

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee held on
23 October 2003

Present: Professor M Whitby, (Chair), Professor A MacFarlane, Professor A Easton, Professor A Mullender, Professor J Jones, Dr S Hill, Professor M McCrae, Dr E Gallafent, Dr P O'Hare, Professor M Harrison.

Apologies: Professor I Lauder, Professor R Dyson, Professor G Lindsay, Dr P Blackmore

In attendance: Ms K Penner, Ms R Wooldridge Smith, Dr P Nicholls and Ms C Smith (for item 8/03-04)

1/03-04 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2003 be approved.

2/03-04 Membership and Terms of Reference of the Committee

RECEIVED:

A statement of the terms of reference, constitution and membership of the Committee for 2003-04, paper AQSC 1/03-04.

3/03-04 Matters Arising

(a) Assessment Practices and Examination Load and Late Submission of Assessed Work (Minute 93/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

- (i) That at its meeting held on 7th July, the Committee considered the recommendations of the Board of Undergraduate Studies concerning revisions to the 50% rule and the imposition of penalties for the late submission of work and recommended to the Senate that the recommendations of the Board of Undergraduate Studies concerning revisions to the 50% rule and the imposition of penalties for the late submission of work be approved, subject to the amendment of the convention on the submission of assessed work to deduct five marks for each working day a piece of assessed work counting for 10% or more of the credit for a module was late.

- (ii) That at its meeting held on 1 October 2003 the Senate considered the recommended revisions to the 50% rule and the imposition of penalties for the late submission of work and resolved:

“That, without prejudice to the original recommendation, the Academic Quality and Standards Committee be asked to give further consideration to the proposed revision to the regulation regarding late submission of assessed work in the light of points raised at the meeting regarding the likely consequences of the variance in the actual penalties imposed upon students for late submission of assessed work being dependent upon the credit weighting of the work in question.”

(Unconfirmed Minute 12/03-04 (b) (ii))

CONSIDERED:

A memorandum from the Chair of the School of Law addressing issues raised by the proposed change to University policy, paper AQSC 2/03-04.

RESOLVED:

- (iii) That it be noted that the matter had originally been raised by the Board of Undergraduate Studies but had not been formally considered by the Board of Graduate Studies and to that end be referred by the Committee to the Board for consideration at its next meeting, together with Minute 3/03-04 (a) (ii) below.
- (iv) That whilst the Committee noted the rationale advanced by Professor Bridges for a sliding scale of penalties determined by the proportion that each piece of work contributed to a module or course, (noting also that there were areas of the University in which pieces of work were not attached to specific modules), the view of the Committee remained:
- (A) that students should be made aware that failure to submit work to an advertised deadline would lead to the imposition of a penalty, which was intended to act as a deterrent
 - (B) that use of a single penalty tariff would be most clearly communicated to students and would facilitate implementation
 - (C) that use of a single penalty tariff, irrespective of the relative contribution of a piece of work to a course of module, would prevent students considering the relative benefit of delaying submission against a potential loss of marks

- (b) Additional Course Costs (Minutes 94 and 106(c)/02-03 referred)

REPORTED:

That at its last meeting held on 18 September, the Committee considered responses from the Chairs of the Department of English and the School of Law to the Committee's queries concerning additional costs to students levied in their respective departments and resolved:

- (i) That clarification be sought from the Department of English as to what information was provided to students relating to the Writers at Warwick sessions and any potential academic repercussions for students who choose not to attend the sessions, such as students being unable to contribute to related seminars.
- (ii) That clarification be sought from the School of Law as to the precise nature and level of costs incurred by students in each year of the School's courses and that the School consider including the additional course costs for compulsory elements of the course in their departmental budget.
- (iii) That clarification be sought from the Chair of the Estimates and Grants Committee as to whether the Committee could offer the School of Law some financial assistance in order to drive down the level of additional costs.

CONSIDERED:

- (iv) A response from the Chair of the Department of English, paper AQSC 3/03-04 (copy attached).
- (v) A response from the Chair of the School of Law, paper AQSC 4/03-04.
- (vi) Additional information provided by the School of Law, paper AQSC 11/03-04 laid on the table.

RESOLVED:

- (vii) That the response from the Chair of the Department of English was satisfactory.
- (viii) That additional information provided by the Law School indicated that the costs of photocopied materials on a module-by-module basis was clearly communicated to students
- (ix) That a bid be made to the Estimates and Grants Committee to seek partial relief of the charges levied upon students for photocopied materials, subject to further clarification from the School.

(c) Review of the Foundation Degree in Community Enterprise and Development

REPORTED:

That at its last meeting held on 18 September 2003, the Committee recommended to the Senate that in light of the comments made in the QAA Review Report on the Foundation Degree in Community Enterprise and Development (paper AQSC 214/02-03), a review be undertaken of the University's policy on the Accreditation of Prior Learning; it being noted that the Committee supported the retention of its rigorous policy on accreditation of prior learning for core modules which applied to all University courses.

CONSIDERED:

Staff with expertise and experience to contribute to the Committee's review of the University's policy on the Accreditation of Prior Learning.

RESOLVED:

That the following staff be involved in the review of AP(E)L:

- (a) Dr S Hill, Centre for Lifelong Learning
- (b) Dr R Moseley, Centre for Lifelong Learning
- (c) Dr R Charlton, Faculty of Medicine
- (d) Two representatives from the Faculty of Social Studies to be nominated by the Chair of the Faculty Board
- (e) Mr K Sloan, Director, Student Recruitment & Admissions Office
- (f) M F Emery, Assistant Registrar (Graduate School)
- (g) Ms R Wooldridge Smith

4/03-04

Progress of Committee Recommendations

REPORTED:

That the Senate, at its meeting on 1 October 2003 considered a report from the meetings of the Academic Quality & Standards Committee held on 7th July and 18th September and recorded its approval of recommendations made by the Committee under the following headings:

- (a) QAA Review of the Foundation Degree in Community Enterprise and Development
- (b) PhD Supervision Guidelines
- (c) PhD Viva examinations by Video-Conferencing
- (d) Regulation 10.3, Regulations Governing the Constitution and Appointment of Boards of Examiners for the full-time 2+2 and part-time Degree of BA
- (e) Regulation 15, Regulations Governing Research Degrees
- (f) Regulation 14.1, Regulations Governing Attendance at Classes

- (g) Course Approval Documentation
- (h) Information Pack on Procedures for the Review of Courses of Study
- (i) New HEFP Course
- (j) Postgraduate Award in Sexual Health, School of Medicine

5/03-04 Chair's Business

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record a vote of thanks to Professor Bassnett for her contribution to teaching quality during her term as Pro Vice-Chancellor.

6/03-04 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

- (a) That Professor Bassnett, acting on behalf of the Committee, had taken action since the last meeting to approve a course specification for Psychology and Philosophy, paper SCSG 88/02-03.
- (b) That Professor Whitby, acting on behalf of the Committee, had taken action since the last meeting to approve the cycle of Periodic Review of courses of study and Departmental Review 2002-03 to 2007-08, paper AQSC 5/03-04.

RESOLVED:

That the further amendments be made to paper AQSC 5/03-04 setting out the cycle of Periodic Review of courses of study and Departmental Review 2002-03 to 2007-08 to include CRER within the list of departments to undergo Review in 2007-08 and to update the information on Professional and Statutory Body accreditation visits.

7/03-04 QAA Institutional Audit

CONSIDERED:

- (a) The final draft of the University's Self Evaluation Document for Institutional Audit, due to be submitted to the QAA on 27 October 2003, drafted by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality), paper AQSC 6/03-04.
- (b) The final draft of the Student Submission for Institutional Audit, due to be submitted to the QAA on 27 October 2003, drafted by the Students' Union Education Officer, paper AQSC 14/03-04, tabled at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That Committee members should forward any further comments or amendments on the SED to the Secretary to the Committee and any comments on the Student Submission to the Education Officer by the end of the day in order for them to be considered prior to dispatch of the documents.
- (d) That consideration be given by the Education Officer to the validity of including the sample of students from the Centre for Lifelong Learning.

8/03-04 External Examiners' Website

RECEIVED:

An oral report and demonstration from Dr Piers Nicholls and Ms Christine Smith, Centre for Academic Practice, of the website for External Examiners comprising internal and external sources of information and advice, departmental case studies and a Good Practice Guide.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Piers Nicholls be thanked for his work in drawing together information to support the work of External Examiners.
- (b) That the web address for the site be communicated to External Examiners in correspondence to them from the Examinations Office with immediate effect.
- (c) That feedback from Examiners on the usefulness of the page be sought in due course.
- (d) That data on the number of hits recorded by the site be maintained.
- (e) That a case study in the Faculty of Medicine be included in the academic year 2004-05.

9/03-04 Course Specifications

CONSIDERED:

Course Specifications drafted for the following courses, approved by Faculty Working Groups:

- (a) Faculty of Arts
 - (i) BA Historical Studies (part-time), AQSC 7/03-04.

RESOLVED:

- (A) That it be noted that the last Periodic Review of Historical Studies had been conducted in 1998/99 with other Part-Time Degrees.

- (B) That the specification be amended to incorporate (B)s to indicate commonality of learning outcomes between the specification and the relevant Subject Benchmark Statement.
- (ii) BA Theatre, Media and Text (2+2), AQSC 8/03-04, tabled at the meeting.
- (iii) BA English and Cultural Studies (part-time), AQSC 9/03-04, tabled at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That feedback on these specifications, tabled at the meeting, be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary with a view to the Chair taking Chair's Action to approve the specifications before the next meeting in the absence of further comment.

(b) Faculty of Science

MSc in Instrumental and Analytical Methods in Biological and Environmental Chemistry, AQSC 10/03-04, tabled at the meeting.

RESOLVED:

That feedback on these specifications, tabled at the meeting, be forwarded to the Assistant Secretary with a view to the Chair taking Chair's Action to approve the specifications before the next meeting in the absence of further comment.

10/03-04

Any Other Business

(a) Quinquennial Departmental Review

CONSIDERED:

The absence of information in the University's Guidelines for the Conduct and Operation of Departmental Reviews of documentation at institutional level which might usefully be submitted for the benefit of external members of review panels.

RESOLVED:

That consideration be given to the provision of appropriate documentation to such reviewers and that the Guidelines be amended to include appropriate institutional level documentation in due course.

(b) Executive Summaries of Periodic Review reports

CONSIDERED:

The continuing rationale for the provision of Executive Summaries of Periodic Review reports, requested by the Committee in 2002-03, in the light of the introduction from the academic year 2003-04 of the HEFCE Periodic Review Summary Report form.

RESOLVED:

That since the HEFCE Periodic Review Summary Report form would perform the role envisaged for the Executive Summary, there was no longer a requirement for the submission of the latter.

(c) Revised Open Studies course and module proposal forms

CONSIDERED:

Amended Open Studies course and module proposal forms, revised to include information on resources requirements, in line with standard course and module proposal forms, papers AQSC 13/03-04 and 12/03-04 respectively, laid on the table.

RESOLVED:

That the revised course and module proposal forms be approved as set out in papers AQSC 13/03-04 and 12/03-04.

11/03-04 Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Committee would be held at 9.15am on Wednesday 19 November 2003 in the Council Chamber.