



Council

Thursday 8 July 2021 at 8:30am

Video-Conferencing meeting conducted via Zoom

Minutes

Present Members:

Mr Victor Chu CBE (Chair); Mr Ayman Benmati; Mr Minto Bhandari; Mr Dominic Blakemore; Professor Lucie Clapp; Dr Alun Coker; Professor Annette Dolphin; Dr Martin Fry; Dr Andrew Gould; Ms Lindsay Nicholson MBE; Mr Turloch O'Brien CBE; Ms Carol Paige; Professor Helen Roberts; Professor Ralf Schoepfer; Lord Sharkey; Dr Michael Spence; Mr Philip Sturrock MBE; Dr Justin Turner QC; Baroness Valentine; Ms Sarah Whitney.

Attendees:

For Minutes 138-156: Ms Joyce Bill, Interim Chief Financial Officer
For Minutes 138-156: Professor Dame Hazel Genn, Vice-President (External Engagement) and Interim Vice-President (Advancement)
For Minutes 138-156: Professor Deborah Gill, Interim Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience)
For Minutes 138-156: Dr Clare Goudy, Chief of Staff, President & Provost's Office
For Minutes 138-156: Professor David Price, Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation and Global Engagement)
For Minutes 138-156: Ms Fiona Ryland, Vice-President (Operations)
For Minutes 138-156: Professor Anthony Smith, Vice-Provost (Faculties)
For Minute 142: Mr Ian Galloway, Commercial Director, Procurement
For Minutes 143-144: Ms Helen Fisher, UCL East Operations Lead
For Minutes 143-144: Ms Kate Higham, UCL East Programme Manager
For Minutes 143-144: Professor Paola Lettieri, Academic Director for the UCL East Campus
For Minutes 143-144: Mr Duncan Palmer, Interim Director of Estates Operations
For Minute 146: Dr Matthew Blain, Executive Director of Human Resources
For Minute 146: Ms Alex Cumberbirch, TOPS Assistant Programme Director
For Minute 148: Professor Alan Thompson, Dean of the Faculty of Brain Sciences and Pro-Vice-Provost (London)
For Minute 148: Ms Amy Lightstone, Head of Engagement and Operations (London)
For Minute 149: Mr John Dubber, Students' Union UCL Chief Executive Officer

Apologies:

Professor David Lomas

Observers:

Professor Stephanie Bird
Professor Jonathan Butterworth
Mr Osman Teklies

Officers:

Ms Wendy Appleby, Secretary to Council
Ms Anne Marie O'Mullane, Assistant Secretary to Council
Ms Olivia Whiteley, Governance Officer

Part I: Preliminary Business

138. Operation of the Meeting

138.1. Owing to the lockdown imposed by the Government as a consequence of the Covid-19 pandemic, it was not possible to convene a meeting in person. Therefore, members of Council were participating in a video conference, using tools that enabled all members to see and hear each other simultaneously. Decisions would be ratified by Chair's Action after the meeting.

138.2. The Chair of Council informed Council that following the Council meeting Council members would be sent a document setting out a draft consultation response to the UUK consultation on a new proposal by the USS Trustee. Council members would be invited to make comments or ask questions on the proposal and the response. The Chair of Council intended to take Chair's Action to approve the response.

139. Welcome and Votes of Thanks

139.1. The Chair of Council welcomed the following incoming members to the meeting as observers:

- a. Mr Osman Teklies, incoming Students' Union UCL Union Affairs Officer. Mr Teklies would be joining Council on 16 July 2021.
- b. Professor Stephanie Bird, incoming elected professorial member of Council. Professor Bird would be joining Council on 1 October 2021.
- c. Professor Jonathan Butterworth, incoming elected professorial member of Council. Professor Butterworth would be joining Council on 1 October 2021.

139.2. The Chair of Council noted that Ms Carol Paige, Students' Union UCL Democracy, Operations and Community Officer would be finishing her term as Council member on the 15 July 2021. Council thanked Ms Paige for her extraordinary service as a UCL Council member for the last two years.

139.3. The Chair of Council informed Council that Mr Mintoo Bhandari had written to the Chair to advise him that he would be stepping down as an external Council member. Council thanked Mr Bhandari for his great service as a UCL Council member for the last two years including his contribution to improving the quality of Council papers.

139.4. The Chair of Council congratulated Ms Wendy Appleby on her new appointment as Vice-President (Operations) at University of Southampton. Council thanked Wendy for her valuable advice and support over the last six years as Secretary to Council.

140. Declaration of Interests

140.1. Ms Carol Paige and Mr Ayman Benmati reported an interest in Item 10, Students' Union UCL Annual Report 2021 and Budget 2021/22.

141. Minutes

141.1. Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2021 subject to the following changes being made:

- a. Minute 127.2.d.: Insert the following sentence at end of paragraph, "In response to a question, the Provost confirmed that should a conflict arise between an external organisation's policies and UCL's own policies, UCL's policies would always take precedence; there had been no evidence this had occurred before."
- b. Minute 127.2.j.: Remove "However" from the beginning of the second sentence.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

142. Confidential: Security Services at UCL (11-02)

142.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

142.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

142.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

143. Confidential: UCL East Professional Services and Vice-Provost Offices cost report (11-03)

143.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

143.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

143.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

144. Confidential: UCL East Facilities Management (11-04)

144.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

144.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

144.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

145. Provost's Report to Council (11-05)

145.1. Dr Michael Spence, President and Provost, introduced the Provost's Report to Council.

145.2. During discussion the following key points were made:

- a. In response to a question on the approach to vaccinating students in the Autumn, the Vice-President (Operations) advised that there would be an extensive communication campaign to encourage vaccination uptake. It was important for international students who had not been vaccinated to be given an opportunity to be vaccinated as soon as possible.
- b. The sections in the report on student mental health were welcomed. The Students' Union was increasingly concerned about student well-being during the pandemic and recognised this was a nationwide issue. The Provost advised that UCL had good relationships with its NHS partners with the aim that students encountered seamless service provision. There would be a focus on student mental health in the new strategy.
- c. In response to a query on the mode of the delivery of teaching in the future, the Provost advised that some areas of the student body wanted face-to-face teaching while others, such as some international students, wanted a distance learning approach to be adopted. SMT were reviewing the benefits and disadvantages of hybrid learning, however, no decision had been taken about the future approach to teaching for 2022 and beyond. This matter would form part of strategy discussions.
- d. In response to a question about steps being taken after the release of Covid-19 lockdown rules on 19 July 2021, the Vice-President (Operations) advised that proposals would be considered by SMT to remove the one-way system and social distancing. Mask-wearing and Connect to Protect would continue. Symptom-free testing would continue at Bidborough House as some budget had been retained for this. The government license would also need to remain in place.
- e. In response to a question, the Provost confirmed there was no plan to pay for a proportion of costs for students travelling from red or amber-listed countries. Instead, a hardship fund would be made available to support students who required it. Students who were quarantining or in self-

isolation would continue to be routinely contacted as this aspect was also important.

- f. In response to a question, the Provost set out the reasons why the posts Vice-President (Strategy) and Vice-President (Advancement) were necessary at this level and were professional services roles. Council members were reminded that they had agreed the overall team profile in February 2021. The approach being taken would enable a very high level of expertise to be recruited to the Provost's senior team and avoid any inherent academic bias that might arise if they were not PS roles. The Provost also explained his commitment to delivering the new roles for the same amount of money and outlined some of the steps being taken to achieve this.
- g. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

145.3. Council received the Provost's Report to Council.

146. Confidential: Closure of Transforming Our Professional Services (TOPS) Business Case (11-06)

146.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

146.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

146.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

147. Governance Working Group Update

147.1. Minutes of the final Governance Working Group Meeting (11-07)

- a. Council received the minutes of the final Governance Working Group (GWG) meeting held on 19 April 2021.

147.2. Response from the GWG to the AB Commission of Inquiry Implementation Group (11-08)

- a. Baroness Valentine introduced the draft response from the Governance Working Group (GWG) to the Academic Board (AB) Commission of Inquiry Implementation Group. The following key points were raised during the presentation:
 - i. There was a section in the Provost's report which included a Senior Management Team response to the recommendations of the AB Commission of Inquiry.
 - ii. The GWG had been established to consider the Halpin recommendations that had been identified as quick fixes as well as relevant AB Commission of Inquiry recommendations and to identify routes forward. The GWG had undertaken this work from August 2020 until April 2021 and would reconvene in the Autumn in order to

- ascertain how the bundle of issues that had been taken forward were bedding in.
- iii. Some key issues centred on improving the quality of the Council papers, taking forward a set of human resources (HR) issues and how best to receive advice on academic policy as it affected the academic mission. While Council should allow the Provost and his leadership team to take decisions on detailed HR issues beyond the regulations for management, it could provide advice on these matters.
 - iv. Overall, the GWG considered that the exercise of looking at the COI recommendations on HR matters had been important for building trust and providing insight. Clearly there was an ongoing exercise for Council around culture and the need for a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. The new People Matters Committee would be a space where this matter could be taken forward.
- b. During discussion the following key points were made:
- i. The work of the GWG was commended for its willingness to explore challenging issues in detail with a transparent approach.
 - ii. There were some issues that had not been resolved. These included whether there should be a separate governance committee and the terms of office of Deans and Heads of Department (HoDs).
 - iii. The GWG had expressed a view that Deans or HoDs should only be appointed for more than two terms on an exceptional basis. The rationale for this was to ensure turnover and enable greater diversity of the incumbents. The Provost advised that in most circumstances, two terms of five years would be sufficient, however, there would be occasions where, exceptionally, a further term of appointment would be necessary; flexibility should be retained to ensure this. There was also a question about the number of organisational levels below which the Council should not be directly involved in the appointment, with a view expressed that the Provost and the level beneath them would be appropriate.
 - iv. There was discussion about the merits of undertaking 360 feedback on Deans on an annual basis and whether feedback should be collected anonymously. The Provost noted that it was important to strike a balance between appropriate accountability and recognising that difficult decisions needed to be taken in complex organisations. Also, it was important to avoid setting up an industry around 360 feedback and the creation of unnecessary bureaucracy.
 - v. The Annual Report on Bullying, Harassment and Sexual Misconduct would be presented to Academic Board and Council for acknowledgement and oversight next academic year.
 - vi. There was discussion about the merits of an Ombudsman as well as the possibility for overlap with existing processes. It was noted that discussion was ongoing on this matter.

- vii. The new People and Culture Committee would continue to monitor these issues in the future.
- c. Council approved the Response from the GWG to the AB Commission of Inquiry Implementation Group.

148. Confidential: Progress Report on the Pro-Vice-Provost (London) Office (11-10)

148.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

148.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

148.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

149. Students' Union UCL Annual Report 2021 and Budget 2021/22 (11-09)

149.1. Ms Carol Paige, Students' Union UCL Democracy Operations and Community (DOC) Officer, Mr Ayman Benmati, Students' Union UCL Education Officer and Mr John Dubber, Students' Union UCL Chief Executive Officer introduced the Students' Union UCL (SU UCL) Annual Report 2021 and Budget 2021/22. The following key points were made during the presentation:

- a. This year had been a very challenging year for students. SU UCL had a positive year of working with UCL and a trajectory of improvement. Over 14,000 students visited the Digital Welcome Fair, with more than 18,000 students tuning in to watch the live broadcast from the Student Centre, where students were introduced to societies and clubs through live performance and demonstrations. During the Welcome period, 1,233 students attended a Speed Friending session, an innovative online session that helped students connect with each other. These sessions continued to run throughout the year.
- b. The advice service advised over 700 people helping them save circa £100k in the process. SU UCL supported 336 student societies and sports clubs with online and, where possible, face-to-face activity and events, attracting 13,270 members despite the pandemic. This included the development of 40 new societies which would not have been possible only for the additional grant of £300k from UCL.
- c. Student satisfaction with the Students' Union, as measured in the National Student Survey, increased by 4.5% which moved the Union to the median. SU UCL had the most successful ever election, with 19.5% turnout. SU UCL had gained silver Investors in People status.
- d. The operating budget for 2021/22 would deliver a small operating surplus. 2021/22 would be a transitional year with increased activity following the disruption caused by the pandemic. SU UCL would need to maintain tight control of spending, as commercial income may remain lower than usual levels due to some degree of continuing online teaching and reduced footfall on campus. The budget included an increase of £250k in block

- grant funding from UCL next year. This would make an important contribution to helping eliminate the Union's structural operating deficit.
- e. Over the next twelve months SU UCL key priorities would include the re-opening of its in-person services to provide the best possible support to students as they begin the 2021-22 academic year.
 - f. A new fit for purpose home for the Union remained the organisation's biggest priority. The closure of the University of London's Student Central would leave students with even more limited access to social and sporting facilities. Fit for purpose facilities were essential. SU UCL were excited to be working with the UCL Estates team to review the Union's future building and facility needs and developing a Master Plan for Students' Union spaces.
 - g. SU UCL would be developing a new Strategic Plan for the Union alongside inputting into the development of UCL's next strategy.

149.2. During discussion, the following key points were made:

- a. The SU UCL were commended for their excellent achievements.
- b. It would be important to learn lessons from the successful areas of activity including the creation of 40 new clubs and societies. The SU UCL DOC Officer advised that additional funding had enabled the Union to employ an individual to review clubs and societies applications. Other areas of success included connecting and supporting 1,000 students with virtual volunteering opportunities and providing comprehensive support to 123 Postgraduate Taught students through the Community Research Initiative for Students, enabling them to research their dissertations in partnership with local community organisations.
- c. The lack of sports facilities was an issue; it meant that sports facilities had to be hired often with long travel times for students.

149.3. Council:

- a. Received the Students' Union UCL Annual Report 2021.
- b. Approved the SU UCL Budget 2021/22.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

150. To Receive the Following Reports

OfS Standing Report to Council (11-11)

150.1. Council received the OfS Standing Report to Council.

Confidential: UCL Seal Report (11-12)

150.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

Action Taken by the Chair Report (11-13)

150.3. Council received the report on Action Taken by the Chair. Action was taken as follows:

- a. In accordance with discussions at the Council meeting of 18 June 2021, the following action was taken by the Chair:
 - i. Approved the minutes of the meeting held on 29 April 2021, 12 May 2021 and 20 May 2021.
 - ii. Approved the requested change to Minute 74.1, 24 February 2021.
 - iii. Approved the UCL Eugenics Response Group Report and sign-off of the report for implementation.
 - iv. Approved the proposed changes to Regulation for Management 11.2 to reflect the closure of UCL Qatar and consequent removal from the list of recognised Units set out in the Regulations for Management.
 - v. Approved the following resolutions:
 - That the temporary arrangements for sealing set out in Appendix 1 of the Regulations which were approved by Council on 17 April 2020 were extended, as set out in the attached draft Regulations, until the November 2021 Council meeting when the need for the temporary arrangements will be reviewed again.
 - Regulations 18.8, 18.9, 18.10 and 18.11 were permanently amended to:
 - Replace the references to the Director of Finance and Business Affairs with a reference to the Chief Financial Officer;
 - Replace the references to the Director of UCL Estates with references to the Director of Estates Development and the Executive Director of Operations;
 - Give the Vice-President (Operations) the same authority to authorise sealing, to sign and to authorise signing of documents requiring the UCL Seal, as the Chief Financial Officer, the Director of Estates Development, and the Executive Director of Operations have under the Regulations.
 - Regulations 18.3, 18.6, 18.8 and 18.10 were permanently amended to include a reference to the “Sealing List” which lists the names of UCL officers in whose presence the Seal could be affixed, as set out in the attached draft Regulations

150.4. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

151. Confidential: Recommendations from Nominations Committee (11-14)

151.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minute.

152. Setting an Additional Access and Participation Target (11-15)

152.1. Council approved the proposed Acorn APP targets for submission to the OfS.

153. Confidential: Requests for use of the UCL brand logo with external organisations (11-16)

153.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

154. Confidential: To Receive the Following Confirmed Minutes (11-17 – 11-19)

154.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

154.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

155. Council Meeting Dates 2021/22 (11-20)

155.1. Council received an update on the meeting dates for Council 2021/22.

156. Date of Next meeting

156.1. The next meeting of Council would take place on Monday 13 September 2021 at 10:00am.

Ms Wendy Appleby, Secretary to Council
July 2021