

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 27 January 2010

Present: Vice-Chancellor,  
Professor L Bridges,  
Professor S Bruzzi,  
Professor A Caesar,  
Professor C Hughes,  
Professor K Lamberts,  
Professor M Whitby  
Professor D Wilson  
Mr A Bradley.

Apologies: Professor R Higgott, Professor M Smith, Professor M Underwood

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of Estates, Director of Development, Strategy and Communications, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Professor S B Palmer, Director of Research Support Services (for items 267/09-10 and 268/09-10).

261/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2010 be approved.

262/09-10 Russell Group Response to Government Announcement on Social Mobility (minute 80/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

The Russell Group response to the Government's announcement on the 'Unleashing Aspiration' report by the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions (SC.183/09-10).

263/09-10 Equality Challenge Unit Research: Black and Minority Ethnic Staff in English HEIs (minute 256/09-10 refers)

RESOLVED:

That, further to consideration of the survey by the Registrar, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) and colleagues in Human Resources, the University would not respond to the Equality Challenge Unit's request for information.

264/09-10 University of Warwick/University of Birmingham Bid for HEFCE Graduate Internship Funding (minute 181/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the University's joint bid with the University of Birmingham for HEFCE Graduate Internships had been successful and that the partnership would deliver 60 internships, noting that this was the proposed maximum number which the universities believed they could deliver.

RESOLVED:

That the formal letter for notification from HEFCE be received at the next meeting of the Committee.

265/09-10 Winter Degree Ceremonies 2010

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record its thanks to colleagues who supported the Winter Degree Ceremonies, acknowledging the significant amount of work required to produce such a successful event.

266/09-10 Additional Student Numbers 2010/11 (minute 224/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That HEFCE had confirmed that the 66 additional student numbers allocated to Warwick would be for Physics and would be spread equally over three years.

267/09-10 Research Strategy Update

RECEIVED:

An report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellors(Research) and the Director of Research Support Services updating on developments including the progress of the Science City Initiative, Advantage West Midlands funding, the strategic initiative 'Security/Global Uncertainty' and details of grant awards and income (SC.184/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Research Support Services)

- (a) That the actual number of awards received to date in 2009/10 was 226 with a value of £27,180m
- (b) That, in the recent European Research Council fellowship awards, the UK received the largest number of Senior Investigator Fellowships with 59, noting the other major countries featuring in the awards were Switzerland and Israel.
- (c) That the University would review the European Research Council fellowships to identify whether a) there were recipients of Young Investigator awards who Warwick might wish to attract and whether b) a targeted application approach.
- (d) That consideration was being given within Research Support Services as to whether revisions to the structures and support available were required to enable greater engagement and success with European research funding, acknowledging that the funding base within the UK was reducing.

268/09-10 Low Carbon Vehicle Technology Project: Funding Agreement Stage

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Research Support Services setting out the key details and risks of the Low Carbon Vehicle Technology Project which was in the final stages of negotiation with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) (SC.185/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Research Support Services)

- (a) That the project did present risks to the University but that measures and checks were in place to monitor those risks and meet compliance requirements.
- (b) The project was understood to be included as a flagship project in the announcement of the Midlands Low Carbon Economic Area expected on 27 January 2010 and would also raise the University's profile with other potential funders, such as the Technology Strategy Board.

- (c) That the estimated loss for the University within the project was circa £700k due to the cap on overhead costs imposed by the ERDF funding conditions, noting, however, that the loss would be borne by the Warwick Manufacturing Group (WMG).

(By the Finance Director)

- (d) That the project, and the risks inherent therein, highlighted the need for WMG to diversify its funding streams, rather than becoming reliant on AWM and ERDF funding.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Low Carbon Vehicle Technology Project Funding Agreement be approved for signature by the University, acknowledging the risks and measures for their mitigation set out in SC.185/09-10.
- (b) That consideration be given as to how to integrate the monitoring of the project, and other future large scale projects, within the University's formal governance structures to ensure timely reporting and resolution of issues where necessary.

269/09-10

The Harris Report

RECEIVED:

The Harris Report presenting the Constitutional Advisory Group's findings and recommendations with regards to the effectiveness of the University's academic and administrative structures and decision-making processes and how these might be optimized to facilitate the future success of the University (S.8/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the Harris Report articulated two models, namely the creation of strong faculties or the improvement of the traditional model of strong departments with a strong Centre, as well as raising issues for consideration around the roles of Faculty Chairs and Pro-Vice-Chancellors.
- (b) That, following initial institutional discussion concluding with the meeting of the Senate to be held on 17 March 2010, the proposed Implementation Group would, if required, begin to develop a implementation plan.

(By the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences)

- (c) That the timescale for consultation with, and methods for engaging, the University community on the recommendations should be clarified.

(By the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (d) That the proposal within the report to align consideration of postgraduate taught matters with those emerging at undergraduate level required further thought.

(By the Deputy Registrar)

- (e) That the University was committed to conducting a review of teaching management, inclusive of course and module approval, and that this would proceed as a priority alongside the wider consideration of the recommendations contained in the Harris Report.

(By the Acting Dean of Warwick Business School)

- (f) That both models proposed in the Harris Report were likely to increase the workload of the Academic Resourcing Committee (ARC).

270/09-10 UUK: University Leaders Statement of Intent on Sustainable Development

CONSIDERED:

An email to the Vice-Chancellor from the President of Universities UK (UUK) inviting university leaders to support a statement of intent on sustainable development as proposed by the UUK Board (SC.187/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the University would not write to support the statement as circulated as SC.187/09-10.

271/09-10 Appointment to Senate Committees

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Dr Trevor McCrisken from Politics and International Studies as one of the 12 Senate-appointed academic representatives on the Higher Education Foundation Programme Board of Studies for the remainder of the 2009/10 academic year be approved on behalf of the Senate.

272/09-10 UUK Annual Review 2008/09

RECEIVED:

The Universities' UK Annual Report for 2008/09 highlighting UUK's work in representing and promoting the UK's universities in the period August 2008 to July 2009 (SC.186/09-10).

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes2009-10/Jan10/27Jan10