



## COUNCIL

Tuesday 10 February 2015

## MINUTES

### *PRESENT:*

Dame DeAnne Julius (*Chair*)

Professor Michael Arthur  
(*President and Provost*)

Lord Clement-Jones

Dr John Hurst

Mr Lukmaan Kolia

Mr Simon Melliss (*Treasurer*)

Ms Vivienne Parry

Professor Nick Tyler

Baroness Warwick

Professor David Attwell

Mr Ven Balakrishnan

Professor David Coen

Mr Omar Khan

Ms Nahid Majid

Ms Lindsay Nicholson

Mr Philip Sturrock

Baroness Valentine

*In attendance:* Ms Wendy Appleby (Secretary to Council); Dame Nicola Brewer (Vice-Provost (International)); Professor Stephen Caddick (Vice-Provost (Enterprise and London)); Mr Phil Harding (Director of Finance and Business Affairs); Mr Rex Knight (Vice-Provost (Operations)); Mr Nick McGhee (Assistant Secretary to Council); Professor David Price (Vice-Provost (Research)), Professor Anthony Smith (Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs)).

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr Martin Fry, Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia, Dr Gill Samuels and Professor Sir John Tooke.

*Key to abbreviations used in these Minutes:*

BME	black and minority ethnic
CUC	Committee of University Chairs
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
HS2	High Speed 2
LLDC	London Legacy Development Corporation
QR	Quality Research Funding
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SMT	[Provost's] Senior Management Team
STEM	science, technology, engineering and mathematics [subjects]
UCU	University and College Union
UoA	[REF] Unit of Assessment

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<b>Preliminary Formal Business</b>
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**33 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

33.1 With respect to the capital projects paper [see Minute 41 below], Baroness Valentine declared her membership of the Board of HS2.

**34 MINUTES**

34.1 **Approved:** the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 27 November 2014 [Council Minutes 20-32, 2014-15], confirmed by Council and signed by the Chair.

**35 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

[see Minutes 36 and 37 below]

<b>Matters for discussion</b>
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**36 PROVOST'S BUSINESS**

**36A UCL East**

[Council Minute 18, 2014-15]

36A.1 In his autumn statement on 3 December 2014 the Chancellor had confirmed the anticipated funding for the LLDC in connection with UCL East. The LLDC Investment Board would be discussing the final terms, after which UCL and the LLDC would move towards finalising a contract.

**36B UCL Academy**

[Council Minute 6E, 2014-15]

36B.1 The Provost congratulated the UCL Academy on its achievement as the highest performing maintained mixed school in the Borough of Camden in this year's annual performance tables for A-levels.

**36C USS Pensions**

[Council Minute 23B, 2014-15]

36C.1 The prospect of industrial action discussed at the last meeting was now in abeyance. Subject to formal statutory consultation, the UCU membership had voted in favour of the proposed changes to the scheme.

**36D HEFCE funding letter**

36D.1 The annual funding letter from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to HEFCE had recently been received. The indications were that

there would be no fundamental change either in the arrangements for the funding of teaching in high-cost STEM subjects or the further concentration of QR funding. The Provost welcomed the inclusion of a small increase in capital funding.

**36E Counter-terrorism bill**

36E.1 The counter-terrorism bill currently making its way through Parliament included proposals to make the 'Prevent' guidance statutory. Elements of the statutory guidance from the Home Office were regarded by the sector as unworkable; representations were being made in favour of a more risk-based approach.

**36F Funding of Higher Education**

36F.1 The Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties had made no announcement on their plans for the sector ahead of the May 2015 General Election. Labour had not announced a policy, but it had been widely reported that they intended to set the maximum home/EU student fee at £6,000, although it was not yet clear how it was proposed that the shortfall be funded. There was a clear political incentive driving the development of an attractive policy for students.

**37 RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2014**

*[PAPER 3-24, 2014-15]*

37.1 **Received:** an oral introduction to the paper from Professor David Price, Vice-Provost (Research).

37.2 The REF results announced on 18 December 2014 represented an extraordinarily positive outcome for UCL. Despite the range of different metrics, press coverage had generally reflected the picture that the traditional dominance of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge had been broken for the first time. It was as yet difficult to predict the scale of any uplift in QR funding but an increase of approximately £10m per annum was anticipated. The result was also expected to act as a significant driver in international student recruitment.

37.3 Calculations of the amount of UCL staff time devoted to the REF indicated overhead costs of about 1.5%; this suggested a remarkably efficient process when compared with the 3-4% of project costs involved in the distribution of research council funding. Nevertheless, the close correspondence between the top 24 institutions judged by research income and by the research power metric suggested that there were real questions to be asked about the value of such an elaborate process.

37.4 REF data did not facilitate analysis at the level of an individual researcher or group, although anomalies between output, environment and impact scores could prove to be informative, with careful analysis.

37.5 Many institutions had elected to return a relatively low proportion of eligible staff, although the publication of HESA data had made such tactics more transparent. There was also evidence of returns being managed so as to minimise the requirement for the submission of impact case studies. It was

noted however that any future requirement that institutions return all eligible staff would tend to encourage institutions to seek to redefine staff contracts.

37.6 Despite widespread scepticism early in the process about the use of impact statements in the REF, the widely-predicted disadvantage to arts and humanities subjects had not been borne out by the feedback from the relevant panel. There were also clear incidental benefits to be derived from the production of case studies, not only for the institutions concerned but also for government and for funding bodies.

37.7 Council noted the importance of seeking to ensure that appropriate mechanisms for the evaluation of interdisciplinary research were developed in time for the REF 2020.

37.8 Council thanked Professor Price for his leadership of what had been a remarkably successful process. Council noted the significant pressure placed on UoA leads and other colleagues, particularly during the months leading up to the submission date, and congratulated all UCL colleagues concerned on their achievement.

## 38 SLASH ANNUAL REPORT

[PAPER 3-25, 2014-15]

38.1 **Received:** an oral introduction to the paper from: Professor Mary Fulbrook, Dean, Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences; Professor Dame Hazel Genn, Dean, Faculty of Laws; and Professor Jo Wolff, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Humanities.

38.2 The paper set out the central role played by the School in advancing UCL 2034 goals. The demand for its course offerings exceeded supply, particularly in the Faculty of Laws. Its research rankings were also strong and departments such as Economics had done particularly well in securing research funding. The School's major constraint was space.

38.3 On the financial side, the School's success in exceeding its core contribution targets in 2013-14 had been founded on increased student recruitment and a change in the composition of the student body. This looked to be more challenging in the future. Opportunities for reducing expenditure were scarce as the scale of non-staff costs was relatively low, particularly in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities. It was noted however that increasing the recruitment of overseas students was not without its impact on the student experience, and also raised fundamental questions in respect of UCL's mission.

38.4 Council discussed the School's plans for drawing on existing expertise to develop four new Area Centres. Although market research in this respect was challenging, this was a relatively low-risk venture as it would not require significant additional academic recruitment. It was noted that there were important strategic reasons for development in this respect, and that the creation of Area Centres would in turn facilitate the development of additional interdisciplinary programmes across UCL. However, Council also raised concerns about the resource cost to other faculties which did not have spare resources to devote to initiatives such as Area Centres. This

should be taken into account before commitments are made and students recruited.

- 38.5 The relationship between the School's plans and the key themes of the 2034 strategy was discussed. Council noted in particular the proposals for the development of new kinds of activity, and collaboration with major cultural institutions and local schools, at UCL East. The Institute of Advanced Study would be a key element in addressing the Global Engagement theme of the 2034 strategy. The intention to require visiting scholars at the Institute to deliver public events was noted.
- 38.6 In respect of the School's pressing need for teaching space, the Provost reported that there was the potential for UCL to develop a shared facility with Birkbeck, seeking to take advantage of the institutions' different peak usage hours. Other significant challenges facing the School included: improving the ethnic profile of staff despite a relative lack of BME graduates in many of the relevant academic areas; a national decline in demand for archaeology and geography degree courses; and the risk connected with the decant of the Faculty of Laws during the refurbishment of Bentham House.
- 38.7 Council thanked Professors Fulbrook, Genn and Wolff for their excellent report and the open and helpful discussion.

39 **COMMITTEE OF UNIVERSITY CHAIRS (CUC) CODE OF GOVERNANCE**  
*[PAPER 3-26, 2014-15]*

- 39.1 **Received:** an oral introduction to the paper from Wendy Appleby, Registrar (and Secretary to Council).
- 39.2 In March 2010 Council had formally adopted the CUC Code of Governance. After a substantial review, a revised version of the Code had been issued in December 2014. The paper introduced the new code, highlighted several issues arising out of the ongoing mapping process in respect of UCL's compliance, and invited Council to adopt the new Code.
- 39.3 It would be advisable for as much of the mapping and reporting process as possible to be completed before the commencement of the quinquennial review of Council effectiveness, due in 2015-16. Council noted that there could be additional work for the Audit Committee as part of Council oversight.
- 39.4 The Code and the mapping of UCL's current arrangements had been made on the Council sharepoint. In agreeing to adopt the Code, Council asked that a hard copy of the Code and mapping documents be circulated for the next meeting, and that the item be revisited at the meeting on 21 May 2015.

**RESOLVED**

- 39.5 **That Council adopt the CUC Code of Governance.**

<b>Matters for approval or information</b>
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40 **STUDENT RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS AND FUNDING COMMITTEE**

[PAPER 3-29, 2014-15]

**RESOLVED**

40.1 **That the Student Funding Committee and the Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee be disestablished with effect from 16 February 2015, and that the Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee be established with effect from the same date;**

**That Council's Schedule of Delegated Powers be amended to replace references to the Scholarships and Student Funding committee with the name of the new body.**

41 **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

[PAPER 3-30, 2014-15]

41.1 The Treasurer reported on the Finance Committee's discussions in this area at its meeting on 27 January 2015.

**RESOLVED** – *on the recommendation of the Finance Committee:*

41.2 **That Council approve the proposals for: (i) the acquisition and fit-out of Level 38, One Canada Square; (ii) the relocation of UCL's Data Centre at Wolfson House to 1-19 Torrington Place; and (iii) the acquisition of a 20-year lease at 'Here East', plus the option on co-located office space on the North Park of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park.**

42 **UCL AUSTRALIA**

[PAPER 3-31, 2014-15]

42.1 **Received** – a paper on future arrangements at UCL Australia.

42.2 The Provost reported that consultation on the proposals and discussions on the possibilities for partnership working in Adelaide were ongoing. UCL Australia was formally established as an academic unit of UCL under Statute 10, and any proposals for change would therefore come back to Council for formal approval after discussion at Academic Board.

42.3 The Vice-Provost (International) noted that the concept of partnership was a central feature of the emerging Global Engagement Strategy, which Council and the SMT were due to discuss at the away day on 30 March.

42.4 It was suggested that Council would benefit from a retrospective analysis of the financial assumptions that had been made in the course of deciding to

proceed with establishing UCL Australia. It was agreed that this should be picked up when ‘lessons learned’ from UCL’s activities in Kazakhstan were discussed at the away day.

43 **SUMMARY FINANCIAL METRICS**

[PAPER 3-32, 2014-15]

43.1 **Received** – a paper outlining summary financial metrics as at January 2015.

44 **CHAIR’S ACTION ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL**

[PAPER 3-33, 2014-15]

44.1 **Received** – a note of action taken by the Chair on behalf of Council since the last report.

45 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

45.1 The next scheduled Council meeting would be on 21 May 2015 at 3pm. The Council/SMT away day was scheduled for 30 March 2015.

Wendy Appleby  
Secretary to Council  
February 2015