



ACADEMIC BOARD

13 October 2015

MINUTES

PRESENT¹:

President and Provost (*Chair*)

Ms Wendy Appleby; Dr Sunny Bains; Mr Francis Brako; Professor David Bogle; Dame Nicola Brewer; Professor Andrew Brown; Ms Annabel Brown; Ms Jane Burns; Dr Ben Campkin; Dr Celia Caulcott; Professor Lucie Clapp; Dr Ben Clifford; Ms Charlotte Croffie; Professor Izzat Darwazeh; Professor Julio D. Davila; Ms Eleanor Day; Dr Sally Day; Dr Rachele De Felice; Dr Melanie Ehren; Dr Caroline Essex; Professor Susan Evans, Ms Ava Fatah gen. Schieck; Dr Martin Fry; Professor Mary Fulbrook; Dr Dilly Fung; Mr Philip Gardner; Dr Hugh Goodacre; Dr Lesley Gourlay; Dr Alistair Greig; Dr Paul Groves; Professor Kenneth Harris; Professor Valerie Hazan; Professor Jenny Head; Professor Michael Heinrich; Dr John Hurst; Professor Chris Husbands; Ms Liz Jones; Ms Lina Kamenova; Professor Brad Karp; Mr Rex Knight; Professor Jan Kubik; Dr Sandra Leaton Gray; Dr Andrew Logsdail; Professor David Lomas; Professor Raymond MacAllister; Professor Sandy MacRobert; Dr Merle Mahon; Professor Genise Manuwald; Ms Fiona McClement; Dr Jenny Mindell; Dr John Mitchell; Ms Suguna Nair; Dr Caroline Newton; Professor Martin Oliver; Professor Norbert Pachler; Professor Alan Penn; Professor Arthur Petersen; Dr Brent Pilkey; Professor Ralf Schoepfer; Professor Richard R Simons; Professor Lucia Sivilotti; Professor Anthony Smith; Dr Hazel Smith; Professor Stephen Smith; Dr Fiona Strawbridge; Dr Sherrill Stroschein; Ms Olga Thomas; Mr Simon To; Professor Derek Tocher; Dr Andrew Wills; Dr Gavin Winston; Professor Jonathan Wolff; Professor Steve Wood.

In attendance: Ms Clare Goudy; Mr Derfel Owen (Secretary to Academic Board); Ms Chandan Shah.

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr Catia Andreassi; Ms Nicola Arnold; Professor Tomaso Aste; Dr Simon Banks; Mr Paul Bartlett; Dr Jochen Blumberger; Professor James Bainbridge; Professor Jonathan Bell; Professor Wendy Best; Professor Matteo Carandini; Professor Helen Chatterjee; Ms Sue Chick; Professor Susan Collins; Professor Stephen Colvin; Professor Marc-Olivier Coppens; Dr Jason Davies; Professor Simon Dixon; Dr Rosalind Duhs; Professor Peter Earley; Professor Andrew Eder; Dr Karen Edge; Professor Mark Emberton; Professor Bryony Franklin; Dr Richard Freeman; Professor Dame Hazel Genn; Professor Nikolaos Gonis; Miss Nisha Gosai; Dr Pilar Gracia Souto; Professor Toby

¹ An attendance sheet was circulated for signature at the meeting. Any colleagues present who did not sign the sheet and whose names are therefore not recorded as present are invited to notify the AB Secretary's office (e-mail – academic.services@ucl.ac.uk) so that their names can be included in the record when these Minutes are confirmed at the next scheduled meeting of AB.

Greany; Professor Lucie Green; Dr George Grimble; Professor Helen Hackett; Professor Robert Harvey; Dr Evangelosdes; Dr Arne Hofmann; Professor Stephen Hunt; Dr Katherine Ibbett; Dr Kersti Karu; Dr Avril Keating; Professor Susanne Kord; Dr Sarabajaya Kumar; Professor Cécile Laborde; Dr Ruth Langley; Professor Bob Lowe; Dr Helga Luthersdottir; Dr Thomas McGee; Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia; Professor Alejandro Madrigal; Dr Helen Matthews; Professor Charles Marson; Professor Timothy Mathews; Dr Margaret Mayston; Professor Kevin Middlebrook; Dr Richard Mole; Professor Jonathan Montgomery; Professor Henrietta Moore; Professor Stephen Neidle; Dr Kit Opie; Dr Julie Olszewski; Professor David Osrin; Professor Jeom-Kee Paik; Professor Alison Park; Professor David Price; Professor Saul Purton; Professor Jonathan Roiser; Mr Mike Rowson; Professor Gary Rubin; Dr Kerstin Sailer; Professor Alan Salama; Professor Tom Salt; Professor Mala Shah; Professor Stephen Shennan; Dr Jolene Skordis-Worrall; Professor Andrew Stahl; Professor Sacha Stern; Dr Martin Stocker; Professor Sarah Tabrizi; Mrs Emanuela Tilley; Professor Alan Thompson; Professor Jayant Vaidya; Professor Rosemary Varley; Professor Phiroze Vasunia; Dr Matt Wakelin; Professor Henning Walczak; Professor Sarah Walker; Professor David Waters; Mr Nigel Waugh; Professor Anne White; Professor Kwee Yong.

Key to abbreviations

AB	Academic Board
AM	Annual Monitoring
ASER	Annual Student Experience Review
CALT	Centre for Advancing Learning and Teaching
GES	Global Education Strategy
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HER	Higher Education Review
NSS	National Student Survey
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PTES	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
RC	Research Council
SED	Self-Evaluation Document
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
UG	Undergraduate
VP	Vice Provost
WP	Widening Participation

Preliminary business

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP 2015-16
[PAPERS 1-01 – 1-03, 2015-16]

- 1.1 **Received** – AB’s terms of reference, constitution and membership for the session 2015-16 and a note by the Secretary on AB Standing Orders.

2 MINUTES OF 13 MAY 2015 MEETING

- 2.1 **Approved** – the Minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 13 May 2015
[AB Minutes 36-46, 2014-15].

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3A Global Education Strategy

[AB Minute 37A, [13 May 2015]]

3A.1 The VP (International) reported that Council had approved the final draft of the GES at its meeting on 30 March 2015 and the Strategy was communicated to colleagues in May. As a result of the GES, restructuring and reappointment activities were completed over the Summer period. The VP Office would close and reopen as a fully staffed GES Office in November.

3A.2 Seven Pro Vice-Provosts have been appointed and will chair regional networks to oversee UCL's engagement and partnership activity.

Matters for discussion

4 PROVOST'S BUSINESS

4A Government's Spending Review

4A.1 The Provost reported on the significant cuts proposed across all government departments including HEFCE, RCs and QAA, TEF and WP. The consequence on HEFCE funding remained a concern.

4B Teaching Excellence Framework

4B.1 A Government Green paper on TEF would be published soon outlining plans for a sector wide approach to recognising and rewarding excellent teaching. The focus would be on output measures including retention; graduate destinations and the NSS. These measures would provide a system to decide whether universities can increase fees for UG students and may extend to PGT student fees in future.

4C NSS

4C.1 The NSS scores for UCL were disappointing and reinforced the need for UCL to focus more effort on improving the student experience. Some subject areas perform extremely well, initial exploration suggests that this is down to a strong relationship between staff and students. Many subject areas would need to intensify their focus on the student experience in order to improve scores, a concerted effort over a number of years would be required to place UCL in a stronger position.

4D Equality and Diversity

- 4D.1 UCL achieved the Silver Athena Swan Award, a significant accomplishment making UCL one of only eight Universities in UK to achieve this standard. UCL also participated in a pilot in the Race Equality Charter marker and achieved a Bronze award. Eight out of sixteen universities that participated in the pilot achieved the Bronze award. Currently UCL is the only University in the UK holding both awards, clearly emphasising the level of importance of these issues at UCL.

5 VICE-PROVOST (EDUCATION & STUDENT AFFAIRS) ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL

[PAPER 1-04, 2015-16]

- 5.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Professor Anthony Smith, Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs)
- 5.2 The VP reported that student experience was a key issue that had been further emphasised by the NSS. The inconsistencies across departments and faculties require colleagues to work together and develop good practice. Many areas in UCL conduct work that is best in the sector which needs to be recognised and shared across UCL to improve the overall student experience.

6 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY – UPDATE

- 6.1 **Received** – an update from Professor Anthony Smith, Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs)
- 6.2 The VP reported that headline results were derived from Institutional data from the 23 questions asked during the NSS. Question 22 of the survey asked students to comment on their overall satisfaction where UCL declined by 3 points, resulting in the largest decline in the Russell Group.
- 6.3 The VP highlighted that UCL was now in the lower quartile at 124th position in the sector. Based on the scores, Assessment and Feedback was clearly the area of biggest concern and this was also a common theme expressed by External Examiners in their annual reports.
- 6.4 The ASER process, replacing AM, will provide the focal point for action planning this with support from Academic Services and CALT. It was also noted that a key feature of the ASER process is the involvement of students in analysing data and developing action plans in response to key issues.
- 6.5 In response to members' comments, the VP reported that there would be different cycles of the ASER process for UG and PGT and PTES would be used to inform the ASER PGT process in the next cycle to make sure that the PGT student experience is effectively reflected.
- 6.6 The VP responded to some members' comments on the production of the examinations timetable, which had been the focus last year, and had featured as an issue again. This year, a plan would be in place for an earlier publication of the examinations timetable in response to student feedback.

7 EDUCATION STRATEGY

[PAPER 1-05, 2015-16]

- 7.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Professor Anthony Smith, Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs)
- 7.2 The VP reported that the first phase of consultation had included consultation with students and staff across UCL and a number of excellent suggestions had come forward to shape the draft proposed at the meeting. A particular theme that emerged from the consultation was the importance of working with students as partners in education, involved in all areas of the development and implementation stages of the Strategy.
- 7.3 In response to some members' comments, the VP identified different enablers in the Strategy that would measure success, recognition for teaching and leadership and rebuilding of systems. The stronger points of UCL such as developing and enhancing intellectual curiosity would be strengthened. Through the Connected Curriculum initiative, a development of assessment and programme components that would be meaningful to students would occur.

8 DOCTORAL EDUCATION AT UCL

[PAPER 1-06, 2015-16]

- 8.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Professor David Bogle, Pro-Vice-Provost (Doctoral School)
- 8.2 The Pro Vice-Provost (Doctoral School) reported that the strategy had been developed to align with UCL 2034, the Research Strategy and to build on the contents of Faculty Doctoral Strategies. A key focus was developing and training researchers/doctoral candidates in academic leadership and research excellence to develop their capacity to engage with multiple career options post-completion.
- 8.3 In response to comments from members, it was noted that there was a need to include an explicit mention on the PGR opportunities available to develop leadership skills, through UCL Arena and active involvement in the academic life of departments.

9 QAA HIGHER EDUCATION REVIEW – UPDATE

- 9.1 **Received** – an update from Professor Anthony Smith, Chair of the HER Strategy Group
- 9.2 The Chair of the HER Strategy Group reported that the QAA HER was scheduled for May 2016 and various groups had been organised to prepare for the review. A communications plan has been agreed and information to Departments would be circulated through the Teaching Committees.
- 9.3 It was reported that the Review Team members had been appointed from five Universities, Kent, Durham, Cambridge, Sheffield and Salford reflecting a wide spectrum of experience in the sector and leadership of education.

- 9.4 In response to a member's comment, the Director of Academic Services explained that the SED would be an opportunity to describe institution level arrangements for managing standards and quality, the review teams would not be drilling into details of individual departments teaching and assessment arrangements.

10 REGULATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT

[PAPER 1-07, 2015-16]

- 10.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Ms Wendy Appleby, Registrar
- 10.2 The Registrar reported that as a result of the Committee of University Chairs publishing new guidance on effective governance, the regulations for management had been reviewed and updated to remove unnecessary detail and streamline some processes.
- 10.3 In response to member's queries, the Registrar explained that approval of the management regulations is Council's responsibility and wider governance matters were outside AB's authority, however comments and feedback from AB members were welcome and would be reflected when the proposals are presented to Council.

Other matters for approval or information
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11 Lead Officer Report 2014-15: Careers and Employability

[PAPER 1-08, 2015-16]

- 11.1 **Received** – the annual lead officer report for 2014-15.

12 Proposed arrangements for AB elections Spring Term 2016

[PAPER 1-09, 2015-16]

- 12.1 **Received** – a note on the proposed arrangements for AB elections in Spring Term 2016.

13 AWARDS TO UCL STAFF

[PAPER 1-10, 2015-16]

- 13.1 **Received** – a note on the award of major prizes etc to members of the academic community of UCL since the previous meeting of AB.

14 APPOINTMENTS

[PAPER 1-11, 2015-16]

- 14.1 **Received** – a list of recent appointments (i) of Vice-Provosts; (ii) of Deans of Faculty; (iii) of Heads of Academic Departments, and (iv) to established Chairs tenable at UCL.

15 ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR (including Academic Board Working Groups on Established Chairs and Readerships)

[PAPER 1-12, 2015-16]

15.1 **Received** – a note of action taken by the Chair on behalf of Academic Board since the last report.

16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

16.1 The next Academic Board meeting would be held on Wednesday 10 February 2016 at 2.05pm.

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