

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of Graduate Studies

There will be a meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies at **10.30am** on **Friday, 24 February 2012** in the Council Chamber, University House.

K Sloan
Registrar

Note: Committee papers can be accessed at <https://files.warwick.ac.uk/bgs/browse>. Questions on items on the agenda or apologies for this meeting should be directed to the Assistant Secretary to the Board, Martin Mik (m.mik@warwick.ac.uk).

2nd CIRCULATION A G E N D A

New items added since the first circulation agenda, additional papers and revised papers are highlighted in **bold**. We will work from the second circulation agenda at the meeting.

1. Minutes of the last meeting

TO CONSIDER:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 16 January 2012 (available online), noting that minute 54(a)/11-12 has been corrected since the circulation of the minutes as follows (insertions underlined, deletions ~~struck through~~):

(...)

~~Master of Advanced Study in Mathematical Sciences Mathematics~~ (minute BGS 97(b)(ii)/10-11 referred)

CONSIDERED:

A request from the Warwick Mathematics Institute that the Master of Advanced Study in Mathematical Sciences ~~Mathematics~~ be introduced as set out in paper BGS 57/11-12, noting that following consideration of the original proposal as set out in papers SGS 121-123/10-11, the Board resolved at its meeting on 9 June 2011 (minute BGS 97(b)(ii)/10-11 referred):

(...)

RESOLVED:

That the proposal to establish the Master of Advanced Study in Mathematical Sciences ~~Mathematics~~ with effect from 2013-14 be approved.

2. Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a) Extension requests (minute 46(b)/11-12 refers)

TO REPORT:

That the fourth year of registration for PhD students admitted on or after 1 August 2011 will be referred to as 'Submission Pending' to distinguish it

from the period of standard registration (three years) and a period of extension, noting that no further primary research is expected to be undertaken in this period and that extensions beyond four years would not be permissible except for genuinely exceptional circumstances.

- (b) ~~New Dedicated Postgraduate Space: Coventry House (minutes 46(c)/11-12, 9(c)/11-12, 87(g)/10-11, 74(f)/10-11, 56/10-11 and 36(g)/10-11 refer)~~

TO REPORT:

- (i) That the name 'Postgraduate Hub' has been formally adopted by the Building Committee for the new dedicated postgraduate space in Coventry House;
 - (ii) That the Postgraduate Hub will be opened formally by the Vice-Chancellor on Wednesday 7 March 2012, noting that all Board members will be invited to attend the event.
- (c) ~~Report from the Skills Working Group (minutes 46(d)/11-12, 87(c)/10-11, 35(d)/10-11, 20(f)/10-11 and 9(d)/10-11 refer)~~

TO REPORT:

- (i) That at its meeting on 16 January 2012, having considered a paper from the Chair on behalf of the Skills Working Group, the Board resolved (minute 46(d)/11-12 refers) 'that Faculty Graduate Studies Committees consider the components of the Portfolio at their Spring Term meetings to ensure their appropriateness for students across disciplines, with a view to supplying examples of activities, the successful completion of which would fulfil each component.'
- (ii) That, at its meeting on 31 January 2012, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts resolved the following (minute AGSC 23(b)/11-12 refers):

'That examples of the activities listed for the Portfolio which are already completed by students within their departments might include organising and/or attending departmental research seminars/conferences, preparing funding applications; that teaching skills ought to be included in the Portfolio; and that it is unclear who will quantify and assess the activities.'
- (iii) That, at its meeting on 30 January 2012, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine resolved that the recommendations in the Skills Working Group paper be taken forward (minute GSCFM 29/11-12 refers);
- (iv) That, at its meeting on 31 January 2012, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science recommended to Student Careers and Skills the following (minute SGS 21/11-12 refers):

'That as many of the objectives set out in the Portfolio were already covered through the Research Student Skills Programme (RSSP), students in the Faculty of Science be encouraged to pursue only one

of the two schemes rather than both so as avoid unnecessary duplication.'

- (v) That, at its meeting on 31 January 2012, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences resolved that it supported 'the introduction of the Warwick Portfolio but only if it remained optional and that the Directors of Graduate Studies bring this to the attention of supervisors' (draft unconfirmed minute GFSS 20/11-12 refers).

TO RECEIVE:

Reports from the Chairs of Graduate Studies Committees on the appropriateness of the Portfolio for students across disciplines and examples of activities, the successful completion of which will fulfil each component.

- (d) University Policy on Remedying Failure at Postgraduate Taught Level to PGT Dissertations/Projects (minute 30/11-12 refers)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That at its meeting on 24 November 2011, it was reported by the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science (minute BGS 30/11-12 refers):
 - '(a) That a proposal to introduce a minimum threshold for the application of the University Policy on Remedying Failure at Postgraduate Taught Level to PGT dissertations/projects had been discussed by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science;
 - (b) That the proposal would be circulated for discussion at other Graduate Studies Committees at their Spring Term meetings with the view of the issue being considered by the Board at its February 2012 meeting.'
- (ii) That, at its meeting on 31 January 2012, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts resolved the following (minute AGSC 22/11-12 refers):
 - (...)
 - '(c) That a minimum level of achievement should be set for resubmission to be allowed in a dissertation based module that makes up a substantial part (typically a third to a half) of a Master's degree;
 - (d) That the proposed minimum threshold of 35% is appropriate.'
- (iii) That, at its meeting on 30 January 2012, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine resolved the following (minute GSCFM 18/11-12 refers):

(...)

‘WMS does not support the proposal for implementation in WMS:

- The majority of the students taking a dissertation/professional project are combining their learning with a full-time occupation;
- The decision on whether or not to allow resubmission is one for the Board of Examiners as they will be party to full information about an individual, including any extenuating circumstances.

The Committee has no objection to the implementation of this policy in other faculties.’

- (iv) **That, at its meeting on 31 January 2012, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences resolved that it did not support the proposed amendments to the Policy on Remedying Failure at PGT Level and recommended to the Board that the proposed amendments to the Policy be adopted as an example of best practice, but not incorporated as a formal change to the Policy, as a means of permitting departmental discretion on this issue (draft unconfirmed minute GFSS 18(b)/11-12 refers).**

TO CONSIDER:

A written report from the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science proposing to introduce a minimum threshold for the application of the University Policy on Remedying Failure at Postgraduate Taught Level to PGT dissertation/projects (paper BGS 60/11-12, copy attached).

- (e) Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2012 (minute 49/11-12 refers)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2012 was launched for Warwick students on 15 February 2012 and will close on 14 June 2012, benefitting from the full period offered by the Higher Education Academy;
- (ii) That 8,190 University PGT students have been invited to participate, including distance learning students, noting that reminder emails will be sent out by the Graduate School on 25 April 2012 and 30 May 2012;
- (iii) That the Graduate School notified all departments of the survey dates, provided timetable of Graduate School email remainders and invited departments to encourage completion of the survey among their PGT students;

(iv) That the measures that will be employed to increase the University response rate include the following:

- (A) Regular emails to departments to provide an update on the institutional response rate and invite them to remind their students to complete the survey (to be sent out by the Graduate School on 27 February, 8 May and 6 June 2012);
- (B) Dedicated PTES webpage available from <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/ptes>;
- (C) Prize draw for all students participating in the survey;
- (D) Flyers and posters for departmental noticeboards, banners, wallpapers and screensavers for computers, plasma screen slides.

(f) ~~Membership of Sub-Committees (minutes 45(b)/11-12, 25(b)/11-12 and 5/11-12 refer)~~

Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee

TO REPORT:

That the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts, acting on its behalf, has taken action to nominate Dr D Lines to serve as the second Faculty of Arts scorer on the Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee, replacing Professor N Eilan.

3. **Chair's Business**

(a) ~~Appropriate Use of Chair's Action~~

TO RECEIVE:

A paper from the Secretary on the appropriate use of Chair's Action, referencing the Board's Terms of Reference (paper BGS 61/11-12, copy attached).

(b) ~~Life Sciences BBSRC Doctoral Training Partnership Bid (minutes BGS 18/11-12 and SC 872/10-11 and 845/10-11 refer)~~

TO REPORT:

- (i) That the bid to the BBSRC for a Doctoral Training Partnership, submitted by the University, as lead partner of a consortium with the University of Birmingham and the University of Leicester, has been successful;
- (ii) That the award will fund 45 four-year PhD studentships to be allocated over a period of five years, a proportion of which only will come to Warwick;
- (iii) That the consortium was also awarded 5 Research Experience Placements (REP) per year for 2013 to 2015, designed to give

promising undergraduate students a first-hand opportunity to experience research in a UK laboratory and to encourage them to consider a career in scientific research.

(c) WCPRS Workshops

TO REPORT:

That a WCPRS workshop for the Faculty of Arts will take place on Wednesday 21 March 2012, 12-2pm in the Postgraduate Hub.

(d) Use of Extenuating Circumstances as Grounds for Postgraduate Appeals (minute 36/11-12 refers)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 24 November 2011, the Board resolved that Faculty Graduate Studies Committees discuss the issue of the use of extenuating circumstances as grounds for postgraduate appeals at their next meeting with the view of identifying best practice and report back to the Board (minute 36/11-12 refers);
- (ii) That the Graduate Studies Committees of the Faculties of Medicine and Social Sciences discussed this item at their meetings on 30th and 31st January 2012 respectively (minute GSCFM 22/11-12 and draft unconfirmed minute GFSS 18(a)/11-12 refer);
- (iii) That the Graduate Studies Committees of the Faculties of Arts and Science are to discuss this item at their term three meetings and report back to the Board at its term three week 7 meeting.

(e) Thesis Submission Requirements (minute 37/11-12 refers)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 24 November 2011, the Board resolved that Graduate Studies Committees of the Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Science discuss the inclusion of an explicit statement in theses submitted for examination, setting out who carried out the work involved, at their next meeting with the view of identifying best practice and report back to the Board (minute 37/11-12 refers);
- (ii) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Medicine discussed this item at its meeting on 30 January 2012 (minute GSCFM 33/11-12 refers);
- (iii) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science is to discuss this item at its term three meeting and report back to the Board at its term three week 7 meeting.

4. A Section of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education on Research Degrees

TO CONSIDER:

A draft section of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education on research degrees for consultation (paper BGS 62/11-12, previously circulated).

5. Chair's Action

TO RECEIVE:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Board (paper BGS 63/11-12, copy attached).

6. Postgraduate Forum and the Students' Union

TO REPORT:

- (a) That, at its meeting on 23 January 2012, the Students' Union Council approved creation of a new Sabbatical Officer with a responsibility for postgraduate matters;
- (b) That nominations for the 2012 Sabbatical Officers closed on midday on Friday 17 February 2012, noting that the Graduate School invited all postgraduate students to consider submitting a nomination, not only for the new Postgraduate Officer post;
- (c) That the Postgraduate Association will be set up with effect from the academic year 2012/13.

TO RECEIVE:

An oral report from the Education Officer and the Postgraduate Forum Coordinator.

7. Reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees

TO RECEIVE:

Oral reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees.

8. Institutional Review Reports

TO RECEIVE:

- (a) An excerpt from the *Abridged List of Recommendations and Responses* referred directly to the Board (paper BGS 58/11-12, previously circulated), noting that full version of the paper is available online from the filestore;
- (b) Summary report of the departmental reports and responses (paper TLR 73/11-12, previously circulated), with the following attachments:
 - (i) Appendix A: a thematic summary of widening participation (paper TLR 74/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (ii) Appendix B: a thematic summary of employability (paper TLR 75/11-

12, previously circulated);

- (iii) Appendix C: a thematic summary of strategic development (paper TLR 76/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (iv) Appendix D: a thematic summary of personal tutoring (paper TLR 77/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (v) Appendix E: a thematic summary of internationalisation (paper TLR 78/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (vi) Appendix F: a thematic summary of assessment and feedback (paper TLR 79/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (vii) Appendix G: a thematic summary of research-led teaching (paper TLR 80/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (viii) Appendix H: a thematic summary of joint degrees (paper TLR 81/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (ix) Appendix I: a thematic summary of e-learning and virtual learning environments (paper TLR 82/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (x) Appendix J: a thematic summary of peer evaluation of teaching (paper TLR 83/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (xi) Appendix K: a thematic summary of student progression (paper TLR 84/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (xii) Appendix L: a thematic summary of student feedback (paper TLR 85/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (xiii) Appendix M: a thematic summary of space allocation (paper TLR 86/11-12, previously circulated);
 - (xiv) Appendix N: a thematic summary of postgraduate teaching opportunities (paper TLR 87/11-12, previously circulated).
- (c) A paper on the consideration of the departmental review reports and responses (paper TLR 7/11-12, previously circulated);
- (d) Paper BGS 59/11-12 (previously circulated) regarding the Committee process following the first phase of the Institutional Review and advising Board members about access restrictions.

9. External Examining

TO REPORT:

- (a) That at its meeting on 2 February 2012, it was reported to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee:
 - (i) That, at its meeting on 1 November 2011, it was reported to the Committee that the final version of Chapter B7: External Examining of the UK Quality Code, had been published on 28 October 2011

and a mapping of the University's current practice against the updated indicators would be undertaken and reported to the next meeting of the Committee (minute 4/11-12 (c) referred).

- (ii) That, at its meeting on 7 December 2011, it was resolved that consideration of a mapping of the University's current practices against the updated indicators (paper AQSC.26/11-12) be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.
- (b) That the Committee considered a mapping of the University's current practices against the updated indicators (paper AQSC.26/11-12) and resolved:
- (i) That the names, positions and institutions of external examiners be published by the University, noting that it would be preferable to publish the information centrally to ensure that it was kept up to date, with links provided from course information.
 - (ii) That the External Examiners' form and the Guidance Notes for External Examiners be updated in line with discussions in the meeting to ensure that procedures and guidance are aligned to the UK Quality Code.
 - (iii) That further consideration be given to the publication of External Examiners' reports, noting the Committee's concerns that the need for transparency be balanced with recognition of the impact that such a move may have on the openness of external examiners' comments and the administrative implications.
 - (iv) That the University recognised the value of external examining both in terms of the input of external staff and the contribution made by its own staff to other institutions and recognised that external examining was an element of the professional responsibilities of academic staff.
 - (v) That any agreement on the part of Warwick staff to undertake external examining duties was between the staff and the external institution but staff should ensure that, in taking on such responsibilities, they had the capacity and expertise to do so.

TO RECEIVE:

A mapping of the University's current practices against the updated indicators (paper AQSC.26/11-12, extract previously circulated, paper available in full online from <https://files.warwick.ac.uk/bgs/browse/2011-12/2012.02.24>).

TO CONSIDER:

Proposed amendments to the External Examiners' report form and to the Guidance Notes (paper BGS 64/11-12, previously circulated).

10. Faculty-led Careers Days for Doctoral Students

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Secretary setting out the objectives of the forthcoming Faculty-led

careers days for doctoral students and contributors to each Faculty event (paper BGS 65/11-12, previously circulated).

11. Postgraduate Reduced Fee Scheme

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Senior International Liaison Officer and an oral report from the Director of the International Officer on issues affecting the reduced fee scheme currently in operation with a number of organisations in international markets (paper BGS 66/11-12, previously circulated).

12. Postgraduate Recruitment (minute 11/11-12 refers)

TO REPORT:

That, at its meeting on 11 October 2011, the Board considered a report from the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment Office on postgraduate student recruitment numbers for the 2011-12 academic year (paper BGS 16/11-12) and a paper from the Secretary and the Project Officer (PGR Recruitment) on the outcomes of the PGR Strategic Branding Workshop (paper BGS 17/11-12) and resolved, *inter alia* (minute 11/11-12 refers):

(...)

‘(d) That a creation of new category be considered by the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment Office for applicants who meet admissions criteria but where decisions were withheld in order to allow time for funding to be sought.’

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (PG Admissions) responding to the Board’s interest in instituting a ‘under consideration’ category on BPM (paper BGS 67/11-12, previously circulated).

13. UK HE International Unit Publication: ‘The UK Doctorate: Policy Positions in the European Context’

TO RECEIVE:

A note from the UK HE International Unit alerting the sector to the publication of ‘The UK doctorate: Policy positions in the European context’, summarising the UK HE sector’s key positions and priorities regarding European doctoral policy (paper BGS 68/11-12, previously circulated).

14. **New courses**

TO CONSIDER:

A paper setting out recommendations for the approval of new courses (paper BGS 69/11-12, copy attached).

15. **Revised courses**

TO CONSIDER:

A paper setting out recommendations for the approval of revisions to existing courses (paper BGS 70/11-12, copy attached).

16. **Postgraduate Awards**

TO RECEIVE:

A list of approved Postgraduate Awards (paper BGS 71/11-12, copy attached).

17. **Any Other Business**

18. **Next meeting**

TO REPORT:

That the next meeting of the Board is on **Thursday, 3 May 2012 at 2pm in the Council Chamber, University House.**

HRWS/MM 22.02.12

Records & Finance/BGS/2011-12/2012.01.16/BGS AGENDA February 12 - 2nd circulation