UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Quality Enhancement Working Group
held on Friday 16 November 2007

Present: Professor Karen O'Brien (Chair); Ms Anne Bell, Ms Sue Bennett, Mr
                Manus Conaghan, Dr Amanda Dowd, Professor Jacqueline Labbe, Dr
                David Lamburn, Professor Anthony McFarlane, Dr Paul O'Hare, Mr
                Peter Ptashko, Mr Sean Russell, Professor Carol Rutter, Dr Paul
                Taylor

Apologies: Mr Jose Arroyo, Dr Fergus McKay, Dr Zoe Radnor, Dr Martin Skinner,
                Ms Roberta Wooldridge Smith

In attendance: Ms Jenny Bradfield, Mr Antony Brewerton (for item 5/07-08), Dr Julian
                Moss

1/07-08   Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership

                RESOLVED:

                That the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership of the
                Group for 2007-08 be approved as set out in paper QEWG 1/07-08,
                subject to an invitation being made to Mr John Dale, IT Services, to
                become a member of the Group.

2/07-08   Minutes of the Previous Meeting

                RESOLVED:

                That the minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 11 June 2007 be
                approved.

3/07-08   Matters Arising

                (a)   Funding for teaching and learning projects (minute 28(b)/06-07
                        referred)

                        REPORTED:

                        (i)   That at the meeting of the Group on 11 June 2007 it
                                was resolved that the Secretariat draw up guidelines for
                                a combined TQEF/EIF fund as soon as possible and
                                discuss with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and
                                Learning) the desirability of introducing a rolling
                                application/approval process for small-value bids
                                alongside fixed deadlines for larger-value bids,
                                including the possibility of establishing a sub-group of
                                the Committee to consider small-value bids;

                        (ii)   That at its meeting on 22 October 2007 the e-Learning
                                Steering Group resolved that the proposed mechanism
                                for allocating TQEF funding in 2007-09 to support
                                teaching and learning projects with an e-learning focus

be approved as set out in paper EL 2/07-08, subject to the amendments noted at the meeting.

CONSIDERED:

Guidelines for allocating TQEF funding in 2007-09, paper EL 2/07-08 (revised), it being noted that:

(iii)   further funds would not be allocated from the Education Innovation Fund;

(iv)   TQEF funding for 2007-09 would be allocated on a competitive basis to teaching and learning projects with an e-learning focus, which addressed one of the key aims of the University Strategy;

REPORTED:

(v)   a funding stream for teaching enhancement projects may become available in connection with the implementation of the University Strategy, but this was yet to be confirmed.

RESOLVED:

(vi)   That the Group's concerns about the current absence of a funding stream for teaching enhancement projects, other than those with an e-learning focus, be reported to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning and International Affairs) and to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

(b)   e-Learning Showcase Day (minute 28(a)/06-07 referred)

RECEIVED:

(i)   A report from Ms Rachel Davis, Learning Grid and Teaching Grid Manager, evaluating the e-Learning Showcase day held in June 2007, paper QEWG 4/07-08;

(ii)   An oral report from the Assistant Secretary on preparations for a second e-Learning Showcase event to be held in March 2008.

(c)   Times Higher Education Awards (minute 36/06-07 referred)

REPORTED:

That the University had been shortlisted for Awards in the following categories, and that the winners would be announced on 29 November 2007:

(i)   Business Initiative of the Year [for Concurrent Thinking];

(ii)   Outstanding Contribution to Sustainable Development;
(iii)   Excellence and Innovation in the Arts.

RESOLVED:

That the Secretary circulate to members of the Group the criteria for nominations for 2008, with a view to increasing the number of nominations for Awards related to teaching and learning.

4/07-08   Centre for Student Development and Enterprise

CONSIDERED:

An oral report from Mr Sean Russell, Director, Student Development and Diversity, on the activities of the Centre for Student Development and Enterprise (CSDE).

RESOLVED:

(a)   That the Group recognised the importance of enhancing the provision of skills support for postgraduate taught students and supported the continued work of academic departments, CSDE and the Graduate School in this area;

(b)   That the Group consider at its next meeting a paper prepared by Ms Catherine Thomson, Induction Officer, CSDE, on discussions between the University and the Students' Union concerning enhancements to the induction process.

5/07-08   Reading Lists (minute 33/06-07 referred)

CONSIDERED:

A report from Mr Antony Brewerton, Head of Academic Support, Library, on the evaluation of the reading list pilot project, paper QEWG 3/07-08.

RESOLVED:

That the proposals for a further pilot outlined in paper QEWG 3/07-08 be approved.

RECOMMENDED (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee)

That the practice within some departments of nominating a member of academic staff to coordinate the submission of reading lists to the Library be adopted by all departments.

6/07-08   Library Developments

               REPORTED:

               (a)   That the Library's digitisation project was well underway, that a
                        substantial number of texts were now available in digital format
                        to support over 200 modules, and that the project could have a
                        significant and positive effect on the Library's service to
                        students;

               (b)   That the re-developed first floor and entrance to the main
                        Library would be opened during week commencing 19
                        November, that the Education Officer & Deputy President of
                        the Students' Union had visited the new facilities and
                        anticipated that they would be well received by students, and
                        that the Library was developing proactive service models to
                        support users in the new facilities.

7/07-08   Learning and Development Centre

               CONSIDERED:

               An oral report from Ms Sue Bennett, Director, Learning and
               Development Centre, on the activities of the Centre.

               RESOLVED:

               That the Group welcomed the proposal from the Learning and
               Development Centre to host themed lunches within Faculties to
               support teaching development and to share good practice.

8/07-08   Employability Strategy

               RESOLVED:

               That the draft Employability Strategy prepared by Ms Roberta
               Wooldridge Smith, Director of Careers and Employability, paper
               QEWG 2/07-08, be considered at the next meeting of the Group.

9/07-08   Strategic Overview of Enhancement Activities

               CONSIDERED:

               A report from the Chair on strategic overview of enhancement
               activities and mechanisms for disseminating good practice.

               RESOLVED:

               That the Group welcomed the proposals outlined by the Chair, that a
               draft strategy for dissemination and coordination of enhancement
               activities continue to be developed for consideration at the next
               meeting of the Group, and that the following suggestions be noted:

               (a)   increasing the emphasis on evaluation of enhancement
                        activities;

(b)   that a communications plan for disseminating the strategy to staff and students be developed, which could include a dedicated website, a hard copy annual summary of enhancement activities, and an alert system for new developments.

10/07-08   QAA Institutional Audit

REPORTED:

That the University's next QAA Institutional Audit was to take place during the Autumn Term 2008.

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Secretary outlining the timescale of and preparations for Institutional Audit, paper AQSC 7/07-08.

RESOLVED:

That the Chair continue to discuss with appropriate Senior Officers the level of administrative support required for Institutional Audit preparations.

11/07-08   Learning, Teaching and Assessment Enhancement Strategy

CONSIDERED:

A draft of the University's new Learning, Teaching and Assessment Enhancement Strategy, paper AQSC 6/07-08 (revised), noting that the draft will be sent to Heads of Department and Faculty Boards for consultation.

RESOLVED:

That members of the Group pass comments on the draft Strategy to the Secretariat.

12/07-08   Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Group would be held in the Spring Term 2008 on a date to be decided.