

**GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE**  
University of London

**ACADEMIC BOARD**

**LEARNING AND TEACHING QUALITY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2008**

**Present:**

Dr Philip Broadhead (Chair)	Mr Andrew Brett
Ms Hannah Bullivant	Mr Jack Gillis
Ms Mary Claire Halvorson	Ms Rachael Johnson <i>vice</i> Dr Basem El-Haddadeh
Dr Veronica Lawrence <i>vice</i> Ms Mary Nixon	Dr James Martin
Professor Nirmala Rao	Ms Juliet Sprake
Dr Gareth Stanton	Mrs Vivien Taibe
Mr Bob Westaway	Ms Denise Miller (Secretary)

**Apologies:** Mr Sam Fisher; Dr Victoria Goddard; Ms Vee Harris;  
Professor Carrie Paechter; Dr Ida Pu.

**In attendance:** Ms Anne Francis; Jessica Pavlos (for item 45.4); Dr John Phelps;  
Matt Ward (for item 45.3)

**OPEN BUSINESS**

**39 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Noted:

- (i) that a member of the QAA's Degree Awarding Powers/Institutional Audit team was present to observe the meeting
- (ii) that with the departure of Mrs Liz Thussu, Denise Miller was now the Committee Secretary

**40 MINUTES**

Resolved:

to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2008

## **41 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

### **41.1 Minute 25.1: Minute 9: The National Student Survey**

Noted:

- (i) that at the last meeting the Chair had reported that following discussion of the National Student Survey at Academic Board the Chair had spoken to all Heads of Departments and would be writing to them in particular about sharing their experience with other departments and consideration of the data at Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees
- (ii) that since that time the Chair had contacted departments with specific issues arising from the data and otherwise had concentrated on tackling generic issues arising from the Survey at the College level

### **41.2 Minute 27: Credit Framework**

Noted:

- (i) that paper 08-30R containing proposals for the Goldsmiths credit framework had been favourably received by Academic Board
- (ii) that that consultations with academic departments on the form of the framework were now taking place

## **42 COLLEGE BOARD AND ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS**

*(minute 51, 23 May 2007, minute 4, 14 November 2007, and minute 26, 6 February 2008, refer)*

Received:

a paper from the Academic Registrar regarding the progress of various amendments to assessment regulations (08-213)

Noted:

- (i) that that the paper was the culmination of a long process, and was intended to update members of the Committee on the progress of items relating to changes to assessment regulations
- (ii) that Academic Board had asked that more detailed guidance should be issued to Chairs of Sub-Boards regarding the application of the tariff for plagiarism; the Academic Registrar had now written to departments with this guidance plus a reminder of the recent regulatory changes
- (iii) that Academic Board had resolved that that late summer re-examinations for taught postgraduates would now become part of the regulations from the 2008-09 session. In the interim the Pro-Warden (Academic) would approve any arrangements for the 2007-08 session by a suspension of regulations
- (iv) that section three of the paper dealt with proposals for extensions to deadlines for coursework

- (v) that at its meeting on 23 May 2007 the Committee had considered the regulations regarding the granting of extensions to deadlines for the submission of assessed coursework. Although, the regulations did not permit such extensions, practice in departments varied. The Committee had noted that any changes needed to be compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act
- (vi) that staff from the Learning and Teaching Office, the Student Support Services Office and the Registry had been working on proposals for guidelines regarding the granting of extensions to deadlines as well as other amendments to assessment arrangements for students with special needs. Proposals would be brought to a future meeting of the Committee
- (vii) that section four of the paper dealt with changes arising from the abolition of College Board, which was to have its final meeting in June 2008, after which sub-boards would become Boards of Examiners in their own right
- (viii) that one of the most important changes was that as departments could no longer refer difficult decision to the College Board these decisions should now be normally referred to the Pro-Warden (Academic)
- (ix) that other recommendations included interim arrangements so that the Academic Board would be able to assure itself of Heads of Departments' personal engagement with the assessment process and arrangements for chairing and supporting the new Examination Boards including annual meetings and email networks for all staff with a role to play on the new Boards
- (x) that the final section of the paper dealt with protocols for the new Examination Boards and proposed that issues such as how many examination boards a department could sensibly have or who should chair them could be considered in the next session by Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee
- (xi) that the Students' Union had some expertise, through its advice work, with students on the effect of the regulations regarding submission of assessed coursework
- (xii) that the proposals for facilitating communication between staff involved in the assessment process would mean a large group of staff exchanging good practice and precedent and were very welcome

**Recommended:**

- (i) that that any recommendations of Boards of Examiners which would require a suspension of the regulations should continue to be referred to the Pro-Warden (Academic), except in the case of a recommendation from the Department in which the PW(A) was based, in which case the approval of the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) would be required**
- (ii) that that for a period of three years following the abolition of the College Board, annual departmental reports on the assessment process should be produced in the name of the Head of Department in order that the Academic Board can assure itself of Heads of Departments' personal engagement with the assessment process. This process should be reviewed after three years**
- (iii) that Heads of Departments should not in future chair meetings of Boards of Examiners themselves, but should invariably delegate the task to another member of the academic staff in their department**

Resolved:

- (i) that an e-mail group of all those staff in academic departments involved in the assessment process in any capacity should be set up by the Academic Registrar in order that changes may be notified, good practice may be shared and issues discussed among practitioners
- (ii) that an annual meeting should be held to which all members of this group would be invited and at which each new session's changes to arrangements and regulations would be described and discussed
- (iii) that the Students' Union would be consulted by the group working on proposals regarding extensions to deadlines for assessed coursework as well as other amendments to assessment arrangements for students with special needs

**43 PROGRESS REPORT ON THE 2007-08 ACTION PLAN SUPPORTING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOLDSMITHS LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY**

*(Minute 7, 25 October 2006; minute 23, 15 November 2006; minute 35.1, 21 February 2007; and minute 48, 23 May 2007, refer)*

Received:

a progress report against targets from the Head of the Learning and Teaching Office concerning the 2007-08 action plan supporting the implementation of the Goldsmiths Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy (08-214)

Noted:

- (i) that planned activities had been completed with a few exceptions which would be carried over to 2008-09
- (ii) that support departments had been monitoring the implementation of their targets, and the Learning and Teaching Office (LTO) would also maintain an overview
- (iii) that the Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy (LTA) dealt in part with facilitating participation in Personal Development Planning, incorporated within the 3D Graduate scheme. The Head of the LTO reported that there was not as yet significant use of the new 3D Graduate website but he had recently had a round of discussions with academic departments who were now more convinced of the value of the scheme
- (iv) that the section relating to part D of the LTA (The Learning Environment) included a target to improve the quality of the learning spaces in the RISB. In pursuit of this the Chair was working on a student learning area integrating IT and library help, with the intention of providing a 'one-stop' shop for students
- (v) that the action plan was a useful working document and represented a productive year of activity

**44 DEPARTMENTAL LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES, ACTION PLANS AND ASSESSMENT CASE STUDIES**

*(Minute 48, 23 May 2007, refers)*

Received:

a progress report from the Head of the Learning and Teaching Office on progress concerning submission of Departmental Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies and associated action plans and case studies (08-215)

Noted:

- (i) that departmental LTAs and action plans were being compiled in alignment with the College strategy
- (ii) that the Committee would consider a report on departmental LTAs and case studies at its next meeting in October, allowing time for the Head of the LTO to receive and analyse them with a view to identifying common themes and good practice
- (iii) that academic departments would resource their own action plans apart from those targets that were generic, which the Head of the Learning and Teaching Office would incorporate into a second version of the College-level plan
- (iv) that departmental action plans were generally specific to particular academic departments with Chairs of DLTCs and Heads of Departments responsible for overseeing and monitoring their implementation
- (v) that the Committee needed to ensure that the College strategy was met at departmental level and that this would be easier to monitor if departments used a standard layout for their strategies and plans. Most departments had followed the format of the College level documents although some had chosen a different approach
- (vi) that standard format made comparisons and analysis of plans easier and quicker and the Committee would wish to encourage its use
- (vii) that the Committee, rather than keeping an overview of departmental engagement, could consider establishing a forum for engaging academic departments in monitoring and report, however the LTO had run a discussion forum with chairs and assessment fellows in May on the theme of assessment which the Head of the LTO thought was a more useful mechanism than a formal body
- (viii) that rendering good practice visible to academic departments was an important measure of the success of the College LTA hence the Head of the LTO would meet with Chairs of DLTCs and assessment fellows and discuss areas of good practice in the plans that could potentially be disseminated College wide
- (ix) that the case studies, strategies and action plans would be uploaded onto the LTO's website once they were fully developed. In addition the plans were public documents shared by departments with their students
- (x) that the plans were impressive documents and evidenced thoughtful reflection on assessment in terms of good practice and areas for development. Departments had all considered the 3D graduate scheme and their case studies on assessment were impressive and provided an excellent insight into current practice

## **45 THE QUALITY FRAMEWORK**

### **45.1 The Quality Framework**

Received:

a report from the Quality Administrator on the operation of the College's quality framework in 2007-08, and on proposed changes for 2008-09 (08-216)

Noted:

- (i) that the report was in two halves, firstly reflecting on the data from student feedback in 2007-08 and from annual programme review in 2006-07 and secondly proposing changes to the quality framework in order to make it less bureaucratic and more responsive, and to integrate National Student Survey data into the framework
- (ii) that the report proposed that the College consider the advantages of buying into a commercial online course evaluation system
- (iii) that it may be possible to undertake course evaluation via the VLE, and this could be investigated further by the Head of the Centre for Excellence in Learning Technology and the Quality Administrator
- (iv) that the Quality Office and the Students' Union had piloted a new system of Programme Monitoring in 2007-08 which allowed for the grouping of cognate programmes for feedback processes and that a modified version of this would be rolled out College-wide in the next session
- (v) that it had been proposed and agreed by the Committee that programmes be grouped for Annual Programme Report (APR) purposes and this approach had been endorsed by Chairs of Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees. As programme monitoring data feeds into the APR process it would be sensible to group programmes for programme monitoring purposes, and this would mean both changes to the Programme Monitoring database and establishing a minimum requirement for Programme Monitoring and Annual Programme Review purposes
- (vi) that in order to promote the integration of the National Student Survey into the College's quality framework changes could be made, including to the Programme Monitoring database, allowing consideration of the data to be integrated into the Annual Programme Review process
- (vii) that this year's National Student Survey had recently closed with a 61% response rate from the College and with all subject areas meeting the target for publication. The data would be released to the College in August and would be available for consideration at the next meeting in October
- (viii) that the Students' Union were pleased that the new system of Programme Monitoring was being rolled out to the College and also would like to see feedback from complaints integrated into the quality framework
- (ix) that with the integration of the Quality Office into the Registry it would be timely for the Quality Administrator to work with Registry colleagues on how to integrate

complaints data into the quality framework and that proposals could then be in the Quality Administrator's next annual report

**Recommended:**

**that proposals (ii) – (iv) of the report be approved**

Resolved:

that the Quality Administrator and the Head of the Centre for Excellence in Learning Technology should discuss the tools available through the VLE and whether or not they are suitable for providing a College wide online system of course evaluation, and report back to the Committee at its next meeting

**45.2 Programme Monitoring**

*(Minute 9.2, 25 October 2006, and minute 28.2, 6 February 2008, refer)*

Received:

a paper from the Quality Administrator evaluating the pilot of new programme monitoring arrangements in five academic departments (08-217)

Noted:

- (i) that during the current session the Quality Office in partnership with the Students' Union had been piloting a new system of student feedback. The new system was intended to be less bureaucratic, to improve student representation and to encourage students to fully engage with their learning opportunities
- (ii) that to evaluate the pilot and whether it had met its three aims of (1) reducing the bureaucratic burden on staff, (2) improving student representation and (3) engaging students with their learning opportunities at a higher level the Quality Office had surveyed staff and students and held a meeting with participants
- (iii) that the evaluation was largely positive and while some aspects of the pilot, such as online forums for student feedback, were not working as expected, other aspects had worked to improve student representation and there was some evidence that the bureaucratic load on staff had been reduced and that students were giving some feedback on their programmes at a higher level than before
- (iv) that a College-wide roll-out of the new system in the next session had been endorsed by SMT with the Students' Union receiving the necessary funding to support it

**45.3 Periodic review of the Department of Design**

Received:

the report on the recent periodic review of the Department of Design (08-218) and departmental response (08-219)

Noted:

- (i) that the periodic review process normally provides the opportunity for the Department to evaluate its programmes and the quality of the students' learning opportunities, for the College to examine the interaction of institutional and Departmental quality

assurance and related processes and to engage in external benchmarking via the involvement of External Reviewers on the review panel

- (ii) that in addition to the above the Design Department had wished to consider explicitly the strategic context of programmes and their development, hence a key aim of the panel was to help the Department identify and develop their strategic priorities for the future
- (iii) that the panel had formed a very positive view of the Department, and commended the Department's intercollegiate activity, enterprise and inter-disciplinary activities
- (iv) that the recommendations ranged from those that could be taken forward in the Department's Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy to those involving much larger processes such as the recommended periodic review of the BA Design & Technology Education which would be undertaken in conjunction with the Quality Office
- (v) that the report's recommendations had been very positively responded to by the Department who felt that all the recommendations made by the panel offered productive moves forward and would aid the growth of the Department in the coming years

Resolved:

to approve the recommendations of the report

#### **45.4 Review of Placements**

Received:

a paper from the Quality and Governance Administrator concerning student placements and employer engagement (08-226)

Noted:

- (i) that the paper examined current policy and practice in two related areas: work placements; and relationships with Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)
- (ii) that the Quality and Governance Administrator had reviewed a range of placements in the College and the paper was both an exploration of current practice and an attempt to provide an overview
- (iii) that as well as providing real benefits to students, placements were also an essential part of the employer engagement agenda
- (iv) that there was much good practice in the administration of placements but also wide variation; this was largely due to the difference between placements on accredited programmes, and those which were created with the intention of allowing students to gain practical experience of their chosen subject
- (v) that the workload of supporting placements could be onerous hence in order to achieve sustainability and growth in placement provision, placement programmes might need to be supported by College-wide mechanisms to support new placements and share good practice

- (vi) that consideration should be given to providing a College placement officer
- (vii) that care needed to be taken in the employment contract for students on placement, and in particular health and safety in the workplace issues needed to be addressed.
- (viii) that a working group could be set up to take forward the report's recommendations, particularly with respect to non-accredited provision

Resolved:

that a working group be established by the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) to develop more detailed proposals and report back to the Committee

## **46 EXTERNAL SYSTEM**

### **46.1 Automatic exemptions for BSc Computing and Information Systems and BSc Creative Computing**

Received:

a proposal from External System Sub-Committee to allow the University of London to give automatic exemption to applicants for the BSc in Computing and Information Systems or the BSc in Creative Computing who have been awarded certain diplomas, higher diplomas or associate degrees by institutions in Singapore and Hong Kong (08-156)

Noted:

- (i) that exemptions for the BSc in Computing and Information Systems and the BSc in Creative Computing help to attract potential students to the Goldsmiths' Computing courses, as they allow students to complete their degree earlier than would otherwise be the case. Automatic exemptions are a benefit to external students as they do not have to pay for these exemptions whereas they do have to pay for those that are determined on a case-by-case basis
- (ii) that an automatic exemption was a published statement of academic parity between a Lead College qualification and another qualification
- (iii) that the aim of the proposals was to extend the range of qualifications that allows automatic exemption from certain units on the BSc Computing and Information Systems and the BSc Creative Computing in Singapore and Hong Kong by providing automatic exemption for certain diplomas awarded by polytechnics in Singapore and for certain qualifications offered by the University of Hong Kong's School of Professional and Continuing Education

Resolved:

to approve the proposals on the recommendation of External System Sub-Committee

## **46.2 Annual Programme Reports**

Noted:

a report from the External Programmes Administrator on the Annual Programme Reports for the English and Computing external programmes 2006-07 and the response from External System Sub-Committee (08-220)

Resolved:

to approve the the Departmental responses to the Annual Programme Reports on the University of London External System's Computing Programmes and the BA/Diploma in English

## **47 PROGRAMME SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE 30 APRIL 2008**

### **47.1 MA Comparative Literary Studies**

Received:

a proposal from the Department of English and Comparative Literature to merge three existing MAs into a single programme (08-150)

Resolved:

to approve the programme on the recommendation of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee

### **47.2 MA Design and Environment**

Received:

a proposal from the department of Design for a new MA in Design and Environment (08-151)

Resolved:

to approve the new programme on the recommendation of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee

### **47.3 MA Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship**

Received:

a proposal for a new MA in Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (08-152)

Resolved:

to approve the new programme on the recommendation of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee

#### **47.4 Theory MAs in Media and Communications**

Received:

a proposal from the department of Media and Communications to offer double MAs with Shanghai University (08-5)

Noted:

- (i) that at its meeting on 23 January 2008 the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee received a proposal from the department of Media and Communications to offer double MAs with Shanghai University and noted the following:
  - (a) that the department of Media and Communications were proposing to enter into an agreement with the School of Film and Television Art and Technology of Shanghai University
  - (b) that it was hoped that this would lead to an increase the number of good quality Chinese students studying within the department and raise Goldsmiths' profile in the Chinese market
  - (c) that it was planned that students from Shanghai University would enrol on one of the "theory" MAs in the department of Media and Communications. These students would attend the taught element of the programme at the College for two terms. In the third term they would return to China, where they would complete their dissertation.
- (ii) that the Sub-Committee requested clarification on certain matters relating to the quality assurance of the programme and advice was sought from QAA on clarifying the code of practice
- (iii) that at its meeting on 30 April 2008 the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee noted the following:

that the Head of the Quality Office had received satisfactory assurances from the QAA and the department of Media and Communications on all of the queries raised by the Committee regarding the proposed MA collaboration with Shanghai University. However, these had not arrived in time to be considered by this meeting of the Committee. It was therefore agreed that the proposal could be approved by action of the Chair.

Resolved:

to approve, on the recommendation of the Chair of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee, the proposal from the department of Media and Communications

#### **48 STANDARDS SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE: 29 APRIL 2008**

Received:

a proposal to replace the dyslexia/dyspraxia alert stickers on assessment scripts with a cover sheet giving marking guidance (08-178)

Resolved:

to approve the proposal on the recommendation of Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee

#### **49 BENCHMARKING OF E-LEARNING**

Noted:

a report from the Head of the Centre for Excellence in Learning Technology on the outcomes from the benchmarking of e-learning in higher education exercise led by the Higher Education Academy in collaboration with the Joint Information Systems Committee (08-221)

#### **50 ANNUAL EXAMINATIONS REPORT AND STUDENT DATA IN THE ANNUAL PROGRAMME REVIEW PROCESS**

Received:

- (i) a report on examinations, including the Digest of External Examiners Reports and Class Percentage Figures for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students (08-98)
- (ii) a paper from the Quality Administrator regarding data supporting the Annual Programme Review process (08-176)

Noted:

- (i) that the above two papers were considered by Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee at its meeting on 29 April 2008
- (ii) that the Sub-Committee decided that it would be appropriate to review the student data used to improve the student learning experience and monitor achievement, with a view to considering the questions that the data was intended to answer and where those questions could best be answered – in the Annual Programme Reporting Process, or in Departmental examination reports
- (ii) that the Academic Registrar, the Head of the Learning and Teaching Office and the Quality Administrator were asked to consider the above and report back to the Sub-Committee

#### **51 PROGRAMME SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE**

##### **51.1 MA in Contemporary African Theatre and Performance**

Noted:

- (i) that at its meeting on 14 November 2007 the Committee approved, subject to amendments requested by Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee, a proposal for a new MA in Contemporary African Theatre and Performance
- (ii) that the amendments were made, approved by the Pro-Warden (Academic) and reported to the 30 April 2008 meeting of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee

## **51.2 BA Therapeutic Cultures**

Noted:

- (i) that at its meeting on 6 February 2008 the Committee approved, subject to the receipt of a satisfactory second reader's report as recommended by Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee, a proposal for a new BA in Therapeutic Cultures
- (ii) that the report was received, approved by the Pro-Warden (Academic) and reported to the 30 April 2008 meeting of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee

## **52 STANDARDS SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE: 22 JANUARY 2008**

Noted:

the minutes of the meeting of the Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 22 January 2008 (08-222)

## **53 GRADUATE SCHOOL BOARD: 12 MARCH 2008**

Noted:

the minutes of the meeting of Graduate School Board held on 12 March 2008 (08-223)

## **54 LIBRARY USER GROUP 17 JANUARY 2008**

the minutes of the meeting of the Library User Group held on 17 January 2008 (08-224)

## **RESERVED BUSINESS**

## **55 SUSPENSION OF REGULATIONS**

Noted:

a list of the suspensions of regulations approved by the Pro-Warden (Academic) (08-225)

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

### **56 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **56.1 Academic Leadership of Teaching**

Noted:

- (i) that the Head of Staff Development had organised a one day workshop for academic Heads of Departments and others with academic leadership responsibilities on Tuesday 8 July 2008
- (ii) that the workshop would be held in Prospero House, Borough High Street and would draw upon the findings of a Leadership Foundation funded research programme that had explored excellence in teaching and academic leadership, led by Professor Graham Gibbs of Oxford University

#### **56.2 Committee membership**

Noted:

- (i) that the meeting was the last one for the Students' Union representatives, Hannah Bullivant and Jack Gillis. The Chair thanked them both for their contribution to taking forward the Committee's discussions
- (ii) that in addition Professor Nirmala Rao would be leaving the College in July and hence was also attending her final meeting. The Chair thanked Professor Rao for her considerable contribution to the Committee's business

### **57 FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE**

Noted:

that future meetings of the Committee would be held in room 110, Deptford Town Hall on the following dates:

Wednesday, 8 October 2008 at **2pm**  
Wednesday, 19 November 2008 at 10am  
Wednesday, 11 February 2009 at 10am  
Wednesday, 20 May 2009 at 10am

*Denise Miller*  
*May 2008*