



COUNCIL

Wednesday 25 October 2017

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Baroness Jo Valentine (*Chair*)

Ms Sarah Al-Aride	Professor Michael Arthur (<i>President and Provost</i>)
Professor Lucie Clapp	Professor Annette Dolphin
Dr Martin Fry	Dr Andrew Gould
Professor Patrick Haggard	Mr Hamza Jamshaid
Ms Nahid Majid	Ms Lindsay Nicholson
Lord John Sharkey	Dr Hynek Pikhart
Mr Philip Sturrock	Mr Justin Turner QC
Ms Sarah Whitney	Professor Andrew Wills

In attendance:

Ms Wendy Appleby (Secretary to Council); Dame Nicola Brewer, Vice-Provost (International); Ms Celia Caulcott, Vice-Provost (Enterprise and London); Mr Philip Harding (Director of Finance and Business Affairs); Mr Rex Knight (Vice-Provost (Operations)); Ms Collette Lux (Director of Communications and Marketing) [*for Minute 8*]; Professor David Lomas (Vice-Provost (Health)); Ms Anne Marie O'Mullane (Assistant Secretary to Council); Mr Derfel Owen (Director of Academic Services) [*for Minute 12*]; Professor Anthony Smith (Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs)); Professor Alan Thompson (Dean, Faculty of Brain Sciences) [*for Minute 9*].

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Ven Balakrishnan; Mr Dominic Blakemore, Ms Lori Houlihan and Dame DeAnne Julius.

Key to abbreviations used in these Minutes:

ASER	Annual Student Experience Review
CUC	Committee of University Chairs
DRI	Dementia Research Institute
FRS	Financial Reporting Standard
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
IoN	UCL Institute of Neurology
NSS	National Student Survey
PGT	postgraduate taught student
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework
UG	Undergraduate
PGT	Postgraduate Taught

Preliminary Formal Business

1 INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the two new elected members of Council, Professor Patrick Haggard and Dr Hynek Pikhart, the three new external members of Council, Lord Sharkey, Mr Justin Turner QC and Ms Sarah Whitney, and the two new student members of Council, Ms Sarah Al-Aride and Mr Hamza Jamshaid.

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 2.1 Lord Sharkey notified the Committee that he was a member of the House of Lords Economic Affairs Select Committee which was undertaking an inquiry into the funding of post-school education. Lord Sharkey would recuse himself from any relevant discussion should it arise.
- 2.2 The Chair reminded Council members of their responsibilities as set out in section 7(1) of the Committee of University Chairs Code of Governance.

3 MINUTES

- 3.1 **Approved:** the minutes of the Council meeting held on 13 July 2017 [*Council Minutes 62 - 78, 2016-17*], were confirmed by Council subject to the following changes being made:

Minute 103.1: Insert the word “communication” after the words “global engagement”.

Minute 87(G)(1): Include the letter “m” after “£334.7”.

Minute 104.3: Remove the word “unexpected”. Remove the sentence “There was also the option of co-locating all neuroscience activity on the site, thereby significantly reducing rental costs elsewhere” and remove the word “however” from the next sentence.

4 MATTERS ARISING

- 4.1 There was one matter arising from the meeting of 13 July 2017 which was carried over to the meeting 25 October 2017; the Outline Business Case, ION/DRI Location [*see Minute 9 below*].

Matters for discussion

5 PROVOST'S BUSINESS

5A Student numbers

5A.1 15,440 students had graduated from UCL in the period September 2016 - August 2017. This comprised 4,812 UG, 9,105 PGT, and 1,252 PhD students. There had been 20,956 new enrolments, including 5,854 full-time undergraduates and 11,070 postgraduate taught students. Council also received an update on preliminary data on applications.

5B Semantic Scholar

5B.1 Neuroscientists Professor Karl Friston and Professor Raymond Dolan have been ranked first and second by Semantic Scholar for neuroscientists; a search engine that uses artificial intelligence to make calculations. They were also ranked second and third in the field of Biomedical Science. Council extended their congratulations to Professor Friston and Professor Dolan.

5C Horizon 2020

5C.1 UCL was third behind Oxford University and Cambridge University for Horizon 20/20 funding in 2016/17.

5D Special Meeting of Academic Board

5D.1 A Special Meeting of Academic Board was scheduled for 30th October 2017 in order to discuss UCL East. The letter requesting the meeting had requested that Academic Board members participate in a separate show of hands on the financial management, the academic principles and the geographical location of UCL East. A report would be made to Council in due course.

5E Spain

5E.1 The Provost would be writing to his counterpart at the University of Barcelona, in order to extend moral support following recent events that had taken place after the vote for independence in Catalonia.

5F Information request to Vice Chancellors

5F.1 A Government whip had reportedly written to all UK Vice Chancellors seeking details of teaching of European affairs with particular reference to Brexit. The Provost reported that UCL had not received any such request.

5G Funding of HE

5G.1 The Provost updated Council on two key government announcements: the plan to freeze undergraduate tuition fees at £9,250 a year for 2018/19, and to raise the income threshold for student loan repayments from £21,000 to £25,000 a year. A major review of university funding and student finance had been announced. There were no details as yet on this major review.

5H **Brexit**

- 5H.1 The Provost provided an update on work being undertaken to emphasise to the government the importance of confirming the rights of EU citizens, and a recent meeting with the Commissioner for Research, Science and Innovation in the European Commission.

6 **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE EDUCATION STRATEGY AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE**
UCL 2034 THEME 2 / ENABLER A
[PAPER 1-01, 2017-18]

- 6.1 The Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs) updated Council on progress towards achieving Principal Theme 2, 'A global leader in the integration of research and education, underpinning an inspirational student experience.' UCL was one year into the implementation of the Education Strategy 2016 – 2021; the strategy underpinning the delivery of Principal Theme 2.
- 6.2 The TEF had been the dominant theme in 2016-17. UCL was awarded a TEF Silver. The next stage of the TEF would be subject level review; UCL was already ascertaining how to prepare for this phase.
- 6.3 UCL's response rate for the National Student Survey dropped in 2016-17 below the 50% publications threshold. This was as a result of the Students' Union joining the National Union of Students call to boycott participation in the survey. There were also changes to the survey questions; year-to-year comparison was therefore difficult in some respects. Student satisfaction had fallen across the whole sector in all areas for the first time in ten years. The marked downward trend at UCL would need to be addressed.
- 6.4 The Registrar introduced the update on Enabler A, 'Giving our students the best support, facilities and opportunities', highlighting that students valued a personalised student experience. There had been substantial improvements to the provision of learning spaces in 2017 and the new Student Centre was due to be operational in 2018. Nonetheless, there was more work to be done in order to deliver a step change in UCL's student satisfaction levels.
- 6.5 Mindful of the unreliable nature of UCL's NSS data due the low response rate, Council discussed the factors affecting the variation in performance between departments. Members discussed what was happening in departments performing well that could be replicated in the departments with lower scores; it was reported that Departments with the strongest results put students at the heart of their activities. It was confirmed that the ASER process had been a significant success in helping departments to reflect on the delivery of education to students. However, this was a culture change matter.
- 6.6 Council discussed the variation in performance by departments from year to year and the factors that could be affecting this. The availability of high quality learning and teaching spaces was important. Course administration and organisation had to be consistent. Engagement with professional development such as HEA fellowships and HEA Senior Fellowships was also important.

- 6.7 Council urged the Vice Provost (Education and Student Affairs) to continue to work with Deans and Heads of Department on the culture change across the institution and to hold areas of weaker performance to account.

7 FINANCIAL UPDATE
UCL 2034 ENABLER C
[PAPER 1-02, 2017-18]

- 7.1 The Director of Finance and Business Affairs reported that the draft financial results for 2016-17 indicated a reported surplus of £85.4m against a forecast of £83.5m. The Committee discussed the variances as set out in the Faculty and Divisional Performance figures in Table 2 and the reasons behind these.
- 7.2 The surplus was a result of £1.3bn income, £15m above forecast, with material variances being research grants (+£19m) tuition fees (-£4m), donations (-£7m) and internal income (+£6m). Council noted progress with the preparation of the financial statements.

8 COMMUNICATIONS REVIEW
[PAPER 1-03, 2017-18]

Ms Collette Lux, Director of Communications & Marketing, was in attendance for this item.

- 8.1 The Director of Communications & Marketing provided her first impressions since taking up the post in March 2017 and the emerging priorities for the Communications and Marketing Division.
- 8.2 Council discussed the devolved nature of such activity at UCL and the challenges associated with having a large number of different communications and marketing roles located at departmental level.
- 8.3 Council welcomed the priorities that the Director outlined, including the introduction of communities of practice, the use of data to understand the reach of communications methods, the development of umbrella campaigns and the streamlining of processes.

9 UNIVERSITY TITLE
[Paper 1-06, 2017-18]

- 9.1 The Registrar gave an update on the process for applying for University title, the timeline for completion and possible changes to the Charter and Statutes in addition to references to the University title itself.
- 9.2 Council was updated on discussions at AB's meeting on 24th October 2017 about some of the suggested changes to the Charter and Statutes. Council discussed decision-making by email and it was agreed that members of Council who had previous experience of participating in board decisions by email in other sectors would input on their experiences. This would help ascertain the situations in which it would be useful to use decision-making by email and how to manage the risks of using such a method of decision-making.
- 9.3 It was requested that future papers to Council should include a clean version of the Charter and Statutes with the changes required for University title

incorporated. This would make it easier to identify the suggested additional changes.

- 9.5 Council noted that a consultation process on the suggested changes that would be undertaken in response to a request by Academic Board. In particular, Council noted that some of suggested changes that would be included in the consultation were: the inclusion in the Charter a clause on academic freedom; the removal of student members' exclusion from reserved business; and electronic methods of decision-making.

RESOLVED

- 9.5 **That the proposal to begin the formal process to seek the legal status of University title be approved.**

10 **COUNCIL ACCOUNTABILITY – QUALITY ASSURANCE**

[Paper 1-07, 2017-18]

Mr Derfel Owen, Director of Academic Services, was in attendance for this item.

- 10.1 The Director of Academic Services gave an update on the obligations and requirements for governing bodies to provide assurance to HEFCE for 2017 on the quality of institutions' higher education provision. Council noted that a report on the periodic review process and an update on the progress towards the actions set out in the QAA Action plan would be provided to Council at its meeting on 23 November 2017.
- 10.2 Council discussed the elements of UCL's Quality Review Framework and the fact that it contained quality enhancement as well quality assurance elements. This was a sector requirement. Council noted that one of the flagship enhancement activities was UCL's Connected Curriculum.

Matters for approval or information
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11 **COUNCIL TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP**

[Paper 1-09, 2017-18]

- 11.1 **Received** – the Terms of Reference and the Constitution for Council for 2017-18. Council noted that Ms Sarah Whitney should have been included in the Constitution for Council.

12 **REGISTER OF INTERESTS 2017-18**

[PAPER 1-10, 2017-18]

- 12.1 **Received** – the annual declarations from Council members in the Register of Interests.
- 12.2 Council members and those in attendance signed their own entries in the Register during the course of the meeting.

13 **MEMBERSHIPS: OTHER COMMITTEES**

[Paper 1-11, 2017-18]

13.1 **Received** – proposals for membership of UCL Committees.

RESOLVED

13.2 **That Dr Hynek Pikhart be appointed as a member of Nominations Committee with effect from 1st October 2017.**

13.3 **That Lord Sharkey be appointed as a member of Remuneration & Human Resources Strategy Committee with effect from 1st October 2017.**

13.4 **That Professor Patrick Haggard be appointed as member of Finance Committee with effect from 1st October 2017.**

14 **MINUTES: ACADEMIC BOARD AND ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

[PAPER 1-12, 2017-18]

14.1 **Received** – the minutes of Academic Board (3 May 2017), Special Meeting of Academic Board (18 May 2017) and unconfirmed minutes of Academic Committee (15 June 2017).

15 **MINUTES: OTHER COMMITTEES**

[PAPER 1-13, 2017-18]

15.1 **Received** – the minutes from Audit Committee (7 July 2017), Investments Committee (21 April 2017, 29 June 2017)

16 **UCL SEAL – ANNUAL REPORT**

[PAPER 1-14, 2017-18]

16.1 **Received** – a report of sealings carried out between 1 October 2016 and 30 September 2017.

17 **STUDENT SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS 2016/17**

[PAPER 1-15, 2017-18]

17.1 **Received** – an update on student suspensions for 2016/17.

18 **EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW: ANNUAL UPDATE ON PROGRESS (CUC CODE)**

[Paper 1-16, 2017-18]

18.1 **Received** – a paper on how UCL’s strategies, policies and procedures mapped against the ‘must’ statements set out in the CUC Code. The paper also commented on the implementation of agreed actions from the Effectiveness Review. It was noted that this document would be submitted along with the letter of instigation for University Title.

19 **ACTION TAKEN BY THE CHAIR**

[Paper 1-17, 2017-18]

- 19.1 **RECEIVED** – a paper informing Council of decisions taken by the Chair on behalf of Council since the last report. These decisions were as follows:

Appointment of Dean of Faculty of Laws, Acting Directors of SSEES and the Institute for Women's Health; reappointment of Head of the Department of Chemical Engineering.

20 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

- 20.1 The next meeting was scheduled for 23 November 2017 at 3pm in the Council Room.

Wendy Appleby
Secretary to Council
October 2017