

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 23 June 2008

- Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor  
Professor K Lamberts  
Professor L M Whitby  
Professor R Lindley  
Professor A Caesar  
Professor H Thomas,  
Professor M Smith (until item 586/07-08),  
Professor R Higgott,  
Mr J Kirby (from item 582/07-08)
- Apologies: Professor L Bridges, Professor S Bassnett, Professor Y Carter, Registrar, Director of Finance
- In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Director of Communications, Director of Estates, Vice-Chancellor's Executive Officer, Administrative Officer (Governance), Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance), Director of Admissions and Recruitment (for item 584/07-08), School Secretary for Warwick Medical School (for item 586/07-08), Finance, Democracy and Strategy Officer (Students' Union) (for item 589(b)/07-08)
- 579/07-08 Minutes  
RESOLVED:  
That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2008 be approved.
- 580/07-08 Policy Update: Careers Service  
REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)  
That a revised version of the Careers Service update (SC.433/07-08) had been circulated to Steering Committee (minute 570/07-08 refers).
- 581/07-08 Innovation Summit  
REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)  
That the Students' Union Innovation Summit (minute 572/07-08 refers) had taken place and was a great success.
- 582/07-08 REF Pilot Exercise  
CONSIDERED:  
A letter from HEFCE notifying the University that it had not been selected as a pilot institution for the REF exercise but had been placed on a reserve list (SC.453/07-08).  
REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Faculty of Science)  
That experiments with the proposed REF software had yielded variable results and because of the uncertainty surrounding the methods to be used under the REF, it would be advisable if the University identified a route to influence the final model if it did not take part in the pilot.

RESOLVED:

That the University write to HEFCE to withdraw from the reserve list for the pilot exercise at this early stage, as it would not be possible to put in place the required academic and administrative resources at a later stage of the process.

583/07-08

Strategic Departmental Review Report and Proposed Revised Schedule

CONSIDERED:

A report detailing progress to date on the Strategic Departmental Reviews (SDRs), including a proposed revised Schedule covering the next five-year period (SC.446/07-08).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That originally scheduled dates for future reviews of departments whose current review had been postponed would be as shown in the original SDR timetable.
- (b) That the scheduling of reviews across the three terms had been considered with reference to the availability of departmental and administrative resources.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Arts)

- (c) That departments be reminded of the need to check for conflicts of interest when nominating external members to SDR panels.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be forwarded to Senate for approval at its meeting on 2 July 2008, subject to the amendments discussed at the meeting.
- (b) That explicit guidance be incorporated in guidance for external members when taking up appointments regarding the need to state conflicts of interest.

584/07-08

Policy Update: Admissions

RECEIVED:

An update on Admissions issues, including postgraduate research applicants, postgraduate taught applicants, MBChB and PGCE applicants and undergraduate applicants (SC.451/07-08).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Admissions and Recruitment)

That eight departments had moved to the new paperless admissions system, with more departments being rolled out in due course with a view to increasing volume gradually.

RESOLVED:

That the Department of Chemistry be entered into Clearing.

585/07-08

Policy Update: Faculty of Arts Issues

RECEIVED:

A report on developments within the Faculty of Arts in the areas of refurbishment of the Humanities Building, research trends, Arts Faculty Fees Working Group and AHRC Block Grant Partnership Scheme (SC.448/07-08).

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

That currently each academic had been scheduled to invigilate over three exams, which was felt not to be the most appropriate use of academics' time and Warwick was the only Russell Group institution continuing to use academics as invigilators.

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the Academic Registrar undertake a review into invigilation practice in order that a report can be brought to the Committee in the Autumn term 2008/09.

586/07-08

Policy Update: Faculty of Medicine Issues

RECEIVED:

A report detailing activities within the Faculty of Medicine, including:

- (i) Academic Health Sciences Centre (AHSC)
- (ii) Appointments of Associate Dean in Teaching and Chair in Clinical Research and Education
- (iii) MRC Bids
- (iv) Science City – Translational Medicine
- (v) Clinical Sciences Research Institute Appointments
- (vi) Upcoming advertisement of Director of Clinical Science Institute
- (vii) Substantial New Research Grant Awards February to May 2008

587/07-08

Policy Update: Faculty of Social Studies

RECEIVED:

A report on developments within the Faculty of Social Studies in the areas of the Faculty Research Forum, Teaching and Learning Forum, building and space management, and governance management and administration of Faculty business (SC.448/07-08).

588/07-08

Policy Update: Faculty of Science

RECEIVED:

A paper presenting the strategy for Life Sciences at the University (SC.445/07-08)

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

That the proposal was a deeply intellectual as well as infrastructure-based strategy which looked to encourage multidisciplinary research in the Life Sciences and across the Faculty of Science as a whole.

589/07-08

Senate Business

- (a) Report from Academic Quality and Standards Committee {Part 1} (S.51/07-08)

RESOLVED:

That the coversheet to the Senate Report from the Academic Quality and Standards Committee {Part 1} (S.51/07-08) detail clearly the basis on which Senate would approve the introduction of a new marking scale for Undergraduate students.

(b) Constitution of the Union of Students (S.54/07-08)

REPORTED (by the President of the Student's Union):

That the Union's thanks be recorded to the Finance, Democracy and Strategy Officer, Tom Callow, for his work on the constitutional review and to the Deputy Registrar for his support throughout the process.

(c) Effectiveness Review of the Council (C.66/07-08)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

That a decision was awaited from the Chair of the Council as to whether the parts of the report on the relationship between the Senate and the Council should be considered by the Senate as well as the Council.

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 2 July 2008 be as set out in the papers circulated for the meeting of the Senate.

590/07-08

Quarter End Reports from Devolved Departments

RECEIVED:

A financial report at the end of Quarter 3 was received from each of the following departments:

- (i) Warwick Business School (SC.442/07-08)
- (ii) Warwick Medical School (SC.443/07-08)
- (iii) Academic Resourcing Committee (SC.438/07-08)

591/07-08

Government Response to DIUS Consultation on Withdrawal of Funding for Equivalent or Lower Qualifications

RECEIVED:

Details of the Governmental response to the DIUS consultation on withdrawal of funding for ELQs.

592/07-08

UUK: Universities Planning Guidance

RECEIVED:

A publication from Universities UK on planning and how Universities might successfully engage with the process (SC.439/07-08).

593/07-08

UUK I-Note I/08/047: NIHR Public Health Research Programme

RECEIVED:

An information note announcing the National Institute for Health Research's new programme to improve public health and reduce health inequalities (SC.440/07-08)

594/07-08

UUK I-Note I/08/38: International Research Collaboration

RECEIVED:

A UUK publication on international research collaboration, its presence in the global sector, its benefits and how it could be managed nationally and institutionally (SC.447/07-08).