

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

**Academic Quality and Standards Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee  
held on 11 May 2017

Present: Professor C Hughes (Chair), Professor A Clarke (Chair of the Faculty of Medicine), Professor P Corvi (SSLC Co-ordinator (Social Sciences)), Professor A Dowd (Academic Director of the Graduate School), Professor L Gracia (Dean of Students), Dr L Gramaglia (Learning and Development Manager (Academic)), Professor S Jacka (Representative of Senate (Science)), Professor C Jenainati (SSLC Coordinator (Arts)), Professor D Lamburn (Chair of the Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee (and Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education))), Dr N Monk (Director of IATL), Professor M Nudds (Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences), Professor A Reeve (Representative of Senate (Social Sciences)), Professor L Roberts (Representative of Senate (Medicine)), Dr N Shiers (Postgraduate Officer, Students' Union), Ms A Thomas (Service Owner (Academic Technology)), Professor G Van der Velden (Academic Director, Warwick International Higher Education Academy), Dr I Tuersley (SSLC Co-ordinator (Science)), Ms H Worsdale (Education Officer Students' Union), Dr N Whybrow (Representative of Senate (Arts))

Apologies: Ms S Bennett (Director of Student Careers and Skills), Professor S Gilson (Chair of the Faculty of Arts), Professor R Leng (Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies), Professor M Shipman (Chair of the Faculty of Science)

In Attendance: Ms K Gray (Secretary), Mrs C Pearson (Assistant Secretary), Mrs J Hughes (Student Careers and Skills, for item 69/16-17), Mr T Crowson (Sports Officer, Students' Union, for item 74/16-17), Dr M Mik (Assistant Registrar (Teaching and Learning), for item 79/16-17), Ms J Bowskill (Assistant Registrar (Teaching and Learning), for item 78/16-17), Mr T Such (Operations Director, International Foundation Programme, for item 81/16-17).

69/16-17 Education Strategy

RECEIVED:

A presentation by the Chair on the proposed Education Strategy (Paper AQSC.28/16-17).

REPORTED (by the Chair):

- (a) That the Education Strategy was intended to provide a framework for developments and much work was already ongoing;
- (b) That the current version was a work in progress and it would be reviewed further and updated regularly;
- (c) In response to a question from the SSLC Coordinator (Arts), that REF and the Education Strategy should not be opposed but should reinforce each other;

- (d) In response to a question from the Representative of Senate (Science), that there would have to be some boundaries to the Strategy and it would not cover all aspects of a students' experience;
- (e) That there would be individual projects linked to the values, strategic directions and facilitators;
- (f) That it was important to provide strategic direction in areas supporting education where this had been lacking previously to ensure that developments were co-ordinated;
- (g) In response to questions from the SSLC Co-ordinator (Science) and the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, that it was recognized that there were differing interpretations of research-led teaching which would need to be considered in due course but the Strategy was intended to set a direction of travel;

(by the Director of the WIHEA):

- (h) That the Strategy needed to be flexible at this stage to allow for further debate on definitions of terms and to come to a common understanding on those definitions across the University;

(by the Representative of Senate (Science)):

- (i) That joint and interdisciplinary degrees required additional resource to operate well and also required staff and students to be able to communicate across the boundaries of different disciplinary discourses;
- (j) That it would be helpful to articulate a desired endpoint in some areas of the Strategy;

(by the Representative of Senate (Medicine)):

- (k) That it was important to reflect education partnerships with local partners in the Strategy;

RESOLVED:

- (l) That further information on the Student Personalised Information Programme would be brought to the Committee;
- (m) That consultation also be undertaken through Insite to allow for wide engagement across the University;

70/16-17

Minutes of the last meeting

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2017 be approved.

71/16-17 Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED:

- (a) That, should any members or attendees of the Committee have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the CUC Guide for Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the UK.
- (b) That no conflicts of interest were reported.

72/16-17 Matters arising

- (a) Feedback on Exams (minute 5/16-17 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting on 27 June 2016, the Senate approved proposals:
  - (A) That feedback on examinations be provided to all students to apply to examinations taken during 2016/17 and that this could take the form either of feedback to individuals or to cohorts;
  - (B) That academic departments be offered the following options for implementing this requirement:
    - (1) Departments already providing feedback on examinations should continue with current practice;
    - (2) Either the pro-forma template set out in Paper AQSC.44/15-16 or an adapted version could be implemented for feedback to cohorts;
    - (3) Departments could propose alternative mechanisms for feedback on examinations, appropriate to their context and discipline;
  - (C) That, where departments proposed using alternative mechanisms for providing feedback on examinations, these be approved by a working group of the Committee;
  - (D) That the method of providing feedback on examinations be clearly communicated to students.
- (ii) That at its meeting on 27 October 2017, it was reported to the Committee that departments had been asked to notify the Secretariat of how they were intending to offer feedback on examinations by 30 September; approximately half had done so and the majority were either providing feedback to individuals or at cohort level, using the template form or an adaptation of this.
- (iii) That the Committee resolved that the purpose of the working group of the Committee be amended to focus on enhancement of approaches to providing feedback on examinations to students, through advice and sharing of good practice and that the Group should have a student member.

- (iv) That the majority of Departments had now provided information on how feedback would be provided to students;
- (v) That, as noted previously, the majority were either providing feedback to individuals or at cohort level, using the template form or an adaptation of this, as set out in Paper AQSC 17/16-17;

(by the Learning and Development Manager (Academic)):

- (vi) That students may not feel comfortable asking for feedback on examinations where it was available to individuals on request and may therefore be deterred from doing so;

(by the Academic Director of the WIHEA):

- (vii) That the student view of the methods of providing feedback were not clear;

RESOLVED:

- (viii) That information in ITLR reports on feedback on examinations be reviewed;
- (ix) That the Department of Economics be asked to provide information on its methods of providing feedback to students on exams;
- (x) That further information be requested from departments on how individual feedback is requested and provided and the workload involved, including numbers of students.

(b) Report on Student-Related Data (minute 57/16-17 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting on 20 February 2017, the Committee considered a report on student-related data by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) and Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on data related to teaching and learning (AQSC.13/16-17) and resolved that consideration of progression rates be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee;

(by the Secretary):

- (ii) That the data for progression from 2015/16 to 2016/17 had been removed given that this was updated on a quarterly basis and included students who were temporarily withdrawn and who were resitting without residence, which may distort the year on year comparison;
- (iii) That development of metrics on progression to inform the new Course Monitoring and Review process to be introduced in 2017/18 were ongoing;

(by the Representative of Senate (Science)):

- (iv) That measures taken to improve progression rates for specific cohorts would need to be at the level of delivery;

(by the Academic Director (WIHEA)):

- (v) That the University had to have oversight of monitoring data and associated measures taken given its accountabilities;

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences):

- (vi) That it may be helpful for departments to know which students fell within each category set out in the report;

(by the Learning and Development Manager (Academic)):

- (vii) That students may not wish to be identified in this way;

CONSIDERED:

Analysis of progression rates in the report on student-related data by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) and Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (AQSC.13/16-17 revised).

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that work in this area was ongoing through the development of the TEF and Education Strategies.

73/16-17      Progress of Committee Business

REPORTED:

- (a) That at its meeting on 1 February 2017, the Senate approved recommendations from the Committee under the following headings:

- Lecture Capture Policy
- Degree Classification and Exam Board Operations
- New Course Approval Process: Course Approval panels
- Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership
- Penalties on Late Submission
- Warwick Business School Executive MBA Modules
- MA Professional Education in partnership with Bishop Challoner
- Teaching School Alliance
- Revisions to the Undergraduate Marking Scale

- (b) That at its meeting on 1 February 2017, the Senate resolved that the proposed revisions to the Undergraduate Marking Scale be approved as set out in QAWG.5/16-17 (revised 2), subject to the minor amendment indicated and that matters raised by members of the Senate relating to the desirability of achieving finer granularity of First Class marks and relating to the application of the scale to level 7

courses and 'Integrated Undergraduate Masters Degrees' be referred back to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee for consideration.

- (c) That at its meeting on 20 February 2017 the Senate approved recommendations from the Committee under the following headings:

Revision to Regulation 8.3 (First Degrees)  
Collaborative, Flexible and Distributed Learning Sub-Committee

74/16-17

Chair's Business

- (a) TEF Outcomes

REPORTED (by the Chair):

That the TEF outcomes would be disseminated to institutions on 12 June and would be published on 14 June.

- (b) NSS Response Rate

REPORTED (by the Chair):

That an overall response rate of 57% had been achieved this year.

75/16-17

Students' Union Update

REPORTED (by the Students' Union Education Officer):

- (a) That the Rate my module website would be re-launched as 'Discover my module' with an emphasis on providing peer to peer advice on modules to inform module selection;
- (b) That it would cover topics such as useful texts, fit with other modules;
- (c) That the 'Liberate my module' campaign was ongoing and incorporated how students could input into the development of the curriculum as co-producers and how diversity within the curriculum was encouraged;

(by the Students' Union Postgraduate Officer):

- (d) That proposals from the Sessional Teachers Project would now be considered by Academic Resourcing Committee;
- (e) That the proposals represented an improvement on the current position but that there were a number of issues remaining;

(by the Learning and Development Manager (Academic):

- (f) That there was a requirement in the proposals for all postgraduate research students to be trained but there were not resources centrally to deliver this within the Learning and Development Centre;

RESOLVED:

- (g) That the outcomes from the 'Discover my module' website could feed into the work being undertaken by the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Working Group on surveys;
- (h) That the Chair investigate how it was intended that delivery of training for postgraduate research students be undertaken;
- (i) That the Postgraduate Officer be thanked for his work on the Sessional Teachers' Project.

76/16-17 Teaching on Wednesday Afternoons

REPORTED (by the Students' Union Postgraduate Officer):

- (a) That currently the policy on no teaching on Wednesday afternoons only applied to undergraduate students;
- (b) That the Students' Union was campaigning to have the policy extended to all full-time taught students based on campus apart from those on professional courses, such as medicine, social work and education;

(by the Students' Union Education Officer):

- (c) That the Students' Union was also campaigning to have the policy apply from 12.00pm rather than 1.00pm as this did not provide sufficient time for students to prepare for fixtures, which usually started at 2.00pm;
- (d) That it was recognised that the Timetabling Project was underway and this request would need to feed into this development;

(by the Students' Union Sports Officer):

- (e) That the Students' Union was also campaigning for students to be permitted to take authorised absences from taught classes when they were representing the University in sports fixtures and that this would extend to Fridays when national events were usually held;
- (f) In response to a query from the SSLC Co-ordinator (Arts), that students would prefer to start taught classes at 9.00 on weekdays rather than move teaching to Saturdays;

(by the SSLC Co-ordinator (Science):

- (g) That the requirements of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) in terms of teaching and assessment should also be taken into account for other subject areas;

RESOLVED:

That a paper setting out proposals in more detail be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

77/16-17 Institutional Teaching and Learning Review

RECEIVED:

Departmental ITLR reports and responses, available at <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/itlr2017/report>

REPORTED:

- (a) That, at its meeting on 12 June 2017, the Committee would consider the reports and responses for approval, together with the evaluation report from the ITLR Steering Group, and close reading of a number of reports and responses would therefore be allocated to individual members;

(by the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education):

- (b) That the Committee would be responsible for the actions arising from the ITLR;

RESOLVED:

That members should also have access to the Evaluation Report when considering the individual departmental reports;

78/16-17 Review of Assessment

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on the proposed Review of Assessment (AQSC.18/16-17).

REPORTED (by the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education):

- (a) That the drivers for undertaking the Review of Assessment included: changes in the external regulatory landscape; the need to review the timing of assessment; the numerous recommendations arising from ITLR in relation to assessment and; how regulations are implemented.
- (b) In response to a query from the SSLC Co-ordinator (Arts) that external examiners had raised concerns about ability to have oversight of assessment and the use of exam board discretion;
- (c) In response to a query from the SSLC Co-ordinator (Social Sciences) that feedback on assessment would not fall within the scope of the Review;
- (d) That more significant changes may be introduced in 2018/19;



(by the Chair):

- (e) That the intention to introduce greater diversity in methods of assessment could be more explicit;

(by the Students' Union Education Officer):

- (f) That the impact of assessment on student wellbeing should be taken into consideration;

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be approved subject to minor amendments to indicate that student wellbeing should be taken into consideration and to make more explicit the Group's remit to introduce greater diversity of methods of assessment where appropriate.

79/16-17

Plagiarism Guidance

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Plagiarism Working Group and Draft Guidance on Handling Plagiarism (Paper QAWG.13/16-17 revised).

REPORTED (by the Representative of Senate (Social Sciences) and Chair of the Plagiarism Working Group:

- (a) That there was variation in departmental approaches to the handling of suspected plagiarism cases;
- (b) That the Guidance had been developed through extensive discussions of the Working Group and iterations had also been considered by the Quality Assurance Working Group;
- (c) That the Guidance aimed to provide reasonable consistency in the investigation of plagiarism but allowing for some local adaptation;
- (d) That there was further work to be done on the terms of reference and support for the Investigating Committee of Senate;

RESOLVED:

- (e) That the title of the Guidance be reconsidered;
- (f) That section 1 of the Guidance include reference to the need to keep records of communications, noting that some may be subject to provisions in the Data Protection Act;
- (g) That section 6 be amended to change the reference from 'cheating' to 'inappropriate use of sources';
- (h) That the Investigating Committee of Senate should have representation from a variety of disciplines;

- (i) That the Chair and Secretary to the Plagiarism Working Group be thanked for their work on the report;

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the Draft Guidance Plagiarism be approved subject to the amendments set out in (e) to (h) above.

80/16-17

Course Approval Forms

REPORTED:

- (a) That at its meeting on 30 November 2016, the Committee considered a proposed new course proposal form for approval 'in principle', noting that it was intended that this would be made available as a digital form and further consultation on the detail and functionality would be ongoing (Paper AQSC.7/16-17, appendices A and B).
- (b) It was also reported to the Committee (*inter alia*) that the form was in development and would be piloted during 2016/17 and introduced in 2017/18;
- (c) The Committee resolved that the form would need to be approved prior to being used in the pilot stage and that the workflow of the process be provided to the Committee when it considered the revised form.

RECEIVED:

A workflow diagram of the course approval process (Paper AQSC.19/16-17).

CONSIDERED:

The revised course approval form to be used in the institutional pilot of the new course approval process, noting that this would not be used as a paper form in practice but would be a digital, interactive workflow process (Paper AQSC.20/16-17).

REPORTED (by the Assistant Registrar (Teaching and Learning)):

- (d) That staff completing the digital form would only see those sections of the form relevant to them;
- (e) That there had been considerable input into the development of the form since the last meeting to ensure that all data required for new courses was captured at this point;
- (f) That those sections relating to Finance and Marketing fell within the responsibilities of the Academic Activities Sub-Committee of the Academic Resourcing Committee;

(by the Representative of Senate (Science)):

- (g) That sometimes multiple members of staff would need to be able to access and comment on draft proposals;

RESOLVED:

- (h) That consideration be given to including provision for Level 3 Foundation courses;
- (i) That new courses be reported to the Students' Union to allow for updating of records;
- (j) That comments be provided by the Learning and Development Manager (Academic) following the meeting;

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the new course proposal form be approved subject to the amendments set out in (h) to (j) above.

81/16-17

Academic Governance Review

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Academic Governance Review Working Group (Paper AQSC.21/16-17).

REPORTED (by the Chair):

- (a) That Senate had approved some aspects of the changes to Committee structures at its meeting in June 2016 and the Working Group had been established by Senate to consider further specific issues and to develop more detailed proposals;
- (b) That it was intended that the new academic governance structure would allow for a more strategic focus and stronger structures to develop education;
- (c) That the Faculty Education Committee was intended to facilitate discussions across the boundaries of level of study;
- (d) That the terms of reference provided for the Departmental Education Committee were not intended to be prescriptive but instead to be a model of best practice;

(by the Service Owner (Academic Technology)):

- (e) That the governance structure served as a useful cascade of information;

(by the Representative of Senate (Science)):

- (f) That the governance structure did not always serve as an mechanism for cascading information, particularly in relation to changes in regulation and policy, and clearly documented resources were required for this purpose;

(by the Chair):

- (g) In response to a query from the Representative of Senate (Arts), that there was student representation on all proposed committees and that the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee was co-chaired with the Education Officer of the Students' Union;
- (h) In response to a query from the Representative of Senate (Medicine), that it would be possible to review new course proposals from other departments in the new workflow system;
- (i) In response to a query from the Chair of the Faculty of Medicine in relation to the timing of the consultation and implementation, that the Working Group had been developing proposals for some time but work on the ITLR had meant that it had not been possible to bring proposals out for consultation at an earlier stage;

(by the SSLC Co-ordinator (Social Sciences):

- (j) That it was important for the agenda, minutes and papers to be transparent;

(by the Dean of Students):

- (k) That the inclusion of the Faculty Senior Tutors in the membership of the Faculty Education Committees would be welcome.

82/16-17 International Foundation Programme Approval of Student Outcomes

CONSIDERED:

Proposals for the approval and oversight of outcomes for students on the International Foundation Programme (AQSC.22/16-17).

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposal set out in Paper AQSC.22/16-17 be approved, subject to an amendment to include an independent academic chair of the exam board.

83/16-17 Good Practice Guide on Providing Information for Students

CONSIDERED:

The updated Good Practice Guide on Providing Information for Students (Paper AQSC.23/16-17).

REPORTED (by the Secretary):

- (a) That, given the changes in the external regulatory environment, particularly with respect to CMA Guidance and Part C of the UK Quality Code, the updated version of the Good Practice Guide made responsibilities for accuracy of information clearer and was intended to be more prescriptive;

- (b) That some sections were yet to be updated as further information was yet to be provided;
- (c) That the updated Good Practice Guide was usually approved annually by the Chair on behalf of the Committee but, given the proposed move to require wider application of the Guide, the Committee was asked to consider it this year;

(by the SSLC Co-ordinator (Arts):

- (d) That the move towards greater prescription be supported, noting the difficulties facing joint degree students in locating information if it was not provided in a similar format by different departments;

RESOLVED:

- (e) That the Learning and Development Manager (Academic) provide updated information for the Learning and Development Centre;
- (f) That the move towards a more prescribed use of the Good Practice Guide be supported;
- (g) That the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) look into access to module information in my.wbs for students and staff outside of the Warwick Business School;
- (h) That the Chair be authorised to approve the final version on behalf of the Committee, for recommendation to the Senate.

84/16-17

Good Practice Guide on Monitoring Student Attendance and Progress

CONSIDERED:

Proposed amendments to the Good Practice Guide on Monitoring Student Attendance and Progress (Paper AQSC.24/16-17).

REPORTED: (by the SSLC Co-ordinator (Science):

- (a) That the fee for the intercalated year could be reconsidered if the level of monitoring required were reduced for non-Tier 4 students, noting that students who took a voluntary year out to work were not required to pay a fee;

(by the Secretary):

- (b) In response to a query from the Dean of Students regarding use of personal tutor meetings as monitoring points, that there could be some flexibility in the type of event used as monitoring points and the Teaching Quality team could consider this further;

RESOLVED:

That the Secretariat explore the rationale for the current level of fees for the intercalated year;

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposed amendments to the Good Practice Guide on Monitoring Student Attendance and Progress be approved as set out in Paper AQSC.24/16-17.

85/16-17 Report on Refurbishments of Teaching Spaces

RECEIVED:

A report on planned refurbishments of teaching spaces (Paper AQSC.25/16-17).

86/16-17 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

That since the last meeting of the Committee, the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Committee to approve the following:

- (a) Amendments to undergraduate degree classification conventions for the degrees of BEng and MEng delivered by the School of Engineering, Paper AQSC.26/16-17.
- (b) A proposal by the Warwick Manufacturing Group for a collaboration with Dyson to deliver a BEng Engineering (Degree Apprenticeship), as set out in Papers SUGS.21/16-17, BUGS.10-13/16-17 and CFDLSC.67-68/16-17.

87/16-17 ITS Teaching Update

RECEIVED:

An update report on IT Teaching Services by the Service Owner (Academic Technology) (Paper AQSC.27/16-17).

88/16-17 HEFCE Publication on Sector-Leading and Innovative Practice in Advancing Equality and Diversity

RECEIVED:

A publication from HEFCE on Sector-Leading and Innovative Practice in Advancing Equality and Diversity available at <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2017/edpractice/>

89/16-17 Postgraduate Courses of Study:

REPORTED:

- (a) That at its meeting on 27 April 2017, the Board of Graduate Studies approved revisions to the following courses:
- MSc in Diabetes
  - MSc in Diabetes Paediatrics
- (b) That it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 27 April 2017 that the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Board to approve revisions to the following courses:
- Change of title from MA in Pan-Romanticisms to the MA in European Gothic and Romantic Studies
  - Master in Public Health
  - PhD in Business and Management
  - PhD in Finance and Econometrics
- (c) That it was reported to the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting on 27 April 2017 that the Chair had taken action on behalf of the Board to approve MSc in Behavioural and Data Science

90/16-17 Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee was scheduled to be held on Monday 12 June 2017 at 14.00pm in room CMR 1.0, University House.

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