

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

ACADEMIC BOARD

LEARNING AND TEACHING QUALITY COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2009

Present: Dr Philip Broadhead (Chair) Dr Jorella Andrews
Ms Anna Furse Dr Victoria Goddard
Ms Mary Claire Halvorson Dr Victoria Korzeniowska
Ms Mary Nixon Ms Bindiya Patel
Ms Denise Miller (Secretary) Dr Robert Di Napoli

Apologies: Dr Tomas Chamorro Premuzic; Dr Basem El-Haddadeh;
Mr Jesse Fajemisin; Mr Larry O'Carroll; Professor Carrie Paechter;
Professor Len Platt; Ms Juliet Sprake; Dr Michael Young;
Dr Joanna Zylinska

In attendance: Mr Gareth Bodrell; Ms Sue English; Ms Anne Francis; Dr John Phelps

OPEN BUSINESS

18 ANNOUNCEMENTS

Noted:

that Mrs Vivien Taibe, Head of Academic Services, would be attending Committee meetings for the rest of the year and would be formally added to the membership for 2010-11

Resolved:

- (i) to welcome Anna Furse, Chair of the Department of Drama's Learning and Teaching Committee, as a co-opted academic member
- (ii) to start the Committee's February 2010 meeting at 2pm

19 MINUTES

Resolved:

to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2009, with the addition of the following at the end of minute 9 (Annual Programme Review):

- (x) that there were several processes of monitoring and review overseen by Departmental Learning and Teaching Committees

Resolved:

to consider how to coordinate departmental processes in order to remove duplication of effort and to make clear the links between Departmental monitoring and review and College policy and decision making processes

20 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 6: Matters arising from the minutes:

Minute 60: Review of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy Action Plan

Noted:

- (i) that the Chair had circulated the draft terms of reference of the proposed Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy Task Group and had had a response from the Students Union who wished to confirm that it was included in the membership. Accordingly the Students' Union's Welfare and Education Officer had been confirmed as a member of the Task Group
- (ii) that one other response had been received from the Director of Information Technology who was concerned that the Task Group was just dealing with the current strategy which took the College only to 2011
- (iii) that the Chair acknowledged that the preparation for the post 2011 Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy (LTA) would need to begin soon, but noted there was also a need to ensure that the existing strategy was relevant and the operational plan appropriate. In addition the Committee might wish to hold back from reconsidering the new LTA until the new Warden had had time to consider the College's strategic direction
- (iv) that it was important for the Task Group to meet soon in order to maintain forward momentum for the remaining life of the existing strategy. The Chair hoped to have full membership and a meeting planned in the next few days

21 INSTITUTIONAL AUDIT 2009

Received:

the report of the recent institutional audit of the College from the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (09-449)

Noted:

- (i) that the College's recent combined Degree Awarding Powers and Institutional Audit visit from the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) had ended in March 2009, and a draft audit report had been received in August, followed by the final report in October 2009

- (ii) that the report confirmed the judgement of the QAA audit team that confidence could reasonably be placed in the soundness of the College's present and likely future management of the academic standards of awards and in the quality of the learning opportunities available to students
- (iii) that the report also commended a number of features of good practice relating to the College's work on discipline-related assessment criteria and initiatives to support innovative practice in student assessment; the systematic involvement of students in the work of the College, the strategically targeted approach to the enhancement of student learning through the teaching fellowships scheme and the work of the Graduate School in providing cross-College support for postgraduate research and taught postgraduate students
- (iv) that there had been five recommendations for action that the QAA considered 'advisable' and another five that the QAA considered 'desirable'. The Head of Quality and Standards had initiated a working group to develop an action plan to address the recommendations, and other areas highlighted in the report, which she hoped to have ready for the Committee's next meeting. The QAA would initiate a mid-cycle follow up, and the action plan would be key to demonstrating that the College had dealt appropriately with the report and its recommendations.
- (v) that none of the recommendations were problematic, or would require significant resource to implement, and some were already being taken forward. The recommendation relating to the induction of External Examiners could easily be addressed, and, with the help and cooperation of academic departments, so could the recommendation relating to the timely appointment and briefing of External Examiners
- (vi) that the recommendation concerning joint honours examination boards raised an important issue that had already been extensively discussed.
- (vii) that recommendations about External Examiners were not surprising given the current national debate about their role. The College had made changes to the role of External Examiners that were in line with changes being made throughout the sector, for example mandating that if External Examiners were to change the mark of one student, that the entire cohort must also be re-examined. This reflected that the External Examiner role was moving away from intervention in the assessment process and towards overseeing that HEIs had good practices and procedures in place which were operating effectively.
- (viii) that it was important to demonstrate that the External Examiner role was receiving support appropriate to its importance in maintaining standards in the sector. The Director of Professional Development (herself an External Examiner) noted that she had been discussing with the Head of Academic Services training for staff who were either new to the External Examiner role or who may become External Examiners in the future. The training would consider good practice in the sector and would look at the changing roles and responsibilities of External Examiners in British Higher Education.
- (ix) that other issues identified in the audit report were the annual programme review process, where the Committee was well aware of the issues around timely

submission of reports, support for postgraduate students who taught, and collaborative provision

- (x) that the judgement of 'confidence' was the highest one that the QAA could give, and that all those who contributed to the successful audit were to be congratulated. The audit report had highlighted areas of good practice which represented significant achievement that the College could be very pleased with.

Resolved:

to forward the report to Academic Board

22 CREDIT FRAMEWORK

Received:

a paper from the Head of Quality and Standards on the introduction of a credit framework at Goldsmiths (09-450)

Noted:

- (i) that at its meeting of 27 February 2008, Academic Board resolved that a paper be produced for consideration by Departments, setting out the rationale for a credit framework and giving the advantages and disadvantages of the different options. A consultation document was circulated by the Academic Registrar at the end of 2008 and feedback obtained from departments. Further feedback had been obtained by the new Head of Quality and Standards who had drafted the proposed credit framework
- (ii) that the Committee was being asked to recommend for approval the broad outlines of the framework together with some specific proposals, with detailed regulatory changes to be progressed through the Committee system, starting with Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee, later in the year
- (iii) that the College already had introduced a postgraduate credit framework, the implementation of which was now almost complete. The requirements of the postgraduate credit framework have been incorporated into the paper which covered both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.
- (iv) that some departments, such as Anthropology, Drama, Politics, Sociology and Media, had operated their masters programmes on the basis of 6 courses and a dissertation and had had to change to 4 course units or 8 half course units and a dissertation in order to conform to the framework. Those departments had had to make difficult decisions about how to adapt programmes to fit the framework, but this had provided an opportunity to review and refresh programmes.
- (v) that departments also had had issues of fitting postgraduate programmes with idiosyncratic structures into the framework in ways that would allow students to apply for admission to the programme with credit in hand. In particular Visual Cultures was reluctant to change a popular masters both because its structure worked well pedagogically and because the Department considered that year long

intensive working was important to successful completion of the programme, and could be disrupted by students leaving early or coming late into the programme.

- (vi) that ultimately decisions had to be guided by what was in the best interests of students and staff, and the overarching principle of providing the highest standard of education possible
- (vii) that since Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee had been approving undergraduate programmes with credit attached for some years the implementation of an undergraduate credit framework, which would not change the current course unit size, was potentially straightforward. In consultation most academic departments had seen no serious problems.
- (viii) that currently undergraduate students could graduate with 10 course units passed out of 12 attempted. Under the new credit framework an undergraduate degree would be defined as 360 credits: 120 at Level 4, 120 at Level 5 and 120 at Level 6. It was therefore proposed to introduce some form of compensation in order to ensure that all students achieved the required 360 credits. These proposals would be discussed at a meeting of Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee during the course of the current academic year.
- (ix) that while the original intention had been to discontinue the pass degree at the same time as introducing the framework, further investigation by the Assistant Registrar (Programmes) had revealed that under University of London regulations the College was required to offer a pass degree without honours
- (x) that the University of London regulations did not permit the introduction of an Ordinary degree. The College had some leeway in its definition of a pass degree and that this would be discussed at a future meeting of the Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee.
- (xi) that the Head of Quality and Standards had proposed renaming course units 'modules', as a way of providing a clear terminological break between the pre- and post-credit framework regulations. However this would be hard to implement as the new student records system did not support use of the term 'module'
- (xii) that the proposal was to introduce the framework from autumn 2010, and for that year's new enrolment only, as the introduction of a credit framework was being combined with the raising of the pass mark to 40%, which could potentially disadvantage students.
- (xiii) that the staggered introduction of the undergraduate credit framework would have implications for publications for students such as handbooks, since information regarding programme regulations would have to be targeted at the appropriate cohort
- (xiv) that ultimately all students, undergraduate and postgraduate, would benefit from the greater flexibility provided by the credit frameworks

Recommended:

the approval of the proposals and the credit framework with three changes: (1) that the term 'course' be used rather than 'module'; (2) that the pass degree be retained but redefined; and (3) that the proposal for an ordinary degree be removed.

23 REPORT OF THE EXAM TASK GROUP

(minute 9, 8 October 2008 refers)

Received:

a report from the Chair on the conclusions of the Exam Task Group (09-451)

Noted:

- (i) that at its meeting on 8 October 2008, the Committee had considered a report and analysis of departmental Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies and action plans that identified common themes, good practice and issues the College might want to consider at a policy level
- (ii) that the report had recommended that a Task Group be established to review the assessment regulations giving particular consideration to the practice of anonymous assessment
- (iii) that the Task Group had met twice and had made six recommendations, the first of which was that presentations and similar formats that comprise a minor part of the overall assessment of a course could be marked by one examiner, with recorded or written samples available for an Assessor.
- (iv) that under the current regulations two examiners had to be present to assess such work, leading to practical difficulties in assessing oral work
- (v) that the intention of the proposal was to encourage the assessment of oral presentations while still providing for a robust assessment process. The meaning of the sample, and the process for sampling would need to be specified in more detail for the Standards Scrutiny Sub-Committee to consider, should the proposal be accepted by the Committee.
- (vi) that the first recommendation was supported by the Committee
- (vii) that the second recommendation, that first year work where deemed appropriate should be marked by one Examiner and samples made available to an Assessor, reflected common practice across the College and was supported by the Committee
- (viii) that the third recommendation, that second and third year work should normally be double-marked, was different from current practice, which varied across the College with some departments practising moderation rather than second marking
- (ix) that assessment processes had to be robust, effective and fit for purpose and should be increasingly rigorous as students advanced through their programmes

- (x) that since the assessment process was considered to be sufficiently rigorous students were not allowed to appeal their results on the grounds of academic judgement
- (xi) that the Committee considered that for third year undergraduate work, at a minimum, the dissertation should be second marked, and that if departments were using sampling rather than second marking the sample should be substantial
- (xii) that the Chair would reconsider the third recommendation, looking for procedures that were flexible while providing for quality and equity
- (xiii) that the Committee supported recommendation four, that sampling by Assessors should be on the same basis as that prescribed for External Examiners, and recommendation five, that anonymity in summative assessment should be preserved wherever practicable
- (xiv) that recommendation six (that the Chair consult on a policy for giving feedback on formative and summative assessment) had partly arisen from the audit process where it had become clear that the a more consistent approach to feedback across the College would be helpful
- (xv) that the Chair would consult with other 1994 group members and would draft a feedback policy that sought to reflect current practice and potential changes consonant with good practice in the sector

Resolved:

to support all the Task Group's recommendations, with the exception of the third

24 THE LEARNING ENHANCEMENT UNIT

Received:

a report from the Head of the Goldsmiths Learning Enhancement Unit, summarising the ethos, vision and aims of the unit (09-452)

Noted:

- (i) that the Chair welcomed Dr Roberto Di Napoli, Head of the Goldsmiths Learning Enhancement Unit (GLEU), to his first meeting of the Committee
- (ii) that the Head of GLEU had written a paper introducing the work of the GLEU, which brought together the Learning and Teaching Office and the Centre for Excellence in Learning Technology. The unit would undertake scholarly work at the same time as providing practical assistance to academic departments
- (iii) that, following the Business Partner model introduced by Human Resources, each member of the GLEU would now work with one of the academic departments, liaising particularly with their Learning and Teaching Committee Chair and this work would provide a backbone to bring together the disparate sides of the unit

- (iv) that the GLEU departmental contacts, if invited, would attend their department's Learning and Teaching Committee
- (v) that the GLEU would encourage colleagues to use the scholarly literature to inform their practice, inviting a discussion between the generic and the discipline based
- (vi) that the unit was the pedagogic arm of Quality, and any issues identified by quality processes should be taken forward by the GLEU, for example, the Head of Quality and Standards had noted that some staff were not comfortable with writing learning outcomes, hence the Head of GLEU had arranged a learning outcomes workshop.
- (vii) that the next draft of the document could usefully address some practical issues, such as guidance for effective working with visiting tutors
- (viii) that the Committee were pleased that the GLEU team were working well together, and considered that the enhancement agenda was very important to the College. The Committee looked forward to receiving the next draft of the document

25 THE RESEARCH/TEACHING NEXUS

Received:

an interim report from the Goldsmiths Learning Enhancement Unit's Research Teaching Fellows on their exploration of the meaning and practice of research-led teaching in the College (09-453)

Noted:

- (i) that the overall aims of the project were: to explore the meaning of "research-led teaching"; to consider with departments whether the GLEU needed to undertake any further work in the area; to share good practice between departments; and to formulate possible recommendations for Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategies
- (ii) that the research phase of the project, which had included discussions with staff, was complete, and the fellows were now fact checking and hoped to have a final report by the end of the year
- (iii) that the research had been very interesting, and the fellows hoped to have some suggestions for further development in their final report, plus examples of good practice. Goldsmiths' was, in some ways, ahead of other universities, with colleagues doing some exciting research led teaching
- (iv) that the College could promote its teaching to prospective students as research led and distinct from that at a non-research intensive HEI, and this could help students to understand and frame the difference between school and university with potential pedagogic benefits

- (v) that the fellows would try and hold a gathering after their final report, to disseminate their findings particularly to those most closely involved with research and research networks in departments, and to Chairs of Learning and Teaching Committees
- (vi) that the fellows had undertaken an excellent piece of work and the Committee looked forward to their final report

26 PROPOSED COLLABORATION WITH BIRZEIT UNIVERSITY, PALESTINIAN TERRITORIES

Received:

a report from the Head of Quality and Standards regarding a proposed flexible and distributed learning arrangement between Birzeit University, Palestinian Territories, and the Department of Sociology (09-454)

Noted:

- (i) that under the Collaborative Provision Framework the Committee was charged with considering whether Birzeit University had an appropriate learning environment and quality systems in order to be a partner institution for the arrangement with the Department of Sociology
- (ii) that colleagues had undertaken much work in support of the proposed link, in particular staff in Sociology had regularly visited Birzeit
- (iii) the proposal was for a distance learning PhD with students who were confined to the Birzeit campus. The students would be supported by video-conferencing, which had been tested by IT Services, and visits by staff from the Department of Sociology
- (iv) that the Academic Development Committee had considered the proposal's risks, and its strategic and legal implications
- (v) that the Committee considered that the quality assurance systems, learning environment and delivery method would be sufficient to support a good student experience and warmly supported the initiative

Recommended:

the approval of the arrangement between Birzeit University, Palestinian Territories, and the Department of Sociology

27 LIBRARY ANNUAL REPORT 2008-09

Received:

the Library's annual report 2008-09 from the Librarian (09-455)

Noted:

- (i) that the annual report from the Librarian for 2008-09 had been considered by the Library User Group at its meeting on 23 October 2009
- (ii) that almost all departments had begun inviting their Subject Librarian to the Departmental Learning and Teaching committees which had proved very helpful in keeping the Library informed about teaching developments. This was allowing the Library to develop a more coordinated response to helping students with their learning, and to have a more targeted approach to providing resources throughout the lifecycle of a programme.
- (iii) that the refurbishment of the Library was ongoing, with the first phase completed over the summer, the results from a questionnaire carried out in December 2008 being used to inform phase two, and phase three being planned for the top floor. The Library had received a substantial additional grant for purchases that had now been rolled into its annual budget, making the budget twice what it had been five years ago.
- (iv) that the Library had held an event to publicise the LIFT Living Archive, with contributions from LIFT and the Drama department. Following this, a seminar was planned in December 2009 for a number of organisations including the BBC and the Arts Council.
- (v) that the Library had had another successful year. The Chair asked the Librarian to pass on the Committee's thanks to the team.

28 PROGRAMME SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE 21 OCTOBER 2009

28.1 Minutes of Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee

Received:

the minutes of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee meeting held on 21 October 2009 (09-456)

28.2 BA Community Music

Received:

a proposal from the Department of Professional and Community Education for a new BA in Community Music (09-373)

Noted:

that the proposed new programme had been recommended for approval by the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee, but the Department of Professional and Community Education would not be able to undertake any further development of the programme until it had received strategic approval, which was pending

Resolved:

to approve, on the recommendation of Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee and subject to the conditions set out by the Sub-Committee, the proposal from the Department of Professional and Community Education for a new BA in Community Music but that further development should await strategic approval of the programme (09-373)

28.3 MA Professional Practice and Management

Resolved:

to approve, on the recommendation of Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee and subject to the programme specification being revised, circulated and approved as requested by the Sub-Committee, a proposal from the Department of Professional and Community Education to make major amendments to the MA in Professional and Community Education, including a change of name to *MA Professional Practice and Management* (09-374)

28.4 Masters programmes in the Department of Politics

Resolved:

to approve, on the recommendation of Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee a proposal to amend programmes in the department of Politics to conform to the College's new postgraduate framework (09-385 and 09-385a)

28.5 Mathematics subject knowledge enhancement programme

Resolved:

to approve, on the recommendation of Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee a proposal for a new Mathematics Subject Knowledge Enhancement Programme in the Department of Educational Studies, funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools and providing additional mathematics education for prospective mathematics teachers with a non-mathematical but numerate first degree (09-386)

28.6 Bsc/BMus in Music Computing

Noted:

- (i) that the Committee at its meeting on 20 May 2009, approved, on the recommendation of the Programme Scrutiny Sub-Committee, a proposal from the Departments of Computing and Music for a new BSc/BMus in Music Computing, subject to some minor amendments asked for by the Sub-Committee
- (ii) that the amendments have been made, approved by the Chair of the Sub-Committee and reported to its meeting on 21 October 2009

29 SUSPENSION OF REGULATIONS

Noted:

a list of suspensions of regulations approved by the Chair (09-457)

30 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Noted:

that this was the Secretary's last meeting before moving to a new post at Queen Mary College. The Chair thanked the Secretary for her outstanding work supporting the Committee.

31 NEXT MEETING

Noted:

that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 17 February 2010 at **2.00pm** in **room 110**, Deptford Town Hall Building.

*Denise Miller
November 2009*