

ROYAL HOLLOWAY
University of London

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board, held on 7 March 2012

Present:	Professor P Layzell (In the Chair) Dr S Ansari Dr B Baker Professor P Beesley Professor G Blair Ms K Blow Professor C Bradley Professor R Deem Professor J Frank Professor A Gange Dr N Gascoigne Ms L Gibbs Professor D Gilbert Dr A Gupta Ms S Honeycombe Professor J Johnson Professor A Kahane Professor R Kemp Dr P Leman	Mr D Lemberger Cooper Professor K Normington Professor B O'Keefe Mr P Phillips Professor J Powell Professor D Rebellato Professor R Schack Professor A Sheppard Ms S Simon Dr P Teixeira-Dias (for Professor M Fowler) Mr J Tuck Professor J Unerman Dr A Varty Professor V Vovk Dr D Waltham Professor J Wann Professor G Ward Dr N Widder Professor J Zanker
With:	Dr M Beck (Secretary)	
In attendance:	Mr S Higman Ms J Roberts Mrs D Salisbury Ms E Wilkinson	Registrar and College Secretary Director of Strategic Development Academic Development Officer Head of College Careers Service
Apologies	Professor J Davison Dr F Fordham Professor M Fowler Dr R Pym	

1. MEMBERSHIP

- 1.1 The Board received the membership list (AB/12/01) and noted the apologies received by the Secretary in advance of the meeting. 12/001
- 1.2 The Board noted that this is the last meeting for Professor Philip Beesley as Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise). Professor Beesley was thanked on behalf of the Board for his various roles in the College, notably Dean (Science) and Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise). 12/002
- 1.3 The Board welcomed Professor Bob O'Keefe, who has been appointed Dean (Management and Economics), to his first meeting as an Ex-Officio member. 12/003

1.4	The Board welcomed the following Representative members to their first meeting in their current capacity: Professor Ahuvia Kahane as Head of Department of Classics and Philosophy; Professor Dan Rebellato as Head of Department of Drama and Theatre; Professor Vladimir Vovk as Head of Department of Computer Science.	12/004
	The Board also noted that Professor Anne Sheppard has been elected to Council by academic teaching staff, to fill a casual vacancy; her term runs to 30 September 2012. She replaces Professor Mary Fowler.	12/005
	The Board welcomed Ms Julia Roberts, Director of Strategic Development, who was attending her first meeting as an invited observer.	12/006
2.	MINUTES	
	The Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 2 November 2011 (M 11/088 - M 11/151), were confirmed as an accurate record.	12/007
3.	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES	
	There were no matters arising from the Minutes.	12/008
4.	ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CHAIR	
4.1	The Board noted that the Principal, on behalf of the Academic Board, approved changes to <i>Section 20: Availability of Theses</i> of the <i>Research Degree Regulations</i> for 2011-12.	12/009
4.2	The Board noted that the Principal, on behalf of the Academic Board, approved changes to the <i>Regulations on the Conduct of Assessment</i> , with revision to paragraph 20 (f).	12/010
4.3	The Board noted that the Principal, on behalf of the Academic Board, approved changes to amend the Council Tax arrangements for 4 th year full time HEU research students with effect from the 2012-13 academic year. The changes were presented in a paper from the Vice-Principal (Education) (AB/12/02). The Vice-Principal (Education) clarified for the Board that the requirement that students work for 21 hours was stipulated in the relevant legislation.	12/011
5.	UNSTARRING OF ITEMS	
	The Board noted that the following item in Part B was unstarred for further discussion during the meeting: Item 24.2 - a paper on the conferral of honorary titles and the award of titles to Royal Holloway staff (AB/12/23).	12/012
6.	FORMAL REPORTS	
6.1	<u>Principal's Report</u>	
	The Board received a written report from the Principal (AB/12/03).	12/013
	The Principal formally thanked all those who participated in the UCAS open days, which are an important part of the admissions process. The College has enjoyed a good response from applicants and their parents on these days.	12/014
	The Principal noted with sadness the death of an undergraduate student as the result of a road collision outside the College at the weekend. The tragedy highlighted again road safety issues and the necessity for a safe crossing on the A30. The Registrar will follow this up with Surrey County Council.	12/015
	The Head of Department of Earth Sciences highlighted the clear College process which outlined steps to be taken by Heads in such situations; however, it was noted that there should be a process for informing heads of other departments in such circumstances. The Registrar will take this suggestion forward.	12/016

6.2 Reports from the Deputy Principal and the Vice-Principals

The Deputy Principal reported that the planning round process in relation to academic posts has been completed and that the next stage would be the scrutiny of space and capital equipment requirements. In parallel, a new planning process was underway for the professional services departments, examining staffing levels, finding required savings, and defining the next year's budget. He noted also that work was underway to revise the current DGG algorithm. 12/017

The Vice-Principal (Students and Staff) reported that the start of session induction would be rebranded 'Welcome Week' and outlined a number of initiatives which are being put in place. Students would be given a clearer sense of what will be expected of them at university and they will be provided with practical help, for example, sandwich packs for those arriving late in the evening, a white marquee, which will form a clearly identifiable central point available all week to obtain essentials such as water, and starter packs for students offered through the 'All-unied' scheme. Parents would be included in the process by providing a checklist counting down to start of session, and information and advice will be offered to students about disabilities, for those with such disabilities, but also those without. The length of time it currently takes to process the ID checks will also be examined, with a proposed move to an electronic process to avoid queues. 12/018

The Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) reported that strong applications for research themes champions had been received and that appointment would be made within the next month. 12/019

The Vice-Principal (Education) reported that the Health Professions Council (HPC) and the British Psychological Society had visited the College this week to re-accredit the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Programme (DClinPsy). The programme had been re-accredited with nine commendations and a few conditions and recommendations. The Vice-Principal (Education) strongly commended the achievement of the Psychology Department, and in particular Professor Andy MacLeod, the Programme Director. 12/020

6.3 Report from the Council

The Board received the unconfirmed minutes from the Council meeting held on 5 October 2011 (AB/12/04). 12/021

7. **DEVELOPMENT OF AN ACADEMIC STRATEGY**

The Deputy Principal reported on the process to develop an updated College strategy. The College's current strategy adopted in 2008 through to 2013 is now out-of-date. To develop a successful long-term strategic plan for the College, initial work will concentrate on developing an academic strategy; followed later by consideration of other supporting, strategic issues. Working groups have been established and will initially focus on the three themes of arts, social sciences and science, with meetings due to take place in March to consider the key issues. This will be followed by a College-wide consultation which will lead to a second set of meetings in June to respond to feedback received. Over the summer the three themes will be integrated to form a unified academic strategy to be presented to an extended Academic Board in November 2012 for approval. The next stage will be to develop a wider College plan to develop into a new corporate plan. The planned submission date of the College plan to Council for formal approval is June 2013. The Deputy Principal thanked the members of staff and students involved in the process. 12/022

8. **IMPACT AGENDA**

The Board received a paper from the Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) on the proposals for embedding the impact agenda (AB/12/05). He emphasised the importance of demonstrating that the College is engaged with the impact agenda in the work that it does. The paper provides a framework for demonstrating that the College is committed to the impact agenda, and includes suggested staff responsibilities and the appointment of 12/023

Departmental Impact Officers to further this agenda. One amendment to the paper has arisen as a result of feedback from last week's Faculty Board meeting and would be incorporated; The plan is to monitor the effectiveness of the framework in a year's time.

9. REF SUBMISSION

9.1 Draft Code of Practice

The Board received the Draft Equality Code of Practice for consideration (AB/12/06a). The Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) stated that the College is required to produce and adhere to a code of practice on selecting staff to include in its REF submissions. This Draft is also being circulated to the Equalities Steering Group as part of the consultation process. Following questions from Board members the Vice-Principal confirmed that paragraph 36 will be removed as a result of feedback from last week's Faculty Board meetings, clarified the sequence of decision making in paragraph 39 and agreed that provision will be made in this paragraph about the 'expert' perspective in cases of dispute. The nature of the informal and formal stages of the appeals process in paragraph 72 was also clarified – it was hoped that concerns about whether a decision on non-inclusion had been discriminatory could be resolved informally, rather than formally, but that an informal discussion did not preclude a formal appeals stage. Paragraph 3, which referred to the impact of (non-)inclusion in the REF on career progression, was also discussed as was the comment in paragraph 35 on the records of decision. With regard to the former, it was agreed that guidance was needed, while in the case of the latter the Vice-Principal confirmed that it was a HEFCE stipulation that individual comments on REF submission could not be recorded.

12/024

The final draft of the Code will need to be submitted to HEFCE by its deadline of 27 April 2012. Since this date is before the next Academic Board meeting, the final version will need to be approved by Chair's action on behalf of Academic Board. The Principal acknowledged the volume of work involved in producing the draft. The Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) requested that detailed comments be sent to Dr Marina Beck, Deputy Head of Academic Development Services, by the end of play on 16 March.

12/025

9.2 Ref Timetable

The Board received an update on progress and the timetable for REF submission for information (AB/12/06b).

12/026

10. SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE, INFORMATION SECURITY AND MATHS

The Board received an update on the proposal to integrate the Department of Computer Science, the Information Security Group and the Department of Mathematics (AB/12/07). The Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) reported that since the initial proposal was considered at the Academic Board meeting in November 2011, the Steering Group had decided not to include Computer Science in the integrated School. This decision would be reviewed after the REF submission in 2013. The present proposal is to form a new School comprising the Department of Mathematics and the Information Security Group with effect from 1 August 2012. The name of the new School is still under discussion, as there is a need to ensure that the name reflects the inclusion of the Information Security Group, given the importance of their brand. The aims of the present proposal are integration, transparency, accountability and enhancing the synergies between the two departments. The proposal has received strong support from the Steering Group and from both groups involved. The SU Vice-President (Education and Welfare) asked how students would be informed of this proposal and new name, and volunteered to communicate this to students. The Vice-Principal (Research and Enterprise) advised that as the Dean (Faculty of Science) would be taking this forward, he would ask her to contact the SU VP (Education and Welfare) for assistance.

12/027

The Board approved the proposal to form a new School integrating the Mathematics Department and the Information Security Group.

12/028

11. PERSONAL ADVISOR SYSTEM

The Board received a report on the Personal Advisor System for students (AB/12/08). The Vice-Principal (Students and Staff) had consulted widely on the Personal Advisor System and thanked the members of staff and students involved. It is recognised that the current system needs reworking to meet the heightened expectations of students under the new fee regime. The Board was asked to consider: (i) whether the purpose of the role of the advisor should be academic, pastoral or both; (ii) how often meetings between advisors and students should take place, and how much variation should be permitted between departments; (iii) the value of implementing an online system to support the role; (iv) the value of introducing a student-student Peer Mentor system, which could relieve the burden on staff time, and be recorded on the Royal Holloway Passport, strengthening the student's employability. Although consideration would need to be given to resources required for training and conducting CRB-checks, where necessary, the Board broadly supported a Peer Mentoring pilot scheme. 12/029

There was also discussion of the online system used by Psychology, which was developed by the Department. If all departments moved towards employing online support IT Services could investigate developing a College-wide system, but did not have capacity for this currently. The Principal reported that the Open University was rated highly in the NSS survey and one of the contributing factors is a good pastoral system with a central online element. 12/030

12. STUDENT RECRUITMENT

12.1 The Board received a report on student intake targets for 2012-13 for information (AB/12/09). 12/031

12.2 To Board considered a report on UG and PG applications received to date for admission in 2012 (AB/12/10). It was noted that there are more C/Fs than this time last year illustrating the effectiveness of the conversion campaign, which includes UCAS open days and communications with applicants about scholarships and the Royal Holloway Passport. 12/032

12.3 The Board received the proposed entry requirements for 2013-14, which had been agreed in consultation with individual departments (AB/12/11). The College may wish to review the entry requirements at a later date in the light of changes to government policy and admissions patterns. It was noted that there was an error in the required grades for the Joint Honours Mathematics and Physics programme recorded next to the Mathematics entry; the correct grades are those recorded next to the Physics entry, that is, AAB (including A in Mathematics and A in Physics). 12/033

A late paper outlining three proposals in relation to English language entry requirements was considered (AB/12/11). The second and third proposals in the paper were accepted. However, some concern was raised about the first proposal relating to accepting certain scores on the Pearson Test of English and how these relate to those required by other HEIs within the rest of the 1994 Group. The SU VP Education and Welfare expressed concern about the poor level of English language proficiency and the expectations of overseas students, to the detriment of their fellow students at the College. The Director of RHI confirmed that the College's English language entry requirements are in line with the sector, but the proficiency test results are not always good indicators of how well the students will perform in their university studies. The College therefore needs to focus on supporting the students once they have commenced their studies. 12/034

The Board approved the entry requirements for 2013-14 subject to: (i) correcting the grade requirements for Mathematics and Physics to AAB; (ii) demonstrating that the English language requirements of the Pearson Test of English are in line with that required by other HEIs within the 1994 group. 12/035

13. TERM DATES

The Board received a proposal to revise the agreed term dates for the 2012-13 academic year (AB/12/12) by moving the start dates of both the Spring and Summer terms in 2013. The 2012-13 term dates approved by Academic Board in November 2010 gave the incorrect date for Easter Sunday as 31 March, and Spring term would therefore have ended on Good Friday. Since the circulation of papers, there has been a request to move only the start and end dates of the Spring term forward by one week, leaving the start and end dates of the Summer term as previously agreed and currently published. The proposed revised term dates for the Spring term are Monday 7 January 2013 to Friday 22 March 2013 (11 weeks). The revised dates mean a three week Christmas vacation and a five week Easter vacation. This proposal avoids significant revenue loss that would result if the Summer term dates were also brought forward by one week. 12/036

The Board approved the revised term dates for the 2012-13 academic year. 12/037

14. HONORARY TITLES

The Board noted a paper on the conferral of honorary titles and the award of titles to Royal Holloway staff (AB/12/23), which was unstarred. Some concern was raised over the award to Professor Stephen Hill of the title Emeritus Professor. The Chair confirmed that this title had been conferred as Professor Hill met the stipulated eligibility criteria. 12/038

STARRED ITEMS

15. FACULTY BOARDS

The Board received a combined report from the meetings of the Faculty Boards held in November 2011 (AB/12/13). 12/039

16. PROPOSED CHANGES TO CONSTITUTIONS AND TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Board approved the proposed changes to the Terms of Reference for the Academic Board Executive Committee (AB/12/14). 12/040

17. NOMINATIONS FOR STATUTE 25 PANELS

The Board approved the nomination of Professor Brian Cowan, Department of Physics, by the Faculty of Science to serve on Statute 25 Panels during 2011-13. 12/041

18. ACADEMIC BOARD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Board received the unconfirmed minutes from the meeting of the Academic Board Executive Committee held on 20 February 2012 (AB/12/15). 12/042

19. COLLEGE BOARD OF EXAMINERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Board received the minutes of the meeting of the College Board of Examiners Executive Committee held on 24 November 2011 and the unconfirmed minutes from the meeting held on 14 February 2012 (AB/12/16a,b). 12/043

20. ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Academic Planning Committee held on 17 October, 28 November 2011 and 26 January 2012 (AB/12/17a,b,c). 12/044

21. COLLABORATIVE PROVISIONS COMMITTEE

The Board received the minutes of the meeting of the Collaborative Provisions Committee held on 24 January 2012 (AB/12/18). 12/045

22. RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The Board received the minutes of the meetings of the Research Committee held on 21 September, 20 October and 7 December 2011 (AB/12/19a,b,c). 12/046

23. LEARNING, TEACHING AND QUALITY COMMITTEE

The Board received the report from the meetings of the Learning, Teaching and Quality Committee held on 30 November 2011 and 8 February 2012, including the Careers Service Annual Report for 2010-11 (AB/12/20). 12/047

24. STUDENTS' UNION

The Board noted the results of the February 2012 election for sabbatical officers (AB/12/21). 12/048

25. HONORARY TITLES

The Board approved the proposal to confer the Honorary Title of Visiting Professor on Professor Richard Ralph Mowbray Clogg, from the Department of History (Hellenic Institute) and Professor John Harris, from the Department of Social Work (AB/12/22a,b). 12/049

26. PUBLICATION

26.1 The Board agreed that no items required broad dissemination around the College. 12/050

26.2 The Board confirmed that no papers needed exemption from the Freedom of Information Act requirements. 12/051

27. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of Academic Board will take place on **Wednesday 30 May 2012 at 3pm in MX001**. 12/052

*Dr Marina Beck
Deputy Head of Academic Development Services
20 March 2012*