

## THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 13 February 2006

- Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)  
Professor S Bassnett (from item 303/05-06)  
Professor L Bridges  
Professor A Caesar  
Professor J Jones  
Professor I Lauder  
Professor R Lindley  
Professor M Luntley  
Professor S B Palmer  
Professor H Thomas  
Professor M Whitby
- Apologies: Professor Y Carter, Professor M Smith, Acting Director of Finance, Director of Personnel.
- In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Director of Academic and Student Affairs, Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Registrar, University Secretary (from item 309/05-06), Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 305/05-06 the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality), for items 306/05-06 and 307/05-06 the Acting Assistant Registrar (Space Management and Timetabling), for item 309/05-06 the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.
- 300/05-06 Minutes
- RESOLVED:
- That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2006 be approved.
- 301/05-06 CETL CAPITAL Centre: Memorandum of Understanding (minute 294/05-06 refers)
- REPORTED: (by the Director of Estates)
- That he had discussed 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 and that it had been established that the notional rent for these premises compared favourably with market rates.
- 302/05-06 Student Admissions (minute 288/05-06 refers)
- REPORTED: (by the Registrar)
- That there had been further media coverage of higher education admissions policies following the publication of the Sunday Times article on 5 February 2006 suggesting racial bias and that it was likely that this would continue to be a contentious issue for the sector.
- 303/05-06 BBSRC Methodology for Allocation of Studentships (minute 277/05-06 refers)
- REPORTED:  
(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor {Research} and the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)
- (a) That the Head of the Department of Biological Sciences would be examining the decisions taken by the BBSRC in regard to the allocation of the University's studentships with a view to informing the University's future strategy in this regard.
- (b) That issues relating to the BBSRC's methodology would be raised with the Chief Executive of the BBSRC.

304/05-06 New Year 2007 Honours List

RESOLVED:

That any suggestions for nominations for the New Year 2007 Honours List be forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor's Personal Assistant before the next meeting of the Steering Committee.

305/05-06 Teaching Quality

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on issues relating to Teaching Quality (SC.198/05-06) together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) pursue rigorously the issues raised in paper SC.198/05-06 and in discussion at the meeting in regard to the University's feedback processes and the need for harmonisation of the University's assessment conventions in order to secure a consistent and sustainable assessment regime across all Faculties.
- (b) That the Steering Committee be kept informed of the outcome of the discussions to be held at Faculty level on issues relating to the University's assessment and feedback procedures.
- (c) That the issue of assessment and feedback be raised at the next Heads' of Departments Forum to be held on 5 May 2006.
- (d) That the draft statement of principles to inform the development of the University's Learning and Teaching Strategy for the period 2006-09 be approved subject to the inclusion of employability of graduates and assessment and feedback as discrete items of the Strategy.
- (e) That members of the Committee take steps to promote to colleagues the University's ongoing consultation on revisions to its Learning and Teaching Strategy and the open staff session to be held on 15 February as part of the consultation process.

306/05-06 Campus Life

CONSIDERED:

A report on significant developments in the following areas relating to Campus Life (SC.209/05-06) together with oral reports from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Campus and the Community), the Director of Academic and Student Affairs and the Acting Assistant Registrar (Space Management and Timetabling):

- (a) Student Term-Time Work
- (b) Islamic Prayer Hall
- (c) Expanded Nursery Provision
- (d) Postgraduate Social and Study Facilities
- (e) Illegal Substances.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the draft University guidelines for the provision of advice to students on term-time working be approved as set out in paper SC.209/05-06 (Appendix 1) subject to amendment along the lines discussed at the meeting.
- (b) That the 'zero tolerance' policy of the University regarding the use and possession of illegal substances in campus halls of residence be reaffirmed, while noting the continuing efforts being taken by the University to improve welfare support for students found to be using or in possession of illegal substances.

307/05-06 Report on the Survey of the Use of Teaching Rooms

CONSIDERED:

The key conclusions from the annual survey of the use of the University's centrally and locally timetabled teaching rooms (SC.208/05-06) together with oral reports from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Campus and the Community) and the Acting Assistant Registrar (Space Management and Timetabling).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Estates)

That research findings from the recent UK Higher Education Space Management Project had indicated that Warwick's occupancy rates for its centrally timetabled teaching rooms were among the highest in the sector.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That all departments be required to utilise the University's new online Ad-hoc Room Bookings System (ABS) for all future room bookings, noting that this would allow for the monitoring of local room use over extended periods with a view to increasing the efficiency of usage of centrally timetabled rooms and potentially enabling the development of complete individualised student timetables.
- (b) That the Space Management and Timetabling Office continue to monitor occupancy rates for locally and centrally timetabled rooms on the Westwood and Gibbet Hill campuses with a view to increasing the efficiency of usage of these rooms and that departments be encouraged to make greater use of the facilities in these areas, particularly at times of low availability of centrally-timetabled space on the main University campus.
- (c) That the potential construction of lecture theatre facilities at Millburn House in the context of the low occupancy rates for existing facilities on the Westwood campus be raised as a topic for discussion at a future meeting of the Committee.

308/05-06 Quinquennial Review of the Centre for English Language Teacher Education

CONSIDERED:

The Quinquennial Review Report of the Centre for English Language Teacher Education (CELTE) (SC.202/05-06) noting that the Director of CELTE would be invited to attend a subsequent meeting of the Committee for detailed discussion of the Report's findings.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the factual information presented in paper SC.202/05-06 be reviewed prior to the Committee's next consideration of the Review Report in order to ensure the accuracy of this information.
- (b) That the Director of CELTE be requested to prepare a paper setting out the Centre's response to the Review Report for consideration by the Steering Committee in conjunction with paper SC.202/05-06, incorporating the following:

- (i) Information on CELTE's academic strategy and its vision for a broader academic role within the University;
  - (ii) Supporting data on student enrolment figures for courses offered by the Centre.
- (c) That the Finance Office prepare a commentary on the financial aspects of the Review Report for consideration by the Steering Committee in conjunction with paper SC.202/05-06 and the response to the Review Report to be prepared by the Director of CELTE.
- (d) That steps be taken to ensure that the programme for future Quinquennial Departmental Reviews include provision for appropriate involvement from the Finance Office.

309/05-06 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Admissions

CONSIDERED:

University data on home/overseas undergraduate applications by course and country of domicile and home/overseas postgraduate applications by faculty for entry in October 2006 as at end-January 2006 (SC.197/05-06) together with an oral report from the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

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

- (a) That a large number of admissions offers had been made since the end of January and that the current position was significantly closer to target intake figures than that presented in paper SC.197/05-06.
- (b) That UCAS would shortly be publishing its applications digest for the total number of applications received by all UK HEIs as of 15 January 2006, noting that a number of institutions had reported significant declines in the number of applications received.

RESOLVED:

That the UCAS applications digest for applications received as of 15 January 2006 be circulated for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 20 February 2006.

310/05-06 QCA Consultation on Future Curriculum Developments

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/06/09 on the consultation by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) on the future of the curriculum for young people (SC.203/05-06).

311/05-06 Science Cities Collaboration with Birmingham University (minute 289/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science setting out the guiding principles associated with the resource allocation model for collaborative research initiatives proposed as part of the Birmingham Science City initiative (SC.200/05-06).

REPORTED: (by the University Secretary)

That the paper setting out the principles for collaboration with Birmingham University would be circulated for consideration by the Strategy Committee at its meeting to be held on 23 February 2006.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the guiding principles associated with the resource allocation model for the proposed collaborative research initiatives with Birmingham University be approved as set out in paper SC.200/05-06 noting that a key objective of any proposed projects would be to secure significant and capacity building collaborative opportunities for the University.
- (b) That the Registrar and the University Secretary prepare a paper setting out a proposed process for the consideration and approval of research projects associated with collaboration with Birmingham University for consideration by the Steering Committee at its next meeting on 20 February 2006.

312/05-06 HEIF3 Institutional Allocations

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the HEFCE notifying the University of its final formula-based funding allocation under round 3 of the Higher Education Innovation Fund (HEIF3) together with a covering note from the Industrial Development Officer (Research Support Services) providing clarification on the reasons behind the reduction in funding from the University's original indicative allocation (SC.199/05-06).

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

That the University's final formula-based HEIF3 funding allocation of £2,350,819 represented a significant reduction on the £3.1m received by the University under HEIF2 and that the University would need to consider carefully any implications and issues for the University arising from this reduction in HEIF funding.

313/05-06 Successor Strategy to the Prime Minister's Initiative

RECEIVED:

The University's response to UUK Information Note I/06/02 on the Successor Strategy to the Prime Minister's Initiative on international education (SC.204/05-06).

314/05-06 Sabbatical Officers of the Union of Students 2006/07

CONSIDERED:

A news release from the Union of Students on the outcome of the elections for Union Sabbatical Officers and part-time Union Officers for the academic year 2006/07 (SC.206/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Committee record its congratulations to all Union Sabbatical Officers and part-time Union Officers for the academic year 2006/07.

315/05-06 Visit of Sir Alan Wilson: 22 March 2006

REPORTED: (by the University Secretary)

That the Director-General for Higher Education, Sir Alan Wilson, would be visiting the University on 22 March 2006 rather than on 2 March as previously notified to members of the Committee and that all members would shortly be contacted to establish their availability on this date.

316/05-06 UUK Information Note: Higher Education Funding 2006-07

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note 1/06/08 on 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 (SC.201/05-06).

317/05-06 Steering Committee Schedule of Policy Items

RECEIVED:

The revised Steering Committee schedule of meetings and timetable of policy issues for discussion for the academic year 2005/06 (SC.205/05-06).

318/05-06 Universities UK Annual Review 2004/05

RECEIVED:

The Universities UK 2004/05 Annual Review (SC.207/05-06).

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