Summary

These are the unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Committee of 4 October 2011.

Recommended action

The Committee is asked to confirm these minutes.

Colin Higgins
January 2012
MINUTES OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE
4 October 2011

Present:
Professor Andrew Jones, Professor Patrick Hanafin, Professor John Kelly, Dr John Kraniauskas, Professor Esther Leslie, Professor Li Wei [Chair],

Apologies:
Professor Alex Poulavassilis, Dr Rick Cooper, Dean Pateman, Tami Peterson (Student Representative)

In attendance:
Robert Atkinson (Deputy Librarian), Paul Rigg (Library), Pauline Muya (Science School Manager), Trevor Pearce (Deputy Academic Registrar (Academic Services), Liz Francis (Head, Research Grants & Contracts), Colin Higgins (Research Student Unit)

1  MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF REFERENCE RC1 (2011/12)
Received:
1.1 The membership for the Committee for 2011/12, together with the terms of reference;

Noted:
(ii) That the Chair welcomed Professor Andrew Jones (Head, Geography, Environment and Development Studies) and Colin Higgins (Research Student Unit) to their first meeting of the Committee.

2  MINUTES RC2 (2011/12)
Confirmed:
2.1 The Committee confirmed the minutes of the meeting of 10 May 2011 with the following amendment:

“43.2 (i) that numbers of research grant applications made in 2010/11 had increased”

3  MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES RC3 (2011/12)
Received:
3.1 Details of matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 10 May 2011 not featured elsewhere on the agenda:

Noted:
3.2 (i) that provision of a workshop on the drafting of press releases would be referred to Business Relations for consideration;
(ii) that the Experts Database on the Birkbeck website was now live, with direct links available for prospective students to potential supervisors broken down by School, Department, area of expertise or name. Further development would be necessary to ensure sufficient distinction between supervisors.

4 REPORT TO THE ACADEMIC BOARD RC4 (2011/12)
Received:
4.1 the report to Academic Board of the meeting of 21 June 2011, including the recommendations which were endorsed by Academic Board.

Noted:
4.2 that the procedure for the allocation of replacement monies for the former Robert’s funds will be circulated to Directors of Graduate Studies in due course.

5 COLLEGE RESEARCH STRATEGY RC5 (2011/12)
Received:
5.1 the College Research Strategy 2010-2013

Noted:
5.2 that Human Resources had decided not to proceed with a Staff Survey to identify institutional barriers to attracting high quality staff to the College on the grounds that the survey was not focused enough.

Agreed
5.3 that the Human Resources department should be requested to undertake an alternative survey of academics to whom offers had been made, but had been rejected, to identify institutional barriers to attracting high quality staff to the College.

6 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK RC6 (2011/12)
Received:
6.1 An update on the College’s preparations for the Research Excellence Framework.

Noted:
6.2 (i) That a detailed review of the 2010 dry run will be carried out in January 2012.

(ii) that a draft of the College Code of Practice for the Selection of Staff for the REF, as required by HEFCE will be circulated for approval by the Committee prior to its publication by HEFCE by July 2012.

7 RESEARCH CENTERS

COLLEGE GUIDELINES RC7 (2011/12)
Received and noted:
8.1 (i) the guidelines circulated to the Committee before for the approval of new Research Centres within the College.
CENTRE FOR RELIGION & CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY RC8 (2011/12)
Received:
8.2 A proposal for approval in principle for a relaunch of the Centre for Religion &
Contemporary Society.

Agreed:
8.3 the Committee approved the proposal for the re-launch of the Centre for Religion
and Contemporary Society in principle subject to further details on the management
structure and proposed activities of the Centre.

9 RESEARCH CENTRE REVIEW RC9 (2011/12)
Received:
9.1 An update report on research centres of the College

Noted:
9.2 that Birkbeck Interdisciplinary & Gender Studies had been very active and had run a
number of well attended seminars and published books in 2011/12.

9.3 that the Centre for Contemporary Theatre had also been very active in 2010/11 and
had run well attended activities.

9.4 that the Centre for European Protected Area Research continued to host high
profile speakers for seminars and lecture series’. The Director of the Centre had
recently retired and would be replaced shortly.

9.5 that the London Centre for Corporate Governance and Ethics had run a regular
seminar series and had engaged with a large group of international researchers.

RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION MATTERS RC10 (2011/12)
Received:
10.1 A proposal to establish checks on research grant applications at School level.

Agreed:
10.2 to recommend approval of the proposal to Academic Board.

ACTION: Liz Francis to draft a response to the ESRC’s consultation on
Research Application Checks

11 GOOD PRACTICE IN RESEARCH POLICY RC11 (2011/12)
Received:
11.1 A proposal to amend the College’s “Good Practice in Research” policy

Agreed:
11.2 to recommend the revisions of the Policy on Good Practice in Research to
Academic Board
12 DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY RC12 (2011/12)
Received and noted:
12.1 the report on activities pursued to develop the Institutional Repository.

Noted:
12.2 that Birkbeck staff would benefit from being briefed and/or trained on BIRON.

13 SCHOOL RESEARCH COMMITTEES RC13 (2011/12), RC14 (2011/12)
Received
13.1 Proposals to amend the Baseline Terms of Reference of School Research Committees, together with School Research Committee Reports.

Agreed:
13.2 the recommend approval of the revised School Research Committee baseline terms of reference to Academic Board.

Noted:
13.3 the view that the purpose of the School Research Committees was unclear and that the College would benefit from reviewing whether these Committees were the best way of overseeing the work of Schools in relation to research.

14 RESEARCH STUDENT MATTERS RC15 (2011/12)
Received:
14.1 A report from the Research Student Sub-Committee meeting of 6 June 2011

Agreed:
14.2 to endorse the recommendations:
   (i) to mandate the submission of one hard copy and one electronic copy of a thesis to the library upon successful research degree examination;

   (ii) the revised research student break in study policy;

   (iii) the procedure for the nomination of Bloomsbury Studentships

15 EXTERNALLY FUNDED RESEARCH GRANTS AND CONTRACTS RC16i-iv (2011/12)
Received and Noted:
14.1 the regular statistical reports regarding research grant application numbers and the value of research grants held by the College.

15 FUTURE MEETINGS
Noted:
15.1 that the next meetings of the Committee would take place on 19 January 2012 and 2 May 2012.

Signed________________________________________________________

Date _________________________________________________________