

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies held on 10th February 2010.

- Present: Professor C Hughes (Chair), Dr A Adams, Prof R Aldrich, Dr C Anderson, Professor M Carpenter, Professor Q Cassam, Professor S Collinson, Professor A Czumaj, Professor J Faundez, Dr C Harrison, Professor M Harrison, Mr T Hayes, Professor P Huddleston, Dr S Kettell, Dr D Lamburn, Professor R Lindley, Professor G Lindsay, Professor N Ireland, Professor A Muthoo, Professor R Naylor, Dr F Peter, Mr J Roberts, Dr J Smith, Dr H Spencer-Oatey, Professor M Waterson and Professor G Watt,
- Apologies: Dr G Bhambra, Mr A Brewerton, Professor P Christensen, Professor D Chung, Dr C Constable, Professor R Davies, Professor P Edwards, Mr R Green, Dr L Guyver, Professor D Joly, Professor M Luntley, Dr F MacCallum, Professor P Marginson, Professor J McEldowney, Professor A Neal, Professor A Prout, Professor C Read, Professor A Reeve, Professor B Rosamond, Professor L Seabrooke, Dr D Singh, Professor J Tritter Professor M Watson, Professor D Wilson, Professor D Wray and Dr M Wyness.
- In Attendance: Ms A Bell (Secretary), Ms E King, Ms H Wollerton; Professor S Lamb for item x/09-10 and Ms Y Salter-Wright for item x/09-10.
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AGENDA

18/09-10 Constitution, Membership and Terms of Reference

REPORTED:

- (a) That Professor A Czumaj (Computer Science) had replaced Professor R Wilson (Computer Science) as the member of academic staff appointed by and from the Board of the Faculty of Science.
- (b) That the postgraduate student representative for 09-10 was Mr T Hayes.
- (c) That Professor Q Cassam was now Head of the School of Philosophy but that the same people from that Department would remain as members of the Board.
- (d) That Professor D Wilson had replaced Professor H Thomas as Dean of the Warwick Business School and that Professor S Collinson had been appointed as the fourth member of the Board representing the Department of Warwick Business School.

- (e) That Professor R Lindley was now representative at the Board for the Institute for Employment Research in his capacity as Director of that department.

RECEIVED:

- (f) An updated committee membership list of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences and its sub-committees for the Academic Year 2009-10, including nominations to other University Committees, paper BFSS.29/08-09(revised2).

19/09-10

Election of Board Members to the Senate

REPORTED:

- (a) That there was one vacancy for a member of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences to represent the Board on the Senate for the period from 10th February 2010 to 31st July 2012 arising from the announcement of Professor H Thomas' resignation as Dean of WBS with effect from February 2010.
- (b) That the continuing members of the Senate appointed by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences were as follows:

Professor B Rosamond (2011)	PAIS
Dr C Harrison (2011)	SHSS
Professor J Faundez (2012)	Law
Professor M Harrison (2012)	Economics
Professor A Muthoo (2012)	Economics

CONSIDERED:

In accordance with University Regulation 2.2 on Annual Elections, the election of one member of the Senate from the membership of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences for 2009/10 to serve for the period from 10th February 2010 to 31st July 2012, noting that four of the six representatives appointed by the Board must be Professors and Heads of Departments.

RESOLVED:

That the nomination of Professor S Collinson to represent the Board on the Senate be approved, noting that the nomination was made by Professor R Lindley and seconded by Professor A Muthoo.

20/09-10

Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the Faculty Board meeting held on 11th November 2009 be approved.

- (a) Examinations (BFSS minute 6/09-10(c) and UFSS minute 12/09-10 refer)

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Chair of BFSS about the University Examinations Timetable and Special Examination arrangements following consultation with the Examinations Office together with a report from the Chair of the Undergraduate Sub-Committee which had considered these issues including a report from the Chair of BFSS at its meeting on 3rd February.

Special Exam Arrangements:

- (i) The Chair of BFSS reported these are a growing burden on departments, as they are expected to supervise and invigilate for increasing numbers of students within the department itself, sometimes at the last minute, which results in cost, equity and quality assurance issues.
- (ii) The result of the meeting between the Chair of BFSS and the Examinations Office was that:
- (A) A deadline for acceptance of special circumstances cases via the Disability Co-ordinator was set (10 March 2010).
- (B) Students will be advised that if they do not meet this deadline then, unless they have mitigating circumstances, they will be allocated to the normal invigilation rooms rather than a special circumstances room unless there is space for them in the special circumstances rooms.
- (C) Students will also be advised to bring their circumstances to the attention of their departments in the same way as for other mitigating factors, so these may be considered under their Board of Examiners' normal process for dealing with such evidence, for example the special circumstances pre-board. The Board of Undergraduate Studies will be asked to ratify this procedure at its next meeting.
- (D) It will also be suggested to the Board of Undergraduate Studies that it may additionally wish to consider undertaking a survey of current arrangements and costs associated with handling special exam arrangements.
- (E) There will always be one or two last minute emergency students and departments should be prepared for this.

- (iii) The Chair of the Undergraduate Sub-Committee reported that at their last meeting on 3rd February 2010, members of UFSS expressed the view that the Academic Office were not fully aware of the scale of the issue and the impact on departmental resources and it was agreed to urgently report back to the Examinations team with a request that special examination requirements are factored in centrally rather than devolved to departments, with effect from this academic year.
- (iv) That during discussion at BFSS, concerns were raised about:
 - (A) The feasibility of departments refusing requests for Special Exam Arrangements even with a deadline.
 - (B) The finances and resources for Special Exam Arrangements and whether it should be the Examinations Office who pay for these, not departments.

RESOLVED:

- (v) That the Chair of this Board and the Chair of the Undergraduate Sub-Committee be asked to look more broadly into Special Exam Arrangements, especially with regard to issues of equality, quality assurance and cost, and report back to the Board at the summer meeting on 2nd June 2010.
- (vi) That the Chair of this Board and the Chair of the Undergraduate Sub-Committee be asked to gather statistical data on trends and numbers for Special Examination requests, for example from the Academic Office and Disability Services.
- (vii) That the possibility to share Special Exam Arrangements at a Faculty level be explored by the Chair of this Board and the Chair of the Undergraduate Sub-Committee.
- (viii) That the Board of Undergraduate Studies be asked to consider undertaking a survey of current arrangements and costs associated with handling special exam arrangements.

University Exams Timetable

CONSIDERED:

- (ix) The Chair of the Undergraduate Sub-Committee reported that at both the Autumn 2009 and Spring 2010 meetings of that Committee, WBS had strongly requested that the examination timetable be brought forward because of the pressure on those marking and administering the exams afterwards, especially the External Examiners.
- (x) The Chair of BFSS reported that the result of the meeting with the Examinations Office was that:
 - (A) Such a change would require a top level decision by the University.

- (B) There are various logistical and practical issues (particularly around accommodation, but with knock-on effects for finances) which, in the event of change, would require long-term planning. Past experience suggests that such change (particularly in respect of large rooms) is difficult to put into effect and has other resource consequences for the providers of rooms.
 - (C) Changes would have knock-on effects for a range of administrative timetables, some of which would be beneficial (for example a longer time to prepare for summer graduation) and others not so.
 - (D) It may provoke complaints from students and parents that the teaching year is being reduced.
 - (E) It may also provoke complaints from students that they do not have enough time to revise and this would be a threat to their potential attainment
- (xi) The Chair of the Undergraduate Sub-Committee reported that there was no particular consensus at their last meeting on 3rd February 2010 and that members agreed to further consult within their departments and report back later in the year so that a firm proposal could be progressed for the academic year 2010-11.

RESOLVED:

- (xii) That the Undergraduate Sub-Committee be asked to consider the timing of summer examinations further and report back to the Board.

- (b) Module Data Interface (minute 3/09-10(v) refers)

CONSIDERED:

An outline proposal for a Module Data Interface, as set out in paper BFSS.11/09-10.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee)

That the proposal be considered for implementation by the academic year 2010-11 with a strong endorsement from this Board.

- (c) Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy (minute 12/09-10 refers)

REPORTED:

That at its meeting held on 27th January 2010, the Senate had approved the proposal to establish the Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy, and requested that the Constitution be amended to include the period of office for the Director.

RESOLVED:

That the revised constitution, including the period of office for the Director of CAGE, as set out in paper BFSS.7/09-10(revised) be approved.

22/09-10 Chair's Business

TO RECEIVE:

Faculty Heads of Department meetings

An invitation from the Chair for the submission of items for consideration at Faculty Heads of Department meetings, noting that these take place twice every term and that their agenda is wide-ranging and includes, for example, administration and governance, strategic elements and the international agenda.

23/09-10 Item for Strategic Discussion

CONSIDERED:

Harris report

The findings and recommendations of the Harris Report of the Constitutional Advisory Group recently published and considered at the meeting of the Senate on 27th January 2010, as set out in paper S.8/09-10, noting that further consideration would be given to the Report together with the feedback received at the Senate 'Half Away Day' to be held on the afternoon of Wednesday, 17th March 2010.

RESOLVED:

That, whilst no specific recommendations were made at the Board, after a wide discussion it was noted that the item would be further discussed at the Faculty lunch on 3rd March 2010.

24/09-10 Strategic Departmental Reviews

RECEIVED:

- (a) The timetable for Strategic Departmental Reviews taking place in 2010-11 as set out in paper BFSS.13/09-10, noting that the School of Health and Social Sciences (including CRER) and PAIS (including CSGR) were due for review from the Faculty of Social Sciences.
- (b) An oral report from the Head of Governance on the consultation regarding the SDR process that would be undertaken, noting that colleagues from the Faculty were encouraged to engage with the review as fully as possible.

25/09-10 Personal Tutoring

CONSIDERED:

A memo and oral report from the University Senior Tutor regarding Personal Tutoring, as set out in paper BFSS.12/09-10.

26/09-10 Report from the Faculty Undergraduate Studies Committee

RECEIVED:

The confirmed minutes of the Undergraduate Studies Committee held on 3rd February 2010, as set out in paper BFSS.14/09-10.

27/09-10 Report from the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee

RECEIVED:

The confirmed minutes of the Graduate Studies Committee held on 2nd February 2010 as set out in paper BFSS.15/09-10.

28/09-10 Report from the Faculty IT Committee

RECEIVED:

- (a) The minutes of the Faculty IT Committee held on 3rd February 2010, as set out in paper BFSS.16/09-10, noting that during the item on e-marking, the IT Committee made a request to see whether there was wide support across the University for the provision of e-marking or e-feedback on assessed work.

RESOLVED:

- (b) That there was interest within the Faculty of Social Sciences in using e-marking more widely, noting that the Institution of Education and WBS already use e-marking, but the Board would ask for a report from David Wright, Head of Information Systems in WBS, on how it has worked in that department before deciding about further provision of this service.

CONSIDERED:

(c) Strategic Framework for IT Activity

A paper by the Director of IT Services outlining the broad strategic framework for IT activity at the University, as set out in paper IPSC.8/09-10, noting that:

- (i) This was considered at the meeting of the Information Policy and Strategy Committee (IPSC) on 18th November 2009 where it was resolved that it be endorsed by IPSC and be circulated by Faculty IT Committees, Faculty Boards and the E-Learning Steering Group, noting that detailed proposals on a project-by-project basis would be considered by IPSC.

- (ii) This was further discussed at the meeting of the Faculty IT Committee on 3rd February 2010.

29/09-10 Report from the Faculty Research Forum

(a) RECEIVED:

The minutes of the Faculty Research Forum held on 25th November 2009, as set out in paper BFSS.17/09-10.

(b) REPORTED:

That the Spring Term meeting of the Faculty Research Committee would be held on Wednesday 10th March 2010 from 2.15-4.15pm in room S0.09.

30/09-10 Report from the Teaching and Learning Forum

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the Teaching and Learning Forum held on 9th February 2010 at which the subject was 'Barriers to interdisciplinary teaching (how to avoid them)', as set out in paper BFSS.18/09-10.

31/09-10 Report from the University International Committee

RECEIVED:

The minutes of the meetings of the International Committee held on 21st October and 9th December 2009, papers IC.10/09-10 and IC.16/09-10.

32/09-10 Faculty Lunch

REPORTED:

That the Spring Term Faculty Lunch would take place on Wednesday 3rd March 2010 at 12.30pm in the WBS Social Sciences lounge (D2.03) and that the items on the agenda would be the Harris Report and a report from the Director of the Student Careers & Skills about the re-configured and re-designed service offered by the recently-formed Centre for Student Careers & Skills.

33/09-10 Date of the Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That the next meeting of the Board would take place on Wednesday 2nd June 2010 at 10am in the Council Chamber, University House and that the deadline for submission of papers for this meeting would be Wednesday 19th May 2010.