

## **Minutes of the 37th Meeting of the English UK Main Board**

Held at: English UK, 219 St John Street, London EC1V 4LY

Date: 12.45 on Thursday 17 November 2011

Present: Sue Edwards (Chair), John Barnett, Sarah Cooper, Michael Cornes, Jane Dancaster, Caroline Hugo, Steve Phillips, Sarah Schechter, Graham Simpson, Kevin McNally from 13.15

Attending: Tony Millns

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### ***Constitutional business***

#### **1. Apologies for absence and declaration of interest**

Apologies had been received from Richard Day and Shane Wilkinson, and from Andrew Hjort as Chair of APSB attending the Board.

Jane Dancaster declared an interest in item 6 of the agenda and it was agreed that she would not take part in the discussion or decision.

#### **2. Minutes of the meeting on 16 June 2011**

The Minutes of the 35<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board on 16 June 2011 were agreed to be an accurate record, with the amendment that Sarah Cooper is mentioned as being among those present twice.

#### **3. Minutes of the meeting on 5 September 2011**

The Minutes of the 36<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board on 5 September 2011 were agreed to be an accurate record.

#### **4. Matters arising and updates**

The Board noted the reports in paper B37/1. TM confirmed that a letter had been received from Neil Hughes of UKBA to say that students transferring from a college which has closed may use an existing SELT score if its validity is still current.

The Board noted under dates for future meetings that because the date for this meeting was pushed back, there may not be sufficient business to justify a meeting in January for which the papers would have to be prepared before Christmas, barely 5 weeks from now. It was agreed that SE and TM would consider this and propose a way of dealing with any decisions that do need to be taken, eg by circulation.

## **5. Membership of the Association**

The Board noted the reports in paper B37/2. A member questioned the description of International Quest's summer programmes as 'high quality'. The action proposed on the debt from Unite was agreed.

## **6. Change to Article 26**

After discussion of the points in paper B37/3, the Board agreed unanimously to propose a change to Article 26; to propose that the maximum term as a director shall be 12 consecutive years; and to put the requisite Special Resolution to all members in a postal ballot, with an explanation of the rationale for the change.

## **7. Nominations Committee**

The Board considered paper B37/4. It agreed the draft terms of reference for the Nominations Committee, and agreed the suggested composition, with the amendment that the Nominations Committee should have 5 rather than 4 members, two of them being members of the current Board but from different sectors. It was agreed that SC would be one of these two members as vice-chair of the Board.

TM indicated that he would consider who the other members might be and report back.

### ***Matters for discussion and decision***

## **8. Student Visa and Accreditation issues**

The Board considered and endorsed the approaches outlined in paper B37/5. Members shared perceptions of the situation and agreed that English UK should continue to devote significant time and effort to lobbying in whatever ways might be effective on the issues. The letter to Damian Green MP, Immigration Minister, following our meeting with him on 3 November, was noted, along with the fact that the current difficulties in which UKBA finds itself make it unlikely that Ministers will want to be seen to be making concessions.

## **9. Centre closures and the SESF**

The Board noted the reports on the three centre closures contained in paper B37/6, and the further report circulated subsequently on the Regency closure, some aspects of which TM indicated are proving problematic (eg Romanians on work experience courses).

The total cost to the SESF is likely to be around £35,000.

The Board noted the amount of work which closures created for the office, and asked for its thanks to be passed on to the whole staff team and especially to Alice Marcolin and Laura Underwood, who have taken on a high proportion of the extra work.

The Board also asked for due thanks to be given publicly through the newsflash to centres which have accommodated displaced students on courses, particularly those which have taken significant numbers.

## **10. Sponsorship of StudyWorld**

The Board agreed the recommendation in paper B37/7, to allow (with important provisos) education institutions to be one of the sponsor categories for StudyWorld 2012 and subsequent

years. TM and Siobhan Baccas were asked to consider the sponsorship package and its pricing.

#### **11. Budget 2012 and subscriptions**

MC spoke to paper B37/8 and after discussion, the Board agreed:

- That the assumptions outlined were reasonable as far as could be seen at the moment
- The draft budget for 2012 (excluding for the moment any subscription increase)
- A proposed 2% increase in subscriptions for 2012
- A postal ballot of all members on this point
- A revised budget to incorporate the 2% increase if the vote is in favour.

#### ***Matters for report and information***

#### **12. APSB 16 June 2011**

The Board noted the Minutes of the Accreditation and Professional Services Board meeting on 16 June 2011.

#### **13. APSB 2 November 2011**

The Board noted the Minutes of the Accreditation and Professional Services Board meeting on 2 November 2011.

#### **14. Enterprises Board, 29 September 2011**

GS spoke to the Minutes of the meeting of the Enterprises Board on 29 September 2011. The Board commended both the overall level of activity and the performance of StudyWorld in 2011.

#### **15. Finance Panel, 14 October 2011**

MC spoke to the Minutes of the Finance Panel meeting on 14 October 2011. He noted the clarification on the VAT exemption for English UK subscriptions. The Board endorsed the proposal to take a new mortgage with NatWest at around 4.5% interest, fixed for 5 years.

#### **16. Accreditation UK Executive Board, 28 July 2011**

The Board noted the Minutes of the Accreditation UK Executive Board meeting on 28 July 2011. CH said that the loss of the word 'excellence' (as in 'points of excellence') in the change to 'areas of strength' was a retrograde step. SE and TM outlined the work done by AH, Mark Rendell and Liz McLaren to put judgements about outstanding areas of provision on a more rational and defensible footing.

#### **17. Accreditation UK Executive Board, 2 November 2011**

The Minutes of this meeting had not been received from the British Council, so this item was deferred.

CH asked if the mapping of ISI criteria to Accreditation UK criteria done by Liz McLaren could be circulated to members to help them prepare for ISI inspections.

***Other business***

**18. Dates of meetings in 2011**

Subject to the comments above about the January meeting, the 2012 dates were agreed.

**19. Other urgent business**

There was no other business and the meeting closed at 15.10.