



**University of London
External System Academic Committee**

External Laws Committee (ELC)

The seventeenth meeting of the External Laws Committee took place on 26 November 2008.

Members of the ESAC are invited to receive the attached (unconfirmed) minutes of the meeting, and in particular note the decisions and approve the recommendations set out below.

2. Terms of Reference and Constitution (min 715 discuss)

The process for the approval of appointments of examiners to the Board of Examiners has now been added to the Terms of Reference of the ELC. The Board of Examiners list is included as a report to the External System Academic Committee.

3. Financial Position (mins 723-726 discuss)

The Director of the EULP gave an oral report on financial position of the Programme and the accounts for 2007-08. The Board of the External System has approved a new methodology for apportioning the programme's costs effective the current financial year.

Laws Consortium Office
January 2009

ESAC 5



External Laws Committee (ELC)

Minutes (Unconfirmed)

The seventeenth meeting of the External Laws Committee was held on Wednesday 26th November 2008.

PRESENT

Mr S Askey, Professor R Blackburn, Dr B Brown, Ms A M Chow (Student Representative), Dr M Diamantides, Dr A Dignam, Mr J Griffiths, Prof A Lewis, Ms M Luckham, Professor F Macmillan (Chair), Ms C MacMillan, Professor K Malleson, Professor W Morrison and Professor J Penner

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms A Dziemba (Secretary), Mr J Ferrá, Ms M Moore, Mrs G Nabi, Ms N Worrall and Mrs S Wilson

APOLOGIES

Mr C Cotterell, Dr M Craven, Prof N Duxbury, Ms P Tuitt, Dr L Welchman and Prof I Yeats

ANNOUNCEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

MINUTES

Received

The minutes of the sixteenth meeting of the ELC held on 24 June 2008

698 Subject to minute 668 being amended as follows: Questions regarding modularity and rules of progression, which have already been raised at previous Examinations Sub-Committee meetings, would be incorporated within the overall review. (i.e. syllabus and curriculum review) In addition, integration of the framework for Further and Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) will need to be clarified, especially as initial research reveals all six Laws Schools across the consortium adopt different models.

Approved

ELC 17/1 the minutes of the eleventh Examinations Panel (formerly Sub-Committee) held on 8th October 2008.

Noted

- 699 Minute 343 being amended as follows: It was proposed that the Chief Examiners and Deputy Chief Examiners prepare additional marking guides for each examination question (approximately 5-10 lines) as guidance for the examiners. The content of the marking guides will provide additional information on giving feedback to students.
- 700 In order to reinforce the importance of the Subject Guides and other learning material supplied by the university, the ELC was asked to endorse a recommendation that examiners set at least two questions directly related to the exercises and activities included in the Subject Guides. The link between learning objectives, provided materials, activities and assessment questions will be drawn to students' attention in the Chief Examiners' reports.
- 701 It is recommended that the Chief Examiners receive additional fee of £100 per marking guide to reflect the responsibility of preparation of the guide. The additional fee will effectively amount to £200 if the marking guides are prepared for both Examination Zones A and B. This was agreed by the ELC
- 702 It was pointed out that minute 364, 365 and 366 of the Examinations Panel minutes did not fully reflect the discussion that took place during the Panel meeting.

Approved

That subject to the above changes, the minutes of the eleventh meeting of the Examinations Panel be approved.

(Secretary's note: the papers ELC 17/6, 17/7 and 17/8 which all relate to the Examinations Panel, were presented to the ELC at this point.)

ELC 17/6 External Examiners' reports (2007-08)

Received

- 703 The comments of the External Examiners within their reports were considered and will be sent to the Chairs of the Board of Examiners for information. It was noted that one External Examiner's report remains outstanding.

Approved

ELC 17/7 Appointments of the External Examiners

Noted

- 704 The appointment of Professor Francis Rose as one of the EULP External Examiners has now ended and the EULP needs to consider the appointment of a replacement External Examiner. Professor Ewan McKendrick has been proposed and the Director, EULP will follow up on his response.
- 705 On behalf of the Laws Programme and the ELC, the Chair wished to thank Professor Rose for his support and assistance over the last four years.

ELC 17/8 Appointments of Chief and Deputy Chief Examiners (2008-09)

Received

- 706 The ELC received and approved the recommended list of appointments of both Chief and Deputy Chief Examiners for the LLB and Diploma in Law (2008-09).

Approved

ELC 17/2 the minutes of the Institutions Panel (formerly Sub-Committee) held on 15th October 2008.

Received

- 707 That the minutes of the tenth meeting of Institutions Panel (formerly Sub-Committee) be approved.

Approved

ELC 17/3 the minutes of the Teaching and Learning Environment Panel (formerly Sub-Committee) held on 12th November 2008.

Received

- 708 As the Chair of the panel could not attend a summary of the main points discussed at the Panel meeting were presented by the Director of the EULP.
- 709 Correction to the recommendation in minute 104 to make Study Packs available exclusively on the VLE in the future. The ELC suggested that a gradual stage pilot scheme to put Study Packs online is implemented. This would also serve as further inducement for students to use the VLE. The committee discussed the variable use students currently made of the VLE and various reasons were offered for the relatively low usage. The introduction of a 'single-sign in portal' should make it easier to contact students although concerns were raised as to whether the new system was actually effective. The Director was asked to raise the issue of a review of the effectiveness of the new system with the appropriate EISA personnel.
- 710 Correction to recommendation in minute 115. The correct version should read: 'It has been discussed that consideration be given to revising the Subject Guides yearly with the online version and incorporating these revisions into the three year cycle for the printed copy.' The committee noted the concerns with the current publications operation and the often quick need to update Subject Guides and other learning materials owing to changing law and/or assessment style. The issue of outsourcing the production of hardcopy materials is currently under investigation by the Panel and will be reported back on to the ELC in due course. The Director however reported that the CEO of the External System had stated to him that the Laws Consortium could not 'opt out' of non-core services, as any other Lead College could. The committee questioned how this could be as the Laws Consortium was meant to be in the same position as a Lead College. The Director and the Chair of the ELC were asked to pursue issue of the Laws Consortium 'opting out' of non-core EISA services.
- 711 Changes to the Constitution of the Teaching and Learning Environment Panel: it has been recommended that the Head of Electronic Resources and Distance Learning, University of London library, is added as an ex-officio member to the Panel.

Approved

That the minutes of the fourth meeting of the Teaching and Learning Environment Panel be approved.

MATTERS ARISING

- 712 Professor James Penner provided an oral report to members regarding the recent discussions at the External User Business Transformation Working Group, which met on Thursday, 20th November 2008. A new online system for students' admissions and registrations (SITS) will be developed over the next four years, with the examinations component being the last process to be delivered. The development of the new student registration system will provide an opportunity for a re-evaluation of the current administrative processes and structures within EISA. It has been suggested that one such model could create a team of administrators who are solely devoted to supporting Laws Programme and which would hopefully lead to improved communications within EISA.
- 713 In addition to services already provided by EISA administration for the Laws Programme exclusively, the processes that support the administration and management of the student lifecycle should be carefully considered, in order to identify further requirements of the Programme.

TERMS OF REFERENCE AND CONSTITUTION

Received

ELC 17/4 Terms of Reference and Constitution and Membership of the ELC

- 714 Terms of Reference have been corrected to reflect the new terminology. Term "sub-committee" has been replaced with "panel" where appropriate.
- 715 It has been noted that the Subject Panel in Laws has now officially retired. The process for the approval of appointments of examiners to the Board of Examiners has now been added to the Terms of Reference of the ELC. The Board of Examiners list, including all new appointments, will be reported to the External System Academic Committee.
- 716 The Dean of the External System has proposed that a 'light touch' review of the EULP is undertaken to establish, amongst other things, the balance of ownership between the Consortium Law Schools and the EULP. Feedback on this proposal will be sought from the heads of the Law Schools and a further report will be made to the ELC in due course.

Agreed

- 717 **That, subject to the views of the Heads of Law Schools, the Terms of Reference for the proposed review be discussed at an extraordinary meeting of the ELC in 2009.**

The Terms of Reference and Constitution and Membership for the ELC have been amended and approved pending the outcome of the review.

ELC 17/5 Standing Orders for the Sub and Subject Committees of the ESAC (draft)

Received

- 718 This item had been withdrawn from the agenda of ELC 16 in order to facilitate further discussions between the Chair and Deputy Chair of the ELC and the Chair of the ESAC, especially in relation to the question of determining the constitution of the ELC.
- 719 That the ELC members review the Standing Orders and forward their comments to the Chair by the Christmas break. The Chair requested from the ELC permission to take Chair's Action on any matters that might arise from the comments.
- 720 The proposed review of the EULP is likely to affect the current set of Standing Orders.
- Agreed
- Recommended
- 721 That the ELC's quorum remains at one sixth of the number of members excluding *ex officio* members.

MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

- 722 Points 6 (The External Examiners' reports (2007-08)), 7 (Appointments of External Examiners) and 8 (Appointments of Chief and Deputy Chief Examiners) of the Agenda had been dealt with as a part of the discussion of Examination Panel minutes.

MATTERS FOR REPORT

Received

ELC 17/9 Financial position of the programme

- 723 The Director of the EULP gave an oral report on financial position of the Programme and the accounts for 2007-08. The Board of the External System has approved a new methodology for apportioning the programme's costs effective the current financial year. The External Undergraduate Laws Programme amounts to around 38% of the new registrations and under the current system of apportioned costs is therefore charged that percentage of all costs. This means that the programme along with the EMFS (LSE) meet around 80% of all external system costs. The two programmes clearly subsidise other programmes. The new system will lower that subsidy but not eliminate it. The 2008-9 accounts would reflect a new system of apportioned costs agreed by the ES Board, this should increase net profit. The Director made several comparisons of costs with other programmes and noted the higher direct costs of the UG Laws programme compared to the EMFS (LSE) owing to the greater learning materials supplied to students.
- 724 The Committee noted that a significant source of income for the Law Schools was dependent upon the financial success of the programme. The Director indicated that the fee increase for the next year would be in the region of 7% plus some specific fees to cover the provision of more text books.
- 725 The ELC proposed that there needed to be a balance of any increased income to benefit the wider EULP and enable sustained investment in learning materials and increased guidance to students.
- 726 It was recommended that a Finance and Development Panel be created to support the above process. In addition, the Panel would also consider the possibility of opting out of non-core EISA activities. The Committee requested that the Director adopt a 'robust' approach towards EISA in order to ensure that the programme achieve 'value for

money' in terms of the services provided. The new Panel would be small and contain the Director, at least one representative from Heads of Law Schools and two ELC representatives.

Agreed

- 726 **That the Constitution of the ELC will be amended to add the Finance and Development Panel. A message will be sent out to ELC members requesting expression of interest in membership in the new Panel. The new Panel would also include a representative of Heads of Law Schools.**

Received

ELC 17/10 Programme Specifications

- 727 Pending consideration at the programme's Annual Review meeting, the Programme Specifications will be deferred until the next meeting of the ELC in March 2009.

Received

ELC 17/11 Provisional Examination Timetable 2009

Noted

- 728 The scheduling of subjects in the examination timetable was discussed. The Director pointed out that the examinations schedule would begin one week earlier than before; this was to help in the production of a full set of results for the Examinations Board. He expressed the view that institutions and students would expect the full results to be available at least as early as the last year. The committee noted the importance of scheduling papers so that the larger core subjects can be marked and results ready for the examinations board. The balance between larger and smaller subjects should be taken into consideration by the Examinations Office and Examination Board Chairs in setting the examinations timetable.

Agreed

- 729 **That the need to maintain an appropriate balance of interests in scheduling the examinations timetable will be discussed at the next meeting of the Examinations Panel.**

- 730 The Law Skills Pathway I Dissertation has not been included in the current timetable. This additional examination will be added to the timetable.

Agreed

- 731 **That the proposed timetable is amended to reflect the additional examination for the Laws Skills Pathway I (Dissertation).**

ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE CHAIR SINCE THE LAST ELC MEETING

Received

ELC 17/10, Summary report of Chair's Actions taken since the last ELC (June 2008)

- 732 To report that Chair's Action has been granted to changes to the LLB Regulations with regards to Skills Pathways 1 and 2.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the ELC is scheduled to be taking place on 24th March 2009.