

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2009

Present: Mr Kenneth May (Chair)
Ms Patsy Carter (deputising for Mr Michael Dick)
Professor Mark d'Inverno,
DR Helen Jones
Mr Chris Pearson
Mr Terry Rosenberg
Ms Rachel Soper

In attendance: Mrs Bunmi Odulaja (Secretary), Mr Steve Collins (for items 8 and 12),
Miss Fatma Gormus (Note taker), Mr Bruce Ormiston, IOM (for item 13),
Visiting Researcher (observer)

1 Apologies: Dr Basem El Haddadeh, Mr Hugh Jones, Professor Celia Lury

2 MINUTES

Resolved:

To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2009

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Apologies from Helen Jones had not been recorded in the Minutes of 7 May 2009.

4 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY

Received:

The policy was noted and no members declared a conflict of interest.

5 AMENDMENTS TO STANDING ORDERS

Received:

The last amendments were in 2009 and were received and noted.

6 TERMS OF REFERENCE, COMPOSITION AND MEMBERSHIP

Received:

Members noted the terms of reference, composition and membership for the year 2009-10. The Chair reminded Committee members of the importance of their roles in contributing to and monitoring of strategic items.

7 STRATEGIC CONTEXT AND HR ACTION PLAN

Received:

the report from the Director of HR (E;09-389)

The Director of HR introduced the report and explained that the findings from the HR review had now been implemented through changing the HR structure. It was felt important that HR and the Committee had a clear view on the importance of HR to the college, how HR needed to engage more fully with the college and its stakeholders, and the role that HR Committee members could play.

In discussion and presentation, the Director of HR reported that the College would be facing difficult times through the reductions in expenditure and changed demands on the sector. It was even more essential that HR and the other support services added value to the college.. We would need constantly to review what was needed by the college and what resources were available to make continuous improvements in the way the college operated and met its mission. He also reported that this was an area in which HR could assist with through reviewing initiatives and anticipating how best to use the resources in the most effective ways.

The Chair expressed the view that it was important for members of staff to acknowledge the scale of the challenges facing them and what the college wanted to achieve. He reported that members of staff would need to understand the affects of external pressures and how these would impact budgets, strategies and operational plans. He explained that priorities would fundamentally need to be changed in order to move forward and HR would need to be involved in every step in order to ensure consistency, good communication and achievement of core business goals.

In reviewing structures and operations to meet future challenges it might be that departments would need to work together rather than in discrete entities in order to establish efficient synergies, and that HR would need to establish figures and review priorities in order to establish how departments can work together to achieve results.

The chair emphasised the importance of understanding opportunity costs and suggested that projects needed to be dealt with at a faster rate to meet the challenges we faced.

It was felt that this was a very substantial agenda for HR and that it would be difficult to take on anything further. Clear and measurable outputs were needed to keep focus on success.

It was agreed that the focus for the next meeting should be on policies.

8 OVERVIEW OF HR POLICIES

Received:

the report from the Deputy Director of HR (F;09-390)

The Deputy Director of HR introduced the report and explained that eight HR policies were at advanced state of approval and had been adapted in line with the Ordinances 11-14.

It was noted that the current need to seek final approval from Council could cause delays in launching changes, and it was felt that there was merit in moving the approval function to this committee with reporting of decisions to Council.

9 E-RECRUITMENT

Received:

the report from the HR Manager (Systems and Support)

The Director of HR introduced the report and explained that the E-recruitment system has been successful since its introduction at the start of 2009. He noted especially that it had been used for the progression round for the first time and that other Universities were expressing an interest in following Goldsmiths' lead.

The Chair asked the members of the committee to comment on their experiences of using the e-recruitment system for promotion/progression.

One of the members reported that time was an issue as people were asked to complete the online forms within tight deadlines.

Another member reported that the e-recruitment was appreciated and believed that the system had potential to meet the College's needs.

10 PROMOTION AND PROGRESSION

The Director of HR reported that the panels had now met and the notifications to members of staff would be sent out as soon as possible. There would be a need for further meetings and reports in order to conclude the handling of the very large number of applications received this year.

11 EQUALITIES UPDATE

Received:

the report from the Equalities Adviser (H;09-391)

The Chair expressed his gratitude for the contributions of the Equality and Diversity Adviser and wished her well in her new career.

12 CURRENT CASEWORK

Received:

the report from the Deputy Director of HR (I;09-392)

The Deputy Director of HR introduced the report and explained that there were no specific trends amongst the casework.

The Chair asked how many of the sickness cases which were reported would have been long term. It was confirmed that the sickness cases reported would have gone through Occupational Health because they were for 4 weeks or more and would therefore be treated as long term.

It was requested that this be made clearer in future reports.

13 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

Received:

the report from the Occupational Health Adviser (J;09-393)

The report was welcomed by all members.

In response to a request for an update on promotion of the service, it was reported that the Colleges' Internet and Hallmark had been used. Also that all well-being events were promoted through posters, emails and the corporate online events calendar.

The Occupational Health Adviser further reported that he would be working closely with the Staff Development team to link well-being awareness days to specific workshops which Staff Development were organising.

14 POLICIES

Received:

report from the Deputy Director of HR (K;09-382) and (L;09-383)

The Committee supported both the Performance and Development Policy and the Probation Policy. It was agreed that both policies should be presented at the next Council meeting on 1 December 2009 for final approval.

15 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Noted:

Thursday 4 February at 10:30 am Room DTHB 110

Thursday 20 May at 10:30 am Room DTHB 110