

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee  
held on Wednesday 28 February 2007

Present: Professor M Whitby (Chair), Ms S Bennett, Professor L Bridges, Mr B Duggan, Dr K Flint, Professor M Harrison, Ms C Longworth, Professor M Luntley, Dr R Moseley, Dr P O'Hare, Professor E Peile, Professor M Smith, Professor S Swain (*vice* Professor A Caesar),

Apologies: Professor J Davis, Dr T Price, Dr P Roberts

In attendance: Ms J Bradfield, Dr J Moss

59/06-07 Minutes of the previous meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2007 be approved.

60/06-07 Matters arising

(a) Course and Module approval (minute 47c/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

That at the meeting of the Committee held on 1 February 2007 it was resolved that members bring to this meeting any further thoughts and suggestions on the course and module approval systems.

CONSIDERED:

The report of two meetings of Chairs of Faculty Undergraduate Committees/Sub-Faculty and Faculty Graduate Study Committees held to discuss course and module approval mechanisms, paper AQSC 29/06-07.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the proposals to amend course and module approval processes be progressed as set out in paper AQSC 29/06-07, noting in particular that different methods of organising Committee business were being trialled across the Faculties within the framework approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee;
- (ii) That Faculty Board members and secretariats be given guidance on their roles in arranging Committee/Sub-Faculty business and considering course and module proposals.

(b) National Student Survey 2007 (minute 55/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the University had chosen to focus the push for responses to the National Student Survey in the two weeks beginning 19 February;
- (ii) That the Communications Office had devised a multi-faceted awareness-raising campaign, including posters, lamppost banners, messages from the Students' Union and an incentive for all who complete the survey (free printer credits);
- (iii) That the response rate by the latest census point on 21 February was 18%, which indicated a reasonable take-up by final-year undergraduates so far.

(c) QAA Overseas Audit (minute 30/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That a QAA team had visited the University on 8-9 February to carry out the UK site visit for the audit of Warwick Manufacturing Group's courses delivered collaboratively with Hong Kong Polytechnic University;
- (ii) That an audit team would visit Hong Kong in May to speak to staff, students and alumni there;
- (iii) That the final audit report was expected in late summer or autumn 2007.

(d) Guidelines on the Use of Postgraduate Students for Teaching (minute 32/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

That the Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2006 had considered guidelines for the use of postgraduate students for teaching, paper BGS 6/06-07 (revised), and had resolved that the proposed guidelines be referred to the Faculty Boards for comment, before further consideration at the second meeting of the Committee in the Spring Term 2007.

CONSIDERED:

A response from the Board of the Faculty of Arts, paper AQSC 73/06-07, together with oral reports from Chairs of the Faculty Boards on the draft guidelines for the use of postgraduate students for teaching, paper BGS 6/06-07 (revised).

RESOLVED:

That the guidelines for the use of postgraduate students for teaching be approved as set out in paper BGS 6/06-07 (revised), subject to the amendments and clarifications noted at the meeting.

- (e) Proposed Guidelines for the Supervision of Research Students based away from the University (minute 36/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Committee at its meeting on 22 November 2006 had considered Proposed Guidelines for the Supervision of Research Students based away from the University, paper BGS 7/06-07 (revised 3) and resolved that they be referred to Heads of Department for comment.
- (ii) That twelve Heads of Department had responded to the request for comments.

CONSIDERED:

Amended proposed Guidelines for the Supervision of Research Students based away from the University, paper BGS 7/06-07 (revised 4).

RESOLVED:

That Guidelines for the Supervision of Research Students based away from the University be approved as set out in paper BGS 7/06-07 (revised 4).

- (f) National Quality Assurance Framework and TQI website: Summaries of External Examiners' Reports (minute 27/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies at its meeting on 21 February 2007 considered the resolution of the Committee made at its meeting on 22 November 2006 that the Board of Graduate Studies and the Board of Undergraduate Studies consider introducing a summary of external examiners' reports for discussion in the non-reserved business of Board meetings;
- (ii) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies resolved that the production of a non-reserved summary of External Examiners reports would be difficult and of little value, it being further noted that the members of the Board, who were themselves External Examiners, felt that it would inhibit External Examiners from being entirely candid in their comments, if they were aware that these may be made available to students, albeit in summary form.

CONSIDERED:

- (iii) The resolution passed by the Board of Undergraduate Studies at its meeting on 21 February 2007;
- (iv) An oral report from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies that at its meeting on 18 January 2007 the Board of Graduate Studies had resolved that the Chair prepare summaries of external examiners' reports for discussion in the non-reserved business of meetings of the Board of Graduate Studies (BGS minute 46/06-07 referred);
- (v) The recommendation from HEFCE and its Quality Assurance Framework Review Group that HE institutions should prepare to share external examiners' reports as a matter of course with the institution's student representatives, for example through staff-student committees;
- (vi) The arrangements currently in place within Departments for the scrutiny of external examiners' reports and the involvement of student representatives within the scrutiny process.

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

- (vii) That Departments be asked to confirm that external examiners' reports are discussed at Departmental Committee, course committee or equivalent meetings with student representatives present (i.e. in the non-reserved section of the relevant meeting);
  - (viii) That the Board of Graduate Studies and the Board of Undergraduate Studies (or sub-group, in accordance with the standard practice of the Board) consider external examiners' reports and departmental responses in the non-reserved section of their meetings.
- (g) SSLC Coordinators' Annual Report (minute 51/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

That the Board of Undergraduate Studies at its meeting on 21 February 2007 considered the Undergraduate Annual Report from the SSLC Coordinators for 2005-06 (paper AQSC 30/06-07) and recommended that the Academic Quality and Standards Committee draw to the attention of the Campus Life Committee the comments in the Annual Report concerning the provision of departmental common rooms, and recommend to the Campus Life Committee that it investigate the extent to which departments have appointed a senior tutor to oversee personal tutoring arrangements.

RESOLVED:

That the Secretariat consult with the Senior Tutor to establish whether all departments have appointed a senior tutor or have made alternative suitable arrangements to oversee the personal tutoring system.

RECOMMENDED (to the Space Management Committee):

That the Committee consider the comments in the Undergraduate Annual Report from the SSLC Coordinators for 2005-06 (paper AQSC 30/06-07) concerning the provision of departmental common rooms.

61/06-07 Chair's Business

REPORTED:

(a) Leitch Review of Skills

That the Chair had attended a number of meetings related to the Leitch Review of Skills and associated issues concerning employer engagement, it being noted that the University considers ensuring students enhance their employability to be a key part of its mission.

(b) 14-19 curriculum

That the Chair had attended a number of meetings related to the 14-19 curriculum and the introduction of specialised Diplomas.

(c) Warwick's Future (minute 49/06-07 referred)

That the Chair continued to be involved in discussions concerning the development of the University's future strategy and was taking forward connected discussions of the distinctiveness of a Warwick education.

62/06-07 Academic Satisfaction Review 2006 (minute 109/05-06 referred)

CONSIDERED:

Responses to the Academic Satisfaction Review 2006 (circulated as papers AQSC 111-112/05-06 for the meeting of the Committee held on 7 June 2006 and available on the Teaching Quality website, [www.warwick.ac.uk/go/quality/asr](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/go/quality/asr)) from the following academic and service departments and committees:

- (a) English & Comparative Literature, paper AQSC 37/06-07;
- (b) French Studies, paper AQSC 39/06-07;
- (c) German Studies, paper AQSC 40/06-07;
- (d) History, paper AQSC 41/06-07;
- (e) The History of Art, paper AQSC 42/06-07;
- (f) Italian, paper AQSC 43/06-07;

- (g) Translation & Comparative Cultural Studies, paper AQSC 45/06-07;
- (h) Warwick Medical School, paper AQSC 46/06-07;
- (i) Biological Sciences, paper AQSC 47/06-07;
- (j) Chemistry, paper AQSC 48/06-07;
- (k) Computer Science, paper AQSC 49/06-07;
- (l) Physics, paper AQSC 51/06-07;
- (m) Psychology, paper AQSC 52/06-07;
- (n) Statistics, paper AQSC 53/06-07;
- (o) Economics, paper AQSC 56/06-07;
- (p) Philosophy, paper AQSC 57/06-07;
- (q) Sociology, paper AQSC 59/06-07;
- (r) Law, paper AQSC 60/06-07;
- (s) Warwick Business School, paper AQSC 62/06-07;
- (t) Library, paper AQSC 63/06-07;
- (u) IT Services, paper AQSC 64/06-07;
- (v) Senior Tutor, paper AQSC 65/06-07;
- (w) Students' Union, paper AQSC 66/06-07;
- (x) Careers Service, paper AQSC 67/06-07;
- (y) Skills Working Group, paper SWG 10/06-07 (revised);
- (z) Board of the Faculty of Science, paper AQSC 70/06-07;
- (aa) Board of the Faculty of Social Studies, paper AQSC 71/06-07;
- (bb) Graduate School, paper AQSC 74/06-07.

RESOLVED:

- (cc) That the Academic Satisfaction Review provided an opportunity to obtain feedback from students that might not be gained in other ways;
- (dd) That, given the relatively low response rate, the Committee had some concerns about the robustness of the data;
- (ee) That the Students' Union and the University take steps to encourage participation in the Academic Satisfaction Review 2007 and that the Committee's concerns about the robustness of the data produced by previous Reviews be discussed with QUAD Research;

RECOMMENDED (to the Space Management Committee):

That the Committee consider the serious concerns raised by a number of departments about the provision of office space for postgraduate students.

63/06-07

Summaries of Annual Course Review reports

REPORTED:

That the following summaries of Annual Course Review reports would be available for consideration by the Committee in the Summer Term:

- (a) Undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Social Studies;
- (b) Taught Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Social Studies;
- (c) Research Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Social Studies;

- (d) Undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Medicine;
- (e) Research Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Medicine.

CONSIDERED:

The following summaries of Annual Course Review reports:

- (f) Undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts, paper AUSC 15/06-07 (revised);
- (g) Taught Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts, paper AGSC 16/06-07 (revised);
- (h) Research Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts, paper AGSC 17/06-07 (revised);
- (i) Taught Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Medicine, paper GCFM 15/06-07;
- (j) Undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Science, paper SFS 38/06-07;
- (k) Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Science, paper SGS 48/06-07;
- (l) Collaborative, Flexible and Distance/Distributed Learning courses, paper AQSC 72/06-07.

RESOLVED:

- (m) That the following summaries of Annual Course Review reports be approved:
  - (i) Undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts, paper AUSC 15/06-07 (revised);
  - (ii) Taught Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts, paper AGSC 16/06-07 (revised);
  - (iii) Research Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts, paper AGSC 17/06-07 (revised);
  - (iv) Taught Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Medicine, paper GCFM 15/06-07;
  - (v) Undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Science, paper SFS 38/06-07;
  - (vi) Postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Science, paper SGS 48/06-07;
  - (vii) Collaborative, Flexible and Distance/Distributed Learning courses, paper AQSC 72/06-07.
- (n) That the method of applying Regulation 11 (Regulations Governing the Procedure to be Adopted in the Event of Suspected Cheating in a University Test) be clarified in respect of students in their final year of study against whom alleged cases arise close to the end of the academic year.

64/06-07

Open Studies Certificate Approval Form

CONSIDERED:

A minor amendment to the Open Studies Certificate approval form, adding as an allowed credit weighting "10, 20 or 30 credits" on page 4 of the form, paper AQSC 69/06-07.

RESOLVED:

That the minor amendment to the Open Studies Certificate approval form be approved as set out in paper AQSC 69/06-07.

65/06-07

New Collaborative Courses

- (a) Warwick Business School: Diploma in Service Leadership (Singapore Specialist Diploma)

REPORTED:

That the Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee at its meeting on 8 February considered a proposal from Warwick Business School to create a partnership with Singapore Institute of Management to deliver the existing Diploma in Service Leadership under the name Diploma in Service Leadership (Singapore Specialist Diploma), paper CFDLSC 45/06-07 (sections of which had been considered by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies as papers GFSS 138-140/06-07), noting that the University already had an agreement with SIM and SIMTech to deliver WMG courses, and recommended that the proposal be approved.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from Warwick Business School to create a partnership with Singapore Institute of Management to deliver the existing Diploma in Service Leadership under the name Diploma in Service Leadership (Singapore Specialist Diploma), paper CFDLSC 45/06-07).

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposal from Warwick Business School to create a partnership with Singapore Institute of Management to deliver the existing Diploma in Service Leadership under the name Diploma in Service Leadership (Singapore Specialist Diploma) be approved as set out in paper CFDLSC 45/06-07, it being noted that Warwick Business School should liaise with the University's representative in Singapore about the course.

- (b) School of Engineering and Department of Physics: EngD in Non-Destructive Evaluation

REPORTED:

That the Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee at its meeting on 8 February considered a proposal to introduce an EngD in Non-Destructive Evaluation in collaboration with Imperial College London, and the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Nottingham and Strathclyde, and under the umbrella of the EPSRC Research Centre for Non-Destructive Evaluation, as set out in papers SGS 37-38/06-07 and recommended that the proposal be approved, subject to a



recommendation that each module be assessed by a submission of between 3,000 and 5,000 words.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the School of Engineering and the Department of Physics to introduce an EngD in Non-Destructive Evaluation in collaboration with Imperial College London, and the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Nottingham and Strathclyde, and under the umbrella of the EPSRC Research Centre for Non-Destructive Evaluation, paper SGS 37/06-07.

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposal from the School of Engineering and the Department of Physics to introduce an EngD in Non-Destructive Evaluation in collaboration with Imperial College London, and the Universities of Bath, Bristol, Nottingham and Strathclyde, and under the umbrella of the EPSRC Research Centre for Non-Destructive Evaluation be approved as set out in paper SGS 37/06-07, subject to the following recommendations (additions underlined, deletions ~~struck through~~):

- (i) that each module be assessed by a submission of between 3,000 and 5,000 words; and
- (ii) that the course structure consists of ~~46~~ 14 modules.

66/06-07

Award of Merit and Starred Distinction on taught Masters courses (BGS minutes 34/06-07 and 54/06-07 and AQSC minute 38/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

- (a) That at the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies on 22 February 2007 the Board had reported that at its meeting on 18 January 2007 the Board had considered the practice of awarding merit and starred distinctions at other universities (paper BGS 20/06-07), noting a correction to the paper to reflect that the University of Birmingham did award merit on its taught Masters courses, and resolved:
  - (i) That there was no support for the introduction of a starred distinction at the University;
  - (ii) That the possibility of awarding merit would be discussed further once the Graduate Studies Committees of the Boards of the Faculties had met.
- (b) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Boards of the Faculties had considered the award of merit and starred distinctions and were of the following opinions:

- (i) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Arts had considered the award of merit and starred distinctions at its meeting on 1 February 2007 and resolved that on the whole, there was no support for the introduction of either the starred distinction or merit classes;
- (ii) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Medicine had considered the award of merit and starred distinctions at its meeting on 30 January 2007 and recommended that the award of Merit and Starred Distinction on taught Masters courses should not be introduced;
- (iii) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science had considered the award of merit and starred distinctions at its meeting on 31 January 2007 and recommended that the Board of Graduate Studies consider the possibility of introducing a “merit” classification for taught masters degrees to be awarded to candidates achieving an average score of 65% or over, with a score of at least 60% for the two elements – coursework average and project – of the degree, noting that if such a “merit” were to appear on the transcript, it should also be on the certificate;
- (iv) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies had considered the award of merit on taught Masters courses at its meeting held on 24 October 2006, and resolved:
  - (A) That the Committee did not support the proposal for a starred distinction;
  - (B) That the Committee supported a permissive practice for awarding informal merit classifications within departments, but did not support the proposal to impose a prescriptive regulation across the Faculties and the Departments for the following reasons:
    - (1) Providing a transcript would detail the quality of a student's performance;
    - (2) The awarding of a merit could persuade students to be cautious in their choice of modules;
    - (3) Departmental choice rather than a centrally imposed policy was preferred.
- (c) That the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 22 February 2007 had considered whether to award merit on taught Masters programmes and had resolved:

- (i) That the Board did not support the adoption at University level of merit awards on taught Masters programmes but endorsed current departmental discretion to award informal merits, subject to departments having adopted specific criteria for such awards;
- (ii) That the Graduate School conduct a survey of departmental practices in this respect, including information on the criteria adopted for awards of informal merits.

67/06-07 New Undergraduate Courses

REPORTED:

That at the meeting of the Board of Undergraduate Studies on 21 February 2007 it was reported that the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, had approved the proposal from the Department of Biological Sciences for a new course "BSc in Biomedical Science" as set out in paper SFS 24/06-07.

68/06-07 Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 9.30am on Thursday 17 May 2007 in the Council Chamber, University House.

JDM/JB, 01.03.07

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