



COUNCIL

Tuesday 5 March 2013

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Sir Stephen Wall (*Chair*)

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Mr Ven Balakrishnan | Dr Bob Barber |
| Lord Clement-Jones | Mr Edwin Clifford-Coupe |
| Ms Philippa Foster Back | Professor Malcolm Grant [except for Minute 63] (<i>President and Provost</i>) |
| Mr Mark Knight | Ms Vivienne Parry (<i>Vice-Chair</i>) |
| Mr Simon Melliss (<i>Treasurer</i>) | Dr Gill Samuels |
| Ms Katharine Roseveare | Dr Sarah Snyder |
| Dr Stephanie Schorge | Professor Nick Tyler |
| Professor Chris Thompson | |
| Baroness Warwick | |

In attendance: Mr Andrew Grainger (Director of UCL Estates) [for Minute 62]; Mr Phil Harding (Director of Finance and Business Affairs); Mr Rex Knight (Vice-Provost (Operations)); Ms Bella Malins (Director of Admissions) [for Minute 50]; Ms Lori Manders (Director of Development and Alumni Relations) [for Minute 61]; Mr Nick McGhee (Assistant Secretary to Council); Professor Anthony Smith (Vice-Provost (Education)) [for Minute 51]; Professor Sir John Tooke (Vice-Provost (Health)) [for Minute 52].

Apologies for absence were received from Professor David Attwell, Ms Natasha Gorodnitski, Mr Tim Perry (Secretary to Council), and Professor Maria Wyke.

Key to abbreviations used in these Minutes:

| | |
|-------|--|
| BEAMS | (School of) Built Environment, Engineering, Mathematical and Physical Sciences |
| DARO | Development and Alumni Relations |
| FC | Finance Committee |
| HE | higher education |
| HEFCE | Higher Education Funding Council for England |
| IoE | Institute of Education |
| LETB | Local Education Training Board |
| NIHR | National Institute for Health Research |
| NSP | National Scholarship Programme |
| NSS | National Student Survey |
| OFFA | Office for Fair Access |
| SLASH | School of Laws, Arts and Humanities, and Social and Historical Sciences |
| SLMS | School of Life and Medical Sciences |
| UCLP | UCL Partners |
| UCLU | UCL (Students') Union |

Preliminary Formal Business

46 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Noted

- 46.1 Any member of Council who had (or who knew of a family member who had) a material, personal, financial or other beneficial interest in any item on the Agenda was requested to declare that interest at the beginning of the meeting in order that such declaration could be recorded in these Minutes.
- 46.2 With respect to Minute 54, Dr Bob Barber and Mr Edwin Clifford-Coupe declared that they were Trustees of UCLU.

47 **MINUTES**

Approved

- 47.1 The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 November 2012 [Council Minutes 18-45, 2012-13] were confirmed by Council and signed by the Chair.

48 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

[see also Minutes 50 and 55 below]

Received

- 48.1 APPENDIX C 4/42 (12-13) – an update on Matters Arising at the last meeting.

Matters for discussion

49 **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Received

- 49.1 APPENDIX C 4/43 (12-13) – the Financial Update 2012-13 (January 2013).
- 49.2 An oral update from Mr Phil Harding, Director of Finance and Business Affairs.

Reported

- 49.3 The Q2 update, due to be published shortly, would not indicate any significant change in the headline figures. The forecast surplus for the

year 2012-13 was currently £10.1m, which was more than £9m below budget. The largest single variance resulted from a change in the accounting treatment of HEFCE income used to purchase shares in the Francis Crick Institute.

- 49.4 The Director of Finance and Business Affairs drew the attention of Council members to:
- a positive £6.7m variance in research income, though without additional overheads;
 - a 21% rise in tuition fee income, which was nevertheless £2.8m below budget;
 - a forecast £2m overspend by Professional Services, mostly attributable to ISD;
 - an increase in overall debt, in line with the increase in activity. This included a significant increase in tuition fee debt, mostly accounted for by the increased proportion of fee income due from the Student Loan Company, but also a substantial fall in NHS debt from £24m to £12m over the past year.
- 49.5 The position of BEAMS and SLASH had recovered in the Q2 update, with both schools showing a modest positive variance. The position in SLMS was still adverse but work to remedy this was ongoing.
- 49.6 A number of changes to the presentation of the financial updates were planned for the second quarter, including enhanced detail at faculty level and additional balance sheet information.

Discussion

- 49.7 At its meeting on 24 January 2013 FC had discussed whether, had the proposed budget for 2012-13 been drafted under the revised accounting treatment of the Crick Institute, a surplus of £10m would have been deemed sufficient. FC had also concluded that £19m should remain the target surplus for the current financial year.
- 49.8 It was noted that SLMS had a significant opportunity to develop an additional income stream to take advantage of the requirement for Local Education and Training Boards (LETBs) to provide medical education.
- 49.9 Council discussed the potentially misleading nature of the term 'surplus' in an HE context, as this reflected the source of cashflow and investment, rather than profit. It was nonetheless noted that it was a standard accounting term in the not-for-profit sector. It was further noted that there was a danger of the rise in costs attributed to Professional Services being interpreted as reflecting an increase in central management costs. Work was ongoing to bring Professional Services back within budget, although this was to some extent an inevitable corollary of the increase in levels of activity across the institution.

50 **RISK REGISTER: UCL'S OFFICE FOR FAIR ACCESS (OFFA) TARGETS**

Received

- 50.1 APPENDIX C 4/44 (12-13) – a paper outlining the measures currently being taken to mitigate the risk across the areas covered by UCL's Access Agreement with OFFA.
- 50.2 An oral report from Ms Bella Malins (Director of Admissions).

Reported

- 50.3 The terms of the Access Agreement had been set at a time when UCL had been seeking to charge the maximum £9,000 fee without introducing tuition fee waivers, but prior to the introduction of measures such as the AAB dispensation in respect of student numbers which had militated against the achievement of the targets.
- 50.4 The 18.5% target intake from lower socio-economic groups in 2013/14 was lower than the current year's figure of 19.6% because UCL had performed better than expected in this respect in 2012/13. Nevertheless, the 2013/14 target could not be amended at this stage. UCL's performance had also been better than the benchmark in terms of continuation rates among the target groups.
- 50.5 Participation in the National Scholarship Programme (NSP) was compulsory. The strict criteria of the NSP meant that most institutions had opted to use tuition fee waivers. With the support of the UCLU, UCL had resisted this move, and had been obliged as a result to meet the requirements through accommodation bursaries, the terms of which required that a given proportion of UCL students eligible for NSP were resident in UCL-owned accommodation.

Discussion

- 50.6 Although a minority of departments argued that the terms of the Access Agreement would prevent them from admitting the best students, most departments had requested additional data or clearer guidance on aspects of UCL's admissions policy in order to help them make progress towards meeting the relevant targets. Significant efforts were being made to improve the data made available to departments, and additional support was being provided.
- 50.7 The Camden Academy was evidence of UCL's prioritisation of efforts to raise attainment levels significantly, rather than simply raise aspiration, before entry into Higher Education. The Academy was cited as an opportunity to redefine the relationship between the HE sector and secondary education; UCL was therefore keen to encourage other Russell Group institutions to do the same.
- 50.8 It was suggested that the issue appeared more challenging still if framed in terms of reducing the intake of applicants with high grades from independent schools, rather than increasing state school intake. It was

suggested that the abolition of student number controls for those achieving grades ABB+ at A Level allowed scope for that to happen, although this would be dependent on the extent to which growth came primarily from the overseas sector. The crudity of the data in certain respects – for example in the inclusion of selective schools in the state school figures – was noted.

- 50.9 Council noted the shortcomings of the term ‘outreach’, which was in danger of being misunderstood as analogous to advertising, or as a corollary to public engagement, rather than a fundamental investment in UCL’s future. The importance of liaison with the parents of potential applicants in order to ensure awareness of the full range of degrees was noted. Council members queried the reasons for regarding application rates (as opposed to intake) as significant, and requested that absolute numbers as well as proportions be provided in future data in this area. It was noted that percentages were used for intake data as targets were set against HESA Performance Indicators, which were also reported as percentages.
- 50.10 Council expressed its support for the efforts of the Director of Admissions and the Vice-Provost (Education) in seeking to address this issue. The Provost would be meeting with the Director of OFFA in the coming days, and Council requested an update at the next meeting.

51 VICE-PROVOST (EDUCATION) REPORT

[Council Minute 68, 2011-12]

Received

- 51.1 APPENDIX C 4/45 (12-13) – a report by Professor Anthony Smith, Vice-Provost (Education).
- 51.2 An oral report from the Vice-Provost (Education).

Reported

- 51.3 The National Student Survey (NSS) surveyed all undergraduate students in their final year, with the data being made available on the Unistats¹ website. In response to UCL’s overall satisfaction score falling 3% in the NSS 2012, the Vice-Provost (Education) was working to raise the profile of the issue within UCL, particularly through the committee structure, and to disseminate best practice. Departments with a relatively weak performance in this area had developed action plans, including some potential ‘quick fixes’ in the areas of assessment and timeliness of feedback.
- 51.4 The Student Barometer was a biannual exercise surveying all students, including postgraduates. The methodology permitted greater granularity than the NSS. Historically UCL’s participation rates had been below 20%, but recent work in this area had raised participation to 30%, and was particularly strong (38%) among international students.

¹ <http://unistats.direct.gov.uk/>

Discussion

- 51.5 UCL had introduced a Personal Tutoring Scheme² which required that each undergraduate student have a minimum of five formal meetings with their Personal Tutor in the first year of their course, and three per annum thereafter. Council noted however that there was variability across UCL in how the Personal Tutoring strategy was being applied.
- 51.6 Some of the main areas for concern raised in student feedback were: organisation of assessment; nature and speed of feedback on academic work; libraries; and IT.
- 51.7 UCL's response rate of 64% in the 2012 NSS was the highest on record, which did not suggest a positive correlation between the response rate and the satisfaction levels recorded. Council noted that the tables were dominated by campus universities and relatively small, single-subject institutions. The example of medicine at UCL however demonstrated that it was possible for large programmes to attain a high level of positive feedback; it was noted that in medicine students were traditionally divided into small groups. It was not possible to gauge the effect of NSS / Student Barometer data on recruitment levels with any certainty.
- 51.8 Council noted that it would be useful to be provided with absolute numbers alongside proportions in future reports. More generally, concern was expressed across Council at UCL's relative poor performance, which contrasted with the university's excellent ratings in other fields. The suggestion was made that the matter should be addressed by hiring external consultants. Council decided, however, to continue to have the matter handled internally, as a high priority.
- 51.9 The Chair thanked Professor Smith for his report and reiterated Council's support for the efforts he was making in this area. He noted that this was an area in which Council expected to see UCL making significant improvements. He noted, in particular, the incomplete implementation of UCL's Personal Tutor strategy across the university and that addressing this should be considered a priority.
- 52 **VICE-PROVOST (HEALTH) REPORT**
[Council Minute 72, 2011-12]

Received

- 52.1 APPENDIX C 4/46 (12-13) – a report by Professor Sir John Tooke, Vice-Provost (Health).
- 52.2 An oral report from the Vice-Provost (Health).

² <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/useful-information/personal-tutor>

Reported

- 52.3 The 2010-11 restructure of the School of Life and Medical Sciences (SLMS) had aimed to capitalise on the core strengths of the School. Knowledge Transfer champions and a planning and performance culture had been introduced alongside a range of school-level functions, including an Academic Careers Office and Translational Research Office. Research domains had been introduced to facilitate interaction between colleagues in different disciplines.
- 52.4 SLMS was actively involved in extending its reach and influence through the development of constructive partnerships, such as the Bloomsbury Research Institute (with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine), the Centre for the Advancement of Sustainable Medical Innovation (with the University of Oxford) and the Francis Crick Institute. UCLP was the biggest Academic Health Sciences Network in the UK. SLMS was also working closely with the office of the Vice-Provost (International) to build international strategic partnerships, although the significant opportunity cost of overseas undertakings was noted.

Discussion

- 52.5 Council discussed the mechanisms for handling research overheads in different faculties, and the danger of perceived inequities in this regard. Given that some research grants (for example many NIHR schemes) did not provide overheads, it was inevitable that some areas of academic activity would need to support those in which overheads were not recoverable if they were deemed to be strategically important. The complex issues surrounding SLMS' central contribution rate were discussed. World-class biomedical science was expensive and as full cost recovery was difficult, cross-subsidy was inevitable. The Provost noted that he had been struck by the readiness of Deans outside SLMS to acknowledge the necessity of cross-subsidy in this respect.
- 52.6 With respect to the development of partnerships beyond UCL, it was suggested that as costs rose and areas of outstanding strength attracted increased funding and thereby enabled the attraction of additional high-quality staff, the logical projection for the future of the sector was one in which institutions would develop specialisations, and collaborations with institutions with complementary strengths. The importance of being cognisant of partner institutions' strengths was noted.

53 INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP
[Council Minute 38, 2012-13]

Received

- 53.1 APPENDIX C 4/48 (12-13) – a report from the Steering Group established to consider the proposed Strategic Partnership between UCL and the Institute for Education.

53.2 An oral report by Rex Knight, Vice-Provost (Operations).

Reported

53.3 The proposal was to put the relationship on a more formal basis by establishing a legally non-binding collaboration agreement, with each institution committing to the investment of £100,000 to support the development of the partnership over coming months.

Discussion

53.4 The proposal to established shared services was discussed. It was noted that a number of shared services were already in place, for example the IoE providing training for new teachers at UCL.

RESOLVED

53.5 **That UCL and the Institute of Education enter into a structured Strategic Partnership, embodied in a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding, in accordance with the terms set out in APPENDIX C 4/48 (12-13).**

54 **UCLU IMPACT REPORT**

Received

54.1 APPENDIX C 4/49 (12-13) – the UCLU Impact Report for the academic year 2011/12.

54.2 An oral report by Edwin Clifford-Coupe, Education and Campaigns Officer, UCLU.

Reported

54.3 The format of the report, formerly called the Annual Report, had been revised in an attempt to make it more accessible to members. Mr Clifford-Coupe drew the attention of Council to a number of successes, including the growth of the Student Academic Representatives (StARs) programme and the work of the Rights and Advice Centre.

Discussion

54.4 Noting the 82% satisfaction rate for the Rights and Advice Centre, Council members enquired about the mechanisms for evaluating whether the Union was meeting the needs of the student body in other areas. Mr Clifford-Coupe said that a survey of students was carried out every 3-4 years, and particular groups who were thought to be under-engaging with UCLU were targeted in a proactive way. The impressive 19,000 memberships of clubs and societies were noted. Council members encouraged UCLU to pursue their efforts to improve student participation rates in elections and other tests of student opinion.

Matters for approval or information

55 **AMENDMENT OF UCL CHARTER**

[Council Minute 28, 2012-13]

Noted

55.1 The Charter of UCL included the following:

23. The Council may by Special Resolution alter, amend, repeal or add to this Our Charter...

24. ...the resolution shall be of no effect unless it is confirmed by a further Special Resolution passed at a meeting of the Council held not less than one month nor more than four months after the date of the first resolution...

55.2 Council had made an initial Special Resolution in respect of the proposed amendment of the Charter at its meeting on 28 November 2012.

Received

55.3 APPENDIX C 4/51 (12-13) – a note by the Director of Legal Services, proposing amendments to article 4(17) of the Charter.

RESOLVED (by Special Resolution)

55.4 That amendments to the Charter of UCL be approved as follows:

1 to delete Article 4(17) and replace with:

“17 To co-operate or work with other institutions and individuals and to award joint degrees or other awards.”

2 to insert as Article 4(18) the following text which currently forms part of Article 4(17):

“18 To amalgamate with colleges, schools or other educational or research institutions with the same or similar charitable purposes.”

3 to renumber Articles 4(18) to 4(21) as Articles 4(19) to 4(22),

and to request that Her Majesty approve these amendments subject to any further amendments as may be required by Her Majesty.

56 **REGULATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT – PROPOSED AMENDMENT**

Received

- 56.1 APPENDIX C 4/52 (12-13) with Annexe 1 – a note by the Secretariat, introducing proposed amendments to UCL Regulations for Management.

RESOLVED

- 56.2 **That Council approve the amendments to Regulations for Management 3.2(a)(ii) and 11.1 set out at Annexe 1 to APPENDIX C 4/52 (12-13).**

57 **UCLU – REPORT ON COMPLIANCE WITH EDUCATION ACT 1994 SECTION 22**

Received

- 57.1 APPENDIX C 4/53 (12-13) – a report by the UCLU General Manager setting out the current arrangements in respect of the requirements of Section 22 of the Education Act 1994.

58 **HEFCE ANNUAL ASSURANCE RETURN**

Received

- 58.1 APPENDIX ^{*3} C 4/54 (12-13) – the HEFCE annual assurance return 2012.

59 **CHAIR'S ACTION ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL**

Received

- 59.1 APPENDIX C 4/55 (12-13) with * Annexes 1-6 – a note summarising action taken by the Chair since the last report to Council.

60 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Noted

- 60.1 Wednesday 10 April 2013 at 4pm.

Nick McGhee
Assistant Secretary to Council
March 2013

³ An appendix reference preceded by an asterisk indicates that, for the sake of economy, the document was not issued with the Agenda but is filed with these Minutes.