

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies held on Thursday 28 April 2016

- Present: Professor A Dowd (Chair), Dr J Burns, Dr A Cristea, Ms F Farnsworth, Dr J Garde-Hansen, Dr D Hartas, Professor D Hewitt, Mr A Johal, Professor A Lockett, Dr G Marakas, Dr P McTernan, Dr N Monk, Dr J Pearson, Professor L Roberts, Professor P Roberts, Professor P Scott, Mr N Shiers, Professor A Stewart, Professor O Westwood, Professor M Wills
- Apologies: Ms R Davis, Professor N Gane, Dr L Gramaglia, Dr K Kirwan, Ms N Morrison, Dr Z Newby, Miss H Ngo, Professor J Palmowski, Dr A Pinter, Professor G Riello, Professor M Saward, Dr D Steeghs, Professor P Winstanley, Mr T Yuen
- In Attendance: Ms N Ellis-Thomas (for item 75/15-16), Ms K Gray (for items 77-79/15-16), Dr E Hough (for items 81-82/15-16), Ms L Larard, Mr D Pearson

69/15-16 Minutes of the last meeting

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 16 February 2016 as set out in paper BGS 43/15-16.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved.

70/15-16 Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a) Membership of the Board (minute BGS 57(a)/15-16 refers)

REPORTED:

That Professor N Gane, Department of Sociology, would serve on the Board of Graduate Studies as one of the two members of academic staff appointed by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences.

(b) PhD Submission Rates (minute BGS) 57(b)/15-16 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Secretary)

That the Graduate School had been in discussion with the Learning and Development Centre regarding the provision of additional support for research student supervisors, including a peer to peer network and themed workshops on issues relating to PGR students.

(c) Refugee Scholarships (minute BGS 60/15-16 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Graduate School had provided details of the breakdown of Refugee Scholarship applications by Faculty to the Chairs of Graduate Studies Committees;

- (ii) That the Committee formed to allocate these scholarships would meet on 3 May to consider applications.

71/15-16 Students' Union Update

(a) Report from the Postgraduate Officer

REPORTED:

- (iii) That the Students' Union had concerns regarding the latest developments of the Sessional Teaching Project as considered by the Academic Resourcing Committee in March, including the amount of time allowed for providing feedback on academic work and variation of pay scales across faculties;
- (iv) That the Student's Union were in discussion with the accommodation provider Study Inn in relation to a number of complaints received from students;
- (v) That the Students' Union had arranged a secure baggage area to be used during the examination period;
- (vi) That the University and Students' Union would be submitting a joint proposal to the Financial Planning Sub-Committee in relation to 24 hour Library proposals.

(b) Student-Staff Liaison Committee Report Spring Term 2015/16

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Postgraduate Officer on issues raised by Student-Staff Liaison Committees during the Spring Term of 2015-16 (paper BGS 44/15-16).

REPORTED: (by the Postgraduate Officer):

- (i) That the review of SSLC minutes had highlighted the following themes:
 - (A) Desire for more recorded lectures;
 - (B) Support for 24/7 Library opening;
 - (C) Concern in relation to availability of space for PGR students.
- (ii) That the Students' Union was involved in a project to pilot the implementation of virtual SSLC meetings to enable increased participation from part-time and distance learning students;
- (iii) That the Student's Union would be undertaking a census of SSLCs to identify any gaps in provision.

(by Dr J Garde-Hansen):

- (iv) That, in addition to the need for centrally provided space, Departments may be able to provide local solutions, such as allowing students to use timetabled rooms when not required for teaching;

RESOLVED:

- (v) That Departments ensure that SSLC secretaries and academic convenors are reminded of the need to upload minutes of meetings to the Student's Union SSLC Portal in a timely manner;
- (vi) That the Board expressed serious concerns in relation to the availability of study space for PGR;
- (vii) That the Board supported the proposal to pilot the use of virtual SSLC meetings, noting that departments currently operating any successful models are encouraged to share their best practice with the Students' Union ;
- (viii) That the Board endorsed the proposal to conduct a census of SSLCs.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Capital Space and Amenities Group)

- (ix) That the Group provide a statement to the next meeting of the Board in relation to current space available for PGR students and future plans in this regard.

72/15-16 Reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Graduate Studies Committees had not met since the last meeting of the Board;
- (by Professor L Roberts)
- (b) That the proposal for a new MSc in Endodontics was awaiting Chair's action consideration.

73/15-16 Chair's Business

REPORTED:

- (a) That an RCUK audit would take place on 21 - 22 June;
- (b) That a mock audit had been undertaken in preparation and results would be communicated as appropriate via the CDT Directors' Forum and Directors of Graduate Studies

74/15-16 Progression Requirements

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Graduate School) on the revision of progression procedures for research students (paper BGS 45/15-16 refers).

REPORTED: (by the Secretary)

That Graduate Studies Committees would consider the paper at their forthcoming meetings;

That, recognising that Departments have differing requirements, the paper sets out proposed minimum requirements;

RESOLVED:

That a revised paper, taking into account comments from the Graduate Studies Committees would be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

75/15-16

Postgraduate Research Scholarships Competition

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report from the Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships) on the outcome of the PGR Scholarships Competition (paper BGS 46/15-16 refers).
- (b) A report from the Chair in relation to applications received for the Chancellors International Scholarship competition (paper BGS 55/15-16 (tabled) refers).

REPORTED: (by the Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships))

- (c) That a number of proposals, as set out in paper BGS 46/15-16, had been identified during the scoring and moderation process for the PGR Scholarships Competition;

(by Professor A Lockett):

- (d) That there were concerns in relation to discrepancies between Faculty nomination quotas and allocation of awards, noting that the success rate was not reflective of the quality of applications, particularly in relation to the Faculty of Social Sciences;
- (e) That the current system of centrally-administered scholarships does not have sufficient visibility to have a positive impact on student recruitment;

(by Professor P Scott):

- (f) That the purpose of the competition should be considered in order to identify a strategic way forward;

(by Professor A Stewart):

- (g) That a fundamental review of the scheme is required.

RESOLVED:

- (h) That a working group would be established to review allocation of awards in light of the results of this year's competition, noting that the competition opens for the next academic year in August;
- (i) That membership of the working group would include Professor A Lockett, Dr P McTernan, Dr J Pearson, Professor L Roberts, Professor P Roberts, Professor P Scott, Professor A Stewart and Professor M Wills.

76/15-16 Professional Development Update

RECEIVED:

A paper from the PGR Professional Development Officer (paper BGS 47/15-16 refers)

77/15-16 External Examiners' Reporting Process for Taught Courses

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar (Teaching & Learning) on amendments to the external examiners' reporting process (paper BGS 48/15-16 refers).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality)):

- (a) That the proposals would allow better oversight of the process in addition to an increased ability to identify general themes in examiners' comments and standardisation of the process for reviewing reports across undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision;
- (b) That the proposals would also be considered by the Board of Undergraduate Studies and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee;
- (c) That examiners reports would continue to be provided to SSLCs.

(by Professor P Scott):

- (d) That the draft form lacked clarity in relation to whether additional comments were required;

(by Professor D Hewitt):

- (e) That it would be useful if examiners could copy and paste text into the form with formatting capability.

RESOLVED:

That the Board supported the proposals.

78/15-16 Course Review and Monitoring Procedure for Taught Programmes

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar (Teaching & Learning) on amendments to course review and monitoring procedures (paper BGS 49/15-16 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality))

- (a) That the current proposal as set out in paper BGS 49/15-16 represented an amendment to the proposal approved by Senate in June 2015 following concerns relating to administrative burden;
- (b) That the proposals were intended to support current departmental practice in relation to ongoing review;

- (c) That it would not be appropriate to introduce the new procedure until after the completion of the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review which was scheduled for the 2016/17 academic year;

(by the Secretary):

- (d) That the proposal included details of the analysis of quantitative data for undergraduate courses, but not postgraduate taught, noting that this data was available at both levels;

(by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality)):

- (e) That the use of quantitative data for postgraduate taught courses would be considered.

RESOLVED:

That the Board supported the proposal.

79/15-16 HEFCE Revised Operating Model for Quality Assessment

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) in relation to the HEFCE Revised Operating Model for Quality Assessment (paper SC 106/15-16 refers).

80/15-16 Responses to External Examiners' Reports

CONSIDERED:

A report on issues arising from External Examiners' reports on Postgraduate Programmes for 2014-15 (paper BGS 50/15-16 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Assistant Secretary):

- (a) That the Chair's review of external examiners reports had identified the following themes:
- (1) Concern over lack of flexibility for Board of Examiners in relation to discretion to amend marks or degree classifications;
 - (2) Concerns in relation to clarity of the form;
 - (3) Issues relating to the information provided to examiners;
 - (4) Variability of feedback provided to students.
- (b) That a working group of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee was considering the issue of discretion for Board of Examiners.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee)

That, noting comments from examiners on the variability of feedback provided to students and suggestions to consider the use of a proforma to standardise feedback, consideration is given to appropriate feedback to students across undergraduate and postgraduate taught programmes.

81/15-16 Visiting Research Students

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Admissions Service Manager (Postgraduate Admissions) in relation to the policy on visiting research students (paper BGS 51/15-16 refers).

REPORTED: (by the Assistant Director (Head of Admissions)):

That the proposal was intended to provide flexibility for Departments to assess English language competency for visiting research students by waiving the standard requirements where appropriate;

RESOLVED:

That the amendment to the policy on visiting research students as set out in paper BGS 51/15-16 be approved.

82/15-16 English Language Requirements for European Students

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Admissions Service Manager (Postgraduate Admissions) in relation to English language requirements for European Postgraduate Applicants (paper BGS 52/15-16 refers).

REPORTED: (by the Assistant Director (Head of Admissions)):

- (a) That the proposal constituted a flexible approach to the assessment of English language competency of students from the EU;
- (b) That Departments would be required to provide a case for waiving the standard requirements for consideration by the Admissions Service Manager (Postgraduate) or Pro Vice-Chancellor responsible for postgraduate admissions;
- (c) That Departments would retain discretion as to the circumstances in which requests to waive standard requirements would be made.

(by Professor A Lockett):

- (d) That, noting the difficulty in recruiting students from the EU, the requirement for formal English language assessment such as IELTS can act as a deterrent;

(by the Chair):

- (e) That mature applicants may not be in a position to meet the standard English language requirements, but could have extensive experience of operating in an English-speaking professional environment;
- (f) That the proposal could additionally apply, at the discretion of the relevant Department, to programmes delivered by distance learning where Tier 4 visa Secure English Language Tests are not required;

(by Professor A Stewart):

- (g) That, in addition to academic writing in a relevant subject, Departments may also wish to consider examples of an applicant's written proficiency in relation to an appropriate professional context;

(by the Chair):

- (h) That it would be the Department's responsibility to ensure the authenticity of the written work.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be approved, with the clarification that *in normal circumstances* the University would not consider an assessment/waiver request in situations where the applicant had provided evidence in the form of a valid English language test that they do not meet the English language requirements of their proposed programme of study.

83/15-16 Any Other Business

84/15-16 Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Board will be held on 31 May 2016 at 14.00 in CMR 1.0.

85/15-16 Chair's Action

RECEIVED:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Board (paper BGS 53/15-16 refers)

(a) Faculty of Arts

(i) History of Art

MA in the History and Business of Art and Collecting

MA in the History and Business of the Contemporary Art Market

REPORTED:

(A) That, at its meeting on 16 February 2016, the Board considered proposals from the Department of History of Art, as set out in paper AGSC.10/15-16, to

- (1) Rename the MA in History and Business of Art and Collecting to the MA in the History and Business of Art and Collecting in the UK;
- (2) Introduce a new MA course entitled MA in the History and Business of Art and Collecting in Continental Europe;

- (3) Rename the MA in the History and Business of the Contemporary Art Market to the MA in the History and Business of the Contemporary Art Market in London;
 - (4) Introduce a new MA course entitled MA in the History and Business of the Contemporary Art Market in Paris.
- (B) That the Board resolved that the proposals be approved, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) Clarification as to the reason for not offering the Postgraduate Certificate as an exit route;
 - (2) Clarification as to the reason for not providing the External Assessor's report;
 - (3) Clarification as to whether Dr J Vickery has been consulted in relation to the proposal for the new MA in the History and Business of the Contemporary Art Market in Paris.
- (C) That the conditions have been satisfied and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has subsequently taken action to approve the proposals.
- (ii) School of Theatre, Performance and Cultural Policy Studies

MA in Theatre and Performance Research

REPORTED:

- (A) That, at its meeting on 16 February 2016, the Board resolved that a proposal to revise the MA in Theatre and Performance Research, as set out in paper AGSC.12/15-16, be approved, subject to the following conditions:
- (1) Receipt of a response from the Department to the concerns expressed by the External Assessor especially in relation to the potential of fragmental delivery;
 - (2) Clarification as to the difference in learning outcomes for the Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate, noting that these were not attached to the paperwork.
- (B) That the conditions have been satisfied and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has subsequently taken action to approve the proposal to revise the MA in Theatre and Performance Research.
- (b) Faculty of Medicine

(i) MSc in Advanced Critical Care Practice

REPORTED:

- (A) That, at its meeting on 19 November 2015, the Board resolved that a proposal from Warwick Medical School to introduce a new MSc in Advanced Critical Care Practice, as set out in paper

M&CPD SC 5/14-15, be approved subject to the following conditions:

- (1) Clarification regarding the start date of the course;
- (2) Clarification the options available to APEL for students who have already been awarded the PG Certificate in Pre-Hospital Critical Care;
- (3) Clarification of the exit awards available to students on the Course;
- (4) Clarification as to whether any professional accreditation of the course is required.

(B) That the conditions have been satisfied and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has subsequently taken action to approve the proposal to introduce a new MSc in Advanced Critical Care Practice.

(c) Faculty of Social Science

(i) Warwick Business School

(A) Warwick MBA by Executive Study

REPORTED:

- (1) That, at its meeting on 16 February 2016, the Board considered proposals from Warwick Business School to:
 - (a) Revise the MBA by Executive Study for the academic year 2015-16, as set out in papers PQC.36-39/15-16;
 - (b) Revise the MBA by Executive Study for the academic year 2016-17, as set out in papers PQC.40-49/15-16 (revised), PQC.50/15-16 and GFSS.63/15-16.
- (2) That the Board resolved that the proposals be approved, subject to the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences conditions being met;
- (3) That the conditions have been satisfied and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has subsequently taken action to approve the proposals.

(B) MSc in Finance

REPORTED:

- (1) That, at its meeting on 16 February 2016, the Board resolved that a proposal from Warwick Business School to revise the MSc in Finance, as set out in papers GFSS.62a-c/15-16, be approved, subject to the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences conditions being met;

- (2) That the conditions have been satisfied and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has subsequently taken action to approve the proposal to revise the MSc in Finance.