

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 9 July 2007

Present: Professor S B Palmer (Chair)
Professor S Bassnett
Professor L Bridges
Professor Y Carter
Professor J Jones
Professor R Lindley
Professor M Luntley
Professor M Smith

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Mr B Duggan, Mr J Kirby, Professor M Whitby, Professor H Thomas.

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Director of Communication, Director of Finance, Director of Estates, Registrar, University Secretary, Vice-Chancellor's Executive Officer, Ms H Sinclair, for item 576/06-07 the Director of the Institute of Advanced Study, for items 577/06-07 and 578/06-07 the Director of Development and Alumni Relations, for item 579/06-07 the Director of Research Support Services, for items 580/06-07 and 581/06-07 the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

573/06-07 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 2 July 2007 be approved.

574/06-07 University Term Dates (minute 563/06-07 refers)

REPORTED: (by the University Secretary)

That the start dates for the summer term in the academic years 2010/2011 and 2013/2014 would commence on a Wednesday and that this was necessitated by the late occurrence of Easter in those years.

575/06-07 Brown Government Appointments (minute 556/06-07 refers)

RECEIVED:

A copy of a press release from the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) setting out Ministerial responsibilities and other senior staff responsibilities in the new Department (SC.432/06-07).

576/06-07 Institute for Advanced Study

RECEIVED:

A report on current developments and issues of concern in the Institute for Advanced Study including staffing, finances, space allocation and current and future programming (SC.426/06-07).

REPORTED:

(by the Director of the Institute for Advanced Study)

(a) That the Institute for Advanced Study at Warwick must be distinctive in terms of the programmes it delivers in comparison with similar institutions at other establishments.

(b) That any alternations made to Toar Cottage to enable the building to be used as interim office accommodation for the Institute for Advanced Study would not necessitate further alteration work should it be necessary to re-let the property in a residential capacity in the future.

(by the Director of Finance)

(c) That the Institute for Advanced Study had been established as a central service and that this service had already been included in the central service charges in departmental plans for the academic year 2007/08.

(d) That the costs of renovation works to Toar Cottage would be met from a separate budget and would not be applied to central service charges.

(by the Director of Estates)

(e) That the feasibility of identifying space in Milburn House to accommodate the requirements of the Institute would be explored.

(by the University Secretary):

(f) That work was progressing on the formalisation of Governance arrangements for the Institute including the establishment of an Advisory Board.

577/06-07 Development and Alumni Update

RECEIVED:

An update on current developments regarding development and alumni relations activity including the telephone fundraising campaign, an update on the Grenzbach Glier Associates feasibility study, Warwick Business School fundraising and alumni relations activities through reunion dinners and departmental events (SC.410/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Development and Alumni Relations)

That other departments including Chemistry and the School of Medicine were interested in developing bespoke development and alumni relationships along the lines of the model adopted by the Mathematics Department.

578/06-07 DfES Consultation on Matched-Funding Scheme for Voluntary Giving to HE in England

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/07/74 summarising the current DfES consultation "Increasing voluntary giving to Higher Education – consultation on a matched-funding scheme for English providers of Higher Education" (SC.433/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the proposals sought to build capacity for fundraising in those HEIs with more need for assistance and that the University would not be eligible for the higher rates of matched-funding proposed in the consultation document.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Development and Alumni Relations prepare a draft response to the consultation on a matched-funding scheme for voluntary

giving to HE for consideration by the Steering Committee before the end of September 2007.

579/06-07 Research and Innovation Update

CONSIDERED:

An update on current developments and issues of concern in Research and Innovation including benchmarking and strategic planning, progress on major initiatives, an update on research income generation and the establishment of the Technology Strategy Board and increasing engagement with business and industry (SC.430/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Finance)

That an internal audit was necessary prior to the Research Council 'dipstick' testing which was expected to be conducted in Spring 2008.

580/06-07 Admissions Update

CONSIDERED:

An update on University admission statistics for undergraduate and postgraduate courses for entry in October 2007 as at 30 June 2007 (SC.425/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation)

That the likelihood of attainment of postgraduate recruitment targets would be clearer following the conclusion of the telephone conversion campaign on 13 July 2007.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Admissions Office, with support as appropriate from the Finance Office, continue to keep Heads of Academic Departments fully informed of the position relating to undergraduate and postgraduate admissions statistics and the financial implications of any shortfall against recruitment targets.
- (b) That the Admissions Office continue to encourage departments to maximise the number of offers made to postgraduate students.
- (c) That, notwithstanding the University's stated objective that the number of departments entering the official clearing process at the end of the 2007 admissions cycle be minimised, the Steering Committee approve the proposal that the following degree programmes be entered into the official clearing process: Chemistry, Early Childhood Studies and Engineering.

581/06-07 Delivery Partnerships: Improving the Higher Education Process

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Notes I/07/76 and I/07/71 providing the fourth progress report from the Delivery Partnership, the Delivery Partnership Action Plan and an interim progress report on the Delivery Partnership Steering Group meeting held on 28 June 2007 regarding reforms to the current UK HE application process (SC.434/06-07 and SC.435/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation)

- (a) That the Delivery Partnership Steering Group had accepted that there was insufficient support for the introduction of a gathered field for initial decision making regarding applicants to HE.
- (b) That a decision regarding the favoured model to implement an adjustment period, to enable students who achieve higher grades than those required by their conditional offers to make a new application in August, was expected at the 17 July meeting of the Delivery Partnerships Steering Group but that it was likely that Model A would not be favoured.

582/06-07 Campus Affairs

CONSIDERED:

An update on the role of the Chaplaincy at the University and proposals for the future of the Chaplaincy (SC.428/06-07).

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee approve the proposals from the Chaplaincy Advisory Group to review its own role, purpose and membership and to examine the future role of the Chaplaincy.

583/06-07 Government Changes to Student Support System

RECEIVED:

A summary of the recent Government proposals for changes to the Student Support System and a copy of the DIUS Press Notice regarding these changes together with a copy of the comments on the announcement from the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) (SC.427/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That it was not yet clear what the implications of these changes to the student support system would be on the University's student support and Bursary Scheme.
- (b) That it was not yet clear whether these changes would require that the University renegotiate its Access Agreement with the Office for Fair Access.

584/06-07 UCE: Proposed Change of Title

CONSIDERED:

A letter from the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Central England inviting comments on proposals that the University be renamed (SC.439/06-07).

RESOLVED:

That the University would make no response to the letter from UCE given that it was the view of the Steering Committee that it was not a matter on which the University could express an informed opinion.

585/06-07 Full Economic Costs: Guidance Notes (minute 559/06-07 refers)

CONSIDERED:

Draft guidelines from the Academic Resourcing Committee to Heads of Department regarding the Full Economic Costing of Grants, to include the full economic costs of academic staff salaries (SC.429/06-07).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft guidelines from the Academic Resourcing Committee to Heads of Department regarding the Full Economic Costing of Grants, to include the full economic costs of academic staff salaries, be approved as set out in paper (SC.429/06-07) subject to the third paragraph of the section relating to Principles for Use of fEC Income for Staff Time being redrafted to ensure greater clarity along the lines discussed at the meeting.
- (b) That the Warwick Business School and Warwick HRI be covered by the Guidelines.
- (c) That the Warwick Medical School be excluded from applying the University Guidelines but that separate arrangements be made for developing the School's own guidance on fEC which broadly reflected that of the University.

586/06-07 University Development Plan

RECEIVED:

Copies of articles from the Coventry Telegraph dated 6 and 7 July 2007 on the Estates Masterplan planning application currently being considered by Coventry City and Warwick District Councils together with a special issue of the CommUnity newsletter dedicated to the University Development Plan (SC.436/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That local press coverage of the Estates Masterplan planning application currently being considered by Coventry City and Warwick District Councils had been wholly positive.

587/06-07 Freedom of Information and HEFCE's Institutional Risk Assessment

RECEIVED:

HEFCE circular letter number 18/2007 setting out the implications of the Freedom of Information Act for HEFCE's institutional risk assessments and Assurance Service Reports (SC.422/06-07).

588/06-07 Steering Committee Schedule 2007/08 (minute 565/06-07 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The schedule of meetings for the summer vacation and the academic year 2007/2008 and the proposed timetable of policy issues for discussion for the Steering Committee (SC.404/06-07).

RESOLVED:

That the schedule of meetings for the summer vacation and the academic year 2007/2008 and the proposed timetable of policy issues for discussion for the Steering Committee be approved subject to minor amendments along the lines discussed at the meeting.

589/06-07 Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies

RESOLVED: (on behalf of the Senate)

That Professor L Bridges be reappointed as Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies for the period to July 2008.

590/06-07 UUK Information Note - Variable Tuition Fees in England: Assessing the Impact on Students and Higher Education Institutions

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/07/73 summarising the UUK Report "Variable Tuition Fees in England: assessing the impact on students and Higher Education Institutions" (SC.423/06-07).

591/06-07 Research Concordat

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/07/78 inviting comments on the revised draft Research Concordat between a range of partners in the Higher Education sector (SC.437/06-07).

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Research) ensure that a University representative attend the briefing session on 12 July 2007 in Birmingham and that in the light of the briefing session determine whether the University should respond to the Research Concordat consultation.

592/06-07 NHS Chief Executive's Annual Report 2006/07

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/07/75 summarising the NHS Chief Executive's Annual Report for 2006/07(SC.438/06-07).

593/06-07 Community Involvement Survey 2007 Final Report (minute 557/06-07 refers)

RECEIVED:

A full copy of the survey of community involvement at the University carried out by the regional affairs consultancy Urban Communications (SC.424/06-07).

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