



ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Tuesday 10 November 2015

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Provost and President (Chair)

Mr David Ashton; Dr Paul Ayriss; Dr Simon Banks; Professor David Bogle; Dame Nicola Brewer; Professor Nick Brook; Dr Caroline Essex; Dr Julie Evans; Professor Mary Fulbrook; Dr Christine Hoffmann; Dr Arne Hofmann; Professor David Lomas; Professor Norbert Pachler; Professor Don Pennington; Professor David Price; Dr Helen Matthews; Professor Geraint Rees; Mr Tom Robinson; Mr Mike Rowson; Ms Wahida Samie; Dr Hazel Smith; Ms Olga Thomas; Professor Jonathan Wolff.

In attendance: Ms Clare Goudy; Mr Derfel Owen (Secretary); Ms Chandan Shah; Professor Gabriella Vigliocco [deputising for Professor Alan Thompson]; Miss Denise Long, Director of Student Support Wellbeing [for item 12]; Ms Karen Barnard, Director of UCL Careers [for item 11];

Apologies for absence: Ms Wendy Appleby; Mr Simon Cane; Dr Celia Caulcott; Dr Brenda Cross; Ms Anna Douglas; Professor Mark Emberton; Dr Dilly Fung; Professor Dame Hazel Genn; Professor Graham Hart; Professor Alan Penn; Professor Michael Pitt; Dr Ruth Siddall; Professor Anthony Smith; Professor Alan Thompson; Ms Susan Ware.

Key to abbreviations:

AC	Academic Committee
AM	Annual Monitoring
ASER	Annual Student Experience Review
CALT	Centre for Advancing Learning and Teaching
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DLHE	Destination of Leavers from Higher Education
EdCom	Education Committee
GES	Global Engagement Strategy
GPA	Grade Point Average
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher Education Institutions
HER	Higher Education Review
HoD	Head of Departments
NSS	National Student Survey
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PT	Part-time
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SED	Self-Evaluation Document
SSW	Student Support and Wellbeing
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
VP	Vice-Provost
WP	Widening Participation

Preliminary business

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP 2015-16

[PAPER 1-01, 2015-16]

1.1 **Received** – AC's terms of reference, constitution and membership for the session 2015-16 for Council's approval at its November meeting.

1.2 The Provost welcomed the following new members to AC:

- Dr Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost (Enterprise and London);
- Professor David Lomas, Vice-Provost (Health);
- Professor Mark Emberton, Dean of Medical Sciences;
- Ms Wahida Samie, Educations & Campaigns Officer, UCL Union;
- Mr Tom Robinson, Welfare and International Officer, UCL Union;
- Ms Suguna Nair, Postgraduate Students' Officer, UCL Union.

1.3 The Provost thanked the following members for their contributions to AC and UCL: Professor Anthony Finkelstein and Professor Chris Husbands.

2 ACADEMIC COMMITTEE SUB-COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE

[PAPER 1-02, 2015-16]

2.1 **Approved** – AC's Sub-Committees terms of reference.

3 MINUTES OF 25 JUNE 2015 MEETING

3.1 **Approved** – the Minutes of the Academic Committee meeting held on 25 June 2015
[AC Minutes 34-49, 2014-15].

4 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

[see also item 9 below]

4A Doctoral Education at UCL

[AC Minute 39, [25 June 2015]]

4A.1 The Pro Vice-Provost (Research) reported that a revised version had been developed incorporating comments received since the last AC meeting and the recent AB meeting, including the Connected Curriculum initiative. Concrete actions had also been established.

Matters for discussion

5 PROVOST'S BUSINESS

5A Green Paper / Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF)

- 5A.1 A Government Green paper on Higher Education has been published and the Provost reported on two key areas that will have an impact on UCL and the wider sector: i) Restructuring of organisation and regulation of HE that, if implemented, would lead to the abolition of a number of sector bodies in England, most notably HEFCE. This would potentially undermine well-established conventions about the separation of government and HE and funding; ii) The TEF – proposed to be introduced in Summer 2016 with student fees linked to institutional outcomes in the framework.
- 5A.2 UCL would be preparing a response and engaging actively with the Russell Group's response.

5B Prizes to UCL Staff

- 5B.1 The Provost congratulated Professor John Hardy for winning the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences for his pioneering research into the genetic effects of Alzheimers and Parkinsons diseases, the first time that the prize has been awarded to a UK researcher.

6 VICE-PROVOST (HEALTH) ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL

[PAPER 1-03, 2015-16]

- 6.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Professor David Lomas, Vice-Provost (Health)
- 6.2 The VP (Health) reported that interdisciplinary interactions such as the Institute of Digital Health were being developed to increase the profile and reach of UCL research strength in health across the university. This would be further enhanced through the Faculty Vice-Deans, developing interactions across the Schools.
- 6.3 It was reported that new programmes to improve research-based education and to improve student experience scores in the NSS to be in the top quartile and increasing the quality of 4* research for REF from 16% to 30%. Core to achieving these targets will be developing plans to address the long-term financial sustainability of research and education activity.
- 6.4 The VP (International) commented that the proposed African Centre would meet SLMS and GES objectives. The complicated nature of the partnership would mean reviewing staffing support and governance costings that would be included in the bid.

7 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY – UPDATE

[PAPER 1-04, 2015-16]

- 7.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Ms Clare Goudy, Director of Education Planning
- 7.2 The Director of Education Planning reported that Assessment and Feedback was clearly the area of biggest concern, which would be the focus of the ASER process.

- 7.3 To tackle issues highlighted in the NSS, 3 immediate actions were highlighted, i) an earlier publication of the examinations timetable, around 4-6 weeks earlier than previous years; ii) abolishing graduation costs to students and iii) extending library opening hours during peak examination periods. The last two points were being included in decisions as part of the planning round due to financial implications for UCL.
- 7.4 The Director of Education Planning reported that a dedicated team was in place to increase engagement and student participation in surveys through a constructive dialogue with students and to raise awareness on the implications of their responses in the surveys. The team would promote and monitor response rates of all surveys and work directly with Faculties and Departments to support their promotion activities.
- 7.5 In response to members' comments, the Provost reported that meetings with each HoD were taking place to identify good practice and common challenges. As part of the ASER process, Academic Services, CALT and the Vice-Provost's office would be working together with HoDs, Departments and Faculties to develop action plans.

8 ANNUAL STUDENT EXPERIENCE REVIEW UPDATE

[PAPER 1-05, 2015-16]

- 8.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Ms Clare Goudy, Director of Education Planning
- 8.2 The Director of Education Planning reported that ASER had replaced AM and Departments would evaluate themselves against a range of data. The NSS data would be the focus for 2015-16.
- 8.3 The data sets had been triangulated and issues relating to Assessment and Feedback were common, specifically marking criteria and feedback on assessment. To support departmental action planning good practice resources would be developed and made accessible through the Teaching and Learning portal.
- 8.4 An ASER *Intensive* process had been developed, this would provide additional support and monitoring for nine Departments.

9 EDUCATION STRATEGY

[PAPER 1-06, 2015-16]

- 9.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Ms Clare Goudy, Director of Education Planning
- 9.2 The Director of Education Planning reported that the revised draft now included a proposal on a pre-entry course for all students, as part of the Global Leader principle; a focus on 'Digital Learning' instead of an online module on each course and the omission of 'Graduate Attributes'.
- 9.3 Nine objectives were identified with a focus on strategic developments such as the Connected Curriculum as well as operational challenges such as Estates and Portico. Assessment and Feedback and PGT provision were key aspects of the Strategy and would be reviewed by Summer 2016.

- 9.4 The consultation process would continue with a focus on student feedback during this Autumn term. Another Town Hall meeting would take place in December for staff to provide comments with a draft submitted to EdCom in December and a final draft to Council in January.
- 9.5 Members' commented and requested further elaboration on the following areas:
- Introduction of the Grade Point Average system;
 - Modularity and support for student choices of courses;
 - Academic development and support for academic writing and research skills for students;
 - Preparing students as Global Citizens as part of the core pre-course.

10 QAA HIGHER EDUCATION REVIEW

- 10.1 **Received** – An oral update on the QAA HER from Mr Derfel Owen, Director of Academic Services.
- 10.2 The Director of Academic Services reported that submission of the evidence for the review would be in February and that the first draft of the SED had been circulated to key colleagues for comment. An additional meeting of AC would occur in February to receive and formally approve the SED before its final submission.
- 10.3 Academic Services would be contacting Faculties and Professional Services for evidence during November. UCLU have secured a funded post for their separate submission to the HER and colleagues would be working closely with UCLU throughout the entire process.
- 10.4 It was reported that the QAA HER was scheduled for week commencing 9 May 2016 and 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.
- 10.5 The Government Green paper on higher education proposed that a positive outcome from QAA Review would be an essential criteria for entry into the TEF and so the importance of the review should not be underestimated.

11 LEAD OFFICER REPORT 2014-15: CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY

[PAPER 1-07, 2015-16]

- 11.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Ms Karen Barnard, Director of UCL Careers
- 11.2 The Director of UCL Careers drew AC's attention to the DLHE data for PGT students, which had shown a small improvement in 14-15, but further improvement was required to improve UCL's position in the Russell Group. Actions to support students included delivery of a pre-entry online course over the summer period for students to think about their careers early. This would be further developed alongside the Education Strategy and a similar course developed to support graduated students.
- 11.3 An initial analysis of the DLHE data suggested that BME students were more likely to be unemployed; however, those that were employed go onto jobs with good salaries. A breakdown of the BME category and a further analysis at the Faculty and departmental levels was required and would be conducted in 2015/16.

- 11.4 The Director of UCL Careers reported a number of initiatives had been developed to enhance support offered to research students. These included, working with the Doctoral School to provide research support in academic and non-academic pathways with over 150 case studies of alumni and non-alumni students; working with Faculty and Departments to offer more bespoke support particularly in academic career paths; extension of support to graduates for 2 years and UG intensive support provided through GradClub Intensive to those students in Departments that could be at risk of future poor employability outcomes.

12 **LEAD OFFICER REPORT 2014-15: STUDENT WELFARE**

[PAPER 1-08, 2015-16]

- 12.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Ms Denise Long, Director of SSW
- 12.2 The Director of SSW reported that the focus for 2014-15 had been to provide a more joined up response to students needs by promoting the services offered and making the team and services more visible to students. Greater links with external services such as Camden and Islington suicide prevention group and CareFirst have been developed to provide an out of hours service to students to access professional support.
- 12.3 In response to members' comments, a support and training programme was being developed for staff and workshops for students to increase awareness of SSW, however resources was a key issue in delivering these. Guidance and information on protocols when handling situations would be developed that Faculties and Departments could refer to.

Other matters for approval or information
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13 **ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR ON BEHALF OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

None.

14 **LEAD OFFICER REPORT 2014-15: STUDENT ACCOMMODATION**

[PAPER 1-09, 2015-16]

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

15 **ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2014-15 - EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

[PAPER 1-10, 2015-16]

- 15.1 **Received** – the Education Committee annual report for 2014-15.

16 **Annual Report for Session 2014-15 - Equalities and Diversity Committee**

[PAPER 1-11, 2015-16]

- 16.1 **Received** – the Equalities and Diversity Committee annual report for 2014-15.

17 **Annual Report for Session 2014-15 - Research Degrees Committee**

[PAPER 1-12, 2015-16]

17.1 **Received** – the Research Degrees Committee annual report for 2014-15.

18 Annual Report for Session 2014-15 - Student Experience Forum
[PAPER 1-13, 2015-16]

18.1 **Received** – the Student Experience Forum annual report for 2014-15.

19 REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS ETC OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

19.1 **Received** – the AC officers have received on behalf of AC the Minutes of the following:

- Education Committee – 27 April 2015, 27 May 2015
- Research Governance Committee – 16 April 2015

20 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

20.1 The next Academic Committee meeting would be held on **Wednesday 27 January 2016 at 11.00, room TBC**

DERFEL OWEN

Director of Academic Services and Secretary to Academic Committee

[telephone 020 7679 8594, UCL extension 28594, email: d.owen@ucl.ac.uk]

12 November 2015