

## THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

### Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 18 August 2003

Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (in the Chair)  
Professor S Bassnett  
Professor A Easton  
Professor J Jones  
Mr R Jones  
Professor M McCrae  
Professor A Mullender

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor Dyson, Professor Lauder, Professor Thomas, Professor Whitby, Finance Director, Administrative Secretary.

In Attendance: Registrar, Academic Registrar, Ms A Goodall, Miss E Clewlow.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor welcomed Mr D Law, the new Academic Registrar, to his first meeting of the Steering Committee.

519/02-03 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 21 July 2003 be approved.

520/02-03 Review of Research Funding Method

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor on the revised methodology proposed by the HEFCE for the identification of '6\*' departments and its likely implications for University departments.

521/02-03 Length of the Teaching Year (minute 490/02-03 refers)

RESOLVED:

That Professor Bassnett bring forward nominations for appointment to the Group to be established to examine the issue of the duration of the teaching year in more detail, no suggestions having been forthcoming in response to the previous request for nominations from the Academic Quality and Standards Committee.

522/02-03 Languages for Export Awards (minute 492/02-03 refers)

REPORTED: (by Professor Bassnett)

That the language departments, the Language Centre and the Warwick Business School had been circulated with a view to eliciting nominations for the regional stage of the Educational Institutions category of the Languages for Export Campaign's Language Service awards.

523/02-03 National Health Service University

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That with the publication of the invitation to tender to become the NHSU's principal academic partner now imminent the University's contact with the NHS University was currently limited for legal reasons.
- (b) That if the proposed University bid to become the principal academic partner of the NHSU were to be shortlisted, the University delegation to promote the bid should be led by the Vice-Chancellor and be carefully constituted to illustrate the seriousness of the University's intent.
- (c) That the tender submitted by a consortium led by the University for provision of accreditation to the NHSU had been unsuccessful.
- (d) That at a recent meeting between the Registrar and the Senior Assistant Registrar (Planning) and representatives of the Strategic Health Authority, the NHS University and Warwick Medical School the potential for developing the University's medical curriculum as a model to be rolled out more broadly had been discussed and an event to explore this idea further would take place in November.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the meeting referred to above be circulated for the information of members of the Steering Committee.

524/02-03 Third Leg Activities (minute 510/02-03 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the Group established to review the University's 'Third Leg' Activities and their interface with Research Support Services would consist of the following:

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)  
 Registrar  
 Mr N Paul  
 Mr M Angle  
 Professor R Freedman  
 Professor R Lindley  
 Mr M Wright (Secretary)

Note: Subsequent to the meeting Professor Freedman had expressed the wish not to add this to his other commitments. The Deputy Vice Chancellor therefore invited Dr M Smith of the Department of Physics to join the Group in his stead.

525/02-03 City of Coventry Ambassadors

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That further information on the role of the City of Coventry Ambassadors Group would be brought forward for consideration by the Committee at its next meeting.

526/02-03 International Children's Games 2005 (minute 491/02-03 refers)

RECEIVED:

A letter from the Registrar confirming Coventry City Council's booking for the International Children's Games on 6-10 July 2005 and outlining the University's contribution towards the event (SC.261/02-03) together with an oral report from the Registrar noting that the University awaited the City Council's formal acceptance of its terms and conditions.

527/02-03 Coventry Cathedral Service of Reconciliation: 17 August (minute 462/02-03 refers)

RECEIVED:

An oral report from Professor Bassnett on the Service of Reconciliation she had attended on behalf of the University at Coventry Cathedral, noting that interest had been expressed in the development of further links between the University and the Cathedral.

528/02-03 WMS Lecturer in General Practice

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That he had approved on behalf of the Committee and in the absence of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor an amendment to the Warwick Medical School's staffing plan to allow for the appointment of a 0.3 time General Practice lecturer to enable delivery of General Practice support to students entering the University in October 2003.

RESOLVED:

That this minor amendment to the Warwick Medical School's staffing plan be endorsed.

529/02-03 Centre for Scientific Computing (minute 516/02-03 refers)

REPORTED:

- (a) That Professor Jones and the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science would bring forward to the next meeting of the Committee the membership of the Group established to review the work and operation of the Centre for Scientific Computing.
- (b) That Dr Ian Nussey had indicated his willingness to assist in the review of the Centre for Scientific Computing

530/02-03 Course Specifications

REPORTED: (by Professor Bassnett)

That course specifications had been completed by all academic departments except one.

RESOLVED:

That Professor Bassnett and the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science discuss outside the meeting ways in which the required course specifications might be secured.

531/02-03 IT Network Disruption

## RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Registrar on the recent disruption to the University's IT networks noting the steps being taken by the Director of IT Services to improve the resilience of the University's network arrangements through provision of a secondary network link and rationalisation of service level agreements with the operating companies.

532/02-03 Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

## CONSIDERED:

HEFCE consultation document July2003/36 on the proposed establishment of Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (SC.256/02-03).

## RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Academic Quality and Standards Committee establish a group to draft a University response to the HEFCE's proposals for the establishment of Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning for consideration by the Steering Committee at a future meeting.
- (b) That Professor Whitby and the Academic Registrar attend on behalf of the University the HEFCE consultation seminars on Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.
- (c) That academic departments be invited to submit proposals, to the Academic Registrar in the first instance, for potential University bids to host Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.
- (d) That Professor Bassnett be nominated for membership of the HEFCE Assessment Panel for Centres for Excellence in Teaching and Learning.

533/02-03 HEFCE Rewarding and Developing Staff

## CONSIDERED:

HEFCE consultation document July 2003/33 on Rewarding and Developing Staff in Higher Education together with an analysis from the Finance Director of the potential impact upon the University of the proposed alterations to the distribution of HR funds (SC.265/02-03).

## RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of Personnel Services and the Finance Director draft a University response to the HEFCE's proposals for Rewarding and Developing Staff in Higher Education for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.
- (b) That the Deputy Vice-Chancellor contact the Chair of the Russell Group to indicate the University's willingness to contribute to a collective response to the consultation from the Russell Group addressing in particular the potential impact of the proposals upon research-intensive universities.

534/02-03 Research Careers Initiative

## RECEIVED:

The Final Report of the Research Careers Initiative from Universities UK and the Department for Trade and Industry (SC.266/02-03).

535/02-03 Golden Hellos (minute 495/02-03 refers)

CONSIDERED:

HEFCE circular letter 19/2003 on the proposed operation of the HEFCE Staff Recruitment Incentives Scheme showing allocations of funding by institution (SC.267/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That a paper by the Director of Personnel Services on the utilisation of the University's institutional allocation of funding for staff recruitment incentives be brought forward for consideration by the Committee at its meeting on 1 September.
- (b) That the HEFCE Staff Recruitment Incentives Scheme be referred to the Vice-Chancellor for consideration by the Better Regulation Taskforce.

536/02-03 Higher Education Innovation Fund – Round 2

CONSIDERED:

HEFCE consultation document July 03/34 on funding proposals for the Higher Education Innovation Fund Round 2 together with a report of a meeting the HEFCE Regional Representative on 6 August (SC.253/02-03).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the possibility of a joint bid for a Knowledge Exchange with Coventry University be borne in mind, given the link between the Universities in the National Technology Institute at Coventry, and that collaboration on this would be a factor in considering bids for exchanges.
- (b) That the Group established to undertake a review of the University's 'Third Leg' activities would, as part of its work, examine existing University projects and identify potential HEIF bids in accordance with the University's strategic priorities.

537/02-03 e-Learning Strategy

CONSIDERED:

- (a) HEFCE circular letter 21/2003 inviting responses to the Funding Council's e-Learning Strategy (SC.255/02-03).
- (b) DfES consultation document 'Towards a Unified e-Learning Strategy' (SC.259/02-03)

RESOLVED:

That Professor Jones draft University responses to the consultation documents on the HEFCE and DfES e-Learning Strategies for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.

538/02-03 Collaboration with RASE

## CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Registrar to establish a formal structure for further engagement with the Royal Agricultural Society of England (SC.264/02-03).

## RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Vice-Chancellor or Deputy Vice-Chancellor lead a small team of relevant members of the University to attend quarterly meetings with the executive team at RASE in the coming year in order to establish the opportunities for the development of a bilateral strategic partnership between the University and RASE.
- (b) That a specialist working group, reporting directly to the Steering Committee and with membership to be agreed outside the meeting, be established to take forward the idea of the Rural Innovation Park with RASE.

539/02-03 OFSTED Inspection Outcomes

## CONSIDERED:

A memorandum from the Institute of Education outlining the outcome of the recent OFSTED inspections of the Institute's Secondary PGCE and Primary BA(QTS) courses (SC.258/02-03).

## RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee record its congratulations to members of staff in the Institute of Education on the OFSTED results achieved.

540/02-03 Exchange Agreement with City University of Hong Kong

## CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the International Office for the establishment of an undergraduate exchange with the City University of Hong Kong (SC.260/02-03).

## RESOLVED:

That further clarification be sought from Dr Breslin regarding the level of interest among Warwick students in participating in the proposed exchange and from the Director of the International Office on the strategic importance of the exchange to the University.

541/02-03 Queen's Awards for Enterprise

## CONSIDERED:

An invitation to apply for the Queen's Awards for Enterprise (SC.262/02-03).

## RESOLVED:

That the criteria for the Queen's Awards for Enterprise be circulated to members of the Steering Committee to aid the identification of eligible potential projects.

542/02-03 Government White Paper on Higher Education

## REPORTED:

That Professor Dyson had accepted an invitation from the Department for Education and Skills to join an informal reference group on the proposed Office for Fair Access.

## RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Registrar on a recent meeting that he and others had had with the manager for the Higher Education Bill about the scope and timescale of the legislation likely to result from the Government White Paper on the Future of Higher Education.

## RESOLVED:

- (a) That, upon the Vice-Chancellor's return, the University should explore informal channels of communication and influence through which to set out its position on forthcoming legislation on Higher Education and its future funding.
- (b) That the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Social Studies consult with the Director of Development and Alumni Relations on the role of staff contributions in the University's fundraising programme.

543/02-03 Nomination to the Board of Governors of Hereward College

## RESOLVED:

That Dr Janet Read be invited to serve as the University's nominee to the Board of Governors of Hereward College following the resignation of the University's previous nominee, Dr P Byrd.

544/02-03 Long Service Award Vouchers

## RESOLVED:

- (a) That a refund be sought for the Argos gift vouchers remaining from the University's previous Long Service Awards scheme, the resulting monies to be contributed to the current staff awards scheme.
- (b) That the WH Smith gift vouchers remaining from the University's previous Long Service Awards scheme be retained for use for occasional book prizes for staff.

545/02-03 DfES Student Complaints in Higher Education

## RECEIVED:

A circular letter from the DfES on the proposed reform of the arrangements for dealing with student complaints in higher education (SC.257/02-03).