LONDON'S GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

6 December 2016

M I N U T E S

Present:
Professor Anthony Smith (Chair)
Ms Mehjabin Ahmed; Dr Tracey Allen; Ms Wendy Appleby; Ms Halima Begum; Dr Ben Clifford; Mr Mark Crawford; Dr Caroline Essex; Dr Julie Evans; Professor Dilly Fung; Dr Clare Goudy; Ms June Hedges; Dr Arne Hofmann; Ms Blathnaid Mahony; Dr Helen Matthews; Professor Tim McHugh; Mr Derfel Owen; Professor Norbert Pachler; Ms Aiysha Qureshi; Dr Hazel Smith; Professor Eva Sorensen; Dr Fiona Strawbridge; Ms Susan Ware.

In attendance: Mr Rob Traynor for item 6; Ms Lizzie Vinton (Secretary).

Apologies were received from: Dr Simon Banks; Ms Judith Hillmore; Dr Christine Hoffmann; Dr Mike Rowson; Ms Olga Thomas; Professor Angie Wade.

Key to abbreviations	
AC	Academic Committee
APRG	Academic Partnerships Review Group
ARQASC	Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Sub Committee
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
ASER	Annual Student Experience Review
CALT	Centre for Advancing Learning and Teaching
DTC	Departmental Teaching Committee
EdCom	Education Committee
FTC	Faculty Teaching Committee
NSS	National Student Survey
PGT	Taught Postgraduate
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PMAP	Programme and Module Approval Panel
RDC	Research Degrees Committee
SEQ	Student Evaluation Questionnaires
SSCC	Staff-Student Consultative Committee
StARs	Student Academic Representatives
UCLU	UCL Union

PART I: PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

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18   CONSTITUTION AND MEMBERSHIP

18.1   EdCom welcomed the new student members, Hanny Arisna and Aiysha Qureshi.

18A   StARs Steering Group Constitution, Terms of Reference and Membership

18A.1   The Steering Group would now report to EdCom and RDC to help raise the visibility of the group's work.

18A.2   **Approved** – the Constitution, Terms of Reference and Membership at <u>EDCOM 2-01 (16-17)</u>.

19   MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

19.1   **Agreed** – the following amendment to Minute 9.2 (16-17) from "*they would complete their studies in time*" to "*they would complete their taught modules in time*".

19.2   **Agreed** – the following additional paragraph under Minute 11 (16-17) to read:
11.3 EdCom noted that QRSC were continuing to discuss the completeness of the ASER data set and, in particular, improving the level of data available to allow Departments to readily comment on key factors such as student profile etc.

19.3   **Approved** – the Minutes of the meeting held 13 October 2016.

PART II: MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

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20   StARS 2020 VISION: DRAFT *[Minute 8 16-17 refers]*

20.1   **Received** – the draft at <u>EDCOM 2-02 (16-17)</u>.

20.2   The StARs Steering Group was working on a new development plan, StARs 2020 Vision, and the paper presented initial ideas for EdCom's consideration. The plan was being developed in close consultation with students and StARs. Consultation with Faculties would take place in January 2016 with a view to submitting the final version to EdCom in March for approval.

20.3   EdCom warmly welcomed the paper and endorsed the direction of travel. Members particularly welcomed the new Lead Student Representative roles in Departments, plans to establish specific leadership support for BME students, the formalisation of current good practice in making StARs chairs and co-chairs of SSCCs, and the increased focus on facilitating the escalation of student feedback from SSCCs to department, faculty and institutional level.

20.4   EdCom suggested that the plan might identify the top three priorities for action, and include some timelines for the achievement of each. It was also suggested that there might be targeted actions to ensure that the Lead Student Representatives promoted issues from students at all levels of study, and that there might be opportunities to have teams of Lead Student Representatives on larger programmes. It would also be useful to include specific steps to encourage StARs to engage with key student-facing services outside of their Departments, such as the Library, Digital Education and other learning resources. Some Faculties had also found it useful to appoint specific staff whose role it was to make active connections and coordinate conversations between StARs, the Department and the Faculty.

21   LECTURECAST POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

21.1   **Received** – the paper at <u>EDCOM 2-03 (16-17)</u> presented by the Director of Education Planning.

21.2 The paper presented the work led by Professor John Mitchell and the Digital Education team in expanding the coverage of Lecturecast across UCL in response to feedback from students. The proposals suggested that an opt-out policy would be the best way of providing the highest level of coverage and would help UCL to offer the scheme in 80% of lectures held in compatible rooms. Work was underway to ensure that timetabling data were as accurate as possible so that recordings were not made for staff opting out. It was suggested that a working group was set up to oversee implementation for 2018-19 and that EdCom should play an ongoing role in monitoring the scheme and ensuring that coverage was as high as possible.

21.3 EdCom discussed whether opting out should be at the level of the individual. There were also concerns about consistency within modules and programmes if individual members of staff opted out, however there were greater concerns about student satisfaction if Department-level opt-out was allowed. It was agreed that the policy should make clear to students that there might be good reasons for a member of staff opting out, and that the policy might provide further detail on the types of situations in which this might occur to ensure a shared understanding with students. Members felt that it was important to emphasise to staff that Lecturecast would only be used for pedagogic reasons and not for any sort of monitoring purposes, and that there was the option of editing the recordings to remove, for example, conversations during breaks etc. which might not be appropriate for distribution.

21.4 There were some concerns about the impact of Lecturecast on attendance at lectures themselves – some Faculties had found this problematic, although others had not experienced any noticeable impact. Students used the recordings for a number of reasons, including revising lectures they had attended, watching lectures they were unable to attend due to work or personal commitments, or simply because that was their preferred learning style. However it was recognised that some students used the recordings because of overly-demanding timetables, and that it was incumbent upon Departments to review such problems by reconsidering timetables and ensuring that the content of lectures was discursive and engaging, encouraging students to attend in person.

21.5 UCLU supported the opt-out policy as part of their ongoing campaign to increase coverage but raised concerns about the delay in implementation to 2018-19, suggesting that there might be a pilot in 2017-18. However the Digital Education team explained that a pilot would be subject to the same constraints as a full system, namely that the accuracy of data on staff teaching locations, enabling the ability for staff to opt out, could not be achieved by 2017-18. Lecturecast would of course still be promoted in the interim, and UCL was investing substantial resources in increasing the number of enabled spaces.

21.6 **Agreed** – EdCom approved the principle of an opt-out policy on an individual basis and to the establishment of a working group to oversee implementation.

22 ANNUAL REPORT ON THE MINUTES OF FACULTY TEACHING COMMITTEES

22.1 **Received** – the report at EDCOM 2-04 (16-17).

22.2 The annual report provided EdCom with an overarching picture of the operation of faculty level committees and the issues discussed. The analysis of minutes had found that all were meeting their terms of reference and had incorporated discussions about key UCL policies as raised at EdCom and AC such as ASER, the Education Strategy and new academic regulations, with a range of UCL staff attending to discuss new initiatives. There was a good level of analysis of student feedback including the NSS, PTES and SEQs (as part of ASER) although there was perhaps a need to increase focus on PGT and PGR-specific issues. The most common issues for discussion were assessment and learning resources. There was a good level of attendance by StARs,

although it was noted that minutes could perhaps record this more explicitly to aid monitoring. It appeared that more work was needed to increase PGT and PGR StARs recruitment and attendance. EdCom noted that a sister report had been received at RDC which had agreed that all Faculties should now have separate committees responsible for PGR student matters to ensure that research degree issues received appropriate scrutiny and to promote attendance by PGR StARs. Separate terms of reference would be developed for approval at RDC in March 2017.

22.3   The report noted a reduction in discussions about Faculty learning and teaching strategies, largely because the formal requirement for these had been removed. It would, however, be timely to now reconsider how Faculty strategies could align with and be informed by the new Education Strategy.

22.4   EdCom also discussed the dissemination of UCL policies and regulations to Faculty and Departmental committees. In some cases there was clear evidence of new policies and regulations being discussed at a local level but this was not always the case. It was however noted that this was not perhaps the most effective way to disseminate key UCL policies and that targeted communication and implementation plans should be a central part of policy developments. These should factor in consultation with FTCs, DTCs and other local fora, which needed to be given development timetables in advance so that discussions could be scheduled in effectively.

23   NEW QUALIFICATION PROPOSAL: POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN EDUCATION

23.1   **Received** – the proposal at <u>EDCOM 2-05 (16-17)</u>.

23.2   EdCom noted that some points required further discussion outside of the meeting and that the matter would be considered by Chair's Action.

24   LATE SUMMER ASSESSMENT PILOT *[Minute 7 16-17 refers]*

24.1   **Received** – the update at <u>EDCOM 2-06 (16-17)</u>.

24.2   The report provided an update on the upcoming pilot which now included roughly 10% of UCL students covering all 11 Faculties. Modelling had now suggested that around 4% of all centrally-run examinations would require a second sitting. The pilot was providing a very useful conduit for engaging with Departments and Faculties about key issues such as Boards of Examiners meetings, the involvement of External Examiners, the timing of Masters dissertations and the management of resit papers. Further town hall meetings were planned for next term.

25   ASSESSMENT REVIEW PROJECT ORAL UPDATE

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

25.2   The Assessment Review project had been set up to facilitate objective three of the Education Strategy and included a diverse programme of work to improve the student experience of assessment at UCL looking at issues such as the volume and timing of assessment, the quality of feedback, opportunities for formative assessment and improving the clarity of marking criteria. The project would include an analysis of assessment within programmes, looking at how activities were spread across modules

and working with Departments to develop more holistic approaches to assessment across a student's time with UCL.

25.3 EdCom welcomed the steps proposed for reducing assessment loads. It was recognised that this would require quite fundamental cultural changes and a move away from testing knowledge and further towards assessing the extent of achievement against module learning outcomes. EdCom suggested that PMAP might develop clearer guidelines about reasonable volumes of assessment in relation to credit, and for module approval forms to perhaps include more detail about individual assessments to better inform the approval process. However EdCom also recognised that this could only help to drive through change in new programmes and modules; there was also a need to interrogate and transform existing provision. It was also noted that the Academic Model project would help UCL to examine the current definitions of modules and components, and that CALT were able to provide expert assistance for individual programmes in reviewing assessment practices.

25.4 A more detailed plan would be received at the next meeting of EdCom.

PART III: OTHER MATTERS FOR APPROVAL OR INFORMATION

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26 APPROVAL OF THE MA EARLY YEARS EDUCATION BOARD OF EXAMINERS PROCEEDINGS

26.1 **Approved** – the measures taken by the Programme Board of Examiners to ensure that academic standards had been safeguarded in the absence of the External Examiner for MA Early Years Education as detailed at EDCOM 2-07 (16-17).

27 APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

27.1 **Approved** – the programmes recommended for approval by PMAP at EDCOM 2-08 (16-17).

28 APPROVAL OF NEW ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

28.1 **Approved** – the partnerships recommended for approval by APRG at EDCOM 2-09 (16-17).

29 MINUTES OF SUB COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

29.1 **Approved** – the Minutes of the Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Sub Committee *19 September 2016* and *17 October 2016* at EDCOM 2-10 (16-17) and EDCOM 2-11 (16-17).

29.2 **Approved** – the Minutes of the Programme and Module Approval Panel *4 July 2016, 12 September 2016* and *25 October 2016* at EDCOM 2-12 (16-17), EDCOM 2-13 (16-17) and EDCOM 2-14 (16-17).

30 ANONYMISED SUSPENSIONS OF REGULATIONS REPORT

30.1 **Approved** – the Suspensions of Regulations at EDCOM 2-15 (16-17).

31   ANY OTHER BUSINESS

31A   Teaching Excellence Framework

31A.1   The metrics had now been confirmed and UCL was drawing together its written submission and related data. The implementation group would meet on 15 December with a view to circulating a draft for feedback by the end of the year. The final submission would be made on 26 January, and would be approved by EdCom Chair's Action in the absence of another meeting before that date.

31A.2   EdCom noted that the National Union of Students had proposed, and that UCLU had passed a motion to support, a national boycott of the NSS 2017. As such, UCLU would not be involved in the promotion of the survey at UCL this year. It was noted that the boycott was likely to have a significant impact on the survey outcomes.

32   DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS:

- 2 March 2017, 2.00 – 4.30, Haldane Room, Wilkins Building
- 25 April 2017, 2.00 – 4.30, Haldane Room, Wilkins Building
- 13 June 2017, 2.00 – 4.30, Haldane Room, Wilkins Building
- 25 July 2017, 2.00 – 4.30, Haldane Room, Wilkins Building

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