

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 18 January 2010

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Professor S Bruzzi (from item 254/09-10),
Professor A Caesar,
Professor R Higgott,
Professor C Hughes (from item 254/09-10),
Professor K Lamberts,
Professor M Smith,
Professor M Underwood
Professor M Whitby
Professor D Wilson
Mr A Bradley.

Apologies: Professor L Bridges

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of Estates, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Professor S B Palmer, Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment (for item 252/09-10), Chief Executive, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust (for item 259/09-10).

Note: The Reserved and Restricted business was taken at the beginning of the meeting.

246/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2010 be approved.

247/09-10 Home/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Intake Targets 2010/11 (minute 232/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the resolution of the Steering Committee to return to the 2010/11 intake targets for Home/EU full-time undergraduates to 2009/10 levels had been communicated to departments, noting the following specific arrangements:

- (i) Computer Science and Philosophy would proceed to recruit to the reduced 2010/11 levels;
- (ii) Philosophy, Politics and Economics (PPE) would retain the increased level approved in October 2009; and
- (iii) The Institute of Education's target had been revised to 10 students higher than the reduced target set in October 2009.

248/09-10 Russell Group Submission to the Independent Review of Funding and Student Finance (minute 230/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That comments from Steering Committee members submitted to the Registrar on the Russell Group response to the Independent Review of Funding and Student Finance had been forwarded to the Russell Group Chief Executive, Wendy Piatt, for consideration and these were as follows:

- (i) That the response was perhaps too detailed;

- (ii) That the last sentence of 4 in the Executive summary is quite difficult to understand on first reading;
- (iii) That under 7 'partially' might be added in front of 'redress';
- (iv) That on page 33: in table 1 the third column has FTE going over two lines which looked clumsy;
- (v) That on page 39: third bullet point on the case study should be Nottingham Trent rather than Nottingham on Trent.

249/09-10 Opening of the New Students' Union Building

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record its thanks to all students and staff involved in the successful opening of the new Students' Union building on 15 January 2010.

250/09-10 Warwick Life Sciences Strategy Group

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Professor Mark Smith, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine), had been appointed Chair the Warwick Life Sciences Strategy Group (WLSSG), which would build on the work of colleagues within the faculties of Science and Medicine and would bring forward an overarching strategy for Warwick Life Sciences in the short, medium and long term.

251/09-10 Death of Student in Haiti Earthquake

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That Xiomng Li, a student on the MA in Politics and International Studies from 2008/09 due to graduate in absentia at the Winter Degree Ceremonies to be held on 21 January 2010, had been working as one of the Chinese peacekeepers in Haiti and had been killed in recent earthquake.
- (b) That, generally, colleagues had begun to voice proposals regarding how the University might mark this tragic event, including using the forthcoming One World Week international student festival on campus.

252/09-10 Admissions and Recruitment Update

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment providing an overview of developments in admissions, recruitment and widening participation (SC.180/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment)

- (a) The number of undergraduate home/EU applications to Warwick was slightly lower than last year, noting that the decline in volume had not affected the quality of applicants.
- (b) That departments with significant reductions in undergraduate application numbers were being closely monitored.
- (c) That the national picture would be known by mid-late February 2010 once the UCAS data was released.

(By the Academic Registrar)

- (d) That the changes in offer levels might have deterred some applicants, noting that this appeared to be acting in the University's favour by increasing the quality of applicants.

(By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience))

- (e) That a reduction of applicants due to the higher offer levels might be a result of schools discouraging students to apply to Warwick as had been seen with Oxbridge and that the University should take steps to ensure that this was minimized.

RESOLVED:

That the University monitor the effect of increased offer levels on widening participation and outreach targets.

253/09-10

Annual TRAC Return and Full Economic Costing Charge Out Rates

CONSIDERED:

The University's annual Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) return to HEFCE for 2008/09 and the Full Economic Costing (FEC) recovery rates that would be applied to Research Council grant applications for the year commencing 1 February 2010 (SC.181/09-10).

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

- (a) That the University's TRAC return and checklist of key risks had been rigorously reviewed by the TRAC Steering Group at its previous two meetings.

(By the Finance Director)

- (b) That a small surplus of £1.3m had been converted into a TRAC deficit of £33.8m once the infrastructure and 'Return for Financing and Investment' adjustments had been applied.
- (c) That the indexation rates for estates might be too low within the model as the rates were based only on non-staff costs for laboratory-based subjects.

RESOLVED:

That the University's TRAC return and FEC charge out rates be approved for submission to HEFCE by the deadline of 29 January 2010.

254/09-10

Senate Business

RESOLVED:

That the comments and recommendations of the Steering Committee on the items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 27 January 2010 be approved as set out in the papers circulated for the meeting of the Senate, noting that the Harris Report outlining the findings of the Constitutional Advisory Group would be circulated to members of the Steering Committee prior to circulation to the Senate on Friday 22 January 2010.

255/09-10 I/2010/001 Survey of HEI Strategies for Implementing the Concordat

CONSIDERED:

A request from Universities UK to all HEIs to complete a survey of their efforts to implement the Concordat as part of the benchmarking process that would measure the impact of the Concordat to support the Career Development of Researchers (SC.175/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That a University response be co-ordinated by the Academic Registrar and the Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Research) for consideration at a future meeting prior to submission by the deadline of 6 April 2010.

256/09-10 Equality Challenge Unit Research: Black and Minority Staff in English HEIs

CONSIDERED:

A call on behalf of the Equality Challenge Unit inviting the University to participate in an online survey of higher education institutions' policies and practices concerning black and minority ethnic staff (SC.182/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the Registrar review the request to ascertain whether the University wished to respond by the deadline of 1 February 2010.

257/09-10 I/2010/002: Survey on Global Health Collaborations

CONSIDERED:

A survey, which the University was invited to complete to inform UUK's discussions with DOH (Department of Health) and DFID (Department for International Development) on long term partnerships and research collaborations which supported health care development in lower and middle income countries (SC.176/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Registrar liaise with colleagues in the School of Health and Social Studies and the Warwick Medical School to identify whether the University would respond by the deadline of 29 January 2010.

258/09-10 Next Meeting of the Steering Committee

RESOLVED:

That the next meeting of the Steering Committee would be held on 27 January 2010 at 10am in the Council Chamber, University House.

259/09-10 University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust Strategy

RECEIVED:

A presentation by the Chief Executive of the University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust (UHCW) setting out the Trust's strategy.

REPORTED: (by the Chief Executive, UHCW)

- (a) That, in early 2009, the Trust began to refresh its strategy to resolve internal management issues and negative perception of its service delivery.
- (b) That the strategy comprised of following four strategic priorities underpinned by measurable goals and targets:
 - (i) Delivering safe, high quality and evidenced patient care
 - (ii) Developing excellence in research, innovation and education
 - (iii) Improving the business and service framework
 - (iv) Building a positive reputation and identity
- (c) That the Trust was already working with the Warwick Medical School and the School of Engineering and was keen for related departments to consider the Trust as a potential collaborator in research projects.

(By the Acting Dean, Warwick Business School)

- (d) That there was scope for the Business School to assist in the implementation of the strategy with regards to access to relevant research and expertise.

260/09-10

HEFCE 2009/49: Outcomes of HEFCE Review of Policy Relating to Disabled Students

RECEIVED:

A publication from HEFCE presenting the key outcomes of its review of its policy as it related to disabled students (SC.177/09-10).

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes2009-10/Jan10/18Jan10