

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Academic Quality and Standards Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee held on 15
October 2018.

Present: Professor D Lamburn (Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education), (Chair), Professor A Clark (Academic Director Undergraduate Studies), Professor G Cooke (co-opted member of staff in quality assurance role), Dr W Curtis (Academic Director, Partnerships), Professor L Gracia (Dean of Students), Dr M Gifford (Representative of the Board of Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine), Dr J Heron (Representative of the Institute of Advanced Learning), L Kennedy (Students' Union representative), E King (Students Union representative), Dr M Leeke (Representative of the Board of Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine), Professor P Tissington (Academic Director, Employability) and Professor G Van der Velden (Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Student Experience and Learning) and Chair of the Student Experience and Engagement Committee).

Apologies: Professor J Angouri (Representative of the Board of Faculty of Social Sciences), Dr L Hammond (Representative of the Board of Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine), Professor C Hughes (Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education), Professor E Jones (Representative of the Board of Faculty of Social Sciences), Dr J Lee (co-opted member of staff in quality assurance role) and Professor C Sparrow (Academic Director, Postgraduate Studies).

In attendance: K Gray (Secretary), C Gray (Assistant Secretary), R Ingram (Process Owner, Student Personalised Information Project) for item 9.18/19, K Johal (Administrative Officer, Complaints Resolution) for item 11.18/19, Dr E Melia (Senior Assistant Registrar, Student Personalised Information Project) for item 9.18/19, R Wooldridge-Smith (Deputy Academic Registrar) for items 10.18/19 and 11.18/19.

1.18/19 Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership

RECEIVED:

The terms of reference, constitution and membership of the Committee for 2018-19 as set out in AQSC.01/18-19.

REPORTED:

(By Professor D Lamburn, Chair):

- (a) That a member of the Committee representing PGT taught matters the Board of Faculty of Arts had not yet been identified;
- (b) That a considerable number of members were not in attendance and that there was no representative from the Board of Faculty of Social Sciences and the Board of Faculty of Arts;

- (c) That members needed to be reminded that attendance was expected.

2.18/19 Freedom of Information

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Steering Committee at its meeting on 29 October 2007 considered a paper outlining how the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies to the publication of minutes of University bodies together with the University Publication Scheme adopted by the Steering Committee in December 2003, paper SC 60/07-08, and resolved that a standard item be included on the agenda of the first meeting of each University Committee at the start of each academic year to inform new members and to remind continuing members of the University policy on the publication of minutes.
- (b) That all non-reserved minutes and agenda of the Committee are published on the University's Governance website at:

<https://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/committees/aqsc/minutes/>

- (c) That copies of paper SC.60/07-08 are available from the Secretary on request.

3.18/19 Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED:

That, should any members or attendees of the Academic Quality and Standards 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, available online from:

<http://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Code-Final.pdf>

That Professor G Van der Velden reported a conflict of interest as she chaired the National Student Survey Subgroup of the Student Information Advisory Group (SIAG) for the Office of Students.

4.18/19 Minutes of the last meeting

CONSIDERED:

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on 11 September 2018.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2018 be approved, subject to correcting L King to L Kennedy in minute 134.17/18 (e).

5.18/19

Matters arising

- (a) Fitness to Practise Operational Procedures (minute 108. (c)/17/18 referred)

TO REPORT:

- (i) That further work was ongoing with CLL and revised procedures would be brought to the Committee at a future meeting;
- (ii) That the application of fitness to practise for new degrees in the Warwick Manufacturing Group in the area of health and wellbeing would be investigated and reported to the Committee at a future meeting.
- (b) Turnitin and Contract Cheating Authorship Investigation (minute 108 (g).17/18 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting on 11 September 2018, the Committee received an update on progress in relation to the Turnitin authoring software tool; due to delays in its availability the University was exploring options with other suppliers and through local developments;
- (ii) That in view of the recent guidance from the QAA on essays mills and contract cheating and public declarations from Vice Chancellors in the national press, plagiarism and contract cheating was high on the national HE agenda;
- (iii) That a fifth sub-group of the Review of Assessment would be created dealing with plagiarism and cheating which would be chaired by Professor Robin Clark from WMG.
- (c) Examination Review and revisions to Regulation 10 (minute 136.17/18 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting on 11 September 2018, the Committee considered revisions to Regulation 10 and concluded that members should have the opportunity to comment further on the presented revisions to Regulation 10;
- (ii) That some members had commented on the revisions proposed and it was agreed that the correction of examination papers would need further discussion;

- (iii) That the Chair had taken Chair's action to approve a revised Regulation 10 on behalf of the Committee for Senate approval for immediate introduction from the academic year 2018/19;

- (d) WMG IET report and action plan (minute 138.17/18 referred).

REPORTED:

That the final WMG IET report would be received by the Committee for information at a future meeting once WMG IET action plan had been endorsed by the IET.

- (e) HEAR report (minute 141.17/18 referred).

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Academic Director (Undergraduate Studies) was in the process of setting up a working group to consider the content of the HEAR and had identified Dr M Leeke (representative from the Faculty of Science), Dr J Raynsford (representative from the Faculty of Social Science), L Kennedy and E King (Students' Union representatives) to be part of the working group;
- (ii) That Dr J Heron had volunteered to be the representative for the Faculty of Arts subject to confirmation by the Chair of Faculty of Arts, Professor P Roberts;
- (iii) That the group would aim to report its findings and recommendations to the AQSC meeting on 21 February 2019.

6.18/19 Chair's Business

REPORTED:

- (a) The sector was now in a very different regulatory environment;
- (b) That the QAA would shortly be publishing the revised Quality Code and associated guidance;
- (c) That no further funding would be provided by the OfS to enable the QAA to review transnational education (TNE).

7.18/19 Students' Union Update

RECEIVED:

An oral update report from the SU Officers on current SU activities.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Students' Union had agreed ten priorities for the coming academic year. These were:

- Warwick Wednesdays, to be free from teaching in the afternoon to allow opportunities for personal growth and enrichment in addition to sport activities;
- The Black attainment gap;
- Student engagement especially focusing on underrepresentation;
- Hate crime campaign;
- Improving mental health and wellbeing services information to help students on the provision;
- Academic transformation project;
- Better bus service to and from campus, operating 24 hours and easing overcrowding;
- Comfortable campus, enabling students to have enough study and relaxation space;
- Representing students in the community in Coventry and Warwickshire;
- Sports campaign focussing on disability sports provision;

(b) That the Students Union would also organise an alternative careers' week focusing on charities, entertainment and progression to PG study;

(By Professor P Tissington):

(c) Alternative career weeks had been raised in the context of careers' open days.

(By E King):

(d) Students Union was working with Coventry City to increase student voice in their community.

8.18/19 AQSC priorities for the academic year 2018/19

CONSIDERED:

A paper setting out the Committee's priorities as developed at an Education Executive Away Day and set out in AQSC 02.18/19.

REPORTED:

(a) That this paper was timely;

(By Professor D Lamburn, Chair):

(b) That the work on the credit and module framework was overdue and would commence imminently;

(By Professor G Van der Velden):

(c) That the role of the Director of Student Experience (DSEP) was in need of clarification;

(By Professor A Clark):

- (d) That the Teaching Quality website urgently needed to be restructured and revised ensuring that it was easy to navigate and contained up to date information;

(By Professor D Lamburn):

- (e) That publication of new policy and revised regulations would follow the Review of Assessment.

9.18/19 Module Approval project

RECEIVED:

An update on the module approval project from the SPI project manager as set out in AQSC 03.18/19.

REPORTED:

(By R Ingram):

- (a) That an in-house IT system for module approval would be developed and piloted in early 2019;

(By Professor D Lamburn):

- (b) That policy development would be needed;

(By Dr E Melia):

- (c) That the pilot would include guidance and training for departments on changes to modules and the module approval process;

10.18/19 Revisions to Regulation 41

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Deputy Academic Registrar to revise Regulation 41 in view of recent strike action and its impact on teaching, assessment and examination activities as set out in AQSC 04.18/19.

REPORTED:

- (a) That departments had provided an analysis of awards made in summer 2018 to the sub-group of Senate approving the pass lists;

- (b) That although final year appeals were higher than in 2017 only 7 appeals made reference to strike action;

(c) That the main changes proposed were:

- (i) submission periods for assessed work;
- (ii) Consideration of mitigating circumstances;

- (iii) Using appropriate means, in line with existing University policy, to address cohort performance issues.

(By Dr Jo Lee, via e-mail):

- (d) That there were challenges associated with keeping records of the impact of strike action on teaching;

(By R Wooldridge-Smith):

- (e) That accurate record keeping was a priority for the University;

(By Dr Jo Lee, via e-mail):

- (f) That 20 day feedback turnaround could be suspended during *force majeure*;

(By R Wooldridge-Smith):

- (g) That the 20 day feedback turnaround should be observed as had been the case during the strike action in spring 2018, noting though that staff could make a case for an extension to this period;

(By L Kennedy):

- (h) That she had been subject to rescheduled examinations due to strike action in summer 2018 and was given 48 hours' notice;

(By R Wooldridge-Smith):

- (i) That she had not been aware of any examinations being rescheduled due to strike action and would follow this up and ensure that such events would be covered in student guidance notes;

(By L Kennedy):

- (j) Would there be an opportunity for students to appeal the outcomes of any alternative forms of assessment used to determine degree classification?

(By R Wooldridge-Smith):

- (k) That such forms of assessment would only be used in exceptional circumstances and the normal appeals processes would apply;

(By Dr M Leeke):

- (l) That in such circumstances it would be necessary to inform students of the application of such a method;

RECOMMENDED (to the SENATE):

That proposed revisions to Regulation 41 should be approved with immediate effect for use in the academic year 2018/19.

11.18/19

Annual report on complaints and appeals for 2017/18

CONSIDERED:

The annual report from the Administrative Officer (Complaints Resolution) on complaints and appeals for the academic year 2017/18 as set out in document AQSC 05.18/19.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the format of the report had been changed and now included a summary coversheet;
- (b) That there was a reluctance of academic departments to log Stage 1 complaints;
- (c) That the report also included a section on accommodation complaints to provide contextual information;
- (d) That the second highest number of complaints related to Regulation 23 and the increase of reporting of complaints in relation to sexual misconduct;
- (e) That the overall number of Stage 2 complaints were the highest since the introduction of the revised Student Complaints and Resolution Procedure introduced in 2014;
- (f) That the number of complaints received by the OIA against the University of Warwick was slightly above the band median;
- (g) That the University had amended its appeals regulation to include a specific timescale for academic appeals to be completed and this had been set at 80 University working days in Regulation 42 which was in line with the Student Complaints Procedure;
- (h) That the University was concerned that the OIA had suggested financial compensation in a few cases which had been rejected;

(By Professor D Lamburn, Chair):

- (i) That there appeared to have been delays in appeals administration during the current academic year;

(By R Wooldridge-Smith):

- (j) That no delays had been reported in the administration of first and intermediate year appeals; final year appeals were administered in the Examinations Office and delays had occurred;

(By R Wooldridge-Smith):

- (k) That there were discussions ongoing relating to the administration of appeals;

RESOLVED:

- (l) That academic departments would be reminded again to log Stage 1 appeals appropriately using the online reporting tool to ensure institutional learning from Stage 1 complaints;
- (m) That the handling of academic appeals be reviewed to ensure consistency and accurate analysis.

12.18/19

Analysis of undergraduate external examiners' reports received for the academic year 2017/18

CONSIDERED:

A summary of themes and topics emerging from the undergraduate external examiners' reports received for the academic year 2017/18 as set out in AQSC 06.18/19.

REPORTED:

- (a) That a few external examiners' reports had not yet been received and some departmental responses were still outstanding;

(By Dr M Leeke):

- (b) Themes emerging were around moderation and scaling;

(By Dr A Clark):

- (c) That timing of Board of Examiners' meetings needed to be considered;

(By Professor G van der Velden):

- (d) That the University may need to provide further guidance on the numbers of external examiners for particular courses;

RESOLVED:

- (e) That the University review its moderation guidance to ensure clarity to departments and external examiners;
- (f) That the 20 point marking scale should be reviewed in 2020/21;
- (g) That the University explore institutional induction events for external examiners;
- (h) That good practice identified in external examiners' reports, be disseminated across the University.

13/18/19

Student Surveys

RECEIVED:

- (a) Steering paper on 2018 NSS results as set out in SC.03.18/19, (copy attached);
- (b) Steering paper on 2018 PTES results as set out in SC.04.18/19; (copy attached);

REPORTED:

(By Professor G van der Velden);

- (c) That the analysis of the NSS had been changed to provide more in-depth analysis for departments, the same would happen with the PTES in due course as well as the International Student Barometer (ISB);

(By Dr M Leeke):

- (d) That the NSS paper was excellent and provided a great summary of NSS issues;

(By E King):

- (e) That assessment of the student experience was broader than the NSS;

(By Professor G Van der Velden):

- (f) That work with the Students' Union had been very valuable in moving a number of issues forward.

14.18/19

ITLR update

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report on disestablishment of the ITLR Steering Group from the Assistant Registrar (Monitoring and Review) as set out in AQSC 07.18/19;
- (b) The ITLR reports and responses for:
 - i) School of Engineering (ITLR 1.17/18 and ITLR 2.17/18)
 - ii) Teaching Quality (ITLR 3.17/18 and ITLR 4.17/18)

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the disestablishment of the ITLR Steering Group was approved;
- (d) That the ITLR reports and responses for the School of Engineering and Teaching Quality were approved.

15.18/19

Office for Students registration and new regulatory framework

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on the registration with the Office for Students (OfS) and the new proposed regulatory framework as set out in AQSC 08.18/19.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the new regulatory framework would come into effect on 1 August 2019 and in the meantime a transitional period of regulation was in place;
- (b) The OfS will prescribe a baseline of quality and protection for students;
- (c) That the OfS would be supported by HESA and the QAA;
- (d) That the University met the conditions of registration by the OfS as higher education provider and had been included on the OfS register;
- (e) That the Institutional Governance team were leading the work to ensure compliance with ongoing general conditions in the context of providing assurance to Council;

RESOLVED:

- (f) That the University needed to be mindful of the ongoing conditions of registration.

16.18/19

PSRB Register

RECEIVED:

The updated PSRB Register as set out in AQSC 09.18/19.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the date of the next re-engagement with the PSRB in relation to the LLB (Honours) Degree with the Ministry of Law in Singapore needed to be checked by a member of staff in Teaching Quality as 2021 would not seem to be correct;
- (b) That a number of dates for re-engagement with PRSBs for courses in the Warwick Business School were outstanding and needed to be chased by a member of Teaching Quality staff to complete the register.

ITEMS TO REPORT AND APPROVE WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION

The Chair and Secretary consider that the following items are non-controversial and/or can be accepted with a minimum of explanation. Members of the Committee may, however, ask for any of the following items to be transferred to the agenda for discussion, by contacting the Secretary in advance of the meeting, or by raising the item at the commencement of the meeting. These papers are available online at the Committee's file space here:

17.18/19 Course approvals

RECEIVED:

A list of courses approved by the University since the last report to AQSC on 29 May 2018 and set out in document AQSC 12.18/19.

18.18/19 Minutes of the Board of Graduate Studies

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the Board of Graduate Studies meetings were available at:

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/committees/bgs/minutes/bgs_minutes_may_2018.pdf

19.18/19 Minutes of the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee were available at:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/committees/sleec/minutes>

20.18/19 Minutes of the Faculty Education Committees

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the Faculty Education Committees were available on the governance pages at:

(a) Faculty of Arts

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/committees/bfa/fec/minutes>

(b) Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/committees/bfsem/fec/>

(c) Faculty of Social Science

<https://warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/committees/bfss/fec/minutes/>

21.18/19 Chair's action

REPORTED:

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

(a) Changes to London Film School Marking Scheme

A revised marking scheme for the MA Filmmaking and MA Screenwriting as offered at the London Film School.

(b) Alternative assessment arrangements

- (i) A revision to a further first sit for an Economics first year student in the first week in September 2018 to allow for an alternative assessment via a test and viva in the middle of September instead of examinations for modules IB132 and EC109. The student suffered from a temporary health condition which had not resolved itself by the time the further first sit was taking place in the first week of September 2018 and it was not in the student's best interest to wait for a delayed further first sit in June 2019.
- (ii) A revised assessment for the module IP306 delivered in the School for Cross-Faculty Studies to change the assessment from 50% of the module from an unseen examination to a seen examination. This change is to assist students who were studying in Monash in term 2 as co-ordinating the setting up of an unseen examination was difficult under these circumstances.

22.18/19 Next meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee is scheduled to be held on **Thursday 22 November 2018 at 900 hours in CMR 1.0, University House.**