

# Council for College and University English

## Minutes of the AGM Business Meeting

HELD 22 APRIL, 2005  
AT ST ANNE'S COLLEGE, OXFORD

The Chair, Elisabeth Jay (Oxford Brookes), welcomed delegates to the business meeting.

1. **Apologies for Absence:** Apologies were received from Linda Anderson, Ron Carter, Vivien Jones, and Brian Maidment.
2. **Minutes of the 2004 OGM, 11 December 2004**  
The minutes were accepted as a correct record and approved by the meeting.
3. **Matters Arising**  
EJ reported that there were no points for action noted in the minutes and no matters arising to report other than those covered under other headings below.
4. **Chair's Annual Report**  
EJ noted that. *CCUE News* had for the first time been electronically distributed. Mindful of the increasing costs of producing and circulating a paper-based copy the Executive had asked Chris Ringrose to try this new format. One obvious advantage of electronic publication is that it can reach all members of a department individually. The *ESSE Messenger* is still paper-based, but Linden Peach (Gloucestershire), the CCUE Treasurer, and Lachlan Mackenzie, ESSE's Treasurer, have been compiling more sophisticated databases to try to ensure that it too reaches everyone that it should. EJ also mentioned that we have identified a postgraduate student who is happy to update and reorganise the CCUE website so that it can accommodate new features such as the archive of *CCUE News*. She took the opportunity to thank Robert Clark of the University of East Anglia for the work he has put into the website over the years both as a member of the Executive and subsequent to his stepping down.

The need to communicate with our potential membership nationwide over CCUE recommendations for the RAE sub-panel provided a timely opportunity to remind departments of CCUE's previous achievements and mission: the attendance at this year's OGM and AGM suggested that at the very least the agenda have been addressing perceived needs. Responding on the subject community's behalf to the invitation to comment on RAE panel configuration and recruitment was the first task this year's Executive undertook, and we were pleased by the eventual decision to change the grouping in which the English sub-panel found itself. The presentation earlier in the AGM from the Chair (Rick Rylance) and Assistant Chair (Susan Manning) of the English sub-panel and Ed Hughes, the RAE Manager, had revealed how successful CCUE had been in arguing for a widely-drawn, large sub-panel capable of responding to the breadth of the discipline, and the extent to which our appeal

for transparent mechanisms for discussion between panels and sub-panels and cross-referencing between the various sub-panels had been heeded. EJ thanked Greg Walker (Leicester) for coordinating the consultation process. It was encouraging to note that the eventual membership of the sub-panel bore a strong correlation to the recommendations from CCUE and the EA.

The Executive had also responded on behalf of the subject community to two consultation documents during the year: 'Towards a Framework of Professional Teaching Standards', in which we argued for a supportive rather than a regulatory system; and the AHRB's request for proposals for identifying areas for future Strategic Programmes. For a number of reasons that would bear serious discussion there were fewer responses to this than might have been expected and EJ had reported a concern to the AHRB that English as a discipline had perhaps not felt itself to be positioned at the forefront of the last two themes. She had also responded on CCUE's behalf to a peer review carried out by Sir Martin Harris for HEFCE as to whether the work of the various Institutes of the School of Advanced Study, University of London merited a continuation of their funding. In this connection she reminded the membership that CCUE has accepted an invitation to take part the advisory board being set up in connection with the successful collaborative bid by the Institute for English Studies and other universities and centres for a role in the AHRB-funded research training scheme. CCUE will also be working in partnership with the IES in the forward planning for the next ESSE conference to be held in Senate House (29<sup>th</sup> August-2<sup>nd</sup> September 2006).

Meanwhile the Executive continues to represent CCUE's interests on other external bodies. Our close relationship with the English Subject Centre is maintained partly through CCUE representation on the Advisory Board, and partly by its Director, Ben Knights, who keeps the Executive regularly informed on developments in the QCA's thinking or the fate of the Tomlinson report and how government initiatives might impact upon teaching needs in higher education. We continue also to participate in the Common English Forum (an informal grouping in which CCUE, the EA, and NATE (The National Association of Teachers of English) can discuss common interests. The next consultative exercise the Executive will face is the QAA's forthcoming engagement with subject associations over revision to subject benchmarks. We will be given three months to respond. Two obvious areas for debate in English will be the place of Creative Writing and the need to pay particular attention to the combined honours route in English Studies.

EJ formally thanked the members of the Executive who have responded swiftly and helpfully to rounds of electronic consultation and made meetings both enjoyable and useful. She remarked that it was enormously helpful to have an Executive that represented a range of institutions, regions, and disciplinary expertise. In this context she asked the meeting to note Rick Rylance's decision to stand down from the Executive this year. He has served CCUE and its concerns in various capacities, not least as Chair for a period of three years, but now feels that his role as Chair of the RAE sub-panel must take precedence. She thanked Rick for all his work for CCUE over the years.

She also thanked Philip Martin, her predecessor as CCUE Chair, who had also decided to stand down from the Executive this year for his work for CCUE over the years. Thanks were also recorded to Professor Joanne Shattock of the University of Leicester, who had carried out this year's independent evaluation of the ESC and offered a ringing endorsement of its activities; and to Greg Walker, the CCUE Secretary, for his work in coordinating the various activities through the year, and to Linden Peach (Gloucestershire), the long-standing CCUE Treasurer, for his persistent and successful efforts to cajole, badger and persuade members into prompting their Finance departments to send departmental subscriptions. EJ also recorded the Executive's gratitude to Sharon Ouditt, the Assistant Secretary, for rounding us up for meetings and taking the minutes of Executive meetings, and the Vice Chair, Marcus Walsh, who not only chaired the first meeting with the new manager of the RAE but helpfully shared his further thoughts on this encounter with us in *CCUE News*

Finally EJ recorded CCUE's gratitude to the Oxford English Faculty for once again hosting the pre-dinner reception at the AGM. Mention of the Oxford English faculty also presented her with the opportunity to thank Vincent Gillespie for the work he has done in liaising with St. Anne's and smoothing CCUE's path for our annual gathering this year as in previous years. Vincent has moved to Lady Margaret Hall, but his knowledge of the behind-the-scenes arrangements and best menus at St. Anne's remains second to none.

#### **5. Report from ESSE**

EJ noted that, given that Lachlan Mackenzie would be addressing the meeting on Saturday morning, she would keep her comments brief. There has not been an ESSE executive meeting since the OGM, but there will be one in Poland in the summer. EJ will be attending and will present a report to the OGM in December 2005. She also reminded colleagues of the forthcoming ESSE conference to be held in London, co-sponsored by the IES and CCUE, and encouraged everyone to attend.

#### **6. Treasurer's Annual Report**

LiP reported that the level of subscriptions had improved markedly since his report to the OGM in December. At that point only 33 subscriptions had been received. The current figure was 71, including one new affiliated HEI, NEWI, whom he formally welcomed to CCUE. 61 of these Departments had also subscribed to ESSE, although only around half of these had ordered their full allocation of *Messengers*. He had thus forwarded a cheque for c.£3,000 to ESSE. Subscriptions were still trickling in, some of which seem to have taken a considerable time to be processed by institutional finance departments. LiP asked colleagues to try to hurry their financial officers wherever possible to ensure payment was processed within a reasonable timeframe. The current balance was £7,200, which would allow the continued subsidisation of events such as the OGM and AGM (where necessary), and the activities of members of the Executive in attending Executive meetings, representing the subject community at meetings of other bodies, etc. He noted that a full account of these activities would be posted on the website in due course, and thanked delegates for their support during the past year.

## **7. The English Subject Centre Report**

Ben Knights (Royal Holloway/Director of the ESC) noted that, given that there was a full account of ESC activities on the ESC website, he would not present a long and detailed report to the meeting. However he did wish to highlight a few significant events. He noted that the renegotiation of contracts between the SCs and their host HEIs was proceeding apace. A formal 'letter of intent' had arrived and funding was now secure until July 2009. The ESC continued to promote and generate a wide range of activities and to liaise with bodies across the sector, developing its role in enabling the community to develop and articulate its pedagogic understanding. The ESC website had been substantially redesigned and had been up and running since February. Paper copies of the ESC Newsletter and of the various reports produced by the Centre were also distributed to Departments across the sector. He asked colleagues to contact Jane Gawthrop if they had not seen these documents. He drew attention to two new reports, *Living Writers in the Curriculum*, written by Andrew Maunder, and *Four Perspectives on Transition*, a study of the transfer from Curriculum 2000 to HE. The first volumes in the *Teaching New English* series, to be published by Palgrave, were now also going into production.

The Higher Education Academy (HEA) had now taken over responsibility for the accreditation of programmes formerly funded by the ILTHE. This means that Subject centres can now potentially have more to do with the ways in which training reaches new lecturers, etc. BK drew attention to the ongoing programme of activities for new lecturers outlined on the ESC website, including a conference for new lecturers to be held in June. He reminded colleagues that it was still not too late to apply for the next round of departmental project funding, although the deadline for submissions was 6 May.

## **8. Arrangement for a Ballot to Elect Members of the Executive**

GW announced that, as a result of the terms of office of a number of current members coming to an end and the stepping down of RR and PM, there were six spaces on the Executive to be filled. Eleven nominations had been received. There would therefore need to be an election to determine who should fill those positions. In the event the following individuals were elected by ballot: Vincent Gillespie, Vivien Jones, Susan Manning, Sharon Ouditt, Lyn Pykett, and Sue Zlosnik.

## **9. AOB**

### **(i) CCUE News**

Chris Ringrose (UC Northampton) reported that the latest issue of *CCUE News* had been distributed as a pdf file to HoDs or CCUE contacts in all departments of English in the UK. This was an ad hoc expedient undertaken to ensure that the journal could be distributed relatively swiftly while the website was being constructed. Adobe Acrobat 4.0 or above was necessary for reading the text. If colleagues did not have this software, they could contact CR and he could despatch a Word copy with little difficulty. He asked colleagues to indicate

whether they had received copies, and a small number indicated that they had not. He agreed to talk to them individually to see where the problem lay. It was suggested from the floor that colleagues with dial-up internet connections at home faced significant problems dealing with so large a pdf file, and CR noted that the intention in future would be to post the newsletter on a secure section of the CCUE website, and send only the relevant link in e-mails to subscribing departments.

EJ thanked CR for masterminding the logistics of the transition to electronic publication so ably.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 5.30.

*Greg Walker, Secretary, 24/04/2005*