

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 16 December 2013

Present: Vice-Chancellor and President,
Provost,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor Christina Hughes,
Professor Christopher Hughes,
Professor T Jones,
Professor J Palmowski,
Professor S Swain,
Professor M Taylor,
Professor P Thomas,
Professor P Winstanley,
Professor L Young.

Apologies: Mr B Sundell.

In Attendance: Registrar and Chief Operating Officer, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Group Finance Director, Director of Estates, Director of Human Resources, Director of Development and External Affairs, Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance).

96/13-14 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2013 be approved.

97/13-14 Autumn Statement 2013

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the Autumn Statement for 2013, published on 5 December 2013 included a number of significant initiatives for higher education, most notably the announcement of an additional 30,000 student numbers for 2014/15, and the abolishment of the student number cap in 2015/16.
- (b) That the government had also announced that it would produce a Science and Innovation Strategy for the 2014 Autumn Statement aimed at ensuring that UK capabilities remain world leading in the long term.

98/13-14 Staff Network Day

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

That the annual Staff Network Day had taken place on Thursday 12 December, and was a highly successful event, with staff taking the opportunity to consider Warwick's place in the local, national and international communities, and to participate in activities focusing on personal development.

99/13-14 Campus Cycle Route

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (a) That the Estates Office had completed the establishment of a new cycle route across campus, making it easier for users to travel around the University in a more environmentally-friendly way.

- (b) That the new route was officially opened by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education)) on Wednesday 11 December 2013.
- (c) That the route joined directly on to the Connect 2 Kenilworth cycle route which opened in 2012, giving cyclists from the University and the surrounding community a clear route from Kenilworth through to Cannon Park via campus.
- (d) That the route had been built as part of the University's Travel Plan, noting that helping staff and students to live more environmentally sustainable lives was part of the University's Strategy: "Encourage everyone to take an active role in achieving key environmental goals".

100/13-14

Centre for Arts Doctoral Research Excellence (CADRE)

CONSIDERED:

A proposal to establish a Doctoral Training Centre in the Faculty of Arts (SC.36/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Faculty of Arts)

- (a) That the Faculty of Arts was seeking to develop a Doctoral Training Centre, to ensure that the Faculty was promoted as a competitive choice to the best PhD students.
- (b) That the proposals for the Centre for Arts Doctoral Research Excellence (CADRE) had been shaped by discussions at the Board of the Faculty of Arts, the Arts Graduate Studies Committee and with colleagues in the Graduate School.
- (c) That CADRE was intended to be a distinctive, sector-leading hub for doctoral and early career researcher training in the Arts, and would offer students the opportunity to work across traditional disciplinary boundaries to produce innovative and cutting-edge research, and to benefit from a wide range of external partnerships.
- (d) That the creation of a dedicated space for Arts doctoral researchers in a new Humanities Forum building would bring the University's offer into line with similar facilities at competitor institutions, and would place Warwick in a strong position for the bid to AHRC BGP3 in 2018.
- (e) That the research themes were still under consideration, noting that a wide range of departments across the University had provided information on their research strengths which had the potential to be incorporated into the subject pathways.
- (f) That scholarships would be allocated by the same process as the Chancellor's Scholarship, and that there was potential to seek additional funding through external bodies, noting that the Faculty had recently been granted an additional Wolfson scholarship.
- (g) That the Faculty had appointed two academic technologists who would play a key role in the visualisation of CADRE's research outputs.

(by the Vice-Chancellor and President)

- (h) That the proposals represented an excellent response to recent developments in the Arts and Humanities funding environment.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education))

- (i) That doctoral training had been identified as a key issue in the recent PTES and PRES surveys, and as such, the proposal was likely to be welcomed by departments.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Science, Engineering and Medicine))

- (j) That consideration should be given to the full title of the Centre, noting that as it currently did not refer to 'training', it could appear that training was not a key element of the Centre's function, potentially impacting on how it would be regarded by funding bodies.

(by the Registrar and Chief Operating Officer)

- (k) That the theme of digitalisation with respect to CADRE's research and training outputs should be emphasised in the proposal, as this would need to be a key element of future bids for funding, noting the strengths of competitor research centres in this area.

RESOLVED:

That the principles for the establishment of a Doctoral Training Centre in the Faculty of Arts be approved as set out in paper SC.36/13-14, subject to the amendments recommended by the Committee.

101/13-14

UK Research Partnership Investment Fund 2015/16

CONSIDERED:

An invitation from HEFCE to submit expressions of interest in applying for an additional allocation of research capital funding for 2015 to 2016 (SC.59/13-14).

REPORTED: (by the Group Finance Director)

- (a) That colleagues were strongly encouraged to put forward expressions of interest, given that the UK Research Partnership Investment Fund was one of the few public sources of research capital funding remaining.
- (b) That the timescales set out by HEFCE were tight, noting that the deadline for submission of expressions of interest was 24 January 2014, with final project proposals to be submitted by the end of April 2014.
- (c) That colleagues should consider the possibility of future projects eligible for such funding, in the event of further calls for bids.

RESOLVED:

That details of potential bids should be sent to the Secretariat by Friday 20 December 2013 to enable the University to co-ordinate a response to HEFCE prior to the deadline for expressions of interest.

102/13-14

Research Performance and Funding in UK Higher Education Institutions

RECEIVED:

A briefing from Universities UK highlighting the contribution of the higher education sector to the research performance of the UK, and examining recent trends in the funding of research (SC.60/13-14).