

THE UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the Meeting of the Steering Committee held on 4 September 2006

Present: Vice-Chancellor (Chair)
Professor S Bassnett
Professor A Caesar
Professor J Jones
Professor S B Palmer
Professor M Smith
Professor M Whitby

Apologies: Professor L Bridges, Professor Y Carter, Mr B Duggan, Professor R Lindley, Professor M Luntley, Professor H Thomas, Registrar.

In Attendance: Academic Registrar, Deputy Registrar, Director of Communication, Director of Estates, Director of Finance, University Secretary, Mrs H E Blunt, Ms N Snodgrass, for item 685/05-06 the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation, for item 687/05-06 the Senior Assistant Registrar (Graduate School).

679/05-06 Minutes

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2006 be approved.

680/05-06 Higher Doctorates (minute 658/05-06 refers)

REPORTED:

(by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor)

(a) That a letter had been circulated to all Heads of Departments to encourage them to put forward appropriate nominations for any members of staff or alumni of the University who might be eligible for the award of Higher Doctorates and that a meeting with all Heads would shortly be convened to discuss this matter.

(b) That the application fee for internal candidates for the award of Higher Doctorates would be waived for applications submitted during the academic year 2006/07.

(by the Deputy Registrar)

(c) That proposed amendments to University Regulation 15 on Regulations for Higher Doctorates to clarify the applications procedure and to correct any anomalies were currently under preparation and would be brought forward for consideration by the Senate and the Council through the Steering Committee in due course.

681/05-06 Deputy Registrar

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Dr Paul Greatrix, Deputy Registrar, would be leaving the University in December to take up the post of Registrar at the University of Nottingham.

RESOLVED:

That the Steering Committee record formally its congratulations and best wishes to the Deputy Registrar on his new role as Registrar of the University of Nottingham.

682/05-06

Resignation of University Treasurer

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That Mr Chris Foy had resigned from his position as Treasurer of the University with effect from 5 October 2006 due to increasing work commitments, and in particular significant commitments overseas, and that steps were currently being taken to identify a successor to Mr Foy.

683/05-06

Academic Staff Titles

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That, following the approval by the Senate and the Council in the Spring Term of the new nomenclature for academic staff titles, there remained a need for clarification of how the new titles would be used in practice within and without the University.

RESOLVED:

That the development of a University policy on the use of the new academic staff titles within and without the University be raised as a topic for discussion at the meeting of the Steering Committee to be held on 18 September.

684/05-06

Newsweek International Top 100 Global Universities

RECEIVED:

An oral report from the Vice-Chancellor on the recent publication by Newsweek International of its ranking of the top 100 global universities, noting that Warwick had not been placed within this list and that the Newsweek rankings had largely been based on measures utilised in previous international league tables published by Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the *Times Higher Education Supplement* (THES).

REPORTED: (by the Vice-Chancellor)

That he would be establishing a working group to examine and review the methodology utilised by Newsweek, Shanghai Jiao Tong University and the THES in their compilation of international league tables and to develop strategies for improving the University's performance in these league rankings.

RESOLVED:

That the Newsweek International Top 100 Global Universities league table be circulated for information to members of the Steering Committee.

685/05-06

Undergraduate and Postgraduate Admissions

CONSIDERED:

University data on home and overseas undergraduate and postgraduate intake projections against budget plan as at 30 August 2006 (SC.450/05-06) together with an oral report from the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Vice-Chancellor write to the Head of the Department of Computer Science to reinforce the issues highlighted in paper SC.450/05-06 and rehearsed in discussion at the meeting relating to the Department's significant undershoot of its undergraduate intake Home/EU target and the need for the Department to develop, as a matter of urgency, potential strategies through which this might be addressed for consideration in

advance of the Quinquennial Review of the Department of Computer Science to be undertaken in early November 2006.

- (b) That the Head of Student Admissions and Widening Participation prepare data on the proportion of Warwick undergraduate students who proceed to postgraduate degree courses within the University for consideration by the Steering Committee at a future meeting.
- (c) That the University Secretary and the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Student Admissions Office, determine the proposed membership of working groups to review the position relating to projected undergraduate and postgraduate student number shortfalls for October 2006.

686/05-06 WHRI Strategic Plan (minutes 474/05-06 and 551/05-06 refer)

RECEIVED:

Copies of letters from the BBSRC to the Director of WHRI and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) in regard to the WHRI strategic research plan for the period 2006 – 2009, providing notification of the BBSRC's approval for the release of the balance of transitional funding for 2006/07 and setting out proposals for the terms of the release of funds for the financial years 2007/08 – 2009/10 (SC.454/05-06) together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research).

REPORTED: (by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor {Research})

That he would shortly be contacting the BBSRC Director of Corporate Science to discuss arrangements for the monitoring of the scientific progress of the WHRI Research Programme by the University, the submission of annual progress reports to the BBSRC and the staged release of funds for WHRI for the financial years 2007/08 – 2009/10 and would report back to the Steering Committee in due course.

687/05-06 University Degree Congregations

CONSIDERED:

Proposals for changes to the scheduling of University Degree Congregations (papers SC.448/05-06 and SC.465/05-06).

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the proposal that the 2007 Winter Degree Congregation be rescheduled from Wednesday 31 January 2007 to Tuesday 30 January 2007 be approved as set out in paper SC.448/05-06.
- (b) That the proposal that all future Winter Degree Congregations take place on the penultimate Wednesday in January be approved as set out in paper SC.448/05-06.
- (c) That the University's current policy of holding the Summer Degree Congregation in the third week following the end of the Summer Term be reaffirmed, noting that while it was recognised that this would lead in some years to a late scheduling of Degree Congregation week, it was anticipated that this would be ameliorated in due course through a possible shortening of the main summer examination period (minute 581/05-06 refers).

688/05-06 HEFCE Single Equality Scheme

RECEIVED:

HEFCE consultation document 2006/28 on the HEFCE's first Single Equality Scheme (SC.455/05-06) together with an oral report from the University Secretary.

689/05-06 Strategically Important and Vulnerable Subjects

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the HEFCE setting out its approach to the communication with and support of institutions considering the closure of departments deemed strategically important or vulnerable (SC.456/05-06).

690/05-06 Birthday Honours 2007

CONSIDERED:

UUK Information Note 1/06/88 requesting the nomination of candidates for honours for services to higher education in the 2007 Queen's Birthday Honours List (SC.457/05-06).

RESOLVED:

That any suggestions for nominations for the 2007 Birthday Honours List be forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Assistant.

691/05-06 2006 National Student Survey: HEFCE Press Release

RECEIVED:

A press release from the HEFCE on the results of the second National Student Survey (NSS) conducted in 2006 (SC.458/05-06) together with an oral report from the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) noting that the NSS would be an item for discussion at the next meeting of the Russell Group Pro-Vice-Chancellors (Teaching and Learning) to be held in the coming week and that the University would be working with the Union of Students to actively encourage participation by all eligible students in the 2007 NSS (minute 599/05-06 refers).

692/05-06 Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey 2003-04

RECEIVED:

The executive summary of HEFCE document 2006/25 on the results of the fifth annual Higher Education Business and Community Interaction Survey utilising financial and output data for the academic year 2003-04 (SC.459/05-06).

693/05-06 Employment Equality (Age) Regulations

RECEIVED:

A paper on the Employment Equality (Age) Regulations scheduled to come into force from 1 October 2006 and the retirement guidelines currently being drafted for implementation within the University together with a copy of the University's Age Discrimination Action Plan (SC.449/05-06).

694/05-06

Shared Services

RECEIVED:

Circular letter number 20/2006 from the HEFCE on the potential benefits to higher education institutions of shared services within the sector and the findings from the recent HEFCE-commissioned KPMG study on the scale of existing shared service activities and barriers to implementing additional shared services within higher education (SC.460/05-06)

695/05-06

Institutional Learning and Teaching Strategies 2006-07 to 2008-09
(minutes 519/05-06 and 604/05-06 refer)

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the HEFCE providing formal confirmation of the HEFCE's approval of the University's proposals for the utilisation of its institutional allocation of funding under the Teaching Quality Enhancement Fund for the period 2006-2009 (SC.461/05-06).

696/05-06

Wellcome Trust Value in People Award

RECEIVED:

A copy of an email from the Wellcome Trust providing confirmation of a fourth year of funding for the University under the Wellcome Trust Value in People Award for the period 1 October 2006 to 30 September 2007 (SC.462/05-06).

697/05-06

European Commission Consultation on Transnational Research Co-Operation and Knowledge Transfer: University Response (minute 632/05-06 refers)

RECEIVED:

The University's response to the European Commission public consultation on transnational research co-operation and knowledge transfer between public research organisations and industry (SC.451/05-06).

698/05-06

Medical Research Council Training Review Questionnaire: University Response

RECEIVED:

The University's response to the Medical Research Council's review of its overall investment in training and career development (SC.452/05-06).

699/05-06

Good Doctors, Safer Patients: CHMS Response

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the Chair of the Council of Heads of Medical Schools (CHMS) to the Secretary of State for Health setting out the objections of the CHMS to Recommendation 19 in the Chief Medical Officer's Report "Good Doctors, Safer Patients": The role of the GMC in the regulation of medical undergraduate curricula (SC.463/05-06).

700/05-06

Strategic Development Fund – Coventry and Warwickshire Lifelong Learning Network

RECEIVED:

A copy of a letter from the HEFCE to the Vice-Chancellor of Coventry University providing confirmation of the HEFCE's approval for the release of £2,540,000 from the HEFCE Strategic Development Fund to support the proposed Coventry and Warwickshire Lifelong Learning Network (SC.464/05-06).