



ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Tuesday 14 March 2017
CONFIRMED MINUTES

PRESENT:

Provost and President (Chair)

Ms Mehj Ahmed; Dr Tracey Allen; Ms Wendy Appleby; Dr Simon Banks; Ms Halima Begum; Dame Nicola Brewer; Professor David Bogle; Dr Celia Caulcott; Mr Mark Crawford; Professor Mark Emberton; Dr Caroline Essex; Dr Julie Evans; Professor Dilly Fung; Dr Christine Hoffmann; Dr Arne Hofmann; Dr Sarabajaya Kumar; Professor David Lomas; Ms Blathnaid Mahony; Professor John Mullan; Professor Norbert Pachler; Professor Ivan Parkin; Professor Alan Penn; Dr Hynek Pikhart; Professor David Price; Mr Mike Rowson; Professor Anthony Smith; Dr Hazel Smith; Ms Olga Thomas; Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker; Professor Andrew Townsend-Nicholson; Dr Andrew Wills

In attendance: Mr Derfel Owen (Secretary); Ms Siobhan Fitzgerald.

Apologies for absence: Professor Mary Fulbrook; Professor Becky Francis; Professor Dame Hazel Genn; Professor Graham Hart; Dr Helen Matthews; Professor Geraint Rees; Dr Ruth Siddall; Professor Alan Thompson

Key to abbreviations:

AC	Academic Committee
ASER	Annual Student Experience Review
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HER	Higher Education Review
NSS	National Student Survey
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
UCLU	University College London Union

Preliminary business

18 MINUTES OF 8 NOVEMBER 2016 MEETING

- 18.1 ***Approved with one correction***—the Minutes of the Academic Committee meeting held on 8 November 2016 [AC Minutes 1-17, 2015-16]. *One correction to be made: addition of Professor John Mullan to attendance list.*

19 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

19.1 *None.*

Matters for Discussion

20 PROVOST'S BUSINESS

20A. Update on Higher Education and Research Bill

20A.1 The House of Lords had been scrutinising the Bill and made some significant amendments, with concerns focussed on institutional autonomy, integrity of research funding, the link between the Teaching Excellence Framework and student fees and the immigration status of international students.

20B. Exiting the European Union

20B.1 During debate in the House of Commons, attempts to clarify the position of EU citizens have been voted down by MPs. UCL communications on this, including a statement from the Provost, have been prepared and are waiting to be released once article 50 is formally triggered by the Prime Minister. The Provost reported that the position of EU students and staff would likely remain uncertain for some time.

21 SLMS REPORT FROM VP: HEALTH

[PAPER 2-01, 2016-17]

21.1 **Received** – an oral introduction to the paper from Professor David Lomas, Vice-Provost (Health).

21.2 The Vice-Provost noted that the School is committed to excellence in teaching, enterprise and research. Driving this is the UCL Health Strategy Forum, a pan-UCL health strategy, which also engages with hospitals, and other Universities. The Vice-Provost explained that partnership work was central to embedding the aims of UCL 2034 within all activities undertaken in the School.

21.3 The Vice-Provost highlighted a number of achievements for the School including a strong performance in world rankings; success in securing grants; overall improvement in NSS teaching and overall satisfaction scores; growth in student numbers on new PG programmes; enterprise and partnership activities resulting in major progress with consultancy work; philanthropic activities, including raising over £40m, much going to dementia research; and steady progress in the Athena SWAN strategy, indicated by all but two departments having Athena AWAN accreditation, the majority at Silver level. While the financial performance of the School fell short by £4.4m of its target of £128.5m in 2015/16, it still performed very well, and Faculties have proven their commitment to improving the School's financial position.

21.4 In response to a member's comment about how to facilitate sustainable growth of the School, the Vice-Provost explained that space outside of the Bloomsbury campus was being used, for example space in the Royal Free hospital, which provided first-class facilities.

22 TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK – UPDATE

[PAPER 2-04, 2016-17]

- 22.1 **Received** – an oral update from Professor Anthony Smith, Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs).
- 22.2 The Vice-Provost thanked Dr Clare Goudy, Director of Education Planning (Office of the Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs), for putting the narrative submission together. It was submitted at the end of January 2017.
- 22.3 The submission is now with the TEF panel of assessors, and the outcome is expected in May. The Vice-Provost reported that the TEF Panel had announced some important changes in emphasis between the narrative submission and the metrics used to inform the judgements. It was noted that the proposed link between the TEF and the ability of institutions to raise fees by the rate of inflation led UCLU to call on students to boycott the NSS. However the consequence of not getting an NSS return this year would mean that the TEF review historic NSS data, rather than discount it. UCL staff need to strongly encourage students to fill in the NSS.
- 22.4 The Vice-Provost noted that TEF 3, which will be subject-level, is under scrutiny at the moment. At present no consensus has been reached about what ‘subject’ means.

23 INNOVATION AND ENTERPRISE REPORT

[PAPER 2-02 2016-17]

- 23.1 **Received** – an oral report from Dr Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost (Enterprise and London).
- 23.2 The Vice-Provost explained that the papers provided to AC are in draft form but have been seen by the UCL Innovation and Enterprise Strategy Panel and SMT. After further consultation, the final version of the strategy will be ready in the Summer.
- 23.3 The report describes the establishment of the new department ‘UCL Innovation and Enterprise’, following the reorganisation of the Office of the Vice-Provost (Enterprise) and UCL Advances and Enterprise Operations. Internally there was a reorganisation, the budget was stabilised, and a senior team recruited to. The focus going forward is the UCL Innovation and Enterprise strategy. The Vice-Provost identified two big ambitions for this strategy: to firstly enable and support individuals, groups, and UCL through engagement with business partners, and secondly to support and help develop individuals (staff, students, and the outside community) so that they are empowered in their professional lives.
- 23.4 These goals enable UCL 2034 through five objectives: improving UCL’s engagement with business and innovation partners; contribution to employability; a culture of innovation to be embedded across UCL that will benefit London, the UK, and the wider world; embed a culture of innovation and knowledge exchange across UCL; contribution to financial sustainability of the institution.
- 23.5 In response to a member’s comment, the Vice-Provost noted that the department’s services are at present not very visible, and that communications about their activities need to be a lot more effective; this is something that is being worked on now.
- 23.6 In response to a member’s question about the Industrial Strategy Challenge fund, the Vice-Provost noted that there is a tendency at present for UCL to build lots of small projects with industry, but the goal is to create a smaller number of more substantial, long-term relationships with research intensive companies, both in London, the UK and across the world. These projects will require input from Deans and HoDs about which businesses would make good partnerships.

24 REVIEW OF THE UCL IPR POLICY

[PAPER 2-03 2016-17]

- 24.1 **Received** – a presentation from Dr Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost (Enterprise and London), with input from Natasha Lewis, Director of Legal Services, UCL.
- 24.2 The Vice-Provost provided some background to the project, explaining that the IPR legislation has changed in the last 10-15 years, and that UCL has amended and modified its policy, rather than reviewing it, which has led to a lack of clarity and some gaps in the current policies on Intellectual property. The review on UCL's IPR policies concluded that a revised policy needs to be drafted.
- 24.3 The aim will be to create a clear and easily accessible policy. This will involve a review of existing policy, rather than a wholesale change. It was noted that there was no intension of changing any existing principles or policy positions, but that these need to be more easily accessible.
- 24.4 The Vice-Provost noted that once the consultation was completed and the revised policy drafted, it will need to be very carefully communicated across UCL. The importance of this was agreed and there was some discussion about how this could be included in induction programmes, to ensure that all members of UCL are aware of the policy.

25 PREVENT at UCL

[PAPER 2-05 2016-17]

- 25.1 **Received** – an oral update from Ms Wendy Appleby, Registrar and Secretary to Council.
- 25.2 The Registrar, noted that the outcome of the first annual monitoring report to HEFCE resulted in a very positive response. This year some key developments will be more training, the development of policies, and engagement with the UCLU to gage the student perspective.
- 25.3 The Registrar acknowledged that lots of people feel deeply uncomfortable with the Prevent agenda, but that it is a requirement of the counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 that institutions comply with the Prevent duty. The Registrar noted that UCL will take as light-touch a measure as it can.

26 LEAD OFFICER REPORT 2015-16: STUDENT WELFARE

[PAPER 2-06 2016-17]

- 26.1 **Received** – an oral update from Ms Denise Long, Head of Student Support and Wellbeing.
- 26.2 The Head of Student Support and Wellbeing explained that the department was created in 2013, so it is now in its third year. It provides dedicated welfare services for students, including Psychological Services, International Student Support, the Chaplaincy, Study Abroad, Student Centre, and Student Disability Services.
- 26.3 The Head of SSW noted that there had been increased demand across all services, but primarily mental health, learning difficulties, and funding issues. Further measures to safeguard under-18s has been put in place. External support and guidance has fed into arrangements for supporting students affected by issues such as sexual harassment and student safety, and consultation with the world-leading experts working at UCL has fed into improved-services work. Work has also been done to improve the response to serious incidents affecting students in the UK and abroad. An improved procedure following student death has been put in place. The Ridgmount NHS Practice has been successfully relocated

to new, larger premises.

- 26.4 The Head of SSW reported on the progress of ongoing projects, noting that the consultation on student mental health support across UCL is due to be completed in April. All SSW services will continue to closely monitor students concerned by how Brexit will affect them. The UCL Connect Project Board has been established and is focussing initially on developing a Digital Student Centre in order to help students to access services.
- 26.5 The Head of SSW noted that areas requiring improvements include better flow of information and better digital streaming processes. A repository for holding sensitive documents is required as the present system is not ICO compliant. There have been reports on inconsistent Personal Tutoring, so the PT model review will include student support systems. There have also been issues with students not using the resources properly, and work with students who do not traditionally make use of these services.
- 26.6 The Provost commended The Head of SSW for the report and the excellent work that has been done under resource constraints.
- 26.7 In response to a member's query on TOPS and the collaboration between the SSW and departments, the Head of SSW noted that departments are critical to student support and the main challenge her is to ensure that there are consistently good connections between departmental staff and central staff. The Registrar, noted that TOPS will provide an opportunity to ensure that real consistency and connectivity is formed.

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

- 27.1 None.

28 ANNUAL LETTER FROM THE OFFICE OF THE INDEPENDENT ADJUDICATOR FOR 2015 [PAPER 2-07 2016-17]

- 28.1 **Received** – the Annual Letter from the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for 2015.

29 ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2015-16 – LIBRARY COMMITTEE [PAPER 2-08 2016-17]

- 29.1 **Received** - the Library Committee annual report for 2015-16.

30 ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2015-16 – STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE [PAPER 2-09 2016-17]

- 30.1 **Received** – the Student Experience Committee annual report for 2015-16.

31 ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2015-16 – STUDENT RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS AND FUNDING COMMITTEE [PAPER 2-10 2016-17]

- 31.1 **Received** – the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee annual report for 2015-16.

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

- 32.1 **Received** – the AC officers have received on behalf of AC the Minutes of the following:
- Education Committee – 13 October 2016, 6 December 2016

- Research Degrees Committee – 8 November 2016

33 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 33.1 **Received** – an oral update on the Global Engagement Strategy (GES) Review was provided by Dame Nicola Brewer, Vice-Provost (International).
- 33.2 The Vice-Provost noted that the paper was now agreed by Council. Internal communications will be low-key and will start within the next week. There are only small changes around the descriptions of the first and last strategic drivers of the GES that draw more explicitly on UCL's global position in light of Brexit, and to foreground the importance of diversity in the student base. The amended version will be circulated to AC in due course.

34 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 34.1 The next Academic Committee meeting would be held on **Thursday 15 June 2017 at 10.00am**. Venue TBC.

DERFEL OWEN

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21 March 2017