

## THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

### Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 27 July 2009

Present: Vice-Chancellor,  
Professor L Bridges,  
Professor R Higgott,  
Professor K Lamberts,  
Professor R Lindley,  
Professor M Smith,  
Professor H Thomas,  
Mr S Thomson,  
Professor M Underwood,  
Professor M Whitby.

Apologies: Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor S Bassnett, Professor S Bruzzi

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Finance Director, Director of Estates, Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office), Mr A Bradley, Professor A Ruckenstein (Boston University), Mr J Mercurio (Boston University), Head of Department of Italian Studies and Dr J Burns (for item 770/08-09), Director of IAS, Professor H Marland, and the IAS Administrator (for item 771/08-09), Director of Management Information and Planning (for item 772/08-09).

The Vice-Chancellor, on behalf of the Committee, thanked the President of the Students' Union and the team of sabbatical officers for the contribution to the University during 2008/09.

761/08-09 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 July be approved, subject to the following amendments (deletions struck through and additions underlined):

*731/08-09:*

Group of 44-13 (minute 705/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning/International Affairs))

- (a) That the Group of ~~44-13~~ intended to submit a bid to the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund on 21 July 2009 and that he, the Registrar and the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment had had the opportunity to review the bid.

(...)

(By the Vice-Chancellor)

- (d) That, given the University's strong commitment to widening participation (WP), we would not wish to give the opposite impression by withdrawing from the Group of ~~44-13~~, particularly given the current focus on WP by Lord Mandelson and the new Department of Business, Innovation and Skills.

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning/International Affairs) draft a letter of support for the Vice-Chancellor for the Group of 44-13 Project for submission when required, noting that the University would include its specific reservations on the approach in its response.

762/08-09 Group of 13 (minute 731/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning/International Affairs))

That he had not yet received a request from the Group of 13 to send a letter of support for the Group of 13 Project

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning/International Affairs) contact the Group of 13 to identify when the request would be forthcoming.

763/08-09 Statement from DBIS and UUK on Additional Student Numbers 2009/10 (minute 709/08-09 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A statement from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills and related response from UUK regarding the 10,000 additional student places offered in mainly Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects for 2009/10 (SC.583/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That it was recommended that the University should reject an institutional offer of 120 additional places from HEFCE on the grounds that accepting these places would serve to worsen the University's current HEFCE contract position.
- (b) That the University's HEFCE Institutional Contact had advised that the University not take up the offer of the additional places.
- (c) That concerns raised from departments within the Faculty of Science with regard to the admissions position had been recognised and that it had been already confirmed that Chemistry would enter clearing, noting that she and her team would work closely with all departments to manage the situation appropriately.

(By the Vice-Chancellor)

- (d) That the University recognised the potential for reputational damage in turning down the additional places but that the lack of additional teaching grant funding from HEFCE was problematic.

RESOLVED:

That the offer of an additional 120 unfunded undergraduate places for 2009/10 be declined.

764/08-09 IGGY Summer U

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the second IGGY Summer U had begun on campus today, with around 130 young people from 15 countries attending a mix of workshops, lectures, field trips and group work in subject areas as diverse as 'Chemistry, Physics and Saving the World' to 'Performance and Myth'.
- (b) That there would be an additional IGGY Summer U at Warwick this year commencing on 10 August 2009 to replace the postponed camp at Alberta.

765/08-09 Ministerial Visit to the University

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That on Monday 20 July, the University had co-hosted a visit to the West Midlands by the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, Ed Balls and members of his ministerial team to mark the launch of the Building Britain's Future policy.

(By the Registrar)

That the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for 14-19 Reform, Iain Wright MP, had expressed interest in the Warwick MBA programme and that information had been forwarded to him in this regard.

767/08-09 Lord Mandelson Event

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That he had today attended a speech by Lord Mandelson, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on the central issues facing universities ahead of the publication of a HE Framework on the future shape of the sector later in the year.

768/08-09 Wolfson – Wellcome Bid

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

That the University had received a call from Wellcome and Wolfson for capital grants with a deadline of 27 July 2009 and that a biomedical research bid had been developed and submitted, led by the Department of Physics and the School of Engineering.

RESOLVED:

That the proposal be considered in full at a future meeting of the Committee should the University bid be shortlisted by Wolfson-Wellcome.

769/08-09 Introduction to Boston University Delegation

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Professor Andre Ruckenstein, Vice-President (Research) and Mr Joseph Mercurio, Executive Vice-President, from Boston University were visiting the University to further the strategic partnership between the two institutions and were attending this meeting of the Steering Committee to gain an insight into the management of University business.

770/08-09 Strategic Departmental Review Response: Department of Italian Studies (minute 676/08-09 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The departmental response to the Strategic Departmental Review for the Department of Italian Studies held between 5 to 7 May 2009 and the Action Plan considered at a previous meeting of the Committee, together with an oral report from the current Head of the Department, Dr Simon Gilson (SC.582/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Head of the Department of Italian Studies))

- (a) That the Department acknowledged the need to consider methods of balancing the high-level of student contact hours with other teaching and research activities within the Department given that the staffing levels would more than likely stay static for the immediate future but that he hoped some additional resource would be allocated in the future.
- (b) That the Department intended to explore the possibilities of spreading administrative roles via collaboration with the other modern languages departments, as well as within the Department.
- (c) That the joint MA in Italian Studies: Culture and Communication had generated greater visibility for the Department within the discipline of Italian and had become a recruitment stream to PhD courses.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the departmental response and action plan be approved as set out in SC.582/08-09, noting the incoming Head of Department was encouraged to delegate responsibilities for activities set out in the Action Plan where appropriate.
- (b) That the Head of the Department of Italian Studies be invited to provide the Steering Committee with a progress report in the Summer Term 2010.

771/08-09

Institute of Advanced Study Update

CONSIDERED:

A report updating the Committee on developments within the Institute of Advanced Study (IAS) including Early Career Vacation Research Schools, Early Career Fellowships, IAS Visiting Fellowships, Sub-Saharan Research Network (SC.584/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Director of the Institute of Advanced Study)

- (a) That over 100 PhD students were participating in the Early Career Vacation Research Schools which aimed to enhance the training environment and networking opportunities for current Warwick PhD students and draw international attention and senior researchers to the University.
- (b) That work was currently being undertaken at Cryfield Grange to add additional bedrooms and a reception area with the facility re-opening in September 2009.
- (c) That the successful Consortium for Advanced Research Training in Africa (CARTA) bid had secured funding for a five-year PhD programme to build capacity for PhD and postdoctoral research on public health in African universities and that this should be recognised as a distinctive element of the IAS programme.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record its thanks to Professor Finn for her contribution as the founding Director of the IAS and welcome Professor Marland to the position from 1 August 2009.

772/08-09 HESA Performance Indicators 2009

RECEIVED:

A paper from the Director of Management Information and Planning presenting the University's results from the HESA Performance Indicators 2009 in the areas of participation rates, non-continuation rates, projected learning outcomes, participation of students in receipt of Disabled Students' Allowance, graduate employment and research (SC.586/08-09).

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

- (a) That the University had marginally missed the location-adjusted benchmark on the widening participation index but had performed favourably compared to many Russell Group institutions.
- (b) That it was not unexpected in the current economic climate that the employment rate for Warwick graduates had decreased by 3% which corresponded to the overall drop for the sector from 94.8% to 91.3%.
- (c) That the University was in the upper quartile of institutions for external grant and contract activity but that its performance in terms of both PhDs awarded relative to academic costs and relative to Funding Council allocation for research was lower, noting that the projected increased intake of PhD students would aid to improve the situation.

(By the President of the Students' Union)

- (d) That the University should consider the scale and scope of its current and future widening participation activities to ensure they impacted on the widest possible range of students.

773/08-09 Faculty of Social Studies Update

RECEIVED:

A report from the Chair of the Faculty of Social Studies on activities within the Faculty in the areas of research, teaching and learning, Heads of Department Away Day and the Festival of Social Studies (SC.593/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the Constitutional Advisory Group might welcome details of any points of interest arising from the Faculty Heads of Department Away Day should the Heads of Department be in agreement that the details should be disseminated.

774/08-09 Unleashing Aspirations: The Final Report from the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions

RECEIVED:

The introduction and summary chapter of the recently published governmental report on Fair Access to the Professions led by Alan Millburn MP (SC.578/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That he was disappointed that the report had not drawn on the wealth of social science research in this area.

(By the Registrar)

- (b) That the University would reflect on the findings and recommendations contained in the report and determine whether a response was appropriate.

775/08-09 HEFCE Review of Subject Cost Weight in HEFCE Research Funding

RECEIVED:

A letter from HEFCE advising of a review of subject cost weight in research funding and inviting the University to participate in the study (SC.585/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the University had replied and confirmed its interest in participating the study, noting that an initial briefing session was scheduled for Autumn 2009.

776/08-09 UUK I-Note I/2009/065: Science and Learning Consultation

CONSIDERED:

A UUK I-Note informing members of a Department of Children, Schools and Families consultation into science and learning seeking to establish the perceptions from both the science and education communities about the strengths and weaknesses of the current education of young people in science and mathematics (SC.580/08-09).

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment co-ordinate the University's response to the DCSF consultation for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting prior to the submission deadline of 18 September 2009.

777/08-09 Charity Regulation Update

RECEIVED:

Information from HEFCE on further changes to charity regulation with regards to draft statutory instruments on the regulation of exempt charities, transitional issues and public benefit reporting (SC.588/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

That the changes to the regulation of exempt charities would impact on Students' Unions in England and that once the commencement date for the new arrangements was announced, the Students' Union would need to take forward the process to make the necessary revisions to its registration to ensure compliance.

778/08-09 DCLG Consultation on Housing in Multiple Occupancy and Private Landlords

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the University had responded to the Department for Community and Local Government consultation on multiple occupancy arrangements and private landlords and that the University response would be received by the Committee for information at the next meeting.

779/08-09 UUK 'Talking Shop' on Admissions 2009

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

That the Director of Management Information and Planning had attended the UUK 'Talking Shop' on the changes to 2009 admissions, including Clearing 2009, the freeze on additional student numbers, the new Adjustment Period, the new points-based immigration system and the impact these were expected to have on both domestic and international recruitment.

780/08-09 National Student Survey 2008 Results

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning/International Affairs))

That the results of the 2008 National Student Survey had been published on 22 July 2009 and that the University's response rate had fallen from 66% to 61%, noting that the University would aim to improve the response rate for the next survey.

781/08-09 UUK I-Note I/2009/066: From Recession to Recovery

RECEIVED:

An Universities UK publication highlighting examples of how universities had responded to the needs of students, graduates and businesses as a result of the recession (SC.591/08-09).

782/08-09 UUK I-Note I/2009/064: Impacts - Success in Shaping Public Policy and Services

RECEIVED:

Information from Universities UK on a report by the Research Councils UK highlighting the impact it had had on shaping public policy and showcasing the benefits of research for the economy and society (SC.579/08-09).

783/08-09 UUK I-Note I/2009/067: HEFCE HE-BCI Survey

RECEIVED:

A summary from Universities UK of the main findings of the latest HEFCE Higher Education – Business and Community Interaction (HE-BCI) survey (SC.592/08-09).

784/08-09 Advantage West Midlands Annual Report 2008/09

RECEIVED:

The annual report from Advantage West Midlands detailing regional successes and achievements, as well as setting out the impact of the recession on the region and the response by AWM and its partners (SC.589/08-09).