

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 15 April 2013

- Present: Vice-Chancellor,  
Deputy-Vice-Chancellor,  
Professor A Caesar,  
Professor Christina Hughes,  
Professor Christopher Hughes,  
Professor T Jones,  
Professor J Labbe,  
Professor J Palmowski,  
Professor S Swain,  
Professor M Taylor,  
Professor P Thomas,  
Professor P Winstanley,  
Professor L Young,  
Mr N Swain.
- Apologies: Professor S Croft.
- In Attendance: Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Deputy Academic Registrar, Group Finance Director, Director of Development and External Affairs, Director of Estates, Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office), Assistant Registrar (Risk, Continuity and Information Security), Director of Research Support Services (for item 281/12-13), University Librarian (for item 283/12-13).
- 275/12-13 Minutes
- RESOLVED:
- That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 March 2013 be approved.
- 276/12-13 Deputy Vice-Chancellor
- RESOLVED:
- That the congratulations of the Committee be extended to Professor Lamberts, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Provost, on securing his appointment as Vice-Chancellor at the University of York, noting that this further demonstrated how sought after senior Warwick staff were with three former Warwick staff having taken up Vice-Chancellorships in the last five years.
- 277/12-13 Budget 2013
- REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)
- (a) That whilst there had been little direct mention of higher education in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's annual Budget speech last month, the announcement that the Spending Review for 2015-16 would have to achieve a reduction in non-protection expenditure of £11.5 billion rather than the £10 billion planned would undoubtedly have significant impact on the sector.
- (b) That the Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) would need to cut a further £130-140 million in each of the next two years, on top of reductions of £150 million in 2013-14 and £280 million in 2014-15 announced in last year's Autumn Statement.

- (c) That the science and research budget remained ring-fenced for the remainder of the Spending Review period and that the future of the ring-fence would be announced alongside the outcome of Spending Round on 26 June 2013.

278/12-13 Public Engagement Network

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That a new Public Engagement Network was being established, creating a professional network aimed at forming a broad community of interest and best practice focusing on public engagement activity at Warwick.
- (b) That the Network was open to all staff with an interest in public engagement and aimed to enable better information sharing and collaboration across traditional University silos in this area.
- (c) That Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Christina Hughes would launch the network at an inaugural 'mini-summit' on Monday 13 May 2013, 12-2pm in the Wolfson Research Exchange.

279/12-13 Division of Microbiology and Infection

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the Warwick Medical School had established a new £4 million Division of Microbiology and Infection, a new research community of around twenty staff and postgraduate students, headed by Professor Mark Pallen.
- (b) That the Division, which would benefit from state-of-the-art laboratory facilities, acted as a starting point for a new campus-wide Research Centre that would integrate laboratory-based research with a much wider range of research activities, whilst also catalyzing links with other key regional, national and global stake-holders, including the health services, industry, government and NGOs.

280/12-13 National Student Drama Festival

REPORTED (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That as in previous years, Warwick students had picked up a number of awards at the National Student Drama Festival 2013.
- (b) That the InDepth Theatre Company had received four awards including the Sunday Times Playwriting Award; the Director's Guild Award for Direction; a commendation for Ensemble Work; and the Festgoers Award, voted for by audiences with the President of Warwick University Drama Society, Dan Hutton, also being awarded the Harold Hobson Award for Theatre Criticism.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee extend its congratulations to all involved for their continued success and achievement.

281/12-13 Research Strategy Update

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Pro-Vice-Chancellors for research and the Director of Research Support Services updating on the progress of the University's research strategy including research funding performance and issues, research income, preparations for the REF 2014, open access of publications and research data and other topical issues (SC.171/12-13).

REPORTED (by the Director of Research Support Services)

- (a) That overall, the University's applications and awards performance was strong but that future funding opportunities might hamper the continuation of this position as some key funders (EPSRC and the EU strands) would be delaying their funding calls in the coming financial year.
- (b) That there may be new sources of regional funding via the Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) for research and innovation and the University's pursuance of these would require consideration as it was likely that these monies would be tied to the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), which carried stringent obligations for funded projects.
- (c) That work continued with departments to enhance the impact and environmental elements for the University's REF submission and that it remained too early to give concrete statements around the University's anticipated REF submission and outcome.
- (d) That the RCUK block grant to support the development of Open Access had been spent as agreed to cover Article Processing Charges (APC) for RCUK funded publications on behalf of Warwick authors and on staff resource to undertake advocacy, promotion and advice and guidance on Open Access.
- (e) That some of the research councils now required researchers to enter details about the funded research onto two online systems – Research Outcomes System (ROS) and ResearchFish – to reduce the reporting burden across Research Councils and to allow researchers and institutions to provide, and access, real-time information about their grants.
- (f) That there was an issue around the University's compliance with the requirement to input information into ResearchFish for grants funded by the MRC or SFTC, noting that the requirement was compulsory but neither funder currently had sanctions in place.
- (g) That there were resource implications for ensuring compliance with the input requirements to ROS and ResearchFish and that it was advantageous to move towards compliance and onward sustainability before the start of 2013/14 when colleagues would be heavily engaged in the final REF preparations.
- (h) That the University was exploring products on the market to benchmark its performance against competitors, it being noted that the current processes to provide such analysis were time and resource consuming and could not deliver real-time information.
- (i) That there might be opportunities for the University in this regard should it become apparent that the market solutions were not appropriate or cost-effective for the higher education sector.

(By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Physical Sciences and Engineering), Knowledge Transfer and Business Engagement)

- (j) That it should be noted that the figures relating to the research awards for the Warwick Medical School included in SC.171/12-13 did not include NIHR grants worth c£5 million.
- (k) That the University had performed well in securing EPSRC funding and was ranked 8<sup>th</sup> nationally, an impressive achievement given the relative size of our science research base.

- (l) That he was concerned around the capability for the University, or indeed any other institution in isolation, to deliver against the expectations around Open Access data as he perceived that there were cost and resourcing implications which had not been considered thoroughly and that it was likely that these issues could only be addressed through collaboration, be that with other Russell Group institutions, regionally or by some other grouping.

(By the Group Finance Director)

- (m) That RCUK had communicated that any underspend against grant profiles by 1 October 2013 would not be rolled over and would effectively be a permanent reduction in funding.
- (n) That this was concerning as the University was several millions underspent against grant spend profiles submitted at award stage and that the RCUK audit return in July 2013 would influence the figures submitted to the REF.
- (o) That work was underway to understand why colleagues were not able to spend to profile, including the impact of University recruitment, procurement and contract processing procedures, in order to make improvements.
- (p) That although the RCUK had not confirmed anything at this stage, it was possible that substantial underspends against profile could result in in-year clawback of grant funding.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Science)

- (q) That there was a strong risk that the length of time taken to finalise contracts would adversely impact on departments' REF returns.

282/12-13

Business Relations Update

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor Research (Physical Sciences and Engineering), Knowledge Transfer and Business Engagement and the Director of Development and External Affairs updating on business relations activities (SC.172/12-13).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Physical Sciences and Engineering), Knowledge Transfer and Business Engagement)

- (a) That this was the first update to the Steering Committee on business relations activities and sought to draw together contributions from the Corporate Relations Team, Warwick Ventures Limited and Student Careers and Skills, noting that future papers would include information from other areas of the institution and the Warwick Science Park as relevant.
- (b) That overall, the University's research grant and contract income from industry, commerce and public corporations was improving (7.2 percent of total grants and contracts income) against the Russell Group average (9.5 percent).
- (c) That it was anticipated that this income would exceed the Russell Group average in the coming years as larger contracts currently under negotiation came online.
- (d) That the University was the most targeted UK HEI in this years' Graduate Market 2013 from High Fliers, a survey of the Times Top 100 Graduate Employers and furthermore, in 2011/12 all 100 of these companies were registered with the University in terms of graduate recruitment events and opportunities.

(By the Director of Development and External Affairs)

- (e) That there was increasing integration and co-ordination of business-facing activities across the University and that staff in these areas were beginning to proactively share information, noting that the creation of the Corporate Relations network in May 2013 would deepen these links.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee extend its thanks to Quentin Compton-Bishop, Chief Executive of Warwick Ventures Limited, for his efforts as Interim Director of Corporate Relations in recent months, noting that the new Director, Dr Allyson Reed, would join Warwick on 29 April 2013.
- (b) That the Director of Development and External Affairs ensure that future reports include information around the postgraduate career offerings separate to the undergraduate activities to reflect the distinctive nature of these opportunities.

283/12-13 University of Warwick Open Access Policy

CONSIDERED:

A proposed University Open Access Policy together with background and context from the University Librarian (SC.173/12-13).

REPORTED: (by the University Librarian)

- (a) That increasing emphasis was being placed by funders nationally and internationally on the open and free availability of the outputs of publicly-funded research and that the proposed Open Access Policy developed by the Scholarly Communications Oversight Group sought to ensure that Warwick researchers were not disadvantaged in this context.
- (b) That it was necessary to introduce the requirement that publicly-funded publications be deposited into the Warwick Research Archive Portal (WRAP) to allow researchers and the University to meet future requirements for open access.
- (c) That the RCUK Open Access requirements would come into effect on 1 April 2013 and that it was anticipated that communication of the approved University policy, together with advice and guidance, would take place via Heads of Departments, University committees with relevant remits and via the Boards of the Faculties.
- (d) That all Warwick publicly-funded publications should be sent to the WRAP via the Library website.

RECOMMENDED (to the Senate):

That the proposed University of Warwick Open Access Policy be approved as set out in SC.173/12-13, subject to the following amendments being made prior to circulation to the Senate:

- (i) Explicit reference to publicly-funded postgraduate students within the Policy and supporting guidance to clarify that this population would be subject to the requirements.
- (ii) Clarification from the Deputy Director of HR with regards to the appropriate definition of 'connections' to the University which would require compliance with the Policy.
- (iii) Inclusion of abstracts and references within the documents to be deposited in cases where publisher or other copyright restrictions prevent deposit of full versions of any published research outputs.

- (iv) Removal of reference to 'postscript' within the definition of the version of research outputs to be deposited, to avoid confusion.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University Librarian liaise with the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies to develop and issue specific open access guidance for publicly-funded postgraduate students.
- (b) That the University Librarian ensure that the links to the WRAP were made easier to locate and navigate on the Library website.

284/12-13 HEFCE Recurrent Grant Allocations

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Academic Registrar summarising the HEFCE recurrent grant allocation for the 2013/14 financial year and the adjusted allocation for 2012/13, following receipt of the grant letter from HEFCE in March 2013 (SC.174/12-13).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That the overall grant letter set out allocations in line with the University's expectations.
- (b) That the Research Funding for 2013/14 has decreased by 0.04 percent compared to the previous allocation and that this was attributable to a decrease in 'Other QR' funding stream which included funds allocated to Charity Support, Business Research and National Research Libraries.
- (c) That the Teaching Grant was more complex to navigate than in previous years due to the mixed fees regimes and that the University's allocation had not decreased to the extent anticipated due to the higher number of continuing students on the former fees regime (those who commenced study before 1 September 2012), it being noted that the related completion rates were expected to be higher than forecast.
- (d) That from 2013/14, some Band C subjects would receive HEFCE core funding as well as teaching grant income.
- (e) That 2013/14 would be the second year of the new Student Number Control (SNC) restrictions for HEIs and that Warwick's SNC would be 482 with an upper limit of 562 and a lower limit of 457, it being noted that institutions exceeding their upper or failing to meet their lower limit could be subject to penalties.

285/12-13 Membership of Senate Committees

RECOMMENDED: (to the Senate)

- (a) That the constitution of the Academic Resourcing Committee (ARC) be revised to include the Dean of the Warwick Medical School (WMS) to acknowledge the unique position of WMS, noting that the ~~Chair of the Faculty of Science~~ Chairs of the other faculties attended the ARC but there was currently no representation for the Faculty of Medicine.
- (b) That the constitution of the ARC be revised to include the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education (Innovation, Employability and Widening Participation), noting that the ARC monitored the progress of academic departments against widening participation benchmarks and as such it would be helpful to the Committee for this post to be a member.

RESOLVED:

That the following be approved on behalf of the Senate:

- (i) That Professor Stuart Croft be appointed to serve on the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences as a co-opted member.
- (ii) That Dr Caroline Wright be appointed to serve on the Board of Undergraduate Studies as the second representative from the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences.
- (iii) That Professor Jacqueline Hodgson be appointed to serve on the Research Governance and Ethics Committee as a representative from the Faculty of Social Sciences.

286/12-13 Senate Business

RESOLVED:

That the comments and recommendations of the Steering Committee on the items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 24 April 2013 be approved as set out in the papers circulated for the meeting of the Senate, subject to clarifications as agreed in the meeting.

287/12-13 HEFCE National Strategy for Access and Student Success

RECEIVED:

A consultation document from HEFCE and the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) to develop a national strategy for access and student success, and that the higher education sector was invited to provide evidence of effective approaches and practices in widening access and ensuring success across the student lifecycle by the deadline of 23 April 2013 (SC.175/12-13).

288/12-13 Student Finance Package for 2014/15

RECEIVED:

A letter from Vince Cable and David Willetts confirming the student finance arrangements for students commencing higher education in the 2014/15 academic year (SC.176/12-13)

289/12-13 USS Covenant Assessment

RECEIVED:

A letter from the Chief Executive of Universities UK to institutions participating in the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) to request that those approached participate fully in the covenant assessment exercise being undertaken by Ernst and Young on behalf of USS in 2013 to determine the ability of its sponsoring employers to continue to support the scheme (SC.177/12-13).