

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 9 May 2011

Present: Vice-Chancellor,  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,  
Professor S Bruzzi,  
Professor A Caesar,  
Professor C Hughes,  
Professor J Labbe,  
Professor K Lamberts,  
Professor M Taylor,  
Professor P Winstanley,  
Mr D Stevens.

Apologies: Professor M Finn, Professor T Jones.

In Attendance: Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of HR, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Director of Estates, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Acting Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer (Governance), International Research Development Officer (Research Support Services) (for item 605/10-11), Director of Research Support Services (for item 606/10-11), Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment (for items 609/10-11 and 610/10-11), Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) for item 611/10-11).

604/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2011 be approved, subject to the following amendments (deletions ~~struck through~~, additions underlined):

591/10-11 (...)

- (d) That the involvement of the Creative Writing ~~Research Group~~ Programme of the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies would strengthen the interdisciplinary aspects of the bid.

(...)

RESOLVED:

That the Expression of Interest to host an AHRC Knowledge Exchange Hub be approved as set out in SC.421/10-11, subject to amendments to include the Creative Writing ~~Research Group~~ Programme and revisions of indicative costs as discussed with the Finance Director, and submitted prior to the deadline of 27 April 2011.

(...)

605/10-11 Consultation on Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation (minute 483/10-11 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The University's draft response to the European Commission's consultation on the Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation (SC.435/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the International Research Development Officer (Research Support Services))

- (a) That the University's draft response to the consultation had been informed by discussions at the meeting of the Steering Committee on 14 March 2011, submission to the BIS consultation on the EU Framework Programme sent on 4 January 2011, and the University Strategy.

(by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)

- (b) That the University's response should include commentary under question 27, to highlight that a key obstacle to ERA's competitiveness with areas of research strength, such as the USA and China, was the portability of pensions.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (c) That the University's response to question 24 could be amended to address the strengthening of the role of women in science and innovation, beyond the issue identified relating to maternity leave.

RESOLVED:

That the International Research Development Officer (Research Support Services) would amend the draft responses to questions 24 and 27, and submit the University's response to the European Commission's consultation on the Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation, before the deadline of 20 May 2011.

606/10-11

Research Strategy Update (minute 338/10-11 refers)

CONSIDERED:

An update report on the volume and value of research award applications for 2010/11 to date (SC.436/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research)

- (a) That projection of the total value of awards by the end of the academic year 2010/11, based on progress to date, was £80 million.
- (b) That there were complex reasons for the lower value of awards overall compared to previous years, including lower success rates with a variety of sponsors, such as AWM, EPSRC, DEFRA and ESRC.

(by the Director of Research Support Services)

- (c) That the University continued to maintain a level of award income of £50-60 million of core funding, but that funding from major sponsors was less consistent.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (d) That it would be essential to consider the volume and value of research award applications for 2010/11 to date at departmental level.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the scheduled Research Strategy update report would include further detail on the volume and value of research award applications in response to the discussion of the Steering Committee, and would be considered by the Committee on 16 May 2011.

- (b) That the scheduled Research Strategy update report would also establish what proportion of AWM funding was capital as opposed to recurrent funding, and explain the differential in the decrease in funding won from sponsors, such as DEFRA.

607/10-11 Open Day

RESOLVED:

That the University Open Day held on Saturday 7 May 2011 had been a success, and the thanks of the Steering Committee be extended to all staff and students involved in the organisation of the day.

608/10-11 NUS Executive

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That congratulations were extended to Daniel Stevens for his election to the membership of the NUS National Executive.

609/10-11 Admissions and Recruitment Update

CONSIDERED:

An update report on Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation (SC.437/10-11).

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

- (a) That increased grade requirements had led to insurance acceptances falling by a third compared to 2009/10.
- (b) That postgraduate applications had increased, for both taught and research courses.
- (c) That, with regard to UKBA and visa requirements, work had begun to assess and mitigate the impact on existing and future applicants, as well as current offer holders who were obliged to meet new requirements.
- (d) That enquiries from prospective students and parents at recruitment events and the University's Open Day were increasingly detailed with regard to Warwick's offer under the new fee regime.
- (e) That he was working with the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies to communicate implications to students affected by the change of the standard registration period for full time doctoral students from 3 years to 4 years.

(by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (f) That there was a consistent issue with under-recruitment to Early Childhood Studies that should be given further consideration.

RESOLVED:

That the paragraph proposed in section 5.4 with regard to the University's use of UCAS contextual data would be reviewed by the Academic Registrar and the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment, prior to submission to UCAS.

610/10-11 UCAS Admissions Process Review and Qualifications Information Review

RECEIVED:

A UUK note with notification of the launch of the UCAS Admissions Process Review and the Qualifications Information Review (SC.429/10-11).

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

That the deadline for responses to be submitted to the Qualifications Information Review had been extended to 16 May 2011, and that a draft response would be brought to the Steering Committee on 16 May 2011.

611/10-11 QAA Report on the Review Collaborative Courses between WMG and SIM/SIMTech, Singapore and the University's Response

CONSIDERED:

The University's draft response to the QAA audit report on the academic quality and standards of the collaborative courses between WMG and SIM/SIMTech, Singapore (SC.438/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality))

- (a) That the QAA report identified three positive features of the collaboration, but that the University's draft response included the request that other positive features be similarly identified.

(by the Registrar)

- (b) That there would be an audit trail of the consideration given to the School of Engineering's SDR report, including the creation and work of the Faculty Working Group and the resolutions of the Steering Committee, that could be shared with the QAA to demonstrate the University's diligence in this area.

RESOLVED:

That the University's response to the QAA audit report on the academic quality and standards of the collaborative courses between WMG and SIM/SIMTech, Singapore be submitted to the QAA prior to the deadline of 13 May 2011, subject to amendments discussed in the meeting.

612/10-11 HEFCE Undergraduate Medical and Dental Intake Target

CONSIDERED:

A letter from the HEFCE regarding the University's undergraduate medical and dental intake targets (SC.430/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

That the Warwick Medical School was not over-recruiting, or recruiting additional numbers to replace non-completions, and that he believed the intake numbers quoted in the letter were distorted by students repeating their first year of study.

RESOLVED:

That the Dean of Warwick Medical School would draft a response to the HEFCE letter regarding the University's undergraduate medical and dental intake targets, to be considered at a future meeting of the Steering Committee.

- 613/10-11      Student Support for 2012/13
- RECEIVED:
- Notification from UUK to update members on planned student support arrangements for 2012/13, including a letter from David Willetts, the Minister for Universities and Science, to Professor Steve Smith, President of UUK (SC.440/10-11).
- 614/10-11      HEFCE Strategic Advisory Committees
- RECEIVED:
- Notification of vacancies on HEFCE strategic advisory committees, with an application deadline of midnight on 11 May 2011 (SC.441/10-11).
- REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience)
- That Dr Paul Taylor, Co-Director of IATL, would be put forward for membership on the committee for Teaching, Quality and the Student Experience.
- 615/10-11      National Student Survey (minute 594/10-11 refers)
- REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience)
- (a)      That the National Student Survey closed on 31 April 2011 and that the University achieved a completion rate of 65.68%, an increase of 2.5% compared to last year.
- (b)      That the Sabbatical Officers of the Students' Union and the staff of the Teaching Quality Office be thanked for their support in encouraging students to complete the Survey.
- 616/10-11      Pulse Survey
- REPORTED: (by the Director of HR)
- That the University's Pulse Survey had closed with a completion rate of 60%.
- 617/10-11      The Observer: Britain's Top 300 Intellectuals
- REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts)
- That Professor Maxine Berg of the Department of History, and AL Kennedy, Associate Professor in the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies, were named in The Observer's list of Britain's Top 300 Intellectuals.
- 618/10-11      Postroom
- REPORTED: (by the President of the Students' Union)
- That he had some concerns about the proposed movement of the postroom to Westwood campus.
- 619/10-11      Sustainability in Higher Education (minute 592/10-11 refers)
- RECEIVED:
- The Executive Summary of the report entitled "The Financial Health and Sustainability of the HE Sector", referred to in SC.417/10-11 at the meeting of the Steering Committee on 18 April 2011 (SC.427/10-11).

620/10-11 Equality Challenge Unit in 2011

RECEIVED:

The Equality Challenge Unit's (ECU) three year strategy and the programme of ECU 2011 projects (SC.431/10-11).

621/10-11 Access Agreement for Entry 2012

RECEIVED:

The final version of the University's Access Agreement submitted to OFFA for 2012 entry (SC.407/10-11 revised {2}).

622/10-11 HEFCE Consultation on HEIF Funding

RECEIVED:

The UUK response to the HEFCE Consultation on the HEIF5 funding scheme (SC.442/10-11).

623/10-11 Universities and the Regional Growth Fund

RECEIVED:

Notification from the UUK of the second call for bids for the Regional Growth Fund (SC.439/10-11).

624/10-11 QAA Institutional Review

RECEIVED:

The University's pro-forma response to the QAA regarding Institutional Review in 2012/13. (SC.448/10-11).

JFB/KP/steersshare/minutes/201011/May11/09May11