

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Academic Quality and Standards Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee held on
20 November 2002

Present: Professor S Bassnett (in the chair), Professor R Burns, Professor R G Dyson,
Professor J Jones, Professor M McCrae, Professor A Mullender, Dr S Hill, Mr
G Jones, Mr A Reiss.

Apologies: Dr P Blackmore, Professor J Dale, Professor A Easton, Professor I Lauder,
Professor G Lindsay, Professor A Reeve.

In attendance: Mr J Dale for item 17/02-03, Mr N Hull for item 18/02-03 and Dr A Dowd for
item 21(b)/02-03.

13/02-03 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 24 October 2002 be
approved.

14/02-03 Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a) Abolition of Degree Classification (minute 10/02-03 refers)

That the issue of abolition of the degree classification system be
referred to the next meeting of the Steering Committee to establish
whether there had been any further discussions at Government level
before any steps be taken to commission a systematic review of the
opinions of employers and Research Councils.

(b) Learning and Teaching Strategy (minute 56/01-02 refers)

REPORTED:

That a letter from HEFCE had been received, commenting favourably on the
University's Learning and Teaching Strategy for the period to 2002-05 and
confirming the release of funding (paper AQSC 9/02-03).

(c) Programme Specifications (minute 6/02-03 refers)

RECEIVED:

A progress report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on the
introduction of Programme (Course) Specifications (paper AQSC 14/02-03).

15/02-03 Reporting Arrangements for the Learning and Teaching and E-learning Strategies

CONSIDERED:

A report from an informal meeting held on 18 November 2002 to consider possible revised committee structures relating to Learning and Teaching matters, including E-learning (paper AQSC13/02-03).

REPORTED: (by Professor Jones)

That the Estimates and Grants Committee, at its most recent meeting, had agreed to separate the arrangements for the allocation of the resources from the Research and Teaching Development Fund but as yet no proposal had been put forward as to how the teaching element of the Fund might be allocated in the future.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Learning and Teaching Strategy Steering Group be abolished and that its responsibility for co-ordination and oversight of the implementation of the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy be transferred to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee with which it already had substantial cross-membership;
- (b) That the Skills Working Group become a sub-group of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee reporting to the Board of Undergraduate Studies and the Board of Graduate Studies as appropriate;
- (c) That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee review the constitution and terms of reference of the Skills Working Group at a future meeting.
- (d) That Professor Jones provide input on behalf of the Committee on the development of new arrangements for the allocation of teaching development funds in the context of the University's Learning and Teaching and e-Learning strategies.

16/02-03 Preparation for QAA Institutional Audit

REPORTED:

That the Chair would shortly be setting up an informal group charged with preparing the University for the Institutional Audit by the QAA, scheduled to take place in March 2004.

17/02-03

Plagiarism

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A paper outlining recent discussion within the University and externally on the issue of plagiarism and the question of how best to take the issue forward through the University's decision-making structures (paper AQSC 10/02-03).
- (b) An oral report from Mr J Dale noting that the possibility of subscribing to the JISC Plagiarism Detection Service was currently under consideration within the University but that detailed consideration had yet to be given to the detailed arrangements for its use.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a Working Group of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on Plagiarism be established to consider:
 - (i) The action needed to address internet-related plagiarism and in particular whether the University should subscribe to the JISC Plagiarism Detection Service;
 - (ii) Any necessary changes to the University mechanisms and Regulations currently in place to deal with allegations of plagiarism of all kind taking into consideration the number of cases of plagiarism currently dealt with on an annual basis.
 - (iii) The measures currently taken at departmental level to warn incoming students about the nature of plagiarism and its consequences.

- (b) That the membership of the Group be as follows:

The Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee (Chair)
The Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies
The Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies
The Chairs of the Faculty Boards
Dr S Hill
A representative of the Students' Union
Mr J Dale

18/02-03

Students' Union Submission to QAA in Preparation for Institutional Audit

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Students' Union for a questionnaire survey, to be conducted by the Union's Research department and funded by the University, to inform the Students' Union submission to be made to the QAA as part of the Institutional Audit process (paper AQSC 11/02-03), together with an extract from the general Students' Union survey of new and returning students conducted at the beginning of the current academic year (AQSC 15/02-03, tabled at the meeting).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, subject to the approval of the Steering Committee and the Finance and General Purposes Committee to the release of funds for the purpose, the proposal that a Students' Union survey be conducted to inform the Institutional Audit Student Submission be approved in principle, subject to a scaling-down of the topics to be surveyed to focus on academic issues - in particular teaching and learning and to ensure that there was no duplication of material gathered from other surveys conducted within the institution;
- (b) that the proposal be revised in the light of the points raised in (a) above and following discussion with the Students' Union and staff within the Academic and Deputy Registrar's Offices on relevant questions to be included in the survey.

19/02-03

Establishment of the Centre for Lifelong Learning

CONSIDERED:

A report from Dr S Hill on proposed changes to the reporting arrangements, examination and course review procedures for courses and programmes offered by the newly established Centre for Lifelong Learning (paper PDLSC 18/02-03).

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Board of Lifelong Learning, at its meeting held on 1 November 2002, considered the proposals set out in paper PDLSC 18/02-03, and recommended that they be approved.
- (b) That the Partnerships and Distance Learning Sub-Committee, at its meeting held on 7 November 2002, resolved that the proposals be approved insofar as the scope of the Sub-Committee was concerned, noting that the current terms of reference - due to the incorporation of a change made in November 2001 - did in fact refer to Foundation Degrees.
- (c) That the Partnerships and Distance Learning Sub-Committee, at its meeting held on 7 November 2002, recommended amendments to clauses (a), (d) and (f) of its own terms of reference, as follows to enable implementation of the relevant recommendations set out in paper PDLSC18/02-03:

(revisions underlined, deletions struck through)

- (a) To advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on University policy on validated and franchised provision, joint awards in partnership with other Higher Education institutions, provision involving a consortium of providers, or any other collaborative arrangement leading to the award of a University qualification (excluding 2+2 degree courses and Foundation Degrees, except where the proposed partner institution has not previously delivered a course leading to an award of the University of Warwick).
- (d) To establish and monitor appropriate mechanisms for the continued quality assurance of awards involving collaborative

provision, distance learning or distance delivery falling within its remit.

- (f) To recommend to the Senate the appointment of Validation and Franchise Groups which will act as Examination Boards for awards of this kind for which courses are delivered by collaborative partners falling within the remit of the Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposals from the Partnerships and Distance Learning Sub-Committee for amendments to its terms of reference, as set out in (a), (d) and (f) above, be approved.
- (b) That the remaining proposals set out in paper PDLSC18/02-03 concerning the reporting and approval arrangements for academic business arising through the Centre for Lifelong Learning be approved in principle.
- (c) That the Centre for Lifelong Learning bring forward proposed amendments to University Regulations to implement the changes proposed in paper PDLSC18/02-03 for consideration by the relevant University committees.

20/02-03

New and Discontinued Undergraduate Courses of Study

- (a) Centre for Lifelong Learning

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Centre for Lifelong Learning for a new Foundation Degree in Post-Compulsory Education and Training (paper UFSS14/02-03 (revised)), it being noted that the version of the proposal under consideration incorporated amendments requested by the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies (16 October 2002), and the Board of Undergraduate Studies (28 October 2002).

RECOMMENDED:

That the proposal from the Centre for Lifelong Learning for the introduction of a Foundation Degree in Post-Compulsory Education and Training with effect from January 2003, be approved as set out in paper UFSS 14/02-03 (revised).

- (b) School of Engineering

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the School of Engineering to discontinue BEng and MEng degrees in Electrical Engineering after the 2003 intake (paper SFS07/02-03), recommended for approval by the Board of Undergraduate Studies, at its meeting held on 28 October 2002.

RECOMMENDED:

That the proposal from the School of Engineering to discontinue their BEng and MEng degrees in Electrical Engineering after the 2003 intake be approved as set out in paper SFS07/02-03.

21/02-03

New, Revised and Discontinued Postgraduate Courses of Study

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report from the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies held on 4 November 2002, incorporating consideration of new and revised postgraduate courses of study (paper AQSC 12/02-03), and its resolutions recorded under the following items:
- (i) Postgraduate Awards
 - (ii) HEFCE Report on Improving Standards in Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes
- (i) New Postgraduate Courses

RECOMMENDED:

That the following proposals for new postgraduate courses be approved, subject to the approval of the fees for each course by the Finance and General Purposes Committee:

- (A) A proposal from the Institute of Employment Research for the introduction of a PhD programme with effect from October 2002, as set out in paper BGS 10/02-03.
- (B) A proposal from the School of Health and Social Studies for the introduction of a Postgraduate Certificate In 'Contemporary Mental Health' to be delivered in collaboration with the Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health, as sent out in paper GFSS 16/02-03 (revised), it being noted that the Partnerships and Distance Learning Sub-Committee (7 November 2002) recommended approval for the Certificate.
- (C) A proposal from the Warwick Business School for the introduction of a Diploma in 'Local Government Management' with effect from February 2003, as set out in paper GFSS 7/02-03, subject to the following amendments:
- (1) Substitution of Institute of Governance and Public Management and/or the Local Government Centre as the Department responsible by 'Warwick Business School'.
 - (2) Consideration of Part 2 of the Course Proposal form by the Estimates and Grants Committee.

- (3) Amendment to the Diploma selection procedure (section 7) so that it is clear that Warwick Business School has control over selecting applicants rather than the Employers' Organisation.
 - (4) Consideration of staff training needs.
 - (5) Consideration of the assessment load, noting that this seemed excessive when compared to other courses.
- (D) A proposal from the Department of French Studies for the introduction of a taught MA in 'French Culture and Thought' with effect from October 2003, as set out in paper AGSC 2/02-03 (revised), subject to further consideration of the amount of assessment that students were allowed to submit in French.

(ii) Revised Courses of Study

RECOMMENDED:

(A) Diploma in Engineering Management

That the proposal from the Warwick Manufacturing Group for a change to the nature of the existing Eskom TLP Franchise Programme from a Post-Experience Diploma to a Postgraduate Certificate in Engineering Business Management be approved as set out in paper SGS8/02-03, subject to the correction of minor typing errors.

(B) MA in Comparative Literary Theory

That the proposal for a change to the title of the MA in Comparative Literary Theory to the MA in Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies be approved.

(b) Post-experience Certificate in Engineering Business Management in Chinese

CONSIDERED:

- (i) A copy of Minute 64/01-02, from the meeting of the Committee held on 12 June 2002, concerning proposals from the Warwick Manufacturing Group for collaborative provision in China through delivery of the Post-Experience Certificate in Engineering Business Management in partnership with the Hong Kong Polytechnic University (paper AQSC 13/02-03)
- (ii) Paper PDL5 41/01-02 setting out proposed delivery and assessment arrangements for the Post-Experience Certificate and considered by the Committee at its meeting on 12 June 2002.

- (iii) An oral report from Professor Dyson on discussion at the meeting of the China Strategy Working Group on the proposal and the Group's concerns regarding the possible weakening of the Warwick brand in China by offering non-English language provision and the quality assurance implications of delivery of courses in a language other than English.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the proposal from the Warwick Manufacturing Group be not approved it being the view of the Committee that there were insufficient safeguards to guarantee the maintenance of appropriate quality and standards for the teaching and delivery of the certificate.
 - (ii) That the Steering Committee be requested to consider the wider issue of principle raised by the proposal in regard to the delivery of programmes outside the UK in a language other than English with a view to a clear policy being developed on this aspect of collaborative provision.
- (c) Warwick Manufacturing Group Proposal for a Partnership with Huazhong University of Science and Technology

CONSIDERED:

- (i) A proposal for a new direct partnership with Huazhong University (paper PDLS 8/02-03 - part), it being noted that the Partnerships and Distance Learning Sub-Committee (7 November 2002) recommended approval of the proposal;
- (ii) a proposal that a preparatory year for the Warwick MSc in Engineering Business Management (1+1 model), consisting of English language tuition examined by CELTE, English language tuition delivered by the Warwick Manufacturing Group tutors, and a project supervised by Huazhong University staff members approved by the Warwick Manufacturing Group, be delivered at Huazhong University, (paper PDLS 9/02-03 part), it being noted that the Partnerships and Distance Learning Sub-Committee (7 November 2002) recommended approval of the proposal

RECOMMENDED:

That the proposal from the Warwick Manufacturing Group, for a partnership with Huazong University, and for a preparatory year for the Warwick MSc in Engineering Business Management, be approved as set out in papers PDLS 8/02-03 and PDLS 9/02-03.

22/02-03

Periodic Reviews of Courses of Study

- (a) Diplomas in Counselling: Provision within the University and at City and Solihull Colleges

CONSIDERED:

The report of the review of Diplomas in Counselling (papers PDLs 14/02-03), and responses from the Centre for Lifelong Learning and the relevant partner Colleges (PDLs 15/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That the report of the review of Diplomas in Counselling, as set out in paper PDLs 14/02-03, be approved.

- (b) Postgraduate Courses in Law

CONSIDERED:

The report of the review of postgraduate courses in Law (BFSS 10/02-03) and response from the School of Law (BFSS 11/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That the report of the review Postgraduate Courses in Law, and response from the School of Law be approved as set out in papers BFSS 10/02-03 and BFSS 11/02-03.

23/02-03

University Reading Weeks

REPORTED:

That the Board of the Faculty of Arts, at its meeting held on 13 November 2002, noted, in the context of reports from Staff-Student Liaison Committees, that inconsistencies had emerged in the timing of Reading Weeks across departments and that this was causing difficulties for joint degree students.

RECOMMENDED:

That departments wishing to hold reading weeks be required to observe the University requirement that they be held in Week 6 of the Autumn and/or Spring terms.