

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of Graduate Studies

There will be a meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies at 2.00pm on Thursday, 15 October 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. Terms of Reference

TO CONSIDER:

A proposal that the terms of reference of the Board be amended as follows (insertions underlined, ~~deletions struck through~~):

- (a) To regulate the admission of all graduate students and, subject to the ~~Higher Degrees Regulations~~ Regulations Governing Taught Postgraduate Degrees and the Regulations Governing Research Degrees, the initial conditions of registration and any change of these conditions;
- (b) To make recommendations to the Senate, via the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, after consultation with the Faculty Boards, Departments and Graduate Studies Committees, if appropriate, on all matters to do with graduate study in the University;
- (c) To make recommendations on the appropriate provision of academic resources and social facilities for postgraduate students in the University;
- (d) To make awards partly or wholly established from University funds to graduate students and to nominate students for postgraduate awards made by external bodies;
- (e) To advise the Senate, via the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, on any general or specific strategic considerations regarding postgraduate study or research in the University;
- (f) To review periodically all postgraduate courses in the University;
- (g) To scrutinise all new postgraduate degree and course proposals and recommend approval to the Senate via the Academic Quality and Standards Committee;
- (h) To advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on matters relating to examinations for postgraduate degrees;
- (i) To advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on the role of internal and external examiners for postgraduate degrees;

- (j) To report to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee annually on the issues raised in reports by external examiners.

2. Membership of the Board 2009/2010

TO REPORT:

That the membership of the Board for 2009/10 is as set out in paper BGS 1/09-10 (copy attached).

3. Freedom of Information Act: Publication Scheme

TO REPORT:

- (a) That the University commits to publishing the minutes, agendas and non-reserved business of University bodies and committees on the University website, as part of its Publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- (b) That members of the Board are reminded that minutes of Board meetings will be published in this way.

4. Membership of Sub-Committees

Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee

TO CONSIDER:

The election of representatives to the Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee, noting that the formal membership is as follows:

- (a) The Chair of the Board as the Chair;
- (b) The Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Boards of the Faculties of Arts, Science, Medicine and Social Studies;
- (c) Four members of the Board, one from each of the Faculties:
Faculty of Arts
Faculty of Medicine
Faculty of Science
Faculty of Social Studies;

With the additional representation of the following in determining awards to be made by the University:

- (d) Eight Faculty selectors, two from each of the Faculties:
Faculty of Arts
Faculty of Medicine
Faculty of Science
Faculty of Social Studies.

5. Nomination for Membership of the Board of Undergraduate Studies

TO REPORT:

That the Chair had approved for recommendation to the Senate that Professor J Labbe operate for a further year as the representative of the Board to serve on the Board of Undergraduate Studies.

6. Nomination of Student Member on the University Research Ethics Committee

TO REPORT:

That the Chair had approved for recommendation to the Council that Miss Sumaiya Khaku, the Students' Union Education Officer for 2009/10, will serve as the student member on the University Research Ethics Committee.

7. Planning Business for 2009/2010

TO CONSIDER:

- (a) A paper from the Secretary setting out progress made towards the Vision 2015 targets (paper BGS 2/09-10, copy attached).
- (b) A paper from the Chair setting out the main objectives of the Board over the coming year (paper BGS 16/09-10, to follow).

8. Minutes of the last meeting

TO CONSIDER:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 4 June 2009 (copy attached).

9. Matters arising on the Minutes

- (a) Council Tax (minutes 97(d)/08-09 and 85/08-09 refer)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, the Board received an oral report from the Education Officer, noting (*inter alia*) that there had been recent student feedback relating to the exposure of postgraduate research students writing up to Council Tax, it being noted that the Deputy Academic Registrar had recently held a meeting to discuss this issue with the Welfare Office and colleagues from the Students' Union Advice and Welfare Service and was hopeful that a change could be made to the form of words currently used in status letters to try to ensure that students who remained studying full-time were not charged;
- (ii) That, at its last meeting on 4 June 2009, it was reported that following further discussions with the Assistant Registrar (Student Records), the need to reflect student status as defined by HEFCE had become apparent, which meant that there appeared to be little scope for the modification of existing letters, but that discussions

were ongoing;

- (iii) That the issue of Council Tax exemption for students in a period of extension highlighted the need to review the treatment of research students during a period of writing up and that this be considered at a future meeting of the Board;
 - (iv) That following a decision by Coventry City Council not to proceed with an arrangement previously accepted to comply with their requirements, the matter had been referred to the Registrar to raise in his next direct meeting with the head of Coventry City Council.
- (b) Annual PGR Course Review Reports (minutes 82(b)/08-09 and 75/08-09 refer)

TO REPORT:

That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, the Board considered the composite annual PGR composite review report prepared by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science (paper SGS 13/08-09.m) and resolved that comments raised by the Department of Chemistry relating to the accuracy of centrally held data be thoroughly investigated, it being noted that it was the view of the Secretary that a central dataset should be provided to departments for comment within Annual Review and research would be undertaken into the feasibility of this being provided for PG Annual Course Review with a view to a report being brought back to the next meeting of the Board.

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Administrative Officer (Graduate School) setting out the findings of an investigation into the Department of Chemistry's concerns by the Academic Office (paper BGS 3/09-10, copy attached).

10. Chair's Business

- (a) Scholarships

TO REPORT:

That the University has awarded 7 OSI/FCO/University of Warwick scholarships (formerly known as East European scholarships) in 2009-10.

- (b) Erasmus Mundus bids (minute 83(f)/08-09 refers)

- (i) Successful Bids

TO REPORT:

- (A) That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, it was reported to the Board that an ad hoc meeting of the Chairs of those committees normally involved in considering proposals for new collaborative courses, had been convened to collectively consider under Chair's action the proposals that were to be submitted to the European Commission's competition for

recognition and funding as Erasmus Mundus courses. The “Erasmus Mundus Grand Committee” made recommendations as set out in the minutes of that Committee.

(B) That the outcomes of the Erasmus Mundus applications were now known, and that these had been successful in the following approved courses:

- (1) MSc in Complex Systems, as set out in papers CFDLSC 25-32/08-09, noting that Warwick is the lead partner in the bid;
- (2) MSc in Economic Development and Growth, as set out in papers CFDLSC 45-46/08-09;
- (3) PhD in Globalisation, Europe and Multilateralism, as set out in papers CFDLSC 47-49/08-09.

(ii) Timing of Future Bids

TO REPORT:

That advice from the British Council recommends that January is the latest that an institution should set about building an Erasmus Mundus consortium, and that it may be preferable for work to begin as early as September in any given application cycle.

(c) Amendments to Graduate School Publications

TO REPORT:

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve amendments to:

- (i) The “Guide to Examinations for Higher Degrees for Research”;
- (ii) The “Guidelines for the Supervision and Monitoring of Research Students”,

in light of the revised University regulations approved by the Board at its last meeting on 4 June 2009, and subsequently by the Senate, noting that the revised versions are not being circulated to members but are available online in the BGS file-store and at:

<http://go.warwick.ac.uk/graduateschool/formslibrary>.

(d) Directors of Graduate Studies’ Lunch

TO REPORT:

That the Autumn term meeting for Directors of Graduate Studies will take place on 29 October 2009 at 12.30pm in the Wolfson Research Exchange.

11. Chair's Action

TO RECEIVE:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Board (paper BGS 4/09-10, copy attached).

12. Postgraduate Committee and Students' Union

TO RECEIVE:

An oral report from the Education Officer.

13. Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2009 (minute 108/08-09 refers)

TO REPORT:

That the Board, at its last meeting held on 4 June 2009, received a summary paper on the initial headlines from the 2009 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey, paper BGS 114/08-09.

TO CONSIDER:

A paper setting out a more detailed analysis of the feedback from Warwick students, benchmarked against the sector as a whole and the Russell Group (paper BGS 5/09-10, copy attached).

14. Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2009

TO CONSIDER:

A paper setting out the results of the PTES survey at Warwick in 2009 (paper BGS 6/09-10, copy attached).

15. Proposals from the Warwick Medical School regarding the MBChB degree

TO REPORT:

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.

TO CONSIDER:

A proposal from Warwick Medical School to allow MBChB students to study for higher level qualifications (paper BUGS 21/08-09, copy attached).

16. Variable Part-time PhD Registration (minute 109/08-09 refers)

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 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.

17. HEFCE Consultation on Withdrawal of Recurrent Teaching Funding.

TO RECEIVE:

The final University response to HEFCE consultation document 2009/25, available online from http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_25/, on the proposed withdrawal from 2010/11 of the following three targeted allocations from recurrent teaching funding: old and historic buildings; accelerated and intensive provision of postgraduate taught subjects in price band D; and foundation degrees (paper BGS 7/09-10, to follow).

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

TO REPORT:

- (a) 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:
 - (i) 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;
 - (ii) 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.
- (b) 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).

(c) 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:

(i) That WPRS awards continue to be allocated centrally, rather than at Faculty level;

(ii) 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;

(iii) That the WPRS competition continue in two rounds;

(iv) 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.

TO CONSIDER:

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

19. Contract for Warwick Postgraduate Research Scholarship Awards Holders (minute 90/08-09 refers)

TO REPORT:

That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, the Board considered a paper from the Project Officer (Postgraduate Student Development) and e-Portfolio Coordinator, Centre for Student Development and Enterprise, and oral report from the latter, on work undertaken to increase the uptake of e-Portfolios by postgraduate research students and resolved (*inter alia*) that consideration be given by the Graduate School to adopting a similar policy [to the "opt-out" policy for e-Portfolios introduced by the Department of History] for WPRS award holders, such students being deemed ambassadors for the Graduate School and wider University with a greater responsibility to report on their progress and experience.

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Secretary proposing elements of a potential contract for WPRS awards holders, expanding on the idea set out above and specifying what further inputs might be expected from those in receipt of a University funded award during their period of registration (paper BGS 9/09-10, copy attached).

20. Visiting Research Students

TO CONSIDER:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar (Postgraduate Admissions) outlining a

proposal to modify the existing procedures relating to the admission of visiting postgraduate research students (paper BGS 10/09-10, copy attached).

21. Graduate School Newsletters

TO RECEIVE:

The newsletters issued by the Graduate School since the last meeting of the Board, as follows:

- (a) Summer 2009 (paper BGS 11/09-10, copy attached);
- (b) Autumn 2009 (paper BGS 12/09-10, copy attached).

22. UK Research Integrity Office: Code of Practice for Research

TO CONSIDER:

A publication from the UK Research Integrity Office entitled "Code of Practice for Research: Promoting Good Practice and Preventing Misconduct" (paper BGS 13/09-10, copy attached).

23. QAA Consultation on Draft Master's Degree Characteristics Reference Point

TO RECEIVE:

- (a) A letter from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) outlining a consultation on a draft Master's Degree Characteristics Reference Point (paper BGS 14/09-10, copy attached);
- (b) A copy of the draft Master's Degree Characteristics Reference Point (paper BGS 15/09-10, copy attached);

24. Any Other Business

25. Next meeting

TO REPORT:

That the next meeting of the Board is on **Tuesday, 17 November 2009** at 2pm in the Council Chamber, University House.

HRWS/RM 6.10.09