

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Academic Policy & Regulations Committee

9 October 2008

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

Members present:	Professor S C Shute, Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Academic Quality & Students (in the Chair) Professor J Heath, College of Life and Environmental Sciences Mr T Marley, Vice-President (Education and Access), Guild of Students Ms C M Pike, Director of Legal Services Mr N Ross, College of Medical and Dental Sciences Professor C Ryan, College of Social Sciences
Apologies	Professor K Dowden, College of Arts and Law
In attendance	Ms C L McCauley, Academic and Student Administration (Secretary) Ms M E Cannadine, Academic and Student Administration Mr P A Fantom, Academic and Student Administration (minute secretary)
Papers	The Minute Book contains copies of all written papers or reports referred to below.

08/47 **Welcome from the Chair**

The Chair welcomed the members of the Committee to the first meeting of the new academic session and formally thanked all current and former members and officers of the Committee for their service during the last academic year.

08/48 **Terms of Reference and Membership of the Committee**

Received:

- (a) The Terms of Reference and Membership of the Committee during 2008/09 (APRC.08.10.01).
- (b) The Terms of Reference and Membership of the Progress and Awards Board (a sub-committee of the Academic Policy and Regulations Committee) and the Research Progress and Awards Sub-Panel (a sub-panel of the Progress and Awards Board) during 2008/09 (APRC.08.10.01a).

The Chair outlined the roles and reporting arrangements of these committees and, with respect to APRC, stressed the relationship that it would have with the newly created Learning and Teaching Committee. In terms of membership, it was noted that all of these committees had been constituted to have representation from each of the five Colleges.

08/49 **Minutes**

Resolved:

That the minutes (APRC.08.10.02) of the meeting held on 22 May 2008 be approved.

08/50 **Matters arising****(a) Code of Practice on the Teaching and Academic Support of Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Students by Postgraduate Teaching Assistants and Undergraduates (Minute 08/38 refers)***Noted:*

That the revised Code of Practice, which distinguished between teaching, academic support, formative assessment and summative assessment, to more accurately reflect the current involvement of students in these activities, was considered and approved by Senate at its meeting on 18 June 2008. Furthermore, a thematic review was to be led by the Chair of APRC and would be conducted during Autumn 2008. If appropriate, further revisions to the Code of Practice would be made in 2009/10.

(b) Student Complaints Procedure (Minute 08/40 refers)*Noted:*

That, due to the introduction of a new statute in January 2009, the revised Student Complaints Procedure should now accord with this legislation. Accordingly, as the revised procedure would require approval prior to the next meeting of the Committee in February 2009, it would be circulated to members for comment and approval by correspondence.

08/51 **Revised Code of Practice on Split Location Study for Postgraduate Research Students***Considered:*

The revised Code of Practice and a supporting paper outlining the revisions that were proposed to ensure consistency with the Regulations and other Codes of Practice, and which brought the Code of Practice into line with the University's new College-based structure. (APRC.08.10.03).

Resolved:

- (a) That the Code of Practice on Split Location Study for Postgraduate Research Students be approved, subject to the incorporation of the following amendments (deletions struck through, insertions underlined):

- (i) Clause 3.8 to read:

Normally UK Registered Students undertaking split location research activity away from the University of Birmingham will be ~~regarded~~ registered as part-time students, but some of this Code of Practice may apply, for example, to the appointment of a local academic adviser and/or mentor.

- (ii) The first sentence of Clause 5.6 to read:

It ~~may~~ will normally be appropriate for a local academic adviser, who will normally hold a PhD in a relevant discipline, to be appointed. The Progress and Awards Board shall approve such cases where an academic adviser is not appointed.

- (iii) The column headed 'Maximum' to be removed from clause 7.1 and for this information to be inserted into a new clause 7.2.

- (iv) Clauses:

7.2 to read: If the Registered Student is required to spend more than the maximum period of attendance [in] at the University of Birmingham....

7.4 to read : *It is desirable that Registered Students come to the University of Birmingham...*

(v) Clause 9.1 to read:

...these Registered Students will be expected to pay the [standard overseas] fee appropriate to their student domicile during their period of research...

(b) That the Progress and Awards Board be asked to consider:

- (i) The current number of students registered for split location postgraduate study and their progression and completion rates.
- (ii) how minimum periods of registration are monitored.

08/52 **Request for Exemption from Regulations governing the classification of degrees for the intercalated BMedSc programmes in Clinical Science and Medicine in Society**

Considered:

A report on a request for an exemption from Regulations for the intercalated BMedSc in Clinical Society and the BMedSc programmes grouped under the heading of Medicine in Society (APRC.08.10.04).

Resolved:

That a revised proposal be prepared and submitted for consideration by the Chair.

08/53 **Request for Exemption from Regulations concerning the number of credits in a module for the MA in Learning and Teaching in Vocational Subjects, delivered at University College, Birmingham, and on the related Postgraduate Diploma and Postgraduate Certificate**

Considered:

A report on a request for an exemption from Regulations to justify the use of 15 credit modules in University College, Birmingham's MA/PGDip/PGCert in Learning and Teaching in Vocation Subjects, which was validated for delivery on 8 July 2008 (APRC.08.10.15).

Noted:

(a) That this request was made in accordance with the decision of APRC that future and existing arrangements with partner institutions should ensure that programme-specific legislation was broadly comparable to University legislation (Minute 08/03 refers).

(b) That the mapping of requirements for particular modules on this programme matched the respective professional body's requirements and, therefore, it would not be permissible to combine two 15 credit modules to create a 30 credit module.

Resolved:

That the exemption request be approved.

08/54 **Registered Students undertaking Additional Credit-Bearing Modules**

Considered:

A report seeking approval for the general principle that all undergraduate students should be allowed to undertake up to 20 credits of personal development modules (APRC.08.10.16).

Resolved:

That the general principle that all undergraduate students shall be allowed to undertake up to 20 credits per annum of personal development modules be approved. This principle was approved subject to the 20 credits being included within the maximum of 140 credits that a student might undertake in any one University session (in accordance with Regulations 5.2.2 (g)(i) and 5.2.2 (g)(iv)).

08/55 **Policy on Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs)**

Considered:

The revised Policy on Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies and a supporting paper outlining the revisions to the policy (APRC.08.10.07).

Resolved:

- (a) That the Policy on Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies be approved.
- (b) That the Programme Approval Review Committee be asked to consider, on a case by case basis, the benefits of having PSRB representation in attendance, where appropriate, at its meetings.

08/56 **The Higher Education Credit Framework for England: Guidance on Academic Credit Arrangements in Higher Education in England, August 2008**

Considered:

A paper setting out the new Framework (APRC.08.10.08).

Resolved:

That APRC receive a report at its next meeting on the implications for the Birmingham PGCE and further details on credit transfer rules.

08/57 **The Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, August 2008**

Considered:

A paper setting out the new Framework (APRC.08.10.09).

Resolved:

- (a) That the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee, Learning and Teaching Committee and the Programme Approval Review Committee receive the report at their next meetings.
- (b) That APRC receive a report on the review of the Framework document against Regulations to ensure that award descriptions align with those proposed by the Framework.
- (c) That the Programme Approval and Collaborations Section undertake a revision of programme approval documentation, for example, to ensure that the Framework and the principles contained therein are considered and referenced in proposals for new and modified programmes.

08/58 **Chair's Action***Reported:*

That Chair's Action was taken between May and September 2008 to approve:

(a) The following Codes of Practice:

- (i) The Code of Practice on Adjusted Regulations and Bachelors Degrees.
- (ii) The Code of Practice on Student Support and Development in Principal Academic Units.
- (iii) The Code of Practice on the External Examining System for Taught Programmes.

(b) The following amendments to legislation:

- (i) To Regulations and the Code of Practice on the Assessment of Research Degree Theses, to correct an anomaly whereby examiners could recommend further minor changes in such a way as to deviate from normal procedures.
- (ii) To Regulations, the Code of Practice on the Assessment and Award of Higher Doctorates, and the Code of Practice on the Admission of Research Students, to ensure that the MD and DDS, which are research degrees and not higher doctorates, are placed alongside other research degrees in legislation.
- (iii) To Regulations, with respect to student fees, to ensure that the University meets current practice, and to remove areas of legislation that are no longer current.
- (iv) To Regulations, to rectify an omission with respect to student property rights over inventions/discoveries during the course of their studies.

(c) The following exemptions:

- (i) A request from the Business School in respect of a suite of programmes being delivered through the Singapore Institute of Management, to split the year abroad into two 60 credit modules taken at Stages 2 and 3 respectively.
- (ii) A request from the Medical School in respect of the frequency of assessment of the MSc in Clinical Biochemistry.
- (iii) A request from the Dental School in respect of an exemption from modularisation of the BDS until completion of the School's internal review of the programme.
- (iv) A request from the School of Social Policy to allow the MA in Counselling and the Postgraduate Diploma in Counselling to be awarded without merit or distinction.
- (v) A request from the Medical School, in respect of the PhD with Integrated Study in Immunology, for one year in the first instance, to allow the award of a masters degree and a PhD where students have completed the requisite credits.
- (vi) A request from the School of Chemistry, in respect of the PhD with Integrated Study in the Physical Science of Imagery in the Biomedical Sciences, for one year in the first instance, to allow the award of a masters degree and a PhD where students have completed the requisite credits.
- (vii) A request from APOD, in respect of the PGCert in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, for one year in the first instance, to allow a maximum registration period of five years.

08/59 **Dates of meetings for the Academic Year 2008/09**

Noted:

That future meetings would be held in Committee Room 1 (G32, Aston Webb) on:

- Thursday 5 February 2009 at 10.30 am (Date to be re-arranged)
- Thursday 21 May 2009 at 2.30 pm