

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 9 February 2009

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor S Bassnett (except item 327/08-09),
Professor L Bridges,
Professor S Bruzzi (from item 335/08-09),
Professor K Lamberts,
Professor M Smith (except item 327/08-09),
Professor H Thomas,
Mr S Thomson,
Professor M Underwood,

Apologies: Professor R Lindley, Professor R Higgott, Professor M Whitby

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of Estates, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Acting Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office), Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer (Governance), Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (for items 335/08-09 and 336/08-09)

326/08-09 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2009 be approved.

327/08-09 Appointment of Senate Representatives on the Committee on the Appointment of Pro-Vice-Chancellors

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

That following the new arrangements formally approved by the Council in October 2008, the Committee for the Appointment of Pro-Vice-Chancellors would include three members of the Senate and one lay member of Council, noting that Trudi Elliott was the potential lay member of Council on the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of the following Senate representatives to the Committee for the Appointment of Pro-Vice-Chancellors be approved by the Steering Committee on behalf of the Senate:

Professor P Mack (English and Comparative Literary Studies)
Professor J Seville (Engineering)
Professor C Hughes (Sociology)

328/08-09 Queen's Anniversary Prizes (minute 38/08-09 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper presenting recent winners of the Queen's Anniversary Prizes for Higher and Further Education to inform the University's consideration as to what areas it might choose to submit for the 2009 awards (SC.232/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

(a) That a number of potential project submissions had been received including the Warwick Commission and Warwick In Africa, noting that any additional bids should be

sent to him directly with the preferred submission being reported to the Steering Committee at its next meeting.

(By the Vice-Chancellor)

- (b) That the University's previous submissions on Student Volunteers for Local Community and National Catalyst for Developing Opportunities for Gifted and Talented Learners had been unsuccessful and that any submission made this year should be focussed on an area where it was likely to win.

329/08-09 Effectiveness Review of Non-Departmental University Governance (minute 313/08-09 refers)

RECEIVED:

A paper detailing the proposed members of the Group on Devolved Departments as commissioned by the Council at its meeting of 11 December 2008 (SC.238/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the Vice-Chancellor had approved on behalf of the Committee the appointment of Professor Crouch (Warwick Business School) and Dr Astbury (French Studies) to the Effectiveness Review Consultative Group (ERCG) for the Review of Non-Departmental University Governance as second representatives for the Faculties of Social Studies and Arts respectively.
- (b) That the Terms of Reference for the Review Group on Devolved Departments would be proposed to FGPC at its next meeting to consider and approve on behalf of the Council.

330/08-09 HEFCE Economic Challenge Investment Fund (minute 314/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That a number of proposals for projects to submit to HEFCE under the new Economic Challenge Investment Fund (ECIF) had been received and that these would be considered by himself or his nominee, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine) with a view to finalising the chosen submission in the coming days.

(By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine))

- (b) That it was clear from discussion at a recent HEFCE workshop that HEFCE wanted concrete proposals with regards to employment and resource projection, noting that it was hoped that allocations be spent by the end of the financial year.

331/08-09 Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence 2008/09

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That nominations of the 2008/09 Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence were open, noting that all staff who taught or supported student learning at Warwick were eligible for nomination by the deadline of 20 February 2009.
- (b) That the winners would receive an award of £5000 and commendees would receive £2000 towards their teaching area.

332/08-09 Research Hotel

REPORTED: (By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine))

- (a) That a scoping study had been commissioned for the Research Hotel project and that of the 21 tenders received, six consultancies had been short listed with interviews taking place later today.

- (b) That the findings of the study would be reported to Advantage West Midlands by 16 April 2009.

333/08-09 QinetiQ KTP

REPORTED: (By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine))

That a knowledge transfer partnership with QinetiQ to establish new research centres within universities had been discussed previously and that a formal proposition for a scoping study had been presented to the Advantage West Midlands Board, noting that, if successful, the findings of the report would be available in 6-9 months.

334/08-09 Academic Health Science Centres

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the University of Birmingham had been short listed as one of seven institutions for potential Academic Health Science Centre (AHSC) designation, noting that the deadline for submission of the final bid was very short.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Acting Dean of Warwick Medical School take forward negotiations with the University of Birmingham with regards to Warwick's involvement in the Birmingham AHSC.

335/08-09 University Response to the Draft QAA Institutional Audit Report

CONSIDERED:

The University's response to the draft QAA Institutional Audit report, together with the draft statement for publication alongside the finalised report (SC.236/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality))

That the University's response to the QAA sought to rectify two areas of discrepancy regarding research/teaching links and E-Learning.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University response to the draft QAA Institutional Audit report be approved for submission by 13 February 2009, subject to the amendments discussed at the meeting.
- (b) That the statement for publication be considered by the Committee at a future meeting once the finalised report has been received from the QAA.

336/08-09 Policy Update: Teaching Quality

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) updating the Committee on strategic developments in matters relating to Teaching Quality (SC.237/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality))

- (a) That a significant project was underway regarding the management of joint honours and cross-departmental degree courses with Professor Karen O'Brien convening a Working Group to develop a Good Practice Guide.

- (b) That this Guide would be considered by the Quality Enhancement Working Group and AQSC in the coming weeks prior to being sent for consultation to Heads of Departments.
- (c) That there was a focus on assessment and feedback to students following examinations as part of the Teaching Quality agenda, noting that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning/International Affairs) had engaged with other Russell Group institutions establishing that all bar Oxford and Cambridge felt students were entitled to formal feedback on examinations.
- (d) That the current response rate for the National Student Survey was 21% which was an increase compared to this point last year and that Heads of Departments would be informed and updated directly of their departmental progress further in due course.
- (e) That the bid for a joint curriculum review and renewal project with King's College London had been submitted to a HEFCE sub-committee for consideration later this month.

RESOLVED:

That the report be approved as set out in SC.237/08-09, noting the Committee's wish to be kept updated regarding the potential joint project with King's College London.

337/08-09

Strategic Departmental Review Report: Warwick HRI

CONSIDERED:

The report of the findings of the Strategic Departmental Review of Warwick HRI which was held on 27 to 28 November 2008 (SC.239/08-09).

NOTE: The report was strictly confidential for members and attendees of the Steering Committee only.

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine))

- (a) That the report was an accurate and fair reflection of the findings of the Review Panel, noting that the Review took place prior to the publication of the RAE2008 results.

(By the Vice-Chancellor)

- (b) That the proposed recommendations and actions would in due course need to be considered in the context of the wider proposal to establish a School of Life Sciences.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report of the Strategic Departmental Review of Warwick HRI be approved as set out in SC.239/08-09, noting that it was confidential to members and attendees of the Steering Committee only at this stage.
- (b) That Professor Bright, Director of Warwick HRI, be invited to attend the meeting on 16 February 2009 to present the departmental response to the report.

338/08-09

Proposals for a Centre of Excellence in Workforce Strategy and Planning

RECEIVED:

A report from the King's Fund commissioned by the Department of Health outlining proposals for a Centre of Excellence in workforce strategy and planning following consultations with stakeholders (SC.231/08-09).

339/08-09 The Strategic Plan of the Association of Commonwealth Universities 2008 to 2013

RECEIVED:

A booklet from the Association of Commonwealth Universities presenting its strategic plan for 2008 to 2013 following 100 years since its establishment (SC.240/08-09).

Kms/jf/steersshare/minutes2008-09/Feb09/09Feb09