

GOVERNING BODY
AGENDA

**Thursday 27th November 2014 from 16.00-18.00 hours in Room 116, College Buildings,
 Thornhaugh St. Russell Square, WC1H 0XG**

Items marked with an asterisk are formal business, not intended for discussion. If members wish to discuss any issues arising from these items they should inform the Secretary to the Governing Body by 9am on Monday 24th November 2014

I	Conflicts of Interest To note	[Oral Update]
II	Minutes To approve: The minutes of the meeting held on 3 rd October 2014	[Attached]
III	Actions Taken	[Oral Update]
IV	Matters Arising / Matters for Report	[Oral Update]
V	The Director's report Copies of Director's reports since the last meeting: September 2014 October 2014	[Appendix A] [i] [ii]
VI	Amendments to the Charter and Articles To approve for recommendation to the Privy Council	[Appendix B]
VII	Audit Executive Report To approve: (i) Executive report of the External Auditors (ii) Management Letter	[Appendix C]
VIII	SOAS Annual Review To approve	[Appendix D]
IX	Financial Statements 2013/14 To approve on recommendation from RPC the Financial Statements for the year ending 31 July 2014	[Appendix E]

X	Financial Forecast 2017/18 To approve on recommendation from RPC	[Appendix F]
XI	Report on the Revised 2014-15 Budget To approve	[Appendix G]
XII	Faculty Plans To approve on recommendation from RPC the Faculty Plans: Faculty of Arts & Humanities (FAH) Faculty of Languages & Cultures (FLC) Faculty of Law & Social Sciences (FLSS) IFCELS (International Foundation Courses & English Language Studies)	[Appendix H] [i] [ii] [iii] [iv]
XIII	ASSUR Report To approve	[Appendix I]
XIV	Governing Body Key Performance Indicators To approve	[Appendix J]
XV	Risk Overview To note	[Appendix K] Annex A
XVI	Audit Committee Annual Report 2014-15 To approve	[Appendix L]
XVII	Annual Diversity Report 2013-14 To consider	[Appendix M] Annexes A-D
XVIII	The LMEI Annual Report To approve	[Appendix N]
XIX	Students' Union Report & Financial Statements To approve	[Appendix O]
XX	The Health & Safety Report To receive	[Appendix P]
*XXI	Award of Emeritus Status to Dr Geoffrey King	
XXII	Report from the Academic Board Governance Working Group To receive	[Appendix Q]

XXIII	Sub-Committee Minutes/Reports Nominations Report DRAFT Academic Board – (12 th November 2014) Audit Committee (6 th November 2014) Resources & Planning Committee (11 th November 2014)	[Appendix R] [i] [ii] [iii] [iv]
XXIV	Next Meetings of Governing Body To note: Next meetings of Governing Body: Governing Body Meetings: Friday 24 th April 2015 9.30am Monday 6 th July 2015 4pm Informal evening meetings of Governing Body: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tuesday 3rd February 2015 (evening) followed by all day Wednesday 4th February • Thursday 21st May 2015 (4-8pm) 	[Oral Update]



SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

GOVERNING BODY

Friday 3rd October 2014

OPEN MINUTES

Dr T Miller (Chairman)
Sir Martin Harris (Vice-Chair)
Mr G Dalal (Honorary Treasurer)
Professor P Webley (Director)
Professor R Black (Pro Director)
Professor N Rao (Pro Director)

Mrs S Alier
Professor Sir I Crewe
Sir Graham Fry
Ms R Mortuza
Professor D Mosse
Professor C Oughton
Mr A Popham

Mr J Robinson
Ms G Robertson
Mr D Skinner
Mr D Suber
Mr S Tinton
Ms Z Weaver

In attendance: Mr G Appleby (Director of Finance & Planning)
Ms Laura Gibbs (Registrar)
Dr C Ince (Secretary, Minutes)
Professor M Craven (Dean of Law & Social Sciences)
Professor G Singh (Dean of Arts & Humanities)

Apologies: Mr C Ilako
Lord Williams of Baglan

1. Welcome and Apologies

Governing Body **noted** the apologies.

2. Membership, Terms of Reference, procedures for the conduct of meetings, and annual plan of work for 2014-15 (Appendix A)

Governing Body **noted** its agreed Terms of Reference and membership along with the procedures for the conduct of meetings and its annual plan of work for the year.

3. Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest stated.

4. Minutes

Governing Body **approved** the minutes of its last meeting, 7th July 2014.

5. Actions Taken

(i) MIN39 – Effectiveness review

The Director **reported** on a number of non-governance issues that had been raised at the April meeting of Governing Body during its discussions on the recommendations from the effectiveness review.

Engagement with staff and students was being improved through a number of channels including a student e-bulletin, a new staff intranet, open meetings, attendance by Pro-Directors at departmental meetings and the establishment of a Joint Negotiation and Consultative Committee, as well as a number of school-wide consultations on major issues. Improved communications with students would help explain the steps being taken to improve the student experience, action on improving coursework turnaround times and the impact of issues such as industrial action.

Since the April meeting Governing Body had received regular updates on the issues about fractional staff via the Director's reports and this had been discussed weekly at Executive Board.

Outsourced contracts had been discussed at Resources & Planning Committee and Governing Body. The School was still working with the University of London on developing a shared service and an outline business case was being prepared for later in the term.

(ii) MIN57 – Capital budget

The Honorary Treasurer **reported** that, as agreed at the last meeting, a contract for the capital expenditure on the boilers in the Brunei Gallery had been signed under Chair's Action.

6. Matters arising/Matters for Report

(i) Effectiveness review

Governing Body **considered** a paper from the student sabbatical members on the next steps in the review of academic governance and the plans for the full effectiveness review in 2015/16.

Governing Body **noted** that as previously agreed the next full review of effectiveness would be taking place in 2015/16. The planning work for this would commence later in the academic year and a group of governors would be tasked to oversee the process. This group would report back to Governing Body before the end of the year with recommendations on the framework for the next review, which would take place using the CUC guidance and with external input. The group would also consider how the wider School might be engaged in the review and any communications strategy.

(ii) Charter & Articles

The Secretary **reported** that the Privy Council's educational advisers had no comments on the proposed changes to the Charter and Articles. Formal resolutions would be considered at the next meeting prior to their submission to the Privy Council.

(iii) Standing Orders

The Secretary **reported** that the changes to the Standing Orders had been incorporated for the current session. The Terms of Reference for the Student Experience Committee would be amended in light of the discussions at the last meeting and the relevant section would now read:

“Student Experience Committee is a sub-committee of Academic Development Committee. It is required to report to Academic Development Committee on a regular basis. It also has a responsibility to liaise with Resources & Planning Committee and other committees and to keep them informed as necessary.”

7. The Director’s Report (Appendix B)

The Director **reported** on his reports from July and September 2014.

The dispute with fractional staff was still not resolved, although the School had implemented a new procedure and contracts with improved terms and conditions. There was an ongoing campaign and the School was holding further discussions with UCU. The overall financial impact of the new contracts could not be quantified yet but it was essential academic priorities were met.

Governing Body **noted** that student recruitment was below target in all areas with a larger number of late withdrawals than anticipated. The latest data was that recruitment would be around 100 below target for undergraduate, 65 for PGT and around 30 for PGR. Overall this was expected to show a shortfall in income of £2.2m for 14/15 of which £1.1m would be offset by the budgeted fee income provision. The School had already identified a further £500k of savings in the current year, including some savings in staff posts in under recruiting areas. Resources & Planning Committee would be holding a meeting later in the month to look at the next faculty plans in detail and consider any change in approach to planned growth in student numbers.

Governing Body **discussed** the latest league tables, the UCU ballot over strike action in relation to the USS pension changes and the proposed merger of Heythrop College with St. Mary’s University, Twickenham. It also discussed the support offered to international students on visa applications and any extension for when they had to undertake thesis corrections, where the School was reviewing its current policy.

Governing Body was pleased to **note** the award of the Equality Challenge Unit Gender Chartermark and that a SOAS student had captained England at the recent U20 Rugby World Cup.

8. National Student Survey 2014 – Key Findings (Appendix C)

The Pro-Director, Learning & Teaching **reported** on the latest NSS results. These had seen the School rise one place to 41st in the overall table. There had been some good results in departments and in the library support offered. However, the scores on assessment & feedback and academic support still showed room for improvement and there was significant variation between departments. Looking at the comments from individual students the two key areas of concern were on the support offered through the personal adviser system and a desire for better understanding of marking criteria on assessments.

Governing Body **agreed** that any future reports should have greater detail on the long-term trends in key areas as well as benchmarking against comparable institutions within London.

Governing Body **noted** that departments needed to be responsive to student concerns and the School should be able to improve further given the advantage it had from a low staff/ student ratio. It was **agreed** that a summary of departmental scores would be provided to the Chairman so he could follow the overall scores up with departments.

Governing Body **noted** that the satisfaction scores for black students were lower and this group of students also showed a gap on academic attainment. This should be a priority to address in any future action plans.

9. Risk Overview (Appendix D)

Governing Body **noted** the risk overview, which was discussed regularly by the Audit Committee and Executive Board. It was important that the controls in place were delivering the improvements indicated by the risk ratings.

10. Briefing on USS (Appendix E)

Governing Body **noted** the briefing document on the proposed changes to the USS pension scheme, which had been circulated to all institutions. There was very little room for any independent action by the School within the process but any formal proposals would need to be clearly communicated to staff. The School had included an increase in employers' contributions from 16 to 18% in the financial forecast but this measure alone would not cover the deficit. Therefore the proposals contained steps to reduce benefits and it was anticipated there would be industrial action later in the academic year.

11. Next Meetings of Governing Body

Governing Body **noted** that its next formal meeting would take place at 4pm on 27th November. Before this it would be holding an informal meeting in conjunction with Academic Board at 4-8pm on 18th November.

SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

GOVERNING BODY

Action Points 2013/14

Minute	Item	Action	Deadline For Report to GB	By
39	GB effectiveness review	Academic Board to reconsider its effectiveness and membership and report back in the autumn	27/11/14	PW
40	SU Priorities	Non-academic priorities to be considered by RPC for 14/15 academic year	27/11/14	Sabbs
42	Health & Safety	Comprehensive review of Health & Safety Policy and supporting procedures	27/11/14	CI
57	Finance	Inclusion of student and staff numbers in future papers	27/11/14	GA
58	Professional Services Plan	Review of Plan to establish measurable objectives and spending over time. Report to RPC.	27/11/14	LG

Action Points 2014/15

Minute	Item	Action	Deadline For Report to GB	By
8	NSS 2014	Departmental breakdown sent to Chairman for followup	27/11/14	NR