

Regulations and Guidelines for Convening and Conducting Boards of Studies Meetings

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PRIFYSGOL
BANGOR
UNIVERSITY

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Quality Assurance and Validation Unit.	Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee.	11 April 2018.	Every three years.

Note: In exceptional circumstances, and subject to approval by the Chair of the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee, responsibilities assigned to Schools, Heads, of School, School Officers or School Committees in these Regulations may be assumed by the College, Head of College, College Officers or College Committees respectively, as appropriate.

Regulations and Guidelines for Convening and Conducting Boards of Studies Meetings



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This Regulation outlines the role and delegation of Boards of Studies.

Introduction

1. This document contains regulations for Boards of Studies and guidelines for convening and conducting Boards of Studies. This document defines requirements and provides a framework for good practice. Its objective is to standardise responsibilities and operating procedures across the University.
2. For ease of reference this document is sub-divided into four sections:
 - a) Responsibilities
 - b) Representation
 - c) Scheme of Delegated Authority
 - d) Administration (minutes, agenda and standing items)

Responsibilities

3. Each school must have a Board of Studies. The Board of Studies is a school's most senior decision making body for all academic matters, including those pertaining to school policies, teaching and assessment, research activities, taught and research programmes, student progression and admissions criteria.
4. Boards of Studies have the following responsibilities.
 - To act as the academic authority of the school.
 - To make recommendations to the Head of School or college/school committees on academic matters.
 - To advise the University (for example, via Task Groups or Senate sub-committees) on academic matters.
 - To recommend the names of persons suitable for appointment as External Examiners.
 - To recommend persons for honorary appointments in the school.
 - To consider and report on matters referred by the University to Boards of Studies.
5. The Board of Studies must be chaired by the Head of School. The Head of School, if unavailable for a specific meeting, may nominate a replacement for that meeting. However the Head of School must not delegate this responsibility on a frequent or regular basis.
6. Heads of Schools are responsible for:

- Ensuring that the school complies with University regulations relating to the Board of Studies.
 - Ensuring that the school complies with general University policies.
 - The effective running of meetings of the Board of Studies.
7. Boards of Studies must act as the Board of Examiners for all taught programmes in a school. The composition and responsibilities of Boards of Examiners are defined in the Rules and Procedures and Code of Practice for the Assessment of Students for Undergraduate and Taught Postgraduate Programmes.
 8. Joint Programme Boards must be established for courses delivered under the terms of a collaborative arrangement between the University and another institution. The composition and responsibilities of Joint Programme Boards are defined in the Code of Practice for Collaborative Provision.

Representation

9. Each school is required to hold a minimum of two Board of Studies meetings in each Academic Year. To facilitate student attendance and participation, meetings should be held during teaching weeks within each semester and preferably within teaching weeks 1-10 to avoid conflict with preparation for end of semester examinations.
10. All members of academic staff are expected to attend their school's Board of Studies. Staff attendance will be confirmed in the minutes. Staff not in attendance should be noted in the minutes, as apologies or absences. Regular absences from Board of Studies by academic staff should be identified and investigated by the Head of School.

11. Student Involvement

- a) Student representation is expected at each Board of Studies meeting. The number of students attending should be a reflection of the total number of students registered in the school. The minimum number of student representatives should be:

Less than 300: 3 Students

Between 300 & 400 FTE's: 4 Students

Greater than 400 FTE's: 5 Students

These numbers are minimum requirements and, to ensure full involvement, it is suggested that a greater number of students are invited.

- b) Schools must ensure that students across years and courses are represented. It is expected that, as a minimum requirement, there should be at least one representative from undergraduate programmes, one representative from postgraduate taught programmes and one representative from postgraduate research programmes. Consideration should also be given to the representation of part-time students, especially in schools with a substantial number of part-time students.
- c) Schools are encouraged to liaise with the Students' Union, via nominated course representatives and Staff Student Liaison Committees, on ways to encourage student participation at Board of Studies meetings. Active engagement between course representatives and academic schools tends to generate the greatest participation and better student attendance at Board of Studies. Staff Student

Liaison Committees are described in the Code of Practice for the Course Representative System.

- d) The Students' Union firmly supports student attendance and participation at Board of Studies meetings. To assist in facilitating adequate student representation the Students' Union will promote best practice by nominating student members for Board of Studies from within each Staff Student Liaison Committees.

12. Boards of Studies have the power to co-opt, on an annual basis, consultative members such as:

- Academic Staff from another school
- Non-academic staff in the school
- Additional students in the school.

The consultative members have no right to vote.

13. The total number of student and co-opted members should not exceed the number of school academic staff. If it is likely that that this condition cannot be met, the school must discuss the membership of the Board of Studies with the Head of Quality Assurance & Validation.

14. The Head of Quality Assurance & Validation (or nominee) has the authority to attend any Board of Studies meeting.

Scheme of Delegated Authority

15. Whilst the Board of Studies is a school's most senior decision making body on academic matters, it can delegate responsibility to a sub-committee or sub-committees (who will report back to the Board of Studies). Where such delegation exists the following is viewed by the University to be appropriate:

- a) A written scheme of delegated authority should be prepared and approved by the Board of Studies. An example of a written scheme of authority is in Appendix A.
- b) The written scheme of delegated authority should be reviewed periodically and recorded in the Board of Studies minutes.
- c) Each committee or group with delegated authority should report to every Board of Studies meeting, supplying minutes or reports as appropriate, thus creating a clear audit trail. These reports and minutes require approval, or otherwise, by the Board of Studies and this outcome should be recorded in the minutes.

Administration

16. To maintain good practice and to standardise meeting formats across the University, schools must comply with the following:

- a) All Board of Studies meetings should be formally minuted. Minutes should highlight individual topics discussed, contain a summary of discussion points and emphasise any agreed actions, annotated with the name of the person or committee responsible for ensuring the action is completed.

- b) Items brought to the meeting from delegated committees or groups such as the Teaching and Learning Committee or Staff Student Liaison Committee should be clearly identified.
- c) Once the unconfirmed Board of Studies minutes have been approved by the Chair, a copy should be sent to the Head of Quality Assurance & Validation.
- d) A full attendance list will be confirmed in the minutes, either as full names or as abbreviations (with an attached list linking full names to the abbreviations). The use of initials only, is discouraged as
 - o Any external audience from outside the school may find this difficult to decipher.
 - o The deciphering of Students initials particularly in large schools can be problematic.
 - o It is not easy to differentiate between staff, students or consultative members.
- e) Students attending a Board of Studies should be clearly noted in the minutes. The learning level of each student representative should also be included.
- f) There is no requirement for students to remain for the whole Board of Studies meeting and they may leave prior to the conclusion of business (at their own discretion). It is advisable to schedule student related issues early in the meeting agenda, prior to discussing staff and school administrative issues.
- g) The use of Reserved Business at a Board of Studies meeting, where students are excluded is discouraged, as the Board of Studies is seen as a policy forum and not a management group. Consequently, there should be no items or discussions relating to individuals.

A sample Agenda that includes regular items that should be discussed at all or specific Boards of Studies is in Appendix B.

17. The Board of Studies must elect one of its members to act as Secretary to the Board. The Secretary will be responsible for the administration of the Board, including notification of meetings, agenda, papers and the accuracy of the minutes.

18. The following documents should be included as separate Agenda items to allow for full and detailed consideration of quality assurance reports:

Report	Meeting
QA1 Form	Semester 1
External Examiner Report	Semester 1
NSS Reports	Semester 1
IQA (if applicable)	First Board of Studies after Report received

Appendix A

Scheme of Delegated Authority

The Board of Studies is a school's most senior decision-making body on academic matters. However, a Board of Studies may delegate certain responsibilities to a sub-committee or sub-committees. Such delegation is required in order to ensure that matters are dealt with in a timely and efficient manner. Where this takes place, any responsibilities that are devolved must be clearly specified in a 'scheme of delegated authority' as outlined below. The reports from each sub-committee should be presented to the Board of Studies at the next available meeting. These may be considered 'for action' or 'for information' as appropriate.

All schools are required to have a Staff-Student Liaison Committee. It is recommended that each school also has a committee with primary responsibility for teaching and learning. However, it is recognised that the organisational structures within schools vary and hence there is no single 'model' that will fit all schools. Whatever structures exists the scheme of delegated authority must identify where the items listed in the first column are considered and/or approved.

Item	Notes
<p>The scheme of delegated authority must list, in this column, which committee within the school is responsible for the items listed in the first column.</p>	
<p>External reports</p>	
<p>External Examiners reports</p>	<p>These must be made available to students and discussed at the Staff-Student Committee. They should also be made available at the Board of Studies but detailed consideration of them could be devolved to a T & L or similar committee.</p>
<p>Reports from professional, statutory, regulatory or accreditation bodies.</p>	<p>These should be made available at the Board of Studies but detailed consideration of them could be devolved to a T & L or similar committee.</p>
<p>Annual monitoring of programmes</p>	
<p>QA1 forms</p>	<p>These must be considered and approved by an identified group within the school, prior to being signed off.</p>
<p>NSS results</p>	<p>These should be presented to the Board of Studies.</p>
<p>NSS Action Plan</p>	<p>This could be developed by a sub-committee but should be reported to the Board of Studies.</p>
<p>Annual monitoring of modules</p>	
<p>QA2 forms Feedback from module evaluation</p>	<p>It is expected that schools have a system in place that will allow central and coordinated oversight of modules that will allow any issues that arise to be dealt with effectively and changes that are planned to be communicated to relevant stakeholders, which may be other schools.</p>
<p>ARQUE reports</p>	

Item	Notes
Internal quality audits	
Internal Quality Audit reports	These should be presented and discussed at the Board of Studies.
12-month response to the Internal Quality Audit Report	This should be approved by the Board of Studies.
New modules and programmes	
Proposals for new or changes to existing programmes	These must be considered and approved by an identified group within the school, prior to being officially signed off by the Head of School.
Proposals for new or changes to existing modules	These must be considered and approved by an identified group within the school, prior to being officially signed off by the Head of School.
Research students	
Generic issues arising from research students or their annual monitoring reports	This could include issues raised by postgraduate students who have been involved with teaching. These must be considered by an identified group within the school.
Nominations and recommendations	
Recommendations for Honorary appointments	These must be considered by an identified group within the school.
Nominations for new External Examiners for taught programmes	These should be reported to the Board of Studies.
Sub Committees	
Staff-Student Liaison Committee	The minutes of all Staff Student Liaison Committee meetings should be presented to the Board of Studies.
Joint Programme Board	A small number of schools have Joint Programme Boards for franchised programmes. The minutes of the JPB should be considered at the Board of Studies.
Other sub-committees	These should all report to the Board of Studies.

Appendix B

Agenda

The following should be considered at all meetings of the Board of Studies

- Minutes of the previous meeting
- Follow up/outstanding items from previous meetings
- Report from the Teaching and Learning Committee
- Report from the Staff Student Liaison Committee
- Reports from all other groups or committees with Delegated Authority
- Minutes of Joint Programme Boards (if applicable)
- Feedback from research students
- Any Other Business

The following should be considered at the Semester 1 meeting of the Board of Studies

- External Examiners reports
- QA1 forms
- NSS results
- Proposals for new programmes

The following should be standard agenda items at the semester 2 meeting of the Board of Studies

- External Examiners reports
- NSS Action Plans
- Proposals for new modules

The following should be agenda items as the need arises

- Reports of any public, statutory, regulatory or accreditation body, as they become available
- Reports from internal quality audits