

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 29 January 2007

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)  
Professor S Bassnett (from item 282/06-07)  
Professor L Bridges  
Professor A Caesar  
Mr B Duggan  
Professor J Jones  
Professor R Lindley  
Professor M Luntley  
Professor S B Palmer  
Professor M Smith  
Professor H Thomas  
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor Y Carter, Director of the International Office.

In Attendance: Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Director of Finance, Registrar (from item 286/06-07), University Secretary, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 283/06-07 the Academic Registrar.

274/06-07 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2007 be approved subject to amendment to minute 253/06-07 as follows: (amendments underlined, deletions struck through)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the following members of staff had been nominated by the University for appointment to the part-time membership of ESRC Boards and Committees in 2007:

Professor Paul Edwards, Warwick Business School  
~~Dr~~ Professor Diane Stone, Department of Politics and International Studies  
~~Dr~~ Professor Sayantan Ghosal, Department of Economics  
Professor Herakles Polemarchakis, Department of Economics.

275/06-07 Institute for Advanced Study (minute 241/06-07 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the proposal for the establishment of the Warwick Institute for Advanced Study had been supported in principle by the Research Committee at its meeting held on 23 January 2007.

RESOLVED:

That the Vice-Chancellor, in consultation with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) and other appropriate colleagues, put in place arrangements for the identification and appointment of an Interim Director for the proposed Institute for Advanced Study.

276/06-07 Fundraising Training (minute 242/06-07 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That a training session for all members and attendees of the Steering Committee on fundraising and development techniques, to be conducted by the President and Chief Executive Officer of Grenzbach Glier & Associates, would be held in place of the meeting of the Steering Committee on 19 March 2007.

277/06-07 Winter Degree Congregation

CONSIDERED:

Oral reports from the Vice-Chancellor and the University Secretary on the Winter Degree Congregation celebrations to be held on 30 January 2007 reaffirming the importance of the Winter Degree Congregation lunch and noting that the Development and Alumni Relations Office would shortly be contacting all members of staff hosting tables at the Winter Degree Congregation Dinner to confirm the guests to be seated at their respective tables.

RESOLVED:

That any members of the Steering Committee who are unable to attend the Winter Degree Congregation lunch contact the Vice-Chancellor's Administration Officer as soon as practicable.

278/06-07 UK-India Education and Research Initiative (UKIERI) (minute 2/06-07 refers)

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

That the bids submitted by the University for UKIERI standard awards and Research Fellowships had been unsuccessful and that feedback from the UKIERI award selection panel on the selection process and the panel's consideration of the bids submitted by the University would shortly be received.

279/06-07 HEFCE Assurance Review

CONSIDERED:

Oral reports from the Vice-Chancellor and the University Secretary on the positive outcome of the HEFCE Assurance Visit to the University during the week commencing 22 January, noting that subsequent Assurance Reviews would take place over just one day on a five-yearly cycle as part of the new lighter-touch accountability process.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee record its thanks to the University Secretary, the Senior Assistant Registrar (Governance) and the Internal Audit team on their considerable work in preparing for the HEFCE Assurance Visit.

280/06-07 Public Health on Campus

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the University Secretary on a suspected case of meningitis that had been identified within a campus hall of residence, noting that the affected student was recovering well and that the University's protocol for such circumstances had been deployed effectively.

281/06-07 Study Leave

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That it was apparent that the take-up of study leave by academic staff was less than optimal, particularly within the Faculty of Science, and that steps would be taken to encourage all staff to take full advantage of study leave opportunities.

282/06-07 Equality and Diversity Update

CONSIDERED:

A paper providing an update on the progress of and issues relating to the implementation of the University's Disability Equality Scheme (DES) and Action Plan; the progress of development of an institutional Gender Equality Scheme and Action Plan; and the launch of new staff equality and diversity statistical reports (SC.178/06-07) together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International Affairs and Equal Opportunities).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of Finance and the Acting Director of HR, in consultation with the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International Affairs and Equal Opportunities), examine the University's current funding arrangements for the implementation of the DES with a view to clarifying the attribution of DES costs in years two and three of the Scheme.
- (b) That any further discussion on the attribution of DES costs be deferred to a future meeting of the Steering Committee following the outcome of clarification of funding provision for the implementation of the DES as set out in (a) above.

283/06-07 Review of Teaching Funding Method: Second HEFCE Consultation

CONSIDERED:

HEFCE document 2007/02 on the HEFCE's second consultation on proposed changes to its teaching funding methodology (SC.186/06-07) together with oral reports from the Academic Registrar and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

RESOLVED:

That, taking into account the points raised in discussion at the meeting and in consultation with relevant colleagues, the Academic Registrar prepare the University's draft response to the HEFCE consultation on proposed changes to the teaching funding method for consideration by the Steering Committee prior to submission to the HEFCE by the deadline of 5 April 2007.

284/06-07 Impact of QR Funding for Research in English HEIs

RECEIVED:

A copy of a news release from the HEFCE on the recent publication of a HEFCE-commissioned report on the impact of quality-related (QR) funding for research in English HEIs together with the executive summary of the report and a copy of an article on HEFCE research funding written by the Chief Executive of the HEFCE and published in *Research Fortnight* on 24 January 2007 (SC.183/06-07).

285/06-07 Consideration by QAA of 'Causes of Concern' in English HE and FE

CONSIDERED:

QAA circular letter number CL01/07 on the QAA's proposed procedure for the handling of causes of concern in regard to the academic quality and standards of higher education in English higher and further education institutions (SC.179/06-07) together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning).

RESOLVED:

That the proposed QAA procedure for handling causes of concern in English HE and FE institutions be welcomed and that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) and the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) convey the University's support for this procedure to the QAA.

286/06-07 Trust Schools

CONSIDERED:

A paper providing information on the University's potential involvement with Trust Schools together with copies of letters from schools who have approached the University requesting Warwick to consider becoming a Trustee in their respective Trusts and background information on Trust Schools published by the DfES (SC.177/06-07) together with an oral report from the Vice-Chancellor.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Communication)

That the questionnaire to be issued as part of the forthcoming University-commissioned audit of its community engagement activities would incorporate questions relating to the representation of members of staff on governing bodies.

RESOLVED:

That the Vice-Chancellor continue to investigate the potential involvement of the University with Trust Schools, it being recognised that satisfactory clarification of the liabilities and responsibilities associated with Trustee status would need to be obtained prior to making any commitment on University representation on Trustee Boards.

287/06-07 Warwick Medal for Writing

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from Dr David Morley for the proposed establishment by the University of an international prize in creative writing and open writing competition (SC.185/06-07).

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee approve the establishment of the Warwick Medal for Writing and international open writing competition as set out in paper SC.185/06-07, on the understanding that major sponsorship for the awards and competition would be sought as soon as practicable.

288/06-07 Strategic Development Fund: Midlands Physics Alliance (minute 221/06-07 refers)

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the HEFCE to the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Birmingham providing formal notification of the release of £3,937,423 in funding from the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund to support the Midlands Physics Alliance and setting out the terms of conditions of this funding (SC.181/06-07) together with an oral report from the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science.

289/06-07 National Student Survey

REPORTED: (by the President of the Union of Students)

- (a) That the Union Council, at its meeting held on 23 January 2007, voted to formally lapse the Union's position of no confidence in the National Student Survey (NSS).
- (b) That the University of Oxford Students' Union had taken a neutral position in relation to the NSS and that the University of Cambridge Students' Union were maintaining an active position of boycott.

290/06-07 Higher Education Funding 2007-08

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/07/05 providing a summary of the annual grant letter from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to the HEFCE setting out the funding to be made available for higher education for the financial year 2007-08 together with a copy of an electronic circular from the HEFCE (SC.180/06-07).

291/06-07 Diploma in Regulatory Occupational Health and Safety

RECEIVED:

A copy of a press release on the University's successful bid to the Health and Safety Executive for the delivery of the postgraduate Diploma in Regulatory Occupational Health and Safety (SC.176/06-07).

292/06-07 UUK Annual Review 2005/06

RECEIVED:

The Universities UK 2005/06 Annual Review (SC.182/06-07).