

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 11 July 2011

Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor S Bruzzi,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor M Finn,
Professor C Hughes,
Professor T Jones,
Professor K Lamberts,
Mr D Stevens.

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor J Labbe, Professor M Taylor, Professor P Winstanley.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of HR,
Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Executive Officer
(Governance), Acting Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer
(Governance), Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment (for item 777/10-11).

774/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 July 2011 be approved.

775/10-11 HEFCE Consultation on Teaching Funding and Student Number Controls (minute 765/10-11 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A UUK paper regarding the HEFCE's consultation on how higher education teaching would be funded and student numbers allocated for 2012/13 (SC.554/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

(a) That the UUK paper provided a useful summary of the technical issues faced.

(by the Academic Registrar)

(b) That the proposal to phase out funding based on historic funding rates, rather than average funding rates, was welcomed.

(c) That the future of Erasmus funding was uncertain, as this was only protected for one year.

RESOLVED:

That a group would convene over the summer to coordinate the University's response to the HEFCE's consultation on teaching funding and student number controls, for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to the submission deadline of 2 September 2011.

776/10-11 Draft Access Agreement (minute 583/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the University's Access Agreement had been approved by OFFA, subject to minor amendments.

777/10-11 Admissions and Recruitment Update

RECEIVED:

An update report on developments in Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation (SC.549/10-11).

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

- (a) That there was further clarity with regard to the UKBA visa requirements and academic progression, and that Confirmation for Acceptance of Studies (CAS) were again being issued to applicants.
- (b) That, whilst it was predicted that undergraduate recruitment would be over target, the overshoot was expected to be within the HEFCE tolerance band.
- (c) That postgraduate taught recruitment was also strong.
- (d) That work with the Management Information and Planning Office had commenced on the collation of data on the proportion of last year's intake relative to the AAB threshold outlined in the White Paper, but that further clarification was required on what constituted "AAB" when tariff points and non-A-Level qualifications were taken into account.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (e) That the use of accommodation at Liberty Park had been agreed, given the increase in forecast at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

(by the Registrar)

- (f) That further consideration should be given to the proposed undergraduate admissions policy statements in the context of the AAB "core and margin" model and the potential use of contextual data, prior to publication on the "study and admissions" section of the Warwick website.

778/10-11 HR Update

CONSIDERED:

A report updating on key activities within HR, including the Learning and Development Centre (SC.552/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Director of HR)

- (a) That a further update on the final outcomes of the Early Voluntary Leavers Scheme (EVLS) would be provided once consideration of all outstanding applications had been completed.
- (b) That staff who were eligible to join the USS pension scheme but who had not thus far elected to do so would be contacted before the proposed changes were implemented on 1 October 2011 to remind them of the opportunity to join the final salary section of the scheme.
- (c) That the University of Warwick Pension Scheme (UPS) valuation had been completed, effective 31 March 2010, and had revealed a deficit.
- (d) That the University had agreed a plan to address the deficit over a period of nine years with the Trustee Directors of UPS.

- (e) That a tender was in progress for the combined mandate of UPS Scheme Actuary and the provision of Investment Services to the UPS Trustee.
- (f) That the University had responded through UCEA to the BIS Consultation on Resolving Workplace Disputes, and was also responding to the BIS Consultation on Modern Workplaces via UCEA.
- (g) That the Learning and Development Centre (LDC) had trained and established an internal mediation team, and three cases had been supported by this team since becoming operational in Spring 2011.
- (h) That an Induction programme for Heads of Department had been in operation for the last two years, and that the programme was being developed and broadened progressively.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the thanks of the Steering Committee were extended to the Payroll and Expenses Team for the successful completion of the HMRC Inspection in March 2011.
- (b) That the Director of HR would investigate the reasons for the increased headcount of administrative staff between 1 June 2010 and 31 May 2011.

779/10-11

Equality and Diversity Update

RECEIVED:

A report outlining the specific duties of the Public Sector Equality Duty (SC.551/10-11).

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

- (a) That the Public Sector Equality Duty required HEIs to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.
- (b) That the specific duties required HEIs to publish one or more equality objectives by 6 April 2012, and thereafter updated at least every four years, and that the information must be published in a manner that is accessible to the public.
- (c) That whilst there were no specific requirements in the draft regulations to conduct impact assessments or engage people from protected groups, the Government had made clear the need for understanding of the effect of policies and practices on equality and as such, the University would need to continue to assess the impact of its key policies accordingly.

(by the Director of HR)

- (d) That an HR Adviser with a specific remit for Equality and Diversity had been recruited to support Equality and Diversity activity for both staff and students.

780/10-11

DfE Strategy Consultation on ITT

CONSIDERED:

A UUK paper on the Department for Education's (DfE) strategy consultation on proposals to meet the Government's objective of increasing the status of the teaching profession to attract more of the best graduates (SC.553/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the DfE's strategy built on the proposals outlined in the White Paper published on 24 November 2012, "The Importance of Teaching".
- (b) That the strategy included less emphasis on "more time in schools" than originally outlined in the White Paper.
- (c) That the proposal for more focussed funding of ITT provision in institutions providing high quality courses, was welcomed.
- (d) That the opportunities arising from the development of University Training Schools had been discussed at a recent meeting of the University's Trust Schools.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee would consider the University's draft response to the DfE strategy consultation on proposals to meet the Government's objective of increasing the status of the teaching profession to attract more of the best graduates, prior to the submission deadline of 29 July 2011.

781/10-11

Consultation on the Draft Student Fees - Scotland 2011

CONSIDERED:

An invitation to respond to a consultation on the draft student fees in Scotland (SC.550/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That the Scottish Government were proposing to enable Scottish universities to set their own fees for students from England, Wales or Northern Ireland.
- (b) That there were concerns over whether this would constitute discrimination, and how this would relate to the cap on the number of students admitted to English universities.

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Registrar would consider whether a response to the consultation on the student fees in Scotland was necessary, and that the Steering Committee would, if appropriate, consider the University's draft response to the consultation prior to the submission deadline of 2 September 2011.

782/10-11

Future Meetings of the Steering Committee

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the next meeting of the Steering Committee was provisionally scheduled for 9-10am on Monday 18 July 2011, due to degree congregation week.

783/10-11

Aldwych Group

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

That the Students' Union Education Officer, Sean Ruston, had been elected as Chair of the Aldwych Group for 2011/12.

784/10-11

Big Ideas for the Future

RECEIVED:

The contents pages of a joint publication by UUK and Research Councils UK called “Big Ideas for the Future: UK research that will have a profound effect on our future”, which highlights important research currently taking place in UK universities (SC.556/10-11).

JFB/KP/steersshare/minutes/201011/Jul11/11Jul11