

BRITISH PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION
Executive Committee meeting

Tuesday 28th May, 1.00-4.00pm
Room 243, 2nd floor, Senate House, London

DRAFT MINUTES

Present: Mark Addis, Maria Alvarez, David Bain, Michael Brady, John Callanan, Tim Crane, Michael Lacey, Bob Stern, Alessandra Tanesini.

1. Apologies

Anita Avramides, Kimberly Brownlee, Havi Carel, Brendan Larvor, Roxanna Lynch, Herjeet Marway, Tom Sorell.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

Approved.

3. Matters arising (MB)

Item 3/3/3/4, National Philosophy Open Day: This is taking place on June 28th 2013 in Manchester.

Item 3/10, Philosophy Foundation: done, see agenda item 9.

Item 5(b), AGM: the AGM took place at 12.00, 28th May 2013. MB will write the newsletter and arrange for distribution at Joint Session.

Item 7, AQA/Philosophy in Schools: (i) ML recommended that TS and ML represent the BPA on the 'expert panel', the main body for reviewing the proposed new syllabus. TS, ML, Howard Peacock, Stephen Law, and John Taylor to form an advisory group to TS and ML in this process.

(ii) Simon Kirchin will continue to represent the BPA on this issue (Howard Simmons did represent the BPA, but doesn't any more). MB to contact Helen Beebee to see if we want an additional BPA representative on this.

(iii) ML to draft list of teachers that we would be happy to endorse and put forward as examiners.

(iv) ML is happy for his teacher training model to be rolled out elsewhere in England. At the moment the model is for ML to book a room and catering in London, advertise the event (circa £195 per delegate), and focus on covering exactly the topics and material that teachers need, as well as inculcating various philosophical skills. Each event focuses on a different part of the syllabus, e.g. AS epistemology or A2 philosophy of religion. After discussion of how best to expand the training, we decided that MB would write to HoDs to ask who would be interested in doing this; we would then organize a meeting for interested parties.

(v) Not done, but we should continue to think of how to get more philosophy PhD students into teaching.

(vi) This was incomplete business from the December meeting. TS wrote a guidance document setting out criteria the team of writers can use for the Answers section of the website. ML hasn't checked the quality of the answers recently, but will keep an eye on this and hope to move the issue forward.

Item 8, GTA Employment: MB and RL produced the advice leaflet and circulated to HoDs and PG students.

ACTION: MB, ML

4. Committee members and officers 13-14 (MB)

The Committee welcomed one new member, Tom Stoneham, and welcomed back Tom Sorell, who is serving a term as a co-opted member. MA is leaving the Exec, and was thanked for all of her hard work for the BPA.

AA, MB, HC, and TC are at the end of their three-year terms in July 2014. MB will liaise with each to ask whether they wish to continue for a further term.

ACTION: MB

5. Director's report (MB)

(a) Gill Howie: MB reported the very sad news that Gill Howie, who served on the Exec from 2009-2012, died in March after a long struggle with illness. Gill did a lot of excellent work both in and beyond academia, and her contributions to the Exec and to the BPA WiP Committees were extremely valuable.

(b) Open Access: The BPA was consulted about the Open Access plans from a variety of sources, and took the following action: (i) we signed up to an Open Letter to *The Observer*, organized by Peter Mandler and A-HUG; (ii) MB wrote the BPA position paper on this, after gathering feedback from HoDs and Exec and circulated to HoDs, BPPA, facebook, website, etc.; MB thanked the Exec for their feedback and help in writing the report; (iii) MB replied to HEFCE consultation on OA on Marcy 25th on behalf of the BPA, and signed up to A-HUG's Joint Statement to RCUK and HEFCE.

(c) A-HUG, CDBU: The BPA joined the Campaign for the Defence of British Universities, and MB attended a meeting of the Arts and Humanities Users Group in March 2012. MB reported to Peter Mandler, Chair of A-HUG, that the BPA would welcome further development of the group, possibly along the lines of the Academy of Social Sciences, as the group's activities have proved valuable and satisfy a need for such a representative body in the arts and humanities. MB reported that the BPA are willing to provide some financial support for this body, although we need to bear in mind that our income and reserves are relatively small. MB will remain contact person for the BPA.

The BPA also joined up to the Knowledge Economy campaign, which was originally an initiative of UCU General Secretary Sally Hunt, and represents a broad, non-partisan campaign alliance which will argue for the importance of investment in post-16 education. One of the current aims

of the group is to gain Parliamentary support for an Early Day Motion directed towards this end. MB to ask MM to respond to the request for a short blog representing a philosophical perspective on the social and economic importance of investing in education.

(d) REF additional output assessors: MB liaised with Alexander Bird about additional appointments in certain areas. David Owens has been accepted, and we've endorsed John Skorupski. MB passed on a list of names and affiliations for an expert on assessing impact cases for philosophy in schools, to let AB and panel decide. MB circulated a message to HoDs letting them know that AB is available to answer any questions people might have about the REF; HoDs and research directors should contact AB directly.

(e) Online presence/website: MB created a BPA Facebook page, which has been advertising conferences, workshops, and other philosophical events. There has been some interest, but MB will think of ways of creating a bigger online presence. MB to liaise with HM about Twitter account; will also contact Angie Hobbs.

ACTION: MB, HM

6. Finance report (Mark A)

Mark A reported that as of May 2013 we have a balance of just over £13,000. The rise in the balance since May 2012 is mainly due to decreased expenditure on IT after a redesign of the website in 2012 and other computing issues. Advertising from the website has decreased, and it is difficult to see this as generating additional funds in future without a significant increase in website traffic.

7. Schools report (ML)

ML reported on a letter circulated from Glenys Stacey, Chief Regulator at Ofqual, to Michael Gove, regarding reform of A level qualifications. ML noted that there has been no agreed timetable for reviewing Philosophy and Religious Studies, but if the subjects are dropped from A level then we might expect to see a drop in numbers of philosophy students at university level from 2017 onwards.

ML reported that he has not heard back from the AQA regarding the timetable for the formation of an expert panel (see Matters Arising).

8. Recruitment Drive (MB)

MB reported that HM has circulated to him instructions for a new recruitment drive; the basic idea is that each member of the Exec is assigned a number of departments. They then check our list of members with faculty and invite people who aren't currently members to join. MB/HM to circulate a draft invitation letter to the Exec. We discussed the best time for having the recruitment drive, and the consensus was that early September would be most effective, as people will be around then and refreshed from the summer break. So we decided that MB/HM will organize the drive for September 2013.

ACTION: all

9. Philosophy Foundation/SAPERE (MB)

MB invited representatives from the Philosophy Foundation and from SAPERE to talk to the Exec about ways in which the BPA might help to support their work, and ways in which the BPA could itself help to promote philosophy in secondary education and in the wider community.

(i) Philosophy Foundation: Emma and Peter Worley gave an overview of the work that the Foundation does. This involves the training of graduates in Enquiry and Philosophical Enquiry methodologies, to enable them to become specialist teachers in schools, businesses, and in the community. There are 150 Foundation-qualified teachers in over 40 schools, mainly primary; and the Foundation has around 10 people working for it full-time. The Foundation would benefit from the BPA's involvement in four ways. (a) The PF would like some form of accreditation from the BPA, which would provide quality assurance for philosophers who contact the PF of the teaching and training that they do. (b) The BPA could help to supply philosophers at the graduate and postgraduate levels. (c) The BPA could help with lobbying in support of the PF. And (d) The BPA could help with training in other parts of the country, via its contact lists.

Some concerns were raised in the meeting about (a). We have in the past refused suggestions that we give a seal of approval or kitemark to organisations, partly because of the amount of additional work this might involve, and partly because of the potential negative effects to the BPA should something go wrong with the organization in question. This doesn't rule out the BPA endorsing specific events or initiatives, however. MB suggested that the Exec discuss this issue, and ways in which we would provide other forms of help to the Foundation along the lines suggested, amongst ourselves, and will report back to Emma and Peter.

(ii) Steve Bramall and Bob House gave an overview of the work that SAPERE do. In the main this involves training teachers (around 2,500 per year) in the P4C (Philosophy for Children) and Community Philosophy programmes. The training is grant and school funded, aimed at general teachers rather than specifically philosophers. The courses are two-day training events, or two-day inset courses in schools, and a good proportion in primary schools, given the flexibility of the primary curriculum. SAPERE raised a number of possibilities for collaboration with the BPA. These included (a) mutual support with networking and raising awareness, (b) presence at each other's events, (c) encouragement of teachers to join the BPA, (d) BPA raising awareness of training available, (e) collaboration on introductory workshops for academics, (f) an invitation to BPA members to join P4C to develop the methodology, (g) an invitation to BPA members to develop a Diploma in Practical Philosophy, and (h) joint support and responses to government policy announcements. Overall SAPERE would be very interested in sitting down and talking with departments who would be interested in these possibilities. MB suggested again that the Exec discuss these possibilities, and report back to Steve and Bob.

The Exec thanked Emma, Peter, Steve, and Bob for their time and effort in thinking of ways in which we can work together, and in providing the BPA with information about possibilities for collaboration.

ACTION: all

10. AOB

No other business.

