

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee held on
23 February 2005

Present: Professor M Whitby (Chair), Professor L Bridges, Professor M Cooper, Professor A Easton, Dr K Flint, Professor E Gallafent, Dr P O'Hare, Professor M Harrison, Dr S Hill, Professor M Luntley, Dr P Roberts.

Apologies: Professor A Caesar, Professor G Lindsay, Mr S Lucas, Mr K Mohaddes.

In attendance: Mr R Watson (for item 77/04-05), Mr N Hull (for item 78/04-05), Dr J Moss, Ms R Wooldridge Smith.

68/04-05 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2005 be approved.

69/04-05 Matters Arising

(a) National Student Survey (Minute 52/04-05 (a) referred)

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Committee Chair that it appeared that Students' Unions at other institutions were belatedly participating in the National Student Survey notwithstanding earlier intentions not to do so.

(b) Assessment Conventions (Minute 56/04-05 referred)

CONSIDERED:

Oral reports from Faculty Chairs following consideration by Faculty Boards of the proposed new formula marking scheme.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That it be noted that the reception to the paper from Faculty Boards to date had been mixed and that the paper circulated to Boards be sent directly to Chairs of Departments with clarification that they were being asked to consider the issue of the proposed marking scheme in the immediate term, rather than the wider issue of final classification conventions;
- (ii) That the Faculty of Science Working Group on scaling would be meeting for the last time in early March and that a report from that Group would be forthcoming to inform the debate about classification conventions.

- (c) Teaching Quality Enhancement Funding (Minute 58/04-05 referred)

REPORTED:

That confirmation had been received from the HEFCE of the award of the anticipated Teaching Quality Enhancement Funding, paper AQSC 58/04-05.

- (d) Discontinuation of courses

- (i) EdD (Minute 64/04-05 referred)

CONSIDERED:

The rationale provided by the Institute of Education for the discontinuation of the EdD, paper AQSC 72/04-05.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That it be noted that the Committee was sensitive to the case made by the Institute for the development of alternative routes to a PhD, particularly for international students who strongly preferred this qualification;
- (B) That Professor Jackson be invited to provide further information on the number of students currently enrolled on the EdD and the Institute's intentions in terms of the provision of continuing support to those students pending completion of their course;
- (C) That it be noted that the decision to discontinue the EdD would have ramifications for other areas of the University currently preparing groundwork for alternative qualifications at D level;

RECOMMENDED (to the Board of Graduate Studies):

That the Board consider the desirability of developing new D level qualifications and alternative routes to PhD, given international recognition of that qualification.

- (ii) WMG: MSc Quality and Reliability

REPORTED:

That the Board of Graduate Studies at its meeting held on 17 February 2005, reported that the MSc in Quality and Reliability would be discontinued from September 2005.

(iii) Law: European Law LLB Italian stream

CONSIDERED:

The case proposed by the School of Law for the discontinuation of the Italian stream of the LLB in European Law as set out in paper UFSS 46/04-05.

(iv) Diploma in Humanistic Counselling, City College Coventry

REPORTED:

That, following a variety of difficulties relating to quality and standards issues and facilities available to students at City College Coventry, the Diploma in Humanistic Counselling had been discontinued, it being noted that due to an earlier suspension of recruitment, no students were currently registered on the course.

(v) Consideration of Proposals for Discontinuation of Courses of Study

CONSIDERED:

The desirability of continued consideration of proposals for the discontinuation of courses of study by the Committee, given that the Committee no longer considered proposals for new courses of study.

RESOLVED:

That proposals for the discontinuation of courses of study in future not be referred to the Committee unless they raised issues of principle and that the secretariats to the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate studies be so informed.

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposals for the discontinuation of the EdD, the MSc in Quality & Reliability, the LLB Italian stream and the Diploma in Humanistic Counselling in conjunction with City College, Coventry, be approved as set out above.

(e) External Examiners' Report and Nomination forms (Minute 62/04-05 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Committee at its meeting held on 27 January 2005:

- (A) Reported that at its meeting held on 10 January, the Board of Graduate Studies recommended revisions to the External Examiners' report form on a thesis submitted for a Research Degree and to the External Examiners' Nomination Form.
 - (B) Considered amendments recommended by the Board of Graduate Studies to the following forms:
 - (1) The External Examiners' report form on a thesis submitted for a Research Degree, paper AQSC 21/04-05 (revised).
 - (2) The External Examiners' nomination form, paper BGS 12/04-05 (revised).
 - (C) Recommended (to the Senate) that the External Examiners' report form on a thesis submitted for a Research Degree and the External Examiners' nomination form be approved as set out in papers AQSC 21/04-05 (revised) and BGS 12/04-05 (revised), subject to further minor amendments for which the approval of the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies would be sought prior to their submission to the Senate.
- (ii) That the Board of Graduate Studies, at its meeting held on 17 February, approved the revised drafts of the External Examiners' Report and Nomination forms, papers AQSC 21/04-05 (revised 2) and BGS 12/04-05 (revised).

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the revisions to the External Examiners' Report and Nomination forms be approved as set out in papers AQSC 21/04-05 (revised 2) and BGS 12/04-05 (revised).

70/04-05

Chair's Business

Higher Education Academy

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Higher Education Academy had abolished membership renewal fees for existing Registered Practitioners and Associate Practitioners, it being noted that application and joining fees remained in place.

- (b) That the Higher Education Academy had recently published a report on the nexus between research and teaching and that there was a potential danger that, given the preponderance of post-1992 institutions in the HEA and the thrust of the research underpinning the report, discussions about this nexus might become dominated by conceptions of research which were anathema to Russell Group institutions.

71/04-05

Quality Assurance in Warwick Manufacturing Group

REPORTED:

- (a) That at its meeting held on 4 February, the CFDLSC considered:
- (i) The Annual Course Review report on Overseas Collaborative Provision delivered by Warwick Manufacturing Group, paper CFDLSC 40/04-05;
 - (ii) A report prepared by the Warwick Manufacturing Group Academic Quality Group on its 2004 Annual Review of Warwick Manufacturing Group Franchised Modules, paper CFDLSC 44/04-05;
 - (iii) External Examiners' reports for the MSc, PgD, PgC, PgA in Electronic Business Management, Engineering Business Management, Information Technology for Manufacture, International Technology Management, Manufacturing Systems Engineering, Process Business Management, Quality & Reliability, Supply Engineering & Logistics from:
 - (A) Professor P Deasley, together with the departmental response, paper CFDLSC 63/04-05;
 - (B) Dr M North, together with the departmental response, paper CFDLSC 64/04-05;
 - (C) Professor K Swift, together with the departmental response, paper CFDLSC 65/04-05;
- (b) That, in the light of these reports, the CFDLSC recommended to the AQSC:

That, in the light of the Committee's concerns about the quality and standards of WMG courses delivered overseas, a Working Group, incorporating senior University representation and expertise in quality assurance and collaborative matters be established to work with WMG on a range of issues; it being noted that a swift response was urged in the light of a potential QAA overseas collaborative audit in 2005-06.

(Minute 33/04-05 (c) (viii))

CONSIDERED:

The establishment of a Working Group to take forward matters relating to collaborative provision with WMG.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the following members of the Committee be nominated to membership of the Working Group:

Professor A Easton (Chair)
Professor L Bridges
Dr S Hill (to April)
Dr P Roberts
Dr P O'Hare

- (d) That the Academic Registrar be invited to join the Group;
- (e) That a clear brief be developed for the Group's engagement with WMG arising from the documentation considered by the Committee and the oral report provided by Dr Hill.

72/04-05

Contractual position of small credit volume collaborations

REPORTED:

That at its meeting held on 4 February, the CFDLSC considered proposals to establish two small credit volume collaborations with Astra Zeneca and between the Mercia Institute of Enterprise and Resource Development International, papers CFDLSC 66/04-05 and CFDLSC 68-69/04095 respectively and recommended to the AQSC that the collaborations be approved, but that the Committee give consideration to the contractual arrangements appropriate for such partnerships given the small credit volumes of the collaborations, for which it was felt that the existing contract was unsuited.

CONSIDERED:

The development of contractual arrangements for small scale collaborations sufficient to mitigate risk to the University but sufficiently light touch so as encourage academic departments wishing to bring forward proposals for such collaborations to do so.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That in the interests of not dissuading departments from developing partnerships with external bodies, a Memorandum of Agreement be developed in conjunction with the legal advisor in the University Secretary's Office;
- (b) That the Memorandum of Agreement remain be used at the discretion of the Chair of the CFDLSC, it being noted that it was likely to be used in stances where collaborations affected c. 30 credits.

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposals to establish two small credit volume collaborations with Astra Zeneca and between the Mercia Institute of Enterprise and Resource Development International be approved as set out in papers CFDLSC 66/04-05 and CFDLSC 68-69/04095 respectively.

73/04-05 Annual Review: Summary Reports

CONSIDERED:

The following composite Annual Course Review reports, together with feedback from consideration of these at Faculty Boards, the Board of Undergraduate or Graduate Studies or the CFDLSC:

- (a) On undergraduate courses in the Faculties of Arts, Science and Social Studies, paper BUGS 24/04-05;
- (b) On postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Arts, paper AGSC 25/04-05;
- (c) On postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Medicine, paper BFM 15/04-05;
- (d) On postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Science, paper SGS 45/04-05;
- (e) On postgraduate courses in the Faculty of Social Studies, paper GFSS 127/04-05;
- (f) On undergraduate and postgraduate collaborative courses, paper AQSC 75/04-05.

RESOLVED:

- (g) That it be noted that the new style form appeared to be eliciting more useful information which indicated that a more effective Annual Review process was now occurring in departments
- (h) That Faculties continue to be encouraged to draw out examples of quality enhancement in departmental practice;
- (i) That the attention of departments in the Faculty of Arts be drawn to recently revised regulations and guidance to departments on the subject of plagiarism.

74/04-05 Academic Satisfaction Review 2004: Faculty of Medicine Focus Group Report

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Committee, at its meeting held on 17 November the Committee considered the Focus Group report on Medicine conducted as part of the Academic Satisfaction Review 2004 and resolved that the report and response from the Faculty of

Medicine be considered by the Committee following consideration by the Board of the Faculty of Medicine.

- (b) That the Medical School referred the report to the MBChB SSLC prior to consideration by the Board of the Faculty, and that, consequently, the Board had not yet debated the report.

CONSIDERED:

- (c) The Focus Group report, paper AQSC 22/04-05;
- (d) The response from Professor Carter on behalf of the Faculty of Medicine, paper AQSC 59/04-05;
- (e) Consideration of the matter by the MBChB SSLC, paper AQSC 71/04-05;

RESOLVED:

- (f) That it be noted that the levels of anxiety about the course reported by students appeared to be largely attributable to the reported lack of transparency of the assessment regime, including the Progress Committee system, which were a fundamental component of the University of Leicester course to which the Warwick Medical School would remain coupled until independent GMC accreditation was achieved;
- (g) That the Faculty of Medicine was considering additional means of supporting students including the appointment of a Student Welfare Officer;
- (h) That Professor Peile, Director of Medical Education, be asked to bring forward a progress report on the Faculty's efforts to address the issues identified in the Focus Group report to the meeting of the Committee to be held in week 4 of the Summer Term 2005;
- (i) That the Committee review the issues raised in the light of student feedback obtained through the 2005 Satisfaction Review which had elicited a 36% response rate from amongst MBChB students.

75/04-05

Academic Satisfaction Review 2004: responses from outstanding departments

CONSIDERED:

Responses from other departments not forthcoming at the last meeting:

- (a) Institute of Education, paper AQSC 61/04-05;
- (b) Politics & International Studies, paper AQSC 63/04-05;
- (c) CRER, paper AQSC 64/04-05;
- (d) School of Engineering, paper AQSC 65/04-05;
- (e) Psychology, paper AQSC 66/04-05.

RESOLVED:

- (f) That the responses from the above departments were satisfactory;
- (g) That it be noted that responses from Warwick Business School, Economics and the School of Health & Social Studies remained outstanding.

76/04-05 Academic Satisfaction Review 2005

CONSIDERED:

Feedback from Quad Research on response rates by department to the 2005 Review, paper AQSC 67/04-05.

RESOLVED:

That it be noted that, whilst a pleasing improvement on response rates in previous years, the overall rate of 25% still left considerable room for improvement before the Review could be said to represent the view of the majority of students.

77/04-05 Annual Report from the SSLC Co-ordinators

CONSIDERED:

A report from Dr S Hill and Mr K Mohaddes, SSLC Co-ordinators, on the operation of the Staff-Student Liaison Committee system 2003-04, paper AQSC 68/04-05; it being noted that, in future, reports from the Co-ordinators on the operation of the SSLC system at undergraduate level would come to the Committee in the Autumn Term and at postgraduate level in the Spring Term.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That consultations were still underway with respect to bringing forward the publication of the examination timetable;
- (b) That the Education Officer, Students' Union, write to chairs of departmental SSLCs encouraging them to discuss with departments the turn-around time for formative and summative assessment in their department, it being noted that 4 weeks had previously been identified as good practice;
- (c) That a memorandum be circulated by the Committee Chair reminding Chairs of Departments of good practice in providing feedback to students and providing a transparent schedule for submission and return deadlines throughout the year in departmental handbooks;
- (d) That the Education Officer, Students' Union, write to chairs of departmental SSLCs encouraging them to raise the question of attendance at departmental meetings with their departments

and that the Committee chair follow up with the Warwick Business School its failure to respond to an earlier memorandum from Dr Hill on this subject;

- (e) That matters relating to accommodation, particularly study space for postgraduate research students, be pursued at the forthcoming meeting of the Accommodation Review Group with Chairs of Departments; it being noted that differences in the level of equipment of rooms reported would depend on whether these were centrally- or locally-timetabled.

78/04-05 Academic Statistics 2004/05

REPORTED:

That the Senate, at its meeting held on 1 December 2004, resolved that the *Academic Statistics 2004-05* be referred to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee to examine and review key data.

CONSIDERED:

Academic Statistics 2004-05, paper AQSC 69/04-05, with a view to identifying key developments, together with an oral report from the Assistant Registrar (Planning & Management Information) and paper 76/04-05 (tabled), on key trends arising from the publication for 2004-05.

RESOLVED:

That of the two matters typically monitored by the Committee:

- (a) The Committee noted that non-completion rates had dropped from 11.4% to 8% in 2004-05 and that a recent change to the methodology used by the Academic Office for capturing reasons for students' withdrawal which would previously have fallen into the 'other personal' category would assist in further analysis of this category from 2005-06.
- (b) The Committee noted the continuing discrepancy between the proportion of first class degrees awarded between faculties and that this be kept under review in the light of current work to consider further harmonisation of final undergraduate classification conventions.

79/04-05 Amendments to Course Approval Documentation

CONSIDERED:

- (a) Amendments to course approval documentation proposed by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies as set out in a revised Part 1 form, paper AQSC 70/04-05.
- (b) An oral report from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies recommending two further changes, *viz*;

- (i) Inclusion of the name of the proposing department;
- (ii) Inclusion of a credit tariff of 10, 20, 30 credits for postgraduate courses.

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the revisions to the course approval documentation proposed by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies be approved as set out in the revised Part 1 form, paper AQSC 70/04-05 and (b) above.

80/04-05 Skills Working Group: Revision to Terms of Reference

REPORTED:

That the Skills Working Group at its meeting held on 11 January 2005 recommended to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee that the Terms and Reference and Membership of the Working Group be amended as set out in paper SWG 1/04-05 (revised).

CONSIDERED:

Revisions to the Membership and Terms of Reference of the Skills Working Group, paper SWG 1/04-05 (revised).

RESOLVED:

That the revisions to the Membership and Terms of Reference of the Skills Working Group be approved as set out in paper SWG 1/04-05 (revised).

81/04-05 Date of the Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 12 May 2005 in the Council Chamber, University house.

HRWS/JDM 23.02.05
Res Min 23.02.05