

**Minutes of the 133rd meeting of the Standing Committee**

**Saturday 11 February 2012, 2 pm**

**Senate House, University of London**

**Present**: Robin Osborne (Cambridge; Chair), Susan Deacy (Roehampton, *Bulletin* Editor), Steven Green (Leeds, Elections), Elena Isayev (Exeter), Miriam Leonard (UCL, Treasurer), Nick Lowe (RHUL, Webmaster), John North (Acting Director, ICS), James Robson (Open University), Catherine Steel (Glasgow, Secretary), Stephen Todd (Manchester), Jaap Wisse (Newcastle).

**Apologies for Absence** were received from Genevieve Liveley (Bristol, Education Committee), Christopher Pelling (Oxford), Ulrike Roth (Edinburgh, Statistics), Edmund Thomas (Durham).

The Chair welcomed John North to his first meeting of SC since becoming Acting Director of the Institute of Classical Studies.

**1. Minutes of the last meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 8 October 2011 were received and approved.

**2. Matters arising**

JACS: it was *agreed* that CUCD should ask HEFCE for the JACS codes for each of the degree programmes on the list supplied by HEFCE; the numbers on each programme; how they are grouped for unistats; and the degree to which institutions have discretion in the allocation of course codes within the unistats subject hierarchy. CUCD SC will return to the topic at its next meeting.

**Action: Stephen Todd**

Contact hours: the document circulated at the November council will be made available on the CUCD website. Considerable variability between institutions in the level of concern paid to the proportion and definition of contact hours was *noted*; SC will continue to monitor the situation as the relationship between KIS and recruitment becomes, or does not become, clearer. It was *agreed* that the Chair will see whether subject associations are willing to act together to persuade HEFCE to provide links to subject-specific documents on the rationale for contact hours.

**Action: Robin Osborne**

Royal Holloway: Nick Lowe gave a brief and very positive update on the position of Classics at Royal Holloway, where the threat to posts has almost gone and is likely to be abandoned entirely in the next few months. He thanked colleagues around the UK for their support and advice during the crisis.

**3. Chair's Report**

Postgraduate funding: the Chair briefed the meeting on actions being taken in response to concern that increased levels of undergraduate debt will act as a deterrent to postgraduate study. A briefing paper from the British Academy is expected in March; the next twice-yearly meeting between the British Academy and subject associations, in April/May, will be dedicated to this issue and, it is hoped, generate some media attention. Meanwhile, subject associations are attempting to reverse the AHRC's decision to cease funding Masters-level study and to reduce its PhD funding by approximately one-third. On behalf of the Arts and Humanities user group, the Chair is setting up a meeting with Rick Rylance to discuss these developments. It was *noted* that a possible loan package for Masters students is under discussion at BIS, and that anecdotal evidence from departments suggests that Masters fees are rising fast towards a presumed target of £9k. Over-supply of PhD candidates in relation to academic posts is likely to worsen post-REF, strengthening arguments for the embedding of employability within postgraduate training.

Undergraduate admissions: it was too early for a clear picture to have emerged, but Classics appeared to be doing reasonably well; anxieties were expressed at the meeting that that is related to the specific demography of the subject. It was *noted* that serious comparisons should be made with 2010 rather than 2011 figures.

**4. REF**

The final rules had now been published; some of the concerns that CUCD had expressed were addressed in the changes that had been introduced, particularly in relation to increased uniformity across panels; changes were generally in the direction of what panel D had hoped for. For Classics, one major issue that remains is the situation of departments whose submission crosses Archaeology (panel C) and Classics (panel D); it will be important, nearer the time, to make requests for cross-referral where appropriate. It was *noted* that additional paternity or adoption leave brings the same reduction in required outputs as maternity leave. Once universities have given preliminary indication of what their submissions will be like, panel advisers will be appointed; the sub-panel is likely to go back to names which were considered when panels were appointed, though there may be other specialist areas which need coverage; nothing will happen in connection with this before the next SC.

There is no official indication about funding, though, unofficially, it seems highly likely that nothing below 3\* will attract funding; there appears to be no basis for any assumptions currently being made about the proportions of funding for 3\* and 4\* research.

**5. Education Committee**

The report from Genevieve Liveley was *noted*. It was *agreed* that Education Committee could co-opt members as it saw fit. SC welcomed the events which had been planned and looked forward to seeing Education Committee's plan for 2012-2013. Jaap Wisse reiterated Newcastle's hope to run an early career researchers event in September, and James Robson expressed interest in the Open University's hosting an event on ancient languages and modern technology: both will contact Dr. Liveley.

**Action: Genevieve Liveley; James Robson; Jaap Wisse**

**6. Institute of Classical Studies and the Joint Library**

John North reported on the current situation at the Institute of Classical Studies. It will continue to function in its current state until at least until autumn 2013, when the funding regime may change; its income has been cut by about a third from last year, with the effect of significantly reducing its capacity to support conferences, research projects, etc. HEFCE's committee of enquiry into the School of Advanced Study is underway and HEFCE will decide the future funding of SAS at its board in December 2012. John North's position continues until Feb 2013; the shape of the post thereafter depends on the funding of SAS, but is highly unlikely under any circumstances to be a full-time position. The objectives for the coming year are: i) to get funding for the ICS within SAS onto a more stable basis; ii) to ensure that effective links between the ICS and the Joint Library exist, insofar as is possible within the current structure which embeds the Joint Library within the UoL library system.

The ICS can potentially help with the activities organised by CUCD's Education Committee, provided that there is a link with research; the training of postgraduates and early career researchers has such a link. It was *agreed* that Genevieve Liveley should liaise with John North to explore possibilities; it was further suggested that the ICS might have a role to play in exploring the impact agenda in the context of postgraduate employability. The sharing of Impact case studies could contribute to this end.

**Action: Genevieve Liveley**

John North is exploring ways of communicating with departments across the UK. The Chair offered CUCD SC, or a part thereof, as a way of achieving this; John North will reflect on this possibility.

**Action: John North**

**7. Treasurer's Business**

CUCD's balance is £4946. It was *noted* that support for Education Committee events would be forthcoming, to a maximum of £400 per event.

**8. Secretary's Business**

The Secretary drew attention to the message about this year's statistics which the Statistics Officer had just sent to departmental contacts, and encouraged all SC members to do what they could to ensure that their department's return was timely and accurate.

**Action: all**

**9. Update from webmaster**

It was *agreed* that the Constitution on the website should be updated now to reflect the changes adopted at November Council, even though the Council minutes cannot be approved until November 2012. The Secretary will check the status and whereabouts of the Subject Centre archives with Sarah Francis.

**Action: Nick Lowe, Catherine Steel**

**10. CUCD *Bulletin***

SC recorded its thanks to Susan Deacy as *Bulletin* editor, who asked any departments which have not received their hard or electronic copies tocontact her.

Susan Deacy suggested that the 2012 edition might have a theme of 'Teaching sensitive subjects'. The idea of close articulation with Education Committee events was welcomed, though it was noted that a *Bulletin* entirely restricted to a single theme was not desirable. Suggestions for articles, and any other observations on the *Bulletin*, should be sent to the editor.

**Action: all**

**11. Statistics**

This item had already been covered under Secretary's business.

**12. 2012 Olympics**

James Robson directed attention to the Open University's website on the Olympics, which is now live (http://www.open.edu/openlearn/whats-on/olympics-2012).

**13. AOCB**

None.

**14. Date of the next meeting**

June 16th at 2pm.