

Open Business

minutes

**Board Meeting on 24 April 2007 held at
4 Mill Lane**



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Board of Graduate Studies

Present: Professor WA Brown (Chair), Ms B Bowers, Dr GMW Cook, Dr LRR Gelsthorpe, Professor GP Hawthorn, Dr PC Hewett, Dr DA Jefferson, Professor RG Osborne, and, Dr J Runde with Dr LE Friday as Secretary in attendance.

Apologies: Prof GAJ Amaratunga, Professor LF Gladden, Dr CR Hiley, Professor ML Jacobus, Professor SK Rankin, Professor BJ Sahakian, Mr K Mohaddes, Dr C Maxwell, Dr N Tooke, Ms CL Burton and Mrs L Whitebread.

1211 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting on 13 March 2007 were signed as a correct record.

Matters requiring discussion

1212 Maintenance rates 2008-09 (Paper 2750 refers)

The Board agreed to stand by their original plan to increase the estimate of the basic cost-of-living requirement by 6% for 2008-09, to complete the planned uplift over three years. The Secretary was asked to discuss this with the Director of the Trusts before publishing the figure in the 2008-09 *Prospectus*.

1213 Dates of meeting 2007-08 (Paper 2751 refer)

Dates for meetings in 2008-09 were approved on the same basis as for 2007-08. The Board deferred a decision about a date for a Long Vacation meeting until the demand for such a meeting is known.

1214 Proposal for two new MPhil Degrees in Biological Anthropology and rescinding the MPhil in Biological Anthropology
(Papers 2752; 2754 and 2754 refer)

The Board noted the proposal effectively divided the existing MPhil in Biological Anthropology into two specialist courses. The academic case was supported, but the Board agreed that the organisers should be made aware that the costing was unrealistic in omitting to account for underlying costs and wrongly concluding that the courses could run at a profit. Dr Runde agreed to look again at the costing template to make it clear that all indirect costs must be accounted for.

1215 MPhil provision in the Centre for International Studies
(Papers 2757, 2758 and 2759 refer)

The updated proposal was considered in the light of a request for clarification of the relationship between the various options proposed. The Board still felt that the structure was complicated and that the relationship between the CPGS and the MPhil in Option 2 was unclear. In general, the Board sees the MPhil as preceding a CPGS, which then leads into the PhD and may be absorbed by it, rather than the CPGS preceding the MPhil. The Secretary agreed to go back to the Centre to attempt to resolve this point.

1216 MPhils in Archaeology: revision of the Special Regulations and replacement of the MPhil in Archaeology by three separate titles
(Paper 2763 refers)

The Board welcomed the proposal to clarify the status of the various different options by forming them into separate MPhil courses and to align the arrangements for orals.

1217 Masters degrees review
(Papers 2774 and 2775 refer)

The Board welcomed the further attempt to rationalise the University's portfolio of masters courses, this time basing the scheme on the purposes and learning outcomes of the various degrees.

The proposal to mobilise the greatly underused titles of MSc and MLitt to embrace the existing one-year research-only MPhils was thought worthy of further consideration by the Review of Graduate Education; it was agreed that these degrees could have a lower minimum research requirement of one year, as for the current research-only MPhil, but that the maximum would be as for the current MSc/MLitt (which is the same as for the PhD, since these degrees are most often awarded in lieu of a PhD).

The use of these titles in other universities for other qualifications might be confusing; equally, it was also noted that our current usage is at odds with those in other institutions. The Secretary was asked to look into the currency of various degree titles in other institutions, particularly to know whether 'MRes' was likely to have a future as a recognised award.

1218 Membership of the Board

The Board noted with regret that Professor Gladden had resigned her membership because she is unable to attend meetings. The Board asked the Secretary to thank Professor Gladden for her valuable contributions over the years.

Consideration was given to the future constitution of the Board. This is understood to be under discussion in the Review of Graduate Education, with the possibility of Schools being asked each to elect a graduate education 'champion' to speak for graduate studies in their subject area. Pending the Review's final report and a possible change in the ordinances, it was agreed that a new member from the School of Technology would be desirable to replace Professor Gladden.

1219 Plagiarism
(Paper 2780 refer)

Information about the forthcoming Plagiarism Awareness Day (2 May) was warmly received.