

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Academic Quality and Standards Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee
held on Thursday 31 January 2013

Present: Professor A Caesar (Chair), Ms S Bennett, Ms A Chowcat, Mr J Entwistle, Professor N Holdsworth, Professor C Hughes, Professor N Johnson, Professor J Labbe, Mr S Lamb, Dr D Lamburn, Professor R Leng, Dr J Kidd, Professor A Reeve, Dr J Robinson, Professor S Swain, Dr P Taylor

Apologies: Professor S Jacka, Dr C Jenainati, Professor P Thomas

In attendance: Ms K Gray, Mr R McIntyre, Professor P Corvi (for item 57/12-13), Mrs R Wooldridge Smith (for item 50(b)/12-13)

48/12-13 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 December 2012 be approved.

49/12-13 Committee Membership

REPORTED:

That Professor S Jacka of the Department of Statistics, had been appointed to the membership of the Committee, in the capacity of a member of Senate from the Faculty of Science.

50/12-13 Matters arising

(a) Regulation 8 Appeals: Scope of preliminary review panels

REPORTED:

(i) That at its meeting on 5 December 2012 it was reported to the Committee:

(A) That, at its meeting on 22 November 2012, the Board of Undergraduate Studies considered a proposed amendment to Regulation 8.12, in the light of the interpretation of paragraph (3) of the Regulation made by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (paper BUGS 10/12-13) and recommended to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee that it be approved.

(by Professor Johnson):

(B) That previous advice from the OIA appears to have contradicted the proposed amendment relating to the ability of the preliminary review panel to consider the merits of the case.

- (ii) The Committee considered a proposed amendment to Regulation 8.12, in the light of the interpretation of paragraph (3) of the Regulation made by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (Paper BUGS 10/12-13) and resolved that further consideration be given to the proposed amendment of Regulation 8.12 in light of Professor Johnson's comments.

(by the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies):

- (iii) That Preliminary Review Panels made a judgement on the relevance of the case as well as whether there was additional evidence presented which had not been made available to the Exam Board and that the amendments were intended to reflect this.

CONSIDERED:

A proposed amendment to Regulation 8.12, in the light of the interpretation of paragraph (3) of the Regulation made by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (Paper BUGS 10/12-13).

RESOLVED:

- (iv) That the draft amendment to Regulation 8.12 be amended as follows:
 - (A) To clarify that the Preliminary Review Panel considers the relevance of the additional evidence rather than the merits of the case.
 - (B) To clarify further the phrase 'at the time of the examination'.
- (v) That the revised Regulation be considered by the University Senior Tutor prior to approval.

(b) Academic Appeals and Complaints

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 5 December 2012 the Committee considered a paper on academic appeals and complaints by students from the Deputy Academic Registrar and the Administrative Officer (Academic Registrar's Office) (Paper AQSC.27/12-13) and resolved:

- (i) That detailed consideration of the paper on academic appeals and complaints by students be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.
- (ii) That the recommendation that complaints be logged and reported on a calendar year basis, in line with OIA practice, as set out in Paper AQSC.27/12-13, be approved.

(by the Deputy Academic Registrar):

- (iii) That the information which would have been contained within the termly report for the Autumn Term to the Committee had been subsumed into the Annual Report and the first termly report would therefore be considered at the next meeting of the Committee.
- (iv) That the University had a high number of OIA cases compared to its benchmark group but that the group was not adjusted for subject mix and, in addition, the University had a higher proportion of postgraduate taught students than peer institutions.
- (v) That, despite the high number of OIA cases, few were found to be justified.
- (vi) That departments may wish to consider how they might mitigate against instances of staff not being available to attend committee or panel hearings relating to appeals and complaints due to study leave or staff having left the institution.
- (vii) That regular meetings were now being held with Legal Services to discuss specific cases at an early stage.
- (viii) That the Deputy Academic Registrar was exploring how mediation might be introduced into complaints and appeals cases.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies):

- (x) That there were few complaints relating to postgraduate research supervision upheld.

(by the Chair of the Committee):

- (xi) That the increase in complaints and appeals increased workloads for those involved, regardless of whether those cases were found to be justified or not.

CONSIDERED:

A paper on academic appeals and complaints by students from the Deputy Academic Registrar and the Administrative Officer (Academic Registrar's Office) (Paper AQSC.27/12-13).

RESOLVED:

That the paper be noted.

- (c) QAA Institutional Review Self-Evaluation Document (minute 25/12-13 (c) referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at the meeting of the Committee held on 5 December 2012 it was reported:
- (A) That at its meeting on 30 October 2012 the Committee considered the draft self-evaluation document for QAA Institutional Review (Paper AQSC.13/12-13) and resolved that any comments be submitted to the Secretary, noting that the Steering Committee would approve the final version prior to submission.
 - (B) That the Self-Evaluation Document had been considered by the Faculty Boards, the Boards of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies.
 - (C) That the Self-Evaluation Document as set out in Paper SC.91/12-13 had been considered by the Steering Committee at its meeting on 26 November 2012 and that a number of comments had been received.
 - (D) That the Steering Committee had resolved that the Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Education (Quality and Standards) approve the final version on behalf of the Steering Committee and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee respectively prior to submission by the deadline of 12 December 2012.

(by the QAA Lead Academic Co-ordinator):

- (E) That preparations for the Review meetings were ongoing and that the Self-Evaluation Document would be made available to all staff and students online.

(by the Students' Union Education Officer):

- (F) That work was ongoing to finalise the Student Written Submission.

And the Committee received:

The draft Student Written Submission for the QAA Institutional Review (Paper AQSC.34/12-13).

- (ii) That the Vice-Chancellor and the Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee had taken action on behalf of the Senate and the Committee respectively to approve the final version of the Self-Evaluation Document for submission to the QAA.

(by the Academic Lead Co-ordinator for the QAA Review):

- (iii) That the First Team Visit had taken place on 15 and 16 January 2013 and that, following this, the QAA Review Team had requested further information and had confirmed the staff and students it wished to meet in the visit in February.

- (iv) That the Team would have three meetings with students (postgraduate research, postgraduate taught and undergraduate) and two meetings with staff (general academic staff meeting and a meeting with staff who support the staff and student experience).

RECEIVED:

- (v) The final version of the University's Self-Evaluation Document submitted to the QAA (Paper AQSC.13/12-13 (revised)).
- (vi) The final version of the Student Written Submission submitted to the QAA (Paper AQSC.34/12-13 (revised))

51/12-13

Chair's Action

- (a) Collaborative Courses: Beijing City University (minute 40/12-13(c) referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting on 5 December 2012 the Committee considered a proposal from the Warwick Manufacturing Group to enter into a new collaborative partnership with Beijing City University (BCU), China, to deliver the following existing courses:

- MSc in Engineering Business Management (and sub-qualifications)
- MSc in Programme and Project Management (and sub-qualifications)
- MSc in Manufacturing Systems Engineering (and sub-qualifications)

As set out in the following papers:

- (A) Collaborative Risk Assessment Form (paper CFDLSC 9/12-13);
- (B) Part 4 Course approval form (paper CFDLSC 10/12-13);

And resolved:

- (C) That the proposal from the Warwick Manufacturing Group to enter into a new collaborative partnership with Beijing City University (BCU), China, to deliver the following existing courses:

- MSc in Engineering Business Management (and sub-qualifications)
- MSc in Programme and Project Management (and sub-qualifications)

- MSc in Manufacturing Systems Engineering (and sub-qualifications)

be approved for recommendation to the Senate as set out in the following papers, subject to approval of the strategic and contractual elements of the collaborative partnership by the Steering Committee at its meeting on 10 December 2012:

- (A) Collaborative Risk Assessment Form (paper CFDLSC 9/12-13);
 - (B) Part 4 Course approval form (paper CFDLSC 10/12-13);
 - (D) That authority be granted to the Chair to approve on behalf of the Committee the proposal for recommendation to Senate, following the meeting of the Steering Committee to be held on 10 December 2012.
- (ii) That at its meeting on 10 December 2012, the Steering Committee considered a paper outlining a number of issues for consideration arising from the proposed collaborative courses between WMG and Beijing City University (SC.101/12-13) and resolved (*inter alia*) that the principle that WMG offer collaborative courses in China be approved on behalf of the Senate as set out in paper SC.101/12-13, noting that it would be subject to review should the format or nature of the collaboration change in the future. (minute SC.153/12-13 referred)
- (iii) That, in light of the decision of the Steering Committee, the Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee had taken action on behalf of the Committee to approve the proposal for recommendation to the Steering Committee.

(b) Draft Policy on Feedback Turnaround Times

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting on 5 December 2012 the Committee considered a revised draft Policy and Guidance on the Timing of Feedback on Assessment (Paper AQSC.12/12-13 (revised)) and resolved:
 - (A) That the revised Policy and Guidance be approved subject to further review of the provisions relating to the marking of assignments linked to examinations.
 - (B) That, while the principle that the policy apply to extended pieces of work such as dissertations and research projects be endorsed, further consideration would be required on how this would be applied in practice.

(C) That any further amendments to the Policy in light of the resolutions set out in (a) and (b) above be approved by the Chair on behalf of the Committee.

(ii) That the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Committee to approve the final version of the Policy on Feedback Turnaround Times as set out in Paper AQSC.12/12-13 (revised 2)).

(by the Chair of the Committee):

(iii) That ongoing development of the Student Assignment Management System was being undertaken to address concerns raised by departments regarding functionality.

52/12-13 National Student Survey

REPORTED (by the Chair of the Committee):

(a) That the NSS would commence on 4 February 2013 and that the Communications Office were working with Teaching Quality on the relevant communications to students.

(b) That the Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) would provide regular updates to departments on the response rates.

53/12-13 Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence

REPORTED (by the Chair of the Committee):

That the nominations process had opened and staff and students were encouraged to take part.

54/12-13 Update Report on the Enhancing Student Satisfaction Programme

RECEIVED:

An update report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Strategy and Change) on the Enhancing Student Satisfaction Programme (Paper AQSC.35/12-13).

REPORTED:

(by the University Senior Tutor):

(a) That the University Senior Tutor was a member of the Tabula Steering Group.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences):

(b) That further consideration needed to be given to encouraging departments to bid to Academic Resourcing Committee (ARC) for items relating to teaching and learning.

(c) That the student experience dashboard needed to contain real-time data to inform Heads of Departments.

(by the Chair of the Committee):

- (d) That the Faculty Chairs had a role in identifying cross-department opportunities for bids for resources.

55/12-13. Update from the Students' Union

REPORTED (by the Students' Union Education Officer):

- (a) That the Students' Union were in the process of identifying students to attend meetings with the QAA.
- (b) That the Students' Union would shortly be launching a survey to assess students' satisfaction with contact hours.
- (c) That the second Education Convention would be held on 20 February, the STARS awards ceremony would be held on 5 March and the HE Summit would take place on 9 and 10 March.

(by the Students' Union Postgraduate Officer):

- (d) That the Students' Union was also consulting on study space for postgraduate students.

56/12-13 Academic Statistics Yearbook

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 2 February 2012 the Committee considered a report on data relating to teaching and learning published in the Academic Statistics Yearbook 2011 and Academic Statistics 2011 (Paper AQSC.33/11-12) and resolved that further consideration be given to the movement in the University's non-completion rates for first year young undergraduate students in comparison with '94 and Russell Group institutions, and how this compares to the University's internally calculated non-completion rates (minute 53/11-12 referred).

CONSIDERED:

A report on data relating to teaching and learning published in the Academic Statistics Yearbook 2012 and Academic Statistics 2012 (Paper AQSC.36/12-13).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted.
- (b) That clarification be provided to the Committee at a future meeting on the calculation of non-completion rates in relation to four-year undergraduate degrees and on the method of calculating of non-completions for postgraduate research students.

CONSIDERED:

A paper by the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies on a proposal by the Warwick Business School for a proposed BSc Accountancy and Finance for participants of the Brightstart programme at Deloitte (Paper AQSC.37/12-13).

REPORTED (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality)):

- (a) That the Teaching Quality office had liaised with the Warwick Business School (WBS) on the development of the proposal for accredited prior learning of the ACA qualification.
- (b) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies had expressed some concerns regarding specific characteristics of the course and that ongoing discussions had taken place with WBS to address these concerns.
- (c) That, given the innovative nature of the proposed course, it had been considered appropriate to refer key issues of principle to AQSC.

(by the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies):

- (d) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies had had no concerns that learning outcomes would not be met but the concerns expressed related to the volume of Accredited Prior Learning, the compression of the study being undertaken, and the conflation of these two characteristics.

(by the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programmes)):

- (e) That WBS had amended the course proposal in light of concerns raised by the Board.
- (f) That Deloitte recruited high achieving school-leavers to its Brightstart programme and students would be fully qualified accountants at the point of entry to the degree course.
- (g) That, given the students' workloads, it would not be possible for the students to attend modules on campus during the spring and summer terms.
- (h) That students would take existing modules.

(by the Chair of the Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee):

- (i) That there was no national guidance relating to the amount of credit that could be recognised as APL, nor the nature of the study, noting

that some Warwick courses were already delivered by distance-learning, and some through concentrated blocks of study.

(by the Director of IATL):

- (j) That the proposal was positive and would permit traditional students and qualified professionals to engage with each other through their studies.

RESOLVED:

- (k) That the proposal be supported, noting that work was ongoing on the assessment conventions to be applied and the timing of resit examinations.
- (l) That the proposal state clearly that, despite the compressed period of attendance at classes, study would be ongoing outside of this period.

60/12-13 Revisions to the Initial Teacher Education Programme

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Institute of Education regarding revisions to the Initial Teacher Education Programme (Paper GFSS.97/12-13).

RESOLVED:

That permission be given to the Chair to take action on behalf of the Committee to approve proposals relating to the Schools Direct PGCE, noting that further details would be provided by the Institute of Education.

61/12-13 Draft Policy on Setting of Examination and Assignment Questions

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 17 May 2012, the Committee considered a report from the Warwick Business School on an issue relating to DLMBA examinations (Paper AQSC.75/11-12) and resolved:

- (a) That the measures put in place by the Warwick Business School to prevent a similar incident occurring again were satisfactory.
- (b) That guidance be provided at University level on the setting of examination questions.

CONSIDERED:

A draft policy on the setting of examination and assignment questions (Paper AQSC.38/12-13).

RESOLVED:

That consideration of the draft policy be deferred to a future meeting of the Committee.

62/12013 Report on the E-Learning Steering Group

RECEIVED:

A report from the meetings of the E-Learning Steering Group held on 14 November 2012 and 17 January 2013 (Paper AQSC.39/12-13).

RESOLVED:

That the Service Owner, Academic Technology, be invited to a future meeting of the Committee to report on developments relating to technology enhanced learning.

63/12-13 Undergraduate Degree Classification Conventions

CONSIDERED:

Amendments to the UG Degree Classification Conventions (to reflect principles approved by Senate) (Paper AQSC.40/12-13).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That clarification be provided of the criteria to be taken into account when considering borderline performance.
- (b) That the Conventions be amended to reflect the fact that the pass mark for the fourth year of the integrated masters degrees would be 50% for all students commencing courses from Autumn 2013.

64/12-13 Outcomes from Institutional Audit 2009/11

RECEIVED:

- (a) The QAA publication Outcomes from Institutional Audit 2009/11: Assessment (Paper AQSC.41/12-13)
- (b) The QAA publication Outcomes from Institutional Audit 2009/11: Postgraduate Research Students (Paper AQSC.42/12-13).

65/12-13 Revised Postgraduate Courses of Study

REPORTED:

That it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 15 January 2013 that the Chair had taken action to approve revisions to the following courses:

- Postgraduate Certificate in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education'

- Postgraduate Diploma in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education
- MA in Career Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education'
- Postgraduate Certificate in Management of Student Work Experience' course
- Postgraduate Diploma in Management of Student Work Experience'
- MA in Management of Student Work Experience'
- MA by Research in Classics and Ancient History

66/12-13

Next meeting

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 9.00am on 28 February 2013 in CMR 1.0, University House.