

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

BOARD OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Undergraduate Studies held on Wednesday 12th November 2003.

Present: Professor Whitby (in the Chair), Mr R Leng, Professor A McFarlane, Dr G Martin, Dr R Naylor, Professor L Paterson, Dr J Robinson, Mr R Watson.

Apologies: Mr K Mohaddes, Professor A Phizacklea, Professor J Treglown.

In Attendance: Ms A Bell, Dr J Taylor.

1/03-04 Terms of Reference

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Terms of Reference of the Board were as follows:
- (i) To consider and make recommendations to the Academic and Quality Standards Committee on issues relating to the assurance and enhancement of the quality of learning and teaching across all undergraduate provision.
 - (ii) To make recommendations to the Senate, after consultation with academic departments and the Faculty Boards, on all matters affecting undergraduate study in the University including strategic considerations.
 - (iii) To scrutinise all new undergraduate course proposals and report to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on consideration of such proposals.
 - (iv) To consider reports from the Faculty Boards on the periodic reviews of undergraduate courses.
 - (v) To advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on matters relating to examinations in undergraduate courses.
 - (vi) To advise the Academic Quality Standards Committee on the role of internal and external examiners for undergraduate degrees.
 - (vii) To advise the Academic Quality Standards Committee annually on the issues raised in reports by external examiners.
 - (viii) To consider submissions from the Faculty Boards for non-standard examination methods, including seen papers, open-book examinations and reading times, and to make recommendations to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

- (ix) To exercise delegated powers on behalf of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee in approving, on personal grounds, minor variations in the arrangements for the sitting of undergraduate examinations by individual students.
 - (x) To consider all matters affecting admissions practices and policy and make recommendation to the Academic Quality Standards Committee.
- (b) That the Senate, at its meetings on 4 July 2001 and 2nd October 2002, had approved the terms of reference under (a) above and had also resolved:

That the responsibility for consideration and approval of four-year undergraduate Masters courses lie primarily with the Board of Undergraduate Studies.

2/03-04 Membership 2003/2004

REPORTED:

That the Senate, at its meeting of 1st October 2003, had resolved that the membership of the Board of Undergraduate Studies for the academic year 2003/2004 be as follows:

	<u>First Appointed</u>	
Chair (a Pro-Vice-Chancellor)	2003	Professor M Whitby
Two full-time members of the academic staff from each of the Faculties of Arts, Science and Social Studies appointed by the Senate:		
Arts	2003 2003	Professor A McFarlane Professor J Treglown
Science	2003 2002	Dr T Drewello Dr G Martin
Social Studies	2002 2002	Mr R Leng Professor A Phizacklea
One full-time member of academic staff from the Faculty of Medicine appointed by the Senate	2001	Professor S Petersen
One member of the Board of Graduate Studies appointed by the Senate	2003	Professor A Phizacklea
The Chairs of the Undergraduate Studies Committees of the Boards of the Faculty of Arts and Social Studies and the Chair of the Sub-Faculty of Science		
Arts	2003	Professor L Paterson
Science	2003	Dr J Robinson
Social Studies	2001	Dr R Naylor

(d) Use of University data by departments (minute 54/02-03 refers)

CONSIDERED:

Ways in which data collected by the University may be used more effectively by departments, for example, First Destination data.

RESOLVED:

That departments be reminded that First Destination data is included in the annual *Academic Statistics* and that it be noted that the data on which *Academic Statistics* was based was now available to departments via the University website.

(e) Periodic Review Reports (minute 54/02-03 refers)

RECEIVED:

An update on the Department of History of Arts response to the Periodic Review report on its degrees carried out in 2002/03 (Paper BFA3/03-04).

9/03-04

Chair's Action

REPORTED:

That the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, had approved:

- (a) A request from the Department of Psychology for a minor variation to the 50% rule for three named final-year students;
- (b) A request from the Centre for English Language Teacher Education for 15 minutes reading time for *ET406 Language Development for Specific Purposes* and *ET407 Linguistics: Language in Context* modules;
- (c) A request from the Department of English for a minor variation to the 50% rule for one named student;
- (d) A request from the Department of Classics and Ancient History that students taking the final year dissertation module CX303 on its degrees be permitted to derive not less than 35% of their degree credit from unseen examination.

10/03-04

Undergraduate Curriculum Review Group

CONSIDERED:

The final report of the Undergraduate Curriculum Review Group (Paper BUGS 3/03-04).

RESOLVED:

That the individual recommendations made in the report of the Undergraduate Curriculum Review Group be taken forward as follows:

(a) Curriculum Development

- (i) that annual consideration of undergraduate curriculum development be added to the Board's terms of reference;

- (ii) that it be noted that the Students' Union Research Department planned to conduct student surveys, including changing trends in the undergraduate curriculum, every 2-3 years.

(b) Flexibility

- (i) that the Board of the Faculty of Science be asked to consider the scope for the introduction of a degree comparable in structure to Cambridge University's undergraduate degree in Natural Sciences, allowing flexible study in the early stages with later specialisation;
- (ii) that the Boards of the Faculties of Science and Social Studies be asked to consider the scope for the introduction of degrees within their faculties of flexible degrees similar to that proposed by the Department of History in the Faculty of Arts which provided for the participation of most departments within the faculty;
- (iii) that any departments experiencing recruitment difficulties be asked to give particular attention to participation in such a model;
- (iv) that the Board noted that such degrees would probably need to incorporate pre-requisites and defined pathways in particular disciplines and to define the amounts of credit to be obtained at particular levels to qualify for an Honours degree;
- (v) that the Board noted that the existing part-time BA courses in Arts and Social Studies might provide helpful models for the development of new full-time courses.

(c) Optionality and Course Structure

- (i) that departments be asked to consider the introduction of half-weight modules as a means of increasing option choice;
- (ii) that departments be asked to review their current arrangements with respect to option choice, particularly with respect to the first year of degree courses, possibly with a view to offering greater optionality in the earlier rather than the later stages of courses and to ensure there were no inappropriate restrictions on option choice;
- (iii) that departments be asked to consider more effective means of promoting the degree of option choice that the University's courses currently offer, it being noted that the Review Group's proposed policy of all students normally having the opportunity of taking at least 10% of their degree credit outside their home department would generally be met by existing degree curricula.

(d) Course Length

- (i) that a sub-group of the Board be asked to consider the possibility of developing a regulatory system allowing the extension of three-year degrees to four-years (it being noted that it was not the intention that such programmes should replace existing three-year courses);
- (ii) that the sub-group should have the following membership:

Professor McFarlane
Dr J Robinson
Mr R Leng.

(e) The 14-19 Curriculum

That the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office be asked to take forward the Review Group's recommendations concerning preparation for the implications of the 14-19 curriculum.

(f) Skills, Extra-curricular Activities and Curriculum Planning

That the Skills Working Group be asked to take forward the Review Group's recommendations under this heading, it being noted that Chair would report back to the Board on these issues as appropriate.

(g) Work Experience

- (i) that departments be asked for their views on the accommodation of intercalated years within their degree courses;
- (ii) that the Review Group's recommendations on work experience, advice to first-year students and employers' forum events be referred to the Careers Service.

11/03-04 Composite Reports of UG SSLCs

CONSIDERED:

The Composite Reports of the Undergraduate Staff-Student Liaison Committees for 2002-2003 from:

- (a) the Faculty of Arts (Paper 35/02-03);
- (b) the Faculty of Science (Paper SFS 16/03-04);
- (c) the Faculty of Social Studies (Paper UFSS 13/03-04).

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that departments be asked to ensure that SSLC minutes are circulated to student faculty representatives and subject librarians;
- (b) that the SSLC report form be expanded sufficiently to encourage fuller comment where appropriate.

12/03-04 Academic Satisfaction Review

RECEIVED:

The Academic Satisfaction Review 2002-2003 together with a memorandum from the Director of Student and Ancillary Services (paper BUGS 4/03-04).

13/03-04 New BA Degree in Classics

RECOMMENDED:

That the proposal from the Department of Classics for a new BA Honours degree in Classics starting September 2005 be approved as set out in Paper AUSC 3/03-04).

14/03-04 Annual Review Summary Reports

CONSIDERED:

The summary reports of the Annual Review of Undergraduate Courses 2002/03 for the following faculties:

- (a) Faculty of Arts (Paper BUGS 6/03-04).
- (b) Faculty of Science (Paper BUGS 7/03-04).

RECOMMENDED:

That the summary reports be circulated to departments in advance of the relevant meetings of the Faculty Boards, it being noted that this may mean the deadline for submission of Annual Review reports by departments would have to be brought forward.

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13/11/03