

SOAS
Faculty of Law and Social Sciences
FACULTY BOARD

Thursday 26 October 2006

MINUTES

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Prof Bob Ash | Dr Stephen Hopgood* |
| Prof Henry Bernstein | Dr Ray Kiely |
| Professor Stephen Chan (Chair) | Dr Tat Yan Kong |
| Atikah Chowdhury | Gabar Nyeso (student rep) |
| Dr Matthew Craven* | Prof Michael Palmer |
| Professor Ben Fine* | Sonja Ruehl |
| Dr Jane Harrigan | Dr Lynn Welchman* |
| Prof Laurence Harris | |

In attendance: Carolyn Heath (Secretary)
Barbara Spina
Wangari Muoria-Sal
Nazima Hodgkinson
Jo Halliday (for item IV)
Jenni Hearn (for item IV)
Dr Alfredo Saad-Filho

Those members whose names are marked with an asterisk were unable to be present: (*) gave apologies, (**) were absent.

1 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

1.1 All members were welcomed, and the Terms of Reference NOTED.

2 MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2006 were APPROVED as an accurate record.

3 MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Fundraising for Capital Project (item 72.2 refers)
It was NOTED that the new Director and Chair of Governors have agreed to the School embarking on a 2016 centennial fundraising project for £100m – to include £30m for the construction of a new building between the Phillips Building and Birkbeck which is expected to house staff from L&SS.

4 QAA AUDIT 2006/7

4.1 Jo Halliday and Jenni Hearn presented details of the QAA Audit scheduled for week beginning 19 March 2007.

4.1.1 The audit team will select 2 units of review to audit the statements and claims made in the Institutional Briefing Paper. It was NOTED that the School will be informed at the end of the preliminary visit in February which departments will

be selected for further scrutiny. It is thought likely that the departments selected will be those recently internally audited. It was NOTED that Jo Halliday has formally requested that the departments selected under the last DAT should not be re-selected, but no guarantees have been given. It was CONFIRMED that support will be available from the QA office to those departments selected.

4.1.2 The QAA team will consist of 4 auditors, all seconded to QAA, who may or may not be subject specialists. The audit will review our academic standards and the quality of student learning across the School. Unlike previous visits, there won't be any teaching observation – the assessment will be made through a series of meetings with staff and students, and through paper trails. There are two potential outcomes – confidence or no confidence.

4.1.3 Departments were encouraged to keep up-to-date with all QAA procedures, including:

- Course approvals and amendments
- Annual programme reviews
- Student evaluation of courses
- Visiting Examiners reports and responses to these
- Department Reviews and responses

4.2 Key points raised from the Economics DAT at the last review were as follows:

- Peer review and quality control of Teaching Assistants
- Insufficient sharing of good teaching practice, including peer observation of teaching
- Insignificant response and feedback to Visiting Examiners reports

4.3 Institutional Briefing Paper

4.3.1 It was NOTED that the draft Institutional Briefing Paper was prepared with a number of staff across the School over the last few months.

4.3.2 It was NOTED that there seems to be few references to Distance Learning within the paper.

4.4 Peer Observation of Teaching

4.4.1 It was NOTED that although agreed at both School and Faculty levels, the policy regarding Peer Observation of Teaching is part of a suite of issues being discussed at a School level with the Unions. Departments were encouraged to undertake the agreed procedures as far as possible.

5 CAREERS SERVICE

5.1 As raised by the student representatives last year, it was NOTED that positive steps have been taken to improve the service provided and to improve the liaison between the Careers Service and Departments.

6 WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT

- 6.1 It was NOTED that this item was withdrawn, and that Hannah Lemon would be coming instead to the next meeting.
- 6.2 It was NOTED that there has been a series of delays, but that work is continuing, and that the new website is likely to be available in 2007.
- 6.3 The Board recorded its intense dissatisfaction in the delays and in the lack of communication regarding the delays - in particular its effects on the School's recruitment and RAE preparations/presentation.

7 DEAN'S REPORT

7.1 Director's Report on External Issues

- 7.1.1 The paper was NOTED as written and presented by Prof Paul Webley at a recent Executive Board Away Day. Key points of the paper were discussed.

7.2 New Directorate

- 7.2.1 The new approach to policy, strategy and operational implementation as demonstrated by the new Director and Registrar was welcomed.
- 7.2.2 It was NOTED that action is being taken to move towards on-line enrolment and registration from 2007/8.
- 7.2.3 It was NOTED that the Director will be holding a series of meetings with students and staff, to inform his strategic vision towards 2016.

7.4 Financial Outlook

- 7.4.1 It was NOTED that it is likely that the approved deficit of £800k will be reduced to £400k.

7.5 New Posts

- 7.5.1 It was NOTED that there will be a double-page advert in the Guardian mid-November for the first set of L&SS staff vacancies. It was also NOTED that the bidding-round for new/additional posts is on-going.

7.6 Bloomsbury Colleges and Development Studies

- 7.6.1 It was NOTED that the sudden announcement of a Bloomsbury Centre of Development Studies has caused some alarm. The Dean said that he had now replaced Lisa Croll on the Steering Committee, and has had extended discussions with the Director of LSH, and has shared documentation with the Development Studies Department.
- 7.6.2 It was NOTED that all elements of cooperation remain negotiable and that the project is funded entirely by HEFCE. The Institute is intended to be a cooperative and collaborative enterprise.
- 7.6.3 The Board's dissatisfaction with the process of consultation hitherto was NOTED.

- 7.7 Wye College and SOAS
- 7.7.1 It was NOTED that Imperial College is leaving the University of London, and that it is highly likely that an agreement will be reached for SOAS to take over the Distance Learning programme from Wye College as an enhancement to our existing DeFiMS provision.
- 7.7.2 Details are limited as the process of due diligence continues, but it was NOTED that the programme's profile is seen as profit-making.
- 8 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING PG)**
- 8.1 Programme Reviews 2004/5
- 8.1.1 The summary of the 2004/5 PG Programme Reviews was RECEIVED. It was NOTED that some departments have started to use the Review as a planning tool. Key points from the summary were noted.
- 8.2 MA Area Studies Dissertations
- 8.2.1 It was NOTED that the Economics Department had raised concern that Economics dissertations from MA Area Studies students were sent only to Area Studies Visiting Examiners, not to Economics Examiners.
- 8.2.2 This was discussed at length – it was AGREED that the dissertation should be sent to the Examiner related to the 'major' discipline (in this case, Economics) to allow an appropriate level of comparison with other students. Action: The AD to discuss this with the Faculty of Languages and Cultures.
- 8.3 MA/MSc Marking Criteria
- 8.3.1 It was NOTED that the new criteria for Merit (now 60-70%) were now approved by all Faculties and had been confirmed to all PG students at enrolment.
- 8.3.2 It was AGREED that there was a need for Registry to measure the impact of this change on the overall results profiles.
- 9 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (LEARNING AND TEACHING UG)**
- 9.1 Assessment Guidelines
- 9.1.1 It was NOTED that there are some differences in the Assessment Guidelines listed in the Department Handbooks, and that faculty-generic versions will be considered at the next FLTC and Faculty Board meetings.
- 9.2 JYA Assessment Deadlines
- 9.2.1 It was NOTED that L&TPC have confirmed that the JYA assessment deadline would be 2 June 2006, and the end of the examinations period in future years.
- 9.3 Recording of Assessments
- 9.3.1 It was NOTED that L&TPC have confirmed that all oral presentations (including class presentations, music performance and conversation tests) which form part of course assessment and count for more than 10% of final assessment should be recorded. This is now School Policy with effect from 2006/7.

10 REPORT FROM ASSOCIATE DEAN (RESEARCH)

10.1 PhD Supervision

10.1.1 It was NOTED that L&TPC have confirmed that staff can become lead supervisors if:

- They had attended or were attending a training course for research supervisors
- They were actively mentored by a senior colleague who would normally be a member of the student's research committee

This was WELCOMED. The course was felt to be very strong and had so far been well attended.

It was NOTED that any queries about the course or who should attend should be directed to Prof Michael Palmer.

10.2 MPhil / PhD Recruitment Event

10.2.1 It was NOTED that there will be a school-wide event in term 2 for those involved in MPhil/PhD student recruitment.

10.2.2 It was also NOTED that few L&SS MPhil students have contacted the Faculty Librarian for generic library skills. Action: Faculty Librarian to liaise with Desmond Thomas.

10.3 Internal Research Allowance

10.3.1 The allowance for 2006/7 was CONFIRMED as £400. It was also NOTED that applications will be considered from MPhil/PhD students for conference attendance, writing up costs and language acquisition training – and that as in 05/06, it was expected that any surplus funds in term 3 would be opened up for staff bids.

10.4 Research Groups

10.4.1 It was NOTED that Faculty Research Committee had recommended the principle of faculty-based research groups to encourage and support grant applications.

10.5 University of London Research Committee

10.5.1 It was NOTED that key issues raised at the recent meeting included:

- Viva to be chaired independently
- Difficulty of replacing supervisors who leave institutions.

11 RERUITMENT

11.1 The on-campus recruitment figures at 13 October were RECEIVED. It was NOTED that the UG figures were higher than expected, and the PG figures lower than expected.

11.2 It was AGREED that the UG system needs refining to avoid such over-recruitment in future.

11.3 The difficulties raised by the divergence in entry standards across the school (AAA in some areas and BBC in others) were NOTED, particularly regarding in-class ability variances.

- 11.4 It was NOTED that the Recruitment and Admissions Office had been unable to deal with internal staffing and technical problems at the peak of the 2006 entry cycle. However, it was NOTED that the PG admissions processes are being thoroughly reviewed as a matter of priority.
- 11.5 It was NOTED that the EAA provision will be reviewed in light of these recruitment figures.
- 11.6 It was NOTED that Distance Learning recruitment statistics would be presented to the next meeting.

12 NEW COURSE PROPOSALS

- 12.1 It was CONFIRMED that the following new COURSES had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows:

- (i) 15PLAC365 World Trade Law (Law MA)
- (ii) 15PLAC366 World Trade Law (LLM) (Law)

These courses were APPROVED.

13 COURSE AMENDMENTS

- 13.1 It was CONFIRMED that the following COURSE AMENDMENTS had been recommended at the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee as follows:

- (i) PPM 208 Public Financial Management: Reporting and Audit (CeFiMS PG Distance Learning) [title amended]
- (ii) PPM 206 Public Policy and Strategy (CeFiMS PG Distance Learning) [title amended]
- (iii) 155200004 Law of Obligations 1 (Law UG)
- (iv) 15PFMC002 International Relations (CISD PG)
- (v) 15PFMC001 International Management (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (vi) 15PFMC003 Cross Cultural Management (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (vii) 15PFMC005 Management in China (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (viii) 15PFMC009 Risk Management (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (ix) 15PFMC013 Corporate Finance (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (x) 15PFMC016 Topics in the Chinese Economy (DeFiMS PG)
- (xi) 15PFMC017 Management in Japan 1 (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xii) 15PFMC019 Management in Japan 2 (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xiii) 15PFMC021 The Japanese Financial System (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xiv) 15PFMC023 Legal Aspects of Corporate Finance (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xv) 15PFMC024 Financial Law (DeFiMS PG)
- (xvi) 15PFMC027 Regulation of International Capital Markets (DeFiMS PG)
- (xvii) 15PFMC028 Legal Aspects of International Finance (DeFiMS PG)
- (xviii) 15PFMC029 Management in the MENA 1 (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xix) 15PFMC031 Management in the MENA 2 (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xx) 15PFMC033 Islamic Banking and Finance (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xxi) 15PFMC036 Corporate Governance (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xxii) 15PFMC039 International Human Resources Management (A) (DeFiMS PG)
- (xxiii) 15PFMC041 Research Methods in Management (DeFiMS PG)
- (xxiv) 15PFMC050 Finance in the Global Market (DeFiMS PG)
- (xxv) 15PFMC051 Banking and Capital Markets (DeFiMS PG)
- (xxvi) 15PLAC037 Developing World 1: Law and Development (Law MA)

- (xxvii) 15PLAC090 Central Asia: Law Institutions and Political Economy of Transition (Law MA)
- (xxviii) 15PPOC003 Government and Politics of Modern South Asia (Politics PG)
- (xxix) 15PPOC021 Politics and Society of the Korean Peninsula (Politics PG)
- (xxx) 15PPOC241 Government and Politics of Turkey (Politics PG)
- (xxxi) 15PPOC247 Government and Politics of Modern South East Asia (Politics PG)
- (xxxii) 15PPOC248 International Politics of Asia (Politics PG)

These amendments were APPROVED.

13 HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

- 13.1 It was NOTED that Dr Alfredo Saad-Filho will be Head of Department of Development Studies for one year from January-December 2007. Regret and congratulations were extended to Dr Ray Kiely for his appointment as Chair at QMU.

14 DEPARTMENT AND FACULTY REPRESENTATIVES 2006/7

- 14.1 The representatives on Faculty and School committees were NOTED.

15 NON-ACCREDITED COURSE PROPOSAL

- 15.1 The proposal for the non-accredited course 'Religion, Pluralism and Politics in South Asia: Topics in Contemporary South Asian Islam' was NOTED and supported.

16 CENTRE PROPOSAL

- 16.1 The constitution for the new 'Law, Environment and Development Centre' (LEDC) was RECOMMENDED to Academic Board for approval.

17 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 17.1 It was NOTED that there was none.

CJH
9 November 2006
Confirmed by Chair