



ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Tuesday 19 February 2019

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Professor Anthony Smith (*Vice Chair*)

Ms Rothna Akhtar; Ms Wendy Appleby; Dr Paul Ayris; Dr Simon Banks; Professor David Bogle; Professor Stella Bruzzi; Professor Piet Eeckhout; Professor Becky Francis; Dr Hugh Goodacre; Dr Clare Goudy; Professor Graham Hart; Dr Arne Hofmann; Professor Ivan Parkin; Professor Hynek Pikhart; Professor David Price; Dr Aeli Roberts; Professor Sasha Roseneil; Mr Mike Rowson; Dr Ruth Siddall; Dr Sam Smidt; Professor Li Wei; Professor Andrea Townsend-Nicholson

In attendance: Ms Annabel Brown; Ms Lina Kamenova; Ms Bella Malins; Mr Derfel Owen (Secretary to Academic Committee); Ms Rachel Port (Minutes); Professor David Shanks; Dr Kathryn Walsh

Apologies for absence were received from Provost and President; Dr Tracey Allen; Dame Nicola Brewer; Mr Simon Cane; Dr Celia Caulcott; Mr Farooq Dean; Mr Ashley Doolan; Professor Mark Emberton; Dr Julie Evans; Dr Christine Hoffmann; Professor Sandra Leaton-Gray; Professor David Lomas; Professor Alan Penn; Mr Saddiqur Rahman; Professor Geraint Rees; Dr Aeli Roberts; Dr Hazel Smith; Ms Olga Thomas; Professor Alan Thompson; Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker; Professor Andrew Wills; Dr Stan Zochowski.

Key to abbreviations

AC	Academic Committee
ASER	Annual Student Experience Review
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
GCRF	Global Challenges Research Fund
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HR	Human Resources
KE	Knowledge Exchange
KEF	Knowledge Exchange Framework
OfS	Office for Students
OVPEA	Office of the Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs)
SSW	Student Support and Wellbeing
TEF	Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework

<p style="text-align: center;">Preliminary business</p>
--

18 **MINUTES OF 1 NOVEMBER 2018 MEETING**

18.1 **Approved** – the Minutes of the AC meeting held on 1 November 2018 [*AC Minutes 1-17, 2018-19*].

19 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

19.1 There were no matters arising.

<p style="text-align: center;">Matters for discussion</p>
--

20 **PROVOST'S BUSINESS**

20A **Brexit**

20A.1 The Provost and President was currently overseas and Professor Smith was chairing the meeting on his behalf. UCL's Brexit Mitigation Group had continued to meet regularly and send out communications to staff and students.

20B **Erasmus**

20B.1 Professor Smith had informed the Secretary of State for Education of UCL's concerns about the Erasmus scheme as UK's continued participation after exit from the EU would depend on the terms of the exit deal.

20C **Augar Review of Fees and Funding**

20C.1 It was anticipated that the review would be published after 29 March 2019, which was the deadline for the UK to leave the EU.

20D **Independent Review of the TEF**

20D.1 The government had launched an independent review of the TEF led by Dame Shirley Pearce. The Russell Group was questioning whether the future purpose of the TEF was for student information or about enhancement and both areas were considered to be problematic [*see Minute 25.1 below*].

21 **PRINCIPAL THEME THREE REPORT: VICE-PROVOST (RESEARCH) ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL**

[PAPER 2-13 (18-19)]

21.1 **Received** – the above annual report, introduced by the Vice-Provost (Research), Professor David Price.

21.2 The annual report demonstrated the significant progress UCL had made towards of the objectives of Principal Theme 3. The following areas were highlighted:

- UCL was in the top ten in global citation rankings as of January 2019, having overtaken UCLA;
- UCL's research grant and contract income had increased by 3.6% to £476.3m in 2017-18;
- The 2019 UCL Research Strategy was formally approved by Council;
- UCL had achieved awards through the Global Challenges Research Fund (GCRF) that amounted to more than £30m at February 2019, and also received an allocation of £4.8m in QR GCRF in 2018-19;
- The new Academic Careers Framework which included a broad range of measures to recognise cross-disciplinarity and disruptive, creative thinking, was used for the first time in UCL's 2018 academic promotions process;
- UCL was leading the Open Science agenda with almost 70,000 full-text Open Access records deposited in UCL Discovery, with almost 2.5m downloads in 2017-18;
- UCL had published 95 books and launched an Open Access megajournal, UCL Open, last month;
- UCL was the third most successful recipient of Horizon 2020 funding in the UK (after Oxford and Cambridge) with £210m funding;
- UCL was the most successful university for collaborative research grants in Horizon 2020, with 167 project participations worth over £75m;
- UCL had increased its success rate in research council funding by 7% and the value awarded by 16.8%, taking its total value to £89m; and
- UCL remained in 6th place in a rank order table of the average rankings of current global league table positions.

21.3 The Vice-Chair commended the impressive report on behalf of AC which showed the continued excellence and impact of UCL's research. The report would be considered at the next meeting of Council.

22 **UCL 2034 ENABLER A: ANNUAL REPORT TO COUNCIL**

[PAPER 2-14 (18-19)]

22.1 **Received** – the above report, introduced by the Registrar, Wendy Appleby.

22.2 The annual report at [AC 2-14 \(18-19\)](#) was last year's version that was approved by Council. The new UCL Student Centre was opened by the Vice-Chair as Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs) yesterday, and increased support for student mental health wellbeing would be available. The latest Enabler A report would be submitted for consideration at the next AC meeting.

ACTION: Wendy Appleby, AC Secretary (to note)

23 **STUDENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY**

[PAPER 2-15 (18-19)]

- 23.1 **Received** – the above draft strategy, introduced by the Deputy Director of Student Support and Wellbeing, Lina Kamenova.
- 23.2 The draft UCL Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2019-21 outlined the strategic vision and the six main objectives in establishing a whole-university approach to student health and wellbeing. Work had already started on some of the actions that included: (i) the setting up of a Student Health and Wellbeing Community of Practice; (ii) SSW was working with HR and faculties to make dedicated mental health and suicide prevention training widely available at UCL; and (iii) SSW was also working with the Students' Union to create a student suicide prevention campaign. It was considered that this was a highly important area of work given the incidence of student suicides in the sector.

RESOLVED

- 23.3 That AC approved the draft UCL Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

ACTION: AC members (to note)

24 **LEAD OFFICER REPORT 2017-18: STUDENT SUPPORT AND WELLBEING**

[PAPER 2-15 (18-19)]

- 24.1 **Received** – the above report, introduced by the Deputy Director of Student Support and Wellbeing, Lina Kamenova.
- 24.2 It was considered that the opening of the new UCL Student Centre would make a massive contribution to the student experience at UCL. The design was to a high specification and with the types of support in mind. The student facing staff in SSW had relocated to the Centre from other locations. 2017-18 was the first full year of operating a Student Support and Wellbeing drop-in service and 2,155 students attended drop-in sessions. The feedback from students had been overwhelmingly positive and, coupled with clearer pathways to support and a more visible offer of other types of mental health support, had coincided with a decrease in the number of registrations to Student Psychological and Counselling Services. The Vice-Chair expressed his thanks on behalf of AC to both the Director of SSW and all SSW staff for their hard work in providing student welfare provision at UCL.

25 **TEACHING EXCELLENCE AND STUDENT OUTCOMES FRAMEWORK: UPDATE**

[PAPER 2-25 (18-19)]

- 25.1 **Received** – the draft institutional submission for the subject-level pilot of the TEF, introduced by Dr Clare Goudy, Director of Education Planning.

25.2 UCL was among 50 providers across England taking part in the second subject-level TEF pilot in 2018-19. 26 subject-level submissions had been prepared for review plus an institutional submission and the deadline was 25 February 2019. The institutional response was intended partly as a response to UCL's metrics which indicated an overall bronze rating. Additionally, UCL had to provide evidence of the quality of its teaching and the learning environment against a number of criteria. The draft response included two new sections on grade inflation and BME attainment respectively compared to the submission for the previous exercise. AC members were invited to make any suggestions for amendments following the meeting.

ACTION: AC members (to note)

25.3 It was noted that the submission drafters and UCL Arena colleagues worked hard to produce the 26 submissions in a short and hard timescale to meet the deadline. Writing days were held where attendees also shared best practice. The submissions would be evaluated over July/August and institutions would be subsequently supplied with feedback and their rating. It was noted that given the next round for submissions would start in the Autumn, it did not allow much time for departments to reflect on their statement of findings. It was considered that the ASER follow up meetings would be very important in this regard and that work would need to start before the summer break. UCL had already tried to assess submissions internally to help departments plan for the next round. In terms of the process, it was suggested that the guidance supplied to drafters could be improved and that local issues should be highlighted in the next round. The Vice-Chair expressed his thanks on behalf of AC to both the Director of Education Planning and Arena colleagues as well as all the drafters for all their hard work in preparing the submissions for UCL.

25.1 **Institutional Response to the Independent Review of TEF**
[PAPER 2-17 (18-19)]

25.1 **Received** – the above draft response, introduced by the Director of Education Planning, Dr Clare Goudy.

25.2 The independent review of the TEF had made a call for views that would inform its work and the design of the future TEF process. The closing date for responses was 1 March 2019 and UCL's first draft response to the questions was at AC 2-17 (18-19). Within the UCL response:

- the production of benchmarked metrics to enable institutions to determine enhancement priorities was welcomed;
- concerns about the regulation of enhancement activity were expressed;
- the importance of engaging with students to determining how the TEF should evolve was noted;
- a move away from a focus on teaching quality was suggested;
- it was proposed that TEF ratings should only be given to providers which performed significantly above their benchmarks or could provide evidence of investment and effort which had not yet translated into metrics; and
- concerns about the current TEF metrics were noted. While using nationally comparable metrics was preferred, AC members commented

that there would need to be increased awareness amongst the student community that providers were not offering equivalent provision and that should be borne in mind when comparing metrics.

RESOLVED:

25.3 That AC endorsed the draft institutional response.

ACTION: AC members (to note)

26 **KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE FRAMEWORK (KEF): UPDATE ON KEF METRICS CONSULTATION PROCESS**

[PAPER 2-18 (18-19)]

26.1 **Received** – an update on the KEF metrics consultation process, introduced by the Director of Knowledge Exchange Policy and Practice, Dr Kathryn Walsh.

26.2 The KEF had two strands of (i) principles and good practice and (ii) metrics for benchmarking an HEI performance in KE. Institutions would be benchmarked against a “peer” group of HEIs and data averaged over 3 years. The proposed metrics had been published as part of the consultation exercise and no new data collection processes were proposed. Using 2016-17 published data, a model of the KEF metrics data for UCL’s peer group had been produced at [AC 2-18 \(18-19\)](#) and revealed some concerns for UCL. UCL Innovation and Enterprise was seeking input to its consultation exercise and had set up a Working Group. Faculties had also been asked to nominate KEF Data Champions. UCL had not been selected to participate in the pilot exercise but it was in close contact with those selected institutions in its peer group such as Imperial and Sheffield about the pilot developments.

27 **PREVENT AT UCL**

[PAPER 2-19 (18-19)]

27.1 **Received** – the annual update report on Prevent at UCL, introduced by the Director of Access and Admissions and UCL Prevent Lead, Bella Malins.

27.2 Since the last report to AC, the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech had been revised along with a new separate procedure on the management of events that included external speakers. In 2017-18 session, 413 staff were trained on the Prevent Duty and its implementation at UCL. A new online training package had been developed and would go live shortly. All student facing staff would be encouraged to undertake this training. A few departments had not trained any student facing staff and the relevant Faculty Deans and Faculty Managers would be notified. UCL had also come under close scrutiny from OfS on its implementation of the Prevent Duty and was expecting the outcome of its 2018 monitoring return next month.

Other matters for approval or information
--

28 **LEAD OFFICER REPORT 2017-18: CAREERS AND EMPLOYABILITY**

[PAPER 2-20 (18-19)]

28.1 **Received** – the Careers and Employability Lead Officer report for 2017-18 session.

29 **LEAD OFFICER REPORT 2017-18: STUDENT ACCOMMODATION**

[PAPER 2-21 (18-19)]

29.1 **Received** – the Student Accommodation Lead Officer report for 2017-18 session.

30 **ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2017-18: EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

[PAPER 2-22 (18-19)]

30.1 **Received** – the Education Committee Annual Report for 2017-18 session.

31 **ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2017-18: STUDENT EXPERIENCE COMMITTEE**

[PAPER 2-23 (18-19)]

31.1 **Received** – the Student Experience Committee Annual Report for 2017-18 session.

32 **ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2017-18: STUDENT RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS AND FUNDING COMMITTEE**

[PAPER 2-24 (18-19)]

32.1 **Received** – the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee Annual Report for 2017-18 session.

33 **REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS ETC OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

33.1 **Received** – AC officers had received the following sets of minutes since the last meeting of AC:

- Education Committee – 2 October 2018
- Library Committee – 16 October 2018
- Research Degrees Committee – 9 October 2018 (unconfirmed)
- Research Governance Committee – 19 July 2018
- Student Experience Committee – 13 November 2018 (unconfirmed).

34 **DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

34.1 The dates of upcoming AC meetings were as follows:

- **Monday 24 June 2019, 10.00am**
- **Thursday 14 November 2019, 10.00am.**

DERFEL OWEN

Director of Academic Services and Secretary to Academic Committee

Tel: +44 (0)20 3108 8209; Internal ext. 58209

E-mail: d.owen@ucl.ac.uk

May 2019