

**SOAS
ACADEMIC BOARD**

**Wednesday 12 November 2014
2pm in Room 116**

AGENDA

* Items are formal business; if members wish to discuss any issues arising from these reports they must inform the Chair or Secretary by noon on Tuesday 11 November 2014.

- I Membership, Terms of Reference and Procedures for the Conduct of Committee Meetings**
To note: membership & terms of reference of Academic Board and the Procedures for the Conduct of Committee Meetings [Appendix A]
- II Minutes**
To approve: minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2014 [Attached]
- III Action Taken**
To receive: updates on action taken
- IV Matters Arising**
- V Director's Report**
(i) To receive: a report from the Director [Appendix B]
(ii) To receive: an oral report of the RPC meeting of 11/11/14 from the Director
- VI Centenary Research Themes (Minute 32 2013/14)**
To approve: centenary research themes as set out in a report from the Pro-Director (Research & Enterprise) [Appendix C]
- VII National Student Survey**
To approve: recommendations within a report on the key findings of the NSS [Appendix D]
- VIII Students' Union Educational Priorities**
To receive: a report on educational priorities from the Students' Union [Appendix E]
- IX Research Institutes and Centres**
To approve: a proposal from the Pro-Director (Research & Enterprise) [Appendix F]
- X Centre of Media Studies and Centre for Film Studies (Minute 37 2013/14)**
To note: a report on the Centres [Appendix G]
- XI Corporate Governance and Risk Management**
To note: a report from the internal auditors (KPMG) [Appendix H]
- XII Academic Board Review Group**
To receive: an update from the Group [Appendix I]
- XIII Sub-Committees**
(i) To receive: termly reports from

- (a) Academic Development Committee [Appendix J]
- (b) Research & Enterprise Committee [Appendix K]
- (c) Equality & Diversity Committee [Appendix L]

XIV Institutes

To receive: annual reports from

- (a) China Institute [Appendix M]
- (b) King Sejong Institute [Appendix N]
- (c) London Confucius Institute [Appendix O]
- (d) South Asia Institute [Appendix P]

XV *Governing Body Minutes

To note: Governing Body open minutes [Appendix Q]

XVI * Academic Promotions

To note: academic promotions [Appendix R]

XVII *Emeritus Status

To note: the award of emeritus status to Dr Geoffrey King

MEMBERSHIP, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND PROCEDURES FOR THE CONDUCT OF COMMITTEE MEETINGS

II Academic Board

Academic Board reports to Governing Body.

(i) The membership of Academic Board will comprise

Chair:

Director (Chair)

Ex-officio Members:

Two Pro-Directors

Three Deans

Head of Doctoral School

Registrar

Director of Library & Information Services

Other Members:

One Associate Dean (Learning & Teaching)

One Associate Dean (Research)

Four members of academic staff from each Faculty Board nominated by Faculty Board through a process to be agreed within the Faculty

Two student members nominated by the Students' Union Executive, each of whom must either be a Sabbatical Officer of the SOAS Students' Union or a full-time registered student of the School

In attendance

Director of Academic Development

Director of Research & Enterprise

Director of Student & Registry Services

Head of IFCELS

Students' Union Manager

(ii) The Registrar will nominate a Secretary. The Board will normally hold three ordinary meetings per session;

(iii) Academic Board will appoint the following Standing Committees. Academic Board will receive regular reports from these committees;

Academic Development Committee

Equality & Diversity Committee (reports also to Resources & Planning Committee)

Faculty Boards

Learning and Teaching Quality Committee (reports through Academic Development Committee)

Research & Enterprise Committee

Student Experience Committee (reports through Academic Development Committee)

Academic Board may delegate activities and authorities to its Standing Committees as appropriate, but retains overall responsibility for these.

- (iv) The remit of Academic Board is to advise Governing Body on any proposal relating to the academic scope, academic structure and academic standards of the School and to bring to the attention of Governing Body any matter which in the opinion of Academic Board affects the teaching and/or research of the School.
- (v) Academic Board will have the following terms of reference:
 - (a) To make arrangements for the delegation of responsibility as necessary to Standing Committees, the Chair and other School Officers;
 - (b) To advise Governing Body on the strategic development and future direction of the School's academic activities, as incorporated in the strategic plan and sub-strategies, and to keep these under review;
 - (c) To approve strategies/sub-strategies where this responsibility has been delegated from Governing Body
 - (d) To receive reports from its Committees, the Pro-Director (Learning & Teaching) and other School Officers in respect of educational developments and to approve recommendations as appropriate;
 - (e) To receive reports on other issues which fall within its remit from its Committees, the Pro-Directors and other School Officers and to approve recommendations as appropriate;
 - (f) To receive reports from the Regional Centres through the Pro-Director (Research & Enterprise), and from other School Centres through the appropriate Dean of Faculty and to approve recommendations as appropriate;
 - (g) To determine academic policy where this responsibility has not been devolved;
 - (h) To receive reports on quality assurance and quality assessment measures employed by the School, to approve recommendations as appropriate, and to review outcomes;
 - (i) To consider matters affecting the academic scope, academic structure and academic standards of the School or any other matter reasonably falling within the remit of Academic Board and advise Governing Body, Resources & Planning Committee, or Executive Board as appropriate;
 - (j) To establish regulations and procedures for compliance with the Statutes and Ordinances of the University of London, and to award degrees;
 - (k) To establish regulations and procedures for School awards and to award School qualifications;
 - (l) To receive reports from Resources & Planning Committee.

Annex XIV

Procedures for the Conduct of Committee Meetings

These procedures apply to Governing Body and all of its Committees.

1. Meetings of all Committees will be scheduled annually in advance, to allow the orderly conduct of business through to meetings of Governing Body.
2. In the case of a Committee which has no lay members, an agenda paper and supporting papers for each meeting will be sent to each member not later than the third working day before the scheduled meeting and normally five working days before. If a Committee has lay members, an agenda paper and supporting papers for each meeting will be sent to each member not later than the fifth working day before the scheduled meeting and normally seven working days before. This applies to ordinary and extraordinary meetings.
3. The Chair, together with the Secretary, will set a deadline for receipt of papers in order that the agenda may be distributed to Committee members in a timely fashion.
4. No business will be transacted at an ordinary meeting other than that specified in the agenda paper except for any matter of which the Chair has been advised in advance, which he/she considers urgent, and which has arisen too late to be specified in the agenda. No papers may be tabled without the consent of the Chair.
5. Committee agendas shall include reserved items where matters under discussion are of a sensitive nature for reasons of protocol or commercial interest or because they relate to individual or identifiable staff or students.
6. There will be a quorum for all Committees which unless specified otherwise will be one third of the membership. For Governing Body the quorum will be eight, the majority of whom must be lay members, for Resources & Planning Committee five, for Academic Board nine, for Audit Committee two and for Executive Board three. No formal business may be transacted at meetings without a quorum of members present.
7. Where issues are put to the vote, a majority of those present and voting will be binding. Should the Committee be equally divided, the Chair may exercise a casting vote.
8. When necessary a Committee meeting may be adjourned but notice of the adjournment and the date it is to be reconvened will be sent to each member, giving at least three working days notice of the intention to reconvene. In the case of Committees with lay members, at least five working days notice of the intention to reconvene will be given.
9. With the exception of the first meeting of each session, the first business of every ordinary meeting of all Committees will be approval of the minutes of the previous meeting. At the first meeting of each session, the first item on the agenda will ask each committee to note its

membership and terms of reference, as well as the Procedures for the Conduct of Committee Meetings.

10. The Chair is responsible for the conduct of the meeting. Members are required to co-operate with the Chair to ensure the fair and effective transaction of business, and the observance of the courtesies of debate.
11. Meetings must be conducted in a constructive, non-confrontational atmosphere and the authority of the Chair must be respected at all times. Members who are guilty of obstructive or offensive conduct will be warned by the Chair that their behaviour is unacceptable. If this behaviour continues, they may at the discretion of the Chair, be asked to leave the meeting.
12. The Chair may at any time call an extraordinary meeting.
13. The Chair will call an extraordinary meeting on the receipt of a written request to that effect stating clearly the purpose for which the meeting is required and signed by no fewer than five members in the case of Governing Body, three for Resources & Planning Committee, eight for Academic Board and one third of the membership for other Committees.
14. Notice of an extraordinary meeting will be issued a minimum of five working days before the meeting is convened where the Committee has no lay members, and seven working days when the Committee has lay members.
15. The agenda for an extraordinary meeting will only contain papers relevant to the issue(s) under discussion. The meeting will not be asked to approve minutes, deal with any matters arising, nor will any other business be allowed.

These minutes are for information only. Any corrections to the minutes will be recorded in the minutes of the subsequent meeting of the committee.

SOAS
ACADEMIC BOARD
MINUTES

Wednesday 11 June 2014

Mr D Beaton*	Professor D Mosse
Professor R Black	Professor I Nikolaeva*
Professor M Craven	Dr E Onyema
Mr D East	Professor C Oughton
Professor R Fardon	Professor A Pauwels
Professor A George	Professor N Rao
Professor A Gerstle	Mr J Robinson
Dr L Hammond	Professor T Screech*
Dr R Harris	Professor G Singh
Dr D Healy	Professor L Smith
Dr K Hirschler	Professor P Webley (Chair)
Dr A Janku	Mr M Zafar*
Mr P Kohler*	

Dr C Ince attended at Acting Secretary

In attendance:
Mrs J Airey
Mr P Baran
Dr M Bentham
Ms S Blohm
Mr D Christmas

*Those whose names are marked with an asterisk were unable to be present.

27. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 12 March 2014 were **approved** as a true record.

28. Action Taken

Academic Board **noted** that all action points from the last meeting which were due for completion had been completed.

29. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising which did not appear elsewhere on the agenda.

30. Director's Report

Academic Board received the report from the Director at Appendix A. The Director elaborated on several items within the report.

(i) Student Recruitment

Updated figures for student recruitment had become available and showed that an overall shortfall in undergraduate enrolment of approximately 200 was now predicted. Approximately 130 students had failed to respond to offers from the School, and efforts were being made to contact them. This meant that recruitment during the clearing process would be extremely important.

Recruitment to Masters programmes was currently approximately 100 below target and figures for postgraduate research students showed a shortfall of approximately 26.

(ii) The North Block

The draft Section 106 agreement had now been finalised and it was hoped that contractors would start work on the site within the next two weeks.

(iii) Funding Success

In addition to the successful outcome of the School's application for £332,000 from the Garfield Western Foundation, the School had just been informed that it would receive £500,000 towards the cost of the North Block from the Wolfson Foundation. This was the largest single grant that the organisation had ever given for arts and humanities.

The Wolfson Foundation was also renewing its PhD scholarship programme, and the School would continue to be one of the small number of institutions that it funded. The School would receive 3 full PhD scholarships a year for the next three years.

(iv) League Tables

In the Guardian league tables, SOAS had slipped two places in the rankings from 22nd to 24th. The Director drew the attention of Academic Board to the performance of the School of Law which had improved its ranking by 10 places, and it was now ranked in the top 10 Law Schools. Several other departments including Politics & International Studies and Anthropology had also improved rankings.

(v) Distance Learning

The University of London International Academy (UL IA) had identified four tracks (A, B C and D) which Lead Colleges could use. The Track A draft contract and price list had been considered by ULIA's Finance Committee and the ULIA Board, and the School expected to receive information about this by the end of the week.

It was anticipated that the School would not implement any changes to its programme set-up until the summer of 2015. It was likely that the current interim arrangements with the University of London would continue until that time.

It was important for the School to look more widely, and strategically, at the area of distance learning, and the Director would be asking the Pro-Director (Learning & Teaching) and appropriate colleagues to be taking this forward over the summer and early autumn of 2014.

(vi) Shadow Minister for Higher Education and Universities

The Director reported on a private event for Universities at which the Shadow Minister for Universities, Science and Skills had spoken.

31. Resources & Planning Committee

The Director reported on the major items from the meeting of Resources & Planning Committee which had taken place on the previous day.

Next year the School would be budgeting for a small deficit of approximately £500,000. This was partly as a result of agreed expenditure which had been delayed. In the current year the School was likely to break even, or have a small deficit.

Academic Board acknowledged that a breakeven position was not sustainable over the longer term. It was necessary to make surpluses of at least 5% in order to remain sustainable as an organisation.

For 2015/16 and 2016/17 the forecast was a recovery to surplus, but on current figures the surplus was likely to be small. Resources & Planning Committee expressed deep concern about this. The Committee was extremely worried that after the boost the School had received as a result of the introduction of £9,000 fees, income from fees would reduce in real terms. In addition, there were several cost increases on the horizon (such as increases in National Insurance, and employer pension contributions) and RPC had therefore asked the School to look at where it could operate more efficiently, and so reduce its cost-base.

32. Centennial Research Themes

Academic Board considered the paper from the Pro-Director (Research & Enterprise) at Appendix B, which had already been discussed by Research and Enterprise Committee, and by the Centenary Planning Group. The Group agreed that as well as organising a fundraising campaign and a series of events to mark the Centenary, it was very important to include some intellectual academic content related to the School's research. The document set out a series of five proposed 'Centenary research themes' that could be used to structure events and activities, to raise the profile of SOAS research.

Academic Board was open to the idea of reducing the number of themes, and it was suggested that perhaps the third theme was less focused than the others. It might also be helpful to identify and prioritise those areas for which student demand was strongest.

The Pro-Director (Research & Enterprise) would bring a paper to the autumn meeting of Academic Board for approval.

33. Students' Union Educational Priorities

Academic Board received the paper from the Students' Union at Appendix C, which provided an update on the educational priorities paper which had been presented to Academic Board in November 2013.

Academic Board heard that positive progress had been made during the session. Academic Development Committee had recognised the need for individual examination feedback on request, and a policy would be drafted during the next session. In relation to the request for more frequent and transparent student evaluation of courses, a new questionnaire had been developed which it was hoped would address the issues raised.

The Students' Union would provide a paper on its priorities for 2014/15 to the next meeting of Academic Board.

34. Academic Board Effectiveness

Academic Board considered the paper at Appendix D. This had been written as a result of issues raised at the last meeting of Governing Body during discussion of the recent Governing Body Effectiveness Review. Governing Body believed that a significant number of the issues raised related to matters of academic governance, and the best route for these to be considered was for it to ask Academic Board to take another look at its own effectiveness and membership.

After consideration of the paper, Academic Board **approved** the recommendation that a small working group be established, chaired by member of Academic Board, to consider the issues over the summer and autumn. The group would report back in the next academic session to Academic Board and/or the proposed joint informal meeting with Governing Body.

It was further **agreed** that:

- Specific terms of reference and membership of the Working Group would be agreed by the Chair of Academic Board.
- The Group would be made up of five members of Academic Board (one member of EB, one head of department, one student member, two other members)
- The Group would be supported by the Deputy Secretary's Directorate
- The Group's Terms of Reference would focus on issues of academic governance within the framework of Academic Board's own Terms of Reference and membership.

35. Existing Faculty & Departmental Centres (Minute 33, 2012/13)

At its meeting in June 2012, Academic Board agreed criteria for School Institutes, Centres and Groups. Faculties were asked to review their existing Centres and to make recommendations to Academic Board in June 2013. Faculties had not completed their reviews by that date, and had been asked to make a final report and recommendations to Academic Board in June 2014.

Academic Board considered Appendix E and its Annexes, which set out the recommendations from the Faculties. Academic Board **approved** the recommendations as follows:

i) Arts & Humanities Faculty

The creation of a Centre for World Christianities. This Centre had previously been known as the Centre for Eastern and Orthodox Christianity.

ii) Languages & Cultures Faculty

- a) Confirmation of the status of the Centre for Translation Studies (a Faculty Centre) and the Centre for Jewish Studies (a Departmental Centre).
- b) The closure of the Centre for Language Pedagogy (a Faculty Centre).

iii) Law & Social Sciences Faculty

- a) Confirmation of the Centre for Ottoman Studies, the Centre of Taiwan Studies and the Centre of Water and Development as Faculty Centres.
- b) Confirmation of the following as Centres attached to the School of Law:
 - Centre for the Study of Colonialism, Empire and International Law
 - Centre of East Asian Law
 - Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law
 - Centre of Law, Environment and Development
- c) Confirmation of the Centre for Development Policy and Research as a Departmental Centre attached to the Department of Development Studies.
- d) Confirmation of the Centre for International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice as a Departmental Centre attached to the Department of Politics & International Studies.
- e) Probationary status be given to the Centre for Ethnic Minority Studies (attached to the School of Law), and the Centre on the Politics of Energy Security (attached to the Department of Politics & International Studies) for one year. Academic Board would expect a report from the Faculty on these Centres at the June 2015 meeting of Academic Board.

- f) Confirmation that the current Centre for Law and Conflict would, with immediate effect, become a Group.

iv) Centres Focused on Religions

Academic Board **noted** that there were a number of Centres which dealt with various religions spread across the Faculties, and was concerned to ensure that there was some coordination between these Centres. The Pro-Director (Research & Enterprise) was asked to take up this issue with the Chairs of the relevant Centres.

36. Centre for Comparative Political Thought

After consideration of the paper at Appendix F, Academic Board **approved** the creation of a Centre for Comparative Political Thought as a departmental centre of the Department of Politics & International Studies.

37. Centre for Film & Screens Studies/Centre for Media & Film Studies (Minute 22 2011/12)

At its meeting in March 2012, Academic Board was asked to agree to the creation of a Centre for Film & Screen Studies, a Faculty Centre of the Faculty of Languages & Cultures.

Academic Board discussed the relationship between this Centre and the Centre for Media & Film Studies, which was attached to the Faculty of Arts & Humanities. Concern was expressed about having two Centres dealing with similar subject matter, and the potential confusion that this might create.

It was agreed that the relationship between the two Centres would be reviewed in two years, and a report (Appendix G) provided to this meeting of Academic Board.

Academic Board considered the report, and **agreed** the recommendations of the report that the two Centres should continue to exist, each with a clearly distinctive main focus, and that the Centres should be renamed to reflect this. Academic Board therefore **agreed** that there should be a Centre of Media Studies (located within the Faculty of Arts & Humanities) and a Centre for Film Studies (located within the Faculty of Languages & Cultures).

The Deans would ensure that both Centres prepared a plan of their activities for the next three years, to be submitted to the next meeting of Academic Board for information.

38. London Asia-Pacific Centre for Social Science

Academic Board considered the paper at Appendix H, which set out a constitution for the London Asia-Pacific Centre for Social Science.

This Centre, which would replace the current Faculty Centre attached to the Faculty of Law & Social Sciences, would be an officially constituted Centre of both King's College London and the School. As a joint collaboration between the two institutions, the Centre would need a constitution which was slightly different from the standard SOAS format.

Academic Board **approved** the revised constitution for the Centre.

39. Regulations

On the recommendation of Academic Development Committee, Academic Board **approved** regulatory changes relating to:

- i) Postgraduate Taught dissertation deadlines (Appendix I). Academic Board **agreed** that the effect of this change on the late submission rate should be monitored.

- ii) Word limits on penalties for over-length coursework (Appendix J)
- iii) Transfer of full-time undergraduate students to part-time study (Appendix K). Academic Board recognised the importance of making the process of transferring as simple as possible and **agreed** that these changes should be monitored to ensure that they were working well.

40. Grievance & Disciplinary Panel 2014/15

Academic Board **approved** new members of the panel for the 2014/15 session, as set out in Appendix L, and thanked Dr Gray and Dr Kong for their willingness to serve on this panel.

41. Sub-Committee Reports

(i) Termly Reports

Academic Board **received** the termly reports from Academic Development Committee (Appendix M), Research & Enterprise Committee (Appendix N) and Equality & Diversity Committee (Appendix O).

The Pro-Director (Research & Enterprise) highlighted items within the report at Appendix N.

- a) In relation to REF debriefs and forward plans, all Departments had been asked to provide five-year plans. It would be helpful if these could be submitted as soon as possible.
- b) The policy on External Professional Activity would be implemented in a staged away. Any consultancy which had been approved under the previous rules would continue as at present, as the new policy would only apply to newly approved consultancy.
- c) A process for internal peer review of research grant applications had been agreed, and this would be introduced in Departments where a process was not already in place.

(ii) Membership of Academic Development Committee

As a result of the Governing Body Effectiveness Review, Academic Development Committee had undertaken a review of its membership. It wished to ensure that it had the correct balance between academic and professional services staff, and the most appropriate staff within these categories.

Academic Board **approved for recommendation to Governing Body** the proposal (Appendix P) that the membership should be amended to include three further members of academic staff, nominated by the Chair. It was confirmed that the Chair would nominate one individual from each Faculty.

(iii) Frequency of Faculty Board meetings

Academic Board considered the proposal as set out in Appendix Q for a reduction in the frequency of Faculty Board meetings to one per term.

The proposal was **approved for recommendation to Governing Body**.

(iv) Faculty Board Reports

As the result of changes made to Faculty Board terms of reference at the end of the 2010/11 session, Faculty Boards were asked to make annual reports to Academic Board regarding the overall delivery of the Performance Indicators and targets in the Faculty Strategic Plan.

Academic Board **received** the reports from Faculty Boards as set out in Appendix R, Annex 1, 2 and 3.

42. Term Dates 2017/18

Academic Board **noted** term dates for 2017/18 (Appendix S) which had been approved by the Learning & Teaching Quality Committee.

43. Regional Centre Reports 2013/14

Academic Board **noted** the annual reports from

- i) Centres & Programmes Office (Appendix T)
- ii) Centre of African Studies (Appendix U)
- iii) Centre of Contemporary Central Asia & the Caucuses (Appendix V)
- iv) Japan Research Centre (Appendix W)
- v) Centre of Korean Studies (Appendix X)
- vi) Centre of South East Asian Studies (Appendix Y)
- vii) London Middle Is Institute at Soas (Appendix Z)

The Chair drew Academic Board's attention to the report from the Centres & Programmes Office at Appendix T. The report gave Academic Board a very clear picture of the invaluable work carried out by the staff in the CPO.

44. London International Development Centre

Academic Board **noted** the annual report from the London International Development Centre at Appendix A1.

45. Emeritus Status

Academic Board **noted** the award of emeritus status to the following individuals, and thanked them for their valuable service to the School:

Professor Tim Barrett
Professor Doris Behrens-Abouseif
Professor Anne Booth
Professor Ian Brown
Professor Graham Furniss
Professor Werner Menski
Professor Itesh Sachdev

46. Committee Members

The Chair, on behalf of Academic Board, thanked all of those members who would be stepping down from membership of Academic Board at the end of the session.

47. Acting Registrar

On behalf of Academic Board, the Chair expressed his thanks to Graeme Appleby who had carried out his duties as Acting Registrar in an exemplary manner, having taken over these duties under difficult circumstances.

Thanks were also expressed to Chris Ince and Barry Douglas, who had also taken on additional duties, and carried them out extremely well.

There were no reserved items of business.

SOAS
ACADEMIC BOARD
Action Points

Minute	Item	Action	Deadline	By
32	Centenary research themes	Provide a paper to AB for approval	AB Nov 14	RB
33	SU priorities	Provide a paper to AB on 2014/15 priorities	AB Nov 14	SU/PB
34	AB Effectiveness	Appoint group and agree ToR	ASAP	PW
35	Existing Centres	Inform Faculties	ASAP	JA
		Report to AB on probationary Centres	AB June 15	MC/FB
		Hold discussions with Chairs of religions-based Centres	ASAP	RB
36	Centre Comparative Political Thought	Inform Faculty	ASAP	JA
37	CFS/CMS	Ensure report is provided to November AB	AB Nov 14	GS/AP
38	Asia-Pacific Centre	Inform Centre Chair and Faculty	ASAP	JA
39	Regulations	Inform the Registry	ASAP	JA
		Monitor effects of changes re deadlines and FT to PT transfer	As appropriate	DC
40	G & D panel 2014/15	Inform new members and pass on thanks of AB	ASAP	JA
41	ADC membership/ frequency FB meetings	Prepare paper for GB	Next GB meeting	JA
45	Emeritus status	Pass on thanks of AB	ASAP	JA
46	Acting Registrar	Pass on thanks of AB	ASAP	JA

Director's report

Student Enrolment 2014-15

It is currently forecast that the School will be significantly below its recruitment targets this year. Based on the proportion of students in previous years who have moved, at this stage in the term, from being partially enrolled to fully enrolled, and the numbers who have enrolled late, we predict that we will be 87 below our undergraduate target, 81 below our post-graduate taught target and 25 below our postgraduate research student target. IFCELS enrolments present a mixed picture: we are 9 above target on the undergraduate foundation programme but 16 below target on the postgraduate foundation programme.

The financial impact of this is that we will be approximately £2.5m below our budgeted fee income for this year. Around £1.1m of this is covered by our contingency fund. We have already identified well over £½m savings for this year and at the moment are projecting a deficit for this year of around £½m.

Undergraduate recruitment 2015 intake

UCAS have published the latest application figures, which include those students applying to courses with a 15 October deadline (applicants applying to Oxbridge, Medicine and Veterinary Science). Overall, there has been a decline of 3% in applications compared to the same point last year. However, whilst it is very early in the application cycle, and not too much should be read into this, the initial trend in applications to SOAS is promising. Up to 26th October SOAS has received 676 applications, an increase of 116 (20%) against the same point last year. This compares to a small fall of -1.1% across all institutions. Our main competitors are showing a decrease in applications of -2.6%

North Block, Senate House

I am very pleased to report that Senate House North Block contracts were signed and sealed on the 20th October, which means that we have now finally moved forward into the construction phase of the project. Staff accommodation and welfare facilities have now arrived on site, and work is well and truly underway. The contract programme states completion in June 2016 which includes a six week mobilisation period and an 18-month construction phase. Options to accelerate the contract to achieve an earlier date have not yet been discussed.

Update on Distance Learning

The University of London completed its strategic review of its international programmes and has asked Colleges adopt one of the four new collaborative models. The four tracks are

- (i) Track A - where colleges buy only the services they need;
- (ii) Track B – with a standard package of services and a revenue sharing agreement;
- (iii) Track C – for new collaborative, online provision; and
- (iv) Track D – for collaborations with commercial partners.

Track B is very similar to our current arrangement, under which SOAS pays the University of London International Academy (ULIA) about £680K pa for the services it provides for delivering

our distance learning programmes. The School has been exploring other options. An initial cost-benefit analysis and continued discussions with ULIA staff suggest that Track A has the potential to provide better value for money, release resources to strengthen our distance learning operations and invest in programme development, and potentially deliver a recurrent reduction in expenditure. A detailed analysis of Tracks A and B is currently being undertaken with a view to providing greater clarity on the choice of options available to the School.

In the meantime, we are exploring the development of new programmes and pathways in distance learning. The recent launch of Masters in Global Diplomacy, from the Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy (CISD), has encouraged other departments and faculties within the School to investigate

- (i) the potential for converting on-campus programmes for distance learning delivery, and
- (ii) the development of new programmes in disciplines such as Economics and Global Media where there appears to be a strong international market.

At least two programmes for potential development during this academic session will be identified in discussions with academic colleagues and a full market analysis will be undertaken to establish their feasibility.

League tables

Our league table performance has been mixed this year. The QS World University Rankings 2014/2015 were published in mid-September:

<http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-university-rankings/2014>

These show a steady rise in SOAS' subject areas. The School is ranked sixth in the UK for Modern Languages, 10th for Arts and Humanities, 11th in Politics and International Studies and 13th for Sociology (which encompasses Anthropology and Development Studies).

However, the School dropped seven places to 31st in the Times & Sunday Times University League Table 2015. This League Table uses 8 metrics to analyse institutional performance including student satisfaction, research quality, entry standards, student-staff ratio, completion rates and graduate prospects. The drop in the School's overall performance was primarily due to decline in completion rates and graduate prospects. SOAS has maintained its position in relation to staff student ratio and expenditure on services and facilities and improved in relation to degree classification (First and 2:1s) now ranking 8th nationally on this metric.

News from the University of London

The Board of Trustees of the University of London has agreed to support SOAS's application to the Privy Council for its name to become "SOAS University of London" (without the comma).

The Council of the Institute of Education (IoE) has confirmed its decision that the proposed merger between IOE and UCL should proceed. Some further work is now being undertaken on legal and operational matters. The IOE Council will then be asked to reaffirm its decision in November by means of a second vote. Subject to this, the Institute will become a School

(Faculty) of UCL from 2 December. Interestingly, it will slightly change the nature of UCL, which currently has very few part-time students (whereas the IoE has a considerable number).

Heythrop College is actively considering developing some form of relationship with another higher education institution, inside or outwith the University of London, as it strives to create a sustainable future. Heythrop's Governing Body has authorised the Principal of the College to enter discussions with St Mary's University, which is understood to be very positive about this approach. Heythrop is aiming to reach a decision about its future direction by the end of the autumn term 2014.

New Minister of State for Universities and Science

A new Minister for Universities (the Rt Hon Greg Clark) was appointed on 15th July 2014. He has been the Conservative MP for Royal Tunbridge Wells since 2005 and studied economics at Cambridge before earning his PhD from the London School of Economics.

Equality Challenge Unit's Gender Mark

SOAS (along with four other universities) was recently recognised for our progress in advancing gender equality in arts, humanities and social science careers in higher education. We have been awarded the Bronze level in the Equality Challenge Unit's (ECU) trial gender equality charter mark – the first award scheme of its kind for these disciplines. The gender equality charter mark aims to address chronic gender imbalance and under-representation in the arts, humanities and social sciences. The bronze level is just the first step in the process, and we hope that this will help us to build a culture that will improve the representation, progression and success of both staff and students.

Personalia

I am very pleased to report that John Okell, Research Associate in Burmese, was awarded an OBE in the 2014 Queen's Birthday Honours list for services to UK-Burma relations. John joined SOAS as a trainee lecturer in Burmese in 1959, and worked at SOAS until he retired in 1999. He has since continued teaching part time both for degree-course students in the South East Asia Department and for non-degree students in the SOAS Language Centre.

Paul Webley
31st October 2014

CENTENARY RESEARCH THEMES

Academic Board is asked to approve the attached Centenary research themes, which were discussed in an earlier format at Academic Board last term.

Executive Summary

Academic Board considered a paper in May 2014 which set out five proposed 'centenary research themes', namely

- (i) Global voices;
- (ii) The heritage of humanity;
- (iii) Global interactions;
- (iv) Sharing a small planet; and
- (v) Global politics.

Following comments from Academic Board, the Research and Enterprise Committee and others in the School, these themes have been modified slightly (especially theme iv, and the title of theme v) and are to now presented to Academic Board for approval. The intention is that the themes will be used to advance the core centenary objectives of promoting SOAS in key regions, building the SOAS community, and raising funds.

Author: Richard Black

Recommendations

Academic Board is asked to approve the proposed themes.

Risks

Without an agreed set of research themes, there is a risk that the Centenary campaign lacks focus, and/or fails to engage adequately with the School's research.

Equality implications

There are no immediate equality implications.

Centenary Research Themes

The School's centenary year (2016) provides a unique opportunity for SOAS to promote and develop the School's research on, and in, the regions of Africa, Asia and the Middle East. It is a time for reflection over a century of activity and achievement within the wider SOAS community, and a number of events, exhibitions and other projects have already been initiated or are under consideration with this in mind. It is also a time to look forward to how to ensure that our research and teaching will grow further and continue to have an impact in the future. There is an opportunity to build the School's reputation and public profile; to seek funding to ensure that research impact is maximised; and to deliver greater international collaboration to ensure synergetic benefits beyond an increase in research funding.

The aim for all Centenary activity is to raise the School's profile in key regions, develop our community and raise funds, and our research is key to all of these objectives. The following research themes are designed to encompass what is best about SOAS research to date, and to set out the School's key aspirations for its research in the future:

1. Global voices

SOAS was the first institution in the UK to study linguistics, and is unique in the world in the breadth and depth of its language competence. The School is home to the 'Endangered Languages Project' which has pioneered the study and protection of endangered languages. But language diversity is not just about protecting endangered languages, it is also about how interaction between languages creates new linguistic and cultural forms, tells us about language itself, and promotes the movement of ideas, understanding, and indeed goods and services. In the School's centennial year, we will seek to reaffirm the significance of language knowledge in its core mission, whilst looking beyond to its significance in multiculturalism, in trade, and in the generation of knowledge.

2. The heritage of humanity

With its own art gallery, a world-renowned 'World Music summer school' and engagement with art and heritage institutions in London and around the world, SOAS aspires to make a contribution to guarding the world's heritage, both cultural and increasingly natural. The recent generous donation of the Alphawood Foundation to South-East Asia art at SOAS is testament to our role in the study of the world's art, and it is important to build on the momentum generated by this donation and associated research and teaching activity to focus on art in other regions that is too often neglected in the UK and in international debates about art and heritage.

3. Global interactions

We hear much of the process of 'globalisation' in the late 20th and early 21st century, but global interconnections have existed through much of human history, and are likely to strengthen in the future. For example, the Silk Road, in a variety of academic, political and cultural programmes around the world, is a metaphor for a form of globalisation that predated the 20th century; yet the economic and strategic importance of Central Asia today challenges notions of the 'end of history'. SOAS has been at the forefront of a non-Eurocentric framework approach to the study of history, religions and cultures, and seeks to bring the same lens to bear on the study of international development, law, and business and finance.

4. Sharing a small planet

In a globally interconnected world, major challenges exist around the availability and distribution of resources such as water, food and energy, as well as managing diverse conceptions of entitlement, fairness and justice. Diversity is seen by some as a danger – leading to competition for resources and ultimately to the ‘clash of civilisations’; but there is a different reading of diversity that it is the key building block of innovation and progress. Promoting a more inclusive world, in is an important element of the fight against poverty and inequality, and ensuring fair access to food, water and energy, and is a key theme of SOAS research. Profound engagement with Africa, Asia and the Middle East also provides SOAS researchers with the tools to bring different perspectives to bear on the management of diversity and development of public policies.

5. Global diplomacy and governance

SOAS was founded at the height of the First World War, and has witnessed the growth of first the League of Nations and the International Court of Justice, then the United Nations, as formal institutional mechanisms to promote peaceful dialogue and global governance. In the recent decades, the realm of the ‘international’ has expanded further, to incorporate institutions such as the International Criminal Court, and formal international processes around issues such as trade, finance, migration, poverty, climate change and biodiversity. SOAS’ long-standing mission as a key training ground for those working in international affairs also informs its engagement with research on international institutions.

Ways forward

Within and across these themes, the aim will be to develop specific cases for support for a series of more focused projects; to provide a strong narrative to our research objectives; and to organise themed events during the centenary year. This will be a task for Institutes (each of which might ‘champion’ on one of these themes during the centenary), research centres and Departments, in collaboration with DAR and REO.

Richard Black
October 2014

NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2014
Key Findings

Academic Board is asked to approve the recommendations in this report.

Executive Summary

The report identifies the key messages from the 2014 National Student Survey (NSS). The results of this year's survey are positive with the School maintaining its high level of overall satisfaction at 88%. SOAS' overall ranking has moved up and currently stands at 41st, an improvement on last year's ranking of 42nd. The focussed efforts on improving the scores in the *Assessment and feedback* and *Academic support* over the last two years have yielded good results in several departments.

The report provides an overview of results at School level and a breakdown of results at department and key criteria level, including an analysis of students' comments.

Recommendations

It is recommended that departments work with ADD on the action plan and report to the appropriate committee.

Risks

Failure to respond to recommendations could result in:

- Inability to build on the positive improvement in results and to maintain an upward trajectory
- Failure to communicate the improvements to students entering their final year in time for NSS 2015
- Inability to improve on the sector average in the key areas of *Assessment and feedback* and *Academic support* in NSS 2015

Equality implications

A full report including a breakdown of results by ethnicity, disability, age and gender will be prepared for consideration by School committees, including Equality and Diversity Committee.

SOAS, University of London NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY 2014

Key findings

- SOAS' overall ranking at 41st is an improvement on last year's ranking at 42nd position.
- While sector wide overall satisfaction for 2014 was 86 per cent, SOAS performance was above sector average at 88%
- The response rate was down 6% on last year at 61%
- The greatest improvement in satisfaction was for Learning Resources (+6%) at 90% putting us in the top quartile and 8% above the sector average, with all departments seeing an improvement in their scores
- Five departments – Development Studies, Department of Finance and Management Studies, Politics, Anthropology, and Law (91%) scored over 90%. Three departments – China, Economics, and Music scored below 80%.
- Nationally, the departments ranked highly include *Africa (1st); Near and Middle East (1st); Asian Studies (1st), Development Studies (2nd) and DeFiMS (4th)*
- As in previous years, *Teaching on my course* received a high score of 89% of students in the School satisfied with the quality of teaching they receive, however at department level there was a wide range of results (ie Politics 94% satisfaction while Economics scored 76%).
- As in previous years, *Assessment and feedback* and *Academic support* received below the sector average scores, however at departmental level there was a wide range of results (eg for assessment and feedback Africa and NME scored 50% satisfaction, while Law scored 76%)
- Nationally, the departments ranked highly include *Africa (1st); Near and Middle East (1st); Asian Studies (1st), Development Studies (2nd) and DeFiMS (4th)*
- Satisfaction with *Organisation and Management* fell 4% to 74%, reversing recent improvements in this area over the last few years.

1. Background

This report identifies the key messages from the 2014 National Student Survey (NSS). The report provides an overview of results at School level and a breakdown of results at department and key area level, including an analysis of students' comments (Annex A).

The NSS, which is now in its tenth year, surveys all final-year students in HEIs. The NSS includes 23 questions in 6 sections, plus the 'Overall satisfaction' question and a question on satisfaction with the Students' Union. In 2014, the School opted into six categories of additional questions, the results of which are not available to the public.

In addition we opted into the question “As a result of completing my degree I believe I will have improved my career prospects”. The School asked one open question- “In your view, what is the single most important thing SOAS should do to improve the student experience for undergraduates?” These additional questions were selected based on the results of the 2012 and 2013 surveys and the identified need to explore student satisfaction further in these areas.

2. School results

The results of this year’s survey are positive. The School maintained its high level of overall satisfaction, after the significant jump achieved last year.

Our response rate however, dropped significantly on last year and stands at 61%. Satisfaction scores improved in two areas, Learning Resources and Personal Development, a reversal on last year’s results. Satisfaction with *Teaching on my course* remained the same as last year at 89%, *Assessment and feedback* and *Academic Support* saw a small drop of 1% and 2% respectively and *Organisation and Management* saw a drop of 4% to 74% reversing previous improvements. The Student Union remain in the top quartile for satisfaction despite a small drop of 1% to 71%.

In relation to assessment and feedback the drop has been caused by a drop of 5% for the Q7. *Feedback on my work has been prompt*, which at 50% is 14% below the sector average and reversing some of the positive improvement we saw in last year's results with the introduction of the 3 week coursework turnaround rule. We do know from monitoring turnaround in LTQC this session that compliance with the rule is patchy. For example, Politics at 94% overall satisfaction has a 44% satisfaction for this question, whereas Law has a satisfaction score of 76% for this question putting it in the top quartile nationally. In relation to academic support the drop of 2% is due to a drop in satisfaction for Q12 Good advice was available when I needed to make study choices, with a satisfaction score of 66%, 9% below the sector average. A focus on the Personal Advisor system in 2011-2012 saw the biggest increase in the survey overall for this section of 13% in 2013. Further consideration needs to be given to the Personal Advisor system. Organisation and management saw a fall of 4% after a steady increase in the last five years. This is due to a significant drop of 7% for Q 15. The course is well organised and is running smoothly, which fell by 7%.

Sections	2014	2013	2012	Sector average 2014	Sector average 2013	Sector average 2012	Top quartile 2014	Top quartile 2013	Top quartile 2012
1. Teaching on my course	89	89	89	87	87	86	90	90	90
2 Assessment & feedback	66	67	60	72	71	70	77	76	74
3. Academic support	74	76	63	81	80	79	84	84	83
4. Organisation & management	74	78	71	79	78	77	84	84	84
5. Learning resources	90	84	76	86	85	82	87	86	85
6. Personal development	78	76	74	82	82	81	82	83	82
7. Overall satisfaction	88	88	84	86	86	85	91	90	90

8. I am satisfied with the SU	71	72	66	68	68	66	71	71	71
-------------------------------	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

Table 1 Sector and Top quartile Averages 2014

3. Sector-wide comparison

Sector-wide overall satisfaction with this year's survey is 86%, at a ten year high. SOAS is above the sector average with 88% satisfaction. In each of the six sections covered by the survey, satisfaction nationally has seen small improvements on 2013. SOAS is slightly above the Russell Group average of 87% student satisfaction, a slight drop on last year.

Nationally, the following subjects performed very well – Africa (1st); Near and Middle East ranked 1st, Asian Studies 1st (up from 4th last year), Development Studies 2nd, and DeFiMS 4th.

		Ranking 2014		Ranking 2013
FAH	Anthropology	6th		4th
FAH	Art and Archaeology	14th		N/A
FAH	History	40th		62nd
FAH	Music	N/A threshold not met		
FAH	Religions	N/A		22nd
FLC	Africa/NME		1st	1st
FLC	Asian Studies	1st		4th
FLC	Linguistics	N/A		N/A
FLSS	DeFiMS	4th		3rd
FLSS	Dev Studies	2nd		4th
FLSS	Economics	63rd		34th
FLSS	Law	36th		64th
FLSS	Politics	13th		44th

Table 2 National ranking by subject

4. Department level results

Results at departmental level are provided in Annex A (Tab 1). An analysis of these results has identified the following key findings.

- Six departments saw their overall satisfaction rate increase on last year – Japan and Korea, China, DeFiMS, Development Studies, Law and Politics
- Five departments have a satisfaction score of over 90%, which equals the top quartile, Development Studies (97% up from 93%), Department of Finance and Management Studies (96% up from 95%), Politics 94% up from 87%), Anthropology (93% down from 96%), and Law (91% up from 87%)

- The highest satisfaction score was achieved by Development Studies at 96% and the lowest for Music at 71%.
- The greatest improvement in satisfaction was for *Learning Resources* (up 6%) with all departments seeing an improvement in their scores
- As with last year the lowest satisfaction was recorded for “*Feedback on My Work has been prompt*” with significant variations between departments (Music 17%, Law 76%)

5. Ethnicity, disability, age, gender and domicile

The statistics for *Overall Satisfaction* in the four ethnicity groupings are shown in the table below. Black students’ satisfaction has dropped by 9% to 86% following a significant improvement last year, but is still above the sector average of 85%. White students at satisfaction remains the same as last year at 90%. Asian students’ satisfaction has dropped 6% at only 82% satisfaction and is now 4% below the sector.

Response rates have fallen, significantly for Black students.

Overall satisfaction % Agree	Whole School	White	Black	Asian	Other
2014	88	90	86	82	85
2013	88	90	97	88	88
2012	84	85	80	85	83
2011	86	86	71	88	83
Response rate 2014	61	65	46	62	74
Response rate 2013	67	66	71	70	67
Sector % Agree 2014	86	90	86	82	85
Sector % Agree 2013	85	86	85	85	82

Table 3. Ethnicity

The overall satisfaction scores for students with disability (excluding a specific learning difficulty) increased by 7% to 92%. For students with a specific learning difficulty (eg. dyslexia) overall satisfaction dropped by 2% to 82%. Both scores are above the sector average.

	2014	2013	2012	2011
Whole School	88	88	84	86
Disability	92	85	77	100
Sector average	83	-	-	-
specific learning difficulty (eg. Dyslexia)	82	84	73	89
Sector average	82	-	-	-

Table 4. Disability

It can be seen from the table below that young and mature students have similar levels of overall satisfaction. The mature students' score sees a slight drop on last year which is a development which needs further investigated, particularly in light of our OFFA targets.

Overall satisfaction % Agree	2014	2013	2012	2011
Whole School	88	88	84	86
Young	88	88	84	86
Mature	87	89	84	84

Table 4. Age

This year female students are slightly less satisfied than male students.

Overall satisfaction % Agree	2014	2013	2012	2011
Whole School	88	88	84	86
Female	87	89	85	85
Male	88	88	83	86

Table 5. Gender

Students from the EU (excluding the UK) are the most satisfied of our students this year.

Overall satisfaction % Agree	2014	2013	Sector average
Whole School	88	88	86
UK	84	89	86
EU	96	86	85
Other	92	89	87

6. Optional Questions

In 2014 the School opted into six categories of additional questions plus the question "As a result of completing my degree I believe I will have improved my career prospects." (Annex A, Tab 2) These categories were chosen to help provide further information on areas of concern.

The satisfaction score for the *Careers* category has seen a drop of 3% to 63% and is 13% below the sector average. The satisfaction scores for both *Course content and structure* has dropped slightly and satisfaction with *Feedback* has increased slightly.

Satisfaction with *Welfare resources and facilities* saw an improvement of 9% on the previous year to 80% which now matches the sector average.

There was no improvement for the additional question "As a result of completing my degree I feel I have improved my career prospects" where the School has a satisfaction score of 83% which is higher than the sector average.

7. Open comments

A total of 808 comments were received (403 Positive and 405 Negative). A summary can be viewed in Annex A (Tab 3 and 4). The free comments reflect many of the issues reported in this paper. There are a significant number of comments regarding teaching styles, assessment and feedback practices, personal advisors and support with course choices. Issues to do with general administration have the largest number of negative references. The comments on administration tend to be regarding poor organisation and bureaucracy and are often not specific. Comments refer to both Faculty level and central administration. Where specifics are included concerns include lack of coordination between different parts of the administration, slow turnaround of coursework, and courses not running. In response to the question *“What is the single most important thing SOAS can do to improve the student experience for undergraduates”* the majority of responses related to improving administration. This year there were also a significant number of references to problems caused by strikes and protests, for example;

“Frequent disruptions throughout the year due to strikes”

“Too many strikes, too much student activism. This interferes with my learning experience in university. I came to university to get an education, not to get it disrupted frequently by strikes. With so many lessons”

There was a significant improvement in the number of references (9 compared to 39 last year) to the importance of improving the personal advisor system following efforts to improve the system over the last few years. There were similar improvements in terms of references to feedback and assessment (14 from 27).

Positive comments reflected very well on the quality of the teaching and the encouragement of critical thinking-

“The teaching staff throughout my time here have been engaging, passionate and approachable. I feel I have had learning experiences here that I wouldn't have been able to access at another university. SOAS has given me the opportunity to study regions and themes that a comparable course at any other university would not have been able to offer me. Staff are passionate about their subjects and passionate about teaching and this makes coming to class something you relish and look forward to and it is never a chore.”

“The passion, expertise and commitment of the academics, the strength and unique character of the department. SOAS politics course keeps the critical academy alive and covers ground no other UK university does. It is an excellent course and I will be sad to finish it in a few months time. I hope to return for postgraduate studies in the coming years.”

8. Next steps

The results of this year's survey are positive, but still patchy. The improvements show that the work undertaken to date to improve the student experience as well as our league table position has had a positive impact. Monitoring of actions is key to sustaining and continuing to make improvements particularly for those departments that have not seen an improvement in their results.

Heads of Departments have been sent their departmental results including students' open comments (August 2014). As in the previous three years they have been asked to complete departmental action plans (deadline of 3 November 2014) in consultation with students, and signed off by the Dean of the Faculty.

Directors of Professional Services have also been sent results and asked to respond to issues raised in their areas and report to Student Experience Committee.

Departments which have significantly improved their results in key areas need to share their practice with others. Departments which saw a fall in satisfaction will be supported in the development of the action plans for the coming session by the team of staff in the Academic Development Directorate.

It is recommended that the School continues to focus efforts on improving the scores for the two core categories in the NSS namely *Assessment and feedback* and *Academic support* in the coming session.

Dr Mandy Bentham
Academic Development Directorate
August 2014

STUDENTS' UNION EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES 2014-2015

Academic Board is asked to receive a report on educational priorities from the Students' Union.

Since the Academic year 2010-11, the Students' Union educational priorities have been a useful basis for collaboration between the Students' Union and the School. This year's educational priorities have been drafted by the Co-Presidents, and will seek the input and consensus from the Students' Union Executive Committee and the wider student body, at the start of Term. With the paper being noted by Academic Board, the Students' Union aims to address all of the areas of concern stated here. By informing the School of the existence of such issues, the Students' Union seeks to advise changes to SOAS' educational provision that would most benefit students.

1. Exam Feedback

Concern:

Exams are not simple bench markers in a students' journey, but an important part of the learning experience itself. The Students' Union believes exam feedback to be a key learning-tool for students. Exam Feedback has been a SU priority since 2011. In the summer of 2013 an 'Examination Feedback Pilot' was tried out by the School, providing first year students of specific degrees with a general comment from the internal marker on the overall performance of the class. Subsequent consultation with the students involved in this pilot showed that students were seeking for personal feedback rather than a vague, general feedback.[1] Following the National Union of Students Charter on Assessment and Feedback, the Students' Union believes that students should receive some form of personalized feedback on their exams, as these represent a fundamental part of their summative assessment.

Priority:

The Students' Union suggests to implement a policy for consistent examination feedback, along with clarifying and raising awareness on the existing forms of exam feedback presently available to SOAS students. This will not only result in an improvement of the NSS results, still poor in the area of Assessment and Feedback, but will allow for an improvement in the overall student performance and student experience.[2]

2. Alternative Forms of Assessment

Concern:

In most courses students believe that there is too much reliance on exams and long essays as the sole form of assessment and that the ratio of weighting between the two is imbalanced (too much weight on exams). In some specific departments, academics are using alternative forms of assessment in order to break from the rigid exams-essays duality, making courses more engaging and approachable. This stimulates not only students' creativity, but critical skills too, which SOAS is well known for cherishing. We believe diversifying forms of assessment is vital to improving accessibility and inclusivity of learning and teaching, as different students have different strengths and abilities, so to privilege one form of assessment, such as exams, above another is to advantage some students over others, which is especially relevant for students with learning difficulties.

Priority:

- The Students' Union aims to work with Faculties and Departments in auditing all various forms of assessment currently used at SOAS and in other HE institutions and to identify the advantages and disadvantages of each form. This can help to identify and share good practice within the School and improves accessibility to education.
- We believe that, besides developing alternative forms of assessment, departments should address the imbalance between exams and essay weighting, with exams being given a maximum weighting of 50%

3. Mitigating Circumstances

Concern:

In 2012-2013 the Students' Union requested a review of the School's mitigating circumstances policy in order to provide coherent School-wide regulations. Although this request was granted, there are some areas which remain problematic. We are aware of a number of cases in which students' mitigating circumstances claims have been denied because there are a number of important areas that are absent from the School's mitigating circumstances policy. In some cases, the same mitigating circumstances were declined by some departments and accepted by others. Moreover, this year evidence provided by Student Advice and Wellbeing counselling service was not accepted as supportive evidence for mitigating circumstances. Neither Student Advice and Wellbeing, nor students, were informed that evidence from the counselling service would not be accepted in mitigating circumstances claims. This meant that there were students whose mitigating circumstances were not accepted in the year 2013-2014 because they had expected that Student Advice and Wellbeing documents qualified as evidence.

Priority:

- The Students' Union believes that the categories of qualification for mitigating circumstances should make special mention of disability and mental health, including chronic mental health conditions, anxiety, and of unforeseen circumstances or incidents that cause stress or trauma for the student.
- To make sure that the mitigating circumstances policy is equally applied by all Departments and Faculties.
- The Student Advice and Wellbeing counselling service is a professional service with qualified counsellors, whose opinions are as valid as that of a GP service. We believe that the opinions of Student Advice and Wellbeing counsellors should be accepted as evidence for mitigating circumstances claims.

4. Support the SOAS Language Centre

Concern:

SOAS is famous worldwide to be one of the few Higher Education Institutions to be offering high-quality language degrees in a wide variety of languages. However, the School also used to provide more students with the opportunity of studying a language if not enrolled in a language degree. Today, the Language Centre is the main provider of Language Entitlement Programme (LEP) courses, which are currently offered free for a term to all SOAS undergraduate students who want to integrate their academic experience with the study of a language which they have no existing competence in. This educational provision is much liked by students, who could, therefore, expand their horizons by learning a language even if a language module is not directly part of their degree. However, fewer number of SOAS students are taking the LEP, particularly after the first free Term. Many have started taking courses in other HE Institutions which offer the same courses at lower prices. In the past few years, the Language Centre has gone through serious restructuring and financial cutbacks. According to the information provided by Ms Anne Campbell, Director of the Language Centre, who guided the Periodic Programme Review of the Centre in 2014, the Centre is self-funding and, therefore, focuses more on external students, which is still proving not to be sustainable.

Priority:

- For the School to better subsidise the Language Centre and raise its profile within SOAS, so as to encourage students to study a language.
- Give proper accreditation to the language entitlements, so as for students to improve their extra-curricular employability portfolio.
- To push for the Language Centre to be able to provide more and longer courses to SOAS students, also for non-beginners.

- To push for the Language Centre to gain the necessary expertise to be able to assign CEFR certificates of language competence in all languages studied at SOAS.

5. Diagnostic coursework for Post-graduate Taught Students

Concern:

A high majority of PGT students receive their first coursework feedback after the Christmas break, half way through their degree. This means students do not have any benchmarks or feedback until January. This is neither useful nor acceptable considering that most postgraduate programs only last a year, and that a high amount of PGT international students come to SOAS with very different academic backgrounds.

Priority:

To implement a policy which offers all PGT students diagnostic coursework during the first term. This coursework should also be marked before the end of the first term.

6. Postgraduate dissertation: changing framework and ensuring greater support

Concern:

As it currently stands, because of the cap on PGT dissertations, students are expected to get a distinction at their dissertation if they hope to get a distinction in their overall mark. With the little support and contact time given to students during their dissertation writing time however, students have to write their dissertation with very little support, only able to meet with their supervisors in the short period there is between the end of exams and the 15th of June (final deadline for them to meet), at a time where few students know already how to go about writing their dissertation. We believe this to be an accurate reason for the high levels of stress and anxiety PGT students report to have experienced at the end of their study time at SOAS.

Priority:

The School should consider lifting the dissertation cap for PGT Students, so as for them to be able to get a distinction also if such mark is not achieved at their dissertation. Alternatively, contact time between PGT students and their supervisors during the summer Term should be arranged personally between the student and the supervisor, with a minimum guarantee of e-mail correspondence between the two.

7. Improving Academic and Pastoral Support

Concern:

With NSS scores continuing to drop in the Academic Support section, and in light of the current dispute between the School and some Fractional Teaching Staff, the Students' Union is concerned about the amount of time students are actually able to get in touch with their tutors and get advice from academics. In regards to this, there is great confusion, on behalf of both students and staff, over what the role of the Personal Advisers actually should be.

Priority:

- To improve the Personal Advisor (PA) system by better explaining to students and staff the 'mentoring purpose' of personal advisers. Also, it is crucial that the assignment of a PA to students is not made randomly, but instead follows guidelines which can make sure both the student and the academic understand the value and purpose of this service, for example by pairing students and PA's according to a common discipline or regional focus.
- To consider examples of best practice carried out in other departments which instead of conforming to the PA system, have supported students through the services provided one competent 'welfare support' staff member.

8. BME Students' Attainment Gap

Concern:

Black minority ethnic (BME) students' grades have on average been repeatedly lower compared to white students. The SOAS Equality and Diversity Report 2013 notes in part four that white

undergraduate students were more likely than BME undergraduate students to have achieved a First, more likely to have achieved at least a 2:1, and less likely to have failed.

Priority

- To disaggregate statistics further along different lines including, but not limited to gender and age, to understand which groups exactly are in need of increased support.
- To work with the school on strategies to understand and close the attainment gap.
- To inform about support systems that students can access in order to pull up their grades.

9. Improve support of academic staff

Concern:

As suggested by point 1, 5, 6 and 7, many of the Students' Union priorities could increase academics' workloads, fractional as well as full time academics. Due to cuts to staff's pay across the higher education sector and increasing work being pushed onto fractional teaching staff, fractional staff are overstretched and under-supported. Hence, in order for this year's educational priorities to be realized, the working and payment situation of the School's fractional staff needs to be revised and improved.

Priority:

To reiterate the crucial need for the School, Faculties and Departments to better support GTAs and STFs by better remunerating their working hours. Doing nearly 50% of the overall teaching at SOAS it is crucial for the School find a way to improve the working conditions of all Fractionals before a new series of strikes and boycotts ends up disrupting the educational experience of students at the new beginning of this academic year.

10. Greater representation and transparency within SOAS' governance structures

Concern:

The Students' Union is concerned that many students and staff feel that there is a divide between themselves and the decision-making groups and bodies within the School. There is a strong sense that although SOAS deploys language about the SOAS community, Senior Management do not endeavour to engage or have dialogue with this community beyond formal channels, which are not sufficient due to lack of representation and transparency within existing structures. The exclusion of the majority of the SOAS community from School governance structures hinders communication and therefore prevents wider understanding of different positions and the reasons behind decision making. This fosters hostility, resulting in protest and industrial action which negatively impacts student experience.

Priority:

We strongly advocate for the 'Academic-Board working group' set up by Governing Body in April 2014, to follow its scope and proceed to a thorough review of the SOAS governance structures, conducted internally by a body comprising representatives of all stakeholder groups. We hope that such a review would indicate areas that can be reformed in order to make these structures more representative and transparent. We believe that such reforms would bring together the SOAS community and improve communication and understanding within this community, which is particularly important at this challenging time for SOAS with its expansion to SHNB.

[1] This consultation was informally organised by the Students' Union and the Student Representatives of those first year courses which had piloted the 'Examination Feedback Pilot'.

[2] 2014 NSS results: Assessment and Feedback did not improve from 2013 NSS scores, remaining lower than average sector results.

SOAS CENTRES AND INSTITUTES

Academic Board is asked to approve a revised statement of the purpose and organization of Centres and Institutes at SOAS

Executive Summary

Over the past year, SOAS has established two new Regional Institutes to act as flagship institutions focused on two of our core regions. This paper sets out a core description of the purpose and organization of such institutes, as well a revised core description of Faculty, Department and Regional centres that clarifies expectations and reporting lines. Annex A also sets out a timeline for re-approval of Department and Faculty research centres.

Author: Richard Black

Recommendations

Academic Board is asked to approve the statements of purpose

Risks

Without these clear statements of purpose, there is a risk of misunderstandings in relation to the role of Centres and Institutes.

Equality implications

There are no immediate equality implications

SOAS regional institutes

SOAS regional institutes are expected to be high-profile bodies whose active membership includes staff from across Departments and Faculties, whose activities build upon the work and interests of the entire School and which receive on-going and substantial¹ external funding to sustain their activities. They are expected to facilitate cross-disciplinary teaching and research, and engage with external partners in promoting knowledge transfer and outreach activities.

Goals

There are five key goals for regional institutes:

1. To foster a cross-departmental and cross-disciplinary research culture, and in doing so, to ensure that SOAS research in each region is recognised as world-leading, and that across all of our regions, SOAS sets the Area Studies agenda;
2. To develop a small number of new 'gold-standard' postgraduate teaching programmes that integrate discipline-based and language-based teaching to provide a set of advanced skills. Such programmes should complement rather than compete with programmes offered within Faculties;
3. To promote doctoral and post-doctoral research training initiatives, in collaboration with the SOAS Doctoral School;
4. To lead on SOAS engagement with and advancement within the region, including coordination of strategic partnerships, support to student recruitment, and a high profile role in alumni and development activities;
5. To create a knowledge hub offering unrivalled expertise and critically informed opinion on regional issues for the benefit of government, the corporate sector, the media and other non-academic stakeholders

Organisation

Each SOAS regional institute is led by a Director who should normally be of professorial standing and have recognised expertise focused on the region, and reports to a Pro-Director. Beyond this, the internal organisation of institutes may vary, but all report to Academic Board on an annual basis, and all may have a (small) external advisory board (or equivalent) to help define long-range priorities and achieve goals.

Activities

SOAS regional institute activities may vary, but should include as a minimum:

1. At least one major research symposium per annum (and/or several smaller ones) whose outcome is clearly directed towards the generation of an internationally-excellent peer-reviewed publication and/or substantial external research grant application
2. At least one major consultancy or research project commissioned per annum
3. Work to attract external funds capable of sustaining the activities of the Centre, with annual targets agreed with the Director of DAR.
4. At least one major event, attracting a high-profile external audience.

¹ Defined as £100k or more per annum

SOAS Research Centres

SOAS research centres are expected to bring together academic staff and postgraduate students from across Departments and Faculties, with a view to stimulating academic debate within the School, and engaging with external audiences. SOAS research centres fall into three categories: Faculty centres, which draw together staff and students working within a particular thematic area across a Faculty, and are located and supported within Faculties; Department centres, which draw together staff and students working on a topic within a Department, and are located and supported within a Department; and Regional centres, focused on the cross-disciplinary study of a particular country or region, which are located outside Faculties, and supported centrally by the Research & Enterprise Office.

Goals

There are two key goals for Departmental, Faculty and Regional research centres:

1. To foster a cross-departmental and cross-disciplinary research culture, in which original and innovative ideas and approaches can flourish, and proposals emerge for events, publications and external research funding;
2. To lead on engagement with external stakeholders, in order to develop collaborative initiatives, raise philanthropic donations, disseminate SOAS research and deliver wider impact

Organisation

Each SOAS research centre should have a Chair or Director who is a permanent member of academic staff and has recognised expertise in the field. Every research centre should produce an annual report, detailing activities over the previous year: Faculty and Department centres report to the relevant Faculty Board, whilst regional centres report to the Research and Enterprise Committee. Each faculty centre is subject to re-approval by Academic Board every three years.

Activities

SOAS research centre activities vary, but should include as a minimum:

1. At least one major research symposium per annum (and/or several smaller ones) whose outcome is clearly directed towards the generation of an internationally-excellent peer-reviewed publication and/or substantial external research grant application
2. At least one major consultancy or research project coordinated within the centre per annum; and/or
3. Work to attract external funds capable of sustaining the activities of the Centre

The recommendations within this report are designed to enhance what has previously been agreed by Academic Board. They do not remove the need for Institutes and Centres to have constitutions. Academic Board approved the format of Centre constitutions during the 2012/13 session.

Annex A: Thematic centre approval dates

Faculty of Arts & Humanities

March 2016	Centre for Food Studies
March 2016	Centre for Migration and Diaspora Studies
June 2016	Centre for Jaina Studies
June 2016	Centre for Buddhist Studies
June 2016	Centre for Study of Japanese Religions
June 2017	Centre for World Christianities

Faculty of Languages and Cultures

June 2016	Centre for Cultural, Literary and Post-Colonial Studies
June 2016	Centre of Islamic Studies
June 2017	Centre for Translation Studies
June 2017	Centre for Jewish Studies
July 2017	Centre for Film Studies

Faculty of Law and Social Sciences

June 2015	Centre for Ethnic Minority Studies (probationary review)
June 2015	Centre on the Politics of Energy Security (probationary review)
March 2017	Centre for Ottoman Studies
June 2017	Centre of Taiwan Studies
June 2017	Centre of Water and Development
June 2017	Centre for the Study of Colonialism, Empire and International Law
June 2017	Centre of East Asian Law
June 2017	Centre of Islamic and Middle Eastern Law
June 2017	Centre of Law, Environment and Development
June 2017	Centre for Development Policy and Research
June 2017	Centre for International Politics of Conflict, Rights and Justice

Notes:

1. Centres which run teaching programmes, or which are joint with other institutions are not reviewed as part of this process.

CENTRE FOR MEDIA STUDIES AND CENTRE FOR FILM STUDIES

Academic Board is asked to note the report on these Centres.

At its meeting in June 2014 Academic Board agreed that the Centre for Film & Screen Studies and the Centre for Media & Film Studies should continue to exist, each with a clearly distinctive main focus, and that the Centres should be renamed to reflect this. It was agreed that there should be a Centre of Media Studies (located within the Faculty of Arts & Humanities) and a Centre for Film Studies (located within the Faculty of Languages & Cultures). Academic Board asked that the Centres prepare a plan of their activities for the next three years, which would be submitted to this meeting of Academic Board for information.

The Centre reports are set out below.

Centre for Media Studies: A Three-Year Plan for Teaching Initiatives

Background:

The Centre for Media and Film Studies was established in 2004, as a post-graduate unit focused on teaching, research and critical analysis of the range of media institutions, policy issues, production, content and audiences in the global south. Given the inherently inter-disciplinary nature of Media and Cultural Studies, the Centre was intended to bridge the faculties of SOAS. In 2014, we function within the Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

We started with a single MA degree in Global Media and Post-National Communication and now have a stable of four masters degrees (GMPNC; Media and the Middle East; Media in Development; Critical Media and Cultural Studies).

We have produced 20 doctorates, with many of our graduates taking up positions in academia around the world (SOAS; Nottingham; LSE; Johannesburg; Edinburgh) and with a number of theses turned into books (Zeydabadi-Nejad on The Politics of Iranian cinema; Pak-Shirazi on Shi'ism and film; Batabyal on Television news practices in India).

Since we were established, SOAS has also seen the establishment of the Centre for Cultural, Literary and Post-Colonial Studies and the Centre for Film Studies (2012), both of which cover some of the same intellectual terrain. In 2011, the School of the Arts was created, to include three separate units (Art and Archaeology; Music; Media and Film Studies). Our name was changed to Centre for Media Studies in summer 2014. In 2013, the MA Global Creative and Cultural Industries was established within the SOA, with Media as one of a set of pathways for students to choose. In the material world, film and media industries are experiencing convergence and digitalization is changing all old modes of cultural production; SOAS has yet to catch up with such changes and perhaps reintegrate units into a larger and more coherent focus on the global cultural industries.

Staff:

We are a well-integrated and dynamic group of media, cultural studies and digital culture scholars with regional foci and trans-disciplinary approaches. All staff members are internationally recognised scholars with membership in international organisations (Sreberny was President, International Association for Media and Communication Research, 2008-2012; Matar was a founding editor of Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication; London Screen Studies Group, Somnath

collaborates with international scholars as part of a Social Science Research Council initiative) and with affiliations with other centres and academic groups across the school (LMEI; Iranian Studies; Palestine Studies; Gender Studies; South Asia; Korea, Food Studies) and beyond.

We have an interesting range of scholars affiliated with us as research associates and attract visiting scholars from around the world (Brazil; Denmark; Turkey; Netherlands; Iran). We have excellent contacts with communication scholars and with key figures in media industries and policy-makers and have a strong media presence in British and international channels. We receive invitations to lecture at HE institutions in Britain (Oxford, Leeds), Europe (Italy), the USA and the global South (Lebanon; Palestine; Israel; Bhutan; Brazil; India; Qatar) as well as invitations to provide specialist talks for diplomats (EU Brussels) and the FCO.

We have research expertise in key areas of Asia and the Middle East, with a growing focus on Africa. We enjoy a diversity of research interests and methodological approaches. Each of us has published a book in the past year:

Batabyal: *Environment, Politics and Activism: The role of the Media*, Routledge

Kang: *Benjamin and the Media*, Polity Press

Matar: *The Hizbullah Phenomenon: Politics and Communication*, Hirst

Sreberny: *Persian Service*, IB Tauris

However, we are a small permanent team (as of autumn 2014, one professor; one senior lecturer; two lecturers; one part-time teaching fellow). Everyone holds some administrative post all the time which makes it hard to focus fully on research, and especially the development of bids for funding; sabbatical and research breaks are hard to withstand and our size also limits our regional foci: we lack expertise on China and on Africa. We lack AHRC/external funding for scholarships, although one of our MPhil students won a Felix this year.

Media and Digital Culture are still fairly new areas of interest in SOAS. We believe that there is considerable room for expansion, with the appropriate commitments of staff and resources from the school. This plan focuses solely on new teaching programmes that we envisage developing over the next three years:

MA degrees

1) MA Global Digital Cultures, starting Autumn 2015.

We have processed complete paperwork for a new degree in Global Digital Cultures, based on a very popular 05.module on Emerging Digital Cultures. We aim for a cohort of 10 students initially, to expand by 5 students in subsequent years, to a steady state of around 20 students. This degree requires a new lectureship that is written in to the A&H Faculty Plan and needs to be advertised and enacted for Spring 2015.

2) MA Media and Religion, to be launched in 2015. We consider this to be an innovative and highly topical area, with considerable student demand. In autumn 2014, we are offering a new 0.5 option in Media and Religion. A full degree in the subject, to be taught together with Study of Religions, has been approved. We are waiting on the necessary commitments from SoR to deliver the full degree in 2015.

3) MA International Journalism, a new degree to be developed for 2016. Matar and Batabyal have considerable international journalism experience. Batabyal will lead on this new programme, to include a component of cultural journalism

4) MA Contemporary Arts of the Middle East: discussions with the Head of SOA toward participation in a SOA degree. In autumn 2014, we are offering a new 0.5 option in Comparative Visual Cultures of the Middle East to test demand.

MA Degree by Distance Learning:

MA Global Media by Distance Learning. Sreberny developed the very successful MA Media by DL at Leicester University. We have held preliminary discussions Autumn 2014 with Nirmala Rao and colleagues in CISD about best practice and how to start. We will develop an option to be offered on the MA Global Studies by DL degree in the first instance, to test demand, with the intention of developing a full stand-alone MA programme by 2016. A business plan together with marketing information and required start-up costs is being gathered.

An undergraduate degree

BA Global Media and Digital Culture, to be launched in 2017-18 (date dependent upon academic posts being provided). We are convinced that there is a student market for a high-powered degree that focuses on the media industries and practices of the global South. An initial option could be offered on the new BA Liberal Arts degree, building into a fully-fledged three year programme.

We also feel that such a route is the only way for us to grow into a department, since there has to be institutional commitment for new teaching posts for this endeavor. A detailed business plan with marketing evidence is being compiled.

In short, we are a small but energetic unit of SOA/SOAS who firmly believe that expansion of our areas of expertise in innovative ways can bring in new home and international students. These plans require vision and resource commitments.

Somnath Batabyal, Jaeho Kang, Annabelle Sreberny and Dina Matar
Associate Heads, SOA and previous Director, CMS
October 2014

Centre for Film Studies

Update

This report provides an update on the Centre for Film Studies as requested by AB in its July 2014 meeting.

Introduction:

The Centre for Film Studies (previously Centre for Film and Screen Studies) in the Faculty of Languages and Cultures has been operational since 2012. The principal aim of the Centre is to provide an intellectual home for the many academics and students, teaching, carrying out research, and publishing on film and image related media in the Faculty and the School. SOAS is exceptional in its geographical focus, and the concentration of expertise in the disciplines of Film and Screen Studies based in the Faculty of Languages and Cultures makes it unique in the field. It is precisely to capitalise on these strengths that the Centre was formed. Furthermore, it has been designed to provide an intellectual home for the MPhil/PhD programme in Film Studies (first recruitment September 2013), the existing MA Global Cinemas and the Transcultural, and the new joint BA degree with Birkbeck, Global Cinemas.

Research and Related Activities

The first two years of the Centre's existence has been very largely taken up with the approval processes for the MPhil/PhD programme and the new joint BA with Birkbeck, Global Cinemas and Screen Arts. However, we have run two successful symposia. One was organised by Film Studies PhD students supported by the Chair and was designed to break down the barriers between research students, early careers academics and more senior staff. Funded by the Sasakawa Foundation (£1,500) 'Rediscovering the Diva: Considering the Impact of Female Star Persona on Japanese Film and Visual Media' attracted a wide range of participants from the UK and abroad and resulted in the publication of a special edition of the *Journal of Japanese and Korean Cinema* (Routledge) edited by Isolde Standish. We also co-hosted with the Centre for Korean Studies a symposium on 'Years of Radical Change: a Conference of Korean Screen Culture'. This also resulted in the publication of a special edition of the journal *Acta Koreana*.

From 2014/2015 the Centre has received a budget of £ 500 from the Faculty to support its activities. This combined with the arrival of our first visiting academic under the Centre's Hospitality programme (Professor Katstuyuki Hidaka from Ritsumeikan University) means that we will no longer be entirely dependent on external sources of funding. It is proposed that this budget be used as seed corn funding towards major research bids. Two possible themes are (a) Film and History and (b) Global Screen Industries. In the second term from January 2015 we plan a series of lectures by invited speakers on Global Screen Industries. Also in the third term, we are planning a symposium, in collaboration with the Centre for Korean Studies, on Film and History. This event is being co-ordinated by our research associate Dr Hyunseon Lee. Finally, we are in discussion with Turkish academics (our research associate Dr Ozlem Guclu, Mimar Sinian Fine Arts University) and Dr Eylem Atakav at East Anglia on establishing a Turkish Film Consortium which will apply to the Turkish Cultural Office for funding for an annual film festival of alternative Turkish filmmaking and a series of symposia to be held at SOAS.

Two of our members are involved in the co-ordination of major international film festivals - Lindiwe Dovey, the Royal African Societies Film Festival event co-hosted with the BFI, and Ben Murtagh the Indonesian Film Festival which is held at SOAS and which is to become an annual event. Ben Murtagh, secured £7000 funding from the Indonesian Embassy in London and the Indonesia Investment Promotion Centre to organise the London Indonesian Film Screenings 2013 (16-20 October 2013) and a Workshop on Indonesian Cinema (17-18 October 2013). The series of nine film screenings attracted a total audience of 950, and was enlivened by Q&A discussions with prominent Indonesian directors Teddy Soeriaatmadja and Riri Riza and Indonesian and British film critics. The films drew in audiences from the London Indonesian community, NGO workers, the British Council and the FCO, as well as the student body and general public. Two of the films also featured as part of the community oriented Bloomsbury Festival, and three of the films were co-hosted by Indonesia Kontemporer.

In October 2014, and in collaboration with the Centre for South East Asian Studies, we will be screening a series of three Thai films – *3 Midi Z short films* and *Poison Ice, Shakespeare Must Die*, and *Under the Different Sky*. These screenings will be open to the public and have been organised by Rachel Harrison.

Isolde Standish, Director of the Centre

AUDIT OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

Academic Board is asked to note the results of the audit of corporate governance and risk management.

Executive Summary

The School's internal auditors (KPMG) undertook an audit of the School's corporate governance and risk management.

The School's corporate governance and risk management was judged to be satisfactory.

Recommendations

N/A

Risks

N/A

Equality implications

N/A



cutting through complexity™

Corporate Governance and Risk Management

	Overall report rating:
	
	Satisfactory

School of Oriental and
African Studies

Internal Audit 2013-14

August 2014

Contents

The contacts at KPMG in connection with this report are:

Neil Thomas

Partner

Tel: +44 (0)20 7311 1379

Fax: +44 (0)20 7311 4121

neil.thomas@kpmg.co.uk

Charlotte Walker

Assistant Manager

Tel: + 44 (0)20 7694 2020

Fax: + 44 (0)20 7311 4121

charlotte.walker@kpmg.co.uk

Page

1. Executive summary 2

2. Recommendations 5

Appendices

1. Summary of work undertaken and risks reviewed 9

2. Governance structure 11

3. Faculty Management Group Standing Orders 12

4. Faculty Board Standing Orders 13

5. Recommendation follow up 14

6. Staff involvement 17

Status of report

Discussion draft issued TBC

Management responses received TBC

Final report issued TBC

Presented to Audit Committee TBC

Distribution

To (for action):

• Chris Ince, Deputy Secretary

cc (for information)

• Graeme Appleby, Acting Registrar

• Paul Webley, Director

Following approval of the audit committee this report will also be shared with the following committees:

Executive Board

This report, together with its attachments, is provided pursuant to the terms of our engagement. The use of the report is solely for internal purposes by the management of the School of Oriental and African Studies, pursuant to the terms of the engagement, it should not be copied or disclosed to any third party or otherwise quoted or referred to, in whole or in part, without our written consent.

Section one

Executive summary

Conclusion

We have reviewed the governance arrangements in place at faculty level within the School and the level of reporting between the Faculty and the School level. From the work we have performed, we reached an overall assessment of Satisfactory.

Development of Faculty policy, implementation of operational improvements and co-ordination of academic and non-academic management of the Faculties is the role of Faculty Management Groups. Our review has concluded that Faculty Management Groups are effective in the delivery of their governance role although there are some inconsistencies across faculties.

Oversight of the development and implementation of the Faculty Strategic Plans is the role of Faculty Boards according to their Terms of Reference. We note that Faculty Management Group are, in practise, the group who develop the Faculty Plan and there are inconsistencies across Faculties with regards to the processes and procedures for approving and monitoring of the Plans with no formal reporting being made between Faculty Management Groups and Faculty Boards.

There is no regular reporting to executive board and a lack of clarity over the level of reporting required to academic board, meaning there is a lack of clear governance structures over Faculties at the School level. This is partially mitigated by the fact that Faculty Deans sit on Executive Board and Academic Board.

We have also reviewed the progress made on the implementation of recommendations made in the 2012-13 Corporate Governance and Risk Management Review. Three of five recommendations have been implemented with the remaining two recommendations being partially implemented. In the first of these cases, two of three Faculties discuss risk registers at Faculty Management Group where department heads are present, however not all discussions are in depth. In the second case, risk registers have not yet been put on the School intranet in order to facilitate the maintenance of 'live' documents due to technological issues with the intranet which are expected to be resolved over the next few months.

This review has raised eight recommendations of which none are high priority, five are medium priority and three are low priority. These are outlined in detail within section two of this report.

Background

Effective corporate governance is critical, and represents core elements of the system of internal control at the School. Our work will review how governance structures are embedded in individual faculties to support the delivery of a robust governance framework. Our review will look to highlight inconsistencies across the faculties and departments and highlight best practice arrangements. This work will build on our 2011-12 review where we considered the overall arrangements the School had in place at a directorate level to promote strong governance.

During the 2012-13 review we focused on the roll out of the risk management framework, our review focused on the tightening of the integration between risk registers of the individual faculties and the Institutional level register this returned a 'satisfactory assurance rating'. Our review will follow up on any changes to the risk management processes in the year and assess progress against recommendations raised in our 2012-13 report.

This review forms part of our Internal Audit Plan for 2013-14.

Section one

Executive summary (cont.)

Objectives

This review is being performed as part of our 2013-14 audit plan. The prime objectives of our review are:

Objective	Description of work to undertake
Objective 1: Corporate governance	<p>We will review the arrangements that the School has in place with respect to those aspects of Corporate Governance which place reliance on governance arrangements within faculties. This will focus on consideration of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The role the Faculty Board has to play in delivering strategic planning and policy development matters in relation to the Faculty. This will include consideration of whether the Board has the appropriate skills and resources available to it to play this role effectively. ▪ The processes policies and procedure the Faculty Boards adopt to meet its governance obligations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ to monitor the overall delivery of the Faculty Strategic Plan and to review this on a regular basis; ➢ to ensure that the Faculty Strategic Plan contains Performance Indicators and targets, and to periodically monitor their delivery; and ➢ to make an annual report to Academic Board regarding the overall delivery of the Performance Indicators and targets in the Faculty Strategic Plan. ▪ The role the Faculty Management Group has to play to support the Faculty Board in implementing operational improvements. This will include consideration of the interaction between the Faculty Board and the Faculty Management Group. ▪ The process, policies and procedures the Faculty Management Group adopts to meet its governance obligations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ to co-ordinate the academic and non-academic management of the Faculty; ➢ to oversee the implementation of the Faculty Strategic Plan and to report regularly to Faculty Board on progress; ➢ to oversee the implementation of learning and teaching policy and research policy within the Faculty and to report regularly to Faculty Board on progress; ➢ to approve in principle new programme proposals; ➢ to report to relevant Faculty and School Committees as appropriate; and ➢ to devise and recommend to Faculty Board Faculty policy on staff development and training, in consultation with the Staff Development Manager, and to ensure that it is implemented. ▪ The interaction between the Faculty Board, Faculty Management Group and the Executive Board in delivering a robust governance framework. ▪ Evidence of best practice governance being adopted by Faculties and how this is shared between Faculties.
Objective 2: Risk management controls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We will follow-up recommendations raised during the 2012-13 review. ▪ In addition we will review any changes made to the risk management process.

Areas of good practice

- ✓ Faculty Management Groups are effectively implementing operational improvements and co-ordinating the academic and non-academic management of the Faculties;
- ✓ Faculty Strategic Plans are consistent across Faculties and include performance activities against which progress can be monitored;
- ✓ Implementation of key areas of the Faculty Strategic Plan is regularly discussed in depth by Faculty Management Groups; and
- ✓ Three of five recommendations from the 2012-13 Corporate Governance and Risk Management Review have been implemented and progress has been made toward implementing the remaining two recommendations.

Section one

Executive summary (cont.)

Areas for development

- There is inconsistency between Faculties over how Faculty Plans are monitored with no formal reporting to Faculty Board and an inconsistent approach to monitoring of KPIs (**see Recommendation one**);
- There is no regular reporting to executive board by Faculties and a lack of clarity over the level of reporting required to academic board (**see Recommendation two**);
- There are inconsistencies in the roles performed by Faculty Boards and a lack of awareness of Terms of Reference to guide roles and responsibilities for Faculty Management Groups (**see recommendation three**); and
- There is insufficient time between the Faculty Board which the Faculty Plan is sent to for approval and the Resources and Planning Committee for any changes to be made as a result of Faculty Board's review. (**see recommendation four**).

Recommendations raised

We have raised the following recommendations in this review (high priority represents the most urgent and high risk category):

Recommendations raised	High	Medium	Low	Total
Made	-	4	3	7
Accepted	-	3	3	6
Partially Accepted	-	1	-	1

Prior year recommendations status

We have summarised below the recommendations management agreed to implement last year and their current status:

Recommendations raised	High	Medium	Low	Total
Recommendations	-	2	3	5
Implemented	-	1	2	3
Partially Implemented	-	1	1	2

Acknowledgment

We would like to thank all School staff for their assistance during our review.

Section two

Recommendations


This section summarises the recommendations that we have identified during the work performed. We have given each of our observations a risk rating (as explained below) and agreed with management what action the School will need to take.

Priority rating for performance improvement observations raised

High Priority (one): Issues arising referring to important matters that are fundamental to the system of internal control. We believe that the matters observed might cause a business objective not to be met or leave a risk unmitigated and need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.



Medium Priority (two): Issues arising referring mainly to matters that have an important effect on controls but do not require immediate action. A business objective may still be met in full or in part or a risk partially mitigated but the weakness represents a significant deficiency in the system.

Low Priority (Three): Issues arising that would, if corrected, improve internal control in general but are not vital to the overall system of internal control.

#	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response	Officer and due date
1	 (Two)	<p>Monitoring of Faculty Strategic Plan</p> <p>Per the Faculty Management Group Terms of Reference, Faculty Management Groups have the responsibility of overseeing the implementation of and monitoring the overall delivery of the Faculty Strategic Plan and to report regularly to Faculty Board on progress.</p> <p>Through discussions with Faculty Administrators and Deans and a review of meeting minutes we have noted inconsistent monitoring of the Faculty plan and associated key performance indicators across Faculties with regards to content monitored and whether monitoring occurs at Faculty Management Group or Faculty Board (see Appendix four).</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We recommend that the School identifies a list of KPIs which should be monitored across all faculties. This should then be supplemented by those KPIs that Faculty Management Group identify as the most important within their own Faculty Plan. These should be monitored at each meeting.</p> <p>We recommend that Faculty Managements Groups provide a report to Faculty Board for each Faculty Board meeting which includes monitoring of performance against KPIs.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>These will be performance indicators at the faculty level. The Deans will submit a paper to EB with recommendations for a standard set of core performance indicators. These can then be supplemented with any faculty specific indicators.</p>	<p>Deans</p> <p>November 2014</p>



Section two

Recommendations (cont.)

#	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response	Officer and due date
2	 (Two)	<p>Reporting from Faculties</p> <p>We noted that currently there is no formal reporting from either Faculty Management Groups or Faculty Boards to Executive Board.</p> <p>We also noted that, whilst Faculty Boards report annually to Academic Board, there is a lack clarity about what should be included in the report.</p> <p>This means that there is a lack of clarity on governance at a Faculty level feeds into the governance of the School as a whole.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We recommend the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formal reporting from Faculty Management Groups to Executive Board. This report should be approved by Faculty Board prior to submission. A standard reporting template is developed to ensure that Academic Board receives the required information and to ensure consistency between faculties. 	<p>Partially agreed</p> <p>Executive Board does not agree that formal reporting from FMGs is required. It receives a number of existing reports that include faculty data e.g. recruitment, admissions and research. It believes that these thematic reports are sufficient and there would be no additional value in faculty specific reports.</p> <p>It is agreed that a standard format for the annual reports should be agreed.</p>	<p>Deans/ Secretary</p> <p>March 2015</p>
3	 (Two)	<p>Faculty Board and Faculty Management Group Terms of Reference</p> <p>Through a review of Faculty Boards' meeting minutes we have found the role of Faculty Boards to be inconsistent across the three Faculties.</p> <p>We also identified that in all of the three Faculties, Faculty Administrators were not aware that there was a terms of reference for the Faculty Management Group. This leads to a risk that Faculty Management Groups are not fulfilling their designed role.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We recommend that the Faculty Board and Faculty Management Group should note their terms of reference at the first meeting of the year to ensure that all members are clear on the roles and responsibilities of these bodies.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Faculty Boards and Management Groups will consider their terms of reference and the conduct for committee meetings at the first meeting of each session, as is common practice for other School committees. The Deans will remind members of their roles as an oral item.</p>	<p>Deans/ Faculty Administrators</p> <p>October 2014</p>

Section two

Recommendations (cont.)

#	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response	Officer and due date
4	 (Two)	<p>Timing of Faculty Board Meetings</p> <p>Faculty Boards have the responsibility of overseeing the development of the Faculty Strategic Plans, however, currently the Faculty Board meets to review the Faculty Plan a maximum of two weeks in advance of the Resources and Planning Committee approving these plans. This leaves insufficient time for any changes to be made following this review.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We recommend that the School reviews the timing of meetings to ensure that Faculty Board has the opportunity to review the faculty plans.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Faculty Boards will schedule an additional meeting late in the summer term to review the Faculty Plan.</p>	<p>Deans</p> <p>May 2015</p>
5	 (Three)	<p>Monitoring of Staff Development</p> <p>Per the Faculty Management Group Terms of Reference, Faculty Management Groups have the responsibility of devising and recommending to Faculty Boards faculty policy on staff development and training.</p> <p>Through discussions with Faculty Administrators and Deans and a review of meeting minutes we have noted that Faculty Management Groups are not performing this element of their role.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We recommend that staff development and training should be monitored at Faculty Management Groups through monitoring of Faculty's completion of the Staff Development Review process by Department. This should then be fed down to Departments to monitor in detail.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>This will be included as an annual agenda item.</p>	<p>Faculty Administrators</p> <p>November 2014</p>

Section two

Recommendations (cont.)

#	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response	Officer and due date
6	● (Three)	<p>Faculty Board noting of sub-committees Terms of Reference</p> <p>Per the Faculty Board Terms of Reference, Faculty Boards have the responsibility of noting the Terms of Reference of the sub-committees (Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee, Faculty Management Group, Faculty Research Committee).</p> <p>Through a review of meeting minutes we have noted that only one of three Faculty Boards formally note the sub-committee Terms of Reference. The other faculties were aware of the Terms of Reference for Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee and Faculty Research Committee but did not discuss them at Faculty Board.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We recommend that all Faculty Boards note sub-committee Terms of Reference annually to ensure that these are still appropriate for the School and to ensure that each group has clear and agreed objectives.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>These will be included on Faculty Board agendas on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Faculty Administrators</p> <p>November 2014</p>
7	● (Three)	<p>Roles of Faculty Board Student Representatives</p> <p>We noted that there is currently no guidance provided to new members of Faculty Boards in terms of what to expect at meetings, how to participate and what is appropriate content for a report to the Faculty Board.</p> <p>Recommendation:</p> <p>We recommend that Faculties provide an induction for new members when they join Faculty Board and their roles are confirmed at the first Faculty Board meeting they attend to ensure that their role is fully understood.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Deans will remind members of their roles via an oral item at the first meeting of each year. This is the current practice for Executive Board and Academic Board and works well.</p> <p>Additional training on committees and the role of committee secretaries is available if required.</p>	<p>Deans</p> <p>November 2014</p>

Appendix one

Summary of work undertaken and risks reviewed

Below we set out the processes tested and the respective risks that this testing provides assurance over. We have also referenced to issues and exceptions and given an assurance level over the processes tested:

Assurance Level	Classification
Adequate	Any weaknesses identified relate only to issues of good practice which could improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the system or process.
Requires Improvement	There are weaknesses requiring improvement but these are not vital to the achievement of strategic aims and objectives.
Inadequate	The weakness or weaknesses identified have a fundamental impact preventing achievement of strategic aims and/or objectives.

Area tested	Risks reviewed	Findings/ Issues /exceptions	Assurance
Corporate governance	Faculty Boards are not effectively playing a role in delivering strategic planning and policy development in relation to the Faculties.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only two of three Faculty Boards reviewed the Faculty Strategic Plans before formal approval by Resources and Planning Committee and only one Faculty Board discussed the Plan in depth (see recommendation three). ▪ The School planning process occurs during the summer and therefore Faculty Boards do not review the Plan until October when there is limited time to implement meaningful changes to the Plan (see recommendation four). 	Requires Improvement
	Faculty Boards are not meeting their governance obligations through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Insufficient review of overall delivery of Faculty Strategic Plans and performance ▪ Failing to report overall delivery of the Faculty Strategic Plans and performance indicators and targets to the Academic Board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ One of the three Faculties is effectively reviewing the overall delivery of the Faculty Strategic Plan by reporting on the most important performance indicators within the Plan. ▪ One of the three Faculties is not formally reviewing the Plan at Faculty Board meetings. One of the three Faculties is reviewing all performance indicators within the plan leading to inefficient performance indicator monitoring (see recommendation one). ✓ All three faculties report annually to the Academic Board the highlights of discussions held during Faculty Board meetings. ▪ Reports to Academic Board are not standardised and there is a lack of clarity about what should be included in the reports (see recommendation two). ▪ It was noted that there is no guidance over what to expect at Faculty Board to new members leading to a lack of clarity of the roles of members (see recommendation seven). 	Requires Improvement
	Faculty Management Groups are not effectively implementing operational improvements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Faculty Management Groups are effectively implementing operational improvements. See Appendix three for a review of Faculty Management Group activities against Terms of Reference. 	Adequate

Appendix one

Summary of work undertaken and risks reviewed (cont.)

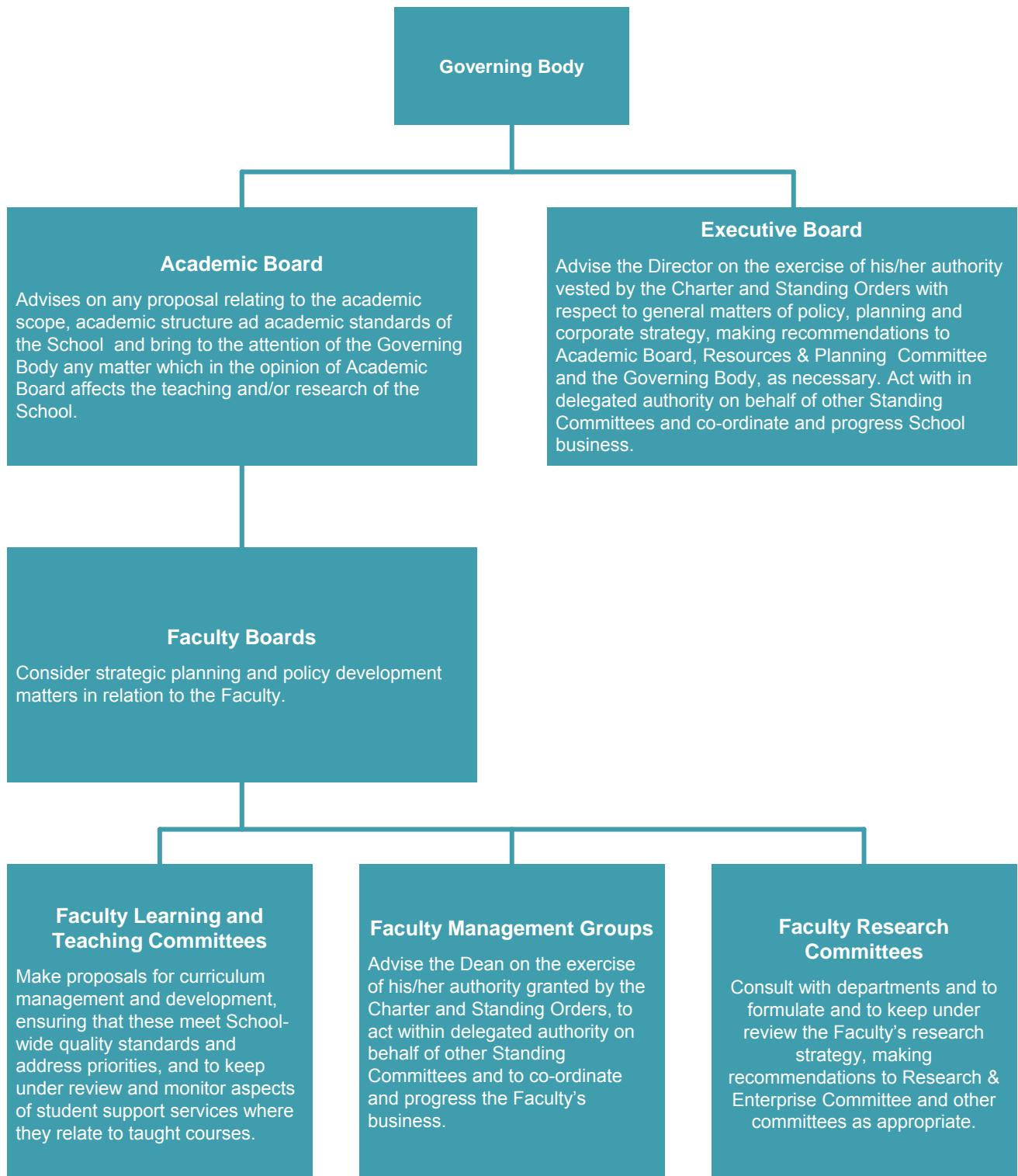
Area tested	Risks reviewed	Findings/ Issues /exceptions	Assurance
Corporate governance	Faculty Management Groups do not have appropriate processes, policies or procedures to meet their governance obligations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Faculty Management Groups are effectively meeting their governance obligations. See Appendix three for a review of Faculty Management Group activities against Terms of Reference. 	Adequate
	There is insufficient interaction between the Faculty Boards, Faculty Management Groups, Academic Board and Executive Board to ensure a robust governance framework is being delivered.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ All three Faculty Management Groups are closely linked with Faculty Boards. Issues discussed at Faculty Management Groups are brought up at Faculty Board due to overlapping membership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is no formal reporting from Faculty Management Group to Faculty Board (see recommendation one). ✓ All three Faculty Boards report directly to Academic Boards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a lack of clarity over what should be included in the report to the Academic Board (see recommendation two). ▪ There is no formal reporting from Faculty Management Groups of Faculty Boards to the Executive Board (see recommendation two). 	Requires Improvement
	There are inconsistent governance practices across faculties.	<p>The governance practices of each of the Faculties has been compared in Appendix three and Appendix four.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Although processes are not exactly the same, all three Faculty Management Groups meet regularly and discuss the key areas of the Faculty Strategic Plan. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is inconsistent Faculty Board performance of governance practices across Faculties, specifically with the regards to the oversight and monitoring of the Faculty Strategic Plan (see recommendation one). 	Requires Improvement

Appendix two

Governance structure

Governance structure

The below chart represents the current governance structure at SOAS as per the Standing Orders for the committees and boards which we have considered during our review. We note that currently the Faculty Management Group does not formally report to Faculty Board in line with this structure chart (**see recommendation two**).



Appendix three

Faculty Management Group Standing Orders

The below sets out the Terms of Reference as per the SOAS Standing Orders: Annex II(ii): Faculty Management Groups. The Terms of Reference have been compared to activities of each of the Faculty Management Group (FMG) to identify inconsistencies and best practice.

Terms of Reference:	Faculty of Languages and Culture	Faculty of Arts and Humanities	Faculty of Law and Social Sciences
Co-ordinate the academic and non-academic management of the Faculty	✓ Management of operational activities of the Faculty is the responsibility of FMG.	✓ Management of operational activities of the Faculty is the responsibility of FMG.	✓ Management of operational activities of the Faculty is the responsibility of FMG.
Oversee the implementation of the Faculty Strategic Plan and to report regularly to Faculty Board on progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Implementation of the Plan is informally overseen through regular discussion of key elements of the plan. ▪ No regular report is made to FB (see recommendation two). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Implementation of the Plan is informally overseen through regular discussion of key elements of the plan. ▪ Snapshot reports of FMG meetings are provided to FB although they are not always meaningful (see recommendation two). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Implementation of the Plan is informally overseen through regular discussion of key elements of the plan. ▪ No regular report is made to FB (see recommendation two).
Oversee the implementation of learning and teaching policy and research policy within the Faculty and to report regularly to Faculty Board on progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At every FMG meeting reports are provided by the Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching and Research. ✓ New policy is dealt with by FMG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At every FMG meeting reports are provided by the Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching and Research. ✓ New policy is dealt with by FMG. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ At every FMG meeting reports are provided by the Associate Deans of Learning and Teaching and Research. ✓ New policy is dealt with by FMG.
Approve in principle new programme proposals	✓ New programmes are approved in principal at FMG.	✓ New programmes are approved in principal at FMG.	✓ New programmes are approved in principal at FMG.
Report to relevant Faculty and School Committees as appropriate	▪ No regular reports are provided by FMG to any other board or committee (see recommendations one and two).	▪ No regular reports are provided by FMG to any other board or committee (see recommendation one and two).	▪ No regular reports are provided by FMG to any other board or committee (see recommendation one and two).
Devise and recommend to Faculty Board faculty policy on staff development and training, in consultation with the Staff Development Manager, and to ensure it is implemented	▪ There is no formal monitoring of staff training and development at FMG (see recommendation five).	▪ There is no formal monitoring of staff training and development at FMG (see recommendation five).	▪ There is no formal monitoring of staff training and development at FMG (see recommendation five).

Appendix four

Faculty Board Standing Orders

The below sets out the Terms of Reference as per the SOAS Standing Orders: Annex II: Faculty Boards. The Terms of Reference have been compared to activities of each of the Faculty Board (FB) to identify inconsistencies and best practice.

Terms of Reference:	Faculty of Languages and Culture	Faculty of Arts and Humanities	Faculty of Law and Social Sciences
Oversee the development of the Faculty Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The plan is developed at FMG and comes to FB for approval. ✓ The Plan was noted by FB in October 2013 and key areas were discussed. ▪ There would have been no time for changes to be made due to the time of the meeting (see recommendation four). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Plan is developed at FMG and comes to FB for approval. ▪ No evidence in FB meeting minutes of draft plan review in detail. ▪ It was noted that there is insufficient time between FB review of the Plan and formal approval by Resources and Planning (see recommendation four). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Plan is developed at FMG. In the current year it did not come to FB for approval due to the cancellation of the FB meeting in October 2013 as a result of a strike.
Monitor the overall delivery of the Faculty Strategic Plan and to review this on a regular basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Plan's performance is monitored at each FB meeting. Each portfolio holder (teaching and learning, research, student experience) reports on the most important KPIs for their relevant area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Progress against the Plan is monitored at FMG. A snapshot of the FMG meetings is provided to FB however timing differences mean the information may or may not be up to date (see recommendation one). ▪ In FB meeting minutes, progress on key areas of the plan is noted but not discussed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The Plan's performance is monitored by FB at each meeting. Every KPI on the Plan is included in a report to the FB. ✓ Reporting on every KPI has led to a focus on updating the list of KPIs rather than on meaningful consideration of performance (see recommendation one).
Ensure the Faculty Strategic Plan contains Performance Indicators and targets, and to periodically monitor their delivery			
Make an annual report to Academic Board regarding the overall delivery of the Performance Indicators and targets in the Faculty Strategic Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An annual report is made to Academic Board summarising key discussion points at FB meetings. ▪ It was noted that there is a lack of clarity about what should be included in the report and that no feedback is received on the report's contents (see recommendation two). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An annual report is made to Academic Board summarising key discussion points at FB meetings. ▪ It was noted that there is a lack of clarity about what should be included in the report and that no feedback is received on the report's contents (see recommendation two). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ An annual report is made to Academic Board summarising key discussion points at FB meetings. ▪ It was noted that there is a lack of clarity about what should be included in the report and that no feedback is received on the report's contents (see recommendation two).
Note the terms of reference of its sub-committees: FL&TC, FMG, FRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No evidence of noting sub-committee terms of Reference in FB meeting minutes (see recommendation six). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Evidence of noting sub-committee terms of Reference in FB in October 2013. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ No evidence of noting sub-committee terms of Reference in FB meeting minutes (see recommendation six).

Appendix five

Recommendations follow up

This appendix summarises our follow up of the implementation of the recommendations agreed with management in the Corporate Governance and Risk Management review in 2012-13.

Corporate governance


#	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response	2013-14 Follow up
1	● (Three)	<p>SOAS Committee webpage</p> <p>From our review of the School's website we noted that the SOAS Committees page has not been updated to take into account the changes made to the External Relations and Communications Committee and the Information Strategy Committee.</p> <p>We recommend management update the website to take account of the change.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>This change has now been actioned.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>KPMG confirmed that the website has been updated to include the External Relations and Communications Committee and the Information Strategy Committee and their terms of reference.</p>

Risk management

#	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response	2013-14 Follow up
2	● (Two)	<p>Departmental level involvement</p> <p>From discussions with faculty and directorate risk register owners we noted that there is little or no engagement below the faculty and directorate level as part of the risk management process. It is important that risk management is embedded across all levels of the School in order to ensure risks are identified and mitigated on a timely basis.</p> <p>We recommend that on at least on a termly basis the relevant faculty and directorate risk registers are distributed to department heads in order to make all staff aware of the risks affecting the School, and for them to assess if there are any risks not identified on the risk registers. This could be incorporated into departmental meetings as well as formally embedding it in the planning process. The results of these discussions should then be fed back up to the owners of the risk registers at faculty level.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The Standard Operating Procedure will be revised to ask faculties to ensure that the risk registers are discussed at Faculty Management Groups each term, prior to their submission to the Deputy Secretary.</p> <p>Directors of Professional Services will be asked to ensure that Risk Registers are raised with their senior teams, or equivalent.</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p> <p>Faculty Management Group Standing Orders have been obtained and do not reference risk registers.</p> <p>Two of the three faculties review the risk register termly at Faculty Management Group which includes Heads of Departments. Minutes of meetings have been obtained and in most cases the risk registers are noted rather than discussed in depth.</p>

Appendix five

Recommendations follow up (cont.)

#	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response	2013-14 Follow up
3	 (Two)	<p>Downwards feedback</p> <p>There is no formal process for providing downwards feedback on risk management to the faculty and directorate level on areas such as the documenting of controls and actions and risk scoring. Through review of the local risk registers and discussions with risk register owners we found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk register owners do not receive any formal feedback on the content of their risk registers after they have been reviewed; ▪ There is not a clear understanding of how to score risks, particularly around impact scores and colour ratings assigned to risks; ▪ There is inconsistency in documenting controls and action plans (see recommendation 5); and ▪ Risk owners do not have visibility to the School's institutional risk register when developing local risk registers. <p>In order for there to be a fully effective risk management process it is vital that the School ensures that the faculty/directorate risk owners receive guidance around scoring risks as well as constructive feedback around areas which could be improved upon. In addition, it is important that the institutional risks are fed down to the faculty and directorate level.</p> <p>We recommend that formal agendas be set for risk meetings between the Deputy Secretary and risk owners to ensure that the above items are captured. In addition, we recommended that guidance be included in the Risk Register – Standing Operating Procedures on how to score risk, specifically the impact scores as well as information on how the colour rating is assigned.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>To date feedback has only been provided to faculties or directorates where there were significant issues to address. During the bedding in process for the new approach it was decided not to have detailed meetings with individual register holders. However, individual meetings have been set up for over the summer period to ensure an improvement in communication and consistency of approach. These will be incorporated in to a set of revised risk registers for the start of the 2013/14 academic year. The annual meetings will be included in a revised SOP to ensure the issues raised in the recommendation are amongst those discussed in these meetings.</p> <p>Annual meetings, at this point in the cycle, will take place with all risk register owners with other meetings when required.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Through discussions with Faculty Administrators and Deans we have noted that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The School Risk Register has been made available to all faculties; ▪ To date, formal two-way feedback meetings have taken place between two of the three faculties and the Deputy Secretary's office; and ▪ There has not been a formal two-way feedback meeting with the third faculty in the year due to turnover of the Faculty Administrator, however feedback was provided in the prior year.

Appendix five

Recommendations follow up (cont.)

#	Risk	Issue and recommendation	Management response	2013-14 Follow up
4	● (Three)	<p>Updating risk registers</p> <p>Faculty and directorate risk registers are not kept as 'live' documents. They are only updated on a termly basis for review. We have seen other institutions where the faculty and directorate risk registers are updated more frequently. Keeping risk registers as 'live' documents assists in the monitoring risks and ensuring mitigating actions are implemented in a timely manner. This will ultimately help aide the School in achieving its corporate objectives.</p> <p>As the School continues to embed risk management throughout the Institution, we recommend as best practice, that the School considers updating its risk management policy, when it is next under review, to incorporate policies for ensuring that risk registers are not simply completed on a termly basis but are updated regularly by Faculty and Directorates. This will help ensure that risks are up to date and movements are assessed, controls and mitigations are reviewed and that actions are progressed.</p>	<p>Agreed</p> <p>The School will move to maintaining the Risk Registers on a secure intranet. This will enable a better sharing of best practice and more frequent updating of information. It will also allow wider sharing of the risk registers across the School</p> <p>The intranet is currently under development so this action will take slightly longer than desirable.</p>	<p>Partially Implemented</p> <p>Risk registers have not yet been put on the intranet due to intranet development issues. As a result, faculty Risk Registers are only updated termly.</p> <p>We have reviewed Faculty Management Group meetings and have noted that key risks for which controls are managed by the faculty are reviewed regularly.</p>
5	● (Three)	<p>Accuracy of the Risk Registers</p> <p>Our testing identified a number of areas in risk registers that were not completed with sufficient detail, these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Description of controls - In our testing we found that in a number of areas the specified controls did not have an adequate description on the nature and operation of the control. ▪ Action plans - From our testing we discovered actions to be recorded that where not measurable. <p>It is important that the information on the faculty and risk register is as complete as possible to ensure that appropriate mitigating controls and actions are in place and can be monitored. In order to address the issues identified above. The following actions should be put into place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Description of controls - When recording a control the controls description should include a detailed enough description to ascertain how the control operates and how it can be monitored. Guidance on how to document a control should be included in the Risk Register – Standing Operating Instructions . ▪ Action plans - All actions should conform to SMART, being Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time bound. Guidance should be issued to risk register owners to ensure those completing risk registers are aware of SMART. 	<p>Agreed</p> <p>This will be addressed through the meetings planned with individual register holders, as detailed for recommendation 3.</p>	<p>Implemented</p> <p>Risk register feedback meetings are being held with risk register owners (see follow up of recommendation three).</p> <p>Faculty and school risk registers have been obtained and reviewed and the following has been noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Risk registers are SMART; ▪ Risk register format is consistent across faculties and the school; and ▪ Risk register scoring is consistent across faculties and the school.

Appendix six

Staff involvement

We undertook interviews in August 2014 with key stakeholders to inform this work:

Name	Title
Chris Ince	Deputy Secretary
Professor Anne Pauwels	Dean of Faculty: Languages and Culture
Roger Nuthall	Faculty Administrator: Languages and Culture
Leigh Ward	Faculty Administrator: Arts and Humanities
Cate Knowles	Faculty Administrator: Law and Social Sciences
David Suber	2012/13 Faculty Board Student Representative: Arts and Humanities

During our audit, we reviewed the following documents:

- SOAS Charter and Standing Orders
- Executive Board meeting minutes;
- Academic Board meeting minutes;
- Faculty Boards meeting minutes;
- Faculty Boards Annual Report to Academic Board;
- Faculty Management Groups meeting minutes;
- Faculty Strategic Plans;
- Risk Management Policy;
- SOAS Risk Register; and
- Faculty Risk Registers.



cutting through complexity™

© 2014 KPMG Audit LLP, a UK limited liability partnership, is a subsidiary of KPMG Europe LLP and a member firm of the KPMG network of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Cooperative, a Swiss entity. All rights reserved.

The KPMG name, logo and 'cutting through complexity' are registered trademarks or trademarks of KPMG International Cooperative (KPMG International).

ACADEMIC BOARD EFFECTIVENESS

Academic Board is asked to receive the attached progress report from the Working Group.

Executive Summary

At the time of writing the Group has met on three occasions, and a fourth meeting will take place in the week of 10 November 2014.

The Group's membership and terms of reference have been agreed. The Group has spent time considering what its main tasks should be, determining what information it requires, from whom this should be obtained, and how this should be done.

Recommendations

N/A

Risks

N/A

Equality implications

N/A

Academic Board Review Group

1. Background

At its meeting in June 2014 Academic Board considered a paper which had been written as a result of the issues raised during discussions of the recent Governing Body Effectiveness Review. Governing Body believed that a number of these issues related to matters of academic governance, and asked Academic Board to review its own effectiveness.

After consideration of the paper, Academic Board agreed that a small working group should be established, to consider issues of academic governance within the framework of Academic board's own Terms of Reference and membership. It was agreed that the group would be chaired by member of Academic Board, and include one member of Executive Board, one Head of Department, one student member and two other members.

2. Membership and Terms of Reference

The membership of the group is as follows:

Richard Fardon (Chair)
Dana Healy
Anne Pauwels
Laurence Smith
David Suber

The group spent its first meeting finalising its terms of reference which, as Academic Board requested, have been agreed with the Chair of Academic Board. These are as follows:

The remit of the group is to undertake a review of the effectiveness of Academic Board and to make recommendations to Academic Board as appropriate. The review, which will take place within the framework of Academic Board's current terms of reference and membership, will include consideration of issues relating to SOAS academic governance, the way in which Academic Board operates within this and its relationship with its sub-committees.

3. Meetings

At its subsequent meetings, the group has spent time trying to determine exactly what is being asked of it, and what its priorities should be. It has also considered the sort of information that it will need to obtain, from whom this information should be sought, and the best way of obtaining it.

During its discussions the group considered whether it should spend time looking at the School's compliance with external requirements (e.g. QAA). It agreed that, given recent positive external audits and the fact that there were no issues related to external compliance raised during Governing Body discussions, this was not an area which it would cover.

Richard Fardon
Chair of Group
October 2014

ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Academic Board is asked to receive the following report.

Remit

The remit of Academic Development Committee is to consider strategic planning and policy development matters relating to the School's profile of academic programmes (whether leading to degrees or not), their mode of delivery, partnerships and collaborations, the marketing of these programmes, policy with regard to scholarships and bursaries, student recruitment and widening participation. It also has responsibility for overseeing the maintenance and monitoring of academic standards and quality, and strategic planning and policy development matters relating to the student experience. The Committee will make reports and recommendations to Academic Board and other committees where appropriate.

Academic Development Committee now has the following subcommittees and panel:

Learning & Teaching Quality Committee
Student Experience Committee

It may delegate activities and authorities to these committees, as appropriate, but retains overall responsibility for these.

Summary of work undertaken

Following the first meeting of the 2014/15 session, ADC wishes to report the following to Academic Board:

- A report on internships was received from the Head of Careers. The Committee welcomed the information on existing and potential opportunities for SOAS students, and made some suggestions for further expansion. It was agreed that the Careers Service would draft a framework for credit-bearing internships which could be adapted by any department wishing to introduce such a course; and that a Performance Indicator relating to the percentage of undergraduate students participating in internships would be considered for inclusion in the next Learning and Teaching Strategy (from 2015/16).
- Updates on the Learning and Teaching Strategy action plan were considered.
- The Students' Union Educational Priorities 2014/15 were noted, and suggestions made for where each of them might most appropriately be discussed.
- NSS 2014 results were received.
- ADC for the first time received Faculty Plans and noted the new programmes proposed, welcoming this opportunity to engage with the planning process and fulfil its remit in considering academic strategy.

On-going work carried forward

Academic Development Committee will continue to monitor progress with the Learning and Teaching Strategy Action Plan and the SU Education Priorities. The Committee will continue to monitor progress with actions arising from the National Student Survey results. Discussions around internships, and the possibility of assessing and awarding credit for these and other activities appropriately aligned with agreed learning outcomes, will continue.

Future priorities and developments

The Committee has asked to receive further updates on arrangements for Distance Learning provision, both accredited and in the form of MOOCs. It will begin work on updating the Learning and Teaching Strategy for 2015/16 onwards. It is expected that amendments to the Regulations and to the School's credit framework will be brought forward in this session.

Professor Nirmala Rao, Chair
Jennifer Rhodes, Secretary
October 2014

RESEARCH AND ENTERPRISE COMMITTEE

Academic Board is asked to receive the following report.

Remit

To consider strategic planning and policy development matters relating to research and enterprise. To provide reports for, and to make recommendations to, Academic Board and other Committees as appropriate. The Committee also has a responsibility for advising and reporting to other committees as specified in the Terms of Reference.

Summary of work undertaken

SOAS Journals

The Committee considered a paper from the editorial managers of the SOAS journals initiating a consultation on governance structures. It was agreed that the Pro-Director (Research) would approach candidates to lead the review.

Research Plans

The Committee considered a paper from the Pro-Director (Research) on the progress of department and individual research plans. The paper was approved, subject to minor modifications, and it was agreed that the Research & Enterprise Committee would undertake an annual review of faculty research plans.

Research Centres & Institutes

The Committee considered and approved a paper on the terms of reference for research centres and institutes. It was also noted that an informal working group had been established to explore the possibility of setting up an Africa Institute by 2015 (the 50th anniversary of the Centre for African Studies) and in advance of the SOAS centenary celebrations in 2016/17.

Research Income

The Committee noted a report from the Research Enterprise Finance Manager which showed that the School's research income had remained steady at around £4 million per year over the past five years.

Centennial Research Themes

The Committee approved the revised paper on the SOAS Centennial Research Themes.

Postgraduate Research Matters

The Committee noted that:

The Doctoral School's first priority was to establish a viable financial model, but that progress was difficult following the recent departure of the school's administrator.

Investigation was underway into the possibility of creating a mechanism whereby departments could appoint a chair to oversee the conduct of a viva, should the need arise.

Research Ethics

The Committee noted a report from the Research Ethics Panel

Ongoing work carried forward

External Professional Activities (EPA) Policy:

The EPA policy has been launched and the implementation has begun. The EPA policy has been communicated to the Faculties and the first workshop was run and subsequent workshops organised. A consultancy workflow document, capturing consultancy project information and approvals has been developed and disseminated to the faculty.

Incorporation into Doctoral training programmes:

The REC discussed potential DTPs with which SOAS may wish to apply for or become associate members of.

Future priorities and developments

- To monitor compliance with Concordats for Researcher Development and Research Integrity.
- To review and evaluate strategy and process in relation to REF 2014 and to prepare for future research assessment frameworks.
- To assist the Library with insuring compliance of external regulations e.g. HEFCE/RCUK regarding Open Access and data management.
- To review current practises and determine appropriate procedures for internal peer review of grant applications for each faculty.
- To determine appropriate training programmes for research staff in areas such as ethics, impact, grant writing, doctoral student supervision, open access and data management and facilitate this process.

Dr Alex Lewis, Committee Secretary
Professor Richard Black, Pro-Director (Research & Enterprise)
October 2014

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Academic Board is asked to receive the following report.

Remit of Committee & sub-groups

iii) The Equality & Diversity Committee [EDC] will have the following terms of reference

(a) To consider strategic planning and policy development matters relating to equality and diversity, and to make recommendations to Academic Board, Resources & Planning Committee and other committees as appropriate;

(b) To monitor the delivery of aspects of approved School strategy relating to equality and diversity, and to ensure that any additional monitoring required to enable the School to meet its legal obligations is carried out in a suitable and timely fashion.

The Committee reports on progress and future actions against the current Equality & Diversity sub-strategy 2014-16. The sub-strategy sets out the School's Equality Objectives for the period. The Public Sector Equality Duty Working Group is responsible for meeting termly to review these objectives and actions. In October the Committee approved the following PSED's terms of reference:

(a) To identify areas where change is necessary

(b) To contribute to the updating of the Schools Equality & Diversity Sub-strategy

(c) To develop and propose solutions and review their effectiveness

(d) To make recommendations to Executive Board, Committees or budget holders as appropriate.

The Membership of the Disability Liaison Group [DLG] was changed; this was agreed as effective immediately. The Committee also agreed that the work of the DLG be added as a standing item to the EDC agenda. The Committee noted the report of the last meeting, and that the Mitigating Circumstances policy was being reviewed by the Registry. It was agreed that the Diversity Advisor would liaise with the Pro-Director (Learning and Teaching) regarding the Mitigating Circumstances policy and putting this to the Academic Development Committee.

Highlights & key issues

The School was successful in its submission for the ECU's pilot of the Gender Equality Mark [GEM]. The result was announced early in September 2014. A working party has been formed who are currently reviewing the action plan against themes and key dates and are also considering a communications strategy to ensure the work of GEM is disseminated across the School.

The Re-Presenting SOAS Symposium took place on the 6th June 21014 and took the form of short presentations, followed by facilitated plenary discussions. The aim of the event was to address issues of representation, orientalism, race and racism at SOAS. It was chaired by the late Deb Viney.

Under the Equality Act (2010) Equality Analyses focus on the outcome of the analysis, rather than the process by which it is achieved. SOAS EB & GB and other senior committee papers have a cover sheet which includes a risk assessment and also an equality analysis – to demonstrate due regard for the Equality Act. The Interim Diversity Advisor and Public Sector Equality Duty working group will review these (at least annually) and will report to EDC on this activity. Relevant equality guidance is being embedded into the Committee Secretary guidelines and training.

EDC have been considering suggestions for the implementation of an emergency care fund accessible to all and across the School. The Committee agreed that the wider commitment and tax efficiencies and implications for a fund needed to be considered but in context of the impact. It was agreed that although a fund in principle was a good idea the mechanism for such a fund required further thought.

Earlier in 2014 the Government proposed significant changes to the administration of the Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) which are very likely to result in substantial reductions to the level of financial support currently provided to some disabled students through the DSA. The Government's stated intention is to encourage institutions to take on more of their responsibilities under the Equality Act (2010). SOAS must ensure that the needs of disabled are anticipated in all of its provision and services and that reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of individual disabled people are put in place to avoid, as far as is considered reasonable, any disadvantage the person experiences as a direct or indirect result of their disability. The possible costs to SOAS of meeting the shortfall in support provided by the DSA are hard to calculate accurately because key details of the proposals have yet to be clarified by the Government. EDC agreed that a recommendation would be made to the Information Strategy Committee to "Consider the implications on the DSA changes within SOAS".

Policies & procedures

The *Dignity at SOAS suite of policies & procedures* has been published at <http://www.soas.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/dignitysuite/> and the annual report on the numbers of Dignity cases is included in the Annual Student Diversity Report. Data for the period '13/14 are currently being gathered and will be reported through the Annual Complaints Report and Annual Student Diversity Reports for '13/14.

As required by the Equality Act (2010) SOAS is required to publish a minimum of one **Equality Objective**, which is to complete the actions outlined in the current Equality & Diversity sub-strategy. The draft of the new **Equality & Diversity sub-strategy (2014-16)** was developed by the Diversity Advisor and the **Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED] working group** in '13/14 and was approved by EDC on 18 Feb 2014. The PSED Group met in September 2014 to review summer progress against the objectives. The Group are also considering the objectives to ensure they remain relevant and specific. EDC and the Trade Unions will be asked to also consider these in '14/15.

Reporting and monitoring of data

The School's Diversity webpages at <http://www.soas.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/reports> include a **range of equality reports and guidance** on various topics. The reports and guidance will be reviewed in '14/15.

The latest additions include:

- Equality Pay Audit, Full Staff Report 2014

Monitoring reports are considered by the EDC and the findings inform the development of strategic / action plans as appropriate. Once the committee has met, these reports can be found at www.soas.ac.uk/equalitydiversity/reports In addition, the EDC receives a report each term from the Diversity Advisor on progress against the current Equality & Diversity Sub-strategy (2014-16). The first report on progress against the new Equality & Diversity sub-strategy 2014-16 was published at EDC on 21 October 2014.

Training programmes/sessions

A number of training activities have been run across the year including the following:

- Aurora - run by the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education, is a programme to encourage a wide range of women in academic and professional roles to think of themselves as leaders, to develop leadership skills, and to help institutions maximise the potential of these women. This innovative development process is for women up to senior lecturer level or professional services equivalent.
- Recruitment & Selection - training commenced on 1st August 2014, for all recruitment panel members. The training has a significant equality and diversity element.
- Unconscious bias training continues to be available
- Equality Diversity Overview for new and existing staff runs monthly, mandatory for all staff.
- Other areas of training are provided on request for example, Disability Awareness training for supporting Dyslexia/Dyspraxia, Vision, Hearing or Physical impairments

- Anti-Harassment Training for Advisers – volunteers are being sought with training and follow-up support to be provided
- A review of equality training is also being undertaken through MEDE
- Mental Health First Aid – available to all staff

Future priorities and developments

- Increase the number of Anti-Harassment Advisers and provide Training and follow-up support
- Raising Awareness initiatives to embed Equality & Diversity
- Re-Presenting SOAS recommendations
- Review of Equality Objectives and progress in 14/15
- Changes to Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs)
- Programme review – embedding equality, a paper is being prepared for presentation to LTC in December 2014
- Implement REF 2014 equality impact analysis recommendations
- Develop equality reporting, extracting relevant information so that it can be easily understood and accessible to anyone who has an interest in the School's reporting
- Maintain reporting schedule for statistical monitoring

SOAS CHINA INSTITUTE ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

Academic Board is asked to receive the report below.

Facts

The SOAS China Institute (SCI) came into being on 1 October 2013, when Michel Hockx was appointed Director. The Institute moved into its offices in the Brunei Gallery (M108-111) in January 2014. That same month, the SCI Deputy Director, Dr Jieyu Liu, joined SOAS from Leeds, and the first SCI Executive Officer, Dr Annie Nie, was appointed. Dr Nie subsequently resigned in June 2014. The current Executive Officer is Mrs Li-Sa Whittington. Further administrative support is provided by the Centres & Programmes Office.

Scope of activity

The SCI promotes cross-Faculty collaboration in teaching and research. It also works to enhance SOAS's external reputation in the field of Chinese Studies through a range of outreach activities. SCI actively engages in fundraising for all China-related activity at SOAS. Internally, the SCI promotes joint-up thinking about China among professional service departments, working closely with colleagues in Development and Alumni Relations, Student Recruitment, Communications, Research and Enterprise, and Marketing.

Main achievements in 2014/15

The SCI took the lead in applying for funding from the HEFCE Postgraduate Support Scheme (PSS) to support new two-year language-based area studies programmes at PGT level. The bid was successful and SOAS and its partners in the scheme were awarded over 850K, mainly for scholarships. Two-year programmes in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, South Asian, and Arabic Studies were approved over the Spring and fourteen funded students started their programmes in September 2014. The new MA Advanced Chinese Studies took a total of five new students, including two self-funded applicants. Students will spend part of their second year on the programme at Zhejiang University in Hangzhou, China. SOAS and Zhejiang University signed an MoU to this effect in September 2014.

The SCI launch event in April 2014 was a major success, built on excellent cooperation between the Centres & Programmes Office and the Development and Alumni Relations Office. The event, featuring a panel discussion with China experts from academia, government, business, and media, drew an audience of well over 200 people from all sectors of society. The SCI vision of promoting dialogue between China experts inside and outside academia was firmly established and received excellent feedback.

The SCI, working with SOAS Enterprise, delivered a week-long bespoke training course on "Industrial Policy and Urban Reform" to a delegation from Jiangsu Provincial

Government in November 2013. Lecturers included SOAS staff in Management, Development Studies, and Environmental Science, as well as staff from LSE Cities.

SCI staff were responsible for, or helped to bring about, major funding bids to the ESRC, the Leverhulme Foundation, the European Research Council and the Newton International Fellowship Scheme.

The SCI Director hosted SOAS alumni events in Singapore, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Hangzhou, and Beijing. SCI organized a range of lectures and seminars, co-sponsored various public lectures and conferences organized by departments, and hosted eight visiting scholars from China and Taiwan.

SCI contributed to a range of media and policy briefing activities, often acting as an intermediary between external clients and SOAS China scholars, liaising closely with the SOAS Press Office and Enterprise Office.

Name: Michel Hockx
Director
September 2014

KING SEJONG INSTITUTE AT SOAS ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

Academic Board is asked to receive the report below.

The King Sejong Institute London has been supporting Korean language courses at the SOAS Language Centre since 2011. SOAS has received GBP 23,788.41 (KRW 42,000,000) from the Sejong Institute in Korea. The grant has been spent on supporting 11 non-beginner courses out of total 15 non-beginners courses. The grant was mainly spent on costs towards teaching, administration and cultural events aimed at promoting interest in Korean language learning.

The Sejong Institute organised a couple of cultural events during the last academic year. A Korean traditional music workshop was held on 11 and 12 November 2013, and 35 people participated. Two Korean Speech Contests, co-organised with Korean Cultural Centre in London were held on 31 May and 28 June 2014 for the first time in the UK. Many SOAS students and SOAS graduates (10 out of total 21) participated in the event. A SOAS student, Anna Yates (PhD in Korean Music) won the second prize in the final round.

We will have a similar budget for this academic year to support non- beginner Korean courses at the Language Centre. The Language Centre is also planning to run a Korean Diploma course from January 2015, which will be supported by the King Sejong fund.

Jaehoon Yeon



London Confucius Institute

SOAS, University of London

WC1H 0XG

<http://www.soas.ac.uk/lci/>

LONDON CONFUCIUS INSTITUTE (LCI) ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

Academic Board is asked to receive the report below.

Staffing and Governance

The previous session saw the arrival of the Chinese director of LCI - Li E and also a number of volunteer and trained language teachers. These are sponsored by Hanban and assist LCI in delivering its language teaching and culture-related activities.

The cooperation with our partner, Beijing Foreign Studies University is going very well.

On 27th June 2014 the annual board meeting took place – this time via teleconference. The meeting was chaired by the Pro-Director, Prof Richard Black. The LCI Directors gave their reports on 2013 activities and 2014 budgets. The report and budgets were approved by the board and have been reported to the Hanban Headquarters.

Activities

The main activities undertaken by the LCI during 2013-2014 are listed below

Teaching

Some Hanban teachers assist the Chinese department at SOAS with teaching. They also undertake the teaching of LCI HSK courses.

LCI also runs business courses for Wanda, Standard Bank and BAE as a trial to broaden the spectrum of Chinese learners.

HSK exams and courses

LCI also acts as a test centre for HSK exams and we have steadily increased the number of candidates that sit these exams from 101 candidates in 2011 to more than 500 candidates in 2014.

Preparation courses for these exams are running on a monthly basis from September 2014, with student numbers growing steadily.

Chinese Scholarships

The LCI also plays a major role in the assessment of candidates for a variety of China-funded scholarships.

- We assessed and recommended four SOAS PhD candidates for the New China Scholarship. All were successful.
- 29 students (almost double compared to 2013 -15 applicants) applied for a one year Confucius Scholarship and all were accepted, including 22 first year students: they will make use of the scholarship when they study abroad at BNU in the second year of their degree.

Academic lectures

- 2014.2 AC Graham Memorial Lectures 2014. Professor Roger T. Ames, Hawaii University gives talk on Confucius
2014.5 A dialogue on traditional and contemporary Chinese Calligraphy by Mr Yun Ping and Mr Zhao Yizhou
- 2014. 5 A Bicentenary in Robert Morrison's Scholarship on China and His Significance for Today held by Tim Barrett
- 2014.6 Between Chinese and English Stages, guest Guowei Wong, Chinese director

Cultural Events

- Two exhibitions at SOAS Wolfson Gallery: Glimpse of China in January, Four Seasons of China in September and upcoming "Chasing the Unseen" Chinese calligraphy exhibition in October.
- Chinese New Year party with Chinese Department
- Dumpling night with Hanban UK
- Chinese Bridge Competition with 3 winners from SOAS
- Chinese culture presentation (paper cutting) in V& A museum
- Completed LCI Video project
- Confucius Day (10th Anniversary) on 26 and 27th September
- 10 Free calligraphy lessons
- 5 Free Chinese dance tasters
- 'All you can translate' event in June
- Biweekly Chinese Language exchange events throughout the all three terms.

Upcoming events:

- "Chasing the Unseen" Chinese calligraphy exhibition in October
- Three lectures on Chinese Education system, by BFSU professor Wang Yibing in October
- Calligraphy, dance and Kungfu lessons start from October
- Run two calligraphy events at British Museum in November

School Networking

We are expanding our school networking this year.

We have recommended two SOAS graduates to be full time Mandarin teachers at The Bushy Academy and Oasis Academy Silvertown.

We also started to offer Chinese lessons to primary schools. Our teacher is teaching 7 sessions of Mandarin per week at Grinling Gibbons Primary school.

We are building up a good working relationship with Stanchester Academy, in the Somerset area.

These schools are happy with the support we provided and most of them are considering setting up Confucius Classrooms in 2015.

We continue (3rd academic year) to support after-school Mandarin club at Hungerford Primary School Hungerford Rd, London N7 9LF.

We started to offer after -school Mandarin club at Harris Academy Modern in September 2014.

New MA Program

LCI will be involved in the MA in Teaching Chinese as a Foreign Language which is likely to start in September 2015.

Visits

HSK Chinese proficiency conference: The Chinese Director Li attended the conference which was held in 26-27th August 2014. The deputy director Suen was invited to the conference as well, as a specialist in testing. Suen reported to the Hanban senior officer about Chinese exams in the UK.

Upcoming academic events

Plan to hold the first research seminar on HSK exam in November 2014. We will invite 10 teachers from other Universities to join the seminar.

Deputy Director Suen is invited to visit Sweden in November to help with setting up Swedish Chinese curriculum.

Budget

The 2014 budget has been submitted to Hanban where funding is being finalised. SOAS will provide matching funds through in-kind contributions.

29 September 2014

Lik Suen, Deputy Director of LCI

Anne Pauwels, Director of LCI

SOAS SOUTH ASIA INSTITUTE ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

Academic Board is asked to receive the report below.

The new Institute [SSAI] came into existence in January 2014, when Michael Hutt took up the position of Director and Ms Sana Shah joined as Executive Officer (0.5 fte), located in the Centres and Programmes Office. Navtej Purewal moved from the University of Manchester to take up the position of Deputy Director on 1 August 2014, at which point the Institute moved into two collocated offices on the fourth floor of the Brunei Gallery building. The SSAI incorporates the Centre for the Study of Pakistan within its overall structure.

With an affiliate membership of nearly sixty academics in thirteen departments across the School, the main purpose of the SSAI is to reinforce and strengthen SOAS's reputation as the UK's premier university for the study of South Asia, through a range of research, outreach, postgraduate training, fundraising and enterprise activities.

In September 2014 the SSAI launched its flagship programme, a two-year Masters in Intensive South Asian Studies, alongside other new two-year programmes in Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Arabic Studies. The South Asia programme has recruited three students in its first year, all of whom have been awarded studentships funded by the HEFCE Postgraduate Support Scheme (PSS). We are grateful to Michel Hockx for taking the lead in securing a total of 14 studentships from this scheme for these new degrees. Two of the students on the South Asia programme will spend the first half of their second year attached to Jawaharlal Nehru University in Delhi, the third to the Nepa School of Humanities and Social Sciences in Kathmandu.

The SSAI Director has held talks with potential research partners in Kolkata, Delhi and Kathmandu during research visits to the region and is currently planning a February trip to India and Pakistan with the head of Development to meet alumni and explore possible sources of philanthropic support.

During its first nine months, the SSAI has hosted a large number of events and programmes, including a graduate student workshop on 'crossing borders in South Asia' and an international workshop on the Indian elections, which served as a springboard for media appearances by many SOAS analysts. It has also worked closely with the Development team to develop a 'case for support' document, which will provide the basis for a major fundraising drive, commencing with a launch event in May 2015.

The SSAI currently hosts three visiting scholars, including a Newton International Research Fellow.

**Michael Hutt
Director
September 2014**

SOAS, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

GOVERNING BODY

Monday 7th July 2014

OPEN MINUTES

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

Mrs S Alier
Professor Sir I Crewe
Mr D East
Ms L Edwards
Sir Graham Fry
Mr C Ilako
Ms R Mortuza
Professor D Mosse

Professor C Oughton
Mr A Popham
Mr J Robinson
Mr D Skinner
Mr S Tinton
Ms Z Weaver
Lord Williams

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

Apologies: Professor Anne Pauwels (Dean of Languages & Cultures)

Observers: Professor Sir M Harris
Mr K Joshi
Ms G Robertson
Mr D Suber

47. Welcome and Apologies

Governing Body **noted** the apologies.

48. Conflicts of Interest

There were no conflicts of interest stated.

49. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 25th April 2014 were **approved**.

50. Actions Taken

(i) MIN 37 – Safety issues

The Secretary **reported** that these had been raised at the Health & Safety Committee as requested.

(ii) MIN 38 – LMEI Articles

The Secretary **reported** that the wording had been agreed as accurate with the LMEI's legal advisers. The wording allowed for the change over time in the post-holder of the Director, rather than it being restricted to the specific Director when the agreement was signed.

51. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

52. The Director's Reports [Appendix A]

31st May, 30th June 2014.

The Director **reported** that in addition to his previously circulated written reports he was able to update members on a number of matters.

At a recent meeting, the Shadow Minister for Universities had indicated he expected higher education to be an election issue and the Labour Party would be making commitments in advance of the next General Election. This was likely to include proposals for a reduction in the student fee without decreasing the overall level of funding to the sector. They would also look to remove students from immigration statistics.

The Director **reported** that USS had initiated an informal consultation over a change in benefits for the USS pension scheme, with a move to a career average model and other options for reducing the risks to the scheme. This would be subject to formal consultation in due course and the proposed changes would be likely to lead to a national dispute with UCU.

Governing Body **noted** that the Senate House North Block Project was on budget but slightly behind schedule due to some minor contractual issues. The Section 106 Agreement had now been approved by Camden Council. Further work was taking place to look at the cycling provision for the new building and addressing the heat and power requirements.

The Pro-Director, Research & Enterprise **reported** on the on-going discussions with fractional staff. The School had a significant number of fractional staff by headcount and they were very important to how the School delivered teaching and assessment. A number of meetings had taken place and the School had made an improved and final offer on 4 July. This was unlikely to be accepted by UCU members so the newly agreed dispute resolution procedure would be invoked.

The Pro-Director, Learning & Teaching **reported** on the latest student recruitment data. The new programmes were recruiting well but overall undergraduate recruitment was disappointing and even if the School achieved the same level of recruitment in clearing as the previous year it was likely to be 70 students below target. However, postgraduate recruitment remained positive with good acceptances from overseas students offsetting any financial shortfall due to a decrease in home applicants.

An initial survey of undergraduate applicants declining offers had shown the key reasons being entry requirements, course content, cost of living in London and the incentives or reduced offers from competitors. The last reason had not been reported in previous years and indicated how the market was changing. The School would review its approach in this area for the following year.

53. Amendments to SOAS Charter & Articles [Appendix B]

The Chairman **reported** on the formal paper to make the changes to the Charter and Articles, which had been discussed in detail at both the last meeting and the informal meeting earlier in the year. Initial discussions had taken place with the Privy Council and the University of London over the proposed changes.

Governing Body **approved** the amendments.

54. Amendments to Standing Orders [Appendix C]

Governing Body **approved** the amendments to its Standing Orders.

Governing Body **agreed** that the newly titled Health, Safety and Security Committee would amend its membership to include "A member of academic staff appointed by Research & Enterprise Committee". This would improve the committee's discussions on academic issues and contribute to the planned review of the School's Health & Safety Policy.

Governing Body **agreed** that the Student Experience Committee would have a dual reporting line to both Academic Development Committee and Resources & Planning Committee. This would ensure any resource implications of its discussions could be considered appropriately.

55. Duties of Registrar & Secretary [Appendix D]

Governing Body **approved** the split of the duties between the new Registrar and Secretary roles.

56. Process for the next GB effectiveness review [Appendix E]

The Chairman **reported** on his proposals for the process for the next Governing Body effectiveness review. This would see it take place earlier than required by the CUC guidelines and involve input from external experts. It would also allow for a wider consultation than in the most recent review.

Governing Body **approved** the revised process and **noted** the existing actions in relation to the review of academic governance and wider issues raised during the last review, Minute 39 of the previous meeting.

57. Finance [Appendix F]

The draft revenue & capital budgets for 2014/15 [i]

The Director of Finance & Planning **reported** that the draft budget for 2014/15 showed a small deficit of £300k. The budget showed an increase in fee income of £2.5m, of which £2.2m was dependent on planned student number growth. The key factors on expenditure were the £1.4m investment via the Accelerated Investment Fund, £1.2m of new staff appointments and £1.4m of non-pay costs, predominately student bursaries and premises costs. Governing Body **approved** the draft budget and **noted** that it would be useful to include overall student and staff numbers in future finance papers.

Governing Body **discussed** the possible shortfall in student recruitment and the additional marketing efforts being put in place. The fee income provision in the budget was sufficient to cover the potential shortfall in undergraduate recruitment that had been discussed earlier as well as any failure to achieve the proposed growth in IFCELS numbers.

Governing Body **approved** the estates capital budget for 2014/15. This included the refurbishment of the infill block, which had been approved at the last meeting. The budget also included a provision of £1m for work on the combined heat and power plant. However, work on Senate House North Block necessitated work on the boilers in the Brunei Gallery, which could be claimed back from the consortium in due course. Governing Body **approved** the Chairman to take Chair's Action on this as required.

Governing Body **approved** the capital equipment budget as detailed in the paper with the remaining £140k expenditure delegated to the Executive Board in line with the Financial Regulations.

The revised financial forecasts to 2015/16 [ii]

The Director of Finance & Planning **reported** that the forecasts saw the School generate a surplus of £1.7m in 2015/16 and £4.3m in 2016/17. These figures would be reviewed in light of the recent HEFCE teaching grant letter before submission.

The forecasts included pay assumptions around national pay increases, incremental increases and USS pension contributions as well as known changes to national insurance contributions. In addition they contained a provision for any negotiated increase in the London Weighting Allowance but this would also need to cover any changes in fractional staff costs.

Governing Body **noted** that the forecasts were based on the existing faculty plans and an increase in student recruitment over the period. An additional meeting of the Resources & Planning Committee would take place this cycle to consider these in detail and the School was also developing plans to conduct a zero-base budgeting exercise.

Governing Body **approved** the financial forecasts for submission to HEFCE.

58. The Professional Services Plan 2014/15 [Appendix G]

Governing Body **noted** the Professional Services Plan for 2014/15, which had been approved at Resources & Planning Committee.

The Registrar would review the plans to develop measurable objectives and consider the investment in different directorates over time. This would be reported back to Resources & Planning Committee.

59. Risk Management [Appendix H]

Governing Body **noted** the Risk Management Policy and its responsibilities and process for the annual review. Both the Executive Board and Audit Committee reviewed the institutional risk register on a regular basis.

The Chair of the Audit Committee **reported** that the latest risk register included a new risk around the failure to take advantage of strategic opportunities. The Executive Board would be reviewing the register before the end of the academic year and reporting back to the Audit Committee. Overall the Committee's view was the process was robust and the

appropriate actions were being taken. The process compared well to other institutions and the Committee received input from both internal and external audit.

Governing Body **agreed** that it would see the risk register overview at each of its meetings.

60. Governing Body Key Performance Indicators [Appendix I]

Governing Body **considered** in detail a paper on proposed changes to the Key Performance Indicators it reviewed on an annual basis. This included some amendments to existing indicators.

Governing Body **approved** the revised indicators and that both financial measures should be included – surplus and cash (via EBITDA).

61. JNCC Membership [Appendix J]

Governing Body **endorsed** the new Joint Negotiation and Consultative Committee constitution and **approved** the recommendations for School members.

62. Academic Promotions [Appendix K]

To endorse: Promotions to Professor and Reader

To note: Promotions to Senior Lecturer

Governing Body **noted** that the School's promotion process allowed for promotion based on merit and assessment against criteria rather than purely by vacancies in a set establishment list. It noted the positive report of the process from the external observer.

The diversity profile of staff was monitored annually by the Equality & Diversity Committee. Overall the School performed well against the sector and had shown significant improvement over time in respect of gender balance at senior academic level. However, there was still room for further improvement.

Governing Body **endorsed** the promotions.

63. Sub-committee Reports [Appendix L]

Governing Body **received** the following sub-committee reports.

Academic Board – 11th June 2014

Audit Committee – 29th May 2014

Health & Safety Committee – 28th May 2014

Resources & Planning Committee – 10th June 2014

Nominations Committee – 16th May 2014

64. Emeritus status [Appendix M]

As this was a starred item it was not discussed. Governing Body **noted** the award of emeritus status.

65. Valedictions

To note: the following governors' terms of office comes to an end 31st July 2014

- Mr David East
- Ms Leah Edwards

To note: the following governors' terms of office comes to an end 31st August 2014

- Ms Elizabeth Wright

Governing Body **thanked** the members for all their contributions. In particular it thanked the Vice-Chair for her work over her 11 years as a member

66. Next meetings of Governing Body

Governing Body **noted** its next meeting would take place on 3 October 2014.

ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS

Academic Board is asked to note the following academic promotions which took effect on 1 September 2014.

Professor

Faculty of Arts & Humanities

Dr Edward Simpson – Department of Anthropology and Sociology

Faculty of Languages & Cultures

Dr Friederike Lupke - Department of Linguistics

Faculty of Law & Social Sciences

Dr Arshin Adib-Moghaddam – Department of Politics and International Studies

Dr Stephen Hopgood - Department of Politics and International Studies

Dr Carol Tan - School of Law

Reader

Faculty of Arts & Humanities

Dr John Campbell – Department of Anthropology and Sociology

Dr Rachel Harris – Department of Music

Dr Jon-Peter Hartung – Department of the Study of Religions

Dr Marloes Janson – Department of Anthropology and Sociology

Dr Mandy Sadan – Department of History

Faculty of Languages & Cultures

Dr Barbara Pizziconi – Department of the Languages & Cultures of Japan & Korea

Faculty of Law & Social Sciences

Dr Laura Hammond – Department of Development Studies

Dr Zoe Marriage – Department of Development Studies

Dr Carlos Oya – Department of Development Studies

Mr Colin Poulton – Centre for Development, Environment and Policy

Dr Daniel Plesch – Centre for International Studies and Diplomacy

Dr Nigel Poole – Centre for Development, Environment and Policy

Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Arts & Humanities

Dr Teresa Bernheimer – Senior Lecturer in the History of the Near & Middle East

Dr Lucy Duran – Senior Lecturer in African Music

Dr Nicholas Gray – Senior Lecturer in the Music of South East Asia

Dr Stephen Hughes – Senior Lecturer in Social Anthropology

Dr Angela Impey – Senior Lecturer in Ethnomusicology

Dr Antonello Palumbo – Senior Lecturer in Chinese Religions

Dr Tania Tribe – Senior Lecturer in Art History

Faculty of Languages & Cultures

Dr Marlé Hammond – Senior Lecturer in Arabic Popular Literature & Culture

Faculty of Law & Social Sciences

Dr Felix Berenskötter – Senior Lecturer in International Relations

Dr Paulo dos Santos – Senior Lecturer in Economics
Dr Alberto Feduzi – Senior Lecturer in Strategy
Dr Enze Han – Senior Lecturer in the International Security of East Asia
Dr Gina Heathcote – Senior Lecturer in Law
Dr Helen Macnaughten – Senior Lecturer in International Business & Management
Dr Lutz Oette – Senior Lecturer in Law
Dr Tim Pringle – Senior Lecturer in Labour, Social Movements & Development
Dr Rahul Rao – Senior Lecturer in Politics
Dr Frauke Urban – Senior Lecturer in Environment & Development