



COUNCIL

Thursday 17 March 2016

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Dame DeAnne Julius (*Chair*)

Professor Michael Arthur
(*President and Provost*)

Professor Lucie Clapp

Professor David Coen

Dr John Hurst

Mr Simon Melliss (*Treasurer*)

Ms Lindsay Nicholson

Mr Philip Sturrock

Mr Ven Balakrishnan

Mr Dominic Blakemore

Lord Clement-Jones

Dr Martin Fry

Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia

Mr Mohammad Ali Mumtaz

Ms Wahida Samie

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 David Price (Vice-Provost (Research)); Professor Anthony Smith (Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs)).

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr Andrew Gould, Ms Nahid Majid, Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker and Baroness Valentine.

Key to abbreviations used in these Minutes:

CPD	Continuing Professional Development
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	higher education institution
REF	Research Excellence Framework
SLMS	School of Life and Medical Sciences
SME	small and medium enterprises
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
UCLB	UCL Business
UCLU	UCL (students') Union
USS	Universities Superannuation Scheme

Preliminary Formal Business

48 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

48.1 Dame Nicola Brewer reported that she had been appointed a Non-executive Director of Aggreko Plc.

49 **MINUTES**

49.1 **Approved:** following a discussion about the accuracy of the confidential minutes, the minutes of the Council meeting held on 11 February 2016 [*Council Minutes 35-47, 2015-16*], were confirmed by Council and signed by the Chair.

Matters for discussion

50 **PROVOST'S BUSINESS**

50A **Senior appointments**

50A.1 Professor Becky Francis, currently Professor of Education and Social Justice at King's College London, had been appointed Director of the Institute of Education with effect from 1 July 2016.

50A.2 Two Deans, Professor Jonathan Wolff and Professor Nick Brook, had recently announced their departure from UCL. Professor Wolff had accepted an academic post at the University of Oxford; Professor Brook would be taking up a Deanship at the University of Bath. An international recruitment process would be carried out for both positions.

50B **Green paper**

50B.1 It was understood that the Prime Minister was keen to see legislation passed to allow a greater number of private education providers to obtain university status, through the removal of current requirements in respect of a minimum number of students. It was unclear what other legislation from the green paper might be incorporated into the same package of measures. UCL had expressed its views on this issue as well as the proposed arrangements for the introduction of the TEF.

50C **HEFCE grant letter**

50C.1 The Provost summarised the headline points from the HEFCE grant letter for 2016-17¹. Student Opportunity Funding was being cut by half, though there would be no diminution in HEIs' responsibility to achieve widening access targets. The letter also indicated that HEFCE would continue to exist for at least another two years, as it required HEFCE to assume responsibility for delivering the TEF in

¹ <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2016/Name,107598,en.html>

Year 2. Funding for the Higher Education Infrastructure Fund would be maintained at the current level.

50D (UK) budget 2016

50D.1 From 2018-19, loans of up to £25,000 would be available to English students without a Research Council living allowance winning a place for doctoral study at a UK university. The eligibility for student loans had been extended to include three-year part-time masters' courses with no full-time equivalent.

50E Expenses and discretionary accounts

50E.1 Revised guidelines on the interpretation of rules relating to expenses were being drafted. The issue of discretionary accounts was being dealt with on a case-by-case basis in SLMS, where the majority of discretionary accounts was based.

50F Rent strike

50F.1 Approximately 140 students, predominantly in one hall of residence, were not currently paying rent. UCL was in discussion with them. For 2016-17, rents for 186 smaller rooms were being reduced by £21 per week, and frozen for the next tranche of 536 cheapest rooms. The number of twin rooms would also be increased. Consideration was being given to the bursary options for the lowest income group.

50G UCLU Council

50G.1 UCLU Council had voted on 8 March in favour of a motion to support boycott, divestment and sanctions against Israel. The meeting had been quorate and appropriately constituted. The decision required ratification by the UCLU Board of Trustees; UCL had written to the Trustees to express concern at the decision and to highlight the need to take account of the potential impact on staff and students, as well as the Union's obligations as a charity. The Provost had been at pains to set out to correspondents that UCL and UCLU were distinct organisations; a misleading headline in the Jewish Chronicle in that respect had been challenged.

50H Bloomsbury Theatre

50H.1 In light of the discovery of asbestos in the Bloomsbury Theatre [*Council Minute 39E.2, 2015-16*] the building had now been stripped to its core. Following the conclusion of a review, UCL had determined that the theatre would be reinstated, although the building was now expected to be unavailable until January 2018 at the earliest. A public statement would be made later in the day². Alternative venues were being secured for student activities.

50I Release of confidential information

50I.1 Council members noted recent media reports relating to the inadvertent release of confidential documents by a senior member of staff, and the acquisition of those documents by, amongst others, a UCL student journalist. The student concerned had interpreted a communication from UCL as a threat of dismissal; this had not been the intention and assurances to that effect had been given. Steps were now being taken to check that appropriate security settings were in place in staff

² <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/0316/17032016-theatre-reinstatement-update>

Outlook accounts. UCL proposed to publish one of the documents concerned shortly, as it was potentially of interest in the context of the ongoing debate around student accommodation charges.

51 **VICE-PROVOST (INTERNATIONAL) REPORT**

[PAPER 4-31, 2015-16]

- 51.1 **Received** – an oral report from Dame Nicola Brewer, Vice-Provost (International).
- 51.2 Dame Nicola summarised the active start that had been made in the early stages of delivering the Global Engagement Strategy. The internal foundations for effective delivery had been laid through communication and clarification of policies and procedures; the reconfiguration of the renamed Global Engagement Office; and the appointment of 7 Pro-Vice-Provosts with regional responsibilities and 11 faculty-focused Vice-Deans (International).
- 51.3 Significant progress was reported in developing two potential anchor partnerships. The President of Peking University would visit UCL on 27 April. A site visit to the Wellcome Trust Africa Centre had been made on 3 March and the outcome of the Strategic Award application was awaited. Dame Nicola was due to make a scoping visit to India shortly.
- 51.4 Work to deliver successful completion of pre-existing contracts was ongoing. UCL Australia was transitioning from a stand-alone operation towards a Faculty partnership with the University of South Australia. Following a review in 2015, UCL Qatar was now moving into the second half of the ten-year partnership, refocussing delivery on the two most successful Masters programmes.
- 51.5 Council discussed the progress made in reviewing UCL's student exchange arrangements with a view to scoping a clear path for future developments and improvement.
- 51.6 Council thanked Dame Nicola for a helpful report in which areas of progress could be clearly identified. Further detail in respect of budgets in this area was requested in future updates.

52 **VICE-PROVOST (ENTERPRISE) REPORT**

[PAPER 4-32, 2015-16]

- 52.1 **Received** – an oral report from Dr Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost (Enterprise).
- 52.2 Against the background of the aims of UCL's strategy *Transforming Enterprise at UCL* (2011-15), Dr Caulcott drew attention to the recent highlights of UCL's activities in this area. These included: support for the creation of almost 200 student start-ups; the growth in commercialisation of research through UCLB; the establishment of the Technology Fund and the Apollo Fund in January 2016; the growth in volume and value of consultancy activity through UCL Consultants; and UCL's impact scores in the REF. Dr Caulcott characterised her task as building on existing strengths rather than changing the overall direction of the strategy. It was intended that the possibility of using the model of the SLMS Translational Research Office elsewhere in UCL would be explored, and that CPD activity

would be brought back within the purview of the Vice-Provost (Enterprise). A review of UCL's relationship with UCLB was planned for 2016.

- 52.3 UCL had a strong reputation for student entrepreneurship and relationships with SMEs. A key area for further attention would be in further enabling entrepreneurship in early career research staff. It was hoped that Council members would have an opportunity to visit the Entrepreneurship unit at BASE KX in Camley Street.

53 FINANCIAL UPDATE

[PAPER 4-33, 2015-16]

- 53.1 **Received** – an oral report from Mr Phil Harding, Director of Finance and Business Affairs.
- 53.2 The update was based on actuals for the first four months of the current financial year. The projected surplus was £40.9 million, against a budget of £45.5m and a surplus in 2014-15 of £29m. The current shortfall against the budgeted surplus was due to lower than predicted income, offset in part by lower expenditure in faculties and net savings in Professional Services. The prospects for hitting budget were still thought to be relatively good as there was reason to anticipate an upturn in the tuition fee and research overhead income projections.
- 53.3 The Treasurer reported that, at its meeting on 29 February, Finance Committee had expressed concern about the scale of some of the variances outlined in the paper, as well as the risk of increased student dissatisfaction as a result of increased student numbers coinciding with extensive refurbishment of the estate. Plans to amend the student fee model in pursuit of improved budgeting were noted.
- 53.4 Council discussed the scope for extending the projected timeframe for surplus generation. It was noted that the pace of capital development and the surplus required to support it had been set over the medium term; any extension in this timeframe would result in increased interest costs and a deferral of aspects of the capital programme.
- 53.5 Council discussed the growth in student numbers and its impact on the student experience. It was suggested that the current pressure in this respect resulted from unplanned growth, whereas the planned growth currently envisaged could be managed with the student experience in mind.
- 53.6 Mr Harding tabled the HEFCE's annual Assessment of Institutional Risk letter, dated 4 March 2016. UCL was not deemed to be at higher risk. Council noted the comments on the assessment of the condition of UCL's estate.

54 USS UPDATE

[PAPER 4-34, 2015-16]

- 54.1 **Received** – an oral report from Mr Phil Harding, Director of Finance and Business Affairs.

- 54.2 Council noted the update and that further information would be provided once the valuation methodology review was complete. USS was responsible for communication with members about any changes to pension arrangements.

Matters for approval or information
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55 **COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP**
[PAPER 4-37, 2015-16]

RESOLVED – on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee

- 55.1 **That Baroness (Diana) Warwick’s term as an appointed member of Council be extended by one year, to 30 September 2017.**

RESOLVED

- 55.2 **That Baroness Warwick be reappointed Vice-chair of Council for the academic year 1 October 2016 – 30 September 2017.**

56 **CHAIR’S ACTION**
[PAPER 4-38, 2015-16]

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

57 **MINUTES OF OTHER COMMITTEES**
[PAPER 4-39, 2015-16]

- 57.1 **Received** – a note of minutes of Council committees received since the last report.

58 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 58.1 The next Council meeting would be held on **Tuesday 12 July 2016** at 3pm. The away day would be held on **Tuesday 17 May 2016**.

Wendy Appleby
Secretary to Council
March 2016