

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 18 September 2006

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)  
Professor L Bridges  
Professor A Caesar  
Professor J Jones  
Professor M Smith  
Professor H Thomas  
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor S Bassnett, Professor Y Carter, Mr B Duggan, Professor R Lindley, Professor M Luntley, Academic Registrar, University Secretary.

In Attendance: Deputy Registrar, Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Director of Finance, Registrar, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 722/05-06 the Head of the Department of Economics, Professor A Oswald, the HR Operations Director and the Assistant Registrar (Student Records), for item 723/05-06 the HR Operations Director, for item 724/05-06 the Community Relations Manager, for item 727/05-06 the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

719/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2006 be approved.

720/05-06 Director of Information Technology Services

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Ms Rosemary Gilmore, the Director of Information Technology Services, would be retiring from the University at the end of the current calendar year.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee record formally its gratitude to Ms Gilmore for her valuable contribution to the work of the University during her tenure as Director of Information Technology Services and its best wishes for her forthcoming retirement.

721/05-06 International Assessors for Chairs

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor confirming the eligibility of international assessors to act as external assessors for Chair-level appointments.

722/05-06 Quinquennial Review of the Department of Economics (minute 709/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The 2006 Quinquennial Review Report of the Department of Economics (SC.466/05-06) together with oral reports from the Head of the Department of Economics and Professor A Oswald.

REPORTED:

(by the Head of the Department of Economics)

- (a) That a proposal for the establishment of a new research centre in Economic Theory and Applications was currently being developed within the Department.
- (b) That the ESRC was in the process of undertaking a consultation on the current 1+3 model of postgraduate training and funding and that the Department had submitted a response to the consultation setting out its concerns regarding the 1+3 scheme, in particular the need for greater flexibility in funding in order to encompass 4-year doctoral programmes, noting that the Department was at present contributing approximately £20k per annum from its departmental budget towards PhD support.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (c) That the number of Warwick Postgraduate Research Fellowships (WPRFs) awarded by the University had increased during the academic year 2005/06 and that 30 WPRFs would be made available in 2006/07, with the results of the WPRF allocations round to be publicised by January.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the recommendations set out in the Review Report be supported by the Steering Committee, in particular the recommendations of the Panel relating to the recruitment and retention of academic staff, and that the following be undertaken by the University:
  - (i) A review of the University's existing processes and procedures for the recruitment of academic staff with a view to enhancing the flexibility and speed with which recruitment panels are convened, including the publicising to all Departments of the pool of academic staff eligible to chair panels;
  - (ii) A review of the terms and conditions for junior academic staff in the context of the new pay and grading arrangements introduced in August 2006 as part of the University's implementation of the HR Framework Agreement with a view to enhancing the ability of the University to recruit high-quality staff at internationally competitive levels.
- (b) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) liaise with the Department of Economics to develop and evaluate potential proposals for the establishment of research centres within the Department.
- (c) That the Department be encouraged to engage fully and positively with the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic and Professional Practice (PCAPP).
- (d) That steps be taken within the Department to address the issues raised in the Review Report regarding the speed and quality of feedback on assessed work.

723/05-06

Academic Staff Titles (minute 683/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper setting out a proposed policy on the use of the new nomenclature for academic staff titles approved by the Senate and the Council in the Spring Term 2005/06 within and without the University (SC.478/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposal that the title of Professor be retained for members of staff within the Professorial grade but that Assistant and Associate Professors continue to use their

existing titles of Dr/Mr/Ms/etc. be approved as set out in paper SC.478/05-06 on the understanding that this policy would be reviewed in 12 months.

- (b) That the Registrar ensure that detailed information and guidance on the University's policy on the use of the new nomenclature for academic staff titles as set out in (a) above be circulated and publicised to all members of academic staff as soon as practicable.

724/05-06 Regional Impact Study (minute 443/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The final Report from the Regional Impact Study undertaken by SQW Ltd into the economic, social and cultural impact of the University on the local and regional community (SC.480/05-06) and the foreword and executive summary of the third UUK study on the economic impact of UK HEIs (SC.481/05-06) together with a presentation from the Community Relations Manager.

REPORTED:

(by the Community Relations Manager)

- (a) That the University had commissioned SQW Ltd to undertake a further study into the estimated impact on the local and regional community of planned future developments in the University estate.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (b) That the 6-month post-graduation data drawn from the HESA DLHE survey reflected a significantly higher proportion of Warwick students remaining in the region after graduation as compared to the student destinations data utilised by SQW Ltd, which had been drawn from 2-year post-graduation data derived from the Development and Alumni Relations Office alumni database.

RESOLVED:

That the final Report from the Regional Impact Study set out in paper SC.480/05-06 be referred back to the University's Regional Affairs Group and that the Group be requested to undertake the following with a view to bringing forward a report for consideration by the Steering Committee in due course:

- (a) A detailed breakdown of quantitative SQW data by region;
- (b) A comparative analysis of detailed quantitative data from the Regional Impact Study undertaken by SQW Ltd and the figures derived from the application of the West Midlands input-output model utilised in the UUK economic impact study to Warwick.

725/05-06 Patterns of Higher Education Institutions in the UK: 6<sup>th</sup> Report

RECEIVED:

The executive summary and selected extracts from the sixth Report commissioned by the UUK Longer Term Strategy Group on patterns of higher education institutions in the UK (SC.479/05-06).

726/05-06 JISC Strategy Consultation 2007 – 2009

CONSIDERED:

The draft institutional response to the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC)

consultation on the draft JISC strategy for the period 2007 to 2009 together with a copy of the JISC consultation document (SC.476/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the draft institutional response to the JISC Strategy consultation be approved for submission to JISC by the deadline of 25 September 2006 subject to minor amendments along the lines discussed at the meeting.

728/05-06 Widening Participation Questionnaire: University Response

CONSIDERED:

The draft institutional response to the HEFCE consultation on widening participation policy and practice within the UK HE sector (SC.477/05-06) together with an oral report from the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

RESOLVED:

That the draft institutional response to the HEFCE consultation on widening participation be approved for submission to the HEFCE by the deadline of 22 September 2006 subject to amendment along the lines discussed at the meeting.

729/05-06 TRAC Research Cost Rates: Benchmarking (minute 711/05-06 refers)

RECEIVED:

An analysis of the University's TRAC research cost rates against that of other UK HEIs (SC.474/05-06).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Finance)

That the University TRAC Steering Group would shortly be reviewing the cost drivers for the University's research cost rates with a view to reallocating costs from research to teaching activities where appropriate.

730/05-06 EPSRC Knowledge Transfer Challenge 2006

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) on the EPSRC Knowledge Transfer Challenge 2006 noting that the University had been strongly encouraged by the Chief Executive of the EPSRC to participate in this competition and that he and the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science would be developing a draft institutional submission in the context of the University's overall strategic objectives for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the EPSRC.

731/05-06 EPSRC Research Framework Agreement

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

That the EPSRC would be visiting the University in the Autumn Term to discuss the principles governing the funding and management of its research grants as set out in the University's Research Framework Agreement with the EPSRC and that discussions between the University and the MRC were currently underway with a view to the potential establishment of a similar framework agreement.