

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 1 February 2011

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor S Bruzzi,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor R Higgott
Professor C Hughes,
Professor T Jones,
Professor J Labbe,
Professor K Lamberts,
Mr D Stevens.

Apologies: Professor M Taylor, Professor P Winstanley.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Executive Officer (VC's Office),
Acting Head of Governance Support Services, Director of Estates, Assistant Registrar
(Deputy Registrar's Office).

353/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2011 be approved.

354/10-11 Library Update (minute 184/10-11 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research (Science and Medicine), the Librarian and the Deputy Librarian on progress on the establishment of the Publications Database (SC.256/10-11).

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

- (a) That in order for the Publications Database to be effective and usable, it was the view of the Project Board that Warwick authors should be mandated to deposit publication references in it, once it had been established.
- (b) That it would also be necessary to consider the potential relationship with other University processes in order to help ensure compliance.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee supported an institutional mandate for Warwick authors to deposit publication references in the new Publications Database.

355/10-11 Pay Negotiations (minute 336/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the University had received two formal notifications from UCU of ballots for industrial action, the first concerning issues around pay and job security, and the second concerning the changes to the USS Pension Scheme.

- (b) That although it was likely that the paperwork provided by UCU to Warwick would be generally in order, it was possible that the paperwork provided to other institutions may not be, which could have implications for national action.
- (c) That the ballots would open today and run for a month, with any resultant industrial action likely to commence from the end of March.

356/10-11

USS Pensions

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That, following the consultation, some suggested modifications to the proposals were being put to the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), relating to:
 - (i) the rejoining period for members who leave the final salary section and subsequently rejoin the scheme;
 - (ii) the proposed caps on inflationary increases.
- (b) That the changes to the scheme were on target to be introduced from 1 April 2011.

357/10-11

Nottingham / Birmingham Strategic Alliance

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the Universities of Nottingham and Birmingham would shortly announce a strategic alliance, and that although it was not clear at this point exactly what the detail of the alliance was, it was not anticipated to preclude either university from relationships with other institutions.

358/10-11

Fees and Financial Support Arrangements

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Academic Registrar setting out the national and institutional context within which the University would be considering changes to the level of its undergraduate fees, student finance and widening participation activity (SC.259/10-11)

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That the purpose of the paper was to facilitate discussion at the various bodies at which these issues would be considered, around three areas:
 - (i) Fee levels
 - (ii) Widening Participation
 - (iii) Enhancing the Student Experience

(by the Students' Union President)

- (b) That it was his opinion that consultation with the student body should be further expanded, for example through Staff-Student Liaison Committees.
- (c) That it was his opinion that members of the current student body would not necessarily value current provision at, for example, £9,000 per year.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (d) That the Warwick student experience was strong, with clear evidence from student surveys.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (e) That the student body was being actively engaged in discussions around these issues in a variety of ways, and that this would be a continuous process.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience))

- (f) That she was aware of much input from students being received at department level, and that the consultation should therefore be viewed as “bottom-up” as well as “top-down”, noting that not all of the consultative measures in place were able to be captured in the paper.

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

- (g) That departments were undertaking considerable work to incorporate the student voice, including via student representation on Faculty Teaching and Learning Committees.
- (h) That more could be done to communicate to undergraduates the importance and benefits of research-led teaching.

359/10-11 Access Agreements for 2012/13

CONSIDERED:

Information from OFFA and UUK providing an update and guidance on access agreements for 2012/13 (SC.260/10-11)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

That there were a number of contradictions implied within the documents, but that there remained much detail to be confirmed with regard to the access agreements, noting that the final guidance letter from BIS to OFFA had not yet been issued.

360/10-11 Role of Faculty Chairs post-Harris

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Deputy Registrar proposing the arrangements for the appointment of the Faculty Chairs and the proposed role description to be adopted from the academic year 2011/12 (SC.258/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the proposals in the paper were consistent with the recommendations of the Harris Report.
- (b) That the proposals would be considered by the Faculty Boards during week commencing 7 February 2011.

(by the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science)

- (c) That there would be advantages in changing the nomenclature from Chairs of Faculty to ~~Deans of Faculty~~, particularly relating to recognition externally.

(by the Registrar)

- (d) That the nomenclature ‘Chair of Faculty’ was meaningful within Warwick and was consistent with “Model B” adopted by Harris.

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

- (e) That it would be useful to expand the section relating to arrangements regarding the Faculty of Medicine.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience))

- (f) That section g.ii. of the responsibilities in the role description should include a reference to liaison with Pro-Vice-Chancellors.

(by the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts)

- (g) That it would be useful to have more specificity in the role description about the role of the Deputy Chair of Faculty.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (h) That the responsibility for representing the views of the Faculty, both internally and externally, should be added to the role description.

RESOLVED:

That the proposals for the arrangements for the appointment of the Faculty Chairs from the academic year 2011/12 be approved, noting that further consideration would be given in due course to nomenclature and to the role description.

361/10-11

Report on Postgraduate Issues

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies and the Deputy Academic Registrar concerning postgraduate issues, together with an oral report (SC.249/10-11).

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

- (a) That the mechanism for allocating the awards for the ESRC Doctoral Training Centre would shortly be clarified.
- (b) That there was now an online one-stop-shop for all departmental sources of PGR/PGT funding, located on the Graduate School website.

362/10-11

HEFCE Public Information and Graduate Salary Data

RECEIVED:

Correspondence from HEFCE concerning their plans to include subject-level graduate salary information on the Unistats website from summer 2011, and inviting comments on the plans (SC.251/10-11)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That it was clear that this proposal would go ahead, and that the Academic Registrar and Director of Management Information and Planning were currently considering whether to submit any comments.

- 363/10-11 Advantage West Midlands Closure Programme
- RECEIVED:
- Correspondence from Advantage West Midlands concerning the closure programme for Advantage West Midlands (SC.253/10-11).
- 364/10-11 Regulation 34 for the Determination of Fitness to Practise
- CONSIDERED:
- Proposed amendments to Regulation 34 for the Determination of Fitness to Practise (SC.255/10-11).
- RESOLVED:
- That, on behalf of the Senate, the proposed changes to Regulation 34 for the Determination of Fitness to Practise be approved and recommended to the Council as set out in SC.255/10-11.
- 365/10-11 Appointments to Committees of the Senate
- RESOLVED:
- That, on the recommendation of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee, the appointment of Professor Roger Leng from the School of Law to the Board of Undergraduate Studies as Chair be approved on behalf of the Senate.
- 366/10-11 UKBA Consultation on the Student Immigration System (minute 330/10-11 refers)
- REPORTED: (by the Students' Union President)
- (a) That the NUS would shortly be launching a campaign around issues relating to the student immigration system.
- (by the Registrar)
- (b) That there had been approximately 27,000 responses to the recent UKBA consultation on the subject.
- 367/10-11 HEFCE Student Number Control Limits (minute 341/10-11 refers)
- REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)
- That he had received notification from HEFCE on Student Number Control Limits for 2011/12, which indicated a 2% rise in the limit for Warwick, noting that more detail would be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee the following week.
- 368/10-11 Home Affairs Select Committee's inquiry into the impact of proposed restrictions on Tier 4 Migration (minute 274/10-11 refers)
- RECEIVED:
- The Russell Group's response to the Home Affairs Select Committee's inquiry into the impact of proposed restrictions on Tier 4 Migration (SC.252/10-11).

369/10-11

HEFCE consultation on developing a shared strategy for relationship management between HEFCE and institutional governing bodies (minute 317/10-11 refers)

RECEIVED:

The University's response to the HEFCE consultation on developing a shared strategy for relationship management between HEFCE and institutional governing bodies (SC.254/10-11).

JFB/KP/steersshare/minutes/201011/Feb11/01Feb11