

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 2 December 2013

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

Apologies: Deputy Registrar, Professor T Jones.

In Attendance: Registrar and Chief Operating Officer, Academic Registrar, Group Finance Director,  
Director of Estates, Director of Human Resources, Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance).

76/13-14 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 November 2013 be approved.

77/13-14 Research Excellence Framework Submission

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the University had returned its submission to the 2014 Research Excellence Framework (REF) on Tuesday 26 November 2013.
- (b) That the University expressed its thanks to the many colleagues involved in preparing the submission, and to the Chair of the REF Executive Steering Group, Professor Tim Jones, for co-ordinating the exercise.

78/13-14 Warwick Arts Centre Family Weekend

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That Warwick Arts Centre had held a successful family weekend on Saturday 30 November and Sunday 1 December 2013, which included Christmas-themed music, performances, food, workshops and craft activities, many of which were free.

79/13-14 Pro-Vice-Chancellor Responsibilities for 2013/14

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the portfolios and responsibilities of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor team had been confirmed for 2013/14 following the appointment of Professor Stuart Croft to the role of Provost, and that the newly configured roles would ensure that the capacity of the team was focussed on the successful implementation and delivery of institutional strategy, alongside the on-going development and delivery of the University's academic priorities.

- (b) That the recruitment process for the vacant post of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Social Sciences) had commenced.

80/13-14

Professor Sébastien Perrier

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That Professor Sébastien Perrier, one of the first joint research appointments by the Monash-Warwick alliance, had received the Le Fèvre Memorial Prize from the Australian Academy of Science.
- (b) That Professor Perrier had won the award for his work in macromolecular chemistry, where he had used the ability to harness chemical synthesis to generate large molecules that form nanostructured materials.
- (c) That the Le Fèvre Memorial Prize commemorated the work of the late Professor R.J.W. Le Fèvre, and recognised outstanding research in chemistry by scientists under 40 years of age.

81/13-14

Department of Business, Innovation and Skills

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That a memo leaked to the media on 22 November 2013 indicated that the Department of Business Innovation and Skills would be entering a period of emergency budgetary savings following overspends on new student numbers for the 2013/14 academic year.
- (b) That cuts to research funding were expected in 2014/15 and 2015/16 as a result of the emergency savings.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (c) That the University's allocation of National Scholarship Programme funding for students commencing study in October 2014 had been reduced by £0.75million since the submission of its Access Agreement, and that the University had been invited to re-submit its Access Agreement taking into account the revised figures.

82/13-14

Response to the Report of the Review of the Warwick Graduate School

CONSIDERED:

A paper outlining the outcomes of discussions at the Board of Graduate Studies on the Report of the Review of the Graduate School (SC.42/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education))

- (a) That at its meeting on 21 November 2013, the Board of Graduate Studies (BGS) had considered the Report of the Review of the Graduate School which had taken place on 1 and 2 May 2013, and had set out a number of proposals for strategic initiatives in response to the Report.
- (b) That the BGS had noted that from 2014/15, almost all Faculties of the University would have Doctoral Training Partnerships, and as such, academic training should be delivered locally where possible, although the Graduate School would have a pivotal role in ensuring the quality and consistency of training across the University.
- (c) That the structural implications of the review for the Graduate School would be limited, but that it was proposed that a new Academic Director (Training and Quality Assurance) of the Graduate School be appointed to lead on matters of quality

assurance, and to ensure alignment with academic strategy.

- (d) That the BGS proposed that the responsibilities of the Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committees of the Boards of Faculties be clarified to ensure that they could provide a more strategic role, noting that further discussion would be required with the Faculty Chairs given current resource constraints.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (e) That consideration should be given to the remits of the BGS and the Board of Undergraduate Studies (BUGS) to ensure that the terms of reference of both committees enabled them to operate with optimum effectiveness.
- (f) That the review presented an opportunity to map out where responsibilities for professional skills training lay, and to identify areas of duplication, noting that it was crucial to ensure that there was a clear pathway for access to training for students as they progressed through postgraduate study.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Steering Committee supported the proposals for strategic initiatives in the Graduate School as set out in paper SC.42/13-14.
- (b) That the Report of the Review of the Warwick Graduate School and the response from the BGS be considered by the Senate at its meeting on 29 January 2014.

83/13-14

Report from the Fees Working Group

CONSIDERED:

A paper outlining the main items of business from the meeting of the Fees Working Group held on 3 October 2013 (SC.37/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That the Fees Working Group had considered a proposal from Warwick Business School that the 2014/15 fee for the MA Industrial Relations and Managing Human Resources (MAIRMHR) programme be set at £25,000, in line with the approved fees of all other WBS Specialist and Generalist Masters.
- (b) That the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer had delegated the role of Chair of the Fees Working Group to the Academic Registrar from the start of the 2013/14 academic year.
- (c) That Professor Jan Palmowski would be the academic representative on the Group, and that the new Head of Admissions would replace the Senior Assistant Registrar (Postgraduate Admissions) on the Group once an appointment had been made to the currently vacant post.
- (d) That following representation from the Students' Union during the fees-setting process, the Group had given consideration to the introduction of a fixed-fee policy.
- (e) That the Group had resolved that the adoption of a fixed-fee policy was not appropriate for the University, noting that currently only 19% of Russell Group institutions operated such a policy, and that feedback from these institutions had not presented any compelling argument as to its benefits or value.
- (f) That the Group would be reviewing the timetable for fees setting for the 2015/16 academic year, noting that there was no longer a clear rationale for considering

standard and non-standard fees separately.

- (g) That the Students' Union would be invited to be involved in consultations on student fees at a much earlier stage in the process than in previous fees-setting rounds.

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (h) That the Students' Union remained supportive of a fixed-fees policy.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (i) That the University had hardship arrangements in place to assist students in managing unexpected changes in fees during the academic year, and that enhanced guidance on management of finances for students was being developed.

RESOLVED:

That the 2014/15 fee for the MAIRMHR programme be set at £25,000, as outlined in paper SC.37/13-14.

84/13-14

Membership of Senate Committees

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the amendment of the constitution of the Academic Resourcing Committee to include the position of Deputy Chair, and the appointment of the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning and Resources) *ex officio* to the role, be approved as set out in paper SC.49/13-14.
- (b) That the appointment of Dr Thomas Crowther from the Department of Philosophy to sit on the Undergraduate Studies Committee of the Board of the Faculty of Arts as the representative from the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences, as set out in paper SC.49/13-14, be noted.

85/13-14

National Student Survey Consultation: Russell Group Response

RECEIVED:

The Russell Group's response to the HEFCE consultation on the National Student Survey (SC.50/13-14).

KS/CS/Steering/Minutes/2013-2014/12-02-2013