

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
BOARD OF THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING & MEDICINE
OPEN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD
14:30, THURSDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2023 IN CMR 1.0

Present	Professor Lorenzo Frigerio	Vice Provost and Chair of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine [Chair]
	Professor Gary Bending	Deputy Head of Department (Academic), Life Sciences
	Dr Nikola Chmel	Faculty Education Committee member representing postgraduate education
	Professor David Davies	Chair of the Faculty Education Committee (Science, Engineering and Medicine) [Deputy Chair]
	Professor Steven Dixon	Professor (Elster Research Chair), Physics
	Professor Jon Forster	Head of Department, Statistics
	Dr Daniel Franklin	Faculty Education Committee member representing undergraduate education
	Professor Peter Gammon	Head of Research and Deputy Head of School, Engineering
	Professor Miriam Gifford	Head of Department, Life Sciences
	Professor John Greenlees	Head of Department, Mathematics
	Thomas Hart	Undergraduate student representative
	Professor Adam Johansen	Professor, Statistics
	Professor Sudhesh Kumar	Head of Department, Warwick Medical School
	Dr Leda Mirbahai	Associate Professor (Teaching Focussed), Warwick Medical School
	Professor Mark Newton	Head of Department, Physics
	Professor Dan Nunan	Faculty Education Committee member representing postgraduate education
	Professor James Robinson	Deputy Head of Department, Mathematics
	Professor Yulia Timofeeva	Head of Department, Computer Science
	Professor David Towers	Head of Department, Engineering
Professor Mike Ward	Head of Department, Chemistry	
Professor Derrick Watson	Head of Department, Psychology	
Attending	Adam Child	Academic Registrar [item 024 only]
	Ruth Cooper	Director of Administration (Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine)
	Craig Franklin	Senior Policy Advisor (Education) [Secretary]
	Phil Griffiths	Education Projects & Academic Governance Officer [Assistant Secretary]
	Sam Johnson	Academic Support Librarian
	Professor David Quigley	Chair of the SEM Faculty IT Committee and Director of the Scientific Computing Research Technology Platform [item 021 only]
	Professor David Roper	Director of Research, Life Sciences [observing]
	Professor Mark Williams	Deputy Chair of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine (Research)
Ref	Item	
014	<p>Welcome and Apologies for absence</p> <p>The Chair welcomed all, including Professor Mark Williams who had joined the Board as the recently appointed Deputy Chair of Faculty (Research).</p> <p>Apologies were received from Professor Georgia Kremmyda, Professor Fiona MacCallum, Dr Lydia Plath, Dr Gavin Schwartz-Leeper, Kiranjit Shergill, Professor Cagatay Turkey</p>	

015	<p>Declarations of Interest</p> <p>No new declarations were made.</p>
016	<p>Minutes of last meeting on 24 November 2022</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2022 (016-BFSEM230223) were approved.</p>
017	<p>Matters arising from last meeting on 24 November 2022</p> <p>There were no matters arising from the meeting to report.</p>
Chair's Update	
018	<p>Chair's Business</p> <p>a) Membership</p> <p>Professor Mark Williams had taken up the new role of Deputy Chair of Faculty (Research) in January 2023 and would join the Board going forward.</p> <p>b) Faculty of Science Engineering and Medicine Education Committee (SEMEC) Spring Term meeting minutes</p> <p>Due to SEMEC members' involvement with the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review (ITLR), the SEMEC meeting scheduled for the Spring term of 2022/23 had been cancelled and, consequently, there would be no minutes to be reported to the Board. A one-hour informal meeting of SEMEC members had recently taken place to discuss optional over-cating (item 024 refers).</p> <p>c) Good news from the Faculty</p> <p>A report had been circulated to members as part of the meeting pack (025-BFSEM230223 refers). The Chair highlighted in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Weldon Prize had been awarded to the SPI-M-O group (part of SAGE), which included members of Warwick's Zeeman Institute (SBIDER), and was the first time in the award's history that it had been given to a group and not an individual. The group's epidemiological modelling supported the UK's policy response to the Covid-19 pandemic. • SEM Faculty Board member Professor Steve Dixon had been elected a fellow of the Royal Academy of Engineering earlier in the academic year. <p>d) Industrial Action Update</p> <p>It was reported by the Chair that on Friday 17 February 2023 UCEA reported that the New JNCHES Dispute Resolution Procedure for the pay negotiations of the 2023-24 negotiating round had been concluded following a week of discussions with trade unions facilitated by ACAS. Both sides recognised the need to allow for a period of calm during further ACAS facilitated discussions and no industrial action would take place in the weeks beginning 20 and 27 February.</p>
Theme Heading	
019	<p>Student Representatives Update</p> <p>The Undergraduate student representative reported that a recent survey of Maths students relating to the proposal to end optional over-cating had found 514 students opposed, and 9 in favour (see also item 024).</p>
020	<p>Departmental Athena Swan Annual Reports</p> <p>The Committee received the report (020-BFSEM230223). The Chair extended the Board's thanks to Ruth Cooper and Maria Kariuki for preparing the Faculty's summary report, and reported that the good practice highlighted would be used to support a bid for central University ED&I funding to facilitate coordinated Faculty level initiatives and to support inclusive education.</p>

021	<p>IT Committee Update</p> <p>The Committee received a verbal update and demonstration of the Jupyter Notebook system from the Chair of the SEM Faculty IT Committee. Key points were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Jupyter Notebook system was a web-based service which enabled the creation and sharing of computational documents in a programming environment (https://jupyter.org/). Over 40 programming languages, including Python and R, as well as basic web development in HTML, CSS and Javascript were available via the service. • The Scientific Computing Research Technology Platform (SCRTP) had been hosting the Jupyter Notebook service at Warwick for the past five years. Users of the service were primarily based in the departments of Physics, Chemistry, Engineering and Mathematics, but the continued growth in the undergraduate student userbase was not sustainable for the SCRTP and procurement of a site licence for up to 10,000 concurrent users of the University of Edinburgh's Notable Service was being arranged through Warwick's Information and Digital Group. • The Notable Service would enable the Jupyter Notebook system to be fully integrated into Warwick's web-based Moodle platform via an activity button and would ensure no additional user authentication issues. • A trial of the new Notable Service was underway and it was expected that the service would be available for teaching use at Warwick from the start of the 2023/24 academic year. • The Notable Service was most suitable for first- and second-year undergraduate teaching. Third- and fourth-year student projects which were likely to require significant computing resource could continue to make use of the existing SCRTP hosted Jupyter Notebook service.
022	<p>Proposal for the establishment of a new Category III (departmental) Research Centre in Chemistry - 'Warwick Computational and Theoretical Chemistry (CaTCh)'</p> <p>The Assistant Secretary to the SEM Faculty Board presented the report (022-BFSEM230223).</p> <p>The proposed Centre would provide a focal point for computational chemical science at Warwick, establishing a formal collective identity and profile for expertise in this area. It aimed to build upon the growth and success of the current active group of researchers working in this area.</p> <p>DECISION: The Board recommended establishment of the Warwick Computational and Theoretical Chemistry (CaTCh) research centre to the Research Committee.</p>
023	<p>Triennial review of the 'Centre for Discrete Mathematics and its Applications (DIMAP)'</p> <p>The Assistant Secretary to the SEM Faculty Board presented the report (023-BFSEM230223).</p> <p>DIMAP had undertaken excellent research in discrete mathematics and combinatorics, and in theoretical aspects of computer science, spanning the Department of Computer Science and the Warwick Mathematics Institute. It had an excellent international reputation, attracting high quality staff and students to Warwick, and had been instrumental in securing external research funding, contributing to the REF.</p> <p>ACTION: Following a query from the Head of the Department of Computer Science, Secretariat to raise a query with RIS regarding the report's assertion that DIMAP should be connected to Warwick Data.</p> <p>DECISION: The Board recommended the continuation of the Centre for Discrete Mathematics and its Applications (DIMAP) to the Research Committee.</p>
024	<p>Discontinuation of Optional Over-cattng</p> <p>The Academic Registrar presented the report (024-BFSEM230223). Key points were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to address the reduction in the unit of resource funding and review policy around optional over-cattng had commenced in 2021/22. • The Academic Resourcing Committee (ARC) had reviewed an analysis of the financial implications of optional over-cattng at its meeting on 14 December 2022, with a subsequent proposal and the current implementation plan being presented to the Faculty Boards and Education Committee for discussion.

- The Education Committee would discuss the implementation plan at its meeting on 7 March 2023. The Senate would then consider the implementation plan and feedback from the Faculty Boards and Education Committee at its meeting on 26 April 2023.
- The proposal to remove optional over-cattling would not affect current students and would only take effect for new students commencing courses of study from September 2024.
- An informal meeting of SEMEC members to consider the proposals, and an informal meeting of the Directors of Education from the departments most directly affected by the proposals had both taken place recently.

Members raised significant concerns in relation to the proposals and the rapid nature of consultation and implementation.

- The Board noted the strength of feeling from students and staff in opposition to the current proposals. A recent survey of Mathematics students had found 514 against and 9 in favour of the proposal to discontinue optional over-cattling. A similar survey of Physics students had found 194 votes against and 4 in favour. SEM SSLC representatives had also expressed strong opposition to the proposals to be implemented. Current SEM Faculty students felt that future Warwick students should continue to be able to benefit from optional over-cattling, should they wish to.
- The student wellbeing argument given in the report was disputed. It was reported by the undergraduate student representative that in the Mathematics department, for example, there was no pressure on students to overcat and department advice had consistently been that if students wished to overcat then they were to do so as little as possible.
- Departments' current marketing to prospective students promoted the flexibility that optional over-cattling enabled. This flexibility was an important factor in drawing some of the most able students to study at Warwick ahead of other comparable institutions. Student feedback supporting this could be shared if required.
- It was reported that the reduction in the unit of resource argument could not be fairly applied to departments such as the Departments of Computer Science, Statistics or Mathematics given their strength in recruiting overseas students, noting that those departments benefited from the reputation and flexibility that optional over-cattling provided.
- The Board expressed concern that the data used in the implementation plan was flawed and the cost modelling had overestimated savings significantly. The implementation plan had not considered many of the marginal costs associated with the removal of over-cattling, which were likely to outweigh any benefits, and a more detailed cost/benefit analysis was needed.
- The reduction in workload argument supporting the proposals was weak, as SEM Faculty academic staff were willing to undertake work to continue to support the current practice of optional over-cattling.
- In relation to students' ability, as part of proposals, to undertake optional study of modern foreign languages in future and the retention of a tangible reward for this study, it was reported that optional language learning would be located around the Warwick Award and that this would de-risk the impact of the current additional load on students' courses of study.
- The Board expressed a concern that the implementation plan was contrary to elements of Warwick's Education Strategy, would significantly impact the student experience, and that the proposals had not been co-created or consulted with students or academic staff adequately.

The Board considered that the proposals to discontinue over-cattling, as presented, were still very much a matter for debate, and that the Faculty wished to request additional time to discuss and develop a convincing alternative proposal, based on accurate data, which would ensure that students' ability to undertake flexible and interdisciplinary education would be preserved.

Items below this line were for receipt and/or approval, without discussion

025	Good News from the Faculty The Committee received and noted the report (025-BFSEM230223).
026	ARC Autumn Review: Faculty of Social Sciences Department Reconfiguration The Committee received and noted the report (026-BFSEM230223, Protected).
Other	
027	Any other business There was no other business.
Next meeting: Thursday, 25 May 2023, 1.30pm, CMR 1.0	

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS			
ITEM	DECISION/ACTION	LEAD AND DUE DATE	STATUS
[2022-2023]			
022 – Proposal for the establishment of a new Category III (departmental) Research Centre in Chemistry - ‘Warwick Computational and Theoretical Chemistry (CaTCh)	DECISION: The Board recommended establishment of the Warwick Computational and Theoretical Chemistry (CaTCh) research centre to the Research Committee.		
023 – ‘Triennial review of the ‘Centre for Discrete Mathematics and its Applications (DIMAP)’	DECISION: The Board recommended the continuation of the Centre for Discrete Mathematics and its Applications (DIMAP) to the Research Committee.		
	ACTION Following a query from the Head of the Department of Computer Science, Secretariat to raise a query with RIS regarding the report’s assertion that DIMAP should be connected to Warwick Data	Secretariat May 2023	In progress