

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

**Academic Quality and Standards Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee  
held on 28 January 2016

Present: Professor C Hughes (Chair), Ms S Bennett (Director of Student Careers and Skills), Professor P Corvi (SSLC Co-ordinator (Social Sciences)), Professor A Dowd (Academic Director of the Graduate School), Ms L Gramaglia (Learning and Development Manager (Academic), Learning Development Centre), Mr C Hindhaugh (Education Officer, Students' Union), Professor S Jacka (Representative of Senate (Science)), Professor C Jenainati (SSLC Coordinator (Arts)), 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 (Director of IATL), Professor L Roberts (Representative of Senate (Medicine)), Mr N Shiers (Postgraduate Officer, Students' Union), Ms A Thomas (Service Owner (Academic Technology)), Dr I Tuersley (SSLC Co-ordinator (Science)), Dr N Whybrow (Representative of Senate (Arts)), Professor P Winstanley (Chair of the Faculty of Medicine and Interim Senior Tutor)

Apologies: Professor C Hughes (Chair of the Faculty of Social Science), Professor J Palmowski (Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies), Professor A Reeve (Representative of Senate (Social Sciences)), Professor M Shipman (Chair of the Faculty of Science)

In Attendance: Ms K Gray (Secretary), Ms C Smith (Assistant Registrar), Ms L Drummond (Academy Administrator, Warwick International Higher Education Academy) (for item 25/15-16)

25/15-16      \*Teaching Excellence Strategy

REPORTED:

- (a) That at its meeting on 2 December 2015, the Committee considered (*inter alia*) the BIS consultation on the Higher Education Green Paper 'Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice' (AQSC.10/15-16) and resolved:
- (i) That the University undertake a mock TEF once further details of the Framework were published;
  - (ii) That further consideration be given to defining the nature of research led teaching at the University;
  - (iii) That further harmonisation of provision and processes be explored;
  - (iv) That the strengths of the University's current taught provision be defined and articulated more clearly.

CONSIDERED:

- (b) A briefing paper on the remit and membership of the NSS Working Group (AQSC.19/15-16).
- (c) NSS 2015 Upper Quartile Differences by Subject (AQSC.20/15-16 {restricted}).
- (d) Departmental NSS Action Plans (Paper AQSC.21/15-16 {restricted}).
- (e) DLHE results 2011/12 to 2013/14 by Department (Paper AQSC.22/15-16 {restricted}).
- (f) Report on DLHE results for 13/14 graduates (Paper SC.24/15-16 {restricted}).
- (g) Student Surveys

REPORTED (by the Chair):

- (i) That the University operated a number of student surveys but that co-ordination of the analysis of the outcomes could be improved.

(by the Representative of Senate (Science)):

- (ii) That clarity was needed on the strategic purpose of each survey, including which would improve the University's performance against targets or external indicators and which would contribute to internal enhancement.
- (iii) That sample surveys rather than surveys of the entire student population could be considered.

(by the Postgraduate Officer, Students' Union):

- (iv) That there were some concerns on the number and use of surveys of students.

(by the Chair of the Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee):

- (v) That the new annual review and monitoring process may provide an opportunity to co-ordinate oversight of responses to surveys.
- (vi) That some institutions operated fewer student surveys.

(h) Module Evaluation

REPORTED (by the Chair):

- (i) That the Committee has considered the introduction of institution-wide module evaluation but has not yet determined to introduce such a scheme;

- (ii) That there were tensions between the institutional needs and local pedagogical needs in terms of evaluation of modules;

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

- (iii) That the delivery of modules could significantly affect students' experience but the key issue was the action taken as a result of the survey outcomes;

- (iv) That Heads of Departments needed support in addressing issues that arose;

(by the Representative of Senate (Science)):

- (v) That in the Department of Statistics students undertook analysis of module evaluations and summaries of these, with staff responses, were made available to all students;

(i) Enhancement Processes

REPORTED (by the Chair):

- (i) That consideration needed to be given to the mechanisms required to achieve the improvements desired;
- (ii) That the capacity of academic departments to deliver the outcomes required needed to be considered;
- (iii) That it was proposed that a Teaching Excellence Framework Steering Group be established.

(By the representative of Senate (Medicine)):

- (iv) That there were sometimes tensions of resource between embedding long term improvements through systems changes and implementing short term measures with immediate impact;
- (v) That internal comparisons of data could mask local and disciplinary specific issues;

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Arts):

- (vi) That although there were some disciplinary differences there were also cross-cutting issues which affected many areas;
- (vii) That the University should focus on only 2 or 3 surveys;

(by the SSLC Co-ordinator (Social Sciences)),

- (viii) That the inclusion of alumni as members of the Steering Group could be considered.

RESOLVED:

- (j) That a Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) Steering Group be established to review data analysis of surveys relevant to the TEF, to promote institutional cultural change and to consider capacity of departments to deliver such change.
- (k) That members of the Committee provide suggestions to the Secretary as to the roles that should be involved.

26/15-16 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2015 be approved.

27/15-16 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.

28/15-16 Students' Union Update

REPORTED (by the Students' Union Postgraduate Officer):

- (a) That the Sessional Teaching Project was ongoing;
- (b) That the termly postgraduate SSLC report had been considered at the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies held on 12 January 2016 and that concerns had been raised about the quality of student experience in those departments with larger than expected postgraduate taught student cohorts this year;
- (c) That the Postgraduate Executive would be focusing on mental health of postgraduate students;
- (d) That in this context the Students' Union were aware of the specific needs of professionals undertaking part-time postgraduate study who may benefit from mental health support but may be difficult to engage;
- (e) That a review of the Graduate Space in the Students' Union had commenced;

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

- (f) That the recorded lecture campaign was ongoing;

- (g) That there was ongoing work and consultation on the proposal for 24 hour Library opening;
- (h) That the sabbatical team had been working on their response to the Green Paper on Higher Education;
- (i) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies at its meeting on 20 November 2015 had endorsed lecture capture and feedback on exams on request as best practice;
- (j) That the Board had also noted that, where students were required to submit both electronic and hard copy assessments, that online submission should satisfy deadline requirements, if submitted first;
- (k) That overcrowding in specific areas around campus was of concern, including the Ramphal Building and the Physics Concourse bridge;

(by the Chair):

- (l) That a Lecture Capture Working Group, led by the Service Owner (Academic Technology), would be convened to develop policy further in this area;

RESOLVED:

- (m) That the Board of Graduate Studies be asked whether issues raised in SSLC reports in relation to specific departments had been followed up with responses requested;
- (n) That further consideration be given to how the Committee be alerted to issues raised by SSLCs, noting that review of SSLC reports fell within the remit of the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies;
- (o) That the Secretary would raise issues of overcrowding with the Space Management and Timetabling Team;
- (p) That the Secretary and the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies consider further clarification of the rule on penalties for late submission;

RECOMMENDED (to the Academic Resourcing Committee):

- (q) That the postgraduate SSLC report also be considered in the context of the academic planning cycle.

29/15-16

Update Report on Accreditation of Placement Years

CONSIDERED:

An update report on accreditation of placement years from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) and the Director of Strategic Programme Delivery (Paper AQSC.23/15-16).

REPORTED (by Secretary):

That the Senate had approved the accreditation of placement years and that work was now ongoing to implement the policy, as set out in paper AQSC.23/15-16, noting that proposals for conversion of marks from overseas institutions had been brought to this meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the Chair of the Committee be granted authority to approve a bespoke process for approval of revisions to courses for the introduction of accredited placement years.

30/15-16      Marks Conversion Tables

CONSIDERED:

A paper proposing draft mark conversion tables for study abroad by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education) (Paper AQSC.25/15-16).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That further information be provided on the contextual information to be made available to students on the differing assessment cultures they will encounter at overseas institutions;
- (b) That incoming Erasmus students be consulted on the content and approach of the marks scales;
- (c) That further consideration be given to how the marks scales apply to interdisciplinary and joint degrees;
- (d) That the marks scales should not be used for the award of marks which would contribute to degree classification.

31/15-16      Terms of Reference of the International Sub-Group

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 17 November 2015, the International Sub-Group considered a proposal that a fourth point be added to the Terms of Reference of the ISG, extending the Group's remit to oversee the implementation of an academic framework for study and work abroad, making recommendations to AQSC on policy and regulations as appropriate (Membership and Terms of Reference 2015-16 ISG 1/15-16) and recommended to the Committee that the extended remit of the ISG's Terms of Reference be submitted to AQSC for consideration and approval.

CONSIDERED:

Proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the International Sub-Group as set out in Paper ISG 1/15-16.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the International Sub-Group as set out in Paper ISG 1/15-16 be approved.

32/15-16 \* Academic Statistics 2015

CONSIDERED:

A report on student-related data from the Academic Statistics 2015 by the Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (Paper AQSC.17/15-16).

REPORTED (by the Chair):

- (a) That there was concern in Government at possible grade inflation across the sector and that a Grade Point Average (GPA) system may be introduced;

(by the Postgraduate Officer (Students' Union)):

- (b) That the increases in student postgraduate student numbers was of concern and student number planning should be linked to accommodation and resources;

(by the Chair):

- (c) That non-completion rates should continue to be monitored and that, while at an institutional level there had not been cause for concern in this area previously, the University could not afford to be complacent.

33/15-16 Retention of Examination Scripts

CONSIDERED:

A proposal to amend guidance on retention of examination scripts (Paper AQSC.18/15-16).

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposal to amend guidance on retention of examination scripts be approved as set out in Paper AQSC.18/15-16.

34/15/16 \* Education Report

RECEIVED:

The Education Report by the Deputy Academic Registrar considered by the Steering Committee at its meeting on 14 December 2015 (Paper SC.47/15-16 {Restricted}).

REPORTED (by the Secretary):

- (a) That the report was intended to highlight to the Steering Committee progress and risks in relation to projects and metrics relevant to education at Warwick;

(by the Chair):

- (b) That the report does not include the full range of measures in place to manage risks;

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the Representative of Senate (Science) suggest metrics that could be used in such reports;
- (d) That clarification be provided on the performance metric related to OIA points.

35/15-16 Disability Policy

REPORTED (by the Secretary):

- (a) That an updated Disability Policy was under development and it was proposed that it contain more specific sections related to students;
- (b) That a statement on learning and teaching had been requested and would be brought to the Committee for consideration in due course.

36/15-16 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Committee, at its meeting on 2 December 2015, granted authority to the Chair to recommend the proposal from Warwick Medical School to deliver the existing Certificate in Diabetes Care (level 4, 30 Credits) with new partner Diabetacare India, to the Senate for approval, subject to the receipt of satisfactory remaining items of due diligence, as set out in the Papers CFDLSC.07(a)/15-16; CFDLSC.07(b)/15-16 (revised) and CFDLSC.07(c)/15-16 revised.
- (b) That, following the receipt of satisfactory remaining items of due diligence the Chair took action on behalf of the Committee to recommend the proposal to the Senate for approval, as set out in Papers CFDLSC.07(a)/15-16; CFDLSC.07(b)/15-16 (revised) and CFDLSC.07(c)/15-16 revised.



37/15-16 BIS Consultation on the Higher Education Green Paper 'Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice'

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 2 December 2015, the Committee considered (*inter alia*) the BIS consultation on the Higher Education Green Paper 'Fulfilling our Potential: Teaching Excellence, Social Mobility and Student Choice' (AQSC.10/15-16).

RECEIVED:

- (a) The University's response to the BIS consultation (Paper AQSC.23/15-16).
- (b) The Students' Union's response to the BIS consultation (Paper AQSC.24/15-16).

38/15-16 HEFCE Consultation on a Review of Information about Learning and Teaching, and the Student Experience

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 2 December 2015 the Committee received the HEFCE Consultation on a Review of Information about Learning and Teaching, and the Student Experience (AQSC.14/15-16).

RECEIVED:

The University's response to the HEFCE Consultation on a Review of Information about Learning and Teaching, and the Student Experience (SC.34/15-16).

39/15-16 Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on Monday 22 February 2016 at 2pm in room CMR 1.0, University House.

CH/KG  
7 February 2016