

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

FACULTY OF SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND MEDICINE

Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine held on
12 February 2019

- Present: Professor M Shipman (Chair), Dr David Davis (Deputy Chair), A Baker, Professor R Ball, Professor S Banerji, Professor G Brown, Professor H Ferhatosmanoglu, Professor B Finkenstadt, Professor L Frigerio, Dr N d'Ambrumenil, N Islam, Dr R Kearney, Professor S Kumar, Professor R Lazic, Professor D Leadley, Professor R Roemer, Dr H Toner, Professor M Ward, Professor D Watson, Professor M Wills, Dr D Wood
- Apologies: Professor D Barkley, Dr D Britnell, Dr M Gifford, Professor J Greenlees, Professor R Goodwin, Professor G Roberts, Professor D Towers, Professor Chris Warhurst
- In attendance: L Hasler (Secretary), Professor D Branch (agendum 8), R Cooper (Director of Administration)

13/18-19 Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED:

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>

14/18-19 Minutes

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine held on 15 November 2018 (BFSEM.09/18-19) and were agreed to be a correct record.

15/18-19 Chair's Business

REPORTED:

- (a) Congratulations were extended to Professors Julie Staunton and Magnus Richardson and colleagues for their success in winning £10 million in support of the HetSys and MathsSys II Centres for Doctoral Training.
- (b) Congratulations were extended to Professor Philip Mawby and the Power Electronics Applications and Technology in Energy Research Group, for winning University Research Group of the Year at the 2018 TechWorks Awards.
- (c) The Chair gave strong encouragement for support of the Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (WATE):

https://warwick.ac.uk/services/ldc/teaching_learning/wate), a scheme in which colleagues from the Faculty were usually relatively successful. It was noted that nominations for awards for excellence in personal tutoring (WAPTE: https://warwick.ac.uk/services/ldc/teaching_learning/wate/wapteinfo/) were also now open and running to the same deadline of 27 February 2019.

- (d) Members were informed that Amanda Bishop, the Faculty's new Widening Participation Coordinator, was now in post, and was making efforts to meet with all Heads of Department. It was noted that a student life-cycle approach was increasingly being taken to widening participation. In response to questions from members of the Board, it was noted that widening participation sat under the broader inclusion component of the new university strategy.
- (e) Members were informed that Louise Hasler, the Secretary to the Board of the Faculty, Faculty Education Committee and Faculty First Year Board of Examiners, would be seconded to the role of Departmental Administrator in Mathematics until 31 August 2019, but in the meantime she would continue in her role as Secretary.

16/18-19 Items from the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine Education Committee

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Deputy Chair of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine Education Committee (SEMEC), Professor Martin Wills, from the meeting held on 24 January 2019 (BFSEM.10/18-19), including a resolution that the University should be asked to provide the URSS scheme with more funding, together with the minutes of the meeting (BFSEM.11/18-19) and Education Strategy priorities (BFSEM.12/18-19).

It was reported that SEMEC had been highly supportive of URSS as a scheme, that it has been noted that participation by students varied between departments across the Faculty, and that it was considered that this variability might be related to existing research opportunities that were embedded within curricula.

It was acknowledged that the £1,000 stipend was not always sufficient to cover a student's living costs for the duration of their project and that some departments provided a top up.

RESOLVED:

To communicate the Board and SEMEC's strong support of this scheme to the University, and desire for the University to fund more places; and to consider how the Faculty might offer financial support to the scheme, for instance via funding students whose supervisors were new to the scheme, or students from under-represented groups

A representative from the department of Mathematics raised two items that had been considered by the Faculty Education Committee: the review of assessment and the review of the credit and module framework; he expressed strong concern that the direction of travel of these reviews would potentially result in changes that would be operationally very difficult for Maths to introduce and were likely to have a detrimental impact on their degree courses. He reported that he had raised concerns about certain outputs of the review of assessment with the Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, but had not had a response.

There was discussion regarding the review of the credit and module framework, and colleagues representing Life Sciences, Mathematics and Physics, indicated that they did not concede that there were drivers towards institutional harmonisation of the credit and

module framework; that there was already a high level of interdisciplinarity across cognate departments of the Faculty and that changing provision to fit a new credit and module framework could weaken existing provision.

Concerns were expressed regarding the fast pace of institutional change, and a perception of a growing centralisation of decision making.

Where changes were being made by some departments, it was noted that a phased approach was helpful (e.g. WMG making all new modules 15 credits in size, but not applying this retrospectively); some members also expressed the view that over-cutting by a small amount allowed for some variation and should not be considered problematic.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy Chair of the Faculty would liaise with departments of the Faculty to garner views on the review of the credit and module framework, and would feed these back, along with the relevant minute of the meeting, to the Deputy Academic Registrar, who is coordinating the review.

17/18-19 STEM Grand Challenge

RECEIVED:

An update on progress towards the goals of the STEM Grand Challenge, following the presentation by the Chair of Faculty to the Council on 5 February 2019 (BFSEM.13/18-19). The Chair summarised the aspirations of the University for disproportionate growth in students in STEM which would require the numbers of students to grow from 10,000 to 14,000 by 2030, although no firm decisions had been made regarding the growth expected by individual departments. It was noted that the Council had enthusiastically received a presentation on the Challenge, and it might be the case that non-traditional ways of funding growth of estate to support STEM would be explored.

It was noted that new STEM buildings would allow interdisciplinarity to be supported, and there was an opportunity for all departments to engage with this. The Head of Department of Statistics observed that where educational provision cut across traditional department structures, greater administrative support was required in order to secure efficient operation.

18/18-19 British Science Association Festival 2019

RECEIVED:

An update on submissions for activities from colleagues for the British Science Association Festival 2019 (BFSEM.14/18-19) and an updated slide presentation (BFSEM.14/18-19 Appendix); that circa 75 applications to contribute to the Festival programme had been received by colleagues, and 26 would be included in the core programme, and that many other applicants had been invited to be involved in the wider programme such as the family day.

RESOLVED:

That the Chair would circulate information on the programme to Heads of Department once successful applicants had been made aware.

19/18-19 Proposal for the Creation of a new School of Creative and Visual Cultures

CONSIDERED:

A proposal to bring together existing Schools and Centres from the Faculty of Arts to create a new School of Creative and Visual Cultures (SCVC) (BFSEM.15/18-19) was presented by Professor Dan Branch, Acting Chair of the Faculty of Arts. Professor Branch confirmed that the proposal was a solution to the difficulty presented by having a number of relatively small departments within the Faculty of Arts; he confirmed that no redundancies were expected in this reorganisation.

It was noted that at this juncture, Film & TV did not wish to be part of the new School as there were concerns about the potentially detrimental impact on their sense of community which was valued by staff and students.

In response to a question about a possible change of footprint in Millburn House, Professor Branch offered reassurances that there would not be any need for further space in Milburn House.

RESOLVED:

To support the proposal for the new School of Creative and Visual Cultures, with the caveat that the changes would need to be supported by clear communications, especially to students.

20/18-19 University Research Centres – Triennial Review

CONSIDERED:

Documentation submitted by University Category II and III Research Centres (BFSEM.16/18-19) whether there was support for these research centres to continue; and if there were any areas that would benefit from improved coordination or further development.

Each centre was discussed, with input from the relevant Head of Department. In all cases, it was felt that the research centres offered a positive contribution to the University and were at an appropriate stage of development relative to their length of life.

RESOLVED:

To support the continuation of Research Centres as follows:

- i. Centre for the History of Medicine
- ii. Warwick Cancer Research Centre
- iii. Centre for Discrete Mathematics and its Applications
- iv. Centre for Fusion Space and Astrophysics
- v. Milburn House Magnetic Resonance Lab
- vi. Centre for Research in Statistical Methodology (CRiSM)
- vii. Fluid Dynamics Research Centre
- viii. Warwick Analytical Science Centre

21/18-19 Warwick Collaborative Postgraduate Research Scholarships

REPORTED:

That five applications had been received for six scholarships, for which a 50% contribution to the costs must be secured by an external sponsor; that WMS was running its own competition due to its three scholarships having been ring fenced; that the deadline had now passed, but any further applications received would be considered in date order and held as reserves in case of any attrition.

RESOLVED:

To ensure that equivalent information for WMS was reported to the Board for so long as their scholarships were ring fenced.

22/18-19 Warwick Postdoctoral Symposium

REPORTED:

That following the success of the inaugural Symposium in 2018, the next Warwick Postdoctoral Science Symposium would be held on 7 May 2019, and that the keynote speaker will be Professor Russell Foster, Professor of circadian neuroscience and Director of the Nuffield Laboratory of Ophthalmology. It was also noted that the Faculty Post-Doctoral Research Prizes would be awarded at this event.

ITEMS TO REPORT AND APPROVE WITHOUT FURTHER DISCUSSION

23/18-19 Timeliness of Feedback

RECEIVED:

A composite report on timeliness of feedback on assessment submitted in the autumn Term 2018 across the Faculty, received by the Science Faculty Education Committee on 24 January 2018 (BFSEM.18/18-19), noting that support for consideration of these data had been strengthened by the production of a summary report.

24//18-19 Date of Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Medicine would be held as follows:

Thursday 23 May 2019 from 10.00am – 12.00pm, Council Chamber, Senate House (followed by lunch).