UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Academic Quality and Standards Committee

<u>Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee
held on Thursday 29 October 2015</u>

Present: Professor C Hughes (Chair), Ms S Bennett (Director of Student Careers and
Skills), Professor A Dowd (Academic Director of the Graduate School), Ms L
Gramaglia (Learning Development Centre), Mr C Hindhaugh (Student
Representative) (Education Officer)), Professor C Hughes (Chair of the
Faculty of Social Science), Professor C Jenainati (SSLC Coordinator (Arts and
Social Science)), Mr S Lamb (Senior Tutor), 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
(Acting Director of IATL), Professor J Palmowski (Chair of the Board of
Graduate Studies), Professor L Roberts (Representative of Senate
(Medicine)), Mr N Shiers (Student Representative (Postgraduate Officer)),
Professor M Shipman (Chair of the Faculty of Science), Ms A Thomas
(Service Owner (Academic Technology)), Dr I Tuersley (SSLC Co-ordinator
(Science)), Dr N Whybrow (Representative of Senate (Arts))

Apologies: Professor P Corvi (SSLC Co-ordinator), Professor S Jacka (Representative of
Senate (Science)), Professor A Reeve (Representative of Senate (Social
Sciences)), Professor P Winstanley (Chair of the Faculty of Medicine)

In Attendance: Ms K Gray (Secretary), Ms C Smith (Assistant Secretary

1/15-16   <u>The Student Portal</u>

RECEIVED:

A presentation on the development of the new MyWarwick Student Portal by
the Director of University Marketing (Paper AQSC.9/15-16).

REPORTED (by the Director of University Marketing):

(a)   That research had shown what features students were seeking in a
student portal;

(b)   That benchmarking against other institutions' student-facing websites
had been undertaken;

(c)   That the new portal presented a progression from the existing 'Welcome'
website, which provided a central point of information for new students,
by linking to existing content for current students and including some
news items;

(d)   That usage of the website was being monitored;

(e)   That a weekly email newsletter for students would be introduced and
would be piloted this term;

(f)   That a student advisory board would be established to advise on communications and that an editorial board would be established to oversee developments;

(g)   That the site needed to work well in order for it to become the primary source of information for students;

(h)   That IT Services were developing a new version of Start.Warwick which would provide an enhanced version of the MyWarwick Student Portal, with increased personalization of information, and which was aimed primarily at use on tablets;

(i)   That the portal and weekly email were not intended to replace departmental communications to students;

(by the Chair):

(j)   That it would be important to plan news at the appropriate times to ensure it was most useful to students;

(k)   That it would provide an opportunity to showcase student achievements;

(by the SSLC Co-ordinator (Science)):

(l)   That it would be valuable for students on joint degrees to receive consistent information;

RESOLVED:

(m)   That the Head of Platform Engineering and the Deputy Director of IT Services be invited to the next meeting of the Committee to outline plans for Start.Warwick;

(n)   That a member of the Committee be included in the Editorial Board.

2/15-16   Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership

RESOLVED:

That the terms of reference, constitution and membership of the Committee for 2015-16 be approved as set out in paper AQSC.01/15-16.

3/15-16   Freedom of Information

REPORTED:

(a)   That the Steering Committee at its meeting on 29 October 2007 considered a paper outlining how the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies to the publication of minutes of University bodies together with the University Publication Scheme adopted by the Steering Committee in December 2003, paper SC 60/07-08, and resolved that a standard item be included on the agenda of the first meeting of each University Committee at the start of each academic year to inform new members

and to remind continuing members of the University policy on the publication of minutes.

(b) That all non-reserved minutes and agenda of the Committee are published on the University's Governance website at: http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/atoz/aqsc/minutes/

(c) That copies of paper SC 60/07-08 are available from the Secretary on request.

4/15-16   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.

5/15-16   Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2015 be approved.

6/15-16   Matters arising

(a)   Faculty of Arts and Tabula (minute AQSC.126b/14-15 referred)

REPORTED:

(i)   That at its meeting on 15 June 2015, it was reported to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee:

(A)   That, at its meeting on 18 May 2015 the Board of the Faculty of Arts had received a composite report on timeliness of feedback on assessment submitted in Autumn Term 2014-15 across the Faculty of Arts (paper BFA.19 (revised)/14-15) and it had been reported (*inter alia*) that all departments in the Faculty of Arts were encountering problems with Tabula, with each department using the system in different ways and for different purposes.

(B)   That the Board of the Faculty of Arts had recommended to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee that clarification be provided on why Tabula had been

selected as the administration system for departments to use.

(ii) That at its meeting on 15 June 2015, the Academic Standards and Quality Committee resolved that the issue be referred to IT Services to clarify the nature of the concerns raised by the Faculty.

(iii) That on 4 August 2015, a meeting had taken place between representatives from each of the Faculties and the Deputy Director and Head of Service Development, IT Services with the following feedback:
(A) That there was general consensus in these Faculties that the Tabula service had improved;
(B) That any outstanding queries relating to the use of Tabula would be taken forward with ITS by the Faculty Secretariat;
(C) That the wider issue of the existence and use of multiple IT systems across the University continued to be under consideration by the Senior Management Team.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Arts):

(iv) That he was not aware of any ongoing concerns.

(by the Chair):

(v) That the Senior Management Team had had an awayday focusing on personalised learning and this was also being discussed with JISC.

(vi) That the governance of IT projects and the co-ordination of systems were under discussion.

(b) Feedback on Exams and Dissertations (minutes AQSC 63b/14-15 and 111/14-15b referred)

REPORTED:

(i) That at its meeting on 23 February 2015, the Committee resolved:

(A) That the introduction of a standard set of cohort-level feedback did not intend to override practice where individual feedback was given but rather provide a minimum standard set of examination information, similar to that which was made available to examination boards, with minimal burden imposed on the department.
(B) That the Teaching Quality Office develop a template for a minimum standard of cohort-level feedback, noting that departments who did not provide individual feedback should be asked to provide further qualitative content.

(ii)   That at its meeting on 15 June 2015, the Committee considered a draft template for a minimum standard of cohort-level feedback (Paper AQSC.80/14-15) and resolved the following:

    (A)   That the Committee's preference was option 2, as set out in Paper AQSC.80/14-15;

    (B)   That, if departments already provided cohort level feedback, they could continue to do so in the format used currently;

    (C)   That, while it was recognized that individual and cohort level feedback served different purposes, it would not be necessary for departments to offer both;

    (D)   That the form be revised to remove maximum and minimum marks, given the risk of identification of individual students in small cohorts;

    (E)   That the revised form be brought to the next meeting of the Committee in 2015/16 for consideration;

    (F)   That further consideration be given to proposals for the use of IT systems to provide the data for cohort level feedback.

(by the Chair):

(iii)   That the template could be adapted to suit different assessment methods but represented a minimum requirement in terms of feedback on examinations;

(iv)   That the WIHEA was likely to undertake work on assessment and feedback;

(by the Students' Union Education Officer):

(v)   That feedback on examinations had been reported as an issue in every annual SSLC report for a number of years and this represented a welcome development, although individual feedback would be ideal.

(by the Students' Union Postgraduate Officer):

(vi)   That the department that offered individual feedback on assessment scored highly in the NSS on feedback related questions.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Science):

(vii)   That high scores in NSS can arise from the level of feedback on formative work undertaken, not just from feedback on examinations;

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Arts):

(viii)   That feedback on examinations was particularly critical for first year undergraduate students but would not be relevant for finalists.

CONSIDERED:

(ix)   A revised draft template for a minimum standard of cohort-level feedback (paper AQSC.80/14-15{revised}.

RESOLVED:

(x)   That the sample feedback be removed from the form included within the guidance.

(xi)   Noting that feedback on exams does not fall within the 20 day rule and that those departments which did not already offer individual or other forms of feedback to students on examinations would be expected to provide this minimum form of cohort level feedback;

(xii)   That particular attention should be given to cohort level feedback to first year students required to resit their examinations and assessments in September, during the summer vacation, to support their studies;

(xiii)   That members consider further the administrative burden on staff in relation to examinations and how this might be reduced.

7/15-16   <u>Chair's Action</u>

(a)   <u>Minimum Requirements for Supporting Transition at Warwick</u> (minutes AQSC 82/14-15 and 111(f)/14-15 referred)

REPORTED:

(i)   That at its meeting on 14 May 2015 the Committee considered a paper from the Induction Strategy Steering Group on Minimum Requirements for Supporting Transition at Warwick, as set out in Paper 51/14-15 and resolved:
(A)   That comments be provided on the proposal to the Secretary to the Committee by 22nd May 2015;
(B)   That further clarity on the status of the document be provided, noting that it appeared to be a work in progress;
(ii)   That at its meeting on 15 June 2015, it was reported to the Committee that no comments had been provided and the Committee therefore resolved that consideration of the minimum requirements paper be considered at its next meeting;
(iii)   That the Chair of the Committee, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve a guidance document from the Induction Working Group on Supporting Transition at Warwick as set out in paper AQSC.51/14-15 (revised).

(b)   <u>PGT Conventions</u> (Minute AQSC.112b/14-15 referred);

REPORTED:

(i)   That at its meeting on 15 June 2015, it was reported to the Committee that the Chair had taken action on behalf of the

Committee to approve the immediate application of revised Postgraduate Taught (PGT) Conventions for all registered part-time students of the Warwick Business School, as set out in Paper AQSC.81/14-15);

(ii) That at its meeting on 15 June 2015, it was further resolved that the wider application of the decision be considered further;

(iii) That the Chair of the Committee, acting on its behalf, has taken action to approve:

(A) The direct application of the harmonised PGT Conventions, as set out in paper BGS.13/15-16 to all PGT students considered by Boards of Examiners from September 2015 onwards, regardless of the students' date of registration and/or mode of study;

(B) That the only exception to this should be where the version of conventions that would have originally applied to the student would lead to a more favorable outcome.

(c) WBS Foundation Year

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Committee, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve amendments to the Regulations for the Foundation Year of the BSc Accounting and Finance (with Foundation year) and the BSc Management (with Foundation year) Honours degrees as set out in paper S.21/15-16.

(d) Good Practice Guide on Providing Information for Students

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Committee, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve a new revised version of the Good Practice Guide on Providing Information for Students for the 2015/16 academic year as set out in paper AQSC.04/15-16.

8/15-16 Progress of Committee Recommendations

REPORTED:

(a) That at its meeting on 29 June 2015, the Senate approved recommendations from the Committee under the following headings:

Report on the Review of the Course Approval Process
Report from the Monitoring and Review Working Group on Annual Course Review
Guidance on Mitigating Circumstances
Revised Policy on Professional Development for Doctoral Researchers
Revised Credit and Module Framework
Good Practice Guide on Monitoring Attendance and Progression
Proposal from Warwick Manufacturing Group that the extension of the collaboration with Yildiz Technical University (YTU), Istanbul be extended to include the delivery of the MSc (and sub-qualifications) in

Engineering Business Management and the MSc (and sub-qualifications) in Manufacturing Systems Engineering
Proposal from the Department of Psychology to extend the existing collaboration with Coventry University to deliver the placement element of the existing course MSC in Clinical Applications of Psychology
Proposed amendments to Regulation 8 for First Degrees and Regulation 9: Constitutions of Boards of Examiners, with respect to the Foundation Year offered by the Warwick Business School
Policy on the Employment of Postgraduates that Teach

(b) That further to consideration by the Senate at its meeting on 29 June 2015, the Steering Committee considered and approved proposals for the Student Complaints Resolution Procedure, on behalf of the Senate.

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

(c) That the Policy on the Employment of Postgraduates that Teach was yet to be fully implemented;

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

(d) That implementation of the Policy on the Employment of Postgraduates that Teach was being aligned to broader policy developments and project work in relation to the employment of sessional teachers;

(e) That a number of issues had arisen during the pilot phase of the project which would need to be taken into consideration.

9/15-16   Committee Members' Achievements

REPORTED (by the Chair):

(a) That the Director of Student Careers and Skills had been appointed Vice-President of the Association of Graduate Careers and Skills.

(b) That the SSLC Co-ordinator (Arts) had been awarded an Erasmus + grant of €275,000 for developing teaching in liberal arts in partnership with other institutions in Europe.

10/15-16   The Warwick International Higher Education Academy (WIHEA)

REPORTED (by the Chair):

(a) That 50 Foundation Fellows had been appointed;

(b) That the recruitment process for WIHEA staff was ongoing;

(c) That core themes for projects were being developed;

(d) That processes for the nomination of Visitor Teaching Fellows were being established.

11/15-16   <u>Monash-Warwick Alliance</u>

REPORTED (by the Chair):

(a)   That funding was available for projects to 2016;

(b)   That the Service Owner (Academic Technology) was leading the development of a repository of learning objects available to both institutions;

(c)   That the Board was seeking to take forward projects which were both sustainable and scalable.

12/15-16   <u>Higher Education Academy Learning Gain Bid</u>

RECEIVED:

An extract of the proposal from the University of Warwick for funding towards piloting and evaluating measures of learning gain as set out in paper AQSC.06.15-16;

13/15-16   <u>Students' Union Update</u>

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

(a)   That the Undergraduate SSLC Annual Report for 2014/15 would be considered by the Board of Undergraduate Studies at its meeting on 20 November 2015;

(b)   That the key issues arising in the Report were recording of lectures; overcrowding and quality of teaching spaces and; 24 hour opening of the Library;

(c)   That SSLC elections had now been held and training for Course Representatives was fully booked;

(d)   That Executive Committees of the Students' Union had now been established for areas of activity linking to each sabbatical officer;

(e)   That the Students' Union would be launching a campaign on lecture capture;

(f)   That the NUS would be launching a campaign against the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF);

(by the University Senior Tutor):

(g)   That recorded lectures were a key form of support for students with disabilities which had become more important with the reduction in financial support to fund note-takers for students;

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Science and the SSLC Co-ordinator (Science):

(h)   That there had been no reduction in attendance at lectures when lecture capture had been introduced;

(by the Secretary):

(i)   That a paper on 24 hour opening of the Library would be brought to the Committee at a meeting in the Spring Term.

(by the Students' Union Postgraduate Officer):

(j)   That the Postgraduate SSLC Annual Report for 2014/15 would be considered by the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 19 November 2015.

(k)   That the key issues arising in the Report were recording of lectures; postgraduate study spaces; availability of English Language skills support; and the Sessional Teaching Project.

(l)   That some students were expressing concerns that student cohorts this year were larger than they had expected;

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

(m)   That a review of in-sessional English Language support was being undertaken.

14/15-16   Technology Enhanced Learning Steering Group

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Technology Enhanced Steering Group as set out in paper AQSC.03/15-16, noting the questions for the Committee summarised on page 12.

REPORTED (by the Service Owner (Academic Technology)):

(a)   That Moodle was now being implemented in the Departments of Politics and Sociology;

(b)   That work had been undertaken with the Departments of Physics and Statistics to develop self-assessment tools with automated feedback;

(c)   That the Academic Technology team was engaged in the planning for the new Teaching and Learning Building;

(d)   That the variation in departmental administrative processes and structures limited the extent to which richer information and an improved quality of service could be provided;

RESOLVED:

(e)   That a roadmap of departmental practice in relation to technology enhanced learning would be useful;

(f)   That further consideration be given to the feasibility of gathering and maintaining data on administrative contacts for modules;

(g)   That the role that technology can play in course delivery be considered further as a potential topic for the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review;

(h)   That assessment and feedback be considered a priority in terms of the development of digital skills in staff and students and that members contact the Service Owner (Academic Technology) with any suggested projects.

*15/15-16   Student Surveys Working Group

CONSIDERED:

A report on the NSS 2015 results considered by Steering Committee at its meeting on 19 October 2015 as set out in paper SC.07/15-16;

REPORTED: (by the Chair):

(a)   That data for all student surveys was now available in one online location;

(b)   That action plans were being developed across all departments which they were asked to discuss with SSLCs;

(c)   That the Chair and the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies were visiting departments, meeting with a number of Heads of Departments initially;

(d)   That Faculty Chairs were also engaging with departments on survey outcomes;

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Arts):

(e)   That he had met with Heads of Departments and was looking at sharing best practice and taking forward more focused work in some areas;

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Science):

(f)   That communication with students was key to improving satisfaction and often simple measures could make a significant difference to the student experience.

16/15-16   Equality issues

REPORTED (by the Secretary):

(a)   That the University's Equality Objectives were to be updated and that the Equality and Diversity Committee had asked the Academic Quality and Standards Committee to propose student-focused objectives that could be included.

(b)   That proposals would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee.

17/15-16   Accreditation of Placement Year in Industry and Year Abroad

RECEIVED:

A paper on principles and proposals for the accreditation of placement years in industry and years abroad as approved by the Senate at its meeting on 12 October 2015 (paper S.20/15-16).

18/15-16   Amendments to Regulation 37 (minute BGS 19/15-16 referred to)

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 8 October 2015 the Board of Graduate Studies considered a proposal for amendment to Regulation 37 as set out in paper BGS.7/15-16 and resolved that the Chair and Deputy Chair be empowered to recommend to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee that Regulation 37 be amended to enable Boards of Examiners to agree extensions in excess of six months based solely on academic judgement and the circumstances of the student (subject to receipt of appropriate evidence), noting that no further extensions could be approved unless there were truly exceptional circumstances.

CONSIDERED:

The proposed amendment to Regulation 37, from the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, as set out in paper AQSC.05/15-16 and BGS.7.15-16.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Senate)

That the proposed amendment to Regulation 37 be approved as set out in paper AQSC.05/15-16 and BGS.7.15-16.

19/15-16   Amendment to Guidance on Requirements for the Award of Postgraduate Research Degrees

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, took action on behalf of the Board to recommend to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee that Guidelines for Research Degrees be amended to include the Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA).

CONSIDERED:

An amendment to the Guidance on Requirements for the Award of Postgraduate Research Degrees to include the Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) as set out in paper AQSC.08/15-16.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Senate)

That an amendment to the Guidance on Requirements for the Award of Postgraduate Research Degrees to include the Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA) be approved as set out in paper AQSC.08/15-16.

20/15-16   Amendment to Regulation 11 on the Procedure to be Adopted in the Event of Suspected cheating in a University Test (BGS minute 23/15-16 referred to)

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 8 November 2015, the Board of Graduate Studies considered a proposed amendment to regulation 11 and recommended (to the Academic and Quality Standards Committee) that the proposed amendments as set out in paper BGS.11/15-16 be approved.

CONSIDERED:

The proposed amendment to regulation 11 on the Procedure to be adopted in the event of suspected cheating in a University Test as set out in paper BGS.11/15-16.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Senate)

That the proposed amendment to regulation 11 on the Procedure to be adopted in the event of suspected cheating in a University Test be approved as set out in paper BGS.11/15-16.

21/15-16   Postgraduate Courses of Study:

REPORTED:

(a)   That it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 8 October 2015 that the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Board to approve the following courses:

PhD in Mathematics of Systems
MSc/PGDip/PGCert/PGA in Systems Engineering Technical Leadership
MSc in Polymer Chemistry
Doctorate in Business Administration (DBA)
International Education and Development

(b)   That it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 8 October 2015 that the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Board to approve revisions to the Global Energy MBA.

(c)   That it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 8 October 2015 that the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Board to approve the discontinuation of future recruitment to the MA in International Performance Research.

*22/15-16   Postgraduate Student Experience Surveys

RECEIVED:

(a)   A report from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies and the Postgraduate Student Development Officer (Graduate School) on the results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2015 (paper SC.206/14-15);

(b)   A report from the Chair and the Postgraduate Student Development Officer (Graduate School) on the results of the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PTES) 2015 (paper SC.184/14-15).

*23/15-16   University response to the HEFCE consultation on Future Approaches to Quality Assessment

RECEIVED:

A response, on behalf of the University, to the HEFCE consultation on Future Approaches to Quality Assessment, as approved by the Steering Committee (paper SC.205/14-15).

24/15-16   Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held on Wednesday 2 December 2015 in room CMR 1.0, University House.

CH/KG 27/11/15