Present: Dr Michael Spence, President and Provost (Chair).

Professor Bas Aarts; Dr Mojtaba Abdi-Jalebi; Aziz Abdulhadi; Dr Rik Adriaans; Hamza Ahmed; Jennifer Akinola; Dr Bojan Alekssov; Dr Tamara Alhilfi; Adnan Ali; Dr Afia Ali; Professor Mark Altwaeel; Dr Jake Anders; Professor Lynn Ang; Professor Panagiota Angeli; Professor Haki Antonsson; Dr Seth Anziska; Professor Kathleen Armour; Professor Anasuya Aruliah; Professor David Attwell; Professor Jan Axmacher; Dr Sakiru Badmos; Professor Jamie Baker; Professor Torsten Baldeweg; Professor Simon Banks; Karen Barnard; Professor Kathryn Batchelor; Dr Hanna Baumann; Professor Polina Bayvel; Professor Yasminah Beebeejaun; Professor Costante Bellettini; Emily Bellshaw; Professor Mette Berg; Professor Michael Berkowitz; Professor Jeff Bezemer; Professor Robert Biel; Professor Stephanie Bird; Professor Brad Blitz; Robert Bodden; Anja Boeijing; Professor David Bogle; Kate Boldry; Professor Iain Borden; Professor Herve Borrion; Professor Noemie Bouhana; Dr Jeff Bowersox; Professor Rachel Bowly; Dr Raina Brands; Professor Georgina Brewis; Dr Damian Bright; Professor Annie Britton; Professor Clare Brooks; Professor Robert Brownstone; Professor Stella Bruzzi; Dr Suzy Buckley; Professor Vishwanie Budhram-Mahadeo; Professor Jonathan Butterworth; Tadhg Caffrey; Professor Joseph Cain; Noël Caliste; Professor Claire Callender; Professor Claire Cameron; Professor Luiza Campos; Professor Benjamin Caplin; Professor Licia Capra; Professor Claire Carmalt; Dr Brent Carnell; Professor Madeline Carr; Professor Philip Cavendish; Professor Paola Ceccarelli; Dr Edith Chan; Dr Declan Chard; Professor Elaine Chase; Nidhi Chaudhary; Sianne Chinwuba; Dr Evangelia Chrysikou; Professor Vijay Chudasama; Andrew Churchill; Professor Olga Ciccarelli; Professor Beverley Clark; Paul Clark; Professor Shamshad Cockcroft; Dr Alun Coker; Professor Susan Collins; Professor Barbara Conradt; Kimberly Cornfield; Dr Sarah Correia; Professor Anthony Costello; Dr Ludovic Coupaye; Sarah Cowls; Professor Anna Cox; Dr Damian Cummings; Sonja Curtis; Professor Paul Dalby; Donna Dalrymple; Durgesh Darekar; Professor Izzat Darwazeh; Professor Pamela Davidson; Professor Neil Davies; Professor Julio Davila; Professor Emily Dawson; Professor Claudio De Magalhaes; Professor Andreas Demosthenous; Professor Janice Derry; Professor Andrew Dick; Professor Alison Diduck; Dr Duygu Dikicioglu; Professor Jason Dittmer; Professor Annette Dolphin; Dr Megan Donaldson; Dr Johanna Donovan; Dominique Drai; Professor Paulo Drinot; Professor Karen Duff; Dr Oliver Duke-Williams; Professor Sandra Dunsmuir; Dr Karen Edge; Professor Frances Edwards; Dr Ian Edwards; Professor Michael Ehrenstein; Dr Cathy Elliott;

1 This meeting was held via videoconference.
Dr Alex Elwick; Dr Andrew Embleton-Thirsk; Dr Emily Emmott; Professor Tariq Enver; Professor Susan Evans; Dr Lorenzo Fabrizi; Professor Mark Farrant; Ava Fatah gen. Schieck; Dr Alexander Fedorec; Professor Delmiro Fernandez-Reyes; Dr Liory Fern-Pollak; Professor Patrizia Ferretti; Professor Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh; Professor Roberto Filippi; Professor Margot Finn; Professor Elizabeth Fisher; Professor Maria Fitzgerald; Dr David Foster; Professor Eric Fraga; Andrea Franchini; Professor Murray Fraser; Dr Richard Freeman; Professor Nicholas Freemantle; Dr Lisa Fridkin; Dr Bettina Friedrich; Dr Martin Fry; Professor Jonathan Gale; Dr Federico Galvanin; Professor Caroline Garaway; Professor Tamar Garb; Professor Sebastian Gardner; Dr Anna Garnett; Dr Maria Gatto; Professor Haidy Geismar; Professor Dame Hazel Genn; Professor Guido Germano; Hayley Gewer; Professor Alasdair Gibb; Dr Sam Gilbert; Professor Shirli Gilbert; Professor Faye Gishen; Polly Glegg; Dr Jennie Golding; Professor Nikolaos Gonis; Dr Hugh Goodacre; Dr Rebecca Gordon; Professor Eric Gordy; Professor David Gough; Professor Rebecca Gould; Professor Ann Griffin; Dr Anne Grydehøj; Professor Antonio Guarino; Professor Francois Guesnet; Professor David Guile; Professor Serge Guillias; Dr Lucia Patrizio Gunning; Dr Oliver Haderle; Professor Patrick Haggard; Professor Stephen Hailes; Martin Hall; Rachel Hall; Professor Antonia Hamilton; Professor Susan Hamilton; Joy Han; Jesper Hansen; Professor Kenneth Harris; Professor John Hartley; Dr James Haworth; Professor Michael Heinrich; Dr Beate Bohnacker Hellawell; Professor Mark Hewitson; Professor Evangelos Himonis; Professor Daniel Hochhauser; Dr Christine Hoffmann; Professor Arne Hofmann; Professor Stephen Hogan; Dr Joshua Hollands; Dr Wayne Holmes; Professor Katherine Holt; Dr Pam Houston; Professor Jennifer Hudson; Professor John Hyman; Dr Talia Isaacs; Kerem Isik; Professor Richard Jackman; Dr Joana Jacob Ramalho; Professor Shabbar Jaffar; Professor Dan Jagger; Professor Helene Joffe; Professor Philip Jones; George Joseph; Professor Jasmina Jovanovic; Dr Thomas Kador; Professor Lily Kahn; Professor Benjamin Kaplan; Professor Catherine Keen; Kate Keen; John Kelsey; Dr Amit Khandelwal; Leigh Kilpert; Dr Maki Kimura; Professor Jeffrey King; Professor James Kirkbride; Professor Josef Kittler; Dr Stephanie Koch; Professor Nikolaos Konstantinidis; Professor Andreas Korn; Edyta Kostanek; Professor Kristen Kreider; Professor Amy Kulper; Dr Kata Kyrölä; Professor Ofer Lahav; Professor Marie-Carine Lall; Dr Danielle Lamb; Professor Claudia Lapping; Professor Diana Laurillard; Dr Sandra Leaton Gray; Professor Alena Ledeneva; Professor Maria Lee; Dr Borja Legarreta Herrero; Professor Louis Lemieux; Dr John Leon Kiappes; Dr Natalie Leow; Professor George Letsas; Professor Paola Lettieri; Professor Dewi Lewis; Dr Jonathan Lezmy; Amy Lightstone; Professor Christoph Lindner; Professor Chaozong Liu; Dr Kris Lockyear; Professor David Lomas; Dr Lorenzo Lotti; Dr Helga Lúthersdóttir; Professor Ruth Mace; Dr Isobel Mackay; Professor Sandy MacRobert; Professor Mairead MacSweeney; Dr Antony Makrinos; Dr Miriam Manchin; Professor John Martin; Professor Sarah Matthews; Dr Margaret Mayston; Dr Jennifer McGowan; Dr Saladina Meckled-Garcia; Professor Francesca Medda; Professor Nicola Miller; Professor Grant Mills; Professor Zoran Milutinovic; Professor John Mitchell; Professor Sara Mole; Dr Magdalena Morawska; Professor Ruth Morgan; Professor Rear Admiral Neil Morisetti; Dr Guy Moss; Professor Gemma Moss; Professor Richard Mott; Dr Dale Mouling; Dr Vanessa Moult; Professor Theano Moussouri; Professor Vivek Mudera; Dr Tamjid Mujtaba; Professor Veronique Munoz-Darde; Professor Steven Murdoch; Professor Mirco Musolesi; Dr Yusra Naqvi; Dr Marga Navarrete; Dr Helene Neveu Kringelbach; Dr Mengyan Nie; Professor Lorraine Noble; Dr Alex Norori-
Academic Board – 8 February 2023 – Minutes

Yadav; Dr Christine (Xine) Yao; Dr Victoria Yorke-Edwards; Professor Ian Zachary; Dr Anselm Zdebik; Dr Davide Zecchin; Professor Stan Zochowski.

In attendance:
Stephen Glover; Charu Gorasia; Dr Clare Goudy; Natasha Lewis; Nick McGhee (secretary); Turlogh O’Brien CBE; Anne Marie O’Mullane; Abigail Smith; Olivia Whiteley.

Part I: Preliminary Formal Business

19 ACADEMIC BOARD MINUTES

19.1 The minutes of the AB meetings of 2 and 16 November 2022 [AB Minutes 1-16 and 17-18, 2022-23] were confirmed.

Part II: Matters for Discussion

20 PROVOST’S BUSINESS (Paper 3-01)

20.1 AB noted the report.

21 WORKING GROUP ON DEFINITION OF ANTISEMITISM REPORT (Paper 3-02)

21.1 The Working Group on a Definition of Antisemitism had been established by Academic Board at a meeting on 10 February 2021 [AB Minute 25, 10.02.21]. It had been charged with facilitating an alternative definition for consideration by Council, in the context of the Board’s duty in advising Council upon all academic matters.

21.2 The chair of the Working Group introduced the report. In considering the available definitions, the Working Group had noted a tension in seeking to respond robustly to antisemitism while not shutting down legitimate academic debate. It considered that the function of a definition within the university context was unclear. After extensive consideration it had concluded that, mindful of the legal and policy context respecting freedom of speech and protection against discrimination, this function should properly be educative rather than proscriptive. This meant that a definition should serve to illuminate debate of what constituted antisemitism, with a view to eliminating it; it should not serve as a standard in disciplinary contexts or in seeking to block events. This conclusion followed from the dense set of legal and policy instruments that already legally regulated disciplinary procedures, academic freedom, and freedom of speech at UCL.

21.3 Against the background of that decision, the Working Group was not persuaded that the recognition of a single definition was the best approach. Rather, it had determined to recommend a ‘basket’ of definitions – more specifically, that a set of definitions be officially recognised by the university and added to a dedicated resource page devoted to the topic. The Working
Group had noted that there were no UCL-specific definitions of cognate phenomena, although definitions were included in the Equalities Act 2010. Adopting a single, institution-specific definition in the case of antisemitism would therefore give rise to the question of why a similar approach was not taken in other cases.

21.4 The IHRA definition was included in the basket recommended by the Working Group. The Group had been mindful of its mandate to identify an ‘alternative’ definition, but had considered that the specific concerns about the IHRA definition raised at the Academic Board meetings of 12 December 2019 and 10 February 2021 were substantially addressed by this proposed approach.

21.5 During the course of discussion the following points were made:

a) Members criticised the absence of Jewish students in the process. It was suggested that their position (notably as stated by the Jewish Society (JSoc)) had been misrepresented in the report. JSoc had been assigned a place on the Working Group but had chosen not to make a nomination. The stated reasons for this decision had included JSoc’s continued support for a definition (the IHRA) which the Academic Board had rejected, and their objection to the inclusion on the group of a signatory to an open letter in respect of Professor David Miller at Bristol University. The Board was advised that the person in question was a nominee of UCU and a non-voting member, who had played an important function in clarifying the processes involved in complaints and disciplinary procedures in the university. The Provost had asked the UCU to reconsider their nominee but no change had been made.

b) A member noted that there had been no explicit consultation either with the Palestinian or Muslim communities at UCL. Academic Board debated the question of the role of the wider community in defining group-specific oppression. The Working Group’s view on this question was set out on the report.

c) Several members of the Working Group had been signatories to, or supporters of, the Jerusalem Declaration (JDA). This was included in the basket of definitions and had been identified by the Group as its preference if only one definition were insisted upon – although that was not the Group’s recommended approach. It was suggested that this fact constituted a conflict of interest. The chair of the Working Group noted that the members in question had been deliberately excluded from the drafting of the section of the report on the Jerusalem Declaration; this had been handled by members with no developed views on the merits of the JDA or any other working definitions.

d) Members referred to incidents of the alternative definitions having been employed in the defence of unacceptable behaviour. It was suggested that this was not relevant to the question, and that the behaviours cited would be contrary to the law and properly subject to disciplinary procedures.

e) In the course of its deliberations and in accordance with its mandate from Academic Board, the Working Group had consulted with all members of the university. Members queried the circumstances leading to the circulation to Academic Board of letters from two external groups: the Board of Deputies of British Jews and the Community Security Trust. The Provost explained that UCL had advised a number of organisations that the report was due, and had
met with them to outline the nature of the report’s recommendations. Two organisations had then summarised their view for UCL’s Council. Council’s practice was to consider such representations, and it had been deemed appropriate that Academic Board should also have sight of this material.

f) Academic Board discussed the approaches taken by the IHRA Definition and the Jerusalem Declaration in respect of statements making comparisons between contemporary Israeli policy and Nazism. It had been the view of the Working Group that there was no incompatibility between the IHRA’s position that such comparisons ‘could be’ antisemitic, taking into account the overall context, and the Jerusalem Declaration’s position that comparison with historical cases was not ‘in and of itself’ antisemitic. It was the view of the chair of the Working Group that the objection was founded on a misreading of both documents.

21.6 AB proceeded to vote on the two resolutions stated below. These had been structured in this way in order to give members who wished to vote against the detail of the Working Group’s recommendations an opportunity to vote separately on the question of a commitment to fighting antisemitism.

21.7 Academic Board voted on the resolutions as follows:

RESOLUTION 1
Academic Board hereby resolves that it condemns antisemitism and recommends that the University take all reasonable steps to combat it, within a framework that respects the principles of free speech and academic freedom at UCL.

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<tr>
<td>Abstain</td>
<td>6</td>
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RESOLUTION 2
Recalling that the Academic Board voted on 10 February 2021 that Council should withdraw its decision to adopt the IHRA definition of antisemitism and replace the definition with another;

Recognising that the precise function of that definition in the UCL context, as at other universities, was not clear;

Recognising that antisemitism is a serious problem at UCL, in other higher learning institutions, and in wider society in general, and that it requires a robust response from the University;

Taking note of the Reports of the Academic Board Working Groups on Racism and Prejudice of December 2020 and on the Definition of Antisemitism of January 2023, both of which investigated and reported on these matters in terms relevant to the interpretation of the resolution below;

Academic Board hereby resolves:
That UCL condemns antisemitism and takes all reasonable steps to combat it, within a framework that respects the principles of free speech and academic freedom at UCL;

That UCL should recognise the existence of multiple definitions and understandings of antisemitism, including in particular those provided by Helen Fein, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism, and the Nexus Task Force;

That the function of such definitions is educative, which means they should be used to promote a better awareness of the existence of antisemitism with a view to addressing and combatting it at UCL;

That these definitions shall not be given determinative weight in the resolution of any proceedings relating to the discipline of university staff or students, in decisions relating to events, or in any other decision affecting the status of staff or students; and that Academic Board requests that Council recognise and adopt the terms of this resolution.

Yes 228 59.36%
No 65 16.93%
Abstain 91 23.70%

21.8 The Provost thanked the members of the Working Group for the thoughtful and careful consideration of the issues and the significant amount of work put into the process. Academic Board’s advice would be taken to Council, and the Chair of the Working Group invited to present their report.

22 TASK AND FINISH GROUP ON STUDENT NUMBERS REPORT (Paper 3-03)

22.1 The Task and Finish Group on Student Numbers (‘the Group’) had been set up following the AB meeting of 16 November 2022 as a joint body of Academic Board and UMC. Academic Board received the Group’s report, together with an Academic Impact Statement relating to the maximum number of students proposed under Scenario 4 of the Size and Shape paper [AB Minute 64B, 13.09.22].

22.2 In the course of a detailed review of the financial modelling underpinning the proposals, the Group had grappled with the imperative of balancing financial sustainability with protection of UCL’s academic mission and values. The Group had concluded that the modelling was sound. Alongside the principal sensitivities of student numbers and the unregulated fee, the Group noted that the inflation rate had a significant impact on the model, and that consequently assumptions about inflation rates played a substantial role in the assessment of the affordability gap.

22.3 The Group had reviewed the impact of changes to the three main levers (costs, unregulated fees, and student numbers) and the consequences of each. It recommended that priority should be given to increasing the
unregulated fee in order to mitigate the required extent of cost-saving and 
student number increases, but recognised the impact of this approach on 
inclusion and diversity. Some level of student number increase however 
would still be necessary. This should occur where it was academically 
desirable and primarily away from the Bloomsbury campus.

22.4 In reaching this conclusion the Group had paid particular attention to the 
academic implications of an increase in student numbers, notably in respect 
of: the risk of a weakening of the research-led character of the institution, the 
impact on the quality of programmes, and the impact on UCL’s carbon 
footprint. The report proposed a number of KPIs to monitor the impact of 
student number increases on academic activity. The Academic Impact 
Statement noted the intention that the additional staff appointed to teach the 
additional students be recruited predominantly to research-active, full 
academic contracts.

22.5 During the course of discussion the following points were raised:

a) Members flagged the risk of an increase in unregulated fees changing 
the nature of the student body to that of a financial elite, and having an undue 
impact on students from the developing world. Any such increase would be 
accompanied by increased provision of bursaries and scholarships, including 
for research students.

b) Members noted the incompatibility of any carbon-based growth with UCL’s 
Net Zero goals. The nature of the carbon impact of online against in-person 
teaching was open to debate. The issue of carbon impact intersected with 
that of access and participation in respect of the availability of affordable 
education to students in the developing world.

c) In discussing the impact of the volume of teaching on research activity, 
members queried the flat narrative of a cross-subsidy from one to the other, 
and noted the significant impact of additional marking and feedback on the 
time available for research. AB was reminded that the model envisaged 
increasing staff numbers to reflect an increase in student numbers. An 
important driver in the process of seeking to establish this model was the 
facilitation of multi-year budgeting, which would in turn enable the kind of 
departmental financial planning that would allow for the creation of 
substantive posts.

d) The proposal was to deliver growth away from the Bloomsbury campus 
wherever possible. Members cited examples of the teaching estate being 
under strain and consequently having a negative impact on the student 
experience and on UCL’s reputation. Plans were in place to address the 
pressures on space, notably through the Education Strategy, as well as to 
invest in major processes with a significant impact on the student experience. 
However financial sustainability was a prerequisite for investment in such 
measures. The chair clarified that the requirement to invest was driven by the 
need to meet a backlog of repairs and maintenance, and to improve pay; it did

2 The Chair noted the conclusions of a recent JISC report, https://beta.jisc.ac.uk/reports/exploring- 
digital-carbon-footprints

8
not arise in a circular way as a result of the proposed student number increases.

e) It was noted that student number growth in recent years had been unplanned and had been driven largely by qualification policy changes and the impact of the pandemic. Better preparation was possible in the case of planned growth. AB noted however a residual risk of unplanned growth by overshooting student recruitment targets.

f) In respect of the impact of increasing student numbers on teaching delivery and programme quality, it was noted that growth would be in disciplines with the ambition to grow and where this was deemed to be feasible and desirable. Members noted the key role of programme leads in determining this question, and the challenge of ensuring that additional teaching income was directed to the right areas given the unpredictable nature of the impact of changes to student numbers and fees. Members also noted the challenge in seeking to amend teaching delivery to fit with student numbers when it was necessary to confirm this significantly in advance. Longer-term planning would help to address this kind of issue, but the immediate challenge was to get to the point of financial sustainability.

g) Members queried the relationship between financial and academic strategic planning. The chair noted that UCL was already significantly more transparent in this respect than much of the rest of the sector.

h) Members raised the question of opportunities for increased income generation, including increased industrial partnerships, and subject to the view of the UCL Medical School, the potential scope for government agreement to an increase in the number of medical students, in view of the potential for expanded numbers at the Royal Free campus.

22.6 Academic Board voted on the proposals as follows:

That the report of the Task & Finish Group should be commended to Council as advice to guide the development of the university’s Financial Strategy

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<tr>
<td>Abstain</td>
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That Professor Patrick Haggard, as co-chair of the Task & Finish Group, should be invited to Council to present the report of the group.

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22.7 The Provost thanked the members of the Task and Finish Group for their work and their rapid delivery of their report.

23 **ACADEMIC BOARD STANDING ORDERS** (Paper 3-04)

23.1 A number of proposed changes to the Standing Orders, drafted by GCAB, were submitted to Academic Board for their ‘first reading’ as required by
Standing Order 1. These would receive their second reading at the meeting of Academic Board on 10 May. GCAB invited comments on the proposed amendments. A further meeting to discussion the matter could be arranged in advance of the second reading if required.

Part III: Other business for approval or information

24 ACADEMIC COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT (Paper 3-05)
   24.1 Noted.

25 STUDENT SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS – ANNUAL DATA (Paper 3-06)
   25.1 Noted.

26 ACADEMIC BOARD TERM 2 MEMBERSHIP UPDATE (Paper 3-07)
   26.1 Noted.

27 DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (Paper 3-08)
   27.1 Noted.

28 MINUTES OF OTHER COMMITTEES (Paper 3-09)
   28.1 Noted.

29 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING
   29.1 The next termly meeting would be on 10 May 2023 at 2pm.

Nick McGhee
Secretary to Academic Board
Tel: [+44] (0)20 3108 8217
Email: n.mcghee@ucl.ac.uk