

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

FACULTY OF SCIENCE

Board of the Faculty of Science

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 13 February 2008.

Present: Professor K Lamberts (in the Chair), Professor S Bright, Professor MJ Cooper, Professor R Critoph, Professor J Davey, Dr A Dowd, Professor A Easton, Dr K Flint, Professor D Haddleton, Professor J Hutton, Professor S Jacka, Professor T Jones, Ms S Liggins, Professor G Medley, Mr S Padamsey, Dr AM Price, Dr J Robinson, Professor L Robinson, Professor C Sparrow, Professor B Thomas, Professor R Wilson, Professor V Zammit.

Apologies: Dr A Clark, Professor J Feng, Professor R Green, Professor S Jarvis, Professor R MacKay, Mr D Morley, Professor P Sadler, Dr M Skinner, Professor M Smith.

In attendance: Professor T Docherty (for item 24), Ms H Ireland, Dr K Leppard.

MINUTES

The Board noted the recent untimely deaths of Professor Sir Howard Dalton (Biological Sciences) and Dr Jan Rakels (Engineering), and wished to recognise the significant contributions they had made to their departments and to the work of the Faculty of Science.

22/07-08 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 7 November 2007 be approved.

23/07-08 Matters arising on the Minutes

(a) Election of Deputy Chair (minute BFS.10(a)/07-08 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That a postal election for Deputy Chair had been announced, but that no nominations had been received before the deadline of 4th December 2007.
- (ii) That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science, acting on behalf of the Board, had appointed Professor Tim Jones as Deputy Chair for the remainder of the 2007/08 academic year.

(b) International Committee (minute BFS.10(b)/07-08 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, with the approval of the Chair of the International Committee, Professor Jianfeng Feng had been appointed to the International Committee in the place of the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science.
- (ii) That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science, acting on behalf of the Board, had appointed Dr Sach Mukherjee as the Faculty's second representative on the International Committee.

- (c) Heads of Department Forum (minute BFS.10(d)/07-08 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the forum for Heads of Departments in the Faculty had held its first meeting, chaired by Professor Jane Hutton.
- (ii) That the Chair of the Board would identify the chair for the next meeting.

- (d) Fees for Intercalated Years (minute BFS.7(c)/07-08 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the Chair had raised the issue of fees for students taking intercalated years with the Academic Registrar and the Fees Working Group, and had attended a meeting of the Fees Working Group where the issue was discussed.
- (ii) That the Fees Working Group had agreed to consider the issue again.

- (e) Central Provision of Mathematics Support (minute BFS.4/07-08 refers)

RECEIVED:

- (i) An oral report from the undergraduate student representative on consultations with students, via SSLCs, to assess the demand from students for central provision of mathematics support, noting that:
 - (A) the general consensus was that provision was sufficient (or could readily be met) within departments;
 - (B) that departments should ensure that students are fully aware of who can support them;
 - (C) that many first year students felt that classes were either too fast or too slow, so there was a need to provide different levels of tuition if possible.

RESOLVED:

- (ii) That Central Provision of Mathematics Support should not be pursued any further at this time.

- (f) Warwick Business School module registration system (minute BFS.3(e)/07-08 refers)

REPORTED:

That, since October, IT Services have established a load from my.wbs to OMR rather than from my.wbs directly to SITS as previously.

24/07-08 Value for Money

RECEIVED:

An oral report from Professor Thomas Docherty on behalf of the Value for Money Committee, noting that:

- (a) The Value for Money Committee had been established by the Senate (reporting to Audit Committee), had met for the first time during the previous week, and aimed to develop a Value for Money policy for the University.
- (b) The Committee would like to understand the academic community's expectations about its function and purpose. The committee is particularly interested in investigating any major obstacles to academic departments getting or delivering value for money.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That a major obstacle for departments in the Faculty to deliver value for money is the quality of buildings and estate, and that better quality accommodation is needed to deliver the University's research strategy.
- (d) That there had been recent examples of where capital investment would save money in the longer term.
- (e) That the establishment of the Value for Money Committee be noted, and that members of the Board be invited to write to Professor Docherty, as Chair of the Committee, with any views or comments before the week beginning 21st April, when the next meeting of the Committee would take place.

25/07-08 Report from the Faculty of Science IT Committee

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty of Science IT Committee held on 23 January 2008 and an oral report from the Chair of the Faculty of Science IT Committee, noting that recent poor email service at weekends had been causing problems.

RESOLVED:

- (b) That the Chair of the Board should raise the issue of the quality of email service at weekends with the Director of IT Services.
- (c) That Heads of Departments should encourage better attendance from academic members of the Faculty of Science IT Committee.

26/07-08 Report from the Sub-Faculty

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Faculty of Science held on 29 January 2008 and an oral report from Dr J Robinson, on behalf of the Chair of the Sub-Faculty of Science.
- (b) Concerns over Timetabling

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the concerns of the Sub-Faculty over the pressure on timetabling be endorsed (minute SFS.21(i)/07-08 refers).

RECOMMENDED (to the Board of Undergraduate Studies and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee):

- (ii) That the major obstacle to creating a workable timetable was the availability of lecture rooms, and the University should ensure that the recent award of funds for teaching infrastructure be used towards developing an appropriate lecture room stock.
- (iii) That the University should work towards a solution to the timetable for 2009-10 and, in doing this, should consider what is the maximum appropriate lecture size for a given subject.

(c) Faculty of Science Enhancement Group

RESOLVED:

That the remit of the Faculty of Science Enhancement Group should include making recommendations on the quality of the National Student Survey (minute SFS.27(e)-(h)/07-08 refers).

27/07-08 Report from the Graduate Studies Committee

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 29 January 2008 and an oral report from the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.

REPORTED:

- (b) That the Graduate Studies Committee, at its meeting of 29 January 2008 (minute SFS.24(f)/07-08 refers), had recommended to the Board of the Faculty of Science that consideration be given to developing a collective recruitment strategy for postgraduate research students for the Science Faculty, including a collective marketing presence, noting:
- (i) That there was limited evidence of good practice across the Faculty in the recruitment of high quality postgraduate research students, especially from overseas (such as students bringing scholarships); and
 - (ii) That this would be in line with the new University Strategy and could fit with developments taking place in the Graduate School.
- (c) That a Project Officer was being appointed in the International Office to work with departments on the recruitment of international students.
- (d) That the Academic Registrar had proposed a workshop involving the International Office, Recruitment Officers for Home/EU students, and postgraduate admissions officers in the Science Faculty, to share ideas on enhancing recruitment.

RESOLVED:

- (e) That the Science Faculty should work with the Graduate School and International Office to enhance recruitment activities by departments, with an emphasis on sharing good practice rather than collective activity.

28/07-08 Report from the Capital Development Progress Group

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty of Science Capital Development Progress Group held on 18 December 2007.

REPORTED:

- (b) That Professor Tim Jones, Deputy Chair of the Faculty, would take over as Chair of the Capital Development Progress Group.

29/07-08 Report from the Faculty of Science Research and Innovation Committee

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty of Science Research and Innovation Committee held on 8 January 2008.

REPORTED:

- (b) That the Senate had approved changes to the Constitution of the Board of the Faculty of Science to include the Chair of the Faculty Research and Innovation Committee *ex officio* (minute BFS.9(f)/07-08 refers).
- (c) That a three year capital infrastructure settlement of £40M had been announced, placing Warwick 16th, which was consistent with previous funding rounds. £28.8M would be allocated to research, with the balance for teaching, although some of this funding was already committed. The process for departments to bid still needed to be clarified.
- (d) That the bid to HEFCE's Strategic Development Fund for £9.6M to support Science City had been successful, and that the full bid for the Materials 1A project was now with Advantage West Midlands.
- (e) That the next meeting of the Research and Innovation Committee would be held on 6 March, and items for the agenda should be sent to the Chair by 27 February.

RESOLVED:

- (f) That Dr Rachel Edwards (Physics) be congratulated on her achievement in winning a European Research Council Starting Investigator Grant.

30/07-08 Chair's Business

(a) Appointment of Heads of Department

REPORTED:

- (i) That Professor Liz Robinson had been appointed as Head of the Department of Psychology from 1st February 2008 until 31st July 2011.
- (ii) That Professor Saul Jacka had been appointed as Head of the Department of Statistics from 1st August 2008 until 31st July 2011.

(b) Doctoral Training Centres

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on the establishment of a joint management board for the Doctoral Training Centres in the Faculty.

31/07-08 Faculty Advisory Board

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report from the meeting of the Faculty of Science Advisory Board held on 31 October 2007.

REPORTED:

- (b) That Dr John Ferrie (President of Systems, GE Aviation) had been appointed as Chair of the Faculty of Science Advisory Board until 30th September 2010.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That members of the Board be invited to contribute suggestions for topics for future meetings of the Advisory Board, as well as to propose potential new members and ideas for how the Advisory Board might be made more effective in contributing to the work of departments in the Faculty.

32/07-08 Science Graduate School

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A proposal to establish a working group to consider the development of a Science Graduate School (paper BFS.5/07-08).

RESOLVED:

- (b) That the proposal to establish a working group to consider the development of a Science Graduate School be approved, with membership as set out in paper BFS.5/07-08.
- (c) That a representative from the Warwick Medical School be invited to join the working group.
- (d) That the working group should consider an alternative title for the proposal, such as the Science Graduate Training Programme.
- (e) That the working group should consider links with the new Research Exchange in the Library.

33/07-08 University Credit Framework

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting on 1st February 2008, considered proposed amendments to the University's Guidance Notes on Credit and the Credit Accumulation and Transfer scheme to provide further guidance on a number of credit-related issues (paper AQSC.35/07-08).

CONSIDERED:

- (b) Proposed amendments to the University's Credit and Module Framework: Module choice and registration (paper BFS.6/07-08 (extract from AQSC.35(revised)/07-08)).

REPORTED:

- (c) That the current understanding of departments in the Science Faculty was that there was a requirement that variations to *core* modules needed approval from the Sub-Faculty of Science, but that variations to *optional* modules were the responsibility of departments.

RESOLVED:

- (d) That the Board understood the underlying issues caused by permitting students to register for more modules than required, and would be happy to explore proposals to resolve these issues, but that the proposal that students may not de-register from a module after the deadline for the first piece of assessed work on that module, as described in paper AQSC.35(revised)/07-08, would not be workable, noting that:
 - (i) it would deprive students of important feedback, which could inform their decisions;
 - (ii) the number of different deadlines for different modules would be unmanageable.
- (e) That the full paper on proposed amendments to the University's Credit and Module Framework (AQSC.35(revised)/07-08) be referred to the Sub-Faculty of Science for detailed scrutiny.

34/07-08 Learning, Teaching and Assessment Enhancement Strategy

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting on 1st February 2008, considered a revised draft of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Enhancement Strategy (paper AQSC.6 (revised)/07-08).

CONSIDERED:

- (b) The revised draft of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Enhancement Strategy (paper AQSC.6(revised 3)/07-08).

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the revised draft of the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Enhancement Strategy (paper AQSC.6(revised 3)/07-08) be referred to the Sub-Faculty of Science and the Graduate Studies Committee for detailed scrutiny, and that these committees should report their recommendations to the next meeting of the Board.

35/07-08 Guidelines for Consideration of Examination Candidates Notifying Mitigating Circumstances

CONSIDERED:

- (a) Draft guidelines for consideration by Boards of Examiners of examination candidates notifying mitigating circumstances (paper BFS.7/07-08).

RECOMMENDED:

- (b) That the draft guidelines be approved subject to the following conditions:
- (i) Amendment of paragraph 3 to make clear that external examiners do not have to attend the pre-meeting, although they will be consulted.
 - (ii) Clarification of the role of the Personal Tutor.
 - (iii) That the draft guidelines should also be considered by the Board of Graduate Studies, with respect to postgraduate examinations.

36/07-08 Annual Course Review

CONSIDERED:

- (a) The composite report on the postgraduate course review reports for 2006-07 from across the Faculty of Science (paper SGS.49 (revised)/07-08).
- (b) The composite report on the undergraduate course review reports for 2006-07 from across the Faculty of Science (paper SFS.38/07-08).

RESOLVED:

- (c) That the composite reports on the postgraduate and undergraduate course review reports for 2006-07 from across the Faculty of Science be approved.

37/07-08 Items to be brought to the Senate

CONSIDERED:

- (a) Whether there were any specific issues which the Board of the Faculty wished to refer to the Senate for consideration.

RESOLVED:

- (b) That there were no specific issues which the Board wished to refer to the Senate for consideration.

38/07-08 Future Meetings and Deadline for Papers

REPORTED:

- (a) That the final meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science in the academic year 2007/08 would be held on the following date:

Summer Term – Wednesday 28 May 2008, 1.30pm (Council Chamber)

- (b) That the deadline for the receipt of papers was 12 noon six working days preceding each meeting of the Board of the Faculty.

39/07-08 Mark Entry System

REPORTED:

- (a) That most departments in the Faculty were not currently participating in the new Mark Entry System.

RESOLVED:

- (b) That the Board was concerned about inconsistent information about how the new Mark Entry System was working and who was taking it up.

40/07-08 Reserved items

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