



## Council

Friday 21 April 2023 at 2:00pm

Council Room, South Wing / via Microsoft Teams

## Minutes

### Present Members:

Victor Chu CBE (Chair); Deniz Akinci; Professor Jon Butterworth; Phil Clark; Dr Alun Coker; Dr Martin Fry; Lindsay Nicholson MBE; Turlogh O'Brien CBE; Christine Ohuruogu MBE; Professor Helen Roberts; Professor Ralf Schoepfer; Lord Sharkey; Dr Michael Spence; Dr Justin Turner KC; Sarah Whitney.

### Apologies:

Hamza Ahmed; Professor Stephanie Bird; Dominic Blakemore; Tina Harris; Tania Holt; Professor Anthony Smith.

### In attendance:

Charu Gorasia, Chief Financial Officer; Dr Clare Goudy, Chief of Staff; Natasha Lewis, General Counsel; Andy Smith, Interim Vice-President (Operations).

For Minute 83: Professor Dame Hazel Genn, Pro-Provost (Bicentennial)

For Minute 83: Alison Parker, Director of Faculty Marketing Comms

For Minute 83: Kirsty Walker, Vice-President (External Engagement)

For Minute 83: Rebecca Whitham, Director of Strategy and Operations, Office of the Vice-President (Advancement)

For Minute 85: Professor Kathy Armour, Vice-Provost (Education and Student Experience)

For Minute 85: Donna Dalrymple, Chief People Officer

For Minute 87: Dr Patrick Ward, Interim Executive Director of Health and Safety

### Officers:

Edward Hossack, Assistant Secretary to Council

Nick McGhee, Head of Governance

Olivia Whiteley, Governance Officer

## **Part I: Preliminary Business**

### **79. Operation of the meeting**

79.1. Whilst Council noted that hybrid meetings were technically not yet permitted under UCL's current Charter and Statutes, the meeting was held in a hybrid format. Some members of Council participated by video conference and some attended together face to face, using tools that enabled all members to see and hear each other simultaneously. It was noted that a quorum was achieved by all those Council members who attended the hybrid meeting. However, due to the new provisions allowing hybrid meetings not yet being formally included in the Charter and Statutes, the Chair would be ratifying decisions made at the hybrid meeting by Chair's Action after the meeting.

### **80. Declarations of Interest**

80.1 The Chair of Council invited Council members to declare any new interests they may have or any interests they had in the items being considered at the meeting.

80.2 In respect of Minute 85, Dr Alun Coker and Professor Helen Roberts declared their interest as members of UCU, and Deniz Akinci declared his interest as a member of Students' Union UCL.

### **81. Minutes of the last meeting (5-01)**

81.1. Council approved the minutes of the meeting held on 24 March 2023 subject to the following changes being made:

- a. Minute 69.2.c: replace "The Provost advised that there were low compliance levels for all four 'critical compliance' courses" with "The Provost advised that the proportion of staff completing all four 'critical compliance' courses was low".
- b. Minute 73.3: replace "A recent survey of Jewish students at UCL conducted by the JSoc found that 98% of Jewish students supported only the IHRA definition" with "In a recent survey of Jewish students at UCL conducted by the JSoc, 98% of respondents supported only the IHRA definition".
- c. Minute 73.8: replace "It would be desirable to make an effort to bring the two opposing views closer to a common ground in the interest of all stakeholders. It was agreed that any process would need to involve the JSoc. The Provost agreed to undertake consideration how best to take this matter forward and to return to Council with recommendations" with "It would be desirable to make an effort to bring the opposing views closer to a common ground in the interest of all stakeholders. To that end, it was anticipated that a further period of consultation and discussion would be needed before this matter could be revisited by Council, with this likely to

- include further consideration of the technical compatibility of any recommended definitions. The Provost agreed to consider how best to take this matter forward and to return to Council with recommendations”.
- d. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minute.

## **82. Matters Arising**

- 82.1. Council sought an update about the progress of the Working Group on a Definition of Antisemitism [Council Minute 73, 24.03.2023]. The Provost noted the length of time taken by this process to date, acknowledging the desire to make progress but also the need to allow sufficient time for the process and to accommodate the availability of concerned parties (including from the Academic Board).

## **Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion**

### **83. Confidential: Preparing for UCL’s Bicentenary: Proposals for Activity and Alignment with Brand Development Work and Campaign Planning (5-02)**

- 83.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 83.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 83.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 83.4. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

### **84. Provost’s Report to Council (5-03)**

- 84.1. Dr Michael Spence, President and Provost, introduced the Provost’s Report to Council.
- 84.2. The following points were raised during discussion:
  - a. It was confirmed that the reduction in staff costs identified in the F2 paper was a result of extended recruitment timeframes and unfilled vacancies; it did not reflect a model of declining staff numbers. Provision had been made in the budget for all staff positions.
  - b. In the context of a specific example raised by an academic member, Council discussed the process for determining student number targets for individual departments and programmes, against the background of the strategic intention for student numbers to rise only where there was a desire to do so, and with a prioritisation outside Bloomsbury. It was confirmed that the Faculty was the appropriate planning unit for the setting of student number targets, although a member suggested that the

pressure to meet faculty budgets would tend to cause this to be overstated. Where student numbers increased, the budget for teaching resources would be set appropriately and student/staff ratios would be maintained. The member of Council citing the example was asked to submit details to the Vice-President (Operations) and the Chief Financial Officer so that this could be investigated.

- c. It would be UCL's preference for the UK to continue its association with Horizon Europe. This was on the basis that funds had been made available and the structure of award funding was also known. There was no indication of a timeline for progress either from the Government or from the Opposition. Council noted the context of research collaborations with partners beyond the EU.

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

**85. Confidential: Marking and Assessment Boycott**

85.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

85.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

85.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**86. Confidential: Forecast 2, 2022-23 (5-04)**

86.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

86.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

86.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

86.4. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**87. Workplace Health and Safety Report (5-05)**

87.1. Dr Patrick Ward, Interim Executive Director of Health and Safety, presented the Workplace Health and Safety Report for February 2023.

87.2. The following points were made in the presentation:

- a. The review of the Work Health and Safety Committee had made good progress. The Committee would adopt a more strategic role pending the approval by UMC of the creation of an operational sub-committee.
- b. The rate of student and staff safety incidents was increasing marginally but was still below pre-pandemic levels.
- c. Levels of engagement with MyHR remained poor. Work was being done to improve the rate of sickness reporting.

- 87.3. The following points were raised in discussion:
- a. It was suggested that the Workplace Health and Safety report provided a more detailed level of management information than was necessary in order to satisfy Council's strategic function. It was noted that UMC routinely received significantly more detail than was provided in this report. This could be reviewed by the University Secretary on his arrival.
  - b. A Council member sought clarity about the extent of health and safety training within the membership of departmental committee structures. Dr Ward indicated that training was in place: the Interim Vice-President (Operations) confirmed that he could investigate further.
- 87.4. Council noted the Workplace Health and Safety Report.

**88. Safety and Compliance Task & Finish Group (5-06)**

- 88.1. Dr Michael Spence, President and Provost, presented the Safety & Compliance Task and Finish Group paper, which proposed the establishment a Safety & Compliance Task & Finish Group. Members were invited to express an interest in participation in the group.
- 88.2. Council approved the establishment of a Safety and Compliance Task & Finish Group with the purpose, Terms of Reference and Membership as set out in Appendix 1 of the paper.

**Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information**

**89. Confidential: Renewal of Wellcome Africa Health Research Institute Grant 2023 (5-07)**

- 89.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 89.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**90. SU UCL Annual Financial Statements (5-08)**

- 90.1. Council noted the annual audited Financial Statements of Students' Union UCL for the year ended 31 July 2022 following consideration by Finance Committee.

**91. Confidential: Statute 18: Proposed Appointment of a Tribunal (5-09)**

- 91.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**92. To Receive the Following Reports:**

**OfS Standing Report (5-10)**

92.1. Council received the OfS Standing Report.

**Action Taken by the Chair (5-11)**

92.2. Council received the report on action taken by the Chair since the last report to Council.

92.3. In accordance with discussions at the Council meeting of 24 March 2023, action had been taken by the Chair to approve:

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2023 subject to a change being made.
- b. The Student Protection Plan for 2023-24.
- c. The ratification of the appointment of Philip Clark to Estates Committee with effect from 1 May 2022 for the duration of his term as an External Council member.

92.4. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

92.5. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**Confidential: UCL Seal Report (5-12)**

92.6. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**Confidential: Current Litigation Summary (5-13)**

92.7. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**93. To Receive the Following Committee Minutes:**

**Audit Committee Confirmed Minutes, 12 December 2022 (5-15)**

93.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**Finance Committee Confirmed Minutes, 10 February 2023 (5-16)**

93.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

**94. Date of Next Meeting**

94.1. The date of the next meeting of Council would be **Monday 19 June 2023**.

Edward Hossack, Assistant Secretary to Council,  
May 2023