

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

To be held on Thursday, 5th November, 2009 at 1:15pm in room 116

AGENDA

- | | | |
|-------------|---|------------|
| I | Terms of Reference and Membership
To approve revisions | Appendix A |
| II | Committee Review
To discuss | Appendix B |
| III | Procedure and conduct of meetings
To note | Appendix C |
| IV | Minutes of the last meeting
To approve | Appendix D |
| V | Matters Arising
Formation of Research Students Management Group | Appendix E |
| VI | Early Career Research Training
To receive a report from the Research Skills
Co-ordinator, Careers and Staff Development | Appendix F |
| VII | Research Students - enrolment figures
To receive a report from Registry | Appendix G |
| VIII | Revised Research and Enterprise Strategy
To approve | Appendix H |
| IX | Enterprise draft Strategic Plan
To receive a report from the
Business Development Manager | Appendix I |
| X | HEFCE consultation on the REF
To discuss the summary of key points
and possible responses to the consultation
questions | Appendix J |
| XI | Internal research grant funding 2009-10
To note | Appendix K |
| X11 | ADRs reports on Faculty Research Committees
To note | Appendix L |
| XIII | Any other business | |
| XIV | Date of next meeting
Thursday, 25 February 2010 at 13.15 in room 116 | |

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

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Held on Thursday 5 November, 2009 at 1:15pm in Room 116

MINUTES

Members: Professor G Furniss (Chair)
Professor I Brown
Professor M Craven
Professor B Fuehrer
Professor MJ Hutt
Professor C Lapavitsas
Dr I Standish
Peter Phillips

In attendance: Dr F Adamson (alternate for Dr Khalili)
Mr M Cerny
Dr K Barrett
Ms K T Oatey (Secretary)
Ms L Roberts
Ms B Spina
Dr D Thomas
Ms S Yeo

Apologies: Dr M Bentham
Dr M Charette
Professor R Fardon
Dr L Khalili
Mr J Robinson

1. Terms of Reference and Membership

1.1 The committee considered the proposed revisions to the Terms of Reference and membership. The Chair explained that he wanted to invite Marcus Cerny, Postgraduate Research Manager and Desmond Thomas, Research Skills Co-ordinator, to be in attendance at Committee meetings. It was **agreed** that he revised Terms of Reference and membership would go forward under the Committee review process.

2. Committee Review

2.1 The committee discussed the paper on the review of committees. The Chair asked members to complete the form distributed to them and return it to the Secretary within ten days. The Dean of Law and Social Sciences asked how the REF management related to the functions of the committee and if it would be handled by a sub-committee or working group. The Secretary will arrange a meeting of the REF Advisory Working Group this term.

3. Procedure and conduct of meetings

- 3.1 The committee **noted** the paper on the procedure and conduct of meetings.

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 4.1 The minutes of the previous meeting were **approved** subject to the following amendments:

Minute 9.2: Dr Barrett pointed out that the Concordat supported the training and development of all staff, not just researchers.

5. **Matters arising**

- 5.1 Minute 10.1: It has been agreed that the Institute of Education will lead the ESRC/DTU bid. Costas Lapavitsas, Richard Fardon and Desmond Thomas are gathering data to write a narrative for the submission which is due in early March 2010.

- 5.2 Minute 10.2: The Chair referred to appendix E about the formation of the Research Students Management Group which resulted from this point and the paper was **noted**. There was some discussion about the possibility of forming a Graduate School. Professor Brown pointed out that a previous Graduate School had failed and suggested that we should think about having a Doctoral School. Professor Rao said that there were many models for Graduate Schools and we should consider them, including the Institute of Education model. It was **agreed** that this was a subject to which the Committee would return.

- 5.3 The Chair confirmed that all other action points from the previous meeting had been carried out.

6. **Early Career Researchers' Training**

- 6.1 The Research Skills Co-ordinator and colleagues from Staff Development and Careers presented a report on early career research training. Training is mostly aimed at post graduate students who are about to complete their PhD or have just completed. Some students did not seem to be aware that the training was available. It is difficult to get hold of early career researchers among staff. The new elements of the training programme consist of career skills such as writing CVs. It was **agreed** that Associate Deans for Research and the Research Skills Co-ordinator will meet to discuss the best way to use Roberts money for ECR training.

7. **Enrolment figures for Research Students**

- 7.1 The Research Postgraduate Manager presented a report on the enrolment figures to date this term. The final figures will not be available until 1 December. We have set ambitious targets which are not being met. The figures do not reflect RAE scores, since Arts and Humanities did well in the RAE but their recruitment figures are down. It was **agreed** that David Atkins and Nick Butler should follow up applicants who did not come to SOAS and find out the reasons. The information will be used in the Faculties' planning process. More scholarships and studentships would improve recruitment figures and it was also **agreed** that the committee will consider the Scholarships strategy at a meeting later in the session.

8. Revised Research and Enterprise Strategy 2009-2012

- 8.1 The Committee **noted** the Research and Enterprise Strategy which has been revised following comments from Executive Board and in light of the HEFCE REF consultation exercise. There are additional performance indicators on research income, enterprise income and postgraduate student recruitment. Mr Peter Phillips, the student representative, requested greater clarity of aim 3 and the statement about including postgraduate students into the research community. The Strategy will now go to Academic Board on 18 November 2009.

9. Enterprise draft Strategic Plan

- 9.1 The Business Development Manager introduced the draft strategic plan which was **noted** by the Committee. Ms Roberts also mentioned that the REO is in the process of producing a new Consultancy Policy.

10. The HEFCE consultation on the REF

- 10.1 The committee suggested we request a separate Development Studies panel, rather than the subject being included in Area Studies as suggested in the consultation document. We should point out that the panels demonstrate a Eurocentric view eg Linguistics is either part of English language or European languages. The composition of these larger panels would be so diluted that the academic community would have no confidence in them. Staff should liaise with their own subject associations as they would be asked to recommend panel members. The suggested proportion of assessment should be changed to 60% outputs, 20% impact and 20% environment. There was discussion of the issue of 3 or 4 items for submission, and the committee held differing views.

11. Internal Research Grant Funding

- 11.1 We would normally advertise the Research Committee's research awards in November and decide on successful applications in February 2010. Deans felt that there should be a discussion about the division of internal research funds between the Faculties and the School, including the Strategic Initiative Fund which has been used to support impact. The Secretary will organise a meeting to discuss this matter later this term.

12. ADRs reports on Faculty Research Committees

- 12.1 The committee received reports from the ADRs of the Faculties of Arts and Humanities and Law and Social Sciences. The Faculty of Languages and Cultures has a new ADR this year and the previous Dean had not provided a report on last year's activities as he had been indisposed. The committee **noted** the reports and that the Languages and Cultures report would be sent to the next meeting of the Committee in February 2010.

13. Any Other Business

- 13.1 Barbara Spina, Head of Teaching and Research Support in the Library tabled a paper about the Library Transformation Plan. It was agreed that this would be included in the agenda for the next meeting on 25 February 2010.