LONDON'S GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

UCL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

2 October 2018

M I N U T E S

Present:

Professor Anthony Smith (Chair);

Dr Tracey Allen; Ms Stefanie Anyadi; Ms Wendy Appleby; Dr Simon Banks; Mr Ian Davis; Mr Farooq Dean; Mr Ashley Doolan; Dr Julie Evans; Dr Clare Goudy; Ms June Hedges; Dr Arne Hofmann; Dr Sandra Leaton-Gray; Dr Helen Matthews; Professor Tim McHugh; Mr Derfel Owen; Mr Saddiqur Rahman; Dr Aeli Roberts; Mr Mike Rowson; Dr Sam Smidt; Dr Fiona Strawbridge and Ms Olga Thomas.

In attendance: Ms Lizzie Vinton (Secretary); Ms Sandra Hinton for item 6; Mr Simon To for item 8; Mr Toby Belshaw for item 9; Mr Rob Traynor for item 11.

Apologies were received from: Ms Rothna Akhtar; Ms Wendy Appleby; Dr Christine Hoffman; Ms Blathnaid Mahony; Professor Norbert Pachler; Dr Mike Porter; Dr Hazel Smith and Professor Eva Sorensen.

Key to abbreviations	
ASER	Annual Student Experience Review
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
DTC	Departmental Teaching Committee
EdCom	Education Committee
FTC	Faculty Teaching Committee
HEAR	Higher Education Achievement Report
IQR	Internal Quality Review
LSA	Late Summer Assessment
MAPS	Mathematical and Physical Sciences
NSS	National Student Survey
OfS	Office for Students
OVPESA	Office of the Vice-Provost (Education & Student Affairs)
PGR	Postgraduate Research
SSCC	Staff-Student Consultative Committee
SU	Students' Union
TEF	Teaching Excellence Framework

PART I: PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1 TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP 2018-19

1.1 **Approved** – the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for **Education Committee** 2018-19 at EDCOM 1-01 (18-19).

1.2 EdCom welcomed the following new members:

- Dr Sandra Leaton-Gray – new Academic Board nominee
- Dr Mike Porter – new Academic Board nominee
- Dr Helen Matthews - ex officio in her new role as Head of Academic Policy and Quality Assurance
- Ashley Doolan – co-opted to the committee in his role as the new Deputy Faculty Tutor for the Joint Faculties

1.3 **Approved** – the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for the **Academic Partnerships Review Group** 2018-19 at EDCOM 1-02 (18-19).

1.4 **Approved** – the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for the **Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Sub-Committee** 2018-19 at EDCOM 1-03 (18-19).

1.5 **Approved** – that a member of the SU professional staff would also be a member of ARQASC in addition to the Sabbatical Officers.

1.6 **Approved** – the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for the **Programme and Module Approval Panels** 2018-19 at EDCOM 1-04 (18-19).

1.7 **Approved** – the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for the **Quality Review Sub-Committee** 2018-19 at EDCOM 1-05 (18-19), with one amendment to note that Stefanie Anyadi is a member of QRSC.

1.8 **Approved** – the Terms of Reference, Constitution and Membership for the **Student Academic Representative Steering Group** 2018-19 at EDCOM 1-06 (18-19).

2   MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

2.1 **Approved** - The minutes of the meeting held 19 July 2018 (EdCom Minutes 72-92, 18-19).

3   MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 No matters were raised which were not already on the agenda.

PART II: MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

---

4   TEACHING EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK

4.1 **Received** – an oral report from the Director of Education Planning.

4.2 OVPESA had expressed an interest in taking part in the national pilot of the subject-level TEF during 2018-19, in preparation for the full implementation in 2019-20. The OfS was looking for around 50 participants and would confirm selections in the next few weeks. If UCL were not selected, there were plans for an internal pilot to help Departments prepare for the initiative.

4.3 As part of this year's ASER, Departments had been asked to work on narratives of around 1200 words. Guidance had been circulated and assistance was available from the Teaching Fellows in Arena. OVPESA was also looking at programme codes to ensure that all subjects were correctly allocated. The pilot subject groupings had not yet been confirmed - there were 35 in the 2017-18 pilot, but the OfS had received a lot of feedback from institutions on the groupings, and it was thought that this would lead to some changes. It was noted that programmes would have to have been running for a full cycle (e.g. 3 years for a standard Bachelors) to be included in the TEF.

4.4 EdCom welcomed the opportunity to take part in the pilot as preparation, but expressed concerns about the additional workload for Departments which were already very stretched. The Director of Education Planning offered to attend FTCs and DTCs to discuss the initiative and the support available. MAPS had held an away day on the TEF and offered to share their experiences more widely.

5   BME ATTAINMENT GAP PROJECT – STUDENT SURVEY *[EdCom Minute 81, 17-18]*

5.1 This item was withdrawn.

6   INTERNAL QUALITY REVIEW *[EdCom Minute 91B, 17-18]*

6.1   **Received** – the paper at <u>EDCOM 1-08 (18-19)</u>.

6.2   Following the discussion at the last meeting, a range of proposals to enhance the IQR process were circulated to faculties for feedback. The authors thanked colleagues for their detailed and thoughtful comments. Responses to that feedback and proposed actions were now being submitted to EdCom for consideration. It was noted that a swift decision was needed as some IQRs were due to start imminently, and the IQR Panel was due to meet and agree themes on 17 October. Agreement in principle was sought at this stage, and more detailed plans and guidance would be circulated to Departments shortly.

6.3   **Approved** – the proposed changes to Internal Quality Review for 2018-19.

7   HIGHER EDUCATION ACHIEVEMENT REPORT – GUIDING PRINCIPLES

7.1   **Received** – the paper at <u>EDCOM 1-09 (18-19)</u>.

7.2   When the HEAR was first introduced at UCL in 2011/12, the decision was taken to exclude internships and paid work. However there had since been an institutional and external drive to incorporate such activities into the curriculum and it was now felt that these ought to be admissible, where they were integrated into a programme of learning or endorsed by a Faculty as an activity directly related to a student's programme of learning.

7.3   EdCom also took the opportunity to consider the other HEAR Guiding Principles. It was felt that these were still broadly appropriate and no major changes were needed. However Laws requested that the principle regarding Moots be revised to include all four finalists in the HEAR. There was also a suggestion that 'ambassadorial roles' could be more clearly defined. The Director of Academic Services agreed to take these two points forward with the relevant parties.

<div align="right">

Action: Director of Academic Services
</div>

7.4   **Approved** – the proposed changes to the UCL Higher Education Achievement Report Guiding Principles as outlined in <u>EDCOM 1-09 (18-19)</u>.

8   STUDENT ACADEMIC REPRESENTATIVES ANNUAL REPORT 2017-18

8.1   **Received** – the report at <u>EDCOM 1-10 (18-19)</u>.

8.2   In 2017-18, Academic Representatives were appointed for 149 of 156 SSCCs (96%). In the first year of the role, 131 Lead Department Representatives were appointed covering 72% of SSCCs, and 95% of Faculty Representative roles had been filled. 1138 Course and Research Student Representatives were trained, more than any previous year. The report also outlined plans for the coming year, which included a reduced focus on coverage and an increased emphasis on helping Academic Representatives to have a transformative impact on students' experiences. There would also be a focus on improving PGR representation.

8.3   EdCom welcomed the improvements in coverage and the plans to improve how we respond to student feedback. The NSS indicated that students had ample opportunities to provide feedback, but were less positive about how well that feedback was acted upon. Whilst the student voice was not a specific focus of the TEF, there was often a strong correlation between institutional responses to student feedback and overall satisfaction levels. Programmes with high satisfaction levels often included leadership teams which focused on building good relationships with students and who worked together to achieve improvements.

8.4   EdCom asked Faculties to encourage Departments to focus on the student voice NSS questions when putting together their TEF narratives, and to encourage FTCs, DTCs and SSCCs to discuss how ways to improve responses to student feedback.

<div align="right">

Action: Faculty Tutors
</div>

9   EXAMINATIONS REPORT 2017-18

9.1   **Received** – the report at <u>EDCOM 1-11 (18-19)</u>.

9.2   The 2017/18 academic year included a number of major changes to centrally-managed examinations. The exam timetable was published on 26 February, meeting the demand for earlier publication from both students and staff. The main exam sittings were moved to a single location at the Excel Centre, and there was a full roll out of the Late Summer Assessment (LSA)

period. There had also been a particular focus on improving the visibility and accessibility of student wellbeing resources. Whilst these changes had been challenging, they had resulted in a significant overall improvement in the student experience as well as a significant decrease in the number of complaints and reports of material irregularities during the exam period. There was still work to be done in a number of areas including the operation of on-campus Special Examination Arrangements facilities, and the quality of invigilation.

9.3 There had been a very high volume of overseas exams in the LSA period, which had led to issues with the quality of invigilation and the speed and efficiency with which papers were returned to Departments for marking. The Examinations Team were working on proposals for changes and would bring this to a future meeting. EdCom suggested that the policy was tightened to cover only distance learning students and those who had otherwise completed their registration at UCL. All other students should be expected to attend UCL for assessment.

9.4 A key area of concern was the number of errors in examination papers. Following complaints from students in previous years about the disruption caused by large-scale announcements, it had been decided that affected students would be handed errata slips. This had greatly reduced the number of complaints about announcements. However some faculties felt that this exacerbated the problem and caused more disruption rather than less. EdCom agreed that further work was needed to improve due diligence in the production of papers and increase ownership by Departments. It was particularly important that someone undertook the paper to time, especially for technical papers. It would also be beneficial to provide examples of good practice from other institutions who had managed to reduce errors significantly.

9.5 EdCom noted that there had been some difficulties with reporting for the LSAs, which meant that some Departments had to manually extract student data. It was particularly important to look at these processes in Portico in preparation for the changes in progression and award regulations for 2018-19. Academic Services confirmed that test environments were currently being set up and that there would be consultation with Departments and Faculties about the new system in the coming weeks.

9.6 Academic Services planned to establish an Exams Operations Group for the coming year to tackle some of the issues raised. A more detailed review of LSAs was also planned for November. EdCom members were asked to encourage staff to attend the drop-in sessions where Student Records were on hand to provide guidance and resolve problems on a one-to-one basis.

10 RELEASE OF PROVISIONAL MODULE RESULTS

10.1 **Received** – the paper at EDCOM 1-12 (18-19).

10.2 In order to comply with new data protection regulations, it was no longer possible for Departments to post student results on physical or electronic noticeboards, even if pseudonymised by candidate number. Final assessment outcomes were now made available to students via Portico within a much shorter time frame, so the posting of provisional results was becoming less necessary. However it was recognised that Departments would still want to provide provisional marks on individual assessments at various stages throughout the year. The policy on the release of results had therefore been revised, and included examples of acceptable channels for communicating results.

10.3 Some concerns were raised about the change in custom and practice for Departments, although it was recognised that the changes were necessary to be GDPR-compliant. EdCom asked Academic Services to investigate mechanisms for making the publication of provisional results to individual students quicker and easier, for example via Moodle Gradebook, or new reports in Portico.

10.4 EdCom noted that the paper required some clarifications with regards to publishing component results. Academic Services would make these amendments before circulating the policy to Departments.

10.5 **Approved** - The committee approved the revised policy subject to the amendments in 10.4.

11 ANNUAL REPORT ON MINUTES OF FACULTY TEACHING COMMITTEES 2017-18

11.1 **Received** – the report at EDCOM 1-13 (18-19).

11.2 The Policy Advisor (Education Governance) presented the annual analysis of discussions at FTCs. This indicated that the committees were operating well. The separation of PGR matters into discrete Faculty Research Degree Committees appeared to have been beneficial. There were some queries about the frequency of NSS discussions, however it was noted that the NSS and the student experience were factors in wide range of discussion topics, and the coding related only to items which were specifically about the NSS itself.

12 STUDENT ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT TASK GROUP

12.1 **Received** – the paper at EDCOM 1-14 (18-19).

12.2 The paper recommended that a task group was established to conduct a full review of the Examination Irregularities and Plagiarism procedure. A number of issues had already been identified, including a need for penalties to be applied more consistently across UCL, for a more targeted approach to contract cheating/ghost writing, and for greater clarity on issues such as proofreading, editing, and poor academic practice. A Chair had been appointed, and a number of colleagues had already been approached to be members of the group. Work was underway to look at procedures in other institutions which might translate to the UCL context, and there were plans to consult more widely across UCL.

12.3 Digital Education was involved in a national pilot of a new Turnitin tool for investigating authorship, which it was hoped would be an invaluable tool in the prevention of contract cheating. It was agreed that a member of Digital Education should be on the task group.

12.4 **Approved** – EdCom approved the establishment of a Student Academic Misconduct Task Group.

13 INTERRUPTION OF STUDY TASK GROUP

13.1 **Received** – the paper at EDCOM 1-15 (18-19).

13.2 The paper recommended that a task group was established to investigate a number of issues in the Interruption of Study and Return to Study process. The group would initially focus on taught students, and would pay particular attention to the impact of backdating interruptions on assessment, fees, student loans and visas, with a view to determining the parameters for the effective date of interruption. It would also seek to better define the relationships between deferrals, extensions and interruptions and to minimise, where possible, opportunities for academic advantage in the interruptions process. A Chair had been appointed, and expressions of interest to join the membership were being sought.

13.3 **Approved** – EdCom approved the establishment of an Interruption of Study Task Group.

PART III: OTHER MATTERS FOR APPROVAL OR INFORMATION

---

14 APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

14.1 **Approved** – the programmes recommended for approval by PMAP at EDCOM 1-16 (18-19).

15 MINUTES OF SUB COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

15.1 **Approved** – the Minutes of the Programme and Module Approval Panel held *12 July 2018* at EDCOM 1-17 (18-19).

15.2 **Approved** – the Minutes of the Student Academic Representation Steering Group held *11 April 2018* at EDCOM 1-18 (18-19)

16 SUSPENSIONS OF REGULATIONS

16.1 **Approved** – the Suspensions of Regulations at EDCOM 1-19 (18-19).

17 DATES OF MEETINGS FOR 2018-19:

- Thursday 6 December 2018 10.30am to 1pm - Keeton Room (XG01), Bentham House (Faculty of Laws)
- Monday 25 February 2019 10.30am to 1pm – Haldane Room, Wilkins Building
- Thursday 25 April 2019 10.30am to 1pm - Haldane Room, Wilkins Building
- Tuesday 11 June 2019 10.30am to 1pm - Haldane Room, Wilkins Building
- Thursday 18 July 2019 10.30am to 1pm - Haldane Room, Wilkins Building

LIZZIE VINTON
Secretary to Education Committee
Assessment Regulations and Governance Manager | Academic Services | Student and Registry Services
Email: l.vinton@ucl.ac.uk

12 October 2018