

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

**Academic Policy & Regulations Committee**

**21 May 2009**

**UNCONFIRMED MINUTES**

Members present:	Professor S C Shute, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic Quality and Students (in the Chair) Professor K Dowden, College of Arts and Law Professor J Heath, College of Life and Environmental Sciences Mr T Marley, Vice-President (Education and Access), Guild of Students Dr C Ryan, College of Social Sciences
Apologies	Ms C M Pike, Director of Legal Services Mr N Ross, College of Medical and Dental Sciences
In attendance	Professor G Morse, Birmingham Law School Mr B Casey, Director of Academic Services Ms C L McCauley, Academic and Student Administration (Secretary) Dr C R Twine, Academic and Student Administration Mr P A Fantom, Academic and Student Administration (minute secretary) Dr A McKinley, Academic and Student Administration
Papers	The Minute Book contains copies of all written papers or reports referred to below. Agenda and papers are also available via <a href="http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/APRC.shtml">http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/APRC.shtml</a> .

09/15 **Vote of Thanks**

*Noted:*

That Dr Chris Twine would be leaving the University in June to take up the position of Director of Postgraduate Programmes at Aston University's Business School.

*Resolved:*

That the congratulations of the Committee be extended to Dr Twine on his new appointment, and that the Committee's thanks be recorded for all of the considerable work undertaken and support given to APRC during his time with the University.

09/16 **Minutes**

*Resolved:*

That the minutes (APRC.09.05.01) of the meeting held on 24 April 2009 be approved.

09/17 **Matters arising**

**(a) Proposed Code of Practice on Taught Programme and Module Assessment**  
**(Minute 09/13 refers)**

*Noted:*

That APRC agreed that whilst the Proposed Code had been approved for introduction in 2009/10,

subject to the incorporation of the amendments set out in Minute 09/13, two aspects of the Proposed Code would be subject to future review:

- (xix) Clause 7.2 regarding students viewing their examination scripts.
- (xxi) Clause 8.3.4 regarding moderation.

09/18 **Proposed Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence**

*Considered:*

The proposed Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence, together with a supporting paper outlining the reasons for its creation, including requirements for the implementation of the Points Based System, and replacement of the current Code of Practice on Reasonable Diligence (APRC.09.05.02).

*Resolved:*

- (a) That the term 'Principal Academic Unit', which had previously been employed in University legislation, would be replaced throughout this Code of Practice and, in due course, all other University legislation, by the term 'School'.
- (b) That the Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence be approved for introduction in 2009/10, subject to the incorporation of the following amendments (deletions struck through, insertions underlined):
  - (i) With respect to Clause 2.1.3, the term non-EEA (non-European Economic Area) to be defined.
  - (ii) Clauses 2.1.5 (a) and 2.1.6 (b) to be rearranged so that the information on Reasonable Diligence drawn from University Regulations is more prominent.
  - (iii) Clause 2.1.6 (b) (ii) to read:

*Absence from teaching sessions, or failure to submit assessed work, contrary to the requirements of a module description or a programme specification, which may be different from those set out on clause 2.1.5 6 (a), as provided for in clause 3.4 below; or*

- (iv) Clause 4.2 (b) to read:

*The Registered Student will have 5 working days to ~~respond to the letter from the Principal Academic Unit and to seek to arrange~~ an appointment to see their personal tutor, research supervisor and/or other academic member of staff. Another member of University staff will also be present at the meeting in order to produce a record of the discussion and the action to be taken. This meeting is also an opportunity for the Registered Student to indicate any circumstances that have had an adverse effect on their reasonable diligence with regard to their programme of study or research.*

- (v) Clause 4.2 (c) to read:

*The Registered Student may ~~request that they~~ be accompanied to the meeting by a friend. ~~However, such attendance by a friend is at the discretion of the Registered Student's personal tutor, research supervisor or other academic member of staff, who will have been notified in advance of the Registered Student's request to be accompanied by a friend, and has agreed to this.~~*

- (vi) Clause 4.2 (d) to read:

*A note of the informal meeting shall be prepared by the ~~Principal Academic Unit~~ School and agreed by the Registered Student. ~~setting~~ This note shall set out the discussion and any action that the Registered Student is required to take to achieve reasonable diligence. Evidence of*

*this note will be required if the ~~Principal Academic Unit School~~ subsequently decides that the Registered Student has not taken such action and that the case should be referred to the Board of Examiners (Section 5 of this Code of Practice). A copy of this note, which may be in the form of an email, will be sent to the Registered Student.*

(vi) Clause 6.2 to read:

*If a procedural irregularity has occurred during the proceedings of the Board of Examiners, or if a decision has been made contrary to Regulations, the Progress and Awards Board will decide the case. If the Progress and Awards Board conclude that a procedural irregularity has occurred, it will ~~advise~~ inform the Head of the ~~Principal Academic Unit School~~ and that the Board of Examiner's decision must be reviewed by the Progress and Awards Board.*

(vii) Clause 6.3 (ii) to read:

*Where the decision is that the Registered Student should be withdrawn, this ~~be done~~ will be effected by Academic and Student Administration and it will be noted on the Registered Student's record that the reason for withdrawal was academic failure due to the Registered Student not showing reasonable diligence with respect to their programme of study or research.*

(viii) Clause 7.1 (a) to read:

*That there was a material irregularity or failure in procedure ~~or unfair discrimination~~ which rendered the process leading to the initial decision unfair.*

(ix) Clause 7.1 (c) to be deleted:

*~~That the nature of the Board of Examiner's decision was disproportionate.~~*

(c) That the Terms of Reference of the University Progress and Awards Board be revised to more accurately reflect the responsibilities of the Board provided for under the Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence.

(d) That Regulations be derived from the proposed Code of Practice on Student Attendance and Reasonable Diligence for the 2009/10.

#### 09/19 **LLB for Graduates – Two Year Programme**

*Considered:*

A paper seeking APRC's approval to a request from the Birmingham Law School relating to the use of Adjusted Regulations in respect of the 30 credit modules on the final year of the LLB for Graduates – Two Year Programme in 2009/10 (APRC.09.05.03).

This request was made due to the potential situation whereby a final year student failing one 30 credit module would either fail to achieve the qualification or be awarded a pass degree instead of an honours degree.

However, APRC was concerned that granting this request would incur wider equity issues and, furthermore, it considered that the potential problem could be resolved by the Birmingham Law School disaggregating the 30 credit modules in order to create 10 and 20 credit modules within the Regulations.

*Resolved:*

That the Birmingham Law School's request be rejected.

09/20 **Revised Code of Practice on Plagiarism***Considered:*

The revised Code of Practice and a supporting paper outlining the proposed revisions arising from the comments received during consultation with Academic Schools and the Student Conduct and Appeals Section of Academic and Student Administration (APRC.09.05.04).

This was in accordance with APRC's consideration and approval of the existing Code of Practice in April 2008, when it was agreed that a major review was to be undertaken during the 2008/09 academic year (Minute 08/28 refers).

During discussion, APRC determined that further revision of the Code of Practice was necessary, particularly in respect of the content and ordering of the categories of plagiarism and the penalties to be incurred by those students found to have committed plagiarism.

*Resolved:*

That following further revision, the Code of Practice on Plagiarism be circulated to Directors of Education and Plagiarism Contacts in Colleges and Schools for further consultation, pending consideration and approval by APRC via email circulation.

*Note added: 14 July 2009*

It was confirmed to the Chair of APRC that Directors of Education and Plagiarism Contacts had received and commented on the revised Code of Practice on Plagiarism, prior to APRC's meeting on 21 May 2009, and therefore the Chair resolved to approve the revised Code of Practice on Plagiarism by Chair's Action on 14 July 2009.

09/21 **Proposed Amendments to Regulations Governing Professional Doctorates***Considered:*

A paper seeking APRC's approval to proposed changes for effect in 2009/10 to the Regulation governing professional doctorates, in order to ensure the Regulations reflect current practice (APRC.09.05.05).

*Resolved:*

That the proposed amendments to Regulations be approved, subject to the incorporation of the following amendments (deletions struck through, insertions underlined):

- (i) Regulation 6.1.3 (a) (vii) to read:

*Professional Doctorate (ClinPsyD, EdD, ThD, EdPsychD, SocSciD, Foren.Psy.D, HScD, HScD(Clin), DBA, DPT, App.Ed and Child Psy.D)*

*A programme, normally of three years' duration, which integrates taught postgraduate work and/or professional practice with research within a programme of 540 credits. Registered Students are assessed by a combination of written examinations and/or project report(s), dissertation or thesis which collectively make an original contribution to knowledge, worthy of publication. The programme comprises ~~research related work (training and thesis or dissertation)~~ and no more than 180 ~~420~~ credits of ~~subject focused~~ taught modules ~~courses spread over the three years of the programme.~~*

- (ii) Regulation 6.1.3 (a) (vi) to read:

*Doctor of Philosophy with Integrated Study (PhD with Integrated Study)*

*A programme, normally of four years' duration, which integrates research with taught postgraduate work in a range of skills and subject focused ~~courses~~ modules, up to a maximum*

*of 180 ~~420~~ credits. Registered Students must produce a thesis which makes an original contribution to knowledge, worthy of publication in whole or in part in a learned journal.*

09/22 **Proposed Reduction to the Maximum Duration of the MBChB**

*Considered:*

A paper seeking APRC's approval to proposals that the maximum duration of the MBChB be reduced to eight years, and that a minimum and maximum duration for the MBChB for graduates of four years and seven years respectively be introduced into Regulations (APRC.09.05.06).

*Resolved:*

- (i) That the maximum duration of the MBChB, as specified in Regulation 6.2.1 (a) be reduced from twelve to eight years, and that the MBChB for graduates be incorporated into Regulation 6.2.1 (a) with a minimum duration of four years and a maximum duration of seven years as follows (deletions crossed through, additions underlined):

*The minimum and maximum periods of study permitted for programmes prescribed for Undergraduate awards of the University shall be as follows.*

...		
<del>BDS, MBChB</del>	5 years	12 years
<u>MBChB</u>	<u>5 years</u>	<u>8 years</u>
<u>MBChB for Graduates</u>	<u>4 years</u>	<u>7 years</u>

- (ii) That Regulation 6.2.1 (d) be altered as follows (additions underlined):

*The maximum period within which a Registered Student may complete an award is calculated from the date of first registration to the date of the final award and is three times the minimum period stated in (a) above, subject to an overall maximum of 12 years, except in the case of the University Certificate, University Diploma and Advanced Certificate for which the maximum is 3 years and the MBChB and the MBChB for graduates, for which the maximums are 8 years and 7 years respectively.*

09/23 **Proposed Incorporation of Intercalated Programmes fully into the Regulations**

*Considered:*

A paper seeking APRC's approval to proposals to incorporate the University's suite of intercalated programmes fully into Regulations (APRC.09.05.07).

*Resolved:*

- (i) That the following clause be added to the Regulations as 6.1.2 (r):

*Intercalated Programmes*

*An intercalated programme is a programme onto which registered students are enrolled whilst still also enrolled on their primary programme of study, which may be at the University of Birmingham or at another institution. Registered students enrolled on an intercalated programme suspend their registration on their primary programme of study. Intercalated programmes will only be available to registered students who are enrolled on a relevant programme, as defined by the programme requirements of the intercalated programme.*

- (ii) That the following clause is added to the Regulations as 6.2.2 (f):

*A Registered Student on an intercalated programme may suspend his or her registration on his or her primary programme of study for the duration of his or her enrolment on the intercalated programme, including an intercalated programme undertaken at other institutions. The period of*

*the intercalated programme shall not be counted towards the maximum duration of the primary programme of study.*

09/24 **Clarification to Regulations concerning the Calculation of Award where the Programme involves Modules marked as Pass/Fail**

*Considered:*

A paper providing clarification to the Regulations governing the determination of the award on bachelors and undergraduate masters degree programmes, ensuring that marks awarded for credits taken at another Higher Education institution and accepted at the University of Birmingham under Accreditation of Prior Learning, and any nominal marks attributed to a module that is pass/fail, are not used in the calculation of the final award (APRC.09.05.08).

*Resolved:*

- (i) That the following clause be added to the Regulations as 7.3.1 (d) (iii):

*Where a module has not produced a numeric mark, due to being classed as pass/fail or because the credit has been awarded for Accreditation of Prior Learning, then that module shall make no contribution to the calculation of the final degree classification.*

- (ii) That clauses 7.3.1 (d) (iii) – (vii) be renumbered as 7.3.1. (d) (iv) – (viii).

09/25 **Roles of the Recognised Supervisor and the Research Programmes Visitor**

*Considered:*

A paper establishing the role of the Recognised Supervisor, together with the role of the Research Programmes Visitor, with respect to members of academic staff in collaborative organisations (APRC.09.05.09).

*Resolved:*

- (a) That members of academic staff in collaborative organisations, who meet the required criteria, be awarded the title of Recognised Supervisor in order to supervise postgraduate research students registered at the University of Birmingham as the lead supervisor without the appointment of a University of Birmingham supervisor. This may also be extended to other “external” supervisors, for example, in industry.
- (b) That the Recognised Supervisors be regarded “as if” they were full members of the appropriate University of Birmingham School.
- (c) That members of academic staff in collaborative organisations, who are identified as potential supervisors of postgraduate research students, are considered by the University of Birmingham for the award of the title of Recognised Supervisor by completing a recommendation form for consideration by the University’s Research and Progress Awards Board.
- (d) That those members of academic staff in collaborative organisations, as a condition of the award of the title of Recognised Supervisor, undertake an induction briefing in terms of University of Birmingham Codes of Practice, in particular relating to postgraduate research students, expectations of supervision and related matters.
- (e) That a senior member of academic staff in the appropriate School in the University of Birmingham be appointed as a Research Programmes Visitor (Appendix C) to provide a pivotal link between the collaborative organisation and the University.
- (f) That the Regulations be amended as follows (deletions struck through, insertions underlined):

- (i) Clause 3.11 to read:

*Award of Recognised Lecturer/Recognised Supervisor Titles*

- (ii) Clause 3.11.1 to read:

*A Head of School may recommend for approval to the Senate or delegated authority the award, for a defined period, of the title of Recognised Lecturer or Recognised Supervisor on a member of staff of a collaborative partner organisation. The member of staff should normally meet specified criteria and be undertaking teaching and/or assessment on a programme or be experienced and actively engaged in research in that collaborative partner organisation which leads to an award of the University or where the student being supervised is a registered student of the University.*

- (iii) Clause 3.11.2 to read:

*The award is subject to the following conditions:*

- (iv) Clause 3.11.2 (a) to read:

*The individual does not hold an appointment financed from University funds or from outside funds administered by the University;*

- (v) Clause 3.11.2 (b) to read:

*The individual is not subject to the Conditions of Employment governing Honorary Staff, but to the employment, disciplinary and other staffing procedures of the collaborative partner organisation.*

- (vi) Clause 3.11.3 to read:

*Recognised Lecturers/Supervisors may be entitled to certain benefits from the University as notified from time to time.*

- (g) That the Code of Practice on the Supervision and Monitoring Progress of Research Students be amended as follows (deletions struck through, insertions underlined):

- (i) The additional clause 2.13 to read:

*With the approval of Senate or delegated authority, a Recognised Supervisor may be appointed as a lead supervisor.*

- (ii) The existing clause 2.13 to be renumbered as 2.14 and to read:

*In instances where supervision from suitably qualified and experienced persons based in other institutions is deemed to be appropriate for some students, a University supervisor should always be appointed in addition. With the approval of Senate or delegated authority, where students are being supervised by a Recognised Supervisor as the lead supervisor, no additional University supervisor is appointed.*

- (h) That the Code of Practice on the Assessment of Research Degree Theses be amended as follows (deletions struck through, insertions underlined):

- (i) The additional clause 4.6 to read:

*A person not on the University of Birmingham's payroll but holding an honorary University of Birmingham title or having been awarded the title of Recognised Supervisor of the University of Birmingham may be appointed as an internal but not as an external examiner. Note: In such cases, it may be appropriate for the chairperson of the oral examination to undertake the*

*administrative duties of the internal examiners (See also 3.3 of this Code of Practice).*

09/26 **Student Representation System**

*Considered:*

A paper seeking APRC's approval to proposed changes for effect in 2009/10 to the Student Representation Scheme Document (APRC.09.05.10).

*Resolved:*

That the proposed amendments to the Student Representation System Policy (formerly the Student Representation Scheme) be approved.

09/27 **Report from the Progress and Awards Board**

*Considered:*

A report setting out the business transacted by the newly constituted Progress and Awards Board during the 2008/09 academic year and seeking APRC's approval to proposed changes to the Terms of Reference of the Research Progress and Awards Sub-Panel (APRC.09.05.11).

*Resolved:*

(a) That amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Research Progress and Awards Sub-Panel, as proposed by the Progress and Awards Board, be approved.

(b) That to ensure consistency with these proposed changes, the Regulations be amended as follows (deletions struck through, insertions underlined):

(i) Clause 7.4.7 (e) to read:

*Where the Registered Student is required to make minor/major corrections, the Registered Student is permitted one opportunity to complete the corrections to the satisfaction of the examiners. The award of the degree is withheld until a 'Certificate of Correction' is provided by the internal examiner for minor corrections and by all examiners for major corrections. ~~With the approval of Senate or delegated authority, a Registered Student may be permitted to carry out further minor corrections. Any further corrections must be included in the examiners' original list of corrections.~~*

09/28 **Exemption from Regulations – MPhil B in Playwriting Studies**

*Considered:*

A paper seeking APRC's approval to a request for an exemption for effect in 2009/10 from Regulations for the MPhil B in Playwriting Studies, which would replace the dissertation (with a maximum of 15 000 words) with an essay (with a maximum of 6 000 words) and a script for a play (with no word limit) (APRC.09.05.12).

*Resolved:*

(a) That Regulation 7.4.2 (d), which states that the thesis for a one-year MPhil B within the College of Arts and Law should contain a maximum of 20 000 words, should not apply to the MPhil B in Playwriting Studies.

(b) That instead of a thesis, the MPhil B in Playwriting Studies should be assessed on the basis of the script for an original play, defined not by word limit but by being practicable to perform, supported by an essay defending the play containing a maximum of 6 000 words.



- (c) That this exemption shall continue unless there is regular adverse comment about excessive length of play from External Examiners or, if that situation should not occur, as long as the MPhil B in Playwriting Studies is offered.

09/29 **Application to Extend Two Exemptions from Regulations**

*Considered:*

A paper seeking APRC's approval to a request for the continued operation of two exemptions from Regulations that were initially granted the duration of one academic year and which concern PhD with Integrated Study programmes that award both a masters and doctoral degree (APRC.09.05.13).

*Resolved:*

That the two exemptions from Regulations granted to the PhD with Integrated Study in Immunology and the PhD with Integrated Study in the Physical Science of Imaging in the Biological Sciences be extended for three years

09/30 **Chair's Action**

*Reported:*

That Chair's Action was taken in March 2009 in relation to a request for exemption from Regulations governing the Accreditation of Prior Learning for a number of undergraduate Engineering programmes in the College of Engineering and Physical Sciences

09/31 **Dates of meetings for the Academic Year 2009/10**

*Noted:*

That future meetings would be held (venue to be arranged) on:

- Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at 10.00 am
- Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at 10.00 am
- Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010 at 2.30 pm