

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 2 August 2010

- Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor L Bridges,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor C Hughes,
Professor K Lamberts,
Professor M Taylor,
Professor P Winstanley
Mr D Stevens
- Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor S Bruzzi, Professor R Higgott, Professor S Palmer,
Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Head of Governance
Support Services.
- In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Director of Estates, Finance
Director, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Ms R
Roke, Mr G Edwards and Professor R Dashwood (for item 740/09-10), Director of
Student Careers and Skills (for item 741/09-10), Senior Assistant Registrar
(Management Information and Planning (for items 742/09-10 and 743/09-10),
Director of Management Information and Planning (for item 743/09-10).

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor welcomed Ms Eliza Gaffney, Executive Officer (VC's Office) and Mr Daniel Stevens, President of the Students' Union, to their first meeting of the Committee.

728/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2010 be approved, subject to the following amendment (deletions ~~struck through~~, additions underlined):

715/09-10
(...)

- (b) That the establishment of a Biomedical Research Unit had become a priority and would be of a value of ~~£5M~~ approximately £5M over five years should the grant be awarded.

729/09-10 Higher Education Academy (minute 506/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the Higher Education Academy (HEA) had recently undertaken an internal review of its focus, operations, work programme and structures and that the new Chief Executive, Professor Craig Mahoney, had written to institutions engaged with the Academy to advise that the HEA would be issuing a briefing document on 17 August to those parties in the sector who engaged with the Academy.

(By the Registrar)

- (b) That the HEA had issued an estimated deadline of the end of August 2010 for responses to the briefing document.

RESOLVED:

That the HEA briefing document be circulated as appropriate to members of the Committee and other colleagues once received on 17 August 2010, with a view to a draft response being considered at the next meeting of the Committee provisionally due to be held on 31 August 2010 if necessary.

730/09-10 Digital Economy Act (minute 717/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That, as resolved at the previous meeting, the Librarian had contacted UUK who had confirmed that it intended to respond to the Ofcom consultation on the Digital Economy Act and online copyright infringement by the deadline of 31 July 2010.
- (b) That the University had also submitted an individual response highlighting the key issues for higher education institutions such as Warwick.

RESOLVED:

That the UUK and the University responses to the Ofcom consultation on the Digital Economy Act and online copyright infringement be circulated for the information of members once the UUK response had been published.

731/09-10 National Pay Negotiations (minute 495/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the Vice-Chancellor had received a letter from UCU informing that, as UCU had rejected the national pay offer as proposed by UCEA at the meeting held on 28 May 2010, UCU was now in dispute with the University and, should agreement not be reached, was mandated to ballot members for industrial action.
- (b) That a letter from UCEA had also been received confirming that it was seeking clarification from UCU on the perceived dispute as, in their view, the national joint discussions had not concluded and that Acas assistance would be available should all parties be in agreement.
- (c) That the local relationship with UCU colleagues remained positive with continued engagement on matters of relevance.

732/09-10 Research Excellence Framework (minute 711/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the additional information regarding the Research Excellence Framework (REF) panel structure and details of how to apply to be Chairs of Sub-Panels and panel members had been circulated to Heads of Department to encourage colleagues to nominate themselves, together with an abridged version of the relevant Steering Committee minute from the previous meeting.

733/09-10 Universities That Count Survey (minute 708/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That Warwick would feature in an article to be published in the THE regarding the outcomes of the sustainability index of the Universities That Count survey, noting that, as reported at the previous meeting, the University had been ranked in the top five institutions on this index.

734/09-10 Appointment of Academic Registrar

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the University was pleased to announce that Dr Mike Glover, currently School Secretary at Warwick Medical School, had been appointed as Academic Registrar to replace Nicola Owen who would take up the post of Deputy Registrar in September 2010.
- (b) That arrangements were being made to appoint to the School Secretary position and to cover the period of transition with Dr Glover taking up the position of Academic Registrar in early October 2010.

735/09-10 Athena SWAN Award (minute 559/09-10)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the University had been awarded an Athena SWAN Bronze award recognising good practice relating to gender equality in Science, Engineering and Technology.
- (b) That, in addition, the Departments of Physics and Chemistry had submitted individual applications and had both been awarded Silver awards, noting that the Department of Physics had previously received a JUNO award which signified the department's culture was gender friendly and had fair and equitable policies.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee extend its thanks and congratulations to all colleagues involved in securing these awards.

736/09-10 UCEA Consultations: Hutton Review of Fair Pay in the Public Sector (minute 681/09-10 refers) and Fixed Retirement Age

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the University had received details of a UCEA consultation relating to the Hutton Review of fair pay in the public sector, it being noted that higher education was not classified as being in public sector.
- (a) That UCEA had also circulated a consultation relating to the proposed phase out of the default retirement age between April 2011 and 1 October 2011 after which date it would not be possible to compulsorily retire employees.

RESOLVED:

- (b) That the Registrar consider whether the University would wish to respond to the UCEA consultation by the deadline of 6 September 2010.
- (c) That a draft response to the UCEA consultation regarding the phase out of the default retirement age be prepared for consideration of the Committee prior to submission by the deadline of 1 October 2010.

- 737/09-10 HESES Audit (minute 635/09-10 refers)
- REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
- That the outcome of the HESES institutional audit held between 21 and 23 June 2010 had been delayed and would be received in the week commencing 16 August 2010, with the Committee being informed of the outcome at its next meeting.
- 738/09-10 HEFCE CL 21/2010 Guiding Principles for International Activity
- REPORTED: (by the Registrar)
- That HEFCE had provided guiding principles for international activity which amongst other things sought to manage the use of public funds for international travel.
- RESOLVED:
- That the HEFCE Guiding Principles for International Activity be received at the next meeting of the Committee for the information of members.
- 739/09-10 UUK: Spending Review
- RECEIVED:
- Information from UUK on its work relating to the Spending Review, including a recent letter sent to the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (SC.492/09-10).
- REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)
- (a) That the letter to the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills provided a good compilation of the key concerns for higher education but its length was likely to minimise the desired impact.
- (By the Finance Director)
- (b) That she would have welcomed a critical reflection of the Wakeham report on the full economic cost of research.
- 740/09-10 Major Research Proposal: International Institute for Product and Service Innovation
- CONSIDERED:
- A revised proposal from Warwick Manufacturing Group to establish an International Institute for Product and Service Innovation (IIPSI) highlighting an increase in funding to be raised from other sources to guarantee the project (SC.497/09-10).
- REPORTED: (by Mr G Edwards, Warwick Manufacturing Group)
- (a) That the AWM funding provisionally allocated to the project had been reduced following Government budget cuts and the University was required to secure an additional £935k to guarantee the project.
- (b) That Warwick Manufacturing Group intended to cover the shortfall via an increase in new research activity within the three areas in IIPSI, namely digital media, polymer electronics and user focused design and believed that the risk of not securing the requisite level of funding based on historic funding data was low to medium, it being noted that the University would be expected to meet the shortfall should the research income not be sufficient to cover the additional funding required.

- (c) That the extra spend outlined in the revised proposal would peak in 2013/14 at circa £235k and that re-profiled figures for the building had yet to be received.
- (d) That 'teaching' activities were excluded under the conditions of the 20 year period of useful economic life of the proposed new building.
- (e) That Warwick Manufacturing Group had had detailed discussions with AWM regarding the conditions related to the ERDF funding allocated to ensure the University would be able to demonstrate at any potential audit that it had fulfilled the requirements of the funding.

(By the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (f) That it was vital to the success and management of risks to the University within the project that the University clearly understood the range of eligible activities.

RESOLVED:

That the Finance Director continue to liaise with Warwick Manufacturing Group to ensure that a further period of due diligence would be undertaken on the following areas prior to consideration of the revised proposal by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, noting that the revised documentation should be received by AWM by 6 September 2010 :

- (i) Verification of projected research income within IIPSI activities within the context of the overall research funding forecasts for Warwick Manufacturing Group;
- (ii) Evidence from AWM clarifying the range of eligible activities which could be undertaken in IIPSI during the 20 years useful economic life defined by ERDF conditions; and
- (iii) Exploration of the future potential issues regarding spend following the end of the ERDF funding period and the closure of AWM.

741/09-10 Draft University HEFCE Employability Statement (minute 612/09-10 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft University employability statement which HEFCE required to be published on the UniStats website by 31 August 2010 (SC.496/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Student Careers and Skills)

- (a) That, although the initial deadline was 31 August 2010, the University would be able to revised the published statement in future to reflect changes in provision, strategic focus or to tailor it more effectively to the audiences.
- (b) That the relationship between the employability statement and other published statements and commentaries by the University on the UniStats website remained unclear.

(By the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (c) That it would be advisable to review the University's statement once those of competitor institutions became available to ensure Warwick appeared distinctive.

(By the President of the Students' Union)

- (d) That he would appreciate some focus on the work of the Students' Union in the statement and how its activities helped to differentiate Warwick's offering from that of peer institutions.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of Student Careers and Skills liaise with the President of the Students' Union regarding possible greater reference to the Students' Union in the statement.
- (b) That, as set out in SC.496/09-10, the statement be published on the UniStats website by the deadline of 31 August, subject to the amendments discussed at the meeting and noting that the statement would be revised in the future following further consideration as outlined above.
- (c) That the Committee record its thanks to the Director of Student Careers and Skills for her work on the University employability statement.

742/09-10

HESA Performance Indicators 2010

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Management Information and Planning) presenting the University's performance in the 2010 HESA performance indicators (SC.494/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Management Information and Planning))

- (a) That the University continued to perform well in comparison to other Russell Group institutions but that there were areas for further exploration including falls in the University's non-completion and graduate employment rates.

(By the Deputy Registrar)

- (b) That the University was conducting an internal audit relating to students leaving the institution and/or returning to study, including possible reasons for this and the process for effective intervention by the institution.

(By the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (c) That it would be useful to include postgraduate research students in the internal audit on non-completion.

RESOLVED:

That the Senior Assistant Registrar (Management Information and Planning) provide the report of the University's performance in the 2010 HESA Performance Indicators as set out in SC.494/09-10, together with any additional relevant information, to the Academic Quality and Standards Committee for its consideration.

743/09-10

HEFCE Recurrent Grant – July Update

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Director and Senior Assistant Registrar of Management Information and Planning presenting a summary of the changes to the University's recurrent grant settlement for the 2010/11 financial year since the previous HEFCE grant letter received in March 2010 (SC.495/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Management Information and Planning)

- (a) That cuts were still being applied to higher education funding and the University had experienced a reduction of circa £424k in the Teaching grant compared to the March

notification, noting that overall the grant settlement had increased principally due to the allocation of additional funding for extra student numbers.

- (b) That the University was required to make efficiency savings by March 2011 in order to receive the full allocation of additional support for student numbers under the HEFCE University Modernisation Fund and that the University might be audited to verify the levels of savings achieved.

744/09-10 Liberating the NHS: Report of the Arm's Length Bodies Review

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Project Director – Research Governance and the Assistant Registrar (Registrar's Office) summarising the recent Department of Health paper 'Liberating the NHS: report of the arm's length bodies review' and potential implications for Warwick of the proposals (SC.498/09-10).

REPORTED: (By the Registrar)

- (a) That the recent Human Tissue Authority audit of the University had been positive and that the proposals in the Department of Health paper to consolidate the HTA's regulatory function with other similar functions within the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and the National Patient Safety Agency would have implications for the University.
- (b) That the proposals raised queries regarding the sustainability of the NHSI in its current form, currently located on campus in Coventry House.

745/09-10 Invitation to Apply for HEFCE Funding for e-Marketplace Systems

CONSIDERED:

The draft University application to HEFCE for funding to develop e-Marketplace systems (SC.489/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Finance Director)

That the role of the Project Champion, to be a colleague from an academic department, was crucial to the success of the overall project and that she was currently identifying an appropriate colleague to undertake this role.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the bid as set out in SC.489/09-10 be approved for submission to HEFCE by the deadline of 6 August 2010 with a view to obtaining £60,000 to part-fund the implementation of an eProcurement system.
- (b) That a Project Implementation Board be established, chaired by the Finance Director as Senior Responsible Officer, with appropriate representation from the Purchasing Office, IT Services and from user departments, including the appointment of a Project Champion from an academic department.
- (c) That the Project Implementation Board finalise the project implementation budget as the tender is prepared and the outcome of the HEFCE bid was known, for submission to Financial Plan Sub-Committee for proposed inclusion in the final draft of the 2010 Financial Plan.

746/09-10

I/2010/056: UUK GuildHE Review of External Examining Arrangements for the UK – Discussion Paper

CONSIDERED:

A UUK I-note inviting members to comment on initial proposals for strengthening external examining arrangements in the UK (SC.491/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the proposals would result in increased bureaucracy and demonstrated a lack of trust in institutions to manage their own quality assurance processes.

(By the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (b) That the University should consider internally the role and expectations of external examiners and that given the inefficiencies in the current system would be likely to increase under the proposed system.

RESOLVED:

That the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) and the Academic Quality and Standards Committee prepare a draft response to the discussion paper referenced in SC.491/09-10 for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting prior to the deadline of 1 October 2010.

747/09-10

I/2010/053: UUK Response to HEFCE Consultation on Principles and Features of the Teaching Funding Method

RECEIVED:

The Universities UK response to the recent HEFCE Consultation on the key principles and features of a revised teaching funding method (SC.490/09-10).

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes/2009-2010/Aug10/02Aug10