

**GOLDSMITHS
University of London**

COUNCIL

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2013

Present: Ms Mary Stacey (Chair), Ms Kath Clarke, Ms Ellen Tsang, Mrs Liz Bromley, Mr Gerald Lidstone, Ms Vicky Annand, Miss Rachel Soper, Mrs Alison Ahern

Apologies: Professor Richard Grayson, Professor Nick Couldry, Professor Frank Bond

In attendance: Mrs Fatma Ali (Secretary), Dr Andrea Gilroy (for item 9)

OPEN BUSINESS

1 MINUTES

Resolved:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2013 be approved.

2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The committee discussed how the online system used for promotions could be made more user friendly and established that general work had already been put into place whereby issues were being logged. This would avoid any further issues being replicated for the next round of promotions. There would also be a debrief at the end of this process.

3 VT ASSIMILATION PROJECT UPDATE

Received:

Visiting Tutor (VT) Project update (13-246)

The Head of Operations explained that high level agreements had taken place recently with the unions and that a deal had now been negotiated which the unions would put to their members for approval. The next stage would be to implement a communications plan to support the project going forward. It is anticipated that the project will be finalised by mid July 2013 with implementation taking place from July until September.

4 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES RESTRUCTURE UPDATE

The Registrar and Secretary explained that she was almost at the end of her phase 1 and that the process had been successful with her newly appointed Directors. She confirmed that the only appointment not yet made was the Chief Information Officer and that the plan

had been to take on the role herself for 2-3 months to get an understanding of what the College needs from IT Services

She further explained that the phase 2 of the project would entail her newly appointed Directors to start thinking about their own teams and begin reshaping their own departments. It is anticipated that the project will be completed by Easter 2014.

5 HR POLICIES UPDATE

Received:

HR Policies update (13-247)

The Committee discussed the 3 policies presented to them for approval.

The Committee decided that the following principles were to be applied the HR policies: brevity, clarity and simplicity. Lengthy documents are unhelpful and if necessary, policies can be accompanied by clear explanatory underlying manager's guidance.

It is also necessary to be aware if policies are contractual and the Human Resources Department shall investigate the current status of the disciplinary policy and also the change management policy.

The Staff Well-Being Policy, which is not contractual, shall be changed to a Statement of Commitment since it is not in the nature of a policy.

The Committee decided that in light of the agreed principles to be applied to policies going forward, changes had to be made to all of the policies presented.

The academic head and professional staff manager on the Committee noted the considerable value these policies would be to assisting managers.

The Chair concluded that the policies should aim to meet the Council deadline.

6 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY MANAGER APPOINTMENT UPDATE

The Director of HR confirmed that a successful appointment had been made. The new appointee will be joining the college in July.

7 HR VISION AND PLANNING UPDATE

Received:

HR Vision and planning update (13-248)

The Committee also welcomed the Director's report and priorities. The Director of HR explained that following extensive research using the resources available to her and having met with 3 SWAG's she concluded that changes had to be made within the HR department. This would entail reshaping the department so that clients become aware of what the HR Service offers and the HR function can develop a strategic, operational and analytical role. She is working on restructuring proposals.

Discussions relating to changes will be discussed with the team in the next couple of weeks.

8 RETIREMENT PROJECT UPDATE

The Committee thanked Dr Andrea Gilroy for her comprehensive report. The Committee discussed where this project could be placed with regards to linking it with a particular department or service within the College. It was agreed that the Registrar and Secretary would take the project forward after her phase 2 of her restructure has been implemented.

In the meantime the Committee agreed that it would not be proposing the SMT and Council consider an employer justified retirement age at this stage.

The following ideas were seen as particularly relevant:

- more retirement information should be made available on the HR website to assist staff in their retirement planning;
- consideration be given to the provision of in-house retirement courses when resources are available to be incorporated into the staff development programme for the forthcoming year;
- the formation of a staff alumni/emeritus association, perhaps not only for retired staff; and
- concerns about the quality of the current retirement information from the pension providers be raised with the pension providers and UCEA.

9 STAFF DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Received:

Staff Development update (13-249)

The Chair thanked the Staff Development Manager for her report. The Director of HR explained that preparations were being made for ensuring that the team plans a year's worth of courses ahead of time to ensure that the courses are being utilised in the best way.

The Committee was pleased to learn that some of the recent courses attended had been excellent and received very encouraging feedback.

10 CASEWORK

Received:

Casework update (13-250)

The Committee discussed the rate of the cases especially with regards to long-term sickness rates in comparison to other universities.

The Chair asked that the Sickness Absence Policy be discussed at the next meeting. She also requested information on the timeline of the cases HR have been working on in order to establish how long each case is live for. We need to identify if there are delays occurring and, if so, how they can be addressed as the effect of on-going unresolved internal procedures can be damaging for all concerned.

11 OTHER

The Committee thanked the Secretary for her contribution over the years and welcomed the new Secretary to the Committee.

NEXT MEETING

Noted:

that the next meeting of the Committee will be on Monday 4 November 2013.

Fatma Ali
HR Business Partner
June 2013