



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Tuesday 12 March 2013

MINUTES

Present:

Prof Mike Ewing (*Chair*)

Mr David Ashton
Ms Karen Barnard
Mr Edwin Clifford-Coupe
Dr Caroline Essex
Dr Julie Evans
Mr Marco Federighi
Ms June Hedges
Dr Arne Hofmann
Ms Bella Malins
Ms Helen Matthews

Mr Dante Micheaux
Dr John Mitchell
Ms Kathleen Nicholls
Dr Hilary Richards
Dr Fiona Strawbridge
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: Professor David Bogle; Mr Jason Clarke; Dr Brenda Cross; Ms Valerie Hogg; Ms Giulia Mari; Mr Ken Marsden; Mr Gergely Raccuja; Dr Ruth Siddall; Ms Paula Speller.

Key to abbreviations

AC	Academic Committee
EDCOM	Education Committee
FTC	Faculty Teaching Committee
GPA	Grade Point Average
KIS	Key Information Set
KISSG	Key Information Set Steering Group
MFL	Modern Foreign Languages
MPA	Masters in Public Administration
NSS	National Student Survey
OIA	Office of the Independent Adjudicator
PGT	Postgraduate taught
PMASG	Programme and Module Approval Steering Group
PT	Personal Tutoring
QMEC	Quality Management and Enhancement Committee
RRG	Regulation Review Group
SHS	Social and Historical Sciences
SLMS	School of Life and Medical Sciences
SoP	School of Pharmacy
SCP	Special Cases Panel
UCLBE	UCL Board of Examiners
UG	Undergraduate

33 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 6 DECEMBER 2012

Confirmed:

- 33.1 The Minutes of the meeting of EdCom held on 6 December 2012 [EdCom Mins. 16 - 32, 06.12.12]

34 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES [see also Minutes 36 & 37 below]

34A New Fee Liability Policy for Interruptions and Withdrawals [EdCom Min.17A, 12-13]

Noted:

- 34A.1 The Director of Financial Planning and Strategy was currently working towards a revised policy which would be submitted the June 25 meeting of EdCom for proposed implementation in 2013-14.

34B Undergraduate Admissions: improving conversion activity [EdCom Min.17B, 12-13]

Reported:

- 34B.1 The Director of Admissions reported that the third of a trio of conversion-related emails were shortly to be sent to offer holders. The Admissions Office had also been helping faculties with events and open-days for offer holders and feedback so far had been positive. A number of regional events had also been held in Exeter, Norwich and Birmingham which aimed to give more information to offer holders about accommodation etc. and had also received positive feedback, particularly from parents. The Admissions Office was hoping to extend this regional activity.

RESOLVED:

- 34B.2 That a further report would be made to EdCom in the summer once feedback on the various activities had been fully evaluated. **[Action: Ms Bella Malins]**

34C Scheduled learning percentages – issues arising from UCL preparations for the key information set (KIS) [EdCom Min.18, 12-13]

Noted:

- 34C.1 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 had been invited to consider whether the calculation method agreed by AC in 2008¹ required revision and, if so, to discuss some alternative proposals. EdCom resolved that contact hours (as opposed to percentages) should be gathered.

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.

Reported:

34C.2 The Head of Student Data Services submitted a progress report to the effect that:

- Functionality had been developed for Portico to collect the teaching and learning hours for undergraduate modules as required for KIS.
- The functionality was added to the Live Portico system on 7 March 2013.
- The Head of Student Data Services was working with the Chair of the KISSG to agree a suitable message or messages to go out to departments to inform them that the KIS would be taking place again this year, and that the module based data would be gathered through Portico.
- It was expected that the teaching and learning hours data for the great majority of departments would complete by the end of April 2013.

RESOLVED:

34C.3 That any further issues or queries which EdCom members may have, be communicated to the Head of Student Data Services via the Secretary. **[Action: EdCom members to note]**

34D Annual Report from EdCom to AC [EdCom Min.24 ,12-13]

Noted:

34D.1 The above report was approved by AC on 13 December 2012.

35 FEEDBACK ON SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Noted:

35.1 Students had requested feedback on summative assessments/examinations. This was not currently UCL policy. EdCom Officers had investigated Chapter B6 of the QAA's UK Quality Code for guidance on sound practice in this area. See <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/Publications/InformationAndGuidance/Documents/Quality%20Code%20-%20Chapter%20B6.pdf>. A relevant extract from Chapter B6 at EDCOM 3/28 (12-13) was introduced by the Chair.

Reported:

35.2 The Chair proposed a wide-ranging discussion and, to initiate this, invited the Laws Faculty Tutor to outline the Faculty's current practice. In Laws, individual feedback on summative assessment was offered (mainly to failing or underperforming students), and the Faculty was currently discussing the provision of more generic feedback.

Discussion:

35.3 The main points of discussion were:

- That it would not be realistic to offer feedback on all final assessments. The QAA Quality Code specified that assessment should not place an unreasonable burden on an institution but should be proportionate to its usefulness;

- It might be possible to provide generic feedback which would be useful for incoming generations of students: this might include a commentary on, for example, those questions in any given year on which students had performed particularly well or badly.
- It might be possible to calculate the numbers of students attempting/not attempting particular questions. This would be helpful to examiners for future assessment-setting; however, there was currently no electronic way of recording this information and in some Faculties the process would therefore be laborious out of all proportion to its perceived usefulness to students;
- It was noted that in at least one Faculty where this would represent an unreasonable burden, individual feedback was actually offered and any requirement to provide generic information of the kind described above would necessitate a redirection of scarce resources towards this end;
- In this Faculty there was also less obvious continuity between the examination papers from one year to the next, making comparisons less valuable; however, its module-level AM reports were required to provide a commentary on examination question take-up.

35.4 Faculty Tutors were invited to discuss the issues further with their FTCs; in particular:

- (1) specific examination feedback for failing or underperforming students;
- (2) the provision of more generic feedback as detailed above.

RESOLVED:

35.5 That Faculty Tutors report on the above discussions with their FTCs at EdCom on 25 June 2013. **[Action: Faculty Tutors]**

36 PERSONAL TUTORING: OVERVIEW, MONITORING AND IMPLEMENTATION
[EdCom Min.20, 12-13]

Noted:

36.1 EdCom was currently revisiting the outcomes of its 2011-12 monitoring of the Personal Tutoring System paying particular attention to the Personal Tutoring of PGT students. In the meantime, the Department of Chemistry was invited to share the good practice noted in its approach to Personal Tutoring.

Reported:

36.2 The Deputy Head of the Department of Chemistry, Professor Derek Tocher, reported the key points of its PT system as follows:

- The PT system was completely devolved from any form of academic tutoring;
- The Deputy Head determined the date and time of all meetings in advance of the start of the academic year and informed staff of these in early September. These dates were then diarised by staff at the same time as their other teaching commitments;
- The agenda for each meeting was set at the same time, with each meeting serving a specific predetermined purpose².

² eg: in the first year, Meeting One would be in Induction week and would involve a General Welcome to UCL Chemistry (attendance, part-time work, time management); Meeting Two would be held in Reading Week and would involve an Introduction to PPD (where students rate their expertise in particular skills) and so on.

- Both staff and students were sent at least two reminders from the Deputy Head about the meetings up to 10 days in advance and reminded of the purpose the meetings were meant to serve;
- For reporting and attendance monitoring, the Department had set up a web-form on Google documents. This enabled a member of staff to log on, view a list of their students and click a radio button as he/she met them. This information was then collected in spreadsheet which was accessed and reviewed by the Deputy Head;
- Typically, each member of staff would have approximately 15 tutees. Some were seen individually, some in groups;
- Compliance by academic staff in this process was typically 85-90%.

Discussion:

- 36.3 EdCom noted that, notwithstanding the fact that this PT system was reliant on there also being a system of academic tutorials (which was not the case in every department), it would be useful if details were published in the Sharepoint for members to access.
- 36.4 It was noted that the final scheduled meeting would also be a good opportunity to link the proposed questions about a student's summer activities to specific volunteering (etc.) activities available.

RESOLVED:

- 36.5 That details of the PT system in the Department of Chemistry be published on the EdCom Sharepoint. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton]**

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

Noted:

- 37.1 A Post-Merger Steering Group, chaired by the Dean of the Faculty of Life Sciences, had been set up to enable closer scrutiny of the SoP's regulatory and procedural framework with a view to integrating where appropriate, SoP's procedures with those of UCL.

Received:

- 37.2 A paper at EDCOM 3/29 (12-13).

Reported:

- 37.3 The Chair reported that progress was being made and that it was anticipated that SoP would be largely conforming to UCL norms by the beginning of session 2013-14. However, some issues with timetabling might necessitate further discussion at EdCom in future.

38 MATTERS ARISING FROM REGULATION REVIEW GROUP 5 FEBRUARY 2013

38A Extenuating Circumstances

Noted:

38A.1 RRG discussions regarding proposed revisions to UCL's current policy on Extenuating Circumstances were ongoing but EdCom was asked to reinforce the policy that no late Extenuating Circumstances would be accepted unless the acute nature of the circumstances prevented them from being brought to the attention of the relevant tutor within the prescribed timeframe. (see also Minute 43B below)

Reported:

38A.2 The Chair provided some background to the creation of the current algorithm for the grading of Extenuating Circumstances and informed EdCom that he had prepared a paper for the RRG's next meeting which outlined current thinking on this and other key issues. It was also noted that any revised policy on Extenuating Circumstances would need to take into account ongoing discussions/proposals for the GPA.

38B Lateness penalties

Noted:

38B.1 UCL Regulations concerning Penalties for over-length Coursework and penalties for Late Submission have now been revised. (see also Minute 43B below)

39 PROCEEDINGS OF FACULTY TEACHING COMMITTEES: SESSION 2011-12

Noted:

39.1 In line with a recommendation arising from the 2012 Review of AC and its Substructure, subsequently approved by AC on 18 October 2012, EdCom is invited to receive and discuss the Annual Report on Proceedings of FTCs 2011-12, referring any significant issues to AC.

Received:

39.2 The report at [EDCOM 3/30 \(12-13\)](#), introduced by the Chair.

Reported:

39.3 The Chair noted that all FTCs (which covered UG matters) had reported on the NSS and discussed the Faculty Digests which collated the student response data and comments. Assessment and feedback issues (quality and promptness of return of marked work), the quality of learning space (including access to computer facilities and study space) were the most commonly mentioned concerns.

Discussion:

39.4 It was noted that issues with the quality of UCL's estate/teaching space also emerged annually via QMEC as part of the AM and IQR processes. The QMEC Chair had also

met in summer 2012 with colleagues from UCL Estates and Information Systems Division to clarify which issues noted by faculties were of a strategic nature and would therefore be looked at in the long-term, and which issues could be resolved in the short-term. This meeting, although useful in generating a written response from UCL Estates and Facilities, apparently had not resulted in progress in areas that had been identified at the meeting as achievable in the time frame of a year. Since space and resourcing issues had a significant impact on the overall student experience, it was essential to improve interaction of students and academic staff with Estates and Facilities so better progress could be made in these areas. It was suggested that EdCom invite a representative from UCL Estates, preferably its Director, to attend EdCom's meeting of 30 April in order to respond to any issues raised (a maximum of four) by faculties.

RESOLVED:

39.5 That the Director of UCL Estates be invited to attend EdCom on 25 June 2013.
[Action: Sandra Hinton]

39.6 That EdCom members/Faculty Tutors email the Secretary with suggestions for issues to be discussed. **[Action: EdCom/Faculty Tutors to note]**

40 AMENDED PROCEDURE FOR THE SPECIAL CASES PANEL

Noted:

40.1 EdCom was asked to approve an amended procedure for the Special Cases Panel, as recommended by UCLBE.

Received:

40.2 A paper at EDCOM 3/31 (12-13), introduced by the Director of Student Services.

Reported:

40.3 The amended procedure was being recommended in response to an issue which had arisen, the OIA's decision concerning which had revealed a need to reinforce the primacy of UCL in awarding degrees. Previously, the remit of the Special Cases Panels was confusing and could lead to them being considered as an appeals process rather than as an infrequently evoked process to overrule unjust decisions made by Boards of Examiners or to adjudicate in cases of disagreement between Faculty Boards of Examiners and Departmental/Divisional Boards.

40.4 EdCom was also invited to consider SPCs for PGT students and whether these should be separate or whether the remit of the existing SPCs should be extended.

RESOLVED:

40.5 That the amended procedure be approved.

41 APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Noted:

- 41.1 The PMASG Chair, acting on behalf of EdCom and on the recommendation of PMASG, has approved the following programmes of study since the meeting of EdCom on 6 December 2012:

MSc Risk, Disaster and Resilience;
MRes Computational Statistics and Machine Learning
MRes Brain Sciences
MRes/PG Cert Medical Technology Entrepreneurship

42 APPROVAL OF A NEW DEGREE AWARD – Executive Masters in Public Administration

Noted:

- 42.1 EdCom was invited to recommend for approval by AC, on the recommendation of, and following full scrutiny by, the Programme and Module Approval Steering Group, a proposal that UCL establish the following new degree award:

- *Executive MPA*

and to approve the following new degree:

- *Executive MPA: Global Public Policy and Management*

RESOLVED:

- 42.2 That in accordance with the procedure for the approval of new degree awards, EdCom recommended this proposal for approval by AC on 21 March 2013.

43 MINUTES FROM STEERING GROUPS ETC.

43A Programme and Module Approval Steering Group

Noted:

- 43A.1 At EDCOM 3/32 (12-13) – the minutes of the meeting of 23 January 2013.

43B Regulation Review Group

Noted:

- 43B.1 At EDCOM 3/33 (12-13) – the Minutes of the meeting of the RRG held on 5 February 2013. (See also Minute 38 above).

44 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

44A Modern Foreign Language Requirements for the Admission of Undergraduates

Received:

- 44A.1 A paper at EDCOM 3/34 (12-13) – introduced by the Chair.

Reported:

- 44A.2 The Chair stressed that it was important to note that the MFL was not an admission but a progression requirement. It was also reported that UCL Disability Services had contacted the Chair to stress that learning a modern foreign language might be damaging to students with certain declared disabilities such as dyslexia. Students in this situation should be referred to the Dean of Students (Academic) for advice.

RESOLVED:

- 44A.3 That a statement to this effect would be added to the relevant webpage and codified in the regulations. **[Action: Professor Mike Ewing]**

45 OTHER BUSINESS

45A Electronic Resources for Re-sit Students

Noted:

- 45A.1 The Arts and Humanities /SHS Faculty Tutor raised the issue of access rights for students who were not fully enrolled but registered to take re-sit examinations (often remotely). These students required access to learning materials that could only be accessed online, as they were not in the UK. There was concern from academic staff that students who were re-sitting were not able to access library services online. EdCom was informed by the Library representative present that the problem was one of identifying these students and their status. Issues with accessing facilities had become more acute since the application of more stringent rules by the UK Border Agency.

RESOLVED:

- 45A.2 That the Director of Student Services would make initial contact with Library Services to request that it recognise the two enrolment categories of: IR (Interrupting – Resitting) and IRF (Interrupting – Resitting (Final Year) in order to allow access to learning materials. If this was not possible, Library Services would be asked to identify where the difficulty lay. **[Action: Mr David Ashton]**

45B Ensuring correct module assessment details in Portico and Moodle

Noted:

- 45B.1 The Director of Student Services noted that there had been a significant number of cases in 2012-13 where the information provided to students regarding assessment patterns had not been the same as the information in Portico. The Examinations Office was concerned that staff may not be engaging properly with the tasks that were run to ensure this information is correct; namely the annual academic review of programme diets and module data and the examinations pro-forma exercise.

RESOLVED:

- 45B.2 That Faculty Tutors contact their staff and ask them to ensure that all module assessment data were checked carefully as part of the annual academic review, and

any requests for changes of assessment for the following year be made in a timely fashion. **[Action: Faculty Tutors]**

45C Regulations – non-standard degrees and blended learning

Noted:

45C.1 The Director of Student Services noted that non-standard degrees (e.g. those with overseas campuses, distant learners, blended learners, or flexible modular students, or which started at different times) would shortly be reviewed, as would the regulations as they applied to them. He recommended that a working group of EdCom be set up to scope the issues.

RESOLVED:

45C.2 That the working group of EdCom should consist of Dr Arne Hofmann; Dr Julie Evans; Mr Marco Federighi; Prof John Mitchell; Ms Irenie Morley and Mr David Ashton. **[Action: Mr David Ashton]**

46 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Noted:

46.1 Future meetings of EdCom are scheduled as follows:

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

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

SANDRA HINTON

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24 April 2013.