

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

Board of the Faculty of Science

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science on Wednesday 10 February 2010.

Present: Professor K Lamberts (in the chair), Professor A Easton, Professor D Scanlan, Professor G Medley, Professor P Sadler, Professor D Haddleton, Professor T Jones, Professor A Czumaj, Dr A I Cristea, Professor J Seville, Professor P Mawby, Dr A Price, Professor B Thomas, Professor E Holub, Professor S Palmer, Professor C Sparrow, Dr D Wood, Professor M Cooper, Professor T Marsh, Professor L Robinson, Professor S Jacka, Professor T Bugg, Dr J Robinson, Dr K Flint, Dr D Leadley, Dr J Cave, Professor J Davey.

Apologies: Dr S Jarvis, Professor Lord S K Bhattacharyya, Professor M Keeling, Professor P Harrison, Dr M Cassidy, Dr A Clark, Professor M Smith, Mr D Morley.

In Attendance: Dr K Leppard (for item BFS 18/09-10), Mrs H Ireland, Mrs Y Salter-Wright (for item 21/09-10), Dr S Lamb (for item 22/09-10), Ms S Stavrakakis (for item 22/09-10), Ms J Coleman (for item 23/09-10) and Professor R Dashwood (for item 23/09-10).

MINUTES

14/09-10 Minutes

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 11 November 2009.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved.

15/09-10 Matters arising on the Minutes

(a) Changes to Membership (minute BFS.1(a)/09-10 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, thanked Professor Roland Wilson and Professor Simon Bright for their long service on the Board of the Faculty of Science.
- (ii) That following the retirement of Professor Roland Wilson, Professor Tim Jones had been elected to represent the Board of the Faculty of Science on the Senate until 31 July 2012;
- (iii) That Professor Stuart Palmer, Interim Head of the School of Life Sciences, had joined the Board of the Faculty of Science;
- (iv) That Professor Brian Thomas, Acting Head of Warwick HRI, had replaced Professor Simon Bright on the Board of the Faculty of Science;
- (v) That Dr Alexandra Cristea had replaced Professor Roland Wilson as the third Computer Science representative on the Board of the Faculty of

- Science because the new Chair of Computer Science, Professor Artur Czumaj, was already a member of the Board;
- (vi) That Professor Artur Czumaj had replaced Professor Roland Wilson as the Board of the Faculty of Science representative on the Board of the Faculty of Social Science;
 - (vii) That the Students' Union had appointed Mr P.C.S. Bangalore-Nagaraj (Computer Science) as the postgraduate student representative on the Board.

(b) Changes to Constitution (minute BFS.47(a)/08-09 refers)

REPORTED:

That the issue of changing the constitution to allow part-time members of academic staff to be Faculty Board members would be considered by the Senate at its meeting in the Spring Term of the 2009/10 academic year.

(c) Fees for Intercalated Years (minute BFS.47(c)/08-09 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Fees Working Group was in the process of gathering data on the comparative take-up of ICY/Optional Year Out schemes between departments, along with details of fees payable by students taking a year abroad through formal student exchange schemes, with a view to any changes being recommended to the Steering Committee;
- (ii) The data would be considered at the meeting of the Fees Working Group in April and any recommendations would be presented to the Steering Committee in the Summer Term.

RESOLVED:

That the Chair would disseminate any information to the Board received in the meantime via the Secretariat.

16/09-10 School of Life Sciences

RECEIVED:

An oral update on the School of Life Sciences from the Interim Chair of the School of Life Sciences, Professor Stuart Palmer.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the University of Warwick will be taking forward the proposed merger of Warwick HRI and the Department of Biological Sciences with a view that the new School of Life Sciences will be in full operation by October 2010;
- (b) That an Education Transition Group, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience), had been set up to oversee the transition of teaching and learning in the new School;
- (c) That the four main research themes of the School had been identified and four Research Directors had now been appointed;
- (d) That individual consultations with 94 members of academic staff would begin on 22nd February 2010 overseen by the Academic Redundancy Committee to identify which staff members might be at risk with a view to making a recommendation to Council in May 2010;

- (e) That Sir John Beringer, whose appointment had finished at the end of January 2010, had produced a set of assessment criteria for consideration by the Advisory Board;
- (f) That the future of the Wellesbourne site was being discussed but that there were no conclusions to be reported at this stage;
- (g) That there is a commitment to fulfilling teaching obligations to all students currently studying in both departments.

RESOLVED:

That the Board of the Faculty of Science recommends that the University provide adequate HR, Finance and Administrative support to all staff during the process of forming the new School of Life Sciences.

17/09-10 Report from the Sub-Faculty

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Faculty of Science held on 3 February 2010.

REPORTED:

(a) Amendments to existing Biological Science modules

That the Committee had received a request that any changes to current modules on any courses within the department of Biological Sciences remain subject to the prior approval from the Life Sciences Educational Transition Group.

(b) 2008 Honours Degree Classification Convention.

(i) Minimum levels of performance

That the proposals for minimum levels of performance had now been approved by Senate.

(ii) Treatment of fail marks

That there was strong encouragement from the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science for Departments to accommodate the new pass marks, but that if this proved impossible the Faculty would need to appeal for special circumstances.

(c) Amendments to modules

That the Sub-Faculty on behalf of the Board of the Faculty of Science had approved changes to modules from the following departments:

- (i) Chemistry
- (ii) Engineering
- (iii) Biological Sciences
- (iv) Computer Science

RESOLVED:

- (a) That any changes to current modules on any courses within the department of Biological Sciences remain subject to the prior approval from the Life Sciences Educational Transition Group;

- (b) That any future changes to modules on any courses within the department of Biological Sciences should first be gain approval from the Life Sciences Educational Transition Group before being considered by the Sub-Faculty;
- (c) That all recommendations from the Sub-Faculty of the Board of the Faculty of Science be approved.

18/09-10 Report from the Faculty of Science IT Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty of Science IT Committee held on 27 January 2010.

CONSIDERED:

The IPSC Strategic Framework for IT Activity as set out in paper IPSC.8/09-10 along with the Science Faculty IT Committee commentary as set out in paper BFS.17/09-10.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Board of the Faculty of Science welcomes the IPSC Strategic Framework for IT Activity but felt that more emphasis should be given to the University's research priorities;
- (b) That the Board of the Faculty of Science approves the conclusions of the Science Faculty IT Committee as set out in paper BFS.17/09-10.
- (c) That the consultation period regarding the outsourcing of staff email was underway and that all comments should be directed to Dr Keith Leppard who will take them forward for discussion at the next meeting of the Faculty IT Committee in May.

19/09-10 Graduate Studies Committee

REPORTED:

- (a) Amendments to existing Biological Science modules

That the committee had received a request that any changes to current modules on any courses within the department of Biological Sciences or Warwick HRI remain subject to the prior approval from the Life Sciences Educational Transition Group.

- (b) Exam Board Conventions

That Exam Board Conventions were now a requirement for all new courses and departments should submit these for consideration along with new course proposals.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That any changes to current modules on any courses within the department of Biological Sciences or Warwick HRI remain subject to the prior approval from the Life Sciences Educational Transition Group.
- (b) That all recommendations from the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science be approved.

20/09-10 Report from the Faculty of Science Research and Innovation Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty of Science Research and Innovation Committee held on 8 December 2009

REPORTED:

- (a) EPSRC Third Call for Innovation and Knowledge Centres
 - (i) That following an internal call for bids, the University had selected a bid around Quantum Technology and that an outline bid would be submitted by the end of February 2010.
 - (ii) That EPSRC would shortlist 6 bids and fund 2.
- (b) European Funding
 - (i) That it seemed likely that the budget for FP7 will remain steady and possibly increase in the future therefore there will be opportunities for funding;
 - (ii) That the Chair of the Research and Innovation Committee was pursuing a more systematic and integrated approach to applying for European funding and that enhanced administrative support from the University would be requested.

21/09-10 Harris Report

CONSIDERED:

The findings and recommendations of the Harris Report of the Constitutional Advisory Group recently published and considered at the meeting of the Senate on 27 January 2010, noting that further consideration will be given to the Report together with the feedback received at the Senate 'Half Away Day' to be held on the afternoon of Wednesday, 17 March 2010.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Board of the Faculty of Science had rejected option 'A' (Strong Faculty Model) and wished to discuss how option 'B' (Strong Centre and Strong Departments Model) could be modified to suit the University's best interests;
- (b) That the Board of the Faculty of Science should reflect on its own constitution and terms of reference, in particular the remit of the Board and whether a reduction in membership would lead to greater efficiency;
- (c) That members of the Board of the Faculty of Science were welcome to submit feedback on the benefits and drawbacks of option 'B' to Yvonne Salter-Wright by 28 February who, if comments were received, would then draft a summary and circulate it to the Board.

REPORTED (by the UG Student Representative):

That the Students' Union valued being kept informed of any changes to the University's Governance Structure.

22/09-10 Personal Tutoring

RECEIVED:

A presentation on Personal Tutoring from the University's Senior Tutor, Dr Stephen Lamb.

CONSIDERED:

A memo from the University's Senior Tutor, Dr Stephen Lamb, on Personal Tutoring as set out in paper BFS.18/09-10 including a questionnaire on the implementation of the 2008 Guidelines on Personal Tutoring.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That clearer guidance be given by the Senior Tutor to personal tutors on how to deal with missed contact points;
- (b) That clearer guidance be given by the Senior Tutor to personal tutors on how to deal with the dual role of acting as the student's advocate whilst upholding academic standards in cases of plagiarism;
- (c) That clearer guidance be given by the Senior Tutor to personal tutors on the steps to take should a student need an emergency appointment with the University Counselling Service as the current average waiting time of 5 weeks was too long in many serious cases;
- (d) That the Senior Tutor should strive to keep contact details and procedures up-to-date on the website;
- (e) That other than the issues raised above, the 2008 Guidelines on Personal Tutoring were deemed to be excellent and the Board of the Faculty of Science commended the Senior Tutor and his team on their clarity.

REPORTED:

That the Senior Tutor would provide an update on Personal Tutoring at the next meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science on 26 May 2010.

23/09-10 Restructure of the School of Engineering and WMG

RECEIVED:

A proposal to restructure the School of Engineering and WMG as set out in paper BFS.19/09-10.

REPORTED:

- (a) That WMG was seeking independence from the School of Engineering due to its increasingly multidisciplinary nature;
- (b) That WMG was experiencing difficulties in recruiting staff from Life Sciences and Healthcare due to its current positioning in the School of Engineering;
- (c) That WMG would continue to fulfil its teaching commitments on the undergraduate degree programmes in the School of Engineering;
- (d) That WMG would continue to have representatives on the Board of the Faculty of Science.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a Working Group be set up to investigate the proposed restructure of the School of Engineering and WMG with a view to reporting its findings to the next meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science in May 2010;
- (b) That the members of the Working Group should be Professor Koen Lamberts (Chair), Professor Tim Jones (Deputy Chair), Professor Michael Whitby (PVC Academic Resourcing), Professor Mark Smith (PVC Research: Science and Medicine) and two other members of the Board of the Faculty of Science from outside the School of Engineering;
- (c) That the UG Representative to the Board of the Faculty of Science would present paper BFS.19/09-10 to the SSLC in the School of Engineering;

24/09-10 Chair's Business

REPORTED:

(a) Faculty Advisory Board

- (i) That the next meeting of the Science Faculty Advisory Board would be held on 20 May 2010;
 - (ii) That the Chair of the Science Faculty Advisory Board, along with other members of the Advisory Board, had met with Professor Stuart Palmer, Interim Chair of Life Sciences, on 12 January 2010 to discuss the progress of the new School;
 - (iii) That Dr Pelham Hawker had been recommended to the Vice-Chancellor for appointment to the Advisory Board.
- (b) That Artur Czumaj had been appointed as Head of the Department of Computer Science;
 - (c) That Colin Sparrow had been reappointed as Head of Warwick Mathematics Institute for another term of office.

25/09-10 Annual Course Reviews

CONSIDERED:

- (a) The summary report on the Undergraduate annual course reviews for 2008-09 from across the Faculty of Science as set out in paper SFS.14/09-10
- (b) The summary report on the Postgraduate Research annual course reviews for 2008-09 from across the Faculty of Science as set out in paper SGS.43/09-10.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the summary report on the Undergraduate annual course reviews for 2008-09 from across the Faculty of Science as set out in paper SFS.14/09-10 be approved.
- (d) That the summary report on the Postgraduate Research annual course reviews for 2008-09 from across the Faculty of Science as set out in paper SGS.43/09-10 be approved.

RECOMMENDED (TO CPARG):

That there were still unresolved issues with timetabling and the lack of suitable large group teaching spaces across the University campus and that the Board of the Faculty of Science recommended that CPARG review this situation.

REPORTED:

That the deadline for submission of departmental Annual Course Reviews for Postgraduate Taught Provision for 2008-09 would be 12 March 2010.

26/09-10 Items to be brought to the Senate

RESOLVED:

That there were no specific issues which the Board of the Faculty wished to refer to the Senate for consideration.

27/09-10 Dates of Future Meetings

REPORTED:

- (a) That the final meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science in the academic year 2009-10 would be held on the following date:

Summer Term – Wednesday 26 May 2010, 2pm (Council Chamber)

- (b) That the deadline for the receipt of papers would be 12 noon on Tuesday 18 May 2010

28/09-10 Any Other Business

REPORTED:

That Professor Peter Winstanley, recently appointed as the new Dean of Warwick Medical School, would start in May and was keen to engage with the Schools of Life Sciences and Engineering.

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