

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 6 February 2006

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor S Bassnett
Professor L Bridges
Professor J Jones
Professor R Lindley
Professor M Smith
Ms K Stark
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor A Caesar, Professor Y Carter, Professor M Luntley, Professor S B Palmer, Professor H Thomas.

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Acting Director of Finance (until 11.30am), Director of Academic and Student Affairs, Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Director of Personnel, Registrar, University Secretary, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 292/05-06 the Head of Student Finance, for item 294/05-06 the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality), for item 295/05-06 the Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning.

284/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 30 January 2006 be approved.

285/05-06 University Protocol for Construction Projects on Campus (minute 279/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Director of Estates)

That it had been established that there was currently no University protocol for construction projects being undertaken on campus during term-time and that he would be taking steps to draw up a suitable protocol.

286/05-06 UK-India Education and Research Initiative (minute 278/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor {International Affairs and Equal Opportunities})

That Professor Bridges had been nominated to represent the University at the conferences to be held in New Delhi in March 2006 as part of the UK-India Education and Research Initiative.

287/05-06 Degree Titles

CONSIDERED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on issues relating to the nomenclature of courses offered by the University in the context of the announcement of full degree titles during Degree Congregation ceremonies.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Academic and Student Affairs bring forward recommendations in regard to the use of full degree titles during Degree Congregation ceremonies for consideration by the Steering Committee at a future meeting.

288/05-06 Racial Bias and Student Admissions: Sunday Times Article

RECEIVED:

A copy of an article on the perceived racial bias in higher education admissions policies published in the Sunday Times on 5 February 2006 (SC.195/05-06, tabled at the meeting) together with an oral report from the Vice-Chancellor noting that the University continually monitored issues relating to recruitment of students from ethnic minorities in order to ensure a fair and equitable admissions process.

289/05-06 Science Cities Collaboration with Birmingham: Submission to Advantage West Midlands (minute 263/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

Final proposals from the Universities of Warwick and Birmingham to Advantage West Midlands for capital funding to support the establishment and development of collaborative research centres aligned to the Birmingham Science City initiative (SC.192/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science, in consultation with the Finance Office and with Heads of Department and external contacts as appropriate, prepare a paper setting out the objectives and fundamental principles associated with the resource allocation model for the proposed collaborative research centres for consideration by the Steering Committee at its next meeting on 13 February.

290/05-06 Higher Education Funding 2006-07

CONSIDERED:

A copy of the annual grant letter from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to the HEFCE setting out the funding to be made available for higher education for the financial year 2006-07 and a news release from the HEFCE on its provisional funding allocations for this period (SC.194/05-06) together with an oral report from the Vice-Chancellor.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University continue to monitor developments in public funding for the UK HE sector in the context of the DfES' proposed shift towards a strategy of UK HE growth through employer-led provision.
- (b) That the Chief Executive of the QAA be invited to visit the University in the Summer Term to discuss the role of the QAA in the context of the proposed move towards employer-led provision of UK HE and that a joint meeting of the Strategy Committee and Heads of academic departments be scheduled for this purpose.

291/05-06 RAE 2008: Panel Criteria and Working Methods

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the Research Assessment Exercise 2008 criteria and working methods had been published for all RAE 2008 subject panels and would shortly be distributed to all academic departments within the University.

292/05-06 Warwick Undergraduate Aid Programme: Work-Study Scheme

CONSIDERED:

A paper setting out the progress made to date in the implementation of the work-study element of the Warwick Undergraduate Aid Programme (WUAP) and the administrative arrangements being put in place to manage this scheme for the academic year 2006/07 (SC.189/05-06) together with oral reports from the Director of Academic and Student Affairs and the Head of Student Finance.

RESOLVED:

That an evaluation of the implementation of the WUAP work-study scheme in the academic year 2006/07 be undertaken as soon as practicable after its first year of operation on the understanding that issues relating to the impact and efficacy of the scheme would be reviewed in the longer term.

293/05-06 Centre for Scientific Computing: Proposal for Investment in High Performance Computing (minute 279(c)/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Centre for Scientific Computing (CSC) for investment by the University in High Performance Computing and a commentary prepared by the Finance Office setting out details of the proposed capital expenditure (SC.178/05-06) together with an oral report from the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science.

RECOMMENDED: (to the Finance and General Purposes Committee):

That, subject to written confirmation from all Heads of Departments in the membership of the CSC that any under-recovery of costs by the CSC having an overall impact on departments' 5-year plans would be met from existing departmental budgets, the proposal for capital expenditure in the CSC be approved as set out in paper SC.178/05-06.

294/05-06 CETL CAPITAL Centre: Memorandum of Understanding (minute 194/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Universities of Warwick and Birmingham for the use of workshop space in the Shakespeare Institute of the University of Birmingham by the CAPITAL Centre together with a covering paper prepared by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (SC.190/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft MoU be approved subject to amendments along the lines discussed at the meeting and on the understanding that the MoU would be developed further prior to its signing by the two Universities.
- (b) That the Director of Estates discuss with the Acting Director of Finance the proposed capital payments being made to the University of Birmingham for the use of the workshop space in the Shakespeare Institute with a view to assessing the competitiveness of the notional rent for these premises.

295/05-06 Lifelong Learning Networks: Implications and Opportunities (minute 232/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by the Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning on the implications and opportunities for the University arising from the proposed establishment of a Lifelong Learning Network for Coventry and Warwickshire (SC.191/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee support the work being undertaken by the Centre for Lifelong Learning in collaboration with Coventry University to develop a full business plan for the proposed Coventry and Warwickshire Lifelong Learning Network for consideration by the HEFCE.

296/05-06

New NHS Research Strategy 'Best Research for Best Health'

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note 1/06/05 on the launch of the new national health research strategy for the Department of Health together with a copy of the strategy document 'Best Research for Best Health' (SC.193/05-06).

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