8 MINUTES AND REPORT TO THE ACADEMIC BOARD

Noted

8.1 The minutes of the meeting of 25th October 2011, which were confirmed at the Academic Board on 16th November 2011 by the members of the Committee who were present.

8.2 Academic Board approved:

- The amendment of the Scheme of Membership of ABExCo to define a quorum of seven members in keeping with standard College practice.
- Proposed amendments to the criteria for academic promotion, to strengthen the criteria for excellence in teaching.
- Recommendations on facilitation of learning and teaching across three terms.
- The Strategy for Learning and Teaching Enhancement in principle.
- Terms and conditions for the issue of Confirmation of Acceptance for Studies.
- The revised Policy on Supervision of Dissertations by Taught Students.
- Amendment of the date by which the College will publish undergraduate degree awards made to students for 2011/12 to 20 July 2012.
- The revised Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study relating to Compensated Fails.
- The draft Institutional Audit Action Plan.
• The regulations for 2012 for the MSc / PG Dip Organisational Psychology & Human Resource Management offered by the College for the University of London International Programmes.

• Procedures for checks to be undertaken within Schools on research grant applications. There were several options for a checking procedure for Schools to choose from.

• The requirement to submit one hard copy and one electronic copy of successful research degree theses to the College, on the condition that supervisors would be warned of the timeline of the implementation of this well in advance to allow them to take the necessary actions to ensure compliance with copyright law.

• The Bloomsbury Colleges Studentships nomination procedure.

• The Break in Study procedure for Research Students.

• The amendment of the College’s Policy on Good Practice in Research to provide for final versions of outputs to be submitted to the College’s Institutional Repository.

9 MATTERS ARISING
Noted
Degree Awarding Powers

9.1 The assessment had concluded and the report of the QAA assessment team had been received. The report was positive and stated that Birkbeck was already discharging most of the functions required of a degree awarding institution. The final decision would be confirmed via QAA’s formal Committees and the Privy Council.

10 MASTERS REPORT
Noted

10.1 The College was about to launch its promise to students regarding student loans: that if they fulfilled the criteria to be awarded a loan then the College would not chase them for payment while the Student Loans Company processed their application.

10.2 Finance was clearly an issue that was of enormous importance to prospective students for 2012-13, demonstrated by the questions being asked at Open Evening and the large increase in visits to the finance pages of the College website compared with previous years.

11 TEACHING AND QUALITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE
Received

11.1 The report of the Teaching and Quality Enhancement Committee following its meeting on 18 January 2012 (X 2011 06).

Recommended for approval by Academic Board

11.2 The Strategy for Learning and Teaching Enhancement

11.3 The revised Regulations for Taught Programmes of Study relating to Concurrent Registration
11.4 The proposal to amend the policy for the Operation of Boards and Sub-Boards of Examiners

11.5 The proposal to amend the Mitigating Circumstances policy

11.6 The revised Break in Study Policy

11.7 The new programmes for 2012/13

11.8 The final report on the Quality Strategy 2009-2012

12 RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Received

12.1 The report of the Research Committee following its meeting on 19th January 2012 (X 2011 07)

Recommended for approval by Academic Board

12.2 The establishment of the Centre for Contemporary Literature

12.3 The establishment of the Birkbeck Institute of Film

12.4 The revised Code of Practice for Training and Research for Research Degrees

12.5 Revised Regulations for the Research Degrees of MPhil and PhD

12.6 Policy on Write Up / Examination Only Research Students

12.7 Policy and Procedure for the Registration of Mixed Mode Students

Noted

12.8 Research Committee had also forwarded the Research Students Sub-Committee’s recommendations on teaching education for research students. RSSC had recommended that all research students should be advised to take the College’s research student teaching education programme if they were interested in teaching at the College; and that Assistant Deans (subject) should be made aware of which students had taken the programme. Further to this, Research Committee noted that the teaching education programme: the Graduate Certificate in Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education, had received accreditation from the Higher Education Academy. Research Committee also proposed a definition of what constituted “teaching” for the purposes of these recommendations.

12.9 Having considered these proposals, ABExCo members agreed that they constituted a significant policy proposal on which the Schools should be consulted further before a decision was made.

Action

12.10 (LW/DP) Prepare a summary of this issue to circulate to Schools for further discussion.
13 STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND WIDENING PARTICIPATION COMMITTEE

Received

13.1 The Report of the Student Experience and Widening Participation Committee following its meeting on 31 January 2012 (X 2011 08)

Noted

13.2 Further contact would be made with the Student Loans Company to emphasis the importance of their frontline staff being aware of all the implications of the new system. For example, in the new system, Certificate of Higher Education students would be eligible for loans provided they met residency and non ELQ criteria, whereas the previous system had not extended to Certificates. SLC staff would need to be aware of this to advise enquirers accurately and there was a concern that this was not yet fully the case.

13.4 More students had so far responded to the National Student Survey than had done so at this point in the process last year.

14 CHAIR’S ACTION

Noted

14.1 Action taken by the Chair on behalf of the Academic Board to approve the Code of Practice on Free Speech (X 2011 09)