UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

SENATE

Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27 January 2010

Present: Vice-Chancellor (in the chair), Professor H Beale, Ms A Bell, Mr A Bradley, Professor S Bruzzi (until item 39(e)/09-10), Professor T Burnard, Professor R Burns, Dr J Burrows, Professor A Caesar, Professor M Cooper, Mr K Das, Professor J Davey, Professor T Docherty, Professor J Faundez, Ms A Green, Dr M Hadley, Professor S Hand, Professor M Harrison, Professor N Hewlett, Professor C Hughes, Professor J Hutton, Professor T Jones, Ms S Khaku, Professor J Labbe, Professor K Lamberts, Professor A Muthoo, Dr M Pope, Professor B Rosamond, Professor J Seville, Professor M Smith, Professor C Sparrow, Professor S Stewart-Brown, Professor B Thomas, Professor M Underwood, Professor M Whitby.

Apologies: Professor L Bridges, Professor A Easton, Dr A Greene, Dr C Harrison, Professor R Higgott, Professor N Johnson, Professor J Thistlewaite, Professor H Thomas, Professor S Thornton.

In attendance: Professor S B Palmer, Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Director of Finance, Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer (Governance).

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed Professor Tim Jones to his first meeting of the Senate as a representative of the Faculty of Science following the retirement of Professor Roland Wilson in December 2009.

25/09-10 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Senate held on 7 October 2009 and the extraordinary meeting of the Senate held on 16 November 2009 be approved.

26/09-10 Progress of Senate Recommendations

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the Council, at its meetings on 8 October and 27 November 2009, approved the recommendations of the Senate recorded under the following items:

(i) Financial Plan 2008-2012 (minute 12/09-10 refers)
(ii) Corporate Planning Statement (minute 13/09-10 refers)
(iii) Annual Report on Equality and Diversity and the Single Equality Action Plan (minute 14/09-10(a) refers)
(iv) Amendments to University Ordinances, for the second time (minute 116(a)/08-09 refers)
27/09-10  Library Restructuring (minute 3/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Librarian)

That since the meeting of the Senate held in October 2009, she had attended Faculty lunches and held meetings with the majority of departments, as well as the Students’ Union, to discuss the impact of the library restructuring and that measures implemented to ease the effect on departments appeared to have been successful.

28/09-10  School of Life Sciences (minute 24/09-10 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Interim Chair of the School of Life Sciences)

(a) That, following the approval of the outline plan for the implementation of the School of Life Sciences at the last meeting of the Senate, the sub-disciplines within the School's four research themes had been identified and that the four Research Directors would be announced shortly.

(b) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine) had been appointed to chair the Warwick Life Sciences Strategy Group (WLSSG) and that this Group would take forward discussions regarding the wider Life Sciences vision at Warwick.

RESOLVED:

That the Interim Chair of the School of Life Sciences provide a report on developments in the School of Life Sciences for consideration by the Senate at a future meeting.

29/09-10  Higher Education Funding Cuts

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That the funding cuts announced by HEFCE in the last year amounted to 5 percent, acknowledging that further reductions of around 6 percent could be expected in the following three years, totalling a 20 percent reduction of HEFCE funding in real terms in four years time.

(b) That Warwick only received 23 percent of its funding directly from government, noting that other institutions which were more dependent on government funding would find it difficult, if not impossible, to remain financially viable.

(c) That the institution would not face financial penalties for over-recruitment as the University had returned to within the HEFCE contract tolerance band.

(By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine))

(d) That Warwick attracted a high level of government research funding for a university of its size and age and that decreases in research council budgets were anticipated, noting that the University would consider targeting applications at European funding bodies which had protected funding levels until 2013.
30/09-10 Revisions to the HEFCE Financial Memorandum

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That the HEFCE were currently consulting on proposed revisions to the Financial Memorandum with institutions, noting that the revisions were driven in part by a response to the governance problems experienced at London Metropolitan University, HEFCE’s concern over the financial health of some institutions and a desire by HEFCE to strengthen its role and authority.

(b) That the proposed amendments would require, amongst other things, university governing bodies (the Council at Warwick) to give assurance on academic standards, to allow HEFCE to control, to some degree, the appointment of Vice-Chancellors, and to permit institutions to be classed as ‘at risk’ for one of 15 ambiguous reasons.

(By the Registrar)

(c) That the revised Financial Memorandum raised genuine issues of principle regarding the purpose of universities and was in direct conflict with the University’s Statutes, which enshrined the autonomy of the University.

RESOLVED:

That the Senate receive an update at its next meeting on the development of the discussion of the proposed revisions to the Financial Memorandum within the sector, as well as the response submitted by Warwick in the light of further discussion to be held at the forthcoming meetings of the Audit Committee and the Council.

31/09-10 Pension Issues

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That the HE sector was facing issues regarding the sustainability of pension schemes as a result of staff demographic changes and stock market turbulence, noting that changes to the University’s own scheme to tackle a £45m deficit were currently under consultation.

(b) That amendments to the national Universities’ Superannuation Scheme were anticipated in order to address its deficit but that the nature of these was currently being debated at a national level.

32/09-10 Senate ‘Half Away Day’ – Wednesday, 17 March 2010

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That a ‘half away day’ would be held in addition to the formal meeting of the Senate on 17 March 2010, primarily to engage members in the process of refocusing the University’s Vision 2015 within the drastically changing and challenging environment and the new opportunities it might present.

RESOLVED:

That further information on the Half Away Day would be circulated to members of the Senate and that members were requested to hold this time in diaries.
33/09-10  **Forthcoming Senior Academic Appointments**

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the University was in the process of appointing new Deans of the Business School and the Medical School and a Head of the School of Life Sciences.

34/09-10  **Warwick Prize for Writing 2011**

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That nominations were open for the second Warwick Prize for Writing, noting that all University staff, students, alumni, Honorary Professors and Honorary Graduates were eligible to nominate by the closing date of 7 May 2010.

(b) That the theme for the 2011 Prize was "Colour" and that the Judging Panel would be chaired by Michael Rosen, award-winning writer and former Children's Laureate.

35/09-10  **David Willetts Lecture**

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That there would be a Lecture by David Willetts MP, Shadow Minister for Universities and Skills entitled “The Pinch: how the baby boomers took their children’s future – and why they should give it back” on Wednesday, 17 February 2010 at 6.15pm and that invitations to this event would be sent to members of the Senate in due course.

36/09-10  **Conferral of Title of Emeritus Professor**

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, at its meeting held on 27 November 2009, the Council approved, on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor on behalf of the Senate, the conferral of the title of Emeritus professor on Professor Howard Thomas with effect from his departure from the University at the end of January 2010 and that an election would take place within the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences to appoint a replacement representative on the Senate.

37/09-10  **Death of Li Xiaoming**

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That it was with great sadness that the University learned of the death of Li Xiaoming in the Haiti earthquake, a graduate student in the department of Politics and International Studies, who had studied for an MA in International Relations at the University during the 2008-2009 academic year, noting that he had been due to graduate in absentia at the Winter Degree Ceremony held on 21 January 2010.

38/09-10  **The Harris Report**

CONSIDERED:

The Harris Report, outlining the findings of the Constitutional Advisory Group established by the Vice-Chancellor to consider whether the University’s academic and administrative structures and decision-making processes were as effective as they could be to facilitate the future success of the University (S.8/09-10) together
with an presentation on the key findings and recommendations of the Report from Professor Mark Harrison, member of the CAG.

REPORTED:

(By the Registrar)

(a) That the process of consultation and feedback on the report would be undertaken prior to the initiation of an Implementation Group which would explore the practicalities and timescales of any proposals given in principle support by the Senate.

(By Professor J Hutton)

(b) That she felt that the Group’s commentary on issues relating to resource allocation was welcome, noting, that in order to apply a rule-based allocation system, it was vital that all resources were overseen by the Academic Resourcing Committee inclusive of devolved departments.

(By Professor J Faundez)

(c) That the University needed to be clear on the risks inherent with any aspect of constitutional change and that the risk identification and assessment for both models should be more extensive.

(d) That the proposal to reduce ‘transactional costs’ was an important aspect of the Report’s recommendations, however, he felt it could be interpreted in a number of ways and that greater clarity in this regard would be helpful.

(By Professor A Muthoo)

(e) That he was an advocate of pursuing the Strong Centre – Strong Department Model B and that issues surrounding the need to increase management capacity and securing appropriate administrative support could be resolved in this context.

(By Professor S Stewart-Brown)

(f) That it was her view that the Warwick Medical School would best be served if the Strong Faculty Model A was pursued.

(By Professor M Cooper)

(g) That he felt that the University’s reputation for success and being fleet of foot was at least in part due to its strong disciplines and a strong centre and therefore felt Model B should be pursued.

(By Professor T Docherty)

(h) That the models presented within the report did not appear to be mutually exclusive and that the University should consider which was appropriate for the current circumstances, acknowledging that further constitutional restructuring might be required, should the context within which the University operated change further, noting that it was his view that the University could move from Model B to Model A over time.
(i) That it was his view that to appropriately increase the management capacity of the Faculty Chairs, the notional FTE assigned should be in the region of that for Pro-Vice-Chancellors rather than at 50% FTE.

(By Professor C Sparrow)

(j) That there was general agreement within the CAG as to what the issues were that needed to be resolved and that, whilst it was collectively agreed that options should be presented to the University, he personally was supportive of the Strong Centre – Strong Department Model B.

(By Professor M Harrison)

(k) That one of the key differences between the Models was to whom heads of academic departments would report and be accountable.

RESOLVED:

(a) That the Senate welcome the Harris Report and that Professor Sir Martin Harris be thanked for chairing the Constitutional Advisory Group so effectively.

(b) That further consultation be undertaken on the Report’s findings and recommendations.

(c) That the Senate consider the Report and the results of the consultation at its next meeting to be held on 17 March 2010 with a view to determining whether support could be given to one of the two Models proposed.

39/09-10  Report from the Steering Committee

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Steering Committee (S.9/09-10 (parts 1 and 2)) and its resolutions recorded under the following items together with a report from the Vice-Chancellor:

(a)  HEFCE 27/2009: Carbon Targets - University Response

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(i) That HEFCE was consulting on Carbon Targets which, if implemented, could have considerable implications for the University, not least in relation to the future accessibility of capital funding.

(ii) That much work would need to be carried out across the University to ensure that everything possible was being undertaken to maximise energy efficiency and carbon reduction.

(b)  National Student Survey 2010

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(i) That the survey period for the National Student Survey (NSS) 2010 was now live.
(By Ms S Khaku)

(ii) That an active campaign was being conducted by the Students’ Union to encourage participation and that a small number of changes had been made to the wording of the survey this year to improve clarity without significantly reducing the comparability of results.

RESOLVED:

That colleagues be encouraged to ensure that visibility for the NSS was raised within departments in order that the response rate could be maximised.

(c) Health Innovation and Education Cluster (HIEC)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, as previously reported, the University submitted a proposal to establish a West Midlands South HIEC in late October 2009 and that the Steering Committee was informed that this bid had been successful.

RESOLVED:

That the Senate extend its thanks and congratulations to Professor Neil Johnson and the team in the Warwick Medical School for their work on the preparation of the bid.

(d) Research Excellence Framework

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(i) That there was a significant consultation on proposals for the first Research Excellence Framework (REF) and that the University had been confirmed as a participant for the Impact Assessment Pilot.

(ii) That, regardless of any delay in undertaking the REF should there be a change in Government, the University would continue to make preparations to ensure that the University was best placed to demonstrate the quality of its research whenever the exercise took place.

(e) Home/EU Full-Time Undergraduate Intake Target 2010/11

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

(i) That the University had revised its methodology for recording “non-completions” for funding purposes to more closely align to the HEFCE definition, noting that this had only become possible recently with the central collection of module marks and the transition to a modular HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) student data return.

(ii) That the overall unit of resource per student remains depressed as HEFCE funding was not allocated for non-completing students but the cost was still borne by the University.

(iii) That the notion of ‘non-completion’ used by HESA did not bear any relationship with academic completion and was primarily based on whether the last assessment within a module, in time series, had been completed at the appropriate time.

(iv) That Warwick had been allocated 66 additional student places in Physics over three years.
National Issues in Higher Education
National and International League Tables
Retirement of Professor Simon Bright
Death of Professor John Buxton
University Policy on Personal Conflicts of Interest
University’s Corporate Planning Statement and Monitoring Statement
University Risk Register Summary
University Key Performance Indicators Summary Report
Removal of Guarantees of Campus Accommodation
Strategic Departmental Review of Mathematics
Group of 13
Establishment of UUK Working Group Examining Prevention of Violent Extremism
UCEA Pay Negotiations
Research Councils UK: Letter Notifying of Reduction in Funds
SFTC Science Programme Prioritisation 2010-2015
Knowledge and Innovation Centre
Research Strategy Update
Institute of Advanced Study Update
Santander - Abbey Research Grant Fund
Visit to India
Warwick Graduates’ Association - Hong Kong
UKBA Tier 4 Review
QAA Audit of HE Programmes in Singapore
International Update
Additional Student Numbers for 2010/11
HEFCE Letter: Changes in Full-Time Undergraduate and PGCE Entrants in 2009/10
Universities That Count
UUK, GuildHE, HEFCE and DEL NI Consultation: Future Arrangements for Quality Assurance in England and Northern Ireland
I/2009/109: Postgraduate Review
I/2009/091: Development of HE Achievement Report and National Conference
UUK I/2009/103: How Have Institutions Used the Income from Variable Fees
National Student Forum Annual Report
HEFCE 26/2009: Leading Sustainable Development in Higher Education
HEFCE: Monitoring the Metrics under the Capital Investment Framework and Capital Funding 2008-11
Capital Developments and Space Management
New University Challenge: Milton Keynes
Admissions and Recruitment Update
Report on Postgraduate Issues
Faculty of Arts Update
Faculty of Social Sciences Update
Faculty of Science Update
Development and Alumni Relations Policy Update
HR and LDC Update
Centre for Student Careers and Skills
Appointments to Committees of the Senate
UUK I/2009/102: Healthcare Scientists Research Fellowship Competition
Science and Technology Select Committee: Dismissal of Professor David Nutt
Science and Technology Committee: Principles on Independent Science Advice
CONSIDERED:

A report from the Academic and Quality Standards Committee (S.10/09-10 {parts 1 and 2}) and its resolutions recorded under the following items together with a report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience):

(a) Amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Board of Graduate Studies

RESOLVED:

That the proposed amendments to the Terms of Reference of the Board of Graduate Studies be approved as set out in S.10/09-10.

(b) Extension to Existing Collaboration with Loughborough College

RESOLVED:

That the proposal from the Centre for Lifelong Learning for an extension to the existing collaboration with Loughborough College, to offer existing Diploma and Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector, be approved as set out in paper CFDLSC 9/09-10 (tabled at the meeting).
CONSIDERED:

A report from the Information Policy and Strategy Committee (S.11/09-10) and its resolutions recorded under the following items together with a report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine):

(a) Strategic Framework for IT Activity

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine))

(i) That Warwick depended on the quality of its IT services to achieve its objectives and to differentiate itself in the market.

(ii) That the requirements and needs of departments needed to be clarified to optimise appropriate resource allocation and that the current consultation on the proposed outsourcing of staff email was one method for colleagues to shape the strategic IT framework for Warwick.

(b) Periodicals Review Exercise 2009

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine))

That University expenditure on periodicals remained under continued scrutiny and that the level of resource had been protected in the last academic year due to the significant importance of access to key periodicals to academic work.

(c) University of Warwick Publications

RESOLVED:

That colleagues be encouraged to respond to emails from the Library inviting submission of research works to the Warwick Research Archive Project (WRAP) in order to enhance the visibility of their publications in preparation for the Research Excellence Framework and to further the University’s research strategy.

(d) University KPI: IT
(e) Server Virtualisation and Data Centres
(f) Library Refurbishment (Floor 5)
42/09-10  Report from the University Health and Safety Executive Committee

RECEIVED:

A report from the University Health and Safety Executive Committee (S.12/09-10) and its resolutions recorded under the following items together with a report from the Registrar:

(a) Health and Safety Developments in Departments in the Faculty of Science

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the University Health and Safety Executive Committee were encouraged by the positive engagement with Health and Safety by the Faculty of Science.

(b) Update on the Incident at Warwick Horticultural Research International (WHRI)

(c) UCEA Publication on ‘Health and Safety Guidance for the Placement of Higher Education Students’

(d) UCEA Response to Government on the Use of ‘Fit Notes’ Instead of ‘Sick Notes’

(e) Report from the University Health and Safety Committee

(f) Review of Stress

43/09-10  Report from the Research Ethics Committee

RECEIVED:

A report from the University Research Ethics Committee (S.13/09-10) and its resolutions recorded under the following items together with a report from the Registrar:

(a) Federal Wide Assurance

(b) UK Research Integrity Office (UKRIO) Code of Practice on Research Governance

(c) New Processes for Ethical Approvals of Biomedical Research

(d) DNA Sample Collection by the Forensic Science Service (FSS)

(e) Procedures for Ethical Approval of Research Students

44/09-10  Honours Degree Classification Conventions

CONSIDERED:

Proposed amendments to the 2008 honours degree classification convention (S.14/09-10), together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Resourcing).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Resourcing))

That further proposed revisions to the 2008 honours degree classification convention would be considered at the next meeting of the Senate, including the treatment of fail marks, assessment conventions for Engineering degrees and provision for re-sit examinations.
RESOLVED:

(a) That the following proposed amendments to the 2008 Honours Degree Classification Convention be approved as set out in S.14/09-10:

(i) Additional language conventions
(ii) Use of vivas in borderline cases
(iii) Additional credit and the Seymour formula
(iv) Timing of proposed changes to the 2008 classification convention

(b) That the Assessment Conventions Working Group further consider the following issues, with a view to proposals being considered at the next meeting of the Senate:

(i) Devising the minimum number of credits in the degree class, particularly in relation to integrated Masters courses and students taking a year-out of study
(ii) Reviewing and clarifying the remit of Exam Boards, together with the range of decisions, and scope for discretion available to them.

45/09-10 Appointment of Representatives of the Senate to the Council

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That, in accordance with the procedure approved by the Senate at its meeting on 2 November 1983, the Registrar had written to members of the Senate to seek nominations for the appointment of a member of the Senate to membership of the Council for the period through 31 July 2012.

(b) That nominations had been received from the following Senate members by the deadline of 22 February 2010:

Professor Seán Hand (Department of French Studies)
Professor Tim Jones (Department of Chemistry)
Professor Jaqueline Labbe (Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies)

Subsequent to the meeting, it was reported to the Senate via correspondence following consultation with the candidates:

(a) That the result of the election by secret ballot held at the meeting, in accordance with Ordinance 5 on the Procedure for the Appointment of Members of the Council Appointed by the Senate, be declared void, as a number of ballots received had been included in the original count rather than declared as spoilt as the intention of the voter was ambiguous.

(b) That the election be repeated by postal ballot on Monday 1 February 2010 for return by Friday 5 February 2010.

Note: That, following the postal ballot, Professor Labbe was appointed as a member of the Senate to the membership of the Council for the period through 31 July 2012.
46/09-10  Awards and Distinctions

RECEIVED:

A paper setting out the awards and distinctions that had been conferred upon members of the University since the meeting of the Senate held on 7 October 2009 (S.15/09-10).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, in addition to those awards and distinctions contained in S.15/09-10, Warwick had enjoyed considerable success in applications for European Research Council fellowships, winning two Young Investigator awards (Dr Timothy Gershon, Physics & Dr Alessandro Triosi, Chemistry) and two Advanced awards (Professor Peter Sadler, Chemistry & Professor Maxine Berg, History).

47/09-10  Report from the Higher Education Foundation Programme Board of Studies

RECEIVED:

A report from the Higher Education Foundation Programme Board of Studies comprising the Annual Report from the Programme, highlighting activities in student recruitment, marketing, student performance and course development in the 2008/09 academic year (S.16/09-10).

48/09-10  Report from the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences recommending the establishment of a Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy (S.17/09-10).

RESOLVED:

That the proposal by the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences to establish a Centre for Competitive Advantage in the Global Economy be approved as set out in S.17/09-10, subject to clarification from the Board of the Faculty of Social Sciences regarding the period of office for the Director of the Centre.

49/09-10  Academic Statistics Yearbook 2009/10

RECEIVED:

The 2009/10 edition of the Academic Statistics Yearbook (S.18/09-10), noting that the Yearbook was available online at www.go.warwick.ac.uk/academicstatistics

50/09-10  Revision to Regulation 23 Governing Disciplinary Matters and the Appeals Committee of the Senate

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(i) That he had approved, on behalf of the Senate, revisions to Regulation 23 Governing Disciplinary Matters to permit a Pro-Vice-Chancellor to chair the Appeals Committee of the Senate to ensure that cases referred to the Committee could be progressed in a timely fashion whilst the post of Deputy Vice-Chancellor was vacant (S.19/09-10, placed on official file).
(ii) That the revisions were subsequently approved by the Pro-Chancellor on behalf of the Council and that the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Resourcing) had been designated as Chair of the Appeals Committee of the Senate.

Note: The revised Regulation 23 had been published in the online University Calendar. (www.warwick.ac.uk/go/governance/calendar/)

51/09-10 Conferral of Title of Emeritus Professor

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

(i) That he had, on behalf of the Senate, recommended to the Council the conferral of the title of Emeritus Professor on the following colleagues with effect from their retirement (given in brackets below):

Professor Roland Wilson, Department of Computer Science (31 December 2009)
Professor Gad Heumann, Department of History (31 July 2010)

(ii) That the Pro-Chancellor had taken Chair’s action on behalf of the Council to approve the above recommendations.