

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 23 May 2005

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor L Bridges
Professor A Caesar
Professor Y Carter
Professor R G Dyson
Professor J Jones
Mr S Lucas
Professor M Luntley
Professor H Thomas (until 10.30am)
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor A Easton
Professor I Lauder
Professor S B Palmer

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Acting Director of Finance, Director of Academic and Student Affairs, Director of Estates, Registrar, University Secretary, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 449/04-05 the Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions.

447/04-05 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2005 be approved subject to the addition of Professor Lauder to the list of those members present at the meeting.

448/04-05 University Financial Plan

RECEIVED:

A report from the Financial Plan Sub-Committee on progress towards completion of the University's Financial Plan for 2005/2005 to 2008/2009 (SC.286/04-05).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That the headline inflation rate for the UK HE sector overall over the next five-year planning period was around 6% per annum.
- (b) That, taking into account ongoing efficiency gains of 1% per annum, an increase in University income of 5% per annum would therefore be necessary in order to sustain the financial viability of University activities at their current levels.
- (c) That, in order for the University to remain sustainable while preserving its sense of ambition and prevailing culture of continued investment in new opportunities, a year-on-year increase in University income of the order of 10% per annum would be required.
- (d) That substantial work would be required in the coming month to examine potential areas for increasing the University's income, including student fee and research grants and contracts income.
- (e) That there was a need to examine the University's portfolio of taught Masters programmes and the speed and flexibility with which these programmes could be introduced in order to respond to external demand and that there was some evidence of a current lack of correlation between the costs of delivery and the fees charged for existing taught Masters courses.

RESOLVED:

That the points raised in discussion at the meeting in regard to the University Financial Plan be reported at the meeting of the Strategy Committee on 26 May.

449/04-05 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Admissions October 2005

CONSIDERED:

University data on home and overseas undergraduate and postgraduate applications by course for entry in October 2005 as at mid-May 2005 (SC.280/04-05) together with oral reports from the Director of Student Recruitment and Admissions and the Academic Registrar.

REPORTED: (by Professor Whitby)

That the University had been approached by the IT Sector Skills Council to establish a new course linking computing and business management needs and that this would need to be considered in the context of the Government's plans to create 24 further CETLs by 2008 with a view to these CETLs working with individual Sector Skills Councils.

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Registrar review the postgraduate admissions data set out in paper SC.280/04-05 in order to ensure the accuracy of this data.

450/04-05 Teaching Quality Issues

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report on strategic developments in matters related to teaching quality (SC.284/04-05) together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching Quality).
- (b) A copy of a press release from the HEFCE on the overall response rate from UK HE institutions to the National Student Survey (SC.281/04-05).

REPORTED:

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor {Teaching Quality})

- (a) That the implementation of the Committee's resolutions in regard to the Warwick Teaching Certificate was currently underway (minute 251/04-05 refers) and that the redeveloped WTC would be introduced as a broader-based General Certificate of Academic Practice during the 2005/06 Autumn term.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (b) That the University had made an appointment to the post of Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) and that the successful candidate would take up the appointment on 1 August 2005.

(by the President of the Union of Students)

- (c) That the institutional response rate to the National Student Survey at King's College London was currently 51%, while overall response rates at the Universities of Liverpool, Bristol and Oxford were comparable to the University's response rate of 40%.

RESOLVED:

That a final decision as to whether to conduct the University Academic Satisfaction Review in 2006 be determined in the context of the final outcome of the National Student Survey, noting that it was the view of the Committee that a full academic satisfaction survey should be undertaken on a biennial or triennial basis.

451/04-05 Post-Qualification Applications

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the progress of consideration of PQA proposals noting that the full implementation of PQA was likely to commence only in the academic year 2010/11.

452/04-05 General Election Results

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/05/69 on the results of the 2005 General Election together with biographical information on the new Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education and other members of the new DfES Ministerial Team (SC.283/04-05, minute 432/04-05 refers).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That Conor Ryan, previously a special advisor to former Secretary of State for Education David Blunkett, had replaced Lord Adonis as Education Advisor in the No 10 Policy Unit.
- (b) That Andy King, formerly Labour MP for Rugby and Kenilworth, had been replaced by Conservative candidate Jeremy Wright.

453/04-05 Aimhigher Programme

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/05/72 on the HEFCE discussion paper 'Aimhigher: funding for 2006-08 and future of the programme' (SC.279/04-05).

RESOLVED:

That the Registrar identify a member of his staff to take forward the preparation of the University's institutional response to the HEFCE Aimhigher discussion paper for submission to the HEFCE by the deadline of 27 June.

454/04-05 Medical Care Practitioners

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/05/68 on the Department of Health survey of UK University initiatives for the professional development of Medical Care Practitioners (MCP) together with the University's draft response to the survey (SC.285/04-05).

RESOLVED:

That the University's draft response to the Department of Health survey on UK University MCP training initiatives be approved as set out in paper SC.285/04-05 for submission to UUK by the deadline of 25 May.

455/04-05 RAE 2008 Sub-Panel Membership

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/05/71 on the appointment of sub-panel members for the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise (SC.282/04-05).

456/04-05 THES Awards 2005

CONSIDERED:

A copy of a leaflet from the Times Higher Education Supplement providing information on the inaugural Times Higher Awards and calling for applications and nominations for the Awards (tabled at the meeting).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That it was the view of the Committee that nominations from the University for the Times Higher Awards should be made in a small number of selected categories in line with the University's particular strengths.
- (b) That consideration be given to the alignment of nominations from the University for the category of Young Researcher of the Year in the Times Higher Awards with nominations for the Philip Leverhulme Prizes.
- (c) That any suggestions for nominations for the Times Higher Awards be forwarded to the Registrar taking into account points (a) and (b) above.

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