

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 15 June 2009

- Present: Vice-Chancellor,
Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
Professor S Bassnett,
Professor L Bridges,
Professor S Bruzzi,
Professor R Higgott,
Professor K Lamberts,
Professor R Lindley,
Professor M Smith,
Professor H Thomas.
- Apologies: Professor M Underwood,
Professor M Whitby,
Mr S Thomson.
- In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Director of Estates, Finance Director, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (Vice-Chancellor's Office), Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office), Mr Alan Curtis (for item 630/08-09 only), Mr Dave Mullins (for item 630/08-09 only), Mr Gavin Bottrell (for item 630/08-09 only), Director of Students Admissions and Recruitment (for item 631/08-09 only), Director of Careers and Student Employability (for item 632/08-09 only), Senior Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office) (for item 634/08-09 only).

NOTE: The Reserved Agenda was taken at the start of the meeting.

624/08-09

Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 8 June be approved.

625/08-09

New Government Department – Business, Innovation and Skills (minute 612/08-09 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Lord Drayson and David Lammy would be part of the Ministerial Team for Science and for Higher Education in the new Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS).

626/08-09

UUK I-Note I/2009/050: Independent Review of Higher Education Support for the Would-be self-employed (minute 615/08-09 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the University would not submit a response to the Independent Review of Higher Education Support for the Would-be Self-employed.

627/08-09 Queen's Birthday Honours

RESOLVED:

That the Committee congratulate those members of staff who received honours in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours List:

- (a) Professor Yvonne Carter (CBE for services to medical education)
- (b) Dr Roger Gadsby (MBE for services to diabetes care and to the NHS)
- (c) Keith Bedell-Pearce (CBE for public service)

628/08-09 UCEA Pay Negotiations 2009/10

RECEIVED:

UCEA Update 09:066 – Pay Negotiations 2009/10, outlining the latest discussions in the 2009/10 pay negotiations (SC.491/08-09)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That a further meeting involving UCU and UCEA would take place on 16 June 2009, and that further information would be reported to the Committee as it became available.

629/08-09 National HE STEM Programme

RECEIVED:

Correspondence between HEFCE and the Institution of Chemical Engineers concerning the National HE STEM Programme (SC.500/08-09).

630/08-09 Major Bid Proposal: Low Carbon Vehicle Technology Programme

CONSIDERED:

A paper concerning the proposed bid from WMG for a Low Carbon Vehicle Technology Project, including a Major Proposals Checklist, FP14a, the budget and Outline Proposal Form (SC.493/08-09).

REPORTED: (by Mr A Curtis, Warwick Manufacturing Group)

- (a) That this application, whilst substantive in its own right, could lead to significant future projects in the same area.
- (b) That Warwick was seen as the lead institution in this area, and that the application would reinforce this.
- (c) That it was anticipated that, in the current economic climate, this could be the last project of this scale that AWM would undertake in the immediate future.

(by the Director of Finance)

- (d) That the application was more complex than others of a similar nature, and that there needed to be thorough scrutiny of the implications of the application, particularly in the areas of contracting, finances, administrative support, intellectual property and outputs.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed bid be approved subject to further work to be undertaken, noting that the Committee acknowledged the risks and opportunities as outlined in the paper and during the meeting.

631/08-09

Policy Update – Admissions and Recruitment

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment outlining the University's current admissions position, together with updates on widening participation activities (SC.499/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment)

- (a) That at the aggregate level, the University was likely to recruit above Plan for Home/EU students but will be short of Plan in laboratory-based subjects, particularly Chemistry and Engineering.
- (b) That it was anticipated that Overseas Plan targets should be achieved, assuming acceptance:enrolment ratios remained steady and visa issuance under the Points Bases System was unproblematic.
- (c) That postgraduate admissions appeared healthy, with offers 20% ahead of the equivalent point last year, and acceptances 15% ahead for overseas students, noting that conversion to enrolment was unclear however in light of the economic climate.

RESOLVED:

That the framework for decision making as outlined in paragraph 15 of SC.499/08-09 and summarised below be approved:

- (i) That all departments be encouraged to maximise their Overseas intake while remaining sensitive to the overall balance of the student population.
- (ii) That, if there was scope in relation to the University's HEFCE contract at Confirmation, priority should be given to those departments significantly below their intake targets (currently anticipated to be Chemistry and Engineering) to accept good-quality Middles.
- (iii) That Clearing could be considered as an option for Chemistry on condition that this was to identify high quality candidates and that the department develop a plan to ensure this was not a recurrent recruitment position.
- (iv) That the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Academic Registrar and Director of Student Admissions and Recruitment determine intake levels at Confirmation in light of the priority to ensure that University met its contractual obligations as well as seeking to optimise recruitment across departments wherever possible.

632/08-09

Policy Update – Careers and Skills

RECEIVED:

A report from the Director of Careers and Student Employability outlining key developments in the areas of Careers and Skills, including employment for the 08/09 graduating cohorts, support for graduates, findings from the recent DLHE survey, Warwick Advantage, the Graduate Skills Programme, the Undergraduate Skills Programme Warwick Volunteers and the CSDE/SU mentoring programme (SC.490/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Careers and Student Employability)

That it was difficult to get precise data about how many students graduating this year were in receipt of firm job offers, although indications were that there were fewer graduate placements available.

633/08-09

National League Tables

CONSIDERED:

A report providing analysis of the results of recent University league tables, as published in The Independent, Guardian and Times newspapers (SC.494/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That those academic departments which had dropped outside of the Top 10 in the Times Good University Guide would be provided information as to how they could influence the rankings, given the impact they have on international recruitment.

(By the Chair of the Faculty of Social Studies)

- (b) That it would be helpful if subject results could be grouped by faculty in future iterations of this type of analysis.

634/08-09

Risk Status Summary

CONSIDERED:

A report updating the Committee on the status of University risks, including those to be reported to the next meeting of the Council to be held on 8 July 2009 and proposals for amendments to the University's Risk Management Policy (SC.497/08-09).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Deputy Registrar's Office))

- (a) That the Risk Management Group had proposed the addition of a further risk (T7) encompassing a range of student recruitment related issues.
- (b) That risk F2 (imbalance in the supply and demand for infrastructure) had been upgraded to reflect the potential impact of the financial situation on planned new buildings.
- (c) That risk SA1 (disaster / calamity impairing key University work or its reputation) had been upgraded to reflect the increased likelihood of a pandemic flu outbreak.
- (d) That risk S3 (employee relations) had been upgraded given the ongoing uncertainty over the national pay negotiations.
- (e) That risk F3 (achievement of development income targets) had been reduced following the recent launch of the University Case for Support and success in raising philanthropic income.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the updated Risk Status Summary be approved as set out in SC.497/08-09.
- (b) That the new risk T7 be included in the report of key University risks to the Council at its meeting to be held on 8 July 2009 in addition to those marked with an asterisk in SC.497/08-09.
- (c) That the proposed amendments to the University's Risk Management Policy as set out in SC.497/08-09, including the responsibilities of the Risk Management Group being allocated to the Steering Committee, be approved prior to consideration by the Audit Committee and the Council.

635/08-09 Academic Labour Study

CONSIDERED:

UUK I-Note I/2009/051, inviting institutions to participate in a questionnaire regarding the academic labour market (SC.492/08-09)

RESOLVED:

That the University would not respond to the questionnaire.

Kms/jf/steersshare/minutes2008-09/June09/15June09