

GOLDSMITHS
University of London

ACADEMIC BOARD / FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND SYSTEMS COMMITTEE
15 October 2008

Present: Mr Hugh Jones (in the Chair), Dr Virginia Brooke, Dr Stephen Cottrell, Dr Basem El-Haddadeh, Ms Mary Nixon, Ms Vivienne Rose, Miss Rosemary Harrison (Secretary).

In attendance: Quality and Governance Administrator.

Apologies for absence: Dr Richard Grayson, Ms Juliet Sprake.

OPEN BUSINESS

1 CONFLICT OF INTERESTS POLICY

Received:

the College's Conflict of Interests Policy, and its potential implications for the obligations of members of the Committee (08-303).

2 STANDING ORDERS

Received:

the Standing Orders in force for all Goldsmiths Committees since 1 September 2007 (08-304).

3 TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP OF INFORMATION MANAGEMENT AND SYSTEMS COMMITTEE

Received:

the terms of reference, composition and membership of the Committee for the academic year 2008-09 (08-328).

Members of the Committee noted that the Committee's origins lay in the former IT Strategy Steering Group, which had operated in 2006-07 to produce the IT Strategy, and had been in abeyance during 2007-08. There was now a need to establish this present body which would oversee the implementation of the IT Strategy and consider proposals for its future development, whilst also providing an institution-level framework for decision-making in the area of records management.

4 PROGRESS IN A COLLEGE-WIDE APPROACH TO RECORDS MANAGEMENT

Received:

a report from the Head of Secretariat, outlining current activities and issues for Goldsmiths in the area of records management, and including as an appendix the overview report from the Feasibility Study conducted by CIMTECH in the Summer term 2008 (08-329).

It was noted that a key problem in the area at present was one of timing: enhancement projects tended to be locally managed, and there was little interaction between potentially related projects in different departments. There was a need for an Information Systems Strategy providing a plan of interactions between various information systems.

There was also a need for simple guidance to departments on generic good practice in records management, and there was potential for developing this area in the light of the CIMTECH report already received. The JISC guidance *Managing information to make life easier: a practical guide for administrators* had been sent to departments some time before, but it would be desirable for there to be ongoing support. It was pointed out that a framework of good records management practice was of great importance for succession planning at the departmental level.

It was noted that, in disseminating good records management practice across the College, it was beneficial to stress the advantages of such good practice to users of records themselves, and to guard against over-emphasis of the legal compliance dimension. It was also desirable to identify "quick win" projects which would demonstrate benefits for users of the system with little effort. However, due to difficulties in eliciting sufficient participation across the College, even minor projects could be subject to delays which were frustrating for those who had cooperated according to the planned timescale. (An example of this was noted from paper 08-329 concerning the archive of Departmental Board minutes, designed for dissemination via the College network.)

5 MODEL PUBLICATION SCHEME

Received:

a report from the Head of Secretariat on the development of a new Publication Scheme for the College, conforming to the new Model Publication Scheme published by the Information Commissioner, to which adherence was required from 1 January 2009 (08-330).

6 MANAGEMENT OF DATA COLLECTION NOTICE INFORMATION

Received:

a report from the Head of Secretariat concerning plans for a review of Data Collection Notices issued by the College (08-331).

It was noted that the College already issued generic data collection notices to new students and staff on arrival, to cover regular predictable processing by the central administration. These notices were from time to time extended with further processing purposes as appropriate, but it would never be possible to predict all necessary purposes at this point. In addition, collection notices for personal data defined by the Data Protection Act as "sensitive" were required to be very explicit, and this often prevented coverage by a generic notice.

7 STUDENT RECORDS SYSTEM

Received:

a report from the Academic Registrar (08-319R)

It was noted that comments from members of the College on a draft specification had been received and the current plan should enable procurement by February 2009.

8 E-RECRUITMENT OF STAFF

Received:

a report from the Director of Human Resources (08-332).

It was noted that the site to be set up to manage the system would be external with Goldsmiths branding. Human Resources Committee had been impressed by the presentation which they had recently received on the system. Members of staff involved in shortlisting would be able to access applications as they were received, via a password. Some reservations were expressed about the use of the automated shortlisting facility within the system, which it was noted would not necessarily be brought into use immediately.

9 PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IT STRATEGY

Received:

a report from the Director of IT on progress in the implementation of the IT Strategy (08-333), together with the IT Strategy as approved by Council in June 2007 (07-245R).

The Committee noted that paper 08-333, because it included forward planning, reported on a work programme of almost two years. Since approval of the Strategy, changes in the management of the IT Services department had been introduced in order to enhance the Strategy's delivery. In the early stages of implementation, infrastructural enhancements to support various more specific aspects of the Strategy were of particular importance. IT governance had been identified as a key area for future developments, as well as improved interaction with the Estates Department.

10 IT NETWORK FAILURE

The Committee noted the recent incident of network failure, which had been caused by an electrical fault in the Whitehead Building. Service had been quickly reinstated by the Systems Team following identification of the problem. It was recognised that the regular maintenance of electrical supplies affecting IT systems needed to be improved as a matter of urgency to prevent a recurrence elsewhere of this type of failure.

11 NEXT MEETING

Noted:

that the agenda for the next meeting (to be held on a date in the Spring term to be decided) would include consideration of:

a revised IT Strategy and an overview of the IT programme;

the future development of a wider Information Systems Strategy (to include the College's approach to the management of paper records);

IT governance;

issues of organisational change;

progress reports on the Student Records Project; E-recruitment;

business continuity planning for IT.

RMH
October 2008