

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

**Academic Quality and Standards Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee  
held on Thursday 3 February 2011

Present: Professor A Caesar (Chair), Ms S Bennett, Professor S Bruzzi, Professor S Hand, Professor C Hughes, Dr C Jenainati, Professor N Johnson, Professor J Labbe, Professor R Leng, Dr D Lamburn, Dr J Robinson, Mr S Ruston, Mr D Stevens

Apologies: Dr P O'Hare, Professor T Jones, Mr S Lamb

In attendance: Dr C Edgar, Mr R McIntyre

39/10-11 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2010, available on the Governance website, be approved.

40/10-11 Matters arising

Secretariat of the Committee (minute 36/10-11 referred)

REPORTED:

That Dr Christina Edgar had been appointed as Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) and had therefore assumed the role of Secretary to the Committee with effect from 1 February 2011.

41/10-11 Chair's action

Monitoring Student Progress and Attendance

REPORTED:

That, since the last meeting, the Chair of the Committee, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve a new student monitoring structure for the Postgraduate course "MA/PG Diploma in the History and Business of Art and Collecting", noting that details of the monitoring points were not circulated to members of the Committee but were available on request from the Teaching Quality section of the Academic Office.

42/10-11 Progress of Committee Recommendations

REPORTED:

That the Senate, at its meeting on 26 January 2011, resolved that recommendations from the Committee under the following headings be approved:

Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership;  
New and Revised Postgraduate Courses;  
New and Revised Undergraduate Courses;  
Collaborative Course Proposals.

43/10-11

Chair's business

- (a) Membership of the Committee (minute 24/10-11 referred).

REPORTED:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 8 December 2010, it was reported to the Committee that the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies would soon be leaving the University and had therefore concluded her Committee work with immediate effect, and resolved (*inter alia*) that members of the Committee make known to the Chair any nominations or volunteers for the vacant position of Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies, and for the associated positions of Chair of the Placement Learning and Joint Degree Coordinators annual meetings, and Chair of the HEAR Project Board;
- (ii) That, since the last meeting, the Chair of the Committee, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the appointment of Professor Roger Leng, School of Law, as Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies, noting that Professor Leng will also therefore assume responsibility for the associated positions.

- (b) The Higher Education Academy (HEA) Consultation on UK Professional Standards Framework (minute SC.279/10-11 referred)

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 10 January 2011, the Steering Committee considered a draft letter from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) in response to the HEA consultation on the UK Professional Standards Framework, indicating the University's intention not to complete the questionnaire whilst highlighting issues of concern regarding the HEA's processes and proposals (paper SC.200/10-11), and resolved (*inter alia*) that, following minor editorial changes, the letter would be sent in response to the HEA Consultation by the deadline of 14 January 2011.

RECEIVED:

- (i) The HEA Consultation on the UK Professional Standards Framework (paper SC.152/10-11), for information;
- (ii) The University's final response to the consultation (paper SC.200/10-11 (revised)), noting that:
- (A) The University has subscribed to a further year's membership of HEA;

(B) The response sent by The University was understood to be in line with those sent by comparable institutions.

(c) Vision 2015 – 2010 Update (minute 25/10-11 referred)

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair, noting that:

- (i) There are currently discussions underway (in a variety of fora including Heads of Department meetings, the committee structure, faculty lunches) regarding the national and institutional context within which the University is required to consider changes to the level of its undergraduate fees, student finance arrangements and widening participation activity;
- (ii) There needs to be a consideration of where the University's offering of education and experience, though excellent, can be further improved;
- (iii) The refreshed Strategy will, therefore, be produced at a time of heightened student fees and expectations;
- (iv) The 'Learning Dimension' (a booklet produced by the Communications Office linked to the learning strand of the Strategy) and 'Teaching and Learning Strategy' will need to be rewritten to reflect the goals of the refreshed Strategy;
- (v) The strong reputation of the University for its high quality research positively influences student recruitment and that research remains pivotal to the University's goals.

RESOLVED:

- (vi) That the 'Learning Dimension' booklet be circulated by the secretariat to Committee members along with the Teaching and Learning Strategy for discussion at the next Committee meeting;
- (vii) That Committee members be invited to consider where there are 'gaps' in the current Teaching and Learning Strategy and how Warwick's aims in this area can best be put forward;
- (viii) That feedback from the current student body regarding the expectations they would have under an increased fee regime would be fed back to the Chair to inform current discussions.

(d) QAA: Recruitment of Reviewers and Review Secretaries for the Institutional Review Process (minute SC.292/10-11 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 10 January 2011, the Steering Committee considered correspondence from the QAA

requesting nominations for Institutional Reviewers and review secretaries and resolved that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) would nominate Dr Amanda Dowd, WMG, to QAA as an institutional review team member before the deadline of midday on 26 January 2011;

- (ii) That Dr David Lamburn, CLL, would also continue as a reviewer, having previously been nominated to the QAA within the previous institutional audit process;

(e) Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (2010/11)

REPORTED:

That nominations were now invited for the Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (WATE) 2010/11, with further information available online at: <http://go.warwick.ac.uk/funding/wate>

(f) National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) 2011

REPORTED:

- (i) That the nomination process for the Higher Education Academy sponsored National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) has now begun, with a deadline for nominations of 23 March 2011;
- (ii) That the University will put forward the maximum three nominations in 2011;
- (iii) That nominees for the NTFS are selected from previous WATE winners.

44/10-11 HEFCE Consultation on Public Information about Higher Education (minute 28/10-11 referred)

REPORTED:

- (a) That, at its meeting on 8 December 2010, the Committee considered a consultation document by the HEFCE on changes to the information published by institutions on courses of study (paper AQSC 34/10-11) and resolved that a small working group be convened, chaired by the Chair of the Committee and to include members from AQSC, Student Admissions and Recruitment, Student Careers and Skills and the Estates Office, to formulate the University's response to the consultation, noting that:
  - (i) The Committee was immediately concerned about the inclusion of "average salary" in the Key Information Set, it being considered that this data was too inconsistent and would need excessive contextual information for it to be meaningful;
  - (ii) That draft response would be considered by the Committee at its next meeting, prior to consideration by the Steering

Committee and submission to HEFCE by the deadline of 7 March 2011;

- (b) That a small working group, convened to consider the consultation document, met on 26 January 2011 with the following membership:

Professor Ann Caesar (Chair)	Chair of AQSC
Dr J Robinson, Physics	AQSC Member
Miss C Thomson	Assistant Registrar (Recruitment)
Mrs T Gibbs	Student Careers and Skills
Dr C Edgar	Senior Assistant Registrar (TQ)
Mr R McIntyre	Assistant Registrar (TQ)

CONSIDERED:

- (b) A paper setting out the University's initial draft response to the consultation (paper AQSC 37/10-11).

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the response be augmented to include the further comments of the Committee, particularly noting:
- (i) That research or further study appears to be presented in the consultation document as secondary to matters around employability and earnings as a reason for engaging in undergraduate study or as a way of measuring the long-term benefits of higher education;
  - (ii) That KIS is not an appropriate acronym;
  - (iii) That the importance of accompanying contextual data being made easily available to prospective students be stressed;
  - (iv) That the data items focus on short-term financial gain from HE rather than considering a more useful medium-term outlook on destinations at 3 or 4 years after graduation (by which time a career may have begun to be established);
  - (v) That the inconsistencies throughout the consultation document (for example around the use of 'professional/managerial positions' and 'graduate jobs' interchangeably) were a concern;
  - (vi) That Question 8 around whether the Student's Union (SU) should be allowed to select a question for inclusion in the National Student Survey was unclear but that if the intention is for a question to be included on the quality of provision from the SU (such as the contribution made to student's experience at University) this be welcomed;
  - (vii) That the question of 'guardianship' of the data be raised.

45/10-11 Academic Infrastructure Consultation (Code of Practice for Standards, Quality and Enhancement)

REPORTED:

That the QAA is currently consulting on proposed changes to the Academic Infrastructure, with a deadline for responses of 1 March 2011;

CONSIDERED:

A discussion paper from the Assistant Secretary setting out a number of the key issues within the consultation document (paper AQSC 38/10-11), noting that the consultation document itself was attached at Annex A, and supporting information at Annex B.

RESOLVED:

That an institutional response to the consultation be drafted by the Assistant Secretary in consultation with the Chair of the Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed-Learning Sub-Committee, noting that:

- (a) The reason for the proposed changes are unclear;
- (b) The proposed document appears to address two different audiences (the public and the QAA) and may, therefore, not address each appropriately (by the use of terms that may have a different common understanding by the public but a very specific meaning in a quality and standards context, for example);
- (c) The recognition that the Programmes Specifications (currently a requirement of QAA) are not fit for purpose be welcomed.

46/10-11 Amendment to Regulation 8.12

REPORTED:

That a possible inconsistency has been identified between two separate sections of regulation 8 (Regulations for First Degrees) by the Warwick Medical School, and that it has been identified that an additional note to clarify the situation with regard to academic appeals for the MBChB programme might be required;

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Examinations Section of the Academic Office to add an additional note to regulation 8.12 (Governing appeals relating to decisions of final-year undergraduate boards of examiners), as follows (additions underlined), noting that, given the minor nature of the amendment, the full text of the existing regulation was not circulated, but can be made available on request from the Secretariat:

- 8.12 Regulations Governing Appeals Relating to Decisions of Final-year Undergraduate Board of Examiners

Note: Appeal procedures relating to the MBChB degree are governed by Regulation 8.10 and those relating to undergraduate non-degree courses by Regulation 39.

...

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposed amendment be approved.

47/10-11 Erasmus Mundus Call for Proposals (draft unconfirmed minute BGS 35(f)/10-11 referred)

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 18 January 2011, it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies:

- (a) That the 2011 Erasmus Mundus Call for Proposals (paper BGS 26/10-11) is now open for both "Action 1A: Erasmus Mundus Masters Courses (EMMC)" and "Action 1B: Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorates (EMJD)", noting that the University prefers Action 1B;
- (b) That although the deadline is 29 April 2011, the Commission's deadline for submission of the "Summary Sheet" of a proposed application is 31 March 2011. The Graduate School will contact departments shortly regarding the administrative support and proposed timetable for submission of applications within the University.

RECEIVED:

The 2011 Erasmus Mundus Call for Proposals (paper BGS 26/10-11), noting that:

- (c) The internal communication from the Graduate School had now been sent to departments;
- (d) Arrangements were being made for a Grand Committee to consider expressions of interest (in the form of the 'summary sheet' and draft documentation) in mid-March ahead of the Commission's deadline;
- (e) The imposed timescale for the process is short.

48/10-11 Outcomes of Collaborative Audit Provision

RECEIVED:

Papers by the QAA on the Outcomes of Collaborative Provision Audits (papers AQSC 39/10-11 and AQSC 40/10-11) in the following areas, noting that these would also be considered by the Collaborative Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee at its meeting on 10 February 2011:

- (a) Student Representation and Mechanisms for Feedback;
- (b) Student Support and Information;
- (c) Assessment and Classification Arrangements;

(d) Progression and Completion Information.

49/10-11

QAA: Revised Subject Benchmark Statements and Recognition Scheme for Subject Benchmark Statements

RECEIVED:

A communication from the QAA (paper AQSC 41/10-11), detailing revised subject benchmark statements in the following areas as outlined on the cover sheet, noting that the subject benchmark statement for Architecture was not circulated:

- (a) Factually-updated subject benchmark statement for Psychology;
- (b) Factually-updated Foundation Degree qualification benchmark;
- (c) Revised recognition scheme for subject benchmark statements.

50/10-11

Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 9.00am on Wednesday, 2 March 2011 in the Council Chamber, University House.

CE, 04/02/11

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