

**UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK**  
**HIGHER EDUCATION FOUNDATION PROGRAMME**  
**BOARD OF STUDIES**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Higher Education Foundation Programme Board of Studies held on 8 July 2010

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Present: Dr M Skinner (Chair), Dr D Britnell, Ms W Chan, Dr M Joy, Ms Y Merali,  
Ms L Nuttall, Dr I Procter, Dr G Sharpling, Ms E Shale, Ms S Starley, Mr P Smart,  
Mr H Waldron,

In attendance: Mr J Kennedy

Apologies: Prof. R Higgott, Dr K Flint, Dr T McCrisken, Ms J Preshous, Dr J Robinson

11/2009-10 Minutes

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3 February 2010 be approved.

12/2009-10 Matters Arising on the Minutes

Minute 26/09-09 refers: That report HEFP 29/2009-10 was an adjunct to the original work carried out by Dr Sharpling illustrating the linkages between the HEFP English and IELTS. Ms Shale highlighted the headlines as follows:

- (i) There were linkages between the two tests, however there was considerable uncertainty visible in the 60 – 65% band.
- (ii) The results were presented with an ultra-conservative interpretation, and the more usual typical conversion factor.
- (iii) The 60 – 65% band displayed considerable disparity and the translation of the HEFP English results to the IELTS had not produced the expected result. It is recommended that the comparison chart is not used externally until after the English & Study Skills review.

REPORTED:

- (iv) That the HEFP English & Study Skills tested a range of skills and included authenticity in the materials used (eg, texts taken from the radio) and the IELTS is a more scripted test.

- (v) That the UKBA guidelines (summer 2010) regarding language testing to obtain a Tier 4 visa are still outstanding and the outcome of these guidelines may affect the future testing of the HEFP English.

CONSIDERED:

- (vi) Would it be possible to ask all HEFP students to sit an IELTS at the end of the HEFP if it is considered necessary to comply to UKBA?
- (vii) Would setting a compulsory IELTS invalidate the HEFP English test, and what would be the time resource needed to teach IELTS?
- (viii) How would the skills acquired by the HEFP English test be appreciated by the students if the IELTS was made compulsory? Would the students lose interest in the HEFP English?

RESOLVED:

The quinquennial review of the English & Study Skills programme would take place in the autumn term 2010, and as the future testing of this skill needed a full and detailed discussion, the development of this component of the HEFP would be resolved as part of the quinquennial review.

Minute 13/2009-10 refers: the brief summary of the HEFP results for 2005-6 indicating the entry grades for students achieving a 2.2 or lower at Warwick upon final graduation had not demonstrated a clear correlation between entry and exit grades, although there was some weakness in language ability demonstrated in the Engineering results.

Minute 16/2009-10 refers: Stratford-upon-Avon College reported that they had implemented a system of communicating students with weaker language skills to the teaching team by flagging up the students as red, amber or green in their ability.

Minute 18/2009-10 refers: Mr Waldron reported that Ms Allen had continued to teach on the HEFP to cover an emergency situation and although the Board of Studies had shown considerable concern on her appointment in the February 2010 meeting, her work had been double-marked and Mr Waldron reported that no complaints had been received from students on her teaching. Ms Allen is likely to cover some of the teaching on the HEFP in 2010/11 but as her cv has not been approved for teaching on the HEFP, the Business Studies moderator requested that a revised cv be submitted to the October 2010 Board of Studies for further consideration.

13/2009-10 External Examiner: Law

CONSIDERED:

Dr Crayton Walker, University of Birmingham, as external examiner for the HEFP Law programme.

RESOLVED:

Dr Walker be invited to act as external examiner for the HEFP Law programme with immediate effect.

14/2009-10 Staffing

CONSIDERED:

The cv's of the following staff to teach on the HEFP:

- (i) Helen Adkins
- (ii) Joanne Callaghan
- (iii) Birgit Oehle

RESOLVED:

All three staff members were approved to teach on the HEFP.

15/2009-10 Business Studies Working Party and Examination Board

RECEIVED:

The Business Studies Working Party Minutes and Examination Board Minutes and results.

REPORTED:

- (i) That work had been completed over the past year on the mathematics syllabus which now resulted in Economics and MORSE accepting the HEFP Business Studies students without the need to study for an additional A level in Mathematics.
- (ii) That the Examination Board had run smoothly, and that one outstanding mark had now been confirmed by the external examiner.
- (iii) A new external examiner for the Business Studies stream is required urgently and Ms Merali will seek a suitable appointee. Chair's action will be required to approve the appointment as the external examiner will need to be in post by September 2010.

RESOLVED:

That the examination grades for the Business Studies programme be approved.

16/2009-10 Social Science Working Party and Examination Board

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Social Science working and Examination Boards had both gone smoothly.
- (ii) That the method for approval of a change in syllabus is through the receipt of a paper outlining the proposed change and submitted to the relevant working party.
- (iii) That clear identification of marks deducted for late submission of work is required.
- (iv) Correction of Mr Roger Leng's name in the Social Science working party minutes will need to be undertaken.

RESOLVED:

That the examination grades for the Social Science programme be approved.

17/2009-10 Law Working Parties and Examination Board

REPORTED:

That the Law working parties and Examination Board had gone smoothly and that Keith Uff, University of Birmingham had been appointed as external examiner.

RESOLVED:

That the examination grades for the Law programme be approved.

18/2009-10 Science/Engineering Working Party and Examination Board

REPORTED:

That the Science/Engineering working party and Examination Board had taken place and no additional points were raised.

RESOLVED:

That the examination grades for the Science/Engineering programme be approved.

19/2009-10 English and Study Skills Working Party and Examination Board

REPORTED:

That an issue had been raised by the external examiner for the English & Study Skills examination board regarding the treatment of students who did not have a mark entered into the final spreadsheet for work not submitted.

CONSIDERED:

- (i) Whether the practice of not allowing a student to submit a piece of work after the end of the course was equitable.
- (ii) Whether all duty of care had taken place and equal opportunity been presented to the student to present the work after the initial deadline in view of extenuating circumstances.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the student in question had been given many opportunities to submit the required work but had declined to do so even after significant staff support.
- (ii) That any future 'zero' grade on the final mark sheet should have a note of explanation presented to the Examination Board.
- (iii) That the examination grades for the English & Study Skills programme be approved.

20/2009-10 Biomedical Programme

REPORTED:

That an additional recruitment trip had been made to Hong Kong and China to boost Biomedical programme applications. Currently applications are still relatively slow, but admissions for this stream will remain open as late as possible.

21/2009-10 English & Study Skills Analysis

RECEIVED:

In response to some concerns raised in the February Board of Studies regarding the English level of students at Stratford-upon-Avon College, Ms Nuttall presented a report on feedback undertaken by the English & Study Skills team indicating that the 2009-10 cohort had been strong with 107 out of 210 students receiving a Distinction grade in the final examinations. In addition, Ms Nuttall highlighted the external examiner's very positive feedback on the majority of the work undertaken by the students.

RESOLVED:

That the reports undertaken by Ms Nuttall would be included in the English and Study Skills quinquennial review (autumn 2010).

22/2009-10 Plagiarism Guidelines

RECEIVED:

A report from the plagiarism sub-committee undertaken in February 2010 to provide guidelines for the avoidance of plagiarism in HEFP work.

CONSIDERED:

- (i) Whether the TURNITIN software license could be used at the colleges?
- (ii) Whether the college staff would have time to use TURNITIN?
- (iii) Whether TURNITIN would be suitable across all pieces of work?
- (iv) Whether the guidelines clearly set out the process to be followed?

RESOLVED:

- (v) A redraft of the guidelines will be initially circulated to the plagiarism sub-committee for comment and then circulated to the whole Board prior to September 2010.
- (vi) That the licensing arrangements would be set out in the guidelines.

23/2009-10 Monitoring of Attendance

RECEIVED:

A set of guidance notes for monitoring attendance and ensuring consistent student support was circulated. Attendance monitoring is also an important part of the UKBA license and the HEFP will need to comply.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) That point 8 'Mid-term meeting with the personal tutor' would be removed from the guidance notes as weekly meetings already form part of the guidance notes.
- (b) That a final check would be made to ensure the guidance notes for monitoring attendance are consistent with Warwickshire College and Stratford upon Avon College procedures.
- (c) On confirmation of a consistent procedure for monitoring attendance, the guidelines would be implemented across the HEFP from September 2010.

- (d) The guidance notes for monitoring attendance will be included in the HEFP Governance & Administration document.

24/2009-10 HEFP Business Studies and Social Science Coursework Mark Distribution

CONSIDERED:

An oral report from Dr Procter on the proposal from the Business Studies and Social Science working parties that the first coursework is weighted to 10% of the total coursework, and courseworks 2 and 3 be allocated a weighting of 15% each.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal to weight coursework 1 at 10%, coursework 2 at 15% and coursework 3 at 15% be adopted from September 2010.

- 25/2009-10 The request to consider standardizing the Economics component across the Law and Science/Engineering will be taken forward to the October 2010 Board of Studies meeting.

26/2009-10 Recruitment – June 2010

RECEIVED:

A copy of the HEFP statistics up to June 2010 indicating that overall applications are up to 31.6% and offers up by 30%.

REPORTED:

That applications will continue to be considered up until 1 August 2010, with applications in Biomedical programmes left open for at least another 10 days. However, it was noted that the processing time for the applications, visa application process etc will not enable the applications to be considered after this time.

27/2009-10 Membership of the Board

REPORTED:

That any staff changes in the colleges that affect Board membership should be emailed to [h.j.johnson@warwick.ac.uk](mailto:h.j.johnson@warwick.ac.uk).

End.