

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 10 April 2006

Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor L Bridges
Professor Y Carter
Professor J Jones
Professor M Luntley
Professor M Smith
Professor H Thomas

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor S Bassnett, Professor A Caesar, Professor I Lauder, Professor M Whitby, University Secretary.

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Acting Director of Finance, Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Registrar, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 444/05-06 the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation, for item 446/05-06 the Director of Warwick Ventures and the Director of the Mercia Institute of Enterprise, for item 448/05-06 the Business Manager of Executive Programmes, Warwick Business School.

438/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 April 2006 be approved subject to amendment to minute 431/05-06 as follows: (amendments underlined, deletions struck through)

RESOLVED:

That the University not submit ~~proposals~~ bids to the European Commission in response to the Commission's current call for proposals for the Erasmus Mundus programme and for projects contributing to higher education reform under the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process.

439/05-06 Measuring and Recording Student Achievement: Second Consultation on National Credit Arrangements for England (minute 428/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the Acting Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) had confirmed that the proposals set out in the second Burgess Group consultation on national credit arrangements for England were in line with the University's credit framework arrangements and that the draft institutional response to the consultation would be prepared accordingly.

440/05-06 Procurement Data Capture and Benchmarking in the HE Sector (minute 432/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That a robust institutional response to the Proc-HE questionnaire on procurement data capture and benchmarking for the HE sector had been prepared and would shortly be submitted to Proc-HE.

441/05-06 HEFCE 2006 Annual Conference / Visit of the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education would be visiting the University on 10 April to address delegates at the HEFCE 2006 Annual Conference and to discuss with senior University representatives issues relating to the 2008 RAE, the regional community and the Singapore project.

REPORTED: (by the Dean of the Warwick Medical School)

That she was scheduled to attend the HEFCE annual conference on behalf of the Council of Heads of Medical Schools.

442/05-06 RAE 2008

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on the DfES/UUK meeting held on 4 April 2006 to discuss the proposed move towards a metrics-based system of research assessment and the feasibility of the incorporation of metrics into the 2008 RAE for selected departments or Faculties noting that the Director-General for Higher Education had indicated his view that the 2008 RAE would proceed as originally planned.

443/05-06 Community Affairs

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the progress of preparation of detailed bids to Advantage West Midlands for the establishment and development of collaborative research centres aligned to the Birmingham Science City initiative.

CONSIDERED:

A paper providing an update on key regional and community affairs issues, including the University's engagement with Advantage West Midlands; Science Cities; the establishment of the University Regional Engagement Group and the key findings from the Regional Impact Study undertaken into the economic, social and cultural impact of the University on the local and regional community (SC.282/05-06) together with an oral report from the Registrar.

REPORTED:

(by the Registrar)

- (a) That the headline economic impact figures from the Study quoted in paper SC.282/05-06 excluded contributions made by the University's key CPD activities, conference facilities and the Warwick Arts Centre.
- (b) That the final report from the Study was currently being prepared and would be circulated for consideration by the Steering Committee and the Council in due course.

(by the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies)

- (c) That a proposal for the establishment of a new research centre in the area of equality and diversity was currently being developed within the Department of Sociology and that this proposal would need to be evaluated in the context of the existing remit and activities of the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations.

RESOLVED:

That, in the light of (c) above, the University Secretary investigate the feasibility of bringing forward the Quinquennial Review of the Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, currently scheduled for 2008, to the Autumn Term 2006/07.

444/05-06

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Admissions

CONSIDERED:

University data on home/overseas undergraduate applications by faculty, course, country of domicile and fees status and home/overseas postgraduate applications by faculty and course for entry in October 2006 as at 31 March 2006 (SC.283/05-06) together with oral reports from the Academic Registrar and the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

REPORTED:

(by the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation)

- (a) That it was anticipated that greater variability in overall conversion rates might be observed as a consequence of competition for student bursaries and that the Student Admissions Office would be continuing to monitor conversion numbers closely.

(by the Dean of the Warwick Medical School)

- (b) That the decline in offers made against applications received in the Warwick Medical School as at the end of March was attributable to the launch of the new Assessment Centre and standardised admissions tests for prospective medical students in conjunction with Barts and The London, Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry, which had delayed offers but was expected to make a significant contribution to a more robust overall admissions process for medical students.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, in the light of points raised in discussion at the meeting, the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation take steps to ensure the participation by academic departments in the UCAS Extra procedure from the 2006/07 admissions cycle onwards it being the view of the Committee that departmental participation in UCAS Extra must be governed by the University's overall admissions strategy.
- (b) That the Student Admissions Office continue to monitor the efficiency of departmental procedures for the consideration of overseas undergraduate applications to facilitate improvements in the University's responsiveness to prospective international students.
- (c) That the increasing reliance of the University on the Warwick Business School to maintain the volume of applications for postgraduate taught courses be noted and raised as a topic for discussion at a future meeting of the Steering Committee.

445/05-06

QAA Institutional Audit: Spring 2008

CONSIDERED:

A copy of a letter from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) notifying the University of the proposal that its next institutional audit be held in the Spring Term 2007/08 as part of the 2006-11 QAA audit cycle (SC.285/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Registrar and the Acting Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) convey to the QAA the University's significant concerns regarding the proposed timing of its next institutional audit with a view to rescheduling the audit for the academic year 2008/09 at the earliest.

446/05-06 HEIF3 Collaborative Bids

CONSIDERED:

Summary information on the two detailed HEIF3 collaborative bids led by the Universities of Essex and Wolverhampton in which the University would be participating as a bid partner (papers SC.288/05-06 and SC.289/05-06) together with oral reports from the Director of Warwick Ventures and the Director of the Mercia Institute of Enterprise.

RESOLVED:

That the University's participation in the proposed collaborative projects led by the Universities of Essex and Wolverhampton be supported and endorsed by the Steering Committee subject to approval of the financial elements of the bids by the Acting Director of Finance.

447/05-06 Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances

CONSIDERED:

The Executive Summary of the DfES White Paper "Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances" together with a covering letter from the Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education (SC.284/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Director of the Centre for Lifelong Learning, in consultation with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Campus and the Community) determine whether the University should respond to the White Paper "Further Education: Raising Skills, Improving Life Chances".

448/05-06 WBS Diploma in Service Leadership: New Collaborative Arrangements

CONSIDERED:

An outline proposal from the Warwick Business School for the development of new collaborative links in Singapore and Dubai to deliver the existing WBS Diploma in Service Leadership (SC.287/05-06) together with an oral report from the Business Manager of Executive Programmes, Warwick Business School.

REPORTED:

(by the Business Manager of Executive Programmes, WBS)

(a) That WBS would be seeking to launch the proposed programmes in Singapore and Dubai in 2006/2007 and 2007/08 respectively.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (b) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International Affairs and Equal Opportunities) would shortly be bringing forward a report for consideration by the Committee providing an update on the progress of discussions with the Economic Development Board of Singapore and other Singapore institutions on the University's proposed plans for academic development in Singapore.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposal from the Warwick Business School for the development of new collaborative links in Singapore and Dubai be approved in principle as set out in paper SC.287/05-06 subject to full course approval documentation being brought forward in due course through the normal University Committee procedures.
- (b) That the report to be brought forward by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International Affairs and Equal Opportunities) include discussion of appropriate measures for the co-ordination of current University activities in Singapore with those proposed under the aegis of the Singapore project.

449/05-06 Quality Assurance of Basic Medical Education (QABME): General Medical Council Accreditation (minute 333/05-06 refers)

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Dean of the Warwick Medical School on the progress of the GMC QABME assessment of the WMS noting in particular the following:

- (a) That the proposed amendments to University Ordinances and Regulations were in the process of being drafted and that an extraordinary meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Medicine had been scheduled to consider the proposed amendments prior to their consideration by the Senate and the Council at their meetings in the Summer term.
- (b) That the WMS had commenced informal discussions with the Privy Council in anticipation of approval by the GMC of independent degree-awarding powers for the WMS.

450/05-06 Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014 (minute 408/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor {Research})

That the Director of Research Support Services would be preparing a briefing paper highlighting the key proposals put forward in the consultation document "Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-14: Next Steps" to inform the University's response to the consultation and that this paper would be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee at its meeting to be held on 8 May.

451/05-06 HEFCE Strategic Plan 2006-11

RECEIVED:

A copy of the HEFCE Strategic Plan for the period 1 April 2006 to 31 March 2011 (SC.286/05-06).