

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 2 June 2014

Present: Vice-Chancellor and President (Chair),
Provost,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor Christina Hughes,
Professor Christopher Hughes,
Professor T Jones,
Mr B Sundell,
Professor S Swain,
Professor M Taylor,
Professor P Thomas,
Professor P Winstanley,
Professor L Young.

Apologies: Professor A Coats, Professor J Palmowski.

In Attendance: Registrar and Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Group Finance Director, Director of Development and External Affairs, Director of Estates, Director of Human Resources, Deputy Academic Registrar, Assistant Registrar (Governance), Interim Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment (for item 232/13-14).

229/13-14 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2014 be approved.

230/13-14 Wolfson Research Merit Awards

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That Professor Karen Vogtmann (Mathematics) and Professor Nicholas Zabaras (Centre for Scientific Computing) had been appointed as Royal Society Wolfson Research Merit Award holders, giving Warwick two out of the 28 new appointments.

231/13-14 Former Warwick Professor Admitted to Académie française

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That Sir Michael Edwards, a former member of staff at Warwick, had become the first Briton to enter the prestigious Académie française, France's highest learned body charged with defending the purity of the French language.

232/13-14 Admissions, Recruitment and International Update

CONSIDERED:

A paper providing an overview of progress to date with the 2014/15 undergraduate and postgraduate admissions cycles, along with an update on activities and developments in recruitment and outreach (SC.125/13-14).

RESOLVED:

That the Admissions, Recruitment and International report be noted.

Education Update

CONSIDERED:

A paper providing an update on matters relating to Education (SC.126/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Academic Registrar)

- (a) That following the closure of the 2014 National Student Survey (NSS), an institutional-wide survey using the NSS questions for first and intermediate year students had been launched in May, enabling departments to address any issues promptly.
- (b) That the HEFCE audit report of the University's Key Information Set (KIS) 2013-14 had concluded that assurance was not obtained over the systems used in deriving the KIS data, noting that the University had responded robustly to the report findings as there were concerns over whether the conclusions drawn were proportionate to the minor technical issues identified.
- (c) That the Graduate School and Strategic Planning and Analytics teams were undertaking further analysis of the Research Degree Qualification Rates (RDQR) published by HEFCE, it being noted that scrutiny of the figures had demonstrated that the data for Warwick were significantly different from the sector in ways that would affect the projected outcomes.
- (d) That the projected qualification rates were not a summary of outcomes for actual students, rather a prediction of the likelihood of qualification with an award after an arbitrary number of years.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning))

- (e) That the University's performance in the Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) survey for 2012-13 graduates had decreased slightly compared with 2011-12.
- (f) That further work was being carried out by Student Careers and Skills (SCS) to further embed careers work within academic departments and to strengthen connections between departments and SCS, noting that the Education Experience Planning Group (EEPG) process had been helpful in this regard.
- (g) That a template was being developed to assist departments, which would include actions around employability.
- (h) That metrics from My Warwick Journey, launched during 2013-14 to help students engage earlier with SCS, would provide useful information.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (i) That employability had been successfully embedded within the curriculum at other Russell Group institutions.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (j) That in relation to the DLHE results, of the graduates sampled 170 were out of work, in absolute terms, noting also that the percentage of Warwick graduates in professional/managerial jobs had increased by approximately 0.5%.

Major Research Proposal: IPSII Plus

RECEIVED:

A paper outlining the Major Research Proposal for a six-month extension to funding for the International Institute for Product and Service Innovation (IIPSI) (SC.137/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Group Finance Director)

That there would be no cost to the University for the project extension.

235/13-14 Senate Business

RESOLVED:

That the items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 11 June 2014 be approved as set out in the papers circulated for that meeting, subject to the revisions as agreed by the Steering Committee.

236/13-14 HEFCE Annual Accountability Return Requirements: Financial Forecasts Submission

RECEIVED:

A letter clarifying HEFCE requirements for the submission of financial forecasts and commentary as part of their annual accountability returns requirements (SC.138/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Group Finance Director)

- (a) That HEFCE were introducing a new financial commitments threshold based on institutions' multiple earnings before interest, tax, depreciation and amortisation (EBITDA), noting that Warwick was below threshold.
- (b) That this requirement would further highlight the importance of achieving targets set within the University's Financial Plan.

237/13-14 New Science and Innovation Strategy for the UK

RECEIVED:

A letter from the four UK higher education funding bodies and Research Councils UK inviting input into the evidence being gathered to inform contributions to the new Science and Innovation Strategy (SC.139/13-14).

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

That the University's response was being coordinated and would be brought to the Steering Committee for consideration prior to the submission deadline of 30 June 2014.

238/13-14 Analysis of Responses to Consultation on HEFCE's Financial Memorandum with Institutions

RECEIVED:

A paper from HEFCE providing analysis of the responses to the 'Financial memorandum: Conditions of grant payments to institutions: Consultation on arrangements for 2014/15 onwards', together with confirmation of how responses were taken into account in finalising the memorandum (SC.140/13-14).

239/13-14 2014 HEPI-HEA Student Academic Experience Survey Summary Report

RECEIVED:

A report presenting the summary results of the 2014 Student Academic Experience Survey, produced by the Higher Education Policy Institute and the Higher Education Academy, together with policy recommendation arising from the data (SC.141/13-14).