

**Minutes of the 129th meeting of the Standing Committee**

**Saturday 9 October 2010, 11 am**

**Stewart House, 32 Russell Sq., University of London**

**Present:** Robin Osborne (Cambridge; Chair), Bruce Gibson (Liverpool; Secretary), Miriam Leonard (UCL, Acting Treasurer), Alan Beale (JACT representative), Sarah Francis (Liverpool; Classics Subject Centre), Elena Isayev (Exeter), Nick Lowe (RHUL; Webmaster), James Robson (Open; Languages), Jakob Wisse (Newcastle), Matthew Wright (Exeter).

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Mike Edwards (Director, ICS), Steven Green (Leeds), Peter Jones (Friends of Classics), Fiona McHardy (Roehampton; Editor of the *Bulletin*), Christopher Pelling (Oxford), Jonathan Powell (RHUL), Ulrike Roth (Edinburgh), Catherine Steel (Glasgow; Subject Centre).

**2. Minutes of the meeting of 12 June 2010.**

The minutes of the meeting of 12 June 2010 were received and approved.

**3. Matters arising from the June minutes.**

1. **Item 3, ii: Australian database of journals.** It was reported that at least one UK HEI was now using the Australian database of journals that had been previously mentioned in order to assess internal promotion cases.
2. **Item 4, i: Financial position of UK Classics departments.** Those present gave brief oral updates on their own departments and others known to them.
3. **Item 6: Electronic publication on institutional websites.** A brief discussion of practice in member departments took place. No conflict of interest had yet arisen.

**4. Minutes of the meeting of 11 September 2010.**

The minutes of the meeting of 11 September 2010 were received and approved, with minor corrections added.

**5. Matters arising from the September minutes**

1. **Item 3: Endorsement of candidate for REF 2014 sub-panel chair in UoA 31 (Classics).** Professor Osborne confirmed that, following CUCD's decision to endorse his candidacy, he had submitted his application to be sub-panel chair.
2. **Item 4: REF 2014 sub-panel 31 (Classics): nominations by CUCD.** It was reported that Professor Roderick Beaton (KCL) had been nominated by CUCD acting on the advice of the Society for Modern Greek Studies, and that Hilary O'Shea (OUP) and Michael Sharp (CUP) had been nominated as possible 'user' members of the sub-panel. The Secretary was thanked for making the nominations on behalf of CUCD.

**6. Chair's Report**

1. **HEFCE Workshop on impact held at the BA, June 2010.** The Chair had attended this occasion, which had seen discussion of the pilot studies of impact. The presentations had taken a uniform and uncritical line of acquiescence, even though concerns emerged during the day about the lack of clarity that often arose in attempts to correlate impact with specific instances of research, and the perennial problem of measuring impact in a reliable fashion. It was also apparent that departmental submissions would be as dependent on rhetorical presentation in describing impact, as they tended to be in describing environment. The Chair also noted that he had written to the HE Minister, David Willetts, in July 2010, as part of a wider campaign expressing concern with the impact agenda: an anodyne response had been received.
2. **AHRC meeting on public engagement, June 2010.** The Chair had attended a meeting focussing on public engagement, which now appeared to be demanded in most funded research projects. There had been over-emphasis on projects such as bicycle racks and fabric design, in areas largely peripheral to most work in the Humanities.

**7. MA benchmarking.**

The Secretary reported on correspondence which Professor Powell had been involved in on this issue with Laura Bellingham at QAA. Members of the SC endorsed the view that it was preferable to leave aside this issue for the time being, as M level benchmarks had not been widely developed in the humanities, and because there was also a risk that an M level benchmark in Classics might struggle to reflect the diversity and strength of provision by UK Classical departments at M level. It was also noted that there was extensive experience amongst member departments in M level design, which could be drawn upon by any department seeking to develop new programmes.

**8. Classics Subject Centre.**

Dr Francis reported that there was continuing uncertainty about the fate of the Subject Centres: much would depend on the outcomes of the Browne report and the Comprehensive Spending Review. A list of events was tabled: it was likely that future provision offered by the CSC would have to take place at lower levels of funding, which might involve small fees for participants or reduced support for travel expenses. There would however be support for the summer school taking place in Reading in 2011. The classics and ancient history employability survey would report by June 2011.

**9. Shortlisting of non-EU citizens for academic posts.**

It was noted with alarm that government quotas on appointments of non-EU citizens were beginning to be applied in the HE sector. It was agreed that departments should be encouraged to write to MPs to point out the likely damage such policies would cause. It was agreed that this topic should feature on the agenda for the November Council meeting.

**10. Secretary's Business.**

The Secretary reported on behalf of Dr Jones that 'Classics for All' had begun fundraising, and that the current aim was to widen the donor base and to prepare the website for a more public phase of fundraising after October.

**11. CUCD Elections.**

The Secretary reported on behalf of Dr Green on the candidates for election who had been duly nominated and seconded. Elections would take place at the November Council meeting using the AV method, as laid down in the CUCD constitution.

**12. CUCD *Bulletin*.**

The Secretary gave a brief report on behalf of the Editor. In response to the Editor's enquiry, SC members agreed that the decision should be left with the Editor as to whether copies of the *Bulletin* should be brought to the November Council. It was agreed that it might in any event be useful to have the statistics available, if only by electronic means, before the Council meeting.

**13. AQA training day on entry level Latin.**

Dr Robson reported that he had attended a training day on this sub-GCSE qualification. The aim was for it to be a staging post towards GCSE, making use of the Cambridge Latin Course, Book 1.

**14. Olympic outreach activity.**

It was reported that the OU had made a new temporary appointment in this area. In the ensuing discussion, it was noted that the Classical Association annual meeting would take place in Exeter in 2012 (which might well include Olympic-themed panels and activities), and that Mr Beale was also writing a sourcebook on the Olympic Games.

**15. Date of next meeting.**

It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on 12 February 2011 in the morning.