

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 6 December 2004

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor A Caesar
Professor Y Carter
Professor R G Dyson
Professor J Jones
Mr S Lucas
Professor H Thomas
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor L Bridges
Professor A Easton
Professor I Lauder
Professor M Luntley
Professor S B Palmer

In Attendance: Deputy Director of Finance, Director of Academic and Student Affairs, University Secretary, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 153/04-05 the Head of Student Finance, for item 155/04-05 Director of Warwick HRI.

150/04-05 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2004 be approved.

151/04-05 University Term Dates (minute 139/04-05 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A report on a review undertaken of the ten year schedule of University term dates and the feasibility of revising dates in the academic year 2010/11 (SC.84/04-05).

RESOLVED:

That term dates for the academic year 2010/11 remain as currently approved and published.

152/04-05 Vice-Chancellor's Business

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the meeting of the Russell Group held on 2 December at which various topics were discussed, including the CUC Governance Code of Practice, the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), post-qualification applications and the recent closure of a number of academic departments.

153/04-05 Warwick Undergraduate Bursary Scheme (minute 131/04-05 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A chart prepared by the Vice-Chancellor providing graphical representation of the proposed smooth tapered scale of relief for the award of undergraduate bursaries and scholarships to students with family income less than £31,972, including provision for a work-study programme to be offered in conjunction with the Bursary Scheme as a means of extending the funding opportunities available to students (SC.101/04-05, tabled at the meeting).

RECOMMENDED: (to the Council)

That the proposals for a smooth tapered scale of relief for the award of undergraduate bursaries and scholarships, as set out in paper SC.101/04-05, together with paper SC.81/04-05 (revised) on the key principles and broad outline of the proposed Warwick Undergraduate Bursary Scheme, be approved.

154/04-05 CUC Governance Code of Practice

CONSIDERED:

A copy of the Governance Code of Practice prepared by the Committee of University Chairmen (CUC) and published on 17 November 2004 (SC.98/04-05).

RESOLVED:

That, where appropriate, members of the Steering Committee discuss informally the concerns expressed at the meeting about the CUC Governance Code of Practice with lay members of the Council at the luncheon to be held immediately before the next meeting of the Council on 15 December 2004.

155/04-05 HRI Update and Quarter-End Report

CONSIDERED:

The 1st quarter statement from Warwick Horticultural Research International (WHRI) for the financial year 2004/05 and a report providing an update on key recent developments at WHRI (SC.96/04-05) together with an oral report from the Director of WHRI.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of WHRI approach the Director of the Mercia Institute of Enterprise to discuss potential research links between WHRI and the Mercia Institute.
- (b) That the Director of WHRI provide further information on WHRI's research strategy in the next WHRI report scheduled to be brought forward for consideration at the meeting of the Steering Committee on 31 January 2005.

156/04-05 Warwick Business School Devolved Budget: Quarter-End Report

The 1st quarter statement from the Warwick Business School for the financial year 2004/05 (SC.90/04-05) together with an oral report from the Dean of the Warwick Business School.

RESOLVED:

That the 1st quarter statement for the Warwick Business School Devolved Budget for the financial year 2004/05 be noted and approved as set out in paper SC.90/04-05.

157/04-05 Warwick Medical School Devolved Budget: Quarter-End Report

The 1st quarter statement from the Warwick Medical School for the financial year 2004/05 (SC.91/04-05) together with an oral report from the Dean of the Warwick Medical School.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the following amendments to the approved budget for 2004/05 of more than £100,000 in forecast expenditure by the Warwick Medical School be approved:

- (i) Reduction in payroll costs of £238,000
- (ii) Increase in fee costs of £150,000
- (iii) Increase in staff related expenditure of £115,000

(b) That the 1st quarter statement for the Warwick Medical School Devolved Budget for the financial year 2004/05 be noted and approved as set out in paper SC.91/04-05.

158/04-05 Students' Union Constitution

CONSIDERED:

Proposed changes to the Constitution of the Union of Students, including proposals for the lowering of the quorums for Union General Meetings and Referenda (SC.92/04-05).

RECOMMENDED: (to the Council, on behalf of the Senate)

That the proposed changes to the Students' Union Constitution be approved as set out in paper SC.92/04-05, subject to an Annual Report on attendance levels at Union General Meetings being submitted to the Steering Committee to monitor whether quorum changes have resulted in increased and regular attendance at Union General Meetings.

159/04-05 Post-Qualification Applications

RECEIVED:

Universities UK Information Note I/04/127 providing an update on recent developments in regard to Post-Qualification Applications (PQA) (SC.99/04-05) together with an oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on areas of concern associated with PQA, including its potential effect on international admissions and the University calendar and its reinforcement of A-levels as the 'gold standard' for university admissions.

160/04-05 OIA Review

RECEIVED:

A copy of a press release, published on 25 November 2004, on the operation and first seven decisions reached by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (SC.97/04-05).

161/04-05 DTI 5-Year Programme

RECEIVED:

Universities UK Information Note I/04/124 on the recent publication of a five-year programme by the Department of Trade and Industry, 'Creating Wealth from Knowledge' (SC.94/04-05).

162/04-05 DfES International Strategy

RECEIVED:

Universities UK Information Note I/04/131 on the Department for Education and Skills' (DfES) international strategy 'Putting the World into World-Class Education' (SC.93/04-05).

163/04-05 Self-Assessment Tool: HEFCE Consultation

CONSIDERED:

HEFCE Consultation document 2004/43 on the use of the self-assessment tool developed by the Universities Personnel Association and the SCOP Personnel Network to measure progress in people management in the HE sector (SC.95/04-05).

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Personnel determine what response to the consultation, if any, the University should submit to the HEFCE by the deadline of 20 January 2005.

164/04-05 Director-General's Visit

RESOLVED:

That the Vice-Chancellor contact the Director-General for Higher Education to inform him that the University would liaise with this office in March 2005 on the detailed agenda for his visit in April 2005.