

# UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

## Board of Graduate Studies

Minutes from the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies held at 2 pm on Thursday 27 April 2006 in the Council Chamber, University House.

Present: Professor L Bridges (in the Chair), Dr D Leadley, Professor P Stoneman, Professor C Read, Professor E Peile, Dr M Finn, Dr M J Kooy, Dr P O'Hare, Professor M Thorogood, Professor R Napier, Dr J McEldowney, Professor R Jackson, Professor N Mann, Mr B Duggan

Apologies: Dr D Kelly, Professor M Wills, Dr A Dowd, Professor N Charles, Ms E Levitt, Dr N Stocks

In attendance: Glenda Kershaw, Steve Raynor, David Law

53/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 16 February 2006 be approved

54/05-06 Matters Arising on the Minutes

a) CELTE: MA in Research Methods in Applied Linguistics and English Teaching (minute 50/b/i, ii & iii/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

Clarifications of the course proposal for an MA in Research Methods in Applied Linguistics and English Teaching (paper BGS 25/05-06)

RESOLVED:

That the course proposal for the MA in Research Methods in Applied Linguistics and English Teaching be approved.

b) Chemistry: MSc in Synthetic Chemistry with Industrial Collaboration (minute 50/c/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

Clarifications of the course proposal for an MSc in Synthetic Chemistry with Industrial Collaboration (paper BGS 26/05-06)

RESOLVED:

That the course proposal for the MSc in Synthetic Chemistry with Industrial Collaboration be approved.

c) Law: PGA in Health and Safety Enforcement

CONSIDERED:

Completed course proposal forms (papers GFSS 100-101/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the course proposal for the PGA in Health and Safety Enforcement will be approved by Chair's action.

55/05-06

Chair's Business

a) WMG/China Aerospace (CA-TDEC)

REPORTED:

- (i) That WMG had been in negotiation with China Aerospace regarding collaboration to provide a Post-Experience Certificate in Engineering Business Management.
- (ii) That Post-Experience courses of this type have been successfully delivered in China and in the UK in collaboration with other Chinese partners for the past ten years.
- (iii) That the admission requirement would be a first degree or Higher Diploma from a Chinese Higher Education Institution which, may or may not be of a high ranking.
- (iv) That this qualification would be recognised as an entry qualification for the WMG Masters programme, provided that students achieve an average mark of 55% in the modules, and a minimum mark of 55% in the project.
- (v) That WMG was seeking approval for the course to commence in January 2007.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal to introduce a Post-Experience Certificate from WMG in collaboration with China Aerospace (CA-TDEC)

RESOLVED:

- (vi) That the proposal to deliver the Post-Experience Certificate in Engineering Business Management for CA-TDEC be approved for one year in the first instance.
- (vii) That the continuation of the programme beyond the first year be subject to:

- (A) A review of the rationale for the existing arrangements whereby students achieving an average of 55% in post-experience modules and 55% in the post-experience project are deemed to have met MSc entry requirements.
- (B) Satisfactory resolution of the quality assurance issues currently being considered by the AQSC.
- (C) A report on the first year of the CA-TDEC programme, to be considered by the Board following the meeting of the first Board of the Examiners, noting that this should include information on student performance, the numbers progressing to the MSc and the examination arrangements.

b) Extenuating Circumstances in research degree examinations

CONSIDERED:

A proposal to determine whether examiners of research theses should be presented with medical evidence at the point of examination.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the presence of medical evidence at any stage of the examination of the thesis should in no way affect the marking of the thesis. The presence of such evidence should in no way 'lower the bar' during examination.
- (ii) That the Graduate School should explore the possibility of having an Independent Chair.

c) Postgraduate Population

REPORTED:

- (i) That Quad Research was currently undertaking a survey in to the Postgraduate Population.
- (ii) That attendance on half of all postgraduate taught modules was 5 students or less.

56/05-06 Reports from the Faculty Graduate Studies Committees

REPORTED:

An oral report from the Faculty of Medicine on the re-organisation of the Medical School.

57/05-06 Postgraduate Committee

REPORTED:

That the Postgraduate Magazine is currently being edited as is due for publication during the summer.

58/05-06 Outline proposals for new courses of Study

MOAC

CONSIDERED:

Proposals from MOAC and the Department of Chemistry for approval in principle for the introduction of two new courses:

- a) MSc in Communicating Multidisciplinary Science (paper BGS 27/05-06).
- b) MSc in Chemistry with Scientific Writing (paper BGS 28/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- c) That the course be approved in principle.
- d) That the course proposals should be ratified by the Faculties of Arts and Social Studies due to the collaborative elements of the course with Departments in those faculties.
- e) That the project is not classified as 50% of the course as this does not equate with the CATS rating of the project – 84.
- f) That the proposals be referred back to the department for clarification of the following:
  - (i) The assessment method with explicit reference to the equation of one subject with another
  - (ii) Whether second markers will be used – one to assess content and one to assess the effectiveness of the communication of the subject matter.
  - (iii) The specific length of the project in words rather than number of pages.

59/05-06 Postgraduate Scholarships

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by the Chair on proposed amendments to postgraduate scholarship funding (paper BGS 35/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- a) That the paper be circulated to Faculty Graduate Studies Committees and Departments for their views of Postgraduate Scholarship funding guided by the questions contained within Appendix 2.
- b) That Faculties and Departments be invited to recommend proposals or devise alternatives if the present proposals are deemed inappropriate.
- c) That Faculties consider whether the current submission deadlines for applications are suitable.

60/05-06 Admissions (minute 25/05-06 refers)

REPORTED:

- a) That the Board, at its meeting in November 2005, established a working group to consider postgraduate admissions criteria and processes.
- b) That the average time taken to consider an application for study was 50 days.
- c) That in future visas granted to overseas students will be assigned to a specific University which will mean the turnaround time of an application will be much more critical.
- d) That applications are sometimes incomplete and therefore, are not assessed by a Department until missing information is present therefore, increasing the time it takes to review an application.

CONSIDERED:

A report from the meeting of the Admissions Working Group (paper BGS 33/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Board wish to see a breakdown of Departmental turnaround times with a split between research and taught applications.

61/05-06 Postgraduate Induction

REPORTED:

- a) That, at a meeting of members of the Board and Directors of Graduate Studies held to discuss induction for postgraduate students, support had been expressed for a longer University level induction for research students than that currently offered by the Graduate School.
- b) That the Faculty of Science would like to include MSc by Research students in the induction process.

CONSIDERED:

A draft proposal for a two-day induction, noting that it was proposed to run this as a pilot in 2006 (paper BGS 29/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- a) That the term contained within the proposal - 'managing your supervisor' - should be altered to 'working with your supervisor'.
- b) That dates of the induction needed to be communicated to the Departments within sufficient time in order for Departments to arrange their own inductions.
- c) That the issue of Student Health should be addressed in the induction.
- d) That the Student's Union are in consultation with the Communications Office with a view to producing a DVD.

62/05-06 Training Needs Analysis for Research Students (minute 44/05-06 refers)

REPORTED:

- (a) That Precept 19 of the QAA's Code of Practice for Research Students states that "Each student's development needs will be identified and agreed jointly by the student and appropriate academic staff, initially during the student's induction period; they will be regularly reviewed during the research programme and amended as appropriate."
- (b) That, at its meeting in January 2006, the Board resolved:
  - (i) That the Board supported a form of self-assessment conducted on entry with a review at the end of each year.
  - (ii) That the secretary brings forward more detailed proposals for consideration at a future meeting.

CONSIDERED:

Outline proposals for a Professional and Research Development Programme (PRD), noting that it is intended to implement these during the 2006/2007 academic year (paper BGS 34/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- a) That Monitoring Panels should have sight of the PRD plan when meeting with the student.
- b) Following agreement of training needs, Departments will need to develop a system of checking that the needs have been addressed and training has been received.

63/05-06 Submission Rates (minute 47/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

Results of a survey of institutions with regard to policy on fees and registration for the writing up period and further extensions (paper BGS 30/05-06).

64/05-06 Integrated (Undergraduate) Masters Courses (minute 43/05-06 refers)

REPORTED:

That the Board, at its meeting in January 2006, considered a briefing note from the Europe Unit on the implications of the Bologna agreement for undergraduate Masters Degrees (paper BGS 20/05-06) and 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 and 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.

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by a working group established by the Faculty of Science to consider the issue (paper BGS 31/05-06)

RESOLVED:

That the Board of Graduate Studies endorse the recommendations of the report and that this should be reported to the Academic Standards and Quality Committee.

65/05-06 Use of Postgraduates in Teaching and Examining

REPORTED:

That English language proficiency could sometimes be a problem with regard to teaching.

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by the Chair on the use of postgraduate students in teaching and examining (paper BGS 32/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- a) That any problems arising regarding English language proficiency should be covered under the training needs analysis.
- b) That Laboratory training was different to teaching and therefore, should not be covered by this policy.