LONDON'S GLOBAL UNIVERSITY

UCL

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

7 June 2016

M I N U T E S

PRESENT:

Professor Anthony Smith (Chair)

Dr Tracey Allen; Ms Wendy Appleby; Dr Simon Banks; Dr Brenda Cross; Dr Caroline Essex; Dr Julie Evans; Dr Dilly Fung; Dr Clare Goudy; Ms June Hedges; Ms Judith Hillmore; Dr Christine Hoffmann; Dr Arne Hofmann; Dr Helen Matthews; Professor Tim McHugh; Professor John Mitchell; Ms Suguna Nair; Mr Derfel Owen; Professor Norbert Pachler; Mr Tom Robinson; Dr Mike Rowson; Ms Wahida Samie; Dr Hazel Smith; Dr Fiona Strawbridge; Ms Olga Thomas; Professor Derek Tocher; Ms Susan Ware.

In attendance: Mr Andy Saffery for item 5; Mr Simon To for item 6; Ms Lina Kamenova for item 7; Dr Ben Clifford for item 8; Mr Gary Hawes and Mr Malcolm Bailey for item 12; Ms Lizzie Vinton (Secretary).

Key to abbreviations	
AC	Academic Committee
ARQASC	Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Sub Committee
ASER	Annual Student Experience Review
CALT	Centre for Advancing Learning and Teaching
EC	Extenuating Circumstances
EdCom	Education Committee
FMS	Faculty of Medical Sciences
FTC	Faculty Teaching Committee
GEO	Global Engagement Office
HER	Higher Education Review
IOE	Institute of Education
PGT	Taught Postgraduate
PGR	Postgraduate Research
PIQ	Programme Initiation Questionnaire
PMAP	Programme and Module Approval Panels
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SoP	School of Pharmacy
StAR	Student Academic Representative
SSCC	Staff-Student Consultative Committee
UCLU	UCL Union

PART I: PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

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70   WELCOME, APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

70.1   EdCom welcomed the new IOE Faculty Tutor, Dr Tracey Allen, to the committee.

71   MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

71.1   **Agreed** – the minutes of the meeting held 26 April 2016.

72   MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

72A   **Late Summer Resits Oral Update** *[Minute 64 (15-16) refers]*

72A.1   The Deputy Registrar had taken over the LSR pilots for summer 2016. Full implementation had been postponed until 2017-18 and so a wider pilot was planned for 2016-17.

PART II: MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

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73   QAA HIGHER EDUCATION REVIEW ORAL UPDATE *[Minute 59B (15-16) refers]*

73.1   The Provost had received the outline outcomes of the QAA review which took place from 9 to 12 May 2016. However the outcomes were embargoed until the report was formally published on the QAA website in approximately two months' time. A draft report would be sent in the next three weeks giving UCL the opportunity to check for matters of factual accuracy. Once published, UCL would be required to publish an action plan in response, which would be signed off by EdCom Chair's Action over the summer.

73.2   The committee thanked the Director of Academic Services and his team for the hard work which went into the review.

74   STUDENT COMPLAINTS REPORT 2015

74.1   **Received** – the report at EDCOM 5-01 (15-16) presented by the Deputy Registrar.

74.2   It was noted that the report focused on academic complaints only. There had been an 11% increase in the number of academic complaints since 2014 and there were greater numbers of complaints from PGT students than UG students. There were some interesting patterns in the number of complaints when broken down by student domicile and the authors planned to collect these data at a more granular level for future reports in order to further explore these variances.

74.3   The report highlighted a number of key areas which appeared to generate the most complaints. In particular it was felt that UCL could provide better guidance about PGT supervision in order to better manage students' expectations in this area. EdCom agreed that it would be helpful for each Department to review its own guidance.

74.4   This year had also included a KPMG review of the complaints process itself. The report recommended more training for staff involved with complaints, a separate procedure for non-academic complaints, and that UCL try to address more complaints through informal resolution (Recommendation 5). Whilst this was already a feature of the UCL procedure, many students still used only the formal procedures. EdCom discussed whether an informal stage could be mandated, but felt that this might create barriers and extend the process yet further for students wanting to make a formal complaint.

74.5   **Agreed** - the Complaints Procedure and associated guidance should 'strongly encourage' students to seek an informal resolution before submitting a formal complaint.

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Action: Deputy Registrar

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74.6   The KPMG report also recommended adding a clear timeline to the procedure, particularly for progressing students whose complaints needed to be resolved before re-enrolment (Recommendation 4). EdCom was asked whether students needed to wait for the formal publication of results before they could submit a complaint, as was currently the case, or whether complaints could be considered once results were ratified by the Programme Board of Examiners. This could reduce the UG process by two to

four weeks, and the PGT process by a number of months. EdCom noted that the introduction of Late Summer Resits could exacerbate the problem further if students submitted complaints relating to resit results. However it was argued that UCL ought to be encouraging students to complain at the time of the problem. It was felt that the current procedure encouraged both staff and students to view complaints as an appeal against results rather than a complaint about a material irregularity in the assessment process.

74.7   **Agreed** - students should be encouraged to complain at the time of the event and not wait until their results are published. However students should still be permitted to request a review of the Board of Examiners' decision, and such requests could be considered once results were ratified by the Programme Board of Examiners, rather than waiting for the formal publication of results.

Action: Deputy Registrar

74.8   **Agreed** - further work on the process would be carried out, looking in particular at the separation of academic and non-academic complaints, and complaints and appeals.

Action: Deputy Registrar

75   StARs ANNUAL REPORT 2014-15

75.1   **Received** – the report at EDCOM 5-02 (15-16) presented by the UCLU Representation & Campaigns Manager.

75.2   The current three-year StARs development plan was coming to a close and UCLU had been working with the StARs Steering Group on the next iteration. The authors invited EdCom members to send comments and suggestions for the plan outside the meeting. The authors thanked the Faculty StARs Contacts and Faculty Tutors for their help in promoting and operating the collaborative programme of StARs work. This had greatly helped to increase coverage, with 72% of FTCs returning StARs in 2014-15 and initial figures for 2015-16 indicating coverage of more than 80%. Further analysis of the spread of StARs was also being carried out, for example by looking at the StARs-to-student ratio on each programme (allowing for disciplinary differences). However the QAA Review process had highlighted concerns about the attendance of StARs at SSCCs. EdCom agreed that future work should include EdCom discussions about the structure of SSCCs and improving StARs coverage at PGT and PGR level.

75.3   The steering group also looked at the lifecycle of a StAR and how UCLU supports them throughout their journey. Other successful activities had included the student-led teaching awards and UCLU Education Conference, whilst including student reviewers on IQR Panels had been an effective means of encouraging engagement. Six new training modules had been rolled out, dividing the training into manageable segments, and this had almost trebled participation during 2015-16.

75.4   The report included a summary of the key issues raised by StARs during 2014-15. EdCom noted that this was a very useful document and hoped that the 2015-16 iteration could be published soon to feed into the next ASER cycle.

75.5   **Agreed** – that UCLU would break down the summary by Department so that Faculties could better understand where problems were arising.

Action: UCLU Representation & Campaigns Manager

76   CHILDREN AND VULNERABLE ADULTS SAFEGUARDING POLICY

76.1   **Received** – the paper at EDCOM 5-03 (15-16) presented by the Student Support and Wellbeing Manager (International and Welfare).

76.2   The revised policy aimed to address a range of issues relating to the safeguarding of under-18s and vulnerable adults. Work was also underway to develop a group of contacts and to have three halls of residence where staff had undergone appropriate

checks. Portico was also being updated to require next of kin details for these students, staff training was being planned and UCLU were looking at their own related policies.

76.3   EdCom warmly welcomed the policy which helped to resolve a number of current issues. It was noted that the policy related primarily to students enrolling on qualification-bearing programmes and not to short courses and summer schools. However the new Life Learning regulations (see Minute 81 below) incorporated the requirements. Members asked Student Support and Wellbeing to investigate the possibilities of an online staff training registration process as this might help to greatly improve uptake. It was noted that online training was also available.

76.4   EdCom requested details of how the policy would be disseminated, noting that it had already been discussed at the Faculty Tutors Forum, and that Faculty Tutors would be asked to help raise awareness. EdCom suggested that, in addition to more general publicity, relevant staff should be made aware of the policy and training opportunities when such a student is admitted to UCL.

76.5   **Approved** – the UCL Children and Vulnerable Adults Safeguarding Policy for Applicants and Current Students.

77   PROPOSAL FOR NEW MPLAN QUALIFICATION

77.1   **Received** – the proposal at <u>EDCOM 5-04 (15-16)</u> presented by the programme developer, Dr Ben Clifford.

77.2   EdCom noted that the programme proposal had been approved separately via PMAP but that the qualification proposal required approval by AC. The programme developer explained that the new qualification would help to recognise the increased credit requirements of the two-year, 300-credit programme in line with the MArch also offered by the Bartlett. Whilst the MPlan was not well-known in the UK, internationally it was recognised as an extended Masters in Planning.

77.3   The Director of Academic Services raised concerns about the standing of the qualification within the UK which was typically understood to be an Integrated Masters. Whilst the programme proposal was very good, PMAP had raised concerns about creating a new qualification. Other EdCom members were concerned about the impact on other higher-credit Masters programmes in their own faculties which resulted in standard MSc or MA qualifications. The programme developer recognised these issues but felt that the Bartlett's standing would help to ensure that the qualification was understood and held in high esteem by employers.

77.4   **Agreed** - to recommend the Masters in Planning to AC for approval.

<u>Action: Secretary</u>

78   ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

78.1   **Received** – the papers at <u>EDCOM 5-05 (15-16)</u>, presented by the Pro-Vice Provost and Chair of ARQASC.

78.2   During 2015-16, ARQASC had undertaken a substantial body of work to review the taught assessment regulations. The process included extensive consultation with staff, students and student representatives, which had had a substantial influence on the thinking of the group. The papers also illustrated the significant breadth of opinions across UCL, and described the various factors which had been taken into account by ARQASC in reaching its final decisions.

78.3   Key changes included a new set of Interim Qualifications, simplified Modern Foreign Language requirements, revised Marking and Moderation standards, new regulations on late submissions and word count penalties, changes to the classification algorithm for study abroad programmes, a new list of requirements around the information provided to students about assessment, and new terms of reference for Boards of Examiners. The Chair of ARQASC also highlighted the Overarching Principles of Assessment which had formed the starting point of the regulations.

78.4 The review had aimed to re-frame the regulations as UCL's minimum academic standards which all programmes were expected to meet, in contrast to the previous regulations which set very high standards but resulted in multiple derogations, variations and suspensions of regulations. Some members asked whether programmes would need to apply to exceed the minimum standards. It was explained that the regulations deliberately defined the minimum standards expected of programmes and that anything above this threshold was therefore acceptable and did not require approval. The regulations clearly stated where any approval was needed for specific regulations.

78.5 It was noted that a number of ARQASC's original proposals had not been implemented because of the decision by the Late Summer Resits Working Group to postpone full implementation until 2017-18. As the proposals for progression, award, condonement and reassessment were intrinsically linked to the ability to resit in the same session, these would be developed further for 2017-18 implementation.

78.6 EdCom and UCLU welcomed the extent of consultation that had taken place. EdCom agreed that proper communication of the changes was vital. ARQASC had drawn up a communications plan which included a range of newsletters, briefing sessions and drop-in sessions. Events would be arranged in every faculty and details would be published shortly. The document versions of the regulations would be published by 1 July, to allow staff to update handbooks and websites/ Moodle, and the revised Academic Manual website would be published at the start of August. UCLU and CALT were also planning to put together a guide to the key assessment regulations for students, and a programme of student communications was being drawn up. EdCom noted that these communications would also include the UCL-level information within the list of Core Programme Information approved by EdCom in April 2016.

78.7 **Approved** - The UCL Assessment Framework for Taught Programmes 2016-17.

78.8 **Agreed** - Academic Services would ensure that the threshold standards were clearly explained in communications and would arrange meetings with those Faculty Tutors who were not members of ARQASC to go through the regulations.

Action: Assessment Regulations and Governance Manager

78.9 **Agreed** - EdCom noted an editorial error in the pass and completion requirements. Academic Services would ensure that this was corrected before circulation.

Action: Assessment Regulations and Governance Manager

78.10 **Agreed** – the new regulations would be kept under review to ensure they were fit for purpose.

Action: Pro-Vice Provost and Chair of ARQASC

79 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES AND REASONABLE ADJUSTMENTS REGULATIONS

79.1 **Received** – the proposals at EDCOM 5-06 (15-16) presented by the Pro-Vice Provost and Chair of ARQASC.

79.2 New regulations for Extenuating Circumstances were introduced in 2015-16 for all taught students. As part of the introduction, it was agreed that the new regulations would be reviewed after the first year to assess whether they were fit for purpose. The introduction had also surfaced additional concerns about how UCL supports students with disabilities and longer-term conditions and it was agreed that a sister set of Reasonable Adjustments regulations should also be developed. The review took the form of a meeting with Faculty Tutors and representatives from UCLU, Student Support and Wellbeing, Student Disability Services, Assessment and Student Records, Academic Services and Ridgmount Medical Practice, and an online survey open to UCL staff, students and External Examiners. Staff were also able to submit comments by email. A total of 212 people responded to the survey, resulting in over 1,300 separate items of feedback. All of the comments were considered carefully and helped to inform

the new draft of the regulations presented to EdCom for approval. The paper included a summary of all the key changes which would be communicated to students and staff via a comprehensive communications plan.

79.3   EdCom welcomed the revised regulations and increased guidance and requested that the regulations continue to be monitored to ensure they were working effectively. UCLU thanked ARQASC and Academic Services for the level of student engagement in the review process and the extent of responsiveness to the concerns that had been raised. The union welcomed the clarifications about the grounds for ECs, and the new focus on students' needs in particular.

79.4   Some members raised concerns about the Authorised Absence policy which was also introduced by Assessment and Student Records for 2015-16. Although some adjustments had been made to the EC policy to remind students to report absences, there were still concerns about students being granted an absence which then forced the EC Panel to accept the EC.

79.5   **Agreed** - ARQASC would further discuss the recent Authorised Absence policy.

Action: Chair of ARQASC

79.6   The revised regulations removed the option for raising students within the borderline zone to the next classification on the basis of ECs. ARQASC felt that this contradicted the important principle that marks and classifications must always represent actual performance and not estimated ability, but also that the probability of a student falling in the borderline zone but not meeting the other borderline criteria was extremely slim. This meant that some students were receiving no mitigation for their circumstances. Some consultation respondents had questioned this decision, as they had found it useful where no other form of mitigation could be offered, and were concerned about an increase in the number of deferrals. Whilst this would be far less problematic once Late Summer Resits were implemented, at present deferrals created a prohibitive volume of work. ARQASC had discussed the issue in detail and felt it was important to retain the decision and EdCom concurred. However it was acknowledged that further discussion was needed on the types of mitigation that were possible on pass/fail degrees.

79.7   **Approved** – the new Extenuating Circumstances and Reasonable Adjustments regulations 2016-17.

79.8   **Agreed** - Academic Services would discuss the options for pass/fail degrees with FMS.

Action: Assessment Regulations and Governance Manager

80   PROGRAMME AND MODULE APPROVAL FRAMEWORK

80.1   **Received** – the paper at EDCOM 5-07 (15-16) presented by the Director of Academic Services.

80.2   The revised Framework had been developed by Academic Services in consultation with PMAP, Faculty Tutors and other UCL staff. It included a two-stage process for programme approval where PMAP considered an initial business case at the first stage and full proposals at the second. This would allow programme teams to market the programme once outline approval was received but the detail was still being developed. The review also considered the approval forms and it was agreed that the PIQ would be taken out of Portico to make the process simpler and quicker. However this meant that faculties would have to be particularly vigilant about version control and unauthorised amendments. The proposals also included new definitions of major and minor programme amendments, and defined the process for approving research degrees.

80.3   EdCom queried whether the new process would help to avoid duplication of provision within UCL and externally. It was noted that, whilst PMAP represented one opportunity to check overlap, programme developers needed to conduct this research at an earlier stage. It was agreed that circulation of the lists of business cases to the full membership of PMAP ahead of meetings would help to ensure that all faculties checked new proposals for overlap with their own provision.

80.4 **Approved** – the UCL Programme and Module Approval Framework 2016-17.

81 LIFE LEARNING FRAMEWORK

81.1 **Received** – the proposals at EDCOM 5-08 (15-16) presented by Mr Gary Hawes and Mr Malcolm Bailey.

81.2 The Life Learning team were in the process of developing a full framework for the management of non-qualification-bearing short courses and other life learning activities, including the development of learner statuses, regulations, entitlements, learner journeys and associated processes. The current paper included proposals for academic regulations to underpin the delivery of both credit-bearing and non-credit-bearing life learning activities. The regulations had been drafted via an extensive consultation process including discussions with ARQASC and Faculty Tutors and drop-in sessions for staff interested in delivering this type of provision. Comments and suggestions had helped to shape the final version. EdCom noted that the assessment section had been developed in tandem with the new Assessment Framework for Taught Programmes (see Minute 80 above) but might require some minor adjustments to align with the final version of the same. The Course Initiation Questionnaire (CIQ) was also being piloted in some faculties and might therefore undergo some non-substantive revisions.

81.3 EdCom warmly welcomed the thorough document. There were some queries about the process for Accrediting Prior Learning from such credit-bearing short courses, and ensuring that credits were awarded in time for students to enrol on a qualification-bearing UCL programme. The Life Learning team confirmed that this was an important goal but that further work was needed.

81.4 Further work was also underway to provide guidance for departments on visa compliance. It was imperative that UCL did not jeopardise its licence and that all student visas were checked, even on one-day courses. However it was confirmed that students on fully-online courses would not be required to provide a visa. EdCom also queried whether these regulations, and especially those around visa compliance, applied to student attendance at conferences. It was confirmed that this was out of scope of the existing document but that visa requirements would be investigated further.

81.5 **Agreed** - the visa requirements for attendance at conferences would be checked and confirmed by SRS.

Action: Registrar

81.6 **Approved** – the UCL Life Learning Regulations 2016-17.

82 ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS FRAMEWORK

82.1 **Received** – the paper at EDCOM 5-09 (15-16).

82.2 **Approved** - the minor amendments to the Academic Partnerships Framework 2016-17 and the updated Register of Academic Partnerships.

83 INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION DEROGATIONS 2016-17

83.1 **Received** – the IOE regulations for 2016-17 at EDCOM 5-10 (15-16) presented by the Pro-Vice Provost and Chair of ARQASC.

83.2 Due to the postponement of Late Summer Resits, the IOE required continued derogation from the main UCL regulations in a number of areas. Full integration was planned for 2017-18. The regulations were approved by ARQASC at its meeting on 31 May 2016.

83.3 **Approved** – the IOE taught programme regulations 2016-17.

84   SCHOOL OF PHARMACY DEROGATIONS 2016-17

84.1   At its meeting in May 2015, EdCom approved a range of derogations for the School of Pharmacy for the 2015-16 session. The School had reviewed these arrangements and indicated that the majority could now be rescinded, with students covered by the main UCL regulations.

84.2   **Agreed** - the following derogations should continue for another year as they were aligned with UCL's general direction of travel:
         a)   Derogation for the exclusion of Year 1 from the MPharm classification calculation
         b)   Derogation to cap resit marks at a pass for students on the MPharm programme.

84.3   SoP had also indicated a willingness to adopt the UCL Extenuating Circumstances regulations but requested that the School be permitted to retain its Fit to Sit Policy which worked well. EdCom discussed the request in detail but felt that, as EdCom had previously given a firm steer that Fit to Sit was not acceptable, this derogation should not be allowed for a single department/ school as it would put those students at a disadvantage to other UCL students.

84.4   **Agreed** – the School of Pharmacy would be required to adopt the UCL Extenuating Circumstances regulations in full for 2016-17.

PART III: OTHER MATTERS FOR APPROVAL OR INFORMATION

85   REVISED MODES OF STUDY

85.1   **Approved** – the revised modes of study as approved by ARQASC at its meeting on 31 May 2016 at EDCOM 5-12 (15-16).

86   GEO SIGNATORY PROPOSAL

86.1   **Noted** – the proposal approved by EdCom Chair's Action at EDCOM 5-13 (15-16).

87   APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

87.1   **Approved** – the programmes recommended to EdCom by the Programme and Module Approval Panels as listed at EDCOM 5-14 (15-16).

88   MINUTES OF SUB COMMITTEES

88A   **Approved** – the minutes of the Academic Partnerships Review Group held 22 March 2016 and 19 May 2016 at EDCOM 5-15 (15-16) and EDCOM 5-16 (15-16).

88B   **Approved** – the minutes of the Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Sub Committee held 5 April 2016 and 28 April 2016 at EDCOM 5-17 (15-16) and EDCOM 5-18 (15-16).

88C   **Approved** – the minutes of the Late Summer Resits Working Group held 5 April 2016, 28 April 2016 and 23 May 2016 at EDCOM 5-19 (15-16), EDCOM 5-20 (15-16) and EDCOM 5-21 (15-16).

88D   **Approved** – the minutes of the Programme and Module Approval Panels held 16 March 2016 and 18 March 2016 at EDCOM 5-22 (15-16) and EDCOM 5-23 (15-16).

88E   **Approved** – the minutes of the Quality Review Sub Committee held 14 March 2016 at <u>EDCOM 5-24 (15-16)</u>.

89   ANONYMISED SUSPENSIONS OF REGULATIONS REPORT

89.1   **Approved** – the suspensions of regulations listed at <u>EDCOM 5-25 (15-16)</u>.

90   ANY OTHER BUSINESS

90.1   No further business was identified.

91   DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

91.1   **Noted** - EdCom dates for 2016-17 would be confirmed by the secretary.

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