

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

MINUTES

Tuesday 21st October 2008 at 1.15pm in Room 116

Chair: Ms Sharon Page

Members: Professor Michael Hutt
Professor Graham Furniss
Dr Elizabeth Moore
Dr Nadjie Al-Ali*
Professor Gilbert Achcar*
Professor Werner Menski
Mr Nick Butler*
Ms Fiona McWilliams
Mr Michael Sherry
Ms Sue Young
Mr Alan Parker
Mr Mpegwa Mwakangata*

In attendance: Ms Dzidra Stipnieks

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

16 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th May 2008 were **APPROVED**.

17 Brunei Advisory Panel

The Committee **NOTED** the minutes of Brunei Advisory Panel meeting held in August.

There was then a wider ranging discussion about the SOAS Collection Management Policy. It was **NOTED** that the School could qualify for museum funding. The Committee also **NOTED** that there was a Formal Disposal Board which would convene as and when necessary re the disposal of items.

18 Departmental updates

The Committee received written reports from Heads of Department on progress regarding action points in the External Relations Strategy. Heads of Department answered questions on a range of issues including the HEFCE matched funding scheme and the student experience at SOAS, the employability of SOAS students and employer engagement, the effectiveness of the School's website and student recruitment targets.

19 External Relations Strategy

The Committee received a discussion paper as part of a review of the External Relations Strategy and its priorities and objectives in light of changes to external and internal environments. In particular the Committee considered the following areas of the Strategy: External profile, Branding, League Tables, Market Research, and ER processes and procedures. The Committee **AGREED** that International Relations should also be a priority. The External Relations Strategy will be updated next term and action plans developed. The Committee discussed the importance of raising the School's profile in the media through current affairs and targeted stories on eg research projects. It was **AGREED** that a more strategic approach was needed to the completion and submission of data for league tables and better use should be made of market intelligence in programme development and resource allocation.

20 Dates of Meetings 2008/09

The Committee **NOTED** the dates of the next meetings:
1.15pm on Tuesday 10th February 2009 in Room 116
1.15pm on Tuesday 28th April 2009 in Room 116

Action points

Minute 19

The External Relations Strategy and related operational plans to be updated.

Communications team to work with Deans to identify and engage media savvy and friendly academics to help raise the School's media profile.

Meeting with AP to be convened asap re PR and reputation management.

There were no reserved minutes.