

Open Business

minutes

Board Meeting on 21 November 2006 held in Seminar Room G, 17 Mill Lane



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Board of Graduate Studies

Present: Professor WA Brown (Chair), Prof GAJ Amaratunga (from item 1123), Dr GMW Cook, Dr LRR Gelsthorpe, Professor GP Hawthorn, Dr PC Hewett, Dr CR Hiley, Professor RG Osborne, Professor SK Rankin, Ms B Bowers with Dr LE Friday as Secretary, and Miss KJ Wilkinson.

Apologies were received from Professor LF Gladden, Professor ML Jacobus, Dr J Runde, Professor BJ Sahakian, Dr C Maxwell, Dr N Tooke, Ms CL Burton and Mrs L Whitebread.

1117 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 October 2006 were signed as a correct record.

Matters for report

1118 AHRC review of studentship competition (Paper 2575 refers)

The Board noted the institutional response to the consultation on how a bid for a block grant might be made and the award managed. It was noted that at least one Degree Committee was unhappy that their views in opposition to the general principle of a block grant had not been conveyed in the institutional response.

1119 Proposal for a new MPhil Degree in Politics (Paper 2598 refers)

The Board was content to support the new course, and noted that it is now proposed to start the course in 2008, rather than 2007.

Matters requiring discussion

1120 Membership of the Board

Professor Hawthorn declined to be nominated for a further term as a member elected by the General Board but accepted an invitation to be co-opted from 1 January 2007. The Board agreed that, in the interests of balancing the representation of subjects, it would be desirable to seek a nominee in the School of Physical Sciences to replace Professor Hawthorn.

1121 Regulations for the Doctor of Divinity Degree (D.D.)

(Paper 2576 refers)

The proposal by the Faculty to remove the option of submitting a specially-composed thesis was supported by the Board.

1122 Supervisor training

(Paper 2577 refers)

The Board noted the data on the availability of induction for supervisors and attendance at these sessions and agreed to expand the programme in view of the likely increase in demand following publication of the Code of Practice. It was agreed that the programme should include sessions especially targetted at supervisors in the Schools of Arts & Humanities and Humanities & Social Sciences, from which the take-up has so far been very limited.

It was further agreed to discuss with Staff Development the possibility of supporting training for post-docs who are required to carry out day-to-day supervisory duties under the 'Roberts' programme.

1123 Procedures for consideration of degrees results

(Papers 2588 & 2589 refer)

The Board agreed that the risks associated with the rushed processing of large numbers of degree results by both Degree Committees and the Board in October are unacceptably high. Of the options for relieving the pressure, the Board agreed that

- it would be possible to consider PhD results outside these main meetings, in short meetings to be arranged according to demand (including August and September if needed) and that this could be immediately;
- rescheduling the BGS meetings for later in the week before the Congregation would not make a significant difference;
- that it would be very helpful if the calendar of Congregations from 2008 onwards could be reviewed to give a little more time before the first Congregation in October and possibly to reschedule those later in the term.

1124 Proposal for a new MSt Degree in Social Enterprise and Community Development and suppression of the MSt in Community Enterprise

(Paper 2592 refers)

The Board agreed that the Degree Committee had met their concerns about governance by establishing a Joint Academic Degree Sub-Committee.

1125 MPhil provision in the Centre for International Studies
(Paper 2584 refers)

The proposal for a comprehensive suite of masters degrees and a Certificate of Postgraduate Studies covering, as flexibly as possible, the options of professional development and research preparation was felt to be over-complicated and concern was expressed about how candidates (and their sponsors) could be sure which options they were being offered at admission. The Degree Committee should be asked to confirm whether all the proposed options were necessary.

1126 Proposal for a new MPhil in Land Economy Research and suppression of the MPhil in Land Economy (Option B)
(Papers 2440, 2590 & 2591 refer)

The Board noted that, for other courses drawing on the Joint Schools Training programme, the contribution of the training is generally 25% or less of the total requirement for the degree. The Degree Committee for Land Economy should therefore be encouraged to adjust the balance of the new course to increase the specialist options and reduce reliance on the JSSS.