

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 24 October 2005

- Present: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor S Bassnett
Professor L Bridges
Professor A Caesar
Professor J Jones (until item 76/05-06)
Professor I Lauder
Professor M Luntley
Professor M Smith
Ms K Stark
Professor M Whitby
- Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Professor Y Carter, Professor R Lindley, Professor H Thomas, Acting Director of Finance, Registrar.
- In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Director of Academic and Student Affairs, Director of Estates, Director of Personnel, University Secretary, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 80/05-06 to 83/05-06 the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality), for item 84/05-06 to 86/05-06 the School Secretary, Warwick Medical School.

73/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 17 October 2005 be approved, subject to the amendment of minute 55/05-06 as follows: (amendments underlined)

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of Estates and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor responsible for accommodation matters, in consultation with the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies, review the University's existing policy of allocation of space for postgraduate research students in the context of University and individual departmental priorities for the allocation of space within available resources.

74/05-06 Collaborative Opportunities with the University of Birmingham (minute 52/05-06 refers)

REPORTED:

(by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

- (a) That he and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) had met with the Vice-Principal and Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Knowledge Transfer) of the University of Birmingham on 21 October for further discussion of potential collaborative opportunities for the two universities arising from the Birmingham City Region 'Science City' initiative.
- (b) That Research Support Services staff within both Universities would be seeking to develop several areas in which collaborative ventures might add significant value to the work and development of both institutions and for which significant funding from Advantage West Midlands might be secured.

(by the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science)

- (c) That a full bid for a Strategic Development Award for the establishment of a Midlands Universities Physics Research Consortium was currently being developed with a view to submission of the bid to the HEFCE by the end of December 2005.

75/05-06 CETLs: Application for Additional Capital Funds (minute 61/05-06 refers)

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

That discussions had been held with the Director of the Reinvention Centre for Undergraduate Research in regard to the potential distribution between the University of Warwick and Oxford Brookes University of any additional capital funds secured from the HEFCE for the Centre.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of the Reinvention Centre and the Director of Estates develop proposals for spending the University's indicative allocation of additional CETL capital funding which would include application for additional capital in excess of the University's indicative allocation as provided for by the HEFCE.

76/05-06 Medical Research Council Institutional Discipline Bridging Award (minute 8/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That an additional expression of interest from the University for the Medical Research Council Institutional Discipline Bridging Award prepared by a member of staff in the Department of Biological Sciences had been submitted to the MRC, that the MRC had subsequently notified the University that only one application per institution would be considered and that they would be willing to consider a full bid for either proposal.

RESOLVED:

That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), the Chair of the Board of the Faculty of Science and the Director of Research Support Services determine which of the two expressions of interest submitted by the University for the Medical Research Council Institutional Discipline Bridging Award be developed into a full bid for consideration by the MRC and the EPSRC.

77/05-06 Warwick in Asia

REPORTED:

- (a) That the Singapore Academic Planning Group established by the Vice-Chancellor to develop an alternative plan for academic development in Singapore had held its first meeting earlier in the day and expected to be able to move forward quickly with the fulfilment of its remit.
- (b) That there had been a significant amount of press coverage in the UK and in Singapore on the University's decision in regard to the Warwick in Asia project.

78/05-06 Review of the Teaching Funding Method: HEFCE Consultation

CONSIDERED:

HEFCE document 2005/41 on the HEFCE consultation on proposed changes to its teaching funding methodology (SC.58/05-06) together with an oral report from the Director of Academic and Student Affairs.

RESOLVED:

That the Academic Office and the Finance Office, in consultation with Heads of academic departments, prepare the University's response to the HEFCE consultation on proposed changes to the teaching funding method and bring forward a draft response for consideration by the Steering Committee before the end of the Autumn Term.

79/05-06 New ESRC Grant Schemes

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note I/05/145 on the launch of new grant schemes by the Economic and Social Research Council (SC.53/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Director of Research Support Services and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) write to all Heads of Departments and the Chair of the Faculty of Social Studies Research Committee providing information on the new ESRC grant schemes and emphasising the need for departments to begin the process of developing bids under the new schemes as soon as practicable.
- (b) That a report providing an update on the development of applications under the new ESRC grant schemes be brought forward for consideration by the Steering Committee before the end of November 2005.
- (c) That the new ESRC grant schemes be raised as an item for discussion at the next Faculty of Social Studies and Faculty of Medicine Lunches.

80/05-06 QAA Consultation on Revision to the Engineering Benchmark Statement

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response to the QAA consultation on proposed revisions to the Engineering benchmark statement together with a draft copy of the revised statement and circular letter CL10/05 from the QAA (SC.50/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the draft institutional response to the QAA consultation on the revised Engineering benchmark statement be approved for submission to the QAA by the deadline of 31 October as set out in paper SC.50/05-06.

81/05-06 Consultation on Draft QAA Strategic Plan 2006-11

CONSIDERED:

The draft University response to the QAA consultation on its draft Strategic Plan for the period 2006-11 and a copy of the draft strategic plan and circular letter CL11/05 from the QAA (SC.51/05-06) together with oral reports from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Campus and the Community).

RESOLVED:

That the draft institutional response to the QAA consultation on the draft QAA Strategic Plan 2006-11 be approved for submission to the QAA by the deadline of 1 November subject to amendments along the lines discussed at the meeting.

82/05-06 National Student Survey 2006

CONSIDERED:

Circular letter number 27/2005 from the HEFCE confirming arrangements for the 2006 National Student Survey (NSS) (SC.54/05-06).

REPORTED: (by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality))

That the institutional deadline for selecting a starting week for the 2006 NSS had been brought forward from 30 November to 28 October.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the survey process for the 2006 NSS commence within the University in the week starting 23 January 2006.
- (b) That the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) and the Director of Academic and Student Affairs discuss with the President and the Education Officer of the Union of Students the University's proposed strategy for the conduct and operation of the 2006 NSS within the University and bring forward a report for consideration by the Steering Committee in due course.

83/05-06 Bologna Process: UK Promoters

RECEIVED:

Europe Note E/05/10 from the UK HE Europe Unit on the announcement by the UK Socrates Erasmus Council of the new UK Bologna Process promoters for the academic year 2005/06 (SC.55/05-06).

84/05-06 NHS Research Strategy: Department of Health Consultation (minute 59/05-06 refers)

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

That the University had opted to submit an individual institutional response to the Department of Health consultation 'Best Research for Best Health: a New National Health Research Strategy'.

RECEIVED:

The institutional response to the Department of Health consultation 'Best Research for Best Health: a New National Health Research Strategy' (SC.59/05-06).

85/05-06 Additional Medical Student Numbers (minute 41/05-06 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The draft expression of interest from the Leicester Warwick Medical Schools to the HEFCE and the Department of Health in bidding for additional medical student numbers for the period 2006-08 (SC.52/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the draft expression of interest in bidding for additional medical student numbers in the Leicester Warwick Medical Schools be approved for submission to the HEFCE and the Department of Health by the deadline of 31 October subject to amendments along the lines discussed at the meeting.

86/05-06 Transitional Research Funding for New Medical Schools

CONSIDERED:

A copy of a letter from the HEFCE on the allocation of £6m in transitional research funding to new medical schools through the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund (SC.56/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That the Secretary of the Warwick Medical School and the Acting Director of Finance contact the HEFCE to establish the formula used for the calculation of transitional research funding allocations.

87/05-06 Degree Congregations

CONSIDERED:

Proposals for changes to the arrangements for and scheduling of University Degree Congregations (SC.48/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposal for the introduction of a third degree ceremony during the Winter Degree Congregation be approved with effect from January 2006 as set out in paper SC.48/05-06.
- (b) That the Director of Academic and Student Affairs investigate the possibility of holding three degree ceremonies in the earlier part of the Summer Degree Congregation Week with a view to shortening the duration of this event from five days to four.
- (c) That the proposal that all future Summer Degree Congregations take place in the third week following the end of the Summer Term be approved as set out in paper SC.48/05-06, on the understanding that investigation into the possibility of shortening the duration of Degree Congregation Week would be undertaken in line with (b) above.
- (d) That the President of the Union of Students provide feedback to the Director of Academic and Student Affairs on the student perspective on the proposed changes to arrangements for the Winter and Summer Degree Congregations.

88/05-06 Meetings of the Investigating Committee into Cases of Suspected Cheating

RESOLVED:

That potential meetings of the Investigating Committee into Cases of Suspected Cheating be set up in advance of the summer examination period in order that any required meetings of the Committee might be convened without delay.

89/05-06 Ethics Matters: Managing Ethical Issues in Higher Education

CONSIDERED:

A copy of the guide "Ethics Matters: Managing Ethical Issues in Higher Education" recently launched by the Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) (SC.57/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That it was the view of the Committee that University procedures for dealing with ethical issues were properly addressed and embedded in overall University planning procedures, and in the case of research ethics dealt with robustly by the University Research Ethics Committee and that, this being the case, no steps be taken to draw up an institution-wide ethical framework.