

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 23 April 2012

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

Apologies: Vice-Chancellor, Mr L Bøe, Professor S Croft.

In Attendance: Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Academic Registrar (from item 462 (d)/11-12), Director of Finance and Financial Strategy, Director of HR, Director of Development, Communications and Strategy, Director of Estates, Head of Governance Support Services, Executive Officer (VC's Office), Administrative Officer (Governance), Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) (for items 462/11-12 to 465/11-12), Director of Management Information and Planning (for item 466/11-12), Head of Enterprise and Innovation Programmes (Research Support Services) (for item 467/11-12).

461/11-12 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2012 be approved.

462/11-12 QAA Consultation on Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education (minute 409/11-12 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The University's draft response to the QAA Consultation on Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education (SC.317/11-12).

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

- (a) That the draft guidance on enterprise and entrepreneurship education for consultation was considered a useful point of reference and was in line with the significant portfolio of activity the University was already undertaking in this area.
- (b) That the University noted the concern that enterprise or entrepreneurship education, if termed as such, could be unattractive to students not focussed on a career in large scale business, despite skills acquired through such programmes being transferrable and relevant to a variety of settings.
- (c) That the University's draft response noted inconsistency in the draft guidance regarding flexibility of assessment methods that could be employed.

(by the Chair of the Board of Graduate Studies)

- (d) That the University's response to the draft guidance should acknowledge both undergraduate and postgraduate education.

(by the Dean of Warwick Business School)

- (e) That the Warwick Business School could contribute to the University's response, given its expertise and experience in enterprise and entrepreneurship education.

(by the Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences)

- (f) That the University's response to the draft guidance should reflect that enterprise education was not a new aspect of higher education at Warwick, and emphasise that the draft guidance reflected current process that had been in place historically at the University.

RESOLVED:

That the University's response to the QAA Consultation on Enterprise and Entrepreneurship Education be approved as set out in SC.317/11-12, subject to the amendments discussed in the meeting, and be submitted to the QAA by the deadline of 24 April 2012.

463/11-12 QAA Institutional Review Thematic Element 2012-13

CONSIDERED:

QAA guidance documents covering the QAA Institutional Review Theme for 2012/13 (Student Involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement) and 2011/12 (First Year Student Experience) (SC.318/11-12).

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

- (a) That there would be two thematic elements for the 2012/13 QAA Institutional Review; the First Year Student Experience, and Student Involvement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement.
- (b) That institutions undergoing review could choose between the two themes for the 2012/13 QAA Institutional Review.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed choice of theme for the thematic element of the 2012/13 QAA Institutional Review be considered and approved by the Steering Committee and the Senate at its June 2012 meeting, following broader consultation within the University to be undertaken by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Education and Student Experience with the support of the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality).

464/11-12 QAA Institutional Review Panel Members

CONSIDERED:

The biographies of the proposed panel members for the University's QAA Institutional Review to be undertaken in 2012/13 (SC.310/11-12).

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

- (a) That the University had previously raised concerns with the QAA where it was felt that panel members were not sufficiently representative of peer institutions in order to provide comparable approaches to teaching, learning and quality assurance.
- (b) That, despite the proposed panel's bias towards the sciences in its disciplinary composition, it was felt that panel members were sufficiently representative of peer institutions.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the fact that Professor Tim Jones was an external examiner for physical chemistry at Oxford was not seen as a substantive potential conflict of interest, but given that there was an annual reappointment process for this position of external examiner, it would therefore not be formally reported to the QAA until confirmation of reappointment was received.
- (b) That the University assumed that the QAA had determined in setting the Review panel that the lack of disciplinary coverage would not hinder the panel's ability to effectively undertake the Review, and that the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality) would respond to the QAA to this effect.

465/11-12

QAA Report Mid-Cycle Follow Up (minute 177/11-12 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The QAA's draft report on the University's Mid-Cycle Follow Up submission, approved by the Steering Committee at its meeting held on 5 December 2011, highlighting issues to be addressed for the next QAA Review (SC.324/11-12).

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

- (a) That the QAA concluded that the University appeared to have made good progress in addressing the recommendations of the institutional audit in November 2008.
- (b) That the QAA had highlighted two issues for the next QAA Institutional Review; effects of the implementation of recommendations from the Harris Report, and developments in collaborative provision arrangements.

(by the Registrar)

- (c) That, while it was not in the QAA's remit to advise on internal structures, they could share their view on the effect that the structures had on quality standards in practice.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (d) That, while showing how the University had effectively responded to the recommended increased delegation to departments within the Harris Review, it was important to highlight within the Review the institutional space and focus given to enhancement of teaching and learning by way of the Institutional Teaching and Learning Review.

RESOLVED:

That the University's check for factual inaccuracies within the QAA's draft report on the University's Mid-Cycle Follow Up submission be undertaken by the Senior Assistant Registrar (Teaching Quality), and submitted to the QAA prior to the deadline of 27 April 2012.

466/11-12

REF Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff (minute 301/11-12 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The University's Research Excellence Framework (REF) Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff and the new Terms of Reference for the REF Executive and Operational Steering Groups (SC.319/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Director of Management Information and Planning)

- (a) That the processes within the REF Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff were designed within the context and requirements of the Equality Act 2010.
- (b) That the process for consideration of complex circumstances in relation to output levels were set out within the REF Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff.
- (c) That the REF Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff would be disseminated widely and made available in an easily accessible format, once confirmed by the HEFCE during Summer 2012.
- (d) That an Appeals Procedure was included for staff who believed that a decision taken to exclude them from the University's REF submission was discriminatory on the grounds of any of the protected characteristics, but not for disagreement regarding the quality rating given for inclusion in the University's REF submission.
- (e) That the REF Operational Steering Group (REFOSG) would act as the sole decision making body on the inclusion or exclusion of staff in the University's REF submission, as per the Group's Terms of Reference.
- (f) That he extended his thanks to colleagues in HR for their assistance in producing the draft REF Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

- (g) That the membership of the Appeals Panel be extended to include a member of the Senate, to give the opportunity for academic engagement in the appeals process.

(by the Director of HR)

- (h) That the draft REF Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff had been circulated to the UCU for comment.
- (i) That the research performance management process would continue independently of REF activity.

(by the Registrar)

- (j) That all selection processes across the University would be undertaken in accordance with the agreed REF Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff to ensure equity, regardless of assessment unit.
- (k) That colleagues would be notified of inclusion during August 2013 and that acknowledgement would be required within two weeks of receipt of this notification.
- (l) That the notification process would be actively managed to ensure receipt during holiday period.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the University's Research Excellence Framework (REF) Code of Practice on the Selection of Staff and the new Terms of Reference for the REF Executive and Operational Steering Groups be approved as set out in paper SC.319/11-12, subject to the amendments discussed in the meeting.
- (b) That the Director of HR explore the viability of offering training for Head of Departments in preparation for difficult conversations with colleagues regarding exclusion from the University's REF submission.

467/11-12 Informal BIS Consultation on European Structural Funds 2014-20 (minute 455/11-12 refers)

CONSIDERED:

The University's draft response to the BIS Consultation on European Structural Funds 2014-20 (SC.316/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Head of Enterprise and Innovation Programmes (Research Support Services))

- (a) That the University had been a beneficiary of significant European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funds, and that the European Commission and National Governments were proposing to dovetail these funds with Horizon 2020 (the successor to Framework Programme 7) for the 2014-20 period.

(by the Director of Finance and Financial Strategy)

- (b) That she would provide an example to the Head of Enterprise and Innovation Programmes (Research Support Services) for inclusion in the University's response, to highlight the need for strong national guidance to reduce the administrative burden involved.

RESOLVED:

That the University's draft response to the BIS Consultation on European Structural Funds 2014-20 be approved as set out in paper SC.316/11-12, subject to the amendments discussed with the Director of Finance and Financial Strategy, and submitted to BIS prior to the deadline of 27 April 2012.

468/11-12 HEFCE and OFFA Guidance Documentation

CONSIDERED:

A letter from the HEFCE and OFFA informing the University of three guidance documents regarding Interim Widening Participation Strategic Statements, 2013-14 access agreements and provisional allocations for the 2013-14 National Scholarship Programme (NSP), together with the circular or Executive Summary of the report (SC.326/11-12).

REPORTED: (by the Registrar)

- (a) That the guidance received from the HEFCE and OFFA pointed to development of the Access Agreement and to the Widening Participation definition going forward.
- (b) That further information on support to enable greater access to postgraduate education was expected to be forthcoming.

(by the Academic Registrar)

- (c) That a Working Group would convene this week to begin drafting the University's Access Agreement for 2013/14.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Academic Registrar lead on the compilation of the University's Access Agreement for 2013/14, for consideration and approval by the Steering Committee before submission to the HEFCE prior to the deadline of 31 May 2012.
- (b) That the Academic Registrar lead on the compilation of the University's interim Widening Participation Strategic Statement for 2012/13, for consideration and

approval by the Steering Committee before submission to the HEFCE prior to the deadline of 22 June 2012.

KMS/KP/steershare/minutes/201112/Apr12/23Apr12