

# UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

## **Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences**

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences held on Wednesday 15 November 2017.

Present: Professor M Nudds (Chair), Professor S Becker (Economics), C Bisping (Chair of EFSS), Professor R Hastings (Chair of FSS Research & Impact Committee), Dr L Hatton (WFS), K Ireland (CTE), Professor R Leng (Law), Professor G Lindsay (Deputy Chair; CEDAR), Dr N Murray (CAL), Professor M Philp (BFA Representative), Dr R Ritchie (WBS), Professor E Smith (CES), Professor J Smith (Economics; Chair of IT Committee), Professor N Vaughan Williams (PAIS), Professor C Warhurst (IER), R Woolley (Library).

Apologies: Dr D Britnell (Faculty Senior Tutor), G Clarke (UG Student Representative (WBS)), F Cornick (Library), Dr R Connelly (Warwick Q-Step Centre), Professor G Currie (WBS), Professor L Francis (CES), Professor N Gane (ESRC DTP), Professor J Garton (Law), Professor P Gill (BFM Representative), Professor R Goodwin (BFS Representative), Dr E John (Philosophy), Professor A Lockett (WBS), Dr G Longworth (Philosophy), Professor C Lury (CIM), Professor G Lynch (PAIS), Professor F McKay (CLL), Dr I Molinaro (WFS), Professor F Peter (Philosophy), Professor J Solomos (Sociology), Professor H Spencer-Oatey (CAL).

In attendance: Dr B Dixon (Faculty Research Strategy and Development Manager, R&IS), A Greenhalgh (Assistant Secretary), M Mik (Secretary), Professor J Swan (WBS), Dr D Watson (BFS Representative).

### 1/17-18 Education Strategy

#### RECEIVED:

- (a) A paper from the Acting Deputy Academic Registrar and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) on the draft University Education Strategy (paper EFSS.01/17-18);
- (b) Comments from the Faculty Education Committee on the draft University Education Strategy (paper BFSS.9/17-18).

#### REPORTED:

- (c) That the Faculty ITLR Engagement Event indicated two areas for particular focus, namely wellbeing and employability, noting that the Faculty secured only one wellbeing post and that a Faculty Employability Working Group would meet to inform a resource bid;
- (d) That there was a desire to harmonise processes to improve student experience, noting that this would cover areas such as module credit weighting and rationalisation of module diversity;
- (e) That there were currently no plans for a new Faculty of Social Sciences building, but that the Faculty needed to engage in a discussion about

what an ideal Faculty space would look like in 10 years' time, taking into account a likely increase in student numbers;

- (f) That there also needed to be a discussion about immediate improvements to existing Faculty spaces;
- (g) That there were numerous issues on Westwood campus, noting that these started impacting the quality of teaching and learning provision delivered by Social Sciences departments based there and were likely to manifest via student surveys;
- (h) That Westwood-based students started expressing their dissatisfaction with the services offered and resources available in Westwood and that this was likely to impact on future recruitment, unless addressed;
- (i) That there was a need for the right kind of spaces, noting the desire to reduce module cohort sizes, the shortage of rooms able to accommodate groups of 80-100 students and the general lack of student study space, both for quiet study and group work;
- (j) That the new Humanities building would represent a novel approach to space on campus;
- (k) That there was a shift in Estates and Space Management from isolated individual building projects within the Social Sciences building towards an integrated model;
- (l) That work on the extension of corridor spaces by the ground floor lecture theatres in Social Sciences was going ahead in 2018, with anticipated start of works in May/June 2018;
- (m) That a move towards a harmonised module credit weighting system would be beneficial, noting a prevalence of 15/30 credit modules in Social Sciences at undergraduate level, but recognising that a similar approach to postgraduate level modules would be problematic;
- (n) That priority-setting needed to take into account core business needs, including teaching and learning and the approaching REF 2021;
- (o) That the harmonisation was welcome in principle, noting that the actual implementation of changes was critical and needed to be well thought through to accommodate the variety of provision across the University, e.g. differences in student cohort sizes;
- (p) That harmonisation of approaches would benefit students on joint degree in particular, but would also improve the experience of single honours students taking modules in different departments;
- (q) That harmonisation needed to preserve best practice.

RESOLVED:

- (r) That the Faculty Chair take discussions about a new Faculty of Social Sciences space forward;

- (s) That no major building work in the Social Sciences building could commence until the end of the Summer 2018 examination period, noting the number of examinations taking place in the building to accommodate special arrangement sittings.

2/17-18 Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED:

- (a) That, should any members or attendees of the Board have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance (2014), available online from <http://www.universitychairs.ac.uk/publications/>;
- (b) That there were no conflicts of interest to report.

3/17-18 Freedom of Information

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Steering Committee at its meeting on 29 October 2007 considered a paper outlining how the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applied to the publication of minutes of University bodies together with the University Publication Scheme adopted by the Steering Committee in December 2003, paper SC.60/07-08, and resolved that a standard item be included on the agenda of the first meeting of each University Committee at the start of each academic year to inform new members and to remind continuing members of the University policy on the publication of minutes;
- (b) That all non-reserved minutes and agenda of the Board were published on the University's Governance website at: <http://warwick.ac.uk/committees/bfss/minutes/>;
- (c) That copies of paper SC.60/07-08 were available from the Secretary on request.

RESOLVED:

That personal attribution of comments be removed from the minutes, noting that minutes were to capture Board discussions, not individual contributions, with the exception where the attribution to a post holder was key to the clarity of the minutes.

4/17-18 Terms of Reference

CONSIDERED:

Proposed changes to the terms of reference of the Board as set out in paper BFSS.1/17-18, noting that the current version of the terms of reference was available online in the University Calendar (<http://warwick.ac.uk/committees/bfss/#tor>).

RECOMMENDED: (to the Senate)

That the proposed changes to the terms of reference of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, as set out in paper BFSS.1/17-18, be approved.

5/17-18 Membership

RECEIVED:

An updated membership of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences and its sub-committees for the academic year 2017-18, including nominations to other University Committees (paper BFSS.2/16-17 (Revised)).

RESOLVED:

That colleagues serving on Faculty and University committees, representing the Faculty of Social Sciences, be thanked for their work and contribution to the governance of the University.

6/17-18 Minutes

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 17 May 2017.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 17 May 2017 be approved.

7/17-18 Matters Arising

(a) Institutional Teaching and Learning Review – Faculty Engagement (minute 45/16-17 referred)

RECEIVED:

A copy of the Faculty Engagement ITLR Report (paper BFSS.11/17-18).

REPORTED:

- (i) That a room had been allocated to the Faculty wellbeing post, noting that this was located close to the Office of the Dean of Students in the Social Sciences building;
- (ii) That the Faculty needed to consider the best possible way to engage with this new resource;
- (iii) That similar posts existed in the Library, noting that their work included putting together events and workshops for staff and students, as well as organising one-to-one sessions and that meetings with and support/guidance for members of staff to deal with difficult situations were particularly well received;

- (iv) That the post holder could triage and/or fast-track access to specialist help, noting that the specific expertise available would depend on the post holder;
- (v) That the Head of Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Wellbeing Support Services would attend the next meeting of Faculty Heads of Department on 28 November 2017;
- (vi) That Estates had agreed to refurbish the Social Sciences Porters' Lodge to accommodate the Student Careers and Skills team, providing them with a more prominent location, noting that the space should be available from Spring 2018;
- (vii) That the Faculty Education Committee had been tasked with progressing ITLR action points and would be reporting to the Board at future meetings, noting that the Committee had undertaken to compile a list of strengths in various areas across the Faculty to share with academic departments.

RESOLVED:

That the follow-up ITLR Faculty Engagement Event take place in the final week of Term 2 2018.

- (b) Proposed Changes to Academic Governance (minute 39/16-17 referred)

RECEIVED:

A final version of the paper from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Deputy Academic Registrar setting out proposed changes to academic governance as approved by the University Senate at its meeting on 5 July 2017 (paper S.75/16-17).

- (c) University Review of Personal Tutoring (minute 44/16-17 referred)

REPORTED:

That an update on the progress of the personal tutoring review would be presented to the Board at its next meeting in February 2018.

8/17-18

Chair's Business

- (a) Welcome to new Members

REPORTED:

That new members be welcomed to the Board.

(b) Health and Safety

REPORTED:

- (i) That a new Risk Assessment Moodle module had been launched and could be accessed online from [warwick.ac.uk/safety/managingrisks/riskassess/](http://warwick.ac.uk/safety/managingrisks/riskassess/);
- (ii) That fire drills were taking place across the campus and all buildings would be included, most likely during Term 1;
- (iii) That the evacuation point for the Social Sciences building had to be moved to the bus terminal area due to the Arts Centre building work;
- (iv) That the Faculty would fund fire risk assessments for all buildings occupied by the Faculty of Social Sciences departments, with subsequent reviews being undertaken by the University Fire Safety Officer on a regular basis;
- (v) That for buildings shared by a number of departments building managers would ensure sharing of information relevant to all units, noting that these posts were yet to be appointed into;
- (vi) That there was a need for more robust briefings on health and safety for staff and students, noting that the Health and Safety Team introduced a new Moodle module 'Staff and Student General Health and Safety Induction', available online from <https://moodle.warwick.ac.uk/enrol/index.php?id=20009>;
- (vii) That the Head of Institutional Resilience had been extremely helpful in working with departments to manage risk to facilitate student visits;
- (viii) That the Faculty Buildings and Facilities Group had been tasked by the Faculty Heads of Department to generate risk assessment templates for activities common across Social Sciences to enable sharing of best practice;
- (ix) That identification of problems needed to be followed up by processes being put in place to deal with those;
- (x) That it would be helpful to have a Health and Safety Policy in a single downloadable document, noting that research bids, especially those issued by Government departments, increasingly required this information;
- (xi) That the Faculty Buildings and Facilities Group had been developing a lone working policy for the Faculty.

RESOLVED:

- (xii) That the Secretary find out what plans were in place for building managers for Westwood Campus;

- (xiii) That Health and Safety become a standing item on the agenda for both the Board and Faculty Heads of Department meetings;
- (xiv) That the Secretary circulate the Leadership and Management of Health and Safety document to Board members for information.

9/17-18 Athena SWAN

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Department of Sociology had been successful in securing an Athena SWAN Bronze Award following their April 2017 submission;
- (b) That Warwick Business School was working towards a submission of an Athena SWAN application by the November 2017 deadline;
- (c) That the University was working on its resubmission, noting that it retained a Silver Award status until April 2018;
- (d) That the sector was experiencing similar issues in terms of initiatives not producing desired change quickly;
- (e) That some of the initiatives introduced in relation to Athena SWAN were undermined by structural limitations, such as parking shortage;
- (f) That proposals put forward to resolve issues in some areas, e.g. extended teaching timetable hours to accommodate all teaching, were contradictory to Athena SWAN priorities.

RESOLVED:

That Board members report any initiatives successful in addressing gender imbalance at other institutions, whether higher education or not, to the Chair.

10/17-18 Faculty Research and Impact Committee

CONSIDERED:

A proposal to reconstitute the Faculty Research Forum as the Faculty Research and Impact Committee, as set out in paper BFSS.3/17-18, noting that this included proposed terms of reference, constitution and membership.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the proposals had been recommended for approval by the Faculty Heads of Department at their meeting in Summer 2017;
- (b) That the Faculty Research Strategy and Development Manager would assume the role of the Secretary to the Committee and would work closely with the Chair;
- (c) That Faculty Impact Officers would be in attendance at Committee meetings to ensure appropriate flow of information.

RESOLVED:

That the creation of the Faculty Research and Impact Committee, with its terms of reference, constitution and membership as set out in paper BFSS.3/17-18, be approved, subject to an amendment to the membership to explicitly refer to the Research Strategy and Development Manager as its Secretary.

11/17-18 Reports from the Chairs of Faculty Committees

RECEIVED:

The following oral reports from the Chairs of Faculty Committees:

(a) Faculty Research and Impact Committee (FSS RIC)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the first meeting of the re-constituted committee took place and the engagement was positive;
- (ii) That the Committee would focus on FSS Global Challenges Fund applications at its future meetings;
- (iii) That the University devolved £50,000 of the Research Development Fund to the Faculty to disburse, noting that there were still deadlines for applications and that a process for consideration of these was in place;
- (iv) That a continued engagement of departmental representatives with the Committee was crucial for its relevance and success.

(b) Faculty Education Committee (EFSS)

REPORTED:

- (i) That the agenda for the Committee meeting was structured so as to ensure a prominent representation of postgraduate research student matters, reflecting comments from the Faculty on the academic governance review proposals;
- (ii) That the Committee prioritised the sharing of good practice across the Faculty and the wider University;
- (iii) That changes to the Warwick Collaborative Postgraduate Research Scholarship were reported;
- (iv) That the Committee received an update on the personal tutoring review;
- (v) That a presentation on Welcome Week 2018 was deferred until January 2018;
- (vi) That the Committee recommended the deferral of the Education Experience Monitoring (EEM) meetings until Term 2

2017-18, noting that this had subsequently been approved by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

(c) Faculty IT Committee

REPORTED:

- (i) That Government departments had increasingly been requiring a Cyber Essentials Certification in order to grant access to their data;
- (ii) That the University was not certified at present;
- (iii) That Government departments had also started requiring the certification in relation to contract bids.

RESOLVED:

That University IT Services be encouraged to explore ways of securing a Cyber Essentials certification, noting the complexity of ITS provision at the University and the impact of the new requirements on the University in terms of its ability to bid for contracts and possible negative impact on the University's research activities.

12/17-18 ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership Update

RECEIVED:

An oral update from the Chair on the ESRC Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP).

REPORTED:

- (a) That the launch event of the Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP took place at Warwick on Monday 30 October 2017, noting that it was attended by new DTP students from across the 6 partner universities as well as leads from the 17 training pathways;
- (b) That the new MA in Social Science Research, replacing the previous DTC core modules, took its first intake of funded 1+3 students in October 2017;
- (c) That the Midlands Graduate School studentships competition for 2018 was now open, and details were available online from [warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross\\_fac/mgsdtp/](http://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/mgsdtp/);
- (d) That the DTP had been awarded 4 ESRC postdoctoral fellowships (across the 6 institutions) and more information about these would be available from the DTP website in due course.

13/17-18 Warwick Q-Step Centre Update

RECEIVED:

An oral update from the Chair on the Warwick Q-Step Centre.

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Chair had been acting as the interim Director of the Warwick Q-Step Centre since the end of July 2017 and would hand over to the incoming Director, Professor U Liebe, in January 2018;
- (b) That a Steering Committee had been established, comprising the Heads of Department (Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies, Politics & International Studies, and Sociology), the Q-Step Director and the Director of Administration (Philosophy, Politics & International Studies, and Sociology);
- (c) That work was under way to introduce a workload model for the Q-Step Centre;
- (d) That additional Q-Step modules were being developed, which would be more aligned to subject interests of Politics and Sociology students and Social Sciences students more generally, thus bringing quantitative skills training to a wider pool of students;
- (e) That a meeting of the Advisory Board, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), would take place in the new year.

14/17-18

Review of Faculty Research Centres

REPORTED:

That the review of the following University Research Centres relevant to the Faculty of Social Sciences would take place in Spring Term 2018:

- (a) Centre for Studies in Democratisation, Category II;
- (b) Innovation, Knowledge & Organisational Networks Research Unit, Category III;
- (c) Warwick Institute for the Science of Cities, Category II;
- (d) Centre for Ethics, Law & Public Affairs), Category III;
- (e) Centre for Human Rights in Practice, Category III;
- (f) Centre for the Study of Safety and Well-Being, Category III;
- (g) Warwick Mind and Action Research Centre, Category III;
- (h) Industrial Relations Research Centre, Category III.

CONSIDERED:

A proposal that future reviews of University Research Centres be delegated to the Faculty Research and Impact Committee (minute BFSS.47(t)/16-17 referred).

RESOLVED:

That future reviews of University Research Centres be delegated to the Faculty Research and Impact Committee for close scrutiny and recommendation to the Faculty Board.

15/17-18 Assessment and Feedback

REPORTED:

That a composite report on timeliness of feedback on assessment submitted in Summer Term 2016-17 across the Faculty (paper EFSS.13/17-18) was not available and would be circulated to the Board in due course.

16/17-18 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

That the Chair of the Board, acting on its behalf, had taken action to approve the following:

(a) Chair of Undergraduate Appeals Committee

The appointment of Peter Brown (CAL), member of the Undergraduate Appeals Committee Panel for the Board, as Chair of the Appeals Committee to consider appeals against decisions of the 2016-17 meetings of the First Year Board of Examiners for the Faculty of Social Sciences and intermediate year Boards of Examiners for undergraduate courses offered within the Faculty.

(b) University Review of Assessment Working Group

The appointment of the following two representatives of the Faculty of Social Sciences to the University Review of Assessment Working Group:

- (i) Christopher Bisping, Chair, Faculty Education Committee (Law);
- (ii) Professor Jacky Swan, Member, Faculty Education Committee (WBS).

(c) Board Membership and Other Committee Nominations

The nominations to the membership of the Board, its sub-committees and other University Committees as set out in paper BFSS.2/17-18.

(d) IATL Management Committee

The appointment of Christopher Bisping, Chair of the Faculty Education Committee, to the membership of the IATL Management Committee, replacing Professor Roger Leng as the second representative of the Faculty of Social Sciences and serving alongside Dr Stefania Paredes Fuentes (Economics).

17/17-18 Faculty Education Committee Minutes

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Education Committee held on 26 October 2017 (paper BFSS.4/17-18);

- (b) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee held on 9 May 2017 (paper BFSS.5/17-18);
- (c) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee held on 10 May 2017 (paper BFSS.6/17-18).

18/17-18 Faculty IT Committee Minutes

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty IT Committee held on 16 June 2017 (paper BFSS.7/16-17);
- (b) The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty IT Committee held on 3 November 2017 (paper BFSS.10/16-17).

19/17-18 Faculty Research and Impact Committee Minutes

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Research and Impact Committee held on 25 October 2017 (paper BFSS.8/16-17).

20/17-18 Faculty Lunches in 2017-18

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Autumn Term 2017 Faculty Lunch had been cancelled;
- (b) That the remaining Faculty of Social Sciences Lunches would take place as follows in 2017-18:
  - (i) Spring term: Thursday 15 February 2018, 12 noon, room CMR 1.0, University House;
  - (ii) Summer term: Thursday 31 May 2018, 12 noon, Council Chamber, Senate House.

21/17-18 Dates of 2017-18 Board Meetings

REPORTED:

That the Board would meet subsequently as follows during the academic year 2017-18:

Thursday 15 February 2018, 10am, room CMR 1.0, University House;  
Thursday 31 May 2018, 2pm, Council Chamber, Senate House.