

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of Graduate Studies

There will be a meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies at 2.00pm on Thursday, 15 January 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 13 November 2008 (copy attached).

2. Matters arising on the Minutes

(a) QAA Institutional Audit

TO RECEIVE:

A copy of the letter received from the QAA setting out the key findings of the panel which visited Warwick in October and November 2008 and outlining the timescale for consideration of, and response to, the panel's draft report (paper BGS 58/08-09, copy attached).

(b) Credit weightings and dissertation word lengths on Masters Programmes (minutes 107/07-08; 8(b)/08-09 and 30/08-09 refer)

TO REPORT:

That at its last meeting held on 13 November, the Board considered a paper summarising guidance for academic departments on the recommended word limits for dissertations at Warwick and on dealing with overshoots on published word limits, paper BGS 39/08-09 and resolved:

- (i) That some minor changes be made to ensure that guidance was in place continuously across the full range of marks, and that the maximum length for assessments in the range 10-19 credits should be 4000 words;
- (ii) That, in addition to the maximum word limit recommended by the guidance, a suggested word limit be set on a case-by-case basis by departments to take account of the nature of the assessment and its

intended audience;

- (iii) That the Board was of the view that departmental practice would vary in the treatment of exceeding the stated word length and that departments may consider introducing a student “self-certification” procedure to ensure that assessed work adheres to the prescribed word-length;
- (iv) That revised guidance be considered at a future meeting of the Board, noting that this would be circulated to departments, that departments reconsider their own courses in light of the guidelines and make revisions to word limits where necessary, and that the guidelines inform the consideration of new/revised courses by the Board in future.

TO CONSIDER:

The original guidance note re-drafted in the light of the Board’s resolutions (paper BGS 39/08-09 (revised), copy attached).

(c) Redrafting of Higher Degree Regulations

TO REPORT:

That at its last meeting held on 13 November 2008, the Board considered an oral report from the Chair concerning, *inter alia*, the need to ensure that the work of the Senior Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar’s Office) in re-drafting the University’s Regulations for Higher Degrees to make them more accessible include amendments to ensure that consideration be given to the introduction of an appeal against the failure to upgrade from Postgraduate Diploma to Masters; the definition of the status of “extension” for PGR students and consequences for students and the University; and the need to introduce both a right of appeal for students enrolled on the PGCE, and a policy for remedying failure in the case of students on practice placements.

TO CONSIDER:

An initial redraft of the existing University Regulation 14 on Higher Degrees (paper BGS 59/08-09, copy attached), noting that further additional regulations will be drafted in due course, one to cover all PGT courses, incorporating provisions relating to postgraduate Diplomas, Certificates and Awards as well as the PGCE and, separately, an additional regulation relating to accredited courses traditionally scrutinised by the Board but which are not at M level in the national qualifications framework.

(d) (International) Student Barometer 2008 (minute 40/08-09 refers)

TO CONSIDER:

An oral report from Mr Stephen Williams, International Office, on the headlines arising from the 2008 Student Barometer of home and international students of particular relevance to postgraduate students.

(e) New PhD Structures

TO CONSIDER:

A report from the Chair on the consideration in principle of proposals for new PhD structures (paper BGS 65/08-09, copy attached).

3. Chair's Business

(a) AHRC Block Grant Partnership Scheme

TO RECEIVE:

An oral report from the Chair.

4. Chair's Action

TO RECEIVE:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Board (paper BGS 60/08-09, copy attached).

5. Postgraduate Committee and Student's Union

TO REPORT:

That the following student representatives have been appointed by each of the Boards of the Faculties from amongst the departments in that faculty:

- (a) Faculty of Arts: TBC
- (b) Faculty of Medicine: David Metcalfe
- (c) Faculty of Social Studies: Oyinlola Osonowo
- (d) Faculty of Science: Pearl Kaijuka

TO RECEIVE:

An oral report from the Education Officer.

6. Graduate School Consultation with Academic Departments

TO CONSIDER:

A report drafted by the Secretary on the outcomes of the consultation exercise undertaken with academic departments in the Autumn Term in the context of enhancing the Graduate School (Office)'s service provision (paper BGS 61/08-09, copy attached).

7. Course Approval Form

TO REPORT:

That the Academic Quality & Standards Committee, at its meeting held on Wednesday 19 November 2008 considered proposed amendments to the course approval form, as set out in paper AQSC 25/08-09, including the following requirements:

- (a) That departments identify which Regulation will govern the course, and confirm whether any changes to Regulations may be necessary;
- (b) That departments identify relative weightings of different years of study in the final classification/decision;
- (c) That departments supply proposed conventions for PGT courses;
- (d) that departments provide fuller information about the intended management of new joint and cross-departmental degrees, so that responsibilities for all aspects of management, liaison and student support are clear in advance of a new course being set up (minute 4(g)(viii)/08-09 and Recommendations 1 and 2 of paper AQSC 9/08-09 refer).

Noting that:

- (e) If approved, these amendments would also be incorporated as appropriate within other relevant course approval documentation; and
- (f) that further amendments to the course approval form and other relevant documentation would be required to adopt the new numbering convention for academic levels included in the revised Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ), and that these amendments will be considered by the Chair on behalf of the Committee, as set out in paper AQSC 5/08-09 (minute 9/08-09 referred).

And resolved:

That the proposed amendments to the course approval form, along with a further proposed amendment concerning SSLC arrangements, be considered by the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies in the spring term. (Minute AQSC 25/08-09)

TO CONSIDER:

Proposed amendments to the course approval form, as set out in paper AQSC 25/08-09 (copy attached).

8. SSLC Coordinators' Annual Report

TO CONSIDER:

The Annual Report from the Student-Staff Liaison Committee Coordinators on the operation of the SSLC system during 2007-08 for postgraduate courses (paper AQSC 22/08-09, copy attached).

9. Strategic Departmental Review Report: Department of Biological Sciences

TO CONSIDER:

A report on the Strategic Departmental Review conducted recently on behalf of the department of Biological Sciences including the following documents, noting that only extracts relevant to postgraduate provision were being circulated:

- (a) Strategic Department Review of Biological Sciences (paper BGS 62/08-09, copy attached);
- (b) Departmental Response to the Strategic Departmental Review (paper BGS 63/08-09, copy attached);
- (c) Action plan for the department of Biological Sciences (paper BGS 64/08-09, copy attached).

10. Revised Course Specifications

TO CONSIDER:

Revised course specifications for the following courses:

- (a) MSc in Financial Mathematics (paper BGS 66/08-09, copy attached);
- (b) Postgraduate Diploma in Public Finance Leadership (paper BGS 67/08-09, copy attached);
- (c) MA in International Performance Research (paper BGS 68/08-09, copy attached);

11. Any Other Business