



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Thursday 6 December 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Prof Mike Ewing (*Chair*)

Mr David Ashton
Ms Karen Barnard
Professor David Bogle
Mr Jason Clarke
Mr Edwin Clifford-Coupe
Dr Brenda Cross
Dr Caroline Essex
Dr Julie Evans
Mr Marco Federighi
Dr Arne Hofmann
Dr Christine Hoffmann
Ms Valerie Hogg
Ms Bella Malins

Ms Giulia Mari
Ms Helen Matthews
Mr Dante Micheaux
Dr John Mitchell
Ms Kathleen Nicholls
Mr Gergely Raccuja
Dr Hilary Richards
Dr Ruth Siddall
Ms Paula Speller
Ms Olga Thomas
Professor Derek Tocher
Ms Susan Ware
Dr Andrew Wills

In attendance: Ms Sandra Hinton (Secretary); Ms Irenie Morley.

Apologies for absence were received from: Ms June Hedges; Mr Ken Marsden; Dr Fiona Strawbridge.

Key to abbreviations

AC	Academic Committee
CALT	Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
CU	Course Unit
EDCOM	Education Committee
ESPS	European Social and Political Studies
HEI	Higher Education Institution
KIS	Key Information Set
KISSG	Key Information Set Steering Group
PGCLTHE	Postgraduate Certificate in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education
PGT	Postgraduate taught
PMASG	Programme and Module Approval Steering Group
PPD	Personal and Professional Development
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
RAS	Registry and Academic Services
RRG	Regulation Review Group
SLC	Student Loans Company
SoP	School of Pharmacy
TF	Teaching Fellow
UCLBE	UCL Board of Examiners
UCLU	UCL Union

16 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 11 OCTOBER 2012

Confirmed:

- 16.1 The Minutes of the meeting of EdCom held on 11 October 2012 [EdCom Mins. 1-15, 11.10.12]

17 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES [see also Minute 23 below]

17A New Fee Liability Policy for Interruptions and Withdrawals [EdCom Min.4, 12-13]

Noted:

- 17A.1 An oral report from the Director of Financial Planning and Strategy.

Reported:

- 17A.2 At its last meeting EdCom proposed that fee liability on interruption or withdrawal should relate to whether or not the student was funded by the SLC, so that:

(1) All students funded by the SLC should be charged:

- 25% of the full fee due if they withdrew or interrupted after 12th October 2012 (ie official enrolment deadline) within the first term, or
- 50% of the full fee due if they withdrew or interrupted after the start of the second term but within second term, or
- 100% of the full fee due if they withdrew or interrupted after the start of the third term.

(2) All other students (including self-financing and overseas undergraduates and all postgraduates) should be charged on a daily basis for the period of their enrolment taking account of the term times for the programme of study.

- 17A.3 This suggestion had been discussed with staff in the Fees Office who had indicated that it was not always clear as to whether a student was SLC funded. Some students were partially SLC funded and it would not be possible to apply two different systems for charging these students. They also feared that UCL would be vulnerable to accusations of discrimination if individual undergraduates were to be treated differently for refund purposes. An undergraduate in receipt of a loan who withdrew at the end of term 1 would be charged £2,250 (25%) whereas one not in receipt of a loan, based on a 12-week term would be charged £3,600. Also, undergraduates had 9 months in which to apply for a loan which added a further complication and meant that the refund calculation could not be automated within SITS.

- 17A.4 On balance, and taking into account the above, EdCom was invited to consider a revised proposal; namely, to apply the approach at (1) above to all undergraduate students and the approach at (2) to all postgraduate students. This would make minimal change to the information published on the website but would dispense with the references to 'academic' and 'calendar' years. This revised proposal had been discussed with, and had the support of, the Director of Finance and Business Affairs.

Discussion:

17A.5 EdCom members were unclear about how days were counted with respect to weekend and public holidays when students could still be using UCL resources.

RESOLVED:

17A.6 The Director of Financial Planning and Strategy will clarify the counting of days and report back to EdCom. **[Action: Ms Valerie Hogg]**

17B Undergraduate Admissions – improving conversion activity [EdCom Min.5, 12-13]

Noted:

17B.1 An update at EDCOM 2/13 (12-13), introduced by the Head of Outreach and Admissions.

Discussion:

17B.2 The Faculty of Brain Sciences Faculty Tutor reported that holding Saturday open events was proving more challenging than previously anticipated, owing to UCL regulations on numbers of Fire Marshalls required to be present.

RESOLVED:

17B.3 That EdCom receive a further update at its meeting on 12 March 2013. **[Action: Ms Bella Malins]**

18 SCHEDULED LEARNING PERCENTAGES – ISSUES ARISING FROM UCL PREPARATIONS FOR THE KEY INFORMATION SET (KIS)

Noted:

18.1 A paper at EDCOM 2/14 (12-13), introduced by the Director of Academic Support.

Reported:

18.2 During UCL's preparations for the KIS, undertaken by a Steering Group (KISSG) of QMEC established for this purpose, an issue had arisen regarding the calculation of scheduled learning hours. EdCom was invited to consider whether the calculation method agreed by AC in 2008^[1] required revision and, if so, to discuss some alternative proposals. In its deliberations, EdCom was asked to be mindful that the KIS would be treated as a statutory return upon which UCL would be audited and that future institutional reviews of HEIs by the QAA would look at how the KIS data was used.

Discussed:

18.3 The main points were:

^[1] That UCL's statement on learning hours should stipulate 1200 learning hours during the 30 weeks of the academic year, and an additional 300 learning hours during vacation periods across the calendar year, a total of 1500 learning hours per undergraduate learning year.

- The KIS did not make any distinction between types of contact;
- Some members felt that the decision to calculate learning hours based on 1500 learning hours per undergraduate year should be revisited, as it seemed to perpetuate a misperception that UCL did little teaching;
- EdCom members overall were more inclined toward the proposal that UCL adopt the view that the maximum number of scheduled hours that could occur during term-time was 1200 (30 weeks at 40 hours per week) and that the other 300 hours of learning occurred during holidays, weekends and evenings and therefore should not be included for this calculation. However, more thought would be needed as to how to present this. There would need to be a clear rationale as to why UCL was calculating scheduled hours on this basis.
- If EdCom were to decide gather percentages from departments, a decision would be required before Christmas in order to give them as much notice as possible about how to calculate this before entering the data on Portico.
- If EdCom were to decide to gather contact hours, the Head of Student Data Services could do the calculation and EdCom could look again at the data gathered at its meeting of March 2013.

RESOLVED:

- 18.4 EdCom resolved that contact hours should be gathered. The Head of Student Data Services would perform the calculation and EdCom would then review the data gathered at its meeting of March 2013. **[Action: Mr Gary Smith]**

19 PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Noted:

- 19.1 A paper at EDCOM 2/15 (12-13), introduced by the Head of the Graduate School.

Reported:

- 19.2 Formerly known as 'Key Skills', a PPD Working Group was currently developing an institutional framework and resources for supporting students' skills development in taught programmes, in conjunction with the work of a Personal Tutoring Project Board. PPD was being explored as a useful framework within which Personal Tutors might discuss the personal and professional development of their tutees.
- 19.3 Faculty Tutors were being invited to promote the use of the PPD resources with their Faculties, working with their appropriate CALT Teaching Fellows. The Working Group welcomed feedback on the system. CALT would be contacting Faculty Tutors in due course to help identify participants for focus groups to help inform improvements to the system.

20 PERSONAL TUTORING: OVERVIEW, MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Noted:

- 20.1 An oral report from the EdCom Chair.

Reported:

- 20.2 As reported above, the Personal Tutoring System provided an appropriate framework, previously lacking, for the discussion of skills development and it was noted that a Personal Tutoring pack was now available on the Personal Tutoring website.
- 20.3 EdCom would shortly be revisiting the outcomes of its 2011-12 monitoring of the Personal Tutoring System¹ and would be paying particular attention to the Personal Tutoring of PGT students.

21 ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS IN DIFFERENT YEARS

Noted:

- 21.1 A paper at EDCOM 2/16 (12-13), introduced by the Head of the Graduate School.

Reported:

- 21.2 During the course of the IQR of the European Social and Political Studies (ESPS) programme, the IQR team had raised an issue regarding the assessment of students on the same module but from different years of study. In the ESPS programme it was not uncommon for fourth year students and second year students to take the same module and to be assessed by the same criteria. The Team had queried this on a number of grounds and in particular because it felt that students in their final year should be expected to have more advanced critical and analytical skills than students in lower years. The Team felt that as there were an increasing number of programmes that allowed students flexibility to take non-year specific modules (for example on the BAsc), EdCom should be invited to discuss the issue and if possible, offer guidance on best practice.

Discussed:

- 21.3 While EdCom supported the concept of progression, whereby the curriculum should impose an increasing level of demand on the learner during the course of his/her programme, it considered that the Harmonised Scheme of Award had already anticipated this by stipulating that a student must take at least 3.0 CUs at Advanced Level with implications for courses at lower levels. It was also necessary to be pragmatic and to acknowledge that cumulative assessment criteria were largely discipline-specific, with a fairly clear split between arts and science subjects. Assessment in scientific contexts implied a 'quantifiability' which was not possible to implement in arts subjects without producing uncompetitively rigid programme diets. Best practice in this area therefore varied from faculty to faculty.
- 21.4 EdCom agreed that, having identified two opposing cultures and no real appetite for change, the issue might nevertheless benefit from further discussion in the context of the proposed AC working group on programme and curriculum review, to be chaired by the Vice-Provost (Education) in the Spring Term. It was also noted that the programme diets of programmes subject to certain types of professional accreditation were already subject to regular review.

¹ See EdCom Min. 5, 11-12.

22 PROBATION FOR TEACHING FELLOWS

Noted:

22.1 A paper at EDCOM 2/17 (12-13), introduced by the EdCom Chair.

Reported:

22.2 An amended Induction and Probation Procedure for Teaching Fellows was implemented on 20 May 2009. The purpose of the amendments was the provision of formal training and development for Teaching Fellows. The principal changes were the introduction of mandatory training in teaching, the assignment of a mentor to each probationer and the increase in the probation period from nine months to two years, giving time for the training to be completed during the period of probation. A survey had been conducted in June 2011 and EdCom was invited to discuss a number of proposals arising from this.

Discussion:

22.3 Noting the low response rate to the survey, EdCom discussed the proposals as follows:

- 1) EdCom felt that the probation period should not be reduced to 9 months for all TFs and those exempted from the PGCLTHE, but that it should remain two years from the date of appointment.
- 2) EdCom discussed the proposition that departments should decide on the mentoring / monitoring of teaching arrangements for probationers but considered that all probationers must be assigned a mentor by departments for the whole two year probationary period and that this should be monitored by UCL Human Resources.
- 3) The Committee agreed that departments must provide induction for all TFs.

22.4 There was no support from EdCom for proposals 4), 5) 6) and 7).

RESOLVED:

22.5 That the EdCom Secretary convey the outcomes of Edcom's discussion above to the Project Officer, Mr Helge Halvorson. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton]**

23 SCHOOL OF PHARMACY – EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS OF MERGER [EdCom Min. 9, 12-13]

Noted:

23.1 A paper at EDCOM 2/18 (12-13), introduced by the Director of Student Services.

Reported:

23.2 A working group on RAS policies and procedures had been established to ensure that post-merger, SoP and UCL were as closely aligned as possible. The Group would make regular reports to EdCom and to a Post-Merger Steering Group, chaired by the Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences. The Group was moving towards a closer

scrutiny of the SoP's regulatory and procedural framework with a view to integrating where appropriate, SoP's procedures with those of UCL.

24 DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT FROM EDCOM TO AC FOR SESSION 2011-12

Noted:

24.1 At EDCOM 2/19 (12-13) – the draft Annual Report, introduced by the EdCom Chair.

Reported:

24.2 EdCom was invited to identify three key items from the report, to be introduced by the Chair when the report was submitted to AC on 13 December. A number of items were identified and, immediately subsequent to the meeting the following were agreed upon by the Chair: Engagement Monitoring, Personal Tutoring/PPD and the educational implications of UCL's merger with the SoP.

RESOLVED:

24.3 That the Annual Report, noting the above three key items, be submitted to AC on 13 December 2012. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton]**

25 MATTERS ARISING FROM REGULATION REVIEW GROUP 13 NOVEMBER 2012²

25A 'Fit To Sit' Policy

Noted:

25A.1 The RRG had recommended to EdCom that UCL should give initial consideration to a 'fit to sit' policy on the understanding that the policy would be adapted and incorporated, as appropriate, into UCL's policies, particularly in respect of the procedure if the student were deemed not fit to sit. Also, that, where appropriate, the current UCL policy and guidance should be amplified in time for the 2013-14 session.

25A.2 At EDCOM 2/20 (12-13), for information, a paper and three School of Pharmacy policy and procedure documents (Appendices (1) (2) and (3)), which were discussed by the RRG at its meeting of 13 November 2012.

Discussion:

25A.3 The Education and Campaigns Officer expressed concern about the implications of the fit to sit policy, in particular in the cases of students with mental health difficulties whose condition might mean that they were not ideally placed to make a judgment on their fitness to sit. It was also noted that those students who were ill but who had not apprised themselves of the relevant regulations before an examination, when faced with a choice of sitting or not sitting an examination would be more likely to sit it, only to discover later that this amounted to a declaration of fitness.

25A.4 The Chair noted that further consultation would be required and that the RRG had only sought permission from EdCom to develop further the idea of a fit to sit policy

² See also item 14C, EDCOM 2/26 (12-13) below.

and its possible uses within a UCL context. Once this had been fully thought through, it would be resubmitted to EdCom.

RESOLVED:

- 25A.5 That the RRG be invited to develop further the possibilities for UCL presented by a fit to sit policy and to submit its findings to the next meeting of EdCom. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton]**

25B Barring and Academic Insufficiency

Noted:

- 25B.1 At EDCOM 2/21 (12-13), a note from the EdCom Chair and some examples of draft Learning Agreements, Contracts and Suspension Warnings currently in use.

Discussion:

- 25B.2 The outcome of the RRG's discussion of the issues had been that barring, academic insufficiency and termination of studies should be abolished as separate procedures but retained as possible sanctions within Learning Agreements (etc.). However, EdCom members made a number of objections to this, considering that while greater use of Learning Agreements should be welcomed, barring must be retained as a separate procedure and that the existing problems with implementation of the barring procedure might be solved by making a number of simple amendments to the current stipulations that warnings should be given no later than half way through the course/module/course unit in question. Much might be done by way of minor amendments to make the process workable and EdCom was therefore adjured to think carefully before abolishing the barring procedure altogether.
- 25B.3 There were also objections to the RRG's proposals that if a student's combined Learning Contracts applied to 2 or more course units then the Faculty Tutor should apply to the Dean of Students (Academic) for a Learning Agreement that applied to the whole session. This amounted, it was felt, to a removal of the Power to Suspend vested in the Provost and delegated by him to Faculty Tutors under Regulation for Management 14.2. The removal of this power from the Faculty Tutor, it was felt, entailed the removal of the Faculty Tutors' ability to act in such matters. Moreover, this also implied the transferring of responsibility to the Dean of Students (Academic) for the interviews which accompanied Suspension Warnings which, given their number, represented a large additional workload. The Chair agreed that the RRG should discuss the issues further.

RESOLVED:

- 25B.4 That EdCom invite the RRG to discuss the issues further and to submit its findings to the next meeting of EdCom. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton]**

25C SAME SESSION AND SEPTEMBER RESITS

Noted:

- 25C.1 The RRG had discussed the above at its meeting of 13 November 2012 and had resolved that the Chair would prepare a paper for Faculty Boards of Examiners,

summarising the main points and inviting further discussion. This would be discussed by the UCLBE before being submitted to EdCom for further discussion.

26 EXAMINATION IRREGULARITIES

Noted:

- 26.1 A paper at EDCOM 2/22 (12-13), introduced by the Director of Student Services.

Reported:

- 26.2 EdCom was invited to note statistical information on examination irregularity cases considered under the Procedures in Respect of a Breach of Examination Regulations, covering the last three academic years.

Discussion:

- 26.3 EdCom noted that the overall findings were positive, with plagiarism appearing to have decreased and incidences of examination irregularities, particularly serious ones, being extremely low. It was also noted that further work might now be done on the actual Procedures in Respect of a Breach of Examination Regulations, as these tended to be opaque in parts.

27 DRAFT UNDERGRADUATE RECRUITMENT STRATEGY 2012 - 2017

Noted:

- 27.1 A paper at EDCOM 2/23 (12-13), introduced by the Head of Outreach and Admissions.

Reported:

- 27.2 UCL had enjoyed increasing applications and limited competition for UK students at undergraduate level for many years. To a certain extent, undergraduate recruitment had therefore not been a priority. In order to keep the quality of applications high and to increase the numbers of offer-holders accepting their places, UCL now needed to commit to changing the internal culture around UK undergraduate recruitment and avoiding complacency. The Strategy was intended to address this.

Discussion:

- 27.3 EdCom endorsed the Strategy but requested that it make more explicit reference to mature students.

RESOLVED:

- 27.4 That the Strategy be submitted to AC for approval on 13 December 2012. **[Action: Ms Bella Malins]**

28 APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Noted:

28.1 The PMASG Acting 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 11 October 2012:

- *BA Greek with Latin with Study Abroad;*
- *BA Latin with Greek with Study Abroad;*
- *PG Cert Technology Entrepreneurship (Summer School);*
- *Bartlett Professional Practice Architecture – Part 3 Post Graduate Diploma.*

29 MINUTES FROM STEERING GROUPS ETC.

29A Programme and Module Approval Steering Group

Noted:

29A.1 At EDCOM 2/24 (12-13) - the Annual Report of PMASG for 2011-12.

29B UCL Board of Examiners

Noted:

29B.1 At EDCOM 2/25 (12-13) - the Annual Report of the UCLBE for 2011-12.

29C Regulation Review Group

Noted:

29C.1 At EDCOM 2/26 (12-13) – the Minutes of the meeting of the RRG held on 13 November 2012.

30 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

30A Penalties for overlong coursework

Noted:

30A.1 The UCLU Education and Campaigns Officer asked EdCom for a ruling on the new UCL regulation on penalties for overlong coursework³ which had not been fully disseminated and about the application of which students and tutors remained unclear. EdCom was also asked for guidance on how to inform students of its decision.

³ which states that any coursework submitted which is 10% or more above the word count should be given a mark of zero; anything that exceeds the upper word limit by less than 10% the mark will be reduced by ten percentage marks.

Discussion:

- 30A.2 EdCom agreed that in respect of any work set and submitted in first term, students should not be penalised for exceeding the word limit by up to 10%. If they had been penalised for this, they were entitled to have this penalty reviewed, and should apply to the Departmental Tutor. For work set and submitted from the start of the second term, the new regulations would be invoked, and the word limit could not be exceeded.

RESOLVED:

- 30A.3 That the UCLU Education and Campaigns Officer draft an all-student email (to be submitted to the Chair and Secretary of EdCom prior to circulation) to the effect that EdCom had resolved to suspend the regulations until the second term (2 January 2013), and had invited the UCLU Education and Campaigns Officer to send an email to all students. **[Action: Mr Edwin Clifford-Coupe]**

30B Feedback on Final Assessment

Noted:

- 30B.1 Students had requested feedback on final assessments/examinations. This was not currently UCL policy.

RESOLVED:

- 30B.2 That EdCom Officers would investigate the relevant chapter of the QAA's UK Quality Code for guidance on best practice in this area and would report back to EdCom's next meeting. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton]**

30C Seminar Sizes

Noted:

- 30C.1 Students had requested definition of appropriate seminar sizes.

RESOLVED:

- 30C.2 That the matter be referred to the JSSC for further discussion. **[Action: Dr Ruth Siddall]**

31 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Noted:

- 31.1 Future meetings of EdCom are scheduled as follows:

Meeting 3: Tuesday 12 March 2013, 2pm - 4.30pm

Meeting 4: Tuesday 30 April 2013, 2pm - 4.30pm

Meeting 5: Tuesday 25 June 2013, 2pm - 4.30pm

SANDRA HINTON

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25 January 2013.