

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 27 February 2012

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor S Croft,
Professor M Finn,
Professor C Hughes,
Professor T Jones,
Professor J Labbe,
Professor S Swain,
Professor M Taylor,
Professor P Winstanley,
Mr L Bøe.

Apologies: Professor P Thomas.

In Attendance: Registrar (except for item 354 (a)/11-12), Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Director of Finance and Financial Strategy, Director of HR, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Director of Estates, Head of Corporate Governance, Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer (Governance), Learning and Development Manager (Academic) (for item 354/11-12), Acting Senior Assistant Registrar (Space Management & Timetabling) (for item 356/11-12), Chair of Creative Education (Warwick Business School) (for item 357/11-12).

350/11-12 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 February 2012 be approved.

351/11-12 Major Research Proposal: ESRC Centres and Large Grants Competition 2011/12 (minute 21/11-12 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The outline case for support and the budget for Warwick's involvement in the major research proposal as part of the ESRC Centres and Large Grants Competition 2011/12 (SC.251/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Arts and Social Sciences))

- (a) That the major research proposal was from a group of institutions that included Warwick, and was led by the University of Nottingham.
- (b) That a successful bid would be important for the University's research strategy, establishing the impact of one of the Global Priority Programme themes
- (c) That notwithstanding the strength of the intellectual case there remained reservations about the disproportionate level of financial contribution proposed both in absolute terms and in particular for Warwick compared to the other institutions in the collaboration.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Knowledge Transfer, Business Engagement and Research (Science & Medicine))

- (d) That the Research Councils did not generally expect the cost of post-doctoral posts to be included in proposals.
- (e) That the level of financial contribution proposed for the University should be limited to a level equivalent to that of the other participating universities.

(by the Director of Finance and Financial Strategy)

- (f) That there was an increasing trend for Research Councils to look for financial contributions from institutions with no reference to Full Economic Costing (FEC) and that this raised a question over the resource and effort expended on FEC and the Transparent Approach to Costing (TRAC) exercise.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the bid to the ESRC Centres and Large Grants Competition 2011/12 as set out in paper SC.251/11-12, be revised as discussed in the meeting.
- (b) That, following the application of revisions to the bid document, the Vice-Chancellor take Chair's Action on behalf of the Steering Committee to consider for approval the bid to the ESRC Centres and Large Grants Competition 2011/12 for submission to the ESRC via the University of Nottingham prior to the deadline of 6 March 2012.

352/11-12

Enhanced Facilities for Commuting Undergraduates (minute 85/11-12 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper requesting consideration of proposed measures designed to increase the study and social facilities available to constituencies within the commuting undergraduate population, following consideration by the Students' Union Liaison Group (SULG) and the Capital Planning and Accommodation Review Group (SC.257/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Access, Widening Participation and Development)

- (a) That the SULG had endorsed the proposed measures, designed to increase the study and social facilities available to constituencies within the commuting undergraduate population, that were previously considered by the Steering Committee as paper SC.65/11-12.
- (b) That the current provision for mature and 2+2 students on Westwood Campus was felt by some students to be of variable quality.
- (c) That it was envisaged that the proposed spaces would be available outside of term time to be used by Warwick Conferences.
- (d) That it was hoped that the proposed spaces would be established in readiness for the start of the 2012/13 academic year.

(by the Registrar)

- (e) That a detailed and costed operational model was required in order to consider both capital and operational requirements of the proposed spaces.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (f) That economies of scale could be reached by considering the proposals alongside related developments, such as the Postgraduate Hub and the Leamington study space.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Social Science)

- (g) That the proposal for space on Westwood campus should take into account the opportunities presented by the refurbishment of the Avon Building.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (h) That learning could be shared from the establishment of the Postgraduate Hub and other similar spaces and their operational models.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience)

- (i) That it may be desirable to consider implementing a communal space for some categories of commuting students on the Westwood campus prior to further consideration of the case for space for other commuting students on the central campus.

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (j) That the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review of the Centre for Lifelong Learning had revealed some demand among students for communal space.

RESOLVED:

That the Registrar develop a detailed and costed operational model to be considered through the formal approval processes in due course.

353/11-12

Deputy Vice-Chancellor

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the appointment of Professor Koen Lamberts as the new Deputy Vice-Chancellor was approved by the Council at its meeting held on 23 February 2012, with immediate effect.

354/11-12

Learning and Development Centre Update

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of HR, with an update on key activities within the Learning and Development Centre (LDC) (SC.260/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Director of HR)

- (a) That there was a need to sustain the activity previously supported by Roberts' Funding, notably the collaborative approach to researcher support with departments.

(by the Learning and Development Manager (Academic))

- (b) That the work of the Teaching and Learning Unit in the LDC focussed on delivering support for developing practice that was relevant and applicable.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience)

- (c) That the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic and Professional Practice (PCAPP) was now perceived positively by many academics and Heads of Departments.
- (d) That there were clear synergies between the work of the 'Academic' team in LDC and IATL and that the collaborative approach should continue and that synergies were being explored.

(by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (e) That the University was actively exploring the viability of establishing a framework to ensure the sustainability of the activity previously supported by Roberts' Funding.
- (f) That it would be beneficial to enhance the provision to support all levels of the research career.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Access, Widening Participation and Development)

- (g) That the inclusion of provision for postgraduate research students that teach within the activities of the LDC was welcomed.
- (h) That the LDC could be involved in consideration of how to encourage departments to engage further with the University's Widening Participation agenda.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (i) That the Board of Graduate Studies would consider how to support postgraduate research students that teach, and that she would work with the Learning and Development Manager (Academic) to establish appropriate teacher training and to address undergraduate student perceptions of these tutors.

355/11-12 Equality and Diversity Update

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Director of HR, with an update on key activities within Equality and Diversity (SC.261/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Director of HR)

- (a) That the Equal Pay Reviews for Levels 1a-8 and Level 9 were published on the Equality and Diversity web pages in line with the deadline of 31 January 2012, as dictated by the specific duties of the Equality Act 2010.
- (b) That no national guidance was provided on the frequency of review, but a recommendation was made to Senate to take a light touch review on an annual basis for Levels 1a-8, with a more detailed analysis and review every two years.
- (c) That for Level 9, a review would be carried out on an annual basis with the ownership resting with the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research (Arts and Social Sciences))

- (d) That it was important that all departments considered the importance of future submissions for Athena SWAN awards.

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (e) That a consultation with students had indicated that the collection of some elements of monitoring data on the gender of students, in line with HESA reporting requirements, had the potential to cause offence to trans-gender students.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Access, Widening Participation and Development)

- (f) That she had chaired the Equality and Diversity Committee on behalf of Professor K Lamberts, and at that meeting the Academic Registrar and the Senior Assistant Registrar (Management Information and Planning) were commended by the Students' Union for consulting on the collection of sensitive monitoring data.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (g) That the collection of monitoring data on sexual orientation and religion or belief for HESA's reporting requirements would be statutory from the academic year 2012/13.

RESOLVED:

That the President of the Students' Union send the Registrar a copy of the motion passed at the General Meeting of the Students' Union to register its concerns about particular questions used in the data collection of gender.

356/11-12

Capital Developments and Space Management

RECEIVED:

A paper outlining recent capital and space developments (SC.258/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Estates)

- (a) That the Capital Plan was progressing as expected and that there would be a number of proposals to be considered by the Capital Planning and Accommodation Review Group, including the selection of a site for a large lecture theatre.
- (b) That centrally timetabled rooms were considered for refurbishment as required, as well as the introduction and maintenance of appropriate AV equipment.

(by the Acting Senior Assistant Registrar (Space Management & Timetabling))

- (c) That performance in a benchmarking exercise of University space metrics during the 2009/10 academic year, had demonstrated significant improvement year-on-year.

357/11-12

Open-space Learning in Real World Contexts

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Dean of the Warwick Business School and the Chair of Creative Education in the Warwick Business School regarding the Open-space Learning (OSL) in Real World Contexts project (SC.256/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Chair of Creative Education (Warwick Business School))

- (a) That the project was successful in capturing creativity, with a sustainable legacy within IATL, WBS and elsewhere.

- (b) That the project had been initially restricted to a sub-set of departments given resource constraints but that links to other departments would be explored alongside other strands of creative learning.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Access, Widening Participation and Development)

- (c) That the input of the Director of IATL would be important to enable the principles of OSL to be embedded in teaching and learning practice.

(by the Registrar)

- (d) That the paper was intended as a celebration of the success achieved within the project.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (e) That, as IATL and OSL were part of Warwick's distinctiveness, such initiatives should be extended to the postgraduate population to enhance their education experience.

RESOLVED:

That the success of the Open-space Learning in Real World Contexts project be welcomed.

358/11-12

Key Information Set: Timetable and Further Information

RECEIVED:

A HEFCE circular containing the latest information on the development of the Key Information Set (KIS), including the timetable for the creation and publication of the 2012 KIS (SC.259/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the circular outlined the specific requirements and timings for the KIS, including the embedding of a KIS "widget" within course information websites to enable the provision of KIS data by the week commencing 24 September 2012.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (b) That a new module had been purchased for SITS to facilitate the collection and transmission of KIS data to HEFCE and HESA.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (c) That there was a lack of clarity over which external organization was taking ownership of the KIS.

359/11-12

Varsity 2012 Events

REPORTED: (by the President of the Students' Union)

That the Finale Day of Varsity 2012 between Warwick and Coventry University would take place on 14 March 2012, finishing with Men's Football.

360/11-12

Students' Union Sabbatical Officer Elections (minute 337/11-12 refers)

REPORTED: (by the President of the Students' Union)

That the successful candidates for the seven full time Sabbatical Officer positions would be announced on Friday 2 March 2012.

361/11-12 Real Costs for Students

REPORTED: (by the President of the Students' Union)

- (a) That the Students' Union was launching an information gathering exercise to establish the average cost of being a student at the University in addition to tuition fees, to include costs such as core textbooks, laboratory equipment, transport and educational trips.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience)

- (b) That an initiative was being explored to reduce the costs of course materials to students.

(by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (c) That any data collected should be compared to that of other institutions.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Access, Widening Participation and Development)

- (d) That any educational trips would be designed to enhance the curriculum, and therefore the Students' Union would need to balance the consideration of costs with the need to develop curricula and pedagogy dynamically.

362/11-12 Mental Health Awareness Week

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That his thanks were extended to the staff and students who engaged with the University's contribution to National Mental Health Awareness Week.

363/11-12 Early Repayment Consultation

RECEIVED:

Statement from David Willetts, Minister of State for Universities and Business, confirming there would be no changes introduced with regard to early repayment of student loans (SC.263/11-12).

KMS/KP/steersshare/minutes/201112/Feb12/27Feb12