^血UCL

Academic Committee

Thursday 23rd June 2022 at 10:00am
Video-conferencing meeting via MS Teams

Minutes

Present Members:
President and Provost (Chair); Professor Ibrahim Abubakar; Professor Simon Banks; Professor Stella Bruzzi; Professor Jon Butterworth; Ms Sarah Cowls; Professor Duncan Craig; Ms Yasmeen Daoud; Mr Ashley Doolan; Professor Dame Hazel Genn; Dr Christine Hoffmann; Professor Jennifer Hudson; Mr Zak Liddell; Professor Ivan Parkin; Professor Hynek Pikhart; Professor Geraint Rees; Professor Aeli Roberts; Mr Mike Rowson; Professor David Shanks; Professor Sam Smidt; Professor Anthony Smith; Professor Olga Thomas; Professor Li Wei

Apologies:
Professor Kathy Armour; Dr Paul Ayris; Professor David Bogle; Professor Clare Brooks; Mr Simon Cane; Dr Julie Evans; Dr Hugh Goodacre; Professor Arne Hofmann; Professor Christoph Lindner; Professor David Lomas; Ms Viktoria Makai; Dr Helen Matthews; Dr Meera Nath Sarin; Dr Ruth Siddall; Dr Justin Siefker; Dr Hazel Smith; Professor Alan Thompson; Dr Eleanor Tillett; Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker; Ms Kirsty Walker

In attendance:
For Minutes 17-30: Dr Clare Goudy, Chief of Staff, President and Provost's Office
For Minute 21: Professor David Price, Professor of Mineral Physics and former Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation and Global Engagement)
For Minute 23: Ms Hannah Swallow, Compliance Manager, Student and Registry Services

Officer:
Ms Rachel Port

Part I: Preliminary Business

17. Minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2022

17.1. Academic Committee (AC) approved the minutes of the meeting held on 3 March 2022 [Minutes 1-16, 2021-22].

18.   Matters arising from the Minutes

18.1. There were no matters arising.

19.   Academic Committee Constitution (2-12)

19.1. The AC Secretary introduced the paper on proposed changes to the committee's constitution. The key points made were:
   a. The recent Academic Board (AB) elections had drawn attention to the fact that the wording "Eight academic staff - including at least one professor and one non-professor from each School…" in the AC constitution was now out of date because UCL no longer had its former School structures of BEAMS, IOE, SLASH and SLMS.
   b. If AC wished to continue with the current arrangement, the faculty groupings would need to be listed instead of indicating the Schools.
   c. It was noted that the Institute of Education (IoE) was a single-department faculty and that AC might consider the appropriateness that two of the eight elected places be assigned to the IoE, given the structural justification that applied when UCL had four Schools had changed.

19.2. The following points were made in discussion:
   a. It was suggested that there could be three faculty groupings with the IoE joining the faculties of Arts and Humanities, Social and Historical Sciences and Laws.
   b. However, it was noted that the AB elections had been held with two IoE staff members having been nominated to serve on AC for 2022-24.
   c. In light of this, it was proposed that the three faculty groupings be created within the AC constitution and that further discussion on whether the two elected places assigned to the IoE be retained, or that there be two places for the new grouping as a whole, take place nearer the time of the AB elections in 2024.

19.3. AC:
   a. Agreed that its constitution be amended to reflect three faculty groupings for its eight academic staff elected by and from AB.
   b. Agreed that further discussion on the two elected places assigned to the IoE take place ahead of the AB elections in 2024.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

20.   Strategic Plan Consultation and Development: End of Phase 2 Engagement and Feedback report

20.1. Professor Geraint Rees, Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation and Global Engagement (RIGE)), introduced the engagement and feedback report on the

end of Phase 2 of the consultation to develop the 2022-27 UCL Strategic Plan. The key points made were:

a. The consultation process, which launched in October 2021, had now published six of the seven discussion papers to the UCL community.

b. Feedback had been received from across the UCL community that provided valuable ideas and critique to shape the discussion papers as well as the draft Plan itself.

c. The final consultation paper would be published shortly and would focus on the size and shape that the institution might plan for to support its academic objectives.

d. It was intended that the draft Strategic Plan be published in Autumn 2022 with a view to it being finalised for launch in early 2023.

21.   UCL REF2021 Results (2-14)

21.1. Professor David Price, former Vice-Provost (RIGE)), introduced the paper on UCL's REF2021 results. The key points made were:

a. UCL had produced a strong performance in its results and was placed 2nd behind Oxford in terms of its research power and was ahead of Cambridge.

b. The submission process had involved a huge amount of work for researchers and professional services support staff across all departments. Professor Price also expressed his thanks to those who acted as Unit of Assessment (UoA) Leads as well as those who served as Main Panel members and/or as assessors.

c. UCL's research received a grade point average (GPA) of 3.50 out of 4 and 92.5% of UCL's research was graded 4* and 3*.

d. In the overall assessment, the UCL submissions with the highest percentage of overall 4* work were from Computer Science, Institute of the Americas, Chemistry, Law and History of Art.

e. The UCL REF2021 data including the comparators data was now available on UCL Tableau.

f. In terms of areas for improvement, UCL would avoid submitting 2* and 1* work in future and ensure consistent environment scores. It would also work to support increases in quality of research outputs in those UoAs with relatively lower GPA.

21.2. The following points were made in discussion:

a. Professor Rees, as the incoming Vice-Provost, expressed his congratulations to his predecessor Professor Price and UCL's REF Team for all their work in preparing UCL's submissions.

b. UCL needed to start to move forward in its preparations for the next REF exercise. RIGE would be able to help departments with their submissions and the REF Impact Team would remain in place.

   c. In terms of the environment statement, it was noted that some parts of UCL performed less well in this area and that a strong narrative was required as it did not just cover the physical environment.

   d. UCL's environment scores under Main Panel D were lower than expected and it was considered that future research strategy was under-developed in some of UCL's submissions.

   e. It was anticipated that the environment statement requirements would focus on research integrity and culture in the next REF exercise.

   f. Feedback on UoA 3 (Allied Health Professions, Dentistry, Nursing and Pharmacy) was considered to be unhelpful with no clear indicators for areas to improve. While no further formal feedback would be provided, it was suggested that the UoA Lead could seek further information informally from one of the Main Panel A members.

   g. It was noted that while UCL's REF2021 results had been widely publicised to the UCL community, it was suggested that a formal presentation of the REF results might be made to AB. It was further suggested that the results of the current exercise as well as UCL's approach to preparing submissions in the future be covered.

   h. AC expressed their sincere thanks to Professor Price for all his work as Vice-Provost over the past 15 years and wished him well for the future.

21.3. AC:

   a. Agreed that the AC Secretary liaise with the AB Secretary about the timing for a presentation on UCL's REF2021 results and preparations for the next exercise at one of the scheduled AB meetings next session.

22. VP RIGE Report on UCL Research Strategy Development and Implementation (2-15)

22.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

22.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

23. Updated UCL Student Protection Plan 2022-23 (2-16)

23.1. Ms Hannah Swallow, Compliance Manager, introduced the updated UCL Student Protection Plan 2022-23. The key points made were:

   a. The Office for Students (OfS) required all its registered higher education providers to publish a Student Protection Plan that is reviewed and refreshed on a regular basis.

   b. The updated version had been brought more into line with the recommended OfS template.

   c. It was intended that the Plan be further improved and updated over the coming years. In 2022-23 session it was intended that an engagement

exercise would be undertaken with students to obtain their feedback on the readability of the Plan.

  d. Subject to AC approval it would be submitted to Council and Students' Union UCL before being submitted to the OfS for final approval.

23.2. AC:
  a. Approved the updated UCL Student Protection Plan 2022-23.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

24. OfS Conditions of Registration and Reportable Events – Academic Committee Responsibilities (2-17)

24.1. AC approved the report on OfS Conditions of Registration and Reportable Events - Academic Committee Responsibilities.

25. New Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) Qualification (2-18)

25.1. AC approved the new Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) qualification.

26. Annual Report on New Programmes of Study at UCL approved in 2021-22 session (2-19)

26.1. AC received the annual report on new programmes of study at UCL approved in 2021-22 session.

27. Lead Officer Report for session 2020-21 - Careers and Employability (2-20)

27.1. AC received the Lead Officer Report: Careers and Employability 2020-21.

28. Lead Officer Report for session 2020-21 - Student Support and Wellbeing

28.1. AC received the Lead Officer Report: Student Support and Wellbeing 2020-21.

29. Reports of sub-committees, working groups etc of AC

29.1. AC received the following sets of minutes:
  a. The minutes of Education Committee, 10th February 2022; 8th March 2022; 7 April 2022; 26 April 2022;
  b. The minutes of Internal Quality Review Panel, 27th January 2022; 12th April 2022;

c. The minutes of Library Committee, 5th April 2022;

d. The minutes of Research Degrees Committee, 14th March 2022;

e. The minutes of Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee, 14th December 2021; 8th March 2022.

30.   Dates of the meetings in 2022-23 session

30.1. The meetings of Academic Committee in 2022-23 session would be held on:
Thursday 17th November 2022;
Thursday 2nd March 2023;
Thursday 6th July 2023;
All meetings to be held virtually at 10:00am on MS Teams.

Ms Rachel Port
Governance Manager: Research Integrity, Office of General Counsel
August 2022