

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

BOARD OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

Minutes of the meeting of the Board of Undergraduate Studies held on Wednesday 20th February 2008.

Present: Prof K O'Brien (in the Chair), Dr J Arroyo, Professor S Gilson, Dr E John, Dr N Johnson, Dr D Lamburn, Dr G Martin, Dr F McKay, Dr J Robinson, Mr M Surve.

Apologies: Dr S Allan, Dr J Kidd, Mr P Ptashko, Dr M Skinner

In Attendance: Dr T Bell, Dr J Taylor.

13/07-08 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 14th November 2007 be approved.

14/07-08 Matters Arising on the Minutes

Progress of Board Recommendations

Protocol for Assessing Student Participation in Seminars (minute 12/07-08 refers)

REPORTED:

(a) That the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts, at its meeting on 30th January 2008, had considered the 'Protocol for assessing student participation in seminars' (paper BUGS 10/07-08) and had resolved that the Committee welcomed the proposal.

(b) That the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies, at its meeting on 30th January 2008 had considered the 'Protocol for assessing student participation in seminars' (paper BUGS 10/07-08) and had resolved that the Committee was broadly supportive of the paper, but had thought that it would be important for departments to receive the right level of guidance, as the Committee had concerns about:

- (i) Ensuring that student participation was defined in a meaningful sense (for example, attendance, oral contribution);

- (ii) Ensuring that changes to modules, so that they follow the guidance, does not create a significant administrative burden on seminar tutors, departments or Faculty sub-committees, noting that the proposal is concerned with only 10% of a module.
- (c) That the Sub-Faculty of Science at its meeting on 29th January 2008 had reported that the paper 'Protocol for assessing student participation in seminars' (paper BUGS 10/07-08) had yet to be circulated to the Sub-Faculty.

RESOLVED:

- (d) That the Board will consider all recommendations at its next meeting when the Sub-Faculty of Science has had an opportunity to consider the paper 'Protocol for assessing student participation in seminars' (paper BUGS 10/07-08).

15/07-08 Chair's Action

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, had agreed to waive the Fifty Per Cent Rule for a named, third-year, BA Early Childhood Studies student on health grounds.
- (b) That the Chair, acting on behalf of the Board, following approval by the Deputy Chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies of clarifications which had been requested by the Committee, had approved the following revised course proposals:
 - (i) A revised proposal from the Centre for Lifelong Learning for a new course, "Open Studies Diploma for Adult Literacy Specialists" for introduction in September 2007 as set out in papers UFSS104/06-07(revised) and UFSS105/06-07(revised);
 - (ii) A revised proposal from the Centre for Lifelong Learning for a new course, "Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector" for introduction in September 2007 as set out in papers UFSS106/06-07(revised) and UFSS107/06-07(revised);
 - (iii) A revised proposal from the Centre for Lifelong Learning for a new course, "Open Studies Diploma for Adult Numeracy Specialists" for introduction in September 2007 as set out in papers UFSS112/06-07(revised) and UFSS113/06-07(revised);
 - (iv) A revised proposal from the Centre for Lifelong Learning for a new course, "Open Studies Diploma for ESOL Specialists" for introduction in September 2007 as set out in papers UFSS116/06-07(revised) and UFSS117/06-07(revised).

16/07-08 Chair's Business

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Chair on the use of plagiarism-detection software for undergraduate assessments across all University departments.

RESOLVED:

That in future consultations on this matter the Chair would communicate the Board's view that there would be little merit in making plagiarism-detection software available for students to use on their own work.

17/07-08 Regulation 10.2

CONSIDERED:

The enforcement of Regulation 10.2, it being noted that the current Regulation states that:

Candidates are forbidden to take into the examination room any books, papers, calculators, or any information storage and retrieval device, or any attaché case or bag in which such items can be carried, unless there is an express provision otherwise in the case of a particular paper. (Regulation 10.2 (4)).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, in the light of problems relating to the safe and efficient entry and exit of students from exam rooms and the taking into exam rooms of mobile phones and other prohibited materials by students, the terms of Regulation 10.2 in respect of bags and cases be strictly enforced with effect from the May/June examinations 2008;
- (b) That consequently the Academic Office will take appropriate measures to inform students that no bags or cases may be taken into exam rooms with the following exceptions:
 - (i) small pencil cases may be used for pens, pencils, rulers etc.
 - (ii) if *strictly* necessary plastic carrier bags may be used to carry permitted texts or other material into open-book examinations;
- (c) That the Students' Union Education Officer Elect be asked to inquire into the possibility of the Students' Union providing storage space for students' bags during examination sessions, (it being noted that neither the Students' Union nor the University would be liable for any property left);

- (d) That the Examinations Office be asked to include reference in invigilators' instructions for dealing with mobile phones which may have been illegitimately brought into exam rooms by candidates.

18/07-08 SSLC Coordinators' Annual Reports

REPORTED:

That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting on 21st November 2007, had considered the Undergraduate Annual Report from the SSLC Coordinators for 2006/07, paper AQSC 28/06-07, and had resolved:

- (a) That the Annual Reports from the Student-Staff Liaison Committee Coordinators on the operation of the SSLC system during 2006-07 for undergraduate and postgraduate courses be approved as set out in papers AQSC 28/07-08 and AQSC 29/07-08 respectively, noting that references to "tutoring" in section 2(f) of the undergraduate report, concerning mentoring schemes, should be understood in the context of informal "buddy" arrangements and not as a reference to academic tutoring;
- (b) That the Annual Reports from the Student-Staff Liaison Committee Coordinators on the operation of the SSLC system during 2006-07 for undergraduate courses, paper AQSC 28/07-08, and postgraduate courses, paper AQSC 29/07-08, be referred for consideration to the Boards of Graduate and 8 Undergraduate Studies, Faculty Boards, the Campus Life Committee, the Library SSLC and the Careers SSLC;
- (c) That the Chair of the Committee and the Deputy President & Education Officer of the Students' Union write to Heads of Department to reiterate the importance of the Student-Staff Liaison Committee system and to remind Heads of Department that it is an expectation that departments invite student representatives to departmental meetings (or equivalent) for the discussion of SSLC business;
- (d) That it become a requirement that new SSLC Academic Convenors attend one of the annual briefings organised by the SSLC Coordinators;
- (e) That the SSLC Coordinators investigate additional methods of disseminating briefing information to SSLC Academic Convenors to supplement existing face-to-face briefings, the SSLC Handbook and the SSLC web portal;
- (f) That the Committee be supplied with lists of departments/courses for which no SSLC annual report has been received.

(AQSC minute 30/07-08)

CONSIDERED:

The Undergraduate Annual Report from the SSLC Coordinators for 2006/07 (paper AQSC 28/07-08).

RESOLVED:

That the Senior Tutor be invited to attend the next meeting of the Board to report on the personal tutor system in conjunction with a written report to be received from the Students' Union Education Officer.

19/07-08 Annual Course Review Reports

RECEIVED:

- (a) a Summary Report of the Undergraduate Annual Course Review Reports submitted by Departments in the Faculty of Arts for the academic year 2006/07 (paper AUCS 35/07-08 (revised)).
- (b) a Summary Report of the Undergraduate Annual Course Review Reports submitted by Departments in the Faculty of Science for the academic year 2006/07 (paper SFS 38/07-08).
- (c) a Summary Report of the Undergraduate Annual Course Review Reports submitted by Departments in the Faculty of Social Studies for the academic year 2006/07 (paper UFSS 72/07-08).

20/07-08 New Courses of Study

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A proposal from the Department of French for a new course 'French with Theatre Studies' for introduction in October 2009 (papers AUCS20/07-08 (revised), AUCS28-30/07-08).
- (b) A proposal from Warwick HRI for a new course BSc in Environmental Biology for introduction in October 2009 (paper SFS 21/07-08 (revised)).
- (c) A proposal from the Department of Computer Science for a course BSc in Discrete Mathematics for introduction in September 2008, which will be taught jointly with the Department of Mathematics, papers SFS 28/07-08, SFS 29(a)-(b)/07-08 and SFS 30/07-08, it being noted that in approving this new degree course, the Sub-Faculty of Science had strong concerns over the pressure that this is likely to cause for timetabling, SFS minute 21(i)07-08 refers.
- (d) A proposal from the WBS for a new course entitled BSc International Management for introduction in September 2008 (papers UFSS 40/07-08, UFSS 41/07-08 and UFSS 42/07-08), noting that:

- (i) The proposal is based on the existing degree BSc in International Business, which includes a compulsory year abroad in France, Italy, Germany or Spain, where students are expected to be proficient in the relevant foreign language;
- (ii) That the proposal would permit students not proficient in a foreign language to spend a year abroad at an English speaking institution.

RESOLVED:

- (e) That the proposal from the Department of French for a new course 'French with Theatre Studies' for introduction in October 2009 as set out in papers AUSC20/07-08 (revised), AUSC28-30/07-08 be referred back to the Department with a request that:
 - (i) the department should, in accordance with the recent Senate resolution concerning external advice in the development of new courses, consider obtaining an external view on the proposal from a senior academic in a comparable institution to Warwick;
 - (ii) the department be asked to justify the anomalous total of 150 CATS for year 4 of the degree;
 - (iii) the exam weights of "up to 50" given for years 2 and 4 of the degree to be corrected to "at least 50".
- (f) That the Board consider at its next meeting the proposal from Warwick HRI for a new course BSc in Environmental Biology for introduction in October 2009 as set out in paper SFS 21/07-08 (revised), when Part 2 of the course specification form has been provided by Warwick HRI, it being noted that the Chair be empowered to act on behalf of the Board to consider the complete course proposal if necessary;
- (g) That the proposal from the Department of Computer Science for a course BSc in Discrete Mathematics for introduction in September 2008, which will be taught jointly with the Department of Mathematics, as set out in papers SFS 28/07-08, SFS 29(a)-(b)/07-08 and SFS 30/07-08, be approved,
 - (i) it being noted that, whilst the Sub-Faculty of Science had expressed strong concerns over the pressure on timetabling (SFS minute 21(i)07-08 refers) it was the view of the Department of Computer Science that this new course would not significantly exacerbate this issue.
 - (ii) subject to the Department of Computer Science adding a list of those Computer Science Industrial Advisory Board members consulted to the proposal.
- (h) That the Board consider at its next meeting the proposal from the WBS for the new course entitled BSc International Management for introduction in September 2008 as set out in papers UFSS 40/07-08, UFSS 41/07-08 and UFSS 42/07-08, when Part 2 of the course specification form has been

provided by the School, it being noted that the Chair be empowered to act on behalf of the Board to consider the complete course proposal if necessary.

21/07-08 Course approval forms (Minute AQSC 32/07-08 refers)

REPORTED:

That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, at its meeting on 21st November 2007, had considered a proposed amendment to the Course Approval form to require more detailed information from departments about the external advice taken during the development of new and restructured courses (Paper AQSC.19/07-08), and had recommended (to the Senate):

That proposed amendments to the Course Approval form to require more detailed information from departments about the external advice taken during the development of new and restructured courses be approved as set out in Paper AQSC.19/07-08, subject to minor amendments proposed during the meeting.

That the Senate, at its meeting on 5 December 2007, had resolved that the above mentioned recommendations be approved.

(Senate minute 53(b)/07-08 refers)

RECEIVED:

A paper detailing the amendment to the Course Approval form to require more detailed information from departments about the external advice taken during the development of new and restructured courses (Paper AQSC.19/07-08 (revised)).

22/07-08 Open-book' status: TH2162

CONSIDERED:

A memorandum from the Department of Theatre, Performance and Cultural Policy Studies requesting open book status for examination paper TH2162 'Aspects of Theatre and Performance II' (papers AUSC.32/07-08, AUSC.33/07-08 and AUSC.34/07-08).

RESOLVED:

That the Chair be asked to take action on behalf of the Board to approve the proposal from the proposal from the Department of Theatre, Performance and Cultural Policy Studies requesting open book status for examination paper TH2162 'Aspects of Theatre and Performance II' as set out in papers AUSC.32/07-08, AUSC.33/07-08 and AUSC.34/07-08, once the Department has provided further details of the examination arrangements.

23/07-08 Proposal for the Department of French Studies to move to an 8-unit classification of degree

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Department of French Studies to move to an 8-unit classification of degree (paper AUSC 36/07-08).

RECOMMENDED (To Academic Quality and Standards Committee) :

That the proposal from the Department of French Studies to move to an 8-unit classification of degree as set out in paper AUSC 36/07-08, be approved.

24/07-08 Undergraduate External Examiners' Reports for 2006/07

RECEIVED:

The procedure for the consideration of External Examiners' reports by the Boards of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies (paper BUGS2/07-08).

CONSIDERED:

- (a) The reports of External Examiners for Undergraduate courses for 2006/07 received since the last meeting of the Board (paper BUGS 11/07-08);
- (b) Pro-forma responses to the External Examiners' reports received from departments since the last meeting of the Board (paper BUGS 12/07-08);
- (c) Responses from departments on specific issues raised by the Board following its consideration of reports at its last meeting (paper BUGS 13/06-07);

RESOLVED:

- (a) That it be noted that the issues concerning plagiarism penalties referred to in the report of the WBS to Dr Lilley's report (Report 50) were the subject of a discussion between the WBS and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning);
- (b) That the Chair of the Board of Undergraduate Studies be asked to contact the Head of the Department of Biological Sciences regarding the implementation of the action plan drawn up in response to the report of Professor Sparrow (Report 22).

TB/JAT 25/2/08