

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 16 April 2007

Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor L Bridges
Professor A Caesar
Professor Y Carter
Mr B Duggan
Professor R Lindley
Professor M Luntley
Professor H Thomas

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor S Bassnett, Professor J Jones, Professor M Smith, Professor M Whitby, Director of Finance, University Secretary.

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Registrar, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 450/06-07 the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

443/06-07 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2007 be approved.

444/06-07 Beacons for Public Engagement (minute 423/06-07 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the University had received notification of the institutions shortlisted to proceed to Stage 2 of the Beacons for Public Engagement application process and that the list of successful institutions would be reported to the Steering Committee at its next meeting to be held on 23 April 2007.

445/06-07 Recurrent Funding 2007/08: Membership of Working Group (minute 424/06-07 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar and the Academic Registrar)

That the following members of academic staff had been or would shortly be appointed to the membership of the working group established to consider and recommend means by which the level of grant received by the University through the new Business Research element of QR funding might be increased, the first meeting of which had been held on 13 April:

Professor D Storey (Warwick Business School)
Professor S Kumar (Warwick Medical School)
Professor A Rodger (MOAC)

446/06-07 Additional Student Numbers

REPORTED: (by the Registrar and the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That the University had submitted an expression of interest in bidding for standard ASNs to support PCET numbers and a bid concerning the launch of a new Physicians Assistant course in the Warwick Medical School.
- (b) That the Academic Registrar had been informed at a late stage that the PCET element would not be eligible for a bid under the employer engagement route and that the WMS bid had been unsuccessful.

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Registrar liaise with the School Secretary of the Warwick Medical School to identify potential alternative routes for securing ASN funding to support the Physicians Assistant initiative.

447/06-07 EPSRC Science and Innovation Award Scheme: Outline Bids (minute 429/06-07 refers)

RECEIVED:

The final outline proposals from the University for funding under Round 4 of the EPSRC Science and Innovation Award Scheme (SC.302/06-07) together with an oral report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

448/06-07 Centre of Excellence: PCET

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the Centre for Lifelong Learning had been successful in its bid to Lifelong Learning UK for designation as a DfES Centre for Excellence in Teacher Training (CETT) in recognition of its work in Post-Compulsory Education and Training, noting that the formal announcement of the outcome of the bidding process would be made following the local elections to be held on 3 May 2007.

449/06-07 Higher Doctorates

REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

That a review of the University's current eligibility and application criteria for Higher Doctorates would be undertaken to bring these into line with the criteria operated by other universities, with a view to bringing forward any proposed revisions to these criteria for approval and implementation in the academic year 2007/08.

450/06-07 Improving the Higher Education Applications Process: Consultation on 'Gathered Field' (minute 399/06-07 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response to the Delivery Partnership Steering Group consultation on the proposed implementation of the 'gathered field' concept as part of the proposals for improvements to the higher education applications process together with a covering paper prepared by the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation and a copy of UUK Information Note I/07/41(SC.287/06-07).

RESOLVED:

That the draft University response to the gathered field consultation be approved for submission to UUK by the deadline of 27 April 2007 subject to amendments along the lines discussed at the meeting.

451/06-07 2007 National Student Survey

CONSIDERED:

A copy of a letter from the HEFCE on the current response rate to the 2007 National Student Survey (NSS) and the threshold for the publication of NSS results on the revised Teaching Quality Information website (SC.289/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That, at the latest census date of 11 April, the University's institutional response rate to the 2007 National Student Survey had increased to 48.02% (1467 responses) against the confirmed publication response threshold of 50% and that a further 61 responses would be required for this threshold to be reached.
- (b) That it was anticipated that the Survey would close at the end of the week commencing 23 April 2007 and that steps would continue to be taken to encourage all eligible students to respond to the Survey in advance of the submission deadline.

452/06-07 Additional Funding for Very High Cost and Vulnerable Laboratory-Based Subjects

RECEIVED:

Circular letter number 13/2007 from the HEFCE on the method of distribution and condition of grant of the additional funding to be allocated by the HEFCE for very high-cost but vulnerable laboratory-based subjects (SC.290/06-07).

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That a proposal from the Departments of Chemistry and Physics to allocate a third of their additional HEFCE funding allocations to PhD studentships would be considered at the next meeting of the Academic Resourcing Committee to be held on 8 May 2007.

453/06-07 Future EPSRC Funding

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the Acting Chief Executive of the EPSRC providing information on EPSRC funding in the 2007-08 financial year and the early years of the forthcoming Comprehensive Spend Review period (SC.291/06-07).

454/06-07 Science and Technology Committee Inquiry: International Policies and Activities of the Research Councils

CONSIDERED:

The draft institutional submission of evidence to the Science and Technology Committee Inquiry into the international policies and activities of the Research Councils together with a copy of the parliamentary press release announcing the launch of the inquiry (SC.299/06-07).

RESOLVED:

That the draft institutional response to the Science and Technology Committee Inquiry be approved for submission to the Committee by the deadline of 16 April 2007 subject to minor amendments along the lines discussed at the meeting.

455/06-07 Shared Services: Invitation to Submit Expressions of Interest

CONSIDERED:

Circular letter number 09/2007 from the HEFCE inviting higher education institutions to submit expressions of interest in leading feasibility studies into or participating in shared service initiatives (SC.297/06-07) together with an oral report from the Registrar.

RESOLVED:

That, in the light of the points raised in discussion at the meeting, the University not express interest in participating in or leading feasibility studies into shared service initiatives and that the Registrar prepare accordingly the University's response to HEFCE circular letter number 09/2007 for submission to the HEFCE by the deadline of 27 April 2007.

456/06-07 Shakespeare Birthplace Trust: University Representative

CONSIDERED:

A copy of a letter from the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust requesting the endorsement by the University of the proposal that Professor C Rutter be re-appointed as the University's representative trustee on the governing body of the Trust for a further term of three years (SC.298/06-07).

RESOLVED:

That Professor C Rutter of the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies be nominated as the University's representative trustee on the governing body of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust for the period 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2010.

457/06-07 University Challenge: Warwick vs. Manchester

REPORTED: (by the President of the Union of Students)

That the Grand Final of University Challenge would be broadcast in the Students' Union that evening and that all Steering Committee members and attendees were welcome to attend this screening.

458/06-07 Founding Director of jobs.ac.uk

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the long-serving member of Personnel staff and founder of jobs.ac.uk, Mr Alex Sproat, had passed away on Thursday 12 April 2007.

459/06-07 UK Clinical Research Collaboration Public Health Research Centres of Excellence
(minute 425/06-07 refers)

RECEIVED:

The final Warwick-Birmingham collaborative bid for funding under the UKCRC Public Health Research Centres of Excellence initiative (SC.288/06-07).

460/06-07 Timetable for Publication of Access Performance Indicators

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/07/45 on the UUK response to the recent DfES proposal to bring forward the publication of the access performance indicators and the subsequent decision by the DfES to maintain the original publication timetable (SC.292/06-07).

- 461/06-07 ERDF Partnership and Management Arrangements
- RECEIVED:
- A copy of a letter from Advantage West Midlands inviting the University to submit comments on the proposed partnership and management arrangements for the delivery of the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) programme for 2007-13 (SC.301/06-07).
- 462/06-07 Budget 2007: UUK Summary
- RECEIVED:
- UUK Information Note I/07/40 providing a summary of key elements from the 2007 Budget pertaining to or having an impact on higher education (SC.293/06-07).
- 463/06-07 Leitch Review of Skills: UUK Response
- RECEIVED:
- UUK Information Note I/07/39 providing a copy of the UUK response to the final report of the Leitch Review of Skills (SC.294/06-07).
- 464/06-07 Financial Health of the HE Sector in England
- RECEIVED:
- HEFCE electronic publication EP 02/2007 providing feedback on the financial performance of the HE sector in England as a whole during 2005/06 together with an overview of the forecast financial health of the sector until 2010 (SC.295/06-07).
- 465/06-07 International Graduates Scheme and Visa Fees
- RECEIVED:
- UUK Information Note I/07/47 on changes to visa fees for international students and the introduction of the new International Graduates Scheme, a non subject-specific staying-on scheme for international graduates in the UK, to replace the Science and Engineering Graduate Scheme (SC.300/06-07).
- 466/06-07 Universities Engaging With Local Communities: UUK Publication
- RECEIVED:
- A copy of the UUK publication "Universities: Engaging With Local Communities 2007" (SC.296/06-07).