

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

HELD 29 MARCH 2008
AT JOHN FOSTER HALL, UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

The Chair, Greg Walker (Edinburgh), welcomed delegates to the business meeting.

1. Apologies for Absence: Apologies were received from Professor Fernando Galván (President of ESSE), Linda Anderson, Chris Christie, Elspeth Graham, Lis Jay and Vivien Jones.

2. Minutes of the 2007 OGM, 1 December 2007

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

3. Chair's Annual Report

GW reported that in the period since the last AGM in April 2007 the Executive had been busy responding to various consultation documents and initiatives on behalf of the Subject Community. We attended a meeting with Philip Essler and his colleagues at the AHRC in Bristol and sought nominations from CCUE Representatives and HoDs for potential members for their Research and PG panels and the Peer Review College. GW also attended, with Peter Kitson of the EA, a consultation meeting in Edinburgh at which Alicea Greated and Tony McEnery (the outgoing director of research and a familiar guest at CCUE events) outlined the current thinking regarding the planned strategic reorganisation of the AHRC's panel structure.

In a separate consultation, we were happy, again in consultation with the EA, to endorse the suggestion that two further members be appointed to the RAE sub-panel for English, Professors Robert Hampson and Ed Larrissy to help to deal with the massive reading load facing the sub-panellists, and to support the addition of one further member, Prof. Fiona Robertson, to replace a member who had to withdraw for personal reasons.

We consulted widely on the principles and detail of the proposed ERIH Journal ranking exercise, and submitted a highly detailed and deeply critical response to the proposals. The English list was supposed to have been published in October 2007, but so far has not appeared. In the context of proposals for metrics, this is an issue on which we will have to keep a long watching brief. We were also invited by the ESF, via the AHRC, to nominate an individual who could act as a point of contact and 'specialist advisor' for the UK English community in discussions with the ESF over the lists. After some discussion with the EA over whether we should become involved at all, we nominated Professor Elisabeth Jay, the CCUE ESSE Rep to act as a critical voice and point of contact between the community and the ESF. So far neither we nor she have heard anything further from

either the ESF or AHRC. We also submitted a critical response to the AHRC's proposal for Block Grant Partnerships for Postgraduate Funding, raising a number of concerns about the implications of the proposal for a variety of different kinds of institutions who seem, prima facie, to be likely to lose out under the two-tier scheme proposed. Again, we shall watch and monitor developments.

Last, but definitely not least, we consulted widely among the subject community and submitted a lengthy and very critical response to the HEFCE consultation document over reforms to the RAE process, and specifically to the suggestion that the new REF exercise will involve a 'light touch' peer review mechanism using a wider range of metrics for Arts and Humanities subjects. The proposal, it seemed to us, was neither light touch nor using the term 'peer review' in a sense that we recognised. We shall keep our eyes peeled for future developments.

All of these documents can be found on the CCUE websites in the section headed 'documents'.

Finally, this being the end of his two-year term as Chair of CCUE, GW thanked those members of the Executive who had made his term so positive an experience. It had been a privilege and a pleasure to serve CCUE over this time, and to thank colleagues for their support and patience over the years. In particular GW mentioned his predecessors Lis Jay and Rick Rylance, who had been the source of much sound advice in the last two years, Sharon Ouditt, the tireless Executive Secretary who is stepping down after many years service to the Exec, and Sue Zlosnik who has stepped in to take over the difficult and demanding job of Treasurer; also Marcus Walsh who had been a hugely supportive Deputy Chair and will be our ESSE representative in the coming period, Ruth Robbins who has taken over as *CCUE News* editor, Ben Knights who had been an ever-present source of good counsel and advice from the Subject Centre, and all the other members of the Executive, including Peter Kitson, who has been instrumental in facilitating the new links between CCUE and the EA. Final thanks to Clare Hanson, who had been CCUE Secretary for the past two years and had been the Secretary without whom no Chair could survive. It was down to her labours that this AGM, like the last, had taken place so efficiently.

Finally, a note for your diaries: **the CCUE OGM 2008** will be held at The IES in Senate House on Saturday 6th December 2008

5. Report from ESSE

Marcus Walsh, as noted above, would be taking over the role of ESSE representative. Delegates were reminded that the next ESSE conference was taking place in Aarhus this summer, and that the 2010 conference would be held in Turin. Colleagues were urged to publicise the activities of ESSE and to emphasise the benefits which European contacts and collaborations offered for the future.

6. Treasurer's Report

SZ reported that CCUE finances were in good shape, with an operating balance of £9553.91. Although delays in payment always gave a somewhat distorted picture, subscriptions were coming in steadily. Delegates were urged to prompt finance officers in their own institutions if there were serious delays. The new mechanism for managing ESSE subscriptions was working reasonably smoothly and was clearly increasing ESSE membership.

7. The English Subject Centre Report

Ben Knights (Director of the English Subject Centre) reported that although a good deal of energy had been devoted to ensuring the survival of the ESC, this had not, he hoped, been detrimental to the real work of the Subject Centre, which continued to range across the various strands of HE English being taught in many different institutional contexts, including FE colleges. He stressed the multiple forms of activity the Subject Centre was engaged in, including **projects** such as 'Embedding e-learning by the use of e-advocates' and **events** such as 'Responsive Critical Understanding'. The Subject Centre also continued to organise important networking and training events such as the very successful annual event for New Lecturers. The ESC's continuing list of publications now included the sixth title in Palgrave's 'Teaching the New English' series, *Teaching Holocaust Literature and Film*, eds Robert Eaglestone and Barry Langford and reports such as Andrew Green's recent *Teaching the Teachers*. Current pedagogic research included research in 'Active Reading', and a project which explores students' experience of studying in specific environments. BK concluded his report with an upbeat assessment of the health and diversity of English as a discipline. However, there were dangers in diversity, particularly institutional diversity, and it was important to engage actively with the changing shape of teaching, learning and reading in the 21st century.

8. Arrangements for a Ballot to Elect Members of the Executive

CH reported that there had been 7 nominations this year for 7 places on the Executive and that there would be no need for an election. The following were thus deemed to have been elected to the Executive for a term of two years: Dr Deborah Cartmell, Dr David Duff, Dr Faye Hammill, Prof Clare Hanson, Dr Ashley Tauchert, Dr Susan Watkins, Prof Nahem Yousaf.

9. AOB

The assembled delegates thanked Greg Walker enthusiastically for all his excellent work for CCUE over many years but especially during his term of office as CCUE Chair. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 2.50.

Clare Hanson
Secretary, 14 April 2008