

SCHOOL OF ORIENTAL AND AFRICAN STUDIES

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

To be held on Thursday, 26th May 2010 at 9.00 am in room 116

AGENDA

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|-------------|---|--------------------------|
| I | Minutes of the last meeting
To approve | Appendix A |
| II | Matters Arising | |
| III | Committee Review
To note Committee Principles
To note recommendations for Research Committee | Appendix B
Appendix C |
| IV | Publications
To receive a report from Rowan Pease | Appendix D |
| V | Research Students Management Group
To receive a report from Marcus Cerny | |
| VI | Scholarships Policy
To receive a report from the Chair | Appendix E |
| VII | Early Career Researcher Programme
To receive a report from Desmond Thomas | Appendix F |
| VIII | Update on REF planning
To receive oral reports from the Deans
and the Research Manager | |
| IX | Research Strategy update
To receive a report from the REO Director
and oral reports from the Deans | Appendix G |
| X | Bloomsbury PhD studentships
To note: Studentships will be advertised in September | |
| XI | Any other business | |
| XII | Date of the next meeting
Wednesday 27 October 2010 at 10.00 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 Wednesday 25 May 2010 at 9.00am in Room 116

MINUTES

Members: Professor G Furniss (Chair)
Dr M Bentham
Professor I Brown
Professor M Craven
Professor R Fardon
Professor M J Hutt
Dr L Khalili
Professor C Lapavitsas
Mr Peter Phillips (student representative)
Professor N Rao
Mr J Robinson
Dr I Standish

In attendance: Ms K T Oatey (Secretary)

By invitation: Mr M Cerny
Ms R Pease
Dr D Thomas

Apologies: Dr M Charette
Mr A Doherty
Professor B Fuehrer

1. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

2. Action points from the previous meeting

2.1 A paper on the Scholarships scheme is on the agenda at item V.

2.2 REF co-ordinators for Arts and Humanities will be the members of the Faculty Research Panel. For Languages and Cultures co-ordinators will be identified when the REF sub-panels are announced. In addition to REF coordinators, Professor Anne Booth and Professor Charles Tripp will be REF advisors for Law and Social Sciences.

2.3 The Research Students Management Group (RSMG) will address the re-wording at their next meeting. Numbers of PhD students completing in 4 years increased to approximately 34% in 2008-09.

- 2.4 Graeme Rosenberg from HEFCE is meeting the Pro-Director (Research and Enterprise) on 3 June in connection with our response to the REF consultation.
- 2.5 The Institute of Education submitted our joint Bloomsbury ESRC-DTU recognition bid. This has received six peer reviews, five of which were excellent, and Andrew Brown from IoE has responded to the reviews.

3. Committee Review

- 3.1 The Committee noted the papers on Committee Principles and the recommendations for Research Committee.
- 3.2 Most of the amendments requested by Research Committee have been accepted. The secretaries of Research Committee, Learning and Teaching Quality Committee and Academic Development Committee will meet before the beginning of next session and liaise regularly thereafter.
- 3.3 There was considerable discussion about the membership of the committee and whether it was appropriate for Directors of Professional Services to delegate attendance to other staff of the Directorates in order to strengthen communication with relevant sections of the Directorates, and to reinforce the advice available to the committee from the Directorates.

4 Publications report for 2009-10

- 4.1 The Chair pointed out that the Publications team were now part of the Research and Enterprise Office. The report was presented by Rowan Pease.
- 4.2 Publications have increased their income and renewed contracts with Cambridge University Press (CUP), increasing the School's share of revenue. CUP is digitising back issues of periodicals and we have received £35,000 from the archive of China Quarterly and Bulletin of SOAS. CUP is targeting consortia of universities and trying to increase sales in Korea, China and India. Germany bought the whole archive.
- 4.3 Both China Quarterly and the Bulletin of SOAS have revised their editorial boards making them more international and enabling younger academics to participate. Membership is now fixed term. The editors of both journals are due to be changed. We would seek to maintain the contextual changes and themed issues that the current editor has introduced to the Bulletin of SOAS. The Journal of African Law has had a system of rotating editors which is not working and will be changed.
- 4.4 The School is looking at the other journals with which SOAS is associated mainly through our academics being editors of the journals. There is a need to remove inconsistencies in the relationships between the editorial boards and the publishers and to provide clear legal advice to editors.

5 Research Student Management Group

- 5.1 A report on the activities of the RSMG through the session was presented by the Postgraduate Research Manager. The committee noted the report and commended the work of the Group.

6 Fees-only Scholarships Scheme

- 6.1 The committee welcomed the paper on a SOAS fees-only scholarship scheme to run from 2010 to 2020. The first tranche of scholarships has been advertised for 2010 entry. The timing should be changed for advertising the next round. The scholarships offer fees only, not subsistence and it is hoped to raise more funding so that we can either increase the amount or the number of scholarships offered. The scheme will be reviewed after two years.

7 ECR training

- 7.1 Desmond Thomas presented the report on the training programme for the last year which was jointly arranged by the Learning and Teaching Unit with the Careers office and Staff Development. Attendance at some of the training was disappointing but we have raised awareness about it and hope this will increase next year. Roberts funding will end next year.

- 7.2 Space has been identified in the basement of the Faber Building for a Research Student common room. Peter Phillips expressed the students' thanks for the provision of a common room.

8 REF planning

- 8.1 All faculties have received lists of outputs from academics and are reviewing them. Deans will ascertain what measures need to be taken, either through mentors or through the Research Faculty Panel. Requests for funding to finish or publish outputs have been met from seed corn funding. The School has established a fund to pay for external advisors. There will probably not be a separate Economics submission and Economics will be included in the submission for Development Studies as in RAE2008. It is not yet clear how the sub-panels will be constructed for Africa and Middle East Studies and Asian Studies.

- 8.2 The Research Manager reported that the REF administrative committee has met and members of the committee have started work on ensuring that the School's data is accurate. We await HEFCE's report on Impact and how to measure it following the completion of the pilot exercises. The REO Information Officer will return from maternity leave in August 2010 and liaise with all administrative departments and Deans. We intend to add a member of the Publications team to the REF administrative committee as SOAS is often a publisher of last resort for outputs.

9 Research Strategy

- 9.1 The Committee noted the report from the Research and Enterprise Office on its progress to date in implementing those parts of the Research Strategy that are within its remit. The Dean of Arts and Humanities pointed out that the success of the China Heritage Initiative (CHI) depends on the implementation of the Consultancy policy which has not yet been agreed by the School.

10 Bloomsbury PhD Studentships

- 10.1 The Research Manager reminded the committee that this will be advertised in September and it is important that we provide at least five good applications to the Bloomsbury Research Committee, from which we will be awarded two scholarships. Marcus Cerny pointed out that Bloomsbury joint supervision needs to be supported by an HR policy.

11 AOB

11.1 RSMG, the Finance Director and Executive Board will look at comparisons of postgraduate student fees.

11.2 Professor Hutt is standing down as Dean of the Faculty of Languages and Cultures after holding the post for six years and the Chair thanked him for his service to the Committee.

12 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday 27 October 2010 at 10.00 in room 116.