

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

Board of the Faculty of Science

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 08 November 2006.

Present: Professor M Smith (in the Chair), Mr T Arnold, Professor RC Ball, Professor S Bright, Professor MJ Cooper, Dr A Dowd, Professor A Easton, Dr K Flint, Professor R Freedman, Professor J Hutton, Professor R MacKay, Professor L Roberts, Dr J Robinson, Dr M Skinner, Dr C Sparrow, Dr N G Stocks, Professor R Wilson, Professor V Zammit.

Apologies: Professor J Beynon, Professor J Feng, Professor JW Gardner, Professor S Jacka, Professor K Lamberts, Mr D Morley, Dr AM Price, Professor S van Strien, Professor M Waterson, Ms H Ireland.

MINUTES

1/06-07 Constitution, Membership and Terms of Reference

REPORTED:

(a) Constitution and Membership

The constitution and membership of the following committees within the Faculty of Science for the academic year 2006/07:

- (i) Board of the Faculty of Science (BFS.15/05-06(revised)).
- (ii) Sub-Faculty of Science (BFS.16/05-06(revised 2)).
- (iii) Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science (BFS.17/05-06).
- (iv) Faculty of Science Information Technology Committee (BFS.18/05-06).
- (v) First Year Board of Examiners (BFS.19/05-06(revised)).
- (vi) Examination Appeals Committee Panels (BFS.20/05-06(revised)).
- (vii) Other Board Elections (BFS.21/05-06(revised)).

(b) Terms of Reference

That paragraph 4 of Statute 21 stated that the Board of each Faculty would have the following powers and functions:

- (i) To regulate, subject to these Statutes and the Ordinances and Regulations and to review by the Senate, the teaching, curricula and examinations in the subjects prescribed for the Faculty.
- (ii) To recommend to the Senate examiners for appointment.
- (iii) To make recommendations to the Senate for the award of Degrees (other than Honorary Degrees), Diplomas, Certificates and other distinctions in the subjects prescribed for the Faculty.

- (iv) To recommend to the Senate Sub-Faculties and Departments to be constituted by the Council.
- (v) To delegate to the Sub-Faculties such matters as are deemed appropriate.
- (vi) To appoint members of the Board of the Faculty to be members of the Senate as provided for under Statute 19.
- (vii) To discharge such other functions as the Senate may from time to time determine.

2/06-07 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 24 May 2006 be approved.

3/06-07 Matters arising on the Minutes

~~Integrated Masters Courses (BFS minute 44(b)/05-06 refers)~~

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee was continuing to monitor the extent to which other Russell Group institutions were supporting integrated masters degrees.

4/06-07 Report from the Sub-Faculty

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Faculty of Science held on 25 October 2006 and an oral report from the Chair of the Sub-Faculty of Science.

REPORTED:

That the first term 2 meeting of the Sub-Faculty had been moved from Tuesday 30 January to Wednesday 31 January to avoid coincidence with the January Degree Congregation.

5/06-07 Report from the Graduate Studies Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 25 October 2006 and an oral report from the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the term 2 meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee had been moved from Tuesday 30 January to Wednesday 31 January to avoid coincidence with the January Degree Congregation
- (b) That a review of the course and module approval process was being carried out, with the aim of introducing an on-line process which would help to stream-line the business dealt with at Graduate Studies Committee and Sub-Faculty level.

6/06-07 Report from the Faculty of Science IT Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty of Science IT Committee held on 18 October 2006 and an oral report from the Chair of the Faculty of Science IT Committee.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the new University email system included a planned 10Mb size limit for attachments to messages.
- (b) That a significant number of email messages from Science Faculty users would be blocked by this limit, which would have serious consequences, for example, moving powerpoint presentations and drafts of papers between authors.
- (c) That it was understood that there would be no indication of message failure sent to either the sender or recipient of blocked messages.

RESOLVED:

- (d) That the proposed configuration/specification of the new email system was not really fit for purpose in certain regards such as (a)-(c) above.

REPORTED:

- (e) That since the last meeting of the IT Committee, the Chair had received a consultation about a proposal to introduce a filter on web access to block undesirable sites.

RESOLVED:

- (f) That the Faculty was not opposed in principle to the introduction of a filter on web access, but that care would need to be taken over the introduction of such a system and that there would need to be a mechanism for reviewing banned sites.
- (g) That there would be concerns if transaction-based filtering was introduced, for example the blocking of credit card use.

7/06-07 Report from the Faculty of Science Research Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty of Science Research Committee held on 18 October 2006 and an oral report from the chair of the Faculty of Science Research Committee.

REPORTED:

- (a) A correction in the minutes as received, noting that the Hydrogen Energy Bid under 3(a) Science Cities should have the £6m total split 2:4 Warwick Birmingham.
- (b) A correction in the minutes as received, noting that the reference to the Learning Grid under 3(d) Research Student Training Programme should in fact refer to the Grid Node.

RESOLVED:

- (c) To discuss at a future Science Faculty Lunch the provision of and support for Grid Nodes, noting that current use of the existing Grid Node by the Faculty was light.
- (d) That the Research Committee's recommendation that more training for research students should be provided at Faculty level be supported, noting that the resources of the Graduate School should be utilised for appropriate administration of training, but that the Faculty should retain determination over the academic content of the programme.
- (e) That the Graduate Studies Committee should take responsibility for the academic direction of research student training across the Faculty.
- (f) That the Research Committee should continue to have a responsibility to consider issues regarding PhD students in the wider context of research strategy.
- (g) That the membership of the Graduate Studies Committee should be reviewed to include representation from the new Doctoral Training Centres.

8/06-07 Chair's Business

- (a) Appointment of a Deputy Chair

CONSIDERED:

A proposal to appoint a Deputy Chair for the Board of the Faculty of Science.

RESOLVED:

That Professor Easton be appointed as Deputy Chair for the Board of the Faculty of Science.

- (b) Advantage West Midlands

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on the Science Cities initiative, being funded by Advantage West Midlands.

- (c) Feedback to Students

REPORTED:

- (i) That the report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Teaching and Learning on feedback to students was not yet available.

- (ii) That AQSC had noted the importance of feedback to students on assessed work (AQSC minute 34/05-06 refers) and that Heads of Departments should seek to take this to SSLCs for discussion.
- (iii) That this issue be referred to the Sub-Faculty of Science for discussion at its next meeting.

(d) RCUK Consultation on Peer Review

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on the Research Councils UK consultation on peer review.

RESOLVED:

That responsibility for formulating the Faculty's response to the Research Councils UK consultation on peer review be delegated to the Faculty of Science Research Committee.

(e) Grant Activity and Spend Profiles

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on grant activity and spend profiles, noting the need to spend grant money by the end of this financial year wherever possible as this is the deadline for RAE purposes.

(f) Targets for Undergraduate and Overseas Student Numbers

RECEIVED:

- (i) An oral report from the Chair on targets for undergraduate and overseas student numbers, noting that the number of overseas undergraduate students had fallen short by 40 of a target of 259 for the Faculty, which had a significant financial impact.

RECOMMENDED:

- (ii) That departments need to provide robust estimates of target numbers for planning purposes.

RESOLVED:

- (iii) That the Board should monitor carefully the causes for any delay in applicant transactions that could lead to such shortfalls.

9/06-07 Research Assessment Funding

RECEIVED:

The response from the University of Warwick to the DfES consultation on the reform of Higher Education research assessment and funding (paper BFS.1/06-07).

10/06-07 International Strategy

RECEIVED:

- (a) An oral report from the Chair on the International Committee, noting that a more widely based international strategy was now being considered, with an emphasis in two areas: more general links with US universities, and a separate strategy for China where relationships would be sought with a smaller number of specific universities for longer-term development.

CONSIDERED:

- (b) The election of an additional representative from the Science Faculty to the International Committee

RESOLVED:

- (c) That Board members should submit nominations to the Chair for the additional representative to the International Committee, particularly people with an interest in China or the USA.
- (d) That the Committee was disappointed not to have received a written report from the International Committee.

11/06-07 Faculty Advisory Board

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on the meeting of the Faculty of Science Advisory Board held on 1 November 2006.

12/06-07 Annual Course Review

CONSIDERED:

A composite report on the postgraduate course review reports for 2004-05 from across the Faculty of Science (SGS.12/06-07 (revised))

REPORTED:

That some review reports of 2004-05 were still outstanding and had been asked by the Graduate Studies Committee to be submitted with the review reports for 2005-06, by the deadline of 1 January 2007 (minute SGS.6(g)/06-07 refers).

RESOLVED:

That the composite report on the postgraduate course review reports for 2004-05 be approved.

13/06-07 QAA Institutional Audit

REPORTED:

That the next QAA Institutional Audit was scheduled for Autumn 2008.

14/06-07 Items to be brought to the Senate

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Board's resolution regarding the proposed configuration of the new email system be reported to Senate, as other avenues of discussion between the Chair and IT Services had not produced an outcome acceptable to the Board.

15/06-07 Future Meetings and Deadlines for Papers

REPORTED:

- (a) That the future meetings of the Board of the Faculty in the academic year 2006/07 would be held on the following dates:

Spring Term – Wednesday 14 February 2006, 2.00pm (**Room PS128**)
Summer Term – Wednesday 30 May 2006, 2.00pm (Council Chamber)
- (b) That the deadline for the receipt of papers was 12 noon six working days preceding each meeting of the Board of the Faculty.

CONSIDERED:

- (c) A proposal that the dates of meetings of the Board of the Faculty of Science in the spring and summer terms be brought forward one week.

RESOLVED:

- (d) That the Board reserves the right not to consider any papers received after the set deadline for each meeting.
- (e) That the dates of meetings of the Board of the Faculty of Science in the spring and summer terms remain as scheduled.

16/06-07 Library provision

REPORTED:

- (a) That there did not seem to be any formal route for Departments to raise issues connected with Library provision, for example where Library provision did not appear to meet departmental needs or decisions had been taken by the Library without adequate departmental consultation.

RESOLVED:

- (b) That matters relating to Library provision which affected Departments in the Faculty of Science should be raised through the Science Faculty Board.

17/06-07 Reserved Items

See the separate minutes for academic members of the Board of the Faculty only.