

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

BOARD OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Undergraduate Studies held on Wednesday 17th November 2010.

Present: Professor K O'Brien (in the Chair), Professor T Bugg, Dr S Gilson, Dr G Martin, Dr F Mackay, Miss I Musaddaq, Professor J Neelands, Mr S Ruston.

Apologies: Professor P Edwards, Dr C Jenainati, Dr N Johnson, Dr S Kettell, Dr J Kidd, Dr J Robinson, Dr J Snape.

In Attendance: Dr T Bell, Dr J Taylor.

1/10-11 Terms of reference

REPORTED:

That the Board, at its meeting on 9th June 2010, had considered a paper on the subject of Review of the Terms of Reference and Constitution of Academic Quality and Standards Committee and its Sub-Committees (paper BUGS 22/09-10), together with an oral report from the Secretary to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee and resolved (inter alia) that the recommended actions agreed by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee be agreed.

CONSIDERED:

Revised Terms of Reference for the Board as follows (revisions underlined):

(a) To consider and make recommendations to the Academic Quality Standards Committee on issues relating to the assurance and enhancement of the quality of learning and teaching across all undergraduate provision.

(b) To make recommendations to the Senate, after consultation with academic departments and the Faculty Boards, on all matters affecting undergraduate study in the University including strategic considerations.

(c) To scrutinise all new undergraduate course proposals and report to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on consideration of such proposals.

(d) To consider the Faculty Summary Reports of the Annual Course Review reports, teaching and learning-related sections of Strategic Departmental Reviews (together with relevant departmental responses) and the Undergraduate Student-Staff Liaison Committee Annual Report and liaise with departments regarding any issues of concern.

(e) To advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on matters relating to examinations in undergraduate courses.

(f) To advise the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on the role of internal and external examiners for undergraduate degrees.

(g) To report to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee annually on the issues raised in reports by External Examiners.

(h) To consider submissions from the Faculty Boards for non-standard examination methods, including seen papers, open-book examinations and reading times, and to make recommendations to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

(i) To exercise delegated powers on behalf of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee in approving, on personal grounds, minor variations in the arrangements for the sitting of undergraduate examinations by individual students.

(j) To consider all matters affecting admissions practices and policy and make recommendations to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee where appropriate.

(k) To consider requests for variations to the University's Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) policy for individual students.

RECOMMENDED:

That the revised Terms of Reference for the Board be approved as set out above.

2/10-11 Membership 2010/11

REPORTED:

That the Senate, at its meeting on 6th October 2010, resolved that the membership of the Board of Undergraduate Studies for the academic year 2010/11 be as follows:

	First Appointed	
Chair	2007	Professor K O'Brien
Two full-time members of the academic staff from each of the Faculties or Arts, Medicine, Science and Social Studies appointed by the Senate:		
Arts	2009	Professor K Butcher or Dr A Phillips
	2009	Dr C Jenainati
Medicine	2006	Dr N Johnson
	2006	Dr J Kidd
Science	2003	Dr J Robinson
	2002	Dr G Martin
Social Sciences	2009	Professor P Edwards
	2008	Dr J Snape

One member of the Board of Graduate Studies appointed by the Senate	2010	Prof J Neelands
The Chairs of the Undergraduate Studies Committees of the Boards of the Faculties of Arts and Social Sciences and the Chair of the Sub-Faculty of Science		
Arts	2010	Dr S Gilson
Science	2009	Professor T Bugg
Social Sciences	2009	Dr S Kettell
One member of staff appointed by and from the Centre for Lifelong Learning	2005	Dr D Lamburn
Two members nominated by the Union of Students	2010	Mr S Ruston
	2010	TBC

3/10-11 Freedom of Information

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Steering Committee at its meeting on 29 October 2007 had considered a paper outlining how the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies to the publication of minutes of University bodies together with the University Publication Scheme adopted by the Steering Committee in December 2003, paper SC 60/07-08, and resolved that a standard item be included on the agenda of the first meeting of each University Committee at the start of each academic year to inform new members and to remind continuing members of the University policy on the publication of minutes.
- (b) That all non-reserved minutes and agenda of the Committee are published on the University's Governance website at: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/atoz/agsc/minutes/>
- (c) That copies of paper SC 60/07-08 are available from the Secretary on request.

4/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 9th June 2010 be approved.

5/10-11 Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a) New Course of Study (minute 30/09-10, refers)

REPORTED:

The following minute from the Academic Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting of 2nd November 2010:

REPORTED:

- (i) That, at its meeting on 7 June 2010, the Assessment Conventions Working Group considered a proposal that departments which deliver Foundation Degrees and 120 FHEQ level 6 credit Honours top up courses be consulted on a proposal that students who complete the Honours top up course be classified on the basis of module marks contributing to the Honours top up course only, and resolved that the Institute of Education be consulted further [on the proposal] and that this apply to students commencing Foundation Degrees from 2011/12;
- (ii) That, at its meeting on 23 June 2010, it was reported to the Committee that the Board of Undergraduate Studies, at its meeting on 9 June 2010, had considered a proposal from the Institute of Education for a new degree course BA Early Childhood Education Studies (papers UFSS 65/09-10 (revised)) for introduction in September 2010 and which replaces an existing degree course of the same name, and resolved that the proposal from the Institute of Education for a new degree course BA Early Childhood Education Studies be approved, subject to the consultation currently being carried out by the Assessment Conventions Working Group with regard to the exam weightings listed under Section 7;
- (iii) That it had subsequently come to light that the Institute of Education, in putting together the proposal for the BA Early Childhood Education Studies as set out in (ii) above, had been working on the assumption that the proposal set out in (i) above would take effect from 2010/11, and that students and tutors had already been briefed to this effect;
- (iv) That the Chair of the Committee, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve a proposal that students who complete the Honours top up course be classified on the basis of module marks contributing to the Honours top up course only to take effect from 2010/11 for the BA Early Childhood Education Studies, noting that this new BA offered by the Institute will be out of line with practice in the Centre for Lifelong Learning for an interim period until the proposed new conventions are implemented across the University.

(Draft AQSC minute 2/10-11(c))

(b) Appeals against final-degree classification: Regulation 8.12 (minute 8/09-10, refers)

REPORTED:

The following minute from the Academic Quality and Standards Committee at its meeting of 2nd November 2010:

REPORTED:

- (ii) That, at its meeting on 4 February 2010, the Committee recommended (to the Senate) that the proposed amendments to Regulation 8.12 concerning the process by which appeals against final degree classification are administered be approved, as set out in paper AQSC 37/09-10;
- (iii) That, since its meeting on 4 February 2010, the Chair of the Committee, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve an amendment to the

recommendation set out in (ii) above to clarify that the change should be implemented with effect from 2010/11 academic year.

(Draft AQSC minute 2/10-11(b))

6/10-11 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

(a) That the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, had approved a change of method of assessment for a named student on the grounds of reasonable adjustment for a disability.

(b) That the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, had approved a new degree of History of Art with Intercalated Year for introduction in October 2010 as set out in paper AUSC 70/09-10 (revised).

7/10-11 Special Examination Arrangements

CONSIDERED:

The establishment of a working group to review the provision of special examination arrangements, with a view to formulating some normative principles (Board minute 17/09-10 resolution (c), refers).

RESOLVED:

That the working group be established with the following membership:

Chair: Professor K O'Brien

A representative of the Faculty of Arts from the Board's membership

A representative of the Faculty of Science from the Board's membership

A representative of the Faculty of Social Sciences from the Board's membership

A representative of the Faculty of Medicine from the Board's membership

The Disability Coordinator, Disability Services

The Students' Union Welfare Officer

8/10-11 Request for Reading Time

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Department of Italian requesting reading time for the three-hour exam for module IT411 'L'Italia nel '900' (paper BUGS 6/10-11).

RESOLVED:

That the request for reading time for the three-hour exam for module IT411 'L'Italia nel '900' be not approved and the Department of Italian be asked to reassure students taking this module that the relative complexities of this paper will be taken into account in the marking process, noting that the

department may also consider reducing the number of questions in part B of the paper.

9/10-11 New Courses of Study

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A proposal from the Departments of German and History for a new course BA in German and History for introduction in October 2011 (paper AUSC 4/10-11 (revised)).
- (b) A proposal from the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies for a new course BA English Literature with Intercalated Year for introduction in October 2012 (paper AUSC 3/10-11 (revised)).

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the proposal from the Departments of German and History for a new course BA German and History for introduction in October 2011 as set out in paper AUSC 4/10-11 (revised) be approved (noting that the Secretary be asked to ensure the Teaching Quality Office is aware that the Department of German will be the “home department” for this degree).
- (d) That the proposal from the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies for a new course BA English Literature with Intercalated Year for introduction in October 2012 as set out in paper AUSC 3/10-11 (revised) be approved.
- (e) That it be noted that the Students’ Union intended to raise again with the appropriate University bodies the issue of fees payable by students on intercalated years.

10/10-11 Undergraduate External Examiners’ Reports for 2009/10

RECEIVED:

The procedure for the consideration of External Examiners’ reports by the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies (paper BUGS 1/10-11).

CONSIDERED:

- (a) The reports of External Examiners for Undergraduate courses for 2009/10 (paper BUGS 2/10-11).
- (b) Pro-forma responses received from departments to the External Examiners’ reports by the time of the meeting of the Board Sub-group held on 29th October, 2009 (paper BUGS 3/10-11).
- (c) A report from the Board Sub-group established to consider the reports of the External Examiners summarising key points in the reports for 2009-10 and making recommendations to the Board for further action (paper BUGS 4/10-11).

(d) Pro-forma responses received from departments to the External Examiners' reports since the meeting of the Board Sub-group held on 8th November, 2010 (paper BUGS 5/10-11), together with a response from the Department of Statistics to Reports 42 and 43 (tabled at the meeting).

(e) The External Examiners' reports for the MBChB degree (paper BUGS 7/10-11).

RESOLVED:

(f) That the report of the Board Sub-group be approved and, following receipt of all the pro-forma departmental responses to the External Examiners' reports, the Chair be asked to take forward issues as necessary as identified in the Sub-Group's report.

(g) With regard to the issue raised of students failing to deregister for supernumerary modules which was commented on in Reports 42 and 43 and the response to consult the Teaching Quality Office and Management Information and Planning and inform the Board Chair and Science Faculty representative (Dr Martin) of the outcome.

(h) That it be noted that the Chair would raise the issue of the number of first-class degrees awarded in the Department of Economics with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience).

REPORTED:

(i) That the Chair had liaised with the WMS regarding the External Examiners' reports for the MBChB degree as set out in paper BUGS 7/10-11 and that in response to comments made by Dr Anderson (Report 83), the WMS had provided the following clarification: "it is not the case that 30% of the students fail on the first round. 70% of students excuse themselves from sitting the full finals by demonstrating effective performance during their senior blocks and in the initial cases seen. Only 30% need to be seen in full finals. This year around 7% of students failed the FPE and were offered the opportunity to take the re-sit assessment in October and November."

JAT/TB 18.11.10