

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 27 March 2006

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

Apologies: Professor S Bassnett, Professor I Lauder.

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Acting Director of Finance, Director of Estates, Director of Personnel (from item 407/05-06), Deputy Registrar, Registrar, University Secretary, Mrs H E Blunt (from item 408/05-06), Ms N Snodgrass, for item 407/05-06 the Director of IT Services, for items 408/05-06 to 410/05-06 the Director of Research Support Services.

402/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 March 2006 be approved.

403/05-06 Board Nominations for the UK Panel for Health and Biomedical Research Integrity
(minute 400/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the Dean of the Warwick Medical School had been nominated by the University for appointment to the UK Panel for Health and Biomedical Research Integrity.

404/05-06 Membership of the '94 Group (minute 372/05-06 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the intention of the University to withdraw from the membership of the '94 Group with immediate effect be reaffirmed by the Steering Committee.

405/05-06 Visit of Sir Alan Wilson: 22 March 2006

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the positive outcome of the visit of the Director-General for Higher Education to the University on 22 March 2006, which had included discussions on the 2006 Budget, RAE Review, Systems Biology, NAGTY, the Government's Trust Schools agenda, the HEFCE's proposed changes to its teaching funding methodology, post-qualification applications, feedback and assessment and Estate Development issues.

406/05-06

Director-General of the CBI

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Richard Lambert had been appointed the new Director-General of the CBI in succession to Sir Digby Jones and would take up his position during summer 2006.

407/05-06

IT Update

RECEIVED:

A report providing an update on current developments relating to IT within the University, including the email replacement project, corporate information systems and web services, information security, service management, the residential network and issues relating to the recent IT system outages (SC.259/05-06) together with an oral report from the Director of IT Services.

REPORTED: (by the Director of IT Services)

- (a) That the Information Policy and Strategy Committee would at its meeting on 28 March be considering the IT Services 5-year plan, including proposals for the implementation of a self-service password-reset facility, potential models and costings for extended out-of-hours technical support and proposals for a collaborative file-sharing system.
- (b) That ITS were continuing to investigate issues relating to the accessibility of locally-installed software on University-managed XP machines in the event of network unavailability.

408/05-06

Budget 2006

RECEIVED:

- (a) A Universities UK press release on the UUK response to the 2006 Budget (SC.265/05-06).
- (b) A press release from the HEFCE on the establishment of a national review of research assessment for alternative approaches to research assessment beyond RAE 2008 and the appointment of Professor David Eastwood, HEFCE Chief Executive designate, as co-Chair of the review committee (SC.268/05-06).

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by the Director of Research Support Services providing a summary of the key proposals in the 2006 Budget relating to health research and the potential move towards a metrics-based system for assessing research quality and allocating QR funding, an outline of the proposals presented in the Government's consultation document "Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-14: Next Steps" and the executive summary of the consultation document (SC.263/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, notwithstanding any potential abolition of the Research Assessment Exercise beyond 2008, the University continue to make serious preparations for the 2008 RAE.
- (b) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Director of Research Support Services prepare a draft institutional response to the consultation document "Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-14: Next Steps" for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the OST by the deadline of 16 June 2006.

409/05-06

Research Council Success Rates

CONSIDERED:

A copy of an article published in 'Research Fortnight' on 22 March 2006 providing details of institutional success rates for applications made to research councils in 2004/05 (SC.267/05-06) together with oral reports from the Vice-Chancellor and the Director of Research Support Services.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Research Support Services)

That the University had achieved a 63% application success rate for applications submitted to the Particle Physics and Astronomy Research Council (PPARC) in 2004/05.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the data on Warwick's research council success rates published in Research Fortnight and set out in paper SC.267/05-06 be checked and validated by Research Support Services prior to utilisation of the data for internal planning purposes.
- (b) That there was a need to increase the total number of research grant applications submitted by the University to the research councils in order to meet its strategic objectives relating to research.
- (c) That the Director of Research Support Services pursue with the Head of the Department of Biological Sciences the issues raised in discussion at the meeting in regard to the University's application success rate for applications submitted to the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council.

410/05-06

EPSRC Science and Innovation Awards

CONSIDERED:

A paper prepared by the Director of Research Support Services on the call for proposals for Round 3 of the EPSRC Science and Innovation Awards and providing details of all awards made by the EPSRC in Rounds 1 and 2 of the Science and Innovation Award Scheme (SC.257/05-06) together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).

REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science)

That the University would be submitting a separate application to the EPSRC in response to the EPSRC call for outline proposals in the area of Materials for Energy Supply.

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science undertake the following:

- (a) The development of outline proposals for funding under the third round of the EPSRC Science and Innovation Awards with a view to bringing forward the University's draft bid for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the EPSRC by the deadline of 30 May 2006.
- (b) The preparation of a paper outlining the timetable and procedures for the internal submission and assessment of draft outline proposals for the EPSRC Science and Innovation Award scheme for consideration by the Steering Committee at its next meeting to be held on 3 April.

411/05-06 HEFCE Physical Sciences Funding Award

RECEIVED:

A press release from the HEFCE on its award of over £5m in funding to support the Royal Society of Chemistry's 'Chemistry for our Future' programme and the 'Stimulating Demand for Physics' programme run by the Institute of Physics (SC.262/05-06).

412/05-06 Changes at the DTI

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/06/27 outlining changes to the structure of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) following a review by the DTI of science, innovation and business relations and support (SC.261/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That Sir David King, the Government's Chief Scientific Advisor and Head of the new Office of Science and Innovation (OSI), be invited to visit the University during the Summer Term.

413/05-06 Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund: Funding Arrangements 2006-07 to 2008-09

CONSIDERED:

HEFCE document 2006/11 on funding arrangements for the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund for the academic years 2006-07 to 2008-09 (SC.260/05-06) together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), with the support of the Teaching Quality team, prepare the University's submission to the HEFCE for the release of its institutional funding allocation for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the HEFCE by the deadline of 16 June 2006.

414/05-06 Launch of Points-Based Immigration System

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/06/25 providing an initial analysis of the recently-launched points-based immigration system for managed migration to the UK together with a paper summarising key elements of the new system and their implications for the University (SC.258/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University continue to review the responsiveness of departments to applications submitted by prospective international students, particularly in the context of the introduction of certificates of student sponsorship under the new points-based immigration system.
- (b) That the Academic Registrar arrange for the provision of a review of overseas applications data across Russell Group institutions for consideration by the Steering Committee on an annual basis.

415/05-06 2004 Spending Review

RECEIVED:

Circular Letter number 04/2006 from the HEFCE on the work being undertaken by the DfES and the HEFCE to meet the savings and efficiency targets set out in the Government's 2004 Spending Review (SC.264/05-06).

416/05-06 Appointment of New Board Members for Training and Development Agency for Schools

RECEIVED:

A press release on the announcement by the Secretary of State for Education and Skills of the appointment of six new members to the board of the Training and Development Agency for Schools (SC.266/05-06).

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