

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Board of the Faculty of Arts

Notes on the Extraordinary Meeting to Discuss the Results of the Singapore Feasibility Study

The following issues were raised and discussed:

Timing and Schedule of Decision Making

- Concern was expressed regarding the timing on the decision making process. It was noted that the Senate's view had been that it was up to the academic body to decide if the Singapore project should proceed, not an incoming Vice-Chancellor.

Freedom of Speech and Human Rights

- A number of concerns were expressed, these included illegality of homosexuality, zero tolerance policy on drugs, the high rate of execution, difficulty in conducting academic business. It was reported that that Singapore had a *soft* authoritarian style of government, not a western style libertarian administration. The University was endeavouring to try and ensure that the Warwick in Asia (WiA) campus would have exemption or would exist as a zone of tolerance in regards to a number of these laws. It was noted that the University had set-out its concerns on human rights and freedom of speech in a memorandum to the Economic Development Board of Singapore (EDB).
- Opinion was given that local Singaporean practitioners in the arts and humanities would welcome Warwick's presence as they believed that it would make a strong positive contribution to the liberalisation of the country.

Financial Matters

- How would research funding be provided to facilitate research in the Arts and Humanities? It was reported that the financial model assumed the following split in academic staff time: 40% teaching, 60% research, and assumes a cross-subsidy such that that income brought in from a variety of routes, most notably student fees, overheads on research income etc would be used to fund humanities research.
- Related to the point noted directly above, concern was expressed on the sustainability of the Arts and Humanities in WiA.
- It was reported that the Vice-Chancellor was currently engaged with the EDB of Singapore on the rate of overheads paid on research.
- Concern was expressed on the potential risk to the financial health of Warwick UK. Would WiA sap financial resources from Warwick UK? It had been stated by the University that it did not propose to do this, furthermore it was reported that the

HEFCE had strict rules regarding limits on the sums of money that the University could borrow.

Warwick UK Staff Involvement

- Some staff expressed concern over the precise nature of involvement of staff from Warwick UK in the project. How would parallel developments in curriculum development pan-out ? It was reported that the University believed that there would have to be some transfer of intellectual capital to WiA and it was clear that if for example the School of Engineering and WBS did not propose to engage in the venture it would be hard to see how it would be feasible. It was reported that, whilst not essential, it was highly desirable that the Humanities were involved in the venture.

Market Demand

- Did the PA Consulting student market research consider the difference in recruiting to alternative subjects ? It was reported that the market research did not strongly differentiate between subjects but that it has used a series of screening criteria to ensure that the data gathered was representative of Warwick's market.

The Profile and Reputation of Warwick UK

- A point was noted regarding the difference between **profile** and **reputation**. The raising of Warwick's profile was deemed to be a fact. Whether Warwick's global reputation would be enhanced was considered to be a qualitative judgement.

The Case Put Forward for WiA

- Some expressed concern that the academic and economic case for WiA has not been thoroughly conveyed in the Feasibility Study Report.

Impact on Warwick UK's International Strategy

- How would WiA impact on Warwick UK's international strategy ? Would it cause distortion away from other key areas such as Europe ? It was reported that Professor Lindley, the new Pro-Vice-Chancellor for International Affairs was developing the University's international strategy and had a strong interest in Europe. Furthermore, it was clear that the University did not want WiA to detract from other opportunities that may arise around the globe.
- A strong opinion was expressed that colleagues may be missing the *bigger picture*, that is, that WiA offered a once in a lifetime opportunity to allow the University to take a large step into the global area of higher education. Globalisation of higher education was clearly high on the agenda of the Government and consequently many UK HEIs. Singapore's Global Schoolhouse offered exciting opportunities,

although it was accepted that there would inevitably be risks associated with the project.