

# SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

## RESEARCH COMMITTEE

To be held on Thursday, 25<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at 1:15pm in room 116

### AGENDA

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|-------------|---|--|
| <b>I</b>    | <b>Minutes of the last meeting</b><br>To approve  | Appendix A                             |
| <b>II</b>   | <b>Matters Arising</b>  |  |
| <b>III</b>  | <b>Update on REF planning</b><br>To receive oral reports from the Deans.  |  |
| <b>IV</b>   | <b>Two papers from Marcus Cerny</b><br>Supervisory Committee responsibilities<br>PhD +4 years submissions<br>To note                              | Appendix B<br>Appendix C               |
| <b>V</b>    | <b>Update on ESRC recognition bid</b><br>To receive an oral report  |  |
| <b>VI</b>   | <b>Report on MPhil/PhD Programmes in Faculty of Arts and Humanities</b><br>To note  | Appendix D                             |
| <b>VII</b>  | <b>Report from ADR Faculty of Languages and Cultures</b><br>To note   | Appendix E                             |
| <b>VIII</b> | <b>Report from the Director of Research and Enterprise</b><br>REO Services<br>Research Grant funding statistics for 2008-09<br>Consultancy Policy | Appendix F<br>Appendix G<br>Appendix H |
| <b>IX</b>   | <b>Report from the Director of LIS</b><br>Library Transformation Project<br>Report on CeDAAME   | Appendix I                             |
| <b>X</b>    | <b>Any other business</b>   |  |
| <b>XI</b>   | <b>Date of next meeting</b><br>Wednesday 26 May 2010 at 9.00 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 25 February 2010 at 1:15pm in Room 116

#### **MINUTES**

**Members:** Professor G Furniss (Chair)  
Dr M Bentham  
Professor I Brown  
Dr M Charette  
Professor M Craven  
Mr A Doherty  
Professor R Fardon  
Professor B Fuehrer  
Professor M J Hutt  
Peter Phillips (student representative)  
Professor N Rao  
Mr J Robinson  
Dr I Standish

**In attendance:** Mr M Cerny  
Ms K T Oatey (Secretary)  
Dr D Thomas

**Apologies:** Dr L Khalili  
Professor C Lapavitsas

#### **1. Minutes of the last meeting**

Professor Hutt pointed out the Professor Rao had been omitted from the list of those present.

#### **2. Action points from the previous meeting**

- 2.1 The REF Advisory Group will consist of Deans, ADRs, the Pro-Director and the Director of the REO. The Research Manager will be the secretary. Until HEFCE agree the Units of Assessment, we will work on the basis of departments and units of assessment for Asian Studies, and Africa and Middle East Studies as before.
- 2.2 This is the last year in which Roberts funding for research training will be available and Faculty Research Committees will discuss the best way to use the funds.
- 2.3 Executive Board discussed the issue of increasing PGR numbers through Scholarship provision at its meeting on Monday 15 February 2010. A paper will be presented to Research Committee at its May meeting. The School will offer thirteen 3-year scholarships for PhD studies starting in October 2010. Work has started on a 10-year scheme for research student scholarships. The Pro-Director expressed his thanks to the Development Office which has been instrumental in

2.4 David Atkins and Nick Butler in the Registry have looked to see if there are particular reasons for students not taking places at SOAS but the evidence does not suggest particular common factors in so far as it has been possible to elicit reasons for non-arrival.

2.5 It was decided that the internal funding grants formerly offered by Research Committee would be disbursed to Faculties for them to allocate.

### **3. Report from the Director of the Research and Enterprise Office**

3.1 Tony Doherty presented papers on the functions of the REO, the research grant funding figures for the year 2008-09 and the draft Consultancy Policy. He explained the document summarising the REO services and emphasised the ways in which knowledge transfer and consultancy activities could be increased. It is hoped that the Regional Centres' inclusion in the REO will lead to an increase in interdisciplinary research and enterprise activity. There will be an internal fund of approximately £150,000 to encourage the preparation of bids for enterprise funding. The Chair added that since our government funding will decrease, it is important to find extra sources of income.

3.2 The average success rate for research grant applications across the faculties is 24% of income applied for, and 44% of the 157 applications were successful. The Committee discussed ways of increasing the research grant income, although the total income had already exceeded the current target. The Pro-Director congratulated the Research Office staff on their hard work in achieving this increase in research funding. The Research Manager announced that we are planning a course on writing successful grant applications to be held 13-14 May 2010.

3.3 Professor Rao pointed out that there is no one to co-ordinate funding bids which are not research, eg bids for teaching and distance learning funding. The Director of the REO explained that these applications could be managed through the Enterprise part of the REO. It was pointed out that CPD and other teaching contracts could be an increased source of enterprise income.

3.4 The REO Director drew attention to the revised Consultancy Policy and invited comments on it.

### **4 Deans' reports on REF planning**

4.1 The Deans have started looking at potential outputs to be submitted to the REF in 2012 and are identifying co-ordinators for each department (or Unit of Assessment). The HEFCE report on the REF consultation process is due in June and the Guidelines are expected in November 2010. In the meantime we will plan on the assumption that we will submit to the same Units of Assessment as we did for the RAE2008. The Chair agreed that the Committee will need a fund to be able to provide financial assistance to staff needing to complete or publish outputs. The Research Manager has already alerted the Finance Director to this need for 2010-11 and 2011-12.

4.2 Deans were asked to send names of departmental or unit of assessment co-ordinators to the Research Manager.

### **5 PhD students**

5.1 Marcus Cerny presented two papers for approval by the Committee. The first was on the responsibilities of PhD Supervisory Committees. The RAM system has been changed so that first supervisors receive 60%, second supervisors receive 25% and third supervisors receive 15% of the RAM credit. There was a discussion about whether supervisors were expected to contact students throughout the year or only in term time. Marcus Cerny confirmed that supervision should be for 52 weeks of the year. It was agreed that the Research Student Management Group (RSMG) would consider re-wording item c) in the paper to give a clear definition to include supervision in the summer vacation.

5.2 The second paper, on PhD submissions after 4 years, was discussed by the Committee. If a student has not completed in 4 years because of extenuating circumstances the Associate Dean for Research can decide if the time can be extended. The RSMG will work out a suitable wording for this process.

**6 ESRC/DTC recognition**

The ESRC recognition bid will be submitted by the deadline of 11 March 2010. The bid is led by the Institute of Education and also includes SOAS, Birkbeck, and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. SOAS is bidding for recognition in Anthropology on our own, Politics and International Studies with Birkbeck, and International Development in a multi-college cluster with LIDC.

**7 Report on MPhil/PhD programmes in the Faculty of Art and Humanities**

The committee noted this report. Other faculties were asked to send similar reports to the next meeting of Research Committee.

**8 Report from the ADR Faculty of Languages and Cultures**

The Committee noted this report, which had been brought forward from the previous meeting.

**9 Report from the Director of Library and Information Services**

John Robinson gave an update on the progress of the Library Transformation Project and the necessity of moving some collections while work is taking place. He also reported on the CeDAMME project which is digitising some of the Library's most valuable collections and making them more accessible. The original objects will be retained in the Library as they are valuable in themselves and because improvements in technology will mean that they will need to be copied to new media in the future.

**10 AOB**

Peter Phillips drew the Committee's attention to the Research Students' Conference on 30-31 March and expressed the hope that some academics would attend it. Conference proceedings will be produced in due course.

**11 Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 26 May at 9.00 in room 116.