

Review of the University of London's

School of Advanced Study

July 2000

Purpose of the Review

To assess the work, activities and contribution of the University of London's School of Advanced Study in relation to the funding made available by the Higher Education Funding Council and to advise the Council on the future funding of the School

Context

1. The School of Advanced Study is one of the University's 'central' institutes. Others include the British Institute in Paris, Courtauld Institute of Art and the University Marine Biological Station at Millport. Unlike the constituent colleges of the University which are directly funded by HEFCE, these central institutes receive HEFCE funds indirectly through the University of London.

2. The School of Advanced Study was formally constituted in 1994 and is managed by a Dean of School. Institute Directors, with the Dean, make up the School's policy-making body, the Directorate. The School comprises the following institutes of advanced study:

<i>Institute</i>	<i>Date established</i>
<i>Institute of Historical Research</i>	1921
<i>Warburg Institute</i>	1944
<i>Institute of Advanced Legal Studies</i>	1947
<i>Institute of Commonwealth Studies</i>	1949
<i>Institute of Germanic Studies</i>	1950
<i>Institute of Classical Studies</i>	1953
<i>Institute of Latin American Studies</i>	1965
<i>Institute of United States Studies</i>	1965
<i>Institute of Romance Studies</i>	1989
<i>Institute of English Studies</i>	1999

3. The institutes are located close together, in and around the Senate House building of the University of London. They differ from the other University of London central institutes in that they operate exclusively at postgraduate level.

4. The stated mission of the School of Advanced Study is to serve national and international interests in the promotion and facilitation of research and advanced study in the humanities and social sciences.

5. The total income to the School in 1998-99 is shown below. The HEFCE grant figure includes £3.9m 'special factor' funding (explained in paragraphs 8 and 10) and formula funding and premiums (see paragraph 9).

Income	Amount
<i>HEFCE Grants</i>	£5.455M
<i>Tuition fees</i>	£0.694M
<i>Research Grants and contracts</i>	£1.461M
<i>Other Income</i>	£1.662M
<i>Donations</i>	£0.118M
<i>Interest</i>	£0.214M
Total	£9.604M

6. The main activities of the institutes include:

- Library and other information services
- Seminars, workshops and conferences
- Research
- Fellowship programmes
- Publication programmes
- Research-related teaching and training.

7. Whilst sharing the commonalities listed above, the institutes are remarkably varied in the nature and scale of what they provide. Seven institutes have their own specialist libraries; three others rely instead on the specialist library collections of the University of London Library to service the needs of their academic community.

Funding the School of Advanced Study

8. The HEFCE funds the School of Advanced Study through its parent body the University of London. The University receives teaching funds based on student numbers together with a specialist premium; this is known as 'formula funding'. Resources are also attracted for research through various forms of R funding. In addition the Senate receives significant non-formula funds known as 'special factor' funding. The School of Advanced Study receives some £3.9 million of 'special factor' funding.

Formula funds and premiums

9. A specialist institutions advisory group reported in March 1998 (HEFCE 98/10) on the most effective way for the new funding method for teaching to be implemented in specialist institutions. This recommended the size and extent of any additional premium weighting on the standard teaching resource to account for extra costs in specialist institutions. The University of London Senate receives a 10 per cent premium to the standard teaching resource plus an additional premium of 53 per cent agreed as appropriate by the Funding Council at the time.

Non-formula funding

10. Some institutions receive funding in addition to that which is built into the formula. These 'special factor' funds are made available to support unique regional and national facilities and the development of particular policy initiatives. Some specialist institutions

acquire these funds through a bidding process (CVE, Minority subjects and the Former Soviet and Eastern European Studies, FSEES). Other special funds such as London Whole Institution (see below) and Museums and Galleries funding are regional and national facility allocations. The focus of this review is to consider the appropriateness of the London Whole Institution 'special factor' funding allocation to the School of Advanced Study.

London Whole Institution funding (LWI)

11. The largest single source of non-formula funding to any specialist institution is London Whole Institution funding. In September 1993 the HEFCE Board considered the outcome of a value for money study and agreed that the 'Senate Advanced Institutes' would be non-formula funded via LWI. Of this funding, some £3.9m goes via the University for internal distribution to the institutes (see paragraph 12 and Annex 1).

The composition and funding of the School of Advanced Study

12. The table below shows the student FTEs, the RAE grades and research active staff (volume) and the internal funding allocations to each of the institutes of the School of Advanced Study. The data relating to student numbers and finance are for 1998-99 and there have been subsequent changes to this data/ the data relating to the Research Assessment Exercise are for 1996.

<i>Institutes</i>	<i>Students FTEs</i>	<i>RAE Grades</i>	<i>Volume: Research staff</i>	<i>Teaching Grant T</i>	<i>Total Research Grant</i>	<i>Special Factor Funding (LWI)</i>
Advanced Legal Studies	28.5	4	6	£20,000	£91,020	£819,081
Commonwealth	27.5	5 / 5	4	£32,812	£102,891	£278,280
Historical Research	2	4	13	£2,718	£197,833	£857,163
Latin American Studies	50.5	5*	5	£72,972	£143,163	£287,043
United States Studies	20.5	4	1	£37,442	£12,636	£115,864
Warburg	23	4	11	£32,148	£157,795	£868,507
English Studies	8	-	-	£20,935	£0	£72,189
Romance Studies	0	(*)	-	£0	£0	£57,356
Germanic Studies	0	5*	1	£0	£23,452	£173,516
Classical Studies	0	5*	0.25	£0	£4,784	£329,000
Totals				£219,035	£733,574	£3.9M

(*) The Institute of Romance Studies made no submission in 1996. It achieved a 5 rating in 1992.

13. The table highlights the variations between the institutes. For example, student numbers vary from 50 FTEs in one institute to zero in some others; the scores for the RAE also vary, but with a significant variation in the number of research active staff. For example, in 1996 the number of research active staff ranges from 13 in the Institute of Historical Studies to less than 2 in three other institutes. In addition, the table below shows that some institutes have their own major specialist library whilst others rely on the University of London library.

<i>Institutes</i>	<i>Total Income</i>	<i>HEFCE Grant</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Library stock</i>	<i>Readers</i>
<i>Classical Studies</i>	£0.46m	£0.37m	11	97,000	6,626
<i>Legal Studies</i>	£2.6m	£1.03m	49	248,000	5,837
<i>Historical Research</i>	£2.13m	£1.13m	55	160,000	4,416
<i>Warburg</i>	£1.3m	£1.11m	33	308,000	1,858
<i>Germanic</i>	£0.30m	£0.22m	6.6	91,000	1,607
<i>Commonwealth</i>	£0.74m	£0.44m	15	177,000	953
<i>Latin American</i>	£0.86m	£0.52m	16.5	17,000	583
<i>U.S. Studies</i>	£0.39m	£0.17m	4	No library	-
<i>English</i>	£0.17m	£0.10m	4	No library	-
<i>Romance</i>	£0.09m	£0.06m	2	No library	-

14. It was therefore against this background that it was considered necessary to review the work and activities of the School of Advanced Study and to advise on whether the present funding levels are justified.

Review Procedure

15. A review panel of external specialists was set up to review and assess the work, activities and contribution of the School of Advanced Study in relation to the funding made available by the Council. The Panel was asked to scrutinise the costs, flow of funds and to make recommendations for the future funding of the School. Terms of reference for the review are shown in Annex 2; the Panel membership is shown in Annex 3.

16. The Panel received comprehensive documentation from the School. This, in essence, was the formal presentation of its case for continued funding. The Panel visited the School on two occasions. They met the Vice-Chancellor, senior officers of the University, the Dean, and institute Directors. In the course of visits to each institute they saw the specialist libraries and met institute staff. Each institute made available additional documentation during the visits to further inform the Panel's deliberations.

The Panel's conclusions and recommendation

17. There is a very wide variation between the institutes in terms of size, organisational arrangements, research, income and specialist facilities. Indeed, each institute has its own unique mission and policy.

18. It is the specialist library collections that are the essence of the institutes. Several of the libraries are leaders in their field nationally. All of the libraries are well managed by expert professional staff. They are the significant resource within the School and are critical to the functioning of most of the institutes and are of national, and often international, significance.

19. The institutes provide a centre for seminars, conferences and visiting fellows in an important location. Most of what the institutes do in practice is promoting and facilitating research through the provision of specialist library resources and organising national and international conferences and research seminars, publications and other information services - a type of intellectual altruism. This work is often of the highest standard, seen as central to the UK's research strengths in relevant fields, and often as an international resource. In addition the institutes undertake research of their own and thus make submissions with the RAE. Their valuable research facilitation role, however, does not easily fit with the requirements of the RAE and, taken together with the limited numbers of academic staff in some institutes, means that the nature of the institutes' work and the requirements of the RAE are not coterminous. The RAE is considered by some institutes to be irrelevant to their core purpose. Indeed, some institutes claimed that the RAE inhibited their research facilitation and sustaining role.

20. If the *raison d'être* of the School of Advanced Study, with subject institutes, is to serve the wider community nationally and internationally there is no logic in transferring the management of the institutes to constituent colleges of the University of London. There will be much more chance to promote the democratic and collaborative functions of the institutes if they are part of an organisation independent of college affiliations.

21. As such an organisation, however, the School could well develop further its leadership role and potential. There have been some specific advantages to the institutes from being members of a larger organisation, particularly in relation to library catalogues, premises and payroll management. At the same time, there is, in the view of Panel members, scope for more inter-disciplinary initiatives to be taken by the School, along the lines of those noted in Annex 4, in the hope that its overarching function would become progressively more intellectual as well as managerial. Panel members and some institute Directors see scope for more entrepreneurial and innovative action by the School, and for greater assertiveness vis-à-vis institutes, while respecting their diverse missions.

24. The specialist libraries belonging to individual institutes are unquestionably a valuable resource for the humanities and should be preserved and developed. The synergy between the libraries and other activities of the institutes is highly prized by institutes and their subject communities and should continue; there would be a significant loss if the libraries were to be disaggregated in any way.

The Panel's recommendations

25. The Panel is satisfied, on the basis of the review, that the School merits the continuation of its special funding. For the future, the level of such funding should be determined on the basis of quinquennial peer review encompassing all the activity of the institutes and of the School as a whole. The RAE is an inappropriate measure for judging the value of the research facilitation activity in the School and funding for research should be determined through the peer review process proposed rather than through the RAE. Significant added value derives from the integration of research libraries and other forms of research facilitation in the institutes. Separation of their funding streams should be avoided, since the capacity for some virement between library and non-library functions is important to the financial and managerial flexibility of the Institutes.

26. Pending the forthcoming review of the University of London Library, however, and the possibilities it offers of taking a strategic view of research library provision in London, the Panel makes no firm recommendation as to the stream through which the above funding should be delivered. The existing provision should, in its view, be continued for another year, that is for 2001-2002. Thereafter, while funding for teaching should remain allocated through formula funding, a single stream of funding for all other activities could continue to be delivered by the Council, which might invite a body such as the Arts and Humanities Research Board (AHRB) or the ESRC to conduct peer review exercises on its behalf. Alternatively, - although we understand that the University of London would regard such a transfer as inappropriate - the Council could transfer the funding *en bloc* to the AHRB, for administration as institutional funding on lines analogous to those adopted for museums and galleries. Whichever approach is adopted, the first peer review might take place in the third year of the new system. Since the University of London gains special benefits from the institutes, the University should continue to provide for the institutes' capital and infrastructure needs.

FLOW OF FUNDS

Annex 1

University of London -School of Advanced Study and Central Institutes

Resources

T Funding	£2,886,108
R funding	£2,468,481
Moderation of T & R	£23,584
Special funding	£8,900,000
Total Grant	£14,304,004

Museums Galleries and Collections	£655,250
Marine Biology Field Station	£161,651
Specialist Collections in the Humanities	£857,475
London Whole Institution funding (LWI)	£5,057,468
Institute of Zoology	£1,530,995
CVE Development	£27,811
Minority Subjects (SSEES) [Ends summer 2000]	£452,722
Former Soviet and Eastern European Studies (SSEES)	£182,459

➤ School of Advanced Studies	
Institute of advanced Legal Studies	} £3.97m
Institute of Commonwealth Studies	
Institute of Historical Research	
Institute of Romance Studies	
Institute of Classical Studies	
Institute of Germanic Studies	
Institute of Latin American Studies	
Institute of United States Studies	
Warburg Institute	
➤ Other Activities and Funding	
London Extra costs - £0.66m	
TPMDE - £0.29m	
Other activities - £0.13	

Annex 2

Terms of reference of the review panel – School of Advanced Study

1. To review and assess the work, activities and contribution of the School of Advanced Study in relation to the funding made available by the Higher Education Funding Council for England and to advise the Council on future funding of the School.
 2. The review should include:
 - an assessment of income, costs and value for money
 - an assessment of the contribution which the School makes within the relevant subject communities, in London, nationally and internationally
 - options for future funding arrangements which will most effectively sustain that contribution.
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Annex 3

Members of the Review Panel

<i>Name</i>	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Specialist subject area</i>
<i>Professor Sir Martin Harris CBE Chair of the Panel</i>	University of Manchester	Humanities
<i>Professor Dr H L Wesseling</i>	Netherlands Institute for Advanced Study in the Humanities and Social Sciences	History
<i>Derek Law</i>	University of Strathclyde	Information
<i>Professor Emeritus John Grant</i>	University of Glasgow	Law
<i>Professor Pat Easterling</i>	University of Cambridge	Classics
<i>Dr David Baker</i>	University of East Anglia	Information
<i>Professor William Paterson</i>	University of Birmingham	German

Annex 4

Inter-disciplinary initiatives promoted or supported by the School

Inter-disciplinary Fellowships scheme (6-8 Fellowships annually on themes involving the interests of 2 or more Institutes)

Annual John Coffin memorial lecture on the History of Ideas

Annual School conference on inter-disciplinary themes (2000: historical and conceptual perspectives on human rights, organised by IALS, IHR and IUSS)

“Core” School project on the Reception of British Authors in Europe (centrally led, incorporates elements provided by IES, IGS, IRS, Philosophy)

Joint research by Warburg and Classical Studies on Renaissance Epigraphic Manuscripts

Collaborative MA teaching (History of the Book (IES) incorporating components from the fields of Italian and Germanic book history; interchange of teaching on human rights between ICthS and ILAS)

Book series (Philosophy Programme) on the History of the Problems of Philosophy, based on a joint Warburg/Philosophy Programme/Classical Studies seminar series

Other joint seminars e.g. Caribbean Studies (ICthS/ILAS), legal history (IHR/IALS)

Palaeography summer schools, jointly provided by staff from IES, IHR, Warburg (with King's College and University of London Library)