

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

BOARD OF THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE

Present: Professor Cooper (in the Chair), Professor Anderson, Professor Ball, Professor Bugg, Professor Dowson, Dr KP Flint, Professor Freedman, Dr E Heit, Professor Kemp, Dr GR Martin, Professor Nudd, Dr AM Price, Professor Roberts, Dr C Sparrow, Professor Wilson.

Apologies: Mr Alexis Adams (student representative), Professor Battacharyya, Professor Carpenter, Professor Copas, Professor Derrick, Professor Dupree, Professor Easton, Professor Gardner, Dr LA Goldberg, Professor Haddleton, Professor Lamberts, Dr S Lawson, Dr D Morley, Dr K Neailey, Dr P O'Hare, Professor Rand, Mr Guy Robinson (student representative), Dr A Simpson, Professor JQ Smith, Professor Spencer, Professor Thomas, Dr R Tribe.

In Attendance: Katharine Grey (for item 27/02-03 only); Mrs H Ireland

MINUTES

20/02-03 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 6 November 2002 be approved.

21/02-03 Matters Arising on the Minutes

(a) Progress of Faculty Board recommendations

(i) Periodic Review reports

REPORTED:

That the Board of Undergraduate Studies on 6 June 2002 considered the review of Computer Science and Computer Systems Engineering and the department's responses and resolved:

- (A) That the Computer Science and Computer Systems Engineering Periodic Review report (paper BFS29/01-02), be approved.
- (B) That the formal response to the Computer Science and Computer Systems Engineering Periodic Review report from the Department of Computer Science be revised to include further details of the steps that will be taken to implement the recommendations of the report and a suggested time frame in which they will be carried out.

and that the Academic Quality and Standards Committee on 12 June considered these and resolved:

- (A) That the report as set out in paper BFS29/01-02 be approved.
- (B) That it was the view of the Committee that the Department's response to the report was inadequate as a statement of how the Department intended to address the issues and recommendations raised in the report.

- (C) That the Committee approved the recommendation of the Board of Undergraduate Studies that the formal response to the Computer Science and Computer Systems Engineering Periodic Review report from the Department of Computer Science be revised to include further details of the steps that will be taken to implement the recommendations of the report and a suggested time frame in which they will be carried out.

(ii) Timetabling

REPORTED:

- (A) That at their meeting on 24 October, the Academic Quality and Standards Committee reported that no solution had been suggested to the problem of timetabling of lectures and examinations raised by the Board of the Faculty of Science, given the constraints on the overall timetabling of events in the Summer term imposed by Degree Congregations.
- (B) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies are considering further this issue and possible solutions to it.

(iii) Faculty Research Centre Advisory Boards

REPORTED:

That at their meeting on 4 December 2002 the Senate resolved that the Faculty's recommendations to keep four Research Advisory Boards in the Faculty and that all others be abolished be approved.

(b) Representation on Senate and other University committees

REPORTED:

- (i) That at the last meeting of the Board it was resolved that the Chair seek nominations for the University Equal Opportunities Committee and the Campus Life Committee outside the meeting.
- (ii) That the Board does not yet have a second representative from the Faculty on the University Equal Opportunities Committee.

CONSIDERED:

- (iii) One further nomination from the Board on the University Equal Opportunities Committee, noting that Dr E Hines is the Board's other representative.

RESOLVED:

- (iv) That Dr Ken Flint would serve as the Board's second representative on the University Equal Opportunities Committee.

(c) Working Group on Non-Completion Rates and Marking Practices in the Faculty of Science

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Board considered the report from the Working Group on Non-Completion Rates and Marking Practices on 29 May 2002 (minute 39/01-02 refers) where they resolved that:

Chairs of departments (or their nominated representative) in the Faculty of Science be requested to:

- (A) Consider the number of students getting below a 2.1 within their department, noting that national data on the spread of degree classifications for their subject area will be provided by the Board Secretariat where available.
 - (B) Submit to the Secretariat, on behalf of the Faculty Board Chair, how departments moderate their marking to ensure appropriate classifications with a view to compiling this information for the sharing of best practice.
- (ii) That at the last meeting of the Board it was resolved that the Secretariat provide degree classification data by subject compared to other HEIs to Chairs of Departments, noting that the recommendations of the Working Group in this regard will be discussed at the next meeting of the Board.

RECEIVED:

- (iii) Relevant information in HESA data Table 14a on HE qualifications obtained in the UK by domicile and subject area 2000/01 and extractions from the Academic Statistics 2002 2.7(a) and (c) (BFS5/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (iv) That the Academic Statistics 2002 table 2.7 (a) for the Faculty of Science be restructured to show subtotals which could more easily be compared to the HESA data in paper BFS5/02-3 and circulated to Departments.
- (v) That Department's consider how they moderate their marks and submit to the Secretariat a brief summary as set out in (c)(i)(B) above to facilitate best practice.

(d) Faculty Information Technology Committee

REPORTED:

That at the last meeting of the Board it was resolved that the Chair would seek further clarification about the tax on computer ports as there was concern expressed over this issue.

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on the computer port tax.

(e) Programme (Course) Specifications

REPORTED:

That at the last meeting of the Board it was resolved that a Sub-Committee of the Board be established to consider completed Programme Specifications on behalf of the Board, noting that the Chair requested nominations for this Sub-Committee to be submitted to the Secretariat.

CONSIDERED:

Whether, in light of no nominations being received by the Secretariat for this Sub-Group by 30 January 2003, each Chair of Department in the Faculty should submit one nominated individual to represent their department on this Sub-Group.

RESOLVED:

That each Chair of Department in the Faculty should submit to the Secretariat one nominated individual to represent their department on the Course Specifications Sub-Group.

22/02-03

Chair's Action

REPORTED:

That the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, has approved the following:

- (a) The Panel members for the Periodic Reviews of Courses of Study as set out in minute 30/02-03 below.
- (b) That Professor Freedman be the Faculty's representative on the Campus Life Committee.

23/02-03

Chair's Business

REPORTED:

That due to other University business, Professor Easton was unable to Chair this meeting of the Board and that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor recommended that Professor M Cooper Chair this meeting.

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on the following topics:

- (a) Developments regarding SRIF, noting that it was estimated that the University would be allocated £15-20 million under this scheme and that the Chair was endeavouring to establish a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor to discuss how this money was going to be used here at the University.
- (b) Progress on the development of the Science Faculty Advisory Board, noting that while an initial number of invitations have been sent out, further nominations would be welcome by the Chair.
- (c) Amendments made to the University website and the description of the Science Faculty, noting that the webpage that was a previous cause for concern has since been removed.
- (d) Skills Working Group, noting that the Chair was seeking one nominated representative on this group.

RESOLVED:

- (e) That the Board strongly supported further discussions with the Vice-Chancellor on the internal allocation of SRIF monies.
- (f) That concern be expressed that any SRIF monies coming into the University will not be considered in the Science Faculty's bottom line in the proposed transparent accounts and that the University Finance Officer be invited to report to the next meeting of the Board to discuss this issue.
- (g) That the Chair would seek a nominated representative for the Skills Working Group outside the meeting.

24/02-03

Report from the Sub-Faculty

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meetings of the Sub-Faculty held on 29 January 2003.

25/02-03

Report from the Graduate Studies Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee held on 29 January 2003.

26/02-03 Faculty Information Technology Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Information Technology Committee held on 21 January 2003.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the following be noted:
 - (i) That the support for the audio visual equipment in lecture theatres seemed very low with too high a frequency of breakdown.
 - (ii) That Giles Carden and Nicholas Hull in the Academic Office are additional points of contact regarding online module registration (section 7 of the 21 January 2003 FITC refers).
- (b) That the appropriate member of ITS be invited to the next meeting of the Board to discuss the issue of support and service of equipment in lecture theatres.

27/02-03 Teaching Survey

RECEIVED:

A report on the Teaching Survey undertaken in term 1 (paper BFS6/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That it be noted that the Board had concerns with how the teaching survey and its variables were being calculated, including why Wednesday afternoon should be included and whether capacity should give heavier weight to larger lecture theatres.
- (b) That the concerns raised regarding the method of constructing the timetable and the subsequent outcomes, particularly in relation to its reproduction based on the previous year, be further addressed by the Assistant Registrar (Accommodation) at the next meeting of the Board.

28/02-03 Annual Course Reviews

REPORTED:

That the Board, at its meeting on 13 February 2002 resolved that Annual Reviews should be a four-page summary review in future (minute 25/01/02 refers).

CONSIDERED:

The following 2001/02 Annual Reviews for undergraduate and postgraduate courses delivered by Departments and Schools within the Faculty of Science received by the Secretariat as at 30 January 2003, it being noted that the Academic Quality and Standards Committee asks the Board to discuss them, consider points of best practice and identify areas for improvement:

- (a) Biological Sciences
 - (i) Biological Sciences courses (paper BFS7/02-03)
 - (ii) Biochemistry courses (paper BFS8/02-03)
 - (iii) Microbiology and Virology course (paper BFS9/02-03)
 - (iv) Computational Biology course (paper BFS10/02-03)
- (b) Chemistry
 - (i) Undergraduate Chemistry courses (paper BFS11/02-03)
 - (ii) MSc IAMBEC for 2000/01 (paper BFS12/02-03)
 - (iii) MSc IAMBEC for 2001/02 (paper BFS13/02-03)

- (c) School of Engineering
 - (i) Undergraduate Engineering courses (paper BFS14/02-03)
 - (ii) MSc courses in Advanced Engineering (paper BFS15/02-03)
 - (iii) WMG Taught Postgraduate courses (paper BFS16/02-03)
- (d) Mathematics
 - (i) Undergraduate Mathematics courses (paper BFS17/02-03)
 - (ii) Postgraduate MSc Mathematics courses (paper BFS18/02-03)
- (e) Physics
 - (i) Undergraduate Physics courses (paper BFS19/02-03)
- (f) Psychology
 - (i) Undergraduate Psychology courses (paper BFS20/02-03)
- (g) Statistics
 - (i) MORSE/MMORSE courses (paper BFS21/02-03)
 - (ii) MMATHSTAT/MATHSTAT courses (paper BFS22/02-03)
 - (iii) MSC/Diploma in Statistics courses (paper BFS23/02-03)

RESOLVED:

- (h) That the Annual Reviews as set out in the above papers BFS7-23/02-03 be approved noting the following:
 - (i) That the following be noted regarding the Annual Review of Undergraduate Chemistry courses as set out in paper BFS11/02-03:
 - (A) That the Board commended the timetabling of the personal tutor meetings by the Department, noting that the Department may wish to amend its Report to reflect its practice more fully.
 - (B) That concern was expressed regarding the consideration within the department of student feedback and in light of discussion at the Board, it was recommended that the Department may wish to amend its report to give further delineation of those considering feedback within the Department beyond the module leaders.
 - (ii) That it be noted that some departments in the Faculty had both a Senior Tutor within the department as well as a Undergraduate Course Director while in some departments one person performed both roles, and that further guidance in this area should be sought from the Senior Tutor's Office.
 - (iii) That the Department of Computer Science had submitted their reviews but they unfortunately were not received by the Secretariat for this meeting, but will be considered at the next meeting of the Board.

29/02-03

Study Leave and Leave of Absence

CONSIDERED:

A concern expressed by the Committee on Study Leave and Leave of Absence about the low take-up of leave by eligible staff in Science departments (paper BFS24/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That the following factors which make it difficult for most departments within the Faculty of Science to take up leave be reported to the Committee on Study Leave and Leave of Absence:

- (a) The experimental nature of the Departments
- (b) The intensive teaching commitments in the Sciences coupled with high staff/student ratios

- (c) The frequent supervision of research students and/or research contracts
- (d) When there are a high proportion of new staff who have not yet accrued leave such as in the Department of Biological Sciences.

30/02-03

Departmental Review and Periodic Course Reviews

(a) Panel Members

REPORTED:

The members of the Panels for the upcoming Periodic Course Reviews:

- (i) Engineering (UG and Partnerships):
 - Prof Easton, Biological Sciences (Chair)
 - Mr R Leng, Law
 - Dr E Heit, Psychology (UG only)
 - Dr J Pickering, Psychology (Partnerships only)
- (ii) Biological Sciences (UG):
 - Dr J Robinson, Physics (Chair)
 - Dr C Sparrow, Mathematics
 - Dr S Gilson, Italian
- (iii) Mathematics (UG and PG):
 - Dr A Dowd, Engineering (Manufacturing) (Chair representing Board of Graduate Studies)
 - Prof. N Chater, Psychology
 - Prof. R Wilson, Computer Science
 - Prof. R Burns, German

(b) Timing of Reviews

CONSIDERED:

- (i) Postponement of the Periodic Course Review of Biological Sciences to the Summer Term, by which time the appropriate documentation can be completed under the new University guidelines for course specifications.
- (ii) Postponement the Departmental Review of the Department of Mathematics to the Autumn Term 2003 due to the Periodic Review being held in the Summer Term this year.

RECOMMENDED:

- (iii) That the postponement of the Periodic Course Review of Biological Sciences to the Summer Term 2003 as well as the subsequent Departmental Review to the academic year 2003/04 be approved.
- (iv) That the postponement of the Departmental Review of the Department of Mathematics to the Autumn Term 2003 be approved.

31/02-03

Language Options within Science

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Faculty's Undergraduate Student Representative on the language availability within Science courses (paper BFS25/02-03).

RESOLVED:

That the Board noted the issues raised in the paper as set out in BFS25/02-03 and that it felt it appropriate for these issues to be considered by the current Undergraduate Curriculum Review Group chaired by Professor Jones, noting that there seemed to be significant timetabling issues when introducing additional flexibility.

32/02-03

Deadline for Papers

REPORTED:

That the deadline for the receipt of papers is 12noon on the Tuesday of the week preceding each meeting of the Board of the Faculty.

33/02-03

Issues to be brought to Senate

CONSIDERED:

Whether there are any specific issues which the Board wishes to report to the Senate for discussion.

RECOMMENDED:

That at the next meeting of the Senate, the internal allocation of the monies coming to the University from SRIF be discussed, noting minute 23/02-03(f) above.

34-36/02-03

Reserved Items

See separate minutes for academic members of the Board of the Faculty only.

YSW/AB/BFS5Feb03Minutes