

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 17 January 2011

Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (except for item 306 e)/10-11),
Professor S Bruzzi,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor C Hughes,
Professor T Jones,
Professor J Labbe,
Professor K Lamberts,
Professor M Taylor,
Professor P Winstanley,
Mr D Stevens.

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor R Higgott.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of HR, Director of Estates, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Acting Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer (Governance), Dr Mark Newton (Department of Physics) (for item 306/10-11), Director of Research Support Services (for items 314/10-11 and 315/10-11), Acting Director of Student Admissions & Recruitment (for item 316/10-11).

305/10-11 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2011 be approved.

306/10-11 UK Magnetic Resonance Centre for Doctoral Training (minute 289/10-11 refers)

(Note: the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Science and Medicine) facilitated the discussion for this item. Following presentation of the case, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor left the room.)

CONSIDERED:

A bid to EPSRC for a multi-partner UK Magnetic Resonance Centre for Doctoral Training (UK-MRBT-CDT), led by Warwick (SC.217/10-11).

REPORTED: (by Professor M Smith)

(a) That the cost to the University of the bid would be £73k, associated with staff costs, and commitment had been given already from industrial sponsors for matched funded studentships.

(by Dr M Newton)

(b) That the current funding scheme was not as generous as for doctoral training centres established previously, but was key to funding research students in the sciences.

(c) That there was a strong academic case, with all institutions hosting Basic Technology centres in magnetic resonance involved.

(d) That the delivery of the training programme would be divided equally between in-house provision and modules available from partner institutions.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Science and Medicine))

- (e) That the Vice-Chancellor had noted his approval of the submission of this bid.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed bid to EPSRC for a multi-partner UK Magnetic Resonance Centre for Doctoral Training (UK-MRBT-CDT) as set out in SC.217/10-11, be supported for submission before the deadline of 20 January 2011.

307/10-11

Vision 2015 – 2010 Update (minute 276/10-11 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A revised draft of the refreshed University Strategy, reflecting comments, questions and ideas generated through the Strategy refresh consultation process (SC.218/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Development, Communications and Strategy)

- (a) That a further draft of the University Strategy, revised in light of comments at the meeting of Steering Committee, would be considered by the Steering Committee at its next meeting, by the Senate on 26 January 2011 and by the Council on 17 February 2011.
- (b) That further work would be undertaken on the prioritisation and resource implications of the proposals.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (c) That further consideration should be given to the measure in Goal 1 of increasing the number of postgraduate research students with a teaching qualification, noting that the measure was not clearly aligned with the Goals relating to research, and clarification should be provided as to whether a qualification or training were required.

(by the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science)

- (d) That paragraph 3(3) could be revised to better reflect the University's ambitions in this area.

(by the Director of HR)

- (e) That the retention of high performance staff as a measure did not clearly align with the Objectives in Section 5.

RESOLVED:

That members' comments be noted and a further draft of the University Strategy would be received by the Committee at its next meeting on 24 January 2011.

308/10-11

Technology Innovation Centres (minute 283/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That a call for expressions of interest in hosting Technology Innovation Centres (TICs) had been made and WMG were expected to respond.

(by the Registrar)

- (b) That the level of commitment associated with an expression of interest needed to be ascertained.

RESOLVED:

That further consideration would be given to the opportunity to host Technology Innovation Centre by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Science and Medicine), together with the Registrar and Finance Director, before the deadline of 31 January 2011.

309/10-11 Liberating the NHS: Developing the Healthcare Workforce (minute 294/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

- (a) That WMS was drafting the University's response to the consultation "Liberating the NHS: Developing the Healthcare Workforce" for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting prior to submission by the deadline of 31 March 2011.
- (b) That the Department of Health's "Modernising Scientific Careers" programme, designed to ensure flexibility, sustainability and modern career pathways for the clinical scientists, could present opportunities across the University.

RESOLVED:

That the Dean of Warwick Medical School open dialogue with departments outside of WMS to discuss a collegial approach to the Department of Health's "Modernising Scientific Careers" programme.

310/10-11 Teach First ITT allocations bid (minute 277/10-11 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

That the allocation of student places to the Institute of Education as Lead Regional Provider of ITT for Teach First in the West Midlands was in line with those requested.

311/10-11 Industrial Doctoral Training Centres

REPORTED: (by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)

That the Warwick Manufacturing Group had been awarded an Industrial Doctoral Training Centre.

RESOLVED:

That congratulations be extended to WMG.

312/10-11 ESRC Doctoral Training Centres

REPORTED: (by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the University had been notified of the allocation of studentships for the ESRC Doctoral Training Centre.
- (b) That although the total number of studentships had fallen nationally, the allocation to Warwick had increased from 45 16 to 27, reflecting the increased concentration of funding.
- (c) That the outcome was positive for the University and that thanks be extended to the previous Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies and to the Assistant Registrar (Graduate School).

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (d) That the award to Warwick had elements of focus in economics and business but also permitted appropriate flexibility in terms of allocation.

RESOLVED:

That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences would provide details of the institutional allocations, to be considered together with the University's ESRC letter by the Committee at its next meeting on 24 January 2011.

313/10-11

REF Panels

REPORTED: (by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That invitations to staff to serve as members of REF panels had been distributed.

(by Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science)

- (b) That clarity on the University's position on support for staff serving on REF panels prior to commitments being confirmed would be welcomed.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor would report on accepted invitations to REF panels at the next meeting of the Committee on 24 January 2011.

314/10-11

Research Council Delivery Plans

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of Research Support Services summarising the delivery plans of the Research Councils from 2011/12 to 2014/15 (SC.220/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Research Support Services)

- (a) That there was little variation between Research Councils in their allocation to core science programmes.
- (b) That funding for the Science and Technology Facilities Council had been distributed into designated funding streams, addressing issues created by the last Comprehensive Spending Review.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine):

- (c) That better alignment and focusing of the University's research with Research Council strategic themes would be critical.

(by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)

- (d) That HEIF funding had been protected but that the criteria for distribution of the funding were expected to be significantly revised.

315/10-11

Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

CONSIDERED:

A letter from the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) regarding future plans for the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) programme (SC.221/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the letter outlined the TSB's broad priorities, including the business areas of focus, and highlighted the intent to reduce the number of new KTP projects to be supported.

(by the Director of Research Support Services)

- (b) That consideration would need to be given to the financial implications of the KTP programme given that it was now ERDF funded.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor, together with the Registrar and the Chair of the Faculty of Science, would review the letter from the Technology Strategy Board regarding future plans for the Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTP) programme.

316/10-11 Admissions and Recruitment update

RECEIVED:

A report from the Acting Director of Student Admissions & Recruitment providing an overview of developments in admissions, recruitment and widening participation (SC.227/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Acting Director of Student Admissions & Recruitment)

- (a) That the volume of Home/EU undergraduate applications had decreased, but that the quality of applications had been maintained.
- (b) That the number of applications to postgraduate research courses was encouraging, with the offer of centrally administered research scholarships contributing to the strength in application numbers.
- (c) That an appointment had been made to the key role of Assistant Registrar (Widening Participation), noting the national focus on this area of activity.

(by the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Arts)

- (d) That discussions were needed regarding the provision of 3+1 degrees given the withdrawal of AHRC funding for postgraduate taught students.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (e) That a focus on Widening Participation was needed for postgraduate students as well as for undergraduate students.

317/10-11 HEFCE consultation on developing a shared strategy for relationship management between HEFCE and institutional governing bodies

RECEIVED:

A document from HEFCE regarding a consultation on developing a shared strategy for relationship management between HEFCE and institutional governing bodies, noting that the Chairs of governing bodies had been invited to respond (SC.223/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the consultation was derived from an earlier report on the effectiveness of HEFCE.

- (b) That the submission deadline of 24 January 2011 did not provide opportunity for consideration by institutional governing bodies.

(by the Registrar)

- (c) That he would discuss the consultation further with the Chair of Council.

318/10-11 Royal Society Awards: Call for Nominations

RECEIVED:

A call for nominations from the Royal Society, for medals, awards and prize lectureships (SC.224/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor)

That he had written to all ~~faculties~~ relevant Heads of Department regarding the call for nominations to encourage a co-ordinated response to the Royal Society.

319/10-11 QAA: Consultation on Changes to the Academic Infrastructure

CONSIDERED:

A circular from the QAA inviting responses to a consultation on changes to the Academic Infrastructure (SC.225/10-11).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the University had responded in 2010 to an interim Evaluation of the Academic Infrastructure.

- (b) That the QAA would look to move from consultation to the implementation of changes to the Academic Infrastructure in the next academic year.

(by the Registrar)

- (c) That the vocabulary of the proposals indicated a move away from a quality assurance framework to an increasingly regulatory environment.

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) consult further on a response to the the QAA Consultation on Changes to the Academic Infrastructure, and that a draft be considered by the Committee before the submission deadline of 1 March 2011.

320/10-11 Universities Week Campaign

REPORTED: (by the Director of Development, Communications and Strategy)

That the University had been invited to take a place on the National Steering Committee of the Universities Week Campaign and had made a modest financial contribution to the campaign.

321/10-11 EC Consultation on Promotion and Validation of Non-Formal and Informal Learning

CONSIDERED:

A circular from the Europe Unit inviting responses to the European Commission's consultation on promotion and validation of non-formal and informal learning (SC.230/10-11).

RESOLVED:

That the circular from the Europe Unit inviting responses to the European Commission's consultation on promotion and validation of non-formal and informal learning be forwarded to Dr David Lamburn, Acting Head of the Centre for Lifelong Learning, for comment.

322/10-11

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 26 January 2011 be approved as set out in the papers circulated for the meeting of the Senate, subject to revisions as agreed in the meeting.
- (b) That the concerns of the Committee be noted in relation to the proposal by the Board of the Faculty of Science that Heads of Departments no longer be required to be members of the Board, given the importance of ensuring that the role of Head of Department had a formal place in the governance structures of the University.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Senate)

That this proposal be considered further by the Senate.

323/10-11

QAA "Outcomes" papers

RECEIVED:

Notification from the QAA of the publication of two Outcomes from Collaborative provision audit papers; "Assessment and classification arrangements" and "Progression and completion information" (SC.226/10-11).

324/10-11

The Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey

RECEIVED:

The University's response to the Higher Education Business and Community Interaction survey (SC.231/10-11).

JFB/KP/steersshare/minutes/201011/Jan11/17Jan11