

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Senate Steering Committee held on 19 June 2006

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor S Bassnett
Professor L Bridges
Professor A Caesar
Professor J Jones
Professor R Lindley
Professor M Luntley
Professor S B Palmer
Professor M Smith (until 10.50am)
Professor H Thomas
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor Y Carter.

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Director of Estates, Director of Finance, Registrar, University Secretary, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 571/05-06 the Director of Academic and Student Affairs, for items 572/05-06 and 573/05-06 the Acting Senior Assistant Registrar (Planning), for item 579/05-06 the Director of Administration (Academic), Warwick Manufacturing Group, for items 579/05-06 and 580/05-06 the Industrial Development Officer, Research Support Services.

568/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 12 June 2006 be approved.

569/05-06 Queen's Birthday Honours 2006

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Professor Jonathan Bate of the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies had been awarded a CBE for services to Higher Education in the 2006 Queen's Birthday Honours List.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee record its congratulations to Professor Bate on his award of a CBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

570/05-06 The Sunday Times League Table 2006

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the *Sunday Times* had approached several academic members of staff to invite them to participate in a peer assessment survey for the newspaper's league table due to be published in Summer 2006.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the *Sunday Times* peer assessment survey be raised as a topic for discussion at a future meeting of the Russell Group.

- (b) That the Deputy Registrar write to all academic members of staff to provide advice on their engagement with the *Sunday Times* in response to the newspaper's peer assessment survey.

571/05-06

AUT Action: Examination Marks

REPORTED: (by the Director of Academic and Student Affairs)

That a number of enquiries had been received from academic departments on the status of the Temporary Regulation approved by the Senate at its meeting on 17 May in the light of the suspension of the AUT industrial action and the continued possibility for use of this Regulation where full sets of marks were not available for classification of degrees or progression to further years of study.

RESOLVED:

That it was the view of the Committee that the Temporary Regulation approved by the Senate on 17 May should not be invoked and that, where full sets of marks were not available for progression or classification decisions, Boards of Examiners should either be reconvened as soon as practicable to consider any outstanding cases or, if appropriate, Chair's Action taken in consultation with the External Examiner.

572/05-06

Reform of Higher Education Research Assessment and Funding

CONSIDERED:

The DfES consultation document and press release on proposals for a new metrics-based research assessment and funding system to replace the current Research Assessment Exercise and a document from the HEFCE setting out technical descriptions of the five proposed funding models and their illustrative effects on institutional QR allocations (SC.374/05-06) together with an oral report from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the majority of RAE 2008 panel chairs had resolved at a recent meeting to abide by published panel criteria and not to use metrics to construct quality profiles for departments.
- (b) That the DfES consultation document and the preparation of a joint Russell Group response were items for discussion at the next meeting of the Russell Group on 22 June.

RESOLVED:

That the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, with input from the University RAE Steering Group and taking into account the views expressed at the meeting, oversee the preparation of a draft institutional response to the DfES consultation on the reform of higher education research assessment and funding for consideration by the Steering Committee in due course.

573/05-06

Code of Practice on Preparing RAE Submissions

RESOLVED:

That any comments from members of the Committee on the draft University Code of Practice for the preparation of RAE submissions (SC.366/05-06) be forwarded to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor with a view to bringing forward a revised Code of Practice for consideration by the Committee at a future meeting.

574/05-06

Review of Governance of BBSRC-Sponsored Institutes

CONSIDERED:

A consultation document from an Independent Review Committee established by the BBSRC to seek views on the current arrangements for the governance of BBSRC-sponsored Institutes (SC.373/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Director of Research Support Services prepare a draft institutional response to the consultation document for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the Independent Review Committee by the deadline of 14 July 2006.

575/05-06

Incorporation of the Russell Group

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the Executive Director of the Russell Group providing an update on the progress of incorporation of the Russell Group together with a draft Memorandum of Association for the new Company (SC.376/05-06).

576/05-06

CUC KPIs Project (minute 375/05-06 refers)

RECEIVED:

UUK Leadership, Management and Governance Strategy Group document LMGSG/06/13 providing an update on the development by the Committee of University Chairmen of a proposed set of key performance indicators for use by all HEIs and the key concerns raised by UUK in response to this project (SC.372/05-06).

577/05-06

International Graduates: New Employment Provisions

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/06/61 on the new immigration rules for international students which provide for all undergraduates in specific subject areas and all postgraduates to be able to apply to work in the UK for up to a year after graduation (SC.371/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee support the new employment provisions for international graduates but that the University continue to lobby the Home Office on the visa implications for international students wishing to take a voluntary year out from their studies for work experience placements.

578/05-06

UUK Survey of Tuition Fees for International Students 2006/07

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/06/54 on the results of the annual UUK survey of 2006/07 tuition fees for full-time students from outside the European Union (SC.370/05-06) together with an oral report from the Academic Registrar.

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Registrar contact UUK to discuss the feasibility of obtaining a matched sample of respondents for the computation of results from the UUK survey with a view to providing an accurate and direct comparison of data between academic years.

579/05-06 Warwick Digital Laboratory: Bid for AWM Funding

CONSIDERED:

An outline bid to Advantage West Midlands for funding to support the construction of the Warwick Digital Laboratory (SC.375/05-06) together with an oral report from the Director of Administration (Academic) of the Warwick Manufacturing Group.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Estates)

That the Estates Office was currently in the process of reviewing the projected costs of construction of the Warwick Digital Laboratory.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of Finance review with Research Support Services and the Director of Administration (Academic) of the Warwick Manufacturing Group the outline bid to AWM with particular reference to the availability of capital funding from external sources and bring forward a revised proposal for consideration by the Steering Committee at its next meeting on 26 June prior to submission to AWM.
- (b) That the internal management structure for the Warwick Digital Laboratory be raised as a topic for discussion at a future meeting of the Steering Committee following the identification of initial users of this interdisciplinary research facility.

580/05-06 CIHE Report on International Competitiveness

CONSIDERED:

The summary of and recommendations from the final report published by the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) on the competitiveness of UK higher education "International Competitiveness: Businesses Working with UK Universities" together with a summary note prepared by the Industrial Development Officer (Research Support Services) (SC.368/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Academic Registrar and the Industrial Development Officer (Research Support Services) write to the Chief Executive of the CIHE to convey the University's concerns regarding the recommendations set out in the CIHE report.
- (b) That Richard Greenhalgh, Chair of CIHE, be invited to visit the University.

581/05-06 Senate Business

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposal from the Board of Graduate Studies for revisions to the current postgraduate scholarship scheme be deferred to a future meeting of the Senate and that the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies hold further discussions with the Finance Office on the proposed revisions to the scheme with a view to bringing forward updated proposals for consideration at the next meeting of the Steering Committee on 26 June.
- (b) That, given that there was already a Masters programme in a very similar field offered by the Department of Sociology, the Chair of the Faculty of Social Studies and the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies discuss with the School of Health and Social Studies the proposed introduction of the MA in Applied Social Research with Specialism in Migration, Ethnicity and Refugee Studies with a view to reconsidering this course proposal and exploring opportunities for collaboration between the two departments in this area of research.

- (c) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) discuss with the Director of IT Services the feasibility of introducing a stand alone password checking and scoring facility as soon as practicable.
- (d) That the Steering Committee support the adoption of proposed revisions to the current 10-year rolling programme of term dates, recognising that this would lead in some years to a potential late scheduling of Degree Congregation week but that it was anticipated that this might be ameliorated in due course through improved arrangements for recording and presenting examination marks and a possible shortening of the main summer examination period.
- (e) That the remaining comments and recommendations of the Steering Committee on items of business for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 28 June 2006 be as set out in the papers circulated for the meeting of the Senate.

582/05-06 QAA Consultation on Integrated Quality Enhancement and Review for HE in FE: UUK Response

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/06/59 on the UUK response to the QAA consultation on its draft Handbook for the proposed integrated quality and enhancement review of higher education provision in further education colleges in England (SC.369/05-06).

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