	UNIVERSITY	OF WARWICK	
	ACADEMIC QUALITY AND	STANDARDS COMMITTEE	
	PUBLIC MINUTES OF THE MEE	TING HELD 10:00, 04 OCT 2023	
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)	
	Professor David Davies	Chair of the Faculty Education Committee (Science,	
		Engineering and Medicine)	
	Dan Derricott	Director of Education Policy and Quality	
	Professor Caroline Elliott	Chair of the Faculty Education Committee (Social Sciences)	
	Professor Lorenzo Frigerio	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)	
	Lee Griffin	Academic Director (Postgraduate Taught)	
	Dr Jeff Jones	Co-opted member of academic staff in a quality	
	Di sen sones	assurance role	
	Professor Georgia Kremmyda	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 Faculty of Science, Engineering and	
		Medicine	
	Vaishnavi Ravi	The Vice President Postgraduate of the Students' Union	
	Dr Ross Ritchie	Representative of the Faculty of Social Sciences	
	Professor Jose Rodrigo	Representative of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and	
		Medicine	
	Holly Roffe	The Vice President Education of the Students' Union an	
		Co-Chair of the Student Learning Experience and	
		Engagement Committee	
	Professor Patrick Tissington	Academic Director (Employability and Skills)	
	Dr Jane Webb	Representative of the Faculty of Arts	
Attending	Lauren Baker	Head of Education Quality and Partnerships, Education	
		Policy and Quality, Secretary	
	Dr Lynne Bayley	Senior Policy Advisor (Assessment and Feedback)	
	Dr Kay Doncom (for item 011a) and for developmental reasons	Student Engagement Officer, Education Policy and Quality	
	Dr Amira Elasra (for item 008)	Assistant Professor (Teaching Focussed), Economics	
	Will Ellis	Product Manager, IDG	
	Dr Sam Hardy (for item 018)	Director of Flexible and Online Learning	
	Andrew Higgins (for item 007)	Director of Student Administrative Services	
	Dr Claudia Rei (for item 007)	Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), Economics	
	Kim Robinson (for items 016 and 017)	Deputy Director and Head of Education Policy and	
		Governance, Education Policy and Quality	
	Professor Jeremy Smith (for item 007)	Director of Undergraduate Studies, Economics	
	Rob Stevens	Policy Advisor (Curriculum and Partnerships), Education	
		Policy and Quality, Assistant Secretary	
	Paul Trimmer (for item 018)	Academic Technologist, Flexible and Online Learning	
Ref		Item	
001 Chai	r's welcome and introduction		

The Chair welcomed all members and noted the following had joined the committee from the start of the academic year:

- Professor Lorenzo Frigerio Pro Vice Chancellor for Education
- Caroline Elliott Faculty Education Chair (Social Sciences)
- David Lees Faculty Education Chair (Arts)
- Jose Rodrigo Representative of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine
- Holly Roffe Students' Union VP Education
- Vaishnavi Ravi Students' Union VP Postgraduate

The AQSC membership was renewed for:

- Professor Phil Young an additional 3-year term.
- Ross Ritchie an extension of 1 year.
- Chris Rogers an extension of 1 year.

Dr Gavin Schwartz-Leeper was due to be attending *in lieu* of Prof. Beccy Freeman. Dr Lynne Bayley was confirmed as an 'attending' member.

In addition to item 011a, Dr Kay Doncom was in attendance for developmental reasons.

OO2 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Professor Phil Young, Dr Elena Riva, Professor Jo Angouri, Dr Chris Rogers, Professor Beccy Freeman, Dr Tim White and Dr Gavin Schwartz-Leeper.

003 **Declarations of Interest**

No new declarations were made.

004 Minutes of last meeting on 15 March 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 March 2023 (004-AQSC150323) were approved.

005 Matters arising from last meeting on 15 March 2023

- Confirmation was provided that outstanding actions from previous meetings would be followed up and reported at a later meeting due to operational capacity being affected by Module and Assessment Boycott and ITLR.
- A trial was due to be held for two departments to confirm exit awards. The departments did not feel that they were ready for this, therefore it would be revisited later in the academic year.
- The item on Economics and Mitigating Circumstances was followed up later in the agenda (item 008).

Chair's Update

006 Chair's Business

The Terms of Reference (ToR) of the Examinations Committee had been changed to reflect the operational rather than pedagogic focus of the Committee. The Examinations Committee had very few academics as members, therefore it was felt that AQSC was best placed to approve changes from online to face to face delivery of examinations.

The Committee discussed whether this left enough ToR in the Examinations Committee, and it was noted that the new ToR had been reported below the line.

It was reported that the University had been awarded triple gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework, one of only four Russell Group Universities to achieve this.

All items recommended to Senate were approved in the summer term on 28th June 2023.

Substantive Items

007 Economics Request for In Person Exams

The Committee received the report (007-AQSC041023, Public) by the Director of Undergraduate Studies in Economics, and key points and discussions were as follows:

The Department of Economics had been running online examinations for four academic years with students sitting all exams remotely and without proctoring. While there were modules within Economics that lent themselves to open book online testing of knowledge, this was not the case for quantitative modules.

The department requested a return to in-person examinations for some of their second and final year modules where Turnitin could not be used, for the academic year 2023/2024 onwards with the following key points:

- Recorded problems of academic integrity.
- Student dissatisfaction.
- General concern of faculty members.
- Quality of Economics degree and Reputation of Economics Department at risk if exams remain online.
- Peer institutions have returned to in person exams.

It was confirmed that case numbers at the Plagiarism Committee had tripled since 2021 mainly concerning examinations. There was concern that independent pieces of work were not being submitted, with an incentive for collusion in groups. The Department had seen a number of pieces of work where there were similarities and had received individual complaints from students and feedback through the National Student Survey.

The Committee raised concerns that there may have been challenges operationally due to limited space, with some examinations being taken by more than 400 students, and that having online examinations on campus would have been the ideal.

Further concerns were raised regarding examination preparation sessions for the face-to-face examinations as it was noted that some students had a lack of experience in this format. The department confirmed that these sessions were scheduled and had consulted with the SSLC several times.

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

008 Mitigating Circumstances Policy Amendment and Economics Variation

The Committee received the report presented by the Assistant Professor (Teaching Focussed) from the Department of Economics (008-AQSC041023, Public) and key points and discussions were as follows:

The Department of Economics obtained approval in 22/23 to continue to use an increased Mitigating Circumstances waiver limit of 12 CATS for 2023/24 only (055-AQSC150323) and were invited to prepare a paper for longer term approval.

Undergraduate students who took specified courses with a significant number of modules from Economics, could be absent for more than 6 credits of assessment that could not be mitigated by methods other than waiver. The Department of Economics had many 30 CAT quantitative modules that relied on tests being set during the year. Due to the number of these, smaller alternative assessments were not appropriate.

Discussion was around the approved policy, which was a deliberate attempt by the University to harmonise and achieve consistency, and concerns were raised that this request would deviate from the approved policy position. Some members were firmly against approving this item and the department was advised to align their curriculum with university policy. It was also felt that there may be an issue of over assessment.

The Chair asked for a show of hands to indicate whether this item should be approved. Four members were in support, 11 were against.

DECISION: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee did not approve this report.

ToR and membership of Academic Quality and Standards Committee

The Committee received the report (009-AQSC041023, Public) by the Head of Education Quality and Partnerships, and key points and discussions were as follows:

- Formal thanks were given to the outgoing members of the committee, Professor Chris Hughes, Professor Gwen van der Velden, Professor Sarah Richardson, Professor Naomi Waltham-Smith, Professor Dmitriy Rumynin, and student members Chih-Hsiang Lo and Hamza Rehman.
- Terms of Reference were unchanged.

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

ACTION: The vacant position of Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor to be added to the Committee membership.

010 Students Union Update

The Committee received a verbal report from the Vice President Education of the Students' Union and Vice President Postgraduate of the Students' Union, key points and discussions were as follows:

The verbal report outlined the Education and Postgraduate priorities for the year, and included:

Cost of Living (Education Based)

- Specific focus on mitigating the costs faced by International Students who were disproportionately
 affected by costs associated with accessing education such as transport to campus and Wi-Fi to access
 online content.
- Targeting hidden course costs, as identified by the 22-23 SSLC reports which surveyed the hidden costs associated with each department
- Financial support for postgraduate students.

Accessibility

- Supported the development of the Disability Code of Practice
- Created and delivered training on disability and neurodivergence for all staff with the University.
- Worked with the DSO, disability taskforce and the University Disability Team and ensured that all disabled students were accessing reasonable adjustments.

Enhancing Communication

- Improved the timetabling process, for timetables to be released earlier.
- Worked to improve communication between SSLCs and the SU, from officers and from the Student Voice Team
- Aimed for earlier release of exam timetables to facilitate productive revision.

Lecture Capture

- Continued work on ensuring Lecture Capture was an "opt out" system rather than "opt in"
- Increased the awareness of the importance of Lecture Capture for accessibility, but also amidst the Cost-of-Living crisis.

Students' Choice

- Work to encourage the university to reverse its decision in limiting students' choice in assessment methods.
- Ensured the ability to "overcat" was protected.

Decolonising the Curriculum

• Restarted the decolonisation programme by looking into rehiring student decolonisation advocates and worked closely with departments on this issue.

- Collaboration with PTOs to organise teach-out style events to cover issues missed by mainstream curriculums.
- Worked with the library to enhance efforts to decolonise the curriculum.

Postgraduate Priorities

- Supported the rights of postgraduate researchers as staff by working with UCU on the PGR as staff manifesto.
- Supported PGR as staff manifesto by UCU with the following focuses:
 - o GTAs paid for all hours worked. The determination of the necessary hours should be consistent across the institution.
 - o GTAs should receive their employment contracts prior to starting work.
 - Agreed hours and pay should fully reflect the time that is required to perform the duties including delivery, preparation, meetings, marking and assessment, student support, and training and development.

ACTION: Students' Union to help shape some of the discussion at AQSC, meeting to be organised between AQSC Chairs and Students' Union representatives.

011a Results of the National Student Survey 2023

The Committee received the report (011a-AQSC041023, Protected) from the Director of Education Policy and Quality, and key points and discussions were as follows:

- The NSS had undergone changes in the last year with the questions and response options, the wording, and the scales, all updated.
- Notably, the overall satisfaction question had been removed. This compromised our ability to provide comparative analysis to previous iterations of the survey, other than ranking in the sector.
- The impact of reducing the number of answer options from five to four was an increase in the proportion of positive responses.
- The University continued to perform strongly in most areas when compared to the Russell Group average, exceeding in Organisation and Management, Student Voice, and Academic Support. Only Assessment and Feedback, and satisfaction with the Student Union fell below the sector average.
- It was noted that although the University was holding steady in the Russell Group, it was important to look beyond the Russell Group for innovative practice, particularly in areas such as assessment.

The Committee discussed that there were varied results within departments. Differences within SCAPVC, which raised questions about the amalgamation of departments into the School and the effect on individual departments. Particular programmes within WMG were identified as being cause for concern. The WMS representative noted that the new question on recommending Warwick University in place of the overall satisfaction question did not work well for MBChB students. It was also noted that apprenticeships needed to be prioritised from a quality and compliance point of view with ongoing scrutiny at this Committee to play an important role.

In the absence of action plans, departments were encouraged to look at opportunities for ongoing enhancement proactively alongside ITLR outcomes.

011b Results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2023

The Committee received the report (011b-AQSC041023, Protected) from the Academic Director (Postgraduate Taught) and key points and discussions were as follows:

• The PTES response rates had increased significantly compared to the 2022 survey, which may have been connected to coming out of the pandemic.

- Overall satisfaction was slightly down compared to 2022 but satisfaction with the engagement, dissertation, organisation, resources, and skills development survey areas all slightly increased.
- When looking at the position of Warwick in relation to the other Russell Group institutions, Warwick was in the highest quarter for the six areas of Engagement, Community, Assessment, Dissertation, Organisation and Skills Development.
- For the remaining areas of Teaching, Resources and Support Warwick was in the second quarter. Overall satisfaction was comparable to the score of the Russell Group upper quarter institutions.

The Committee discussed that there were differences in performance between undergraduate in the NSS and postgraduate in PTES for WBS and WMG. Further discussion followed regarding consideration as to why the response rate was higher and why the student voice was not as strong, and that departments were encouraged to looked at the PTES results alongside the ITLR 2023 reports.

ACTION: Follow up PTES results with departments and encourage them to highlight areas of good practice, identify the reasoning behind the response rate, noting the importance of the timing of dissertation questions.

012 Institutional Teaching & Learning Review (ITLR) AQSC Outcomes

The Committee received the report (012-AQSC041023, Protected) from the Director of Education Policy and Quality, and key points and discussions were as follows:

- 38 reviews were completed which had provided assurances that there was a lot of high-quality teaching and learning provision across the University.
- All but 5 review reports had been through AQSC and professional service close scrutiny groups for moderation and reported to this Committee. The remaining reports were in the final stages of the process and would be reported to AQSC by correspondence.
- A series of actions followed to include Education Policy and Quality writing to the 18 departments who had required actions following the ITLR process to ask for a short SMART action plan.
- EPQ would monitor monthly progress against outstanding actions and would close actions as they were resolved or addressed.
- Once a department had addressed all actions they would no longer be contacted.
- It was anticipated that most actions within the departments control would be resolved by the end of the 2023/24 academic year.
- The Committee were asked to consider the outcomes and agree the next steps of the process with the aim of building on good quality.

Discussion ensued that the Committee required more time in future meetings to discuss such items in greater detail. Plans for a paper that pulled together actions to be channelled to the relevant department were confirmed, which would include some systemic long-term challenges which would be fed into Warwick Transformation and UEB.

ACTION: EPQ to report back to AQSC in October 2024 with an ITLR update.

DECISION 1: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee **approved** this report and proposed actions.

DECISION 2: Future AQSC meetings for the forthcoming year to be extended by 30 minutes to allow for more in depth discussion.

013 Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity

The Committee received the report (013-AQSC041023, Public) from the Academic Director (Postgraduate) and key points and discussions were as follows:

- The inappropriate use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in assessments had been a concern for colleagues, particularly since the November 2022 increase in publicity concerning generative AI.
- The Committee heard that all student declarations needed to be unified and updated to reflect the new guidance.
- Invitations were made to share any suggestions to changes to the wording of the guidance by correspondence to the Secretariat.

ACTION: Members to contact secretariat with comments and changes to the wording of the declaration by Monday 9th October 2023.

014 WIHEA Learning Circle on Self-Certification

The Committee received the report (014-AQSC041023, Public) from the Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor (Education and Policy) and key points and discussions were as follows:

- In the academic year 2022/23, reports from some departments highlighted high workloads due to increased numbers of self-certification requests, alongside reports from students detailing differential experiences around implementation of the self-certification policy by different departments.
- Subsequently, a WIHEA Learning Circle was formed to investigate issues experienced by both students and staff.
- The aim of the learning circle was to report to AQSC any relevant issues and to make potential recommendations to changes in guidance or policy.

The Committee was informed of the WIHEA Learning Circle's plans to bring a series of recommendations on self-certification to the next meeting of AQSC, which would then be followed by a wider Departmental consultation with any recommendations for change proceeding through the normal governance route. The Committee was asked to approve a proposal that any departments wishing to opt out of the Self Certification policy should discuss their request with their SSLC and then obtain formal approval from AQSC.

The Committee felt that the mechanism for approval of opting out for the academic year 2023/24 should not be approved as the year had already started and information relayed to students in student handbooks should be honoured. Although it was agreed that opting out should be managed through approval via AQSC for the academic year 2024/25 onwards. Consideration would need to be given to the resourcing and timeline of any further the consultation.

ACTION: WIHEA Learning Circle to bring recommendations to the next meeting of AQSC.

DECISION: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee **did not approve** the proposals for opting out of the policy for academic year 23/24.

015 Marking and Assessment Boycott: Policy, Outcomes and Status

The Committee received the report (015-AQSC041023, Public) from the Senior Policy Advisor (Assessment), and key points and discussions were as follows:

An update on the work to mitigate against the Marking and Assessment Boycott, called from 20th April 2023 and paused on 30th August 2023, was provided.

The Committee noted the intended timeframe to reconcile outstanding marks was by Christmas 2023. It was also noted that more resource was required to support the work, in recognition of the additional strain put on professional service departments at already peak times.

The following actions were planned when MAB recovery had been completed:

- Analysis of the long-term impact of the policy interpretation on classification on degree outcomes.
- Analysis of the long-term impact of the policy interpretation on progression on student achievement.
- Consideration of possible revisions to Regulation 41 to capture key elements of policy interpretation.

016 **Policy on Posthumous Awards**

The Committee received the report (016-AQSC041023, Public) from the Deputy Director and Head of Education Policy and Governance, and key points and discussions were as follows:

- In the 2022/2023 academic year, Special Cases Committee was asked to consider several recommendations for posthumous awards from Departmental Boards of Examiners.
- In determining whether to support recommendations from Boards of Examiners, it became clear that there were currently no criteria in the regulatory framework to enable consistent decision-making.
- There was no universal approach to criteria for posthumous award requirements in the sector.

Key considerations were discussed, including whether awards should reflect academic trajectory or potential achievements of the student, or that they be determined by recorded achievement. The Institutional External Examiner had advised that the institution should have consistent guidelines. Committee members noted that their preferred policy position was to award on a student's potential and trajectory.

017 Progress of the Academic Governance Review

The Committee received the report (017-AQSC041023, Public) from the Deputy Director and Head of Education Policy and Governance, and key points and discussions were as follows:

- A progress report was provided with details on what the review set out to achieve, work undertaken
 to date, the approach to consultation and engagement with key stakeholders and a high-level
 timeframe for delivery.
- The review reflected on strengths and effectiveness, recognising opportunities for enhancement, seeking to understand alignment with sector best practice.
- In addition, it utilised learning since the previous academic governance review to collaboratively improve decision-making system as a university community, rather than made suggestions for radical reform.

The anticipated timeframe for delivery and implementation of any recommendations for improvement and enhancement was at the beginning of the academic year 2024-25.

ACTION: Some discussion points to steer the direction of the project to be brought to a meeting of AQSC in early 2024.

018 Amendments to Lecture Capture Policy and Consent Form

The Committee received the report (018-AQSC041023, Public) from the Director of Flexible and Online Learning and key points and discussions were as follows:

The proposed amendments to the Lecture Capture Policy, not revised since 2017, were designed to align the capture policy and consent form with current service capabilities.

There were statements within the current policy that were technically not possible to achieve, specifically around retention of data, which may have had GDPR implications.

The policy was split between the policy page with minimal information, and the consent form, which contained the majority content of the policy. The aim was to rebalance this by bringing the policy wording together on the policy page, refocusing the consent form on recording consent for automated lecture capture and clarifying the text in both areas.

During the discussion it became apparent that the ability to withdraw consent required further discussion and work.

The Committee expressed concern around the wider policy and form but as the item ran out of time committee members were invited to submit further comments by email to the AQSC secretariat.

ACTION: Members requested to contact Secretariat with comments by Monday 9th October 2023.

Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval, without discussion		
019	Chair's Actions The Committee received and noted the report (019-AQSC041023, Public)	
020	ToR and Membership of Examinations Committee The Committee received and approved the report (020-AQSC041023, Public)	
021	ToR and Membership of Partnerships Committee The Committee received and approved the report (021-AQSC041023, Public)	
022	Courses Approved in 22/23 The Committee received and noted the report (022-AQSC041023, Public)	
023	Course Proposal Scrutiny Panel Terms of Reference The Committee received and approved the report (023-AQSC041023, Public)	
Next meeting: Tuesday 21 st November, 10:00, Microsoft Teams		

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS						
ITEM	DECISION/ACTION	LEAD AND	STATUS			
		DUE DATE				
[2023-2024]	[2023-2024]					
007	DECISION: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee approved the request.					
Economics						
Request for In						
Person Exams						
008	DECISION: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee did not approve this report.					
Mitigating						
Circumstances						
Policy						
Amendment						
and						
Economics						
Variation						
009	DECISION: The Academic Quality and Standards Committee approv	red the ToR and r	nembership.			
ToR and						
membership						

of Academic Quality and Standards Committee					
009 ToR and membership of Academic Quality and Standards Committee	ACTION: The vacant position of Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor to be added to the Committee membership.	Secretariat	In Progress		
010 Students Union Update	ACTION: Students' Union to help shape some of the discussion at AQSC, meeting to be organised between AQSC Chairs and Students' Union representatives.	Secretariat	In Progress		
011b Results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey 2023	ACTION: Follow up PTES results with departments and encourage them to highlight areas of good practice, identify the reasoning behind the response rate, noting the importance of the timing of dissertation questions.	Academic Director (Postgraduate Taught)	In Progress		
012 Institutional Teaching & Learning Review (ITLR) AQSC Outcomes	ACTION: EPQ to report back to AQSC in October 2024 with an ITLR update.	Secretariat	Not yet due		
012 Institutional Teaching & Learning Review (ITLR) AQSC Outcomes	DECISION 1 : The Academic Quality and Standards Committee approved this report and proposed actions				
012 Institutional Teaching & Learning Review (ITLR) AQSC Outcomes	DECISION 2 : Future AQSC meetings for the forthcoming year to be more in depth discussion.	extended by 30 r	ninutes to allow for		
013 Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity	ACTION: Members to contact secretariat with comments and changes to the wording of the declaration by Monday 9 th October 2023.	Secretariat	Completed		

014 WIHEA Learning Circle on Self- Certification	ACTION : WIHEA Learning Circle to bring recommendations to the next meeting of AQSC.	Secretariat	In Progress
014 WIHEA Learning Circle on Self- Certification	DECISION : The Academic Quality and Standards Committee did not approve the proposal that would allow Departments to opt out of the policy for academic year 23/24 but agreed any requests to do o from 2024/25 must be approved by AQSC.		
017 Progress of the Academic Governance Review	ACTION : Some discussion points to steer the direction of the project to be brought to a meeting of AQSC in early 2024.	Secretariat	Not yet due
O18 Amendments to Lecture Capture Policy and Consent Form	ACTION: Members requested to contact Secretariat with comments by Monday 9 th October 2023.	Secretariat	Completed