

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 12 June 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 M Whitby

Apologies: Professor S Bassnett, Professor H Thomas, Academic Registrar.

In Attendance: Director of Estates, Director of Finance, Director of Personnel, Registrar, University Secretary, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 551/05-06 the Director and Director of Operations of Warwick HRI, for item 552/05-06 the Director of Development and Alumni Relations, for item 555/05-06 the Director of the Careers Service, for items 559/05-06 and 560/05-06 the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

546/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 5 June 2006 be approved.

547/05-06 Instalment Arrangements for Student Fees (minute 539/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

That the Student Finance Office would be continuing to look into the flexibility of fee collection arrangements for self-funded international students.

548/05-06 CBI Real Business First Women Awards

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That the Dean of the Warwick Medical School and Ms Val Gooding, a lay member of the University Council, had been awarded the First Women Science Award and Lifetime Achievement Award respectively at the CBI Real Business First Women Awards held on 7 June.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee record its congratulations to Professor Carter and Ms Gooding on their outstanding achievements in the 2006 CBI Real Business First Women Awards.

549/05-06 QAA Institutional Audit (minute 472/05-06 refers)

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) notifying the University of the proposal that its next institutional audit be rescheduled to the Autumn Term 2008/09 and providing information on the proposed timing of the mid-cycle audit follow-up for all institutions (SC.364/05-06, tabled at the meeting).

550/05-06 Final Pay Settlement: UCEA Statement

CONSIDERED:

A press release from the Universities and Colleges Employers' Association on the outcome of the recent national University pay negotiations (SC.361/05-06) together with oral reports from the Vice-Chancellor and the Director of Personnel.

REPORTED: (by the Director of Finance)

That the University would be including the TRAC cost of capital adjustments in its management accounts to more accurately reflect its bottom-line financial position.

RESOLVED:

That the Vice-Chancellor contact the President of Universities UK to convey the University's concerns, as expressed at the meeting, in regard to the review of financial and pay data for the sector to be undertaken in Autumn 2008 and its potential impact on pay negotiations for 2008/09.

551/05-06 Warwick HRI 5-Year Plan

CONSIDERED:

- (a) The five-year financial plan for Warwick HRI for the period 2005/06 to 2009/10 (SC.355/05-06) together with oral reports from the Vice-Chancellor and the Director of WHRI.
- (b) The draft WHRI strategic research plan for the period 2006/07 to 2009/10 for submission to the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC) together with a covering letter to the Chief Executive of the BBSRC (SC.362/05-06) (minute 474/05-06 refers).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the WHRI five-year plan be recommended for approval as set out in paper SC.355/05-06.
- (b) That the draft WHRI strategic plan be approved as set out in paper SC.362/05-06 for submission to the BBSRC by the deadline of 16 June 2006 subject to amendment by the Director of WHRI, in consultation with the University Secretary, of the covering letter to the Chief Executive of the BBSRC along the lines discussed at the meeting.

552/05-06 Policy Issue for Discussion: Development and Alumni

RECEIVED:

A report providing an update on University development and alumni relations activities (SC.349/05-06) together with an oral report from the Director of Development and Alumni Relations.

553/05-06 Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-2014 (minute 537/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The University's draft submission to the Office of Science and Innovation in response to the consultation document "Science and Innovation Investment Framework 2004-14: Next Steps" (SC.352/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the draft institutional response to the Science and Innovation Investment Framework consultation document be approved for submission to the OSI by the deadline of 16 June 2006 subject to minor amendments along the lines discussed at the meeting.

554/05-06

SRIF3/T&L Funding Transfer Requests and Project Changes

CONSIDERED:

Recommendations from the SRIF3/T&L Programme Monitoring Group for the internal reallocation of SRIF3 funds and revisions to SRIF3 project specifications (SC.353/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That, subject to approval from the HEFCE, the projected under-spend of £590,000 on the Engineering refurbishment of science laboratories be reallocated to the following additional SRIF3 projects:

Potential installation of Chemistry NMR at Millburn House (£150,000)
Additional Parallel Cluster Computing Facilities (Centre for Scientific Computing)
(£400,000)
Tektonics Curve Tracer (School of Engineering) (£40,000)

- (b) That the proposed reallocation of £182,500 from the Systems Biology SRIF3 project and contribution of a further £17,500 from existing research grant funds towards the purchase of additional parallel cluster computing facilities within the Centre for Scientific Computing (CSC) be approved as set out in paper SC.353/05-06.
- (c) That, in view of the additional funding outlined in (a) and (b) above, the equipment specification for the CSC parallel cluster computing facilities be increased from £799,000 to £999,000, on the understanding:
- (i) That departments would still be required to raise their individual contributions towards a renewals fund for the equipment.
- (ii) That the Director of Finance, the Chair of the Faculty of Science and the Deputy Director of Research Finance (Research Support Services) would meet to determine how the build-up of funds for the equipment renewal would be monitored.
- (d) That, in the light of the issues raised in paper SC.353/05-06 and in discussion at the meeting, permission be sought from the HEFCE for the removal of the demolition of the David Lowe building at Wellesbourne from the Warwick HRI SRIF3 project specification.

555/05-06

Careers Service Update

CONSIDERED:

A report on strategic developments relating to the Careers Service, including the January 2006 Destinations of Leavers of Higher Education (DLHE) exercise; the HEIF-funded Work Experience Project; the development of an international strategy for the Service and accredited career management skills provision; the Recruiters' Club Forum and campus recruitment fairs; and employer liaison in relation to the recent AUT industrial action (SC.351/05-06) together with an oral report from the Director of the Careers Service.

REPORTED: (by the Director of the Careers Service)

That the data utilised in the calculation of the University's graduate prospects score in the 2006 University League Tables published by *The Times* had been classified as 'self-

reported' due to the University having engaged in debate with the league table compilers concerning anomalies in the data drawn from the DLHE survey.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of the Careers Service contact the Chief Executive of the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) to arrange an informal meeting with the Vice-Chancellor and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) to discuss the concerns raised at the meeting in regard to the survey design used by HESA and the data capture practices utilised by individual institutions in their data collection for the DLHE survey.

556/05-06 HEFCE Strategic Development Fund

RECEIVED:

HEFCE document 2006/15 providing details of the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund (SDF) and the revised processes for submitting, assessing and monitoring proposals for funding under the SDF (SC.354/05-06).

557/05-06 Higher Education Concordat

RECEIVED:

The executive summary of the Higher Education Concordat on quality assurance arrangements and data collection for HEIs in England published by the Higher Education Regulation Review Group (SC.356/05-06).

558/05-06 Transparency Review

RECEIVED:

HEFCE Circular Letter number 08/2006 on the data received from universities and colleges for 2004/05 in the sixth round of reporting under the Transparency Review (SC.363/05-06).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Finance)

That the University had been requested to review its 2004/05 TRAC return with a view to possible resubmission and that the revised return would be brought forward for the consideration of the Steering Committee in due course.

559/05-06 Improving the Higher Education Applications Process

RECEIVED:

UUK Information Note I/06/60 on the Government's response to the proposals set out in the DfES consultation document "Improving the Higher Education Applications Process" (SC.358/05-06) together with an oral report from the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

560/05-06 Undergraduate and Postgraduate Admissions

CONSIDERED:

University data on home/overseas undergraduate and postgraduate applications by faculty and course for entry in October 2006 as at 31 May 2006 (SC.348/05-06) together with an oral report from the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

REPORTED: (by the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation)

That the Student Admissions Office had received comparative data on institutional response times to postgraduate applications across the sector and that the SAO would be reviewing the University's current response times in the light of this data.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Committee's concern in regard to the apparent time-lag in the processing of postgraduate applications be noted.
- (b) That the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation, in consultation with the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, review the University's current processes for considering and approving postgraduate applications with a view to improving the University's responsiveness to prospective postgraduate students.
- (c) That future reports from the Student Admissions Office incorporate separate Home and EU admissions data in addition to the combined Home/EU figures currently presented.

561/05-06 Pathways to Higher Education: Access Courses

RECEIVED:

The executive summary of HEFCE document 2006/16 on the patterns of progression into and through higher education by students who have undertaken access courses together with a press release from the HEFCE (SC.360/05-06).

562/05-06 Membership of the Senate

REPORTED: (by the University Secretary)

- (a) That, in accordance with Regulation 2.3, notices had appeared in CommUnicate and inbox insite seeking to fill three vacancies in the appointees of the Assembly on the Senate for the period 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2009.
- (b) That two nominations for appointment had been received by the deadline of 7 June 2006 for Professor Peter Mack from the Department of English and Comparative Literary Studies and Dr J Read from the School of Health and Social Studies and that, in accordance with Regulation 2.3, Professor Mack and Dr Read are therefore deemed to have been appointed to membership of the Senate for the period 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2009.
- (c) That the Committee of the Assembly established by the Steering Committee at its meeting on 8 May would shortly be nominating one further member of the Assembly for appointment to membership of the Senate for the period 1 August 2006 to 31 July 2009 for approval by the Vice-Chancellor.

563/05-06 Language-Based Area Studies Initiative

RECEIVED:

A press release from the HEFCE on the launch of five new collaborative centres by the HEFCE, ESRC, AHRC and SFC as part of their joint £25m Language-Based Area Studies Initiative (SC.357/05-06).

564/05-06 Warwick International Newsletter

RECEIVED:

A copy of the first issue of the Warwick International Newsletter (SC.359/05-06) together with an oral report from the Vice-Chancellor.

565/05-06 Reform of Higher Education Research Assessment and Funding

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research))

That the Government's consultation document on proposals for a new metrics-based system of research assessment to replace the current Research Assessment Exercise was expected to be published in the coming week.

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