

# **Council for College and University English Minutes of the OGM Business Meeting**

HELD 9<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2006  
AT THE INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY,  
SENATE HOUSE, LONDON

The Chair, Professor Greg Walker, welcomed members to the Business Meeting.

## **1. Minutes of the 2006 Annual General Meeting, April 2006**

These were accepted as a correct record and approved by the meeting.

## **2. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising not covered under other headings below.

## **3. Chair's Report**

(i) **The Executive.** GW reported that the Executive had met twice since the AGM in April and had in addition conducted a number of electronic discussions over various issues. It had responded on behalf of the community to a number of documents and consultations.

(a) *The QAA English Subject Benchmarking Revision Group*, convened by BK and involving EJ, GW and SZ, met to draft minor revisions to the English benchmarking statement. The principal aims were to remove any redundant material, to simplify and streamline the existing text and to add material that took account of the fact that Creative Writing is now a significant part of English studies in many institutions. The document was posted on the QAA website and comments were sought from the community. The Revision Group was to meet shortly to discuss these responses, respond to them, and draft a revised document which will also appear on the QAA website.

(b) *The ERIH Journal Ranking Exercise*: In keeping with other subject associations, having sought and collated responses from the community, CCUE drafted a response to the Journal Ranking exercise indicating that both the rankings and the process of their compilation had been deeply flawed and offering assistance should the European Science Foundation decide to rethink the exercise from first principles. GW noted that although he had had no direct response from ESF, the AHRC and other bodies are now acknowledging the 'ill conceived' nature of the ERIH exercise and promising that it will form no part of any future metrics exercise attached to the RAE.

(c) *The RAE and Metrics Consultation*: Following another consultation with the community, CCUE drafted a robust formal response to the HEFCE proposals for the greater use of metrics in future research assessments. The text can be consulted on the CCUE website ([www.CCUE.ac.uk](http://www.CCUE.ac.uk)). Thanks to the good offices

of Peter Kitson, we have maintained close contact with the English Association throughout this exercise, and have been able to present a response from across the subject community and from a wide range of stakeholders to the proposed metrics-led RAE model. The AHRC held a discussion day on metrics for Subject Association representatives and a subsequent HEFCE/AHRC away-day at Warwick in July which GW and others attended. Despite the AHRC's advocacy of 'metrics mediated by peer review' as the preferred option, there was a strong consensus among the subject associations present that this was not acceptable, and that peer review should remain the central element in any future RAE. Subject Association chairs kept in touch after the meetings, and have shared their various responses to the HEFCE Consultation exercise, all of which have again spoken firmly for the retention of a strong element of peer review in any future system. It was noted that it was also crucial that 'peer review' should continue to operate at the level of subject expertise rather than being delegated to academics in related disciplines. GW had also written to the AHRC to express concern about the manner in which the 'Expert Group' on metrics in the arts had been constituted without prior consultation with relevant bodies such as CCUE and the English Association.

*(d) AHRC Consultation on Postgraduate Funding:* The responses to the consultation of the community had been mixed but CCUE had again responded as clearly as possible, reflecting both the advantages and disadvantages implicit in the proposals. The text of the response is posted on the website.

*(e) AHRC Strategic Plan:* The CCUE Executive had also responded to the AHRC's consultation over its strategic plan, and the various aims and strategic statements set out there. Particular concern was expressed over the increasing emphasis of the AHRC on 'strategic' rather than 'response mode' funding for research, and the potential effects of this on individual researchers working in smaller departments or units.

*(f) AHRC Strategic Resource Enhancement Consultation:* There had been a limited number of responses to our consultation of HoDs, but these had been collated and forwarded to the AHRC. A copy is on the website.

*(g) QCA Consultation on the A-Level Dissertation Project:* VJ drew our attention to the on-line consultation, and GW responded on CCUE's behalf, offering a cautious welcome for the additional opportunities for sustained research work that the dissertation project seemed to offer.

*(h) A Research Information Network/J-Stor consultation* about the future of e-archives was attended by VG.

*(i) The QCA Teaching English* event in London was attended on CCUE's behalf by BK.

## **(ii) ESSE**

A number of Executive members attended the very successful ESSE conference in London, hosted by the Institute of English Studies in association with CCUE. Congratulations were offered to Professor Warwick Gould on the successful running of this event, and to Professor Fernando Galván of the Universidad de Alcalá, Madrid, who was elected President of ESSE in succession to Professor Ado Haberer.

**(iii) CCUE News**

GW reported that the next issue of *CCUE News* would be the last under the editorship of Chris Ringrose, who was standing down after many years of service. GW wished warmly to thank CR for his excellent work in producing a journal of consistently high quality and high interest for the community, and for distributing it so efficiently, especially during the transition from print to electronic copy. A successor had been suggested, and CR had kindly agreed to brief the new team fully and be available for consultation on the early stages of their work.

**(iv) The CCUE website** continued to grow and prosper, and GW thanked Paul Vetch, of the Humanities Computing Centre, KCL, for his good humoured, speedy and efficient service as CCUE webmaster.

**(v) The CCUE AGM: AGM 2007 at St. Anne's College: 20-21 April, 2007**

GW reported that both Ros Ballaster and Cora Kaplan had agreed to give Guest Lectures at the AGM, which would also include panels on the RAE, on 'Teaching Language' and on 'Developing Early Career Researchers'.

**4. Treasurer's Report**

CH reported on LiP's behalf that finances continued to remain in a healthy state, with a balance of £5346.64 currently in the CCUE account and further subscriptions to come in. LiP saw no reason to request the membership to consider a rise in the subscription, which currently stands at £80 per institution per annum.

**5. AOB**

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 4.45.

*Clare Hanson, Secretary, 15/01/07*