

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Quality Enhancement Working Group

**Minutes of the meeting of the Quality Enhancement Working Group  
held on Wednesday 27 November 2008**

Present: Professor Karen O'Brien (Chair), Mr Jose Arroyo, Ms Sue Bennett, Mr Antony Brewerton, Mr John Dale, Dr Ken Flint, Ms Gill Frigerio, Professor Christina Hughes, Professor Neil Johnson, Professor Jackie Labbe, Mr Sean Russell, Professor Carol Rutter, Mr Mohammed Surve, Dr Paul Taylor

Apologies: Dr Seán Allan, Mr Manus Conaghan, Dr Amanda Dowd, Dr David Lamburn, Professor Anthony McFarlane, Dr Fergus McKay, Dr Paul O'Hare, Dr Martin Skinner

In attendance: Ms Jenny Bradfield, Dr Julian Moss; Dr Susan Brock, Dr Catherine Hanley, Ms Emma King (all for item 15/08-09)

12/08-09 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Group held on Wednesday 15 October 2008 be approved.

13/08-09 Matters Arising

(a) Joint and cross-departmental degrees (minute 4(d)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

(i) That at its meeting on 15 October 2008 the Group considered an oral report from the Chair on ongoing work to examine management arrangements on undergraduate courses delivered by more than one department, noting that a Working Group set up under the aegis of the Board of Undergraduate Studies and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee was due to meet on 17 October 2008, and recommended (to the BUGS/AQSC Working Group on Joint and Multi-disciplinary degrees):

(A) That the term "cross-departmental degrees" be considered as a description of the courses concerned;

(B) That the Working Group consider what implications their recommendations may hold for other sources of guidance and advice, including Student-Staff Liaison Committee guidance, Personal Tutor guidance;

- (C) That the Working Group consider whether further work would be necessary on cross-departmental taught postgraduate courses.
- (ii) That at its meeting on 28 October 2008 the Academic Quality and Standards Committee considered a report from the BUGS/AQSC Working Group on Joint and Multi-disciplinary degrees, paper AQSC 9/08-09, and resolved:
- (A) That the Committee strongly supported the work of the Working Group on Undergraduate Joint and Cross-Departmental Courses;
  - (B) That the Committee endorse the Group's recommendation that a Good Practice Guide for the management of undergraduate joint and cross-departmental courses be drafted by the Chair of the Group and the Teaching Quality section of the Academic Office, to be sent to departments for consultation later in the academic year, as set out in Recommendation 16 of paper AQSC 9/08-09, it being noted that the 'home' department for a particular course should liaise with the other relevant department(s) in managing the course;
  - (C) That the Committee endorse the Group's recommendation that an annual meeting for course leaders/coordinators of undergraduate joint and cross-departmental courses be convened by the Teaching Quality section of the Academic Office, to be chaired by the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies, as set out in Recommendations 17 and 18 of paper AQSC 9/08-09;
  - (D) That the Committee endorse the Group's recommendations on the development of student representation and liaison arrangements on undergraduate joint and cross-departmental courses, and that the SSLC Coordinators consider the proposals set out in Recommendations 14 and 15 of paper AQSC 9/08-09;
  - (E) That at a future meeting the Committee consider proposed amendments to the course approval form, as set out in Recommendations 1 and 2 of paper AQSC 9/08-09;
  - (F) That the Chair of the Group take forward work concerning the other Recommendations from the Group in drafting the Good Practice Guide and through other mechanisms, as set out in

paper AQSC 9/08-09, consulting with the University community as appropriate;

- (G) That in due course the Board of Graduate Studies consider the reports and recommendations from the Group, and the draft Good Practice Guide, with a view to considering whether similar guidance is needed for postgraduate courses which cross departmental boundaries.

(AQSC minute 4(g)/08-09)

RECEIVED:

Paper AQSC 9/08-09, together with an oral report from the Chair on the next meeting of the BUGS/AQSC Working Group on Joint and Cross-Departmental degrees.

- (b) Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund (minute 4(c)(ii)/08-09 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the following projects were supported in the second round of bids to the TALEF in October 2008:
- (A) Bob Thomson (Learning and Development Centre) *Action Learning*, £700.
  - (B) Geraldine Hartshorne and Silvester Czanner (Warwick Medical School) *Initial Steps towards educational modelling of Human Embryos*, £1,240.
- (ii) That subject to the outcome of discussions with the applicants, a further three projects were likely be supported.
- (iii) That the Chair of the TALEF Selection Board took action on behalf of the Board to approve the award of £27,000 to the following project: Tom Abbott (Communications Office), *Digital Press*, £27,000.
- (iv) That there will be insufficient funds to support a further round of bids for TALEF funding and that the TALEF Selection Board at its meeting on 17 October 2008 recommended that any remaining funds should be distributed elsewhere to support teaching and learning enhancement, for example, the Teaching and Learning forums.

## RECEIVED:

Oral reports from the Chair and Secretary on the Audit visit by the QAA audit team as part of the University's Institutional Audit, which took place on 10-14 November 2008, noting that QAA had written to the Vice-Chancellor to provide an initial indication of the key findings likely to be included in the draft audit report, including:

- (a) That confidence can be placed in the soundness of the University's current and likely future management of the academic standards of its awards;
- (b) That confidence can be placed in the soundness of the University's current and likely future management of the quality of the learning opportunities available to students;
- (c) Highlighted instances of good practice in a number of areas:
  - the student representation framework including the SSLC system
  - the enhancement of student skills development
  - preparation for and support of study abroad
  - the opportunities afforded through the URSS and the Reinvention Centre for students to become involved in research activities
  - the comprehensive information, including Academic Statistics, available for staff and students on Insite
  - the student experience provided by the Centre for Lifelong Learning and the University's commitment to opportunities for part-time students
- (d) Recommendations for action in the University's management of joint honours and cross-departmental courses, and the operation at departmental level of the new guidelines on personal tutoring.

## RESOLVED:

- (e) That the Group record its thanks to Dr Julian Moss, Ms Jenny Bradfield, Ms Helen Hutchings and Ms Carla Stafford (Teaching Quality section of the Academic Office) for their work in the administration of the Audit, and to Professor Karen O'Brien for her work as Senior Academic Coordinator for Audit;
- (f) That the Group record its thanks to the students who were involved in preparing the Student Written Submission, especially Mr Mo Surve (Students' Union Education Officer), his predecessor Mr Peter Ptashko, and Dr Tim Sansom (Academic Representation Coordinator, Students' Union), and to the students who met the Audit team;
- (g) That the Group record its thanks to all those members of staff who met the Audit team.

15/08-09 Creative Environments for Learning

CONSIDERED:

A proposal drafted by the CAPITAL Centre and the Reinvention Centre, Creative Environments for Learning, paper QEWG 17/08-09.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Group warmly support the Creative Environments for Learning project, as set out in paper QEWG 17/08-09;
- (b) That the Director of the Learning and Development Centre discuss the proposal in outline with the University's Liaison Contact at the Higher Education Academy with a view to identifying potential sources of funding for the project;
- (c) That Professor Rutter and Dr Taylor seek advice from Research Support Services on potential sources of funding for the project, which might include HEFCE, Research Councils or the ESRC Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) or any successor programmes;
- (d) That members of the Group with further ideas on potential sources of funding for the project discuss these with Professor Rutter and Dr Taylor.

16/08-09 Teaching and Learning Developments and e-lab

CONSIDERED:

A report from Mr John Dale, Head of e-Learning and Web Development, IT Services, paper QEWG 18/08-09.

RESOLVED:

That the Group serve as one forum for the discussion of ideas for future electronic teaching and learning developments, where appropriate assisting in the definition of potential tools and services.

17/08-09 Teaching and Learning Forums

CONSIDERED:

Reports from the Chairs of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Forums on recent and planned activities, including:

- (a) an oral report from the Chair of the Faculty of Medicine Teaching and Learning Forum, noting ongoing discussions of assessment and feedback, and the potential increasing involvement of NHS staff who teach on Medical School courses;

- (b) notes of the meeting of 31 October 2008 of the Faculty of Science Teaching and Learning Forum, paper QEWG 20/08-09;
- (c) notes of the meeting of 29 October 2008 of the Faculty of Social Studies Teaching and Learning Forum, paper QEWG 21/08-09;
- (d) a written update from the Chair of the Faculty of Arts Teaching and Learning Forum along with an oral update from the Students' Union Education Officer on the last meeting of the Faculty of Arts Teaching and Learning Forum.

RESOLVED:

- (e) That reports from chairs of Faculty Teaching and Learning Forums be considered early in each meeting of the Group;
- (f) That the Director of the Learning and Development Centre work with LDC colleagues to establish additional informal routes for sharing discussions between different Faculty Teaching and Learning Forums

18/08-09 Feedback on Assessed Work

CONSIDERED:

A report drafted by the Assistant Secretary concerning feedback on assessed work, paper QEWG 19/08-09.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Assistant Secretary be thanked for compiling a useful digest of information on assessment.
- (b) That the Teaching Quality section and Faculty Teaching and Learning Forums be invited to compile digests of current issues in assessment, including current practice in departments, and perceptions and possible misconceptions concerning University rules on assessment;
- (c) That the Students' Union Education Officer be invited to compile a digest of student opinion on assessment.

19/08-09 Undergraduate Research Scholarship Scheme (URSS)

REPORTED (by the Director of the Learning and Development Centre):

That information about the Undergraduate Research Scholarship Scheme (URSS) for 2009 had recently been circulated to departments, that publicity to students would begin in January 2009, and that the deadline for applications would be 2 February 2009.

20/08-09 Chair of the Group

REPORTED:

That Professor O'Brien would be relinquishing the Chair of the Group while on study leave during the spring and summer terms 2009, and that a new Chair would be confirmed in due course.

RESOLVED:

That the Group record its thanks to Professor O'Brien for her contribution to quality enhancement at the University during her tenure as Chair.

21/08-09 Date of Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Group would be held in the Spring Term 2009 on a date to be decided.

JDM/JB, 3.12.08

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