

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 15 December 2008

Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor,  
Professor L Bridges (except item 231/08-09),  
Professor S Bruzzi,  
Professor K Lamberts  
Professor R Lindley,  
Professor R Higgott (until item 233/08-09),  
Professor M Smith,  
Mr S Thomson,  
Professor M Underwood,  
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor S Bassnett, Professor H Thomas,

In Attendance: Registrar, Academic Registrar, Acting Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office),  
Head of Governance Support Services, Administrative Officer (Governance),

219/08-09 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2008 be approved.

220/08-09 Academic Health Science Centres (AHSCs) and Health Innovation and Education Clusters (HEICs) (minute 205/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Acting Dean of Warwick Medical School)

That, following careful consideration, the University would only prepare a HEIC bid by the deadline in March 2009, noting that there was potential collaboration with Coventry University to increase the multidisciplinary aspect of the bid.

221/08-09 HEFCE Circular 35/2008: Bringing Forward Capital Spending From 2010/11 (minute 208/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That his correspondence with the Deputy Chief Executive of HEFCE had confirmed that in January 2009, £50m of the £250m overall (Capital Investment Fund) allocation would be brought forward and allocated to institutions who had met the CIF criteria, as a result of which Warwick could receive an estimated £500k to be spent by the end of March 2009.

RESOLVED:

That the Registrar, Director of Estates and the Director of Finance identify projects which might be brought forward with a view to a list of projects being considered at a future meeting of the Committee.

222/08-09 UUK I-Note I/08/108: Modernising Scientific Careers – The Next Steps (minute 210/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Acting Dean of Warwick Medical School)

That a response was being co-ordinated, noting that the final draft would be submitted for consideration by the Committee prior to deadline of 27 February 2009.

223/08-09 Report of the Fees Working Group (minute 188/08-09 refers)

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Director of Management Information and Planning presenting data on the overseas fee levels being set at competitor institutions to inform the recommendation to increase overseas fees for 2009/10 (SC.166/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the revised recommendation from the Fees Working Group proposed a 6.4% increase to Band 1 fees to £10,900 and a 4.5% increase to Band 2 to £13,950, noting that raising Band 2 by 6.4% would set fees over the £14k barrier which could deter potential applicants.

(By the Academic Registrar)

- (b) That the recent currency fluctuations had improved the University's position in China but not across other key markets.
- (c) That the Fees Working Group would be undertaking further review of fee setting methods over the coming academic year to ensure that the University would position itself correctly to applicants as well as financially going forward.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the recommendation to increase the Band 1 fee by 6.4% to £10,900 and that the Band 2 fee be increased by 4.5% to £13,950 as set out in SC.166/08-09 be approved, subject to the RAE2008 results published on 17 December with consideration being given to increasing Band 2 further should the University receive good results.
- (b) That the Fees Working Group review the fees for overseas students on Intercalated Years of Study, particularly within the Science Faculty, which were deemed by the Faculty to be too high.

224/08-09 IUSS: Putting Science and Engineering at the Heart of Government Policy - New Inquiry (minute 171/08-09 refers)

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

That following discussions with the Chair of the Faculty of Science and several Heads of Department, the University would not submit a response to the IUSS Inquiry into putting Science and Engineering at the heart of government policy because it would be ill-advised to respond fully to such an unfocused yet high-profile inquiry.

RESOLVED:

That the recommendation not to submit a response be approved.

225/08-09 Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills: New Inquiry into Students and Universities (minute 136/08-09)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the University had received the final draft of the Russell Group response to the IUSS Students and Universities inquiry, noting that the final version would be circulated for the information of the Committee when available.

- 226/08-09 National HE Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Programme  
 REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
 That the University had not been successful in its bid to host the National HE Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematic Programme.
- 227/08-09 Appointment of New Universities UK President  
 REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
 That Professor Steve Smith, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Exeter, would be the next President of Universities UK succeeding Professor Rick Trainor, Principal of King's College London, on 1 August 2009.
- 228/08-09 Extraordinary Meeting of the Steering Committee on RAE2008 Results  
 REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
 That an extraordinary meeting of the Committee would take place on 17 December 2008 to consider the University's RAE results published under embargo on that date.
- 229/08-09 University Financial Position  
 REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
 That the Vice-Chancellor had written to Heads of Department and other budget holders to confirm the University's stance on appointments in the current financial climate, noting that all appointments for ARC departments and devolved budgetary status would require approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Vice-Chancellor respectively.
- 230/08-09 UUK I-Note I/08/109: Standing Together – Universities Helping Business Through the Downturn  
 RECEIVED:  
 A brochure from Universities UK demonstrating the sector's desire to reach out to business in the current challenging financial situation, providing information to business on how universities might assist, and a contact for each member institution (SC.165/08-09).  
 REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Science and Medicine))  
 That the brochure highlighted that Warwick was weak with regards to knowledge transfer partnerships, an area which was being explored by Research Support Services.
- 231/08-09 Strategic Departmental Review Report: School of Law  
 CONSIDERED:  
 The final report from the Strategic Departmental Review for the School of Law held on 29 February and 15- 16 May 2008, together with proposals as to the delegation of the recommendations included within the report (SC.164/08-09).  
 REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)  
 (a) That the School of Law had reached a crucial stage in its development, noting that there was a need to review its focus on 'law in context' as its position as a pioneer in the field had diminished over recent years.

(By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research: Arts and Social Studies))

- (b) That, at a recent meeting with colleagues from the School, there was a clear recognition that the research activities within the School required restructuring and targets defined.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be approved as set out in SC.164/08-09, subject to minor amendments discussed at the meeting.
- (b) That Professor Faundez, Head of the School of Law, be invited to attend the meeting on 19 January 2009 to present the departmental response to the report and its recommendations.

232/08-09 Proposed Revision to the Senior Administrative Structure of the Warwick Business School

CONSIDERED:

A paper from the Dean of Warwick Business School proposing the appointment of two Deputy Deans responsible for the academic and operational activities in the School in place of the existing single Deputy Dean structure (SC.159/08-09).

RESOLVED:

That the appointments of Deputy Dean (Operations and Finance) and Deputy Dean (Faculty) be approved as set out in SC.159/08-09.

233/08-09 AHRC Block Grant Partnership Bid

REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

That the University had received positive feedback from the AHRC regarding the bid for a block grant partnership to fund postgraduate research studentships, noting, however, that there were some outstanding issues in some subject areas which were being addressed by the Graduate School prior to feeding back to AHRC by 7 January 2009.

234/08-09 UUK I-Note I/08/110: Devolution and Higher Education – Impact and Future Trends

RECEIVED:

A report from Universities UK on the effects of devolution on higher education (SC.157/08-09).

235/08-09 UUK I-Note I/08/111: Researcher Mobility in the European Research Area: barriers and incentives

RECEIVED:

An information note from Universities UK summarising the main points of a report exploring researcher mobility within the European Research Area (SC.162/08-09).