

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**

**Board of Graduate Studies**

There will be a meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies at 2.00pm on 4 June 2009 in the **Council Chamber**, University House.

J F Baldwin  
Registrar

**Note: Committee papers can be accessed at <https://files.warwick.ac.uk/bgs/browse>. Questions on items on the agenda or apologies for this meeting should be directed to the Assistant Secretary to the Board, Rory McIntyre ([r.j.mcintyre@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:r.j.mcintyre@warwick.ac.uk)).**

**A G E N D A**

1. Minutes of the last meeting

TO CONSIDER:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 30 April 2009 (copy attached).

2. Matters arising on the Minutes

(a) PGR Focus Groups (minute 91/08-09 refers)

TO REPORT:

That, at its last meeting, the Board considered a paper from the Secretary on the recommendations arising from focus groups held with Postgraduate research students during the Spring term (paper BGS 100/08-09) and resolved that the structure of the Sabbatical Officer team within the Students' Union was currently under review and it was felt unlikely, despite there being much support for the idea, that a Postgraduate Sabbatical Officer post would be created in the foreseeable future in the light of financial constraints.

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Secretary on the recommendations arising from focus groups held with Postgraduate research students during the Spring term (paper BGS 100/08-09, previously circulated and also available online), noting that the paper had not been fully considered at the last meeting of the Board.

(b) Graduate School Charter (minute 92/08-09 refers)

TO REPORT:

That, at its last meeting, the Board considered a draft proposal from the Secretary, arising from focus groups undertaken with PGR students, for a "Graduate School Charter" for PG students, setting out the range of services provided by the Graduate School and a mission statement (paper BGS 101/08-09) and resolved:

(i) That the Board was supportive of the creation of a Charter for the

Graduate School, but that further thought be given to the draft, in particular to articulate the role of the Graduate School in setting policy for postgraduate admissions;

- (ii) That members be invited to consider the Charter and bring ideas for discussion at the next meeting of the Board.

TO CONSIDER:

A draft proposal from the Secretary, arising from focus groups undertaken with PGR students, for a "Graduate School Charter" for PG students, setting out the range of services provided by the Graduate School and a mission statement (paper BGS 101/08-09, previously circulated and available online), noting that the paper had not been fully considered at the last meeting of the Board.

- (c) PGR Prizes (minute 93/08-09 refers)

TO REPORT:

That, at its last meeting, the Board considered a proposal from the Secretary to introduce annual prizes for students writing for publication and for research student supervision by staff (paper BGS 102/08-09) and resolved:

- (i) That the Board was concerned about the mechanism and criteria for judging the proposed prizes, taking due account of disciplinary differences;
- (ii) That the Board had concerns over how nominations for a prize for supervision might best be collected and judged, and that one possible solution might be to open up the criteria for Warwick Teaching Awards to allow research supervisors to be eligible;
- (iii) That there was some concern over the amount of time necessary to judge a prize for writing, it being noted in particular that Roberts' funding may cover administrative time and the prize money itself, but would not recompense individual academics involved in the judging process.

TO CONSIDER:

A proposal from the Secretary to introduce annual prizes for students writing for publication and for research student supervision by staff (paper BGS 102/08-09, previously circulated and available online), noting that the paper had not been fully considered at the last meeting of the Board, and the existing criteria for the Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (paper BGS 119/08-09, copy attached).

- (d) Annual PGR Course Review Reports (minutes 75/08-09 and 82(b)/08-09 refer)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 19 February 2009, the Board considered the

composite Annual PGR Course Review Reports prepared by each of the Graduate Studies Committees of the Faculty of Arts (paper AGSC 22/08-09) and Medicine (paper BGS 89/08-09), noting that the reports from the Faculties of Science and Social-Studies would be considered at a future meeting of the Board;

- (ii) That, at its last meeting, the Board considered the composite Annual PGR Course Review Reports prepared by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science (paper SGS 13/08-09.m).

TO CONSIDER:

The composite Annual PGR course review report prepared by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social-Studies (paper GFSS 83/08-09, copy attached).

- (e) Future Options for Warwick Postgraduate Research Scholarships (minute 83(e)/08-09 refers)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That, at its last meeting, the Board considered a paper from the Chair setting out options for the future policy on the level of WPRS award to be made to overseas students (paper BGS 105/08-09) and resolved:

- (A) That the Board was not supportive of a reduction in stipend for WPRS award holders, noting that any such reduction might impact on the recent decision to align the application process for WPRS and the recently-awarded scholarships under the AHRC block grant scheme, where the stipend for the latter is fixed by the Research Council;

- (B) That any future revisions to the WPRS scheme might include a recommendation that departments receive the same level of income regardless of whether the award holder is a home/EU or overseas student, i.e. the equivalent of the home/EU fee plus the amount of QR funding a department receives for such a student, and that for WPRS overseas students departments are charged the same central service charge as for a home/EU PGR student.

- (ii) That, following the last meeting, the Chair had consulted the Graduate Studies Committee of the four Faculties to seek views on the future administration of the award of Warwick Postgraduate Research Scholarships (paper BGS 107/08-09, copy attached).

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School) summarising the feedback received from the Graduate Studies Committees in response to the consultation (paper BGS 108/08-09, copy attached).

3. Chair's Business

(a) Dorothy Hodgkin Postgraduate Awards

TO REPORT:

That the University has not been granted any Dorothy Hodgkin Postgraduate Awards for the 2009/10 academic year;

(b) Warwick Collaborative Postgraduate Research Scholarships information event for Staff

TO RECEIVE:

An oral report from the Chair on the event held on 1 June 2009.

4. Chair's Action

TO RECEIVE:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Board (paper BGS 109/08-09, copy attached).

5. Reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees

TO RECEIVE:

Oral reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees.

6. Postgraduate Committee and Students' Union

TO RECEIVE:

An oral report from the Education Officer.

7. Review of the University Regulations and enhancements to monitoring arrangements

TO REPORT:

(a) That the Steering Committee, at its meeting on 11 May 2009, considered a paper outlining the proposed approach to manage the implementation of the new Points Based System legislation within the University (SC.442/08-09) and resolved that the proposed approach be approved as set out in SC.442/08-09, subject to revisions as discussed in the meeting to be made prior to consideration by the Boards of the Faculties.

(b) That at the meeting of the Steering Committee it was reported:

(by the Academic Registrar)

(i) That the Higher Education sector had successfully negotiated with the UK Border Agency to establish greater clarity and flexibility in the reporting requirements regarding students' academic progression;

(ii) That the University needed to consider carefully the message that

any approach might send to overseas students, noting that the monitoring system could enhance the student experience in the longer term;

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (iii) That it should be explicit in the revised Regulation 13 on Student Registration, Attendance and Progress and the related Good Practice Guide that students failing to comply with the monitoring standards would not be reported to the UK Border Agency until the University's internal investigation procedures had been completed including the opportunity for students to present their case within the appropriate appeals process;

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (iv) That the process detailed in SC.442/08-09 was a sensible and fair approach building on current practices;

#### TO RECEIVE:

A set of principles for the implementation of the Points Based System (PBS) at the University, as approved by the Steering Committee (paper SC.442/08-09, copy attached).

#### TO CONSIDER:

- (c) Proposed amendments to University Regulations affecting student registration, attendance and progress, incorporating changes to support the implementation of PBS, noting that these have previously been circulated for consultation to the four Boards of the Faculties at their meetings in week 6 and 7 (papers BGS 110/08-09, BFSS 39/08-09 and BFSS 40/08-09, copies attached);
- (d) A new Good Practice Guide on Monitoring Student Attendance and Progress (papers BFSS 41/08-09 and BFSS 42/08-09, copies attached);
- (e) Guidelines for international students on the implications of changes to their registration for their visa (paper BFSS 43/08-09, copy attached);
- (f) An additional paper outlining the Procedure for Committees dealing with student cases, equally applicable across several of the new student facing regulations (paper BGS 120/08-09, copy attached);
- (g) A paper setting out the key resolutions of the Boards of the Faculties (paper BGS 111/08-09, to be tabled).
8. Regulation Governing Higher Degrees (minutes 65(b)/08-09 and 54(c)/08-09 refer)

#### TO REPORT:

That, at its meeting on 19 February 2009, the Board considered (*inter alia*) revised Regulations for Higher Degrees (paper BGS 73/08-09), drafted by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office) and resolved that the Board approved strongly of the style and content of the latest draft of the new regulation, but noted the following:

- (a) That consideration may be given to removing the requirement for the examiners' joint report to be approved by the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the relevant Faculty, and that the Chair, the Secretary and the Senior Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office) discuss outside of the meeting the desirability of locating this responsibility with the Graduate School office in routine cases;
- (b) That the section on the PhD by Published Work did not include the latest revisions to the regulations approved by the Board in 2007/08;
- (c) That further thought be given to the guidelines on the use of an external adjudicator, noting that it was the view of the Board that the adjudicator should only be able to make a recommendation of an award at the same level as, or between, those recommended by the internal and external examiners;
- (d) That some thought was needed as to the best way of representing the management of the progression from the taught to the research element of an MPhil/PhD incorporating both types of study, particularly where progression requires the student to achieve a particular standard in order to progress;
- (e) That consideration be given at a future meeting of the Board to potential alterations to the current classification of, and time allowed for, minor corrections.

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office) setting out proposed changes to the Regulations Governing Higher Degrees (paper BGS 112/08-09, copy attached);

9. Regulation Governing Taught Postgraduate Degrees

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office) setting out proposed changes to the Regulations Governing Taught Postgraduate Degrees (paper BGS 113/08-09, copy attached).

10. Annual PGT Course Review Reports

TO CONSIDER:

The Annual PGT Course Review Reports prepared by each of the Graduate Studies Committees, as follows:

- (i) Arts (paper AGSC 26/08-09, copy attached);
- (ii) Medicine (paper DMAP 71/08-09 (Revised), copy attached);
- (iii) Science (paper SGS 30.08/09k, copy attached);
- (iv) Social Studies (paper GFSS 326/08-09, copy attached).

11. New course proposals

A paper setting out recommendations for the approval of new courses (paper BGS

117/08-09, copy attached).

12. Revised course proposals

A paper setting out recommendations for the approval of revisions to existing courses (paper BGS 118/08-09, copy attached).

13. Report on PGR Annual Report Forms

TO CONSIDER:

A report compiled by the Secretary on issues arising from the 2009 PGR Annual Report Forms, including actions taken to date where appropriate (paper BGS 115/08-09, copy attached).

14. Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2009

TO CONSIDER:

A paper outlining the early headlines arising from the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey 2009 (paper BGS 114/08-09, copy attached), noting that a more detailed analysis will be available to the Board at its first meeting in the Autumn term;

15. Variable Part-time PhD Registration

TO CONSIDER:

A report from the Secretary (paper BGS 116/08-09, copy attached), following up issues raised by the discussion of the Board to endorse the proposals set out in paper BGS 33/06-07 (copy attached) to permit students to register for PhDs on the basis of a variety of lengths of study occasioned by varying degrees of part-time status.

16. Any Other Business

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