



COUNCIL

Tuesday 4 June 2019

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Dame DeAnne Julius (*Chair*)

Professor Michael Arthur (*President and Provost*)

Mr Dominic Blakemore

Professor Annette Dolphin

Dr Andrew Gould

Ms Lindsay Nicholson

Professor Hynek Pikhart

Mr Philip Sturrock

Baroness Valentine (*Vice-Chair*)

Mr Minto Bhandari

Professor Lucie Clapp

Dr Martin Fry

Professor Patrick Haggard

Mr Turlogh O'Brien

Lord (John) Sharkey

Mr Justin Turner QC

In attendance: Ms Wendy Appleby (Secretary to Council); Ms Anne Marie O'Mullane (Assistant Secretary to Council); *For Minutes 112-123:* Dame Nicola Brewer (Vice-Provost (International)); Dr Celia Caulcott (Vice-Provost (Enterprise & London)); Mr Philip Harding (Director of Finance & Business Affairs); Professor David Price (Vice-Provost (Research)); Ms Fiona Ryland (Chief Operating Officer); Mr Richard Jackson (Director of Sustainability and Communications) (*for Minute 113*); Ms Francesca Fryer, Director of Estates (*for Minute 113*); Professor Geraint Rees (Dean, Faculty of Life Sciences and Chair of the UCL Environmental Sustainability Steering Group) (*for Minute 113*); Professor Sasha Roseneil (Dean, Faculty of Social & Historical Sciences) (*for Minute 114*); Professor Alan Penn (Dean, Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment) (*for Minute 115*); Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker (Dean, Faculty of Engineering Sciences) (*for Minute 115*); Professor Ivan Parkin (Dean, Faculty of Mathematical & Physical Sciences) (*for Minute 115*); Professor Paola Lettieri (Academic Director, UCL East) (*for Minute 122*); Mr Kalyan Casal (Director Turner and Townsend) (*for Minute 122*).

Apologies for absence were received from: Ms Sarah Whitney, Professor Andrew Wills; Ms Lori Houlihan; Professor David Lomas, and Professor Anthony Smith.

Key to abbreviations used in these Minutes:

BEAMS	School of the Built Environment, Engineering, and Mathematical and Physical Sciences
EPSRC	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IAS	Institute for Advanced Study
JEP	USS Joint Expert Panel

JEP2	Phase Two of the USS Joint Expert Panel
NSS	National Student Survey
OfS	Office for Students
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PRM	Prevent Review Meeting
PTES	Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey
SEPPP	School of Economics, Politics and Public Policy
SSEES	School of Slavonic and Eastern European Studies
SLASH	School of Laws, Arts and Humanities and Social and Historical Science
SLMS	School of Life Sciences and Medical Sciences
USS	Universities Superannuation Scheme
UCU	University and College Union
UUK	Universities UK

108. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

108.1 No interests were declared.

109. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

109.1 **Approved:** The minutes of the meeting held on 2 May 2019 [*Council Minutes 94-107, 2018-19*] subject to an amendment to Minute 107.1 providing additional information on the individuals who had had access to the draft Visitor's Report.

110. MATTERS ARISING

110A SLMS Annual Report [Minute 102, 2018-19]

110A.1 The Chair updated Council on the response to queries raised at the last meeting regarding consultation with academic staff prior to their work being licenced to other entities: their work would not be used if they objected. Any outstanding questions about this matter would be resolved by the VP Health and the Provost with the Council member raising the concern.

Matters for Discussion

111. PROVOST'S BUSINESS

111A EU student funding

111A.1 EU students commencing university in England in the 2020/21 academic year would have guaranteed home fee status and financial support for the duration of their course.

111B Admissions 2019/20

- 111B.1 The latest admissions statistics indicated that, while there would naturally be variation across disciplines, the vast majority of places at UCL would be filled with high quality students in 2019/20.

111C Augar Report

- 111C.1 The publication of the Augar Report had occurred at a time of political change and it would fall to Mrs May's successor to determine whether the recommendations would be taken forward. Primary legislation and the approval of Treasury were also required in order to implement key elements of the recommendations, which were therefore far from certain to be adopted. The recommendations included the lowering the undergraduate tuition fee cap to £7,500 with the reinstatement of the teaching grant providing additional income to HEIs for higher-cost subjects. There would be a reintroduction of the means-tested maintenance grant and the removal of interest on loans during the period of study. Overall, graduates would be making higher total repayments for longer than under the current structure due to the reduction in the repayment threshold from £25,725 to £23,000 and the extension of the repayment period from 30 to 40 years. Lifetime repayments would be capped at 1.2 times the original loan amount.

111D Communities of Practice award

- 111D.1 UCL's Communities of Practice had won a national award for the best organisational development and culture change initiative at the 2019 Universities Human Resources Awards for Excellence in HR.

111E University Rankings

- 11E.1 UCL had placed eighth in the QS World University Rankings 2020.

111F Masters Level Apprenticeships

- 111F.1 UCL had been registered as a degree apprenticeship provider for the delivery of Masters level apprenticeships; initial higher level apprenticeship programme would be in space science and ophthalmology.

111G Exams

- 111G.1 There had been approximately 100,000 individual sittings of examinations at UCL in the 2019 examinations period, the vast majority of which had taken place at the Excel Centre. The Provost thanked the team that organised and supported this activity, including all those involved in marking.

111H IHRA Definition

- 111H.1 The Provost summarised plans to bring to Council for approval a comprehensive proposal for the adoption of definitions of anti-Semitism, Islamophobia and racism. Further consultation with the UCL community would first be required.

112. USS – CONSULTATION ON 2018 VALUATION

[Paper 6-85, 2018-19]

- 112.1 **Received:** The draft consultation response for submission to UUK. The Director of Finance & Business Affairs provided an analysis of the options set out in the consultation document and the views expressed by staff. 371 comments had been received from staff, with 38% responding on the basis of what was understood to be a UCU template response challenging the requirement for 'de-risking'; and 18% rejecting all options/no preference. There was therefore a 56% majority not favouring any option. A significant minority (32%) were in favour of Option 3.
- 112.2 At its annual conference, UCU had passed a number of motions relating to its no-detriment position, and a new General Secretary had been appointed. It was now expected that the UCU would ask institutions to confirm whether they would limit members' contributions to 8% or meet the costs for additional contributions. If they did not do so, there would be a ballot for strike action in September 2019.
- 112.3 There were indications that the Pensions Regulator had concerns about Option 3 and the 2018 valuation; it was expected that USS would be working hard to address those concerns. As UUK had given permission to UCL to submit a consultation response after the deadline, UCL would be in a position to know how other employers had responded.
- 112.4 Council discussed the options and the feedback provided by staff, as well as the risks associated with returning a response in favour of no option. Council members expressed their disappointment that there was not a clear option based on JEP2, which was its preferred position. Council therefore gave its reluctant support to Option 3, as it contained the cost until JEP2 had completed its work, thereby leading to a position where JEP could be delivered. By rejecting all three options there was a risk of a default approach of Option 1 being pursued due to a lack of a clear mandate for UUK to follow.

RESOLVED:

- 112.5 **To approve the draft consultation response text subject to the following changes to the text:**
- insertion of the word "**strong**" before "**support**" in paragraph one to emphasise UCL's support for the JEP recommendations;
 - insertion of the word "**unwilling**" before "**accept**" in paragraph 3;

- In the final paragraph, after the phrase “*We therefore offer reluctant support for option 3,*” to insert the following: “*because it provides the best option to allow JEP2 to continue its important work, and to deliver a longer-term recommendation for USS. Our view is therefore consistent with the strong support expressed for JEP in our previous responses. Moreover, we explicitly reject the unacceptable increases associated with option 1*”.¹

113. UCL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY 2019-24

[Paper 6-86, 2018-19]

113.1 **Received:** the draft UCL Sustainability Strategy 2019-24. Professor Geraint Rees (Chair of the UCL Environmental Sustainability Steering Group) and Mr Richard Jackson (Director of Sustainability and Communications) provided a presentation on the key principles underpinning the Strategy.

113.2 The Strategy was divided into two parts:

- *Foundations:* A programme of measures aimed at further embedding sustainability into UCL’s systems, processes and culture.
- *Signature Campaigns:* There were three signature programmes, ‘Positive Climate’, ‘The Big Switch’ and ‘Wild Bloomsbury’. The ‘Positive Climate’ campaign had the aim of UCL achieving a carbon-neutral position by 2024 and zero carbon by 2030, as well as to inspire and enable climate change action and research. The ‘Big Switch’ campaign related to UCL’s relationship with the material world and revolved around buying, using, and discarding products and the sharing and reusing of equipment. ‘Wild Bloomsbury’ addressed issues of resilience and interaction with UCL’s neighbouring community.

113.3 Council welcomed the draft Strategy. In response to queries and comments from members, Mr Jackson confirmed that UCL was working with its partners, and indeed was reliant on partnership for delivery of certain goals. There was a plan to procure green electricity, which could be achieved relatively quickly. Procurement of green gas however was more complicated and was still being investigated. SMT had discussed the significant opportunities in the supply chain for saving and offsetting travel. There was more work to be done about behaviour change concerning the disposal of waste on campus and opportunities around good sustainability practice in laboratories.

RESOLVED:

113.4 **To approve the UCL Sustainability Strategy 2019-24.**

¹ A sub-group comprising of Ms Wendy Appleby, Mr Phil Harding, Ms Fiona Ryland, Mr Andrew Gould and Lord Sharkey had been delegated to finalise the wording at the meeting.

114. **SLASH SCHOOL REPORT**

[Paper 6-87, 2018-19]

[Professor Sasha Roseneil, Dean of the Faculty of Social & Historical Sciences, was in attendance for this item]

- 114.1 **Received:** An annual report from SLASH and SSEES. Professor Sasha Roseneil, Dean of the Faculty of Social & Historical Sciences, gave a presentation on the activities and performance of the School since its last report.
- 114.2 The School had a student population of 7,379 undergraduate students, 3,837 taught postgraduates and 724 PhD students, representing 35% of UCL's student population. The School's contribution was 19% which represented a higher average income contribution of 37% in comparison to the UCL average of 26%. Research funding in Arts and Humanities had risen by 33% in 2018; UCL was the most successful university in Europe in the area of Social Sciences and Humanities for ERC grants. Significant progress was being made on the development of new courses and the School was working hard on education issues, particularly in respect of taught postgraduate students' experience. The School had four out of UCL's five top-scoring departments in the NSS across the key areas of Overall Satisfaction, Teaching, and Assessment and Feedback. The School delivered some significant PGT training activity through two large-scale Doctoral Training Centres. Significant progress had also been made on the development of a new School of Economics, Politics and Public Policy (SEPPP).
- 114.3 In response to questions Professor Roseneil explained that the Institute for Advanced Study (IAS) drew together ten research centres in social sciences and the humanities, functioning as a major hub for interdisciplinary activity.
- 114.4 Council discussed issues relating to the career path for Teaching Fellows, the balance of postgraduate taught and research students, and the working relationship with the Institute for Fiscal Studies in the context of its role in the SEPPP.

115. **BEAMS SCHOOL REPORT**

[Paper 6-88, 2018-19]

[Professor Alan Penn (Dean, Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment), Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker (Dean, Faculty of Engineering Sciences) and Professor Ivan Parkin (Dean, Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences) were in attendance for this item]

- 115.1 **Received:** An annual report and presentation on the activities and performance of BEAMS since its last report.
- 115.2 BEAMS represented a large and diverse grouping of 2,883 staff and 13,630 students. Several areas of the school placed very highly in international league tables; the Bartlett had placed in first position in the QS World ranking based on citations and reputation. Research income was high, with 956 current live awards worth £498m, and the School was particularly successful in generating EPSRC and ERC grants. The School has received a series of

large strategic equipment grants funded by EPSRC. BEAMS would lead on 7 of the new 75 EPSRC Centres for Doctoral Training announced in 2018.

115.3 A number of challenges were discussed, including: volatile NSS and PTES results; widening participation amongst students and achieving the School's Athena Swan ambitions amongst staff; the constraints of space on the Bloomsbury campus, and developing improved ways of working with central services to procure research and industrial contracts quickly. Physics & Astronomy was congratulated for being awarded JUNO champion by the Institute of Physics.

115.4 Professor Penn was due to step down from his role as Dean at the end of August 2019. Council thanked him for his work as Dean in leading the success of UCL in this area over the past decade.

116. OFS LETTER ON FINANCIAL VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

[Paper 6-88, 2018-19]

116.1 **Received:** The Director of Finance and Business Affairs introduced the paper which showed a comparison of student number growth at UCL and across the sector. The OfS letter did not suggest that UCL was at risk in respect of its student numbers forecasts.

Matters for approval or information
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117. REGULATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT

[Paper 6-92, 2018-19]

117.1 In view of the discussion at Minute 121 below, Council agreed to postpone a decision on the matter of the Terms of Reference of the Finance Committee until a future meeting.

118. AUDIT COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

[Paper 6-93, 2018-19]

118.1 **Approved:** On the recommendation of Nominations Committee, the appointment of Professor Annette Dolphin to Audit Committee with effect from 1st October 2019.

119. UCL'S PREVENT REVIEW MEETING SUMMARY AND OUTCOME

[Paper 6-95, 2018-19]

- 119.1 **Received:** UCL's Prevent Review Meeting Summary and Outcome issued to the Chair of Council by the Head of Prevent at the OfS.
- 119.2 Council queried whether the PRM would impact on UCL's risk rating. The Secretary agreed to follow up on this matter.

Action – the Secretary

120. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

- 120.1 The next meeting of Council was scheduled for **Monday 8th July 2019** at 2.00pm in the Council Room.

Wendy Appleby
Secretary to Council
June 2019