

GOLDSMITHS
University of London
ACADEMIC BOARD
RESEARCH AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER COMMITTEE
4 February 2009

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2009

Present: Professor Jane Powell (in the Chair), Professor Les Back, Mr Mike Metelits, Professor Carrie Paechter, Professor Len Platt, Professor Irit Rogoff, Professor Robert Zimmer, Ms Lynda Agili (Secretary)

Apologies: Professor Maria Shevtsova

OPEN BUSINESS

21 MINUTES

Resolved:

to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2008, subject to an amendment to Minute 12

22 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Noted:

(i) Finance support for grant applications and management

that SMT has approved the establishment of a new full time post in the Finance Office to be dedicated to supporting and managing external research project finances both pre and post award

that the post represented a real addition in the human resources dedicated to research management and appropriately reflected the increased workload that has developed as a result of raised levels of external research income and more emphasis on the importance of submitting substantial grant applications

Noted:

(ii) AHRC Block Grant Partnership and Institutional Arts and Humanities Research Strategy

that the reviewers' responses to the College Block Grant Partnership application had been largely favourable and that it was hoped that the award announcement, due at the end of February, would maintain current levels of AHRC studentships for Goldsmiths despite the overall 15% cut in AHRC postgraduate funding

that the ESRC were now considering the adoption of a similar approach to postgraduate funding which would require HEIs to bid to become, individually or collectively, Doctoral Training Units or Centres; Centres, but not Units, would receive quotas of studentships

that Goldsmiths had a strong social science doctoral training programme so might be able to bid for a Centre status in its own right; if so, it may need to extend transferable skills training in Year 2 and 3. However, it was not yet clear whether Goldsmiths has the critical mass of disciplines or students to submit an independent application for Centre status.

Noted:

(iii) Departmental Research Committees (DRC)

that the Research Office would establish regular liaison with the DRC Chairs with a view to dissemination of information, sharing of good practice, development of strategy at both departmental and central levels, and identification/provision of training and resource needs

Noted:

(iv) Research Excellence Framework [REF] Developments

that Expert Advisory Groups had been established to review the outcomes of the bibliometrics pilot exercise and to advise on the interpretation and use of the resulting data

that EAG workshops would also consider the lessons from RAE2008 and the potential for refining the system

that the EAGs would be meeting throughout the Spring and Summer terms with a view to providing a proposal for consultation in September 09

that current indications are that REF will probably be an evolution of RAE, retaining a strong element of expert review for all panels, rather than representing a wholesale move to metrics; this reflects concerns both about the complexity and logistics of gathering accurate and robust citation data and about their interpretation

Noted:

(v) Changes to RKTC constitution

that following discussions with the incoming Chair of the Research Ethics Sub-Committee [RESC] and with the secretariat it was agreed that the Chair of RESC should sit on RKTC as an *ex officio* member subject to the approval of Academic Board

Noted:

(vi) The Centre for Philosophy

that the Department of Visual Culture had come to the view that it was inappropriate for it to host the Centre for Philosophy, and that consequently the Centre remains inactive pending a decision on logistical arrangements

that if and when those involved in the Centre formulate a revised proposal for its organisational arrangements and operation, it will need to be re-presented to RKTC and Academic Board

Noted:

(vii) Business Advisory Sub-Committee [BASC]

that BASC would now be sitting later in the term and would report to the subsequent RKTC meeting

Noted:

(viii) Business Development Office [BDO]

that the report of the Internal Audit of Enterprise and Business Development at Goldsmiths had made a number of recommendations including:

- (a) that RKTC Terms of Reference should be reviewed to clarify its responsibilities in relation to business development, enterprise, and knowledge transfer
- (b) that there should be exploration of enhanced linkage between the Business Development Office and Research Office, at strategic, operational and administrative levels

Resolved:

that proposals for possible modifications to the RKTC Terms of Reference will be developed later in this academic year

that the Head of the Research Office, the Senior Business Development Manager, and the PWRE should discuss synergies and overlaps between the activities of the two offices with a view to identifying possibilities for closer working

Noted:

(ix) New Research Office Secretary

that Research Office had appointed Ms Emily Harrup as a new .5 secretary

23 REVIEW OF RESEARCH CENTRES

Received:

a proposal to review the current status and functioning of current Goldsmiths 'soft' Research Centres, starting with consideration of their 2008-09 annual reports at the next meeting of RKTC (A; 09-43)

Noted:

- i. that there is a need for academic departments and RKTC to clarify the extent to which existing Centres are performing against their original aims
- ii. that in future, academic departments should consider and submit to RKTC annual reports on the Centres they host, indicating whether they are still serving a valuable function and giving an indication of recent, current, and planned future activities
- iii. that in the light of this year's annual reports it may be appropriate to review and revise the guidelines for establishing Centres and/or their terms of reference and governance systems

24 RESEARCH COMMITTEE FUNDS

Received:

the application form and guidelines for the Early Career Research Awards competition (B; 09-44) and a proposal for the provision of funding to support academic staff in the development of large external research grant proposals. (C; 09-45)

Noted:

- i. that £7,500 of committee funds would be kept aside to support the development of large-scale (> £500K) and complex research applications as and when the opportunities arose
- ii. that Research Office would evaluate the need for additional support over and above what it is routinely able to offer to applicants for large grant applications, and would make recommendations to the Chair for authorisation of amounts up to £1,000; requests for additional support up to £1,500 should be circulated to RKTC for their comments. In cases where more substantial levels of funding are needed to support the development of very ambitious and high value projects, requests should be referred to SMT
- iii. that the eligibility criteria for the Early Career Researcher [ECR] Awards competition will specify that applicants should hold an established academic post on Lecturer A or B grade and be within their first 5 years of appointment at Goldsmiths
- iv. that ECR applications should provide evidence of strong departmental commitment, such that successful applicants would receive support of various kinds from their departments to increase the prospects of the

- research funded by RKTC leading on to competitive applications for external funding
- v. that the current system for assessing proposals, in which all RKTC members independently grade all applications, represented a very high workload, and that alternative systems might prove more efficient without loss of effectiveness
 - vi. that the University of London Central Research Funds, currently chaired by Professor Back, are open to academic staff and postgraduates and support small grants similar in scope to those supported by the RKTC, and that the rate of applications is currently low

Resolved:

- i. to establish a triage process by which a subgroup of RKTC [the Chair and Professors Rogoff and Zimmer] would carry out a preliminary review of all applications and screen out all those which were agreed to be non-competitive; the 'longlist' would then be considered by all members
- ii. that Research Office should make all academic staff aware that it is well worth submitting applications to the University of London Central Research Funds

25 PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH THE CENTRE FOR THE STUDY OF THE BALKANS

Received:

a proposal to establish the Centre for the Study of the Balkans with effect from September 2009, as a soft centre attached to the Department of History (D; 09-46)

Noted:

- i. that there was broad support for the Centre; that the initiative appeared to provide a potentially fruitful opportunity for national and international development; and that it was strongly endorsed by the Department of History
- ii. that it was important that the proposal should clearly articulate the inter-departmental membership of the Centre and that the cross-departmental membership of the Advisory Board be confirmed
- iii. that subject to Academic Board's approval of the Centre, RKTC would award £805 to assist in financing the Inaugural Lecture

Recommended:

to approve the establishment of the Centre for the Study of the Balkans attached to the Department of History, with effect from September 2009 subject to confirmation of cross-departmental membership and activities

26 PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH GOLDSMITHS LEVERHULME MEDIA RESEARCH CENTRE: SPACES, CONNECTIONS, CONTROL

Noted:

that the Leverhulme Media Research Centre: Spaces, Connections, Control Centre had been established with effect from January 2009, as a soft Centre attached to the Department of Media and Communications Studies, following approval by Academic Board on 3 December 2008

27 RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Noted:

that an internal conference to promote the RCUK Concordat recommendations for the career development of contract research staff, and to explore with these members of Goldsmith their perceived priorities for support and training, is being organised by the Staff Development Team and Research Office on 19 March 2009 at Prospero House, London Bridge

28 LAUNCH OF NEW AHRC £8M FELLOWSHIP SCHEME

Noted:

the launch of the new AHRC Fellowship Scheme which will replace the current AHRC Research Leave Scheme. Details can be found at <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/News/Latest/Pages/NewFellowshipScheme.aspx> and in the Research Opportunity Horizon Scanning report

29 RESEARCH OPPORTUNITY HORIZON SCANNING

Received and noted:

a report of major research initiatives currently open for application (E; 09-47)

30 LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Noted:

the following periods of paid leave approved by Chair's action:

- (a) Dr J Besson, Dept of Anthropology (12.1.09 – 27.3.09)
- (b) Prof A Blamires, Dept of English and Comparative Literature (21.9.09 – 11.12.09)
- (c) Prof D Keown, Dept of History (21.9.09 – 11.12.09)
- (d) Prof L Platt, Dept of Professional and Community Education (21.9.09 – 18.6.10)
- (e) Prof R McDonald, Dept of English and Comparative Literature (21.9.09 – 11.12.09)
- (f) Mr M Waller, Dept of Design (12.1.09 – 27.3.09)

Resolved:

to approve the reports following leave of absence: (F; 09-48)

- (a) Prof N Couldry, Dept of Media and Communications
- (b) Dr R Crownshaw, English and Comparative Literature
- (c) Dr J Dragovic-Soso, Dept of Politics
- (d) Ms J Gabrys, Dept of Design
- (e) Dr G Menz, Dept of Politics
- (f) Prof M Michael, Dept of Sociology
- (g) Dr E Tarlo, Dept of Anthropology

31 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Noted:

HERA

- i. that the AHRC had announced their support for the HERA [Humanities in the European Research Area] competition and would be responsible for the participation of UK institutions
- ii. that the competition rules look fairly complicated and that potential project PIs should contact the Research Development Officer as early as possible with outline proposals

32 NEXT MEETING

Noted:

that the next meeting will be held on 13 May 2009 at 2.00 pm

33 RAE 2008 THE OUTCOMES

Received:

the Goldsmiths UoA quality profiles (G; 09-49); a table summarising the overall quality profile and sub-profiles (H; 09-50); an analysis of Goldsmiths' positioning across the sector and disciplines (I; 09-51); a comparison of predicted output profiles against final assessment profiles (J; 09-52)

Noted:

- i. that modelling of potential income following the profile announcements had been undertaken and, despite Goldsmiths' improved overall performance, QR income was likely to be much the same as previous years. Overall QR funding has been reduced whilst STEM subject income is to be ringfenced; consequently the unit of resource for non-STEM disciplines, and especially those where there has been overall growth nationally in researcher numbers, will inevitably fall.
- ii. that Goldsmiths' two top-performing RAE submissions were Sociology and Media and Communications
- iii. that boosts to Goldsmiths' QR income would almost certainly come from Computing, Psychology and Visual Cultures, all of which showed marked improvements in RAE2008 relative to RAE2001; and from the first-time Social Work & Social Policy and the Politics submissions
- iv. that submissions which had maintained or slipped from their RAE2001 positions, most notably Art and Design, would be likely to receive less QR funding
- v. that the sub-profiles demonstrated that in some cases overall 'activity' profiles were strongly influenced by the Environment and Esteem assessments despite the relatively low weighting attributed to these dimensions; and that attention should be given to identifying and sharing practice from the departments which received high scores for Environment with those which did less well
- vi. that some members of RKTC felt that it would be desirable to lobby for more flexible UoAs which would enable greater interdisciplinarity

LA
March 2009