

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 29 March 2010

Present: Vice-Chancellor,  
Professor L Bridges,  
Professor S Bruzzi,  
Professor A Caesar,  
Professor R Higgott  
Professor C Hughes,  
Professor M Underwood,  
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor K Lamberts, Professor M Smith, Professor D Wilson, Mr A Bradley.

In Attendance: Registrar, Academic Registrar, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance).

409/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2010 be approved.

410/09-10 UKBA Highly Trusted Sponsor (minute 391/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

(a) That the UK Border Agency (UKBA) had confirmed that all universities would provisionally be designated as Highly Trusted Sponsors from 6 April 2010.

(by the Academic Registrar)

(b) That universities would have to apply for formal accreditation to the Highly Trusted Sponsors route by the end of June 2010.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee be updated as required on developments relating to the Highly Trusted Sponsors route, noting that the University would at that stage consider whether it wished to apply for formal accreditation.

411/09-10 Group of 13

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience))

(a) That the University should consider whether it wished to continue with the Group of 13 institutions collaborating on the HEFCE 'Realising Opportunities' project as the recent meeting had indicated that the varied approach adopted in November 2009 to enable Warwick and Kings to pilot the extended project option was now being rejected in favour of pursuing only the preferred differential offer scheme.

(By the Vice-Chancellor)

(b) That there were potential reputation issues that would arise from withdrawing from the Group of 13, acknowledging that the University was considered in some areas as a leader in Widening Participation but that the activities being undertaken were not specifically aligned to current government schemes.

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for Student Experience and Academic Resourcing draft a letter for review by the Vice-Chancellor seeking clarity on the terms of the project and to state the circumstances under which Warwick would continue to engage.

412/09-10 Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the following colleagues had been selected as finalists in the Warwick Awards for Teaching Excellence (WATE) and would proceed to the next round:

Dr Peter Corvi  
Jonathan Heron  
Caroline Jones  
Dr Cath Lambert  
Ruth Leary  
Dr Michael McMahon  
Paul Prescott  
Dr Paul C. Taylor  
George Ttoouli  
Dr Nicholas Whybrow

- (b) That the deadline for stage two supporting statements was 19 April 2010.

413/09-10 University and College Union

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That he had received a letter from the University and College Union (UCU) seeking support for the UCU case to defend higher education against damaging cuts in funding for the sector and to give the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) a mandate to negotiate on behalf of the sector on job security.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the UCU letter be circulated to members of the Steering Committee for their information.
- (b) That the University would not mandate the UCEA to negotiate on job security and would not respond regarding the broader case.

414/09-10 Implementation of the School of Life Sciences

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That he had received a letter from the Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Science and Technology in Agriculture raising the Group's concerns regarding the potential impact on applied research in the agricultural sector following the proposed closure of WHRI.

415/09-10

Budget 2010

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That it was announced in the recent Budget that £35m would be placed into a venture capital fund accessible to HEIs and that although the criteria and process for accessing the funds was as yet unclear, it was vital that the Warwick Ventures NEWCO was constituted appropriately to allow it to act swiftly and effectively in a challenging commercial environment.
- (b) That 20,000 additional student places had also been announced and institutions could bid for numbers for a three year period from 2010/11, it being noted that funding for additional places would be provided in full in 2010/11 and would be contingent on the recipient institution making efficiency savings to cover the costs for the extra places in the second and third year.

RESOLVED:

That further information on the additional student places be circulated to the Committee when available.

416/09-10

UUK I/2010/019: HEFCE Recurrent Grants for 2010/11

RECEIVED:

Information from Universities UK summarising key outcomes of the HEFCE recurrent grant allocation for 2010/11 (SC.277/09-10).

417/09-10

Independent Review of HE Funding and Student Finance – Call for Proposals

CONSIDERED:

The second call for evidence from the Independent Review of HE Funding and Student Finance chaired by Lord Browne, together with an UUK I-Note summarising the call and setting out UUK's approach in that regard (SC.275/09-10).

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

That the University had been approached by JM Consulting, acting on behalf of UUK and for report to the Browne Review, to participate in a case study regarding how the University would use the increased fee income should the cap on tuition fees be raised.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University would respond to the call for evidence by the deadline of 14 May 2010 with input from relevant colleagues.
- (b) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Resourcing) confirm that the University would participate in the case study conducted by JM Consulting, acknowledging that the process would additionally be useful for internal purposes.

418/09-10

HEFCE Summer Schools Funding Confirmation

RECEIVED:

A letter from HEFCE notifying that there would be no further matched funding available for summer school provision for 2009/10 and that HEFCE was in discussions with the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills regarding the future for AimHigher summer schools for 2010/11 with a reduced programme to be announced shortly (SC.273/09-10).

419/09-10 UUK I/2010/014: Aligning Your Institution with the European Charter and Code

CONSIDERED:

A UUK I-Note setting out how higher education institutions might align their internal procedures with the European Charters for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (SC.281/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Research Support Services complete the UUK Survey, on behalf of the Committee, by the deadline of 6 April 2010.

420/09-10 University's Risk Identification and Assessment for Spring 2010

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Head of Governance Support Services presenting the arrangements for the University's risk identification and assessment for Spring 2010 inclusive of the full University Risk Register and Status Summary for the consideration of the Committee (SC.285/09-10), together with an oral report by the Registrar.

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the approach being adopted for the University's risk identification and assessment on this occasion was a pragmatic one, recognising the ambiguous external context within which Warwick was operating, it being noted that, while some risks would take on a greater resonance in the current circumstances, there was not a need to add further risks to the register.

(By the Head of Governance Support Services)

- (b) That departmental SWOT analyses and risk assessments were requested from all departments and that these would be considered by the Operational Risk Management Group with a summary report being provided to the Steering Committee and appropriate committees regarding any key issues raised.

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

- (c) That particular attention should be given to those risks pertaining to industrial relations in the light of internal and external developments in this regard.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University Risk Register and Status Summary set out in SC.285/09-10 be updated in the light of discussion, in particular relating to Risks O2 managerial capacity, R1 University reputation, S1 staff recruitment and retention, S3 good employee relations, F1 University surplus, T6 student satisfaction, and F6 AWM outputs.

- (b) That the Committee consider the University's risks at its meeting on 10 May 2010 prior to the meeting of the Council to be held on 19 May 2010, at which the Council would be invited to approve the status attached to the risks presented.

421/09-10 Amendments to the University Accommodation Regulations

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Deputy Registrar proposing amendments to University Regulation 27 (Residential Accommodation Regulations) to include an additional period of residence of 37 weeks (SC.286/09-10).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposed revisions to Regulation 27 as set out in SC.286/09-10 be approved, on behalf of the Senate and that the revisions be recommended to the Pro-Chancellor for approval on behalf of the Council.
- (b) That Regulation 27 be further considered as part of the ongoing review of student-facing regulations to address issues raised relating to providing residential accommodation for visiting students or those only on campus for part of an academic year.

422/09-10 Dean of Warwick Business School

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Professor Mark Taylor would take up the post of Dean of Warwick Business School on 1 April 2010 and would be attending the Steering Committee from its next meeting.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record its thanks to Professor David Wilson, Acting Dean of Warwick Business School, for his valuable contribution to the Steering Committee and to Warwick Business School in his period as Acting Dean.

423/09-10 HEFCE 2010/08: Recurrent Grants for 2010-11

RECEIVED:

A HEFCE publication summarising the provisional allocations of recurrent funding to institutions for 2010/11, noting that final allocations would be advised in July 2010 (SC.284/09-10).

424/09-10 UUK Report: "The growth of private and for-profit higher education providers in the UK"

RECEIVED:

The summary and recommendations of a UUK report examining the growth of private and for-profit higher education providers in the UK (SC.276/09-10).

Note: Members were informed that the full report was available at:

<http://extranet.universitiesuk.ac.uk/Publications/ReportsAndPolicyBriefings/Pages/default.aspx>

425/09-10 E/2010/01: Results of survey on UK HEIs engagement in European HE developments – UK

RECEIVED:

The results of the Europe Unit's survey of UK HEIs in 2009 and their engagement in European HE developments, noting that the University responded to the survey (SC.274/09-10)

426/09-10 I/2010/016: GSCC Report "Raising Standards – Social Work Education"

RECEIVED:

An I-Note informing members of the publication of a General Social Care Council annual report presenting an update on Entrants to social work training; Findings from monitoring; Practice learning; Outcomes for students; Entry to the workforce (SC.272/09-10)

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes2009-10/Mar10/29Mar10