

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Quality Enhancement Working Group  
held on Wednesday 2 November 2005

Present: Professor M Whitby (in the Chair), Ms A Bell, Dr J Dempster, Ms S Law, Professor A McFarlane, Dr M Neary, Dr P Taylor

Apologies: Mr B Duggan, Mr D Law, Dr P O'Hare, Dr Z Radnor, Dr C Rutter

In attendance: Dr J Moss, Mr D Wallis

1/05-06 Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership

RECEIVED:

The Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership of the Working Group for 2005-06, paper QEWG 1/05-06.

CONSIDERED:

An appropriate modus operandi of the Group to facilitate quality enhancement activities across the University.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Working Group continue to meet on a termly basis with the current membership;
- (b) That further consideration be given to various methods of engaging the wider University community with the quality enhancement agenda, including meetings of quality enhancement "champions" from across the University, focus groups and other outreach sessions, and further development by the Centre for Academic Practice of its engagement with academic departments.

2/05-06 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 17 May 2005 be approved.

3/05-06 Matters Arising

- (a) Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (minute 18/04-05 referred)

RECEIVED:

An update from the Chair on the activities of the Reinvention Centre and the Capital Centre, noting that:

- (i) The formal launch event of the Reinvention Centre took place on 12 October in the University House atrium,

and that Centre's minibus was already raising awareness of the Centre around campus.

REPORTED (by Dr M Neary):

- (A) That one academic Fellowship had been awarded, to Dr P Taylor, and that a number of other applications were under consideration;
  - (B) That the Centre was building links within and outwith the University, including with Ruskin College;
  - (C) That the Centre was building up its activities in the Learning Grid;
  - (D) That HEFCE had made extra funding available to CETLs, conditional on receipt of an appropriate application.
- (ii) The formal launch of the Capital Centre would take place in January, but that the Centre was already running various activities, with the refurbishment of Millburn House intended to be completed by summer 2006.
- (b) Distribution of UKeU Dividend (Minute 20/04-05 referred)

REPORTED:

That the e-Learning Steering Group at its meeting on 13 October 2005 resolved to ask the leader of each of the four projects to prepare a summary of progress for the next meeting of that Group, to be held on 18 January 2006.

- (c) Teaching Enhancement Awards (Minute 22/04-05 referred)

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the five applications for Teaching Enhancement Awards submitted to the Centre for Academic Practice by the recent deadline (27 October 2005) be considered by the members of the Group in due course and feedback returned to the Secretariat for collation via email before Christmas;
- (ii) That a meeting be held to consider the applications only in the event of disagreements about whether to make awards or not;

4/05-06

Education Innovation Fund

RECEIVED:

An update from the Chair on consideration by the Finance and General Purposes Committee of a proposal from the Vice-Chancellor to establish an Education Innovation Fund, as set out in paper SC.43/05-06, noting that no adverse feedback had been received, and that the proposal would be considered for final approval by the Council in December.

CONSIDERED:

- (a) Draft guidelines for awards from the Education Innovation Fund, should it be approved by the Council, paper QEWG 3/05-06;
- (b) Methods to encourage enhancement activities and bids to the Fund across the University.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the proposal for the Education Innovation Fund be warmly and enthusiastically welcomed;
- (d) That the primary criterion for making awards from the Fund be the innovativeness of the proposal, while proposals will also need to demonstrate the potential impact on students and the sustainability of the idea, should it prove successful;
- (e) That a two-stage light-touch application process be developed, with initial expressions of interest of up to a page considered by members of the assessment panel by email, and subsequent full applications, signed off by the Head(s) of the appropriate department(s), considered in a meeting of the assessment panel;
- (f) That the following be invited to form the panel to assess bids:

Professor Michael Whitby	Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Chair
Ms Anne Bell	Librarian
Mr John Dale	e-Lab
Mr Brian Duggan	Students' Union
Ms Sue Law	Centre for Academic Practice
Dr Mike Neary	Faculty of Social Studies
Dr Ed Peile	Warwick Medical School
Dr Paul Taylor	Faculty of Science
a representative of the Faculty of Arts	
Dr Glynis Cousin	Higher Education Academy

Secretariat: Mr Darren Wallis, Dr Julian Moss

- (g) That the guidance encourage award holders to engage in reflection throughout their projects, to help capture progress and lessons for others;
- (h) That the Secretariat refine the draft criteria and circulate the revised guidance to members of the group for further comment;

- (i) That the Fund be widely publicised, emphasising that individual members of staff, groups of staff, departments, cross-departmental groups, administrative and support departments, and the Students' Union are all eligible to apply;
- (j) That a memo to be circulated to Heads of departments and other centres and sections of the University, including the Students' Union, and similar material advertising the Fund be placed on insite;
- (k) That the Secretariat work with the Communications Office to make the education media aware of the Fund.

5/05-06

Learning & Teaching Strategy (Minute 23/04-05 referred)

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A paper prepared by the Secretary and Assistant Secretary outlining the current state of the review of the University's Learning & Teaching Strategy, paper QEWG 4/05-06;
- (b) Ideas for enhancing the quality of academic courses at the University left to the Group by Dr P Blackmore, prior to his departure for Coventry University, paper QEWG 2/05-06;
- (c) Principles for developing the next iteration of the Strategy.

RESOLVED:

- (d) That the University develop a shorter strategy than previous versions, through a fundamental rewrite;
- (e) That the new Strategy be project-focused with key strategic themes, which may include:
  - creativity and innovation
  - internationalisation of the University and the curriculum
  - diverse learning preferences, including more research into teaching and learning
  - skills
  - ethics
- (f) That the widespread embedding of recent innovations and developments in good practice be placed alongside further innovation in the new Strategy;
- (g) That the new Strategy encourage academic departments and centres to carry out regular reflection on their curricula;
- (h) That e-learning not be highlighted as a particular strand in the new Strategy, it being noted that e-learning is one method of learning amongst many;

- (i) That an article be placed on insite before the end of the Autumn Term setting out the likely parameters and shape of the new Strategy and inviting suggestions and contributions;
- (j) That the Secretariat prepare an outline for a new Learning & Teaching Strategy by the end of the Autumn Term, with appropriate colleagues then invited to contribute to the production of a first draft by the beginning of January;
- (k) That the first draft thus produced be circulated to members of the Working Group for comment in the first instance, to be followed by formal consultation with University Boards and Committees;
- (l) That consideration be given to arranging open discussion meetings to give a wide cross-section of the University community the opportunity to comment on the draft Strategy.

6/05-06

Teaching Quality Enhancement & Professional Standards Funding

REPORTED:

- (a) That subsequent to the meeting of the group assessing bids for TQEF & Professional Standards Funding on 10 March 2005, the Chair took action on behalf of the group to approve the following amended bid:

Dr Trevor Hawkes, Mathematics, 'Computer-Aided Assessment in the Science Faculty': £21,000 from the challenge fund supporting the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy sub-heading on Computer-Aided Assessment.

- (b) That the group assessing bids for TQEF & Professional Standards Funding at its meeting held on 19 July 2005 resolved to fund the following projects, subject to minor clarifications in a small number of areas, subsequently supplied and approved by the Chair of the group:
  - (i) Mrs Carol Davies, Warwick Medical School, 'Development of web-based "blended learning" resources for part-time postgraduate CPD students taking the module "Understanding Research and Critical Appraisal in Health Care": £17,000;
  - (ii) Dr Hilary Nesi, Centre for English Language Teacher Education, 'The development of an on-line grammar resource for international students at Warwick University', £9,000 with a further £9,000 from the challenge fund supporting the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy sub-heading on Computer-Aided Assessment;
  - (iii) Dr Loredana Polezzi, Department of Italian, 'Integration of e-learning practices in teaching and learning in the Modern Languages disciplines': £17,000.

- (c) That the group assessing bids for TQEF & Professional Standards Funding at its meeting held on 19 July 2005 resolved to refer the following bid back to the proposing departments for refinement ahead of resubmission, and that members of the group subsequently considered a resubmitted bid and resolved to fund the project:

Dr Sarah Richardson, Department of History, 'e-resources and e-learning in the Department of History and School of Comparative American Studies': £19,250.

7/05-06 Outcomes from national audit and review processes

CONSIDERED:

- (a) 'Outcomes of Institutional Audit', an overview report by QAA of the outcomes of the first 70 institutional audits, paper QEWG 5/05-06;
- (b) 'Enhancing Practice: Assessment', an outcome of the Scottish Enhancement Themes process, paper QEWG 6/05-06;
- (c) 'Enhancing Practice: Responding to Student Needs', an outcome of the Scottish Enhancement Themes process, paper QEWG 7/05-06.

RESOLVED:

That the Group consider further publication in the series when they are published where appropriate, including the *Outcomes...* paper on assessment and classification arrangements.

8/05-06 Date and time of next meetings

RESOLVED:

That the Secretariat arrange the next meeting of the Group for the seventh week of the Spring Term (week commencing 13 February 2006).