



## Academic Board

Wednesday 9 February 2022<sup>1</sup>

### MINUTES

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

Professor Bas Aarts, Dr Ali Abolfathi, Mr James Agar, Professor Dario Alfe, Mr Adnan Ali, Professor Lynn Ang, Dr Seth Anziska, Professor Kathleen Armour, Dr Manuel Arroyo-Kalin, Dr Paul Ayris, Professor Angus Bain, Dr Emily Baker, Professor Stavroula Balabani, Professor Simon Banks, Dr Cecile Bats, Professor Polina Bayvel, Mr Ayman Benmati, Professor Michael Berkowitz, Professor Stephanie Bird, Dr Matthew Blain, Professor Brad Blitz, Professor Noemie Bouhana, Dr Patrick Bray, Professor Annie Britton, Professor Geraldine Brodie, Professor Clare Brooks, Ms Annabel Brown, Professor Jamie Brown, Dr Nicole Brown, Professor Dan Browne, Professor Stella Bruzzi, Dr Suzy Buckley, Professor Vishwanie Budhram-Mahadeo, Professor Jonathan Butterworth, Professor Fabio Caccioli, Mr Tadhg Caffrey, Professor Joseph Cain, Professor Claire Cameron, Professor Licia Capra, Dr Velia Cardin, Professor Claire Carmalt, Professor Maria Chait, Professor Rachel Chambers, Dr Declan Chard, Professor Elaine Chase, Andrey Chau, Professor James Cheshire, Professor Olga Ciccarelli, Professor D'Maris Coffman, Dr Alun Coker, Professor Susan Collins, Professor Claire Colomb, Professor Barbara Conradt, Professor Anthony Costello, Ms Sonja Curtis, Professor Izzat Darwazeh, Professor Anthony David, Professor Dina D'Ayala, Professor Rohan de Silva, Professor Jess Deighton, Professor Marc Deisenroth, Professor Spiros Denaxas, Professor Janice Derry, Professor Wei Di, Professor Alison Diduck, Professor Dagmara Dimitriou, Professor Sandra Dunsmuir, Professor Ian Eames, Professor Frances Edwards, Professor Piet Eeckhout, Ms Brittany Eldridge, Professor Susan Evans, Ms Pascale Fanning-Tichborne, Ms Ava Fatah, Professor Delmiro Fernandez-Reyes, Professor Patrizia Ferretti, Professor Elizabeth Fisher, Professor Stephen Fleming, Dr Andrew Flinn, Mr James Ford, Professor Nicholas Freemantle, Dr Bettina Friedrich, Dr David Frost, Dr Martin Fry, Professor Jonathan Gale, Dr Federico Galvanin, Professor Sarah Garfinkel, Dr Claire Garnett, Professor Haidy Geismar, Professor Mark Geller, Professor Dame Hazel Genn, Professor Guido Germano, Professor Alasdair Gibb, Professor Shirli Gilbert, Professor Deborah Gill, Professor Faye Gishen, Ms Milena Gonakova, Professor Nikolaos Gonis, Dr Hugh Goodacre, Professor Eric Gordy, Professor Elizabeth Graham, Ms Emma Grant, Professor Francois Guesnet, Professor Patrick Haggard, Professor Stephen Hailes, Professor Muki Haklay, Mr Martin Hall, Professor Susan Hamilton, Mr Jesper Hansen, Professor Stephen Hart, Professor Kirsten Harvey, Professor Michael Heinrich, Dr Ulrike Heuer, Professor Evangelos Himonides, Professor Daniel

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<sup>1</sup> This meeting was held via videoconference.

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Hochhauser, Dr Christine Hoffmann, Professor Arne Hofmann, Professor Jennifer Hudson, Professor Andrew Hudson-Smith, Professor John Hyman, Professor Dan Jagger, Professor Tariq Jazeel, Ms Liz Jones, Professor Tim Jordan, Dr Thomas Kador, Professor Lily Kahn, Dr Jens Kandt, Professor Catherine Keen, Mr Peter Kelly, Dr John Kelsey, Professor Nicoletta Kessarlis, Dr Maki Kimura, Professor John King, Professor Josef Kittler, Professor Jonathan Knowles, Professor Nikolaos Konstantinidis, Dr Efrosyni Konstantinou, Professor Susanne Kord, Ms Edyta Kostanek, Professor Ofer Lahav, Dr Danielle Lamb, Dr Borja Legarra Herrero, Professor Louis Lemieux, Professor Paola Lettieri, Professor Tim Levine, Professor Li Wei, Mr Mutong Li, Professor Xi Liang, Professor Jennifer Linden, Professor Christoph Lindner, Professor Vladimir Litvak, Professor Alison Lloyd, Professor Annemaree Lloyd-Zantiotis, Dr Helga Lúthersdóttir, Ms Collette Lux, Professor Ruth Mace, Dr Isabel Mackay, Professor Sandy MacRobert, Professor Mairead MacSweeney, Professor Eleanor Main, Ms Viktória Makai, Professor Ruth Mandel, Dr Giulio Marini, Professor Deborah Martin, Professor John Martin, Professor Manolis Mavrikis, Dr Margaret Mayston, Professor Anne McMunn, Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia, Professor Susan Michie, Professor Stanimira Milcheva, Professor John Mitchell, Professor Sara Mole, Dr Dafne Zuleima Morgado Ramirez, Professor Rear Admiral Neil Morisetti, Professor Sharon Morris, Professor Vivek Mudera, Professor Michael Munday, Professor Veronique Munoz-Darde, Professor Steven Murdoch, Professor Mirco Musolesi, Dr Helene Neveu Kringelbach, Dr Mark Newman, Professor Thanh Nguyen, Professor Lorraine Noble, Professor Nikolitsa Nomikou, Dr Alex Norori-McCormac, Dr Abel Nyamapfene, Dr Ademola Odunsi, Professor Moses Oketch, Professor Martin Oliver, Professor Sandy Oliver, Professor Norbert Pachler, Professor Enrico Palandri, Professor Jayne Parker, Professor Ivan Parkin, Professor Nora Pashayan, Dr Thomas Peach, Professor James Phillips, Professor Franck Pichaud, Professor Hynek Pikhart, Professor Deenan Pillay, Professor H el ene Plun-Favreau, Dr Stephen Potts, Professor David Price, Professor David Pym, Professor Ahad Rahim, Professor Greta Rait, Dr Joana Ramalho, Professor Davide Ravasi, Professor Kieren Reed, Professor Geraint Rees, Professor Antonella Riccio, Professor Mary Richardson, Professor Carol Rivas, Professor Helen Roberts, Dr Flaminia Ronca, Professor Sasha Roseneil, Dr Suzanne Ruddy, Ms Fiona Ryland, Professor Ruben Saakyan, Professor Patricia Salinas, Dr Benet Salway, Professor Vieri Samek-Lodovici, Professor Prince Saprai, Professor Federica Sarro, Dr Tim Scanlon, Professor Ralf Schoepfer, Professor Stephanie Schorge, Professor Katrina Scior, Professor Eloise Scottford, Professor Toby Seddon, Professor David Selwood, Professor Mala Shah, Professor Maryam Shahmanesh, Professor Sonu Shamdasani, Professor David Shanks, Dr Ala'a Shehabi, Professor Robert Sheil, Professor Elizabeth Shepherd, Dr Michael Short, Professor Dimitrios Siasakos, Ms Maria Sibiryakova, Mr Justin Siefker, Professor Talvinder Sihra, Professor Bill Sillar, Dr Samuel Sims, Professor Trevor Smart, Professor Sam Smidt, Professor Anthony Smith, Professor Samuel Solomon, Professor Pam Sonnenberg, Professor Kaila Srail, Professor Michael Stacey, Professor Vincent Sterk, Professor Claudio Stern, Professor Fiona Stevenson, Dr Sherrill Stroschein, Dr Mike Sulu, Dr Bugra Susler, Ms Stephanie Sze, Mr Bryan Taylor, Professor Irving Taylor, Professor Geraint Thomas, Professor Mark Thomas, Professor Olga Thomas, Professor Alan Thompson, Professor Julian Thompson, Professor Jon Thomson, Professor Claire Thorne, Dr Amy Thornton, Professor Ulrich Tiedau, Dr Eleanor Tillett, Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker, Professor Helena Titheridge, Professor John Tomaney, Professor Ahmed Toosy, Professor Andrea

Townsend-Nicholson, Ms Helen Tsui, Professor Jayant Vaidya, Professor Liz Varga, Professor Mina Vasalou, Mr Clive Vassell, Professor Laura Vaughan, Professor Yiannis Ventikos, Dr Nalini Vittal, Dr Bella Vivat, Professor David Voas, Professor Michael Walls, Ms Breege Whiten, Professor Amanda Williams, Professor James Wilson, Professor Matthew Wing, Professor Selina Wray, Dr Ozgur Yazaydin, Dr Sophie Zadeh, Dr Vedran Zerjav, Professor Stan Zochowski.

**In attendance:** Dr Clare Goudy, Ms Linda Lam, Mr Nick McGhee (Secretary to Academic Board), Ms Abigail Smith, Mr Mitesh Vagadia, Ms Olivia Whiteley.

**Apologies:** Professor Joanna Chataway, Professor Annette Dolphin, Professor Helen Hackett, Professor James Kirkbride, Professor Alison Koslowski, Professor Gesine Manuwald, Professor Jane Perryman, Professor John Potter, Ms Maria Sibiryakova, Professor Sacha Stern, Professor Ijeoma Uchegbu, Professor Dominic Wyse.

## Part I: Preliminary Formal Business

### 24 ACADEMIC BOARD MINUTES

24.1 The minutes of the AB meeting of 26 January 2022 [AB Minutes 19-23, 2021-22] were confirmed, subject to the following amendment of the third bullet point of Minute 21.4 (replacement of struck-through text with underlined text):

A member suggested that UCL should seek to identify criteria that would speak to the institution's specific and unique distribution of expertise and where it was felt that it had the potential to ~~contribute to the sense of UCL as a school of thought.~~ create novel schools of thought which would be recognised from outside as being specific to UCL.

### 25 MATTERS ARISING

25A **STONEWALL** [AB Minute 20.2, 2021-22]

25A.1 UCL's decision not to rejoin the Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme or to submit to the 2023 Stonewall Workplace Equality Index had met with a strongly negative reaction from some staff, students and alumni, although it had been welcomed by others. The arguments about the impact of Stonewall affiliation on academic freedom were not universally accepted. Some feared that the decision signalled the start of a withdrawal from other charter mark schemes, or took the view that the decision reflected an underlying transphobic attitude.

25A.2 It was important for members of AB to engage with the ongoing debate on campus. UMC had approved the creation of an LGBTQ+ Equality Implementation Group to develop a strong programme of action on LGBTQ+ equality and inclusion at UCL. The terms of reference and membership for this group were being discussed with the LGBTQ+ Equality Steering Group, and with student union officers. Progress would be reported through *TheWeek@UCL*. The Provost reasserted UCL's commitment to

supporting LGBTQ+ staff and students, and confirmed that all of the measures in place to support the rights, interests and inclusion of LGBTQ+ members of the community were continuing.

## Part II: Matters for Discussion

### 26 PROVOST'S REPORT (Paper 4-17)

26.1 Noted.

### 27 ANTISEMITISM EDUCATION PLAN (Paper 4-18)

27.1 Professor Sasha Roseneil (Pro-Provost (Equity and Inclusion)) introduced the paper.

27.2 At a meeting on 10 February 2021 AB had voted to create an action plan for combatting antisemitism [*AB Minute 25.10, 2020-21*] and to review reporting procedures (see Minute 28 below). The Antisemitism Education Action Plan Committee had been established as a result. The Committee had compiled all reports of antisemitism submitted to Report + Support<sup>2</sup> and via other routes, including to a series of dedicated focus group meetings for Jewish staff. These were presented to AB in a confidential appendix to the paper.

27.3 The Committee had developed and proposed the creation of an education plan with the key aims of improving awareness of the history of antisemitism and its key tropes, and the understanding of Jewish culture and religion. The group had not addressed the issue of the adoption of particular definitions of antisemitism as this was the subject of a separate piece of ongoing work.

27.4 Academic Board discussed the report, noting the context of debates about the concept of UCL as a secular institution. Academic Board accepted the report and confirmed its endorsement of the 15 recommendations.

### 28 REVIEW OF REPORTING PROCEDURES (Paper 4-19)

28.1 Professor Sasha Roseneil (Pro-Provost (Equity and Inclusion)) introduced the paper.

28.2 The Reporting Procedures Task and Finish Group had reviewed reports and guidance issued to the HE sector in recent years in respect of a range of issues including bullying, harassment, sexual misconduct, racism and antisemitism. The Group had also carried out a user evaluation survey of the Report + Support system. It had concluded that UCL was compliant with

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<sup>2</sup> <https://report-support.ucl.ac.uk/>

sector guidance, but had nevertheless identified a number of areas for improvement. These related to issues such as under-reporting, limited awareness of procedures, a lack of trust in the institution, and the availability of advocacy and support mechanisms.

- 28.3 As a result of its work the Group had already enacted a number of remedies and changes, principally in respect of improving the scope and user experience of Report + Support. The Group had also liaised with Student Union societies, including the Jewish Society (JSoc), and had encouraged the reporting of incidents to UCL. Some other proposals would require a sustained programme of work addressing both policy and culture. A sub-committee of the EDI Committee was being tasked with this work.
- 28.4 In discussing the report a number of members drew attention to the efficacy of informal methods for challenging and addressing problematic behaviour at an early stage. It was suggested that it was counterproductive for procedures to place individuals too hastily in an adversarial position, as this tended to entrench attitudes and to make the task of bringing about cultural change more difficult. Members also noted that a failure to seek to engage with those about whom reports were submitted represented a missed opportunity.
- 28.5 The Report + Support platform facilitated the anonymous submission of reports, but these could not generally be used in a disciplinary context. Such reports could however be considered where the pattern of reporting indicated that there may be an issue to be addressed in a particular area of the institution. Academic Board discussed questions of working culture more broadly, noting the need to regard this as a shared responsibility to be addressed through programmes of cultural change rather than by way of complaints procedures.
- 28.6 Members discussed the Commission of Inquiry's recommendation for the creation of the role of an ombudsman, however named [AB Minute 51, 2019-20]. The proposal was the subject of ongoing discussions with colleagues in HR. Members cited potential advantages to the proposal, such as independence and the improved signposting of staff to the right procedures, as well as pitfalls such as the potential confusion of existing procedures and roles and the risk of failing to address the key issue of the need for adequate support to both parties.
- 28.7 Academic Board accepted the report.

## 29 **OPEN ACCESS / OPEN SCIENCE – UPDATE** (Paper 4-20)

- 29.1 Professor David Price (Vice-Provost (Research)) and Dr Paul Ayris (Pro-Vice-Provost (Library Services)) introduced the paper.
- 29.2 AB noted the data indicating that publications made available on an Open Access basis attracted more attention in the academic community than those behind a paywall. UCL had embraced Open Access publishing and had

consequently seen a marked rise in its rolling citation counts over the past decade.

- 29.3 From 1 April 2022 academics publishing work acknowledging Research Council funding would have to comply with the UKRI Open Access Policy<sup>3</sup>. Monographs similarly funded and published after 1 January 2024 would be required to be available on an Open Access basis no later than 12 months after publication. It was thought likely that these requirements will also be embedded in future REF processes, on the grounds that the QR element of the funding was intended to support research in a non-hypothecated way. UCL's guidance<sup>4</sup> on the impact on its researchers was signposted. A town hall meeting would be held later this month.
- 29.4 The UCL Press had been founded in 2015 as the UK's first fully Open Access University Press. The pandemic had focussed minds on the importance of e-textbooks at a time when students had been unable to access the physical resources of the library.
- 29.5 AB discussed the future landscape for monograph publishing; issues around the selection of academic publishers; the impact of Open Access on the economics of the publishing model; and the exclusion of consideration of the publisher in the REF. The selection of future domains for UCL press journals was discussed. Expansion of this provision would be a question of funding and staff capacity.
- 29.6 The Chair congratulated the colleagues concerned for UCL's achievements in this area.

### 30 **ACADEMIC BOARD STANDING ORDERS** (Paper 4-21)

- 30.1 Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia (member of GCAB) introduced the paper, summarising the proposed changes. Comments were invited ahead of the second reading at the meeting of 11 May 2022 and should be submitted to Dr Meckled-Garcia direct.

### 31 **ELECTIONS** (Paper 4-22)

- 31.1 The secretary would be writing to staff eligible for election to AB in the coming days. Members of AB were invited to engage with their colleagues to encourage them to consider putting their names forward for election for the following two academic years.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-open-access-policy/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/open-access/2021/10/27/oa-week-ukri-policy/>

**32 MENTAL HEALTH CHARTER (Paper 4-23)**

- 32.1 Professor Deborah Gill, Pro-Vice-Provost (Student Experience) introduced the paper. UCL wished to apply for the University Mental Health Charter award<sup>5</sup> as one of approximately 40 institutions expected to apply in the first wave. This process would constitute one element of the implementation of the university-wide Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy, which sought to ensure that UCL considered staff and student wellbeing as a whole.
- 32.2 Professor Gill outlined the application process, which would conclude with an on-site visit. Although there were grounds to be reasonably optimistic of achieving a merit award, the key factor for the institution was the receipt of expert feedback.
- 32.3 The Charter's requirements for gathering data were light-touch and it had been possible to supply all of the necessary data from central sources. In respect of the implications for staff workloads, it was necessary to separate out what was a consequence of the charter and what resulted from a renewed commitment to maintaining and improving the mental health of staff and students. The work required for the charter application itself was already essentially complete. Although it was quite possible that some of the work necessary to support wellbeing would change as a result of the process, it was not anticipated that this would impact academic departments in any significant way.
- 32.4 Members enquired after the process for consultation with staff networks. AB noted that UCL would be looking for people with relevant experience to participate in some of the onsite visits.
- 32.5 During the ensuing discussion members raised a number of issues including: the role of the Student Success Advisors; the need to avoid a positive outcome being interpreted as indicating that the job had been done, rather than a spur to further work; and how the impact of factors such as career progression and work culture on the mental wellbeing of staff featured in the process. In this latter respect it was noted that these factors were addressed in the sections relating to learning and work. The process could be expected to encourage UCL to consider those kinds of issues further.
- 32.6 An Academic Impact Statement had been produced but not yet shared. AB noted that the expected process was that impact statements would be discussed with ABExCom before the matter was brought to AB for discussion. The timescales had made this difficult in the current case but the Impact Statement would be updated following the current meeting and then shared.
- 32.7 Academic Board confirmed that it was content to endorse the approach set out in the paper.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://universitymentalhealthcharter.org.uk/>

32.8 The Provost noted that this was Professor Gill's last meeting of AB prior to her taking up the post of Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) at Southampton University. He thanked her for her work at UCL and wished her well for the future.

**Part III: Other Business for approval or Information**

**33 AB MEMBERSHIP UPDATE** (Paper 4-24)

33.1 Noted.

**34 LIBRARY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT** (Paper 4-25)

34.1 Noted.

**35 OFFICE FOR STUDENTS: REGULATIONS, CONDITIONS AND REPORTABLE EVENTS** (Paper 4-26)

35.1 Noted.

**36 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

36.1 The next meeting would be held on **Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> March 2022**, 14:05-16:00.

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