

GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE
University of London

ACADEMIC BOARD

LEARNING AND TEACHING QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 8 October 2008

Present: Dr Philip Broadhead (Chair) Dr Basem El-Haddadeh
Mr Jesse Fajemisin Ms Mary Claire Halvorson
Ms Vee Harris Professor Carrie Paechter
Professor Len Platt Dr Ida Pu
Dr Gareth Stanton Mrs Vivien Taibe
Ms Jess Tratt Mr Bob Westaway
Ms Denise Miller (Secretary)

Apologies: Dr Victoria Goddard; Dr James Martin; Ms Juliet Sprake; Ms Mary Nixon;
Dr Jorella Andrews and Dr Michael Young

In attendance: Ms Anne Francis; Dr John Phelps; Dr Esther Saxey

OPEN BUSINESS

1 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Noted:

the College policy on conflicts of interest (08-303)

2 STANDING ORDERS

Noted:

the College's Standing Orders (08-304)

3 MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

Noted:

- (i) the terms of reference and membership of the Learning and Teaching Quality Committee and its sub-committees for 2008 – 2009 (08-322)
- (ii) that the Committee place occupied by the Head of the Learning and Teaching Office would be taken by the Head of the Learning Enhancement Unit once appointed
- (iii) that the group A vacancy would be filled by Dr Jorella Andrews of the Department of Visual Cultures and the Group B vacancy by Dr Michael Young from the Music Department

4 MINUTES

Received:

the minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2008 and the minutes of the meeting held on 28 August 2008

Resolved:

to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 28 August 2008

5 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

5.1 Minutes of the 14 May 2008 meeting: College Board and Assessment Regulations (minute 42)

Noted:

that the Committee had recommended that any suspension of the regulations requested by Boards of Examiners should continue to be referred to the Pro-Warden (Academic) but that subsequently the Pro-Wardens' responsibilities had been reorganised with the Pro-Warden (Academic) becoming the Pro-Warden (Academic Development) and consequently the responsibility for assessment had passed to the Chair as Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development)

5.2 Minutes of the 28 August 2008 meeting: MSc in Computer Games and Entertainment (minute 61)

Noted:

- (i) that drafting a final agreement had proven to be slightly more complicated than originally thought, and was still in progress. Teaching in Malta would not start until reading week, as the Department of Computing needed some lead in time in order to prepare teaching material
- (ii) that since it was possible that due to recruitment issues the start of the programme would be deferred by one year, the agreement would come to the November meeting if time allowed
- (iii) that the Committee wished to pay particular attention to the agreement as it was likely to become a significant part of the College's collaborations framework

6 THE NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

Received:

a paper from the Quality Administrator on the results of the National Student Survey 2007-08 (08-323)

Noted:

- (i) that the Quality Administrator had provided an initial analysis of the data focussing on areas for development. The Committee would receive more detailed analysis in November
- (ii) that the Department of Design was to be congratulated, having scored well above the benchmark in most areas, and particularly having scored the highest mark for the subject area Design Studies in the country for teaching, and the second highest for overall satisfaction. Additionally Social Work (a subject area which comprises BA Social Work and BA Applied Social Science, Community Development and Youth Work at Goldsmiths) had recovered after having a dip in their scores last year to become joint first for teaching in their subject area and tenth in terms of overall satisfaction
- (iii) that Computing and Psychology had suffered from the Whitehead Building closure with a fall in their Learning Resources scores
- (iv) that from the survey data it could be concluded that students were largely satisfied with the College's IT resources, but dissatisfied with the library resources and with the teaching accommodation. These conclusions were also supported by the College's internal student feedback data
- (v) that SMT had agreed £150k of immediate additional funding for the library, and how this would be used to have the greatest impact in supporting student learning would be negotiated with the Librarian. At the same time the excellent new facilities in the RISB should also help to improve students' satisfaction with the quality of their learning resources
- (vi) that satisfaction with the teaching accommodation should improve when the College moved to centralised timetabling allowing the best use of the available space. In addition the Estates Department was continuing the refurbishment of bookable teaching rooms in line with the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy implementation plan, to create bright, comfortable spaces some of which could be flexibly set up to support different teaching styles, and liaising with Media Resources to install and upgrade audio visual equipment
- (vii) that the College's 3D Graduate scheme was one of the best personal development planning schemes in the sector, but this was not reflected in the College's low overall scores for Personal Development
- (viii) that students' dissatisfaction with Organisation and Management largely seemed to be about a lack of communication, particularly for students on joint programmes
- (ix) that the Chair had been working with the departments that had done least well in terms of overall student satisfaction to agree and implement changes for this year in response to the most pressing areas of concern
- (x) that it was important for departments to encourage a good response rate in the 2009 survey thus making their results as representative as possible

7 THE STUDENT 'ONE-STOP' HELPDESK

Received:

an oral report from the Director of IT on the new helpdesk in the RISB

Noted:

- (i) that over the summer work had taken place on the ground floor of the RISB to put in place a integrated IT and Library helpdesk. This was phase one of a plan, as noted in the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy, to improve the learning environment for students by improving the RISB facilities to include new silent study areas, new space for social/collaborative learning and upgraded computing facilities. Phases two and three would follow
- (ii) that the ground floor of the RISB was now a learning environment where students could eat, drink, work in groups (as recommended by the LTA), or take part in peer to peer learning and had proved to be a huge popular success. Students had been given a leaflet that could be stored with their library card in induction week to help them appreciate and access the new facilities
- (iii) that there were some teething problems in bringing together the Library and IT teams, which would be addressed by running a training programme so that the teams could cover for each other on the basics. In addition the entrance turnstiles would be moved forward in order to give more space for the ground floor, new signs were to be put up and a single queuing system implemented
- (iv) that the achievement was impressive and represented much hard work by staff who were to be congratulated on implementing a great step forward for the College

8 LEARNING ENHANCEMENT UNIT

Received:

from the Chair, a report on progress towards establishing a Learning Enhancement Unit (08-324)

Noted:

- (i) that a Working Group chaired by the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development) had been formed in response to the review of the Centre for Excellence in Learning Technology (CELT) undertaken in June 2007, particularly the reviewers' recommendation that:

in the medium term the College should consider moving towards an Educational Development Unit with academic leadership, with a strong focus on teaching, which would report to the Pro-Warden (Students and Learning Development), of which CELT and the LTO would form the core
- (ii) that the Working Group had recognised the valuable work of both CELT and the LTO and had concluded that more could be achieved as a larger unit, particularly to support key strategies including the Learning, Teaching Assessment Strategy; the Student Experience Strategy; and Equality and Diversity action plans, hence the

Working Group had recommended to SMT the merger of CELT and the LTO into the Learning Enhancement Unit, with a revised set of aims

- (iii) that SMT had accepted the recommendations with immediate effect and colleagues from CELT and the LTO were already working together
- (iv) that the aims of the new unit integrated the aims of CELT and the LTO while adding new responsibilities including research into relevant pedagogies, the effect of which was to give the Learning Enhancement Unit an important role to play in the strategic leadership of all aspects of learning and teaching
- (v) that the new unit would be headed by a person with an academic background and given an appropriate grade and the post would be advertised shortly. The working group had taken the view that an academic would be best able to engage with academic members of staff on the issues, particularly if they had experience of teaching in a research intensive institution
- (vi) that the Head of the LEU would work closely with colleagues including, for example, the Dean of the Graduate School, on areas of joint interest and responsibility, and would work with departments to assist with the implementation of their LTA strategy action plans, reporting to the Committee, as a member, on any major or generic issues arising
- (vii) that the effectiveness of the LEU would be monitored by the Committee, who hoped that the new unit would be proactive and influential in developing teaching practices and enhancing the quality of students' learning opportunities

9 LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Received:

from the Chair a report on Departmental Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies reflecting on common themes and good practice (08-325)

Noted:

- (i) that the Chair thanked Esther Saxey, the Learning and Teaching Administrator, who had given invaluable help in preparing the report
- (ii) that the report followed on from the continuing review of assessment and provided a high level analysis of departmental Learning Teaching and Assessment Strategies and action plans (LTAs), drawing out common themes, good practice and areas that the College might wish to consider at a policy level
- (iii) that the departmental LTAs were available on the k-drive or online at: <http://www.goldsmiths.ac.uk/learning-teaching/departmentalstrategy.php> (College username and password required)
- (iv) that the highlights of the departmental plans were given in the appendix, with the intention that departments could use it as a reference, for example a department wanting to start online assessment could refer to the appendix to see if any other colleagues were already engaged with this and then consult with them

- (v) that the report recommended that a Task Group be established to review the assessment regulations giving particular consideration to the practice of anonymous assessment, given that online submissions cannot be anonymous (at present) and that in certain disciplines (eg Drama, Music) it was impossible to anonymously assess all student achievement
- (vi) that while it was intended that anonymous assessment would continue for examinations, the practicalities of coursework marking could usefully be clarified for staff
- (vii) that the norm in the sector is anonymous marking, which had been shown by research to promote equal opportunities
- (viii) that the minimum requirement for the VLE was that any handouts given to students should be posted on the VLE, and all courses should be represented. The Head of CELT would be talking to department in the coming session about effective use of the VLE, use of which could be greatly expanded by departments given that IT services was currently upgrading and was about to add an extra 20 terabytes of storage
- (ix) that a further report would come to the Committee once the Task Group had met

Resolved:

- (i) that the paper be circulated to all Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees for their consideration
- (ii) that a task group be established to undertake:
 - (a) a review of assessment regulations to facilitate the adoption of innovative practice in assessment
 - (b) that as part of the review of assessment regulations, specific consideration be given to the rationale for and application of anonymity in the assessment process.
- (iii) that the Learning Enhancement Unit be asked to work with Registry and academic colleagues on reviewing the use of percentage marks.

10 ANNUAL REPORT

Received:

from the Committee Secretary a draft annual report on the Committee's business in 2007-08 focussing particularly on the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (08-326)

Noted:

- (i) that the Committee was required to give an annual report to Council about the work the Committee had undertaken in pursuit of strategic aim three:

To ensure a high-quality learning experience through a commitment to excellence and innovation in learning and teaching, an up-to-date and stimulating learning

environment, a reflective and well-designed curriculum which reflects the aspirations of students and the needs of society, and support for teaching quality.

- (ii) that while some of the work the Committee did in this respect was routine (eg new programme approvals or considering reports of Periodic Reviews) much of the attention of the Committee had been focussed on the development and implementation of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy and the review of assessment, and it was these activities that the report discussed
- (iii) that in 2006-07 the Committee had overseen the development of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and following on from that during 2007-08 the Committee had overseen the development of a College level action plan to support the LTA, and departmental LTAs, with associated action plans and assessment case studies
- (iv) that in 2008-09 the Committee would continue this work, starting with reviewing in detail departmental action plans, drawing out common themes and areas of good practice
- (v) that the Committee noted the improvement in student satisfaction with *Feedback on Assessment* in the National Student Survey for 2008 and hoped that this reflected the good work done by the Learning and Teaching Office, the Chair and the Committee

Resolved:

to approve the report for forwarding to Council

11 EXTERNAL PROGRAMMES

11.1 Computing programmes

Noted:

- (i) that on behalf of the Committee the Chair had approved the 2008-09 regulations for the external BSc and Diploma in Computing and Information Systems and the BSc/Diploma in Creative Computing
- (ii) that the significant regulatory changes had already been approved by Goldsmiths, and the regulations were then rewritten to include them. The Pro-Warden (Academic) as Chair of External System Sub-Committee and subsequently as Chair of Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee recommended the approval of the text of the rewritten regulations.

11.2 English programmes

Noted:

- (i) that in the past external BA English students have been required to pass all 12 course units for the award of the BA, in contrast to internal students who must complete 12 and pass 10 with certain other conditions applying
- (ii) that following successful appeals from external students based on the discrepancy in the external and internal regulations, the recommendations of the 2007 Periodic Review of the External English programme and discussions between the Dean of the

External System and the Pro-Warden (Academic), the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, had approved a change to the 2008-09 regulations for the external BA in English. The change would more closely align the internal and external regulations by allowing external students to be awarded the BA after completing 12 course units and passing 10.

- (iii) that on behalf of the Committee and on the recommendation of the Chair of Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee the Chair had approved the 2008-09 regulations for the external BA and Diploma in English
- (iv) that on behalf of the Committee and on the recommendation of the Chair of Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee the Chair had approved changes to the programme specifications for the external BA and Diploma in English. The changes had been made to incorporate regulatory changes, including that BA English students are now required to pass all 10 course units and complete 12 for the award of the degree

12 CREDIT FRAMEWORK

Noted:

a report from the QAA, published in August 2008, regarding guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England (08-327)

13 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, 19 November 2008 at 10am

Wednesday, 11 February 2009 at 10am

Wednesday, 20 May 2009 at 10am

Denise Miller
October 2008