



SPECIAL MEETING OF ACADEMIC BOARD

15 March 2017

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Provost (*Chair*)

Professor Christopher Barker; Professor Matteo Carandini; Professor Claire Carmalt; Professor Lucie Clapp; Dr Ben P Clifford; Dr Alun Coker; Professor Marc-Olivier Coppens; Professor Andrew Eder; Professor Susan Evans; Dr Rachele De Felice; Dr Richard Freeman; Dr Martin Fry; Professor Mary JA Fulbrook; Dr Paul Groves; Dr Saladin D Meckled-Garcia; Ms Anna Golap; Ms Jessica Gramp; Professor Graham Hart; Dr Evangelos Himonides; Professor Robert Kleta; Dr Sarabajaya Kumar; Professor Sandy Macrobert; Professor Robin Mcanulty; Ms Fiona McClement; Professor Susan Michie; Professor Gudrun Moore; Professor John Mullan; Dr Anne Peasey; Dr Inés Pineda-Torres; Professor William Richardson; Professor Anthony W Segal; Professor Sonu Shamdasani; Professor Elizabeth Shepherd; Dr Bill Sillar; Professor Trevor Smart; Dr Helen Stagg; Dr Sherrill Stroschein; Dr Emanuela Tilley; Professor Nigel J Titchener-Hooker; Professor Derek Tocher; Dr Ahmed Toosy; Professor Rosemary Varley; Ms Susan Ware; Dr Norman Williams; Dr Andrew Wills; Dr Stan Zochowski.

In attendance: Mr Derfel Owen (Secretary to Academic Board); Ms Siobhan Fitzgerald (Academic Services); Mr John Parr (HR).

Apologies for absence were received from: Dame Nicola Brewer; Prof. Andrew Brown; Mrs Bonita Carboo; Prof. Claire Callender; Dr Ben Clifford; Prof. Maria De Iorio; Prof. Peter Earley; Prof. Mark Emberton; Prof. Dilly Fung; Prof. Xavier Golay; Dr Sandra Gray; Prof. Helen Hackett; Ms Rachel Hall; Dr Andrew Harris; Prof. Kenneth Harris; Ms Melissa Hazen; Prof. Michael Heinrich; Dr Andrea Hodgetts; Dr Arne Hofmann; Mrs Caroline Holden; Ms Lori Houlihan; Dr John Hurst; Prof Robert Lowe; Prof. Alejandro Madrigal; Prof. Gesine Manuwald; Dr Margaret Mayston; Prof. Charles Marson; Prof. Usha Menon; Prof. Kevin Middlebrook; Dr Jenny S Mindell; Prof. Henrietta Moore; Prof. Veronique Munoz-Darde; Prof. Enrico Palandri; Dr Andy Pearce; Prof. Graham Penn; Dr Rosie Peppin Vaughan; Prof. Arthur Petersen; Prof. David Price; Prof. Geraint Rees; Prof. Thilo Rehren; Prof. Vieri Samek-Lodovici; Prof. Andreas Schaefer; Dr David Sim; Prof. Sarah Spurgeon; Prof. Andrew Stahl; Prof. Sacha Stern; Prof Alan Thompson; Prof. Nigel Titchener-Hooker; Mr Simon To; Dr Hans van de Koot; Prof. Sarah Walker; Dr Jane Warren; Prof. Dominic Wyse.

Key to abbreviations

AB	Academic Board
AC	Academic Committee

DfE	Department for Education
EU	European Union
GES	Global Engagement Strategy
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
NSS	National Student Survey
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SMT	Senior Management Team
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
ULCU	University College London Union
VP	Vice-Provost

41 ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS FRAMEWORK

[PAPER 3-01, and PAPER 3-02, 2016-17]

- 41.1 **Received** – an oral introduction from Professor Anthony Smith, Vice Provost (Education and Student Affairs).
- 41.2 The VP explained the rationale for reviewing the promotions criteria and the process of consultation so far. He explained that the aim of the proposed framework is to capture the impact that academic staff have through their work and achievements in a clear and transparent way, taking account of the variety of activities that make up an academic career. Four areas of academic endeavour had been identified within the proposed framework; research, education, enterprise and external engagement, and institutional citizenship.
- 41.3 The VP noted that the framework has now been through a number of iterations, and explained that he had requested this special meeting of AB to hear views from members to further inform the consultation.
- 41.4 There was significant support for the aims of the review and the general direction of the framework, in particular the clearer emphasis and recognition of teaching was appreciated. However, some concerns remained about the clarity of the criteria, and how they may be understood and interpreted.
- 41.5 Some raised concerns about whether the criteria could uniformly be applied across all disciplines or whether there should be Faculty or School specific to reflect the different nature of the careers and academic activities in different disciplines. A large number of members disagreed with this and it was noted that the online consultation had expressed strong support for institution-wide criteria.
- 41.6 Some comments were also made about whether the enterprise and external engagement criteria were overly commercially focussed. The VP explained that this is not the intention of the criteria, that they were meant to encourage and support external engagement and collaboration with industry and other external organisations.
- 41.7 A number of comments were made about the criteria for institutional citizenship, where it was felt that more clarity was needed. Some argued that there was an overemphasis on it, while others stated that the new criteria accurately reflected the importance that this type of activity deserved. The importance of recognising not just

institutional-level contributions, but work done at departmental and programme level was stressed, as was the caution that recognition should come for effective performance in the roles, not simply holding the role.

41.8 Some suggested more thought was needed on the impact of part-time working, career breaks, and caring responsibilities on promotion prospects, while others argued that the wording of the framework was appropriate and was inclusive. The VP responded that proportionality in the overall sense of contribution should be taken into account to ensure parity, and that guidance notes would be produced for this.

41.9 It was noted that many staff have developed long-term career plans based on the existing promotions criteria and that changing them at this stage might disrupt plans or restrict some colleagues' ability to seek and gain promotion. The Provost responded that a plan for transitioning to the new framework would be required to ensure that colleagues were not disadvantaged and that the new framework should serve to clarify and bring greater transparency to the promotions process.

41.10 A number of members expressed concern about the change of titles at grade 9. Mainly the removal of Reader and introduction of Associate Professor. It was noted that the existing titles were used inconsistently across UCL, often associated with research or teaching track, and that this was counter to the aim of ensuring that teaching and other aspects of academic-life were given the same recognition as research. It was also noted that the current titles could cause confusion, and some believed them to be antiquated, and would prefer a system more in line with other international institutions. There were additional concerns that while the creation of a single grade 9 title was a positive move, the adoption of the title Associate Professor may undermine the title Professor.

41.11 The Provost and Vice-Provost noted that the next steps would be to put together an Advisory Group drawn from Academic Board, which will seek to tighten some criteria and address some other points that had been made. A document tracking changes will then be taken to the next meeting of AB.

42 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

42.1 The next Academic Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 3rd May 2017 at 2.05pm.

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