

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 19 October 2009

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Professor S Bruzzi (until item 36/09-10),
Professor A Caesar,
Professor R Higgott,
Professor C Hughes,
Professor K Lamberts,
Professor M Smith,
Professor M Underwood,
Professor M Whitby
Mr A Bradley (from item 33/09-10)

Apologies: Professor L Bridges, Professor H Thomas

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Director of Estates, Finance Director, Director of Development, Communication and Strategy, Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer (Governance), Professor S B Palmer, Director of Management Information and Planning (for item 33/09-10), Director of Research Support Services (for item 34/09-10)

27/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2009 be approved, subject to the minor amendments discussed at the meeting.

28/09-10 Times Higher Education Awards 2009 (minute 865/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

An extract from the Times Higher Education (THE) Awards 2009 'winners' booklet providing a brief digest of the achievements of Teesside University which had been named the THE University of the Year 2009 (SC.31/09-10).

29/09-10 HEFCE 27/2009: Carbon Targets – University Response (minute 11/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

The University response to the HEFCE consultation on Carbon Reduction Targets, noting that this had been submitted to HEFCE on 16 October 2009 (SC.32/09-10).

30/09-10 Pay Negotiations 2009/10 – UCU Consultation Outcome

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That on 12 October 2009, the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) had written to the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) to confirm the result of the meeting of the Higher Education Committee (HEC) held on 9 October 2009, where they had discussed the outcome of their consultation exercise on UCEA's final pay offer.
- (b) That the decision of the UCU HEC was that UCEA's full and final offer should be rejected.

(By the Registrar)

- (c) That there had not been agreement with all unions and that there was an established process to allow further discussion in such cases.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee be kept informed of developments.

31/09-10 Santander – Abbey Research Grant Fund

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That as part of the agreement with Warwick, Santander Universities had made available £15,000 in 2009-10 to support research/study visits made by academic staff and postgraduate and undergraduate students to one of the following countries/territories: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico, Peru, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela.

32/09-10 Strategy Bites – Widening Participation

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the first Strategy Bites event of the Autumn term, focusing on Widening Participation, would take place on Friday 30 October from 12.30pm - 1.30pm in the Sutherland Staff Lounge, Rootes Building with the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment, Darren Wallis, would give an update on Warwick's Widening Participation strategy.

33/09-10 Strategic Considerations to Inform Student Intake Target Settings

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the ARC target-setting sub-group proposing initial principles and recommendations on areas where adjustments to target intakes should be prioritised (SC.25/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the proposals would benefit from further work to explore the financial and other implications to departments of adjustments to intake targets.
- (b) That he extended his thanks to colleagues who had been engaged in the discussions and preparation of the proposed response to a very complex issue for the University.

(By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Resourcing))

- (c) That the preliminary proposals were based on the consideration of a number of strategic issues as opposed to implementing pro-rata cuts across all departments.
- (d) That many of the reductions in intake proposed would be in place for one year only should the University return (or be close) to its HEFCE contract target range, it being noted that the decision to increase targets at that stage would be taken within the context of the overall recruitment position.

(By the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences)

- (e) That discussions with departments facing potential reductions in intake targets should focus on the overall departmental portfolio of activities to fully identify the implications, or indeed opportunities raised by, any proposed reduction in undergraduate

Home/EU numbers.

(By the Director of Management Information and Planning)

- (f) That several departments had been requested to volunteer potential reductions in Home/EU undergraduate intakes prior to the ARC sub-group being established.
- (g) That the voluntary exercise had not been successful but had highlighted the balance departments were seeking to manage between Home/EU and overseas students and the potential need to reduce overseas intakes accordingly to maintain such a balance.

(By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience))

- (h) That there appeared to be no correlation between the strategic internal planning or development undertaken by departments and the proposed reduction in intakes.

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

- (i) That there would be a significant financial effect of a reduction in student numbers on smaller departments, however small the reduction might be and the consequences of proposed reductions should be considered alongside the other strategic issues.

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

- (j) That he had grave concerns for the sustainability of a specific department within the Faculty of Science should the proposed intake reduction be implemented.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the ARC target-setting sub-group revisit the strategic factors used to prioritise the reductions in target intakes with a view to simplifying these for communication to the academic community.
- (b) That the paper SC.25/09-10 and the proposed reductions to departmental intake targets should not be circulated further at this time.
- (c) That the financial impact of proposed reductions on individual departments be provided to the Steering Committee to inform its further consideration of the strategic approach to the reductions at its next meeting.

34/09-10

Research Strategy Update

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Research) and the Director of Research Support Services outlining developments in research strategy, including the Science City Initiative and Advantage West Midlands Funding, update on Strategy Initiatives (Low Carbon and Security), the Research Development Fund and research income generation (SC.33/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Research Support Services)

- (a) That a consolidated report on the Science City and Advantage West Midlands (AWM) project outputs was being considered regularly by the Budget Steering Group.
- (b) That the AWM-funded Clinical Trials Building at Gibbet Hill had been completed earlier in October 2009 but unfortunately it was yet to become fully occupied due to a leak on the ground floor.

- (c) That the ESRC-funded Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy (CAGE) contract was due to signed this week.
- (d) That earmarked strategy funding for both the Low Carbon and Security initiatives had been discontinued, it being noted that the University was exploring means of restoring funding to these initiatives.

RESOLVED:

That the Research Strategy Update be approved as set out in SC.33/09-10.

35/09-10

UUK I/2009/103: How Have Institutions Used the Income from Variable Fees

CONSIDERED:

An I-Note from Universities UK requesting members to submit details of how institutions had used the income resulting from the introduction of variable fees (SC.30/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the survey was designed to aid UUK to respond to an expected Government-established independent review of fees this autumn.
- (b) That it was anticipated that this issue would be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the Russell Group.

(By the President of the Students' Union)

- (c) That the University might benefit from producing a statement of where the additional income from fees had been or would be spent to illustrate the value that increasing fees further would have.

(By the Finance Director)

- (d) That any consideration of future fee levels should be considered prospectively as opposed to the retrospective analysis requested within the UUK survey.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University consider whether to respond to the UUK survey by the deadline of 16 November 2009 following the discussion of the item by the Russell Group.
- (b) That the Committee noted the potential general internal benefit of a breakdown of where the additional fee income had been spent since the introduction of variable fees.

36/09-10

UUK I/2009/100: Community Infrastructure Levy

CONSIDERED:

An I-note notifying of a Department of Communities and Local Government consultation on the community infrastructure which was an additional levy to be charged to property developers on the discretion of local authorities (SC.27/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the levy was viewed by local authorities as an additional income stream and that further exploration of the technicalities was required.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Estates investigate the potential implications on the community infrastructure levy for the University with a view to compiling a response to be submitted by the deadline of 23 October 2009.

37/09-10 Appointment of Committees of the Senate

RESOLVED:

That the appointment of Dr Louise Campbell of the Department of History of Art to the Investigating Committee into Cases of Suspected Cheating Panel for 2009/10 be approved on behalf of the Senate.

38/09-10 UUK I/2009/102: Healthcare Scientists Research Fellowship Competition

RECEIVED:

An I-Note informing members that the Chief Scientific Officer for the Department of Health, supported by the National Institute for Health Research, was launching the second round of the CSO Healthcare Scientists Research Fellowship Competition (SC.14/09-10).

39/09-10 Europe Unit E/09/10: European Commission Consultation on Community Innovation Policy

RECEIVED:

An E-Note inviting responses to the European Commission public consultation on the Community Innovation Policy noting the deadline of 16 November 2009 (SC.26/09-10).

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes2009-10/Oct09/19Oct09