the breadth of a role's workload
- 3 that the current probationary arrangements would be reviewed in the context of the discussion of the harmonisation of terms and conditions of service

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OBSERVER STATUS ON COMMITTEES

Noted:

- 1 that the unions had previously requested observer status on Committee's such as the Human Resources Committee and would wish the College to reconsider their request
- 2 the college representatives' agreement to consider this request again

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Noted

the date of the next meeting of this committee would be Monday 29 October 2007