

New President

The Council is pleased to announce that Professor the Lord Parekh of Hull has agreed to serve as the President of the Academy. Bhikhu Parekh will be known to many as a distinguished political theorist, who has written on western and Indian political thought, and as the chair of the recent Runnymede Report into multi-ethnic Britain.

Consultation news

The Council has written to the Department for Education and Skills to support the suggestion that the AHRB should become a fully-fledged research council. In the view of the Council, parity and clarity would be served by bringing this area of research funding into line with the arrangements provided for the rest of the academic community.

News from our Seminar Series

Our two most recent seminars attracted good turnouts and received high praise from the participants. The IPR seminar identified and clarified a series of issues that are crucial for learned societies in their role as publishers as well as for individuals seeking to protect and benefit from their intellectual endeavours. The Ethics and Research Guidelines seminar in February was opened by a panel of speakers recently involved in the process of developing professional guidelines in research ethics: Joe Bailey (Kingston University and the British Sociological Association), Ron Iphofen (University of Bangor and the Social Research Association), Ray Lee (Royal Holloway College and the British Sociological Association), and Jan Pahl (University of Kent and the Social Policy Association). The seminar was organised and chaired by E. Stina Lyon (South Bank University and the British Sociological Association). Jean Martin (Office for National Statistics) also contributed as leader for one of the discussion groups. The afternoon proceeded with discussion groups on the themes of: data confidentiality and informed consent; ethics and different research paradigms; negotiating access; and relationships with NHS and social care Research Ethics Committees. A final report back session and panel discussion concluded by

considering the role of the Academy in taking forward some of the issues, dilemmas and concerns raised during the day. Reports of both seminars will soon be available on our web site www.the-academy.org.uk.

Interchange Scheme

The Home Office and the Academy are promoting the interchange of social scientists between the Home Office and the university sector.

Social scientists with an interest in areas of Home Office responsibility are invited to spend a period ranging from a few weeks up to a year working in the Research, Development and Statistics Directorate (RDS) of the Home Office. Home Office responsibilities include crime, drugs, policing, criminal procedure, prisons, probation, citizenship, asylum, race relations and immigration. By working in the Home Office you would contribute to the formulation of government policy through research.

Similarly, Home Office civil servants with a background or experience of social research or policy are invited to spend a period of time on secondment to a University social science department, where they will contribute to teaching and on-going research projects.

The aims of the scheme are to promote closer working between the Home Office and academia, and to give both academics and government researchers the opportunity to work in and learn from relevant environments outside their usual places of work.

Further details and opportunities for interchange will be advertised on the Academy's web site: <http://www.the-academy.org.uk> and the Home Office's (<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/vacancies1.html>) as they become available.

The Interchange scheme was formally launched on 1st May at the Royal Society, by our new President, Bob Ainsworth, MP (standing in for David Blunkett), Paul Wiles (Director, Home office, RDS) and Nigel Gilbert, with an audience of about 40, mainly Academicians. The scheme was welcomed by the speakers, who emphasised

the importance of developing links between UK social
science and government.