THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 11 June 2012

Present: Vice-Chancellor,
                        Deputy Vice-Chancellor,
                        Professor A Caesar,
                        Professor S Croft,
                        Professor C Hughes,
                        Professor T Jones
                        Professor J Labbe,
                        Professor M Taylor,
                        Professor P Thomas,
                        Professor P Winstanley.

Apologies: Professor S Swain, Mr L Bøe.

In Attendance: Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar, Director of Finance and Financial Strategy,
                        Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Director of Estates, Head of
                        Corporate Governance, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer
                        (VC's Office), Assistant Registrar (Information Security, Risk Management and
                        Business Continuity), University Senior Tutor (for item 547/11-12), Senior Assistant
                        Registrar (Teaching Quality) (for item 548/11-12), Director of Student Careers and
                        Skills (for item 549/11-12).

544/11-12   Minutes

                RESOLVED:

                That the minutes of the meeting held on 28 May 2012 be approved.

545/11-12   HEFCE Consultation on Philanthropic Support for Higher Education in the UK (minute 517/11-
                12 refers)

                REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

                That, following consideration of the Steering Committee by correspondence, he took Chair's
                Action on behalf of the Steering Committee to approve the University's response to the
                HEFCE Consultation on Philanthropic Support for Higher Education in the UK, set out in
                SC.375/11-12, and that it was submitted to the HEFCE prior to the deadline of 7 June 2012.

546/11-12   Senate Business (minute 535/11-12 refers)

                REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

                That, following consideration of the Steering Committee by correspondence, he took Chair's
                Action on behalf of the Steering Committee to approve the four remaining items of business
                for the meeting of the Senate to be held on 13 June 2012 with minor amendments to the
                versions circulated to the Steering Committee on 1 June 2012.

547/11-12   Personal Tutoring

                CONSIDERED:

                A report from the University Senior Tutor including recommendations for revisions to the
                Personal Tutoring system, following a survey of students and staff undertaken in the Autumn
                term of 2011 (SC.368/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the University Senior Tutor)

(a)   That the Working Group, which analysed the results, included membership from a wide constituency of the University and that the Academic Quality and Standards Committee had monitored findings and proposed recommendations at each stage.

(b)   That the survey demonstrated a 76% student and 84% staff satisfaction rate with regards to personal tutoring at the University and that the Working Group had focused its efforts on addressing areas perceived as requiring improvement.

(c)   That the minimum requirements set out in Annex A of SC.368/11-12 were practical steps which if taken could result in swift enhancements to the current personal tutoring experience.

(By the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience)

(d)   That the findings of the survey and the subsequent recommendations were invaluable and timely in the context of the key role played by personal tutors within the student experience.

(By the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

(e)   That the role of the personal tutor in Phase II of the MBChB was carried out by non-University colleagues as students were based in NHS organisations and that consideration would be given as to how the recommendations in SC.368/11-12 might be implemented within this environment.

(By the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

(f)   That the Academic Resourcing Committee did take personal tutor duties into account within departmental resourcing discussions when the information was presented, it being noted that not all departments employed formal workload models.

RESOLVED:

(a)   That the Committee record its thanks to the University Senior Tutor for his considerable work on the survey and the recommendations.

(b)   That the proposed recommendations and referrals to appropriate University bodies or officers be approved as set out in SC.368/11-12.

(c)   That the University Senior Tutor liaise with the Learning and Development Centre to identify whether personal tutor training could be incorporated within the Postgraduate Certificate for Academic and Professional Practice (PCAPP).

(d)   That the Deputy Vice-Chancellor in liaison with the Academic Registrar determine a mechanism to ensure all departments have a formal workload allocation model in place.

548/11-12   Teaching Quality Update Report

CONSIDERED:

An update report from the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) on the following teaching and learning issues: Warwick Community Agreement; QAA Institutional Review; Staff Development; Key Information Sets; Learning and Teaching Strategy 2012-17; National Student Survey; External Consultation (SC.377/11-12).

(a)   Warwick Community Agreement

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

(i)   That the Steering Committee had resolved that a document be developed that set out the mutual roles and responsibilities of constituent groups within the University community, but that this would be different in character and emphasis to a Student Charter found at some other institutions.

(ii)   That a Working Group of AQSC was convened to develop a draft, with further review points by the President of the Students' Union, the Corporate Communications Manager and the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality).

(iii)   That it was anticipated that a final draft would be recommended to the Senate for consideration at its second meeting in the Summer Term 2012.

(By the Vice-Chancellor)

(iv)   That the document as presented in Annex A of SC.377/11-12 required development to ensure that the expectations set out were realistic as well as challenging.

(v)   That, to his knowledge, a number of other universities had introduced student charters or similar agreements and that the University might be able to benefit from their experience.

(By the Academic Registrar)

(vi)   That the tone of the document was positive and mutually beneficial in nature but that the legal standing of statements made within it should be clarified.

(By the Deputy Registrar)

(vii)   That it would be more beneficial to reflect aspirational elements for the Warwick student experience within the Teaching and Learning Strategy as opposed to the proposed Community Agreement, which should seek to present current roles and responsibilities.

RESOLVED:

(i)   That the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) liaise with the University Legal Advisor to clarify the legal standing of the proposed Warwick Community Agreement as set out in SC.377/11-12.

(ii)   That members of the Committee be invited to send any further comments on the draft Agreement to the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) for incorporation as appropriate.

(b)   QAA Institutional Review

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

(i)   That a working group had been convened, led by Dr David Lamburn, to co-ordinate and support the University's preparations for the QAA Institutional Review in March 2013.

(ii)   That work would commence shortly to gather evidence as a basis for the required Self-Evaluation Document, which differed from the previous QAA

Institutional Review and was expected to be briefer with more substantive evidence.

(By the Head of Governance Support Services)

(iii)   That the Secretariats of the committees of the Senate and the Council had been briefed with regards to the QAA Institutional Review and the involvement of their committees, particularly in respect of evidencing decisions and considerations via minutes and papers.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed University selection of "Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement" as the thematic element for the QAA Institutional Review of 2012/13 be approved as set out in SC.377/11-12.

(c)   Key Information Sets (KIS)

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

(i)   That data had been collected regarding contact hours on all modules offered at the University and that work was underway to map the modular data to a typical student pathway as an indication of the volume of contact hours to be included for each course in the KIS.

(By the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

(ii)   That it was vital that the University collate and present accurate information and that it was important to include any planning increases in departmental contact hours in the KIS as this would more accurately reflect the predicted picture for students in 2013/14.

RESOLVED:

(i)   That the Vice-Chancellor remind Heads of Departments of the importance of the KIS at the Heads of Departments Forum to be held on 21 June 2012 and that the Academic Registrar endeavour to provide illustrative contact hours data to present to Heads of Departments.

(ii)   That the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) update the Vice-Chancellor on the approval process for the KIS dataset.

549/11-12   Student Careers and Skills Update

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Director of Student Careers and Skills, with an update on the Centre for Student Careers and Skills' involvement in the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review; Diplomas for Employability; and encouragement of student engagement (SC.376/11-12).

(a)   Diplomas for Employability

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

(i)   That a pilot of Diplomas for Employability would be undertaken with undergraduate students from at least six departments.

(ii)   That the Diplomas aimed to bring together evidence of academic achievement, work experience and extra-curricular activities to demonstrate a work-ready, well-rounded and skilful graduate.

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(iii) That there was an opportunity to widen the scope of the pilot or to roll the initiative out campus-wide should the pilot be progressing successfully.

(By the Dean of Warwick Medical School)

(iv) That the changing NHS and economic context had resulted in a greater focus on employability for student doctors and that the Warwick Medical School would welcome the opportunity to engage with the employability initiatives at the University.

RESOLVED:

That the Director of Centre for Student Careers and Skills and Professor Christina Hughes in her capacity as the new Pro-Vice-Chancellor, incorporate evaluation points at earlier stages within the Diplomas for Employability pilot programme to allow an expansion at the earliest opportunity to other areas of the University as appropriate and to permit the University to respond swiftly to support students who were to be graduating into an uncertain economic environment.

(b) Placement Learning Unit

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

(i) That the Placement Learning Unit was established in February 2012 and that the Unit had made significant progress, including providing 90 bursaries to students undertaking short-term unpaid placements.

(ii) That it was anticipated that the Unit would provide 250 bursaries this year.

(iii) That the Unit was working alongside the Management Information and Planning team to capture data on the overall volume of placements being undertaken, it being noted that recording the details of placements centrally was challenging as placements were often arranged privately via family members or other connections.

(iv) That the Unit would be leading the Warwick element of the Monash University 'Green Steps' student sustainability internships programme in 2012.

550/11-12 Changes to Methods of Payments for Students Paying Tuition Fees and Accommodation Fees in 2012/13

CONSIDERED:

Proposed changes to tuition and accommodation fee payment arrangements for 2012/13 (SC.291/11-12).

RESOLVED:

That the proposed changes to tuition and accommodation fee payment arrangements for 2012/13 be approved as set out in SC.291/11-12.

551/11-12 Student Number Controls for 2013-14: Proposals for High Grades and a Core and Margin Exercise (minute 528/11-12 refers)

RECEIVED:

The University's response to the HEFCE's proposals regarding Student Number Controls for 2013/14, submitted prior to the deadline of 1 June 2012 (SC.372/11-12, revised).

552/11-12   UK Quality Code for Higher Education - Database of expertise for 2012-13

RECEIVED:

An invitation from the QAA to nominate individuals for the database of expertise on topics of priority for the Quality Code programme of work for 2012-13, by 31 July 2012 (SC.378/11-12).

553/11-12   Matched Funding Scheme for Voluntary Giving

RECEIVED:

A circular from the HEFCE summarising the outcomes and impact of the matched funding scheme between 2008 and 2011, and future steps to address the challenges for voluntary giving to higher education (SC.384/11-12).

554/11-12   HEFCE UK Research Partnership Investment Fund

RECEIVED:

The University's Expression of Interest and supporting documentation submitted to the HEFCE UK Research Partnership Investment Fund by Warwick Manufacturing Group (SC.386/11-12).

555/11-12   QAA Consultation on the UK Quality Code: Section B3 – Learning and Teaching

REPORTED:

That the University's response to the QAA consultation on Chapter B3 – Learning and Teaching of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education would be overseen by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality), and be considered by the Steering Committee prior to the submission deadline of 25 July 2012.