

**British Philosophical Association**  
**Executive Committee Meeting: Friday March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007**  
**DRAFT MINUTES**

**Present:** Jo Wolff, Brad Hooker, Helen Beebee, Dudley Knowles, Dan Hutto, Tom Sorell, M.M. McCabe

**In attendance:** Sacha Stephens

**1. Apologies:** John Dupré, Adrian Moore

**2. Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 6 October 2006 were approved.

**3. Matters Arising (not otherwise appearing)**

**Newsletter:** Jo reported that a newsletter had been produced and was available on the website at [www.britphil.ac.uk/nwsltrn06.htm](http://www.britphil.ac.uk/nwsltrn06.htm).

**4. Committee Membership, Officers and Elections**

The Executive Committee members whose term finishes in summer 2007 are Stephen Clark, John Dupré and Tom Sorell. Tom was unable to stand for re-election, having served two terms; however he agreed to be co-opted onto the committee to continue his work on schools issues.

Tony McWalter would cease to be a co-opted member of the committee from summer 2007. Co-opted members from summer 2007 would therefore be Gordon Finlayson and Tom Sorell.

Dan Hutto agreed to remain as a supernumerary member of the Committee to continue his work as Treasurer.

Sacha would email BPA members inviting them to stand for election, and make the necessary arrangements for holding elections.

**5. President's Report**

**i) AHRC Postgraduate Matters**

**a) Future Post-graduate competitions**

Brad reported that he had written to the AHRC in October, following consultation with members, outlining some of members' concerns about the AHRC's proposals for radical changes to the system for allocating postgraduate funding. (Such funding will now be allocated on the basis of periodic institutional bids, so that the burden of selecting students for AHRC awards will fall on Departments rather than the AHRC, and the number of awards Departments will be allocated will be pre-determined. Brad's letter has been posted on the website, at [www.britphil.ac.uk/BHahrcx6.htm](http://www.britphil.ac.uk/BHahrcx6.htm).)

Negotiations with the AHRC were ongoing.

## **b) Post-graduate panel nomination**

Brad reported that the AHRC had advertised for new members of the Postgraduate panel, which had not been its previous practice, and it had not informed or consulted either the existing Panel or, apparently, the subject communities about this change.

## **ii) Letter to HEFCE Concerning University of London School of Advanced Study**

The BPA had been asked by HEFCE to comment on the Institute of Philosophy at the School of Advanced Study, as part of a funding review of SAS. Following consultation with members, Brad had sent a letter to HEFCE concerning BPA members' views on the value and significance of the Institute of Philosophy to the discipline, the effectiveness of its communication with members, and its future strategic development.

## **6. Secretary's Report**

### **i) AHRC Post-Graduate Submission Rate Monitoring**

Jo reported that he had made a further attempt to persuade the AHRC to publicize their policy regarding late submitters who have had delayed completion due to serious medical problems. The AHRC reported that they would, in future, make their position clear and public.

### **ii) European Research Index for the Humanities**

The ERIH listing of journals in Philosophy has now been published at:

[www.esf.org/research-areas/humanities/activities/research-infrastructures.html](http://www.esf.org/research-areas/humanities/activities/research-infrastructures.html)

It was noted that the list is better than the previous draft, but that the existence of the list was to be regretted, as it is likely to have a distorting effect on publications in the future and will encourage simplistic use of metrics, even though the AHRC and HEFCE have distanced themselves from the list for the time being.

### **iii) RAE**

#### **a) And web publications.**

A member had pointed out a difficulty with papers posted on a dept website for RAE purposes, in that for an accepted paper this would be a breach of copyright. The BPA has worked with several publishers to find a way round this problem.

#### **b) The future of the RAE:**

A document has been set out by HEFCE. Details remain obscure but the main message seems to be that peer review in the humanities will be a continuing part of the picture.

[www.hefce.ac.uk/research/assessment/reform/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/research/assessment/reform/)

#### **iv) AHRC budget cuts.**

Owing to government switching funding away from the Research Councils at short notice the AHRC decided to reduce by half the number of awards in the latest Research Leave round. While it was accepted that the AHRC was in a difficult position, it was questioned whether this was the best solution. However the decision has already been made.

[www.ahrb.ac.uk/news/news\\_pr/2007/AHRC\\_statement\\_on\\_funding.asp](http://www.ahrb.ac.uk/news/news_pr/2007/AHRC_statement_on_funding.asp)

#### **7. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report for the 6 months to 31 March 2007 was tabled. Assuming all outstanding membership renewals were paid, a profit of just over £1000 was projected for the year to September 07, though this did not take into account the costs of the design of the new website and logo.

40 individual members, 1 learned society, and 15 departments had not yet renewed their membership. There had been new subscriptions of 30 individual members, 2 lifetime members, 1 learned society and 1 department.

#### **8. School issues**

Tom reported that the event for schoolteachers, held in Manchester, had been a success, although attendance was not as high as had been hoped (around 20) and the event had been quite expensive to advertise and run. Presentations were made by Brad, Simon Blackburn, and Anthony O'Hear.

Tom also reported that relations with the AQA had improved, lessening the need for this kind of event.

#### **9. Website and Logo**

Jo reported that the domain name [www.bpa.ac.uk](http://www.bpa.ac.uk) had now been organized, and that the design of the new website was well in hand. Hosting the site at Birmingham had proved to be impossible, since the University would not host sites using their own Content Management System, but a commercial host had been found. This would cost just under £300 per year. It was agreed to use this host for the foreseeable future.

A graphic designer had been commissioned to produce a logo for the BPA. The Committee saw various designs and decided on a preferred design.

#### **10. Benchmarking**

Helen reported that the revised Benchmarking Statement had now been approved and had been sent out to all Departments by the QAA.

#### **11. Philosophy at University of Central England**

The Committee was pleased to note that UCE had approved Mark Addis's proposal to offer philosophy as a 'minor' degree subject, although it was understood that the University had not yet agreed to provide the resources required to offer this programme.

**12. Next meeting**

The next meeting would be held in October or November 2007; date to be decided nearer the time.

**13. AOB**

There was no other business.