

Unreserved Business

minutes

Board Meeting on 13 January 2009 at Mill Lane



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Board of Graduate Studies

Present: Prof J Rallison (Chair), Dr H Babinsky, Prof RJ Bennett, Prof D Cardwell, Dr GMW Cook, Prof EH Cooper, Prof PJ Ford, Prof PC Hewett, Dr CR Hiley, Mr S Mtimbiri, Dr R Padman, Prof BJ Sahakian, Dr DR Sargan with Dr K Maxwell as Secretary with Dr LM Biggs and Ms SJ Pickard in attendance.

Apologies: Mr MR Younger, Prof SK Rankin

Dr LRR Gelsthorpe is on sabbatical leave.

3311 **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting on 18th November 2008 were signed as a true record.

3312 **Expressions of interest**

Professor Cardwell and Dr Babinsky expressed an interest in item number (3314.6) and left the room during the discussion of this matter.

3313 **Straightforward Business**

Board Membership

The Board welcomed Dr Sargan and Dr Babinsky.

3314 **Matters requiring discussion**

3314.1 **Revisions of the MPhil programmes offered in the Department of Archaeology**
(Papers 3458 & 3491 refer)

The Board was satisfied that the Department has addressed the issues identified at the previous Board meeting, but noted that the External

Examiner's report for the 2007-08 cohort had identified problems with structure of the courses. The Board agreed to approve the revisions, subject to the Secretary being satisfied, on the basis of advice from the Department, that the proposed course structure resolved the concerns expressed by the External Examiner.

Action: Secretary

3314.2 Proposal for electronic submission of the PhD thesis

(Papers 3492 & 3493 refer)

The Board was in general agreement that submission of a digital thesis was the correct way forward, but was not able to approve the proposal as it stands until the University Library and/or Legal Services Office have satisfactorily addressed a number of issues arising:

- 1) The Board was concerned that it may not be trivial to convert a thesis to a digital format which was acceptable to the UL, especially in cases where individual pages/appendices are inserted, or for musical scores. The Board requested that the Library should provide more information and in particular whether it would accommodate submissions in a variety of formats.
- 2) The Board recognised that it would be more difficult to monitor thesis copying and distribution once in digital format. It agreed that more information was required on how access would be regulated and appropriately restricted.
- 3) The Board remained concerned regarding the issue of third party copyright, in particular with reference to illustrations/photographic material and musical scores.
- 4) The Board was concerned that the revised thesis copying and distribution form was biased in favour of the University and that the students were not sufficiently protected, particularly with respect to third party copyright.
- 5) The Board requested more information on how former students would be protected.
- 6) The Board sought reassurance that Intellectual Property Rights would be preserved and delayed submission allowed whilst results were published.
- 7) The Board agreed that the underlying principle was that the electronic version must enjoy the same protection as is presently enjoyed by the printed thesis and sought reassurance on this point.

Action: Secretary

3314.3 Applications for renewal of Non-University Institution status: EMBL-EBI and the British Antarctic Survey

(Papers 3494, 3495 & refer)

The Board received the applications from the EMBL-EBI and BAS and agreed to approve both institutions for renewal of NUI status, subject to Degree Committee approval.

Action: Secretary

3314.4 **Proposal for new research stream: MPhil in Technology Policy**

(Paper 3496 refers)

The Board approved the Degree Committee's proposal to introduce a new research stream with effect from 1st October 2009.

Action: Education Committee

3314.5 **Copying and dissemination of MPhil coursework**

(Paper 3497 refers)

Since the substance of the proposal applied equally to undergraduate coursework, the Board agree to forward the draft student consent form to the Education Committee. The Board noted:

- 1) It was not clear from the guidelines, what relevance the term lecturer had to Masters level students.
- 2) Confidentiality of marks must be ensured and it was never acceptable for work to be disseminated to students in the same cohort.
- 3) It would be preferred if the practice was limited to good and excellent exemplar course material
- 4) The declaration form should make it clear that the student can refuse consent at any time.

Action: Education Committee

3314.6 **Proposed ERASMUS collaboration**

(Paper 3498 refers)

The Board wished to re-iterate the University's position that it does not award joint or double degrees, but that it was acceptable for a student to be granted leave to work away at other Institutions for a period not in excess of six terms. The Board was unwilling to approve a scheme which was referred to as a joint PhD programme and for which the full requirements as set out by EMII are not specified.

The Board agreed that the Department of Engineering should consider either 1) establishing a bilateral agreement which would allow for the transfer of students between Cambridge and Hamburg within the constraints of the University's existing regulations, or 2) provide further and better particulars on the proposed ERASMUS collaboration.

Action: Secretary

3314.7 **Draft Grace for the General Regulations for admission as a graduate student to incorporate the MRes degree**

(Paper 3499 refers)

The Board approved the revised wording for the Regulations.

Action: University Draftsman

3314.8 Application charges for graduate admissions applications

(Paper 3502 refers)

The Board was mindful that the introduction of a charge for paper applications should not deter potential applicants. The Board supported the following proposals:

- (i) from 2009-10 (i.e. for entry in 2010-11), a £35 application charge is introduced for applying on on-line and on paper;
- (ii) from 2010-11 (i.e. for entry in 2011-12), on-line applications become fully electronic, enabling the upload of references and scanned transcripts, written work, CVs etc. This will require a project to be set up involving BGS and CamSIS, to look at software solutions for achieving the desired outcome;
- (iii) the majority of payments be made via the existing on-line credit card facility, but if this proves impossible to access, then bankers drafts in £ sterling would also be acceptable;
- (iv) in exceptional circumstances, to be explained by the applicant and at the discretion of the Board of Graduate Studies, the application fee may be waived;
- (v) the use of the application charge is formally reviewed by the Board of Graduate Studies in September 2010.

Action: Education Committee

3314.9 Notice of intention to rescind MPhil course

(Paper 3503 refers)

The Board noted that the Degree Committee for the Faculty of Computer Science & Technology intend to rescind the MPhil in Computer Speech, Text & Internet Technology with effect from the academic year 2010-11.

Action: University Draftsman

3314.10 Request to revise the Special Regulations: MPhil in Economics

(Paper 3507 refers)

The Board was not willing to accept the proposed change to the Special Regulations for the MPhil for the existing cohort of students which would affect the 2009 examinations.

Action: Secretary

3314.11 Minutes of the Postgraduate Applications Committee

The Board accepted the minutes and for its part noted that it was not acceptable for students who continue from the MPhil to the PhD to wait until the Michaelmas Term to be approved for the MPhil degree and that this process should be complete by 30th September each year. Whilst the Board acknowledged that this may be difficult to achieve at the end of an 11 month MPhil, Degree Committees should be encouraged to act as expeditiously as possible and that Board members would approve candidates for the Degree on *ad hoc* basis throughout August and September.

Action: Secretary