

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of Graduate Studies

There will be a meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies at **2.00pm** on **Tuesday, 17 November 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).

A G E N D A

1. Minutes of the last meeting

TO CONSIDER:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 15 October 2009 (copy attached).

2. Matters arising on the minutes

(a) Proposals from the Warwick Medical School regarding the MBChB degree (minute 15/09-10 refers)

TO REPORT:

(i) That, at its last meeting on 3 June 2009, the Board of Undergraduate Studies considered:

(A) A proposal from the Warwick Medical School to change University Regulation 8.10 'Regulations for the Degrees of Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) and for the Bachelor of Medical Sciences (BMedSci) (paper BUGS 26/08-09);

(B) A proposal to allow MBChB students to study for higher level qualifications (paper BUGS 21/08-09);

(C) A proposal to allow students from the International Medical University, Malaysia, direct entry into Phase II of the MBChB course (paper BUGS 22/08-09).

And recommended (*inter alia*) that the proposal to allow MBChB students to study for higher level qualifications as set out in paper BUGS 21/08-09 be approved subject to its consideration by the Board of Graduate Studies.

(ii) That, at its last meeting on 15 October 2009, the Board considered a proposal from Warwick Medical School to allow MBChB students to study for higher level qualifications (paper BUGS 21/08-09) and recommended (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee) that the proposal be approved, subject to:

- (A) Amendments of the maximum duration for the PhD under proposal 2 to 3 years (exceptionally 4 years);
- (B) The “explicit criteria” used to determine entry to each route being specified;
- (C) An assurance from Warwick Medical School that the transfers would be carefully monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis;
- (D) Consideration being given to the principle of students withdrawing from a graduate-entry undergraduate degree to pursue a PhD and then return to the undergraduate degree, with the associated issue relating to the currency of the first phase of undergraduate learning, it being noted that the University policy on the Accreditation of Prior Learning normally discounted credit accumulated more than 5 years prior to the proposed course entry point.

TO CONSIDER:

A revised proposal from Warwick Medical School to allow MBChB students to study for higher level qualification (paper BUGS 21/08-09 (Revised), copy attached) to address the Board’s concerns.

- (b) Warwick Postgraduate Research Scholarships Selection Criteria (minutes 18/09-10, 97(i)/08-09 and 83(e)/08-09 refer)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, 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 meeting in April, 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).

- (iii) That, at its last meeting on 4 June 2009, the Board considered 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) and resolved:
- (A) That WPRS awards continue to be allocated centrally, rather than at Faculty level;
 - (B) That the selection criteria for WPRS be carefully revised in order to make them as sensitive as possible to disciplinary differences, and that a proposal be brought to the next meeting of the Board for discussion;
 - (C) That the WPRS competition continue in two rounds;
 - (D) That members of the Board be asked to consider any proposed changes to the WPRS application form and to forward these to the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School) within the next 14 days.
- (iv) That, at its last meeting on 15 October 2009, the Board considered a paper from the Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships) outlining proposed new selection criteria for the WPRS competition (paper BGS 8/09-10) and resolved:
- (A) That the selection criteria used to assess a student's academic record be revised and amended in line with the discussion at the meeting, to include:
 - (1) The removal of degree classification requirement from standalone Master's degrees;
 - (2) That supporting evidence might include a research proposal "and/or" references.
 - (B) That the Chair work on a formula to combine the individual scale scores into a single score taking into account their relative weighting.

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships) outlining the proposed new selection criteria for the WPRS competition (paper BGS 8/09-10 (Revised), copy attached), revised in light of feedback from the Board.

3. Chair's Business

4. Chair's Action

TO RECEIVE:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Board (paper BGS 17/09-10, 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 the Students' Union

TO RECEIVE:

An oral report from the Education Officer.

7. Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee (minute 4/09-10 refers)

TO REPORT:

That the Graduate Studies Committees of the Faculties, at their last meetings, nominated the following to serve as Faculty selectors on the Graduate Awards & Nominations Sub-Committee:

- (a) Arts
Dr N Whybrow
Dr J Alexander
- (b) Medicine
TBC
TBC
- (c) Science
Professor R Napier
Dr A Clark
- (d) Social Sciences
Dr R Carter
Dr S Neill

8. Review of Portfolio of Postgraduate Provision

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the PGR Recruitment Officer, Student Admissions and Recruitment Office, setting out the range of provision offered by the University at Postgraduate level (paper BGS 18/09-10, copy attached), noting that the annex to the paper is not being circulated in hard-copy but is available online on the BGS file-store.

9. Reports from External Examiners

TO CONSIDER:

A report compiled by the Assistant Secretary to the Board on issues arising from External Examiners' reports on Postgraduate Programmes for 2007-08 (paper BGS 19/09-10, copy attached).

10. Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2009 National Results

TO RECEIVE:

A report from the Higher Education Academy summarising the development, operation and findings of the first national survey in the UK of taught postgraduate students, PTES 2009 (paper BGS 20/09-10, copy attached), noting that the Board has previously considered a report on Warwick's participation in PTES at its last meeting, and that the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2009 national report is still not yet available from the HEA.

11. Research Degree Qualification Rates

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School) on the University of Warwick's Research Degree Qualification Rates (paper BGS 21/09-10, copy attached).

12. PGR Funding Working Group

TO REPORT:

That, at its last meeting on 15 October 2009, the Board considered a paper from the Chair setting out the main objectives of the Board over the coming year (paper BGS 16/09-10) and resolved (*inter alia*) that a working party be convened from within the existing membership of the Board to review and make recommendations on the current funding model for PGR students, it being noted that:

- (a) The Chair was concerned that the University might be reaching the limit of achievable expansion of PGR student numbers without a fundamental re-evaluation of funding;
- (b) That any Board member wishing to volunteer to join the working group should approach the Chair directly, and that the Chair would bring a paper to the next meeting of the Board setting out the key challenges faced;

TO CONSIDER:

The convening of a working party to review the current funding model for PGR students, with a view to discussing potential membership and the remit of the group.

13. Definition of a Thesis

TO RECEIVE:

A copy of the text of a memo from the Chair of the Board to Departments, setting out the new regulations pertaining to the definition of a thesis in the context of a submission for a research degree at the University (paper BGS 22/09-10, copy attached).

14. Nominations to the UK Council of Graduate Education (UKCGE) Executive Committee

TO RECEIVE:

A paper setting out the procedure for nominations to be made to three vacancies on the Executive Committee of the UKCGE (paper BGS 23/09-10, copy attached), noting that:

- (a) Hard copy nomination forms are available from the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School);
- (b) Nomination paperwork should be returned to the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School) by Friday, 11 December 2009 in order that all Warwick's nominations can be returned to UKCGE by the deadline of 21 December 2009.

15. New course proposals

A paper setting out recommendations for the approval of new courses (paper BGS 25/09-10, copy attached).

16. Revised course proposals

A paper setting out recommendations for the approval of revisions to existing courses (paper BGS 26/09-10, copy attached).

17. Any Other Business

18. Next meeting

TO REPORT:

That the next meeting of the Board is on **Tuesday, 19 January 2010** in the **Council Chamber**.

HRWS/RM 11.11.09