



A meeting of the Board of Examinations was held on Wednesday 13 November 2013 in the Syndicate Room at the Old Schools.

Present: Professor J Rallison (Chair); Dr D Good; Rev Dr J Holmes; Dr J Keeler; Mr Jia Hui Lee; Mr T Milner; Rev Canon H Shilson-Thomas; Mr R Taplin; Mrs J Green (Acting Secretary); Mrs C Fage (incoming Secretary); Mrs L Whittock (In attendance).
Mr J Harding attended for item 5

Apologies: Dr M Jones; Mr. J Matheson; Dr R Thornton; Dr. D Woodman

1. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes of the last meeting held on Wednesday 24 July 2013

The minutes were approved as a correct record

3. Matters Arising not appearing on the Agenda

Ref minute 4.1

Secretary to amend college invigilation instructions to include restrictions on removing question papers for some multiple choice examinations. These instructions will be updated for 2014.

Ref minute 4.2

The Acting Secretary is currently in discussions with CamSIS about out-of-hours support.

Ref minute 6.1

The Student Registry is taking forward the recommendations made by the Senior Proctor and seeking to implement solutions at the appropriate point.

Ref minute 6.2

The General Board Education Committee (23 October 2013) approved the revised plagiarism guidelines.

Ref minute 7.1

Fines had been issued to the students from a list provided by the Senior Proctor.

Ref minute 7.2

The Senior Proctor, after discussions would liaise with the Secretary regarding payments for additional Proctor support.

Ref minute 7.3

The Senior Proctor would attend the next meeting of the Senior Tutors' Standing Committee on Welfare and Finance to discuss possible means of managing end of examination celebrations.



Ref minute 8.2

A paper was sent on 25 October to all Heads of Department and Departmental Administrators announcing the phased withdrawal of the centralised mark entry process. Demonstrations for departments on the functionality available were being announced for December 2013 and January 2014.

Ref minute 9.2

An examinations web page will go live before the end of the Michaelmas term 2013.

Ref minute 10.1

Actions were being taken against each item on the examination space issue. College space was not required for 2013/14 but a paper will be drafted for the Bursar's Committee outlining the needs for the next 5 – 10 years.

Ref minute 11.1

Amendments had been made to the Guidelines for Special Examination Arrangements and published online.

The Chair expressed the Board's thanks to the Student Registry and acknowledged the hard work behind the scenes.

4. Special Arrangements Guidelines

4.1 The Board discussed a proposal from the Disability Resource Centre (DRC) to extend its discretion in making recommendations for examination access arrangements to include those students diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). As with the existing arrangement, the DRC would make a recommendation for examination adjustments but the Board would retain the final decision. It was noted that advisors at the DRC held the practising certificate to diagnose this disorder.

The Board agreed the proposal.

4.2 The Board discussed guidelines on the use of an amanuensis with additional time of 25% to be allocated in all instances, and with any disability-related additional time to be considered additively. Mr Harding indicated that this was standard practice across several Russell Group Universities.

The Board agreed a single document was required that separately identified the regulations as approved by the Board, and the guidelines issued by the DRC. It was noted that the number of candidates requiring an amanuensis was small, that an addition of 25% time was reasonable in such cases, but that allocations in excess of 25% should be agreed by the Board on a case-by-case basis on the recommendation of the DRC. The Acting Secretary would work with the DRC on a new document that met the requirements discussed.

5. Membership 2013/14

Membership for 2013/14 was noted.



6. Student Fines

- 6.1 The Board were reminded that student fines for exam exuberance had been introduced for the first time in 2012/13 to deal with behaviour at the end of examinations, following complaints relating to damage to university and non-university property.
- 6.2 The Senior Proctor discussed the weaknesses of the fining system, indicating the problems of number of venues and the small number of proctorial staff available. It also interfered with the main function of the Proctors during the examination season.
- 6.3 The Senior Proctor indicated that for 2013/14 they would be addressing the problem by taking a route of persuasion, focussing on the public, external venues such as the Guildhall, Corn Exchange, Pitt Building and Mill Lane Lecture Block. They would look for the support of the Board of Examinations, Senior Tutors, the Student's Union, College JCR's and possibly the Police. Working with these bodies, they would act to persuade students to move their celebrations to university or college locations in a bid to reduce the physical and reputational risks associated with this problem.
- 6.4 Further discussion indicated other possible sanctions such as preventing students from graduating in person, or preventing the award of the MA degree in cases of unpaid fines. It was agreed that these sanctions would require further discussion and consultation and would not be progressed at this point.
- 6.5 In cases of serious proven offences it was agreed that the Chair of the Board of Examinations would be given discretion to impose a higher fine, up to £175, outside of meetings of the Board.
- 6.6 There were a number of fines outstanding from 2012/13 and it was agreed that the Acting Secretary would contact Senior Tutors to pursue these.

7. Examination space

The Acting Secretary gave an oral report on the progress of the new examination space at the Sports Hall in West Cambridge. It was agreed that the Acting Secretary would arrange a series of 'open days' at the start of the Easter term for students and staff to familiarise themselves with the location and venue.

8. Payment schedule for 2013/14

The proposed payment schedule for examination supervisors, invigilators and attendants was approved.



9. Any other business

- 9.1 Mr Lee reminded the Board that the Muslim holiday of Ramadan falls during the examination period in 2017. It was agreed that the manager of the Multi-Faith Chaplaincy Centre would be consulted. The Chair warned that moving the examination season en bloc would cause insuperable difficulties.
- 9.2 Dr Keeler indicated that the Department of Chemistry made space available in the department for their Part II and Part III candidates who required extra time, rather than them sit the papers in college or in a central site. This was reported as successful for the department as it reduced delays in receiving these scripts and Dr Keeler was interested in how many other departments also followed this model. The Acting Secretary confirmed that at present, only the Department of Engineering also accommodated candidates in the department.
- 9.3 Dr Keeler also provided useful feedback a candidate they were managing who had an alternative mode of assessment and the challenges it posed to the department. The Student Registry was asked to keep a catalogue of alternative modes of assessment and seek feedback at opportune time.
- 9.4 The Senior Proctor reminded the Acting Secretary of the need for examination information in a timely manner.

10. Next meetings

Wednesday 12 March 2014	2pm, Syndicate Room
Wednesday 9 April 2014	2pm, Syndicate Room
Wednesday 23 July 2014	2pm, Syndicate Room