



meeting of the Governing Body and meetings of some of its sub-committees. This information was available on the Bloomsbury Learning Environment (BLE).

(ii) *Minute 3 (ii): IFCELS*

The Vice Principal reported that staff savings amounting to £355,000 had been achieved through staff retirements, redeployment and voluntary severance. This had resulted in opportunities for restructuring within IFCELS. Work was in progress on making progression routes more explicit and targeted between IFCELS and the Faculties. The Vice Principal thanked the Director of Finance & Planning and the Director of Human Resources and their staff for their support in the review of IFCELS.

(iii) *Minute 3 (iv): Staff development review*

The Interim Registrar & Secretary reported that a new single system of staff development review (SDR) had been agreed with the trades unions and duly launched. Linked to the planning cycle, reviews would take place between January and April each year. The scheme was focussed on the setting and agreeing of objectives. Briefing sessions had been held and had been well received. The Staff Development Office would monitor the implementation of the scheme.

(iv) *Minute 7: KPIs – student completion rates*

The Governing Body noted that a report on the student experience at SOAS would be presented to the Academic Board in March 2010 and to the Governing Body in April 2010.

(v) *Minute 10: Students' Union position on student occupations*

The student governors reported that the position of the Students' Union Executive was not to co-operate with any action that was in breach of the law. They stressed that the SU's responsibility was to represent the interests of all the students of the School, not the views of external groups, who had their own agendas. The SU would continue to use the normal channels of communication with the School's management to represent issues that were concerning students.

## **14 Director & Principal's Report**

Governing Body received a report from the Director and Principal [Appendix A] and the following additional comments were noted:

(i) *Pensions*

The joint UUK/UCU review group was working on detailed proposals and USS would update its members in the New Year.

(ii) *Pay*

Governing Body noted that the latest 2009 pay offer had been accepted by Unison, that Unite had recommended that its members accept, that GMB had yet to reach a decision, and that the Educational Institute of Scotland had rejected it. The UCU's higher education committee had 'noted' the offer, and it was understood that this meant it regarded this year's pay negotiations to be concluded with the UCEA offer of 0.5%.

(iii) *HEFCE: ASNs, cuts and the future*

There would be a particular impact on SOAS if special library funding were to be reduced. HEFCE was considering this and other implications and further information was expected in late December/early January.

- (iv) *Admissions 2009/10*  
The new tier 4 student visa system had affected student recruitment and was creating a negative perception of the UK as a place to come and study.
- (v) *The new framework for higher education and the fees review*  
It was anticipated that the next HEFCE grant letter would reflect a move towards greater research concentration. Any changes proposed to student funding would not come into effect until 2011/12 at the earliest.
- (vi) *The PDF and 53 Gordon Square*  
Discussions were being finalised prior to the final meeting of the working party on the PDF shortly.
- (vii) *The Queen's Anniversary Prize*  
The Governing Body noted this with pleasure and congratulated the Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Cultures and his colleagues.
- (viii) *Vice-Chancellor*  
The Director and Principal informed the Governing Body that Professor Geoffrey Crossick, currently Warden of Goldsmiths College, had been appointed as the next Vice-Chancellor of the University of London, with effect from September 2010.

## 15 Governance

- (i) *Standing Orders: Audit Committee*  
As recommended by the Audit Committee, the Governing Body **approved** an amendment to the Committee's terms of reference to comply with the requirement of HEFCE that the annual audit report gives the Committee's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the School's arrangements for the management and quality assurance of data submitted to HEFCE and other bodies [Appendix B]. It was agreed that Standing Orders be changed with immediate effect.
- (ii) *Charter and Articles*  
The Governing Body received a 'clean copy' of the Charter and Articles, as had been agreed at the meeting on 2 October, subject to the two amendments noted then and in the covering paper [Appendix C]. The Governing Body **resolved** that the revised Charter and Articles be submitted to the Privy Council for approval.

## 16 Strategic Planning

- (i) *Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)*

The Governing Body received an update report on KPIs [Appendix D], noting that a full written report on student completion, satisfaction and the student experience would be presented to the Governing Body in April 2010.

*(ii) Learning and Teaching sub-strategy*

The Vice Principal (Learning and Teaching) introduced the proposed revised Learning and Teaching sub-strategy [Appendix E]. The Governing Body noted that this had arisen as a result of a major review of the Academic, Learning and Teaching and Student Experience sub-strategies, which it replaced. The sub-strategy was an update on what was already being done in the areas it covered, together with clearer aims, objectives, PIs and an action plan. It was based on growth in student numbers and other developments which were now being brought together under the new Academic Development Directorate. It was noted that the growth targets on pages 12 and 13 of the Learning and Teaching sub-strategy were the same as those set in the Financial sub-strategy. Governors stressed the need to monitor the delivery of the academic objectives in relation to the financial targets. Governors stressed the importance of supporting students' ability to succeed and looked forward to receiving the report on student completion at its next meeting. Governors noted that the School was conducting a portfolio review which had identified that 49% of the School's courses had less than 10 students. It was recognised that, to date, HEFCE funding had supported specialist and language-based courses that met the School's mission but did not necessarily attract large numbers of students. It was noted that the School offered an extremely wide range of courses (some 723 courses and 350 degree programmes) and this was being reviewed. Governors wondered whether courses were being proliferated because development was being unduly driven by academics' research interests (aim 5 of the sub-strategy) and whether this was compatible with the objective to have financially sustainable courses where possible. Governors asked for a report back on the portfolio review at the next meeting of the Governing Body. The Governing Body **approved** the Learning and Teaching sub-strategy.

*(iii) Research and Enterprise sub-strategy*

The Pro-Director (Research and Enterprise) introduced the proposed revised Research and Enterprise sub-strategy [Appendix F]. The Governing Body noted that it had received an earlier version of the proposed sub-strategy now submitted. The revised version now contained specific timescales and responsibilities and reflected the drive to enhance the enterprise function. The sub-strategy would be supported by the new Research and Enterprise Directorate, whose new Director would assume his post in January 2010. Governors queried what were the priorities in the ambitious list of objectives. The Pro-Director indicated that there were two main thrusts: the first was the development of enterprise in the sub-strategy; the second was the monitoring of research productivity and excellence, in preparation for the forthcoming REF in 2012/13. Governors were pleased to note the importance given to the SDR scheme, and noted that there would be enhanced mentoring and support for early career research-active staff. The terms of the REF posed challenges for SOAS, given the School's research was exclusively in arts, humanities and social science. Governors queried whether some of the PIs were over-ambitious but noted that the trajectory of income had been planned, was in line with the Financial sub-strategy and was considered to be achievable. The Governing Body **approved** the Research and Enterprise sub-strategy.

*(iv) Financial sub-strategy*

The Director of Finance and Planning introduced the proposed revised Financial sub-strategy [Appendix G]. The Governing Body noted that this had been revised in the light of changes to the funding regime and in alignment with the Faculty plans. It was noted that a key objective was to achieve a target surplus of 3% of turnover (around £2m) by 2010/11. Growth rates for expansion in student numbers were noted and there was further detail of developments in the Faculty plans. It was noted that, in order to achieve the target level of surplus by 2012/13, cost savings in the order of £425k would be required. It was also noted that a review of the Language Centre was about to be undertaken. Governors noted the uncertain funding environment and the tables which translated the risks into financial terms. If growth targets were not achieved, further cost reductions would have to be sought. It was noted that the financial forecast, to be considered later on this agenda, included more conservative growth rates in student numbers. It was noted that funding for strategic initiatives relating to research had been made available to faculties, rather than being all held centrally, in order to incentivise researchers. The Governing Body **approved** the Financial sub-strategy.

*(v) Student Administration and Support sub-strategy*

The Governing Body **approved** the development of a Student Administration and Support sub-strategy in place of the current Student Experience sub-strategy, noting that elements of the latter had now been incorporated into the new Learning and Teaching sub-strategy [Appendix H].

*(vi) Development and Alumni Relations report*

The Governing Body welcomed the Director of External Relations and Development and **received** a report on development and alumni relations activities [Appendix I]. In introducing the report, she thanked the Governing Body for their support of this important area of the School's work. She updated governors on the structure and activities of her new team and what had been achieved, including the exceeding of matched funding income in 2008/9. The Governing Body was pleased to note the activities planned for 2010 and beyond, including the major fundraising projects. The Governing Body thanked the Director of External Relations and Development for her comprehensive report.

*(vii) Corporate Planning Statement 2009*

The Governing Body **approved** the Corporate Planning Statement 2009, as recommended by the Resources and Planning Committee, for submission to HEFCE [Appendix J].

## **17 Financial and audit matters**

*(i) Draft minutes of the Resources and Planning Committee*

The Governing Body **received** the draft minutes of the Resources and Planning Committee meeting held on 17 November 2009 [Appendix K].

*(ii) Audited financial statements*

The Governing Body **approved** the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 July 2009, as had been reviewed in detail and recommended by the Resources and Planning Committee [Appendix L]. It was noted that the

outturn was substantially better than forecast, and the Governing Body was pleased to note that there had been a surplus for the third year running.

*(iii) Revised revenue budget 2009/10*

The Governing Body **approved** the revised revenue budget 2009/10, as had been reviewed in detail and recommended by the Resources and Planning Committee [Appendix M]. Governors were pleased to note that the validation showed a position that was markedly better than the original budget, owing to better student recruitment than previously envisaged, and other factors. The projected surplus was now £1.2m.

*(iv) HEFCE financial forecasts 2009 and commentary*

The Governing Body **approved** the HEFCE financial forecasts 2009 and commentary, as had been reviewed in detail and recommended by the Resources and Planning Committee [Appendix N].

*(v) Cash Flow Projection, Capital & Debt Statement, Short-term Deposits*

The Governing Body **received** the Cash Flow Projection, the Capital & Debt Statement, and the statement on Short-term Deposits, as had been reviewed in detail and approved by the Resources and Planning Committee [Appendices O, P & Q]. Governors noted the healthy cash position and that this would be steadily spent over the period. The position on short term deposits had been reviewed and money had been invested safely.

*(vi) Annual Assurance return*

The Governing Body **noted** the signed Annual Assurance return to be forwarded to HEFCE [Appendix R].

*(vii) Minutes of the Audit Committee*

The Governing Body **received** the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 5 October 2009 [Appendix S] and the draft minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 16 November 2009 [Appendix T].

*(viii) Annual Internal Audit report 2008/9*

The Governing Body **approved** the Annual Internal Audit report 2008/9, as had been reviewed in detail and recommended by the Audit Committee [Appendix U]. Governors noted that there had been one priority 1 finding in the period and that management action had already been taken to remedy the weakness identified. The lower level recommendations from previous years were being reviewed and implementation dates agreed for those not yet achieved. Governors considered the report to be overly long and detailed for their purposes and that it was difficult to identify the most important findings. The Governing Body asked that the internal auditors produce next year a shorter executive summary report for the Governing Body, with the more detailed report being scrutinised by the Audit Committee.

*(ix) Annual Audit Committee Report 2008/9*

The Governing Body **approved** the Annual Audit Committee Report 2008/9, as had been reviewed in detail and recommended by the Audit Committee [Appendix V].

## **18 Other sub-committees**

*(i) Academic Board*

The Governing Body **received** the draft minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held on 18 November 2009 [Appendix W], noting in particular the discussions on the draft Learning and Teaching and Research and Enterprise sub-strategies and the discussion on the Library report.

*(ii) Health & Safety Committee*

The Governing Body **received and noted** a report from the Health and Safety Committee [Appendix X].

*(iii) Nominations Committee*

The Governing Body **received** a report from the Nominations Committee [Appendix Y] and **noted** (a) minor amendments to the procedures for the appointment of lay members of the Governing Body; and (b) the use of Chair's action to appoint the lay member of the Equality and Diversity Committee.

## **19 Students' Union**

The Governing Body **received** the Students' Union (SU) Annual Report 2008/9 and the audited accounts for the year ended 31 July 2009 [Appendix Z]. The Governing Body complimented the SU on their report and on the wide range of activities undertaken by them. The student governors indicated that the surplus identified in the accounts would be spent on the refurbishment of the SU in the near future.

## **20 Annual Report and Financial Statements 2008/2009**

The Governing Body **received** the report and statements [Appendix A1].

## **21 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Governing Body would be held on **Friday 30 April 2010**, starting at 11.00am followed by lunch at approximately 1pm.

**SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES**

**GOVERNING BODY**

**Wednesday 9 December 2009**

**Action Points**

| <b>Minute</b>      | <b>Item</b>  | <b>Action</b>  | <b>By whom</b>                       | <b>By when</b>               |
|--------------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 13 (i)             | Degree Awarding Powers                                 | Oral report on progress to next meeting of GB, under Matters Arising           | Vice Principal                       | 30.04.10                     |
| 13 (iv);<br>16 (i) | KPIs – student completion rates/the student experience | Report to AB March & GB April 2010   | Vice Principal                       | AB: 17.03.10<br>GB: 30.04.10 |
| 14                 | Director & Principal's report                          | Update on all matters to next GB   | Director & Principal                 | 30.04.10                     |
| 14 (vii)           | The Queen's Anniversary Prize                          | Congratulate Dean of Languages & Cultures                                      | Deputy Secretary                     | 21.12.09                     |
| 15 (i)             | Governance: Standing Orders – Audit Committee          | Amend Standing Orders on website   | Deputy Secretary                     | 21.12.09                     |
| 15 (ii)            | Governance: Charter & Articles                         | Chair to sign resolution; submit papers to PCO                                 | Deputy Secretary                     | 10.12.09                     |
| 16 (ii)            | Learning & teaching sub-strategy                       | Report back on portfolio review  | Vice Principal                       | 30.04.10                     |
| 16 (v)             | Student Administration & Support sub-strategy          | Notify Director of Student & Registry Services of approval of change in title  | Head of Planning                     | 21.12.09                     |
| 16 (vi)            | Development & Alumni Relations report                  | Thank Director of External Relations & Development for report                  | Deputy Secretary                     | 21.12.09                     |
| 17 (viii)          | Annual Internal Audit report 2008/9                    | (a) Review previous recommendations;<br>(b) Produce shorter report for GB 2010 | Deputy Secretary & internal auditors | (a) 29.01.10;<br>(b) In 2010 |
| 18 (iii)           | Nominations Committee                                  | Send minute to secretary to Nominations Committee                              | Deputy Secretary                     | 21.12.09                     |
| 19                 | Students' Union  | Send minute to SU  | Deputy Secretary                     | 21.12.09                     |