

**GOLDSMITHS  
University of London**

**COUNCIL & ACADEMIC BOARD**

**EQUALITY & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Meeting held on 8 February 2011**

Present: Mrs Alyson McGarrigle (in the Chair), Ms Alison Ahern, Ms Sharon Alleyne, Ms Jennifer Bain, Ms Francesca Bancarino, Dr Philip Broadhead, Mr John Ginman, Mr Barry Hayward, Mr Chris Pearson, Ms Eleanor Saunders, Ms Colleen Toomey, Ms Marcia Williams.

Apologies: Dr Deirdre Osborne.

In attendance: Mr Michael Dick, Mr Matthew Grew (Secretary), Rev'd Adele Rees, Ms Rachel Soper, Ms Ellen Tsang.

**1 MINUTES**

**Resolved:**

to approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 October 2010.

**2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

**Noted:**

- (i) that a process had begun in order to fill the vacancy on the Committee for a member of the senior academic staff *[Minute 5 26 October 2010 refers]*;
- (ii) that in response to a letter from the Chair concerning the Committee's concerns about disabled access to Deptford Town Hall and refuge points in the Richard Hoggart Building, the Registrar & Secretary had confirmed that a high priority would be given to the completion of these works, and that the Committee's views would be relayed to SMT *[Minute 6 26 October 2010 refers]*.

**3 REVIEW OF WIDENING PARTICIPATION**

**Received:**

a response to the Committee's comments on the Review from the Deputy Warden (11-22).

**4 COLLEGE WEBSITE – RECRUITMENT TRAILERS**

**Received:**

a response to the Committee's comments from the Director of Marketing, Recruitment & Communications (11-23).

## **5 REPORT OF THE ESTATES & FACILITIES DEPARTMENT**

### **Received:**

a report on access improvements to the College from the Director of Estates & Facilities (11-24).

### **Noted:**

A Stairmate Major portable platform lift had been successfully tested in Deptford Town Hall. The Estates Department recommended the Stairmate Major as the most cost effective solution to achieving disabled access to this listed building, at £14,000. Procurement would go ahead following further external consultation by the Head of Health & Safety. The Stairmate would need to be operated by a member of staff: either the porter on duty, or another trained member of staff in the vicinity.

Work to provide disabled refuge points in the Richard Hoggart Building would be programmed into the Estates Department's bid for its next round of works, work beginning (subject to approval of the bid) in Summer 2011.

Signage to provide for disabled navigation of the Richard Hoggart Building would be provided in Summer 2011.

Although it was accepted that room-numbering in the Richard Hoggart Building was confusing, it was noted that any change would incur significant costs (updating health & safety records, asbestos register etc.). It was hoped that the future provision of well-sited navigation maps would provide a solution.

## **6 REVIEW OF COLLEGE 'DIGNITY' POLICIES**

### **Received:**

a report from a working group to review the College policies on 'Dignity at Work' & 'Dignity in the Learning Environment' (11-25).

### **Noted:**

The Committee commended the report of the working group. It was observed that in practical use, unforeseen conflicts between the policies and other regulations in force had become clear.

## **7 DRAFT TRANSGENDER POLICY**

### **Received:**

a draft policy from the Interim Equality & Diversity Advisor (11-26).

### **Noted:**

The Committee thanked Marcia Williams for her work in producing a comprehensive draft policy. It was felt that there were some areas where the policy might need to be refined in order to mesh with other regulations (eg 'Fitness to Practise' criteria for teaching and

social work degrees), or to ensure that support or training referred to was actually in place, particularly for students.

**Resolved:**

to consider the policy at the next meeting of the Committee, following broader consultation across the College.

**8 GENDER NEUTRAL TOILETS**

**Received:**

a proposal from the President of the Students' Union, for the provision of gender neutral toilets (11-27).

**Resolved:**

to endorse the proposal, and suggest that the Estates Department might consult other universities where gender neutral toilets had been provided, in order to source signage which would be both appropriate and compliant with building and health and safety regulations.

**9 REPORT OF THE DISABILITY COORDINATOR**

**Received:**

a report from the Disability Coordinator (11-28).

**Noted:**

The Disability Working Party had met, and agreed to limit its discussions to the issue of extenuating circumstances affecting students' assessments. The Working Party would aim to draft guidelines providing consistency and fairness across the College, focussed on providing support to students with disabilities.

**Resolved:**

to receive draft guidelines on the operation of extenuating circumstances affecting assessments at the next meeting of the Committee.

**10 REPORT OF THE INTERIM EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ADVISOR**

**Received:**

a report from the Interim Equality & Diversity Advisor (11-29); a proposal to establish two staff networks (11-31).

**Noted:**

The Committee noted that heads of departments were now urgently in need of guidance in the light of the repeal of the default retirement age, to enable them to plan future staffing requirements and to present appropriate options to staff who may or may not wish to retire or to reduce their working hours.

**Resolved:**

to support the proposal to establish staff networks for disabled and LGB staff.

**11 ANNUAL MONITORING OF RACE, GENDER & DISABILITY**

**Noted:**

that although a data cleansing project was in process, data was not of sufficient quality to present to the Committee.

**Resolved:**

- (i) to receive a monitoring report on staff at the next meeting of the Committee;
- (ii) to receive a monitoring report on students at the next meeting of the Committee.

**12 ANNUAL REPORTS ON STUDENT APPEALS & COMPLAINTS 2009-10**

**Received:**

the annual reports from the Head of Assessments (10-548) & Head of Student Services (10-549).

**Noted:**

that a disproportionately high number of appeals and complaints had been brought by black and minority ethnic students, and that this imbalance should be monitored by the Committee.

**13 NEXT MEETING**

**Noted:**

that the final meeting of the Session would be held in DTHB 110 on the following date:

Tuesday 24 May 2011 – 2.30pm

*Matthew Grew  
February 2011*