

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 9 June 2008

- Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
Professor L Bridges
Mr J Kirby
Professor K Lamberts
Professor L M Whitby
Professor Y Carter
Professor R Lindley
Professor A Caesar
- Apologies: Professor H Thomas, Professor M Smith, Professor R Higgott, Professor S Bassnett
- In Attendance: Registrar, Academic Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Director of Communications, Director of Finance, Vice-Chancellor's Executive Officer, Administrative Officer (Governance), Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance), Director of Estates, Director of Management Information and Planning (for item 545/07-08), Director of Research Support Services (for item 546/07-08), Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality)(for item 548/07-08) and Senior Assistant Registrar (Planning) (for item 549/07-08)
- 541/07-08 Minutes
RESOLVED:
That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 May 2008 be approved.
- 542/07-08 Sir Robert Taylor
REPORTED: (by the Vice-chancellor)
That Sir Robert Taylor, a former University Council member, had died.
RESOLVED:
That the Committee record its condolences to Sir Robert Taylor's family.
- 543/07-08 HEIF4 Funding
REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)
That the University bid for HEIF4 funding had been approved.
- 544/07-0/8 Aligning Strategic and Financial Planning
RECEIVED:
A paper from the Director of Finance regarding work being undertaken to better align strategic and financial processes including the establishment of a number of limited life working groups to take the work forward (SC.427/07-08).
- 545/07-08 REF Consultation Outcomes and Next Steps
RECEIVED:
An update from HEFCE on responses to the recent REF consultation, modification to the proposals resulting from the consultation and timeframes for REF implementation, together with an oral report from the Director of Management Information and Planning (SC.417/07-08).

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

- (a) That the University had offered to participate in the REF Bibliometric Pilot and confirmation of this had yet to be received.
- (b) That taking part in the pilot might incur a significant burden on the University, both centrally and departmentally with regards to data collection, but the benefits of advance information on the REF may be of equally significant measure.

RESOLVED:

That, if the University is invited to be a pilot institution, the impact on resources be reviewed at a future meeting of Steering Committee prior to the decision as to whether the University would accept the invitation to participate.

546/07-08

Policy Update: Research and Innovation

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of Research Support Services (SC.406/07-08) outlining activities in the areas of research and innovation, namely:

- (a) Research Planning, RDF and Incentives,
- (b) Increasing Engagement with Research Councils and External Funding Bodies
- (c) Research Income Generation.

547/07-08

UUK I-Note I/08/045: 14-19 policy developments and qualifications strategy consultation

RECEIVED:

A note drawing attention to some recent 14-19 policy announcements and requesting responses to the qualifications strategy consultation (SC.424/07-08).

548/07-08

Policy Update: Teaching Quality

RECEIVED:

A report updating on strategic developments in Teaching Quality.

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

- (d) That the University's response rate to the NSS was very positive and ahead of the national rate.
- (e) That the initial pilot of the proposed new undergraduate marking scale went well with some departments discovering unexpected benefits and that a proposal to implement the new marking scale and a new Honours degree classification convention would be considered by the Academic Quality and Standards Committee with a view to passing them for consideration by the Senate at its meeting of 2nd July 2008.
- (f) That the two current University CETLs had funding for two more years and any opportunity to continue these would be investigated, together with an independent review of their outputs in terms of enhanced teaching and learning to ensure funding would be well spent.

REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Graduate School)

That the University had participated in the Postgraduate Research Experience Survey for the first time this year, with a 40% response rate, and that initial feedback had been positive.

549/07-08

HESA Performance Indicators

RECEIVED:

A paper detailing the University's outcome in the recent HESA Performance Indicators (SC.418/07-08).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Planning))

- (a) That the University's performance was comparable with its competitors, with an improved position in the Research Indicators against Russell and '94 Group institutions.
- (b) That the basis on which benchmarks had been calculated had raised concerns within the Russell Group and that the omission of students' full range of qualifications, the number of applications, and whether students' obtained the right combination of subjects for entry, had worked against Russell Group universities.

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

That, with regards to this year's Widening Participation indicators, there had been difficulties in obtaining high-quality and timely entry information from UCAS, making the University's own data analysis on the Performance Indicators less reliable.

550/07-08

Senate Business

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the comments and recommendations of the Steering Committee on the items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 18 June 2008 be as set out in the papers circulated for the meeting of the Senate.
- (b) That the Report on Retention of Readerships (S.39/07-08) be forwarded to Senate via Academic Staff Committee at the meeting on 2nd July 2008 and therefore be removed from the agenda of Senate business for its meeting on 18th June 2008.
- (c) That the comments of the Steering Committee of the paper on 'Working Group on the Appointment of Pro -Vice-Chancellors (S.38/07-08) be included in the papers for the meeting of the Senate on 18th June 2008.

551/07-08

Recruitment of Students' Union General Manager

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

- (a) That, following the resignation of the General Manager of the Students' Union (minute 479/07-08 refers), the post had been re-defined as a Chief Executive position in line with recent changes to charity legislation.
- (b) That both the Registrar and Deputy Registrar would be involved in the recruitment process to take place on 10th and 11th June 2008.

- 552/07-08 HEFCE Strategic Plan 2006/11
RECEIVED:
The HEFCE Strategic Plan 2006/11, recently updated for 2008/09 (SC.421/07-08).
- 553/07-08 REF Pilot Scheme
RECEIVED:
The University's submission to the call for pilot institutions for the proposed REF (SC.412/07-08).
- 554/07-08 HE Engagement with Schools
RECEIVED:
A letter from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) to Universities UK welcoming the work to inform the deliberation of the National Council of Educational Excellence and presenting the University's recommendations (SC.413/07-08).
- 555/07-08 HEFCE Circular 11/2008: Matched Funding Scheme
RECEIVED:
Information from the HEFCE on the recently launched Matched Funding Scheme, including results of consultation, the structure, eligibility and payment scheme (SC.415/07-08).
- 556/07-08 UUK I-Note I/08/043: Communicating the Results of Scholarly Research
RECEIVED:
Information on a Research Information Network report examining the global annual cost of publishing, circulating and accessing journal articles (SC.422/07-08).
- 557/07-08 UUK I-Note I/08/044: Further Information on Tiers 2 and 5 of the New Immigration System
RECEIVED:
A summary of the new immigration arrangements and potential concerns of the HE sector arising from the Tiers 2 and 5 Statements of Intent (SC.423/07-08).

KMS/gb/steersshare/minutes200708/June08/09June08