

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 26 July 2010

Present: Vice-Chancellor,  
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,  
Professor L Bridges,  
Professor A Caesar,  
Professor R Higgott,  
Professor C Hughes,  
Professor K Lamberts,  
Professor M Taylor,  
Professor P Winstanley  
Mr A Bradley.

Apologies: Professor L Bridges, Professor S Bruzzi.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Professor S Palmer, Director of Estates, Finance Director, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Ms E Gaffney and Mr D Stevens (until item 714/09-10), Director of Management Information and Planning (for item 711/09-10), Director of the International Office (for items 712/09-10 to 713/09-10).

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed Ms Eliza Gaffney, incoming Executive Officer (VC's Office) and Mr Daniel Stevens, incoming President of the Students' Union, to the meeting as observers. The Committee also extended its thanks to the outgoing President of the Students' Union, Mr A Bradley, for his contribution to the Students' Union and University during his period of office.

700/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2010 be approved.

701/09-10 Performance of Advantage West Midlands (minute 677/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

A letter from Advantage West Midlands (AWM) reporting the outcomes of a recent National Audit Office evaluation of Regional Development Agency performance, it being noted that Advantage West Midlands achieved the maximum rating of 'Strong' for its performance (SC.465/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That discussions were continuing regarding how AWM budgetary reductions would impact on University projects.

702/09-10 HEFCE Letter regarding University Response to Teaching Funding Review Consultation (minute 610/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

Confirmation from HEFCE that the University's response to the recent consultation on the Teaching Funding Review had been received and would be taken into account as part of the analysis of responses received (SC.477/09-10).

703/09-10 UCEA Update 10:081 – Consultation on Changes to Economic Migration Routes to the UK Tier 1 and 2 (minute 688/09-10 refers)

CONSIDERED:

An update from the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) regarding the Migration Advisory Committee consultation in relation to proposed limits to be imposed on Tier 1 and Tier 2 immigration routes (SC.483/09-10), it being noted that the University intended to respond to the consultation by the deadline of 17 September 2010.

Note: The referenced Universities UK I-Note I/2010/054 had been circulated electronically for members' information.

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

That details regarding the specified range of English Language Tests which would be accepted under the Tier 4 immigration route had been published by the UK Border Agency.

RESOLVED:

That details of the UK Border Agency accepted English Language Tests be circulated for information of the Committee.

704/09-10 Pension Reviews (minute 680/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the Universities Superannuation Scheme trustee board had met on 22 July 2010 and had approved the package of proposed scheme changes recommended by the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) following its meeting on 7 July 2010.
- (b) That a consultation process with members would commence during September and would last for 70 days.
- (c) That the Hutton Review of public sector pensions was ongoing and that Warwick had submitted general comments to Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) regarding the NHS and local government pension schemes of which some colleagues were members.

705/09-10 Summer Degree Ceremonies

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record its thanks and congratulations to all colleagues involved in the successful Summer Degree Ceremonies held between 19 and 23 July 2010, in particular the Head of Governance Support Services, the Assistant Registrar (Student Records and Graduation), Warwick Food and Drink and the Estates Office.

706/09-10 UCEA Review of Job Security

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That, as part of the national pay discussions, the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA) had sought views on the appropriateness of national bargaining for issues relating to job security.
- (b) That Warwick did not support this proposal, regarding job security as an issue which should be handled at a local level and that the UCEA questionnaire had been completed and submitted.

- 707/09-10      Government Office in West Midlands
- REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)
- That the Government Office in the West Midlands was due to close and that the implications and consequences for the region and the University were not yet clear.
- 708/09-10      Universities That Count Survey (minute 169/09-10 refers)
- REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)
- That the University had participated in the HEFCE-backed 'Universities That Count' survey, a corporate benchmarking programme, and that Warwick had been ranked in the top five institutions in the sustainability index (out of a total of 29 participants).
- RESOLVED:
- That the full report of the outcomes of Universities That Count be considered at a future meeting of the Committee.
- 709/09-10      Launch of the Knowledge Centre
- REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)
- That the University had launched an online Knowledge Centre aimed at further engaging Warwick alumni with developments at the University and to give them access to learning and research at Warwick.
- 710/09-10      Outcomes of the HEFCE Financial Memorandum Consultation
- RECEIVED:
- A letter and copy of the revised HEFCE Financial Memorandum, effective from 1 August 2010 (SC.467/09-10).
- REPORTED: (by the Registrar)
- (a)      That, following significant pressure from higher and further education institutions, the tone and spirit of the revised Financial Memorandum had been improved and better reflected the partnership between institutions and HEFCE.
- (b)      That work was ongoing regarding borrowing consents, anti-fraud initiatives and HEFCE's approach to institutional risk classifications with further opportunities for institutions to input in due course.
- (c)      That the level of monitoring and the associated burden on institutions regardless of risk status still remained a concern.
- (By the Finance Director)
- (d)      That the level at which HEFCE required institutions to report any theft, fraud, loss of charity assets or other irregularity was well below that which external auditors would consider material.

711/09-10

Update on Research Excellence Framework Developments

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Management Information and Planning regarding developments in the Research Excellence Framework including panel structure and membership, assessment of impact and data collection (SC.481/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Management Information and Planning)

- (a) That HEFCE had published the Unit of Assessment (UoA) sub-panel structure for the REF comprising of 30 UoAs, it being noted that some UoAs had been consolidated into single units, including Modern Foreign Languages and Mathematics and Statistics.
- (b) That Warwick would enter approximately 23 submissions under this structure based on the range of submissions in the RAE 2008.
- (c) That it was essential that the University encouraged appropriate senior academic colleagues to apply to be sub-panel chairs by the deadline of 17 September 2010.
- (d) That the Impact pilot project had revealed that, whilst the individual case studies were relatively simple to assess, the overarching departmental/UoA statement presented greater difficulties.

(By the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (e) That a number of the submission within the Impact pilot had been deemed ineligible as 'public understanding' of the research presented was not included within the criteria for assessing Impact, noting that it would be crucial for institutions to have these criteria available when preparing their submissions to ensure eligibility.

RESOLVED:

That the further details published by HEFCE regarding recruitment of panel chairs and members be circulated to the Committee for their information and to aid in the nomination process.

712/09-10

University Draft Response to European Commission Consultation: Unlocking the Potential of Cultural and Creative Industries (minute 662/09-10 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response to a European Commission consultation regarding unlocking the potential of cultural and creative industries (SC.476/09-10).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft response be submitted to the European Commission by the deadline of 30 July 2010, subject to the minor amendments discussed at the meeting.
- (b) That the Committee record its thanks to the Director of the International Office and Dr Chris Bilton for their work on the response.

713/09-10 Report from the Fees Working Group on International Student Fee Setting

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Fees Working Group proposing revisions to the international fee levels for 2011/12, the process for setting fees and the establishment of a new central scholarships fund (SC.466/09-10).

Note: The report, SC.466/09-10, was circulated in hardcopy to members and attendees of the Committee only and was marked 'Commercial in Confidence'.

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the report and recommendations contained therein was the culmination of the initial phase of reviewing the University's fee setting processes in light of economic conditions, market and demand factors and the University's Vision 2015 strategy.
- (b) That, as part of the second phase of work, a working group would be established and supported by the Director of Management Information and Planning to examine the student experience at Warwick.

(By the Director of the International Office)

- (c) That the proposed enhancement of the scholarship opportunities offered by the University would send a clear strategic message regarding Warwick's commitment to global widening participation.

(By the President of the Students' Union)

- (d) That he welcomed the due consideration given to the Students' Union-led proposal to introduce fixed-fees but also cautioned that any increase in student fees would need to be reflected in an enhanced student experience and via enhanced bursary/scholarship support as proposed.

(By the Academic Registrar)

- (e) That, whilst fixed-fees would provide greater clarity for students, it was felt that overall students would pay more because of the higher safety factor incorporated into such a fee to cover associated potential risks and overheads.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the international tuition fees for 2011/12 be approved as set out below,:

*Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught*

Band 1	£12,325
Band 2	£16,000

*Postgraduate Research*

Band 1 £12,115

Band 2 £15,460

- (b) That the proposed establishment of a new central scholarships fund to support the University's commitment towards Global Widening Participation be approved.
- (c) That the proposal that departments be given greater flexibility to differentiate their fees from the standard Band 1/Band 2 rates be approved, in order to support departments who might want to charge a higher fee than the Band 1 fee but for whom Band 2 fees might be prohibitive.
- (d) That the proposal that a wider review of the existing fee band classifications for courses be undertaken be approved, with a view to ensuring that courses were being optimally priced.
- (e) That the revised timetable for the setting of overseas tuition fees be approved.

714/09-10

Future Funding of Researcher Development Training Following Withdrawal of Roberts Funding

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies proposing options for the future funding for researcher development training following the withdrawal of Roberts Funding in March 2011 (SC.484/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That, initially, consideration should be given to what training the University needs to provide and then how this might be provided and funded, acknowledging that there might be other options than those presented in the paper.

(By the Deputy Registrar)

- (b) That the current central provision was provided as an additional aspect to the curriculum rather than embedded within it and therefore a charge had to be applied.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the following recommendations as set out in SC.484/09-10 be approved:
  - (i) That RCUK be asked, in addition to the University carrying forward underspends on Roberts funding to 2011–12, that it be allowed to vire funds between training for Postgraduate Researchers (PGR) and for Post-Doctoral Researchers;
  - (ii) That the proposed PGR fees for overseas students for 2011-12 be set at a level to include £200 per fte for funding researcher development training and other activities;
  - (iii) That the university in principle agrees to increase the home/EU PGR fee from October 2011 in line with RCUK rates, i.e. to include the £200 per fte for researcher development; and
  - (iv) Depending on the outcome under (i), immediate action be taken to review the implications for the in-year provision of Roberts funded activities, including the costs of the Postgraduate Certificate in Transferable Skills for Science, in 2010-11, noting that this would be considered by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, together with the Registrar, with a view to bringing a further paper to the Steering Committee for decision as soon as

possible (and preferably before the commencement of the next academic year).

- (b) That the Chairs of the Boards of the Faculties begin discussions with Heads of Departments regarding the approved proposals, particularly issues around funding central provision and integrating better with departmental provision.

715/09-10 A Summary of the Government White Paper “ Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS”  
(minute 689/09-10 refers)

RECEIVED:

A paper from Professor Neil Johnson and Dr Mike Glover, Warwick Medical School, summarising the recent White Paper on reforming the NHS including opportunities and threats for Warwick, together with an oral report from the Dean of Warwick Medical School (SC.482/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

- (a) That, in response to the opportunities presented by the White Paper, Warwick Medical School and Warwick Business School had begun discussions regarding potential training provision to support the proposed GP consortia which would commission healthcare on a local level, it being noted, however, that the precise specifications for these groups were not finalised.
- (b) That the establishment of a Biomedical Research Unit had become a priority and would be of a value of approximately £5M over five years should the grant be awarded.

716/09-10 HEFCE Circular Letter 17/2010: Arrangements for Capital Investment Fund

CONSIDERED:

Information from HEFCE regarding the arrangements for the second Capital Investment Fund (CIF) (SC.473/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Estates)

- (a) That, although HEFCE had confirmed the process by which institutions could make submissions for assessment under the second CIF by the deadline of 8 October 2010, the funds available were subject to the Comprehensive Spending Review due to report in Autumn 2010.
- (b) That universities would be required within their submissions to demonstrate value for money, sustainability and alignment of CIF plans to an institutional strategy amongst other criteria.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Estates provide details of the proposed University submission to the second CIF for consideration by the Committee prior to the deadline of 8 October 2010.

- 717/09-10 UUK I/2010/052: Digital Economy Act
- CONSIDERED:
- A Universities UK I-Note on the implications of the Digital Economy Act for HE and highlighting the current Ofcom consultation on the Act and online copyright infringement (SC.480/09-10).
- RESOLVED:
- That the University Librarian contact Universities UK to explore whether it would respond as a representative of the sector and whether Warwick might input appropriately into a collective response, noting that should UUK not intend to respond, the University would submit an individual response.
- 718/09-10 UUK I/2010/051: Information Legislation and Management Survey 2009
- RECEIVED:
- Information from Universities UK relating to the findings of the annual JISC InfoNet survey, on behalf of Universities UK and GuildHE, on universities' experience of requests under the Freedom of Information & Data Protection Acts and the Environmental Information Regulations (SC.468/09-10).
- 719/09-10 UUK I/2010/047: Managing Undergraduate Student Recruitment 2010/11
- CONSIDERED:
- A report on the challenges facing applicants, universities and the higher education sector during the 2010 application cycle, and activities/measures in place to support institutions in responding to these challenges (SC.474/09-10).
- REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)
- That Warwick was comfortable in operating within the targets set by HEFCE but acknowledged that the limits were very tight, with, in Warwick's case, only 100 students between the minimum and maximum parameters where 'fines' might be applied.
- RESOLVED:
- That the Academic Registrar continue to communicate to Heads of Departments given the tight recruitment parameters and to update them on how these were being managed.
- 720/09-10 HEFCE CL 20/2010: Changes to Co-Funding Conditions of Grant and Monitoring Arrangements
- RECEIVED:
- A letter from HEFCE explaining changes to the setting and monitoring of targets for institutions with co-funded employer engagement provision (SC.471/09-10).
- 721/09-10 Leadership Foundation for Higher Education Press Release
- RECEIVED:
- A press notice reporting the outcomes of second evaluation report of the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education (SC.478/09-10).

722/09-10

Membership of the Science and Technology Select Committee

RECEIVED:

Details of the appointed members of the Science and Technology Select Committee (SC.470/09-10).

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes/2009-2010/Jul10/26Jul10