

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

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

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Professor L Bridges,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor M Smith,
Professor M Underwood
Professor M Whitby
Professor D Wilson
Mr A Bradley.

Apologies: Professor S Bruzzi, Professor R Higgott, Professor C Hughes, Professor K Lamberts

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer (Governance), Professor S B Palmer (from item 81/09-10), Director of the International Office (for items 86/09-10 and 87/09-10).

78/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

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

79/09-10 HEFCE Letter: WPSA Feedback and Outcomes (minute 729/08-09 refers)

RECEIVED:

A letter from HEFCE providing initial feedback on the University's Widening Participation Strategic Assessment submitted in June 2009 as well as the broader sector-wide outcomes of the process (SC.60/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Resourcing))

That HEFCE would circulate further guidance in November 2009 for institutions outlining its requirements for a report on progress against the strategic assessments.

80/09-10 Government Higher Education Framework (minute 64/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

The executive summary of the Government's new Higher Education Framework published on 4 November 2009 (SC.64/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the implementation of a numbers of the recommendations could lead to further "micro-management" of universities.

(By the Vice-Chancellor)

- (b) That the proposed contestable funding for programmes with 'high employment rates' was problematic and that it was anticipated that the impact on general HEFCE funding of this proposal would be announced shortly so as to effect change in this year's funding allocations.

81/09-10

Group of 13 (minute 834/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Resourcing))

- (a) That he and the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment had attending the recent meeting of the Group of 13 held on 4 and 5 November 2009.
- (b) That the majority of institutions in the Group were forcibly supportive of implementing reduced offers for students from underrepresented groups in return for taking an additional module at A-Level, noting that Warwick was not in agreement with this approach which could act as a disincentive to securing the highest possible achievement at A-Level.
- (c) That continued engagement with the 'Realising Opportunities Project' would require investment of the University's own widening participation funds to supplement the HEFCE allocation in order to deliver the University's commitment to providing extra summer school places for years 12 and 13 pupils and offering on-line mentoring to widening participation students within the project.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That Warwick should:
 - (i) continue to monitor its engagement with the Group of 13 in light of the pressure from the majority of the Group to adopt the reduced offer approach and
 - (ii) continue to present to the Group alternative proposals which the University believed would have a greater and more appropriate impact on the widening participation agenda.
- (b) That the Vice-Chancellor contact Vice-Chancellors from other Group of 13 institutions to establish their views on the preferred approach of the Group following which the Steering Committee would consider the issue again.

82/09-10

UCEA Pay Negotiations

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That there had been no progress towards a national pay settlement when UCEA and the unions had met at ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) on 4 November 2009 and that the groups would meet again on 24 November 2009.
- (b) That some institutions had already paid the 0.5 percent pay increase to staff as proposed in the final UCEA offer but that the sector had been strongly advised by UCEA not to do so as it infringed the dispute resolution procedures.

83/09-10

Review of Higher Education Funding and Student Finance

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That a Government review of higher education funding and student finance had been announced today by Lord Mandelson.
- (b) That the review would be led by Lord Browne of Madingley with the involvement of David Eastwood, the vice-chancellor of the University of Birmingham and former head of the Higher Education Funding Council for England, and Julia King, the vice-chancellor of Aston University amongst others.

84/09-10 Conferral of Title of Emeritus Professor

RECOMMENDED: (to the Council)

That the conferral of the title of Emeritus Professor on Professor Howard Thomas, Dean of Warwick Business School, be approved, on behalf of the Senate, with effect from his departure from the University in January 2010.

85/09-10 Report on Early Student Statistics: Postgraduate and Undergraduate Enrolments

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Academic Registrar outlining the undergraduate and postgraduate enrolment position for 2009/10 at a census date of 27 October 2009 (SC.65/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

That the position was positive against projections in most student categories, noting that the financial benefit from the overshoot on undergraduate overseas students was spread across a wide range of departments.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That further work be undertaken to identify factors in the shortfall in postgraduate research recruitment and to develop an ameliorative policy if necessary.
- (b) That the financial impact of the enrolment position be considered at a future meeting of the Committee once the quarter 1 figures have been considered accordingly.

86/09-10 International Update

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of the International Office providing an overview of developments in international activities including international enrolment statistics, the International Student Barometer, exchanges and partnerships (SC.56/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of the International Office)

- (a) That the International Office together with the Student Admissions and Recruitment Office would undertake analysis to identify the causes and potential continuation of the increase in overseas student recruitment.
- (b) That the University's current and future core international partnerships continued to be considered in detail by the International Committee, noting that a consistent and common understanding of the purpose of these partnerships needed to be developed across the institution.

(By the Vice-Chancellor)

- (c) That the University should not seek to establish an optimal recruitment level for overseas students, acknowledging, however, that there might be a requirement for informal arrangements in this regard for certain departments or courses.

(By the President of the Students' Union)

- (d) That, if an increase in international students was to be pursued, further consideration should be given to the level of bursary and scholarship provision available.

87/09-10 Draft University Response to European Commission Green Paper on Mobility of Young People (minute 853/09-10 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response prepared by the Director of the International Office to the European Commission Green Paper on Mobility of Young People (SC.57/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the University response to the European Commission Green Paper on Mobility of Young People be approved for submission by 13 November 2009 as set out in SC.57/09-10, subject to the following revisions:

- (i) Rewording of the last paragraph in section 1.2 to highlight that the recent changes to Erasmus Mundus funding more adequately covered the associated administrative costs but, conversely, a reduction in the other funding streams in the scheme was evident.
- (ii) Inclusion of a section concerning the Warwick International Gateway for Gifted Youth and its facilitation of mobility at a pre-HE level as a means of encouraging mobility at university.

88/09-10 Draft University Response to European Commission Public Consultation on Innovation Policy (minute 39/09-10 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response prepared by the Director of Research Support Services to the European Commission Public Consultation on Innovation Policy (SC.58/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the University response to the European Commission Public Consultation on Innovation Policy be approved for submission by 10 November 2009 as set out in SC.58/09-10.

89/09-10 University Policy on Personal Conflicts of Interest

CONSIDERED:

The proposed University Policy on Personal Conflicts of Interest providing guidance in areas where an interest or relationship might conflict, or appear to conflict, with an individual's role at the University (SC,63/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

That the implementation of a University-wide policy regarding personal conflicts of interest would allow colleagues to navigate potentially difficult situations with greater confidence.

RESOLVED:

That the University Policy on Personal Conflicts of Interest be approved as set out in SC.636/09-10, subject to the identification of suitable alternative individuals for disclosure of personal conflicts of interest beyond the Head of Department or Director of HR.

90/09-10

BIS Review of the Delivery of the Funding Operation for 2009/10 Entrants

RECEIVED:

Information from Universities' UK regarding a Department of Business, Innovation and Skills review of the delivery of the funding operations for 2009/10 applications processing cycle, together with the University's response to the review submitted on 6 November (SC.59/09-10).

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes2009-10/Nov09/09Nov09