

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Academic Quality and Standards Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee
held on 12 May 2016

Present: Professor CL Hughes (Chair), Ms S Bennett (Director of Student Careers and Skills), Professor P Corvi (SSLC Co-ordinator (Social Sciences)), Professor A Dowd (Academic Director of the Graduate School), Dr L Gramaglia (Learning and Development Manager (Academic), Mr C Hindhaugh (Education Officer, Students' Union), Professor C W Hughes (Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences), Professor S Jacka (Representative of Senate (Science)), Professor C Jenainati (SSLC Coordinator (Arts)), Professor D Lamburn (Chair of the Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee), Professor R Leng (Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies), Dr N Monk (Director of IATL), Professor J Palmowski (Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies) (for item #), Professor A Reeve (Representative of Senate (Social Sciences)), Professor L Roberts (Representative of Senate (Medicine)), Mr N Shiers (Postgraduate Officer, Students' Union), Ms A Thomas (Service Owner (Academic Technology)), Professor G Van der Velden (Academic Director, Warwick International Higher Education Academy), Dr N Whybrow (Representative of Senate (Arts))

Apologies: Professor A Clarke (Chair of the Faculty of Medicine), Professor S Gilson (Chair of the Faculty of Arts), Professor M Shipman (Chair of the Faculty of Science), Dr I Tuersley (SSLC Co-ordinator (Science)), Professor P Winstanley (Senior Tutor)

In Attendance: Ms K Gray (Secretary), Ms C Pearson (Acting Assistant Secretary), Mrs C Gray (Assistant Registrar (Teaching and Learning) for items 64-65/15-16; Mr J Dale (Head of Platform Engineering and Deputy Director of IT Services) for item 69/15-16.

58/15-16 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2016 be approved.

59/15-16 Constitution and Membership of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee

REPORTED:

- (a) That Professor Aileen Clarke had been appointed a member of the Committee as Chair of the Faculty of Medicine (*vice Professor Winstanley*);
- (b) That Professor Peter Winstanley remained a member of the Committee as Interim Senior Tutor (*vice Mr S Lamb*) but that this would be his last meeting before he left the University;

- (c) That Professor Gwen van der Velden had been appointed a member of the Committee in her capacity as Director of the Warwick International Higher Education Academy.

RECEIVED:

The revised Constitution and Membership of the Committee (Paper AQSC.35/15-16).

RESOLVED:

- (d) That Professor Winstanley be thanked for his commitment and contribution to the work of the Committee both as Chair of the Faculty of Medicine and as Interim Senior Tutor;
- (e) That Professor Gwen van der Velden be welcomed to the University.

60/15-16

Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED:

That, should any members or attendees of the Committee have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the CUC Guide for Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the UK.

RESOLVED:

That no conflicts of interest were reported.

61/15-16

Matters arising

- (a) Marks Conversion Tables (minutes AQSC.30 and 42(c)/15-16 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 28 January 2016, the Committee considered a paper proposing draft mark conversion tables for study abroad (paper AQSC.25/15-16)
- (ii) That at its meeting on 22 February 2016, the Committee resolved that the International Sub-Group clarify the following points:
 - (A) The long-term intentions for the use of the Marks Conversion Scales, in particular their application for courses where marks arising from assessments taken at partner institutions contributed towards the final degree classification;
 - (B) Confirmation that the mapping of mark descriptors from overseas institutions against Warwick's mark descriptors had been undertaken in developing the marks scales.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies and the Chair of the International Sub-Group):

- (iii) That the development of the marks conversion tables had been the subject of lengthy consultation with academic departments, some of which already used such conversion tables for deriving marks for use in degree classification;
- (iv) That, where marks were used for degree classification, it was recommended that a process of moderation be used;
- (v) That, if through application of the marks conversion tables, a department felt that they were not appropriate for their discipline or for specific host institutions, then consideration could be given by the International Sub-Group to their adaptation;
- (vi) That many overseas institutions did not use mark descriptors as they were recognised in the UK and that therefore it would not be possible to use these to derive mark conversion tables;
- (vii) That, as contracts with exchange partners were renewed, a review of the suitability of the conversion tables would be undertaken with exchange partners;
- (viii) That this work would be overseen by the International Sub-Group of AQSC to ensure approaches were co-ordinated.

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the draft mark conversion tables for study abroad be approved as set out in Paper AQSC.25/15-16.

- (b) Draft Statement of Expected Student Behaviour (minute AQSC.45/15-16 referred)

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 22 February 2016, the Committee received a presentation and consultation paper on the draft Statement of Expected Student Behaviour (papers AQSC.30/15-16 and AQSC.34/15-16) and resolved (*inter alia*) that any additional comments be submitted directly to the Director of Delivery Assurance and the Senior Assistant Registrar (Delivery Assurance).

RECEIVED:

An update report on the development of the Statement of Expected Student Behaviour from the Director of Delivery Assurance and Resolution (Paper AQSC.36/15-16).

RESOLVED:

- (i) That, although significant revisions had been made to the document in light of consultation, the Committee had outstanding concerns in relation to terminology and purpose;
- (ii) That members provide feedback to the Secretariat to inform the ongoing consultation prior to consideration of the Statement by the Senate at its meeting on 8 June 2016.

(c) Revision to Regulation 8.10 (minute AQSC.49/15-16 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting on 22 February 2016 the Committee considered a proposal from the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine that Regulation 8.10 be revised as set out in paper MUSC.23/15-16 and recommended to the Senate that the proposal be approved to apply to students commencing their studies from 2016-17.
- (ii) That subsequent to the meeting of the Committee and prior to consideration by the Senate, further amendments were proposed to Regulation and in relation to timescales for implementation.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine that Regulation 8.10 be revised as set out in paper MUSC.23/15-16 (revised 2).

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposal to amend Regulation 8.10 be revised as set out in paper MUSC.23/15-16 (revised 2).

62/15-16

Chair's Business

(a) Teaching Excellence Strategy (minutes AQSC 25 and 42/15-16 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting the Committee considered a paper from the Secretary setting out terms of reference and constitution of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Steering Group (paper AQSC.26/15-16) and resolved:
 - (A) That the Terms of Reference, as set out in paper AQSC.26/15-16 and amended as proposed in (i) and (ii) above, be approved;

- (B) That members contact the Secretary with any suggestions on reducing the Steering Group membership.

(by the Chair)

- (ii) That the membership of the Steering Group had been reduced and was set out in minute 72(c)/15-16;
- (iii) That the Group was following the model for strategy development introduced by Strategic Planning and Analytics;
- (iv) That development of the TEF Strategy was linked to Institutional Teaching and Learning Review (ITLR) and Heads of Departments would be briefed on timescales for the latter shortly;
- (v) That, although the White Paper and Technical Consultation on TEF were yet to be published, it was expected that TEF1 would be undertaken over summer 2016 and that panels to review TEF2 submissions would meet in spring 2017;
- (vi) That the Director of the WIHEA would be leading on developing the narrative for the TEF submission and that current discussions with academic colleagues on the distinctive features of a Warwick education would contribute to this work;
- (vii) That the TEF would initially be undertaken at an institutional level but was likely to move to discipline level at a later stage;
- (viii) ITLR however would need to focus on departments and would cover both quality assurance and enhancement;

(by the Director of the WIHEA):

- (ix) That there was a lot of enthusiasm for and good practice in teaching in the institution and the ITLR would provide an opportunity for aligning activity within themes.

(b) Learning Gain Project

TO REPORT:

- (i) That researchers from the University of Cambridge had visited the University to undertake qualitative interviews as part of the project;
- (ii) That HEFCE would also be commissioning work at a national level in the area of learning gain.

63/15-16 Students' Union Update

REPORTED (by the Education Officer, Students' Union):

- (a) That a joint staff and student working group had developed proposals related to the request for a 24 hour library which would be considered shortly by the Finance and General Purposes Committee;

- (b) That the proposals set out a number of options related to extending the opening hours of the library and related facilities;
- (c) That Rate my Module had been launched by the Students' Union;
- (d) That the facility was intended to celebrate good practice in teaching and that any negative comments submitted were not published but were instead passed to the relevant SSLC;
- (e) That the Students' Union would be holding its first Course Representative awards this year.

(by the Postgraduate Officer, Students' Union):

- (f) That he continued to be involved in the Sessional Teaching Project and that the frameworks for the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences would be considered by the Academic Resourcing Committee;
- (g) That further consideration was being given to the framework for the Faculty of Science departments but that the Students' Union had concerns that differing rates of pay were being proposed;
- (h) That it was recognised that, while some elements of duties undertaken by postgraduates who taught were different in Science to other faculties, some were also similar.

64/15-16 Course Review and Monitoring Process

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar (Teaching and Learning) on the revised course review and monitoring process for taught courses (Paper AQSC.37/15-16).

REPORTED:

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

- (i) That, following in principle approval of new course monitoring and review processes being given by Senate in 2014/15, further consideration had been given to the implementation of process and updated proposals were now being brought forward for consideration;
- (ii) That extensive consultation had been undertaken and proposals amended in light of this;
- (iii) That, given that ITLR would be taking place in 2016/17 it was proposed that the new monitoring and review processes be introduced from 2017/18;
- (iv) That half of all teaching departments and centres would be engaged in the biennial Education Experience Monitoring (EEM) meetings each

year and that these would probably be held in the Autumn term, recognising that, for some predominantly postgraduate departments, alternative points in the year could be considered;

- (v) That ongoing monitoring would need to include data on non-completions, complaints and appeals and that the Quality Assurance Working Group had requested that collection of data on Stage 1 complaints be undertaken;
- (vi) That there would be a student representative on the EEM meeting panel and meeting reports would be made available to SSLCs;

(by the Representative of Senate (Social Sciences)):

- (vii) That the process needed to achieve a balance between identification of problems at an early stage and encouraging enhancement;

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

- (viii) That further consideration may need to be given to the links between these review processes, TEF and academic resourcing;

(by the Secretary):

- (ix) That, given that a review of academic governance would be undertaken in 2016, it may be appropriate to identify formal governance links once this process had been completed.

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the revised course review and monitoring process for taught courses be approved as set out in Paper AQSC.37/15-16.

65/15-16 External Examining

(a) Appointment of External Examiners and Pass List Scrutiny

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 8 March 2016 the Senate considered:

- (i) A paper from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), proposing changes to the process for consideration of the appointment of External Examiners and Pass Lists (Paper S.41/15-16).
- (ii) In response to observations from Professor Lesley Roberts, welcoming the proposal, but indicating that the use of the word 'discipline' might be problematic, and indicating that integrated professional programmes did not have 'modules', that further consideration be given to the specific wording in some areas of the proposal.

- (iii) In response to an observation from Professor Roberts that external examiners should have a valuable role beyond the examination process *per se*, for example through taking a view of the quality of the course; taking an active role in setting examination paper questions and in speaking directly to students, that more information on this wider role could also be integrated into existing guidance.
- (iv) In response to an observation from Professor Alison Rodger, that she felt there was a need for a central record of external examiners to avoid conflicts of interest, that work was being undertaken in this area to respond to the provisions of the UK Quality Code.
- (v) In response to a query from Professor Cathia Jenainati, that where there was a particularly small pool of external examiners in the UK, that there was a precedent for appointing external examiners from the EU.
- (vi) In response to an observation from Professor Saul Jacka, that the timeframe for the setting of examination papers often preceded the timeframe for the approval of external examiners, that this would be separately addressed.

and resolved:

- (vii) That amendments relating to the processes for the appointment of external examiners and consideration of pass lists be approved as set out in paper (S.41/15-16), it being noted that consideration would be given by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee to operational matters.

(Unconfirmed minute 69/15-16 referred)

CONSIDERED:

- (viii) Operational matters arising from proposals set out in the paper from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), on changes to the process for consideration of the appointment of External Examiners and Pass Lists, as set out in S.41/15-16).

REPORTED (by the Secretary):

- (ix) That further work was required to ensure that the University was able to monitor the decisions taken by Board of Examiners, particularly the extent to which academic discretion was applied and the circumstances in which this was the case;

(By the representative of Senate (Science)):

- (x) That it was good practice to allow external examiners to meet students;

(By the Chair):

- (xi) That the introduction of the role of senior external examiner would be optional.

RESOLVED:

- (xii) That Guidance for External Examiners be updated to set out clearly their role and responsibilities and the range of students' work to which they should have access, noting that external examiners should not be provided with all scripts and coursework;
- (xiii) That proposals be developed for the role of senior external examiner;
- (xiv) That a central register of University staff acting as external examiners at other institutions was required.

(b) External Examiners' Report Form and Process of Scrutiny

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar (Teaching and Learning) setting out proposals for a revised External Examiner report form and process for scrutiny of reports and departmental responses (Paper AQSC.38/15-16).

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

- (i) That the current form and process of scrutiny of external examiners' reports and responses was not functioning effectively at an institutional level;
- (ii) That the proposals would enable thematic issues to be identified;
- (iii) That the departmental responses would be integrated into the report form;
- (iv) That the revised form would ensure that the University was meeting the requirements of the UK Quality Code;

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

- (v) That the current process was cumbersome;
- (vi) That the formal response to the external examiner should form part of an ongoing dialogue;

(by the Representative of Senate (Science):

- (vii) That a department should be able to set out a reasoned case for disagreeing with an external examiner as part of this dialogue;

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

- (viii) That a new external examiner should have access to previous reports and responses which would support them in understanding the context for decisions made previously;

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

- (ix) That the proposals for a revised External Examiner report form and process for scrutiny of reports and departmental responses be approved as set out in Paper AQSC.38/15-16 subject to:
 - (A) A section being added to record comments of the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies;
 - (B) A question on the effectiveness of collaborations, where applicable, be added, noting that this was present in the current external examiners' form.

66/15-16 *Course Regulations and Information for Students

CONSIDERED:

A paper by the Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on proposed changes to the publication of course regulations (Paper AQSC.39/15-16 (Restricted)).

REPORTED (by the Secretary):

- (a) That in light of the requirements of the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) Guidance and the QAA UK Quality Code, it was essential that accurate information be published for students on the options open to them and on the course entity;
- (b) That the current mechanism for producing Course Regulations did not easily reflect the complex course structures available in some areas of the University and there was also duplication of similar information available online.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the proposals set out in Paper AQSC.39/15-16 (Restricted) be approved for 2016/17, noting that revised procedures for the publication of course information would be implemented thereafter.
- (d) That further discussions on the matter be taken forward with the Service Owner (Academic Technology).

67/15-16 HEFCE Revised Operating Model for Quality Assurance

CONSIDERED:

A briefing paper by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on the HEFCE Revised Operating Model for Quality Assurance (Paper SC.106/15-16).

REPORTED (by the Secretary):

- (a) That the HEFCE had published its Revised Operating Procedure for Quality Assurance which would replace the current mechanisms operated by the QAA;
- (b) That the review process for established providers would incorporate:
 - A one-off verification of the University's periodic review process, the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review.
 - An Annual Provider Review, incorporating information gathered at a national level and provided by the institution's Council to the funding body;
 - The incorporation of quality assessment into the quinquennial HEFCE Annual Review (HAR);
- (c) That the Council would be required to provide assurance to the funding body on the effectiveness of quality assurance and on academic standards;
- (d) That work related to academic standards would be taken forward at a national level to include training for external examiners, calibration of degree standards and development of guidance on degree classification algorithms;
- (e) That the HEFCE would be tendering for organisations to take on this work, for implementation in 2017/18.

68/15-16 *International Student Barometer/Student Barometer Autumn Wave Survey 2015/16

RECEIVED:

A report on the outcomes related to teaching and learning from the Autumn Wave Survey of the ISB/SB 2015/16 (Paper AQSC.40/15-16 (restricted)).

RESOLVED:

That consideration of Paper AQSC.40/15-16 (restricted) be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

69/15-16 Source-Matching

CONSIDERED:

A report by the Service Owner, Academic Technology on source-matching (Paper AQSC.41/15-16).

REPORTED (by the Head of Platform Engineering and Deputy Director of IT Services):

- (a) That Turnitin had introduced unannounced changes to the Turnitin source-matching product which had impacted on Tabula and my.wbs;
- (b) That these were resolved in the short term but that there were ongoing concerns about the reliability and performance of Turnitin as a partner across the sector;
- (c) That addressing the issue for the Warwick Business School and my.wbs was a priority;
- (d) That all students' work currently stored on Tabula, my.wbs and Moodle could be submitted to new source matching software;
- (e) That Moodle was not impacted by the changes introduced by Turnitin;

(by the Chair):

- (f) That the Committee's responsibility was to ensure that there was fair and consistent treatment of students with respect to plagiarism detection and that products used were robust;
- (g) That any change in product used would require testing by and training for academic departments;
- (h) That an alternative approach would be to use Moodle for all assessment submission;

(by the Service Owner (Academic Technology):

- (i) That the University of Glasgow was currently using both Turnitin and an alternative product, URKUND, and was analysing the outcomes;

RESOLVED:

- (j) That the location of and the rationale for the decision that the standard variant of Moodle be implemented rather than a variant with greater functionality be investigated further;
- (k) That the Chair would discuss options with representatives of the Warwick Business School and IT Services;
- (l) That this would be discussed further at the next meeting of the Committee.

70/15-16 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

(a) Collaborative Courses

- (a) That the Committee, at its meeting on 22 February 2016, had granted authority to the Chair to recommend an amended proposal from the department of History of Art to introduce a variant of two existing validated Master's courses delivered by the Institut d'Études Supérieures des Arts (IÉSA), Paris, to the Senate for approval (minute 50(a)/15-16 referred)
- (ii) That, following the receipt of the proposal amended in light of recommendations by the Board of Graduate Studies, the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Committee to recommend the proposal to the Senate for approval, as set out in paper AGSC.10/15-16 (revised).

(b) Accreditation of Placement Years

- (i) That the Committee, at its meeting on 28 January 2016, had granted authority to the Chair of the Committee to approve a bespoke process for approval of revisions to courses for the introduction of accredited placement years (minute 29/15-16 referred).
- (ii) That the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Committee to approve:
 - (A) A revised course approval form focusing on the key elements of information required to introduce credit for placement years (Paper AQSC.42/15-16).
 - (B) The proposal that Professor Leng (as Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies) and Professor Lamburn (as Chair of the Quality Assurance Working Group and a member of the International Sub-Group of AQSC) be authorised to approve the proposed revisions to courses.

72/15-16 Matters arising

(b) SU Update (minutes AQSC.28 and 42(b)/15-16 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting on 22 February 2016, the Committee resolved (*inter alia*) that clarity on the timescales for the investigation of overcrowding on the Physics concourse bridge and their remedy be obtained from the Estates Office,
- (ii) That subsequent to the meeting, the Estates Office had confirmed that piloting would be undertaken in the Summer term with the intention to influence the flow of students through these areas using signage, barriers and stewarding in the first instance;

- (iii) That successful practical solutions would be implemented for the coming Autumn term;
 - (iv) That the Student members of the Committee would be invited to the next meeting of the Capital, Space and Amenities Group to be kept up to date on progress in this area.
- (c) Teaching Excellence Strategy (minutes AQSC 25 and 42/15-16 referred)

REPORTED:

- (x) That at its meeting the Committee had considered a paper from the Secretary setting out terms of reference and constitution of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Steering Group (paper AQSC.26/15-16) and resolved:
 - (C) That the Terms of Reference, as set out in paper AQSC.26/15-16 and amended as proposed in (i) and (ii) above, be approved;
 - (D) That members contact the Secretary with any suggestions on reducing the Steering Group membership.
- (xi) That the Chair had taken action to approve the following membership for the TEF Steering Group:

Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (Chair)
 Chairs of the Faculty Boards (or their nominee)
 Chair of the Quality Assurance Working Group
 Director of the Warwick International Higher Education Academy
 Director of Strategic Planning and Analytics
 Deputy Academic Registrar
 Student Representative

73/15-16 New Student Mobility Agreements

REPORTED:

- (a) That the following new exchange agreements had been approved by the International Steering Group of AQSC (minutes ISG.16 and 19/15-16 refer)
 - Centre for Applied Linguistics exchange agreement with Fudan University
 - Liberal Arts exchange agreement with Jacobs University Bremen
 - Chemistry exchange with the Chinese University of Hong Kong
 - University-wide exchange agreement with Universitas Gadjah Mada, Indonesia
 - WBS undergraduate exchange agreement with Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
 - English undergraduate exchange agreement with the University of Massachusetts Amherst, USA

- English undergraduate exchange agreement with the University of Rochester, USA
- (b) That the International Steering Group of AQSC approved a proposal to renew a University-wide UG exchange agreement with the University of Tokyo.

74/15-16 Progress of Committee Recommendations

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on Tuesday 8 March 2015, the Senate approved proposals under the following headings:

- Retention of Examination Scripts
- Collaborative Policy and Strategy
- Discontinuation of Courses
- New Variants of MA in the History and Business of Art and Collecting and MA in the History and Business of the Contemporary Art Market
- Warwick Manufacturing Group: Pakistan Institute of Management
- Warwick Manufacturing Group: Singapore Institute of Management (SIM) and Singapore Institute of Manufacturing Technology (SIMTech)
- Discontinuation of Collaborative Courses
- CFDLSC Terms of Reference

75/15-16 New Postgraduate Courses

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 28 April 2016 it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies that the Chair had taken action to approve the following new courses:

MA in the History and Business of Art and Collecting in the UK;
 MA in the History and Business of Art and Collecting in Continental Europe
 MA in the History and Business of the Contemporary Art Market in London;
 MA in the History and Business of the Contemporary Art Market in Paris.
 MSc in Advanced Critical Care Practice

76/15-16 Revised Postgraduate Courses

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 28 April 2016 it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies that the Chair had taken action to approve revisions to the following courses:

MA Theatre and Performance Research
 MBA by Executive Study
 MSc Finance

77/15-16 Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held on Monday 13 June 2016 at 2.00pm in room CMR 1.0, University House.

CH/KG
22 May 2016