

SEN12D022

Title: Restructure of Faculty of Arts and Humanities
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Issue

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities will be reorganised from nine to four Schools with effect from September 2014.

Recommendation

Recipients are invited to note the proposal and the timetable for the restructure.

Resource Implications

None

Risk Implications

The restructure responds to risks to the core business of the University in teaching and research. In particular, small and medium sized schools:

- 1) are vulnerable to fluctuations in Admissions;
- 2) involve disproportionate administrative burdens.

The commitment of significant amounts of senior staff time to the management of a large number of Schools risks delaying full engagement with key corporate plan targets around research, education and the student experience, employability and internationalisation.

Equality and Diversity

The proposal does not impact on groups with protected characteristics.

Timing of decisions

The restructure will involve the formation of two new Schools (see below). Heads of School within the Faculty have been invited to propose their preferred configuration. Taking account of these views, the Dean will finalise the structure and the names of the new Schools by the end of June 2013. The structure will have regard for the relative size of the four Schools, the likely configuration of REF2020 Units of Assessment and the optimisation of UEA's profile nationally and internationally.

From July 2013 the HUM Faculty Executive will develop and take responsibility for delivery of an implementation plan. The new structure will take effect from September 2014.

Further Information

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Background

The restructure is central to the HUM Faculty Plan which identifies the need to: preserve the range of disciplines offered in the Faculty, support areas of excellence with appropriate resource, and focus staff time on priority areas including research, education and the student experience, employability, internationalisation and developing partnerships with non-academic organisations.

Discussion

The Faculty of Arts and Humanities currently operates 10 Schools, 9 following the ending of Music teaching at the end of 2013/14. With a number of challenges stemming from changing government policies confronting the Humanities in the coming period, there is a pressing need to reduce the number of Schools. Significant levels of staff time are currently given over to the management of a large number of small or medium sized schools. It is anticipated that fewer Schools will enable savings over time, allowing academic and administrative staff to focus on priority areas. For example, HUM underperforms on grant capture relative to its research ranking.

HUM's existing Schools represent commitments to a wide range of disciplines and the new structure seeks to maintain this range, allowing the retention of the distinctive disciplinary mix which has evolved at UEA as well as supporting interdisciplinary initiatives such as the BA Liberal Arts and the Humanities Foundation Year (both are currently located in the Faculty School).

While the Course is the primary point of identification for students, disciplinary identity as expressed in the current School structure is also important for both students and staff. It is therefore proposed that, where appropriate, Schools adopt a system of Sectors by which disciplinary identities and the working relationships they foster can be retained.

It is proposed that the Schools of History (HIS) and of Literature Drama and Creative Writing (LDC) will continue in their current form.

Two new Schools will be formed from the remaining seven existing Schools: American Studies (AMS), Art History and World Art Studies (ART), Film, Television and Media Studies (FTM), Humanities (HUM), Language and Communication Studies (LCS), Philosophy (PHI) and Political, Social and International Studies (PSI).

Heads of the new Schools will be appointed in Autumn 2013 following a process of external advertisement. The early appointment of these Heads will ensure their full involvement in the implementation of the new structure.

UEA consistently achieves Top Ten ranking in two Humanities disciplines: American Studies and Media Studies. This performance underpins two aspects of the proposed structure:

- 1) the retention of American Studies as a Sector (in contrast with many UK Universities which have retained American Studies programmes but not distinct academic units);
- 2) the consolidation of Media Studies provision (currently offered in two Schools, FTM and PSI) into one new Sector. During 2013/14 an interim Head of FTM would be responsible for drawing together teaching provision, addressing resource issues and research planning.

As part of the process of the movement of Schools to Sectors, it is recognised that some individual academics may wish to relocate in order to better align their research and teaching objectives within the new structure. However, no academic will be required to move as part of the restructure.

Existing research centres and units including Sainsbury Institute for Art (SIfA) and Centre for Japanese Studies (CJS) will continue to operate at the Faculty level.

From July onwards the Faculty Executive will produce an implementation plan which will put in place, in good time, the arrangements required to move to the new structure by September 2014.