UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 14:00, 07 FEBRUARY 2024		
Present	Professor Andy Clark	Co-Chair, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Policy) (Meeting Chair)
	Professor Will Curtis	Co-Chair, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education Quality and Standards)
	Professor Dan Branch	Academic Director (Doctoral College)
	Dan Derricott	Director of Education Policy and Quality
	Professor Caroline Elliott	Chair of the Faculty Education Committee (Social Sciences)
	Dr Beccy Freeman	Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)
	Lee Griffin	Academic Director (Postgraduate Taught)
	Dr Jeff Jones	Co-opted member of academic staff in a quality assurance role
	Dr David Lees	Chair of the Faculty Education Committee (Arts)
	Dr Helen Nolan	Representative of the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Vaishnavi Ravi	The Vice President Postgraduate of the Students' Union
	Professor Ross Ritchie	Representative of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences
	Professor Jose Rodrigo	Representative of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
	Dr Chris Rogers	Representative of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences
	Dr Gavin Schwartz-Leeper	Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), Liberal Arts
	Professor Pat Tissington	Academic Director (Employability and Skills)
	Dr Jane Webb	Representative of the Board of the Faculty of Arts
	Dr Phil Young	Representative of the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
Attending	Dr Lynne Bayley	Senior Policy Advisor (Assessment and Regulations), Education Policy and Quality
	Andrew Higgins (for item 051)	Director of Student Administrative Services
	Dr Alexa Kirkcaldy	Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), WMG (for developmental reasons)
	Sarah Mullins (for item 055)	Project Delivery Lead, Education Policy and Quality
	Ger Purcell	Academic Partnerships Officer, EPQ, Secretariat
	Kim Robinson (for item 053)	Deputy Director and Head of Education Policy and Governance
	Rob Stevens	Policy Advisor (Curriculum and Partnerships), Education Policy and Quality, Assistant Secretary
	Dr Chris Strelluf (for item 051)	Associate Professor, Applied Linguistics
	Jackie Whitehouse (for item 052)	Head of Work-Based and Professional Learning, FOLD
Ref	**Item**	
044	**Chair's welcome and introduction** The Chair welcomed all members, including Dr Alexa Kirkcaldy who is attending meetings this academic year for developmental reasons.	
045	**Apologies for absence**	

	Apologies were received from Professor Jo Angouri, Lauren Baker, Professor David Davies, Will Ellis, Professor Lorenzo Frigerio, Professor Georgia Kremmyda, Dr Elena Riva, Holly Roffe and Dr Tim White.
046	**Declarations of Interest**
	No new declarations were made.
047	**Minutes of meeting held on 29 November 2023**
	The minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2023 (047-AQSC070224) were **approved.**
	It was noted that an action listed from item 038-AQSC291123 was amended slightly to confirm forms were being returned to departments to request outstanding academic misconduct data.
048	**Matters arising from meeting held on 29 November 2023**
	The Chair gave an update on outstanding actions.
	Item 033-AQSC291123, WIHEA Learning Circle on Self-Certification: recommendations, was confirmed as awaiting the outcome of a resource request.
	Item 034-AQSC291123, PSRB Update, departments have been asked to fill in a proforma that was being followed up to ensure stronger reporting. The webpages were enhanced regarding level of support EPQ can give.
	An updated version of an item tabled at the last meeting, 036-AQSC291123, Weighting of Carry Forward Components**,** was being presented to the Committee at this meeting.
049	**Chairs' Business**
	It was confirmed that a mock Ofsted inspection was currently being undertaken in two departments in the University.
050	**Students' Union Update**
	The Committee received a verbal report advising that the Students' Union had no update for the Committee.
	Substantive Items
051	**Proposal for return to in-person exams in specified Applied Linguistics undergraduate modules**
	The Committee received the report (051-AQSC070224, Public) from the Associate Professor, Applied Linguistics, and key points and discussions were as follows:
	- The Department of Applied Linguistics requested approval to return to face-to-face examinations for six undergraduate modules for Summer 2024 exams. - The modules in question were currently assessed via a combination of either 50/50 or 60/40 weighting of research project (higher order cognitive tasks) and online examination (lower order cognitive tasks). - The Department verified through testing that existing online examination formats were particularly susceptible to successful completion by 'chatbots'. - The Department considered a number of strategies in response, but noted increasing the proportion of higher order task assessment would unfairly disadvantage less capable students, and also found that attempts to actively design assessment tasks to negate chatbot capabilities quickly became outdated in the face of the rapidly developing technology. - In response to concerns raised about how students used to the online assessment format would be supported in the transition to in-person examinations, the Associate Professor, Applied Linguistics advised there would be opportunities provided for students to practice the new format. - The paper (051-AQSC070224) was commended for its logical approach and pedagogical rationale.
	DECISION: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee **approved** the paper**,** conditional upon the Department and the MMA team agreeing an implementation strategy deliverable within the relatively short timeframe.
	ACTION: Department of Applied Linguistics and MMA team to discuss options for implementation of changes.

052	**University of Warwick Self-Assessment Report (SAR) 2022/23 and Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) 2023/24**
	The Committee received the report (052-AQSC070224, Protected) from the Head of Work Based and Professional Learning, FOLD, and key points and discussions were as follows:
	• The Chair noted the version of the SAR submitted to AQSC was not the latest version and as such, could not be considered for approval.
	• Planned Mock Ofsted inspections were taking place over 6/7 February, focused on Warwick Manufacturing Group and the School of Engineering. Any relevant feedback would be incorporated into the final version of the SAR before submission at the end of February.
	• Early feedback from Day 1 of mock inspections suggested areas highlighted as of concern are broadly in line with areas identified internally, although a safeguarding concern was unexpected.
	• New interim data received from DfE was positive, showing significant improvements in key metrics such as pass rates, retention and achievement rates.
	• Social Work degree apprentice feedback was also positive, with 100% satisfaction score on NSS.
	• It was noted that aspects of Ofsted inspections could be disarming for those not used to them, for example, inspectors walking in and out of classrooms, and that it would be important to help teaching staff acclimatise.
	• Areas identified as needing improvement included a high number of students taking a break-in-learning (BIL) which was associated with higher withdrawal rates; some programmes at Level 7 were of particular concern regarding levels of achievement and retention.
	• NSS results were low for DTS Level 6. It was noted that improvement needed to be made capturing and acting upon feedback while students were still in situ, rather than waiting for the NSS to record/acknowledge a problem. Course-level and mid-programme evaluations must be given higher importance.
	• A significant number of apprentices reported a low sense of belonging to the Warwick community. A project working with the SU was hoping to address this.
	• A question was raised as to the involvement of apprentices in quality improvement efforts. It was noted Course Representatives from degree apprenticeships were involved but were often very busy and struggled to engage with committee structures and timings. Good practice at other universities was discussed, including holding evening coffee exchanges, and utilised virtual chat channels (VLE/WhatsApp) to engage students.
	• Career guidance and advice was confirmed as an important aspect of DA provision; however it was noted this could have been a source of tension with employers, who were not keen on training designed to help apprentices to 'make career transitions'. Efforts to reduce this tension included changing terminology and focusing on more on generalist career development skills such as interviewing.
	• The actual Ofsted inspection for the institution could be as early as April 2024, and preparing for it was critical given the reputational risk associated.
	• In terms of timelines going forward, the SAR was in its final iteration and was due to be submitted before the end of February 2024. The QIP was due to be updated next in March and then again in May this year.
053	**Undergraduate External Examiners' Report Analysis 22/23**
	The Committee received the report (053-AQSC070224, Public) from the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Policy), and key points and discussions were as follows:
	• The report highlighted that most of the practice is excellent across key areas (academic standards, comparability, conduct of exam boards)
	• A minority yet significant number of departments had not followed up on external examiner (EE) feedback, in one case the same problem was identified two years in a row.
	• The University did not have an effective system in place to track departmental response to EE feedback.

- Consideration would be given within Education Policy and Quality (EPQ) to the role of the external examiner and the processes that support the EE system.
- Other EE concerns raised in the report were discussed, and included problems accessing systems, which was an issue for IDG as well as other access-rights holders.
- The report recommended a set of seven actions to address some of the issues raised.

DECISION: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee **approved** the paper.

ACTION 1: IDG to address the concerns of the external examiners around IT access and password provision for 2023/24.

ACTION 2: EPQ to review the workflow process for 'follow-up' of external examiner reports to ensure full records are obtained and responses to reports are thorough and robust from departments and the central University (when required).

ACTION 3: EPQ to confirm responses are provided for the following issues raised by departments: (a) SLS to respond to the external examiner about the format of end of year assessments, (b) Psychology to consider more specific rather than generic marking criteria for assessments, and (c) that WBS be advised to source an extra external examiner whose role is specifically to look at programme level outcomes, levels and assurance.

ACTION 4: EPQ to remind departments that EEs should comment on draft assessments and examinations and be provided with links to appropriate departmental and programme handbooks and that students must be provided with links to up-to-date student handbooks.

ACTION 5: EPQ to seek approval from departments who have been highlighted under areas of good practice to share the practices identified and to disseminate this through its newsletters.

ACTION 6: For EPQ to develop an induction programme for those new to external examining at Warwick.

ACTION 7: For the MMA team to continue to review the timescales for release of the examination timetable on an annual basis though the Examinations Committee.

054	**Weighting of Carry Forward Components**

The Committee received the report (054-AQSC070224, Public) from the Senior Policy Advisor (Assessment and Regulations), Education Policy and Quality, and key points and discussions were as follows:

- The Committee was asked to approve Tabula changes to address problems caused by the treatment of carry forward components of a student's grade.
- It was noted the changes were not designed to alter existing practice in departments – rather to enable the system to adapt to existing practice and eliminate errors as a result.

DECISION: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee **approved** the report.

055	**Education Quality Framework and Annual Assurance Report 2022/23 – OfS B Conditions**

The Committee received the report (055-AQSC070224, Public) from the Director of Education Policy and Quality, and key points and discussions were as follows:

- The Education Quality Framework was an attempt to bring together a holistic view of expectations for the quality of education at Warwick and associated approaches of assuring that.
- The aim was to identify where there may be gaps in activity, duplication in activity, and to assess overall effectiveness.
- This system-level perspective would be crucial to ensure quality was built into every level of activity, and done so as efficiently as possible.
- It was confirmed that the Education Quality Framework as presented was a first iteration, and that feedback was invited. Feedback offered included:

	o In addition to looking at the types of QA activities undertaken, consideration should also be given to ensuring key stakeholders have access to training to enable them to perform their roles effectively e.g. induction of external examiners; supporting staff implementing processes and regulations; how students involved in governance/committees were supported. o Considerable duplication occurs across module-level, programme-level and annual-level reviews. o The Framework speaks to 'co-creation' with students however this was not something widely evident in practice across the institution. o Further feedback from Committee members was requested via the AQSC resource account. • As context to the Annual Assurance Report, it was noted the regulatory body was OfS through a set of conditions of registration, against which the institution was obliged to demonstrate compliance through various metrics. • The report assessed the University's compliance with OfS 'B' conditions, and overall, the results are positive. • Three areas were identified by the report where improvements could be made: 1. Course approvals: courses were approved for an indefinite period at Warwick, it was a recommendation that there was re-approval after a set period (e.g. 5 years). 2. Quality assurance processes for degree apprenticeships. 3. Aspects of student assessment (in particular: academic integrity and AI; awarding gaps between black/white students; assessment outcomes for degree apprenticeships; assessment infrastructure.) It was confirmed that the Annual Quality Report was a first draft: a final version will be brought back to AQSC for approval. **ACTION:** An updated version of the report detailing the actions to be tabled at a forthcoming meeting of AQSC.
056	**Award Analysis and Assessment Trends** The Committee received the report (056-AQSC070224, Public) from the Senior Policy Advisor (Assessment and Regulations), Education Policy and Quality, and key points and discussions were as follows: • The Chair expressed his thanks to the author for the huge amount of work undertaken to produce the report. • It was noted Senate Sub Group (SSG) had already reviewed some of the data around awards and there was a return to pre-pandemic levels of grade inflation, so no concerns in that area were noted. • In some areas the percentage of first-class and good honours awards had dropped below pre-pandemic levels. This required monitoring and some additional thought given as to what institutional targets for award levels were to ensure students were not disadvantaged. • In terms of progression, initiatives such as the right to remedy failure had a bigger impact on STEM/technical departments, mostly because students on these types of programmes were more likely to experience a module-level failure and therefore have higher resit rates. • The number of resits-in-residence (RIR) went up during the pandemic but has since come back down and was stabilising. • There was concern about the low success rate for those on RIR (c.40%). Work was underway to identify if there were alternative options to RIR to enhance a student's chances of success. • The Committee was advised that the data in the report was pulled from multiple different sources and as a result could produce anomalies on occasion. Departments were advised that the underlying data should be evaluated to establish facts prior to undertaking any action. • It was noted there was more data captured and available for undergraduate courses than postgraduate. • Student Administrative Services were looking to develop systems at PG level to address this.

	• It was suggested it would be helpful to contrast data against internal/external benchmarks for some of the award areas to understand what counts as good. • It was noted HESA data disaggregated to discipline level could be used as a blunt sector comparison with the caveat that entry requirements differ considerably across the sector. In Life Sciences, the biggest predictor of a 1st degree classification was AAA as the entry tariff.
	Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval, without discussion
057	**Chair's Actions** The Committee received and noted the report (057-AQSC070224, Public)
058	**Update to Examinations Committee Membership** The Committee received and approved the report (058-AQSC070224, Public)
059	**Update to Partnerships Committee Membership** The Committee received and approved the report (059-AQSC070224, Public)
	Next meeting:

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS			
ITEM	**DECISION/ACTION**	**LEAD AND DUE DATE**	**STATUS**
[2023-24]			
051 Proposal for return to in-person exams in specified Applied Linguistics undergraduate modules	**DECISION:** The Academic Quality and Standards Committee **approved** the paper**,** conditional upon the Department and the MMA team agreeing an implementation strategy deliverable within the relatively short timeframe.		
051 Proposal for return to in-person exams in specified Applied Linguistics undergraduate modules	**ACTION:** Department of Applied Linguistics and MMA team to discuss options for implementation of changes.	Andrew Higgins	Completed
053 Undergraduate External Examiners' Report Analysis 22/23	**DECISION:** The Academic Quality and Standards Committee **approved** the paper.		
053 Undergraduate External Examiners'	**ACTION 1**: IDG to address the concerns of the external examiners around IT access and password provision for 2023/24.	Siân Moore	TBC

Report Analysis 22/23			
053 Undergraduate External Examiners' Report Analysis 22/23	**ACTION 2**: EPQ to review the workflow process for 'follow-up' of external examiner reports to ensure full records are obtained and responses to reports are thorough and robust from departments and the central University (when required).	Siân Moore / Secretariat	TBC
053 Undergraduate External Examiners' Report Analysis 22/23	**ACTION 3**: EPQ to confirm responses are provided for the following issues raised by departments: (a) SLS to respond to the external examiner about the format of end of year assessments, (b) Psychology to consider more specific rather than generic marking criteria for assessments, and (c) that WBS be advised to source an extra external examiner whose role is specifically to look at programme level outcomes, levels and assurance.	Secretariat	April 2024
053 Undergraduate External Examiners' Report Analysis 22/23	**ACTION 4**: EPQ to remind departments that EEs should comment on draft assessments and examinations and be provided with links to appropriate departmental and programme handbooks and that students must be provided with links to up-to-date student handbooks.	Siân Moore	TBC
053 Undergraduate External Examiners' Report Analysis 22/23	**ACTION 5**: EPQ to seek approval from departments who have been highlighted under areas of good practice to share the practices identified and to disseminate this through its newsletters.	Secretariat	April 2024
053 Undergraduate External Examiners' Report Analysis 22/23	**ACTION 6**: For EPQ to develop an induction programme for those new to external examining at Warwick.	Siân Moore	TBC
053 Undergraduate External Examiners' Report Analysis 22/23	**ACTION 7**: For the MMA team to continue to review the timescales for release of the examination timetable on an annual basis though the Examinations Committee.	Secretariat MMA Team	TBC
054 Weighting of Carry Forward Components	**DECISION:** The Academic Quality and Standards Committee **approved** the report.		

055 Education Quality Framework and Annual Assurance Report 2022/23 – OfS B Conditions	**ACTION:** An updated version of the report detailing the actions to be tabled at a forthcoming meeting of AQSC.	Project Delivery Lead, EPQ, May 2024	Completed