

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 27 July 2015

- Present: Professor Sir Nigel Thrift (Vice-Chancellor and President (Chair)), Professor T Jones (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Science, Engineering and Medicine)), Professor P Winstanley (Chair of the Faculty of Medicine).
- Apologies: Professor R Ball (Chair of the Faculty of Science), Professor A Coats (Academic Vice-President (Monash-Warwick Alliance)), Professor S Croft (Provost), Professor M Freely (Chair of the Faculty of Arts), Professor Christina Hughes (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)), Professor Christopher Hughes (Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences), Professor J Palmowski (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education)), Professor S Swain (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Social Sciences)), Professor M Taylor (Dean of the Warwick Business School), Professor P Thomas (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (People and Public Engagement)), Ms C Turhan (President of the Students' Union), Professor L Young (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning and Resources)).
- In Attendance: Ms C Ahearne (Executive Officer to the Vice-Chancellor), Ms J Horsburgh (Deputy Registrar), Dr E Hough (Assistant Registrar, Governance (Assistant Secretary)), Mr I Rowley (Director of Development, Communication and External Affairs), Mrs Y Salter-Wright (Director of Delivery Assurance, for items 387/14-15 and 388/14-15), Mr K Sloan (Registrar and Chief Operating Officer (Secretary)).

375/14-15 Apologies and Conflicts of Interest

376/14-15 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the open and restricted minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 13 July 2015 be approved.

377/14-15 Professor Simon Swain elected as British Academy Fellow

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That Professor Simon Swain had been elected as a Fellow of the British Academy, in recognition of his outstanding research.

RESOLVED:

That the congratulations of the Steering Committee be extended to Professor Swain.

378/14-15 Summer Degree Congregation

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That more than 4500 students had been awarded their degrees during last week's highly successful degree congregations.
- (b) That the ceremonies had also recognized distinguished honorary graduates from a wide range of areas, as well as the winners of the Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence and the Outstanding Student Contribution Awards.

RESOLVED:

That the thanks of the Steering Committee be extended to all the staff who had contributed to the smooth running of the events and to Opera Warwick who had entertained guests at the celebratory dinner held on the Thursday evening.

379/14-15 New Lay Members Appointed to the Council

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That Dr Neil Bentley and Dr Deborah Keith had been appointed as lay members to the Council, from August 2015.
- (b) That Dr Bentley was CEO of OUTstanding, Head of Board Practice for the search firm Audeliss and a former deputy of the CBI.
- (c) That Dr Keith had over 30 years of experience in the science and technology sector, most recently in corporate research and development with Syngenta.

380/14-15 Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya: Freedom of the City of Coventry

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That Coventry City Council has agreed to make Professor Lord Kumar Bhattacharyya and Mr Ratan Tata free people of the city, noting that this award was the highest honour a city council could award an individual.

RESOLVED:

That the congratulations of the Steering Committee be extended to Lord Bhattacharyya and Mr Tata.

381/14-15 Economics First Pre-University Summer Schools in India

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That colleagues from the Department of Economics had recently returned from India after delivering the first pre-University Summer School in Economics and Finance, aimed primarily at 16-17 year olds.
- (b) That this new and exciting initiative had been hosted by the prestigious British School in New Delhi, with whom Warwick's Department of Economics had partnered to develop and deliver the venture.

382/14-15 Warwick SU Environmental Award

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That the Students' Union had achieved an NUS Green Impact Gold award for the 6th year in a row.

RESOLVED:

That the congratulations of the Steering Committee be extended to the Students' Union on this achievement.

383/14-15 Staff Summer Festival

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That the staff summer festival would take place on Wednesday 26 August from 1pm-9pm in the new central plaza/piazza area, featuring live music, a craft market, sports and games, a food market, and an open air cinema, and that as many colleagues as possible be encouraged to attend, noting the need to ensure the campus remained operational.

384/14-15 Staff Showcase

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That the next Staff Showcase, hosted by Warwick Conferences, would take place on 11 August, with an opportunity to explore their facilities, hear about their event management services and sample their new buffets.

385/14-15 Institute for Fiscal Studies: Review of the Budget

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the Institute for Fiscal Studies has released a report, analysing the higher education funding reforms announced in the recent Budget.
- (b) That the report suggested that the replacement of maintenance grants with loans would not lead to significant savings in the long-term, noting that it had also suggested that this would have a negative impact on the accessibility of higher education for those from lower income backgrounds.

386/14-15 Universities UK

REPORTED (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That Universities UK's 'Universities for Europe' campaign was being launched that day, noting that this focused on setting out why membership of the European Union made the UK's outstanding universities stronger – contributing to economic growth, graduate employability and cutting-edge research discoveries.

387/14-15 Student Complaints Resolution Framework

CONSIDERED:

A paper summarising progress on implementation of the Student Complaints Resolution Pathway, further to consideration at the meeting of the Senate held on 29 June 2015 (SC.177/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Delivery Assurance)

- (a) That at its meeting on 29 June 2015, the Senate had given support to the refinements proposed to the Student Complaints Resolution Framework, as set out in Appendix D to the paper.
- (b) That the Board of the Faculty of Arts had been given a further opportunity to provide feedback on the proposals.

- (c) That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts had, on the Board's behalf, requested that further consideration be given to the indicative timescales for internal processes and in particular of 30 days for a Stage 2 departmental response to a complaint.
- (d) That the Pathway was still in the early stages of implementation, noting that some flexibility in timescales was already present in the procedure.
- (e) That in light of the above, and the continuing development of best practice guidance from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator, it was not recommended that the timescales be amended.
- (f) That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts had, on the Board's behalf, requested that further guidance be provided around Stage 1 outcomes, including ensuring that the student knew the process by which he/she could escalate the complaint if they felt it had not been sufficiently resolved.
- (g) That further engagement of local, departmental colleagues in the process would aid in the development of relevant and useful advice and guidance.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (h) That it would be important to carefully monitor the implementation of the Procedure, in order to capture data on timescales and indications of where the 30 University working day indicative time period might be expected to require extension.
- (i) That in instances where Stage 2 of the Procedure did extend beyond 30 University working days, that the reasons for this be recorded.
- (j) That it was important to ensure that the flexibility inherent in the Procedure was clearly communicated to both staff and students.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposals for the Student Complaints Resolution Procedure as set out in paper SC.177/14-15 and S.65/14-15 be approved on behalf of the Senate.
- (b) That the Director of Delivery Assurance give consideration be given to appropriate mechanisms for monitoring, capturing and reporting data on complaints under the Student Complaints Resolution Procedure.

388/14-15

Student Discipline Framework Review Proposals

CONSIDERED:

A paper detailing proposed revisions to Regulations 23, 27 and 36 and providing an update on, and proposals associated with, a review of the Student Discipline Framework (SC.178/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Delivery Assurance)

- (a) That at its meeting on 29 June 2015, the Senate had given support to the proposals and regulatory revisions, noting however, that it had resolved to give the Board of the Faculty of Arts a further opportunity to provide feedback.

- (b) That much of the feedback received from the Board of the Faculty of Arts and from the Students' Union following the meeting of the Senate, concerned the practical application of the regulations and the dissemination of related support, advice and guidance to key stakeholders, particularly students.
- (c) That it was recognised that further work was still needed with regard to point (b) above, noting that the Students' Union role was critical here.
- (d) That the Delivery Assurance and Resolution Service would therefore continue the constructive dialogue with the Students' Union on the implementation of the Student Disciplinary Framework over the summer, noting also that the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts had highlighted that ongoing liaison with the Students' Union was particularly important.
- (e) That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts had, on behalf of the Board, suggested that more detail be given in Regulation 27 regarding the specific tariffs, noting however that this level of detail would not normally be provided within the Regulations.
- (f) That it was therefore not recommended that more specific detail be included in Regulation 27 regarding the specific tariffs, noting however that these would be presented to the Committee for consideration and approval at a subsequent meeting.
- (g) That further coordination and consultation would continue with those who support the wellbeing of students, to enhance the clarity and transparency of both protocols and the guidance provided to students, staff and members of the Residential Life Team.
- (h) That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts had, on behalf of the Board, proposed that the senior member of staff for Student Support Services and the Head of University Security be removed from the list of authorised officers under Regulation 23 section 6.1.1 minor offences, noting that for the reasons articulated in the paper to the Committee, this amendment was not recommended.
- (i) That at the meeting of the Senate on 29 June 2015 there had been discussion around the designation of authorising officers (those who could, in the first instance, deal with minor disciplinary offences under section 6 of Regulation 23).
- (j) That in naming the authorised officers, the recent amendments to Regulation 23 had only served to enhance the transparency around what was already within the scope of the Regulation.
- (k) That students had the right to appeal against the decision of an authorized officer, and/or the penalty imposed, noting that further training and guidance would be developed for those who can take action as authorized officers.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (l) That it was important for authorized officers to have the same level of authority in enforcing Regulations, as those reporting to them, noting that this had been in practice for many years, within the context of both student support and residential life as well as security services.

- (m) That the important separation of duties where appropriate, in terms of those responsible for investigating an incident, and those responsible for making a determination (and any relevant mitigation and penalty), would be retained within the implementation of the revised Student Discipline Framework.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Medicine)

- (n) That it may be pertinent to reconsider aspects of the Student Discipline Framework, once the findings of the Government's recently announced consultation on legal highs are released.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposed revisions to the Student Disciplinary Framework as set out in paper SC.178/14-15 and S.81/14-15 (revised) be approved on behalf of the Senate, including amendments to the following University Regulations and policies/protocols with effect from the start of the Autumn Term 2015:
- (i) University's Policy on Illegal Drugs
 - (ii) Regulation 23 on Student Disciplinary Offences
 - (iii) Regulation 27 on On Campus Residential Accommodation
 - (iv) Regulation 36 Governing Student Registration, Attendance and Progress
 - (v) University Fitness to Study protocol.
- (b) That consultation be undertaken over the summer in establishing a Statement of Expected Behaviour for students, with a view to it being brought to the Autumn Term 2015 meeting of the Senate for consideration and approval.

389/14-15 *Reductions to Grants for 2014-15 and 2015-16

CONSIDERED:

A paper informing the Committee of the savings measures adopted by HEFCE and information on the Student Finance Package for 2016/17 (SC.182/14-15 {restricted}).

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the report (SC.182/14-15 {restricted}) be noted.

390/14-15 UCEA Response to the Migration Advisory Committee Call for Evidence: Review of Tier 2

RECEIVED:

A letter from the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA), informing members that the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) was now undertaking a wider review of Tier 2 with a view to making recommendations about significantly reducing economic migration to the UK (SC.178/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (a) That the most significant potential recommendation concerned minimum salary thresholds for Tier 2 employees, noting that if imposed, it was estimated that a substantial proportion of academic and research staff at Warwick could be affected.

- (b) That the proposed changes to the thresholds would have a detrimental impact on the institution's ability to recruit international academic talent.
- (c) That the Director of Human Resources had been asked to coordinate the University response, to be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee by the deadline.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That members of the Committee be encouraged to raise awareness of the issues within their professional networks.
- (b) That data on the potential impact of the recommendations, along with case studies on staff who would have been affected by the proposals, had they been in place at the time of their recruitment, be brought to the Committee for consideration with the institutional response.

391/14-15 Invitation to Comment on Future Changes to the UK Performance Indicators

RECEIVED:

An invitation to comment on future changes to the UK Performance Indicators (www.hefce.ac.uk/data/pi/). All UK providers of HE are being asked by their relevant funding body to submit any feedback that they may have about these proposals before **noon on Friday 18 September 2015**. The Director of Strategic Planning and Analytics has been invited to consider the consultation and bring forward a response to the Steering Committee consideration.

392/14-15 New Meningitis ACWY Immunisation Programme

RECEIVED:

Information on the University's response to notification from Public Health England, UUK and the NHS, that the former 'MenC' vaccination was being replaced by a new Meningococcal ACWY (MenACWY) vaccination. The University Health Centre expects to be able to offer the vaccine to new students from 1 August 2015 and information about the programme has been sent to the Induction team to ensure the messages are relayed to prospective students.