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The Society has offices in Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow and London, as well as the main office in Leicester. All enquiries should be addressed to the Leicester office (see contents page for address).

The British Psychological Society was founded in 1901, and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1965. Its object is 'to promote the advancement and diffusion of a knowledge of psychology pure and applied and especially to promote the efficiency and usefulness of Members of the Society by setting up a high standard of professional education and knowledge'.

Extract from The Charter

News about Society matters and brief items for News of members are welcome. Please send to *The Psychologist* at the Society's office, or to psychologist@bps.org.uk. Subsystem notices: notices received from elected officers of subsystems of official meetings, events, conferences of Divisions, Sections, Branches and Special Groups of the Society are inserted free of charge. Items should be sent to susepp@bps.org.uk.

Higher education issues

THE fight to reband psychology as a laboratory-based discipline under the HEFCE Funding Method for Teaching continues, with the Joint Committee for Psychology in Higher Education (JCPHE, representing the BPS, the Experimental Psychology Society and the Association of Heads of Psychology Departments) responding to the latest consultation.

The response was prepared by Professor Dominic Abrams, Chair of JCPHE, supported and coordinated by the Research Board, with significant input from the Psychology Education Board. It commented on the general methodology that HEFCE proposes to adopt, but strong arguments were also made for a reassessment of the current banding of psychology.

- Concerns were expressed over the quality of the evidence upon which the costs of teaching are calculated. The methodology should be finalised on the basis of a clear consensus within the academic community.
- The true cost should be established by looking at the nature and needs of disciplines. There are dangers that the funding model will become overly prescriptive rather than responsive to the appropriate needs and costs of teaching resources.
- In previous assessments, HEFCE failed to distinguish between accredited and non-accredited courses resulting in a significant underestimation of the cost per student on accredited courses. The response outlined in detail the stringent requirements for

the graduate basis for registration (GBR) and the minimum resources that are expected.

- Rebanding has put serious pressure on staff:student ratios (SSRs), resulting in an increasing failure of departments to meet the requirements for GBR (20:1). This constitutes a serious threat to the discipline and to the quality of education that can be provided.
- Psychology is a science and should be funded as a science. The discipline is rooted in scientific methods and practices and requires students to become adept at statistical analysis, scientific methods and design, and requires knowledge of measurement in both biological and behavioural domains. Psychology research is funded by science-based research councils, and the Society is a member of the Science Council. Moreover, the QCA is moving to classify psychology as science in pre-tertiary education, and the discipline is continuing to undergo huge expansion at GCSE, AS- and A-level.
- The extent of the disquiet and concern about the

effects of the current banding of psychology was emphasised. As the discipline continues to grow in popularity and relevance, the net effect of the rebanding of psychology may be to reduce modal funding per science student. This is because the supposedly appropriate level of resource has been reduced substantially in what is arguably one of the most attractive areas of science (for example, against a baseline of a 7 per cent decrease in physics and a 28 per cent decrease in undergraduate enrolment overall, psychology had a 93 per cent increase between 1996/7 and 2003/4). Psychology is also one of the main recruiters of women into science.

In addition, a response to the HEFCE consultation on its Strategic Plan was prepared by Professor Nick Emler, Deputy Chair of the BPS Research Board. The response emphasised that the Society believes that a strategy for higher education should be founded upon a clear and appropriate vision of higher education, including what sets it apart from further or other

DRAFT MINUTES OF A SPECIAL GENERAL MEETING 9 December, 10am, 33 John Street, London WC1

Dr Graham Powell was in the chair and 10 members were present.

1. The result of the postal ballot for President 2007/8 was declared. Dr Pam Maras will serve as President Elect 2006/7 and will take up the office of President in 2007/8.
2. The result of the postal ballot concerning the Resolution 'That a London and Home Counties Branch be formed in accordance with Rule 36(d)' was declared as follows:
For 810 Against 55
Therefore the Resolution was carried.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE VACANCIES

The Standing Committee for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities (SCPEO) has responsibility for the implementation of the Society's Equal Opportunities Policy. Vacancies are pending. Are you:

- passionate about equal opportunities issues?
- able to attend four meetings a year and contribute to SCPEO activities?
- interested in furthering the aims of the committee?

We welcome expressions of interest from all membership grades within the Society, whether you are a Student Subscriber or a Fellow. You don't need to be an expert but you do need to be committed to equality and diversity and making it happen within the Society. SCPEO members have a range of experience and skills and we work together to support the Society fully on equality and diversity issues.

If you are interested in finding out more, then please contact us for an information pack. We can also put you in touch with current committee members, who are happy to answer questions and share their experience of SCPEO activities.

Information packs, including a post description and statement of interest form, are available from Felicity Hector on 0116 252 9507 or felhec@bps.org.uk. Deadline for returning statements of interest is Wednesday 19 April 2006.

Appointments to this committee are made by the Board of Trustees. Terms of office are normally for three years.

kinds of education, or for that matter from vocational training. The draft Strategic Plan is criticised for not having such a clear vision.

The response to the Strategic Plan also emphasised the need for HE teaching environments to be research-informed, and called for an acknowledgement of the difficulties surrounding this, given the inequality of research support via the RAE. It highlighted a lack of confidence in the teaching funding review as a result of its reliance on weak methodology. There is considerable suspicion in the academic community that there is an intention to split teaching and research. Teaching and research are indivisible and cannot be regarded as distinct activities.

The JCPHE also outlined the belief that the RAE presents a significant risk to the objectives of developing innovative forms of inquiry.

Past experience demonstrates that RAEs have encouraged conservatism in universities' research policies. Such exercises have certainly discouraged investment in interdisciplinary studies. The draft plan appears to offer no prospect of countering this effect.

The JCPHE hopes that these arguments will encourage HEFCE to revisit the banding issue for psychology. In due course, departments of psychology will be approached to provide evidence of the impact of the drop in funding to present to HEFCE. The BPS Scientific Officer is also preparing a statement for publication in *THES* to raise awareness in relation to this crucial issue.

□ *If you have queries regarding either of these responses or need more information, please contact Dr Lisa Morrison Coulthard, Scientific Officer (lismor@bps.org.uk).*

ETHICS COLUMN No.5 HOW THE INVESTIGATORY COMMITTEE WORKS

Many members are concerned about how a complaint, if it is made, will be considered by the BPS. The mechanism for this first involves a body called the Investigatory Committee.

The Investigatory Committee, which consists of nine senior chartered psychologists from a range of backgrounds, considers all complaints made to the Society and makes recommendations to the lay members of the Professional Conduct Board about whether there has been misconduct and whether a hearing or some action should take place.

Once a complaint has been received, the member who is the subject of the complaint is usually asked to respond to it, and the complainant is also given an opportunity to comment on that response.

All members of the Investigatory Committee read all the information provided during a complaint. A member of the committee, who will usually come from the relevant subsystem for the type of work complained about, will be asked to lead the committee's discussion, and will advise about accepted standards for that type of work. The committee members look at what evidence is available to support the accounts given and apply their common sense and experience to reach a decision, which will be made on the balance of probabilities.

There may be some dispute about what is appropriate behaviour in a particular context, for example, the committee is aware that two 'reasonable' psychologists looking at the same circumstances may arrive at different decisions without one of those decisions necessarily being unethical. In examining professional judgements, the committee pays particular attention to the process that was used to reach the decision, and in responding to a complaint members should therefore be prepared to explain the ways in which they made their decisions.

The committee also accepts that not all examples of poor work constitute misconduct, and that where the line between misconduct and poor-quality work falls is a matter of fact in the individual circumstances of each case. The committee takes the view that it is not appropriate to use the disciplinary procedure to give advice on standards where the poor work falls short of being misconduct. If they find themselves in the unfortunate position of having a complaint made against them, members may want to consider why complaints arose in relation to their work, even if no misconduct is found.

In deciding what recommendation to put forward, the committee uses a sliding scale that takes into account elements such as the seriousness of the allegation, the decision-making processes used, the potential harm, the strength of feeling among committee members and specialist knowledge. The committee tends towards caution and will usually appoint a panel to carry out further investigation where there is ambiguity about whether misconduct has occurred.

The process of investigating complaints can take time to ensure fairness to all parties, and inevitably delays can occur. For members and complainants this is a stressful period, but of the 42,000 members only about 120 are complained about in a year, and of these only about 10 to 15 matters are referred to a full hearing.

The complaints-handling process is set out in the Society's Statutes 14 and 15. More details about the complaints process are also available on the website or by contacting the Society's regulatory affairs team on 0116 254 9568, or at conduct@bps.org.uk.

SUBSYSTEM NOTICES

DIVISION OF COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

Annual Conference 2006 'Assertively Different'

Saturday 13 May 2006, Hamilton House, London

More details in February 2006.

To register please visit the BPS website www.bps.org.uk/conferences-&-events or call the BPS Conference Office (0116 252 9555).

Annual General Meeting and call for nominations

Saturday 13 May 2006, 10.20am at the National Union of Teachers, Mander Hall, Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1.

Nominations are invited for Chair-Elect, Honorary Secretary, Committee Members (two posts).

Nomination forms should be sent to the Honorary Secretary at the Society's offices by 20 March 2006. The nominations require a proposer and seconder who must be full members of the Branch, and the consent of the nominee to accept office, if elected, must be obtained in writing. Nomination forms will be circulated separately to Division Members.

CONSCIOUSNESS AND EXPERIENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY SECTION

10th Annual Conference

15–17 September 2006, St Anne's College, Oxford

Call for papers: 150-word abstract plus a 500-word summary or paper

on conference themes by 5 May 2006 to Michael Beaton, Department of Informatics, University of Sussex, Falmer, Brighton BN1 9QH. E-mail: M.J.S.Beaton@sussex.ac.uk.
Registration enquiries: Guy.Saunders@uwe.ac.uk. Other enquiries: m.velmans@gold.ac.uk. Full details on CEP website: www.bps.org.uk/conex/consciousness-experiential_home.cfm.

DIVISION OF OCCUPATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

CPD masterclass and workshop programme 2006

The 2006 Learning a Living programme runs from April to October. Highlights for April and May include:

Workshops

13 April – Maximising interpersonal relationships: FIRO Element B Accreditation

25 April – Career counselling: A practitioner's approach

11 May – Managing people through change: Keys for successful business transformation

24 May – Introduction to

appreciative inquiry as a performance improvement methodology

Full programme details via www.bps.org.uk/events/dopws06/. Further information – e-mail dopworkshops@bps.org.uk, or call Mandy Lindsay or Kerry Wood on 0116 252 9555. Book early to avoid disappointment as places are limited.

NORTHERN IRELAND BRANCH

50th Anniversary Conference and Celebration Dinner Dance
12–14 May 2006, Wellington Park Hotel, Malone Road, Belfast

Dinner dance on Saturday 13 May 2006; dress code is Formal.

For further information contact Anne Kerr (tel: 028 9097 4129; e-mail: n.ireland@bps.org.uk; web: www.nibps.org.uk).

DIVISION OF HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

Annual Conference 2006

13–15 September, Essex University

Deadline for abstract submissions for late posters – 8 June 2006.

Further details from: the conference website www.dhp2006.org.uk or

NATIONAL ASSESSORS TRAINING EVENT

17 May 2006 at Imago@Holywell Park, Sir Dennis Rooke Building, Holywell Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire.

This event is open to all National Assessors currently held on the register.

For general queries please contact Christine Grant. E-mail: chrgra@bps.org.uk; tel: 0116 252 9918.

YOUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU

Vacancy	Person specification	Information (closing date)
Board of Examiners in Health Psychology – Assessors for the Qualification in Health Psychology (Stage 2)	Chartered health psychologists with experience of supervising and assessing health-related projects at master's level or equivalent.	Alex Johnson – alejoh@bps.org.uk (28 April)
Board of Examiners in Clinical Neuropsychology – Chair	Practitioner full member neuropsychologist (at least five years) with experience of examining at postgraduate level in clinical neuropsychology and detailed knowledge and understanding of the process of examinations.	www.bps.org.uk/careers/society_qual/vacancies.cfm Jean Arnold – jeaarn@bps.org.uk , 0116 252 9518 (31 March)
Board of Examiners in Occupational Psychology – Assessors	At least five years' experience as a chartered occupational psychologist. Experience in assessing evidence and assessing the work of trainee occupational psychologists will be especially valuable.	www.bps.org.uk/careers/society_qual/vacancies.cfm John Duggan – johdug@bps.org.uk , 0116 252 9512
Board of Examiners in Forensic Psychology – Chair	Chartered forensic psychologist (at least five years) with experience of examining at postgraduate level in forensic psychology and detailed knowledge and understanding of the process of examinations.	www.bps.org.uk/careers/society_qual/vacancies.cfm Jean Arnold – jeaarn@bps.org.uk , 0116 252 9518 (24 March)
Board of Assessors in Clinical Psychology – Registrar	Chartered clinical psychologist (at least five years) with experience of examining at postgraduate level in clinical psychology and detailed knowledge and understanding of the process of examinations.	www.bps.org.uk/careers/society_qual/vacancies.cfm Alex Johnson – alejoh@bps.org.uk , 0116 252 9584 (31 March)
Standing Committee for the Promotion of Equal Opportunities – Committee members	Any grade of member, from student subscriber to Fellow, with an interest in equal opportunities issues.	see advert p.169

e-mail DHP2006@bps.org.uk.

For lower rates, register before 31 July. Student bursaries are available, send applications to Professor N. Rumsey, Chair of the DHP – from April until 8 June 2006. See conference website for details.

DIVISION OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Annual General Meeting

5 April 2006, at the MIC Hotel and Conference Centre, 81–103 Euston Street, London NW1.

Keynote speaker: Professor Louis Appleby, National Director for Mental Health.

Free to attend: This event is only available to DCP members of the Society. To book your place please visit our website.

For further details and a booking form please visit www.bps.org.uk/dcp/dcp-events.

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY SECTION

Annual Conference 2006

6–8 September, Jurys Inn, 245 Broad Street, Birmingham

This year's conference is dedicated to creating a common platform for the diverse and often competing strands of social psychology to come together in a spirit of open dialogue, discussion and debate. We therefore encourage applications from any area of research within the field.

Keynote speakers: Jack Dovidio (University of Connecticut), Steve Reicher (University of St Andrews) and Jonathan Smith (Birkbeck College, University of London).

Submission deadlines are 26 May for papers, workshops and symposia, 16 June for posters.

Further details are available from the conference website: www.socialpsychology.org.uk.

DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY SECTION

Annual Conference and call for submissions

7–9 September 2006, Royal Holloway University of London
Submissions are welcomed in any area of psychology relating to developmental issues for paper and poster presentations, symposia and workshops. The deadline for all submissions is 28 April 2006.

For more details, including information on submission, registration and accommodation, visit www.pc.rhul.ac.uk/sites/bps2006 or e-mail bps2006@rhul.ac.uk.

PSIGE

National PSIGE Conference 2006 'Equality and Diversity in the Third Age'

University of Sussex, 5–7 July

Themes: Social construction of ageing; Diversity – Enabling inclusion and user involvement; Innovative practice in service development; Psychotherapy with older people; Dementia care issues; Neuropsychology and rehabilitation; The politics of ageing and discrimination.

For further details see the BPS website, www.bps.org.uk or contact the BPS conference office on 0116 252 9555.

DIVISION OF SPORT & EXERCISE PSYCHOLOGY

Joint workshop with the FA and BASES

29 March, Cardiff

More details in February 2006 issue.

Annual General Meeting

Thursday 30 March, 9.15am to 10.15am, during the BPS Annual Conference in Cardiff.

More details in February 2006 issue.

The first volume of the 2006 *Sport and Exercise Psychology Review* will include the Division's Strategic Plan, which has been developed by the committee and led by Dr Barry Cripps. The plan will be discussed at the AGM.

DCP FACULTY OF LEARNING DISABILITIES

Advancing Practice Conference 27–29 March 2006 at The Hill Education and Conference Centre, Abergavenny, Wales.

See our website www.bps.org.uk/events/flid2006, e-mail flid@bps.org.uk, or call the BPS conference office on 0116 252 9555.

SPECIAL GROUP IN COACHING PSYCHOLOGY

1st Coaching Psychology Research Conference

City University, London, Monday 10 April 2006

Programme to include:

MEETING DATES

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 31 March 2006

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Friday 10 February 2006 (London)

Friday 17 March 2006 (Leicester)

Friday 5 May 2006 (London)

Friday 23 June 2006 (Leicester)

Friday 15 September 2006 (Leicester)

Thursday 26 October 2006 (London)

Friday 8 December 2006 (London)

REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 30 March 2006

Monday 24 April 2006

Monday 16 October 2006

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE BOARD

Friday 3 February 2006

Tuesday 4 April 2006

Tuesday 6 June 2006

Friday 8 September 2006

RESEARCH BOARD

Wednesday 29 March 2006 (followed by Spearman Medal Committee)

Thursday Friday 22 June 2006 (followed by Presidents' Award Committee)

provisional

Friday 20 October 2006 (followed by Visiting Psychologists Committee)

provisional

MEMBERSHIP AND PROFESSIONAL TRAINING BOARD

Friday 17 February 2006

Friday 16 June 2006

Thursday 14 September 2006

Friday 3 November 2006

PSYCHOLOGY EDUCATION BOARD

Thursday 9 March 2006

Thursday 29 June 2006

Thursday 19 October 2006

PUBLICATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS BOARD

Friday 31 March 2006 (during Annual Conference)

Friday 7 July 2006

Friday 3 November 2006

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT BOARD

Tuesday 14 March 2006 (OGM)

Tuesday 17 October 2006 (AGM)

FELLOWSHIPS COMMITTEE

Thursday 18 May 2006

Friday 29 September 2006

GRADUATE QUALIFICATIONS ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE

Thursday 2 March 2006

Thursday 27 April 2006

Thursday 22 June 2006

Thursday 7 September 2006

ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

Thursday 23 March 2006

Thursday 8 June 2006

Thursday 7 September 2006

STANDING COMMITTEE FOR THE PROMOTION OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Thursday 16 March 2006

Monday 5 June 2006

Thursday 21 September 2006

THE PSYCHOLOGIST POLICY COMMITTEE

Friday 19 May 2006

Friday 6 October 2006

ETHICS COMMITTEE

Thursday 30 March 2006

Thursday 25 May 2006

Thursday 27 July 2006

Thursday 28 September 2006

Thursday 30 November 2006

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

Thursday 2 March 2006

Thursday 22 June 2006

Thursday 14 September 2006

FUTURE SOCIETY CONFERENCES, ETC.

Annual Conference –

30 March–1 April 2006

A keynote from Professor David Lane (International Centre for the Study of Coaching at Middlesex University) – 'Coaching psychology research as a co-operative venture'; Some of the latest thinking and research in coaching psychology through research papers and poster sessions; Kristina Gyllensten CPsychol (Coaching Psychology Unit, Department of Psychology, City University, London) – 'The challenge of using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in coaching psychology research on a DPsych programme'; Professor Stephen Palmer (Coaching Psychology Unit, Department of

Psychology, City University, London) and Dr Alison Whybrow (University of Manchester) – 'Coaching psychologists: Their practice and opinions. A summary of the 2005 BPS SGCP Survey'; Roundtable discussion.

For further details and booking information see the News page of the SGCP website on www.coachingpsychologyforum.org.uk.

DEATHS

Gill Nyfield, formerly a director of SHL Group plc, died in January, aged 52.