UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of Graduate Studies

Minutes of the Board of Graduate Studies meeting held on Tuesday 13 January 2015.

Present: Prof J Palmowski, Mr R Batista, Ms J Cooper, Ms R Davis, Prof G Riello, Prof J Hayton, Dr P McTernan, Dr Z Newby, Dr J Pearson, Dr A Pinter, Prof L Roberts, Dr P Roberts, Prof M Saward, Prof P Scott, Prof M Soteriou, Prof D Steinberg, Mr A Thompson, Prof M Wills.

Apologies: Mr A Brewerton, Dr K Denby, Prof A Dowd, Dr J Garde-Hanson, Dr O Goriunova, Mr L Green, Mr A Hammant, Ms J Humphreys, Dr K Kirwan, Mr S Lamb, Prof D Leadley, Ms X Rasul, Dr D Steeghs.

In attendance: Dr E Hough (for item 41/14-15), Ms L Larard, Mr D Pearson, Mr K Punter (for item 42/14-15), Dr S Soanes (for item 40/14-15),

36/14-15   Minutes of the Last Meeting

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 20 November 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 10 October 2014 be approved.

37/14-15   Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a)   Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee (minutes 6/14-15 and 23(a)/14-15 refer)

REPORTED:

(i)   That the following had been nominated to serve as Faculty Selectors on the Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee:

(A)   Faculty of Arts

(1)   Professor I de Smet;
(2)   Dr D Wright;

(B)   Faculty of Medicine

(1)   Professor D Grammatopoulos;
(2)   Dr S Taylor-Phillips;

(C)   Faculty of Science

(1)   Dr N Wilson;
(2)   Dr B Finkelstadt;

(D)   Faculty of Social Sciences

    (1)   Mr P Whitehead;
    (2)   Professor N Gane.

(ii)   That the four members of the Board to serve as representatives on the Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee would be:

(A)   Professor M Soteriou (Faculty of Arts);

(B)   Dr J Pearson (Faculty of Science);

(C)   Dr A Pinter (Faculty of Social Sciences);

(D)   Dr P McTernan (Faculty of Medicine).

(b)   PGR Scholarships Competition (minute 23(d)/14-15 refers)

REPORTED:

(i)   That following consultation with the Board, the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has taken action to approve the following revisions to scholarship nomination quotas:

(A)   That the following quotas would apply to the Faculties of Science and Social Sciences:

    (1)   6 nominations for departments with a PGR population (not including Masters-level qualifications) 50 and above;

    (2)   4 nominations for departments with a PGR population (not including Masters-level qualifications) of between 15-49;

    (3)   2 nominations for departments with a PGR population (not including Masters-level qualifications) of below 15.

(B)   That the following quotas would apply to the Faculty of Arts:

    (1)   10 nominations for departments with a PGR population (not including Masters-Level) population of 15 or above;

    (2)   5 nominations for departments with a PGR population (not including Masters-Level) population of below 15.

(C)   That the Faculty of Medicine would continue to have 10 nominations as previously agreed.

(D)   That the Department of Philosophy would receive 10 nominations to reflect their status within CADRE, rather than

the Social Sciences

(ii) That the deadline for the central scholarships competition had passed and a review of resources would be required following which, re-allocation of any declined awards would be made according to the remaining nominee's scores and dependent on finances available;

(iii) That the WCPRS scheme would be reviewed to ensure that studentships are used as an effective way to engage with collaborative partners across all faculties.

(c) International Scholarships (minute 26/14-15 refers)

REPORTED:

(i) That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf has taken action to approve the proposal from the International Office to offer fee discounts to the Vietnam International Education Development (VIED) programme of the Ministry of Education and Training, Vietnam (MOET) of 40% for PGR courses with no stipend and 30% for PGT for a period of three years, noting that individual departments are under no obligation to accept students on this basis;

(ii) That the International Office would create a website to provide information to departments on all fee collaboration agreements entered into by the University.

(d) Postgraduate Forum and the Students' Union (minute 28/14-15 refers)

(i) Postgraduate Student-Staff Liaison Committee Annual Report 2014

RECEIVED:

(A) An oral report from the Postgraduate Officer and Head of Client Services, Library in relation to potential extended opening times for the Library and PG Hub;

(B) A report from the Postgraduate Officer on issues raised by SSLCs during the first term of 2014/15 (paper BGS 24/14-15).

REPORTED:

(C) That the Board would be supportive of the implementation of Lecture Capture across all lectures noting that technology is currently available in larger teaching rooms however further communication may be required to ensure academic staff are aware;

(D) That the Centre for Applied Linguistics currently provides

training to support students whose first language is not English.

RESOLVED:

(E)   That the Chair would contact the Service Owner, Academic Technology Team to discuss communication of the availability of Lecture Capture technology;

(F)   That the health and safety concerns identified in the report would be communicated through appropriate channels;

(G)   That the Postgraduate Officer would contact the Director of IATL to discuss opportunities for interdisciplinary options at postgraduate level, noting that separate conversations relating to multi-disciplinary modules should be held directly with the relevant academic departments.

(ii)   Postgraduate Office Space Survey Report

RECEIVED:

A report from the Postgraduate Officer outlining the split of responses between postgraduate taught and research students (paper BGS 25/14-15).

REPORTED:

(by Dr P Roberts)

(A)   That the provision of quiet study space for postgraduate students in the Arts faculty in particular is inadequate, and has been negatively impacted by the increase in open learning spaces at the Library which has reduced the availability of quiet study space;

(by the Chair)

(B)   That CPARG's recent Space Survey had highlighted discrepancies between the Students' Union's and the University's findings on space, noting that CPARG found many PGR spaces to be under-utilised.

RESOLVED:

(C)   That the Chair would discuss requirements with the Chairs of Faculty Graduate Studies Committees, compiling a BGS response to the Students' Union's concerns at the next meeting of the Board;

(D)   That the Head of Client Services, Library would be asked to speak to concerns around space in the Library at the next meeting of the Board.

38/14-15   Chair's Business

RECEIVED:

An update on the Postgraduates Who Teach policy.

REPORTED:

That issues raised by AQSC would be considered and further consultation with a number of academic departments would take place in order to ensure that the Policy could be implemented fully across the University.

39/14-15 Skills Working Group

RECEIVED:

A paper on the Skills Working Group (paper BGS 26/14-15).

REPORTED:

(by the Chair)

(a) That proposals around a minimum professional development requirement, and how this might be recognised by the University, would be included in a paper for discussion at the next meeting of the Board

(b) That the issue of whether completion of the programme, or elements of it, should be mandatory was yet to be decided;

(c) That any potential compulsory programme could be problematic for some students due to absence from the University for reasons related to their study;

(d) That Departments currently offer various opportunities for students to develop professional skills, and that such programmes would need to be considered in conjunction with any new framework;

(e) That supervisors could play an important role in identifying the training needs of their students as well as promoting and encouraging attendance;

(f) That previous PRES results have indicated that students do not feel adequately prepared for future careers and that the framework was intended to meet the needs of students, noting that there would be different requirements for students intending to pursue academic and non-academic careers;

(by Prof P Scott)

(g) That there did not appear to be any evidence that the Doctoral Skills 1,2,3 modules of the PGCTS successfully prepared students for future careers, noting that a more flexible option could be to ensure that the completion of a training needs analysis is mandatory for all PGR students;

(by Prof M Wills)

(h)   That the existing training needs analysis tool available via Student Careers and Skills is a useful resource, but take-up is currently poor;

(by Mr R Batista)

(i)   That PGT students would welcome the opportunity to undertake some of the training set out in the framework;

(by Prof J Hayton)

(j)   That, as a minimum, it may be appropriate to ensure all students are trained in grant writing, impact engagement and ethics;

RESOLVED

(k)   That further discussions would take place at the Director of Graduate Studies lunch, the CDT Directors' Forum, within Faculties, and at a future meeting of the Board.

40/14-15   Postgraduate Open Day

RECEIVED:

A report from the Project Officer (Postgraduate Recruitment) on the Postgraduate Open Day which took place on 26 November 2014 (paper BGS 27/14-15).

REPORTED:

(by Prof D Steinberg)

(a)   That a personal approach to recruitment had been effective in previous years, enabling prospective applicants to have direct contact with academic staff;

(by Dr A Pinter)

(b)   That the Centre for Applied Linguistics facilitates introductions between prospective applicants and current students/alumni which has proved successful with a high level of uptake in the scheme;

(c)   That the Project Officer (Postgraduate Recruitment) would be convening a group with stakeholders to discuss the format of future events.

RESOLVED:

(d)   That the Project Officer (Postgraduate Recruitment) would consult Chairs of Faculty Graduate Studies Committees on the potential to develop Faculty based programmes to provide information to prospective applicants;

(e)   That Chairs of Graduate Studies Committees would report back to the Board on current areas of good practice within departments.

41/14-15   Postgraduate Community Working Group

RECEIVED:

An update from the Postgraduate Student Development Officer (Graduate School) on progress of the Postgraduate Community Working Group (paper BGS 23/14-15).

RESOLVED:

(a)   That Students' Union events would be added to the Calendar of Activities;

(b)   That Departments would advise the Postgraduate Student Development Officer (Graduate School) of any departmental and faculty events that could be added to the Calendar of Activities.

42/14-15   Graduate School Website

RECEIVED:

(a)   A report from the Chair on the proposal to establish a new Graduate School website for postgraduate students (paper BGS 28/14-15);

(b)   An oral report from the Deputy Director of University Marketing.

RESOLVED:

That the Secretary would work with the Senior Online Communications Officer (Website) to progress the project, with a view to clarify the cope of the work, and the timescale for completion.

43/14-15   Chair's Action

(a)   Faculty of Social Sciences

(i)   Centre for Professional Education

PGCE Variations

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has taken action to approve the proposal to introduce new routes and subjects with existing partner schools as outlined in paper CFDLSC 19a-b/14-15.

(ii)   Centre for Lifelong Learning

MA/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in Career Development and Coaching Studies (CDCS)

REPORTED:

(A)   That, at its meeting on 20 November 2014, the Board resolved that a proposal to revise the MA/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in Career Development and Coaching Studies (CDCS), as set out in papers GFSS.4a-f/14-15 be approved subject to the following:

(3)   The Centre noting that the International Office has responsibility for visa-checking for all full-time students;

(4)   That full-time students be given access to their own, physical SSLC, rather than the part-time virtual form;

(5)   The Centre justifying the 5 October start date for the full-time variant.

(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/Postgraduate Diploma/Postgraduate Certificate in Career Development and Coaching Studies (CDCS).

(iii)   Centre for Lifelong Learning/Warwick Business School

PgA Career Development

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has taken action to approve the proposal to introduce a new PgA in Career Development as set out in GFSS 57(a-d)/14-15, subject to formal sign-off from the Heads of Department.

(iv)   Politics and International Studies

MA in Politics and International Studies: Big Data and Quantitative Methods

REPORTED:

(A)   That, at its meeting on 20 November 2014, the Board resolved that a proposal to introduce a new MA in Politics and International Studies: Big Data and Quantitative Methods, as set out in papers GSSS .3a-f/14-15, be approved subject to the following:

(1) The Department undertaking further consultation with the Warwick Institute for the Science of Cities;

(2) Clarification as to the Department's response to the External Assessor's statement that it may be desirable to introduce an examination to assess students' quantitative knowledge;

(3) Confirmation of which aspects of the course specification do not apply to the PG Certificate and PG Diploma, noting that this is currently framed in terms of credit.

(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 MA in Politics and International Studies: Big Data and Quantitative Methods.

(b) Faculty of Science

(i) Warwick Manufacturing Group

MSc in Healthcare Operations Management

REPORTED:

(A) That, at its meeting on 20 November 2014, the Board resolved that a proposal to introduce a new MSc in Healthcare Operations Management, as set out in SGS .6 (a-d)/14-15 (revised), be approved, subject to clarification of the processes for quality assurance, noting that a substantial proportion of teaching staff are employed external to the Department and the University;

(B) That the requested clarification has been received and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has subsequently taken action to approve the proposal to introduce a new MSc in Healthcare Operations Management.

(ii) School of Life Sciences

(A) MSc in Medical Biotechnology and Business Management

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has taken action to approve the introduction of a new MSc in Medical Biotechnology and Business Management course, as set out in SGS.10(a-e)/14-15.

(B) MSc in Integrative Bioscience

REPORTED:

(1)   That, at its meeting on 20 November 2014, the Board resolved that a proposal to revise the MSc in Integrative Bioscience, as set out in paper SGS.9(a-c)/14-15 be approved for one year only subject to the appropriate signatures being secured;

(2)   That the appropriate signatures have been secured and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has subsequently taken action to approved the proposal to revise the MSc in Integrative Bioscience.

(C)   MSc in Integrative Bioscience and Business

REPORTED:

(1)   That, at its meeting on 20 November 2014, the Board resolved that a proposal to revise the MSc in Integrative Bioscience and Business, as set out in paper SGS.9(a-c)/14-15 be approved subject to the appropriate signatures being secured;

(2)   That the appropriate signatures have been secured and the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, has subsequently taken action to approve the proposal to revise the MSc in Integrative Bioscience and Business.

44/14-15   Any Other Business

45/14-15   Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Board is on 9 February 2015 at 2.00pm in Senate House Council Chamber.