

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

ACADEMIC BOARD

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

13 January 2009

Present: Professor Simon McVeigh (in the Chair), Dr Catherine Alexander, Ms Vicky Annand, Dr Andrea Gilroy, Mr Gerald Lidstone, Professor Carrie Paechter, Ms Rachel Soper, Ms Vivien Taibe.

In attendance: Head of Quality and Standards, Personal Assistant to Pro-Warden (Academic Development), Widening Participation Co-ordinator (for item 17), Undergraduate Student Recruitment Officer and Head of Student Recruitment and International Office (for item 19), Ms Sian Prime (for item 15) Quality Administrator (for item 20), Quality and Governance Administrator (Secretary),

Apologies: Dr Gavin Butt, Mr Jesse Fajemisin, Mr Geraint Fox, Dr Helen Jones, Ms Jess Tratt.

13 MINUTES

Resolved:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2008 be approved, with a minor amendment to include Dr Helen Jones on the present list.

14 MATTERS ARISING

Noted:

re Minute 9:

- (i) that the Chair would be forming a collaborations working group to work on a strategy for partnerships and collaborative provision;
- (ii) that the new Head of Quality and Standards had been tasked to work on a collaborations framework, which would streamline and formalise the College's processes for agreeing and monitoring collaborations;
- (iii) that a paper on broader aspects of internationalisation would be presented to SMT in late January, with a view to examining what the College would want from an internationalisation strategy.

15 ICCE UPDATE

Received:

a report from the Director of Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship (09-15).

The Committee noted that the Institute was a major strategic development for the College and would encourage collaborative relationships and a community of interest, both within the College and with local, national and international partners. The Institute's new MA in Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship had been established, and was currently offered in 4 pathways: Drama, Design, Media and Communications and Music.

The Committee also heard that the Institute sought to drive cultural change at the College, for instance by offering short courses which would aim to foster and support entrepreneurial potential in the Goldsmiths community. In addition, it was planning to make four entrepreneurial fellows per year, whose role would be to contribute to research and act as advocates for ICCE and aspirational case studies for students. The Committee agreed that it should consider its own role in steering the College in its development of entrepreneurship.

16 ACCESS AGREEMENT

Received:

the College's report on progress against milestones (09-5).

Noted:

that the College was confident that the second year of variable fees had been a success and that it had performed strongly against the targets set in the Access Agreement.

17 WIDENING PARTICIPATION

Received:

a progress report on the Widening Participation Strategy (09-6).

Noted:

- (i) that wider consultation on the Strategy would be welcomed, and in particular the input of the Planning Office was invited;
- (ii) that the College should consider to what extent it was willing to take on more students with lower A level grades (given that undergraduate programmes are oversubscribed), although it was noted that in many cases these students became very high achievers with appropriate support;
- (iii) that student support was a crucial concern in widening participation, and it was important for the College to consider how it could adapt to meet the particular support needs of non-standard entry students;
- (iv) that point 3 in Section 4 (Aims) should be redrafted as follows: "facilitate routes into higher education through new provision in PACE and other academic departments";

- (v) that section 5 (Target Groups) should incorporate postgraduates other than those “returning to study”.

18 ADMISSIONS AND ENROLMENT REPORT

Received:

a paper from the Head of Planning (09-7).

Noted:

- (i) that in 2008/09 1522 fundable new entrants enrolled onto full-time undergraduate programmes, about 200 students more than in the previous year;
- (ii) that part-time UG numbers had been decreasing, and that most of the 551 part-time UG students were enrolled on modular programmes in PACE;
- (ii) that all academic departments had been asked to consider how recruitment to postgraduate programmes could be boosted, whether by new additions or amendments to the portfolio, or specific marketing drives;
- (iii) that there had been something of a decline in overseas enrolment numbers, and that as part of the 2008/09 Planning Round, departments had been asked to consider and indicate areas where expansion of overseas student numbers might be possible both in the short and medium term;
- (iv) that the funding council was considering how it could ensure that sector as whole did not over-recruit next year, and as a result the College would be well-advised to allocate undergraduate places as quickly as possible so as to reduce its dependency on clearing.

19 UNDERGRADUATE RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

Received:

a paper from Recruitment and Admissions (09-8).

The Committee noted that growth within the UK undergraduate market was likely to be curtailed, but that the Strategy was designed to improve current practice in order to recruit higher-quality applicants and tackle the issues raised by changing recruitment demographics.

The Committee heard that a major recruitment issue going forward was the need, now more than ever, to improve levels of conversion so as to reduce reliance on clearing. Interactions with academic staff in departments were the major factor in converting enquiries into applications, and offers into acceptance and enrolment, and while Recruitment and Admissions staff could offer logistical support for this, the relationship management aspects had to be taken on by the departments themselves.

It was noted that the College’s website and web presence – particularly in terms of the variation between department websites – was not fit for purpose in the UK marketplace. Recruitment and Admissions staff were working with Communications and Publicity staff and the Web Team to make improvements in this area.

The Committee noted the importance of the student experience in improving retention (particularly in London where it was so easy to switch between HEIs), and that a Student Experience Working Group had been formed to look at this issue.

20 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY RESULTS 2008

Received:

a paper from the Quality Administrator about the performance in the NSS of the College and its subject areas relative to the sector for this year, and also over time (09-9).

The Committee noted that the NSS provided the College with an opportunity to consider how it managed students' expectations, and in particular whether courses were being advertised appropriately. It was apparent from the NSS results that a major area of dissatisfaction for students was poor communication and management on joint programmes, and as such the Committee thought it necessary for the College to consider how it could improve joint provision. In addition, the Committee noted that it was important that high-performing departments (such as Design) maintained good links with alumni in order to welcome them back for postgraduate study.

21 POSTGRADUATE CREDIT FRAMEWORKS

Received:

a report from the Assistant Registrar (Programmes) on departmental progress on the credit framework (09-10).

The Committee noted that for many departments, some or all of their current provision already conformed to the new framework; other departments (including Anthropology, Centre for Cultural Studies, Media, Politics, Sociology and History) would be meeting with the Dean of the Graduate School and the Head of Quality and Standards in January with the aim of finding a consensus on a shared way to move forward. It was noted that there was no indication that any department would be unable to meet the deadline of conforming to the new structure by 2010.

22 POSTGRADUATE PORTFOLIO REVIEW

Received:

a paper from the Pro Warden (Academic Development) on the upcoming portfolio review (09-11).

Noted:

- (i) that the need for a review (and then a long-term rolling programme of review) was particularly urgent given the College's ambitious growth targets and the current climate, which had seen home/EU PGT numbers continuing to decline slowly and an increasingly fragile international market;
- (ii) that there was a need to refresh and revalidate programmes (particularly in fast-moving subject areas such as Computing and Media and Communications) on a regular basis;
- (iii) that the PG review would map areas of contiguity, encouraging flexibility and leading to beneficial sharing of teaching or facilities;

- (iv) that web and other publicity materials could be improved to clarify Masters provision across the College and assist applicants in their choices – for instance, by offering a “Build Your Own Prospectus” option.

23 FOUNDATION DEGREES

Received:

a paper from the Quality and Governance Administrator on foundation degrees (09-12).

The Committee noted that since the paper on foundation degrees had been drafted, HEFCE had been instructed not to allocate any further additional student numbers before 2010-11 at the earliest, which would have large implications for the possibility of development of foundation degrees. The committee endorsed the general approach to foundation degrees as set out in paper 09-12, but recognised that in practice this avenue may not be a viable one for the College.

24 PLACEMENTS

Received:

a paper from the Quality and Governance Administrator on placements (09-13).

The Committee discussed a wide range of issues relating to placements, in particular:

- (i) that adequate placement management was extremely important, and tended to place a large burden on staff members (in particular where placement tutors were required to visit students on placement);
- (ii) that in the case of a student being unable to find a placement, consideration would have to be made for alternative forms of assessment;
- (iii) that the intended learning outcomes of any placements must be clearly identified and monitored to ensure they appropriately contribute to the overall and coherent aims of the programme (as set out by the QAA's *Code of Practice Section 9: Work-based and placement learning*);
- (iv) that international students, particularly those without English as a first language, would likely need special support with finding and going on placement;
- (v) that students were consistently reporting that they wanted the opportunity to take on placements, and that incorporating placements would be a way to add value to current degree programmes.

Recommended:

that the College should seek to expand upon its current placement provision.

Resolved:

that a group of staff members from around the College be convened to form a Placement Strategy Group, with the remit of considering a Strategy for increasing and improving placement provision throughout the College.

25 SHORT COURSES FRAMEWORK

Received:

a paper from the Head of Planning (09-14).

The Committee noted that Academic Board had approved the running of a pilot scheme for short courses in ICCE based on a framework which had been considered by Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee and Learning and Teaching Quality Committee. The Institute had been selected as the location for the pilot scheme as short courses were expected to constitute a significant strand of activity in the Institute and staff members had already developed a number of courses, some in collaboration with external partners, which could be delivered as soon as the infrastructure is in place. It was also noted that a considerable amount of interest in other modes of provision, such as continuing professional development and in particular summer schools, would be addressed by the short courses framework.

Resolved:

that future developments in short courses (piloted through ICCE) would be reported to the Committee.

26 DATES OF NEXT MEETING

Noted:

that the next meeting of Academic Development Committee would be held on the following date in room 110, Deptford Town Hall Building:

29 April 2009

Jessica Pavlos
Quality and Governance Administrator
January 2009