

**GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE**  
**University of London**

**COUNCIL**

**JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (JCC)**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 10 June 2008**

Present: Mr Hugh Jones (Chair), Mr Des Freedman (UCU), Dr Ben Levitas (UCU),  
Mr Chris Pearson, Ms Suzanne Stead (UNISON)

Apologies: Professor Philip Broadhead, Professor Simon McVeigh

In attendance: Mr Barry Douglas, Ms Johanna May

**1. GOLDSMITHS AND INTO**

The Registrar and Secretary explained that he had wanted to discuss this matter with the unions at the earliest possible stage. He has not said anything about this matter at the previous scheduled meeting of the JCC since at that time discussions were confidential, and apologised for this sequence of events.

He reminded the trade unions members that the College's financial situation had been discussed at the JCC. The College was not achieving the recommended 3% surplus and the gap between where it was now and the position of being in surplus was getting bigger. The impact of inflation, salary increases and increase to pension contributions as well as the rising cost of utilities meant that the College needed to achieve significant savings and/or growth in income. The recruitment of international students was the second biggest source of income for the College after its HEFCE grant. The fact that overseas student recruitment was unregulated made it a feasible source of growth. INTO had approached Goldsmiths to explore the possibility of a partnership. The feasibility of such this proposal and whether or not the initiative could deliver what was promise, was currently being examined.

Over the next 7-8 weeks there would be a process to review all aspects of the potential partnership including marketing, HR, Estates, legal implications etc. This process would enable the College to judge if it was worth continuing with this initiative or not.

It was noted that INTO provides accommodation, pre sessional and foundation programmes and was a significant marketing operation employing 100 staff in this area.

UEA, Newcastle and other institutions had already entered a partnership with INTO and had seen a significant increase on pre sessional courses and a direct increase in the number of overseas students. In UEA summer schools had increased from 70 to 430 with a 70% progression rate which had led to a 40% increase in overseas students. Basically this was a possibility that the College had to look at.

It was noted students would sit standard exams and the admission procedures remained the responsibility of the university. There were a range of models – in UEA the staff were employed by the University, in Exeter the pre sessional programmes were run by INTO staff.

The College needed at this stage to look carefully at how realistic the initiative might be and how sustainable. Since this would be a long term commitment – of 35 years, there were long term costs.

The effect on the College of increasing the number of overseas students would also have to be judged carefully but such an initiative would help recruitment to those departments where there were currently very few overseas students.

The UCU representatives thanked the Registrar and Secretary for the early notification of the College's thinking on this matter.

The Registrar and Secretary explained that if it was decided to continue with this proposal it would be necessary to tender the contract.

The thinking at this point was that accommodation and teaching facilities for the INTO initiative could be located on the site of the former St. James's Hall (although this might not ultimately be suitable). The advantage of the St. James's site is that it would provide the College with more residential accommodation, and would be conjoint with accommodation and teaching rooms.

The discussions continuing in the small groups over the next 7 weeks would allow the College to learn a lot more about this process. These had begun last week and the Registrar and Secretary had talked to the Head of the Language Studies Centre about this proposed initiative. Discussions had taken place with HR and Student Services and the other service heads would be starting their discussions shortly.

INTO had encouraged the College to speak to its counterparts. The Business Model would be based on a leaseback (as is Loring Halls) with a share of the surplus from pre-sessional programmes. The College wanted carefully to examine the plausibility of this model and the risks associated with a 35 year commitment in the overseas student market. It was noted that a 35 year commitment was common for Public Private Finance initiatives.

The UCU representatives asked whether Goldsmiths had a view as to what the relationship with INTO could be, given that there were a range of approaches to degrees of integration.

The Registrar and Secretary indicated the College had not yet reached a decision on this but he felt integration would be the right approach and the College would gain most if INTO processes were built into regular College processes such as marketing.

He indicated the review of the business case should be finished before the end of the summer period and discussions would take place in Council, Finance and Resources and Academic Board. Any changes to the contractual situation of staff would be the subject of consultation which would probably start in the next academic year.

The Registrar and Secretary commented that the Language Studies Centre would need to grow either as an academic unit servicing departments or as an academic unit in its own right.

UCU said this was a vital question to ask without any consideration of what an outside agency might think. The Registrar and Secretary indicated the role of the Language Studies Centre was already being discussed but the possibilities opened up by this initiative provided a different context for widening that question. The College's interests were not the same as INTO's but as long as the separate needs of the College and INTO were met by their joint activity, both parties could do well by it.

There would be advantages to the College tapping into the 100 employees of INTO involved in worldwide marketing. This was a different operation to the College's current use of agents.

The UNISON representative indicated that while she too was grateful for the opportunity to consult on this proposal at an early stage, UNISON was a public service union and opposed privatisation in public services. It was better for staff to retain services in-house therefore she urged caution in this matter. It was a matter of concern that a company that had been in existence only for 3 years was proposing a 35 year partnership. She was trying to find out what

UNISON knew of this company. There would be implications for support staff in the departments affected.

The Director of HR indicated that the College would be finding out how the partnership worked in other HE institutions for example if there was crossover of staff or completely separate operations.

It appeared there was an immediate overlap with the Language Studies Centre but this might not necessarily be the case. It was recognised that there were issues around support departments i.e. who provides HR, portering, cleaning, secretarial services.

UCU indicated INTO had made a £1.7M loss this year and the national union policy was against this initiative.

The Registrar and Secretary said he would be glad to receive any outcomes from the Unions' research and would be engaging in a direct dialogue with a range of people at the other universities already involved with INTO. There were some good universities involved in this initiative and the College wanted to know what they had done as well as speaking to those institutions that had chosen not to go with INTO to find out what were the factors in their decision.

The Registrar and Secretary undertook to update the JCC members on the developments in this area and would also communicate with the wider College; the Head of Internal Communications would share the communication plan with the Unions.

The UCU representatives indicated there was a UCU general meeting scheduled shortly and they would put this matter on the agenda and tell the national union of this development.

The Registrar and Secretary indicated he would be happy to provide the UCU with a briefing note to be used at this meeting. It was important to stress that the College was currently engaged in a feasibility study and there was no certainty around this issue - as a result of the feasibility study the College might decide not to pursue this initiative.