

GOVERNING BODY
AGENDA
Friday 19th April 2013 from 09.30 - 11.30 hours
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 Clerk to the Governing Body by 9am on Wednesday 17th April 2013

I	Conflicts of Interest To note	[Oral Update]
II	Minutes To approve: The minutes of the meeting held on 27 th November 2012	[Attached]
III	Actions Taken	
IV	Matters Arising / Matters for Report	
V	Questions on the Director's report (<i>the latest Director's monthly report was dispatched on 26th March</i>) Copies of Director's reports since the last meeting: 2 nd January 2013 31 st January 2013 28 th February 2013	[Appendix A] [i] [ii] [iii]
VI	HEFCE Annual Assessment of Institutional Risk To note	[Appendix B]
VII	Finance To receive: The forecast financial out-turn 2012/13	[Appendix C] Annexes A,B
VIII	Governing Body Effectiveness To approve:	[Appendix D] Annex A
IX	QAA Institutional Audit To note:	[Appendix E]

X	Student Progression & Retention To note:	[Appendix F]
XI*	Grievance Appeal To note:	[Appendix G]
XII	SOAS OFFA Access Agreement 2014-15 To note:	[Appendix H]
XIII	Sub Committee Reports: To receive: Minutes/reports from the following sub committees: Academic Board Audit Committee Health & Safety Committee Nominations Committee Resources & Planning Committee	[Appendix I] [i] [ii] [iii] [iv] [v]
XIV*	SOAS Community Consultative Referendum To note:	[Appendix J]
XV	2013/14 Meeting dates To note: 2013/14 meeting dates for those School Committees which have lay members	[Appendix K]
XVI	Next Meetings of Governing Body	
	To note: Next meetings of Governing Body: Informal evening meeting – Thursday 30 th May 2013 16:00 - 20:00 hours (SOAS Brunei Suite) Governing Body Meeting Thursday 4 th July 2013 16.00 -18.00 hours (Room 116), followed by a dinner in the Brunei Suite.	

SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

GOVERNING BODY

Friday 19th April 2013

OPEN MINUTES

Dr T Miller (Chairman)
Ms E Wright (Vice-Chair)
Mr G Dalal (Honorary Treasurer)
Professor P Webley (Director)
Professor G Furniss (Pro Director)
Professor N Rao (Pro Director)

Dr F Adamson
Mrs S Alier
Professor Sir I Crewe
Ms A Fulton
Sir Graham Fry
Professor B Harriss-White
Mr H Lanigan-Coyte
Ms R Mortuza
Dr J Parker

Mr J Robinson
Lord Williams
Ms Z Weaver

In attendance: Mr G Appleby (Director of Finance & Planning)
Mr D Beaton (Registrar & Secretary)
Professor M Craven (Dean of Law & Social Sciences)
Professor A Pauwels (Dean of Languages & Cultures)
Professor G Singh (Dean of Arts & Humanities)
Dr C Ince (Minutes)

Apologies: Mr C Ilako
Mr N Lerner
Mr S Tinton

26. Welcome and Apologies

Governing Body **noted** the apologies.

27. Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest stated.

28. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting 27th November 2012 were **approved**.

29. Actions Taken

There were no actions due for report.

30. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

31. Questions on the Director's Reports [Appendix A]

2nd January 2013, 31st January 2013, 28th February 2013, 26th March 2013

The Director **reported** that the latest data on student recruitment showed a similar picture to his last report. Most undergraduate applicants had to decide on any offers received in May and this would give a clearer picture on enrolments in 2013/14.

Governing Body **noted** that Professor Richard Black, from the University of Sussex, had been appointed as the next Pro-Director, Research & Enterprise and that he would start on 1 September 2013.

Governing Body **discussed** the positive outcome of the recent review of HEFCE funding streams, the launch of the HEFCE Student Green Fund and the possible impact of the Government's current Comprehensive Spending Review

Governing Body **noted** that the outputs from its Away Day had been incorporated in to the regular decision making process. The impact of the event and the format for any future away days would be considered as part of the planned effectiveness review.

The Director **reported** that after extensive discussion the School had decided to establish a South Asia Institute, rather than the previously considered India Institute. This was based on existing strengths and allowed the School to build upon the areas that differentiated it from other institutions. Interviews for the Director of the Institute would take place in May. Governing Body **noted** that options were being considered for the role of the Director of the China Institute.

32. Finance: to approve

HEFCE Annual Assessment of Institutional Risk [Appendix B]

Governing Body **noted** the annual assessment of institutional risk from the funding Council. The School was "not at higher risk", which was the best rating.

33. Finance: The forecast financial outturn 2012/13 [Appendix C]

Governing Body **received** the mid-year forecast financial outturn, which showed a positive variance of around £0.5M and a projected surplus of £412K. This was primarily due to a reduction in staff costs and non-pay budgets combined with an increase in the HEFCE grant. However, this masked decreases in income from distance learning, IFCELS and the Language Centre.

The decrease in income from the School's distance learning activity was partly due to a change in the number of intakes from five to four per year but also a reflection of the fast change in pace of delivery mechanisms in this area and the need to enhance the School's offering. The School needed to look at what action could be taken immediately to improve the position as well as the longer-term picture.

The financial position with IFCELS was £70K better than reported in the paper due to additional recruitment and extra resources were being used to improve the position further if possible. The decrease in income was primarily because of the non-renewal of an external contract and the effect of the visa changes on the market.

The Language Centre was an ongoing concern and a new business plan was being developed to grow its business. The Centre helped to sustain the teaching of less-widely taught languages in the School and used space outside of core hours and overall did make

a positive financial contribution but did not achieve the target overhead contribution. The Centre faced significant pressure from new external providers offering beginner courses at lower cost it could not match.

Governing Body **noted** that all three of the areas discussed had quite volatile markets so it was necessary to have conservative projections in any budgets for these areas. The School would need to keep the sustainability of these areas under review as it faced increasing competition from low-cost providers.

34. Governing Body Effectiveness [Appendix D]

The Chair **reported** on the outline plans for the Governing Body's periodic review of its effectiveness, in line with the guidance issued by the Committee of University Chairs (CUC).

The last review had implemented a number of significant changes to Governing Body so this review would take a lighter touch approach. The views would be sought from all members of Governing Body along with those attending its committees and any other key stakeholders. Governing Body **approved** the approach outlined in the paper and that a small working group would be established to manage the process. This group, consisting of 2-3 governors as well as the Chair and Director, would report back to the next meeting with recommendations for the process and any further detail.

35. QAA Institutional Audit [Appendix E]

The Director **reported** that the School had received the draft report earlier in the week and it was being checked for factual accuracy. The outcome was very positive with the School "meeting expectations" in all four categories. Governing Body thanked all the staff involved in preparing for the audit and the Pro-Director, Learning & Teaching and the Co-President, Education & Welfare for taking the lead on the submissions.

36. Student Progression & Retention [Appendix F]

The Pro-Director, Learning & Teaching **reported** on the student progression and retention report. The School had maintained its progression rates at a time of increasing numbers but the data showed that progression was worse on courses with a language component. Student satisfaction was a concern and this was reflected in the School's performance in national league tables.

Governing Body **discussed** the reasons for a decreased progression in language courses and the steps the School was taking to provide additional support for these students such as an increase in meetings with language tutors. The languages offered by the School were not offered in most schools so students often had no experience prior to starting.

37. Grievance Appeal [Appendix G]

Governing Body **noted** the report on a recent grievance appeal.

38. SOAS OFFA Access Agreement 2014-15 [Appendix H]

The Pro-Director, Learning & Teaching **reported** that there had been no significant changes to the Access Agreement from the submission the previous year. The School was in line with the benchmark in almost all areas and was undertaking a systematic evaluation of its outreach activity. The School had positive feedback from its summer school activity and was getting better data on if this was leading school pupils to apply to SOAS.

39. Sub Committee Reports [Appendix I]

To receive: Academic Board, Audit Committee, Health & Safety Committee, Nominations Committee and Resources & Planning Committee

Governing Body **received** the reports from its sub-committees.

40. SOAS Community Consultative Referendum [Appendix J]

This was a starred item. Governing Body **noted** the item.

41. 2013/14 Meeting dates [Appendix K]

Governing Body **noted** the meeting dates for 2013/14.,

42. Dates of the Next Meetings of Governing Body

Governing Body **noted** that its next meeting would be Informal evening meeting on Thursday 30th May 2013.

The next formal meeting of Governing Body would be held on Thursday 4th July 2013 at 16.00hrs.

SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

GOVERNING BODY

Action Points 2012/13

Minute	Item	Action	Deadline For Report	By
7	KPIs	Report to include targets for each KPI and detail on benchmarking	30/9/13	GA
34	Effectiveness Review	Report from Working Group on next steps	4/7/13	CI