

## ***Open Business***

# *minutes*

Board Meeting on 22 April 2008 at Mill Lane



**UNIVERSITY OF  
CAMBRIDGE**

Board of Graduate Studies

Present Prof WA Brown (Chair), Prof M Blamire, Dr GMW Cook, Dr LRR Gelsthorpe, Prof J Heal, Dr CR Hiley, Mr LS Liu, Prof RG Osborne, Prof SK Rankin, Dr J Runde, Prof BJ Sahakian, Mr MR Younger with Dr K Maxwell as Secretary and Mr P Carr, Dr LM Biggs, Mrs LJ Whitebread and Ms SJ Pickard in attendance.

The Head of the Education Section (Alice Benton) was also in attendance.

Professor PC Hewett and is on sabbatical leave

### 3209 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2008 were signed as a true record.

### 3210 Declarations of interest

There were no reported conflicts of interest.

### Matters requiring discussion

3211 Application for a new MPhil in South Asian Studies  
(Paper 3229 refers)

The Board requested that additional information which detailed: a) how the costing for staff resources was reconciled with the teaching hours; b) what the implications of the new course would be for the Faculty's other teaching and examining commitments.

**Action: Secretary**

3212 Fee for the Course: bilateral studentship agreements  
(Paper 3230 refers)

The Board agreed that fees should be waived for those students enrolled on a course covered by a bilateral studentship agreement, for those terms that the student is working at the partner institution up to a maximum of six terms.

**Action: Secretary**

3213 Residence requirements for part-time students  
(Papers 3233, 3195 refer)

The Board reiterated the view that the part-time research experience should be as much like the full-time experience as possible and that distance learning was not appropriate for a research programme. It was agreed that:

- 1 The wording in the Code of Practice and the Guidelines be left as it is;
- 2 The interview report form be amended so that details have to be given of where the student will live;
- 3 The potential supervisor be required to submit, along with the interview report, a programme of what attendance will be required and how it will be managed, comprising an overview of the five year research period and a more detailed plan for the first five terms; this plan to be signed by the supervisor and counter-signed by the Head of Department;
- 4 The detailed programme of attendance be updated at the time of registration and every five terms thereafter; with the supervisor and Head of Department signing as above;
- 5 The Board scrutinise the proposed attendance arrangements more rigorously;
- 6 The wording of the undertaking on attendance to be signed by the student be strengthened; and that it be signed by those applying to continue as well as those applying through the Admissions Office;

It was noted that it would be helpful if when planning seminars departments were mindful of the times when part-timers could attend.

**Action: BGS Part-Time Student Co-ordinator**

3214 Introduction of the part-time MPhil: matters arising  
(Papers 3234 & 3235 refer)

The Board agreed:

Residency requirements

- That candidates for part-time MPhils examined by thesis and oral only be subject to the same residency restrictions as those on part-time research programmes;
- That candidates for partially-taught MPhils normally be required to live within easy commuting distance from Cambridge unless the teaching pattern is one of distance learning plus residential blocks.

Fees

- That where both full-time and part-time routes to the same MPhil exist, the total University Composition Fee payable should be the same, whether the course is taken by full- or part-time study. If collected over the duration of the part-time route, fees should be payable at 50% of the full-time route per year where possible.
- That where the part-time MPhil has no full-time equivalent, the fee should be determined at the date of admission and be payable in two annual instalments.

### Role of Colleges

The Board recommended, for their part, that it would be helpful if the level of college fee for all part-time students be reduced. The Board maintained the strong view that MPhil students should be members of colleges. It was agreed that issues relating to the role of colleges be discussed at a joint working party of college and Board representatives; but that Graduate Tutors Committee be invited to comment on the existing paper in the first instance.

### Academic Integrity

The Board agreed that the academic standards of any new part-time MPhil should be the same as those of the equivalent full-time MPhil or, if none existed, of the degree as a whole.

### Proposal for the introduction of a new or significantly amended course and examination for the MPhil Degree)

The Board approved the revised form.

**Action: BGS Part-Time Student Co-ordinator**

### 3215 Graduate maintenance rates 2009-10

The Board to increase the annual minimum maintenance requirement by 2.7% on the 2008-09 rate, i.e. from £9290 to £9540.

**Action: BGS Finance & Studentships Officer**

### 3216 Board of Graduate Studies meetings: proposed dates for 2008-09

The Board approved the following dates for meetings in 2008-09:

23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008  
 14<sup>th</sup> October 2008  
 18<sup>th</sup> November 2008  
 13<sup>th</sup> January 2009  
 10<sup>th</sup> February 2009  
 10<sup>th</sup> March 2009  
 14<sup>th</sup> April 2009  
 5<sup>th</sup> May 2009  
 9<sup>th</sup> June 2009  
 7<sup>th</sup> July 2009