

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 3 March 2014

- Present Provost (Chair),
 Professor A Caesar,
 Professor Christina Hughes,
 Professor Christopher Hughes,
 Professor T Jones,
 Professor J Palmowski,
 Mr B Sundell,
 Professor S Swain,
 Professor P Thomas,
 Professor P Winstanley,
 Professor L Young.
- Apologies: Vice-Chancellor and President, Professor A Coats, Professor M Taylor.
- In Attendance: Registrar and Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Group Finance Director, Director of Human Resources, Director of Development and External Affairs, Deputy Academic Registrar, Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office), Assistant Registrar (Governance), Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment (for item 173/13-14), Director, International Office (for item 173/13-14).
- 166/13-14 Minutes
- RESOLVED:
- That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2014 be approved.
- 167/13-14 Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Social Sciences)
- REPORTED: (by the Provost)
- (a) That Professor Simon Swain had been appointed to the post of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Social Sciences).
- (b) That Professor Swain had served as Chair of the Faculty of Arts at Warwick since 2011, and would take up his new role in April 2014.
- RESOLVED:
- That Professor Swain be congratulated on his appointment.
- 168/13-14 Students' Union Elections
- REPORTED: (by the President of the Students' Union)
- (a) That the Students Union elections for the 2014/15 Sabbatical Officers had taken place during the week commencing 24 February 2014.
- (b) That the election events ran smoothly, although the voter turnout was notably lower than in the 2013/14 elections, possibly due to fewer candidates running for posts.
- (c) That Cathryn (Cat) Turhan, currently Welfare Officer, had been elected President of the Students' Union for 2014/15.

RESOLVED:

That the congratulations of the Steering Committee be extended to Ms Turhan and the other successful candidates.

169/13-14

TEDEx Warwick

REPORTED: (by the Provost)

- (a) That TEDxWarwick, an annual conference held in the Arts Centre's Butterworth Hall, took place on Sunday 2 March 2014, and featured talks from a world-leading stem cell surgeon, the first ever female presidential candidate of Cameroon and a world-leading violinist, amongst many others.
- (b) That this was TEDx Warwick's 5th annual conference since its inception as a relatively small-scale student event, and that it had expanded to become a full-day, 1,200-strong world-class conference attracting intellectually curious participants from across the UK and Europe.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (c) That a number of high-profile speakers who had attended many TEDx events internationally, had commented that Warwick's was the most impressive and well-organised.

RESOLVED:

That all organisers and facilitators of TEDx Warwick be formally commended on the success of the event.

170/13-14

Warwick Varsity 2014

REPORTED: (by the Provost)

That despite losing the Rugby Union match by a single point, Warwick won an overall victory against Coventry University in the annual Varsity contest.

171/13-14

Love Warwick 2014

REPORTED (by the Provost):

- (a) That on Thursday 27 February 2014, the University joined nearly 100 educational institutions worldwide to participate in the second annual Student Engagement and Philanthropy Day.
- (b) That the initiative, organised by CASE Affiliated Student Advancement Programs, was designed to increase student understanding of philanthropy.
- (c) That such events were highly significant, noting that as a charity, donations to the University from alumni and friends contributed towards improving the Warwick student experience, providing for example: scholarships, learning facilities, research bursaries and sports equipment.

172/13-14

Rootes Dining Grid

REPORTED: (by the Provost)

- (a) That following a pilot scheme launched earlier in the Spring term 2014, the University had announced that it was to create increased study space in Rootes in a new 'Dining Grid', to be open in March 2014 and fully operational by the end of the Spring term.

- (b) That the wifi-enabled multi-functional space would enable students to heat-up their own food, study individually and in groups, and to book rehearsal space, and would also be used for additional exam capacity during the peak exam period in the summer term.

173/13-14

Admissions 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 outreach and widening participation (SC.92/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment)

- (a) That home/EU and overseas undergraduate (UG) applications had increased from the comparative point in 2013/14 in excess of the overall national increase of 7%.
- (b) That the figures for home/EU Postgraduate Taught (PGT) suggested a significant increase, however, this was largely accounted for by a rise in applications to the MBChB and an externally imposed change in the PGCE admissions process, and that with this data excluded, PGT application numbers had declined.
- (c) That the number of applications and offers for both home/EU and overseas research students had seen a healthy increase.
- (d) That planning was underway for the University's open days, and that the Student Admissions and Recruitment Office (SARO) was exploring options to increase central support for departmental open days, hence allowing for the provision of additional services on these days.
- (e) That the annual monitoring return to OFFA and HEFCE for the access agreement and the interim Widening Participation Strategic Statement had been submitted on 14 January 2014.

(by the Director, International Office)

- (f) That the new Immigration Bill was causing significant concern in the higher education sector, as it was likely to further increase the perception of the UK as unwelcoming to international students.
- (g) That the rebranding of the Higher Education Foundation Programme to the Warwick International Foundation Programme, along with a guaranteed conditional offer of a place on an undergraduate course across all academic streams had resulted in strong growth in applications, offers and acceptances.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (h) That the Student, Marketing and Admissions Strategy Group continued to meet on a regular basis to monitor and direct priorities and strategic decision making, and that the direct reporting line to the Academic Resourcing Committee was helpful in positioning student recruitment in the wider academic planning process.
- (i) That on 23 April 2014, the Director of SARO, Mr Andrew Higgins, would be taking up the new post of Director of the Academic Office.

RESOLVED:

That the thanks of the Committee be extended to Andrew Higgins for his work during his time in post as Director of SARO.

174/13-14

Student Number Control 2014/15

RECEIVED:

A paper outlining the implications of the 2014/15 Student Number Control (SNC) for Warwick (SC.93/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That on 14 February 2014, HEFCE had written to institutions regarding their SNC limits for the 2014/15 intake, and confirming the addition of 30,000 extra places for 2014/15 and the removal of the SNC from 2015/16.
- (b) That the University had modestly overshot its SNC limit for 2013/14 entry, which had resulted in a grant adjustment to the 2013/14 teaching grant, and that a similar level of grant adjustment would apply to the 2014/15 and 2015/16 grants, corresponding to the study cycle of the additional students.
- (c) That the University would undertake modelling to determine the viability of under-recruiting against the SNC in 2014/15 in order to eliminate the negative adjustments.

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

- (d) That widening participation targets increased on an annual basis, and as such, it was important for the University to ensure that its recruitment strategy could enable such targets to be achieved, in addition to remaining within its SNC limit.
- (e) That a sub-group of the Widening Participation Steering Group was developing a contextual data policy to provide guidance to admissions staff, particularly for key periods such as confirmation and Clearing.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (f) That the University was committed to widening participation, and that the contextual data policy should be transparent and embedded into the recruitment process across the University.

175/13-14

Creation of a School of Modern Languages and Cultures

CONSIDERED:

An update on proposals to create a new School of Modern Languages and Cultures (SC.96/13-14, Restricted).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That at its meeting on 16 December 2013, the Steering Committee considered a proposal to create a School of Modern Languages and Cultures, and resolved that the vision of a formalised structure for the units forming the Sub-Faculty of Modern Languages be supported, and that the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer be authorised to assemble an implementation group to complete an impact assessment of the proposal.
- (b) That consultation had taken place with the Boards of the Faculties at their respective meetings in February 2014, and an extraordinary joint meeting of the Staff and Student Liaison Committees in the Sub-Faculty were planned for 10 March 2014, to which Students' Union representatives would also be invited.

- (c) That the implication of the establishment of the new School would be the dis-establishment of the Sub-Faculty and its constituent units, to be replaced by a single new Department known as the School of Modern Languages and Cultures.
- (d) That there was a strong preference within the Sub-Faculty to informally retain the term 'department' for the disciplinary sub-units within the School given that these were closely linked to external teaching and research profiles, noting however, that under Ordinance, use of this term would be in name only.
- (e) That the Implementation Group recommended that the creation of the School be implemented with effect from 1 August 2014, to take account of the start of the financial year.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Arts)

- (f) That the proposals represented a positive development for Languages at Warwick, and that the Deputy Registrar and the Assistant Registrar (Strategy and Change) be thanked for their work in co-ordinating the activities of the Implementation Group.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (50th Anniversary))

- (g) That the proposed model for the School was excellent, and that the ability to informally maintain the use of the term 'departments' was welcome, noting that it would allow greater flexibility for the University to remain distinctive in an evolving part of the sector.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (h) That in establishing the School, care should be taken to clarify that the term 'department' was for external presentation only, and did not carry any currency in terms of constitutional or resourcing matters.

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (i) That it was anticipated that the developments would be welcomed by students, noting that the changes were intended to enhance the student experience and were unlikely to cause concern.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Senate)

- (a) That the academic vision for the creation of a School of Modern Languages and Cultures with effect from 1 August 2014, as set out in paper SC.96/13-14, Restricted, be recommended to the Council.
- (b) That, subject to the approval of the academic vision, the establishment of the School of Modern Languages and Cultures be recommended to the Council, noting for the first time the necessary revisions to the University Ordinances 7 on the Constitutions of the Boards of the Faculties and University Ordinance 8 on Sub-Faculties, as set out in appendix 4 of paper SC.96/13-14, Restricted.
- (c) That, subject to the approval of the academic vision, the disestablishment of the Sub Faculty of Modern Languages, the Departments of French Studies, German Studies, Hispanic Studies and Italian and the Language Centre be recommended to the Council, noting for the first time the necessary revisions to the University Ordinances as set out in appendix 4 of paper SC.96/13-14 Restricted.

176/13-14 Senate Business

RESOLVED:

That the items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 12 March 2014 be approved as set out in the papers circulated for that meeting, subject to the revisions as agreed by the Steering Committee.

177/13-14 Changes to the Access and Student Success Information Required by HEFCE (2014/15) and OFFA (2015/16)

RECEIVED:

A circular from HEFCE outlining changes to the access and student success information required by HEFCE in 2014/15 and OFFA in 2015/16 (SC.94/13-14).

178/13-14 Charging for Home Office Immigration and Nationality Services 2014/15

RECEIVED:

A letter from the Home Office setting out proposals for fee changes for visas, immigration and nationality, to take effect from 6 April 2014 subject to Parliamentary approval.

KS/CS/Steering/Minutes/2013-2014/03-03-2014 Open