

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 11 February 2012 at the Institute of Historical Research – 11 a.m.

Present: Prof. Ann Hughes, Co-convenor (Keele), Dr Keith McLay Co-convenor (Chester), Dr Glenn Richardson, Secretary (St Mary's UC), Prof. Rainer Schulze, Treasurer (Essex) , Dr Meg Arnot (Roehampton), Dr Mark Clapson, (Westminster), Dr John Conlin (Southampton) , Dr Paul Corthorn (Queen's University, Belfast), Dr Karin Dannehl (Economic History Society/Wolverhampton), Dr Andrew Dilley (Aberdeen), Prof. Barry Doyle (Huddersfield), Dr Amanda Goodrich (Open), Dr Andrew Foster (Kent and HA), Prof. Donald MacRaild, (Northumbria), Dr Robert McNamara, (Ulster), Dr Jason Peacy (UCL), Dr Philip Ollerenshaw (UWE Bristol) Dr Rebecca Rist (Reading), Dr Andrew Roach (Glasgow), Dr John Young (Strathclyde), Dr William Whyte (Oxford)

1. Apologies for Absence

Dr Richard Allen (University of Wales, Newport); Prof. Malcolm Chase (Leeds); Dr Peter D'Sena (HEA) Dr Daniel Gordon (Edgehill); Prof. Stuart Jones (Manchester); Ms Elizabeth Redgate Newcastle); Dr Lowri Rees (Bangor); Dr Claudia Stein (Warwick), Dr Chris Stoors (Dundee)

2. Minutes of the Steering Committee Meeting of 15 October 2011.

These were accepted as an accurate record. There was one typographical error noted;

Pg. 3 "PDS is keen to organise 10 one-day events; workshops and seminars hosted by a commissioned university of other boy; should read 'or other body'.

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes.

AH noted that REF guidelines and updates were available on HEFCE website for preparation of submissions.

4. Secretary's Report.

Membership of SC: The following representatives were elected to the Steering Committee at the Plenary Meeting of 19 November 2011 and took their places at this meeting.

Dr Mark Clapson (Westminster) (2011)

Dr Paul Corthorn (Queen's, Belfast) (2011)

Professor Donald MacRaild (Northumbria) (2011)

Dr Robert McNamara (Ulster) (2011)

Dr Lowri Ann Rees (Wales, Bangor) (2011)

5. Treasurer's Report.

The Plenary meeting in November made a small profit. Subscriptions are where they should be or better for this point in the yearly cycle. Drive for subscriptions which was projected at Plenary will go ahead and the new website will be helpful in raising awareness of the benefits of HUK and act as a focus for increasing subscriptions.

6. Convenors' Reports:

I. Survey on Application Trends.

KMcL Reported on survey of application rates to History degree programmes for 2012-13. There were 23 returns only. Some HODs were unwilling to release information due to sensitivity about the point of the survey and related issues. The resulting picture was mixed. Most Departments/Schools were up on numbers, down, or holding steady against 2010 (given that 2011 is acknowledged to be an exceptional year). A number noted that conversion rate was the real test rather than initial applications. It was agreed that a further survey of applications/conversions would be of use at the start of the 2013 academic year.

A wide ranging discussion followed which confirmed the survey returns. There was a range of views as to the effects of new fees regime on history degree programmes. Broadly, recruitment in the institutions represented on the SC was stable, even buoyant. Something of a retreat to perhaps more traditional arts degrees and away from 'studies' type degrees was noted, history perhaps perceived as a credible subject within the arts. Some retreat from combined subject degrees and increase in application for single honours history.

The effect of capping on recruitment and degree choice available was yet to be fully realised.

There was agreement that widening participation initiatives were likely to be adversely affected by current arrangements. Recruitment of mature-aged students is also likely to be adversely affected. The NUS is concerned about this issue and cooperation with the union,

particularly with a view to securing reliable data on access/widening participation/mature- age recruitment, is advisable. It was agreed that this issue would form part of the focus for the Plenary in November

II. Survey on Preparedness for Undergraduate Study.

Survey has been undertaken on preparedness and on curricula HOD and HA leading

III. Proposals on a Closer Relationship with the Royal Historical Society.

There has been no further contact from the RHistS following the SC's response to its invitation to merge the two bodies. The SC's expression of interest in closer cooperation with the Society on relevant issues, rather than a merger, was endorsed by the History UK Plenary in November.

IV. Financial Support from the Higher Education Academy.

Refer Agenda item no 7.

V. Attendance at Subject Association & Other Meetings on Behalf of History UK.

Monday 13th February meeting of Subject Association would be attended by KMCL.

VI. New Co-Convenor (from October/November 2012)

Expressions of interest had been received by AH but no formal nominations had yet been made. It was agreed that members of the SC would consider potentially suitable nominations from within the membership of History UK for the May meeting. Factors that might be considered in seeking a new co-convenor included regional representation; gender balance and pre/post 1992 university representation. AH/GR would be happy to receive nominations before May meeting. An election process could be established if required.

7. Report from Peter D'Sena, Discipline Lead for History, Higher Education Academy.

KMCL tabled report and highlighted the following areas of HEA work :

I. Annual Conference: Teaching and Learning in History. –see paper report:

II. Call for Workshops/Seminars.

III Update on Available Grants.

A discussion followed about the various grants available. It was agreed that History UK would apply for Special Interest Group funding of £500 to support costs of Plenary and/or expert speakers to attend SC committees as needed. Student representative's costs might also be supported.

Teaching Development Grants. Discussion followed on issues of employability modules and schemes; internships; opportunities/difficulties in their administration. Employability in the curriculum might be a possible topic for Plenary? It was suggested that HUK might make an approach to employers generally backing the principle of Work Place Learning. The advantages of making subject-specific skills explicit to students were discussed alongside those acquired through WPL- the two must be balanced.

8. Website Development.

GR presented quote from Martin Steer at IHR on hosting new webpage/site. It was agreed to accept the quote and to begin work on the website as soon as possible. Discussion followed as to main items/areas to be included in site. It was agreed that the site should have both an administrative function for the committee and a public relations/promotion aspect and this should be available to all and linked via Google and the like to social media to enable maximum profile-raising and for the site to evolve into one that best served the needs of academic history community.

9. Reports from:

I. Irish Representatives.

University of Ulster had consolidated provision at Coleraine campus. It was likely to mean some job losses. At Queen's College there was concern about how new fees regime will work out. History was doing well in attracting GB students. At this stage applications were buoyant but conversions and enrolments are obviously key.

II. Scottish Representatives.

The picture of recruitment to Scottish departments from the rest of the UK was at present somewhat uncertain due to a variety of factors. It is still not clear what the demand there will be from rest of UK students. A Report on future of HE in Scotland was recently published. Andrew Dilley agreed to circulate report to members.

III. Welsh Representatives.

Mergers – still on the table for the Universities of Glamorgan, Newport and Cardiff Metropolitan (UWIC). It is a matter of watching this space for further discussions and developments. **Cooperation:** There seems to be a good level of

cooperation between colleagues around Wales and some interesting partnerships developing. History Research Wales (HRW) clearly takes a leading role here. Also, Bangor is bringing the North American Association for the Study of Welsh Culture and History (NAASWCH) Conference to Wales in July.

Investment: Aberystwyth has recently announced that it will invest in more History staff alongside other departments.

Student Applications & Fees: October press release – Fall in Welsh university applications second-smallest in UK

(<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-wales-15430721>) **YET:** Universities to be rewarded for dropping fees (17 Jan 2012).

10. Reports from:

I. Historical Association.

11-12 May The Annual Conference will be held on these dates.

13. Two issues raised: PGCE History secondary places have been reduced, does this affect certain institutions? Numbers have gone down from 700 places in 2006/7 to 482 for 2012-13. There is continued rationalisation of provision overall and the numbers of HEI able to offer teacher-training, which is a major concern for the future of History as a subject in schools and beyond in HE.

14. HA public history committee has also expressed concern with what is happening in wider history in relation to archival training and archivist positions. Modern records archiving is under threat due to a number of factors, from the commercialisation of archives and particularly the expenses of archival services. The commercially produced *State Papers* is for example, too expensive digitally for most universities. Issues also arise through impact of FOI and Data Protection legislation.

II. Royal Historical Society.

Teaching Policy Committee – now an annual meeting with reps of exam boards; history doing ok in transition to EBAC and higher take up. A Level take up of history is OK.

History teachers need help – what can RHS do to help teachers in securing things as sources. How might HEI's offer assistance for this.

Historians Connect: A database of history academics willing to be put in touch with history teachers in school to assist in providing expertise and advice on primary sources and related issues http://www.history.org.uk/resources/primary_news_1284.html

III. Institute of Historical Research.

IV. Postgraduate representative.

11. Any Other business.

12. Dates of Future meetings:

- Saturday 19 May 2012.
- Plenary 17 November 2012: