UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

Minutes for the Planning Review Group (PRG) held at 9am on 30th October 2012 in John Usher, Northcote House.

**Present:**

Prof. Neil Armstrong- Senior DVC (Chair)

Prof. Janice Kay- DVC Education

Prof. Mark Overton- DVC External Affairs

Prof. Nick Talbot- DVC Research and Knowledge Transfer

Michele Shoebridge- Deputy Registrar and Director of Academic Services

Andrew Connolly- Director of Finance

Steve Chadwick- Director of Strategic Planning and Change

James Hutchinson- CE of Students’ Guild

Prof. Robert Van de Noort – College Dean

Prof. Susan Banducci – Associate Dean, Education

Prof. Debra Myhill – Associate Dean, Research and Knowledge Transfer

Paul Beerling- College Manager

Hannah Pike- Assistant College Manager, Research and Finance

Joanna Lunnon- Assistant College Manager, Infrastructure and Planning, Research and Finance

**In Attendance:**

Dr Nicki Horseman- Assistant Director Strategic Planning and Change

Suzanne Baxter- Strategic Finance Analyst

Steph Selway- Strategic Planning Officer

12.3 **Financial Outturn**

Overall the Finance Director said there were only a few standout items that he wanted to highlight.

1. International PGT income was a significant shortfall
2. Gross research income budget for 12/13 was on a downward trend compared to the out-turn and the previous year, however staffing costs were budgeted to grow.

The College responded that:

1. International PGT targets had fallen short in the past. This year’s targets were more realistic and showed a smaller difference between plans and outturn.
2. The College commented that one Research Centre (Egenis) had come to the end of its funding by the ESRC, and that it would take time to replace this funding. In addition, 2010/11 was a prolific year in terms of research grant applications, so there is a trough to be expected from this peak. Future years show an upward trend. The College noted that its FTE research income was above the median of the competitor group.

12.4 Discussion was had around the nature of Research targets and the College suggested that the typical fluctuations in relation to application and income patterns meant that rolling three or five year targets were a more appropriate measure than an annual snapshot. The College confirmed that work was taking place to increase the awards won by existing staff, as well as to recruit further staff.

12.6 **Strategy and Performance Review**

The College Dean then led a short section detailing the College’s performance and planned strategy, explaining that the planned growth in student numbers was an opportunity for the College to strengthen its disciplines, but that this required additional investments in academic staff to ensure that SSRs, NSS and employability would not be adversely affected.

12.7 The vision for the College was to attain a Top 10 position for all disciplines. There was an overarching need to reduce SSRs from NSS, Employability and REF. It would also enable the further growth in student numbers, especially in PGT programmes. The College was doing very well in terms of Internationalization (especially in Law, IAIS and GSE). Cornwall remained a challenge, but the College was investing in developing a distinctive Politics provision with close synergies to the ESI. In terms of developing interdisciplinarity, the Strategy and Security Institute had been set up and was developing according to plan

12.17 **Space**

The College had put forward some significant plans for growth and commented that they had considered the space implications for this. Longer term a more strategic solution to space issues was planned, and evidence of this was to come in further meetings of the Group. The Professional Services support provision was also addressed, and although at the time it was agreed to be sufficient, this was also an area highlighted for attention in future meetings.

12.19 **Student Intake Targets**

The Director of Strategic Planning and Change opened discussion by noting that overall he was happy with the targets as they had been set, and felt there was substance behind projections for growth. Previously submitted numbers had been in some areas slightly higher, for instance for Politics in Cornwall, however the group was assured that the newer figure represented reliable baselines for financial planning. The group agreed that the targets should not hinder Admissions from recruiting above and beyond this if applicants of sufficient quality were present.

12.22 **Staffing**

The existing 2013/14 staffing plans were described as modest by the group in line with the growth the College hoped to achieve, however the College had additionally requested 8 academic posts and 1 professional service post outside of this. The group requested further financial data to support their decision.

**Date of Next Meeting:** 10:30-12:30, 10th January 2013, Ted Wragg, Northcote House