

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Academic Quality and Standards Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee held on
15 May 2003

Present: Professor S Bassnett (in the chair), Professor R Burns, Professor M Cooper, Dr A Easton, Dr S Hill, Professor I Lauder, Dr P O'Hare, Professor A Reeves, Mr A Reiss, Professor M Whitby.

Apologies: Dr P Blackmore, Professor R Dyson, Dr S Hill, Mr G Jones, Professor J Jones, Professor M McCrae.

In attendance: Ms C Charlton (for item 54/02-03 (g)), Ms K Penner, Ms R Wooldridge Smith

53/02-03 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 February 2003 be approved.

54/02-03 Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a) Reading Weeks (Minute 38/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That at its meeting held on 26 February, the Committee considered a paper outlining the results of a survey of all teaching departments undertaken to establish the extent and timing of reading weeks and resolved *inter alia*, that a letter be sent to the Dean of the Warwick Business School requesting clarification of practice on individual courses in the School and drawing to his attention the absolute requirement to ensure harmonisation of reading weeks for students enrolled on joint degrees.

CONSIDERED:

- (i) The response from Professor H Thomas, Dean, WBS (paper AQSC 23/02-03).
- (ii) An e-mail from the Director of the Language Centre amending information previously recorded concerning the Centre's practice with respect to reading weeks (paper AQSC 33/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That a letter be sent to the Dean of the Warwick Business School drawing to his attention the absolute requirement to ensure harmonisation of reading weeks for students enrolled on joint degrees.

(b) Academic Statistics (Minute 43/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That at its meeting held on 26 February, the Committee considered the University's Academic Statistics for 2002-03 and resolved, *inter alia*, that concern about the data utilised in the comparison of research income of UK universities (Section 5.4) be referred to Ms Kate Hughes, Director, Research Support Services with a request for clarification of the classification of research income.

CONSIDERED:

An e-mail received from Mr Simon Bailey, Research Support Services, sent in response to the Committee's enquiry (paper AQSC 34/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That the Research Support Services Office be requested to monitor the University's position in the discipline tables comparing the relative levels of research income contained in section 5.4 of the Academic Statistics with a view to investigating any significant changes in the relative positions of other institutions.

(c) Working Group on Student Support and Guidance (Minutes 47/01-02 and 42/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That a Working Group comprising the following members had been established to consider recommendations for improving the provision of student support and guidance, including greater support and training for personal tutors; inter-cultural awareness training for staff and consideration of sources of stress amongst staff and its impact on student well-being:

Professor Susan Bassnett (Chair)
Dr K O'Brien, English
Dr Paul Taylor, Chemistry
Mr R Leng, Law
Students' Union Welfare and Equal Opportunities Officer

RESOLVED:

That the proposed membership of the Working Group on Student Support & Guidance be approved with the inclusion of Dr Paul O'Hare, Medical School; it being noted that the Group would be serviced by the Director of Student and Ancillary Services and attended by the Senior Tutor.

(d) Working Group on Quality Enhancement (Minute 50/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That a Working Group comprising the following members had been established with the following terms of reference and membership:

- (i) To take a holistic view of Quality Enhancement activities undertaken in the University
- (ii) To monitor the dissemination of information about quality enhancement activities to ensure the sharing of best practice across the institution
- (iii) To consider quality enhancement implications arising from changes to the external teaching quality framework, superseding the work of the Faculty Quality Groups
- (iv) To oversee current and proposed quality enhancement projects undertaken in the Centre for Academic Practice, in the first instance those relating to research-based learning and the development of approaches to evaluation.
- (v) Membership:
Professor John Jones (Chair)
Faculty Chairs or their nominee (tbc)

RESOLVED:

That the proposed Terms of Reference and membership for the Quality Enhancement Working Group be approved; it being noted:

- (vi) That Drs P Taylor and A MacFarlane would represent the Faculties of Science and Arts respectively
- (vii) That the Group would be augmented by the Academic Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning and the Director of the Centre for Academic Practice.

(e) Annual Course Review Reports 2001-02 (Minute 47/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That at its meeting held on 26 February the Committee considered undergraduate and postgraduate Annual Course Review reports from all faculties and resolved, *inter alia*,

- (i) That a pro-forma for Annual Course Review reports be brought forward to the next meeting of the Committee.

CONSIDERED:

A pro-forma form for Annual Course Review reports, prepared by the Senior Assistant Registrar, (Teaching Quality) (paper AQSC 35/02-03), together with revised notes of guidance for departments (paper AQSC 36/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That the pro-forma form for Annual Course Review reports be approved as set out in paper AQSC 35/02-03; it being noted that the Chair would take action on behalf of the Committee to approve the addition of the following sections:

- (A) Requiring departments to consider non-completion data and undertake cohort analysis to track students' entry and exit performance
 - (B) Setting out departmental links with and consultation of employers with respect to curriculum design and review, and student achievement
- (ii) That clarification be provided of the mechanism for following up with departments and reporting to the Committee areas of concern highlighted in Annual Course Review reports.

RECEIVED:

A copy of a memorandum from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality), to the Chairs and Secretariats of the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies and the Faculty Boards, setting out the requirement for Faculty Boards to take the lead in investigating in the first instance, areas of concern arising from Annual Course Review reports (paper AQSC 37/02-03).

- (f) Periodic Review of the School of Theatre Studies (Minute 45/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That at its last meeting the Committee considered the Periodic Review Report on the Faculty of Arts' review of provision in the School of Theatre Studies together with the School's response and resolved that an updated response be provided by the School of Theatre Studies indicating how the issues arising in the Periodic Review had been addressed.

CONSIDERED:

A response from Professor D Thomas, Professor Responsible, School of Theatre Studies (paper AQSC 38/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That a sub-group of the Quality Task Group comprising Professors Bassnett and Whitby and Dr S Hill meet with the Professor Responsible for the School of Theatre Studies to offer central support to the School in fulfilling its responsibilities in a number of areas relating to teaching quality, this to include the provision of a report from School on its progress towards meeting the recommendations set out in the latest Periodic Review.

(g) Operation of the Committee (Minute 51/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That at its last meeting held on 26 February the Committee considered its role in the consideration of new course proposals, changes to courses and Annual Course Review reports and resolved, *inter alia*, that a summary of the potential means of streamlining the Committee's work be considered at its next meeting, these to include;

- (i) Publication of papers electronically via Insite
- (ii) Sub-division of the Committee along faculty lines to consider new and revised courses and Annual Review reports for the relevant faculty
- (iii) Use of an Executive Summary to draw out issues arising or examples of best practice contained within Annual Course Review reports.

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by the Senior Assistant Registrar, (Teaching Quality) on means of streamlining the Committee's work and summarising the purpose of the varying levels of scrutiny afforded specific items of business (paper AQSC 39/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (iv) That Committee endorsed the position set out in paper AQSC 39/02-03 with respect to the e-publication of committee papers
- (v) That from the academic year 2003-04 sub-groups of the Committee be established with cross-faculty membership to take the lead in scrutinising business submitted on behalf of groups of departments allocated to the sub-groups; it being noted that departments would be grouped in order to avoid committee members scrutinising their own department's business or acting on behalf of departments in their own faculty, whose business they may previously have considered in another forum.
- (vii) That the paper be circulated to the Faculty Boards and the Quality Task Group.

55/02-03 Progress of Committee Recommendations

REPORTED:

That the Senate, at its meeting on 12 March 2003 considered a report from the meetings of the Academic Quality & Standards Committee held on 30th January and 26th February 2003 and its resolutions recording under the following headings:

- (a) Course Specifications
- (b) Preparation for QAA Institutional Audit
- (c) External Examining

- (d) Periodic Reviews
- (e) Reviews to Course Approval Documentation
- (f) Annual Course Review Reports
- (g) New Courses of Study
- (h) Disestablishment of the Centre for Research in Health, Medicine & Society

And made the following resolutions under Minute 50/02-03 (unconfirmed):

(i) Warwick Skills Programme: Delivery Plan 2003-05

That the Delivery Plan of the next phase of development of the Warwick Skills Programme from 2003 to 2005 be approved in principle, as proposed in paper AQSC 28/02-03 (revised) and that the Delivery Plan be referred for comment and discussion to Faculty Boards in the Summer Term 2003, together with information about the successful early implementation of the Warwick Skills Certificate; noting that an initial pilot phase of embedding of the Skills Programme within the curriculum with selected departments would commence in the academic year 2003-04.

(j) SSLC arrangements in partner institutions

That the principles proposed to underpin SSLC arrangements in partner institutions be approved as set out in paper AQSC 24/02-03.

56/02-03 Chair's Business

RECEIVED:

- (a) A report from the Senior Assistant Registrar, (Teaching Quality) on the Chemistry Developmental Engagement (paper AQSC 87/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Department of Chemistry be congratulated on an excellent result.
- (ii) That it be noted that the follow-up required on the three issues arising from the DE would proceed as follows:
 - (A) That the CATS issue be referred to the Working Group on CATS established by the Committee, (see Minute 64/02-03)
 - (B) That the availability/ease of access to course level data on progression to facilitate monitoring and analysis of trends in non-completion would be addressed through work in progress in the Academic Office to ensure that the University could meet the TQI requirements of the Cooke Report; it being noted that a requirement for departments to analyse such data would also be incorporated into the Annual Course Review Report form (see Minute 54/02-03 (e) (i)).

- (C) That the benefit to be derived from better co-ordination of reporting lines for consideration of External Examiners' reports, Annual SSLC reports and Annual Course Review reports be considered by the Committee at its next meeting.
- (b) A report from the Senior Assistant Registrar, (Teaching Quality) on feedback from the QAA on Institutional Audits conducted to date, provided at the QAA Subscribers' Meeting held in Birmingham on 13th May 2003 (paper AQSC 88/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That clarification of point 5 be sought from the QAA.

- (c) An oral report from Professor Bassnett on a meeting held between the Pro Vice-Chancellors on 12 May to discuss the delivery of Warwick courses in a language other than English and the recommendation made to the Steering Committee that the primary language of delivery of all Warwick courses should be English.
- (d) An oral report from the Chair on progress made by the Plagiarism Working Group; it being noted that the Group would bring forward proposals for amendments to Regulation 12 in the Autumn Term following consultation with Chairs of Departments and that the University had signed an agreement to acquire electronic plagiarism detection software which would be available for use from the start of the 2003-04 academic year.

57/02-03

Consultation by Law Society and the Bar Council on QA arrangements for Qualifying Law Degrees (Minute 5/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That at its meeting held on 24th October 2002, it was reported to the Committee that the Law Society and the Bar Council had issued a detailed joint consultation document on future arrangements for qualifying law degrees, and had separately issued a circular requesting that representatives of the professional bodies in Law be invited to attend "validation events" for new Law degrees, following which a draft response had been sent by the University addressing the consultation issues.

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Law Society and the Bar Council setting out the proposed new framework for quality assurance and related matters in respect of Qualifying Law degrees (paper AQSC 44/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That paper be brought to the next meeting of the Committee providing an institutional perspective on the proposed new framework for quality assurance and related matters in respect of Qualifying Law degrees
- (b) That the Chair of the Law School be requested to provide a similar paper on behalf of the School for the next meeting of the Committee.

58/02-03

Risk Analysis

CONSIDERED:

A paper drafted by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) summarising risk identification, evaluation and management in the area of Teaching Quality (paper AQSC 40/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the paper be amended to reflect the view of the Committee that work overload for academic staff could potentially have a high impact, not least in reducing the effectiveness of controls put in place in a number of areas.
- (b) That it was acknowledged that the risks associated with the Medical School were generally decreasing as the University's increased its capacity to deliver the curriculum.

59/02-03

Initial Results of the Academic Survey 2002-03

CONSIDERED:

A summary of the initial findings of the Students' Union Academic Survey 2003 (paper AQSC 90/02-03 [table]); it being noted that a full report would be brought to the Committee for its next meeting on 11th June.

60/02-03

Additional Course Costs

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Education Officer, Students' Union, providing an overview of the additional costs incurred by students taking degrees at the University, by department (paper AQSC 42/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That SSLCs not having responded to the request for information on additional course costs from the Students' Union be requested to do so as soon as possible, this to include the Medical School SSLC.
- (b) That the paper be circulated to Departments with a request for feedback for consideration by the Committee later in the term; noting that the Committee viewed costs incurred in the purchase of set texts differently from other additional costs and that the key points were the extent to which students received information on additional costs prior to their arrival at the University, and the transparency of that information.
- (c) That clarification be sought from the Department of English concerning the charges levied on English Studies students attending compulsory Creative Writing talks on Wednesday afternoons.
- (d) That clarification be sought from the Chair of the School of Law concerning the £55 charge levied upon the students' arrival.

- (e) That the information about year abroad costs be considered by the Placement Learning Working Group.

61/02-03 English Language proficiency of overseas students

CONSIDERED:

A response from the Director of the International Office to an enquiry concerning the English Language proficiency of overseas students raised at the last meeting of the Committee (paper AQSC 43/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That further information be requested from Dr J Khan, Director, Centre for English Language Teacher Education, concerning the relative merits of the English language entry qualifications approved by the University, particularly with regard to oral competence.
- (b) That it be noted:
- (i) That the Warwick Teaching Certificate contained a session dedicated to the teaching of overseas students
 - (ii) That a substantial proportion of students enrolling on the Warwick Skills Certificate were overseas students who appeared to be using the Certificate for remedial purposes
 - (iii) That the Centre for Academic Practice had responsibility for providing training for Graduate Teaching Assistants but that responsibility for monitoring their performance rested with departments.

62/02-03 Course Specifications

CONSIDERED:

Course Specifications drafted for the following courses, approved by Faculty Working Groups:

- (a) Faculty of Arts
- (i) French and German, paper AQSC 46/02-03 (copy attached).
 - (ii) English and German Literature, paper AQSC 47/02-03 (copy attached).
 - (iii) German and Business Studies, paper AQSC 48/02-03 (copy attached).
 - (iv) German Studies, paper AQSC 49/02-03 (copy attached).
 - (v) German with French, paper AQSC 50/02-03 (copy attached).
 - (vi) German with Italian, paper AQSC 51/02-03 (copy attached).
 - (vii) German with International Studies, paper AQSC 52/02-03 (copy attached).
 - (viii) History of Art, paper AQSC 53/02-03 (copy attached).
 - (ix) History of Art and French, paper AQSC 54/02-03 (copy attached).

- (x) English and Italian Literature, paper AQSC 55/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xi) Italian and European Literature, paper AQSC 56/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xii) Italian with Film Studies, paper AQSC 57/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xiii) Italian with French, paper AQSC 58/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xiv) Italian with German, paper AQSC 59/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xv) Italian with International Studies, paper AQSC 60/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xvi) Italian with Theatre Studies, paper AQSC 61/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xvii) German Studies and Italian, paper AQSC 62/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xviii) French and Italian Studies, paper AQSC 63/02-03 (copy attached).

RESOLVED:

That the Course Specifications considered from the Faculty of Arts be approved, subject to the following minor amendments:

- (xix) French and German, paper AQSC 46/02-03: amendment to the 4th Learning Outcome: Subject-Specific/Professional Skills to clarify that the formative 'unassessed written assignments' are presented orally.
- (xx) History of Art, papers AQSC 53 & 54/02-03: replacement of 'especially term spent in Venice' with 'including term spent in Venice'.
- (xxi) German with International Studies, paper AQSC 52/02-03: replacement of 'Politics' with 'Politics and International Relations' as the second relevant Subject Benchmark Statement.

(b) Faculty of Science

- (xxii) Biochemistry, paper AQSC 65/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxiii) Biochemistry with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 66/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxiv) Biological Sciences, paper AQSC 67/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxv) Biological Sciences with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 68/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxvi) Biological Sciences with Cell Biology, paper AQSC 69/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxvii) Biological Sciences with Cell Biology with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 70/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxviii) Biological Sciences with Environmental Resources, paper AQSC 71/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxix) Biological Sciences with Environmental Resources with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 72/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxx) Biological Sciences with Microbiology, paper AQSC 73/02-03 (copy attached).

- (xxxix) Biological Sciences with Microbiology with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 74/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxii) Biological Sciences with Molecular Genetics, paper AQSC 75/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxiii) Biological Sciences with Molecular Genetics with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 76/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxiv) Biological Sciences with Virology, paper AQSC 77/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxv) Biological Sciences with Virology with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 78/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxvi) Computational Biology, paper AQSC 79/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxvii) Computational Biology with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 80/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxviii) Microbiology, paper AQSC 81/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxix) Microbiology with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 82/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxx) Microbiology and Virology, paper AQSC 83/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxixii) Microbiology and Virology with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 84/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxixiii) Virology, paper AQSC 85/02-03 (copy attached).
- (xxxixiv) Virology with Intercalated Year, paper AQSC 86/02-03 (copy attached).

RESOLVED:

That the Course Specifications considered from the Faculty of Science be approved, subject to the following minor amendments;

(xxxv) Biological Sciences, papers AQSC 65 – 86/02-03: inclusion of appropriate references to the relevant Subject Benchmark Statement in all the Learning Outcomes sections.

(xxxvi) Clarification of the reference to 'assessed seminars' as a Summative Assessment Method.

- (c) That the Chairs of Departments having completed Course Specifications be thanked for their hard work.

63/02-03 Course Approval Form for Open Studies Certificates

CONSIDERED:

A draft course approval form for Open Studies Certificates, derived from the revised version of the course approval form for new courses of study approved by the Committee at its last meeting (paper AQSC 45/02-03).

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the course approval form for Open Studies Certificates be approved as set out in paper AQSC 45/02-03.

64/02-03 Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme (CATS)

CONSIDERED:

Reports from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on issues arising from the Credit Accumulation and Transfer Scheme in the light of the outcome of the Developmental Engagement in the Department of Chemistry and from the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies on behalf of the Undergraduate Curriculum Review Group.

RESOLVED:

That a Working Group be established to review the current position with regards to CATS with the following membership;

Professor S Bassnett (Chair)
Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies
Director, Centre for Lifelong Learning
A representative from each Faculty
Director, Centre for Lifelong Learning

65/02-03 Date of Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 9.30am on 11th June 2003.