



**MEETING OF THE FACULTY BOARDS OF EXAMINERS (UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE) IN ARTS AND HUMANITIES
And SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL SCIENCES**

Tuesday 22 January 2013

MINUTES

Chair: Professor Jonathan Wolff, Dean of Arts and Humanities

Present:

Mrs Vanda Broughton	Information Studies
Prof Susan Collins	Slade School of Fine Art
Dr Jason Davies	Centre for Advancement of Learning and Teaching
Dr Lee Grieveson	Centre for Intercultural Studies
Dr Nick Gonis	Greek and Latin
Prof Jonathan Holmes	Geography
Dr Lily Kahn	Hebrew and Jewish Studies
Prof Robert Lumley	School of European Languages, Culture and Society
Mrs Helen Matthews	Joint Faculty Academic Administration Manager
Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia	Political Science
Prof Kevin Middlebrook	Institute of the Americas
Prof Ian Preston	Economics
Prof Stephen Price	Chemistry (Arts and Sciences)
Dr Peter Schröder	European Social and Political Studies (ESPS)
Dr Antonio Sennis	History
Dr Christophe Soligo	Anthropology
Dr Alison Wright	History of Art

Apologies for absence were received from Prof John Dickie, Dr Arne Hofmann and Dr Colin Provost.

12 MEMBERSHIP

Noted

- 12.1. Professor Stephen Price had been appointed as Chair of the Board of Examiners for the Bachelor of Arts and Sciences (BASc) programme.

13 MINUTES

Approved

- 13.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2012 were confirmed as a correct record.

14 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Minute 2.1 Assistant Internal Examiners

Noted

14.1. It was reported that the role of Assistant Internal Examiners would be considered further by UCL Board of Examiners in the light of varying practice in different Faculties.

Minute 3.9 Take-Home Papers and Coursework Deadlines in Term 3

Noted

14.2. Following the discussion at the previous meeting regarding the difficulties of scheduling take-home papers around unseen examinations, the Joint Faculty Academic Administration Manager had consulted the Registry about the regulatory constraints. It was noted that as there was no formal specification of the duration of take-home papers or prohibition on coursework deadlines in the third term, there was some flexibility to set a take-home paper with a relatively long duration or a summative coursework exercise in the third term where appropriate.

Minute 4: Academic Regulations and Penalties for Over-Length Work

Noted

14.3. It was noted that following representations by UCLU representatives, Education Committee had agreed that the new version of the regulation relating to penalties for over-length work, which removed the 10% leeway before penalties for exceeding the word count were applied (undergraduate regulation 3.1.7 and postgraduate taught regulation 3.1.8), would not come into effect until January 2013.

14.4. Concern was expressed about the late publication of the 2012/13 regulations after departmental handbooks had been finalised which had led to this problem, and about the way in which the subsequent suspension of the regulation had been publicised via an email from the UCLU representative.

Minute 5: PORTICO and Award Calculation

Noted

14.5. It was noted that a check had identified some apparent anomalies in the PORTICO award rules for some four year programmes in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities, which were being investigated.

Minute 11.2: Extenuating Circumstances

Noted

14.6. It was noted that UCL was considering adopting elements of the arrangements operated by the School of Pharmacy, and that changes to the UCL extenuating circumstances policy were therefore likely in future.

15 CONDUCT OF FINAL MEETINGS OF GRADUATE BOARDS OF EXAMINERS IN OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2012

Received

- 15.1. The Board received an oral report from the Joint Faculty Academic Administration Manager on the conduct of the graduate boards of examiners, including general issues raised by External Examiners and Faculty Representatives at Board meetings.

Noted

- 15.2. Common issues that had arisen included the operation of borderline criteria and extenuating circumstances cases. Boards were reminded that consideration of extenuating circumstances need not be restricted to candidates who met the standard borderline criteria.
- 15.3. It was noted that some boards within the Department of Information Studies had not classified candidates anonymously, and that action had been taken to ensure that these boards complied with regulations in future.

16 DRAFT REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE JOINT FACULTY BOARD OF EXAMINERS ON THE EXAMINATION PROCESS FOR THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2011/12

Noted

- 16.1. The Board received the Chair's draft report on the examination process for 2011/12.

Discussed

- 12.1. Common issues that arose from the reports included timetabling problems and their effects on timescales for marking and moderation; the operation of the Merit award for Masters' programmes; moderation procedures and comparability of marks across disciplines.
- 12.2. It was noted that not all Chairs had used the proforma provided for their reports, which made the compilation of the Faculty report more difficult. Some had provided considerably more detail than was actually required. Chairs were reminded that reports should not identify individual students.

13 CALCULATION OF WORD COUNTS FOR ASSESSED WORK

Noted

- 13.1. Following the discussion of this matter at the previous meeting of the Board (minute 4.2 refers) further investigation of the calculation of word counts by different software had been undertaken, and it had been ascertained that different totals could be obtained for the same piece of work, even in different versions of the same software package.
- 13.2. It was further noted that regulations stated that for discipline specific practices such as bibliographies, tables, pictures and graphs, departments should specify in writing to students whether these were included as part of the upper word limit and how this would be counted.

Discussed

13.3. It was noted that some disciplines, including Chemistry, set assessment length in terms of the number of pages with specified margins, font and point size. It was further noted that departmental conventions on referencing style (notes or author/date) had implications for overall word length.

Agreed

13.4. It was agreed that a Faculty-wide framework for the calculation of word counts was not feasible. Departments should provide clear guidance to students on what should be included in the word count and should use common sense in the application of penalties.

14 USE OF PORTICO REPORTS

Noted

14.1. UCL Board of Examiners had requested feedback on the use of PORTICO reports by Boards of Examiners. A brief survey of Boards in both Faculties had accordingly been undertaken. It was noted that whilst use of the A12 Finalists' Report was widespread, there was currently no report that met the needs of Masters Boards.

14.2. Chairs of Boards were asked to submit any further comments to the Faculty Academic Administration Manager by 31 January.

15 MATTERS CONSIDERED BY UCL BOARD OF EXAMINERS

Noted

15.1. The Board received an oral report on matters considered by the UCL Board of Examiners.

15.2. It was noted that a Working Group had been established to review issues relating to the current examination timetable software, formal examination accommodation and central resources availability.

15.3. Chairs of Masters Boards were reminded that the requirement of 65 in the research project for a merit should be defined and made available to students and staff and should be applied to the marking process.

15.4. It was noted that the rates payable for travel, hotels and subsistence of external examiners were being reviewed.

15.5. It was noted that work of the Grade Point Average Working Group was progressing and the group would be meeting again on 25 January.

16 APPLICATIONS FOR SUSPENSION OF REGULATIONS

Noted

16.1. It was noted that applications for suspension of regulations should be routed via the Joint Faculty Office.

17 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS

Regulations for Boards of Examiners

Noted

18 It was noted that the Regulations for Boards of Examiners 2012/13 had now been published online at www.ucl.ac.uk/ras/examiners.

Distribution: Joint Faculty Board of Examiners; Secretary, UCL Board of Examiners