



COUNCIL

Monday 7 October 2013

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Sir Stephen Wall (*Chair*)

Professor Michael Arthur
(*President and Provost*)
Mr Mohammed Zayyan Butt
Ms Philippa Foster-Back
Mr Keir Gallagher
Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia
Ms Katharine Roseveare
Dr Stephanie Schorge
Baroness Warwick

Professor David Attwell
Mr Ven Balakrishnan
Lord Clement-Jones
Dr Martin Fry
Ms Carol Lake
Mr Simon Melliss (*Treasurer*)
Dr Gill Samuels
Professor Nick Tyler
Professor Maria Wyke

In attendance: Ms Nicola Arnold (Director of Financial Control and Analysis); Mr Rex Knight (Vice-Provost (Operations)); Ms Denise Long (Director of Student Support and Wellbeing) [for Minute 9]; Mr Nick McGhee (Assistant Secretary to Council); Mr Nigel Percival (Operations Director, Office for International Affairs) [for Minute 21]; Mr Tim Perry (Secretary to Council) and Professor David Price (Vice-Provost (Research)) [for Minute 7].

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Vivienne Parry and Professor Chris Thompson.

Key to abbreviations used in these Minutes:

BBSRC	Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council
BEAMS	School of the Built Environment, Engineering Sciences, and Mathematical and Physical Sciences
BIS	Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
DARO	Development and Alumni Relations
EPSRC	Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council
ESRC	Economic and Social Research Council
FTE	full-time equivalent
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IRIS	Institutional Research Information Service
LSHTM	London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine
MAPS	Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NERC	Natural Environment Research Council
NIHR	National Institute for Health Research
NSS	National Student Survey
RAE	Research Assessment Exercise
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SLMS	School of Life and Medical Sciences
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPS	Student Psychological Services
THE	Times Higher Education

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

1 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Noted

- 1.1 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. No such interests were declared.

2 COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE; CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP; STANDING ORDERS

Received

- 2.1 APPENDIX C 1/01 (13-14) (with Annexes 1-3) – Council's terms of reference, constitution and membership for the session 2013-14, and a note by the Secretary on Council Standing Orders.

3 RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

Received

- 3.1 APPENDIX C 1/02 (13-14) – guidance on the role and responsibilities of members of Council.

4 MINUTES

4A Council: minutes of the last meeting

Approved

- 4A.1 The Minutes of the Council meeting held on 9 July 2013 [*Council Minutes 90-122, 2012-13*] were confirmed by Council and signed by the Chair.

4B Finance Committee minutes

Received

- 4B.1 Draft Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 23 September 2013, for information.

5 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

[see also Minutes 9 and 17 below]

5A **Statute 18**

[Council Minute 99, 2012-13]

Discussion

5A.1 An enquiry was raised regarding the proposed timetable for further discussion of the reform of Statute 18. Attention was drawn to Council's duty, under Article 17 of the Charter of UCL, to consider Statutes and Regulations proposed by Academic Board. The Chair, advising that it was important for the new Provost to develop a view of the matter, confirmed that Council would consider it in due course. In the meantime, the Provost would report on the matter to the meeting of Academic Board on 23 October 2013.

5B **UCL Business**

[Council Minute 94.5, 2012-13]

Discussion

5B.1 Council had previously discussed a need for additional information on the operations of UCL Business (UCLB). Dr Stephanie Schorge asked that any Council members with views on the nature of the information required in order to enable them to develop an overview of UCLB's activities contact her outside the meeting. It was noted that a presentation from UCLB was scheduled for the Finance Committee meeting of 14 November 2013.

Matters for discussion

6 **PROVOST'S BUSINESS**

Received

6.1 An oral report from Professor Michael Arthur, President and Provost.

Noted

6.2 In his Lunch Hour Lecture on 3 October, the Provost had outlined his initial thoughts on key strategic priorities on which UCL would need to focus in order to build on its success and reputation, and to meet the challenges ahead. Council members would be provided with an online link to the Provost's lecture¹.

¹

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/stream/media/swatch?v=7eb6f753e244>

Reported

- 6.3 The Provost, paying tribute to the achievements of his predecessor, Professor Sir Malcolm Grant, cited UCL's strong values, as reflected in the Council White Paper, its outstanding research performance, and its interdisciplinary strengths as platforms on which a world-leading position could be developed and sustained. An SMT away day, also involving a number of Council members and senior UCL officers, had been scheduled for late November 2013 with a view to further developing and articulating UCL's long-term strategy.
- 6.4 The Provost identified the following for priority attention:
- UCL faced a range of acute and medium-term **estate** issues, the standard of some student accommodation being a particular cause for concern;
 - there was an urgent need, reinforced by UCL's disappointing results in the latest National Student Survey, to ensure that the UCL **student experience** matched the high quality of the university's research performance;
 - despite good progress in achieving the aims of the Athena Swan charter, there was a clear need for more rapid progress towards **equality** and **diversity** targets. Each Dean would be asked to sign up to a key objective in this area;
 - further development of student **access** and **widening participation** strategy and approaches was needed;
 - the need to develop a distinctive **International Strategy** consistent with both UCL's values and its global ambitions. It was noted that the post of Vice-Provost (International) would be advertised externally in the near future;
 - the need to encourage **partnerships** with industry and business, and to promote entrepreneurship. The importance of developing local partnerships with other HEIs was also noted;
 - the opportunity for **London** to become the principal destination globally for Higher Education, and the development of UCL's role in this context;
 - strengthening the **lifelong community** of UCL particularly through alumni development;
 - the need for increased senior academic input to the **planning** process and to address the key strategic issue of the optimal size of UCL;
 - a review of **academic governance**, with particular reference to the role of Academic Committee, drawing on a piece of work recently carried out by the Vice-Provost (Education);
 - UCL's approach to a potential development opportunity at the **Olympic Park**.
- 6.5 On the question of a possible development at Stratford, the Provost saw this primarily as an opportunity to develop new activity, for example in the areas of industrial collaboration and student entrepreneurship. Some preliminary partnership discussions had begun with the Vice-Provost (Enterprise) chairing a steering group. The Provost anticipated being in a position to ask Council, at its meeting on 27 November 2013, to

authorise UCL to proceed towards developing a Memorandum of Understanding but with no financial commitment being sought at this stage.

- 6.6 The Provost identified a need to ensure alignment between the academic community, the Senior Management Team and the Council. To that end, he proposed that academic Vice-Provosts henceforth be invited to be in attendance at Council meetings, in order both to help ensure that Council and SMT were well aware of each other's concerns, and to enable the academic Vice-Provosts to contribute their expertise to Council discussions.

Discussion

- 6.7 Council supported the proposal to invite academic Vice-Provosts to attend future meetings. They would not be Council members.
- 6.8 UCL's performance in the 2013 NSS, while disappointing overall, was highly variable, with some subject areas performing well. It was suggested that performance might be improved in future if a higher percentage of students completed the survey. Council noted that a culture change was needed at UCL to guard against complacency about NSS results, in the context of a strong research performance and buoyant student recruitment.
- 6.9 The need for UCL to take account of the findings of staff, as well as student, surveys was noted.
- 6.10 Council discussed methods of giving teaching due weight in career progression, including the revision of the promotions criteria or the creation of an electronic record of teaching, on the model of the IRIS system for research outputs. The promotions process also raised important equality issues in that there was continuing evidence to suggest that female academic staff were less likely to put themselves forward for promotion.
- 6.11 It was suggested that a review of academic governance should include a review of Academic Board as well as Academic Committee.

RESOLVED

- 6.12 **That academic Vice-Provosts be invited to be in attendance at Council meetings henceforth.**

7 VICE PROVOST (RESEARCH) REPORT

Received

- 7.1 APPENDIX C 1/04 (13-14) – a report by Professor David Price, Vice-Provost (Research).

Reported

- 7.2 UCL had achieved an 11% increase in its research spend over the past 12 months, with grant awards from the EPSRC and ESRC reaching record levels. The overall level of new awards had surpassed £400m, so it was reasonable to predict further growth in research spend for at least the next two years. The rapid growth in the numbers of contracted researchers from 1,900 to 2,500 over the past five years was likely to continue, with clear implications for space.
- 7.3 The REF submission at the end of November was currently expected to include 2,305 FTE staff, which equated to 95% of those eligible for selection as research active. This represented an increase of 25% over the RAE 2008. With reference to a recent report² in the Times Higher Education (THE) on the appointment of 0.2FTE academic staff in advance of the REF census date (of 31 October 2013), Professor Price reported that UCL had 43 such staff, of whom only a few had a contract due to end in the current calendar year.
- 7.4 UCL had fallen four places (from seventeenth to twenty-first) in the THE World University Rankings 2013-14. This was principally due to a methodological change and probably reflected to some extent a relative lack of public awareness of UCL overseas and/or confusion over the University of London structure, particularly in South-East Asia.
- 7.5 Professor Price noted a shift in government funding methodology from the recurrent model towards one-off capital grants. This had clear implications for the planned use of any surplus.

Discussion

- 7.6 The Office of the Vice-Provost (Research) was working with Human Resources and its Organisational Development team to implement a career development programme for contract researchers. It was suggested that funds should be made available to provide temporary research assistant support for staff returning from maternity leave.
- 7.7 Although Professor Price felt that UCL's approach to the issue of Open Access had been vindicated by the findings of the Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) Committee in September 2013³, this had not changed government policy. RCUK retained its preference for the Gold Access route, and UCL had made provision for appropriate funding to address this.

² <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/news/twenty-per-cent-contracts-rise-in-run-up-to-ref/2007670.article>
³ <http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/business-innovation-and-skills/news/on-publ-open-access/>

- 7.8 In response to a question on the use of metrics for the evaluation of research effectiveness per head, Professor Price noted that UCL academics published over 6,000 articles a year with an average citation rate of over 20, which put UCL in the top few in Europe and the top 20 in the world. The other reasonable proxy for effectiveness was the RAE weighted grade point average, which in 2008 had placed UCL third in the UK behind Oxford and Cambridge.
- 7.9 UCL's research spend had increased over the past three years despite successive flat cash settlements for the HE sector, so the university was evidently increasing its market share. Although there was no indication of a likely downturn over the next two years, it was reasonable to assume that UCL was approaching its maximum market share. The Provost noted that the flat cash settlement, although generally accepted as a good outcome in difficult circumstances, was insufficient to allow the sector to maintain its international competitiveness in the longer term. It was incumbent upon the sector to make a persuasive case for an increase in funding.
- 7.10 Professor Price identified as particular points of concern:
- the future of EU funding, and the impact of any change in the UK's relationship with Europe;
 - the future of NIHR income;
 - a reduction in income from smaller charities (possibly reflecting a decline in their funding during the recession);
 - an ongoing, comparatively weak performance in winning funding from the BBSRC and NERC.
- 7.11 On the question of income from UK Industry, Council noted that about one-third of UCL's EPSRC grants (totalling c. £80m) had a significant element of industrial funding.
- 7.12 Council thanked Professor Price for an excellent report.

8 FINANCIAL UPDATE

Received

- 8.1 APPENDIX C 1/03 (13-14) – a summary of UCL's financial performance for the year ended 31 July 2013, subject to final consolidation adjustments and audit.
- 8.2 An oral report from the Director of Financial Control and Analysis.

Reported

- 8.3 The draft surplus for the year was £19.2m. This represented a return to the budgeted figure and a rise of £9m on forecasts made during the course of 2012-13. It was likely that the final surplus figure would be marginally higher once the results from subsidiaries had been incorporated.

- 8.4 Total income was over £920m, and was likely to be consolidated at about £940m. The principal reasons for the rise in the forecast surplus since the last update were: an increase in direct research income in SLMS; a lower than expected level of equipment expenditure in BEAMS; and an increase in income and a reduction in costs in Professional Services. There had also been a release in provision for the Gower Street Heat and Power contract.

Discussion

- 8.5 A student member of Council reported a range of problems being experienced at the recently-opened New Hall residence on Caledonian Road. The Vice-Provost (Operations) asked for further detail of the issues outside the meeting. It was noted that the development of New Hall had not been a UCL project; the property had been purchased at a relatively late stage in the development in order to meet an urgent need for additional bed spaces.
- 8.6 The Treasurer reported that Finance Committee had received two updates on student residences over the past year and would be discussing the strategy in this area later in the current academic year. There was a distinction to be made between the issue of ensuring that UCL planned adequately for projected student numbers and determining the appropriate level of cost to students.

9 STUDENT WELFARE UPDATE

[Council Minute 103, 2012-13]

Received

- 9.1 APPENDIX C 1/05 (13-14) – an update on developments in the student welfare area.
- 9.2 An oral report from the Registrar and the Director of Student Support and Wellbeing.

Reported

- 9.3 At its previous meeting Council had received annual Lead Officer reports for three areas, including student welfare. That report drew attention to three areas of concern: the continuing increase in the numbers of UCL students registered with Student Psychological Services and the implications of this for staffing levels in the unit; the future of the NHS practice in Gower Place; the increasing workload for the Rights & Advice unit in the UCL Union, whose responsibilities included advice to students requiring a visa. Council had asked for an update on these issues at its next meeting and the document now before Council reported positive developments in all three areas.
- 9.4 The start of the new academic year had also seen the introduction of restructured student support arrangements centred on UCL Student and Registry Services and, in particular, its Student Support and Wellbeing department.

- 9.5 Welfare checks at either end of a period of interruption of study were being introduced, with medically qualified advisers assisting with decision-making about a student's fitness for study.
- 9.6 The new academic year had seen a 28% increase in students registering with Student Psychological Services. 1,872 students had registered with Student Disability Services, compared with 1,270 in 2012-13. It was thought likely that the increase was at least partly due to the effective promotion to the student community of Student Support and Wellbeing Services.
- 9.7 It was agreed, at the suggestion of the Provost, that arrangements would be made for Council members to visit the less satisfactory UCL student residences to see the nature of the issues at stake.

Discussion

- 9.8 In response to a question regarding the future of the UCL Dental Centre, the Vice-Provost (Operations) confirmed that the plan was for the service to relocate in due course. The Dental Centre's lease on 3 Gower Place was not due to expire for another two years.
- 9.9 Council noted the developments described in the report.

10 REVISED DISCIPLINARY CODE AND PROCEDURE

[Council Minute 101, 2012-13]

Received

- 10.1 APPENDIX C 1/06 (13-14) – proposals for revision of the Disciplinary Code and Procedure in respect of students.
- 10.2 It was proposed that Council approve the necessary updating of the Disciplinary Code and Procedure changes and that a further revised document be submitted to the Council meeting of 25 March 2014 for approval, via the Academic Board meeting of 19 February 2014, following a review of Code and Procedure by a working group set up for that purpose.

RESOLVED

- 10.3 **That the amended Disciplinary Code and Procedure in respect of Students as set out at Annexe 1 to Appendix C 1/06 (13-14) be approved with immediate effect.**
- 10.4 **That Council set up a working group, as proposed in Appendix C 1-06 (13-14), and charge the working group to submit a further revised Disciplinary Code and Procedure to the Council meeting on 25 March 2014 for approval, following consultation with the UCL Union and on the advice of the Academic Board meeting of 19 February 2014.**

Matters for approval or information
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11 **REGULATIONS FOR MANAGEMENT – AMENDMENT**

Received

- 11.1 APPENDIX C 1/08 (13-14) (with Annexe 1) – proposed amendments to UCL Regulation for Management 15.

RESOLVED

- 11.2 **That the amendments to Regulation for Management 15 detailed at Annexe 1 to APPENDIX C 1/08 (13-14) be approved.**

12 **INDEPENDENCE OF CLERKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR COUNCIL**

Received

- 12.1 APPENDIX C 1/09 (13-14) – a proposal for Council to confirm its satisfaction with the independence of its clerking arrangements in the period of 1 October 2012 – 30 September 2013.

RESOLVED

- 12.2 **That the Council confirm its satisfaction with the independence of its clerking arrangements for the last 12 months.**

13 **UCL PARTNERS**

Received

- 13.1 APPENDIX C 1/10 (13-14) – a proposal to admit LSHTM as a ‘Founding Member’ of UCL Partners.

RESOLVED

- 13.2 **That the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine be admitted as a Founding Member of UCL Partners.**

14 **PANEL OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS**

Received

- 14.1 APPENDIX C 1/11 (13-14) – the proposed panel membership of persons independent of UCL, from among whom external members of student grievance and appeal panels, of the Discipline Committee, of the Discipline Review Body and other relevant bodies would be chosen.

RESOLVED

- 14.2 **That the proposed membership of the Panel of Independent Persons be approved for the period 1 October 2013-30 September 2016.**

15 NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2012-13

Noted

- 15.1 APPENDIX C 1/14 (13-14) – a summary of the main outcomes resulting from Nominations Committee discussions in 2012-13.

RESOLVED

- 15.2 **That the Nominations Committee annual report 2012-13 be approved.**

16 REGISTER OF INTERESTS 2013-14

Noted

- 16.1 APPENDIX C 1/12 (13-14) – the annual declarations from Council members in the Register of Interests.

17 APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR OF COUNCIL – UPDATE

Noted

- 17.1 APPENDIX C 1/13 (13-14) – an update on the search for a new Chair of Council to succeed Sir Stephen Wall with effect from 1 October 2014.

18 USE OF THE UCL SEAL: ANNUAL REPORT

Noted

- 18.1 APPENDIX C 1/15 (13-14) – a report of all sealings carried out between 30 July 2012 and 1 October 2013.

19 CHAIR'S ACTION ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL

Noted

- 19.1 APPENDIX C 1/16 (13-14) – a summary of the actions taken by the Chair on behalf of Council since the previous report to Council.

Tim Perry
Secretary to Council
October 2013