

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 8 May 2012

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor S Croft,
Professor M Finn,
Professor C Hughes,
Professor T Jones,
Professor J Labbe,
Professor S Swain,
Professor M Taylor,
Professor P Winstanley,
Mr L Bøe.

Apologies: Professor P Thomas.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Director of Finance and Financial Strategy, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Director of Estates, Head of Corporate Governance, Administrative Officer (Governance), Director of Research Support Services (for item 481/11-12), Deputy Director of Research Support Services (for item 481/11-12), Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance, Risk and Continuity) (for item 482/11-12), Head of Student Finance (for item 483/11-12).

476/11-12 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2012 be approved.

477/11-12 Ofsted Consultation on Proposals for Initial Teacher Education Inspections (minute 411/11-12 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, following consideration of the Steering Committee by correspondence, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor had taken Chair's Action on behalf of the Steering Committee to approve the University's response to the Ofsted Consultation on Proposals for Initial Teacher Education Inspections, as set out in SC.332/11-12, and that it had been submitted to Ofsted prior to the deadline of 2 May 2012.

478/11-12 RCUK Consultation on a Capital Investment Roadmap (minute 387/11-12 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, following consideration of the Steering Committee by correspondence, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor had taken Chair's Action on behalf of the Steering Committee to approve the University's response to the RCUK Consultation on a Capital Investment Roadmap, as set out in SC.329/11-12 and subject to minor amendments, and that it had been submitted to the RCUK prior to the deadline of 4 May 2012.

479/11-12 ProQuest Proposal: Trial Project for Retrospective and Prospective Theses (minute 378/11-12 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Acting Librarian regarding the ProQuest Proposal to digitise retrospective theses, to address the issues raised in discussion at the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 5 March 2012 (SC.328/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the ProQuest proposal had been discussed by the Board of Graduate Studies and that wider issues surrounding the digitisation of theses had been raised.
- (b) That the deadline for commitment to ProQuest's current terms was 1 May 2012, but that a partnership agreement could still be discussed following this deadline.

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

- (c) That there remained a risk that some publishers, particularly within the Humanities, might consider digitised theses to constitute "pre-published" work, and therefore early career researchers could be negatively impacted.

RESOLVED:

That the partnership agreement with ProQuest be re-considered by the Steering Committee following the appointment of the new Librarian.

480/11-12 Coventry House

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That it was proposed that the name of Coventry House be reverted to Senate House.

(by the Registrar)

- (b) That this recommendation would be put to the Chair of the Building Committee for approval.

481/11-12 UUK Consultation on a Draft Research Integrity Concordat

CONSIDERED:

A request from the UUK for input to the consultation on a draft research integrity concordat, together with the draft Concordat and the University's draft response to the consultation (SC.336/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Research Support Services)

- (a) That the Concordat did not add any value to the framework provided by the UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO), particularly the UKRIO Guidelines that the University adheres to.
- (b) That the requirement to make an annual statement to identify activities undertaken to implement the Concordat was felt unnecessary and that the value of such reporting over and above the current reporting of exceptions where concerns about research integrity have been raised was unclear.
- (c) That other institutions intended to voice their concern regarding the purpose of the Concordat in the context of the existing UKRIO guidelines, which are functioning well.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Arts and Social Sciences))

- (d) That it was important that the University's response to this consultation was in line with other Russell Group institutions.

(by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

- (e) That the response should incorporate consideration of the particular requirements of research integrity with the NHS and that this should be included in a collective Russell Group response should one be collated.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (f) That the use of the term "researcher" within the Concordat should be more clearly defined, with particular reference to the status of research students.

RESOLVED:

That the University's draft response to the UUK Consultation on a Draft Research Integrity Concordat be approved as set out in paper SC.336/11-12 and subject to amendments, and submitted to the UUK prior to the deadline of 11 May 2012.

482/11-12

University's Risk Identification and Assessment for Spring 2012

CONSIDERED:

The revised University Risk Register and Status Summary, to be considered by the Council at its meeting on 16 May 2012 (SC.337/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Corporate Governance)

- (a) That the risk management process was currently under review to better reflect the maturity of institutional risk management.
- (b) That there were a number of newly identified areas of potential risks and that consideration of how these new risks could be incorporated within the Risk Register was required, noting also that the assessed status of these new risks should be considered.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (c) That some of the newly identified areas of risk could be considered to constitute new dimensions of risks currently articulated in the Risk Register.
- (d) That the status of Risk Res 1 "Lack of sustained growth in the University's quality and capacity for research, innovation and knowledge transfer" should be considered to remain as Red, noting current research income performance and the importance of preparation for the forthcoming REF in particular.

(by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

- (e) That the identification of "Inability to attract a sustained level of funding as a result of changes to the NHS" as a newly identified area of risk was in response to the very significant decrease in the NHS budget expected over the coming years, which could impact the Medical School in multiple ways.

(by the Registrar)

- (f) That the presentation of risks within the University's Risk Register reflected the perception of the University community, following identification of departmental risks through the planning process as well as from other sources.
- (g) That the Council considered the University's Risk Register as a strategic document, but that time-limited and specific risks such as "Olympic engagement" also needed to be considered, assessed and managed as they arose.

(by the Director of Finance and Financial Strategy)

- (h) That Risk F2 "Imbalance in supply and demand of infrastructure hampers University growth and achievement of goals" should be revised to incorporate the new risk "Maintenance of University buildings".
- (i) That the status of Risk F4 "The University's financial stability and/or the integrity of its financial systems is compromised" should be revised to Green/Amber-Green to reflect the fact that significant work had already been undertaken or was underway to address the UK Bribery Act, through amended financial regulations and communication and guidance.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (j) That the reputational risk of potential security breaches should be incorporated into the narrative for Risk SA1 "Disaster or calamity significantly impairing key University work or reputation".
- (k) That Risk T8 "Incurring sanctions from OFFA as a result of not achieving the University's requirements under its OFFA agreement" should be incorporated into Risk T7 "Not achieving an optimal level of student recruitment" as a part of achieving the recruitment objective of diversity in the student population.
- (l) That the status of the Risk T9 "Loss of the University's Highly Trusted Sponsor (HTS) status from the UKBA" should remain as a stand-alone risk with a Red status.

RESOLVED:

That the University Risk Register and Status Summary, as set out in paper SC.337/11-12, be revised subject to the amendments discussed in the meeting, prior to circulation of papers to members of the Council during the week commencing 7 May 2012.

483/11-12

Changes to Withdrawal Policies for Undergraduate Students from 2012-13

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Head of Student Finance proposing changes to the University's policy on tuition fee liabilities for undergraduate student withdrawals from 2012/13 (SC.338/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Student Finance)

- (a) That, under the current policy on withdrawals for undergraduate students, full-time students were charged pro rata per week for each week of their course that they were in attendance.
- (b) That the University charged withdrawing part-time students for the term of any modules that they had already started, so a part-time student who started a term paid for the full term.

- (c) That BIS and the NUS had requested that institutional withdrawal policies on fee levels should correlate to a student's drawdown of their tuition fee loan with the Student Loans Company (SLC).
- (d) That moving to the proposed withdrawal policy would be cost neutral for the University.
- (e) That BIS had not yet legislated to make institutions charge fees in accordance with the student liability policy from 2012/13 onwards, but had indicated that they would do so in the future if required.
- (f) That the University was already required to confirm student attendance to the SLC at three separate liability points.
- (g) That the process would be less of an issue for students withdrawing and restarting a course within the same institution, than it would be for those transferring from a different institution.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (h) That all full-time undergraduate students who withdraw from their course of study would be charged tuition fees as follows:
 - (i) Attendance in term 1 25% of the annual tuition fee will be payable
 - (ii) Attendance in term 2 50% of the annual tuition fee will be payable
 - (iii) Attendance in term 3 100% of the annual tuition fee will be payable
- (i) That all part-time undergraduate students who withdraw from their course of study would be charged tuition fees as per full-time students where fees are charged on an annual basis.

(by the Registrar)

- (j) That there had been confusion within the sector about how best to apply this policy in the context of the new fees regime, and that BIS and the NUS were attempting to provide clarity.
- (k) That, given the move to the proposed withdrawal policy would be cost neutral for the University, it would be beneficial for the University to provide this clarity.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed changes to the University's policy on tuition fee liabilities for undergraduate student withdrawals from 2012/13 be approved in principle, as set out in paper SC.338/11-12.

484/11-12

JISC Survey Results

RECEIVED:

A paper summarising the outcomes of the the 7th annual JISC infoNet, GuildHE and Universities UK Information Legislation and Management Survey, in the context of Freedom of Information requests received by the University (SC.333/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Corporate Governance)

- (a) That the 2011 JISC survey showed that the number of requests being made under the Freedom of Information Act (FoI) and Data Protection Act (DPA) and the Environment Information Regulations (EIR) had continued the general upward trend

witnessed in previous years, particularly with regard to “Financial information” and “Student issues and numbers”.

- (b) That, as with all previous years, journalists continued to be the most active category of requester.
- (c) That research undertaken by JISC of seven HE institutions calculated that a university spends 5 hours and 2 minutes on average to respond to a FoI request, at an average cost of £99.
- (d) That these figures did not accord with the University’s own estimates of the true costs of responding to Fols, including significant staff time for consideration and approval, and unfortunately did not offer much support to the sector’s general case that this legislation created an excessive burden.

485/11-12 Students’ Union Sabbatical Officer Elections (minute 433/11-12 refers)

REPORTED: (by the President of the Students’ Union)

That Ben Sundell was announced on Friday 4 May 2012 as the successful candidate for the vacant full time Sabbatical Officer position of Welfare & Campaigns Officer, following a re-election process due to the original election winner Ben Hodges stepping down.

KMS/KP/steersshare/minutes/201112/May12/8May12