

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
HIGHER EDUCATION FOUNDATION PROGRAMME
BOARD OF STUDIES

Minutes of the Meeting of the Higher Education Foundation Programme Board of Studies held
on 3 February 2010.

Present: Prof. R Higgott (Chair), Dr B Britnell, Dr K Flint, Dr M Joy, Mr R Leng,
Dr T McCrisken, Ms Y Merali, Ms L Nuttall, Ms E Shale, Dr G Sharpling,
Ms S Starley, Mr P Smart, Mr J Preshous, Dr J Robinson, Dr M Skinner,
Mr H Waldron

Apologies: Dr K Flint, Dr R Leng, Ms S Starley

In Attendance: Mr D Fowers, Mr J Kennedy, Ms D Ning, Dr I Procter

11/2009-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

The Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2009 be approved.

12/2009-10 Membership of the Board of Studies

REPORTED:

That Senate had approved the appointment of Dr Trevor McCrisken (PAIS) as a member of the HEFP Board of Studies and Dr McCrisken was formally welcomed to the Board.

13/2009-10 Matters Arising on the Minutes

RESOLVED:

~~Minute 24/2009-09 refers:~~ That Dr Keith Uff, University of Birmingham be approved as the external Law examiner for the HEFP Law programme.

(HEFP 10/2009-10)

~~Minute 26/2008-09 refers:~~ Dr Sharpling confirmed that work had now started to analyse the data on the different types of language test in conjunction with Ms Shale and a report would be available for the July Board of Studies.

Minute 23/2008-09 refers: A meeting to discuss best practice across the University and Colleges when dealing with plagiarism would take place following the Board, Dr McCrisken was proposed as chair of the meeting, a report with recommendations from this meeting will be presented to the July Board of Studies.

Minute 29/08-09 refers: it was reported with Ms Bhogal had provided a presentation on applying to the Social Sciences at Warwick, specifically targeted at the Social Sciences students.

Minute 4/2009-10 refers: The HEFP Annual Report had been submitted to the meeting of Senate, and no further comments had been added.

Minute 6/2009-10 refers: Information on the degree classifications of students following graduation was discussed and the following comments reported:

(a) DARO has over 1300 records of HEFP alumni on the database which could be utilized if a broader scale project on investigating student performance was required.

(b) Paper 7/2009-10 indicated that following a request to provide information on the degree classification of the ex-HEFP students, a small number of university responses had been received: 10/31 for the 2005-6 cohort.

(c) Of the 65 students in this cohort with confirmed degree classifications (Warwick: 51) a breakdown of degree classifications was indicated on a bar chart, showing that from Warwick 4 students achieved a 1st class degree, 20 students achieved a 2:1, 11 students achieved a 2:2, 5 students achieved a 3rd class degree, 6 withdrawn, 5 not yet completed their degree.

(d) Concern was raised that the number of students achieving a 2:1 or above was below the expected level, however, the Board requested that a comparison of 51 non-HEFP international students be selected and then the results compared.

(e) It was agreed that the IO would trace the students below a 2:1 degree and identify their entry grade to Warwick, whether they entered as a CF/CI or Clearing student and provide a brief report to the July Board.

Minute 7/2009-10 refers: a process has now been established, and circulated to the Colleges, indicating that on receipt of an electronic-style passport photograph, confirmation of date of birth, an application will be made for a University card in order to gain electronic access to the University library for HEFP teaching staff.

RECEIVED:

(a) Stratford-upon-Avon College:

An oral report from Mr Waldron reporting that:

- (i) 182 students were currently registered on the Business Studies programme and that two students had withdrawn. 31 students were registered on the Social Science programme with no withdrawals.
- (ii) The Part 1 examinations had progressed well.
- (iii) The development with the mathematics syllabus was progressing, in conjunction with Ms Shale, and that the progress with entry to Economics degrees at Warwick was positive.
- (iv) Work had taken place to compare the A level mathematics result with the HEFP mathematics results and a correlation between a grade A in A level mathematics and HEFP 80% identified, which supported the case for accepting HEFP students onto Economics degrees requiring an A level mathematics at A grade.
- (v) Additional work between SA and Ms Shale would continue to develop additional subjects for inclusion in the syllabus to enable direct entry to MORSE, without the need for the supplementary A level mathematics component.

RECOMMENDED:

That Warwick was only aware of one student who had withdrawn from the HEFP, and the second student reported above (transferred to a non-Warwick programme) will need to be officially withdrawn from the HEFP, and the Home Office advised of the withdrawal. Timely reporting of student withdrawals, will be essential as attendance is a key reporting aspect of Warwick's visa licence.

(b) Warwickshire College:

RECEIVED:

An oral report on behalf of Ms Starley, who had sent apologies on attendance at the meeting, on the progress of the Law programme:

- (i) The current group had 20 students, with no withdrawals.
- (ii) The group was working well, with concern on 1 student who had isolated herself from the group, but who was under constant review.
- (iii) The first two assignments had now been completed and high levels of achievements in both had been achieved, with 8 students performing at Distinction level and the majority of the group achieving a good Credit level.

(iv) Visits had taken place on 1 February to the Houses of Parliament, the Supreme Court and the Old Bailey, plus other trips to the Birmingham Crown Court.

An oral report on behalf of Mr Smart on behalf of the Science/Engineering programme:

(v) The group consisted of 44 students with no withdrawals.

(vi) This is the first year the group has run with the option of either Economics or IT, and Mr Smart requested that the HEFP application/acceptance forms include a point on whether the students selected either IT or Economics. (D Ning to action).

(vii) Friday afternoon sessions at The School of Engineering had been organized for the first time and the students initial thoughts are that the content is not linked to the HEFP syllabus, so although it provides an insight into Engineering projects, the reaction to the introduction of this idea has been mixed and will need further discussion between Dr Britnell and Mr Smart on how to progress for the next year.

14/2009-10 Recruitment 2010

RECEIVED:

(a) A report from Ms Johnson on the trends in the January 2010 recruitment statistics indicating a positive trend across all programmes, with the exception of Biomedical applications.

RECOMMENDED:

(a) That Ms Johnson will meet with Mr Smart regarding the Biomedical programme for 2010 and the feasibility based on current applications.

(b) That Ms Johnson contacts the colleges on the predicted groups for 2010 entry, based on the January 2010 trend, to discuss resourcing of the groups.

REPORTED:

(b) That Ms Zhanar Orsaninova, Lead Manager, Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan had taken place on 25 January and discussions regarding the potential funding of students into the UK had been discussed. The Bolashak programme is likely to fund students into specific areas of sciences for the next financial year, but confirmation of the list of preferred subjects has not been released, although it will not cover Economics related or Business programmes for the next year.

16/2009-10 Social Science Quinquennial Review Report

RECEIVED:

- (a) The Social Science Quinquennial Review
- (b) An oral report from the chair of the review, Dr Procter, outlining the procedures undertaken and the main recommendations:
 - (i) Role of the personal tutor: be clear on the purpose in student handbooks
 - (ii) How to deal with emergency situations – clear instructions required in the student handbooks
 - (iii) Library access for staff: now confirmed
 - (iv) Plagiarism: the review highlighted the need for more guidance.
 - (v) Procedure for contingency on examination day for illness.
 - (vi) Record of attendance at lectures will be required as part of the PBS immigration system.
 - (vii) Concern on the level of English, even though students have the entry level for the Programme, there are some students who continue to struggle on the Programme.

RECOMMENDED:

That the items listed above will be resolved through the College adding the identified information to the handbook; through the plagiarism working party and through recording attendance at lectures, the outstanding question regarding a small number of students struggling on the English language programme will be resolved as follows:

- (viii) SA will produce a list of students identified as struggling with their language skills and the IO will identify the entry qualification, type of test and test centre with the aim of producing a short summary of the findings to the July Board of Studies. Following the investigation into the data, the Board will have an opportunity to make a decision on whether testing of language on arrival at the two Colleges should be implemented.

17/2009-10 English and Study Skills Quinquennial Review

REPORTED:

The Quinquennial Review of the English and Study Skills programme is due in 2010.

CONSIDERED:

Whether the membership of the review panel should include an external member of staff.

RESOLVED:

That Dr Sharpling, as English Studies moderator, act as chair to the review group, accompanied by Ms Nuttall representing Stratford-upon-Avon College, and Ms J Preshous, representing Warwickshire College. Dr Skinner would act as the member of staff from outside of the direct discipline. Dr Sharpling will identify an external examiner, from a comparable Russell Group University, for consideration by the Chair. Ms Ning from the IO will provide the administration for the Review.

18/2009-10 Staff

RECEIVED:

(a) A CV for Ms Allen to teach on the Business Studies at Stratford-upon-Avon College.

CONSIDERED:

(b) Whether the procedure had been followed for replacement of staff under non-standard circumstances (see Governance & Administration).

(c) Whether Ms Allen had a teaching qualification and was suitably qualified/experienced to teach Business Studies at this level.

REPORTED:

(d) Mr Waldron reported that Ms Allen had been temporarily asked to teach on the HEFP in December due to an unexpected change in staffing in Economics. The Business Studies tutor had been moved to teach Economics and Ms Allen put in place to teach Business Studies. Ms Allen had therefore taught on the Programme since December without consultation or confirmation through the HEFP moderator and Chair.

(e) Ms Merali, Business Studies moderator requested corrective action as the reputation of the HEFP is built on the quality of the provision, and would not support anything other than a very temporary use of Ms Allen to fill the post of a Business Studies lecturer on the HEFP. In addition there was concern that by using very inexperienced staff on the Programme, the College might have demonstrated a lapse of judgement and corrective action to staff the Programme properly was requested.

RESOLVED:

(f) That the appointment of Ms Allen on the Business Studies programme could not be supported and SA were asked to look at the teaching and delivery of the Programme and resolve the issue of providing qualified teaching staff.

(g) That the procedures set out in the Governance & Administration for both temporary and full-time teachers on the HEFP should be adhered to in future to enable discussions to take place prior to teaching on the HEFP.

(h) That the Chair of the Board will visit Stratford-upon-Avon College for a broader conversation on the development of the HEFP.

19/2009-10 Any Other Business

REPORTED:

(a) Attendance Recording to conform to Warwick's Tier 4 of the Points Based System Licence:

Note: HEFP students are all registered under Warwick's licence.

That documentation setting out the expectation of attendance on the HEFP, steps to be taken in cases of non-attendance and subsequent visa consequences needed to be finalized.

CONSIDERED:

(b) The specific contacts at the two colleges to liaise with on the draft documentation.

RECOMMENDED:

Mr Waldron offered to represent SA and Mr Smart offered to represent Warwickshire College. In conjunction with the two colleges, Ms Johnson will prepare a report for consideration by the July Board of Studies with a view to establishing a common practice across the HEFP.

/HJJ