

17 May 2012

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Academic Policy & Regulations Committee

02 April 2012

CONFIRMED MINUTES

Members present:	Professor J S Bale, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Education (in the Chair) Professor K Dowden, Head of School, Archaeology and Antiquity, College of Arts and Law Mr Zuki Majuqwana, Vice-President (Housing and Community), Guild of Students Ms C L McCauley, Assistant Director of Registry (Policy), Registry Ms C M Pike, Director, Legal Services Professor N M Ross, Head of Academic Innovations, College of Medical and Dental Sciences
Apologies:	Professor C Ryan, Director of Education, College of Social Sciences Professor A Jung, Head of School, Computer Science, College of Engineering and Physical Sciences Professor C Thomas, Director of Graduate Research, College of Life and Environmental Sciences
In attendance:	Ms Nina Morris, Registry, (Secretary) Mr Mark Jeffery, Registry (for item 12/03)
Papers	The Minute Book contains copies of all written papers or reports referred to below. Agenda and papers are also available via http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/APRC.shtml .

12/11 **Minutes**

Received:

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2012 (APRC.12.04.01).

Resolved:

That the minutes be approved.

12/12 **Matters arising on the Minutes not addressed elsewhere on the agenda**

(a) Report on Regulations pertaining to the weighted mean mark

Received:

An oral report from the Secretary, which noted that the weighted mean mark was not defined in the current Regulations.

Resolved:

That the weighted mean mark be defined in the Regulations as follows, with effect from 2012/13:

Credit weighted mean mark (hereafter referred to as the weighted mean mark) of a set of modules means the sum of the products of the marks attained in each module and the credit values of the module, divided by the sum total of the credit values of the modules required.

(b) Marks to display on the transcript of a student who has been permitted to re-take a module in which credit has already been achieved

Received:

An oral report from the Chair pertaining to the mark that should be recorded in BIRMS when a student was permitted to take as a first sit a module for which they have already gained credit.

Resolved:

That the Regulations be clarified at the next meeting of the Committee.

12/13 **New Code of Practice on External Examining (taught provision) and related legislation**

Received:

A new Code of Practice on External Examining pertaining to taught provision, and amendments to related legislation in light of new guidance published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) (APRC.12.04.02).

Noted:

- (i) That this paper reflected the University's response to the QAA, and many of the clauses in the Code of Practice directly referenced this guidance.
- (ii) That this did not represent a major shift in University policy, rather, a number of areas which were previously considered "good practice" had subsequently been strengthened and in some cases would now be mandatory.
- (iii) That the paper had been previously approved by the University Quality Assurance Committee.
- (iv) That, as Professor Thomas was unable to attend the APRC, he had submitted a number of comments that would also be taken into consideration when preparing the final draft of this Code of Practice.

Resolved:

- (i) That section 2.6 be amended as follows (amendments underlined and emboldened, deletions struck through):
*Once approval has been given at College-level the form should be passed to the University Registry for scrutiny and subsequent approval at institutional level by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) or nominee **on behalf of Senate.***

- (ii) That section 9.2 be amended as follows (amendments underlined and emboldened): *Schools should provide external examiners with the opportunity, **at least once per academic year**, to meet **representative** groups of students to gather their views of the programme.*
- (iii) That it should be made clear within the Code of Practice that if a student contacted the external examiner, this would be a disciplinary offence, and that this information should also be made clear in any place where external examiners contact details were available to students;
- (iv) That Appendix A – University Criteria for Appointment of External Examiners be amended as follows (additions underlined and emboldened): *sufficient standing (**normally holding a position of Senior Lecturer or higher**), credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers*
- (v) That Mark Jeffery consult with the Assistant Director (Student Data) on the practicalities of implementing section 5.5 in BIRMS;
- (vi) That Mark Jeffery would liaise with Legal Services regarding the External Examiner terms of appointment, in order to ensure that information was included regarding their contact details being published and how correspondence was subject to Freedom of Information requests.
- (vii) That the above amendments were subject to approval by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), and that once this approval had been given, this paper be returned to a future APRC for final approval for it to pass into legislation for 2012/13.

12/14 **Amendment to the Regulations pertaining to a new Professional Doctorate (ForensClinPsy D)**

Received:

A paper requesting that a new award should be included under the umbrella of “Professional Doctorate”, and that this award would be Doctor of Forensic-Clinical Psychology (ForenClinPsyD) (APRC.12.04.03)

Noted:

- (i) That this request was for an approval in principle, as the programme was yet to be approved by the University Programme Approval and Review Committee (UPARC).
- (ii) That this award conflated two existing awards: Doctor of Clinical Psychology and Doctor of Forensic Psychology Practice.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Secretary would liaise with the programme proposer to determine whether this programme would be subject to Fitness to Practise;
- (ii) That the award be approved as a new award in principle which would be included under the umbrella of “Professional Doctorate” from 2012/13, subject to the approval of the programme by UPARC.
- (iii) That, more generally, the list of awards included under “Professional Doctorate” be tidied up, as there is currently inconsistency in the typography of the titles.

12/15 **Amendment to the Regulations pertaining to language of a thesis**

Received:

A paper requesting an amendment to the Regulations pertaining to the language of thesis (APRC 12.04.04) for effect in 2012/13.

Noted:

- (i) That the Regulations be amended as follows (amendments underlined and emboldened, deletions struck through):

7.4.1 Award Requirements

7.4.1 (i) A Registered Student should submit a synopsis (in English) of about 200 words of the work presented, to be included in the bound copies of the work submitted. The examiners shall be required to certify that the synopsis is an accurate summary.

7.4.2 Format of theses or reports

7.4.2 (a) ~~Theses and reports shall be submitted in English except where an exemption has been approved by the Senate or under delegated authority. In general, an exemption shall be granted where a Registered Student is studying a language other than English and the assessment or part of it is intended to demonstrate the Registered Student's ability in that language. The default language for all research degree theses is English. With the approval of the Senate or delegated authority, and on an exceptional basis, where there are demonstrable academic benefits, the thesis may be submitted in another language. The report of the examiner(s) will be submitted in English.~~

12/16 **Amendment to the Regulations pertaining to the role of the Investigating Officer in a Student Conduct case**

Received:

A paper requesting an amendment pertaining to the role of the Investigating Officer in a Student Conduct case (APRC.12.04.05) for effect in 2012/13.

Resolved:

That the Regulation be amended as follows (deletions struck through):

8.3.1 Every alleged offence shall first be investigated by the Investigating Officer, who shall be the Director of Academic Services or his or her nominee. Where the allegations relate to ~~serious plagiarism or students on programmes subject to Fitness to Practise procedures~~, the Investigating Officer shall be nominated by the Head of College (or delegated authority).

12/17 **Amendment to the Regulations pertaining to the status of students governed by the Regulations pertaining to student conduct**

Received:

A paper requesting an amendment pertaining to the status of a student who is subject to Misconduct and Fitness to Practise regulations (APRC.12.04.06) with immediate effect.

Resolved:

- (i) That the Regulation be amended as follows (amendments underlined and emboldened, deletions struck through):

8.1.1 Introduction

*These Regulations apply to all Registered Students, students on Leave of Absence, ~~and~~ students who are registered as writing up, **students who have the status of external resit** and Graduands ("students"). Under these Regulations the University has the power to discipline and to suspend or expel students for good cause. Once disciplinary proceedings have been instituted against a student under these regulations, no disciplinary action may be taken against the student under other disciplinary rules or Regulations within the University for the same misconduct.*

- (ii) That a definition of "Leave of Absence" be included at the start of the Regulations (the Secretary to liaise with Tam Milner and Debbie Warren regarding this).
- (iii) That a definition of the status "writing up" be included at the start of the Regulations (the Secretary to liaise with Tam Milner and Debbie Warren regarding this).

12/18 **Chair's Action**

Received:

A paper reporting Chair's Action taken between November 2011 and February 2012 (APRC.12.04.07).

12/19 **Date of Meetings for the Academic Year 2011/12**

Noted:

- (i) That the next meeting would be held in the Beale Room (Committee Room 1) on Thursday 17 May 2012 at 2.30pm.
- (ii) That an extraordinary meeting had been arranged for the 20 June 2012, but that this may need to be rearranged depending on the date of Senate.