

HARPER ADAMS UNIVERSITY

Staff Meeting**Minutes of the Staff Meeting held on 15 April 2016 in the Foulkes-Crowther Lecture Theatre**

Attendance: a record of all staff who attended is held in the Staff Meeting Minutes (0004 Tc 02 T/50.004 Te(I)-1J 0 Tj 0.004V)

15/07 Welcome

The Vice-Chancellor welcomed new staff to the meeting.

15/08 Minutes

Agreed: the minutes of the Staff Meeting held on 21 September 2015 (15/01-15/06).

15/09 Matters Arising

Agreed: that there were no matters arising which needed further discussion.

15/10 Presentation from the Vice-Chancellor

- Noted:
- i) that the Vice-Chancellor's presentation would be made available to all staff on the University Portal following the meeting;
 - ii) that the University had won the 'WhatUni' University of the Year Award the previous evening. The University had also been judged as first for student support and for job prospects. It had also been placed in the top three (gold, silver or bronze) in all of the categories in which it had been shortlisted. The Vice-Chancellor expressed his thanks to all staff for their commitment and support in achieving this extremely prestigious accolade. The awards had been voted for by students and the University's success was therefore a reflection of hard work by all staff across the institution;
 - iii) that applications for undergraduate courses starting in September 2016 were currently running at 99% of levels at the same point in 2015. It was noteworthy that the number of students rejecting offers made to them by the University was slightly higher at this current point, however, numbers remained changeable as students were still making up their minds and, therefore, firm outcomes of the full application cycle were not yet available. The University would continue to try to ascertain possible reasons why students were rejecting the offers that had been made to them, and feedback would be provided to Admissions Tutors and other staff in due course;
 - iv) that taught postgraduate applications for 2016 were currently similar to those for 2014 and were lower than those received at the same point in 2015. It was noted that this appeared to be a HE sector-wide situation. The University was continuing, nevertheless, to market its taught graduate provision actively and was also in discussion about a number of opportunities to attract further EU students, particularly to postgraduate courses;
 - v) that, as some staff would be aware, discussions were currently ongoing about whether or not the University's current arrangements for interviewing undergraduates should be

reviewed. In particular, consideration was being given to whether or not it might be possible to hold interviews earlier in the cycle. There was evidence that other Universities had identified that offer making needed to be done as quickly as possible in the cycle and, where interviews were still taking place, these had often been brought forward to try to address this need;

vi) that undergraduate applications across the HE sector were currently 0.2% higher than in the previous year at the same point in the cycle. It was noteworthy that the increase mainly related to additional EU applicants;

vii) that it was anticipated that competition for students for 2017 entry would continue to be extremely fierce, particularly as the demographic downturn started to have a greater impact;

viii) that a new Vice-Chancellor had been appointed at the Royal Agricultural University, Professor Joanna Price. The RAU was also currently focussing on their 'Farm 491' project which was being funded with support from the Local Enterprise Partnership;

ix) that SRUC had not yet announced the appointment of a new

Vice-Chancellor (1-5-4118165910-119400) (1-1127-1) (8602) (2016)

- xv) that it was clear that the government remained particularly focused on ensuring that centres funded under the Agri-Tech Strategy were working closely with industry partners and there were also likely to be opportunities to further develop the University's links with AHDB. The vision was to fully occupy the Agri-Tech funded centres and to ensure that they were working effectively. The local authority and Marches LEP were continuing to be supportive of a proposal to develop further Agri-Tech related employment opportunities on land set aside to the south of Newport. Funding had now been secured to open up the site and information for companies that may be interested in relocating had also been put together and would be promoted by the inward investment team working at Telford & Wrekin;
- xvi) that announcements on institutional funding for all English HEIs would be made during the next week. The Department of Business Innovation and Skills had published its recent letter to HEFCE in which it had been confirmed that there would be no further changes to the HEFCE budget for the last quarter of the year;
- xvii) that the University's strong student recruitment had enabled it to maintain and slightly improve its financial position this year. It was therefore important that student d [(m)-24.4(ai)3.1(nt)-1.1(ai)3.1(n and)11.9(

xxii) that the University's budg

xxxi) that it was understood that Universities UK had issued guidance around university/university staff engagement with the EU

15/11 Questions from Staff

A member of staff asked when the outcome of the recent Staff Survey would be known. It was confirmed that feedback from Capita had only recently been received and, therefore, as soon as a full analysis had been completed, staff would be updated on the outcome of the survey, including proposed action points.

A member of staff asked whether the funding announcements referred to earlier in the meeting would include confirmation of likely funding for workforce development. The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that such funding would be included within the HEFCE grant announcements.

15/12 Date of Next Meeting

19 September 2016 at 09.15