

Unreserved Business

minutes

Board Meeting on 9 February 2010



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Board of Graduate Studies

Present: Prof J Rallison (Chair), Prof RJ Bennett, Dr AK Bennison, Prof D Cardwell, Dr GMW Cook, Dr LRR Gelsthorpe, Prof SD Goldhill, Prof PJ Ford, Dr IB Kingston, Prof PC Hewett, Dr R Miller, Dr R Padman, Dr DR Sargan, Mr MR Younger with Dr K Maxwell as Secretary and Ms J Harcourt, Ms EL James Ms SJ Pickard, Ms J Wilkinson in attendance.

Apologies: Prof BJ Sahakian

Mrs P Blake (CamSIS) attended for 4.3 and Mrs C Fage (Head of the Points Based Immigration Office) attended for 4.4.

3458 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 January 2010 were approved.

3459 Expressions of interest

Dr Cooke declared an interest in 4.6.

Matters for report

3460 Chairman's report

The Chairman reported that the School of the Humanities and Social Sciences had agreed to the formation of a new administrative structure to facilitate graduate policy and to co-ordinate bids for Research Council funding. He also reported that the General Board's recently published review of Social Sciences related in part to the training of graduate students.

3461 **Application to admit part-time research students: Faculty of History & Philosophy of Science**
(Paper 3878)

The Board approved the application to admit part-time PhD students with effect from 1st October 2010.

Action: Secretary

3462 **Postgraduate Scholarships and Bursaries provided by the Cambridge Commonwealth Trust (CCT) and Cambridge Overseas Trust (COT)**
(Paper 3879)

The Board was pleased to receive the consultation paper and supported the proposals, although Professor Cardwell noted that if the proposals for graduate funding went ahead this would mean a reduction in funding for undergraduates.

Action: Secretary

3463 **Update on Electronic Data Management (EDM) and E-Referencing**
(Paper 3880)

The Board received the paper. Mrs Blake reported that good progress was being made with both projects and that it was anticipated that the new functionality would be in place by September 2010, in time for the start of the 2011-12 admissions cycle.

The Board was concerned that the proposed deployment date would not leave sufficient time for implementation, user acceptance testing and training. The Board wished to make clear the need for thorough testing of the new system by all interested parties before it went live and that it was important that a fall-back position was in place.

Action: Secretary

3464 **Update on Points Based Immigration**
(Paper 3881)

The Board noted that the proposals for monitoring student attendance had been approved by the Senior Tutors' Committee and that the paper would be modified further to account for the monitoring of students who were undertaking fieldwork. The Board suggested that Non-University Institutions should undertake some monitoring responsibilities for their students. The Board recognised that the monitoring was light touch and thanked Mrs Fage for her work in this area.

- 3465** **Minutes of the MSt Liaison Committee**
(Paper 3882)
- The Board received the minutes.
- 3466** **Word limits for the PhD degree in Biological Science**
(Paper 3883)
- The Board approved the request to move from a page limit to a word limit with immediate effect with a period of grace for students who are currently writing up
- Action: Secretary
- 3467** **Response to the BIS review of Postgraduate provision**
(Paper 3884)
- The Board received the paper.
- 3468** **Request to increase the fees for Masters courses: School of Humanities and Social Sciences**
(Paper 3885)
- The Board approved the proposals with effect from 1st October 2011.
- Action: Secretary
- 3469** **Report of the Working Group on Specific Learning Difficulties**
(Paper 3886)
- The Board received the report and endorsed its recommendations.
- Action: Secretary
- 3470** **Language corrections for graduate dissertations**
- The Board agreed that this was a significant issue which relates to the students' prior education, admission standards and technical issues over the use of English language. It agreed that the Code of Practice should be revised to provide better guidance for all parties and that transferable skills training could be better utilised to assist students whether delivered through a Graduate School and/or College. It also agreed that student needs must be assessed on a case by case basis and noted that English language correction in dissertations must be undertaken with a full awareness of the risk of introducing work which is plagiarised.
- Action: Secretary

3471 **Level of service by the Institute of Continuing Education (IoCE) for MSt degrees**
(Paper 3887)

The Board received the revised proposals from the Director of the IoCE. Although supportive of the principle, the Board was not willing to support the proposals in their current form. It agreed:

i) The IoCE should consult all interested parties before the proposals could be approved (Schools, Faculties/Departments);

(ii) The proposals would require final percentages before it could be approved;

(iii) The Board does not have the authority to approve a change in funding allocations and that such permission must be sought from the Resource Management Committee;

(iv) The Board did not think it appropriate to ask its officers to mediate where funding could not be agreed between IoCE and Faculties;

(iv) The proposals were in place, contrary to the Regulations for the MSt degree.

Action: Secretary

3472 **Fee for the course: draft Notice**
(Paper A3907)

The Board approved the Notice and agreed to permit the Chairman to make any further editorial changes prior to publication.