

TAKING OVER AS CHAIR OF CUCD

by *Helen Lovatt*

As the incoming chair of CUCD, I wanted to say a few words about my plans and priorities, and issue a few reminders.

First who I am: I am a scholar of Latin literature and its reception, and Professor of Classics at the University of Nottingham. I have previously served as Head of Department there and as Chair of the Education Committee at CUCD, so I have some idea of the challenges facing me. The discipline in the UK is growing (you might be interested to check the [list of members and associate members](#) on the website), but there is no room for complacency.

CUCD is the subject association of UK University Classics departments, and subject associations are increasingly involved in consulting with government and other research bodies. However, we also exist to represent colleagues: if there are issues that you would like discussed, or actions you would like us to take, you can always contact your representative (usually your Head of Department) or you can contact us directly. My e-mail address is helen.lovatt@nottingham.ac.uk and I will do my best to help with issues and problems that affect the discipline in the UK. You can see the minutes of the most recent Standing Committee meeting [here](#).

The most important issues currently facing us are:

- improving the discipline's record in **equality, diversity and inclusion**, especially with regard to race. We are planning a report on gender and race in university Classics and have set up a working group to make a start. We hope to have initial findings and recommendations by the end of the academic year. In the meantime our existing protocol on diversity is [here](#), and the reports on [gender](#) and [race](#) produced by the Royal Historical Society have some very useful guidance for those in different roles, such as job committees and Heads of Department.
- **Open access**. UK research bodies are committed to implementing Plan S (details [here](#)) by January 2020, and consultation is currently taking place. In particular, this could have a negative effect on our learned societies and their journals, although it will also have potential benefits for researchers. We are currently consulting on this. Colleagues might be interested in the data gathered by the RHS, which is available [here](#). Neville Morley's clear and concise explanation is [here](#).
- **REF and TEF**. We are keeping an eye on developments in the government's assessment exercises and will support departments in any negative fall-out from them.
- Supporting other **arts and humanities** departments as necessary and working together to change the media narrative about the arts and humanities disciplines, especially through the [Arts and Humanities Alliance](#). Reading critically, writing effectively, persuading and understanding the past in all its manifestations – these are skills essential for effective citizenship and a rewarding life. I will be participating

in discussion about strategies for recruiting students in the Humanities and how we can work together more effectively at the University English AGM in April.

- **Pressure on pre-university classics provision** arising from the removal of AS and reduced funding for schools. We will be collaborating with other Classics associations to try and support classics in schools, which is vitally important for recruitment to university classics.
- Continuing issues with **casualization** and fair treatment of hourly paid lecturers and temporary staff. Guidance is available [here](#).
- The various possible impacts of **Brexit**. UK Classics is unashamedly international and will continue to work to build relationships across Europe and beyond. We value very highly our non-British colleagues and deplore the highly negative attitudes that have been displayed since the 2016 referendum.

There are many things I would like to do as CUCD chair: in particular I would like to work towards the establishment of mentoring networks, especially for new Heads of Department.

I am excited to see Dr. Joanna Paul taking over as chair of the Education committee, and looking forward to many stimulating discussions of pedagogical issues.

I would like to thank those who came before me and have set such a high standard for me to live up to, and those who serve on the Standing Committee, particularly those who undertake the active roles, such as treasurer, secretary, chair of Education Committee. As a group, we are on the young side and mostly women: it would be great to see more men standing for election to Standing Committee in the future or taking on active roles.

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