

**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 9 February 2005.

Present: Professor A Easton (in the Chair), Professor RC Ball, Professor MJ Cooper, Professor C Dowson, Dr K Flint, Professor R Freedman, Professor D Haddleton, Dr S Joseph, Dr D Morley, Professor M Paterson, Dr AM Price, Dr J Robinson, Professor D Singer, Professor M Smith, Dr C Sparrow, Professor MF Steel,

Apologies: Dr RA Beare, Professor SK Bhattacharya, Professor S Bright, Professor DG Chetwynd, Professor PJ Derrick, Professor JW Gardner, Professor RJ Green, Professor K Lamberts, Dr G Martin, Professor G Nudd, Professor D Peled, Professor DA Rand, Professor PR Taylor, Professor H Thomas, Dr R Tribe.

In Attendance: Professor M Allen, Ms H Ireland, Professor J Jones, Mr D Kelley.

**MINUTES**

20/04-05 Minutes

RESOLVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science held on 3 November 2004 be approved.

21/04-05 Matters Arising on the Minutes

International Strategy Committee

22/04-05 Chair's Business

REPORTED:

- (a) That the AQSC, at its meeting of 27 January 2004, reported that the Committee would again be giving consideration to means of removing further bureaucracy from the University's quality assurance framework and that a letter would shortly be sent to Chairs of Departments inviting them to bring forward suggestions to this end which would not compromise quality and standards or the University's ability to demonstrate these internally and externally, AQSC minute 54/04-03(b) refers.

RECEIVED:

- (b) Faculty of Science Research Committee

An oral report from the Chair on the inaugural meeting of the Faculty of Science Research Committee held on 19 November 2004.

(c) Science Research Investment Fund Round 3 (SRIF3)

An oral report from the Chair on the third round of the Science Research Investment Fund.

(d) Centre for Scientific Computing

An oral report from the Chair on the developments in the Centre for Scientific Computing.

(e) Faculty Advisory Board

An oral report from the Chair on forthcoming meetings of the Faculty Advisory Board.

23/04-05 Report from the Sub-Faculty

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Sub-Faculty held on 25 January 2005, copy attached.
- (b) An oral report on the meeting of the Sub-Faculty held on 25 January 2005, noting that Dr K Flint was in the Chair.

REPORTED:

- (c) That the matter of appeals procedures against the decisions of Boards of Examiners be brought for consideration to the Board of the Faculty of Science, with particular regard to the question of new evidence submitted after the meeting of the Boards of Examiners.
- (d) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies, at its meeting of 10 November 2004, resolved:

That the following text be added to the section "Guidance for students wishing to appeal" in the notes accompanying the appeal form:

"You are strongly encouraged to discuss any matters leading you to consider appealing with your Personal Tutor (or another appropriate member of staff in your department or the University Senior Tutor) before submitting a formal appeal, which should not normally be your first course of action. Depending on the circumstances, your Personal Tutor may be able to facilitate a resolution of your concerns directly in consultation with the Chair and/or Secretary of the Board of Examiners for your degree without the need for you to make a formal appeal under Regulation 8.12".

CONSIDERED:

- (e) Whether there are any points which the Board would like to address in regard to the procedures for appeals against the decisions of Boards of Examiners.

24/04-05 Report from the Graduate Studies Committee

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee held on 25 January 2005, copy attached.
- (b) An oral report from the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.

25/04-05 Report from the Faculty IT Committee

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty IT Committee held on 12 January 2005, copy attached.
- (b) An oral report from the Chair of the Faculty IT Committee.

26/04-05 Examinations and Assessments

- (a) Harmonisation of marking scales and degree classifications

REPORTED:

- (i) That the AQSC, at its meeting of 27 January 2005, resolved *inter alia* that an abridged version of paper AQSC.33/04-05 be circulated to Faculty Chairs for the forthcoming meetings of the Faculty Boards in the Spring and Summer Terms for consultation on the Working Group's proposals, AQSC minute 56/04-05 refers.
- (ii) That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science was a member of the Working Group.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from a working group of the AQSC for the institution-wide adoption of a formula marking scheme based on a 20-point scale (BFS.11/04-05).

RESOLVED:

That the following points regarding the proposal set out in paper BFS.11/04-05 be noted:

- (i) It should be considered whether the scale should be applied at question level, some members supporting this.
- (ii) That the Working Group be requested to explore a 20 point, linear scale and that the descriptors would need further exploration, noting that it was felt inappropriate to have a descriptor entitled 'condonable fail'.
- (iii) That any new scale should ensure that students taking modules outside their own Faculty are treated with appropriate parity within their own Faculty, though scepticism was expressed by some as to whether this required all Faculties to use the same scale.

(b) Seymour Credit

RECEIVED:

A survey of Russell Group Universities on their approach to recognition awarded to students who take an overload on the volume of CATS required for their course of study (BFS.12/04-05).

CONSIDERED:

The continued use of the Seymour Formula in awarding credit to students who take an overload on the volume of CATS required for their course of study within the Faculty of Science.

REPORTED:

That previous minutes of the Examinations and Marking Sub-Group have been brought to the Board and that members of the Sub-Group were invited to attend this meeting of the Board, noting that a further meeting of the Sub-Group would be held to act upon the response of the Board into the final proposals which shall be considered at the Academic Quality and Standards Committee before Easter.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That Departments be requested to consult their students as to their views on Seymour Credit, and that it be put as an agenda item at their next SSLC meeting.
- (ii) That the views of the Language Centre be sought by the Chair, noting that many Science students take extra modules from them.
- (iii) That it be noted that there was strong agreement that able students should be allowed to take over 120 CATS, though it was generally agreed that a cap of 150 CATS for a student in one year could be agreed if individual departments could set a lower limit than this if appropriate.

27/04-05 Periodic Reviews

TO REPORT:

- (a) That the AQSC, at its meeting of 27 January 2005, resolved that the report of the Periodic Review of postgraduate provision in the Department of Biological Sciences and the departmental response be approved as set out in papers BFS.4-5/04-05, AQSC minute 60/04-05 refers.
- (b) That the Periodic Review (Undergraduate) of the Department of Chemistry will be held in the Summer Term and that the University members of the Panel will be:
  - (i) Dr K Flint (Biological Sciences)
  - (ii) Dr J Robinson (Physics)
  - (iii) Dr P Marsh (History)

- (c) That the Periodic Review reports from the Departments of Statistics and Psychology, along with the departmental responses, will be brought for consideration by the Board at its meeting to be held on 25 May 2005.

28/04-05 Membership of other Committees

TO CONSIDER:

The nomination of a representative of the Faculty of Science to serve as a member of the Warwick Active Community Steering Committee.

29/04-05 National Science Week

TO REPORT:

That national science week will be held from 11 until 20 March 2005, noting that further details were available online at <http://www.the-ba.net> and that any department that wishes to be involved should speak to their Recruitment Officer within the Student Recruitment and Admissions Office.

30/04-05 Issues to be brought to the Senate

None

31/04-05 Reserved Items

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