



## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

4 October 2013

### MINUTES

*Present:*

Professor Mike Ewing (*Chair*)

Mr David Ashton  
Professor David Bogle  
Professor Chris Carey  
Mr Jason Clarke  
Dr Caroline Essex  
Dr Julie Evans  
Mr Marco Federighi  
Mr Keir Gallagher  
Ms June Hedges  
Dr Arne Hofmann

Ms Valerie Hogg  
Dr Helen Matthews  
Ms Kathleen Nicholls  
Dr Hilary Richards  
Dr Fiona Strawbridge  
Professor Derek Tocher  
Mr Ben Towse  
Dr Paul Walker  
Dr Andrew Wills

*In attendance:* Ms Clare Goudy; Ms Sandra Hinton (Secretary); Ms Irenie Morley; Dr Hazel Smith; Ms Paula Speller.

*Apologies for absence were received from:* Ms Karen Barnard; Dr Brenda Cross; Dr John Mitchell; Ms Olga Thomas; Ms Susan Ware.

#### *Key to abbreviations*

AC	Academic Committee
CALT	Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
EdCom	Education Committee
GPA	Grade Point Average
HEA	Higher Education Academy
HEAT	Higher Education Assurance Team
HEI	Higher Education Institution
PMASG	Programme and Module Approval Steering Group
QMEC	Quality Management and Enhancement Committee
SISFWG	Student Information System Funding Working Group
SMT	Senior Management Team
StRAC	Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee
UCLBE	UCL Board of Examiners
UKBA	UK Border Agency

## 1 TERMS OF REFERENCE, CONSTITUTION AND 2013-14 MEMBERSHIP

### **Received:**

- 1.1 At EDCOM 1/01 (13-14) – the Constitution and 2013-14 Membership.
- 1.2 At EDCOM 1/02 (13-14) – the Terms of Reference.

### **Noted:**

- 1.3 EdCom noted the removal of item 2 of EdCom's Terms of Reference, in accordance with UCL Council's approval of the creation of a Student Recruitment and Admissions Committee (StRAC) which would report to AC.

### **Reported:**

- 1.4 The EdCom Chair welcomed the following new members to EdCom:
  - Professor Chris Carey, Chair of the Programme and Module Approval Steering Group and Chair of the UCL Board of Examiners.
  - Mr Keir Gallagher, Education and Campaigns Officer, UCL Union.
  - Mr Zubair Idris [*in absentia*], International Students' Officer, UCL Union.
  - Mr Ben Towse, Postgraduate Students' Officer, UCL Union.

## 2 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 25 JUNE 2013

### **Received:**

- 2.1 An oral report from the Chair concerning the unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of EdCom held on 25 June 2013 [*EdCom Mins. 57-70, 25.06.13*], circulated previously.

### **Reported:**

- 2.2 The EdCom Chair reported that, as Chair of QMEC, he had invited the Director of UCL Estates to attend the meeting of QMEC on 18 June 2013 to discuss those issues concerning UCL's teaching estate which had arisen from the 2012-13 Annual Monitoring round. At that meeting, the Director of Estates had made a number of references to the content of a progress report by the Timetabling Review Group, chaired by the Vice-Provost (Education), which was due to be considered by the Provost's SMT the following (19 June 2013).
- 2.3 A few days later at EdCom's meeting on 25 June, in the course of a separate discussion of UCL's teaching estate [*EdCom Min.62, 12-13*], the Chair had referred to a number of points which had been raised by the Director of Estates in relation to the Timetabling Review Group's report at QMEC and these were then included in the Minute of the EdCom discussion. Following the meeting, the Vice-Provost (Education) had notified the EdCom officers that a number of the references to the Timetabling Review Group's report which had been made to QMEC were factually inaccurate and that, consequently, the Minutes of the June QMEC and EdCom meetings could, as currently worded, present a misleading impression of the content of the Group's report. The EdCom officers had agreed to a request from the Vice-Provost (Education) that the Minutes of the June meetings of QMEC and EdCom be amended. The Chair reported that EdCom officers would therefore be revising and

then re-circulating the Minutes for approval by Committee members via email.  
**[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton].**

- 2.4 The progress report by the Timetabling Review Group had been approved by the Provost's SMT on 19 June 2013 and would be circulated to EdCom members shortly. The outcomes of the Group's work and next steps in terms of implementation of the Group's recommendations would be on the agenda of relevant committees in the Autumn Term and would form a substantive item for discussion on EdCom's own agenda on 26 November 2013 **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton - to note]**

### **3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

#### **3A Role of UCL Student Mediator [EdCom Min. 60.6, 12-13]**

**Noted:**

- 3A.1 Documents confirming the role and responsibilities of the new UCL Student Mediator were now available in the UCL Academic Manual at <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/academic-manual/>.

#### **3B Fit to Study Policy [EdCom Min. 60.7, 12-13]**

**Reported:**

- 3B.1 The Director of Student Administration reported that work was in progress on a Fit to Study Policy. Use of a Medical Advisor was currently being trialled and their experiences would be used to inform the draft Policy. It was anticipated that a draft Fit to Study Policy would be submitted to EdCom during the 2013-14 session. **[Action: Mr David Ashton]**

#### **3C Report of the GPA Working Group [EdCom Min. 62.4, 12-13]**

**Reported:**

- 3C.1 The EdCom Chair, as Chair of the AC GPA Working Group, reported the following:
- The report from the AC Working Group on the GPA had been submitted to AC on 4 July 2013, where members had agreed in principle that UCL should join an HEA-sponsored national pilot group, subject to UCL receiving more information on the details of how the pilot would be conducted.
  - Although the timescale for the HEA-sponsored pilot had not yet been confirmed, it had been suggested that UCL should consider piloting the GPA system in 2014-15 for incoming first year students. If this happened, it would initially be conducted in tandem with the current system of degree classification. It was understood that the national steering group would meet again in December 2013 and that the AC GPA Working Group would be reconvened after this to discuss any outcomes.

**RESOLVED:**

- 3C.2 That the EdCom Chair, as Chair of the AC GPA Working Group, would keep EdCom informed of any progress. **[Action: Professor Mike Ewing - to note]**

**3D Faculty issues with PORTICO functionality 2012-13 [EdCom Min. 68, 12-13]**

**Noted:**

- 3D.1 A paper from the Director of Information and Data Services comprising a response to EdCom's discussion of PORTICO functionality on 26 June would form a substantive item for discussion on the agenda of the 26 November meeting. This paper also incorporated a response to an action point arising from EdCom's meeting of 26 June [EdCom Min. 68B.6 12-13], concerning increased access to SITS for departmental staff.
- 3D.2 A Student Information System Funding Working Group (SISFWG), chaired by the Registrar, Mr Tim Perry, had been established and would submit a report to EdCom's 26 November meeting prior to its submission to the Vice-Provost (Education). This Group's discussions had also been informed by a report from SUMS Consulting, the impact of which was likely to be far-reaching. It was proposed that the Working Group's report be introduced by one of its members who was also a member of EdCom.

**RESOLVED:**

- 3D.3 That EdCom receive and discuss (1) a report from the Director of Information and Data Services and (2) a report from the Chair of the SISFWG at its meeting of 26 November 2013. [Action: Ms Sandra Hinton – to note]

**4 PEER ASSESSMENT**

**Noted:**

- 4.1 On 2 July 2013 the UCLBE had received a paper on Peer Assessment from Dr Rosalind Duhs, Senior Teaching Fellow, CALT. The UCLBE had resolved that the matter should be referred to EdCom, who should take into account the UCLBE's discussion with a view to developing guidelines for staff. EdCom should also discuss whether peer assessment should be permitted for summative marks. Dr Rosalind Duhs had been unable to attend EdCom to introduce the paper and had invited the Chair of the UCLBE to introduce it to EdCom on her behalf.

**Received:**

- 4.2 At EDCOM 1/03 (13-14) – a paper, introduced by the Chair of the UCLBE.

**Reported:**

- 4.3 The UCLBE Chair noted the following in his oral report:
- Peer assessment could offer a valuable learning experience for students and there was evidence available from other Russell Group universities that, managed correctly, it could help to reduce plagiarism.
  - There was no formal UCL policy or guidance in respect of the use of peer assessment in a formative capacity and consequently, it was used in an *ad hoc* fashion across UCL. The full extent of its use was not known (see 4.11 below).
  - Use of peer assessment in summative assessment was not currently permitted by UCL regulations.
  - If peer assessment were formally introduced for summative assessment it would need to be implemented on the understanding that its use might not be

appropriate for every academic discipline. It would also need to be carefully monitored thereafter.

4.4 EdCom was invited to consider:

- (i) Whether a clear policy and guidance for the use of peer assessment in formative assessment should be developed.
- (ii) Whether in principle EdCom would wish to explore further the use of peer assessment in summative assessment.

**Discussion:**

4.5 The following was noted in respect of (i) peer assessment in formative assessment:

- While members were generally in favour of extending the use of peer assessment in formative assessment, a number of other issues would need to be re-examined in tandem, such as the current process governing appeals.
- Anonymous marking would need to be strictly enforced.
- In keeping with the ethos of peer assessment, departments should ensure that students participated in its design.
- All design of peer assessment should take place under the guidance of CALT.

4.6 The following was noted in respect of (ii) peer assessment in summative assessment:

- For some members, it raised legitimate concerns regarding the primacy of academic judgement in marking and a potential increase in the number of student appeals.
- Even if the amount of work permitted to be peer-assessed were to be capped at a very low percentage, this might still have a significant impact at the borderline of degree classifications (although this would be less of an issue with a GPA system).
- Although any contention around borderline classifications might be mitigated by discussion at examination boards, any corresponding increase in their workload would not be welcomed.

4.7 EdCom noted that while peer assessment for summative assessment was potentially more contentious, with no consensus between members regarding its overall benefits or disadvantages, there were, in fact, no insuperable cultural, regulatory or practical obstacles to its introduction.

**RESOLVED:**

4.8 A clear policy and guidance for the use of peer assessment in formative assessment should be developed. **[Action: Dr Rosalind Duhs]**

4.9 Assistance in the drawing up of the policy and guidance be sought from those Faculty Tutors in the Faculties of Mathematical and Physical Sciences and Engineering Sciences where peer assessment was known to be taking place. **[Action: Dr Caroline Essex and Mr Marco Federighi]**

4.10 Once this policy and guidance had been developed, EdCom would revisit the issue of peer assessment in summative assessment. **[Action: Professor Mike Ewing and Ms Sandra Hinton – to note]**

- 4.11 All remaining Faculty Tutors should be invited to find out about and report on the use of peer assessment in their Faculties to EdCom's meeting of 6 March 2014. **[Action: Faculty Tutors]**

## 5 ACADEMIC REGULATIONS FOR 2013-14

### **Noted:**

- 5.1 The Academic Regulations for 2013-14 had been signed off and were now available on the Registry website.

### **Reported:**

- 5.2 A number of changes had been made subsequent to signing off the Regulations. In summary:
- A regulation in respect of students whose work was both overlong *and* late which could currently be exploited strategically in order to avoid the stricter of the two penalties would need to be revised.
  - The current guidance on anonymity would need to be revised.
  - A paper on referrals would be submitted by the Chair to the meeting of EdCom on 26 November 2013.

### **Discussion:**

- 5.3 Members considered whether:
- late changes to the Regulations should be incorporated into the Regulations for 2013-14 and if so, how this might most effectively be communicated to Chairs of Boards of Examiners, staff and students;
  - there should be no change to the published Regulations at this stage but that changes should be incorporated into the Guidance and any inconsistencies in 2013-14 resolved on a case-by-case basis on the understanding that the necessary changes would be made in 2014-15.
- 5.4 It was noted that the Academic Regulations in their present form would be undergoing a radical revision during the coming session. The exact nature of the revision was yet to be decided but would include clear protocols for updating and publication. It was anticipated that the group tasked with this review would draw more broadly upon experience and advice at departmental level and that the results would be fully communicated to the UCL community.

### **RESOLVED:**

- 5.5 That there should be no change to the published Regulations for 2013-14 but that any changes should be incorporated into the Guidance and if necessary, changes made to the Regulations for 2014-15. **[Action: Mr David Ashton]**
- 5.6 That Faculties should invite Departments to report to them all incidences of transgression in respect of overlong and late submission of student work in order to assess the scale of the problem. All incidences should then be reported to Professor Mike Ewing as Dean of Students (Academic). **[Action: Faculty Tutors]**

- 5.7 That a paper on referrals be submitted by the EdCom Chair to EdCom's meeting of 26 November 2013. **[Action: Professor Mike Ewing]**

## **6 RECENT CHANGES TO IMMIGRATION POLICY**

### ***Received:***

- 6.1 An oral report by the Director of Information and Data Services.

### ***Reported:***

- 6.2 Following a meeting between a Joint Educational Task Force and the Home Office, the UK Visa and Immigration Service (formerly the UKBA) had agreed a partnership arrangement with UK HEIs. It was anticipated that this arrangement would lead to a more informal and collegial approach to HEIs as Sponsors.
- 6.3 A Home Office team of Tier 4-specific auditors had been created, to be known as HEAT (Higher Education Assurance Team), who would be initiating a programme of visits to HEIs over the coming 2-3 years. UCL was expecting a full 1-2 week long audit within this timeframe but nothing had yet been confirmed. However, in anticipation of this, Information and Data Services would be focusing its activity on ensuring that all UCL's processes were fully Tier 4 compliant.
- 6.4 Tier 4 regulations had remained relatively stable in 2013-14. Two areas of change however, were reported as follows:
- The introduction of a Doctorate Extension Scheme.
  - Credibility Assessment Interviews for students wishing obtain visas to study.
- 6.5 This latter change would be kept under active review by UCL as a potential area for concern as these interviews seemed to represent a shift away from the ethos of the points-based system which they were intended to replace.

## **7 SPECIAL PROVISIONS AEGROTAT MEETING REPORT**

### ***Received:***

- 7.1 At EDCOM 1/04 (13-14) – a note of the meeting held on 26 June 2013 for information.

## **8 UCL SCHOOL OF PHARMACY MPharm: REQUEST FOR DEROGATIONS**

### ***Received:***

- 8.1 At EDCOM 1/05 (13-14) – a paper, introduced by the Faculty Tutor, Faculty of Life Sciences.

### ***Reported:***

- 8.2 The UCL School of Pharmacy had requested that EdCom approve derogations from the UCL Harmonised Scheme of Award in respect of the MPharm as follows:

- Capped resit examinations - UCL's Regulations stated that resit marks were not capped and students were awarded the better of the two marks achieved between the first and second attempts. The UCL School of Pharmacy wished to retain the capped resit pass mark.
- Degree weighting - the current weighting of 4-year degrees at UCL was 1:3:5:5. The UCL School of Pharmacy had requested an alternative weighting of: Year 1 = 0%, Year 2 = 20%, Year 3 = 30% and Year 4 = 50%.

**Discussion:**

- 8.3 In respect of capped resits, EdCom agreed that, as UCL policy did not permit capping, the request should be refused and that the UCL School of Pharmacy should conform to UCL norms from 2014 -15 onwards.
- 8.4 In respect of changes to degree weighting, it was noted that extensive discussions had already taken place about the weighting of the MPharm. During these discussions it had been strongly felt that the first year should count towards the overall classification. EdCom resolved therefore that any weightings which had already been notified to students who commenced their studies in 2013-14 should be permitted to stand but that the MPharm should conform to the weighting of 4-year degrees at UCL (1:3:5:5.) from session 2014 -15 onwards..
- 8.5 EdCom noted that in order to merge with UCL, the UCL School of Pharmacy had relinquished its own Charter, Statutes and degree-awarding powers. UCL now awarded the degrees of the UCL School of Pharmacy and any future external scrutiny of UCL's exercise of its own degree-awarding powers would expect to see the School in conformity with UCL norms.

**RESOLVED:**

- 8.6 That EdCom's decisions at 8.4 and 8.5 above should be conveyed to the UCL School of Pharmacy by the Faculty Tutor, Faculty of Life Sciences. **[Action: Dr Hilary Richards]**

**9 APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES OF STUDY**

**Noted:**

- 9.1 The PMASG Chair, acting on behalf of EdCom and on the recommendation of PMASG, had approved the following programmes of study since the meeting of EdCom on 25 June 2013:

*BSc/MSci Management Science*  
*BA Ancient Languages*  
*MSc Space-Time Analytics*  
*MSc Geoinformatics for Building Information Modelling*  
*BEng/MEng Biochemical Engineering*  
*MSc Security Technology*  
*MSc International/Industrial Programme*  
*MSc Experimental Pharmacology and Therapeutics*  
*MSc in Computational and Genomic Medicine*  
*MSci/BSc Applied Medical Sciences*  
*Post Graduate Diploma in Academic Research and Methods*



## 10 MINUTES FROM STEERING GROUPS ETC.

### 10A Programme and Module Approval Steering Group

**Noted:**

10A.1 At EDCOM 1/06 (13-14) – the minutes of the meeting of 26 June 2013.

10A.2 At EDCOM 1/07 (13-14) – the minutes of the meeting of 24 July 2013.

### 10B UCL Board of Examiners

**Noted:**

10B.1 At EDCOM 1/08 (13-14) – the minutes of the meeting of 2 July 2013.

**Discussion:**

10B.2 Officers of the UCL Union raised the issue of examination resit fees [*UCLBE Min.2C, 12-13*]. The EdCom Chair requested a paper from these officers, outlining the main issues which they wished to raise.

**RESOLVED:**

10B.3 That the officers of the UCL Union submit a paper in respect of examination resit fees to the meeting of EdCom on 26 November 2013. This paper should be received by the Secretary no later than Monday 18 November 2103. [*Action: Mr Ben Towse and Mr Keir Gallagher*]

## 11 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

### 11A Award of Merit

**Reported:**

11A.1 The Chair reported that the UCLBE would be undertaking a comprehensive study of the Award of Merit. [*Action: Ms Sandra Hinton – to note*]

## 12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### 12A Delays in receipt of transcripts

**Reported:**

12A.1 The Faculty of Brain Sciences' Faculty Tutor reported that there had been some delays in receipt of transcripts from the Examinations section for students in the Division of Psychology and Language Sciences. Affiliate students in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities had also experienced delays.

12A.2 The Director of Student Administration confirmed the following:

- The delays experienced in the Division of Psychology and Language Sciences had been isolated incidents and not symptomatic of a larger problem.
- The delays experienced by Affiliate students had been caused by incorrect addresses. A proposal to correct this had been put forward and a response was awaited.
- Increased resources, in the form of two additional posts in the Examinations section, were being dedicated to this area, although the staff recruited to these posts had not yet started.
- The quality of information emerging from Masters Boards of Examiners could be imperfect, which often affected the quality of the transcripts.
- KPMG would be conducting an audit of the examinations function during the Autumn Term, which would, it was anticipated, highlight problem areas.

### **13 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

***Noted:***

13.1 The next meeting will be on **26 November 2013 at 2- 4.30pm** in the **Haldane Room**.

SANDRA HINTON

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15 November 2013