

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 8 February 2012

- Present:** Professor C Hughes (Chair), Professor K Ansell-Pearson, Professor S Brammer, Professor S Breslin, Professor A Cassam, Professor N Charles, Dr C Harrison, Professor C Hoerl, Professor R Leng, Professor R Naylor, Dr D Orrells, Dr F Peter, Professor N Piercy, Professor A Reeve, Professor K Seers, Professor H Spencer-Oatey, Dr Z Stemplowska, Professor M Waterson, Professor D Wilson.
- In attendance:** Dr M Glover (for item 19/11-12), Ms N Muckle (for item 21/11-12), Ms R Lambert, Mrs A Thompson, Mrs R Swann.
- Apologies:** Dr I Abbott, Dr A Adams, , Professor P Burnell, Professor M Carpenter, , Dr N Chen, Ms A Chowcat, Professor S Croft, Professor D Firth, Dr C Fox, Mr J Harrison, Dr K Haywood, Dr C Hersch, Professor C Hughes, Dr D Lamburn, Dr M Lee, Professor R Lindley, , Dr N Lee, Professor G Lindsay, Professor A Muthoo, Professor A Norrie, Professor M Parker, Professor P Raffield, Dr R Salzberg, Professor J Smith, Ms A Stewart, Professor M Taylor, Dr C Wilkie, Dr J Winston, Dr C Wright.

**MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE BOARD**

17/11-12 Minutes

CONSIDERED:

The minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 9 November 2011.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes be approved.

18/11-12 Matters Arising

(a) ESRC Doctoral Training Centre (minute 3(d)/11-12 refers)

REPORTED:

That the Secretary had circulated, as paper BFSS.7/11-12, the DTC briefing paper produced by Professor L Bridges, interim Director of the DTC, to Board members.

- (b) School of Health and Social Studies (minute 5/11-12 refers)

RECEIVED:

An oral update from the Chair regarding progress with the consultation on the future of the School of Health and Social Studies, noting in particular that:

- (i) The Senate had considered the consultation paper and resolved that the School of Health and Social Studies be disestablished, with existing activities subsequently being absorbed within other departments;
- (ii) A working party had been formed to develop detailed recommendations as a result of the Senate's resolution, with colleagues in the School continuing to be consulted on progress;
- (iii) Recommendations from the Working Group were expected by the end of the Spring Term.

- (c) Committee Elections - Board of Graduate Studies (minute 9a/11-12 refers)

REPORTED:

That Faculty representatives to the Board of Graduate Studies had been confirmed as Professor Jonathan Neelands and Mr David Salter.

- (d) Committee Elections - E-learning Steering Group (minute 9b/11-12 Refers)

REPORTED:

That a Faculty representative to sit on the E-Learning Steering Group was required to replace Professor David Wray, from the Institute of Education, it being noted that the Institute had agreed to propose nominations from within the Institute and that names should be submitted to the Secretary to the Board.

RESOLVED:

That other departments in the Faculty be encouraged to provide alternative nominations to the Secretary, to supplement those of the Institute of Education.

19/11-12 UKBA Attendance Monitoring

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Academic Registrar updating the Board following a recent audit of the University's attendance monitoring systems, which looked at

compliance with the UK Border Agency's (UKBA) requirements regarding overseas students, paper BFSS 8/11-12.

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That the University had adopted an inclusive approach to the monitoring of attendance, such that the Warwick student population was subject equally to monitoring checks;
- (b) That the administrative burden of the attendance monitoring system was acknowledged, however the risk to the University of non-compliance was significant with the potential to lose Warwick's Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) status, it being noted that this sanction had already been imposed on Glasgow Caledonian for failure to monitor student attendance following a UKBA audit.
- (c) That as a HTS, the University could face a UKBA audit at any time and as such systems must be compliant;
- (d) That the expected financial impact to the Institution resulting from the loss of HTS status had been estimated at £30 million in lost revenue from international students;
- (e) That Internal Audit had recently found numerous instances of non-compliance across the University, which, if found at UKBA audit could result in the withdrawal or suspension of HTS status;
- (f) That to support departments in ensuring compliance, a Good Practice Guide would be issued shortly;
- (g) That departments would shortly be requested to review their UKBA documentation and attendance monitoring processes to ensure ongoing compliance, noting that the main areas of concern were in relation to monitoring of PhD and joint honours students for whom the current process did not adequately support.

(by Dr Z Stemplowska)

- (h) That it would be helpful to departments if the additional guidance provided addressed how to rectify mistakes in attendance monitoring.

(by Professor A Reeve)

- (i) That technical solutions may be available to support attendance monitoring, however, any solution would not be 100% error free.

(by Professor R Leng)

- (j) That for the School of Law monitoring of PhD students was operationally easier than for undergraduate students given that formal records were kept of supervisions with each student.

(by Professor C Hoerl)

- (k) That tension was created in treating all students the same for UKBA purposes, particularly in departments with very few international students for whom the threat of action following the loss of monitoring points was not sufficiently robust to encourage the students to engage.

(by Professor H Spencer-Oatey)

- (l) That retaining formal signed records following PhD supervisions would be a good method of monitoring attendance.

RESOLVED:

That colleagues submit any examples of good practice in relation to attendance monitoring to the Secretary for forwarding to the Academic Registrar.

20/11-12

University Policy on Remedying Failure at PGT level

REPORTED:

- (a) That at its meeting on 31 January 2012, the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee considered a proposal to revise the University Policy on Remedying Failure at PGT Level, paper GFSS.122/11-12
- (b) That the Graduate Studies Committee was not supportive of the proposal and had requested clarification from the Academic Quality and Standards Committee as to whether department exam conventions need further revision following the introduction of merit and whether, in order to achieve a merit, students must not have a fail mark.

CONSIDERED:

The proposal outlined in paper GFSS.122/11-12, in the context of the Graduate Studies Committee resolution noted above.

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (c) That the Graduate Studies Committee had discussed the issue of a lower limit for failure of PGT dissertations.
- (d) That it was felt that departments would wish to retain their discretion in this area as the consequences for the burden of supervision were different in social sciences to other Faculties.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Board was supportive of the Graduate Studies Committee resolution regarding University Policy.
- (b) That the Secretary report the resolution to the Board of Graduate Studies for further consideration.

21/11-12

Research Income

RECEIVED:

An oral report from Ms N Muckle regarding research income in the Faculty, noting in particular that:

- (a) Research income and awards in the Faculty of Social Science has been declining for a number of years, with statistics not showing a favourable comparison internally and externally;
- (b) Whilst the external environment for research income had become more challenging in the recent past, through significant reduction in the availability of public funded for research, and increased competition for RCUK funding, research statistics for the Faculty suggested a decline in function application activity, noting that historically the Faculty attained 50 awards per year whilst last year only 35 applications were submitted;
- (d) That preparations for the REF, and concurrent focus on finalising outputs for the exercise, was likely to account for a proportion of the reduced application activity;
- (e) That there was a risk that, due to the fall in research income in the Faculty, the University may fall out of the ESRC 'top 12' institutions, and as a result would lose the institutional benefits associated with this status;
- (f) The Faculty was making moves to address its underperformance in research income, particularly with a focus on RDF;
- (g) Professor Jacqueline Hodgson for the School of Law would be leading on engagement with colleagues in the Faculty in relation to increasing RDF bids over the coming year.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Chair write to all Head of Departments to:
  - (i) Underline the importance of activity to improve research income;
  - (ii) Circulating examples of good practice in this area, particularly in relation to post-doctoral funding;
  - (iii) Request further examples of good practice from departments for wider circulation across the Faculty.

(a) Warwick Institute of Public Policy (minute 3b/11-12 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That the interviews for the Director of the Warwick Institute of Public Policy had failed to appoint, as such the WIPP initiative was currently on hold pending further consideration of the direction of the initiative.

(b) Teaching and Learning Review: Faculty Engagement

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (i) That the Faculty Engagement stage of the Teaching and Learning Review would take place on 19 March 2012;
- (ii) That two external reviewers had been appointed to the Panel, Professor Debra Myhill (University of Exeter) and Dr Jonathan Leape (London School of Economics);
- (iii) That the outcome of the Faculty level engagement was expected to address a number of QAA specific concerns ahead of the QAA inspection in 2013, as well as focus on quality enhancement through the collation of good practice and expertise on a number of key themes raised during the departmental stage of the Review;
- (iv) That the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review information from departmental reviews was available on the Governance website and open to all, students and staff to look at comments and concerns.

(c) REF Update: Faculty Impact Officer

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (i) That the REF Faculty Impact Officer post was advertised.
- (ii) That the new post would take a lead in collating and distributing impact statements for the Faculty and disseminating relevant information as appropriate.

(d) Faculty IT Support

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (i) That the Faculty wished to roll out My-Economics to the rest of the Faculty but lacked the Faculty internal resources to support;
- (ii) That Mike Roberts, Director of IT Services, would address Heads of Departments to address concerns regarding Faculty IT provision and update on the University IT Development Programme.

RESOLVED:

That the Board was very supportive of improving IT support and service within the Faculty.

(e) Warwick-Monash collaboration

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (i) A number of joint initiatives were being developed as part of the Warwick-Monash collaboration including new joint posts and joint programmes with PhDs;
- (ii) That approximately £1 million was being invested in renovating teaching rooms in the Ramphal Building which would also provide new technology systems for joint teaching with Monash.

(f) Warwick-Queen Mary collaborative doctoral awards

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That the Faculty had not been successful in its Queen Mary collaborative bid.

23/11-12 Faculty Board Membership

(a) Faculty Research Committee

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (i) That the Governance team had confirmed that the Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences Research Committee was to be included in the membership of the Board with immediate effect, as a formally constituted representative on the Board;
- (ii) That, subsequently, the Chair had approved the membership to the Board of Professor Stuart Croft, as Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences Research Committee.

(b) Faculty of Medicine Representative

REPORTED:

That the Faculty of Medicine representative on the Board, Dr Ann Adams, had stepped down from her role at the end of the Autumn term, it being noted that the Faculty of Medicine will provide a nomination to replace Dr Adams as representative on the Board for the remainder of the 11-12 academic year.

24/11-12

Faculty IT Committee

REPORTED: (By Professor A Reeve)

That item 4 of the minutes of the last meeting of the Faculty IT Committee, held of 8<sup>th</sup> February, suggested that there was little interest to improve IT provision within the Faculty, specifically in relation to the provision of alumni email accounts, however this did not adequately reflect the prevailing view of the Faculty.

(By Professor J Smith)

That the minute had intended to reflect the lack of resource within the Faculty for IT, to enable significant development to be taken forward.

## **ITEMS RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION**

- 25/11-12      Report from the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee
- The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee held on 1 February 2012, BFSS.9/11-12
- 26/11-12      Report from the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee
- The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee held on 31 January 2012, BFSS.10/11-12
- 27/11-12      Report from the Faculty IT Committee
- The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of the Faculty IT Committee held on 1 February 2012, BFSS.11/11-12
- 28/11-12      Spring Term Faculty Lunch
- REPORTED:
- That the Spring Term Faculty Lunch will be held on Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> February from 1pm – 2pm in the Council Chamber, University House, at which Professor Margot Finn (Pro-Vice Chancellor for Access, Widening Participation and Development) and Dr Giles Carden (Director of Management Information and Planning) will present on WP initiatives.
- 29/11-12      Joint Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Social Sciences Lunch
- REPORTED:
- That the Summer term Faculty lunch will be held jointly with the Faculty of Arts, at 12.30pm on 20 June 2012, in D2.03, Warwick Business School Social Sciences lounge.
- 30/11-12      Dates of 2011-12 Committee Meetings
- REPORTED:
- That the remaining dates and venues for the Board's meetings for the academic year 2011-12 are as follows:
- Thursday 24 May 2012, at 10.00am in the Council Chamber, University House.