

# UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

## Board of Graduate Studies

Minutes of the Board of Graduate Studies held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2006.

Present: Professor L Bridges (Chair), Mr L Askins, Dr C Bilton, Mr R Cave, Dr A Dowd, Mr B Duggan, Dr M Finn, Professor R Jackson, Dr D Kelly, Dr M J Kooy, Professor B Lockwood, Professor R Napier, Dr P O'Hare, Professor C Read, Dr N Stocks, Professor P Stoneman, Professor M Wills

Apologies: Dr D Leadley, Miss E Levitt, Professor McEldowney, Professor N Mann, Miss L Slator, Professor M Thorogood

31/05-06 Minutes

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 10 November 2005.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved subject to the following amendment – to note that Dr N Stocks was present at the last meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies held on 10 November 2005.

32/05-06 Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a) External Examiners' Reports (minute 22/05-06 refers)

REPORTED:

That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting of 16 November 2005, recommended (to the Senate) that the external examiners report form for taught postgraduate courses be amended to remove question 9, noting that the revised section of the QAA Code of Practice no longer mentions resources in this context.

(b) Examination Conventions and Guidance to Boards of Examiners (minute 23/05-06 refers)

REPORTED:

That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting of 16 November 2005, resolved that the system for the review and approval of taught postgraduate exam conventions be approved.

- (c) Wisconsin-Madison Exchange Scheme (minute 18/05-06 refers)

The Wisconsin-Madison exchange scheme which was in doubt at the time of the last meeting was now accepting applicants and therefore, a letter from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies indicating continued support for the scheme, as proposed at the last meeting, was no longer needed.

33/05-06

Chair's Business

- (a) Postgraduate Admissions and Fees Paper

REPORTED:

- (i) That the paper prepared by the Student Admissions Office on issues relating to postgraduate admissions and the issue of postgraduate fees for spouses or partners of University employees was considered by the Steering Committee on 12 December 2005.
- (ii) That Steering Committee resolved the Student Admissions Office examine the viability of the collection and presentation of more detailed data for future admissions reports as discussed at the meeting.
- (iii) That further investigation into the implications of a move towards a fully-centralised system for both undergraduate and postgraduate admissions be undertaken by the Student Admissions Office and a report brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee in the Spring Term.
- (iv) That the proposal that spouses or civil partners of all overseas University employees be eligible for Home/EU fees for postgraduate degrees be approved in principle, on the understanding that a report on the technical issues associated with the implementation of this proposal would be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee as soon as practicable.

- (b) Midlands Hub – UK Grad Poster Competition

REPORTED:

- (i) That the UK Grad through the Midlands Hub was organising a regional poster competition noting that 10 places would be available to the University of Warwick.
- (ii) That the deadline for nominations was the end of May 2006 and that the competition would take place on 3 July 2006.

RESOLVED:

That the Faculty Graduate Studies Committees be informed of this event, noting that the Graduate School would co-ordinate the selection process for Warwick.

34/05-06 Postgraduate Committee

REPORTED:

That the Postgraduate Committee was organising a Postgraduate Ball to be held at Easter 2006.

35/05-06 Postgraduate Staff-Student Liaison Committee (SSLC) Reports

REPORTED:

That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting of 16 November 2005, considered a report on the operation of the postgraduate SSLC System during 2004-05 (paper AQSC 24/05-06) prepared by the SSLC Coordinators, Mr R Cave, Mr B Duggan, Dr K Flint and Dr P Roberts and resolved:

- (a) That it be noted that issues raised in respect of the Library provision were being taken forward by the Librarian and the Education Officer of the Students' Union.
- (b) That the Chair write to departments emphasising the importance of providing detailed and constructive comments to students on their coursework, it being noted that feedback was an area where institutions had generally performed less well in the 2005 National Student Survey.
- (c) That it be noted that communication and the management of expectations were key factors in student views of the quality of feedback.
- (d) That all personal tutors should have publicised office hours during term time, regardless of where they live, and that the Chair should draw this to the attention of Heads of Department.
- (e) That an overview report on the personal tutor system be considered by the Committee in the spring term.
- (f) That the recommendation in respect of the overcrowding of some lecture and seminar rooms be brought to the attention of the central timetabling team rather than departments.
- (g) That it be noted that, contrary to the impression given in the reports, SSLC representatives are routinely invited to departmental meetings in some of the named departments and that the SSLC Annual Report form be amended to reflect this.

- (h) That the SSLC Coordinators pass on a number of recommendations to the Campus Life Committee.
- (i) That SSLC Academic Convenors be informed about student mentoring schemes being developed across the University.

CONSIDERED:

A report on the operation of the postgraduate SSLC System during 2004-05 (paper AQSC 24/05-06) prepared by the SSLC Coordinators, Mr R Cave, Mr B Duggan, Dr K Flint and Dr P Roberts together with an oral report from Mr B Duggan on progress made to date on the issues raised.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the reports on follow-up to the Postgraduate SSLC Report be considered by the Board of Graduate Studies.
- (b) That it be noted that the administration of the allocation of the carrels available in the library was the responsibility of the Graduate School Office not the library.

36/05-06 Education Innovation Fund

Vice-Chancellor's Education Innovation Fund (AQSC minute 22b/05-06 refers)

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting of 16 November 2005, received the draft guidance for applicants and application form, (paper AQSC 20/05-06) and resolved that the Board of Graduate Studies would be represented by its Chair on the panel scrutinising applications.
- (b) That the closing date for the next round of applications was 17 March 2006.

37/05-06 Outline Proposals for new courses of study

- (a) Centre for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies

CONSIDERED:

A proposal for the introduction of a MA in Translation, Media and Cultural Transfer with effect from September 2006 (paper BGS 16/06-06), noting that, although all paperwork has been completed, this was a request for approval in principle and has not yet been considered by the Faculty of Arts.

RESOLVED:

That the MA in Translation, Media and Cultural Transfer be approved (as set out in paper BGS 16/05-06) subject to ratification by the Board of the Faculty of Arts and the following amendments:

- (i) Clarification of the weighting of the dissertation.
  - (ii) Amendment to the length of the Postgraduate Diploma noting this should consist of Part I of the course only.
- (b) History of Art

CONSIDERED:

An outline proposal from the Department of History of Art for a revised MA in History of Art (paper BGS 18/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the report for outline approval for the MA in History of Art be approved (as set out in paper BGS 18/05-06) subject to the following amendments

- (i) Clarification of the arrangements for part-time students
  - (ii) Clarification of the modules taken on the 'Venice and its Legacy' stream.
- (c) Warwick Business School

CONSIDERED:

An outline proposal from the Warwick Business School for the introduction of a new MSc in Management and Business with effect from October 2006, (paper BGS 17/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the request for outline approval for the MSc in Management and Business (as set out in paper BGS17/05-06) be approved subject to the following:

- (i) The submission of a full course proposal, course specification and as many module proposals as possible to the Graduate Studies Committee in the spring term.
- (ii) Confirmation from the Teaching Quality unit that the group work component was in line with University policy.

- (iii) Consultation with the Warwick Manufacturing Group over the marketing of the course, with the aim of avoiding direct competition in some overseas markets.
  - (iv) That the Warwick Business School be advised to consult with the International Office over the marketing of the course at the remaining overseas recruitment events in 05/06.
- (d) Institute of Education

CONSIDERED:

An outline proposal for a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (M-Level), scheduled for introduction in 2007, (paper BGS 23/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the course be approved in outline subject to Faculty ratification.
- (ii) That the title of exit route two of the proposed award of Professional Graduate Certificate in Education (with Qualified Teacher Status) be referred to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee for consideration, noting that this qualification would be awarded to students who do not complete academic work successfully at M level but do achieve H level and pass all school-based parts of training so are eligible for QTS.

38/05-06 Discontinued course of study

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Department of History to discontinue the MA in Local and Regional History, noting that the Board of the Faculty of Arts, at its meeting of 19 October 2005, recommended that the proposal be approved as set out in paper AGSC01/05-06.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal to discontinue the MA in Local and Regional History be approved.

39/05-06 QAA Special Review of Research Degree Programmes

CONSIDERED:

An initial draft submission for the QAA Special Review of Research Degree Programmes (paper BGS 19/05-06)

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the submission be amended in line with comments made at the meeting.
- (b) That the paper be circulated to Departments and Directors of Graduate Studies.

40/05-06

PhD Submission And Qualification Rates

REPORTED:

That the AHRC has increased its submission rate threshold requirements for departments from 50 per cent to 60 per cent in 2005 and 70 per cent in 2006 and its minimum institution threshold will be increased from the existing 30 per cent to 40 per cent in 2005, 50 per cent in 2006 and 60 per cent in 2007.

CONSIDERED:

- (a) Summary information from the Academic Statistics showing the percentage of students submitting within 4 years for full-time study and 6 years for part-time study for the cohort with a deadline in September 2005, noting that this survey excluded students who had been granted periods of suspension, additional extension or those who had withdrawn within the first year (paper BGS21/05-06).
- (b) A summary of data produced by the HEFCE for the QAA Special Review comparing the University's qualification rates to the sector average (paper BGS 21/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That submission rates and qualification rates should be referred to Faculty Graduate Studies Committees with the aim of seeking suggestions regarding effective methods of increasing the submission rate.

41/05-06

EPSRC Postgraduate Training Strategy

CONSIDERED:

The EPSRC Postgraduate Training Strategy (paper BGS 22/05-06) and draft response.

RESOLVED:

That any Board members' comments should be submitted to the secretariat by Friday 13<sup>th</sup> January.

42/05-06 PhD Students based overseas

REPORTED:

That the Graduate School had received a number of queries from departments considering PhD applicants who would be based overseas for the duration of their PhD.

CONSIDERED:

The development of a set of guidelines for such cases, noting that issues raised had included minimum attendance requirements, expected means and frequency of contact with supervisor, access to adequate library and IT facilities and supervision provided by local contacts who are not members of Warwick staff.

RESOLVED:

That the secretary prepare a set of draft guidelines for consideration at a future meeting of the Board.

43/05-06 Integrated (Undergraduate) Masters Courses

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A briefing note from the Europe Unit on the implications of the Bologna agreement for undergraduate Masters Degrees (paper BGS 20/05-06).
- (b) The principle of awarding both a Masters qualification and a Bachelors qualification for integrated programmes noting that students would be required to complete 120 credits at M level.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, as the proposed award of an Master's degree on the basis of completing only 120 CATS at M level was not consistent with Masters Degrees presently offered by the University, the Board did not wish to endorse this proposal on the basis of the information available, noting that the Board would appreciate input from the departments concerned before considering the matter further.
- (b) That there were no objections to the award of a Postgraduate Diploma for 120 CATS at M level or the award of a Masters degree if students were to complete an additional 60 CAT dissertation at M level.



44/05-06

Student Development

CONSIDERED:

Proposals on the most effective methods of assessment of Research Students' skills requirement, presented orally by Board members.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Board supported a form of self-assessment conducted on entry with a review at the end of each year.
- (b) That the secretary brings forward more detailed proposals for consideration at a future meeting.

45/05-06

Word limits for theses presented for higher degrees by research

CONSIDERED:

A proposal that candidates for higher degrees by research be required to include a word count within the thesis submitted for examination.

RESOLVED:

That examiners be advised that they may require a candidate to inform them of the length of a thesis if they suspected it to be over length but that candidates not be required to publish this within the thesis.