

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of Graduate Studies

Minutes of the Board of Graduate Studies meeting held on Thursday 15 October 2009.

Present: Professor L Bridges (Chair), Dr A Clark, Dr A Dowd, Dr F Griffiths, Professor N Johnson, Ms S Khaku, Professor J Labbe, Dr D Leadley, Professor A Neal, Professor C Sparrow, Dr A Stokes, Professor P Stoneman, Dr J Vickery, Dr A Williams.

Apologies: Dr I de Smet, Professor L Green, Professor M Watson.

In attendance: Dr J Gardner, Mr R McIntyre, Ms R Wooldridge Smith.

1/09-10 Terms of Reference

CONSIDERED:

A proposal that the terms of reference of the Board be amended as follows (insertions underlined, ~~deletions struck through~~):

- (a) To regulate the admission of all postgraduate students and, subject to the ~~Higher Degrees Regulations~~ Regulations Governing Taught Postgraduate Degrees and the Regulations Governing Research Degrees, the initial conditions of registration and any change of these conditions;
- (b) To make recommendations to the Senate, via the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, after consultation with the Faculty Boards, Departments and Graduate Studies Committees, if appropriate, on all matters to do with postgraduate study in the University;
- (c) To make recommendations on the appropriate provision of academic resources and social facilities for postgraduate students in the University;
- (d) To make awards partly or wholly established from University funds to postgraduate students and to nominate students for postgraduate awards made by external bodies;
- (e) To advise the Senate, via the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, on any general or specific strategic considerations regarding postgraduate study or research in the University;
- (f) To review periodically all postgraduate courses in the University;
- (g) To scrutinise all new postgraduate degree and course proposals and recommend approval to the Senate via the Academic Quality and Standards Committee;
- (h) To advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on matters relating to examinations for postgraduate degrees;

- (i) To advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on the role of internal and external examiners for postgraduate degrees;
- (j) To report to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee annually on the issues raised in reports by external examiners.

RECOMMENDED (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee):

That the revised terms of reference be approved.

2/09-10 Membership of the Board 2009/2010

REPORTED:

- (a) That the membership of the Board for 2009/10 was as set out in paper BGS 1/09-10;
- (b) That Dr C Jenainati would be replaced as a member of the Board from within the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts;
- (c) That there was still scope for a further two co-opted members to be appointed to the Board if this proved desirable and that any nominations should be put forward to the Chair as soon as possible, noting that all Committees were being encouraged to address any perceptions of gender imbalance amongst their membership;
- (d) That consideration would be given to the additional position of Deputy Chair of the Board, likely to succeed the current Chair.

3/09-10 Freedom of Information Act: Publication Scheme

REPORTED:

- (a) That the University committed to publishing the minutes, agendas and non-reserved business of University bodies and committees on the University website, as part of its Publication Scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2000;
- (b) That members of the Board were reminded that minutes of Board meetings would be published in this way.

4/09-10 Membership of Sub-Committees

Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee

CONSIDERED:

The election of representatives to the Graduate Awards and Nominations Sub-Committee.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Dr J Vickery would serve as the member from the Faculty of Arts;

- (b) That Dr F Griffiths would serve as the member from the Faculty of Medicine;
- (c) That Dr A Dowd would serve as the member from the Faculty of Science;
- (d) That Professor M Watson would serve as the member from the Faculty of Social Science;
- (e) That the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees would nominate Faculty selectors in due course.

5/09-10 Nomination for Membership of the Board of Undergraduate Studies

REPORTED:

That the Chair had approved for recommendation to the Senate that Professor J Labbe operate for a further year as the representative of the Board to serve on the Board of Undergraduate Studies.

6/09-10 Nomination of Student Member on the University Research Ethics Committee

REPORTED:

That the Chair had approved for recommendation to the Council that Miss Sumaiya Khaku, the Students' Union Education Officer for 2009/10, will serve as the student member on the University Research Ethics Committee.

7/09-10 Planning Business for 2009/2010

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A paper from the Secretary setting out progress made towards the Vision 2015 targets (paper BGS 2/09-10);
- (b) A paper from the Chair setting out the main objectives of the Board over the coming year (paper BGS 16/09-10).

RESOLVED:

- (c) That a stronger emphasis might usefully be placed on strengthening the support offered to supervisors and on improving the supervisory experience during the year;
- (d) That a working party be convened from within the existing membership of the Board to review and make recommendations on the current funding model for PGR students, it being noted that:
 - (i) The Chair was concerned that the University might be reaching the limit of achievable expansion of PGR student numbers without a fundamental re-evaluation of funding;
 - (ii) That any Board member wishing to volunteer to join the

working group should approach the Chair directly, and that the Chair would bring a paper to the next meeting of the Board setting out the key challenges faced;

- (e) That concerns be noted about the ability of the postgraduate admissions team adequately to deal with the growing postgraduate population and the corresponding large increase in the number of applications, and that addressing this issue might form an additional priority for the Board over the coming academic year;
- (f) That, given the challenges posed by the introduction of the new Points Based Immigration System, the Board formally record its recognition of the work of those involved in implementing the new procedures required and in supporting students through to the point of enrolment, in light of the very small number of new incoming students who had entered the UK with the wrong visa, or who had been prevented from joining the University in a timely fashion;
- (g) That work continue on drawing together examples of best practice in the production of examination conventions for taught postgraduate courses, and the provision of a set of exemplar conventions to inform the work of departments and Faculty committees.

8/09-10 Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 4 June 2009 be approved.

9/09-10 Matters arising on the Minutes

- (a) Council Tax (minutes 97(d)/08-09 and 85/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, the Board received an oral report from the Education Officer, noting (*inter alia*) 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 Officer 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;
- (ii) That following further discussions with the Assistant Registrar (Student Records), the need to confirm full-time status as defined by the local Councils (study for greater than 24 hours per week, over greater than 21 weeks per year, and involving regular attendance) had led to development of a bespoke variant of the current status letter request procedure, involving corroboration by the supervisor that the student met the criteria;

- (iii) That the issue of Council Tax exemption for students in a period of extension highlighted the need to review the treatment and status of research students during a period of writing up and that this be considered at a future meeting of the Board;
- (iv) That following a decision by Coventry City Council not to proceed with the arrangement proposed to comply with their requirements, the matter had been referred to the Registrar to raise in his next direct meeting with the heads of Coventry City and Warwick District Councils.

RESOLVED:

- (v) That the effect within shared student houses of a single student entering a period of extension and subsequently exposing the entire property to Council Tax, albeit at a reduced rate, was a further undesirable consequence of the Councils' policy;
 - (vi) That the issue of the exposure of students in the writing up phase be raised by the Chair at the next meeting of the Russell Group PGR Special Interest Group.
- (b) Annual PGR Course Review Reports (minutes 82(b)/08-09 and 75/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, the Board considered the composite annual PGR composite review report prepared by the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science (paper SGS 13/08-09.m) and 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.

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Administrative Officer (Graduate School) setting out the findings of an investigation into the Department of Chemistry's concerns by the Academic Office (paper BGS 3/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the paper be approved, it being noted that:

- (i) The Board noted the different census dates required for the production of Academic Statistics and for the summary data included within annual course report forms;

- (ii) The Board felt that possible inconsistencies in data across different tables in the Academic Statistics be explored further;
- (iii) The annual course review report form be reworded in order to clarify the requirement for reflection on departmental trends in key areas, rather than simply focussing on raw data.

10/09-10

Chair's Business

- (a) Graduate School Charter (minutes 97(f)/08-09 and 92/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

That the Graduate School Charter had been published online and officially launched at the PGT and PGR induction events during week one of term.

- (b) Warwick Collaborative Postgraduate Research Scholarships information event for Staff (minute 98(b)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

That the above information event had taken place on 24 October 2009 and had been well attended., with staff presentations available on the staff section of the Graduate School Portal.

- (c) New University Regulations (minutes 101-103/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

That the amendments to University regulations recommended by the Board at its last meeting on 4 June 2009 had subsequently been approved by the Senate and Council and were now in force, as of 1 October 2009.

- (d) Scholarships

REPORTED:

That the University had awarded 7 OSI/FCO/University of Warwick scholarships (formerly known as East European scholarships) for 2009-10.

- (e) Erasmus Mundus bids

- (i) Successful Bids

REPORTED:

- (A) That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, it was reported to the Board that an *ad hoc* meeting of the Chairs of those committees normally involved in considering proposals for new collaborative courses, had been

convened to collectively consider under Chair's Action the proposals that were 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.

(B) That the outcomes of the Erasmus Mundus applications were now known, and that these had been successful in the following cases:

(1) MSc in Complex Systems, as set out in papers CFDLSC 25-31/08-09, noting that Warwick is the lead partner in the bid;

(2) MSc in Economic Development and Growth, as set out in papers CFDLSC 45-46/08-09;

(3) PhD in Globalisation, Europe and Multilateralism, as set out in papers CFDLSC 47-49/08-09.

(C) That the Chair had reported that funding for Warwick's existing Erasmus Mundus programme, the MA in International Performance Research, had been cut by 50% and there was now some uncertainty about Warwick's continued participation in that consortium;

(ii) Timing of Future Bids

REPORTED:

That advice from the British Council indicated that January would be the latest that an institution should start building an Erasmus Mundus consortium for a bid in the next round, and that it may be preferable for work to begin as early as September in any given application cycle.

(f) Amendments to Graduate School Publications

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve amendments to the following, in light of the revised University regulations approved by the Board at its last meeting on 4 June 2009, and subsequently by the Senate, noting that the revised versions were not circulated to members but were available online at:

<http://go.warwick.ac.uk/graduateschool/formslibrary> and in the BGS file-store:

(i) The "Guide to Examinations for Higher Degrees for Research";

- (ii) The “Guidelines for the Supervision and Monitoring of Research Students”,

(g) Directors of Graduate Studies’ Lunch

REPORTED:

That the Autumn term meeting for Directors of Graduate Studies would take place on 29 October 2009 at 12.30pm in the Wolfson Research Exchange.

(h) PGT Overseas Course Fees

REPORTED:

That the Fees Working Group had recently approved an increase in PGT course fees from 2010/11 onwards to £11,500 for Band 1 courses and £15,000 for Band 2 courses, it being noted that the question of PGR fee levels was still to be decided.

11/09-10 Chair’s Action

RECEIVED:

A report on items approved by the Chair on behalf of the Board (paper BGS 4/09-10), as follows:

(a) Faculty of Medicine

(i) Warwick Medical School

- (A) “MSc in Health Sciences (Retinal Screening)” (minutes 105(a)(v)/07-08 and GCFM 26(i)/07-08 referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Medicine, at its meeting on 13 May 2008, considered a proposal for a Retinal Screening variant of the MSc Health Sciences entitled ‘MSc in Health Sciences (Retinal Screening)’ (paper DMAP 115-119/07-08);
- (2) That it was reported to the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Medicine that there were some concerns about the potential size of the market for this programme;
- (3) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Medicine resolved:
 - (a) That the course would not run unless a sufficiently large cohort could be

recruited as set out in the financial case to be approved by AASC;

- (b) That the new programme should replace the existing Diabetic Retinopathy postgraduate award;
- (4) That the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Medicine recommended to the Board that the proposal be approved;
- (5) That the Board, at its meeting on 5 June 2008, considered the proposal for a Retinal Screening variant of the MSc Health Sciences entitled "MSc in Health Sciences (Retinal Screening)" and resolved that the proposal be approved, subject to:
 - (a) Provision of Part 2 of the form;
 - (b) Consideration being given by the department to the balance between coursework and the examined component of the course, in comparison with the CATS weighting assigned to the different components;
 - (c) Consideration being given by the department to the appropriate credit weighting for the dissertation;
 - (d) Clarification of the differences in the learning outcomes for the PG Cert as opposed to the full MSc;
 - (e) Revision of the learning outcomes provided in the course specification to ensure they are demonstrably at M level;
- (6) That Warwick Medical School had since provided clarification on all points raised by the Board and revised papers in support of the revisions, and that the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, had taken action to approve the new course entitled "MSc Health Sciences (Retinal Screening)", as set out in papers DMAP 95/08-09, DMAP 96/08-09, DMAP 115/07-08 (Revised), DMAP 117/07-08 (Revised), GCFM 45/04-05 (Revised) and GCFM 38/04-05 (Revised).

(b) Faculty of Science

(i) Department of Chemistry

(A) “MSc in Analytical Science”

REPORTED:

That the Chair of Board, acting on its behalf, had approved the proposal, in principle, for a new course entitled “MSc in Analytical Science”, to replace the existing MSc in Instrumental Analytical Methods in Biological and Environmental Chemistry (IAMBEC), paper BGS 123/08-09, in order to allow electronic applications to be accepted.

(B) “Postgraduate Award in Scientific Research and Communication”

REPORTED:

That the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science and of the Board had taken action, on behalf of their respective Committees, to approve a proposal to introduce a new course entitled “Postgraduate Award in Scientific Research and Communication”, as outlined in paper BGS 124/08-09.

(ii) Department of Psychology

(A) “MSc in Clinical Applications of Psychology” (minute 105(b)(ii)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

(1) That, at its meeting on 13 May 2009, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Science considered a proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MSc in Clinical Psychology” as set out in papers SGS 42/08-09.a and SGS 43/08-09.b, and resolved to approve the proposed course, subject to:

- (a) Amending the answers to question one of part two to “Yes” then “No”;
- (b) The approval of the Finance Office;

(2) That, at its meeting on 4 June 2009, the Board considered the proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MSc in Clinical Psychology” and resolved that the proposal be approved, subject to:

- (a) Raising with the Department of Psychology whether they should consider establishing a 4 year UG programme leading to an MPsych

degree;

(b) Clarification of the reasons behind no alternative exist qualifications being offered.

(3) That a revised version of the course had subsequently been submitted, complying with the Board's previous recommendations that a Certificate-level exit point is now available, and that the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had take action to approve the new course entitled "MSc in Clinical Applications of Psychology", as set out in paper SGS 42/08-09.a (Revised), it being noted that the title of the course had changed since it's initial consideration.

(c) Faculty of Social Sciences

(i) Warwick Business School

(A) "Postgraduate Award in Management and Business (TNT)" (minutes BGS 79(b)(ii)(C)/08-09 and GFSS 21(d)(iv)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

(1) That, its meeting on 29 January 2009, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social-Studies considered a proposal from Warwick Business School for a new course entitled "Postgraduate Award in Management and Business", as set out in papers GFSS 163/08-09 and GFSS 164/08-09, and resolved that the proposal be approved, noting that the department had already started test bedding elements of the course in November 2008;

(2) That, at its meeting on 19 February 2009, the Board considered a proposal from Warwick Business School to introduce a new course entitled "Postgraduate Award in Management and Business" (papers GFSS 163/08-09 and GFSS 164/08-09) and resolved that the proposal be approved, subject to:

(a) Confirmation of whether this is a new or revised course, in light of the stated intended start date of November 2008;

(b) An explanation being received, if this is a new course, for the late application for this approval.

- (3) That clarification from Warwick Business School that this was a revised course, and an explanation for the late application, had been received and that the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had subsequently taken action to approve the revised course entitled "Postgraduate Award in Management and Business (TNT), as set out in papers GFSS 163/08-09 and GFSS 164/08-09.
- (B) "MSc in Operations Management" (minutes BGS 79(d)(ii)(B)/08-09 and GFSS 21(d)(ii)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That, its meeting on 29 January 2009, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social-Studies considered a proposal from Warwick Business School for a new course entitled "MSc in Operations and Supply Management", as set out in papers GFSS 131-135/08-09 and resolved that the proposal be approved;
- (2) That, at its meeting on 19 February 2009, the Board considered the proposal from Warwick Business School to introduce a new course entitled "MSc in Operations and Supply Management" and resolved that the proposal be not approved, noting that approval in future would be subject to:
- (a) Consultation with WMG over the similarities between this course and those offered by WMG in the area of Supply Chain and Logistics Management;
 - (b) Confirmation of the credit value and length of the dissertation.
- (3) That discussions had since taken place between WBS and WMG, it being noted that WMG had indicated that they were satisfied that there was no significant overlap in course content and that WBS had proposed a change in the title of the course to "MSc in Operations Management" to highlight the difference in focus;
- (4) That, in light of (3) above and subsequent clarification of the nature of the dissertation, the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the new course entitled "MSc in Operations Management", as

set out in papers GFSS 131-135/0809
(Revised).

- (C) “MSc Management by Blended Learning” (minutes 79(d)(ii)(D)/08-09 and GFSS 21(d)(v)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That, its meeting on 29 January 2009, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social-Studies considered a proposal from Warwick Business School for a new course entitled “Blended Learning Masters in Management”, as set out in papers GFSS 170-174/08-09, and resolved that the proposal be approved, noting that the Committee queried the use of the term “blended learning” as a descriptor to the course given that all teaching will be done by distance learning but was satisfied that WBSlive would provide a strong online face-to-face platform differentiating the course provision from traditional distance-learning courses;
- (2) That, at its meeting on 6 February 2009, the Collaborative, Flexible and Distance-Learning Sub-Committee considered papers outlining aspects of the proposal from Warwick Business School to introduce a new “MSc in Management by Blended Learning” which required scrutiny by the Committee and recommended that the proposal be approved;
- (3) That, at its meeting on 19 February 2009, the Board considered the proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MSc Management (by Blended Learning)” and resolved that the proposal be approved, subject to:
 - (a) Revision of the learning outcomes in the course specification to ensure they are demonstrably at M level;
 - (b) Reconsideration of including the term “Blended Learning” in the title, following consideration of this matter by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.
- (4) That, following revision of the course specification and further consideration of the course title, the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the new course entitled “MSc Management (by Blended Learning)” as set out in papers GFSS 170-

174/08-09.

(ii) School of Health and Social Studies

(A) “MPhil/PhD in the Built Environment, Health and Well Being”

REPORTED:

That the Chair of Board, acting on its behalf, had approved the proposal, in principle, for a new course entitled “MPhil/PhD in the Built Environment, Health and Well Being”, paper BGS 122/08-09, in order to allow electronic applications to be accepted.

(iii) Institute of Education

(A) “MA in Education Assessment” (minutes BGS 105(c)(iv)(A)/08-09 and GFSS 31(e)(i)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

(1) That, at its meeting on 12 May 2009, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies considered a proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MA in Education Assessment”, as set out in papers GFSS 283/08-09, GFSS 284/08-09, GFSS 285/08-09, GFSS 286/08-09, GFSS 287/08-09 and GFSS 289/08-09, and recommended that the proposal be approved;

(2) That, at its last meeting on 4 June 2009, the Board considered the proposal to introduce a new course entitled “MA in Education Assessment” and resolved that the proposal be approved, subject to clarification of why the course is based in the Centre for Lifelong Learning instead of the Institute of Education;

(3) That clarification had subsequently been received from the Institute of Education, and that the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Board to approve the new course entitled “MA in Education Assessment”, as set out in papers GFSS 283/08-09, GFSS 284/08-09, GFSS 285/08-09, GFSS 286/08-09, GFSS 287/08-09 and GFSS 289/08-09.

(B) Postgraduate Certificate “14-19 Education and Skills” (minutes 105(c)(iv)(E)/08-09 and GFSS 31(e)(ix)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That, at its meeting on 12 May 2009, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies considered a proposal to introduce a new postgraduate certificate entitled “14-19 Education and Skills”, as set out in papers GFSS 278/08-09, GFSS 279/08-09, GFSS 280/08-09 and GFSS 281/08-09, and resolved that the proposal be approved;
- (2) That, at its last meeting on 4 June 2009, the Board considered the proposal to introduce a new postgraduate certificate entitled “14-19 Education and Skills”, and resolved that the proposal be approved, subject to:
 - (a) Clarification of the implications for admissions on non-QTS candidates;
 - (b) Revision of learning outcomes to M level.
- (3) That, in light of clarification received from the Institute of Education and of the submission of a revised course specification, the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had subsequently taken action to approve the new postgraduate certificate entitled “14-19 Education and Skills”, as set out in papers GFSS 278/08-09 (Revised), GFSS 279/08-09, GFSS 280/08-09 and GFSS 281/08-09.

(iv) Department of Economics

- (A) Module and Postgraduate Award “Preparing for Competition in a Network Utility” (minutes 105(c)(ii)/08-09 and GFSS 31(b)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (1) That, at its meeting on 12 May 2009, the Graduate Studies Committee of the Faculty of Social Studies considered a proposal to introduce a new module and postgraduate award entitled “Preparing for Competition in a Network Utility”, as set out in papers GFSS 200/08-09 and GFSS 201/08-09, and recommended that the proposal be approved;
- (2) That, at its last meeting on 4 June 2009, the Board considered the proposal to introduce a new module and postgraduate award entitled “Preparing for Competition in a Network Utility” and resolved that the proposal be not approved until further clarification on the following points was received:

- (a) The nature of assessment and assessment load;
 - (b) Who are the temporary/part-time staff who will be responsible for 30% of teaching (and is this related to the need for mentoring of PhD students in Part 2);
- (3) That clarification on the assessment and the nature of the involvement of part-time/temporary staff had subsequently been received and that the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the new module and postgraduate award entitled "Preparing for Competition in a Network Utility", as set out in papers GFSS 200/08-09 and GFSS 201/08-09.

12/09-10 Postgraduate Committee and Students' Union

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Education Officer, noting the followings:

- (a) That a ballot to elect members to the Postgraduate Committee and student representatives of the Board would take place in week 3;
- (b) That the annual SSLC report would soon be completed, and that the main issues related to the use of, and payment to, postgraduate students for undergraduate teaching, Council Tax, and hidden course costs.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the Chair arrange a meeting with the Welfare Officer to discuss the use postgraduate students in teaching, it being noted that the Board had recently adapted guidance to departments in this regard.

13/09-10 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) 2009 (minute 108/08-09 refers)

REPORTED:

That the Board, at its last meeting held on 4 June 2009, received a summary paper on the initial headlines from the 2009 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey, paper BGS 114/08-09.

CONSIDERED:

A paper setting out a more detailed analysis of the feedback from Warwick students, benchmarked against the sector as a whole and the Russell Group (paper BGS 5/09-10).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a further analysis be undertaken to explore the differences in response between full-time and part-time students;
- (b) That a Faculty breakdown of scores related to integration into the academic community be performed.

14/09-10 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) 2009

CONSIDERED:

A paper setting out the results of the PTES survey at Warwick in 2009 (paper BGS 6/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That, where requested, data be provided to departments in order that they might perform their own analyses and extract maximum utility from the data for the institution.

15/09-10 Proposals from the Warwick Medical School regarding the MBChB degree

REPORTED:

That, at its last meeting on 3 June 2009, the Board of Undergraduate Studies considered:

- (a) A proposal from the Warwick Medical School to change University Regulation 8.10 'Regulations for the Degrees of Bachelor of Surgery (MBChB) and for the Bachelor of Medical Sciences (BMedSci) (paper BUGS 26/08-09);
- (b) A proposal to allow MBChB students to study for higher level qualifications (paper BUGS 21/08-09);
- (c) A proposal to allow students from the International Medical University, Malaysia, direct entry into Phase II of the MBChB course (paper BUGS 22/08-09).

And recommended (*inter alia*) that the proposal to allow MBChB students to study for higher level qualifications as set out in paper BUGS 21/08-09 be approved subject to its consideration by the Board of Graduate Studies.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from Warwick Medical School to allow MBChB students to study for higher level qualifications (paper BUGS 21/08-09).

RECOMMENDED (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee):

That the proposal be approved, subject to:

- (d) Amendments of the maximum duration for the PhD under proposal 2 to 3 years (exceptionally 4 years);
- (e) The “explicit criteria” used to determine entry to each route being specified;
- (f) An assurance from Warwick Medical School that the transfers would be carefully monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis;
- (g) Consideration being given to the principle of students withdrawing from a graduate-entry undergraduate degree to pursue a PhD and then return to the undergraduate degree, with the associated issue relating to the currency of the first phase of undergraduate learning, it being noted that the University policy on the Accreditation of Prior Learning normally discounted credit accumulated more than 5 years prior to the proposed course entry point.

16/09-10 Variable Part-time PhD Registration (minute 109/08-09 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Secretary (paper BGS 116/08-09), following up issues raised by the discussion of the Board to endorse the proposals set out in paper BGS 33/06-07 to permit students to register for PhDs on the basis of a variety of lengths of study occasioned by varying degrees of part-time status.

RESOLVED:

That the initial decision of the Board to offer more flexible part-time registration not be progressed further.

17/09-10 HEFCE Consultation on Withdrawal of Recurrent Teaching Funding..

RECEIVED:

The final University response to HEFCE consultation document 2009/25, available online from http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_25/, on the proposed withdrawal from 2010/11 of the following three targeted allocations from recurrent teaching funding: old and historic buildings; accelerated and intensive provision of postgraduate taught subjects in price band D; and foundation degrees (paper BGS 7/09-10), noting that this was tabled at the meeting.

18/09-10 Warwick Postgraduate Research Scholarships Selection Criteria (minutes 97(i)/08-09 and 83(e)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (a) That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, the Board 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) and 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.
- (b) That, following the meeting in April, the Chair had consulted the Graduate Studies Committee of the four Faculties to seek views on the future administration of the award of Warwick Postgraduate Research Scholarships (paper BGS 107/08-09).
- (c) That, at its last meeting on 4 June 2009, the Board considered a paper from the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School) summarising the feedback received from the Graduate Studies Committees in response to the consultation (paper BGS 108/08-09) and resolved:
- (i) That WPRS awards continue to be allocated centrally, rather than at Faculty level;
 - (ii) That the selection criteria for WPRS be carefully revised in order to make them as sensitive as possible to disciplinary differences, and that a proposal be brought to the next meeting of the Board for discussion;
 - (iii) That the WPRS competition continue in two rounds;
 - (iv) That members of the Board be asked to consider any proposed changes to the WPRS application form and to forward these to the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School) within the next 14 days.

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Project Officer (Postgraduate Scholarships) outlining proposed new selection criteria for the WPRS competition (paper BGS 8/09-10).

RESOLVED:

- (d) That the selection criteria used to assess a student's academic record be revised and amended in line with the discussion at the meeting, to include:
 - (i) The removal of degree classification requirement from standalone Master's degrees;

- (ii) That supporting evidence might include a research proposal “and/or” references.
- (e) That the Chair work on a formula to combine the individual scale scores into a single score taking into account their relative weighting.

19/09-10 Contract for Warwick Postgraduate Research Scholarship Awards Holders (minute 90/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

That, at its meeting on 30 April 2009, the Board considered a paper 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 and resolved (*inter alia*) that consideration be given by the Graduate School to adopting a similar policy [to the “opt-out” policy for e-Portfolios introduced by the Department of History] 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.

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Secretary proposing elements of a potential contract for WPRS awards holders, expanding on the idea set out above and specifying what further inputs might be expected from those in receipt of a University funded award during their period of registration (paper BGS 9/09-10).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Board was not persuaded of the value of requiring WPRS award holders to act as mentors, and that this should therefore not be included in the contract;
- (b) That the obligation for WPRS students to complete an e-portfolio be amended to reflect the view of the Board that they be encouraged to do so, but that this should not be a formal requirement;
- (c) That participation in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey could not be monitored as the survey was completed anonymously;
- (d) That items (a), (d) and (f) from the paper be included in the final contract, it being noted that the Board did not envisage that supervisors need be involved in the production and submission of a summary of students’ research progress and experience.

20/09-10 Visiting Research Students

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Assistant Registrar (Postgraduate Admissions) outlining a proposal to modify the existing procedures relating to the admission of visiting postgraduate research students (paper BGS 10/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the paper be approved, subject to the minor modification that referees be asked to include a statement on the purpose of the research visit within their reference.

21/09-10 Graduate School Newsletters

RECEIVED:

The newsletters issued by the Graduate School since the last meeting of the Board, as follows:

- (a) Summer 2009 (paper BGS 11/09-10);
- (b) Autumn 2009 (paper BGS 12/09-10).

22/09-10 UK Research Integrity Office: Code of Practice for Research

CONSIDERED:

A publication from the UK Research Integrity Office entitled "Code of Practice for Research: Promoting Good Practice and Preventing Misconduct" (paper BGS 13/09-10).

23/09-10 QAA Consultation on Draft Master's Degree Characteristics Reference Point

RECEIVED:

- (a) A letter from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) outlining a consultation on a draft Master's Degree Characteristics Reference Point (paper BGS 14/09-10);
- (b) A copy of the draft Master's Degree Characteristics Reference Point (paper BGS 15/09-10);

24/09-10 Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Board is on **Tuesday, 17 November 2009**.

HRWS/RM 15.10.09