



ACADEMIC BOARD

Wednesday 14th November 2018¹

MINUTES

PRESENT²:

President and Provost (*Chair*)

Ms Mumtaz Abdul-Ghafoor, Dr Bojan Aleksov, Mr Rory Alexander, Ms Wendy Appleby, Dr Elinor Bailey, Mr Malcolm Bailey, Dr Lawrence Bellamy, Professor Stephanie Bird, Dr Roberto Bottazzi, Dr Jamie Brown, Dr Alun Coker, Dr Ruth Dann, Mr Alex Donovan, Dr Johanna Donovan, Ms Dominique Draï, Dr Carlotta Ferrara degli Uberti, Dr Martin Fry, Dr Andrew Gardner, Dr Claire Garnett, Dr Hugh Goodacre, Ms Emma Grant, Professor Serge Guillas, Dr Jennifer Hazelton, Dr Anja Heilmann, Dr Magda Hercheui, Dr Moritz Herle, Dr Evangelos Himonides, Dr Thomas Kador, Dr Amal Khanolkar, Dr Franz Kiraly, Ms Katherine Koulle, Dr Jagjeet Lally, Dr Borja Legarra Herrero, Dr Helga Lúthersdóttir, Ms Bella Malins, Dr Nephtali Marina-Gonzalez, Dr Margaret Mayston, Dr Florian Mussgnug, Dr Mark Newman, Dr Teresa Niccoli, Professor Enrico Palandri, Professor Richard Pearson, Dr Anne Peasey, Mr Andrew Porter, Professor David Price, Professor Sarah Price, Mr Saddiqur Rahman, Professor Ralf Schoepfer, Professor Tony Segal, Professor Sonu Shamdasani, Dr Nadine Simons-Weidenmaier, Professor Lucia Sivilotti, Professor Anthony Smith, Ms Jamie Smith, Professor Sacha Stern, Ms Cicely Striolo, Dr Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker, Mr Simon To, Professor Andrea Townsend-Nicholson, Ms Alexandrina Vasilichi, Ms Louise Vink, Dr Nalini Vittal, Dr Bella Vivat, Professor David Wengrow, Dr James Wilson, Mr Michael Wozniak.

In attendance: Mr Derfel Owen (Secretary to Academic Board); Mr Nick McGhee (Academic Services).

Key to abbreviations

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| AB | Academic Board |
| GCAB | Governance Committee of Academic Board |
| HE | Higher Education |
| OfS | Office for Students |
| VP | Vice-Provost |

¹ This meeting was a continuation of that of 24 October, when AB had not been able to complete the agenda. Minutes of the previous meeting were therefore not submitted for approval.

² 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.

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| Matters for discussion |
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1 PROFESSORIAL BANDING CRITERIA

[PAPER 3-01, 2018-19]

- 1.1 The Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs) introduced the draft changes to the Professorial Banding Criteria. The proposals were made with the intention of reflecting more closely the terminology of the new Academic Careers Framework. It was intended that the consultation period would be extended. Revised proposals would be brought back to Academic Board in due course, if possible after further discussion with a working group of Academic Board. A review of the Academic Careers Framework against performance would take place in a year's time.
- 1.2 AB discussed the need to ensure that banding criteria reflected the ethos of UCL, for example in respect of interdisciplinarity, and the particular challenges for some groups of staff in meeting the requirements of the teaching and research criteria.
- 1.3 AB debated the merits of requiring input from external referees in the consideration of academic standing, and the scope for considerations of institutional citizenship in the process.
- 1.4 It was hoped that the revised criteria could be introduced in time for the academic year 2019/20, but otherwise would be in place in time for 2020/21.

2 CODE OF PRACTICE ON FREEDOM OF SPEECH AND THE PROCEDURE FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF EXTERNAL SPEAKERS

[PAPER 3-02, 2018-19]

- 2.1 The Director of Access and Admissions introduced the paper, which was due to be presented to Council on 16 November 2018 and then to be submitted to the Office for Students by the end of the month. The paper had been reviewed following consultation with a QC and in light of comments from GCAB and others; further comments from GCAB had since been circulated, and would be reflected in the presentation of the paper to Council along with any issues arising from the current discussion.
- 2.2 Members raised a number of issues with the draft Code of Practice, including:
 - a potential conflict between paragraph 24 (which stated that 'the ultimate authority for the interpretation and implementation of this Policy is the President and Provost') and the role of a tribunal in considering a case under the Staff Disciplinary Procedure (as provided for in paragraph 21). It was confirmed in this regard that paragraph 24 related to 'day to day' operations and not to any disciplinary tribunal; this wording would be clarified.
 - the use of the term 'gender' rather than 'sex' in paragraph 16 in a list of what were otherwise protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, as well as the absence of gender reassignment from that list. This wording would be amended to include all protected characteristics.
- 2.3 A number of issues were also raised in respect of the Procedure for the management of events involving external speakers. These included a lack of clarity around the responsibilities of staff when organising conferences, and a lack of clarity on what

constituted 'risk', particularly in view of the potential to place conditions on events including the requirement to have an independent chair. The Chair clarified that, while the Code of Practice itself required Council approval, the room bookings procedure did not and that there remained scope for further work. AB noted the working arrangements in respect of Room Bookings' approval process and the additional resource now available as a result of an improved bookings system. It was intended that the Procedure would be reviewed after its first year of operation with a report being made to AB.

- 2.4 The Director of Access and Admissions would review the Code and Procedure in light of the above comments. Following consideration at Council, final amendments would be made to the Code, including those agreed at AB.

3 **DRAFT RESEARCH STRATEGY**

[PAPER 3-03, 2018-19]

- 3.1 The Vice-Provost (Research) drew attention to a number of key metrics indicative of UCL's exceptional research performance, including a rise to an average of 6th place in international league tables (or 12th if measured in terms of the number of outputs and citations); its leading position in securing Horizon 2020 funding; a recent THE analysis of the financial year 2017/18 showing a 17% increase in UCL's research council funding; and an annual research spend of £475m in 2017/18, up 4%. The Research Strategy represented UCL's approach to the challenge of continuing to flourish against the background of some significant key risks including Brexit, UKRI restructure, changes to visa regulations and other political changes.
- 3.2 AB debated the pressures on academic staff at all stages of their careers. It was suggested that there were barriers to Early Career Researchers participating in the wider life of the university (including Academic Board). UCL was currently considering the national Concordat for Early Career Researchers. Professor Price would be seeking the input of colleagues in this area as well as in respect of other key challenges including equality and diversity, and the leadership agenda.
- 3.3 In response to a question, Professor Price noted that four high-level steering committees had been set up for each of the REF panels A-D, chaired by Deans and including departmental or UoA leads. The coming REF would see a significant reduction in the number of submissions, and fewer impact case studies.
- 3.4 AB noted that a paper addressing issues including the processing of research contracts would be discussed at SMT shortly following reviews from the Wellcome Trust and other bodies.

4 **DIVERSITY OF UCL EXTERNAL COUNCIL MEMBERS**

[PAPER 3-04, 2018-19]

- 4.1 The Chair of GCAB presented the paper which related to the professional diversity of external members of Council. The paper proposed that the Nominations Committee should consider the professional diversity of external members of Council when reviewing forthcoming vacancies. It was suggested that the external membership had insufficient academic experience, with undue weight having been placed historically on financial and property expertise. The view of AB were sought with a view to GCAB producing a more detailed proposal for discussion.

- 4.2 The Registrar set out the current arrangements by which Nominations Committee consulted a skills matrix, including HE experience, when considering upcoming vacancies. Nominations Committee had a responsibility to consider diversity across the whole of Council.
- 4.3 GCAB further proposed that the Chair of Nominations Committee should be appointed by Council on the advice of a joint Council / AB committee, and that the Chair of Nominations Committee should be neither a staff member of UCL nor a member of Council.
- 4.4 AB agreed that GCAB should bring back more detailed proposals for discussion and onward communication to Council.

5 UCL RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY
[PAPER 3-05, 2018-19]

- 5.1 The Vice-Provost (Research) introduced the paper and the need for a light-touch review against the background of changes in the external environment. Any further comments on the paper should be directed to the Pro-Vice-Provost (Library Services).

RESOLVED

- 5.2 **That the revised Research Data Management Policy be approved.**

6 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 6.1 The next Meeting of Academic Board would take place on 6 February 2019.

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