

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 19 April 2010

Present: Professor M Smith (in the Chair),
Professor L Bridges,
Professor S Bruzzi,
Professor C Hughes,
Professor K Lamberts (until item 449/09-10),
Professor M Underwood,
Professor M Whitby (until item 446(b)/09-10).

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor A Caesar, Professor R Higgott, Professor M Taylor, Mr A Bradley.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Director of Estates, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Director of Management Information and Planning (for items 443/09-10 to 445/09-10).

432/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 March 2010 be approved.

433/09-10 UUK I/2010/023: Budget 2010 (minute 415/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

UUK I-note highlighting those features of the Budget 2010 relevant to Higher Education (SC.295/09-10).

434/09-10 UUK Survey: Implementing the Concordat (minute 255/09-10 refers)

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

That the Director of Research Support Services, together with the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Research and the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies had co-ordinated the University response to the UUK survey relating to how HEIs had implemented the Concordat to Support Career Development of Researchers and that the response had been submitted by the deadline of 6 April 2010.

435/09-10 University Response to the UUK Study: Contribution of HE to the Creative Economy

RECEIVED:

The final University submission to the UUK study which sought to present the HE sector's contribution to the Creative Economy (SC.298/09-10).

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

That the Warwick case study on the Digital Laboratory had been selected as one of 20 to be explored further.

436/09-10 Group of 13 (minute 411/09-10 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) update the Committee at its next meeting on the status of the Group of 13, following the submission of a letter from the University to the Chair of the Group of 13 seeking clarity on the terms of the project.

437/09-10 University and College Union (minute 413/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the University and College Union had met with Trade Unions and its offer of a 0.25 percent non-consolidated pay increase had been rejected by the Unions and that a further meeting would be held today.

RESOLVED:

That the Registrar update the Committee at its next meeting on any pertinent developments in the national pay negotiations.

438/09-10 UUK I/2010/014: Aligning Your Institution with the European Charter and Code (minute 419/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

That the University was checking whether it might be permitted to submit its response later than the 6 April 2010 deadline.

439/09-10 HEFCE Assessment of Institutional Risk

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

That HEFCE had recently confirmed that Warwick had been classified 'not at higher risk' under the annual HEFCE institutional risk assessment and was meeting its accountability obligations.

RESOLVED:

That the benchmarking information presenting Warwick relative to the sector in terms of risk assessment be circulated to the Committee for information at a future meeting, noting that the Audit Committee would consider this data and report to the Council at its meeting in May 2010.

440/09-10 Sound Impact Environmental Awards

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

- (a) That the presentation of both Sound Impact Environmental Awards and the Best Bar None Awards had taken place as part of the NUS AGM and Conference attended by Students Unions from all over the UK.
- (b) That Warwick Students' Union was awarded Gold status for its "Green Space website and commitment to local food and biodiversity" and was one of only five Unions to do receive the highest recognition in the Sound Impact Environmental Awards.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record its congratulations to all involved in this great achievement.

441/09-10 Independent Review of HE Funding and Student Finance – Call for Proposals (minute 417/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That he and the Academic Registrar would consult with relevant colleagues to compile a draft University response to the second call for evidence from the Independent Review of HE Funding and Student Finance prior to consideration by the Steering Committee in advance of the submission deadline of 14 May 2010.

(By the Registrar)

- (b) That when requested under the Freedom of Information Act, the Russell Group had not released its submission to the Review's first call for evidence and that the University had now been asked to release any submission made to the Review with which it was associated.

442/09-10 Volcanic Ash Disruption

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

- (a) That the impact of the travel disruption for staff and students due to the volcanic ash cloud was becoming apparent and contingency planning was important, particularly in light of the forthcoming April exams period.

(By the Deputy Registrar)

- (b) That two groups, the Business Continuity Group and the Academic Continuity Group, were being convened today to establish the activities and groups affected by the disruption with a view to providing guidance to Heads of Departments at the earliest opportunity.

443/09-10 HEFCE Research Excellence Framework Consultation Outcomes

CONSIDERED:

The outcomes of the HEFCE consultation on the proposed Research Excellence Framework (SC.288/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Management Information and Planning)

- (a) That the key points from the HEFCE consultation were as follows:
 - (i) That the use of citations data in the REF remained uncertain, it being noted that HEFCE had identified a number of equality and diversity issues and also proposed to establish which panels had a wish to use it;
 - (ii) That, whilst there was broad support for the introduction of impact as a measure of research quality, concerns were raised over the weighting and the current untested method of assessment proposed for this element;
 - (iii) That the research output individual statements explaining the contribution of the individual researcher in respect of co-authored outputs seemed to be increasing in importance;
 - (iv) That a generic framework for guidance applicable to all panels was being drawn up to handle individual staff circumstances and
 - (v) That a proposal existed to use HESA data to report metrics on research student and research income data which, if used, would mean they would no longer be directly attributable to individual staff members submitted.

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

- (b) That HEFCE were inviting applications for Main Panel Chairs and that the University proposed to encourage individuals to submit applications.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee be updated on significant developments with regards to the REF, particularly after the conference to be held in June 2010.

444/09-10

HEFCE University Modernisation Fund

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Management Information and Planning setting out the principal details concerning the two student number related schemes under the HEFCE University Modernisation Fund (SC.312/09-10).

RECEIVED:

- (a) HEFCE Circular 06/2010: Support for moving full-time undergraduate numbers into Strategic Important and Vulnerable subjects (SIVS) in 2010-11 (SC.296/09-10)
- (b) HEFCE Circular 08/2010: Allocation of funding for additional new entrants and efficiency activities in 2010-11 through the University Modernisation Fund (SC.300/09-10)
- (c) HEFCE Circular 07/2010: Allocation of funding for shared service activities in 2010-11 through the University Modernisation Fund (SC.299/09-10)

REPORTED: (by the Director of Management Information and Planning)

- (a) That initial discussions with colleagues suggested that there was potential to bid for both movement of undergraduate full-time student numbers to band B and C SIVS and also for funding for additional entrants with a focus on band D SIVS primarily.

(By the Academic Registrar)

- (b) That the University would explore sustainable means of pursuing these initiatives with flexibility to allow affected departments to manoeuvre in the future to respond to changes in the market and public funding and that revisions to targets would only be considered if quality levels of entrants were maintained.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Steering Committee approve the following as set out in SC.312/09-10:
 - (i) The desirability and strategy associated with making a bid to the scheme for Moving Full-time Undergraduate Student Numbers into SIVS, the subjects in band B and C where numbers should be increased and where, by way of compensation, they should be reduced in band D.
 - (ii) The desirability and strategy associated with making a bid to the scheme for Allocating Funding for Additional New Entrants in band D subjects.
- (b) That the Director of Management Information and Planning clarify with HEFCE whether the funding allocated to moving students to higher price bands would also attract the £1k

supplement for SIVS.

- (c) That the University explore further options for engaging with the HEFCE initiative related to shared services, particularly data centres as this was an institutional priority.

445/09-10

HEFCE Review of Teaching Funding

CONSIDERED:

Documentation from HEFCE relating to the first stage of its review into the teaching funding method, together with UUK I/2010/021 summarising the consultation document (SC.289/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the HEFCE review of teaching funding would impact on the ongoing Independent Review of HE Funding and Student Finance and that the documentation suggested a shift in HEFCE's remit from being purely a funding body to become more involved in planning and creating strategic change.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a Working Group be established to consider the University's response with the following included on the membership:
- The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience)
 - The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Resourcing)
 - The Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies
 - The Chairs of the Boards of the Faculties
 - The Academic Registrar
- (b) That the draft response be considered by the Steering Committee prior to submission by 12 July 2010.

446/09-10

First Report from the Transport Strategy Group

CONSIDERED:

The first report from the Transport Strategy Group presenting a number of guiding principles to underpin future work on a transport and travel strategy for the University and a set of proposals relating to changes to car parking arrangements for 2010/11 (SC.303/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That it was widely acknowledged within the institution that the current travel and transport arrangements were not appropriate for a campus of Warwick's size and ambition, noting that several large scale changes had been successfully implemented within the constraints of the infrastructure available.
- (b) That the University would have to take difficult decisions regarding the extent to which it needed to make a significant capital investment to improve the issues raised by the Transport Strategy Group.

(By the Acting Dean, Warwick Medical School)

- (c) That, whilst staff at the Medical School had experienced a dramatic improvement since the initial changes to car parking arrangements, there were outstanding issues relating availability of car parking spaces for students or colleagues visiting from clinical placements or other sites.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Steering Committee:
 - (i) Note the paper and recommendations from the Transport Strategy Group as set out in SC.303/09-10;
 - (ii) Note that the recommendations set out in SC.303/09-10 would be translated into an action plan with the office responsible for scoping the impact of each recommendation and the proposed timescale for doing so being clearly identified;
- (b) That the draft principles set out in SC.303/09-10 which it was proposed would underpin the development of the transport and travel strategy over coming years be approved; and
- (c) That the recommendations for car-parking and related provision for 2010/11 be approved and communicated at the start of the Summer Term 2010 as set out in SC.303/09-10.

447/09-10 Warwickshire County Council Sustainable Community Strategy

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Head of Stakeholder Relations presenting the Warwickshire County Council Sustainable Community Strategy produced by the Local Strategic Partnership of which the University was a member (SC.301/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee, on behalf of the University, endorse the Warwickshire County Council Sustainable Community Strategy as set out in SC.301/09-10.

448/09-10 Appointment of Governor to Warwick Independent Schools Foundation

RESOLVED:

That a continuance of service of Professor Grammatopoulous (WMS) for a further 3 year term as a governor of the Warwick Independent Schools Foundation be approved.

449/09-10 E/2010/06: Advice to UK HEIs Applying to Participate in Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate Programmes (EMJD)

RECEIVED:

Information from the UUK Europe Unit providing further advice to institutions regarding whether HEIs could treat students on EMJD programmes as doctoral students or whether employment contracts would be required (SC.305/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

That the University was preparing an application to the EMJD scheme to be submitted by the deadline of 30 April 2010 and that it was Warwick's understanding that that there were mechanisms whereby doctoral students under the scheme would be treated as students.

450/09-10 The Pathway Report from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA)

CONSIDERED:

The report of the Pathway Project launched by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator in October 2008 as a consultative exercise related to the potential expansion of the OIA scheme (SC.311/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the consultative exercise had concluded that the OIA would not seek to expand its remit into areas other than academic appeals at this stage.
- (b) That the implementation of the revisions to requirements for Completion of Procedures letters would entail additional work across the institution.

(By the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (c) That the recommendation that institutions should report annually all complaints to the OIA would be problematic for Warwick as the University sought to resolve all complaints at the lowest possible level and might not be aware centrally of all complaints made.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee support the proposal that the Students' Union Point of Contact with the OIA should be a member of staff from the Union rather than a sabbatical officer.

451/09-10 Universities UK Activities in response to British Council Press Release

RECEIVED:

Information regarding the activities Universities UK planned to undertake in response to the British Council's press release calling for HEIs to recruit overseas students responsibly (SC.293/09-10).

452/09-10 UUK Letter: National Campaign Week to Promote Higher Education

CONSIDERED:

A letter from Universities UK providing information on their campaign to promote HE which would commence with a pilot 'Universities Week' on 14 June 2010 (SC.294/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Development, Communication and Strategy confirm whether additional work was required centrally to support the University's participation in the campaign, noting that the University's engagement was initiated by Warwick Sport.

453/09-10 Department of Business, Innovation and Skills Review of Postgraduate Provision in the UK

RESOLVED:

That the recently published Department of Business, Innovation and Skills Review of Postgraduate Provision in the UK be considered at a future meeting.

454/09-10 UUK I/2010/020: Government Response to Social Work Task Force Report

RECEIVED:

UUK I-Note alerting members to the Government's implementation plan which described how the Government was working with employers, higher education institutions, the social work profession and people who used social work services to put the recommendations of the Social Work Task force report into effect, together with an extract of the Government response (SC.290/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

That the plan suggested significant change for social work education which would affect the manner in which the School of Health and Social Studies pursued this type of provision.

455/09-10 UK HE Sector Position on the Future of European Research

RECEIVED:

An E-note announcing the Europe Unit position paper on the future of European research, together with the full position paper (SC.291/09-10).

456/09-10 Change in NERC July 2010 Grants Closing Date

RECEIVED:

Announcement from the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) stating that the 1 July 2010 closing date for its standard, partnership and consortium grant scheme would be brought forward to 10 June 2010 (SC.287/09-10).

457/09-10 Science and Technology Committee: ' Climate Science Must Be More Transparent'

RECEIVED:

An announcement from the Government's Science and Technology Committee regarding the publication of its report on the disclosure of climate data from the Climatic Research Unit (CRU) at the University of East Anglia and a call for the climate science community to become more transparent by publishing raw data and detailed methodologies (SC.292/09-10).

458/09-10 I/2010/022: Apprenticeships in Higher Education Institutions

RECEIVED:

An update on information gathered by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills and the National Apprenticeships Service, following the publication of I-2009-045, on the numbers of apprenticeship places in higher education institutions together with a request that members check that the information held for their own university was correct and complete (SC.297/09-10).

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes2009-10/Apr10/19Apr10