

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 1 October 2007

- Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)  
Professor S Bassnett  
Professor L Bridges  
Professor A Caesar  
Professor R Higgott  
Mr J Kirby until item 10/07-08  
Professor K Lamberts  
Professor R Lindley  
Professor M Smith, for items 11/07-08 to 15/07-08  
Professor H Thomas  
Professor M Whitby
- Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor Y Carter, Registrar.
- In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Director of Finance, Director of Estates, University Secretary, Ms H Sinclair, for item 11/07-08 the Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance), for item 12/07-08 the Director of the Alumni and Development Office, for item 13/07-08 the Director of Research Support Services.
- 1/07-08 Minutes  
RESOLVED:  
That the minutes of the meeting held on 24 September 2007 be approved.
- 2/07-08 Ministerial Visits  
REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
That the following high level visits were currently taking place on the University campus:  
(a) Ian Pearson MP, Minister of State for Science and Innovation at the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills was visiting the Warwick Manufacturing Group and would also meet student representatives at University House to discuss issues relating to student fees.  
(b) That Liam Byrne MP, Minister for the West Midlands, was holding a conference with the region's key thinkers hosted at the Vice-Chancellor's residence.
- 3/07-08 Independent Chair of the Finance Data Review (minute 689/06-07 refers)  
REPORTED: (by the University Secretary)  
That Baroness Rennie Fritchie had been appointed as the Independent Chair of the forthcoming HE Finance and Pay Data Review to examine pay negotiations for the academic year 2009-10 and beyond.
- 4/07-08 Argent House (minute 674/06-07 refers)  
REPORTED: (by the Director of Estates)  
(a) That the University was continuing to investigate the possibility of the purchase of Argent House on the University Science Park to

accommodate the Estates Office, in lieu of new build, to accommodate jobs.ac.uk, an IT server room in lieu of conversion of teaching space and potentially to accommodate the Centre Européen de Calcul Atomique et Moléculaire (CECAM).

- (b) That it was expected that a clear position on the costs associated with the potential purchase of Argent House would be available by the end of October at which point the University would be able to reach an informed decision on the potential purchase of the property.

5/07-08 Millburn House

REPORTED: (by the Director of Estates)

That it was likely that the University contractor carrying out the refurbishment work to Millburn House might go into liquidation, that the University had served notice to the contractor and was seeking legal advice on the position but that this situation was not expected to delay occupancy of the building in the short term.

6/07-08 National Student Survey (minutes 677/06-07 and 664/06-07 refer)

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

That he would be writing to all Heads of Departments, in conjunction with the Education Officer and Deputy President of the Union of Students, with proposals for action in response to the University's performance in the National Student Survey.

7/07-08 Centre Européen de Calcul Atomique et Moléculaire (CECAM)  
(minutes 638/07-08 and 638/06-07 refer)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the Director of the Centre for Scientific Computing had been invited to present the University's bid to host the Centre Européen de Calcul Atomique et Moléculaire (CECAM) to the CECSM Council on 12 October 2007 in Lyon.

8/07-08 Times Higher Education Supplement Awards (minutes 528/06-07 and 568/06-07 refer)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the University had been short-listed in the following categories in the 2007 Times Higher Awards:

- (a) Excellence and Innovation in the Arts;  
(b) Outstanding Contribution to Sustainable Development;  
(c) Business Initiative of the Year.

9/07-08 Coming Up Weekend

RECEIVED

An oral report from the Academic Registrar on the organisation and arrangements put in place for enrolment and welcoming of new University students, and their families, to the campus during 'Coming-Up' week end.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee record its formal thanks to all those University staff who had contributed to the smooth and successful operation of 'Coming Up' weekend.

10/07-08 University Open Day

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That the University Open Day held on 26 September had been oversubscribed and that this has caused significant traffic congestion and parking difficulties for visitors.
- (b) That the outcome of the consultation with academic departments, in which the Academic Office was currently engaged, on the potential alternative arrangements for University Open Day events, including the possibility of holding a third University Open day, would be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee in due course.

11/07-08 Strategic Departmental Review: Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies

CONSIDERED:

The Review Report of the Strategic Departmental Review of the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies held during July (SC.15/07-08).

RESOLVED:

That the Head of the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies be invited to submit an initial response to the Review Report to the Steering Committee for consideration at its next meeting on 8 October 2007.

12/07-08 DfES Consultation on Matched-Funding Scheme for Voluntary Giving to HE in England (minute 578/06-07 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response to the DfES consultation on the proposed matched-funding scheme for voluntary giving to HE in England (SC.14/07-08).

RESOLVED:

That the Director of the Development and Alumni Relations revise the response to the DfES consultation on the proposed matched-funding scheme for voluntary giving to HE in England, along the lines discussed at the meeting, for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to UUK by the deadline of 19 October 2007 and the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills by the deadline of 2 November 2007.

13/07-08 Research and Innovation Update

RECEIVED:

A paper providing an update on research and innovation issues including the development of a University strategy for research, an update on the Science City initiative, steps being taken to increase engagement with the Research Councils and external funding bodies and an update on research income generation (SC.05/07-08).

REPORTED:

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor {Research: Arts and Social Studies})

(a) That a re-prioritisation of the services offered by Research Support Services was taking place in the context of the overall University Strategy.

(by the University Secretary)

(b) That discussions were taking place between the Finance Office, Research Support Services and the University's Legal Adviser on the arrangements for the negotiation, drafting, development and approval of contracts with a view to clarifying and streamlining procedures and processes.

14/07-08 Withdrawal of Funding for Equivalent or Lower Level Qualifications (minute 681/06-07 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The HEFCE consultation on the Withdrawal of Funding for Equivalent or Lower Level Qualifications (SC.06/07-08).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

That the consultation document indicated that funding for students on the MChB course would not be affected by the announcement from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills on the withdrawal of funding for equivalent or lower level qualifications.

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Registrar draft the University response to the consultation on the withdrawal of funding for equivalent or lower level qualifications for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the HEFCE by the deadline of 7 December 2007.

15/07-08 Senate Business

RECOMMENDED:

That the constitution of the Board of Undergraduate Studies be revised such that it is no longer a requirement that the Chair of the Board is a Pro-Vice-Chancellor, as proposed in paper S.5/07-08 (tabled at the meeting).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That consideration of the remaining proposals set out in the paper on revisions to University Committee Structures and to the constitutions of Committees of the Senate (S.5/07-08, tabled at the meeting) be deferred until full consideration and wider consultation could be undertaken on the proposals with a view to final proposals being considered by the Senate at its meeting to be held on 5 December 2007 it being understood that current Senate Committee structures would therefore continue to operate during the course of the Autumn Term.
- (b) That the University Secretary bring forward recommendations on the membership of Senate Committees for the academic year 2007/08 as proposed and agreed at the meeting.

16/07-08 Publication of OECD Education at a Glance

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/07/116 summarising the main findings of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) publication *Education at a Glance* providing a comparison of international education indicators including participation rates in higher education, investment in education, the international market in HE students and the labour market (SC.08/07-08).

17/07-08 HEFCE's Accounts Direction to Higher Education Institutions for 2007-08 Financial Statements

RECEIVED:

HEFCE'S Accounts Direction to Higher Education Institutions on preparing their financial statements for 2007-08 (SC.09/07-08).

18/07-08 Evaluation of the Effectiveness and Role of Third Stream Funding

RECEIVED:

HEFCE Circular Letter 24/2007 providing initial information on the evaluation of 'third stream' funding being undertaken by the HEFCE prior to the selection of institutions to participate in the evaluation as case studies (SC.10/07-08).

19/07-08 UUK Higher Education International Unit (minute 538/06-07 refers)

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/07/101 providing an update on the establishment of UUK's UK Higher Education International Unit which aims to provide policy advice and analysis to UK HEIs (SC.11/07-08).

20/07-08. 14-19 Curriculum Developments: DCSF Newsletter

RECEIVED (SC.12/07-08)

UUK Information Note I/07/11 on the publication of the *Newsflash Edition of the 14-19 Education and Skills HE Newsletter* published by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) setting out the specifications for the full Diploma qualification and the revised A levels.