

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 17 October 2005

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor L Bridges
Professor A Caesar
Professor J Jones
Professor I Lauder
Professor R Lindley
Professor M Luntley
Professor S Palmer
Professor M Smith
Ms K Stark
Professor H Thomas
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor S Bassnett, Professor Y Carter, Professor H Thomas.

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Acting Director of Finance, Director of Academic and Student Affairs, Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Director of Personnel, Registrar, University Secretary, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 54/05-06 the Senior Assistant Registrar (Planning), for item 56/05-06 the Director of WHRI, for item 57/05-06 Dr J Tritter.

50/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2005 be approved.

51/05-06 Warwick in Asia

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the range of documentation to be considered at the meeting of the Council to be held on 18 October 2005 as part of the final Feasibility Study Report.

52/05-06 Collaborative Opportunities with the University of Birmingham

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That he, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar had recently met with the Vice-Chancellor, Vice-Principal and Registrar of the University of Birmingham and the Chief Executive and Chairman of Advantage West Midlands (AWM) to discuss potential collaborative opportunities for the two universities arising from the Birmingham City Region 'Science City' initiative.

(b) That the discussions had emphasised the need for any future collaborations to build on the existing strengths of both institutions and to add significant value to the work and development of both institutions.

53/05-06 The Education Innovation Fund

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by the Vice-Chancellor proposing investment of £1m from University funds for the establishment of an Education Innovation Fund to support innovative pedagogical projects within the University over the two-year period 2005/06 to 2006/07 (SC.43/05-06).

RECOMMENDED:

That the sum of £1m be released for the establishment of the Education Innovation Fund as set out in paper SC.43/05-06.

RESOLVED:

That, should the Finance and General Purposes Committee and the Council approve the establishment of the Education Innovation Fund, the Chairs of the Boards of the Faculties be responsible for the promulgation of the Fund within each of their Faculties.

54/05-06 HE Performance Indicators

CONSIDERED:

A report on the HE Performance Indicators published by HESA in September 2005 and the University's performance against published benchmarks (SC.18/05-06) together with an oral report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Planning).

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Office undertake the following:

- (a) development of internal University performance indicators to supplement the HESA data and provide further analysis of the University's performance against benchmarks;
- (b) investigation into the reasons for non-continuation of Warwick students and potential means of addressing these issues with a view to improving the University's retention figures.

55/05-06 Graduate Issues

CONSIDERED:

A briefing paper on issues relating to the provision of study space for research students, research postgraduate scholarships and financial support and the postgraduate application fee for taught courses (SC.27/05-06) together with an oral report from the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of Estates and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor responsible for accommodation matters review the University's existing policy of allocation of space for postgraduate research students in the context of University and individual departmental priorities for the allocation of space within available resources.
- (b) That the Academic Registrar undertake a review of the postgraduate application fee for taught courses as proposed in paper SC.27/05-06 and bring forward a report for consideration by the Steering Committee in due course.
- (c) That the Working Group established by the Board of Graduate Studies to review mechanisms for the financial support of postgraduate research students bring forward any recommendations for change for consideration by the Financial Plan Sub-Committee and the Strategy Committee in the context of the annual financial planning round.

56/05-06 Warwick HRI Update and Year End Report

CONSIDERED:

The out-turn statement from Warwick Horticultural Research International (WHRI) for the financial year 2004/05 (SC.37/05-06) and a report providing an update on key recent developments at WHRI (SC.40/05-06) together with an oral report from the Director of WHRI.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the year-end out-turn statement for the Warwick HRI Devolved Budget for the financial year 2004/05 be noted and approved as set out in paper SC.37/05-06.
- (b) That issues relating to the proposed use of the David Lowe building as a research incubation facility and the future of the WHRI site at Kirton continue to be addressed by the Director of WHRI and be included in the next WHRI report to be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee.

57/05-06 National Centre for Involvement

CONSIDERED:

A summary of the University's draft tender bid to the Department of Health for the establishment and delivery of a National Resource Centre for Patient and Public Involvement together with the draft fEC budget for the proposed Centre (SC.39/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the draft summary bid and budget for the proposed National Resource Centre for Patient and Public Involvement be approved for submission to the Department of Health by the deadline of 26 October 2005 subject to amendment along the lines discussed at the meeting.

58/05-06 Second Leverhulme Symposium (minute 618/04-05 refers)

REPORTED: (by Professor Jones)

That the University's outline proposal to host the Second Leverhulme Symposium in 2007 had been shortlisted to proceed to the second stage and that a detailed proposal would be prepared for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the Leverhulme Trust.

59/05-06 NHS Research Strategy: Department of Health Consultation (minute 636/04-05 refers)

REPORTED:

That the University would not be submitting an individual institutional response to the Department of Health consultation 'Best Research for Best Health: a New National Health Research Strategy' but would instead be a signatory to the consultation responses currently under preparation by University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire and the West Midlands Strategic Health Authority.

RESOLVED:

That responsibility for approving and signing off the University's assent to the final consultation responses from UCHW and the WMSSHA be delegated to the Dean of the Warwick Medical School and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).

60/05-06 Degree Classifications and Credit Proposals (minute 25/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

- (a) UUK Information Note I/05/138 on the two consultations launched by the Measuring and Recording Student Achievement Steering Group on the future of the degree classification system and the development of a national credit framework for England (SC.25/05-06).
- (b) The draft response from the Russell Group to the consultation document on the future of the degree classification framework in England, 'UK Honours Degree: Provision of Information' (SC.49/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) convey to the Russell Group the views of the Committee, as expressed at the meeting, on the proposed draft Russell Group response to the consultation document 'UK Honours Degree: Provision of Information'.
- (b) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), with the support of the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality), prepare draft institutional responses to the consultations on the future of the degree classification system and the development of a national credit framework for England along the lines discussed at the meeting, for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to Universities UK by the deadline of 18 November 2005.

61/05-06 CETLs: Application for Additional Capital Funds

CONSIDERED:

A copy of a letter from the HEFCE providing notification of its plans to allocate additional capital funds for existing CETLs and inviting institutions to apply for release of the indicative allocations of funding for their CETLs (SC.46/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Acting Director of Finance and the Director of Estates prepare the University's submission to the HEFCE for the release of its indicative allocations of additional CETL capital funding.
- (b) That the Acting Director of Finance and the Director of Estates discuss with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) the distribution between the University of Warwick and Oxford Brookes University of any additional capital funds secured from the HEFCE for the Reinvention Centre for Undergraduate Research.

62/05-06 Chronology of Key Reviews/Decisions in HE

RECEIVED:

Universities UK Information Note I/05/94 on the publication of a chronology, commissioned by the Longer Term Strategy Group, of key reviews and decision points having an impact on higher education over the next seven years (SC.24/05-06).

63/05-06 Strategically Important and Vulnerable Subjects

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from Universities UK informing UUK members that notifying the HEFCE of any planned closures of departments deemed strategically important or vulnerable would now be voluntary and would not require a formal notice period as a condition of grant (SC.26/05-06) together with a copy of Steering paper number

SC.409/04-05 considered at the meeting of the Steering Committee on 12 September 2005.

64/05-06 Regulations to Outlaw Age Discrimination

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of Personnel on the Department for Trade and Industry's consultation on the draft Employment Equality (Age) Regulations 2006 together with a copy of Update 05/71 from the Universities and Colleges Employers Association (SC.30/05-06).

65/05-06 Doctoral Exchange Agreement

CONSIDERED:

A proposal for a doctoral exchange agreement between the Departments of Philosophy at the University of Warwick and Columbia University (SC.41/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposed doctoral exchange agreement between the Departments of Philosophy at the University of Warwick and Columbia University be approved as set out in paper SC.41/05-06.
- (b) That the Academic Registrar prepare a comprehensive report on all student exchange agreements entered into by the University, encompassing data on the total number of agreements and number of agreements demonstrating recent or current activity, for consideration by the Steering Committee by the end of the Spring Term.
- (c) That responsibility for approving departmental student exchange agreements be delegated to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International Affairs and Equal Opportunities) on the understanding that this would be contingent on a report on all student exchange agreements being brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee in line with (b) above on at least an annual basis.

66/05-06 Senate Committees

RESOLVED: (on behalf of the Senate)

- (a) That the proposed membership of the Undergraduate Appeals Committee Panels for the Boards of the Faculties of Science and Social Studies for the academic year 2005/06 be approved as set out in paper SC.45/05-06.
- (b) That Dr T Arber be appointed to the membership of the Information Policy and Strategy Committee in place of Professor Jones.
- (c) That Dr A Barnes, Ms M Briggs and Professor P Huddleston be appointed to the membership of the Board of the Institute of Education to fill the three existing vacancies in representatives from the Institute of Education in the academic membership of the Board.
- (d) That Mr A Dolan be reappointed to membership of the Equal Opportunities Committee as a representative from the Faculty of Social Studies in place of Dr A Parker.
- (e) That Dr P O'Hare be appointed to the vacant position in membership of the Equal Opportunities Committee as a representative from the Faculty of Medicine.

67/05-06 Education and Skills Committee Annual Review of Expenditure Issues: UUK Submission

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/05/142 on UUK's submission to the Education and Skills Select Committee's annual review of expenditure issues based on the DfES Annual Report (SC.44/05-06).

68/05-06 Visit of the Director-General for Higher Education (minute 19/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the University Secretary)

That the visit of the Director-General for Higher Education to the University, originally scheduled to be held on 5 October 2005, had now been rescheduled to 2 March 2006.

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