



The fourth meeting of the External System Academic Committee Friday 10th October 2008

MINUTES

PRESENT: Prof J Kydd (Dean, EISA) (Chair), Mr K Ansari (ULU), Mr J Dickens (EISA), Dr A Hamblin (RVC), Prof S Huttly (LSHTM), Prof G Kingdon (IoE), Prof K Malleson (Queen Mary), Prof W Morrison (Laws Consortium), Mr Simeon Underwood (LSE).

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr J Gregson, Miss L Hannah (Assistant Secretary), Mr J McConnell, Mr J Morgan, Mr C. O'Callaghan and Mrs S Wilson (Secretary).

APOLOGIES: Prof J Annette (Birkbeck), Prof R Kemp (RHUL), Mrs C Knights (EISA), Prof R Richardson (LSE).

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

- 277 The Chair welcomed Mr Kamran Ansari, who has daily contact with students in his capacity as ULU President, and brings geographical experience of residing in Hong Kong.
- 278 Two resignations have been received. Firstly, from Professor Nirmala Rao, following her move from Goldsmiths to become Vice-Principal at SOAS. Secondly, Professor Rob Kemp, RHUL. The Chair stated that both colleagues would be welcomed if their circumstances enable them to re-join the Committee.
- 279 The Chair welcomed Jon Gregson who joined the staff of EISA as Director of Global Networks and Communities in September and will be working to build a global community supporting the External System. The ESAC agreed that Mr Gregson should continue in his capacity as Chair of Systems and Technology Sub-Committee and that continuity is important at this stage in the Business Transformation process.
- 280 Concern was expressed that the resignations result in a predominance of External System staff populating the ESAC. Consequently the Chair invited members to identify academic colleagues with relevant experience to join the Committee. The Chair reminded the ESAC that membership is on the basis of individual expertise and not as representation of the Lead Colleges. Any nominations or expressions of interest should be forwarded to the Secretary of the ESAC.

MINUTES

External System Academic Committee

Received:

- 281 Paper **ESAC 4/1**, the Minutes of the third meeting of the ESAC held on 23rd May 2008.

Agreed:

282 *To approve the Minutes of the ESAC of the 23rd May 2008.*

Matters Arising from the ESAC Minutes

Noted:

- 283 (Minute 161) The Assessment Methods and Practices Working Group, Chaired by Professor Wayne Morrison, has had a second meeting and a series of actions have been identified. The Group is reviewing a number of papers and a timeline for activities is under development. The Chair of the Working Group reported that innovations around student engagement with the assessment process are under consideration.
- 284 (Minutes 243 – 248) The issue of blind double marking had been remitted to the Assessment Methods and Practices Working Group and it was reported that the Group did not favour a dramatic change to current practice which aligns to practice in the Lead Colleges. The matter of payment to examiners had also been considered as it was noted that blind double marking represents a huge workload particularly for programmes with large student numbers.
- 285 It was noted that double marking, and the practice of checking marks and justifying marks through communication between examiners, assures the process. Students are advised that double marking takes place and that there is no appeal against marks.
- 286 The Chair requested a rapid response to this issue by the Assessment Methods and Practices Working Group. The Chair of the Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle Sub-Committee (QASL) reminded the ESAC of the quality issues which underpin the assessment process.
- 287 The Assessment Methods and Practices Working Group is asked to bring a paper on blind double marking to the next meeting of the ESAC.
- 288 The Chair of the ESAC suggested that the Working Group may benefit from additional academic membership.
- 289 (Minute 266) Contractual issues was noted under matters arising but would be covered by the Chief Officer's report later in the agenda.
- 290 The Director of Learning and Development Directorate (L&D) gave an oral up-date on progress with the examiner's commentary (ESAC2 minutes 78, 82-83 and ESAC3 Action Sheet). It was reported that the LSE have a well-formed approach and that the Laws Consortium are engaged with the enhancement of the examiner's commentary. The External System will review progress in these areas and identify good practice. Training on this matter is likely to take the form of a guidance document for examiners which captures best practice. The ESAC will receive a paper in due course.
- 291 The ESAC recommended that the enhanced examiner's commentary should strike an appropriate balance between supporting students without encouraging regurgitation of key points at examination.
- 292 It was noted that the proposed increased payment to examiners for an enhanced commentary will be considered by the External System Finance Committee (ESFC) in due course.

COMMITTEES OF THE ESAC

293 The Minutes of the four sub-committees of the ESAC were considered.

Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle Sub-Committee (QASL)

Received:

- 294 Paper **ESAC 4/2**, the Minutes and recommendations of the Quality Assurance and Student Lifecycle Sub-Committee (QASL) of the 2nd July 2008, was presented by the Chair of the Sub-Committee.
- 295 The Chair of the QASL noted that the Sub-Committee was currently dealing with a backlog of Annual Programme Reports and that this work was progressing well. The QASL and the External System are working to achieve a process for full consideration of the major quality issues within the reports within a reasonable timeframe. The Corporate Performance and Quality Directorate (CPQ) is developing a simple pro-forma which will become the mainstay of QASL attention. The Dean reported that the External System is looking at an additional reporting line using a meta-analysis of the Annual Programme Reports as an agenda for a twice yearly meeting.
- 296 The Chair of QASL expressed a view that avoidance of duplication is fundamental and that as a result the Sub-Committee is considering two main issues: firstly, the quality assurance requirements; and secondly, the value of the report for all stakeholders including the Lead Colleges. The Dean and the Chair of QASL will meet to discuss these matters and members of the ESAC were invited to e-mail comments or to identify a willingness to join the meeting.
- 297 It was noted that the new Annual Programme Reports will not contain the large volume of generic information. The Chair of the QASL reported that the Sub-Committee will consider emergent trends and issues of a system-wide nature.
- 298 The Chair of the ESAC welcomed these developments and was sure that the Board of the External System (BES), Collegiate Council (CC) and the Board of Trustees (BT) will appreciate a detailed account of programme level progress.
- 299 The Chair of QASL reported strong support in respect of the framework for a Humanities Consortium development and the working party taking this issue forward.
- 300 The Director of Learning and Development Directorate (L&D) reported that the working party had met and adapted their Terms of Reference in the light of the QASL recommendations and that they now included the development of a financial model. The Director, L&D also reported the need for significant and robust market intelligence required in support of this development.
- 301 The ESAC questioned some of the practical matters affecting the potential development of a consortium approach to Humanities and this included the question of where the consortium might reside. The Director of Business Transformation Programme (BTP) raised the need to harmonise regulations to ensure any consortium addressed differences in examination and classification arrangements.
- 302 The working party is looking at the use of a modular, credit-based scheme to facilitate the consortium approach and the Director, L&D identified the Birkbeck model as an example of good practice in this area. A sound knowledge of the Bolgna agreement will also inform the Humanities development. There was discussion about whether differences in the way in which the Colleges deal with credit issues might inhibit the development of a new Humanities framework.
- 303 The ESAC agreed the benefits of student representation on the QASL Sub-Committee.

Resolved:

- 304 ***That the Minutes of the QASL be accepted.***
- 305 ***That the Chair of the QASL and the Dean meet to discuss Annual Programme Reporting.***
- 306 ***That QASL progress the recruitment of undergraduate and postgraduate student representatives.***

Institutions Sub-Committee (IS-C)

- 307 The Chair of the Institutions Sub-Committee (IS-C) gave an oral report on the meeting of the 6th October 2008.
- 308 The Sub-Committee has made progress in the preliminary allocation of existing institutions to Affiliate and Registered status, the strategy for communicating the outcome to third party institutions and the process and right of appeal against preliminary allocation to Registered status. The Chair reported that the timescales for full initial inspection and subsequent inspection is now more generous.
- 309 The Chair set out the priorities for the next meeting of the IS-C as: reviewing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the policy for issuing the MOU; and finalising the wording of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with Registered and Affiliate Centres.
- 310 The Chair reported that the Sub-Committee will return to the matters of memberships of the inspections panel with the aim of keeping the size of the panel sensible whilst ensuring an appropriate level of externality and objectivity. The development of clear criteria for the selection of inspectors is paramount. There is a need to avoid inspection teams dominated by the Lead Colleges and personnel with close associations to the institutions. It was noted that where provision is small then a small inspection team would also be appropriate providing the requirement for externality is fulfilled. The Chair further reported a desire to keep the process robust but simple and to avoid an overly bureaucratic process.
- 311 The ESAC questioned the wisdom of extending the timetable for transition to a fully inspected regime and noted both the risk of undiscovered poor practice and the potential restrictions for Registered Centres who wish to become recognised as Affiliate Centres. The Chair of the Sub-Committee reassured the ESAC that annual monitoring, coupled with reports from Lead College visits, should safeguard performance. However, he accepted that there is a need to identify a system to recognise improving centres, and agreed to take this point back to the Sub-Committee. The ESAC was informed that the Sub-Committee had also agreed some flexibility around the timescale to permit ranges between inspections of 3-5 years for Registered Centres and 5-7 years for Affiliate Centres.
- 312 The ESAC discussed the financial arrangements to support the new third party institutional arrangements. The view was expressed that some institutions are well-capitalised and therefore able to afford relatively high fees. There was a suggestion that the IS-C should aim to make the activity financially sustainable in the longer run while recognising that substantial financial subsidy will be needed for some years: notwithstanding that arrangements with third party institutions are business critical we should work towards a position where the service is paid for by the users rather than through a fees increase for all students, bearing in mind that some students do not study at institutions.
- 313 In concluding the discussion the Chair of the ESAC expressed an opinion that, although aspiring to be self-financing, the new process must be robust, transparent, appropriately objective and ensure full reporting through the External System governance.

Resolved:

- 314 ***That the formal Minutes of the IS-C be considered at the next meeting of the ESAC.***
- 315 ***That criteria for the selection of inspectors and inspection panels be developed, approved and published.***
- 316 ***That IS-C should re-visit the business plan, and especially the funding of the inspection regime, following the discussion by the ESAC.***

Systems and Technologies Sub-Committee (S&TS-C)

Received:

- 317 The Chair of the Systems and Technologies Sub-Committee (S&TS-C) presented paper **ESAC 4/3**, the Minutes of the meeting of the S&TS-C on 30th July 2008.

- 318 The Chair reported on the pilot SITS evaluation and that four different suppliers had been considered and selection made following site visits and other research. The Sub-Committee had been impressed by the presentation made by TRIBAL and had been confident to make the recommendation to award the contract. The Chair of S&TS-C noted that a pilot activity to ensure an understanding of TRIBAL and working systems had been completed and resulted in some positive outcomes and some concerns.
- 319 The ESAC was interested to note the establishment of a risk register by the S&TS-C.
- 320 The Sub-Committee had recommended the development of a policy regarding the use of plagiarism detection software before the TurnItIn software is employed. This will be remitted to the Plagiarism Working Group.
- 321 The S&TS-C had identified a need to up-date the eLearning strategy to ensure its continued relevance and currency. A companion document written for a wider audience will also be developed. These documents, following a wider discussion of main issues, will be the subject of a future S&TS-C meeting.
- 322 The S&TS-C has identified the need for a more coherent communications strategy regarding the significant developments within the Business Transformation Programme (BTP). A communications plan has been developed by the communications team in the Global Networks and Communities Directorate, and will include opportunities for dialogue and feedback. The first staff forum was held on 8th October 2008 and was regarded a successful occasion.

Resolved:

- 323 *That the Minutes of the S&TS-C be accepted.*
- 324 *That the Plagiarism Working Group considers policy for the implementation and use of detection software.*
- 325 *That the communication strategy was welcomed and its activities will be kept under review by S&TS-C and the ESAC.*

Centre for Distance Education Advisory Sub-Committee (CDEAS-C)

Received:

- 326 Paper **ESAC 4/4**, the second meeting of the Centre for Distance Education Advisory Sub-Committee (CDEAS-C) which took place on the 11th September 2008, was presented by the Chair of the CDEAS-C.
- 327 The success of the recent 5th Pan Commonwealth Forum, which was co-ordinated by the L&D Directorate, was noted and the ESAC offered congratulations to all concerned.
- 328 The CDEAS-C had considered the future of the Centre for Distance Education (CDE) as its funding comes to an end. A full evaluation report will be presented to the ESAC in due course. The continuation of the CDE as an expert network is considered desirable and small meetings to develop detailed proposals will take this forward.
- 329 The Chair of the CDEAS-C acknowledged the continued support from the L&D Directorate as a substantial contribution to the overall success of the CDE. He further noted that substantial elements of grants remain unspent and the Sub-Committee will confront the best use of these monies in future meetings. The ESAC requested estimates and spending proposals in due course.
- 330 The Chair of the Sub-Committee praised the dissemination of research and depth of impact of sharing information and practice which has resulted from the work of the CDE.
- 331 The Chair of the ESAC commented on the excellence of a recent CDE seminar and the keen interest from members of Lead Colleges and the lively debate which ensued.

Resolved:

- 332 *That the Minutes of the CDEAS-C be accepted.*
333 *That the evaluative report on the future of the CDE and estimates of, and proposals for the use of, unspent funding are brought to the ESAC in due course.*
334 *The Secretary of the ESAC to write on behalf of the Dean and the Committee to congratulate the CDE on the success of the recent Pan Commonwealth Forum.*

External Laws Committee Subject Committee (ELC)

Received:

- 335 Paper **ESAC 4/5a**, the Minutes of the External Laws Committee (ELC) held on the 24th June 2008, was introduced by the Deputy Chair of the Subject Committee.
336 The Deputy Chair introduced the Terms of Reference and Constitution of the ELC for the academic year 2008-09 (paper **ESAC 4/5b**).
337 It was requested that, following the dissolution of the University of London Laws Subject Panel as part of the revised University structures, an amendment to enable the approval of the Board of Examiners by the ELC be accepted.
338 It was noted that the Standing Orders are currently undergoing customisation for the ELC Subject Committee to reflect its Terms of Reference, Constitution and effective working practices. In the meantime the ELC continues to operate under its present arrangements.

Resolved:

- 339 *That the Minutes of the meeting of the ELC on the 24th June 2008 be accepted.*
340 *That the ELC is delegated to approve the appointment of the Board of Examiners including Visiting Examiners, Assistant Examiners and Assessors, for onward reporting to the ESAC.*
341 *That the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership of the ELC for the 2008-09 session are approved.*

MATTERS ARISING

Board of the External System (BES)

- 342 The Dean of the External System (Chair of the ESAC) gave an oral report on the University governance and the meeting of the Board of the External System (BES) on the 10th July 2008.
343 The Dean reported that the Board of Trustees (BT) had been established under Jenny Abramsky as Chair. The Collegiate Council (CC), an advisory body comprising of the Heads of Colleges, reported to the BT.
344 That the Ordinances now define the External System as a Central Academic Body with a Dean and its own governance arrangements. It is understood that the BES will be subject to oversight by CC and is ultimately responsible to BT.
345 The ESAC had some concerns about the potential for duplication and over-handling of External System business which could possibly result from over elaborate reporting lines for the BES.

Noted:

- 346 That the Academic Regulations are now separate from the Ordinances. Additionally that, although when making use of their own degree awarding powers the Colleges do not have to abide by the University's Academic Regulations, in the context of the External System the Academic Regulations pertain.

Noted:

- 347 The BES has accepted the paper on Dual Registration and that this will be reported to the next meeting of the QASL Sub-Committee.

External System Finance Committee (ESFC)

- 348 The Chief Officer of the External System presented an oral report of the External System Finance Committee (ESFC) meeting of the 12th June 2008.
- 349 The Chief Officer reported on the phasing out of the Vice-Chancellor's Development Fund (V-CDF) over the next three years. The phase out will result in a deduction from turnover of 3% in year one (2008-09), 2% in year two (2009-10), and 1% in the final year (2010-11). The ESAC were concerned that 3% in this operating year may result in an increase on the amount agreed for 2007-08 and requested that the formula be adjusted to permit 3% of turnover or the final 2007-08 payment whichever ever was the smaller sum.
- 350 The Chief Officer also reported that the budget for SITS implementation had been authorised from reserves at a cost of £3.8m over four years.
- 351 The Chief Officer reported that a financial review of the External System had been initiated by the University Finance Committee and is scheduled to report by the 31st October 2008. The Terms of Reference for the review were circulated (Appendix 1). There was disappointment that this decision had been taken without the University Finance Committee having sight of any reports or Minutes from the External System governance (which includes its own Finance Committee). These reports may have reassured the University Finance Committee that the areas identified for review had already been addressed and practices agreed. It was further noted that PricewaterhouseCoopers had been retained for this work at a cost of £80,000.
- 352 It was reported that, following legal advice, the new College contract template had been agreed and will be implemented from October 2008. The main change is that the agreement reflects the independence of the Colleges from the Central University and assigns liability to whichever party provides the service. The agreement will also impact on the quality assurance responsibilities.
- 353 The Chief Officer reported that new financial reports were in development which will be applied to the year 2007-08 and will be considered at the next meeting of the ESFC and the BES. The reports are more detailed and include income and expenditure and are divided into overheads, fixed costs and student number-related costs. Thus the BES will be able to assess the impact of new policies and changes to market conditions. It was noted that over 50% of External System expenditure is student-number sensitive and therefore rapid response to challenges is possible. As the External System also fixes student fees it has a robust business model.
- 356 It was reported that programme accounts will include greater detail with costs divided into direct, indirect and staff costs. The BES will also be receiving models for the apportionment of costs which have hitherto been based on registrations.
- 357 It was noted that there will be a balance sheet for the External System as a whole and a reserves report will be provided to assess future commitments. The final report will cost EISA services and the BES has previously agreed to a breakdown of EISA services as *core*, services which Colleges pay for as part of being within the External System, and *non-core*, which Colleges may opt out of and provide themselves if they wish. There are therefore links between these decisions and the new contracts which assign liability. A clause in the new contracts will establish the process for opt-out.
- 358 The Chief Officer explained that a report will go to the next BES for implementation in October 2009 with consideration of a Lead College taking on a non-core service to be considered at some future point. It was noted by the ESAC that the EISA unit costs are very low.
- 359 It was reported that, following an assessment of financial risk, the BES has agreed a policy for reserves with a contingency of around £2.5m. Additionally around £500,000 is to be retained to permit rapid response to a market opportunity. The current major spending commitments have already been noted. The rest of the reserve requirement will be contingent on the strategic policy for

the External System currently being taken forward by the Dean. Any accumulated surplus will be distributed to the Colleges as a dividend on a basis yet to be determined.

360 Members of the ESAC were concerned that these developments have implications for those Lead Colleges which may not be fully aware of the situation. Additionally there is a need for good information to underpin planning and decisions at programme level. It was explained that these issues were the subject of BES and ESFC papers.

361 It was noted that delays in the production of the Minutes of the BES and ESFC had reduced the ability of ESAC members to access, and consult on, major decisions.

Agreed:

362 ***The ESAC asked the Chief Officer to take forward the request that the formula for phasing out the VCDF be adjusted in year 1 to 3% or the contribution in 2007-08 whichever is advantageous to the External System.***

363 ***That members will receive finance papers in the future and that financial matters will continue to be a matter for report to the ESAC.***

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

External System Strategy Paper

Received:

364 The Dean presented paper **ESAC 4/6**, a strategic plan of the External System, which was derived from a paper previously presented to the BES and therefore included feedback from the BES members. The initial paper had been developed in direct response to a request from the BES and the Dean had consulted by correspondence, meeting with Heads of College and their nominated representatives and using website information.

365 The ESAC was invited to make comments to the Dean and were advised that the next iteration would be presented to the BES at its next meeting on the 4th November 2008.

366 It was suggested that a definition of the External System would strengthen the document and reduce some inherent ambiguities. The ESAC advised that broader opinions and views from the Lead Colleges should also be included.

367 Members of the ESAC requested clarification on a number of points including: 'processes and structures' (page 3), the differences between plan /purposes /intent, the use of EISA rather than External System in relation to students.

368 The Dean explained that the BES had asked for a plan but not a 3-5 year plan. He reassured the ESAC that suggested changes and clarifications will be incorporated and again asked for members to communicate any further thoughts via email.

Agreed:

369 ***That members of the ESAC will communicate any further suggestions for the strategy paper within two weeks by email to the Dean.***

Welcome Pack for Committee Members

Noted:

370 The Chair introduced paper **ESAC 4/7a**, the contents list of the new welcome pack for committee members of the ESAC and its sub-committees. Paper **ESAC 4/7b**, the Standing Orders for the sub-committees had been previously debated by the ESAC and the Committee was presented with the final draft. The Minutes have previously noted that the Standing Orders are being revised for the Subject Committee of the ESAC.

MATTERS FOR REPORT

Statistical information

Received:

- 371 Paper **ESAC 4/8**, statistical information relating to student applications, January – July 2008 was noted. The Chair informed the Committee that progression and completion data will be presented in due course to QASL and the ESAC. The Committee is content that the statistics generated from our current information system may not be perfect but welcomed its availability to inform decision and policy-making.

Business Transformation Programme (BTP)

- 372 The Director of Business Transformation Programme (BTP) provided an up-date to the ESAC based on a slide presentation given to EISA staff earlier in the week (Appendix 2).
- 373 Key points included the signing off by the Vice-Chancellor of the contract for SITS on the 22nd August and the phased approach that will be taken to turning off EARS and Atlas. The Project Board will receive the TRIBAL plan at its next meeting.
- 374 The Director, BTP reported that the system will be fully functioning by September 2011.
- 375 The Committee notes that the BTP has its own defined governance and requested clarification of its relationship to the External System governance.
- 376 The Director, BTP up-dated the ESAC on progress with the student portal and introduced a live demonstration. The portal is scheduled to go live to students of EMFSS and Laws on Monday, 13th October 2008. There were three items of particular note: the ability to co-brand the portal with the Lead College logo if desired, the ability to assure good library provision and the potential for institutions to use information on the portal. A more detailed report of the portal provision will be produced in the coming weeks and will be circulated to members of the ESAC.
- 377 The Director, BTP informed the Committee that the working portal will be demonstrated to Lead Colleges. It was noted that user groups have already had a demonstration and that programme teams must undertake considerable work to ensure the portal is ready for students.
- 378 The Chair noted that both the Lead College and EISA must develop and deploy expertise in use of the technical aspects of the portal and develop a good policy for its use and that this should be investigated at the annual programme review in the future.

Quality Assurance Agency Mid-cycle Report 2008

Noted:

- 379 The University of London External System Mid-cycle report, paper **ESAC 4/9a**, was submitted to the QAA by the deadline of the 30th June 2008. The ESAC also received a copy of the draft QAA response to the Mid-cycle follow up report, paper **ESAC 4/9b**, and noted that the External System has submitted a response and included periodic review reports which have been previously presented through governance.

Agreed

- 380 ***That the Dean should write to the Heads of Colleges regarding the QAA audit cycle and the proposal to look at External System provision during the College audit. It was noted that the QAA has indicated that the College can request an alternative method with a clear rationale.***

Committee Performance Model

Received:

- 381 The Quality Manager (Assurance and Enhancement), CPQ Directorate presented paper **ESAC 4/10** Committee Performance Model, which outlined a proposed method of monitoring committee performance which, following suggested enhancements, has the endorsement of the QASL Sub-Committee. There was some discussion about the potential use of a traffic light system to indicate performance and the Quality Manager requested that members of the ESAC forward ideas and suggested performance indicators by email.
- 382 It was noted that the QAA have indicated their interest in the use of such a model and identified it as a matter for the next institutional audit of the External System (paper **ESAC 4/9b**, page 3, paragraph 13). The paper was remitted back to the QASL Sub-Committee.

Dual Registration

Noted:

- 383 The Head of Programme Management, CPQ Directorate provided a short written report (Appendix 3) on progress with dual registration of students studying with London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. The Committee noted that the QASL Sub-Committee will discuss a more detailed paper at its next meeting.

Periodic Programme Review

Received:

- 384 Paper **ESAC 4/11**, Periodic Programme Review – Monitoring and Reporting Process, was introduced by the Head of Quality, CPQ Directorate. It was noted that the papers follow information previously received setting out the outcomes of periodic review. Paper **ESAC 4/11b** highlighted the differing review cycles in operation across the Colleges. The Committee agreed that the variation permitted alignment of External System provision with College procedures and that a consistency check, to ensure this alignment, will be beneficial.

Agreed:

- 385 ***That QASL Sub-Committee reviews the paper and the subsequent consistency check of College practice.***

Regulations Project

- 386 A short written up-date on the Regulations Project was tabled for the ESAC by the Head of Programme Management, CPQ Directorate (Appendix 3).

Public Relations Update

- 387 Paper **ESAC 4/12**, a collection of Press Cuttings compiled by the Head of Global Media and Public Relations, had been circulated to members. The Dean reported that this will be a standing agenda item.
- 388 The ESAC welcomed the paper and enquired about the presence of the External System at British Council exhibitions. The Chair reported that a significant marketing budget was used for a range of activities but the marketing strategy cannot include all British Council events.
- 389 The ESAC also noted the detailed work undertaken by the Alumni Office within the last two years resulting in significant progress.

Agreed:

- 390 *The Secretary of the ESAC to write on behalf of the Committee and the Dean to congratulate the Alumni Office on their work to date.*

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 391 There were no items of business notified.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING(S)

- 392 The dates of the ESAC meetings were noted as follows:

- Friday 20 February 2009 at 9.30am, STB3
- Friday 22 May 2009 at 9.30am, ST273

RESERVED BUSINESS

- 393 There were no items of reserved business.

CPQ, EISA October 2008

**Action Sheet
ESAC 4**

Colleagues are invited to note the agreed actions and relevant Minute references assigned to them. If you have any queries, please contact Stephanie Wilson (stephanie.wilson@london.ac.uk).

There is also a key of the initials used, appended to this action sheet.

ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE EXTERNAL SYSTEM ACADEMIC COMMITTEE HELD ON 10TH OCTOBER 2008			
Minute	Agreed action	Responsibility	Timescale
280	ESAC Membership <i>The Chair invited members to identify academic colleagues with relevant experience to join the Committee. Membership is on the basis of individual expertise and any nominations or expressions of interest should be forwarded to the Secretary of the ESAC.</i>	ESAC/ JK/ SW	Ongoing
Update Ongoing - No nominations received. Members of the ESAC are requested to continue to consider potential academic members. Nominations to Stephanie Wilson.			
287	Blind Double Marking <i>The Assessment Methods and Practices Working Group to produce a paper on blind double marking.</i>	SK/ WM	ESAC 5, 20 th Feb 2009
Update Completed - Item 9 ESAC 5 agenda.			
288	Membership of Assessment Methods and Practices Working Group <i>Investigate and recruit additional academic members for the Working Group.</i>	JK/ WM	31 st Oct 2008
Update Ongoing - No nominations received. Members of the ESAC are requested to continue to consider potential academic members. Nominations to Stephanie Wilson.			
292	Payment for Examiner's Commentary <i>Take forward proposed increased payment for enhanced Examiner's Commentary</i>	JK/ SMT/ RR	December 2008
Update Completed - Item 12 ESAC 5 agenda.			
324	Policy on the use of Plagiarism Detection Software <i>The Plagiarism Working Group to determine policy requirements for the implementation and use of Plagiarism Detection Software.</i>	JK/ SK/ SW	Report to S&TS-C and ESAC in due course
Update Completed - Subject discussed by Working Group at December and January meetings. Outcomes to be presented to S&TS-C in March 2009 and onward to ESAC 6.			

325	Communication Strategy <i>The communications team of the Global Networks and Communities Directorate to develop a communications strategy regarding Business Transformation Programme (BTP) developments and progress.</i>	JG and GloNaC team	Report to SMT, S&TS-C and onwards to ESAC
Update Ongoing - Director of Global Networks and Communities to provide progress report.			
333	CDE Evaluation Report <i>Production of an evaluative report on the future of the CDE. Report to include estimation of unspent monies and proposals for its use.</i>	JD	Report to CDEAS-C and onwards to ESAC
Update Completed – Item 10 on ESAC 5 agenda.			
334	Congratulatory Note <i>The Secretary of the ESAC to write on behalf of the Dean and the Committee to congratulate the CDE on the success of the recent Pan Commonwealth Forum.</i>	SW	31 st Oct 2008
390	<i>The Secretary of the ESAC to write on behalf of the Committee and the Dean to congratulate the Alumni Office on their work to date.</i>	SW	31 st Oct 2008
Update Completed - 21 st October 2008			
362	Phasing out of the Vice-Chancellor's Development Fund <i>To request that the formula for phasing out the Vice-Chancellor's Development Fund to be adjusted in year 1 to 3% or the contribution in 2007-08 whichever is advantageous to the External System.</i>	JMc	ESAC 5, 20 th Feb 2009
Update Completed - Item 5 on ESAC 5 agenda.			
375	Business Transformation Project Governance <i>The ESAC notes that the BTP has its own defined governance and requested clarification of its relationship to the External System governance.</i>	C'oC	Paper to be circulated to ESAC A.S.A.P.
Update Completed – November 2008			
376	Progress with Student Portal <i>The Director, BTP to circulate a paper outlining progress with the portal and library provision following a scheduled meeting with the library.</i>	C'oC	Paper to be circulated to ESAC A.S.A.P.
Update Completed - Item 14 on ESAC 5 agenda.			

377	Demonstration of Portal <i>The working portal to be demonstrated to Lead Colleges and other stakeholders.</i>	C'oC and BTP Team/ JT	Progress report to ESAC 5, 20 th Feb 2009
Update Completed - Item 14 on ESAC 5 agenda			
385	Periodic Programme Review <i>Check consistency of alignment between College processes and cycle and External System review.</i>	CPQ	Paper to be sent to QASL 5, 16 th Jan 2009
Update Completed - Item minuted at QASL 5. QASL to review annually.			

UP-DATE OF ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE EXTERNAL SYSTEM ACADEMIC COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 MAY 2008			
Minute	Agreed action	Responsibility	Timescale
257	Code of Discipline <i>CPQ to review the Code of Discipline for fitness for purpose in the light of changes to legislation and the changing context of the External System.</i>	CK /SW	Report to QASL /ESAC in due course
Update Ongoing – to be cross-referenced against UoL Statutes, Ordinances and Academic Regulations.			

UP-DATE ON ACTIONS ARISING FROM THE EXTERNAL SYSTEM ACADEMIC COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 FEBRUARY 2008			
Minute	Agreed action	Responsibility	Timescale
72	Appointment of External and Co-opted Members and Review of Membership That Chairs and Secretaries keep the Membership of the Committees of the ESAC under review and propose, through the Chair of the ESAC, additional members, external members or co-opted members.	AH /SU /JG /JM /JC /BG /MD /JT /FM /KM /JK /SW	On-going
Update Ongoing - No nominations received. Chairs and members of the Sub-Committees of the ESAC are requested to continue to consider potential members. Nominations to Stephanie Wilson.			
82	Examiner's Commentary That the Learning and Development Directorate progress the training of examiners to recognise the role of primary feedback mechanism for students and to ensure the quality and consistency of the reports.	JD /L&D	Report to ESAC 4, 10 th October 2008
Update Completed – Item 15 on ESAC 5 agenda.			

KEY

AH	-	Anne Hamblin, Chair - QASL	JM	-	Jonathan Morgan, Chair - CDE
BG	-	Barney Grainger, Secretary – QASL			Advisory S-C
BTP	-	Business Transformation Programme	JMc	-	John McConnell, Chief Officer
CK	-	Caroline Knights, Joint Acting Head, CPQ	JT	-	Jonathon Thomas, Secretary - S&TS-C
C'oC	-	Craig O'Callaghan, Director, BTP	KM	-	Kate Malleson, Deputy Chair – ELC Subject Committee
CPQ	-	Corporate Performance and Quality Directorate	L&D	-	Learning & Development Directorate
FM	-	Fiona Macmillan, Chair – ELC Subject Committee	MD	-	Michael Davis, Secretary – Institutions S-C
GloNaC	-	Global Networks and Communities Directorate	RR	-	Ray Richardson, Dean of External Study, LSE
JC	-	Judith Collier, Secretary - CDE Advisory S-C	SK	-	Surayya Khan, Quality Manager
JD	-	John Dickens, Director, L&D	SU	-	Simeon Underwood, Chair – Institutions S-C
JG	-	Jon Gregson, Director, GloNaC and Chair - S&TS-C	SW	-	Stephanie Wilson, Secretary – ESAC
JK	-	Jonathan Kydd, Chair ESAC and Dean of the ES	WM	-	Wayne Morrison, Director, EULP

Appendix 1

A financial review of the External System

The principal objective is to review the current business model and identify any changes required to secure its viability and robustness as a business unit within the central University of London.

In the course of the review we would expect that the following areas would be addressed:

- the adequacy of the operational plan to deliver the objectives of the medium term strategic plan.
- the financial implications of the relationships and contracts with stakeholders, particularly the sharing of risk and reward, to cover the lead Colleges, students and the central University.
- the form of the contractual relationships entered into between the central University and the lead Colleges.
- the process for the appraisal of proposals for new investments to develop and maintain new courses, the funding requirements therefor and the balance sheet implications.
- how an objective measure of the financial performance of the existing operation can be provided and how budgeting and forecasting, together with appropriate sensitivity analyses, should be carried out.
- a specification for the financial management of the business, having regard to its size and complexity, identifying any deficiencies in the existing systems/structures, the competences of the operational team and any gaps in the skill base
- an effective basis of accountability and reporting to secure the maintenance of constructive relationships with the key stakeholders embracing consideration of the recognition and allocation of revenues and costs to programmes to inform negotiations with lead Colleges.
- the key financial risks relating to the External System considered as a constituent part of the central University.

Appendix 2

Please note that Appendix 2 will be circulated as a separate document.

Appendix 3

Statement from Caroline Knights, Head of Programme Management

Agenda item 12

DUAL REGISTRATION

Members will recall being consulted on a proposal concerning dual registration - prompted by a request by the LSHTM - before its submission to the Board of the External System on 10 July. The Board approved dual registration in principle. It agreed that EISA officers should be encouraged to continue discussions with LSHTM, and that authority should be delegated to the Dean of the External System, in consultation with the Chair, to approve dual registration arrangements with the College if appropriate.

The comments that had been raised by ESAC members concern matters of quality. As a result, a paper to both address those comments and to provide more detail on the impact of dual registration on the student lifecycle and student experience will be discussed by QASL on 17 October. Details of that discussion, with recommendations, will feed into the next meeting of ESAC.

Agenda item 15

REGULATIONS PROJECT

ESAC has previously been presented with information on the Regulations Review Project, and at its meeting in February was advised that the work of the Regulations Review Group (chaired by the Chair of QASL, Anne Hamblin) had been concluded and that a final report would be received in due course.

In April, QASL received the recommendations for a new Regulations booklet, the key features for which are:

- That students are the primary target audience for the Regulations booklet. The booklet will therefore be structured to reflect the student life cycle.
- A revised Programme Specification will become part of the new Regulations booklet.
- Language will be concise but accurate with clear definitions of regulatory terms.
- There will be a column on the right hand side of the page where notes and references can be made to help users find additional information.
- Presentation will be simple with information tabulated where possible.
- Programme Regulations and the General Regulations will be combined to reduce the amount of cross referencing.
- Linked programmes will be combined into one document where this is feasible.
- It is intended that there will be an online version which will be readily accessible.

Since that QASL meeting, work has begun on developing these new-style booklets and those for certain programmes will be rolled out for 2009-10, with the remainder being available for 2010-11. Certain matters involving the detail of the regulations - for example, the periods of notice for introducing changes - remain outstanding and are to be considered through the committee structure during 2008-09.