

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of Graduate Studies

Minutes of the Board of Graduate Studies meeting held on Thursday, 30 April 2009.

Present: Professor L Bridges (Chair), Dr A Dowd, Professor B Dutta, Dr F Griffiths, Professor N Johnson, Dr D Leadley, Professor P Marshall, Professor R Napier, Dr A Stokes, Professor A Sturdy, Mr M Surve.

Apologies: Professor K Butcher, Miss P Kaijuka, Professor J Labbe, Mr D Metcalfe, Professor A Neal, Miss L Osonowo, Professor N Stocks, Dr J Vickery

In attendance: Mrs C Edgar (for item 82(c)/08-09), Dr J Gardner, Mrs S Goodlad (for item 89/08-09), Mr R McIntyre, Mr S Ranford (for item 90/08-09), Professor A Rodger (for item 87/08-09), Mr D Wallis (for items 82(c)/08-09 and 89/08-09), Ms R Wooldridge Smith.

81/08-09 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 19 February 2009 be approved. The Chair recorded his thanks to Professor Labbe and Dr Dowd for acting in his stead during his recent absence.

82/08-09 Matters arising on the Minutes

(a) Poor Supervisory Practice (minute 66(a)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

That, at its last meeting, in response to an item raised by the Chair, the Board resolved (*inter alia*) that a proposal on models of training for supervisors of postgraduate research students be drafted by the Chair and Secretary to be considered at a future meeting of the Board, it being noted that the Board had expressed the view that:

- (i) Such training should ideally be held at department level;
- (ii) Attendance should be strongly encouraged by Heads of Department and Directors of Graduate Studies on a regular basis, potentially every other year;
- (iii) That it was most crucial to ensure attendance by very long-serving staff, who may not recently have felt a need to update themselves on University requirements, and staff having recently joined Warwick from another institution, where practice might differ.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal by the Chair and Secretary on potential training models for supervisors of postgraduate research students.

RESOLVED:

- (iv) That the proposed workshop outlined be welcomed by the Board;
 - (v) That the Graduate School Office work on case study materials to complement the proposed session outline;
 - (vi) That it be noted that colleagues from the Warwick Business School would in due course share a complementary paper relating to supervision currently under consideration in the School;
 - (vii) That it be noted that the Graduate School was inviting departments to come forward as pilots to implement the proposal and that, to this end, it be circulated to Heads of Departments and Directors of Graduate Studies.
- (b) Annual PGR Course Review Reports (minute 75/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, at its last meeting, 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 the composite report from the Faculty of Social Studies would not be available until the next meeting of the Board, following consideration by the Graduate Studies Committee.

CONSIDERED:

The composite Annual PGR course review report prepared by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science (paper SGS 13/08-09.m).

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.

- (c) Postgraduate Admissions Process Review (minute 68/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, at its last meeting, the Board received oral reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees and noted that the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Arts had raised (*inter alia*) the point that some departments within the Faculty had expressed concern over recent delays in the processing of some postgraduate student applications, and that meetings to try to resolve the issue had so far proved unsuccessful;
- (ii) That the Board resolved that the Secretary would raise this point with the Director of the Student Admissions and Recruitment Office as a matter of some urgency, and that he be invited to attend the next meeting of the Board to respond to concerns and speak to improvement work already ongoing in the postgraduate admissions team.

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment and the Assistant Registrar (Postgraduate Admissions) and a paper outlining a process review within postgraduate admissions and a proposal to increase the application fee for PG students applying to the University.

RESOLVED:

- (iii) That the Board was supportive of the introduction of a “No fee – no submission” policy for applications noting, however, the following:
- (1) That this condition should be highlighted within the application process to ensure clarity;
 - (2) That the role of the International Office in supporting students who may experience difficulties in making credit card payments online be emphasised;
 - (3) That the policy should be used as a disincentive to those students who make an application with no clear intention of accepting a place at the University, that departments may opt to waive the fee in certain circumstances, for example where regular contact with a given student is in place prior to an application being made, and that PGR students are exempted from the application fee automatically.
- (iv) That the Board saw no merit in introducing a blanket policy on the refusal of deferral requests, noting that individual departments may choose to implement this policy if desired;

- (v) That the Board was supportive of the introduction of a deadline for applications, but that further discussion should be held with the International Office on the potential impact on overseas recruitment, and that 6-9 months was considered to be a long time for a “reject by default” policy to be invoked;
 - (vi) That the proposal on providing information, advice and guidance to prospective applicants be approved, and that the proposed introduction of deputy course selectors on all courses be endorsed;
 - (vii) That a modest increase in the application fee to cover the cost of issuing Certificates of Acceptance of Studies under the new Points Based Immigration system be approved.
- (d) Provision of training for PhD students who teach (minutes 70/08-09 and 13/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 9 October 2008, the Board considered an oral report from the Chair on a meeting with the QAA auditors as part of the Briefing Visit, noting that one issue raised by the auditors was the practice of only requiring PhD students who teach for more than 20 hours to undergo training, and resolved that it be noted that practice varied across different departments in terms of provision of training to PhD students who teach and that a paper outlining different practices should be considered at a meeting of the Board to be held in the Spring term on the basis of a survey of Departmental practice;
- (ii) That, at its last meeting, the Board considered a paper outlining the differing practice across departments in provision of training to PhD students who teach (paper BGS 78/08-09) and the existing guidelines on the use of postgraduate students for teaching (paper BGS 86/08-09) and resolved:
 - (A) That revised guidelines be drafted by the Secretariat and considered at a meeting of the Board to be held in the Summer Term;
 - (B) That, whilst the revised guidelines should stop short of requiring all PhD students who teach to undergo the same advanced level of training, they should recommend that all doctoral-level students involved in teaching should undertake training appropriate to the specific nature of the duties undertaken.

CONSIDERED:

Revised guidelines drafted by the Secretariat on the use of postgraduate students for teaching (paper BGS 92/08-09).

RESOLVED:

That the paper be approved subject to a minor amendment to point 4 to set out that “It is a University requirement that postgraduate students who will undertake *any* teaching duties should receive preparation and training that is both appropriate to the specific nature of the duties undertaken and proportionate to the amount of teaching performed, and that a record be kept of such training for quality assurance purposes”.

(e) New PhD Structures (minute 54(e)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 15 January 2009, the Board considered a report from the Chair on the consideration in principle of proposals for new PhD structures (paper BGS 65/08-09) and resolved:

- (i) That the Board encourage departments to think flexibly about new forms of PhD and that any such proposals be judged on their individual merit;
- (ii) That the Board was content to continue to work within the current regulation indicating that work already submitted for a lower award could subsequently contribute to a piece of research for a higher award, providing the extent of previously assessed work was clear, such that the examiners could clearly identify the development to be considered.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the School of Law for an accelerated route PhD programme (paper BGS 106/08-09).

RESOLVED:

That the Board was supportive of the proposal in principle, it being noted that no formal agreement be entered into with the School of Law until the Graduate School Office had been able to ascertain that no financial detriment would result as a consequence of the transfer of students from level 7 to level 8 in this way.

83/08-09 Chair's Business

(a) Examination advisors

REPORTED:

That, at a meeting of the Graduate Appeals Committee held in December 2008 to consider the appeal of a PhD student from the department of Biological Sciences, the Committee recommended (to the Graduate School) (*inter alia*) that consideration be given to introducing a requirement for an examination advisor to be present during all *viva voce* examinations.

RESOLVED:

That the Board did not approve of the use of examination advisors for all *viva voce* examinations, it being noted in particular that:

- (i) The Board had recently explored this possibility and was not persuaded by the Complaints Committee recommendation, to change its view;
 - (ii) That examination advisors were put in place to consult on the examination process, and that it was felt unlikely that the use of an advisor would resolve situations where the examiners were unable to reach an agreement on the outcome of the examination;
 - (ii) That current practice, within which the Chair of the Board, as part of the process of approving the appointment of examiners, routinely requires an advisor to be used where examiners are inexperienced or have not previously examined at Warwick, and in which some departments currently make use of advisors in all cases if there is a discipline specific reason to do so, was felt to be appropriate.
- (b) PGT External Examiners' fees

REPORTED:

- (i) That, following an enquiry from the School of Health and Social Studies, the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School) and Assistant Registrar (Examinations) had conducted a consultation with departments over the current fee scale for external examiners;
 - (ii) That the Chair of the Board had, on the basis of that report, agreed that there were no grounds to revise the current external examiners' fee scale;
 - (iii) That further discussions with the School of Health and Social Studies had identified a possible need to review External Examiners' fees, and that a paper had been submitted to the Fees Working Group to consider the matter with a view to making a recommendation to the Steering Committee.
- (c) Forthcoming Workshops

REPORTED:

That the Graduate School is running workshops as follows during the coming term:

- (i) Conversion of students from UG to PG (1 and 8 May 2009, for students);
- (ii) WCPRS (1 June 2009, for staff)

(d) Russell Group PGR Special Interest Group

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on the first meeting of the Russell Group PGR Special Interest Group, held at Warwick on 10 March 2009, noting that there had been a significant level of interest in sharing information on such issues as postgraduate application numbers, new PhD structures and the Bologna process, and that meetings were due to continue on a six-monthly basis, hosted initially at Warwick.

(e) Future Options for Warwick Postgraduate Research Scholarships

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).

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.

(f) Erasmus Mundus Grand Committee

REPORTED:

That, at an ad hoc meeting on 20 April 2009, the Chairs of those committees normally involved in considering proposals for new collaborative courses, convened to collectively consider under Chair's action the proposals which are 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, noting that:

- (i) The courses approved as part of this process would be reported at a future meeting of the Board, once finalised;
- (ii) The outcome of the Erasmus Mundus application would be

known in Autumn 2009;

- (iii) That the Fees Working Group would take forward issues relating to the financial value represented by such courses.

84/08-09 Chair's Action

RECEIVED:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Board (paper BGS 93/08-09), as follows:

(a) Faculty of Arts

(i) German Studies

MA in Translation, Writing and Cultural Difference (minute 16(b)(iii)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (A) That, at its meeting on 9 October 2008, the Board considered a revised course specification for the MA in Translation, Writing and Cultural Difference (paper BGS 12/08-09), and resolved that the course specification be approved, subject to completion of the Personal Development Planning Section of the form;
- (B) That the requested revisions to the course specification had subsequently been received and that the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, had approved the revised course specification for the MA in Translation, Writing and Cultural Difference, as set out in paper BGS 12/08-09 (Revised).

(ii) Department of English and Comparative Literature Studies

MA in Pan-Romanticisms (minute 16(b)(ii)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (A) That, at its meeting on 9 October 2008, the Board considered a revised course specification for the MA in Pan-Romanticisms (paper BGS 11/08-09), and resolved that the course specification be approved, subject to revision of the learning outcomes to ensure they are demonstrably at M-level;
- (B) That the requested revisions to the course specification had subsequently been received and that the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, had approved the revised course specification for the MA in Pan-Romanticisms, as set out in paper BGS 11/08-09 (Revised).

(iii) Department of Theatre and Performance Studies

PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies with Practice as Research

REPORTED:

- (A) That the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Arts, acting on behalf of the Committee, had taken action to approve proposed revisions to the course entitled “PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies”, with a component of practice as research, to include the MPhil and MA by Research as exit qualifications;
- (B) That, following further discussions with the department of Theatre and Performance Studies, the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the proposed revisions to the “PhD in Theatre and Performance Studies”, with a component of practice as research, as set out in paper BGS 104/08-09, it being noted that this was a revision to the PhD with practice as research originally approved by Senate.

(b) Faculty of Social Studies

(i) Warwick Business School

(A) MA in Industrial Relations and Managing Human Resources (minute 105(c)(i)(B) referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies, at its meeting on 13 May 2008, considered a proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MA in Industrial Relations and Managing Human Resources” (papers GFSS 317/07-08, GFSS 318/07-08 and GFSS 319/07-08) and recommended to the Board that it be approved, it being noted by the Committee that in future means for greater collaboration between the Business School and the School of Law be explored on courses and modules where there is a legal component;
- (2) That, at its meeting on 5 June 2008, the Board considered the proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MA in Industrial Relations and Managing Human Resources”, as set out in papers GFSS 317/07-08, GFSS 318/07-08 and GFSS 319/07-08, and resolved that the course be approved, subject to revision of the

proposal and course specification to disaggregate those learning outcomes delivered by the Masters, Diploma and Certificate;

- (3) That clarification had subsequently been received, and that the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the course entitled “MA in Industrial Relations and Managing Human Resources”, as set out in papers GFSS 317/07-08 (Revised), GFSS 318/07-08 and GFSS 319/07-08.

(B) MA in International and European Employment Relations (minute 105(c)(i)(C) referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies, at its meeting on 13 May 2008, considered a proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MA in International and European Employment Relations” (papers GFSS 330/07-08, GFSS 331/07-08 and GFSS 332/07-08) and recommended to the Board that it be approved, it being noted however that the proposal may require the consideration of the Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee;
- (2) That, at its meeting on 5 June 2008, the Board considered the proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MA in International and European Employment Relations”, as set out in papers GFSS 330/07-08, GFSS 331/07-08 and GFSS 332/07-08, and resolved that the course be approved, subject to revision of the proposal and course specification to disaggregate those learning outcomes delivered by the Masters, Diploma and Certificate;
- (3) That clarification had subsequently been received, and that the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the course entitled “MA in International and European Employment Relations”, as set out in papers GFSS 330/07-08 (Revised), GFSS 331/07-08 and GFSS 332/07-08.

(C) MA in Management and Organisational Analysis (minute 105(c)(i)(D) referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies, at its meeting on 13 May 2008, considered a proposal to introduce a new course entitled "MA in Management and Organisational Analysis" (papers GFSS 333/07-08, GFSS 334/07-08 and GFSS 335/07-08) and recommended to the Board that it be approved;
 - (2) That, at its meeting on 5 June 2008, the Board considered the proposal to introduce a new course entitled "MA in Management and Organisational Analysis", as set out in papers GFSS 333/07-08, GFSS 334/07-08 and GFSS 335/07-08, and resolved that the course be approved, subject to revision of the proposal and course specification to disaggregate those learning outcomes delivered by the Masters, Diploma and Certificate;
 - (3) That clarification had subsequently been received, and that the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the course entitled "MA in Management and Organisational Analysis", as set out in papers GFSS 333/07-08 (Revised), GFSS 334/07-08 and GFSS 335/07-08.
- (D) Postgraduate Award in Strategic Leadership (Network Rail) (minutes GFSS 28(b)(i)/07-08, BGS 69(b)(i)/07-08 and BGS 15/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies, at its meeting on 31 January 2008, resolved that the proposal to revise the module entitled 'Postgraduate Award in Strategic Leadership (Network Rail)', as set out in paper GFSS 138/07-08, be approved but that Warwick Business School be advised to suggest to the client that consideration be given as to whether the relation between the CATS points and the teaching hours and word count was appropriate for the level of the award, noting that there was a significant workload and number of contact hours, therefore a PG Certificate might be a more appropriate level of award;
- (2) That the Board, at its meeting on 21 February

2008, resolved that the proposal to revise the module entitled 'Postgraduate Award in Strategic Leadership (Network Rail)', as set out in paper GFSS 138/07-08, be approved subject to:

- (a) Reconsideration of the level of assessment required as required by the Graduate Studies Committee, noting that this seems excessive for the credit to be awarded;
 - (b) Clarification of what "coaching instruction and practice" entails and how this will be delivered as part of the course;
- (3) That, at its meeting on 9 October 2008, it was reported that clarification of items (a) and (b) above had since been received, but that the level of credit, having been reduced by 50%, still seemed excessive for the credit to be awarded, and resolved:
- (a) That there appeared to be some confusion as to whether the proposed changes constituted revisions to a single module or to the Postgraduate Award;
 - (b) That the module leader and Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science would clarify the position, for consideration by Chair's action following the meeting.
- (4) That following discussions between the module leader and the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, a Postgraduate Award proposal form had been completed and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the revision to the course entitled "Postgraduate Award in Strategic Leadership (Network Rail)", as set out in paper GFSS 138/07-08 (Revised).

85/08-09 Postgraduate Committee and Students' Union

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Education Officer, noting in particular:

- (a) That there continued to be concerns outlined by postgraduate students in the Centre for Translation and Comparative Cultural Studies over the implication for them of the potential disestablishment of the Centre, it being noted that the Chair

indicated that he had written to them all personally and met with a number of them at their request;

- (b) 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.

86/08-09 Template for PGT and PGR exchange programmes

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Assistant Director, International Office, setting out proposals for a template for PGT and PGR exchange programmes (paper BGS 95/08-09).

RECOMMENDED (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee):

That the proposals for a template for PGT and PGR exchange programmes be approved.

87/08-09 Summer Programme and MSc in Research Skills for Science (minutes 45/08-09 and IC 5/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (a) That, at its meeting on 13 November 2008, the Board received an oral report from the Assistant Director (Student Recruitment) in the International Office in light of a recommendation to the Graduate School that consideration be given to the construction of a one-year foundation programme for postgraduate students in order to tap potential markets for postgraduate students where undergraduate education provision does not provide an adequate base for postgraduate level studies in an English-speaking country;
- (b) That the Board resolved that investigation begin into the development of a postgraduate foundation programme, noting that it was the view of the Board that any such programme should not compete with any existing provision for Masters students at Departmental level and that initiatives planned over the summer vacation take into account both the availability of staff and appropriate accommodation;

CONSIDERED:

A paper (BGS 96/08-09) from the Assistant Director (Student Recruitment) in the International Office, and oral report from the Director of MOAC, on progress made with the proposed postgraduate foundation programme.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That a Postgraduate Award be made available for those students completing the 20 credits of study as part of the summer programme who do not subsequently continue to study the MSc in Research Skills for Science;
- (d) That a potential collaboration between this summer programme and a similar initiative within WMS be explored further;
- (e) That the Director of MOAC liaise with the Chairs of the Board and of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science to seek approval of any further formal changes required to the programme.

88/08-09

Guidelines for consideration by Boards of Examiners of examination candidates notifying mitigating circumstances (minutes 36/08-09, 103/07-08, BUGS 9(h)/07-08, BUGS 28/07-08 and BFS35/07-08 referred)

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies, at its meeting on 14 November 2007, resolved that the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies Committee be asked to draft a protocol for Boards of Examiners to follow when considering special cases and mitigating evidence from students, for consideration by the Board in due course;
- (b) That the Board of the Faculty of Science, at its meeting on 13 February 2008, considered draft Guidelines for Consideration of Examination Candidates Notifying Mitigating Circumstances, as set out in paper BFS 7/07-08, and recommended that the draft guidelines be approved subject to the following conditions:
 - (i) Amendment of paragraph 3 to make clear that external examiners do not have to attend the pre-meeting, although they will be consulted;
 - (ii) Clarification of the role of the Personal Tutor;
 - (iii) That the draft guidelines should also be considered by the Board of Graduate Studies, with respect to postgraduate examinations.
- (c) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies, at its meeting on 4 June 2008, recommended (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee) that the revised Guidelines for Consideration of Examination Candidates Notifying Mitigating Circumstances be approved;
- (d) That the Board, at its meeting on 7 June 2008, considered draft guidelines for Consideration of Examination Candidates Notifying Mitigating Circumstances (paper BGS 67/07-08) together with Faculty and Departmental responses to the draft Guidelines (paper BUGS 14/07-08), and resolved:
 - (i) That the draft Guidelines for Consideration of Examination Candidates Notifying Mitigating Circumstances be not

- approved for postgraduate taught students but that the Board reconsider the Guidelines at its next meeting;
- (ii) That it be noted that concern was expressed that mitigating circumstances should be disclosed to, or further discussed at, a meeting of the full Board of Examiners, as this might deter students from bringing forward their full mitigating circumstances in certain cases;
- (e) That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting on 12 June 2008, considered the Proposed Guidelines for Consideration of Examination Candidates Notifying Mitigating Circumstances, paper AQSC 87/07-08, together with the resolutions of the Board of Undergraduate Studies and the Board of Graduate Studies, and resolved that the proposed guidelines be further considered in the Autumn Term 2008 following reconsideration by the Board of Graduate Studies;
 - (f) That the Board, at its meeting on 13 November 2008, considered the University Guidelines for Consideration by Undergraduate Boards of Examiners of Examination Candidates Notifying Mitigating Circumstances (paper AQSC 87/07-08), noting that the Board was invited to consider how this may be applied to Postgraduate Taught courses, and resolved:
 - (i) That the Board did not approve of the application of the guidelines to Postgraduate Taught courses;
 - (ii) That proposed guidelines for Postgraduate Taught Boards of Examiners be drafted and considered at a future meeting of the Board.

CONSIDERED:

Draft guidelines for consideration by postgraduate taught Board of Examiners of examination candidates notifying mitigating circumstances (paper BGS 97/08-09).

RECOMMENDED (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee):

That the guidelines be approved, subject to one amendment noted at the meeting.

89/08-09 PG Decliner Survey Report

RECEIVED:

A paper (BGS 98/08-09) and oral report from the Marketing Analysis Manager, Student Admissions and Recruitment Office, on the findings of a survey of students who had declined to accept the offer of a place at Warwick in 2008.

90/08-09 e-Portfolios

CONSIDERED:

A paper (BGS 99/08-09) 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, it being noted in particular that:

- (a) An alumni directory had recently been introduced, allowing students' e-Portfolios to remain online after graduation;
- (b) The department of History had recently introduced an "opt-out" policy for e-Portfolios, creating them for all research students except those who specifically notified that they did not wish to participate in the scheme, and that an update on this be provided at a future meeting of the Board.

RESOLVED:

That consideration be given by the Graduate School to adopting a similar policy as under (b) above 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.

91/08-09 PGR Focus Groups

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).

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 Office post would be created in the foreseeable future in the light of financial constraints.

92/08-09 Graduate School Charter

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).

RESOLVED:

- (a) 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;

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

93/08-09

PGR Prizes

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).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Board was concerned about the mechanism and criteria for judging the proposed prizes, taking due account of disciplinary differences;
- (b) 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;
- (c) 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.

94/08-09

Graduate School Newsletter

RECEIVED:

A copy of the Graduate School newsletter, circulated to Heads of Departments, Directors of Graduate Studies and other staff having requested inclusion (paper BGS 103/08-09).

95/08-09

Any Other Business

- (a) Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2009

REPORTED:

That the first national administration of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2009, in which the University was taking part, had opened on 20 April 2009 and was due to close on 19 June 2009, it being noted that early response rates were good.

- (b) e-Learning

REPORTED:

That, as part of ongoing work to achieve savings across the University, a proposal had been brought forward by IT services to

reduce support within IT services for e-Lab, noting that no decision had yet been taken about the future of the Unit.

RESOLVED:

That the Board note its strong objection to cuts within this service, in particular in relation to any loss of access to the Turnitin plagiarism detection service, which would have a significant negative impact on quality issues across a large number of departments at postgraduate level and reduce the effectiveness of investigations into potential cases of plagiarism.

HRWS/RM 06.05.09