

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

ACADEMIC BOARD

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

29 April 2009

Present: Professor Simon McVeigh (in the Chair), Ms Vicky Annand, Mr Geraint Fox, Dr Andrea Gilroy, Mr Gerald Lidstone (for Items 27 to 33), Professor Carrie Paechter, Ms Rachel Soper, Ms Vivien Taibe, Ms Jess Tratt.

In attendance: Head of Quality and Standards, Widening Participation Co-ordinator (for item 30), Administrative Officer (Recruitment and Admissions) (for Item 34), Quality and Governance Administrator (Secretary),

Apologies: Dr Catherine Alexander, Dr Gavin Butt, Mr Jesse Fajemisin, Dr Helen Jones.

OPEN BUSINESS

27 MINUTES

Resolved:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2009 be approved, with the following amendments:

re Minute 19:

- (i) that the Committee wished to make clear that it endorsed the Undergraduate Recruitment Strategy;
- (ii) that the Committee wished to clarify that the parts of the discussion relating to the College website actually pertained to the College's postgraduate, rather than undergraduate, provision; the problems with the website were largely confined to postgraduate provision.

28 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Noted:

that the Chair was to establish a Placement Strategy Group, consisting of a number of members of Academic Development Committee, as well as staff from the Quality and Standards and Careers Offices.

29 REVIEW OF COMMITTEE BUSINESS

Received:

a report from the Secretary (09-158).

30 WIDENING PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

Received:

a report on the Strategy from the Widening Participation Co-ordinator (09-159).

Noted:

- (i) that while the transparent, consistent, and holistic consideration of applications to Goldsmiths, along with the role of student support in ensuring retention were both vital parts of the WP agenda, the key to the Strategy should be raising awareness, aspirations and attainment in the community;
- (ii) that the means to measure the success of the objectives set out in the Strategy should be clarified, given that access to good management information could be problematic at the College, and that in some cases the “evidence of success” was currently phrased in such a way so as to be unmeasurable anyway;
- (iii) that setting clear targets and providing clear, measurable gauges of success was a vital part of the Strategy;
- (iv) that consideration of demographic statistics relating to applications and to the student population needed to be considered in relation to the sector; and that it was important to consider this information at both College and departmental level;
- (v) that the College would benefit from further consideration about its WP responsibilities to the local area, including a definition of what constitutes “local” (ie London, SE London, Lewisham etc);
- (vi) that it was important that the College provided incentive to meeting its WP targets by recognising and rewarding departments who consistently made large contributions to the College’s WP agenda;
- (vii) that there would be an action plan for each milestone set in the WP Strategy and that progress on the action plans would be reported to the Committee regularly.

31 COLLABORATIVE PROVISION FRAMEWORK

Received:

a paper from the Head of Quality and Standards (09-124R).

The Committee noted that this version of the Collaborative Provision Framework had been seen by the QAA Institutional Audit team, and that though it had been approved by Learning and Teaching Committee in its current form, minor amendments would continue to be made (largely through LTQC) before its final approval. The Committee was glad to hear that further information that would be included in future versions would include a glossary or terminology document (which does exist in the College but would need to be updated before inclusion in the framework), information for our collaborative partners on the Goldsmiths brand and trademark, and exemplars from already existing collaborations.

The Committee was asked to consider its own role in the approval of collaborative provision. Its terms of reference currently stated that it was responsible for proposing new collaborative

partnerships to Academic Board for approval. The Collaborative Provision Framework added another dimension to this approval, firmly separating institutional approval from programme approval (ie effectively decoupling strategy and quality), and the Committee agreed that it should take responsibility for institutional approval.

The Committee noted that approval of collaborative provisions could be agreed in one committee cycle, but that 18 months would be preferable. The framework would be accommodating to the needs of different types of collaborative provision: for instance, in some cases a truncated version of the approval process could be used or the due diligence process could be condensed if deemed sensible.

The status of students on collaborative programmes was discussed, and it was mentioned that further decisions would have to be made regarding how the College dealt with them as alumni, whether they would be entitled to join the Students' Union, and the like.

The Committee thanked all those involved in producing the framework, and in particular the Head of Quality and Standards; it was felt that the document would make a vital contribution to the future of the College.

32 PARTNERSHIP FRAMEWORK

Received:

a paper from the Head of Student Recruitment, Admissions and International and the Pro-Warden (Academic Development) and (09-160).

The Committee welcomed the development of a partnership framework, and noted that the College had in the past approached its work with regard to collaborations and partnerships in a reactive and ad hoc, rather than strategic, fashion. In addition, there had been little institutional oversight of the arrangements that were being made. The final version of this framework would set out an institutional agenda for dealing with partnerships, to ensure that the College developed and monitored its partnerships appropriately, proactively identifying institutions with which beneficial partnerships might be formed.

The Committee agreed that the College would benefit from an audit of existing formal and informal alliances, and noted that a pilot study (focusing on relationships with India) was currently underway. This would enable the College to have a better record of collaborative relationships and their nature, and could facilitate the development of a network of "Regional Interest Groups", which would involve informal groups of staff members with shared regional links communicating through occasional meetings and an electronic mailbase. It was noted that of course any sharing of information in this way would need to be dealt with sensitively (particularly in terms of early-stage research proposals), and that appropriate steps would need to be taken to define relationships.

The Committee noted the importance of the role of alumni in College partnerships, and of fostering relationships with Goldsmiths and Goldsmiths External System graduates. It was also noted that while the framework was largely focused on teaching partnerships, institutional collaborations would be an effective avenue for improving synergy between teaching and research.

The Committee discussed the College's need for appropriate infrastructure to support partnerships. It was important to be able to take the initiative to encourage prospective partners by, for instance, receiving them at the College for lectures or tours of the campus. In addition, the College required more focused ways of linking academics with funding streams. It was

suggested that perhaps a way of dealing with this in early stages would be through a Partnerships Champion, charged with taking forward some of the proposals raised in this framework.

33 SHORT COURSES

Received:

a paper from the Head of Planning (09-165).

Noted:

that all the recommendations set out in paper 09-165 were approved, with the following comments from the Committee:

- (i) that the concept of credit would be a difficult one; students would very much want to receive credit for work completed, but if short courses were to be credit-bearing, they would be subject to the same requirements (eg those of the QAA) as any other College provision;
- (ii) that it might be worth investigating the notion of using ECTS credits for short courses;
- (iii) that the College needed to have a better infrastructure for dealing with the logistics and practicalities of running short courses, and that with regard to accommodation, specific needs should be factored into the Master Planning Exercise;
- (iv) that students should be formally registered on the student records systems at the point at which they elected to submit an assessment; however, the College would benefit from systems put in place to keep in touch with short course alumni;
- (v) that it was vital that enrolment of short course students be speedy and professional (for instance, they should not be required to fill out overly-long enrolment forms), and that the process should be tailored to the needs of different short course students (for instance, only students attending for one term or longer would be required to obtain ID cards; multiple students attending from the same company should not necessarily need to fill out individual enrolment forms);
- (vi) that the Committee would take a leading role in monitoring the success and development of short course provision, and would receive a report on short courses at each meeting in 2009-10.

Resolved:

that the Chair be authorised to approve the strategic case for new short course programmes and report decisions back to the Committee regularly.

34 ADMISSIONS POLICY

Received:

a paper from the Administrative Officer (Recruitment and Admissions) (09-164).

Noted:

- (i) that Heads of Departments and senior Registry figures had been consulted on the Admissions Policy document;
- (ii) that the document was orientated more heavily toward undergraduate recruitment, although there was reference to postgraduate recruitment where necessary;
- (iii) that the document contained amended service standards;
- (iv) that the established entry criteria should be made more readily available to all staff members in the interest of transparency and consistency;
- (v) that there were a number of minor amendments yet to be made to the document, particularly as a result of the upcoming reorganisation;
- (vi) that provision for deviation from the standard offer was made in bullet point two in section two, where it stated that all applications would be considered holistically;
- (vii) that the Office would need to consider how to implement training for interviewers.

Resolved:

that the Committee would consider how the current climate (ie fewer university places) might affect admissions criteria in the years to come in an early meeting in 2009-10.

Recommended:

that the Admissions Policy (subject to some minor amendments) be approved.

35 EAST ASIA

Received:

a paper from the External Relations and Development Committee (09-161).

36 PORTFOLIO REVIEW

Received:

- (i) a report on the progress of the postgraduate portfolio review (09-162)
- (ii) a report on programmes identified for review (09-163).

Noted:

that Phase One of the Postgraduate Portfolio Review had identified the following programmes for review by Academic Development Committee, which made the following recommendation and observations:

MA Performance and Culture: Interdisciplinary Perspectives

It was noted that the Department was keen to continue running this programme, in particular because it had been very successful as a vehicle for recruiting PhD students. The Committee noted that the programme's recruitment numbers were likely affected by its self-limiting entry criteria, which could be reviewed. The Committee recommended that the programme continue.

MA Contemporary British Politics

The Committee noted that whilst this programme had never recruited well, all but one of its units were shared with other programmes, and that the individual units were well attended. It was noted that the programme's recruitment numbers might be affected by its narrow curriculum, and also that a proposed MA in Modern History and Politics might further affect its ability to recruit. The Politics Departmental Board had recommended that this programme continue. The Committee recommended that the programme's scope and perhaps title be widened to broaden its appeal to prospective students, particularly in the international market. It was recommended that the programme be kept under review for a further year.

MA Aural and Visual Cultures

The Committee noted that this was a very niche programme, and although its recruitment numbers were low, there was some indication that it was attracting a significant number of international applicants. It was recommended that more detailed information about likely conversion rates be sought before a decision was made regarding the programme's future.

MA Cross-Sectoral and Community Arts

The Committee noted that the Department of PACE had already suspended this programme and that it was considering re-configuring it, possibly as a pathway within a revised MA Professional, Community Education and Development. It was recommended that the status of these programmes be further reviewed in a year's time.

PG Diploma in Counselling

The Committee noted that this programme had already been closed to new applications and that new applicants were being directed to the corresponding MA programme, so no decision was required.

MA Group and Intercultural Therapy

The Committee noted that the Department would be closing this programme immediately.

MA Psychoanalytic Studies

The Committee felt that more detailed information on issues to do with programme staffing was needed before a decision was made regarding the programme's closure, but that this programme would be examined further in the upcoming Review of the Psychotherapeutic Studies Unit.

MA Cultural History

The Committee noted that this programme would be evaluated as part of the upcoming Review of the Department of History, and as such declined to make a recommendation regarding its status.

MA Applied Linguistics: Sociocultural Approaches

The Committee noted that this programme attracted many students from other departments. The Committee strongly recommended a change in the title of the degree.

MSc in Cognitive Computing

The Committee noted that this programme had not been actively marketed by the Department which had resulted in poor recruitment. The Department had instigated a marketing plan for this programme and the Head of the Department of Computing had recommended that the subject be closed in one year's time if it had not achieved improvements in student recruitment numbers as a result of improved programme marketing.