

COUNCIL FOR COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY ENGLISH

Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting

St Anne's College, Oxford
Saturday 7 May 2011 at 3pm

Present: Linda Anderson, Scott Brewster, Susan Bruce, Deborah Cartmell, Claire Connolly, Fiona Douglas, David Duff, Faye Hammill, Jan Jedrzejewski, Peter Kitson, John Lyon, Gail Marshall, Angelique Richardson, Helen Small, Marcus Walsh, Greg Walker, Nahem Yousaf.

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Elspeth Graham and Peter Middleton.

2. Minutes of the Executive Committee of 3 December 2010

The minutes were accepted as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Composition of Executive: Election of New Officers

Linda Anderson stepped down as Chair, but remains as a member of the Executive for a further year. Susan Watkins, having stepped down from her role as Assistant Secretary and as a member of the Executive, was not present. David Duff was elected as the new Chair, Deborah Cartmell as the new Secretary, and Fiona Douglas as the new Assistant Secretary. Susan Bruce was welcomed onto the Executive as a new member, having been elected at the Business Meeting.

Subsequent discussion recommended that CCUE's Constitution be revisited. This was advisable given the imminent closure of the English Subject Centre, and any future role CCUE might want to play in carrying on some of its work. It would also be a good opportunity to consider the need for new or reinstated roles (e.g. website officer, press officer, conference & meetings liaison officer), and to re-examine and perhaps redefine some of the grey areas around terms of office, types of office-holder, regional representation, election procedures, postgraduate membership etc. Any proposed changes to the Constitution have to be notified to all members 6 weeks in advance of the AGM and require a two-thirds majority. It was agreed that Executive members would be asked to comment on the Constitution as currently worded (<http://www.ccue.ac.uk/about/constitution.html>). Draft amendments would then be discussed at the next meeting of the Executive.

It was suggested that CCUE should consider applying for charitable status, which might enable subs to be gift-aided, or confer other benefits.

ACTION: DC to investigate procedures for charitable status and to report back to the Executive.

5. Matters to Report from the Chair

- (i) Linda Anderson was warmly thanked for her efforts and achievements as Chair.
- (ii) The AGM had been well attended (c. 67 delegates, in line with previous years). There had been a noticeable increase in the numbers of people staying on for the Business Meeting, and a good relationship with the membership was evident – possibly galvanised by the Willetts letter – which was something to build on and maintain. Last OGM had

- been very well attended (80+), a third year of increase. Surplus from the OGM had in effect been used to subsidise the AGM, which tended to run at a slight loss.
- (iii) New climate in HE underlines necessity of ensuring CCUE is representing the different parts of the sector and UK in Executive and general membership. Also worth rethinking CCUE's relationship with other organisations (e.g. the English Association, the British Academy) to ensure cross-representation.
 - (iv) CCUE was founded in 1993, so could mark the 20 year anniversary in 2013.

6. Treasurer's Report

There was nothing further to report that wasn't covered in the Business Meeting.

7. ESSE

There was nothing further to report that wasn't covered in the Business Meeting.

8. OGM 2011

- (i) The date for the OGM was agreed as Saturday 3 December 2011 (with the Executive meeting and dinner the night before). Possibility of using British Academy premises for OGM.
- (ii) It was agreed to invite as prospective speakers Rick Rylance (in his AHRC and RCUK capacities) and Adrian Smith (who was preparing a report on postgraduate funding and had previously written the influential report *One Step Beyond: Making the Most of Postgraduate Education*).
- (iii) The two panels would provisionally be on the following subjects:
 - Reviewing (literary, academic, division between academic writers and reviewers etc) – to be organised by FH. The following were suggested as speakers on this panel: editors from *TLS* or *LRB*, *Independent*, *academe* (e.g. Stefan Collini, John Mullan, Boyd Tonkin).
 - Biography – to be organised by DD. Suggested speakers included Alison Light, Richard Bradford, Richard Holmes and Hermione Lee.
- (iv) Announcement of 2011 CCUE Book Prize winner.
- (v) The OGM would conclude as usual with the Business Meeting.

ACTION: DD/DC to investigate possibility of using British Academy premises.

ACTION: DD to send out rules for 2011 Book Prize.

9. English Subject Centre

It was agreed that CCUE should make contact with the discipline lead from the HEA, and ask them to address next year's AGM. In the first instance, a small group from the Executive would meet with the new appointee during the summer.

In light of previous discussions, it was agreed that CCUE should try to continue the Subject Centre's Heads of Department Networking Day dovetailing with the AGM. It should also try to maintain the New Lecturer Training Day, currently held in November. One option would be to dovetail the latter with the OGM, since the two events could then be mutually reinforcing. It was agreed that some preliminary costings would be required, as these events would need to be self-financing once Subject Centre funding was removed. SB, DC, DD & PK agreed to help organise the New Lecturers event and to liaise with Ben Knights. The Institute for English Studies was proposed as a possible venue. PK said the English Association may be able to offer some conference organising templates and to provide some administrative support.

Discussions had also taken place about ways of maintaining the legacy of the Subject Centre website. PK reported that the English Association were hoping to link parts of the site to their

own. LA noted that plans were being explored for maintaining other parts of the website via the Centre for Computing in the Humanities at King's College London. CCUE could have a role in this though it was not in a position to offer technical or financial assistance. There was some possibility of receiving unused funding from the Subject Centre to help support the website. The final meeting of the ESC Advisory Board will be in July.

ACTION: Preliminary costings for running New Lecturer and Networking events to be obtained. SB, DC, DD & PK to help organise New Lecturers event.

ACTION: DD and LA to liaise with Subject Centre about possible transfer of funds to maintain website.

10. English Association

PK reported that the Higher Education Committee of the EA had sent its list of REF nominations to HEFCE. Members of the Committee had attended key events, including the British Academy meeting for the Learned Societies and Subject Associations for the Humanities and Social Sciences (27 October 2010); the Emergency General Meeting of the AHRC (4 February 2011) and the British Academy event 'The Value and Role of the Arts, Humanities and the Social Sciences' (1 March 2011) to mark the opening of the Academy's refurbished premises. The Committee has responded to the new consultation on the National Curriculum chiefly as regards the transition from school to university. The response was able to draw upon excellent reports published by the English Subject Centre concerning the transition to year 1 of university English. The Committee sent a letter of protest to Ed Vaisey, concerning the closure of local Libraries. The Committee, via the Board of Trustees of the Association is hoping to organise an event in the Autumn inviting the Minister for HE and welcomes the participation of the new Chair of CCUE. The British Academy has requested subject associations and learned societies respond to the consultation organised by the European Commission for the next framework programme, the Common Strategic Research Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding Innovation (20 May deadline). The Academy is concerned about the potential reduction in support for social sciences and humanities in the new CSF. The Association has been involved with CCUE concerning support for the Subject Centre as discussed earlier in the Agenda.

11. Regional Reports

Northern Ireland (JJ): Higher Education is a devolved responsibility but there has been no formal statement yet from the Executive or the Assembly, and it is still unclear whether there will be any continued funding for teaching in the Arts and Social Sciences (there have been rumours there might be some, given the underfunding of HE in NI compared to the rest of the UK, but these are unconfirmed), nor indeed whether there will be any changes to the fee regime. Universities have been told to expect a 14% overall funding cut over the next 4 years, frontloaded over the first two years (this is without taking into account inflation, which will make it more like a 22% cut over the next 4 years in real terms).

Scotland (GW): The SNP government upholds the principle of free education and has pledged not to introduce tuition fees or to reinstate any form of graduate tax over the term of the new parliament. Funding for arts and humanities teaching is thus set to continue, but universities have been told to plan for overall funding cuts in each of the next four years. It is unclear how the growing differential between income for Scottish universities and English universities will be addressed once the new fee regime is in place in England. The 4 year degree may come under pressure but at this stage no decisions have been taken.

Wales (CC): Thus far, the newly elected Assembly had not signalled any change to the previously announced policy whereby any increase in current tuition fee levels for Welsh domiciled students, whether they study in England, Wales, Scotland or Northern Ireland, will be met by the Welsh Assembly Government. The proposed changes to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales Publications Grant remained a source of concern to academics.

12. AOB

There was no other business. The meeting rose at 4.10pm.

Fiona Douglas (University of Leeds), Assistant Secretary.