

SOAS  
**Human Resources Committee**

10.00am on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011 in room 116

**Agenda**

Items marked with an asterisk are formal business, not intended for discussion. If members wish to discuss any issues arising from these items they should inform the Chair by 9.00am on the day prior to the meeting.

**I Minutes**

To approve minutes of the meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011.

**II Matters arising**

- i) Staff KPI's
- ii) Industrial Relations update

**III HR Strategy progress report 2010/11**

Appendix A

To consider: the report on progress since February

**IV HR Strategy Action Plan 2011/12 – 2013/14**

Appendix B

To consider & approve: the Action Plan for the Next three years

**V Annual Report to RPC**

Appendix C

To consider & approve: the annual report to Resources and Planning Committee

**VI Sickness Absence Management**

Appendix D  
(to follow)

To consider: the School's proposed policy, procedures and management guidelines

**VII Any Other Business**

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

### **Human Resources Committee**

10am on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2011 in Room 116

Mr Donald Beaton, Registrar and Secretary (Chair)

Mr Peter Mitchell, HR Director (Secretary)

Ms Marva De La Coudray, Head of Widening Participation

Professor Matthew Craven, Dean of Faculty\*

Dr Barbara Pizziconi, Senior Lecturer\*\*

Dr Ted Proferes, Programmes Convenor & Director of Studies

Mrs Barbara Spina, Head of Teaching and Research Support

Dr Julia Strauss, Senior Lecturer

Ms Deb Viney, Diversity Adviser

Ms Zoe Weaver, External Adviser

Ms Serena Yeo, Staff Development Manager

Ms Martine Baraket, HR Manager

Mr Charles Perry, HR Manager

Ms Seema Sanyal, HR Manager

\*Those whose names are marked with a single asterisk were unable to attend the meeting

\*\*Those whose names are marked with a double asterisk attended part of the meeting

#### **9. Minutes of meeting 28<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

The Committee approved the Minutes.

#### **10. Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising.

#### **11. HR Strategy & Action Plan 2010/11 – progress report**

The HR Director presented the Key Strategic Objectives and Action Plan (Appendix A) in its new format which brought it in line with the format of other SOAS committees. The status of each objective is clearly set out along with details of who is responsible for the action, performance measures and risks. The HR Director updated the committee on the specific progress of the strategy for the year to date.

#### **12. Key Performance Indicators for Staff**

The HR Director referred the committee to the paper 'Developing staff KPI's' (Appendix B) and the recommendation that we pursue the CAPITA proposal that was discussed at the 1994 Group HR Directors' meeting hosted by SOAS in December 2010. The committee approved this recommendation.

#### **13. Development of the HR Strategy and Action Plan 2011/12 – 2013/14**

The HR committee was asked to consider the high level objectives set out in the paper tabled by the HR Director and agree that they would be considered by a HR committee working group, with a view to finalising the strategy for 2011/12 and beyond at the HR committee meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> May 2011.

The objectives included:

- More support from staff development in areas identified as problematic in the staff survey;
- Implementation of work shadowing;
- Development of team working rewards;
- Communication best practice guidelines;
- Implementing actions identified in staff survey.

The Committee noted that the working group would consider in detail the proposals set out in the HR Strategy and Action Plan. In order to do this effectively it would be important for there to be academic staff as members of the group.

An academic member of the committee initiated a discussion on the purposes, roles and constitutional responsibilities of members when overseeing the work of the HR Committee. The discussion focused on whether part of a member's role was to ensure that HR policies and procedures were being correctly implemented across the School and whether the committee meeting was the appropriate place for any concerns to be raised. The Chair welcomed the discussion and concluded there was a need for there to be a clear set of approved School procedures and a mechanism for alerting staff to when changes have been made.

#### **14. Staff survey update**

The HR committee NOTED the staff survey proposed action plan. Specifically:

- The review of internal communications that is currently being undertaken;
- The Estates & Facilities refurbishment projects that are taking place;
- Employee Support Programme;
- The re-launch of the Staff Development Review scheme;
- Development of management development programmes at middle management level;
- The 'dignity at work' policies;
- That Faculty and Directorate survey reports will be discussed at local levels to identify areas of priority.

#### **15. Service Level Agreements**

The HR Committee NOTED the paper on Service Level Agreements (SLA's) the purpose of which is to request Executive Board to approve the adoption of these agreements.

SLA's were trialled in Core HR, Payroll and Pensions and Staff Development. The intention is that SLA's are 'rolled' out across other Professional Services. SLA's are an important way of managing expectation from 'customers' and help develop and understanding of the resource and time restraints of the HR Directorate.

The committee discussed the points made and looked at the potential barriers to the development of such a 'light touch' scheme across SOAS in general.

Some doubts were raised that such a scheme would ever be of use or fit for purpose with regards to many academic activities. The Chair said that there were no proposals to roll out such a scheme for academic staff and that the recommendation to EB was that SLA's would continue to be used in HR and consideration would be made whether they would be of benefit in the other eight Professional Services Directorates and Faculty offices over the next 12 to 18 months.

#### **16. Industrial Relations report**

The HR committee NOTED the paper on industrial relations with regards to the UCU dispute over pay and pensions.

The following points were highlighted to the Committee:

- That the dispute is a national one and not a 'failure to agree' locally between the School and SOAS UCU;
- That the School has a responsibility to try to ensure that the needs of students are protected;
- The School should make best endeavours to inform our students in advance if teaching were likely to be disrupted.

#### **17. Staff Development Equality report 2009-2010**

The HR committee NOTED the report and discussed some of the findings of that report and the recommendations made.

#### **18. Any Other Business**

There was no other business discussed.

Meeting ends 12 noon.