

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 7 September 2015

Present: Professor S Croft (Provost (Chair)), Ms R Drinkwater (Group Finance Director), Professor S Gilson (Chair of the Faculty of Arts), Professor Christina Hughes (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)), Professor T Jones (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Science, Engineering and Medicine)), Mr I Leigh (President of the Students' Union), Professor J Palmowski (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Postgraduate and Transnational Education)), Professor M Shipman (Chair of the Faculty of Science), Professor C Sparrow, Professor P Thomas (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (People and Public Engagement)), Professor P Winstanley (Chair of the Faculty of Medicine), Professor L Young (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning and Resources)).

Apologies: Professor Sir Nigel Thrift (Vice-Chancellor and President), Professor A Coats (Academic Vice-President (Monash-Warwick Alliance)), Professor Christopher Hughes (Chair of the Faculty of Social Sciences), Mr K Sloan (Registrar and Chief Operating Officer), Professor S Swain (Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Arts and Social Sciences)).

In Attendance: Mr J Breckon (Director of Estates), Ms D Chambers (Director, Student Recruitment, Outreach and Admissions Office (in attendance for item 432/14-15)), Ms C Cochrane (Director, Research and Impact Services) in attendance for item 433/14-15)), Dr M Glover (Academic Registrar), Ms J Horsburgh (Deputy Registrar (Secretary)), Dr E Hough (Assistant Registrar, Governance (Assistant Secretary)).

425/14-15 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the open and restricted minutes of the meeting of the Steering Committee held on 1 September 2015 be approved.

426/14-15 In Memoriam: Dr Oliver Sacks

REPORTED: (by the Provost)

- (a) That Dr Oliver Sacks, internationally renowned neurologist, had passed away on 30 August 2015 at the age of 82.
- (b) That Dr Sacks had been a much loved Visiting Professor at Warwick and a recipient of an honorary doctorate from the University in January 2014.

RESOLVED:

That the condolences of the Committee be extended to the family and friends of Dr Sacks.

427/14-15 Time Higher Education Awards

REPORTED: (by the Provost)

- (a) That Warwick had been shortlisted for the Times Higher Education Award for Outstanding International Student Strategy.
- (b) That colleagues from the Centre for Applied Linguistics, International Office and the Students' Union had been shortlisted for their work addressing the issue of integration between domestic and international students.

RESOLVED:

That the congratulations of the Committee be extended to those colleagues shortlisted.

428/14-15 Rankings Success

REPORTED: (by the Provost)

- (a) That the University has been ranked in 92nd in the new Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) – a jump of 96 places on last year.
- (b) That this represented a significant achievement for the University.

429/14-15 Campus Transformation Update

REPORTED: (by the Provost)

That this week would see key developments in the project to transform and enhance central campus, including the re-opening of the newly developed University Road and the opening of the campus Bus Interchange.

430/14-15 Staff Summer Festival

REPORTED: (by the Provost)

That the first Warwick Summer Staff Festival was held on 26 August, featuring music, a bake sale and a craft market, noting that nearly £500 had been raised for charity.

RESOLVED:

That the thanks of the Committee be extended to all those staff who contributed their time and skills to make it such a successful day.

431/14-15 Major Incident on Campus

REPORTED: (by the Deputy Registrar)

- (a) That an incident involving a chemical reaction in a storage cupboard had taken place in the Chemistry department during the evening of 27-28 August, noting that this had necessitated the Major Incident Team to be convened and the attendance of the fire and ambulance service.

- (b) That the area and local vicinity had been evacuated safely and no one had been harmed in the incident.
- (c) That the incident had been discovered by a research student, who had acted in accordance with protocols, noting that they had been thanked for their prompt action.
- (d) That the Health and Safety Executive had subsequently visited the Chemistry department regarding a breach of the Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAWA 74), noting that the University expected to receive a Letter of Notification detailing a series of improvement actions in due course.
- (e) That a weekly action group chaired by the Deputy Registrar (acting on behalf of the Registrar) and comprising Chemistry, Health and Safety and Governance colleagues, had been convened to follow up on immediate actions, noting that a report on the incident, along with a detailed action plan, would be forthcoming to the Steering Committee within the next few weeks.
- (f) That an institutional-level group would also be convened to review any lessons that might be learned from the incident and to consider any institutional-level matters identified.
- (g) That institutional recommendations with respect to chemical storage and management, would subsequently be brought before the Steering Committee.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Science and Engineering))

- (h) That the growth of interdisciplinary research made the process of ensuring compliance with health and safety protocols an increasingly complex matter and that this should also be a focus for the institutional group.

432/14-15 *Student Admissions Update

CONSIDERED:

A presentation updating the Steering Committee on the latest student admissions data.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the update on student admissions be noted.
- (b) That admissions data relating to widening participation be brought to the next meeting of the Steering Committee.
- (c) That the data from the HEFCE project be made available to colleagues in the Graduate School and SROAS, in order that it may inform future recruitment-related activities.

433/14-15 *Research Update

CONSIDERED:

A report updating the Committee on Research and Impact Services activity (SC.199/14-15, restricted).

RESOLVED:

That the update from Research and Impact Services be noted.

434/14-15 HEFCE Policy for Open Access in the Post-Research Excellence Framework

CONSIDERED:

A paper detailing the HEFCE policy for open access in the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework (SC.200/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Science and Engineering))

- (a) That the policy stated that, to be eligible for submission to the post-2014 REF, authors' outputs must have been deposited in an institutional or subject repository, noting that this referred to the Green, rather than the Gold open access route.
- (b) That the policy would apply to research outputs accepted for publication after 1 April 2016, noting that compliance would be assessed from April 2017 onwards.
- (c) That the policy represented a positive stance, noting that staff should be encouraged to begin complying with it as soon as possible.
- (d) That the HEFCE policy on open access would be discussed at the next meeting of the Research Committee, alongside that of the UK funding councils, with guidance being cascaded to key staff thereafter.

(by Professor Sparrow)

- (e) That it would be helpful if staff could be provided with clear instructions for compliance with the policy.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (People and Public Engagement))

- (f) That as with the topic of data sharing, it would be helpful if staff could be provided with standard text that could be used to indicate compliance on research funding applications.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report on the HEFCE open access policy be noted.
- (b) That the Research Committee be requested to produce clear guidelines and template text on open access compliance for use by academic colleagues.
- (c) That an update on the review into open access be brought to the Steering Committee in the autumn term.

435/14-15 BIS Consultation on Freezing the Student Loan Repayment Threshold

CONSIDERED:

A paper on the Universities UK (UUK) request for comments on the BIS consultation on freezing the student loan repayment threshold (SC.201/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Academic Registrar)

- (a) That BIS was required to make substantial savings against its current budget, noting that higher education funding made up 70% of that budget.
- (b) That BIS had detailed three options for the treatment of student loan repayment thresholds, as detailed in the paper.
- (c) That option a. – to freeze repayment thresholds for all new regime students for a period of 5 years at the current level – would likely be the preferred option of BIS.
- (d) That option a. provided the greatest savings, while having little, if any, impact on equality or diversity issues and minimizing the need for cuts in other areas of current expenditure.
- (e) That it was recommended that the University note the consultation as opposed to providing a formal response.

(by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning))

- (f) That aside from the consultation document, the cost of the student loan to individual students was a matter of societal concern.

(by the President of the Students' Union)

- (g) That it would be disappointing if fees were to increase without an associated increase in the loans threshold.

RESOLVED:

That the University note the UUK consultation.

436/14-15

Joint Strategic Needs Analysis Questionnaire

CONSIDERED:

A paper outlining the University's proposed response to the Coventry Public Health Insight team's Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) questionnaire. (SC.202/14-15).

REPORTED: (by the Chair of the Faculty of Medicine)

- (a) That he proposed a number of changes be made to the paper prior to submission, noting that this had been prepared at fairly short notice and during a period when a number of key staff were away from the University.
- (b) That the proposed changes were predominantly stylistic and editorial in nature.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed response be approved for submission, subject to editorial review by the Chair of the Faculty of Medicine and the Deputy Registrar.