



ACADEMIC BOARD

Wednesday 15 May 2019

MINUTES

PRESENT¹:

President and Provost (*Chair*)

Professor Michael Arthur (*Chair*), Ms Mumtaz Abdul-Ghafoor, Dr Ali Abolfathi, Mr James Agar, Ms Wendy Appleby, Ms Raphaela Armbruster, Dr Paul Ayris, Mr Malcolm Bailey, Professor Yolande Barnes, Dr Michael Baron, Dr Jane Biddulph, Professor Stephanie Bird, Dame Nicola Brewer, Ms Cathy Brown, Professor Robert Brownstone, Ms Elizabeth Carter, Dr Celia Caulcott, Dr Declan Chard, Dr Sungano Chigogora, Professor Lucie Clapp, Dr Ben Clifford, Dr Alun Coker, Professor Nicola Countouris, Ms Sonja Curtis, Ms Donna Dalrymple, Dr Ruth Dann, Dr Jason Davies, Dr Martin Davies, Dr Rachele De Felice, Professor Joseph Devlin, Dr Johanna Donovan, Ms Dominique Draï, Dr Karen Edge, Ms Evelyn Eguridu, Dr Russell Evans, Professor Andrew Fisher, Professor Becky Francis, Dr Richard Freeman, Dr Bettina Friedrich, Dr Martin Fry, Dr Andrew Gardner, Professor Deborah Gill, Dr Hugh Goodacre, Ms Emma Grant, Dr Andrew Harris, Dr Sandra Leaton Gray, Professor Muki Haklay, Mr Martin Hall, Professor Michael Heinrich, Dr Borja Legarra Herrero, Dr Evangelos Himonides, Ms Lori Houlihan, Professor John Hyman, Dr Thomas Kador, Ms Leigh Kilpert, Professor Robert Kleta, Professor Nikolaos Konstantinidis, Professor Susanne Kord, Professor Paola Lettieri, Dr Dewi Lewis, Professor Sandy MacRobert, Mr Simon Mahony, Ms Bella Malins, Dr Elvira Mambetisaeva, Dr Nephtali Marina-Gonzalez, Professor Mark Marsh, Dr Margaret Mayston, Dr Claire McAndrew, Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia, Dr Nils Metternich, Dr Ghita Kouadri Mostefaoui, Professor John Mullan, Dr Mark Newman, Dr Adam Paige, Professor Enrico Palandri, Professor Ivan Parkin, Dr Renata Peters, Professor Hynek Pikhart, Professor David Price, Professor Stephen Quirke, Professor Jane Rendell, Professor Helen Roberts, Professor Sasha Roseneil, Ms Fiona Ryland, Professor Vieri Samek-Lodovici, Professor Joanne Santini, Dr Prince Saprai, Professor Sonu Shamdasani, Professor Andreas Schatzlein, Professor Ralf Schoepfer, Professor Andrea Sella, Dr Bill Sillar, Ms Thushyanthi Sivagnanam, Ms Abigail Smith, Professor Anthony Smith, Ms Jamie Smith, Professor Sarah Spurgeon, Professor Sacha Stern, Professor Michael Stewart, Dr Sherrill Stroschein, Professor Judith Suissa, Professor Alan Thompson, Dr Amy Thornton, Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker, Mr Simon To, Dr Ahmed Toosy, Professor Andrea Townsend-Nicholson, Professor Chronis Tzedakis, Ms Louise Vink, Dr Nalini Vittal, Ms

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.

Yasmin Walker, Professor Andrew Wills, Mr Michael Wozniak, Dr Jinghao Xue, Professor Ian Zachary, Dr Stan Zochowski.

In attendance: Dr Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost (Enterprise & London), Mr Phil Harding (Finance and Business Affairs), Ms Sandra Hinton (Academic Services), Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia (GCAB), Mr Derfel Owen (Secretary to Academic Board), Professor Ralf Schoepfer (Chair of GCAB). Professor Ijeoma Uchehgbu.

Apologies: Professor Jonathan Ashmore, Professor James Bainbridge, Dr Jyoti Belur, Dr Elisabete Cidre, Professor Matteo Carandini, Professor John Collinge, Professor Marc-Olivier Coppens, Professor Izzat Darwazeh, Professor Annette Dolphin, Professor Peter Earley, Dr Rachael Frost, Dr Claire Garnett, Professor Helen Hackett, Professor Graham Hart, Dr Jennifer Hazelton, Professor Stephen Hunt, Dr Sarabajaya Kumar; Ms Elvire Landstra, Professor Albert Leung, Dr Claire Lindsay, Professor Annemaree Lloyd; Professor David Lomas, Dr Helga Hlaðgerður Lúthersdóttir, Professor Gesine Manuwald, Professor Charles Masron, Professor Robert Mills, Professor Sara Mole, Professor Maxine Molyneux, Dr Susan Moore, Ms Ema Muk-Pavic, Dr Andy Pearce, Professor Graham Penn, Mr Richard Pettinger, Dr Stephen Potts, Dr Carol Rivas. Dr Miguel Rodrigues, Dr Benet Salway, Dr Beatrice Sica, Dr Ruth Siddall, Dr Florence Sutcliffe-Braithwaite, Ms Emanuela Tilley, Dr Hans van de Koot, Dr Bella Vivat, Professor Sarah Walker, Dr. Martijn A. Zwijnenburg.

Key to abbreviations

AB	Academic Board
EU	European Union
GCAB	Governance Committee of Academic Board
IHRA	International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
JC	Joint Committee
JEP	Joint Evaluation Panel
OfS	Office for Students
SMAB	Special Meeting of Academic Board
SMT	Senior Management Team
SRS	Student and Registry Services
SU	Students' Union
UCU	University and College Union
UG	Undergraduate
USS	University Superannuation Scheme
UUK	Universities UK

PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1. EXPECTATIONS FOR STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR AT ACADEMIC BOARD MEETINGS

- 1.1 The Chair reminded members of AB that there had been a difficult discussion at the meeting of 6th February 2019 regarding the proposed introduction of the IHRA definition of Anti-Semitism. He had subsequently received 5 letters from AB members expressing concern about the conduct of some members during this discussion and therefore considered it appropriate to set out some

expectations for standards of behaviour at future meetings. These were as follows:

Members of Academic Board would be expected:

- to be collegial and constructive in approach and to behave respectfully and courteously to one another and to make sure that their behaviour does not distract in any way from the flow of the meeting;
- to be respectful in their dealings with other Academic Board members and the secretariat;
- to be respectful of each other's expertise and views, listening, assessing and evaluating them with an open mind and without prejudice;
- to be clear about the functions of the Board as prescribed in its terms of reference, the Charter, Statutes and Regulations for Management;
- to respect confidentiality and handle sensitive issues with discretion;
- to co-operate with the Chair to ensure the fair and effective transaction of business;
- to accept decisions made in the broader interest of UCL;
- to prepare for meetings by reading and considering the paperwork for the meeting;
- to be succinct when speaking.

1.2 The Chair would intervene if these standards were transgressed.

2. MINUTES OF 6th FEBRUARY 2019

2.1 Adoption by UCL of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of Anti-semitism [Min. 6, 6 February [18-19]]

The Chair updated AB on the subsequent discussion of this issue at Council's meeting of 13 March 2019 where Council had been exposed to its complexities for the first time. As with AB, discussion at Council had been far-ranging. Council wished to further educate itself about the complexity of the issues involved and to draw on expert input and insight. It was also considered that the issue of anti-semitism was not best tackled in isolation. Council would therefore consider the issues of racism and Islamophobia and bring all these together in a further paper which would be widely consulted on. Although it would slow down the time at which this issue might return to Council for discussion, a more comprehensive paper and then a more comprehensive consultation was thought to be the most collegiate and effective way to proceed.

2.2 The Vice-Provost (Advancement) informed AB that consultations were taking place with relevant student groups and external bodies and many positive activities were planned to improve religious literacy and cultural understanding as well as gleaning best practice in other sectors which could be included. AB members were invited to contact the Vice-Provost (Advancement) with any ideas or questions.

2.3 The Provost noted that some email comments on the minuting of this item had been received and the minutes had been amended in response.

2.4 The recording of the suggestion by the Governance Committee of Academic Board (GCAB) for a working group to advise on racism and prejudice [Min.6.4]

was disputed. It was proposed that the minute should record that AB had been explicitly asked if it wished to proceed with a working group and had assented. There should therefore be a discussion with GCAB about its composition. The Chair agreed that this minute should be amended and was happy for a working group to be set up to try to compose an acceptable definition but this would still require an extension of the scope of its membership.

- 2.5 The minutes of the 6th February 2019 were approved, subject to the agreed amendments at 2.4 above and 3A.1 and 3A.2 below.

3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3A Minutes of 6th February 2019 – [Min. 5.5, and Min. 8.2,6 February [18-19]]

3A.1 GCAB had challenged the implications of minute 5.5: *'It was confirmed, following a query, that Council had the authority to decide on whether a matter contradicted the regulations for management and the Charter and Statutes'*. GCAB believed Council did not have the ultimate authority over the interpretation of the Charter and Statutes. It was agreed that the minute should be changed from *"It was confirmed"* to *"It was argued"*.

3A.2 GCAB had challenged the implications of minute 8.2: *'AB was reminded by the Chair that it was not the role of AB to oversee the VP budget which goes through an appropriate planning and budget allocation process.'* Although not within its remit to oversee budgets, AB was nevertheless entitled to make a comment on the value for money of a proposal and its academic aims and to refer any issues to Council.

3B USS Pensions [Min. 7, 6 February [18-19]]

3B.1 The Director of Finance and Business Affairs gave an oral update, noting AB's previous resolution that it must be informed and involved in any consultation about USS pensions. It was noted that the UUK consultation paper had been received and circulated late, but that it was important to engage AB as soon as possible given the very tight timeframes for responding. The Provost had written on 13 May to open up the consultation to include all USS members but this was an opportunity to seek AB's views, albeit with short notice. UCL had requested that the deadline for responses to the consultation be extended from 30th May to 4 June 2019.

3B.2 AB was reminded that the USS Trustee had responded to the submission from UUK following the consultation with employers that took place in March. They were now proposing three alternative contribution structures which, in the Trustee's view, would allow the 2018 valuation to be completed. UUK was therefore once again consulting with USS employers on which of the three options they preferred.

The three options were summarised as follows:

1. **Upper Bookend** – 33.7% (23% for employers and 10.7% employees) to apply from April 2020

2. **Lower Bookend** and contingent contributions arrangement – initial contributions set at 29.7% (20.4% employer, 9.3% employee), and three potential 2% contribution increases should scheme funding deteriorate, potentially taking the required rate to a maximum of 35.7%.
 3. **A 2020 valuation approach** - an initial contribution rate of 30.7% (21.1% for employers and 9.6% employees) to apply from October 2019. A 2020 valuation would be undertaken and, subject to that and ongoing discussions with stakeholders, the contribution rate would remain unchanged until 1 October 2021. In the event of there being no agreement on an alternative schedule of contributions following the 2020 valuation, a default rate of 34.7% would apply.
- 3B.3 None of these options exactly matched the proposals from the Joint Expert Panel (JEP) and all options were unattractive. However, it did mean that current benefits were preserved. Options 2 and 3 relied upon the Trustees being able to confirm that the sector's covenant was strong. There had been some input from the Pensions Regulator questioning this and raising concern about rising levels of borrowing in the sector. A condition of accepting 2 and 3 might be to undertake some sort of debt monitoring, which might be interventionist. A Board meeting of USS would take place on 16 May and a meeting of the Joint Negotiating Committee on 17 May.
- 3B.4 The second condition of option 2 related to proposed changes to the rules to make it harder for employers to withdraw. Trinity College Cambridge was considering withdrawing and this had prompted the Regulator to tighten up the rules, making it harder to leave the scheme.
- 3B.5 AB members had, at its 6 February meeting, encouraged UCL to continue to support the JEP's recommendations and challenge the position USS had taken not to accept all the JEP recommendations and its continued plan to de-risk as part of the March 2018 valuation. It was noted that it was important to restate that UCL had done everything it could to say that these were unacceptable options because they were based on an unrealistic risk model. It was also clear that there was now very little difference between UCU's position and UUK's. Option 3 would at least preserve current benefits for an increase in contributions that was less than the upper bookend and allow time for the JEP to conclude the second stage of its work in the autumn and to bring forward recommendations that could avoid the default increase in October 2021.
- 3B.6 The Director of Finance and Business Affairs was invited to comment on Aon's recent risk advisory note which expressed disappointment that the form of contingent contributions was unacceptable to the USS, particularly given that the deficit had reduced. It was felt to be a good and compelling analysis and would be made available to Council. The report also raised issues concerning the governance of USS, which the JEP was being asked to consider.
- 3B.7 Members of AB felt that USS had consistently refused to look at its own methodology and that the options were essentially offering a choice to manage the demise of the scheme in one of three ways. AB members wanted UCL to adopt a position of fully endorsing the opinion of the JEP and that what should go forward from UCL was a clear message that it did not accept the premise of any of the three options.

- 3B.8 The Director of Finance and Business Affairs informed AB that UCL had considered whether it should leave the scheme but the bill for this would be in the region of 400 million pounds. As a 'last man standing' scheme, differences of opinion across the sector concerning leaving it tended to be affected by how much they had to lose. Some would lose comparatively little.
- 3B.9 The Chair noted that the mood of AB was clear and undertook to report this accurately to Council. UCL would continue to support the JEP but consider carefully whether it should choose an option as being the 'least worst' or choose none. The Chair would circulate to AB any proposal put to Council and there would be full transparency.
- 3C Joint Committee on the Appointment of President and Provost** *[Min. 26, 6 February [18-19]]*
- 3C.1 The Registrar informed AB members that the Joint Committee (JC) for the Appointment of the next UCL President and Provost's membership had been finalised at the meeting of Council on the 15 March 2019. The AB members nominated to the JC by AB were Professor Tony Segal, Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker and Dr Sandra Leaton-Gray. An update on the membership would be circulated to AB. The Joint Committee's first meeting had been an Away Day on the 3rd May 2019 and had been a productive day. The JC agreed on the search parameters and the search agencies who would be invited to pitch. Once the search agency was appointed, a consultation with the UCL community on the role profile and candidate qualities would take place. As part of this exercise, opportunities to engage with the consultation would be circulated to AB.

Matters for Discussion

4 PROVOST'S BUSINESS

4A Fee Status for EU students

- 4A.1 The UK Government had not yet decided what the fee status would be for EU students in 2021. Ministers had indicated that a decision might be as late as July 2019, although the government had been informed that students were making choices now. Pressure continued to be brought to bear for a timely decision.

4B Applications for European Research Council Grants

- 4B.1 This had been the most successful round of applications ever, with 47 successful UK applications, 8 of which had been from UCL (and 5 of these from within a single Faculty – Social and Historical Sciences). This vindicated the encouragement given to UCL academics to continue to apply.

4C Security Incident

- 4C.1 The Chief Operating Officer informed AB about a security incident on the afternoon of 14 May in the Science Library. The Police had been called and had arrested the suspect. The building had been cleared and sniffer dogs brought in. Nothing was found and the building reopened a few hours later. A Major Incident team had been convened and increased security measures introduced.

Some Security Officers had experienced resistance when clearing the building and staff and students would need to be reminded that they were doing a vital job. An investigation had begun and if necessary there would be a review of policies and procedures.

- 4C.2 The bravery of the security officers on duty at the time of the incident was commended and would be formally recognised in due course. Lessons would be learned and the Provost had requested that any outcomes be conveyed swiftly to SMT.

5 DRAFT CONFLICTS OF INTEREST POLICY [Paper 5-01, 18-19]

Presented by Dr Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost (Enterprise & London)

- 5.1 The Vice-Provost (Enterprise & London) introduced the revised policy noting that it intended to protect staff in their dealings with these external organisations that it brought UCL into line with the rest of the sector. Work on the revised policy had been wide-ranging, with expert input from UCL's Internal Auditors and a Working Group of Academic Board.
- 5.2 A system for reporting and recording conflicts of interest was essential and would be developed but as this was currently sub-optimal, colleagues were asked to support the policy whilst recognising the limitations of the current system.
- 5.3 AB was invited to consider whether the coverage proposed by the policy was appropriate. It was noted the advantage of the policy covering all PGR students was that they all then learned about the importance of declarations of interest in preparation for their future careers. AB endorsed this as there was currently significant variation in engagement across disciplines and covering all PGR students would make such declarations normative. It was noted that a statement of declaration might be included in annual appraisal or promotions documentation.
- 5.4 The Vice-Provost confirmed that the next stage for the policy was submission to Finance Committee for approval.

6 UCL STATEMENT ON RACE EQUALITY [Paper 5-02, 18-19]

Presented by Professor Ijeoma Uchehgbu, Provost's Envoy on Race Equality

- 6.1 The Statement had been drafted by the Race Equality Steering Group, in consultation with the Race Equality Charter Self-Assessment Team and UCL Vice-Provosts. The statement had been endorsed by SMT with a recommendation it be forwarded to Council for approval. AB was asked for comment and input in advance of consideration by Council.
- 6.2 Professor Uchehgbu informed AB that the statement was needed to support UCL's efforts to address racial inequality in the staff and student profile. The statement had been drafted over 15 months by the Race Equality Steering Group. The Chair noted that in his view it was an important piece of work and congratulated Professor Uchehgbu for bringing it to fruition. Members of AB also

applauded the statement for acknowledging both the problem and its scale. The statement was strongly endorsed by AB.

7 DRAFT ACADEMIC BOARD STANDING ORDERS [Paper 5-03, 18-19]

Presented by Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia, Member of GCAB

- 7.1 Dr Meckled-Garcia presented the Draft AB Standing Orders and explained that they had now been discussed with the Registrar and Secretary to Council and with UCL Legal Services. Concerns about altering the meaning of the Charter and Statutes had been addressed.
- 7.2 Dr Meckled-Garcia informed AB that GCAB had been charged with setting up Standing Orders to gather all the rules and principles governing the working of AB into one place. The Standing Orders had received their first reading at AB in October 2018. They were now being submitted for a second reading. It was hoped that the Standing Orders would act as a useful reference point for both new and existing members and were recommended for adoption by AB.
- 7.3 AB approved the Standing Orders for adoption and expressed gratitude to GCAB for the volume of work.

8 PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM AB TO COUNCIL CONCERNING THE NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE [Paper 5-04, 18-19]

Presented by Professor Ralf Schoepfer, Chair of GCAB

- 8.1 Professor Schoepfer explained that AB has the authority to recommend to Council that changes be made to the Statutes and Regulations for Management and that AB had not utilised this power often in recent years.
- 8.2 The motion had two substantive proposals and stipulated detailed proposed amendments to the RfMs relating to Council's Nominations Committee:
 - 1) That the Chair of the Nominations Committee to Council should not be the Chair of Council.
 - 2) That a joint committee of Council and AB be established to advise Council on the appointment of the Chair of Nominations Committee.
- 8.3 Professor Schoepfer reminded AB of the presentation made at its meeting on 14 November 2018 highlighting concerns about the diversity of UCL Council members and that this proposal was aimed at addressing those concerns and providing ongoing reassurance to AB about the diversity of Council members.
- 8.4 It was explained that when UCL sought new external members it spread its nets very widely, including adverts in the press and input from members of AB and that the concerns expressed about the diversity of members had been addressed at the November meeting
- 8.5 A number of points were made by members, which included the following:

- If the proposals were followed, there was a possibility that the Chair of the Nominations Committee might have no substantive knowledge, experience or responsibility to UCL.
 - That in most large organisations the Chair of its governing body was the Chair of its Nominations Committee. UCL would need a compelling argument about why its own arrangements should be different.
 - That the proposals contained an implication that Council was not listening to AB but caution was advised on the grounds that UCL was not in financial difficulty and that, notwithstanding some collegiate issues, AB had gained a stronger voice recently and was having better quality conversations. UCL was doing well, growing research funding, and building academic excellence. AB was asserting its voice powerfully on a range of matters and was being heard by Council.
- 8.4 The Chair of the Commission of Inquiry suggested that the proposals might be considered in parallel with any other recommendations the Col might make. The Chair endorsed this suggestion, cautioning that if the proposals were to go forward in their present form, Council might reject them, which would not be an optimal outcome for AB's first pro-active proposal, in some time, on changes to RfMs.
- 8.5 AB agreed not to vote on the proposals but that they should be further considered by the Commission of Inquiry.

<p>Matters for approval or Information</p>

9 LEAD OFFICER REPORT 2018-19: STUDENT SUPPORT AND WELLBEING
[Paper 5-05, 18-19]

9.1 **Received:** the Lead Officer Report 2018-19

10 AB ELECTIONS TO COUNCIL *[Paper 5-08, 18-19]*

10.1 **Received:** A paper which detailed arrangements for the election of Academic Board members to Council with effect from October 2019

11 PROFESSORIAL BANDING CRITERIA *[Paper 5-09, 18-19]*

11.1 **Received:** A paper on Professorial Banding Criteria

12 GCAB MINUTES *[Paper 5-10, 18-19]*

12.1 **Received:** Minutes of the GCAB meetings that took place on 6th June 2018 and 11th October 2018

13 COUNCIL MINUTES *[Paper 5-11, 18-19]*

13.1 **Received:** Minutes of the Council meeting that took place on 16 November 2018

14 ACADEMIC BOARD CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

[Paper 5-12, 18-19]

14.1 **Received:** An update on those who have joined AB since the October meeting of Academic Board

15 APPOINTMENTS *[Paper 5-13, 18-19]*

15.1 **Received:** Details of senior appointments made since the last report to Academic Board.

16 ACTION TAKEN BY THE PROVOST AS CHAIR OF ACADEMIC BOARD – ACADEMIC BOARD WORKING GROUPS *[Paper 5-14, 18-19]*

16.1 **Received:** A report on Academic Board Working Groups established under the UCL regulations for appointment to established Chairs and Readerships since the last report to Academic Board.

17 AWARDS AND PRIZES TO UCL STAFF *[Paper 5-15, 18-19]*

17.1 **Received:** Details of awards, appointments, elections and honours relating to UCL staff since the last report to Academic Board.

18 MEETING DATES FOR 2019/20:

- 23 October 2019: 14.05 – 16.00pm
- 12 February 2020: 14.05 – 16.00pm
- 13 May 2020: 14.05 – 16.00pm

Venues to be confirmed

DERFEL OWEN

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May 2019