

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

WARWICK INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION PROGRAMME

BOARD OF STUDIES

Minutes of the Meeting of the Warwick International Foundation Programme Board of Studies held on 26 January 2016.

Present: Prof. C Hughes (Chair), Dr D Britnell, Dr T McCrisken, Dr K Moffat, Ms L Clarke, Dr M Joy, Mr D Fowers, Mr I Pemberton, Mr D Bhachu, Prof. P Corvi, Dr M Skinner, Dr D Garratt, Dr S Liu, Mr J Kennedy, Ms W Chan, Claire Lucas, R. Naylor, Ms R. Herbert

Apologies: Dr G Sharpling, Prof. S Jacka, H Kinghorn

In attendance: Ms H Johnson, Mr T Such, Mr W Johnson

1/2016-17 Minutes of last meeting

RESOLVED:

That The Minutes of the Warwick International Foundation Programme Board of Studies held on 6 July 2015 (WarwickIFP 1/2016-17)

2/2016-17 2015-16 Recruitment Outcome.

RECEIVED:

A Report from Mr T Such, Warwick IFP Manager, on the Recruitment for the 2015-16 academic year (WarwickIFP 2/2015-16)

CONSIDERED:

- (a) That 287 students enrolled onto the programme in September, despite a number of setbacks caused by UKVI policy changes
- (b) That the introduction of a new IELTS for UKVI test mid-cycle caused large disruption for students applying to the Warwick IFP. A number of applicants took the wrong IELTS test and either faced considerable delays to their application or, in a number of cases, were unable to join the course
- (c) IELTS for UKVI test results took up to 1 month to be received by students, compared to just 2 weeks with the previous test
- (d) Despite the challenging environment, application numbers increased by 100, totaling over 950 applications
- (e) The conversion rate has continued to fall, despite investment in conversion activity, suggesting increased competition in the market and students opting to make multiple applications for different foundation providers
- (f) Diversity has increased overall, due to an increase in IFP online conversion activities specifically through Facebook

- (g) Core markets continue to be challenging. Hong Kong continues to decline, driven by the introduction of a new educational model and further completion in Hong Kong and from across the world
- (h) Russia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan have seen declines in applications and enrolments due to the uncertainty of the value of the Russian Ruble, a combined loss of over 35 students compared to previous years
- (i) The 2016-17 applications are opening on the 1st of February, 3 months later than usual. That the potential impact would be a loss of over 200 applications over the course of the cycle
- (j) The new Pro-Vice-Chancellor specializes in Malaysia. Would it be possible to exploit in contacts to expand into that market

4/2016-17

Partner Reports

RECEIVED:

A report from Stratford-upon-Avon College (WarwickIFP 3/2015-16)

CONSIDERED:

- (a) That the new grading system is working well and helping staff to make accurate academic predictions. There has been an increase in Distinctions this year so far
- (b) 155 students on Business studies, representing 30 nationalities. Social Science has 35 students and represents 16 nationalities.
- (c) Diversity of the programme has helped to improve cultural understanding and integration
- (d) That the range of nationalities for the 2015/16 cohort is very diverse and refreshing
- (e) That all UCAS applications have gone smoothly, all except 1 have completed a UCAS application
- (f) 83% of Business students have applied to Warwick, 100% of Social Science have applied to Warwick. This is due to the increased integration with Warwick, such as on site lectures, and weekly visits
- (g) That students are very involved in an outreach programme helping to support the local community
- (h) That students and staff are making the most out of the Student Learner Conference
- (i) That students have received a quick turnaround of offers from the University of Warwick
- (j) That cross-partner links are developing between students via the newly established Alumni society
- (k) A mentoring scheme has been set up by current students at Warwick to assist IFP students looking at progression into Warwick

RECEIVED:

A report from Warwickshire College (WarwickIFP 4/2015-16)

REPORTED:

- (l) That there were a number of strong candidates for Oxbridge this year, however, no offers received to date
- (m) That there has been a 17% increase in the amount of students totaling 97. Especially for Maths and Economics which has seen a sizeable increase compared to the previous academic years
- (n) The ICT option is proving very popular compared to economics with the Science and Engineering students
- (o) Diversity of the programme has helped to improve cultural understanding and integration
- (p) It is noticeable that Law has declined due to the lack of Hong Kong students
- (q) That cross-partner links are developing between students via the newly established Alumni society
- (r) That all UCAS applications have been submitted on time. All but one student have applied to Warwick
- (s) That the new replacement law teacher has settled in well and well received by the students and staff
- (t) That students have received a quick turnaround of offers from the University of Warwick

5/2016-17

UCAS Applications 2017-17 and Destinations 2015-16

RECEIVED:

An oral report from Mr T Such on the progress of UCAS for IFP students in the current academic year. (WarwickIFP 2/2015-16)

- (a) 1419 University applications in total, a broad range of university choices, showing an increase from the previous year
- (b) University option correlate strongly with the universities that attend the annual IFP University Fair
- (c) 295 applications have been made to Warwick. A few students have made multiple course applications to Warwick
- (d) 211 applications have been made to Manchester, across the cohort, 74% of the students have selected at least one course at Manchester
- (e) Manchester seems to be gaining more momentum than Warwick across the past 10 years in terms of University applications

RECEIVED:

A draft destination report regarding IFP 15/16 students and their destinations for 16/17 (WarwickIFP 2/2015-16)

- (f) Over the past 10 years the IFP has had strong acceptance rates among top 10 institutions
- (g) Historically, Warwick has enrolled 39% of the students that have passed through the Warwick IFP, the next best is Manchester who takes 23% of the total cohort

- (h) On Average, Warwick will see 70-80 students continuing their studies at undergraduate level each year. Manchester will see 50 IFP students per year on average progressing into undergraduate studies
- (i) Lancaster is proving to be a popular choice among the IFP Business Studies students. Currently ranking 3rd most popular progression route. Durham has also seen a rise in IFP interest over the past few years
- (j) Lancaster and Manchester offers are more flexible on their entry requirements compared to Warwick. Meaning students have a strong change of entering the institutions as an insurance option
- (k) The University of Warwick is losing out to top institutions on the engineering front, despite the progression scholarship offered by Warwick

6/2016-17 Tender Process

REPORTED:

- (a) That a Tender Process, in adherence to European Procurement Regulations, was conducted in July 2015
- (b) That, following the procurement process, the University of Warwick intends to contract exclusively with Warwickshire College Group for the delivery of the Warwick IFP from the 2016/17 academic year until the end of the 2020/21 academic year

CONSIDERED:

- (c) That, whilst the details of the tender outcome could not be discussed within the Board of Studies, a great deal of interest was expressed in the contract and a number of strong submissions were received
- (d) That, a legal challenge was received by a submitting party following the tender exercise which has since been resolved mutually by both parties
- (e) That there was lots of strong interest and competition for the tender
- (f) That from the end of the current academic year, Stratford-upon-Avon College would cease operation of the Warwick IFP
- (g) That, despite the transfer of all operations to Warwickshire College Group, the University would like to thank Stratford-upon-Avon College for their support in the delivery of the IFP (and formerly the HEFP) over many years

RESOLVED:

- (h) That the University and Stratford-upon-Avon College would meet in due course to discuss other potential collaborative opportunities

7/2016-17 UCAS Applications 2016-17 and Destinations 2015-16

TO CONSIDER:

The proposed examination and assessment moderation timetable for the current academic year

- (a) That the IFP Board of Studies to be moved to the 8th of July
- (b) The exam boards to be held the same week of the 8th of July
- (c) A new timetable will be circulated, outlining the agreed dates for the Board of studies and examination timetable.

8/2016-17 Any other Business

TO CONSIDER:

- (a) Whether the introduction of the new IELTS for UKVI suggests that we should offer students both the regular IELTS and the IELTS for the UKVI, or whether IELTS should not be included in the course fee

RESOVLED:

- (b) That the IFP team will ask students on their views and opinions of paying a fee for taking the IELTS for UKVI
- (c) That further research into alternative options to take place with the view of establishing a fair compromise for the students that will need an IELTS to progress