

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 27 September 2010

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor S Bruzzi,
Professor A Caesar,
Professor J Labbe,
Professor K Lamberts,
Professor M Taylor
Professor P Winstanley.

Apologies: Professor R Higgott, Professor C Hughes,

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Finance Director, Director of Estates, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Director of HR, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Incoming Academic Registrar, Incoming Administrative Officer (Governance), Head of Stakeholder Relations and Environment Manager (for item 828/09-10), Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (for item 829/09-10).

823/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2010 be approved.

824/09-10 Pudsey Grangefield School Trust (minute 479/09-10 refers)

RESOLVED:

That Professor David Wray, Acting Director of the Warwick Institute of Education, be nominated as a Trustee of the proposed Pudsey Grangefield School Trust, it being noted that the University's formal engagement with Trust Schools and Academies would be reviewed in the Spring Term 2011 as previously resolved.

825/09-10 Student Accommodation (minute 806/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the situation regarding the allocation of student accommodation had improved and that the additional alternative temporary accommodation secured should be sufficient to cover the number of students without University accommodation at the beginning of the term.
- (b) That a 'no-show' factor was expected within the University accommodation due to deferral or students deciding not to take up their place which would help release rooms for students without accommodation.

(By the President of the Students' Union)

- (c) That, whilst the Students' Union were not entirely satisfied with the final arrangements regarding student accommodation and had asked the Registrar formally to consider additional arrangements for students affected, he did acknowledge the work being undertaken by the University to resolve the issues.

RESOLVED:

That the Registrar, Deputy Registrar and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) consider the proposal from the President of the Students' Union regarding potential compensation in the form of bus passes for students who were placed in temporary non-University accommodation.

826/09-10 University Open Day

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record its thanks to colleagues who attended and organised the successful University Open Day held on 25 September 2010.

827/09-10 Sunday Times Article on Fees and Funding for Higher Education

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the information published in the Sunday Times on 26 September 2010 entitled '*Tuition fees will rise to £10,000*' appeared reasonably accurate.
- (b) That cuts to the Teaching Grant up to 78 percent had been mooted and that QR funding was likely to be concentrated.
- (c) That potential cuts in the Teaching Grant would result in a fundamental change in how universities operated and required increases in graduate contributions to compensate.

(By the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (d) That the University would be well placed to capitalise on the suggested concentration of research given the institution's uniformly good performance in the 2008 RAE.

RESOLVED:

That the Fees Working Group prepare an initial paper regarding potential strategies for managing such reductions for the consideration of the Committee at a future meeting.

828/09-10 Universities That Count Survey (minute 733/09-10 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Head of Stakeholder Relation and the Environment Manager providing analysis of the results of the second Universities That Count (UtC) corporate responsibility benchmarking programme (SC.547/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Stakeholder Relations)

- (a) That the University was ranked 5th out of the 29 institutions who participated in the survey and was awarded a Silver standard, with a 13 percent increase from the previous survey (73.1 percent to 86.7 percent).
- (b) That the University had completed the new optional Teaching, Learning, Research and Knowledge Exchange (TLRKE) section of the survey, which was not included in the institution's final results, noting that there was scope for significant improvement around the teaching and academic activities focusing on sustainability at the University.

(By the Environment Manager)

- (c) That it was expected that within future sustainability metrics, universities would have to demonstrate performance improvement and that, to ensure Warwick could demonstrate this, consideration should be given to how sustainability might be benchmarked and co-ordinated internally.

(By the Director of Estates)

- (d) That the second round of the HEFCE Capital Investment Framework required institutions to include information on their sustainability strategies and that the positive results of the UtC would strengthen the University's submission to be provided to HEFCE by 8 October 2010, noting that the lack of coverage it carried might however become an issue.

(By the Head of Governance Support Services)

- (e) That it had been difficult to demonstrate 'across institution' coverage of policies relating to sustainability in teaching and learning within the UtC due to adhoc nature in which these policies had developed.

(By the President of the Students' Union)

- (f) That the Students' Union would be giving consideration to how issues around sustainability might be introduced into the curriculum across the institution and so it would be beneficial to establish whether this was a University imperative.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee record its thanks to colleagues who assisted in the completion of the UtC survey.
- (b) That the University participate in the third year of the survey, acknowledging the substantial resource this would entail.
- (c) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education and Student Experience) give consideration to the potential integration of 'green' issues within the Warwick curriculum.

829/09-10

University Response to UUK/GuildHE/QAA Review of the External Examiner System (minute 748/09-10 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response to the UUK/GuildHE/QAA Review of the External Examiner System (SC.533/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality))

- (a) That the proposals within the consultation documentation aimed to provide assurance of quality and standards within the higher education sector.
- (b) That it was unclear how the proposals fitted with the current guidelines on external examiners and their duties.

(By the Registrar)

- (c) That the review and its proposals sought to implement a standard system of external examining across the sector as opposed to an institution-defined method of independently assessing the quality of its teaching and learning.

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

- (d) That, due to recurrent nature of such scrutiny of institutional standards, it would be beneficial for the University to produce a position statement on its approach to external examining.

RESOLVED:

That the draft University response to the UUK/GuildHE/QAA review of the external examining system as set out in SC.553/09-10 be approved for submission by the deadline of 1 October 2010, subject to the amendments discussed at the meeting.

830/09-10 Emergency Planning Policy

CONSIDERED:

The draft University Emergency Planning Policy providing a framework for University members should a serious event or situation occur (SC.554/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That the Emergency Planning Policy was underpinned by a comprehensive Emergency Planning Pack informed by key service and support teams.
- (b) That the University had engaged an external consultant to assist in developing thinking relating to emergency and crisis planning.

RESOLVED:

That the University Emergency Planning Policy be approved as set out in SC.554/09-10, noting that guidance should be included within the Emergency Planning Pack as to how serious events or situations experienced by a University partner or other body with resulting implications for Warwick would be managed.

831/09-10 Corporate Planning Statement

CONSIDERED:

The draft University Corporate Planning Statement to be submitted to HEFCE by 1 December 2010 as part of the annual accountability return (SC.555/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Governance Support Services)

- (a) That the provisional Corporate Planning Statement (CPS) as presented in SC.555/09-10 aimed to update and assure HEFCE of the progress made during 2009/10 against the key priorities listed in the 2009 CPS.
- (b) That the CPS for 2010 would not seek to include identification of key priorities for 2010 as the refocused University strategy would be submitted together with the CPS, noting that the CPS and the refocused strategy would be considered by the Council in November 2010.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Senate)

That the draft Corporate Planning Statement be approved as set out in SC.555/09-10, noting that the document would be updated prior to circulation to the Senate to include any comments from members provided to the Head of Governance Support Services by 29 September 2010.

832/09-10

Senate Business

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the comments and recommendations of the Steering Committee on the items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 6 October 2010 be approved as set out in the papers circulated for the meeting of the Senate, noting that paper S.5/10-11 proposing the membership of Senate committees for 2010/11 would be updated prior to circulation to the Senate to include any nominations received following the consideration of the Committee.
- (b) That members of the Steering Committee review the proposed memberships of those committees which they chair and advise the Head of Governance Support Services of any amendments by 29 September 2010.

833/09-10

International Student Barometer

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

That he wished to extend his thanks and congratulation to colleagues working in student-facing services at the University following the excellent performance in this area in the recent International Student Barometer.

834/09-10

International Rankings Presentation from Heads of Department Meeting 21 September 2010

RECEIVED:

A presentation delivered the Director of Management Information and Planning regarding international university rankings methods, measures and issues (SC.556/09-10).

835/09-10

I/2010/071: Publication of 'Recession to Recovery' Report

RECEIVED:

An I-note advising members of the recent publication of the second strand of Universities UK's *From Recession to Recovery* project, which reflected on longer-term issues facing higher education in the context of recession and crisis in public finance (SC.549/09-10).

836/09-10

I/2010/073: Publication of OECD Education at a Glance

RECEIVED:

An I-Note advising members of the key findings from OECD's Education at a glance publication with a focus on the comparative performance of the United Kingdom amongst OECD countries (SC.550/09-10).

JFB/jf/steersshare/minutes/2009-2010/Sep10/27Sep10