



COUNCIL

Thursday 21 May 2015

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Dame DeAnne Julius (*Chair*)

Professor Michael Arthur
(*President and Provost*)

Lord Clement-Jones

Dr Martin Fry

Mr Omar Khan

Ms Nahid Majid

Mr Simon Melliss (*Treasurer*)

Ms Vivienne Parry

Mr Philip Sturrock

Baroness Warwick

Professor David Attwell

Mr Ven Balakrishnan

Professor David Coen

Dr John Hurst

Mr Lukmaan Kolia

Dr Saladin Meckled-Garcia

Ms Lindsay Nicholson

Dr Gill Samuels

Baroness Valentine

In attendance: Ms Wendy Appleby (Secretary to Council); Dame Nicola Brewer (Vice-Provost (International)); Professor Nick Brook (Dean, Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences); Professor Stephen Caddick (Vice-Provost (Enterprise and London)); Professor Anthony Finkelstein (Dean, Faculty of Engineering Sciences); Mr Philip Harding (Director of Finance and Business Affairs); Professor Chris Husbands (Vice-Provost (Academic Development)); Mr Rex Knight (Vice-Provost (Operations)); Mr Nick McGhee (Assistant Secretary to Council); Professor Alan Penn (Dean, Faculty of the Built Environment); Professor Sir John Tooke (Vice-Provost (Health)).

Apologies for absence were received from: Professor David Price, Professor Anthony Smith, and Professor Nick Tyler.

Key to abbreviations used in these Minutes:

BEAMS	School of the Built Environment, Engineering, and Mathematical & Physical Sciences
HE	Higher Education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
IoE	UCL Institute of Education
QR	Quality Research funding
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds [world university rankings]
REF	Research Excellence Framework
URAP	University Ranking by Academic Performance

Preliminary Formal Business

48 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

48.1 No interests were declared.

49 **MINUTES**

49.1 **Approved:** the Minutes of the Council meeting held on 10 February 2015 [Council Minutes 33-47, 2014-15], confirmed by Council and signed by the Chair.

50 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

[see Minutes 51 and 54 below]

Matters for discussion

51 **PROVOST'S BUSINESS**

51A **UCL Australia**

[Council Minute 42, 2014-15]

51A.1 The consultation on the future of UCL Australia had now ended. UCL had concluded that it should cease independent operations in Australia from 2017, and was now working on building a partnership with the University of South Australia. The arrangements for the future of the students concerned had been satisfactorily assured.

51B **University League Tables**

51B.1 UCL had placed fifth equal with Oxford in the QS World University Rankings 2015. The UCL Institute of Education had been ranked first in its subject sector. UCL had also been ranked sixth in the world by the new informatics-based University Ranking by Academic Performance (URAP) tables.

51C **Implications of the General Election 2015 for HE**

[Council Minute 36F, 2014-15]

51C.1 The unexpectedly conclusive outcome of the General Election had sidestepped concerns over Labour's plans to fund the shortfall resulting from a cut in the maximum student fee to £6,000, but a number of significant uncertainties around the future of the sector remained. These included the possible indexation of the student fee, potentially as part of an HE bill that would seek to sweep up a number of outstanding issues across the sector; the impact of any immigration reforms on the recruitment of

overseas students; and the impact of any vote to withdraw from the EU following a referendum to be held by 2017. The implications of such a decision included a drastic fall in the number of EU students as a result of the withdrawal of the home/EU fee, and the loss of EU research funding, which currently represented approximately 10% of UCL's research income.

- 51C.2 The Provost noted current discussions with other Russell Group members in the south-east to develop a submission to any future Comprehensive Spending Review. Council noted the importance of communicating the extent of UCL's enterprise activities [see Minute 66 below]. It was suggested that Council members would benefit in due course from advice on key 'talking points' as well as suitable examples of successes in this respect.

52 **FINANCIAL UPDATE**
[PAPER 4-34, 2014-15]

- 52.1 **Received:** an oral report from Mr Phil Harding, Director of Finance and Business Affairs.
- 52.2 The forecast surplus position for the current year, adjusted to incorporate a projected £1m shortfall at the UCL Institute of Education, had improved from 1.6% to 1.9% of total income since the Council meeting on 10 February 2015. This was nevertheless still £6.7m short of the budgeted 2.5% surplus figure. The principal factors responsible for the shortfall were under-recruitment of students and under-performance on research income, particularly in respect of overhead recovery. Some significant one-off factors had also contributed to the position, including: a package of early retirement severance costs; a cut in HEFCE grant income; and the costs of the IoE merger. Work was ongoing to recover the position. UCL's cash balance was predicted to fall to approximately £74m by the end of the financial year.
- 52.3 Council members discussed a range of concerns over the robustness of the forecasting mechanism and the feasibility of achieving the 3.5% surplus target for 2015-16, as set out in the Estates and Funding Strategy. It was confirmed that, alongside the budget, Council would receive at its meeting on 9 July a plan for delivering the required scale of change. The only alternative to this plan would be to roll back the scale of ambition for the estate, and to cut staff and student numbers.
- 52.4 Council noted the importance of ensuring that all staff understood that less than a quarter of the total projected capital spend was for the development of UCL East; the remainder was to remedy historic underinvestment in Bloomsbury.

53 **SCHOOL OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICAL AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES (BEAMS): ANNUAL REPORT**
[PAPER 4-37, 2014-15]

- 53.1 **Received:** an oral introduction to the paper from Professors Nick Brook, Anthony Finkelstein and Alan Penn, Deans of the Faculties of Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Engineering Sciences, and Built Environment respectively.

- 53.2 The School had expanded its research and teaching activity significantly in recent years, and all three Faculties had performed strongly in the REF 2014. Central contribution targets had increased considerably and were expected to continue to do so in the medium term. In order to continue to meet these targets the School would need to make careful adjustments to its undergraduate / postgraduate and home / EU / overseas student mix, whilst remaining mindful of the background of national and international fluctuations in demand between the School's subject areas.
- 53.3 A lack of space for the development of facilities in Bloomsbury remained one of the principal challenges across the School. Notwithstanding the ongoing programme of redevelopment on the Bloomsbury campus, notably including a new building for the Department of Computer Science and the ongoing refurbishment of Wates House, engagement with major estates projects at sites such as UCL East, the Francis Crick Institute and Harwell was vital to the School's ongoing ability to develop new types of interdisciplinary activity. Council noted specific examples envisaged for UCL East in the areas of robotics, environmental chambers for testing building fabrics, and creative collaboration with performance arts.
- 53.4 On a national level, equality and diversity issues were particularly challenging in the academic areas covered by the School. Council noted that all three BEAMS Faculties had a higher proportion of senior female academic staff than the sector or Russell Group average, and that Engineering was some distance ahead of the sector on the overall proportion of female staff, but in general the rate of improvement was slow. Council discussed issues around the recruitment and retention of women. The approach taken to marketing the academic fields was thought to be a key factor in addressing the issue.
- 53.5 Council discussed changes in student demand across the academic areas covered by the School, as well as the impact of the economic downturn on students' perception of employment opportunities, and thereby on satisfaction levels. It was suggested that employment data should be incorporated into School reports as a matter of course. The School had made a concerted effort to improve student satisfaction, including a thorough overhaul of the Engineering programmes. NSS scores were now improving.
- 53.6 Council thanked Professors Brook, Finkelstein and Penn for their comprehensive report.

54 **GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK**
[PAPER 4-38, 2014-15]

- 54.1 **Received:** an introduction from Wendy Appleby, Registrar (and Secretary to Council).
- 54.2 Council members were requested to give feedback on the paper, either during or outside the meeting, before firm proposals were submitted to the meeting of 9 July. The aim was to clarify the governance structure, without initiating wholesale reform, in advance of the Council Effectiveness Review scheduled for 2015-16.

54.3 Council members welcomed the proposals in the paper.

Matters for approval or information
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55 **RENAMING OF ACADEMIC UNIT**

[PAPER 4-39, 2014-15]

RESOLVED – on the recommendation of Academic Board:

55.1 **That the Department of Management Science and Innovation be renamed the UCL School of Management.**

56 **MEMBERSHIP OF UCL COMMITTEES**

[PAPER 4-40, 2014-15]

RESOLVED – on the recommendation of the Nominations Committee:

56.1 **That Ms Nahid Majid be appointed to the Ethical Investment Review Committee and the Ethics Committee, and that Baroness Valentine be appointed to the Remuneration and Strategy Committee, with effect from 1 October 2015 until 30 September 2017.**

57 **DISCIPLINARY CODE FOR STUDENTS**

[PAPER 4-41, 2014-15]

RESOLVED – on the recommendation of Academic Board:

57.1 **That the revised UCL Disciplinary Code and Procedure in Respect of Students be approved.**

58 **DELEGATED AUTHORISATION LIMITS**

[PAPER 4-42, 2014-15]

RESOLVED – on the recommendation of the Finance Committee:

58.1 **That the amended delegated authorisation limits be approved.**

59 **TUITION FEES 2016-17**

[PAPER 4-43, 2014-15]

59.1 **Received** – details of the minimum tuition fee rates to be charged for UK/EU graduate programmes and all overseas students for the Academic Year 2016-17, as agreed by Finance Committee at its meeting on 26 March 2015.

60 **INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION STUDENTS' UNION**

[PAPER 4-45, 2014-15]

60.1 **Received** – proposed amendments to the Constitution of the Institute of Education Students' Union.

60.2 Council noted that the matter of the merger of the IoE Students' Union with UCLU would be on the agenda for the meeting of 9 July 2015.

RESOLVED

60.3 **That the proposed amendments to the Institute of Education Students' Union Constitution be approved.**

61 **LIBRARY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

[PAPER 4-46, 2014-15]

61.1 **Received** – the annual report of the Library Committee for 2013-14.

62 **HEFCE ANNUAL ASSURANCE REPORT**

[PAPER 4-47, 2014-15]

62.1 **Received** – the HEFCE annual assessment of institutional risk, dated 24 March 2015. HEFCE's assessment was that UCL was not at higher risk.

63 **CHAIR'S ACTION ON BEHALF OF COUNCIL**

[PAPER 4-48, 2014-15]

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

64 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

64.1 The next Council meeting would be held on **Thursday 9 July 2015** at 3pm.

Wendy Appleby
Secretary to Council
May 2015