



COUNCIL

Thursday 13 July 2017

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Dame DeAnne Julius (*Chair*)

Professor Michael Arthur
(*President and Provost*)
Mr Dominic Blakemore
Lord Clement-Jones
Dr Andrew Gould
Ms Nahid Majid
Mr Zakariya Mohran
Baroness Valentine
Dr Andrew Wills

Mr Ven Balakrishnan
Ms Halima Begum
Professor Lucie Clapp
Dr Martin Fry
Dr John Hurst
Mr Simon Melliss
Mr Philip Sturrock (*Treasurer*)
Baroness Warwick (*Vice-chair*)

In attendance: Ms Wendy Appleby (Secretary to Council); Dame Nicola Brewer (Vice-Provost (International)); Dr Celia Caulcott (Vice-Provost (Enterprise and London)); Mr Philip Harding (Director of Finance and Business Affairs); Mr Rex Knight (Vice-Provost (Operations)); Professor David Lomas (Vice-Provost (Health)); Mr Nick McGhee (Assistant Secretary to Council); Professor Anthony Smith (Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs)).

Apologies for absence were received from: Professor David Coen, Professor Annette Dolphin, Ms Lindsay Nicholson; Mrs Lori Houlihan (Vice-Provost (Development)) and Professor David Price (Vice-Provost (Research)).

Key to abbreviations used in these Minutes:

HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
ISD	Information Services Division
NSS	National Student Survey
PGT	postgraduate taught
PGTA	Postgraduate Teaching Assistant
RDEC	Research and Development Expenditure Credit
RPIF	UK Research Partnership Investment Fund
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
TOPS	Transforming Our Professional Services
UCLU	UCL (students') Union

Preliminary Formal Business

85 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

85.1 The Vice-Provost (International), Dame Nicola Brewer, had been appointed a non-executive Director of Scottish Power with effect from July 2017.

86 **MINUTES**

86.1 **Approved:** the Minutes of the meeting held on 2 May 2017 [*Council Minutes 77-84, 2016-17*] were confirmed by Council and signed by the Chair.

Matters for discussion

87 **PROVOST'S BUSINESS**

87A **Teaching Excellence Framework**

87A.1 UCL had achieved a silver award in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2017. This represented as positive a result as could be expected in view of UCL's NSS metrics. The Provost paid tribute to the work of UCL colleagues and particularly Professor Anthony Smith and Dr Clare Goudy, for their contribution to this result.

87A.2 The TEF narrative submission would be circulated to Council members for information.

87B **Global Teaching Excellence award**

87B.1 UCL had been shortlisted for a Higher Education Academy Global Teaching Excellence Award.

87C **National Student Survey 2017**

87C.1 UCLU had supported the NUS call for a boycott of student engagement with the NSS in 2017, reflecting concern over the potential link between student satisfaction and fees through the TEF. The boycott had resulted in a fall in student participation at UCL from almost 80% in 2016 to 49.4% in the current year. Work was currently ongoing to model the impact of the boycott, which alongside changes to the questions asked in the survey would make meaningful comparisons with previous years difficult. It was not yet clear what approach HEFCE would take in respect of those institutions not achieving 50% feedback.

87D **Queen's Birthday Honours**

87D.1 Professor Alimuddin Zumla (Division of Infection & Immunity) has been awarded a knighthood for his services to public health and protection from infectious diseases in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2017.

87E Academic Board

87E.1 A special meeting of Academic Board on 18 May 2017 had been called by a group of members with a view to discussing ways in which Academic Board could be better represented in informing decisions over the current and future trajectory of UCL. The meeting was very well attended and approved a proposal to establish a Governance Committee of Academic Board, whose remit would include improving the representation of the views of Academic Board on matters affecting the academic work of UCL to the Senior Management Team and to Council. The statutory relationship between Council and Academic Board was unchanged and it would be for the full Academic Board to express its views to Council, in particular through its elected members of Council and the Provost.

87F External Environment

87F.1 Several key external events had affected the HE environment since the last meeting of Council: the General Election in May 2017, the passing of the Higher Education Bill and the creation of the Office for Students, the first Chief Executive of which would be Nicola Dandridge, who had a strong knowledge of the sector as Chief Executive of Universities UK.

87G UCL Campaign

87G.1 The Campaign had achieved a total £334.7m towards its target of £600m. This was a tremendous result, and the Provost congratulated the Vice-Provost (Development) and her team, as well as the academic community.

87H Queen Square House

[see also Minute 104, 2016-17 below]

87H.1 UCL had secured a £28.8m Research Partnership Infrastructure Fund award towards the refurbishment of Queen Square House.

87I Grenfell Tower

87I.1 Council members had been circulated in recent weeks with UCL's response to the Grenfell Tower fire and the evaluation of UCL's buildings and fire safety regulations. Council members were invited to raise any questions they had on the issue; there were none.

87J Associate Professor title

[see also Minute 92, 2016-17 below]

87J.1 A paper regarding the title of Associate Professor was included on the agenda for formal approval. The Provost invited any questions on that issue; there were none.

88 FINANCIAL UPDATE¹ – FULL YEAR FORECAST

[PAPER 6-62 (16-17)]

- 88.1 The forecast surplus for the current year was £60m, equating to 4.7% of income. The reported figure would be higher at £83m, but this was attributable to changes in the financial reporting standard.
- 88.2 The principal variances against budget were: £10.6m higher than anticipated research income, with overhead cost recovery £4m higher than budget due to the recognition of income from previous years' RDEC claims; tuition fees (principally PGT) £10m down on budget, reflecting a gross figure down £15.6m offset by higher than budgeted receipt of doctoral training grants; and favourable variance of £7m on staff costs. Approximately £20m of HS2 compensation, recorded as unplanned income, would be receivable over the course of 2016/17.
- 88.3 Capital Expenditure was currently forecast at £148m, £29m lower than budget. UCL had to date drawn down £100m of the revolving credit facility; a further £50m forecast to be required in June had not yet been required and was expected not to be needed until the autumn. 0.9% interest was payable on the loan and a non-utilisation fee of 0.2% on the funds not yet utilised.
- 88.4 Council discussed the spend on staff costs, which was partially offset by higher spend on contract and agency staff. It was explained that this resulted from a combination of higher spend on ISD projects and on cover for vacancies, principally in the Estates Division. This latter point reflected the difficulty of retaining staff in estates given the significant upturn in construction activity in London.

89 UCLU ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17 AND 2017-18 BUDGET

[PAPER 6-65 (16-17)]

- 89.1 UCLU was presenting a break-even budget for 2017-18, representing a notable turning point from the deficit position of recent years. This had been achieved principally through a review of UCLU's relationship with Watford Football Club, and the introduction of measures to reduce permanent staff costs. The budget also included significant investment in systems to support engagement with a growing student body.
- 89.2 Council noted the principal campaigns run by the Union during 2016-17, including: Heads Up, which addressed issues of mental health at UCL; Pride in Sport, which sought to ensure that no group was marginalised in sporting activities; Zero Tolerance to Sexual Harassment; and Black Lives Matter. The Union had also supported the NUS boycott of the NSS, but had worked to ensure that the student voice was not lost as a result. A campaign had also been run to address issues around Postgraduate Teaching Assistants (PGTAs), principally in respect of recognition of hours worked, the gender pay gap, and transparency in recruitment.

¹ The update had been compiled under the (former) UK GAAP accounting standards, as that was the methodology used in developing the 2016-17 budget. The results would be delivered under the new FRS102 rules.

- 89.3 A new visual identity had been adopted, and was in evidence in the Impact Report. The slogan *Where More Happens* reflected the 19,000 memberships of 250 student-led societies. 2016-17 had seen a notably successful varsity season, and also over 600 students who had never previously participated in sport undertaking sporting activities through Project Active.
- 89.4 Council discussed the matter of the mental wellbeing of the student population. The Registrar reported on the range of actions being taken to enable easier access to services, improved response rates for students and introduce different forms of support available.

RESOLVED

- 89.5 **That the UCLU budget 2017-18 be approved.**

90 **TRANSFORMING OUR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (TOPS)**
[PAPER 6-68 (16-17)]

- 90.1 The Vice-Provost (Operations) and Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs), who co-sponsored the TOPS initiative, reported on progress with the programme. The context for TOPS was a relatively low level of satisfaction with professional services across the institution, as reflected in the red/amber ratings for many of the 2034 Enablers, irrespective of the hard work and commitment of staff. Furthermore, benchmarking showed that UCL had a relatively high level of spend on transactional activities compared to other universities; TOPS would see this effort redirected to value-added activities. More generally, there was a sense of frustration across UCL that some of the basic processes did not work effectively. The TOPS programme sought to address these shortcomings and also provide improved career structures for professional services staff (both centrally and in academic departments), supported by improved systems and processes. The TOPS programme was designed not only to fix the current problems but to ensure structures were in place that would serve UCL for the next 10-20 years.
- 90.2 Some external members reported on their experiences of similar changes in their own organisations. They highlighted the significant gains in speed of processes, financial controls and customer satisfaction that can be achieved, albeit with some disruption during transition. In response to a question about the next stages, Council learnt that there would be a process of engagement with the wider UCL community over the coming months, and particularly with academic staff, with a view to finalising the TOPS proposals in the late autumn. A further report would be made to Council in the new academic year.

Matters for approval or information
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91 **ACADEMIC UNITS OF UCL**

[PAPER 6-69 (16-17)]

RESOLVED – on the recommendation of Academic Board

91.1 **That UCL Australia be disestablished as an academic unit with effect from 1 January 2018;**

91.2 **That the Institute of Prion Diseases be established as an academic unit with effect from 14 July 2017.**

92 **ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR TITLE**

[PAPER 6-71 (16-17)]

RESOLVED – on the recommendation of Academic Board

92.1 **That, pursuant to Statutes 1(2) and 18(1), persons appointed to the role of Associate Professor be designated academic staff of the college.**

93 **COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIPS**

[PAPER 6-72 (16-17)]

RESOLVED

93.1 **That the proposed arrangement whereby Dr Andrew Wills' term of office be completed following his appointment as a professor be approved;**

93.2 **That Professor Lucie Clapp be appointed to the Finance Committee with effect from 1 October 2017.**

94 **TUITION FEES 2018-19**

[PAPER 6-73 (16-17)]

94.1 **Received** – a note of the tuition fees for the academic year 2018-19 approved by Finance Committee.

95 **HEFCE ANNUAL PROVIDER REVIEW**

[PAPER 6-74 (16-17)]

95.1 **Received** – the HEFCE Annual Provider Review 2016-17, confirming HEFCE's view that UCL was not at higher risk in respect of financial sustainability, good management and governance matters, and that UCL met requirements on quality and standards matters.

96 **UCL FRIENDS' TRUST**

[PAPER 6-75 (16-17)]

96.1 **Received** – a note the appointment of Dr Toni Griffiths as a Trustee of the UCL Friends' Trust.

97 **REPORTS FROM OTHER COMMITTEES**

[PAPER 6-76 (16-17)]

97.1 **Received** – a note of minutes received from other committees since the previous report.

98 **COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP AND DATES 2017-18**

[PAPER 6-77 (16-17)]

98.1 **Received** – a note of the Council membership and meeting dates in 2017-18.

99 **CHAIR'S ACTION**

[PAPER 6-78 (16-17)]

99.1 **Received** – a note of action taken by the Chair to approve the appointment of Deans and Heads of Department.

100 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

100.1 The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday 25th October 2017 at 3pm.

Wendy Appleby
Secretary to Council
July 2017