

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies held on Thursday 27 April 2017

- Present: Professor A Dowd (Chair), Dr J Burns, Ms R Davis, Dr J Garde-Hansen, Professor N Gane, Professor K Glaister, Dr K Hooper, Professor K Kirwan, Dr C Lyonette, Dr G Marakas, Dr J Pearson, Dr L Pettinger, Dr A Pinter, Dr A Realo, Professor L Roberts, Professor P Roberts, Professor P Scott, Dr N Shiers, Dr D Wright
- Apologies: Miss E Dunford, Miss K Foy, Professor L Gracia, Ms S Hattersley, Dr J Heron, Professor D Hewitt, Miss A Jotautyte, Miss V Kushchak, Professor A McAinsh, Professor G Riello, Dr H Schaefer, Professor O Westwood, Professor M Wills
- In Attendance: Ms M Davies (for items 64-65/16-17), Ms N Ellis-Thomas (for items 68-69/16-17), Ms L Larard, Dr N Murray (for item 63/16-17), Mr D Pearson, Mr H Rowles (for item 62/16-17)

57/16-17 Minutes of the last meeting

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 14 February 2017 as set out in paper BGS 34/16-17.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved.

58/16-17 Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a) Proofreading (minute BGS 44(c)/16-17 refers)

REPORTED:

That a revised version of the policy had been considered at the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting on 20 February 2017 and recommended for approval at a future meeting of the Senate, together with proposed amendments to Regulation 11.

(b) Accommodation for Postgraduate Students (minute BGS 44(f)/16-17 refers)

REPORTED:

That the Chair and Secretary had met with Faculty Senior Tutors and representatives from Warwick Accommodation and the Students' Union, noting that it had been agreed with Warwick Accommodation and the Students' Union that further work would be undertaken to ensure that academic departments were appropriately briefed regarding accommodation developments, especially in cases where students were unable to secure on-campus accommodation.

(c) Scrutiny of PGT External Examiners' Reports Sub-Group (minute BGS 51/16-17 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Examinations Office would notify Departments that, until the new system is launched, automatic notifications are not sent when external examiners' reports are received and as such Departments are required to log on to eVision to access reports;
- (ii) That the new online system would support the use of text formatting;
- (iii) That details of a demonstration of the new system due to take place on 12 May 2017 would be circulated to members of the Board.

59/16-17 Students' Union Update

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Postgraduate Officer.

REPORTED: (by the Postgraduate Officer)

- (a) That the Students' Union would be recruiting to a short-term position to support the work of the Postgraduate Engagement Working Group in conducting research into demographics of the postgraduate population, engaging with academic departments and identifying best practice in other institutions;
- (b) That tickets for the Postgraduate Summer Ball, to be held on 26 June 2017, were currently on sale;
- (c) That the Students' Union had been involved with the Sessional Teaching Project which is due for roll out in September, noting however, that the Students' Union remained concerned with aspects of proposed draft framework that is due to be considered by ARC on 19 May;

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Postgraduate Officer on issues raised by Student-Staff Liaison Committees during terms 1 and 2 of 2016-17 (paper BGS 35/16-17).

REPORTED: (by the Postgraduate Officer):

- (d) That SSLCs had reported that there were calls for an increase in the number of recorded lectures, which would be particularly beneficial for students unable to attend due to ill health and other reasons;
- (e) That there were different approaches to the provision of printer credit across departments, noting that the Students' Union requested that the Board endorse the principle that should students be required to submit hardcopy assignments, the associated printing costs be borne by the department;
- (f) That concerns had been raised as to the support available to students undertaking research trips/placements both in the UK and overseas;
- (g) That the issue of transparency in the availability of teaching opportunities, although an aim of the Sessional Teaching Payroll Project, did not seem to be addressed in the proposed draft framework;
- (h) That more could be done to develop a sense of community for students with parental/caring responsibilities;

(by Dr J Garde-Hansen):

- (i) That it can be difficult for Departments to provide opportunities for students to catch up on missed sessions in the case of practical workshops and other types of teaching that would not be compatible with Lecture Capture;

RESOLVED:

- (j) That the Board support the principle that Departments ensure adequate provision to allow students who are unable to attend lectures to catch up due to ill health, noting that most Departments already provide such resources as standard, for example reading lists and lecture notes in addition to the use of recorded lectures;
- (k) That the Board would support further consideration being given to the bearing of printing costs by Departments where hard copy submissions are required, noting that this was part of a larger piece of work that was being discussed between Students' Union and University representatives;
- (l) That the Secretary would request an update on the policy for research trips/placements to be provided for the next meeting of the Board;
- (m) That the Board supported the proposal to introduce specific events for students with parental/caring responsibilities during Welcome to Warwick week and throughout the year, noting that the Students' Union should liaise with the PG Community Engagement Team and Graduate School regarding possible future events.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Sessional Teaching Payroll Project Steering Group)

- (n) That, noting that the Board understood that transparency regarding the availability of teaching opportunities was included in the terms of reference of the Sessional Teaching Payroll Project, further discussion of this issue should be undertaken by the Steering Group.

60/16-17 Reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees

RECEIVED:

Oral reports from the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Graduate Studies Committees had not met since the February meeting of the Board.

(by Professor L Roberts, Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine):

- (b) That course specifications were being reviewed and updated as necessary to ensure that they were in alignment with course approval documentation;
- (c) That Dr J Madan had been appointed as the Director of Postgraduate Research in Warwick Medical School;

(by Dr D Wright, on behalf of the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts):

- (d) That concerns in relation to a lack of focus on postgraduate issues had been discussed as part of the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review (ITLR) review.

61/16-17 Chair's Business

REPORTED:

- (a) That Dr K Hooper had been appointed as Deputy Academic Director of the Graduate School and the Deputy Chair of the Board with immediate effect;
- (b) That Ms E Dunford had been elected as the Students' Union Postgraduate Officer for the 2017/18 academic year;
- (c) That the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) response rate was currently higher than at the same time in 2016, noting however that the response rate in 2016 was disappointing in relation to previous years;
- (d) That the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) was lower than at the same time in 2015 (noting that the PRES is run biennially);

RESOLVED:

That Departments are encouraged to continue to encourage students to complete the PTES and PRES.

62/16-17 Provision of PGR Space

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar, Space Management and Timetabling on the provision of space for postgraduate research students (paper BGS 36/16-17).

REPORTED: (by the Assistant Registrar, Space Management and Timetabling):

- (a) That Heads of Departments are responsible for allocating space within departments;
- (b) That it was difficult to quantify the current use of space due to mixed-use rooms, particularly in the Faculty of Science;
- (c) That Departments were being encouraged to use larger spaces for shared use by postgraduate research students, noting the recent introduction of shared study spaces in CADRE and the Faculty of Social Sciences;
- (d) That provision for PGR students in the new Humanities building was being planned in line with space guidelines and projected student numbers, inclusive of the PGR population within Milburn House.

63/16-17 English Language Support

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Head of Student Development, Student Careers and Skills, in relation to the provision of English language support across the University (BGS 37/16-17).

REPORTED:

- (a) That the provision of English language support within Departments was varied, noting that provision depends on cohort sizes and departmental budgets;
- (b) That it had been identified that there was a need to provide discipline-specific support tailored to the needs of students, noting that different groups of students had different requirements, for example international, part-time, mature students;

(by Dr N Murray, Associate Professor, Centre for Applied Linguistics):

- (c) That there is an issue with funding, noting that the Centre for Applied Linguistics (CAL) was able to provide general support but did not have the resources to provide tailored, discipline-specific support;
- (d) That discipline-specific support was preferable to generic provision, noting that students would receive greater benefit from support aligned within faculties, ensuring that the particular needs of different disciplines could be met, with appropriate central oversight;
- (e) That the current situation raised concerns over equity of provision, noting the different support available across Departments;
- (f) That, noting the availability of support from the Centre for Applied Linguistics and other areas such as Student Careers and Skills and the Learning and Development Centre, Departments reported that there was a lack of clarity as to where to signpost students for help with particular issues;
- (g) That the issue affected undergraduate and postgraduate students;

RESOLVED:

- (h) That the Board would support the following recommendations as set out in the paper, noting that the Academic Registrar would be consulted as to where responsibility would be best placed to take this forward noting the impact on undergraduate as well as postgraduate students:
 - (i) The creation of a working group with representation from key providers to connect current provision and present, develop and maintain a clear picture of the availability of provision (for example the creation of a webpage to provide details of current provision, benchmarking exercise to establish other institutional approaches);
 - (ii) The commission of a detailed audit of academic departmental practices to establish current provision, costs and challenges (including recruitment and integration), developing teaching and learning practices, communication's in student handbooks and departmental websites and strategies for improvement;
 - (iii) Development of a business case for investment to ensure all students have equitable and timely access to the required support and that academic departments have appropriate institutional support for supporting academic literacies and the broader skills continuum.

64/16-17 Managing Absence for Tier 4 Students

CONSIDERED:

A revised paper from the Head of Immigration Services, Office for Global Engagement in relation to managing absence for Tier 4 students (paper BGS 38/16-17).

REPORTED:

- (a) That the proposed policy had been amended in response to feedback provided at the February 2017 meeting of the Board;
- (b) That the intention of the proposal was to enable PGR students to request a period of leave to allow them to undertake paid employment as permitted by the Home Office;
- (c) That requests for authorised absence would only be granted in the circumstances that the requested period would not adversely affect the student's ability to submit their thesis on time;
- (d) That the University does not have a policy on annual leave for research students, noting that there is an expectation that full-time students commit at least 1800 hours per academic year to their studies;

RESOLVED:

That the Board recommended that the proposal be approved, subject to the removal of the word "strictly" from the sentence "Maximum period of absence permitted as a 'vacation' in a 12 month period is strictly 4 weeks".

65/16-17 Length of Tier 4 Sponsorship for Postgraduate Research Students

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Head of Immigration Services, Office for Global Engagement in relation to the length of sponsorship for Tier 4 PGR students (paper BGS 39/16-17).

REPORTED:

- (a) That the current length of Tier 4 sponsorship, in line with students' submission date, resulted in students using the additional four month period, intended for tidying up their affairs before leaving the UK, to prepare for and undertake their viva;
- (b) That the process for requesting an extension to a Tier 4 visa was time-consuming and costly;
- (c) That, should students complete their studies within their visa period, the University would be required to report their early completion to the Home Office;
- (d) That providing sponsorship for an additional four months would usually cover the period up to and including the viva, but not any additional period for the completion of corrections, noting that students are not required to be resident in the UK to complete corrections or resubmission;

RESOLVED:

That the proposal to extend the length of Tier 4 sponsorship for PhD students to four years and four months be approved.

66/16-17 PhD by Published Work

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Administrative Officer (Graduate School) on the recommendations of the PhD by Published Work Task and Finish Group (paper BGS 40/16-17).

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Task and Finish Group had identified a number of potential amendments to the information available regarding the PhD by Published Work to provide clarity as to the expectations of the admissions and examination process;
- (b) That the academic advisor should be required to comment on the quality of published work submitted for admission to the degree, including the quality of publications for example high-quality journals, to ensure that only publications of an appropriate standard are presented for inclusion in the final thesis;
- (c) That, should a candidate present any unpublished work at the admissions stage, the academic advisor be required to comment upon this, noting the expectation that candidates should present a cohesive body of published work demonstrating a substantial contribution to knowledge;
- (d) That students should make efforts to ensure that co-authors provide a statement as to their contribution to the published work, but should this not be possible theses would be accepted for examination providing that students are able to demonstrate reasonable efforts have been made to obtain these;

RESOLVED:

That the proposals to amend the published guidance and introduce new guidance to examiners in addition to a form for candidates to submit together with their thesis, be approved, subject to minor amendments to clarify points (b)-(d).

67/16-17 Recommendations Available to Examiners of Higher Degrees by Research – Major Corrections

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Administrative Officer (Graduate School) (paper BGS 41/16-17).

REPORTED:

- (a) That it had previously been noted by the Board that availability of an outcome of major corrections for research degree examinations may avoid the situation that a candidate fails to complete minor corrections resulting in a fail outcome, noting that examiners may be reticent to recommend an outcome of resubmission in the event that a significant amount of 'minor' corrections be required;
- (b) That examination processes at a number of other institutions include the outcome of 'major corrections' in addition to 'minor corrections' and 'resubmission';
- (c) That the terms 'minor' and 'major' corrections were generally understood across the sector;

RESOLVED:

- (d) That the Board recommended that the proposal to introduce a category of major corrections be approved, noting:

- (i) That minor corrections should be re-defined to refer to typographical amendments only, noting that a new category of major corrections be introduced where a candidate is required to make amendments that do not entail a significant amount of further research or analysis;
 - (ii) That candidates be permitted a period of up to a maximum of six months to make major corrections, noting that there would be no changes to the period allowed for minor corrections (three months) and resubmission (12 months), and that these limits apply equally to full and part-time students;
 - (iii) That the recommendation of major corrections not be available to examiners of resubmitted theses;
 - (iv) That the satisfactory completion of major corrections be assessed by at least one examiner, usually the internal;
- (e) That, noting that the introduction of a major corrections category would require changes to University Regulations, proposed amendments would be available for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

68/16-17 Scholarships Update: Chancellor's International Scholarships

RECEIVED:

An update from the Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships) on the outcome of the 2017 Chancellor's International Scholarships (paper BGS 42/16-17).

69/16-17 Scholarships Working Group

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships) on the recommendations of the Scholarships Working Group (paper BGS 43/16-17).

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Scholarships Working Group had been tasked with considering long and short term recommendations for the Chancellor's International Scholarships (CIS) competition;
- (b) That Faculty selectors should be provided with clear guidance to ensure consistency;
- (c) That, noting that inconsistencies between departmental statements had previously been identified, guidance should also be provided to departments to ensure consistency;

(by Dr D Wright):

- (d) That, there was a need to consider separate quotas for distinct centres such as the Centre for Cultural and Media Policy Studies sitting within academic departments with sizeable PGR populations;
- (e) That the allocation of Warwick Collaborative Postgraduate Research Scholarship (WCPRS) awards should include consideration of impact and engagement in addition to financial contribution;

RESOLVED:

- (f) That the main strategic objective of the Chancellor's International Scholarships (CIS) competition would remain as attracting the best students, and for CIS to aspire to align to the University's Research Strategy, Industrial Strategy and Global Research Priorities where possible;
- (g) That new assessment criteria be introduced for the CIS competition under the following headings, noting that the criteria should include broad guidance around indicative areas and should allow for assessors to make decisions to select the best without being bound by a detailed scoring matrix:
 - (i) Person and Preparedness
 - (ii) Project and Place
- (h) That assessors would be required to rank their top applications, providing a rationale for their rankings, rather than assigning individual scores to students;
- (i) That the allocation of CIS awards be devolved to Faculties, noting that the interpretation of the assessment criteria is likely to differ according to disciplinary differences;
- (j) That allocations be split between Faculties as follows, noting that although there are a total of 25 awards, 30 are routinely allocated to allow for drop out:
 - (i) Faculty of Science – 10
 - (ii) Faculty of Social Sciences – 8
 - (iii) Faculty of Medicine – 6
 - (iv) Faculty of Arts - 6
- (k) That Faculties be permitted to reallocate awards in the event of drop outs to a maximum of:
 - (i) Faculty of Science – 8
 - (ii) Faculty of Social Sciences – 7
 - (iii) Faculty of Medicine – 5
 - (iv) Faculty of Arts - 5
- (l) That the number of faculty assessors be increased from four to five, enabling each application to be considered four times;
- (m) That the departmental nomination quota be reduced to allow for a smaller number of nominations to be considered at Faculty Graduate Awards Committees, as follows:
 - (i) PGR population of 50 or above – 3 nominations
 - (ii) PGR population 15-49 – 2 nominations
 - (iii) PGR population below 15 – 1 nomination
- (n) That the BPM system be updated to accommodate the recommended changes, namely:
 - (i) That headings be changed within the student application form to reflect the new assessment criteria;
 - (ii) That assessors be allowed to provide a ranking and accompanying narrative for the ranking;
- (o) That the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences be permitted to accept applications for Warwick Collaborative Postgraduate Research Scholarships

(WCPRS) with a minimum of 10% (but recommended 25%) contribution from an external sponsor, noting that funding would be subject to approval from the Chair of the Board;

- (p) That no change be made to the requirement for the Faculties of Medicine and Science to obtain a minimum 50% contribution from external sponsors for WCPRS applications;
- (q) That any WCPRS funding not allocated by faculties be returned to a central pot to be reallocated to other faculties after a set date each year;
- (r) That the amendments to WCPRS set out at (n)-(p) above be trialled for one year with a review into the success of the new model being undertaken in spring 2018;
- (s) That the online guidance in relation to maternity/paternity pay for funded students be updated to read:

'Maternity and Paternity will only be paid to students where Terms and Conditions of the individual funding state that it should be covered. Where no reference is made to Maternity and Paternity pay within the Terms and Conditions of the studentship, the default position is that no student will receive funding from the University during their period of leave'.

70/16-17 New and Revised Course Proposals

(a) Faculty of Medicine

(i) Master in Medical Education

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine, acting on its behalf, has taken action to recommend that a proposal from Warwick Medical School to revise the Master in Medical Education, as set out in papers GSCFM 60/16-17 and GSCFM 35(revised)/16-17, be approved.

CONSIDERED:

The proposal to revise the Master in Medical Education, as set out in papers GSCFM 60/16-17 and GSCFM 35(revised)/16-17.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be approved subject to:

- (A) Confirmation of the assessment methods for the learning outcomes of 'problem solving' and, noting that this was recorded in the Course Specification as only applicable to the project/ dissertation
- (B) Confirmation of the assessment methods for 'skills and expertise in academic writing' in the Course Specification as only applicable to the Project/ Dissertation
- (C) Clarification as to why external advisor report is not applicable.

(ii) MSc in Diabetes

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine, acting on its behalf, has taken action to recommend that a proposal from Warwick Medical School to revise the MSc in Diabetes, as set out in papers GSCFM 62-63/16-17, be approved.

CONSIDERED:

The proposal to revise the MSc in Diabetes, as set out in papers GSCFM 62-63/16-17.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be approved

(iii) MSc in Diabetes Paediatrics

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine, acting on its behalf, has taken action to recommend that a proposal from Warwick Medical School to revise the MSc in Diabetes Paediatrics, as set out in papers GSCFM 64-65/16-17, be approved.

CONSIDERED:

The proposal to revise the MSc in Diabetes Paediatrics, as set out in papers GSCFM 64-65/16-17.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be approved

(iv) MSc in Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research

REPORTED:

That at its meeting on 2 March 2017, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine recommended that a proposal from Warwick Medical School to revise the MSc in Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research, as set out in papers GSCFM 71-72/16-17, be approved.

CONSIDERED:

The proposal to revise the MSc in Interdisciplinary Biomedical Research, as set out in papers GSCFM 71-72/16-17.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be approved subject to:

- (A) Provision of a rationale for not providing exit awards;
- (B) Signatures of Heads of Departments consulted on the proposal.

(b) Faculty of Science

School of Engineering

MSc/PgDip/PgCert/PgA in Humanitarian Engineering
MSc in Humanitarian Engineering (with Sustainability)
MSc in Humanitarian Engineering (with Management)

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science, acting on its behalf, has taken action to recommend that a proposal from the School of Engineering to introduce a new MSc in Humanitarian Engineering, as set out in papers BGS.33(a-s)/16-17, be approved.

CONSIDERED:

The proposal to introduce a new MSc in Humanitarian Engineering as set out in papers BGS.33(a-s)/16-17.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be approved subject to:

- (i) Clarification of the length of the part time variants of the sub-qualifications, noting that these will be available as continuing professional development courses;
- (ii) Clarification as to whether core modules (including specialist core) have to be passed at 50% or whether some (up to 30 credits) can be allowed to achieve marks of 40%, noting that if the latter is the case they should be classified as 'optional core';
- (iii) Signatures of Heads of Departments consulted on the proposal.

71/16-17 Any Other Business

72/16-17 Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Board is on Tuesday 30 May 2017 at 14.00 in CMR 1.0.

73/16-17 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

(a) Guide to Examinations for Higher Degrees by Research

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve amendments to the Guide to Examinations for Higher Degrees by Research (available at:

https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/formslibrary/guide_to_examinations_for_higher_degrees_by_research.pdf)

(b) Faculty of Arts

School of Modern Languages and Cultures

MA in Pan-Romanticisms

- (i) That the Board, at its meeting on 14 February 2017, resolved that a proposal from the School of Modern Languages and Cultures to change the programme title of the MA in Pan-Romanticisms to the 'MA in European Gothic and Romantic Studies', as set out in paper AGSC 13/16-17, be approved subject to receipt of an original copy of the external assessor's comments.
- (ii) That the condition had been satisfied and the Char of the Board, acting on its behalf, had subsequently taken action to approve the proposal to change the programme title of the MA in Pan-Romanticisms to the 'MA in European Gothic and Romantic Studies'.

(c) Faculty of Medicine

Master in Public Health

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the proposal to revise the Master in Public Health as set out in papers GSCFM.37(revised)/16-17 and GSCFM.38/16-17 .

(d) Faculty of Social Sciences

Warwick Business School

(i) PhD in Business and Management

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the proposal to revise the PhD in Business and Management as set out in paper BGS.31/16-17.

(ii) PhD in Finance and Econometrics

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the proposal to revise the PhD in Finance and Econometrics as set out in paper BGS.33/16-17.

(e) Faculty of Science

Department of Psychology

MSc in Behavioural and Data Science

- (i) That the Board, at its meeting on 31 May 2016, resolved that a proposal from the Department of Psychology to introduce a new MSc in Behavioural and Data Science, as set out in paper SGS.24/15-16 (revised), be approved subject to:
 - (A) Receipt of a copy of the External Advisor's original comments;
 - (B) Confirmation that the Department of Statistics has been consulted on the proposals.
- (iii) That the conditions had been satisfied and the Char of the Board, acting on its behalf, had subsequently taken action to approve the proposal to introduce a new MSc in Behavioural and Data Science.