

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND MEDICINE

Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine Education Committee

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday, 24 January 2019

- Present: Dr Dave Britnell (Chair), Dr Stuart Allen (Life Sciences), Alex Baker (Postgraduate Student from the Faculty), Professor Gavin Brown (Mathematics), Dr Adam Chester (Computer Science), Dr Nikola Chmel (Chemistry), Professor Robin Clark (WMG), Professor Gill Cooke (Engineering), Dr David Davies (WMS), Dr Miriam Gifford (Life Sciences), Dr Russ Kitson (Chemistry), Professor Jason Madan (WMS), Professor Kevin Neailey (WMG), Dr Gioia Panzarella (Faculty of Arts), Dr Michael Pounds (Physics), Professor Lesley Roberts (Deputy Chair), Dr Jane Sinclair (Computer Science), Dr Elke Thonnes (Statistics), Dr Helen Toner (Faculty Senior Tutor), Dr Ian Tuersley (Student Engagement Coordinator), Dr Adrian von Muhlenen (Psychology), Professor Martin Wills (Deputy Chair), Dr Dave Wood (Mathematics), Dr Philip Young (Life Sciences).
- In attendance: Professor Andy Clark (Academic Director (Undergraduate Studies)), Amy Collins (Assistant Secretary), Claudia Gray (Teaching Quality), Louise Hasler (Secretary), Jonathan Heron (IATL), Helen Hotten (Teaching Quality), Jenny Hughes (Careers & Skills), Wendy Hunt (Careers & Skills), Professor David Lamburn (Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)), Professor Pat Tissington (Academic Director (Employability and Skills)), Joanne Wale (IATL).
- Apologies: Professor David Hobson (Statistics), Dr Jessica Savage (Faculty of Arts), Professor Matthew Turner (Physics), Dr Jennifer Smith (Faculty of Social Sciences).

23/18-19 Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED:

- (a) That, should any members or attendees of the Committee have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the CUC Guide for Members of Higher Education Governing Bodies in the UK, available from <http://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Code-Final.pdf>
- (b) That no conflicts of interest were declared.

24/18-19 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

REPORTED:

That members were asked to engage with agenda items in light of the University's policies that support equality, diversity and inclusion.

25/18-19 Minutes

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of SEMEC held on 15 October 2018 (SEMEC.10/18-19).

RESOLVED:

That the minutes were held to be a true and accurate record.

26/18-19 Matters Arising

a. Annual Course Review Reports (minute 46/17-18 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, on its meeting of 16 May 2018, the Faculty of Science Education Committee (dis-established) had resolved that the Secretariat would propose the amendment of the templates for postgraduate research course reviews to require departments to identify their own key successes and needs.
- (ii) That the response from Rhiannon Martyn, Senior Assistant Registrar of the Graduate School, had been that the annual course review process was due for review, and that in meantime it would be acceptable to amend the form to meet the Faculty's needs. An updated version of the form was therefore circulated.

b. SLEEC reporting lines and Module Review Feedback form development (minute 45/17-18 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, on its meeting of 16 May 2018, the Faculty of Science Education Committee (dis-established) had resolved that the Secretary would seek clarity over the accountability and reporting lines of the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee, with a view to addressing the concerns raised and to suggesting that the Student Learning Experience and Engagement Committee might report into Education Committees going forward.
- (ii) That the Secretary had consulted with colleagues and established that Faculty Education Committees would usually have been involved in policy developments at an earlier stage but that scheduling of meetings had made this difficult in the 2017-18 academic year, noting that the Student Module Feedback proposals had been developed by a WIHEA Learning Circle drawing upon academic membership from across departments and that SLEEC had subsequently consulted on a draft proposal with Heads and

Directors of Studies in each academic department before revising and finalising the proposals.

c. Equality and Diversity (minute 7/18-19 refers)

REPORTED:

- (i) That, on its meeting of 15 October 2018, SEMEC had resolved that the Secretary would consult with the Senior Assistant Registrar and the Strategic Planning and Analytics Office in order to ascertain what support might be available to departments in returning Equality and Diversity completion and progression data to SEMEC on an annual basis, and that further consideration to the proposal for consideration of such data would be given at the term 2 18/19 meeting of SEMEC in light of feedback from the Secretary.
- (ii) That colleagues in the Strategic Planning & Analytics Office had reported that they were able to provide degree outcomes by gender, and by ethnicity, noting that details of the outcome of vivas (passed viva with no corrections/ minor corrections/ major corrections) may not be 100% accurate, but representatives of academic departments had indicated that they were satisfied with the level of accuracy given what these data would be used for.
- (iii) That on 13 December 2018 the Office for Students had published a [report](#) describing its new approach to access and participation, in which it had indicated that it wished to eliminate:
 - 1. The gap in entry rates at higher tariff providers between the most and least represented groups;
 - 2. The gap in non-continuation between the most and least represented groups;
 - 3. The gap in degree outcomes between white and black students;
 - 4. The gap in degree outcomes between disabled and non-disabled students.

In light of this, outcomes for students both with and without disabilities will also be sought.

- (iv) That data on graduate outcomes should be provided to members sufficiently far in advance of the summer term meeting of SEMEC to facilitate discussion at the next meeting.

d. Education Strategy (minute 8/18-19 refers)

REPORTED:

That further to the development of the University's Education Strategy, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) had now shared a list of ten priorities from within the Strategy for the academic year 2018-19 (SEMEC.15/18-19).

CONSIDERED:

Award of URSS places across the constituent departments of the Faculty, noting that promoting student research opportunities was one of the top priorities within the Education Strategy for 2018/19 identified by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) (SEMEC.11/18-19); that applications for URSS awards across the Faculty was very variable; that there was currently insufficient funding to be able to fund all creditable applications; and that funding in addition to the URSS budget would enable more students to benefit from this experience.

REPORTED: (by the URSS Coordinator from Careers and Skills)

- a. That Careers and Skills had been working with departments with lower rates of applications, noting that those with higher rates of applications and successes appeared to be those that made the most efforts to publicise this scheme.

REPORTED: (by the representative from WMS)

- b. That it would be pragmatic to target departments that do not already offer many research opportunities to students.
- c. That it might be beneficial to propose to the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine that it provide a top-up bursary for SEM students with URSS places.

REPORTED: (by the representative from WMG)

- d. That departments such as Engineering and WMG offer a number of schemes particularly attractive to students in their discipline, such as internships, which might be part of the reason for their own lower application/success rates in URSS.
- e. That ring-fencing for new supervisors (be they new to the University or new to the scheme) might be a way forward.

REPORTED: (by the postgraduate student representative)

- f. That it was often the same academics that came forward to supervise these projects which was also a challenge.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Chemistry)

- g. That WIHEA had been gathering data relevant to this item which the Secretary may wish to review for a further discussion.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Mathematics)

- h. That the scheme could be felt to bring a burden on academic staff in terms of the time required to support students on this scheme at a busy time of year, and that, although changes had been made to require less face-to-face interaction, academics would still prefer to have the face-to-face element hence this was not felt to be sufficiently helpful.
- i. That while seeking a more detailed report based on WIHEA data would be useful to the committee, it might still recommend an increase in budget to the Faculty Board meanwhile.

RESOLVED:

That the Secretary would seek further information available from WIHEA and revise the proposal to provide more detail to a future SEMEC meeting, including an analysis of the reasons for some departments' comparative success in this scheme, beyond the anecdotal suggestions made by members at the meeting.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Board of the Faculty of SEM)

That an increase in budget for URSS places would be beneficial to the faculty.

28/18-19 Draft Employability Strategy

RECEIVED:

The University's draft employability strategy (SEMEC.13/18-19) setting out proposed strategic directions and how these would be facilitated, and an oral report from Pat Tissington, Academic Director of Employability and Skills.

REPORTED: (by the Academic Director of Employability and Skills)

- a. That the employability strategy was designed to address the shortfalls of recent data analysis, noting that Warwick had been ranked 26th in the DLHE where it was generally ranked amongst the top ten universities in other areas
- b. That a newly introduced question in the enrolment form had revealed that about 50% of final year Warwick students had not considered their career at all on commencement of their final year of study, noting that the results of this survey would be shared with departments in due course.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Engineering)

- c. That there was a need for a cultural shift amongst colleagues too, as (anecdotally) staff were known to advise students not to worry about their careers during their studies, with a response from the Academic Director of Employability and Skills that more was being done to address this now through guidance provided to personal tutors.

REPORTED: (by the representative from WMS)

- d. That alumni could be a good resource for providing advice to current students, noting that it could be felt that academic staff were not always best placed to provide students with advice on non-academic career choices.

REPORTED: (by the postgraduate student representative)

- e. That it would be beneficial if extracurricular activities referenced in the strategy could be taken for credit by students (not at the expense of other learning activities), with a response from the Academic Director of Employability and Skills that this was possible and was already practiced in some departments.
- f. That the major companies which visit campus were largely banks and law firms and not Small to Medium Enterprises that might be of more interest to students of this particular faculty, with a response from the Academic Director of Employability

and Skills that the Students Union was beginning to engage better with SMEs for precisely this reason, noting that an SME-focussed fair was being planned for 29 January 2019.

29/18-19 Development of Interdisciplinary Modules

RECEIVED:

A report (SEMEC.14/18-19) and an oral report from members of the Institute of Advanced Teaching and Learning providing an update on the development of interdisciplinary modules, including recommendations to departments on how interdisciplinarity can best be supported.

REPORTED: (by the members of IATL)

- a. That all SEM faculty departments were engaging with IATL but a few specific modules had especial popularity due to relevance to the faculty's disciplines, although some SEM students appeared to take interest even in Social Science or Arts focussed modules.
- b. That module registration appeared to be encountering similar issues this year to last, noting that the provision of guidance on the processes for registration and departmental approval was of particular concern, since some departments seemed to have varying approaches and may not have been familiar with the standard procedures.
- c. That although departments raised concerns that some students can apply earlier than others due to in-department constraints, it was in fact practice to ring-fence places by department as a means of ensuring later-applying students were not disadvantaged by their departmental processes.
- d. That IATL had recently surveyed departments to seek clarification of their departmental procedures with respect to IATL module registration, in order to improve their own guidance.
- e. That the SPI project around timetabling might allow for improved streamlining of IATL module scheduling in the future, but that in the short term departments were encouraged to engage with IATL to arrange particular focussed timings of modules to suit their own students.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Life Sciences)

- f. That the School of Life Sciences would be better enabled to encourage its students, who generally showed a positive level of interest in IATL modules, if the processes were more streamlined.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Engineering)

- g. That the School of Engineering was constrained by its Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies with respect to space available in restricted curricula for offering engagement with interdisciplinary modules, noting that some space for the 'soft skills' was made within the department in its modules but that engagement with IATL was unfortunately challenging.

RECEIVED:

A paper, and an oral report from Professor David Lamburn (Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Claudia Gray (Assistant Registrar (Assessment)) summarising the proposed recommendations arising from the various sub-groups convened to consider aspects of assessment (SEMEC.12/18-19).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education))

That the Review of Assessment had been ongoing with four streams of work for some time, with a fifth to be commenced imminently with a remit to consider approaches to cheating, and that members of the SEM Faculty Education Committee were invited to comment on any aspects of the papers which had been submitted for review.

a. Mitigating Circumstances

REPORTED: (by the postgraduate student representative)

- (i) A minor syntactical correction of which the Academic Director (Undergraduate Studies), who led the mitigating circumstances stream, made a note.

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Chair, WMS)

- (ii) That the mitigation stream of the review of assessment ought to consider compiling guidance for doctors, since doctors' evidence could be wide-ranging in usefulness to the process and since wealthier students often had access to doctors more able to spend time producing sufficiently useful evidence, this being a concern in terms of Widening Participation.

REPORTED: (by the Academic Director (Undergraduate Studies))

- (iii) In response to a query from the postgraduate student representative, that the recommendations around panel composition had included the department senior tutor role in order to secure the involvement of a person with appropriate links to welfare and support services.
- (iv) In response to a concern raised by the Student Engagement Coordinator that students were increasingly submitting mitigation with the expectation it could change marks, that student-targeted guidance had only been developed for the academic year 18/19 and thus that the effects of this in improving student understanding of process were yet to be felt.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Life Sciences)

- (v) That the School of Life Sciences had trialled the provision of much more explicit mitigation guidance to its students and, contrary to popular fears, had discovered this actually reduced the number of submissions found not to contain actual mitigation or sufficient evidence.

b. Assessment Methods

REPORTED: (by the postgraduate student representative)

- (i) That it should be noted that the recommendation around use of more innovative assessment methods would necessitate improved training for PGR students who supervise undergraduates.

REPORTED: (by the representative from WMG)

- (ii) That it should be noted by departments that there would be a need to provide more detail than at present about hours of study required in preparations for coursework or examinations, noting that the compilation of such information would take time, with the response that this was to be captured in the new MA1 form and that 1 credit should equate to 10 hours of study.

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education))

- (iii) That staff were still welcome to provide feedback and recommendations to the Review of Assessment if there were issues of concern to be raised.
- (iv) In response to a query from WMS, that the purpose of the abolition of student choice was more to avoid situations where a student might navigate an entire course choosing only one type of assessment, noting that it was intended that departments would be able to make special cases for the inclusion of some student-choice assessments within a course.

31/18-19 Review of Warwick's Credit Framework

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education))

- a. That Warwick's credit and module framework was undergoing a review during the current academic year, to include harmonisation of credit tariffs, noting that this would involve wide consultation and engagement with departments to understand the implications of changes to curricula (SEMEC.19/18-19).
- b. That some departments had more consistent use of 15 credit modules (or multiples thereof) than others, meaning that the impact on departments would vary.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Life Sciences)

- c. That in reviewing the school's approach to credits, they had found a number of unexpected benefits in moving to multiples of 15, for instance a review of how aspects of the curriculum might better be divided across modules, although there were still concerns around optionality.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Statistics)

- d. That the department had concerns about their joint degrees and how the distribution of disciplines would be impacted by a move to 15 credit modules (or multiples thereof).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Chair, WMS)

- e. That it seemed likely that a universal move to 15 credit modules (or multiples thereof) would have a great operational impact on departmental committees, with

which the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) agreed, noting that departments would need to plan and prepare for this eventuality.

32/18-19 Postgraduate Business

a. Results of PTES

CONSIDERED:

A paper summarising the results of the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey across the Faculty (SEMEC.16/18-19).

RESOLVED:

That there were no particular issues to highlight.

b. Graduate School Priorities

RECEIVED:

A paper considered at the meeting of the Board of Graduate Studies held on 6 November 2018 (BGS.09/18-19; SEMEC.17/18-19).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Chair, Chemistry)

- (i) That the Graduate School would welcome comments on these priorities.
- (ii) In response to a query from the postgraduate student representative, that it was not thought to be the case that the desire for increase in PGR student numbers was related to a need for more PGR students to supervise increasing UG numbers.

c. Annual Course Review (PGR)

CONSIDERED:

A composite report of postgraduate research annual course review reports from across the Faculty (SEMEC.18/18-19).

RESOLVED:

That the Secretary would ascertain whether SPA could provide data with which each department could populate their PGR course review forms, in order to improve consistency of detail in future.

d. Chancellor's International Scholarships and WCPRS Awards

REPORTED:

- (i) That due to scholarships for WMS being ring fenced this year, WMS would be shortlisting applications separately from the rest of the Faculty. That the following colleagues had agreed to rank and moderate applications for Chancellor's International Scholarships, noting that these colleagues will also be asked to rank applications for WCPRS Awards, should the number of applications exceed allocated scholarships:

For the Faculty, except WMS:

- Professor Martin Wills, Chemistry
- Dr Florin Ciucu, Computer Science
- Professor James Lloyd-Hughes, Physics
- Dr Nicole Tang, Psychology
- Dr Georgia Kremyda, Engineering

For WMS:

- Professor Charles Hutchinson
- Professor Max Birchwood
- Professor Stavros Petrou
- Dr Andrew Blanks
- Dr Nick Waterfield

- (ii) The Faculty deadline for WCPRS awards is 4 February 2018, noting that only one had been received at the time of meeting.
- (iii) That other schemes including China Scholarships, EU Chancellor's, and others were recently opened for applications, details being available through GS website.

33/18-19 Progress against departmental ITLR recommendations

REPORTED:

That progress of academic departments towards ITLR recommendations were considered at TEG meetings held in the first term of 2018-19; and that progress of professional service departments against ITLR recommendations was considered at meetings of the Student Success Programme Board, which had oversight of follow-up to the ITLR for professional services departments, held on 23 October 2018.

CONSIDERED:

A report on progress towards ITLR recommendations (SEMEC.20/18-19).

RESOLVED:

- a. That the Secretary would seek relevant SSPB minutes.
- b. That members would share good practice tips for other departments through the Secretary if they so desired.

34/18-19 Report on Teaching Excellence Group Meetings

CONSIDERED:

A report from Dan Derricott (SEMEC.21/18-19), Assistant Registrar (Monitoring and Review) on the TEG meetings held in the autumn term and whether there were any themes arising which could inform future agenda items.

RESOLVED:

In the absence of any comments or suggestions for future items during the meeting, that members could submit any suggestions to the Secretariat if they so desired.

35/18-19 Review of Welcome Week 2018

RECEIVED:

A reflective report on Welcome Week 2018 (SEMEC.22/18-19), noting in particular the third section on academic induction, including recommendations for Welcome Week 2019.

REPORTED:

That an academic induction conference (to share good practice in the aspects of student induction provided by academic departments) was planned for March 2019, for which booking was open:

<https://warwick.ac.uk/students/welcome/staff/welcomeweek/academicinduction/welcomeconference>

36/18-19 Timeliness of Feedback Turnaround Times

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report summarising Feedback Turnaround Times for the Faculty (SEMEC.23/18-19).
- (b) In light of compliance with feedback turnaround times being strongly differentiated within the Faculty, the Committee is invited to consider how to formalise consideration of the turnaround reports within departments.

REPORTED:

That three departments had dropped from a previous 100% mark which should be discouraged.

37/18-19 Update on Review of Personal Tutoring

RECEIVED:

A report from the Dean of Students describing progress against the recommendations of the review of Personal Tutoring, together with an oral report from the Faculty Senior Tutor, Dr Helen Toner. (SEMEC.24/18-19).

REPORTED: (by the Faculty Senior Tutor)

That resources were under development and termly meetings were resulting in the building of good relationships, noting the recent introduction of awards for personal tutoring excellence and ongoing training initiatives.

REPORTED: (by the representative from Mathematics)

That a personal tutor training session had been held recently in the department and that the turnout had been extremely positive.

38/18-19 Change in Membership of First Year Board of Examiners

CONSIDERED:

It was proposed that a representative of WBS would not be asked to attend meetings of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine's First Year Board of Examiners, noting that:

- (a) It had been custom and practice for a representative of Warwick Business School to attend meetings of the Faculty of Science's First Year Board of Examiners, but that attendees had been very limited with respect to contributions they had been able to make to meetings.
- (b) Regulation 9.1 Governing the Constitution of Boards of Examiners for First Degrees set out the quorum as being at least one member from each of the Departments within the Faculty.

RESOLVED:

That the representative of WBS would not be asked to attend meetings of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine's First Year Board of Examiners, effective from 2018/19.

39/18-19 MSci in Integrated Science

REPORTED:

That approval had been given to a new course (commonly called the Hooke Science Programme), designed to teach students how to pose and answer scientific questions by drawing methods and concepts from biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics and computing (SEMEC.25/18-19).

CONSIDERED:

A concern raised by the PGR student that the name of the course seemed inappropriate given the lack of chemistry and physics, noting that the marketing section of the form had highlighted this issue yet the course had still been approved, and that colleagues in Chemistry were not teaching on the course and did not understand some Chemistry-based aspects in the course paperwork.

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Chair, WMS)

That the same issues had been raised through the formal course approval process but that the question was one relating to definition of interdisciplinarity, noting that departments were not discipline silos and that for WMS in particular it was acknowledged that medicine is an umbrella discipline encompassing traditional disciplines from both arts and science. As such the course as defined was deliverable across WMS and SLS expertise although wider expansion would be desirable.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy Chair, WMS, would facilitate a conversation between the postgraduate student representative and the course leader of the MSci if they wished, in order to address the concerns raised more appropriately, bearing in mind that the course leader

was better placed to do this.

ITEMS REPORTED AND APPROVED WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION

40/18-19 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

That the following actions had been undertaken by the Chair on behalf of the committee since its previous meeting:

- a. Approval of an extension request made by WMG for the marking deadline for the module Communications for Connected Car.
- b. Approval of a change to the assessment methods for two Mathematics modules (MA3B6 Complex Analysis and MA4G6 Calculus of Variations) – both from 100% exam to 85% exam and 15% assessed coursework.
- c. An amendment to the FYBoE decision regarding one WMG student, resulting in a change of outcome from withdrawal to resit without residence, based on the department receiving late information about reasonable adjustments that had not been implemented for the student's original resit.
- d. A variation to the regulations for two WMG students on the Applied Engineering Programme, in order to allow resits for failed fourth year modules, noting that the existing degree regulations for the AEP did not allow this and that this was to be amended for future years; this was subsequently approved by the Vice-Chancellor, who is empowered as Chair of Senate to vary regulation.
- e. Approval of ten minutes' reading time for a time-constrained laboratory assessment used to assess the module WM216 (Applied Programming 2), as part of the Dyson Engineering Degree.
- f. Approval of the addition of fifteen minutes' reading time to the examination for ES262 Electromechanical System Design.
- g. Approval of a new module, Mindful Project Management, to be taught as part of the IATL interdisciplinary MSc in Humanitarian Engineering.

41/18-19 Date of Next Meeting

REPORTED:

Term 3: Thursday 16 May 2019, 2.00pm – 4.00pm, Senate House Council Chamber