

Open Business

minutes

**Board Meeting on 10 July 2007 held at
4 Mill Lane**



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Board of Graduate Studies

Present: Dr PC Hewett (Chair), Prof GAJ Amaratunga Dr GMW Cook, Dr LRR Gelsthorpe, Professor GP Hawthorn, Dr CR Hiley, Professor ML Jacobus, Ms C Norman, Professor RG Osborne, Professor SK Rankin, Dr J Runde, with Dr LE Friday as Secretary and Dr K Maxwell, Dr L Biggs and Ms J Wilkinson in attendance

Apologies: Professor WA Brown, Dr DA Jefferson, Mr K Mohaddes, Professor BJ Sahakian, Dr N Tooke and Mrs L Whitebread.

1267 Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting on 12 June 2007 were signed as a correct record.

Matters for report

1268 Membership of the Board

Ms Bowers and Mr Mohaddes were thanked for their contribution as graduate student representatives in 2006-07. Ms Norman was welcomed to her first meeting as GU representative.

Matters requiring discussion

1269 Application for recognised Non-University Institution status: MRC Epidemiology Unit

The Board approved non-University institution status for the MRC Epidemiology Unit on the recommendation of the degree Committee for the faculty of Clinical Medicine and Clinical Veterinary Medicine.

1270 Examination for the MusD Degree: Guide to Applicants

The proposed guide to candidates was approved subject to further clarification of the definition of 'published works'.

1271 Constitution of the Degree Committee for Oriental Studies

The proposal to amend the constitution to take account of restructuring of the Faculty as the Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies was supported by the Board.

1272 Word limits for the PhD in Oriental Studies

Minor amendment of the word limit was approved for publication.

1273 PhD by Special Regulations

Following extended discussion, it was agreed that the Guides to both candidates and examiners/assessors should be revised to clarify the criteria for the degree and the nature of the examination for the PhD by the Special Regulations.

The Board noted that the *prima facie* stage remains the only part of any assessment of work for higher degrees that offers no feedback other than a pass/fail and as such offers no information to a candidate on which to base any representations or second attempt. It was further noted that assessors at this stage were not being asked to act as examiners but to make a judgment whether there were sufficient indications that the work met the basic criteria for the examination to proceed (but not that it was being prejudged to be suitable for the award of the degree).

It was agreed therefore to attempt to formulate a coversheet for assessors, incorporating a checklist of the criteria for proceeding to the examination and allowing the assessor to provide additional brief feedback to be conveyed verbatim to an unsuccessful candidate.

1274 Proposal for a Master of Finance Degree

The Board was satisfied with the response received from Professor Meeks regarding the funding of the course, the relationship with the MBA and the MPhil in Economics (the two degrees are aimed at different groups of students and there are at present no plans for shared papers with Economics).

1275 Proposal for a new two-year MPhil in Environmental Design in Architecture (Option B)

The proposal to modify the existing 'stream B' of the MPhil to provide a 2-year course with three terms of placement in practices was welcomed. The Board noted the importance of establishing formally the relationship of the University to the practices concerned in terms of quality assurance etc.

The Board noted that the 2-year MPhil in Chinese Studies provided a model of an MPhil awarded after 6 terms full-time study, where an extended period was spent away from the University. However, in this case, there is an exactly parallel one-year

course and the Board wished to encourage the Faculty to mark in some way the extra effort by students engaged in the 'professional practice' stream, particularly as this element is important for recognition of the course by professional bodies.

1276 Examinations for the MPhils in History

While applauding the Faculty's efforts to bring the details of the word limit rules in line across its MPhils, the Board did not accept that it would be necessary to maintain all the small differences in word length, especially given that the way the word limits are counted have now been adjusted. It was agreed to ask the Faculty to rationalise their word limits to preferably two or, at most, three models.

1277 MSt Degrees in Primary & Community Care, Clinical Effectiveness and Public Health to be rescinded.

It was noted that the last cohorts for each of these courses are about to end, with the final results expected in October for most candidates. However, a small number of candidates who have intermittently or have extended deadlines will remain outstanding. The Board was content that the courses be rescinded from 30 September 2007.