

GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE
University of London

ACADEMIC BOARD

LEARNING AND TEACHING QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 15 November 2006

- Present:** Dr Philip Broadhead (Chair) Mr Andrew Brett
 Ms Hannah Bullivant Ms Mary Claire Halverson
 Ms Vee Harris Ms Jennifer Huseman
 Dr James Martin Professor Carrie Paechter
 Dr Gareth Stanton Mrs Vivien Taibe
 Mrs Liz Thussu (Secretary) Mr Bob Westaway
- Apologies:** Dr Jorella Andrews; Dr Basem El-Haddadeh; Dr Ida Pu;
 Professor Nirmala Rao; Professor Maria Shevtsova; Ms Juliet Sprake;
- In attendance:** Mr Gareth Bodrell; Dr Andrew Fisher (for item 22); Ms Anne Francis;
 Ms Denise Miller; Ms Mary Nixon; Dr John Phelps

OPEN BUSINESS

17 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Noted:

there were no announcements

18 MINUTES

Resolved:

to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2006 subject to the following amendments:

- (i) **adding the word “External” to the title of 11.1, so that the heading of minute 11.1 reads “Encouraging the reporting of plagiarism in the Computing and Information Systems *External* Programme”**
- (ii) **noting under 11.1 that that the Students’ Union were concerned that paying examiners separately for detecting plagiarism was not the best approach to take**

19 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Encouraging the reporting of plagiarism in the Computing and Information Systems *External* Programme (minute 11.1)

Noted:

- (i) that the proposal was to pay examiners who were contracted to mark work for the External Programme for the extra work involved in reporting plagiarism, and did not reflect Goldsmiths' internal practice
- (ii) that the Committee had *recommended* the approval of the proposal which would now be forwarded to the University of London's External System Academic Board for further consideration and approval
- (iii) that there was student representation on External System Academic Board through the University of London Union
- (IV) that the College recognised that in addition to detecting plagiarism, a commensurate effort should be put into preventing it

20 QAA INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT

Received:

from the Head of Quality, the College's report on progress since the QAA Institutional Audit (R.06.258)

Noted:

- (i) that the College was the subject of a QAA Institutional Audit during March 2005, with the report published in August 2006
- (ii) that the Head of Quality had written a report commenting on the report's findings and detailing action taken in response to its recommendations
- (iii) that the QAA had found the College's SED to be full, fair and frank and this was supported by the fact that their report's recommendations closely paralleled issues known to the College and reported on in the SED
- (iv) that much of the response to the report involved work in taking forward changes to the committee structure and planning process that were already underway during the review, with the Committee being a key part of this
- (v) that, under the new committee structure, Academic Board would be receiving the minutes of all reporting committees to ensure that members were fully informed about the business transacted by them, plus all reporting committees would undertake an annual review of their own effectiveness
- (vi) that this was the first year of operation of the new committee structure and so the question of the operation of annual reviews, their nature and timing, would need to be decided

- (vii) that one of the QAA's recommendations was to develop a cleaner and more effective decision making process for ensuring that the learning infrastructure met student needs and that this would be addressed by embedding the work of the Student Committee into the College planning and development process and by formulating a Student Experience Strategy linked to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

Resolved:

that the Academic Registrar would convene a meeting with committee secretaries and report back to the Committee about how best to take forward the annual review process for committees reporting to Academic Board

21 APPLICATION FOR DEGREE-AWARDING POWERS

Received:

a report from the DAPs Project Team in relation to the College's application to the Privy Council for Degree-Awarding Powers (R.06.259)

Noted:

- (i) that the composition of the Project Team given in the paper should be amended to show Mr Padraig O'Connor's role as Head of the Graduate School Office, and not the Research Office Administrator
- (ii) that the DAPs Project Team had met on 30 October 2006 and identified some initial actions to be taken in preparation for the application process
- (iii) that the Project Team had undertaken a risk assessment and this would be circulated separately to team members, related to the College's risk register, and, once completed, would come before the Committee
- (iv) that the key recommendation of the Project Team was that a representative from Personnel, ideally with responsibility for staff development, was needed on the Project Team,
- (v) that the Project Team would also benefit from the membership of the Director of Professional Development

Resolved:

- (i) to endorse the Project Team's recommendations; in particular the recommendation that a representative from Personnel join the Project Team**
- (ii) to invite the Director of Professional Development to join the Project Team**

22 DEPARTMENTAL PLANNING PROCESS

Received:

a report on the Departmental Planning process from the Head of Planning (R.06.260)

Noted:

- (i) that the Chair thanked the Head of Planning for coming to speak to the item
- (ii) that the report set out the relationship between the committee system and the evolving Corporate Plan
- (iii) that a key element of the committee review was to rewrite terms of reference for major committees in terms of strategic responsibility for areas of the Corporate Plan, so that committees would both make recommendations concerning, and monitor the delivery of, strategic planning and policy making relating to their area of responsibility
- (iv) that while the College Strategy was agreed in December 2005, the Corporate Plan was still under development with drafts to come to the Committee later in the year, hence an interim solution was needed to allow committees to undertake their monitoring responsibilities
- (v) that there were eleven aims in the College Strategy, with committees being responsible usually for just one of them, and in the case of LTQC, for strategic aim three, relating to learning and teaching
- (vi) that while currently activities relating to the Committee's responsibilities could be found in a number of places, it was intended that eventually all the College's planned activity relating to strategic aims would be found in Departmental Plans and the Corporate Plan, and would be monitored through the quarterly operating statement
- (vii) that the most recently quarterly update of the Operating Statement, which sets out progress against departmental targets with respect to strategic aim three, was to be found at Appendix B to the paper, hence the data contained related to ongoing activity
- (viii) that receiving quarterly Operating Statements was an interim measure, and in future years would be replaced with a report on the previous year's activity at the start of the session, but as the current session was the first in which Department plans were aligned with strategic aims the first of such reports would not be available until the start of the 2007-08 session
- (ix) that while it was clearly management's role to ensure the successful conclusion of current activity, having information about it allows the Committee to begin to undertake its role in monitoring strategic aim three
- (x) that it was hoped that from the large number of targets in the quarterly report the Committee would be able to identify where the College was repeating strategies that had succeeded in the past, simply because they had succeeded before, and where the College was not doing the harder developmental work of identifying weaknesses and targeting them for

improvement; the Committee could then use this information to inform its policy advice to Academic Board

- (xi) that while the format of the data could be improved it should be possible to look at the “flag” column (red, amber, green) and identify if there were themes and connections between those items that were repeatedly flagged red
- (xii) that once the Corporate Plan was in place the data would be in a more user friendly form
- (xiii) that the overview of current activities within the Committee’s area of responsibility would allow it to consider how the Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy could link into departmental and College plans
- (xiv) that the report was very useful in describing how the governance and the planning process now work together

23 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Received:

from the Head of the Learning and Teaching Office an outline and structure for the revised College’s Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, 2006-2011 (R.06.261)

Noted:

- (i) that the Learning and Teaching Office intended that the revised Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy would be much shorter than its predecessor, as it would contain key statements of overarching aims with the detail, including resource implications, in an action/implementation plan
- (ii) that the strategy was structured with overarching aims and key priorities for action at the beginning, followed by five sections provisionally headed: Quality, Standards and Enhancement; Approaches to Curriculum Design and Learning and Teaching; Assessment; Support for Teaching and Teachers; and Learning Environment
- (iii) that the revised strategy would address the College’s strategic aims
- (iv) that the Committee member’s comments were invited, particularly on the structure, overarching aims, attributes of a “Goldsmiths’ Graduate”, any additional areas to be covered within each of the proposed five sections plus any alternate headings
- (v) that the reference to “active citizens” within the bullet points defining the attributes of a Goldsmiths Graduate was an important reference to public life and could be expanded
- (vi) that entrepreneurship is defined as a series of attributes, including confidence and a willingness to engage with ‘big’ ideas, and as such the strategy could make the claim that the College instils an entrepreneurial spirit in its graduates

- (vii) that the Students' Union offers members the chance to learn key transferable skills such as team working and leadership through volunteering and other extra-curricular activities and this could be reflected in the strategy
- (viii) that the strategy should incorporate in its overarching aims both a clear commitment to, and definition of, interdisciplinarity and the strategic aim of developing the infrastructure to support it, including a flexible student records system, a database with courses available to students from outside their departments and financial procedures and systems
- (ix) that the strategy would be implemented at College level, and at departmental level through departmental Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategies with associated action plans and identified annual priorities
- (x) that academic departments needed guidance on how their strategies should be tied in to the Quality Assurance Framework and governance structures at departmental and College level
- (xi) that aspects of governance within academic Departments as they relate to learning, teaching and assessment were soon to be jointly reviewed by the Registry, Quality and Learning and Teaching Offices
- (xii) that the Students' Union was looking at ways of incorporating Programme Monitoring Representatives into their governance structures
- (xiii) that while the aims might be implemented differently across departments leaving programme deliverers free to be effective, the issue of how to centralise academic activities strategically should also be addressed
- (xiv) that while the Committee was responsible for strategic aim three, the Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy as core business would address all strategic aims
- (xv) that one overarching aim was to provide students with an "excellent" learning experience, and as such, the strategy should define what Goldsmiths considers an excellent learning experience to be
- (xvi) that the overarching aim of "meet[ing] the needs of our diverse student population" could be amended to both explicitly include mature students and to celebrate the cultural richness of the student body
- (xvii) that the overarching aim of enabling students to become "self-motivated learners" could be amended to include "self-directed", since a self-motivated student is one who has taken responsibility for their own learning but is not necessarily an independent learner, whereas a "self-directed" student is
- (xviii) that learning is problematic and as such sparks new ways of thinking through "creative conflict" and this could be reflected in the strategy
- (xix) that while the overarching aims emphasise learning, good teaching remains key to achieving them, hence the promotion of teaching needs to be part of the HR strategy
- (xx) that the Head of the Learning and Teaching Office would now draft in detail three of the five sections (Approaches to Curriculum Design and Learning and

Teaching; Assessment; and Support for Teaching and Teachers) and members who wished to take part in the drafting process, or with any further comments on the strategy, should contact the Learning and Teaching Office

- (xxii) that the Head of Quality would take the lead in drafting the Quality, Standards and Enhancement section while the Director of IT would take the lead on the Learning Environment section
- (xxiii) that a further revision of the strategy would be received by the Committee at its meeting in January 2007

Resolved:

- (i) that the Students' Union would draft some text regarding their work in offering their members opportunities to learn key transferable skills**
- (ii) that the changes suggested would be incorporated and circulated to members for further comment and revision in good time for the next meeting of the Committee**

Secretary's note: the deadline for return of comments to the Learning and Teaching Office is 12 January 2006

24 REVIEW OF COLLEGE BOARD

Received:

from the Head of Quality the report and recommendations of the Review of College Board (R.06.262)

Noted:

- (i) that the College's committee system had been reviewed in 2004/05 and again in 2005/06 with a view to increasing the effectiveness of the College's governance
- (ii) that under the review Learning and Teaching Quality Committee was to have delegated authority from Academic Board for overseeing the operation of the College's systems for ensuring the quality and standards of awards
- (iii) that College Board was a common feature of University of London Colleges and was established at Goldsmiths after the mid-1990s changes to the University of London structure, which included devolution of power to administer awards to Colleges
- (iv) that the issue of the effectiveness of College Board had been raised by the QAA Institutional Audit, and in response to their recommendations it was considered timely to review how far the College Board was fulfilling its terms of reference and contributing to the assurance of standards for all awards
- (v) that the College Board provided a useful forum for exam chairs to share good practice and that this function could, and should, be continued in some form
- (vi) that most HEIs do not have the additional layer of a Board in addition to their Exam Boards

- (vii) that, if Exam Boards were made more effective, they could become the final arbiter for awards, thus giving an appropriately larger role in the process to External Examiners (who are not present at College Board)
- (viii) that the Head of Quality and the Academic Registrar would consult with institutions whose systems and mechanisms for ensuring the quality of their awards had been commended by the QAA
- (ix) that one way to make Exam Boards more effective would be to have a trained Registry representative present to give advice and act as guarantor of the regulatory framework
- (x) that the large number of exam boards (PACE has 40) would be a challenge for the Registry, but that identifying good practice from other departments might allow a reduction in the organisational load
- (xi) that as a small number of contentious and/or difficult decisions were referred to the College Board every year some mechanism was needed for reviewing/ratifying these decisions
- (xii) that one of the report's recommendations was that consideration be given to reinforcing the managerial responsibilities within academic departments in setting up and running exam boards efficiently
- (xiii) that managerial responsibility for the assessment process would need to be clearly located, reinforced and empowered with consideration also given to the possible need for extra resources
- (xiv) that, as any changes agreed would be put in place for the 2007-08 session, College Board would meet in summer 2007, at the end of the current session
- (xv) that the recommendations were broadly welcomed

Resolved:

- (i) **to approve the recommendations in paragraphs 52-55 of the report**
- (ii) **to approve the recommendation in paragraph 56 provided:**
 - (a) **that "Heads of Departments" is amended to read "Heads of Departments/Centres"**
 - (b) **that in considering how the managerial responsibility for the assessment process can be reinforced, consideration is given to clearly identifying where the responsibility is located, and any extra resource needs**
- (iii) **to approve the recommendation in paragraph 57**
- (iv) **to approve recommendation 58 and, in addition, note that the Academic Registrar would report to the next meeting of the Committee on the status of the review of assessment regulations**
- (v) **to approve recommendation 59**

- (vi) to approve recommendation 60 provided that the word “consider” was removed and the wording revised accordingly
- (vii) to approve recommendation 61 along with the Committee’s additional recommendations:
 - (a) that training for Exam Chairs, as well as being compulsory, should be more substantial than the present 2 hour slots, possibly becoming an all day event organised and conducted at a separate venue from the College
 - (b) that the policy on training for Chairs and Secretaries should be added to the Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy, as part of the Quality and Standards strategy
- (viii) to approve recommendation 62

25 PERIODIC PROGRAMME/DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW OF ART PSYCHOTHERAPY

Received:

a report from the Department of Professional and Community Education on action taken in response to the Periodic Programme/Departmental Reviews of the MA and PG Diploma in Art Psychotherapy delivered internally and through collaborative provision (R06.263)

Noted:

- (i) that the review had been conducted in two stages, with stage one, the internal programme, taking place at Goldsmiths in February 2006 and phase two, the collaborative provision, taking place in April 2006 in Berne, Lausanne and Berlin
- (ii) that the subsequent reports and recommendations had been considered by Academic Committee and Academic Board in May 2006, with both committees further considering and approving the renewal of the contract with Berne, and noting the termination of the College’s collaborative arrangements with Lausanne and Berlin
- (iii) that PACE had responded to the recommendations for the London programme only, with their response to the report on collaborative provision to come before the Committee in January 2007
- (iv) that in addition to the review in February the programme had also had a Health Professions Council Accreditation visit in May/June 2006
- (v) that no member of the Art Psychotherapy teaching staff was present at the meeting as Wednesday was their teaching day for the MA
- (vi) that the review had given the programme team an opportunity to reflect on their practice, and to hear the voice of their students who complained of

overload, and that they had taken this opportunity very seriously and had made substantial changes in response

- (vii) that another key issue identified by the review was the quality of accommodation available to the programme, and that as a result of the review and of the Health Professions Council accreditation visit a considerable improvement had been made
- (viii) that student complaints, whether to the Registry or to the Students' Union, were another form of feedback and should be linked in to the review process
- (ix) that paragraph 3.2 of the response to the review noted that four written elements of assessment had been reduced to two, and that while the reduction in workload was welcomed by staff and students the discontinued coursework was considered to be a valuable way for students to integrate their learning about organisations, systems, history and politics

Resolved:

- (i) **to congratulate the Department and the programme team for a meaningful, thoughtful and appropriate response to the review**
- (ii) **to ask the programme leader if the programme team was satisfied that the learning outcomes covered by the two discontinued pieces of written work were covered appropriately elsewhere**

26 PROGRAMME APPROVALS

26.1 Postgraduate Certificate in the Management of Learning and Teaching

Received:

- (i) a proposal from the Director of Professional Development and the Head of the Learning and Teaching Office for a new Postgraduate Certificate in the Management of Learning and Teaching (R.06.256)
- (ii) a tabled appendix to the proposal consisting of an extract from minutes of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Noted:

- (i) that Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee (PSSC) had recommended that the programme be approved retrospectively from September 2006
- (ii) that the programme was exciting, innovative and substantial with clear learning outcomes and should be supported
- (iii) that staff with less than three years teaching experience would take the programme, with the decision made at interview stage for new staff
- (iv) that a decision about exemptions from the 3 years rule and about how the programme would relate to mentoring and probation arrangements would be considered by Senior Management Team

- (v) that there would be resource implications to be considered in releasing teaching staff to attend the programme
- (vi) that decisions taken about the running and resourcing of the programme would need to become part of the Staff Development Strategy

Resolved:

the approval of the programme with effect from September 2006

26.2 MA in Geo-Sociology

Received:

- (i) from the Department of Sociology a proposal for a new MA in Geo-Sociology (R.06.257)
- (ii) a tabled appendix to the proposal consisting of an extract from minutes of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Noted:

- (i) that Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee (PSSC) had recommended the programme for approval
- (ii) that PSSC had noted that the programme specification had been written in a very academic style, and that the external advisors had noted that some of the specialist language used would be understood by those with a Sociology degree but perhaps not otherwise
- (iii) that the programme was distinctive, with an innovative assessment strategy, and should be supported

Resolved:

the approval of the programme

27 EXTERNAL PROGRAMMES

Noted:

an outline proposal from the Quality Affairs Administrator regarding the External Programme in English, that would be submitted in more detail to the meeting of the External System Sub-Committee on 13 December 2006 (R.06.264)

Resolved:

to endorse the proposal that following the External System Sub-Committee meeting of 13 December 2006 the Chair may take action in considering and approving a proposal regarding the English programme, allowing the proposal to be submitted in time for the 26 January 2007 meeting of External System Academic Board.

28 QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK REVIEW

Received:

a summary of the conclusions of the report on the evaluation of TQI and the National Student Survey carried out under Phase 2 of the Review of the national Quality Assurance Framework (R.06.265)

Noted:

- (i) that in October 2006 the Quality Assurance Framework Review Group (QAFRG) reported on Phase 2 of the review of the Quality Assurance Framework
- (ii) that the review had examined the operation and effectiveness of the Teaching Quality Information (TQI) website and National Student Survey (NSS)
- (iii) that the College was involved in the review as one of 13 HEIs to take part in the consultation and value-for-money study undertaken by the QAFRG and it is interesting to note that the results of the value for money study very much reflect the College's experience
- (iv) that a consultation on proposals relating to the organisation and presentation of data in the NSS was ongoing with the QAFRG recommending that the NSS should continue to be conducted annually for the time being
- (v) that UCAS has been commissioned by HEFCE to re-design and launch a more user-focused web-site in summer 2007 with a key priority being to present the data in a user-friendly way
- (vi) that results would in future be presented at a more detailed level in the JACS code subject hierarchy (Level 3, 107 subjects) and this would make the data more useful for users as results are more likely to reflect programme level scores than at present when results would often be aggregated to Level 1 (19 subjects)
- (vii) that it was also proposed:
 - (a) that a summary of key statistics should be made available on the site
 - (b) that a summary of the institution's profile of students should be added, to provide contextual statistics for users
- (viii) that the full report was available at http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2006/06_45/

RESERVED BUSINESS

29 SUSPENSION OF REGULATIONS

Noted:

a list of the suspensions of regulations approved on behalf of the Committee by the Pro-Warden (Academic) (R.06.266)

30 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Noted:

there was no other business

31 FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

Noted:

that future meetings of the Committee were scheduled for:

24 January 2007 at 2pm in room 110, Deptford Town Hall
21 February 2007 at 10am in room 110, Deptford Town Hall
9 May 2007 at 10am in room 110, Deptford Town Hall
23 May 2007 at 2pm in room 110, Deptford Town Hall

DM
November 2006