

Council for College and University English**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING HELD 7 DECEMBER 2002 AT THE CLORE
MANAGEMENT CENTRE, BIRKBECK COLLEGE, TORRINGTON SQUARE, LONDON**

The Chair, Rick Rylance, welcomed members to the meeting.

1. Apologies:

Sally Ledger (Birkbeck), Tony Sharpe (Lancaster), Helen Taylor (Exeter), Bob Welch (Ulster).

2. Minutes of the AGM of 26-7 April 2002:

The minutes were accepted as a correct record.

3. Chair's oral report:

The Chair, Rick Rylance, reported that the Executive Committee had met three times since the AGM in April. His report is summarized as follows:

(i) Membership of the Executive. The Executive had used to the full its powers of co-option, adding three new members to the existing membership: Dr Urszula Clark (University of Wolverhampton), Dr Jan Jedrzejewski (Ulster), and Professor Lyn Pykett (University of Wales Aberystwyth). The co-options of Jan Jedrzejewski and Lyn Pykett reflect the interest of the Executive in broadening its representation from institutions across the UK (complementing Professor Susan Manning (University of Edinburgh)). Urszula Clark's co-option extends its representation of colleagues in the fields of linguistics and language. The Chair thanked all members of the Executive for their work, especially Vincent Gillespie (ESSE), Lis Jay (Assistant Secretary), Linden Peach (Treasurer), Michael Rossington (Secretary) and Judy Simons (ESC).

(ii) Research. (a) The Executive had responded to the invitation of the Research Assessment Review working group chaired by Gareth Roberts with a detailed document, copies of which were given to delegates at the meeting (a copy was subsequently posted on the CCUE website); (b) CCUE had been invited to send representatives to the AHRB Round Table on Languages and Literature, one of a series of regular meetings between subject communities and the AHRB, in January 2003; (c) CCUE representatives had been invited to attend all five AHRB research strategy seminars in 2002-3; (d) the meeting was reminded of the timetable of the RA review. The first stage of consultation under way, the second would take place in May 2003 with an announcement of the terms of the next Research Assessment Exercise in September. It is widely thought that the next RAE will take place in 2008. (After the Chair's report, a number of delegates recommended that the subject community take a stand in not falling in with pressure to use metrics exclusively in research assessment, and it was suggested that it would be of benefit to all if the Arts and Humanities community as a whole acted in concert on this issue.)

(iii) The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and Schools. (a) CCUE representatives had attended an event on National Curriculum Tests in English, and the possibility of a book of essays on Language and Literature, along the lines of *Literature in Context*, was being explored with QCA; (b) CCUE had agreed to distribute at the meeting a questionnaire designed by Keverne Smith (College of West Anglia) at his own initiative on how well their pre-HE experience prepared students for HE. Delegates were urged to respond.

(iv) Liaison with other organizations in HE. CCUE Executive members continued to play an active part in such bodies as the Council for University Deans in Arts and Humanities and ESSE. CCUE had responded to the invitation of the MHRA to submit nominations for membership of its Postgraduate Committee.

(v) English Subject Centre. The meeting was reminded of the partnership between CCUE and ESC in various activities such as the Teaching and Curriculum Survey. CCUE had organized the External Evaluation of the ESC in 2002-3 which resulted in a very positive report by the independent evaluator, Professor Marion Shaw.

(vi) Commissioned Research. the Chair suggested that a number of recent initiatives such as The British Academy's recently-announced review of the contributions of the arts and social sciences to the economy ('Creativity and the Economy') demanded detailed and informed responses based on research which the CCUE Executive could not be expected to conduct alone. The proposal that CCUE funds be used to commission such research was unanimously accepted by the meeting.

A number of other issues were reported as having been raised at Executive Meetings including relations between the study of Language and Literature, the subject community across the UK, English and the Departmental structure, and the public understanding of English.

4. The Subject Centre for English:

The Director, Professor Philip Martin, spoke to a written report of the Subject Centre's activities since May, a copy of which is available on the CCUE website. A number of points were highlighted:

- Colleagues were reminded of the importance of returning completed Curriculum and Teaching Survey forms as soon as possible.
- The Subject Centre website had been completely redesigned and now hosted a wide range of materials, resources, information, data, links and opportunities for discussion. Members were warmly encouraged to visit the site and use its resources (www.english.ltsn.ac.uk).
- A number of reports had been completed and would be published imminently on the website, with one or two hard copies being sent to every Department, depending on the size (of the latter).
- The meeting was reminded that the membership had mandated CCUE to arrange an international conference which is to be organized jointly with ESC. The conference title is 'The Condition of the Subject' and it will take place at the Institute for English Studies from 17-19 July 2003.

5. Treasurer's Report:

The Treasurer, Linden Peach, presented an interim report for the financial year 2002-3. The finances of CCUE were now in a healthier state with a current balance of £9000, largely a result of institutions responding promptly to requests for subscriptions to be paid in a timely manner. The Treasurer noted that administrative expenditure by the Council was low (£380.57), given the level of activity of the Executive Committee.

6. AOB:

The Chair alerted colleagues to the fact that the invitation to make bids to the second round of the Science Research Infrastructure Fund (SRIF II), expected to be announced soon, will not exclude Arts and Humanities.

Dr Michael Rossington,

Secretary,

18.i.03