

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Academic Quality and Standards Committee

There will be a meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on Thursday 19 May 2011 at **9.00am** in the Council Chamber, University House.

**Note: Questions on agenda items or apologies for this meeting** should be directed to the Secretary of the Committee, Christina Edgar, ext 22707, email [C.L.Edgar@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:C.L.Edgar@warwick.ac.uk) or to the Assistant Secretary, Rory McIntyre, ext 74464, email [R.J.Mcintyre@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:R.J.Mcintyre@warwick.ac.uk)

J F Baldwin  
Registrar

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The agenda is split into two sections: items for consideration by the Committee and items for report without further discussion unless requested by a member of the Committee. All papers are available electronically from the Committee's file store:  
[https://files.warwick.ac.uk/tqcomm/browse/AQSC/19\\_May\\_2011](https://files.warwick.ac.uk/tqcomm/browse/AQSC/19_May_2011)

**A G E N D A**

**ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE COMMITTEE**

1. Minutes of the last meeting

TO CONSIDER:

Minutes of the meeting held on 2 March 2011, previously circulated and available on the Governance website at:

<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/atoz/aqsc/minutes/>

2. Matters arising

(a) Vision 2015 (minute 25/10-11 refers)

TO REPORT:

That the Committee has been thanked for its contributions to the refreshing of the Vision 2015 strategy, which has since been finalised and made available online at [www.warwick.ac.uk/go/vision2015](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/vision2015).

(b) Annual Course Review Reports (minute 62/10-11 refers)

TO REPORT:

That the Capital Planning and Accommodation Review Group acknowledged the scheduling issues in large and medium sized lecture theatres and would shortly be considering a proposal to build further lecture theatre space.

(c) Student Academic Complaints and Appeals 2009-10 (minute 60/10-11 refers)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 2 March 2011, the Committee considered a report from the Administrative Officer (Academic Registrar's Office) concerning student academic complaints and appeals 2009-10 (paper AQSC 48/10-11)

and resolved:

- (A) That the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies would contact the Academic Registrar's Office for clarification on the issue raised in section 5 with respect to postgraduate taught student appeals on the grounds of poor supervision;
- (B) That the role of the AQSC in the Student Academic Complaints Procedure is considered to be in oversight of the process and consideration of any precedent or policy change that may be suggested to them as a result of individual cases or following consideration of an annual report.
- (C) That the Academic Registrar be asked to augment the current policy (as quoted in Annex 1 of paper AQSC 48/10-11) in item 4 to provide guidance as to the circumstances under which the University would consider it 'not appropriate' to raise a complaint 'initially in writing to the person responsible for the action which has given rise to the complaint' to allay the concern of the Committee that students may find this initial step difficult by providing helpful advice on this step.
- (ii) That there were no undergraduate student cases considered through the second formal stage of the Academic Complaints Procedure in 2009/10;
- (iii) That the student academic complaints procedure had been augmented in item 4(i) as recommended by the Committee.

3. Progress of Committee Recommendations

TO REPORT:

That the Senate, at its meeting on 16 March 2011, resolved that the recommendation from the Committee under the following heading be approved:

Amendment to Regulation 8.12 (minute AQSC 46/10-11 refers)

4. Chair's business

TO RECEIVE:

An oral update from the Chair on current issues including:

- (a) Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (WATE) 2010/11;
- (b) Proposed undergraduate fee levels.

5. Online submission of assessed work (minute EL.9/10-11 refers)

TO REPORT:

That the eLearning Steering Committee, at its meeting on 5 May 2011, received an oral update from the Director of IT Services on progress toward a University system for online submission of assessed work , noting (*inter alia*) that:

- (a) A bid had been submitted to the Strategic Investment Group, Chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, for the additional resource needed to develop the proposed solution, and that this bid would be considered at the upcoming meeting of this Group on 16 May 2011;
- (b) Members of the Group could, if they felt strongly about the proposal, lend their support to the bid by contacting their Faculty Chair in advance of the meeting;
- (c) The overwhelming view of the Group was that the proposed solution had the potential to deliver considerable service enhancements in a diverse set of operations, including both academic and administrative processes, external examining, student experience and employability;
- (d) The project was envisaged to be taken forward in phases with the most urgent requirements met first and a 'toolkit' built up over time.

6. International Student Barometer (ISB)      **9.30am**

TO RECEIVE:

A paper from the Assistant Director (Planning & Student Experience), International Office, on the International Student Barometer (ISB) Autumn Wave 2010 results (Paper AQSC 53/10-11, copy attached).

TO CONSIDER:

- (a) Areas of the learning experience to be prioritised for further improvement;
- (b) Suggestions on how to share best practice between academic departments regarding the learning experience to help achieve greater consistency in student satisfaction across the University;
- (c) How best to disseminate the results of the International Student Barometer.

7. Update from the Students' Union

TO RECEIVE:

An oral report from the Students' Union President and Education Officer.

8. Erasmus Mundus Grand Committee

TO REPORT:

- (a) That three bids have been submitted to the European Commission's competition for recognition and funding as Erasmus Mundus courses by the University:
  - (i) Joint PhD in Technological and Social Complex Systems (TASCS), led by Complexity Science, noting that Warwick is the lead partner;
  - (ii) A double-degree in Physics in the area of Plasma Physics (FunPPAC), led by Physics;
  - (iii) A Joint degree in Particle Physics (PCUBE), led by Physics.
- (b) That a review of the Erasmus Mundus approval process would be undertaken in the coming weeks with recommendations for a revised schedule for next year, primarily to ensure bidders had sufficient time to draw together the relevant documentation;
- (c) That the Graduate School would look into the level of detail required for approval of Erasmus Mundus bids in future years.

9. PSRB Review of the Warwick Business School by EQUIS

TO CONSIDER:

A report from EQUIS (European Quality Improvement System) regarding the peer review undertaken in January 2011 of the Warwick Business School, including a cover paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar, WBS (Papers AQSC 54/10-11 and 55/10-11, copies attached).

10. QAA Institutional Review

TO REPORT:

- (a) That at its meeting on 18 April 2011, the Steering Committee considered a report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) outlining the key points of the new QAA Institutional Review Process, and notification of the University's Institutional Review in 2012/13 (Paper SC.410/10-11, copy attached)  
  
and reported (by the Academic Registrar):
  - (i) That the University's QAA Institutional Review would take place in 2012/13, the second year of operation of the new process.

- (ii) That the role of the “institutional facilitator” would likely rest in the Teaching Quality team, and the role of the “lead student representative” with the Students’ Union Education Officer.

and resolved:

That the Teaching Quality team would complete the pro forma to inform the size and constitution of the QAA review team, for submission to the QAA by the deadline of 3 May 2011.

- (b) That the pro forma to inform the size and constitution of the QAA review team was submitted to the QAA by the deadline of 3 May 2011.

#### 11. Degree Classification Conventions

TO REPORT:

- (a) That the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies wrote to exam correspondents, exam secretaries and departmental secretaries on 14 March 2011 regarding implementation of the new degree classification conventions in 2011 (Paper AQSC 56/10-11, copy attached);
- (b) That the Teaching Quality Team will shortly be sending out answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the new conventions (also making them available online);
- (c) That responsibility for the operation of the examinations process is retained by the Examinations Office so queries on procedural aspects should continue to be directed to this team;
- (d) That, should there be questions of policy about the implementation of the new conventions during the upcoming exam period, the Teaching Quality Team can be contacted for advice by email on [quality@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:quality@warwick.ac.uk) or by telephone on 024 765 22065.

#### 12. UUK-GuildHE Review of External Examining Arrangements

TO RECEIVE:

The final report and recommendations from the UUK review of external examining arrangements in universities and colleges in the UK (Paper SC.419/10-11, copy attached).

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Secretary on potential changes in response to the recommendations (Paper AQSC 57/10-11, copy attached).

13. Internal Audit follow-up: Student Academic Complaints

TO RECEIVE:

An extract from the internal audit of 'Student Complaints – Academic Matters' (Paper AQSC 58/10-11, copy attached):

TO CONSIDER:

The desirability of imposing time limits for acknowledgement of complaints, escalation of complaints and completion of procedures for both students and the University within the formal part of the Academic Complaints Process, noting that no sector-wide benchmarking had yet taken place.

14. National Student Survey

TO RECEIVE:

A report from the Assistant Secretary and Teaching Quality Support Officer on the National Student Survey final response rates for 2011 (paper AQSC 59/10-11, copy attached).

15. Personal Tutoring (minute 58/10-11 refers)

TO REPORT:

(a) That, at its meeting on 2 March 2011, the Committee received a discussion paper from the Senior Tutor on the current position of the personal tutor system and proposals to achieve enhanced consistency of guidelines' implementation (paper AQSC 45/10-11), noting (*inter alia*) that a formal evaluation would be undertaken of the personal tutoring system next term to provide an independent view on the current system and to allow for plans to be made for any enhancement of the system (as referenced during the refreshing of the Vision 2015);

and resolved:

(b) That the Students' Union Education Officer would remind academic convenors, at the briefing session held during the summer vacation, of the need to discuss the practice and policy of student tutoring arrangements (not individual instances) at SSLCs;

(c) That the University Senior Tutor would circulate the website search findings to Departmental Senior Tutors along with guidance (and/or a template document or webpage content) on the information expected to be covered (and maintained as up-to-date) on departmental websites.

TO RECEIVE:

An oral update from the Senior Tutor.

16. Any other business

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**ITEMS TO REPORT AND APPROVE WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION**

The Chair and Secretary consider that the following items are non-controversial and/or can be accepted with a minimum of explanation. Members of the Committee may, however, ask for any of the following items to be transferred to the agenda for discussion, by contacting the Secretary in advance of the meeting, or by raising the item at the commencement of the meeting.

17. Chair's Action

TO RECEIVE:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Committee (Paper AQSC 60/10-11, to follow).

18. New and Revised Courses

TO REPORT:

(a) That the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 5 May 2011 resolved that the following new courses be approved:

- (i) MSc in Intercultural Communication for Business and the Professions
- (ii) Postgraduate Diploma in Intercultural Communication for Business and the Professions
- (iii) Postgraduate Certificate in Intercultural Communication for Business and the Professions
- (iv) PGCE (Teach First), subject to approval by CFDLSC (not yet secured)

(b) That the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 5 May 2011 resolved that the following new course title be approved:

Master of Science in Public Leadership and Management (formerly Master of Science in Public Management)

19. Terms of Reference of the Committee (minute 73/09-10 refers)

TO REPORT:

(a) That a mistake in the draft Terms of Reference of the Committee in AQSC 58/09-10 had been noted, such that the recommended action in section 3(c) (supported by the Committee):

*That consideration of External Examiners' reports, Annual Review reports, periodic review reports and SSLC reports be devolved to BUGS and BGS, together with the responsibility for intervening in departments where there were issues of concern. Serious issues of concern would also be raised with AQSC.*

had not been fully incorporated into the amended Terms of Reference.

- (b) That the Terms of Reference had subsequently been updated to reflect the original recommendation of the Committee (approved by Senate) by the deletion of clause (f):

~~*To consider an annual report on the operation of the Student-Staff Liaison system.*~~

20. QAA: Doctoral degree reference point draft (draft unconfirmed minute BGS 65/10-11 and minute AQSC 66/10-11 refer)

TO REPORT:

- (a) That, at its meeting on 2 March 2011, it was reported to the Committee that at its meeting on 24 February 2011, the Board of Graduate Studies considered a QAA Consultation paper on Doctoral degree characteristics (paper BGS 41/10-11).
- (b) That a response had been submitted on behalf of the University including the following comments and suggestions:
- (i) That in general the 'Rough Guide' be welcomed;
  - (ii) That the range of duration for part-time PhDs be explicitly included (typically between 5 and 7 years);
  - (iii) That the questions 'What kind of funding is available to support conference attendance?' and 'Will there be extra costs associated with the PhD (e.g. bench fees)?' be added to the suggested list of questions to consider before taking up a PhD;
  - (iv) That a description of the types of examiners be included in the assessment section (including internal and external examiners and noting that the supervisor does not examine the thesis);
  - (v) That the Guide include information about applying for a visa.

21. Next meeting

TO REPORT:

That the next meeting of the Committee will be held at 9am on 22 June 2011 in the Council Chamber, University House.