

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 1 November 2010

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

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor M Taylor, Director of HR.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of Estates, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Senior Assistant Registrar (Management Information & Planning Office) (for item 80/10-11), Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (for item 82/10-11).

73/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 25 October 2010 be approved, subject to the following amendments (deletions ~~struck through~~):

In Attendance: (...) Deputy Academic Registrar (for item ~~59~~ 60/10-11). (...)

64/10-11 (...)

- (b) That the recommendation that the Senior Tutor be formally added to the constitution of the Academic Quality and Standards Committee be approved on behalf of the Senate, noting that ~~Dr~~ Mr Stephen Lamb would currently serve in this capacity.

(...)

74/10-11 National Audit Office Census of Higher Education Institutions (minute 63/10-11 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The University's draft response to the National Audit Office survey into the financial health of the HE sector in England, and the role played by HEFCE in sustaining it (SC.60/10-11).

RESOLVED:

That the University response to the survey be approved, subject to minor amendments as discussed at the meeting, for submission to the National Audit Office prior to the deadline of 5 November 2010.

75/10-11 Universities That Count (minute 56/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the Head of Stakeholder Relations and Environment Officer would participate in the focus groups that would form part of the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges' methodological review process for the Universities that Count survey.
- (b) That it would be valuable to have academic input into the focus groups, noting that the principle of embedding sustainability in the curricula was likely to be considered.

RESOLVED:

That academic colleagues who wished to contribute to the focus groups, or who wished to nominate another individual, should approach the Registrar outside of the meeting.

76/10-11 The Future of the Quality Assurance System (minute 43/10-11 refers)

RECEIVED:

A joint statement from HEFCE, UUK, GuildHE and QAA on the future of the Quality Assurance System (SC.49/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the statement included notification of two further forthcoming consultations, those being:

- (a) A HEFCE, UUK and GuildHE consultation on changes to the information that institutions publish about Higher Education,
- (b) A QAA consultation on revisions to the UK-wide Academic Infrastructure.

77/10-11 Local Enterprise Partnerships

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That twenty-four successful bids for Local Enterprise Partnerships had been announced, including the Coventry & Warwickshire and Birmingham, Solihull, East Staffordshire, Lichfield & Tamworth partnerships.
- (b) That efforts were underway to secure a high profile Chair of the Coventry & Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership.
- (c) That the Government had recently published a White Paper entitled "Local Growth: Realising Every Place's Potential" outlining the Government's new approach to encouraging business investment and promoting economic development, noting that the implications of the paper would be considered by the Committee at its meeting to be held on 8 November 2010.

(by the Registrar)

- (d) That there remained ambiguity over how the Local Enterprise Partnerships would be implemented.

78/10-11

Pay Negotiations

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That Unison had accepted the offer of a 0.4% consolidated pay increase but that GMB and Unite had rejected it, citing the level of the pay offer and lack of progress on an approach to job security as the key issues.
- (b) That UCEA had been involved in further talks with UCU and EIS through Acas.

79/10-11

Strategic Investment Fund

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That Heads of Departments would be invited to make bids to the University's Strategic Investment Fund, established to invest in initiatives that meet strategic aims in research and teaching, noting that further information would be published online through Insite.

80/10-11

Early Student Statistics

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Academic Registrar and the Senior Assistant Registrar (Management Information & Planning Office) concerning postgraduate and undergraduate enrolments against budget and plan, together with an oral report (SC.47/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That a total increase in fee income of £2.39m was predicted against plan, given enrolments and re-enrolments at this stage in the year.
- (b) That there were significant increases in undergraduate student numbers (primarily Home/EU), resulting in an overall overshoot of 393 students against planned target.
- (c) That student numbers on government-supported postgraduate taught courses were higher than forecasted (123 students above planned target).
- (d) That recruitment for independently-funded postgraduate taught courses was significantly below-plan, for both Home/EU (undershoot of 24) and Overseas (undershoot of 108).
- (e) That a shortfall in postgraduate research numbers against plan, across both Home/EU and Overseas students, did not take account of in-year recruitment.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (f) That there was some lack of clarity relating to continuing government funding for Band D postgraduate taught courses.

(by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

- (g) That recruitment to the MBChB course was potentially a future issue for consideration, noting that numbers of newly qualified doctors nationally now exceeded the number of vacant positions.

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (h) That it was important that the potential for strain on campus facilities was considered in the context of an increasing student population.

RESOLVED:

That the Senior Assistant Registrar (Management Information & Planning Office) liaise with the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies to clarify the funding of Band D postgraduate taught courses.

81/10-11

Widening Participation Strategic Assessments

CONSIDERED:

A letter from the HEFCE, clarifying their expectations of widening participation strategic assessments (SC.53/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That the University was compiling its annual monitoring return for Access Agreements and Widening Participation Strategic Assessments, to be submitted to HEFCE by 14 January ~~2010~~ 2011.
- (b) That recruitment to the currently vacant post of Assistant Registrar (Widening Participation) would assist in ensuring that the University's work in this area was aligned with HEFCE requirements.
- (c) That the Acting Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment would identify current widening participation activity being undertaken within departments, acknowledging that more stringent adherence to HEFCE's guidelines may be required in future.

(by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

- (d) That Widening Participation was a particular challenge for the Warwick Medical School in the context of the MBChB programme being graduate entry only.

(by the Registrar)

- (e) That continued dialogue with the Centre for Lifelong Learning may prove useful in providing insights and advice to departments.

RESOLVED:

That the University's annual monitoring return for Access Agreements and Widening Participation Strategic Assessments be considered by the Steering Committee prior to its submission to HEFCE by 14 January ~~2010~~ 2011, noting that the Committee would be kept up to date with any actions arising from the HEFCE letter (SC.53/10-11).

82/10-11

Teaching Quality Update

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) providing an update on teaching and learning issues, (SC.46/10-11), together with an oral report.

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality))

- (a) That the delegation of the Module Approval Process, through Faculty Board sub-committees to departments, was approved over the summer.
- (b) That development work on the IT system to support the Module Approval Process had commenced.
- (c) That the full report on the King's-Warwick Project had been submitted to HEFCE.

- (d) That the establishment of a fit for purpose IT system to support feedback on assessment had been made a priority at the last meeting of the e-Learning Steering Group, noting that the Director of IT Services was establishing a team to take this forward.

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

- (e) That the Institute for Advanced Teaching and Learning would in future report to Steering Committee separately, and alongside the Institute of Advanced Study.

83/10-11 Financial Performance of ARC Departments: Quarter 4 2009/10

CONSIDERED:

A report setting out the 2009/10 year-end financial position for ARC Departments (SC.58/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That it should be noted that the costs relating to the restructuring associated with the establishment of the School of Life Sciences was included in the figures contained in SC.58/10-11.

RESOLVED:

That the report on the 2009/10 year-end financial position for ARC Departments be approved as set out in SC.58/10-11.

84/10-11 Financial Performance of Warwick Medical School: Quarter 4 2009/10

CONSIDERED:

A report setting out the 2009/10 year-end financial position for Warwick Medical School (SC.59/10-11).

RESOLVED:

That the report on the 2009/10 year-end financial position for Warwick Medical School be approved as set out in SC.59/10-11.

85/10-11 HEFCE Plans for the National Student Survey 2011

RECEIVED:

A letter from the HEFCE, requesting an update of the University's relevant NSS contact details, and the population of the University's 2011 NSS target lists (with the requested contact details for students) by Friday 26 November 2010 (SC.56/10-11).

86/10-11 Guidance for Researchers on Retractions in Academic Journals

CONSIDERED:

An information note from Universities UK concerning the recent publication of UK Research Integrity Office's Guidance for researchers on retractions in academic journals (SC.55/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

That he had found the national framework referenced in the information note to be useful when recently chairing a Research Misconduct hearing at another institution.

RESOLVED:

That the UUK information note contained in SC.55/10-11 be circulated to Heads of Departments and submitted to the Research Ethics Committee for consideration.

87/10-11

Technology Innovation Centres

CONSIDERED:

An email from the Science and Technology Committee concerning its inquiry examining the Fraunhofer model as a model for Technology Innovation Centres in the UK (SC.48/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the Prime Minister had recently announced a new £200m fund for university and industry collaboration which included the creation of Technology Innovation Centres.
- (b) That the deadline for submissions in response to the inquiry was 2 December 2010.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Registrar identify an administrative colleague to coordinate the response to the inquiry, noting that the response would be considered by the Steering Committee prior to the deadline for submission of 2 December 2010.

88/10-11

Changes to the Constitution and Membership of the Fitness to Practise Committee for the Degree of MB ChB, Warwick Medical School

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance, Risk and Continuity) proposing minor amendments to University Regulation 34, and recommending approval of the membership of the Fitness to Practise Committee and Panel for the Warwick Medical School MB ChB degree (SC.54/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

That the Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance, Risk and Continuity) would work with the Warwick Medical School and other relevant departments to undertake a holistic review of University Regulation 34 for the Determination of Fitness to Practise in the current academic year.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposed amendments to Regulation 34, as set out in SC.54/10-11, be recommended to the Pro-Chancellor for approval on behalf of the Council.
- (b) That, subject to the approval of the proposed minor amendments to Regulation 34, the membership of the Panel of practitioners to serve on the Fitness to Practise Committee and the Fitness to Practise Appeals Committee (MBChB) for 2010/11 be approved on behalf of Senate, as set out in SC.54/10-11

89/10-11

Appointments to Committees of the Senate

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

That following the count of the ballot papers submitted for the election of a member of the Assembly to serve on the Senate, Professor Chris Dowson from the School of Life Sciences

had been elected to membership of the Senate as a representative of the Assembly for the period to 31 August 2013.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, on the recommendation of the Board of the Faculty of Science, the appointment of Dr Mark Leeson of the School of Engineering to the Graduate Appeals Committee be approved on behalf of the Senate.
- (b) That the appointment of Dr Kevin Moffat of the School of Life Sciences to the Higher Education Foundation Programme Board of Studies, be approved on behalf of the Senate.

90/10-11 HEFCE Annual Conference Speeches

RECEIVED:

- (a) A transcript of the speech delivered by David Willetts on 21 October 2010 at the HEFCE Annual Conference (SC.51/10-11).
- (b) A transcript of the speech delivered by Sir Alan Langlands on 21 October 2010 at the HEFCE Annual Conference (SC.52/10-11).

91/10-11 AHRC Block Grant Partnerships

RECEIVED:

Correspondence from the Chief Executive of the Arts and Humanities Research Council, outlining potential implications arising from the Comprehensive Spending Review (SC.50/10-11).

92/10-11 REF impact pilot - publication of reports

RECEIVED:

Correspondence informing the University of the schedule of the publication of reports from the REF impact pilot (SC.57/10-11).

RESOLVED:

That the reports from the REF impact pilot would be considered by the Steering Committee at its meeting to be held on 22 November 2010.

93/10-11 SALIX/HEFCE Revolving Green Fund - update

RECEIVED:

Correspondence from Salix Finance, providing an overview of the Salix/HEFCE Revolving Green Fund and the performance of this energy efficiency scheme in the HE sector to date. (SC.64/10-11).

NO/KP/steersshare/minutes/2010-11/Nov10/01Nov10