

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Open Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 4 December 2017

- Present: R Drinkwater (Group Finance Director and Chair), Professor A Clarke (Chair of the Faculty of Medicine), Professor C Constable (Representative of the Senate), Professor S Gilson (Chair of the Faculty of the Arts), Professor C Hughes (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education)), Professor J Palmowski (Academic Vice-President), R Sandby-Thomas (Registrar), H Worsdale (President of the Students' Union).
- Apologies: Professor S Croft (Vice-Chancellor), Professor C Ennew (Provost), Professor M Nudds (Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences), Professor M Shipman (Chair of the Faculty of the Sciences), Professor S Swain (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (External Engagement)), Professor P Thomas (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research)), Professor L Young (Academic Vice-President).
- In Attendance: M Bobe (Head of Enterprise and Innovation Programmes) (for minute 89/17-18), J Breckon (Director of Estates), K Dixon (Administrative Officer (Governance)) (Assistant Secretary), T Donnelly (Organisation Development Director) (for minute 94/17-18), L McCarthy (Head of Governance), G McGrattan (Director, People Group), J Phillips (Director of Health and Safety) (for minutes 91/17-18 and 92/17-18), R Roke (Director of Strategic Programme Delivery) (Secretary), I Rowley (Director of Development, Communication and External Affairs), R Wooldridge Smith (Acting Academic Registrar).

Note: Some items are noted as "Exempt information not included" as they contain information that would be withheld from release to the public because an exemption under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 applies.

81/17-18 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the open and restricted minutes of the meeting held on 20 November 2017 be approved, subject to the following amendments:

[Additions double underlined, deletions double ~~struck through~~]

60/17-18 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the open and restricted minutes of the meeting held on 6 November 2017 be approved, subject to the following amendments:

[Additions underlined, deletions ~~struck through~~]

50/17-18 *Report from the Academic Resourcing Committee

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Academic Resourcing Committee (SC.18/17-18) {restricted}.

(by the Acting Academic Registrar)

- (d) That budget setting this year aimed to produce ~~reduce target~~ gross departmental margins and that work was underway in liaison with Finance to establish indicative targets for monitoring this.

51/17-18 *Report from the Capital, Space and Amenities Group

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Capital, Space and Amenities Group (SC.19/17-18) {restricted}.

[...]

(by the Group Finance Director)

[Exempt information not included]

71/17-18 *League Table Results

CONSIDERED:

A presentation on league table results (SC.29/17-18) {restricted}.

[...]

(by the Group Finance Director)

[Exempt information not included]

82/17-18 Conflicts of Interest

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That, should any members or attendees of the Steering Committee have any conflicts of interest relating to agenda items for the meeting, they should be declared in accordance with the Committee of University Chairs (CUC) Higher Education Code of Governance (2014).

NOTE: No declarations were made.

83/17-18 In memoriam: John Shanahan

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (a) That the University was deeply saddened by the news that John Shanahan, Waste & Recycling Assistant, passed away peacefully on Monday 20 November after a period of illness.
- (b) That John had been a member of the Waste & Recycling Team since March 2004 and during this time made an outstanding contribution to the team, the wider Estates Office and the University; John was always held in very high regard for his hard work and helpful attitude, quickly gaining the respect of everyone with whom he came into contact.

84/17-18 Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Europe) Appointed

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That Professor Seán Hand had been appointed as Deputy Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Europe) with effect from Friday 1 December 2017; it was noted that he would be working closely with Professor Stuart Croft and Professor Simon Swain to extend and deepen the University's relationships with European university partners, and to pursue opportunities for funding, student mobility, and European research and teaching collaboration.

85/17-18 New Development Director

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

That Matt Ferguson had been announced as the new Development Director and would join the University at the start of the new year; it was noted that Matt had previously worked as Chief Development Officer for King's College London and was regarded as one of the most successful principal gifts fundraisers in UK higher education, having individually raised £50m during his time at KCL.

86/17-18 National Battery Manufacturing Development Facility

REPORTED: (by the Chair)

- (a) That a partnership between WMG, Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and Coventry City Council had been awarded £80m to establish a new National Battery Manufacturing Development Facility.
- (b) That the new national facility would be established in the Coventry and Warwickshire area and would enable UK-based companies and researchers to come together to build and maintain a world leading position in manufacturing technologies for batteries and their components in vehicles and transportation.
- (c) That the funding would not flow through the University's main accounts as the award was made to a joint company comprising WMG and Coventry City Council, which would be responsible for managing the facility.

87/17-18 Membership of Senate Committees 2017/18

CONSIDERED:

A report on the proposed membership of committees of the Senate 2017/18 (SC.39/17-18).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

That the in-year membership changes were due to recent changes in academic governance structures and an increase in the number of deputy chairs for the Faculty Education Committee (Medicine) to two.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Simon Crick's job title be amended from Head of Finance to Chief Finance Officer for WMS.
- (b) That the proposed changes to membership of committees of the Senate 2017/18, as set out in SC.39/17-18, be approved.

88/17-18

Consultation on Changes to UK Quality Code

CONSIDERED:

The University's response to the consultation on the review of the UK Quality Code (SC.40/17-18) {restricted}.

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-chancellor (Education))

- (a) That a consultation on a review of the Quality Code was issued in October to invite sector feedback, further to that collected in 2016-17, on the proposal to reduce the number of expectations in the code from thirteen to four and to accompany these with: core practices demonstrating the relevant and desired outcomes; supplementary practices for enhancement and advice; and guidance developed in consultation with the sector and its stakeholders.
- (b) That the four expectations would focus on two key areas, that of the standard of awards and the quality of awards; it was noted that this was to ensure the code was more agile and responsive, and that students were the focus of the system.
- (c) That it had been a challenge to formulate the response due to the limited material provided for consultation and the tight timescale for responses.
- (d) That the lack of detail provided may be construed as ambiguity surrounding the key points of the consultation and that this had been highlighted in the response, in addition to the challenge it posed to submitting robust and constructive feedback.
- (e) That there was concern over the minimal reference to access and widening participation in the consultation, and also over how student engagement would be reflected in the revised code.
- (f) That the University's draft response had noted a general shift in tone, to a more transactional view of Higher Education, and one which was increasingly outcome-orientated.
- (g) That the response had aimed to focus on areas that were key values of the University, including the importance of externality and of institutional autonomy.

(by the Senate Representative)

- (h) That the principle of a streamlined code was a positive one, but that the need for greater context in some areas was an issue that could usefully be emphasised in the response.

- (i) That, for question ten, the response could combine the sections on the suggestion of guidance and case studies with the subsequent point of such guidance following the student life cycle.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (j) That a lack of dialogue surrounding quality and enhancement was a concern that should be highlighted in the response.
- (k) That the response could usefully note that a chapter-by-chapter approach had been useful in the current format of the code, as it informed a process of sequential review.
- (l) That the rapid turn-around time for the Quality Code consultation was likely to be an endeavour to influence the current consultation regarding the Office for Students, which had a submission deadline of 22 December.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Medicine)

- (m) That consideration should be given to the University's strategic view regarding the future role of the QAA (in the context of the QAA consultation influencing the OfS consultation) and how this is reflected when responding to the consultation.

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (n) That the University be commended for emphasising in its response that meaningful student engagement was key to the development of the code but that taking a transactional view of Higher Education was cause for concern.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft consultation response be approved, subject to the amendments above.
- (b) That it be approved that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education) be permitted to approve any final amendments to the response prior to submission, on behalf of the Steering Committee.

89/17-18

HE-BCI Survey 2016-17

CONSIDERED:

The University's response to the HE-BCI Survey 2016-17 (SC.41/17-18) {restricted}.

REPORTED: (by the Head of Enterprise and Innovation Programmes)

- (a) That the HE-BCI survey, managed by HESA, was a statutory requirement for reporting the University's strategy and data on its third stream activities; it was noted that the HEFCE makes this information publically available.
- (b) That Part A of the survey would inform the narrative surrounding the Knowledge Exchange Framework and this had been taken into consideration when formulating the response.
- (c) That question eleven would require amending to indicate that there were 26 members of Council, not 25, as indicated on the survey.

(by the Director of Development, Communication and External Affairs)

- (d) That, for question six, it would be more appropriate to respond that the University 'has a strategic plan developed and implemented as a result of an inclusive process across the whole Higher Education Provider'; it was noted that it would be beneficial to show the progress made in this area.

(by the Chair)

- (e) That the reference to the attainment of the Race Equality Charter Mark would require removing.
- (f) That the data provided in Part B, Table 2 (Business and Community Services) had three instances of last year's data being restated due to further clarification having been issued regarding these areas; it was noted that more recent figures could potentially be higher and therefore would be reviewed and included as appropriate. [Revised at the meeting on 18 December 2017].
- (g) That examples of how employers are actively involved in the development of content and regular review of the curriculum included WMG, WBS and other departmental Advisory Boards with external participation.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University's response to the HE-BCI Survey 2016-17 as set out in (SC.41/17-18) {restricted} be approved, subject to the amendments above.
- (b) That it be approved that the Group Finance Director be permitted to approve any final amendments to Part B of the survey prior to submission, on behalf of the Steering Committee.

90/17-18

*Report from the Administrative and Professional Services Group

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Administrative and Professional Services Group (SC.42/17-18) {restricted}.

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

[Exempt information not included]

- (b) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellors had become members of the Group at the start of the academic year; it was noted that this was a positive move to increase the transparency of the Group.

[Exempt information not included]

RESOLVED:

That the report from the Administrative and Professional Services Group (SC.42/17-18) {restricted} be noted.

CONSIDERED:

An update on Health and Safety for the period May – October 2017 (SC.43/17-18, {restricted}).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (a) That positive progress had been made since the last update provided to the Committee, with the overall risk status moving towards amber and away from red; it was noted that the Audit and Risk Committee had agreed that the status should remain as red whilst work was still progressing.
- (b) That a further external audit was planned for the end of January 2018, which if successful, would further progress the overall risk status towards amber.
- (c) That a scoring system was used to identify high risk departments, which would then be focused on to ensure that Health and Safety mechanisms were working effectively locally as well as centrally; it was noted that the seven identified departments would all need to move from red to amber to bring the overall risk rating down.
- (d) That the QuEMIS module completion rate was at 93%; it was noted that the target of 100% completion was, in retrospect, over-ambitious due to the consistent state of flux, with 95 – 100% completion rate proposed as a more sensible target.
- (e) That fire safety remained a high priority: specifically, improving fire arrangements, awareness of fire safety, ensuring fire door mechanisms were functioning correctly and that fire drills were routine practice in departments.
- (f) That there had been an increase in non-emergency visits from the fire services after the Grenfell Tower disaster; it was noted that these visits had not highlighted any areas for concern.
- (g) That Trade Unions had emphasised that workplace stress risk assessments were a key concern and that the University Health and Safety Executive Committee had reprioritised the issue accordingly.
- (h) That whilst there had been an increase in reportable Health and Safety incidents since last year, no repeating trends or specific areas for concern had been identified.
- (i) That there was currently one notice from the Environment Agency in place, relating to the request to rescind the licence for historic use of radiation sources at Wellesbourne; this being a matter of routine for such activities and not therefore a cause for concern.
- (j) That progress had been made in conjunction with Estates on work equipment and assets management; it was noted that there was a QuEMIS module that linked to a plan preventative system, which once populated, would be rolled out.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the execution of an external Health and Safety audit be approved.
- (b) That the roll-out of internal audits by the Health and Safety Department, commencing December 2017, be approved.

92/17-18

*Health and Safety Policy Annual Review

CONSIDERED:

The University's Health and Safety Policy for review (SC.44/17-18) {restricted}.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Health and Safety)

- (a) That the revisions to the policy included: minor amendments to simplify the language used; the addition of explicit reference to the University's framework for setting health and safety objectives, at the request of the British Standards Institute; and additional clarification of the organisational chart and that Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Faculty Board Chairs were considered to have 'lines of influence' as opposed to performing a line management function.
- (b) That the Health and Safety department was working alongside Wellbeing and Support Services on the commonalities between addressing stress and wider issues of wellbeing in the workplace; it was noted that Occupational Health would also be increasingly involved in responding to this agenda in the future.
- (c) That there were a number of policies that determined appropriate management systems that were awaiting final approval prior to being rolled out across the University.

(by the Director of Estates)

- (d) That a significant amount of work had been undertaken by Estates and the Health and Safety department to clarify how to identify key risks and to subsequently manage and/or mitigate them; it was noted that the University's risk profile would be informed by the next audit.
- (e) That there had been a number of instances where departments had taken on Estates-related activities themselves to progress them more rapidly, but that this increased levels of risk; departments were being urged to discuss any issues of concern with Estates prior to undertaking such activity so it could be managed safely through the appropriate channels.
- (f) That the importance of progressing from a red to amber risk status be reiterated.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed revisions to the University's Health and Safety Policy for review (SC.44/17-18) {restricted} be approved.

Equality and Diversity Update

CONSIDERED:

An update on Equality and Diversity (SC.45/17-18)

REPORTED: (by the Director, People Group)

- (a) That key achievements since the last update provided to the Committee included: the establishment of the Gender Task Force, which was designed to add more context to discussions surrounding gender issues in the workplace; the submission for the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, which aimed to sustain the improvements the University had achieved since last year; and that the department of Sociology had achieved Bronze Athena SWAN status in April.
- (b) That the University was continuing its work towards an appropriate resubmission deadline for the Race Equality Charter Mark; it was noted that the ECU was setting increasingly high standards for those institutions attempting to attain RECM status.
- (c) That it was important to retain momentum around gender and race equality submissions; the importance of not allowing the recent RECM decision to negatively impact the work required on other Charter Marks was noted.
- (d) That a period of frustration was frequently experienced when standards were raised by an awarding body but where the pace of sector or institutional progress did not match requirements to meet the new level of expectation; it was noted that this was common to the majority of institutions and was not an issue exclusive to Warwick.
- (e) That there was a need for further work on academic career management and progression as the diversity of applicants and postholders declined throughout the academic career pipeline; it was noted that promoting the values and benefits of working for the University was a key element of ensuring a diverse range of applicants.
- (f) That whilst equal pay reporting was positive, gender pay reporting had been highlighted as an issue of concern, with 68% of those in the lowest pay quartile being female, and 64% of those in the upper quartile of pay being male.

(by the Registrar)

- (g) That the Estates department employed a significant number of individuals in the lowest pay quartile, and that a large percentage of these employees were female, which thereby impacted gender pay reporting; it was noted that other institutions had outsourced such services, which negated the impact of gender pay reporting, but that it was not a solution that the University would, or should, wish to pursue.

RESOLVED:

That the update on Equality and Diversity (SC.45/17-18) be noted.

CONSIDERED:

The Pulse Staff Engagement Survey Update November 2017 (SC.46/17-18) {restricted}.

REPORTED: (by the Organisation Development Director)

- (a) That the Pulse Survey held in 2015-16 had been very comprehensive and therefore it had taken six months to evaluate and action the feedback fully, which staff had highlighted as a negative aspect of how the Survey had been conducted; it had subsequently been decided to redesign the Survey as a shorter, more frequent method of evaluating staff engagement, thereby allowing it to be more responsive and current.
- (b) That the Survey had been condensed to twenty questions, which focused on: employee engagement; senior leadership and strategic narrative; and progress against Warwick's five priority institutional themes that were established as a result of the 2015-16 Survey.
- (c) That there were additional questions regarding line management, communication, and change management, it being noted that recent research had identified a link between institutions that achieved TEF gold status and those which rated highly in terms of staff ability to 'speak up and challenge'.
- (d) That the selection of questions included in the Survey had been based on the four pillars of employee engagement, as proposed within the 'Engage for Success Report' and research by ORC, the survey provider.
- (e) That post-Survey, departments would be asked to develop a brief action plan focusing on 2-3 key priorities based on feedback received.
- (f) That further research would be undertaken in conjunction with the Communications team to aid the development of a wider institutional action plan.
- (g) That, this year, the Survey will be compatible with multiple devices to make it easier to engage with and subsequently increase the response rate.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Medicine)

- (h) That there was a concern that the PDR process could be perceived as being systematically downgraded and its importance reduced, with the more concise survey predominantly focusing on other aspects of working for the University.

(by the Director, People Group)

- (i) That there had been no change to the status of the PDR, which had always been recommended and expected rather than mandatory; it was noted that the PDR was recommended and largely expected, with some areas of the University electing to make it mandatory.

- (j) That it had been decided to decouple merit pay from the PDR process, to assuage the belief that the PDR was simply a mechanism by which to access merit pay, rather than as a career development tool.
- (k) It was noted that departments that did not actively and positively promote PDR completion saw lower completion rates, which was an issue that required addressing.

(by the Director of Communication, Development and External Affairs)

- (l) That it be noted that the majority of employees completing the survey may predominantly be interested in evidence that feedback is being listened to locally within departments, as well as centrally; it was recommended that departments therefore be encouraged to consider their response to previous survey feedback.

RESOLVED:

That the Pulse Staff Engagement Survey Update November 2017 (SC.46/17-18) {restricted} be noted.

As at 18 August 2018