



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

14 March 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Prof Mike Ewing (*Chair*)

Mr David Ashton
Prof David Bogle
Dr Sue Bryant
Mr Neil Chowdhury
Dr Brenda Cross
Professor Vince Emery
Dr Caroline Essex
Mr Marco Federighi
Dr Arne Hofmann

Dr John Mitchell
Ms Kathleen Nicholls
Dr Hilary Richards
Dr Ruth Siddall
Prof Richard Simons
Dr Fiona Strawbridge
Ms Olga Thomas
Ms Susan Ware

In attendance: Ms Clare Goudy; Ms Sandra Hinton (Secretary); Ms Irenie Morley; Dr Mike Munday; Mr Mark Pickerill.

Apologies for absence were received from: Ms Karen Barnard; Mr Jason Clarke; Ms Valerie Hogg; Prof Alexi Marmot; Mr Martin Reid.

Key to abbreviations:

AC	Academic Committee
DLTS	Departmental Learning and Teaching Statement
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EdCom	Education Committee
FTC	Faculty Teaching Committee
GPA	Grade Point Average
HR	Human Resources
ISD	Information Systems Division
LTSS	Learning and Teaching Support Service
MAPS	Mathematical and Physical Sciences
MFL	Modern Foreign Language
OIA	Office of the Independent Adjudicator
PGT	Postgraduate taught (student)
PIQ	Programme Institution Questionnaire
PMASG	Programme and Module Approval Steering Group
RAS	Registry and Academic Services
SoP	School of Pharmacy
UCLBE	UCL Board of Examiners

37 **MEMBERSHIP 2011-12**

Noted

- 37.1 **Ms Helen Matthews, Joint Faculty Academic Administration Manager of Arts and Humanities and Social and Historical Sciences** had joined EdCom as a co-opted member with immediate effect and was welcomed by the Chair.

38 **MINUTES**

Approved

- 38.1 The Minutes of the meeting of EdCom held on 8 December 2011 [*EdCom Mins. 17-36, 08.12.11*] issued previously, were confirmed by the Committee and signed by the Chair.

39 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

[*See also Minutes below*]

- 39A **Recording of External Examiner activity undertaken by UCL staff**
[*EdCom Min. 18A, 11-12*]

Noted

- 39A.1 EdCom had resolved that the EdCom Vice-Chair would investigate the feasibility of recording UCL staff External Examiner activity. The Vice-Chair, the Curricular Development and Examiners Manager and the EdCom Secretary met on 15 January 2012 to discuss the issues.

Reported

- 39A.2 The Vice-Chair reported that he would revisit, with Mr Richard Warren of UCL Management Systems Division, the possibility of capturing this information via existing functionality and report the outcome to EdCom.

- 39B **Review of the Harmonised Scheme of Award**
[*EdCom Min. 20, 11-12*]

Noted

- 39B.1 At its meeting on 8 December 2011, EdCom resolved that the Vice-Chair of EdCom should liaise with Faculty Tutors and the Dean of Students (Academic) regarding dates for a meeting to discuss the Harmonised Scheme.

Reported

- 39B.2 The Vice-Chair reported that the meeting, held on 14 March 2012, had been productive and had indicated a desire to rationalise UCL practice whilst remaining mindful of the ongoing discussions regarding the GPA.

39C **Overhead Projectors in Lecture Theatres**
[EdCom Min. 22, 11-12]

Noted

39C.1 Lack of consultation with faculty staff over refurbishment of teaching space, particularly lecture theatres, has resulted in some overhead projectors being removed with no substitute device provided for staff (i) to display information in a lecture and (ii) to be able to do this while using Powerpoint. At its December meeting EdCom resolved that the Vice-Chair, on behalf of EdCom, should raise the issue with the Director of UCL Estates.

Reported

39C.2 The Vice-Chair reported that the Director of UCL Estates had now confirmed that all OHPs had now been replaced by 'visualisers' as a matter of UCL policy and that OHPs, as old technology, could no longer be supported. However, the Vice-Chair agreed to raise once more with the Director of UCL Estates why both forms of display could not continue to be used simultaneously. **[Action: Professor Vince Emery]**

39D **Institutional Learning and Teaching Strategy – Implementation Plan**
[EdCom Min. 19, 11-12]

Noted

39D.1 A report on key assessment types was submitted to EdCom's December meeting where it was resolved that the data, grouped by faculty, should be sent to Faculty Tutors for discussion by FTCs. FTCs would then consider whether it would be useful to gather data on e-assessments and whether there should be a change to the overarching module assessment components terminology.

Reported

39D.2 The Director of Student Services, Mr David Ashton, reported that faculty-level information and data was now with the faculties with a request that this be discussed at their FTCs. The outcomes of this would be discussed at EdCom's meeting of 4 May 2012.

40 **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND THE UCL ADMISSIONS PROCESS**

Noted

40.1 In December 2007, AC had approved a policy on modern foreign language requirements for undergraduate admissions. A formal statement setting out UCL's policy on this matter, which would take effect from the 2012 entry, had been received by AC at its meeting in May 2008.

40.2 The Vice-Provost (Education) and the Dean of Students (Academic), together with the relevant committee/administrative officers, had been reviewing the initial implementation of the policy. A note setting out a number of issues arising from this review would be submitted to AC at its meeting on 22 March

2012. EdCom was invited to consider the note in case there were any points that it would wish to bring to the attention of AC at its meeting later in the month.

Received

40.3 At APPENDIX EDCOM 3/23 (11-12) - the above note.

40.4 An oral report by the **Chair of EdCom, Professor Mike Ewing**.

Reported

40.5 The Chair noted that EdCom was not being invited to approve or alter the policy in its current form. It had already been thoroughly discussed by relevant UCL committees and approved by AC and would be implemented as agreed, but EdCom was being asked to formulate some ideas for submission to AC on how it might operate most optimally.

Discussion

40.6 Discussion followed, of which the main points were:

- EdCom considered that the language aspiration which had originally driven the policy remained valuable and worth protecting. However, the Committee endorsed the acquisition of a language as a part of a Key Skill set rather than as a core component. This might perhaps take the form of a Certificate, which could be studied for and acquired by the end of a student's first year exams. It might also be taken in a self-directed manner via e-learning over a longer period of time.
- EdCom noted that this slight shift in emphasis from an entry policy to what was effectively a progression policy, would render it more consistent with UCL's position on the acquisition of language skills and the development of inter-cultural awareness and would serve to encourage the ongoing development of language skills and to ensure that students engaged with other languages throughout their courses of study.

RESOLVED

40.7 That the EdCom Chair make the above points in his oral report to AC on 22 March 2012. **[Action: Professor Mike Ewing]**

41 **LECTURECAST SYSTEM**
[EdCom Min. 34A, 11-12]

Noted

41.1 The Online Media Project Board viewed the LectureCast system as a useful tool that a number of lecturers used to complement their teaching. It had traditionally been regarded as opt-in.

Received

41.2 At APPENDIX EDCOM 3/24 (11-12) - a paper from the **Chair of the Online Media Project Board**.

41.3 An oral report from the **Chair of the Online Media Project Board, Dr John Mitchell**.

Reported

41.4 EdCom was invited to consider a number of recommendations, including the development of a consistent UCL policy on use of LectureCast.

Discussion

41.5 EdCom agreed that an institutional policy was needed and posed a number of questions regarding the applicability of any UCL policy to non-UCL staff and the issues of infringement of copyright.

RESOLVED

41.6 That the report and recommendations be approved. **[Action Dr John Mitchell]**

42 **STUDY ABROAD**
[EdCom Min. 51, 10-11]

Noted

42.1 In June 2011, EdCom resolved that a small working group comprising (*inter alia*) the Director of Student Services, the Chair of EdCom and representatives from the International Office should meet initially to discuss the issues and develop proposals for minimum standards for Study Abroad.

Received

42.2 At APPENDIX EDCOM 3/25 (11-12) - a paper from the Director of Student Services.

42.3 An oral report from the **Director of Student Services, Mr David Ashton**.

Reported

42.4 The purpose of the paper at APPENDIX EDCOM 3/25 (11-12), which concentrated on undergraduate study abroad, had been to form a starting point for a baseline provision for, and expectation of, study abroad and was intended to bolster and support UCL's study abroad programme but also to provide guarantees to students on what they might expect from UCL whilst undertaking study abroad. EdCom was asked to consider the recommendations.

Discussion

42.5 The joint FTC of the Faculties of Arts and Humanities and Social and Historical Sciences had already submitted a joint response to the proposals to

the Director of Student Services as there was felt to be some disparity between the proposals and actual practice in these two faculties.

- 42.6 As a number of comments were then made regarding differing faculty experiences it was resolved that the group established to consider Study Abroad should be expanded to incorporate departmental practitioners who have experience of running programmes with a substantial Year Abroad and at least one student representative. It was suggested that this group might submit an update report to EdCom's 29 June meeting.

RESOLVED

- 42.7 That the Study Abroad working group be expanded as per 42.6 above and submit an update report to EdCom on 29 June 2012. **[Action: Mr David Ashton]**

43 **SCHOOL OF PHARMACY – EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS FOR UCL**

Received

- 43.1 An oral report from the **Academic Director of Studies of the UCL School of Pharmacy, Dr Mike Munday**, who attended for this item.
- 43.2 An oral report from the **Faculty Tutor, Faculty of Life Sciences, Dr Hilary Richards**.
- 43.3 An oral report from the **Director of Student Services, Mr David Ashton**.

Reported

- 43.4 Dr Richards reported that several meetings had been held with the Head of Outreach and Admissions, Ms Bella Malins. The SoP would be making its usual undergraduate offer for 2012-13, but would fall into line with UCL norms in the following academic session 2013-14. There were some concerns regarding staffing but these were under control and there was full awareness of what the issues were. It was anticipated that the SoP would produce a DLTS by mid-April 2012. Term dates were still under discussion and would need to be further aligned with UCL's.
- 43.5 Dr Munday reported that he had been in continuous discussion with key members of UCL staff (Dr Richards, Ms Malins and Mr Ashton) and had found this extremely productive. Good progress continued to be made with the fit of many SoP academic and administrative processes with those of UCL but it remained the case that the MPharm was in many respects more like a medical degree such as the MBBS, for which some special accommodations would always need to be made. On the whole however, things were progressing smoothly and SoP students and staff had been very pleased to have access to UCL's facilities.
- 43.6 Mr Ashton reported that some marking schemes required adapting on SoP masters programme, with the main issues arising from the PGCert and PGDip. There were also issues arising from a UoL MRes which would need to align with the UCL standard. ECTS issues had also arisen and an interim report on

this would be submitted to EdCom on 4 May 2012. **[Action: Mr David Ashton]**.

44 **INTERVIEWS: DEFINITION AND POLICY**

[EdCom Min. 27, 11-12]

Noted

44.1 Following the comments from EdCom and subsequently AC in December 2011, the Admissions Structures and Selection Processes Steering Group had revised the definition and policy for interviews. The Steering Group asked that the definition and policy be submitted to EdCom and AC for approval.

Received

44.2 At APPENDIX EDCOM 3/26 (11-12) – the definition and policy.

Discussion

44.3 A number of EdCom members, while acknowledging that the policy could not be changed in this respect, requested that UCL Human Resources be invited to clarify why two members of staff were considered the requisite minimum to interview a student. It was felt that any concerns about potential bias were already adequately addressed by the myriad departmental processes (and different staff members) through which admissions decisions were currently reached.

RESOLVED

44.4 That the Chair of EdCom request clarification on the above from the Director of UCL Human Resources. **[Action: Professor Mike Ewing]**

44.5 That the revised definition and policy for interviews be approved.

44.6 That the revised definition and policy be submitted to AC for approval.

45 **COMMON TIMETABLE REVIEW**

[EdCom Min. 30, 11-12]

Noted

45.1 Proposed changes in the operation of timetabling at departmental/divisional levels had been approved by AC on 15 December 2011 and circulated to Faculties. These are summarised below:

- 1 *Maintaining the current block structure but subdivide each block into 1 hour components.*
- 2(a) *Allowing lectures (especially lectures involving the larger lecture facilities) to be scheduled in both the morning and afternoon slots.*
- 2(b) *Allowing laboratory practicals to be scheduled in both morning and afternoon slots.*
- 3 *Make available the lunchtime slot (13:00-14:00) for the teaching of students.*

- 4 *Ensure that the delivery of the timetable takes precedence in departmental planning over the demands of individual academics while maintaining sensitivity to the work-life balance.*
- 5 *Ensure that all timetable slots are indicated on CMIS (irrespective of whether the rooms are centrally bookable or not) to ensure that the on-line timetable for students is complete.*

Received

- 45.2 An oral report from the **Dean of Students (Academic), Professor Mike Ewing.**

Reported

- 45.3 Professor Ewing noted that since Professor Emery, acting as Academic Champion, had managed to negotiate the above points of flexibility on behalf of Faculty Tutors (etc.), it would now be appropriate to invite Faculty Tutors to comment how these were being used in practice to solve timetabling issues.

Discussion

- 45.4 Discussion followed of which the main points were:
 - Many faculties had already been timetabling using the flexible points noted above for some time. Particularly in the scheduling of laboratories in the morning to free up lecture theatres in the afternoon. However, other faculties claimed that lecture theatre availability was so limited in their areas that this was not the solution it appeared to be. Nonetheless, the Faculty of Life Sciences had reportedly devised a number of creative bespoke solutions to the issues, such as extending the teaching day to 7pm.
 - Back-to-back timetabling meant that travel between rooms was causing problems, with students crowding staircases and doorways on their way in and out of lectures (etc.). A lecture might begin up to ten minutes late while attendees departed/arrived.
 - The Faculty Tutor of Life Sciences noted that the BSc Natural Sciences experienced particular problems which could not be solved by taking advantage of the points of flexibility. Multi-disciplinary programmes had necessarily to be timetabled first and the Chair invited the Faculty Tutor of MAPS to discern whether it was making optimal use of all available timetabling expertise in the Faculty.
 - The Vice-Chair noted that it was sometimes difficult to identify exactly who the timetablers in Faculties actually were.
 - It was noted that if any change was to be effected for the following academic session, it would have to be in place by the end of March 2012 at the latest.

RESOLVED

- 45.5 That the Vice-Chair and the Director of Information and Data Services would identify the timetablers in each Faculty, undertake further analysis of the

issues raised and report back to EdCom on 4 May 2012. [**Action Professor Vince Emery and Ms Kathleen Nicholls**]

- 45.6 That the Faculty Tutor of Life Sciences submit to the EdCom Chair the bespoke timetabling solutions which the Faculty had devised. [**Action Dr Hilary Richards**]

46 **GRIEVANCES**

Received

- 46.1 At APPENDIX EDCOM 3/27 (11-12) - a paper from the Director of Student Services.

- 46.2 An oral report from the **Director of Student Services, Mr David Ashton.**

Reported

- 46.3 Numbers of grievances submitted by students were on the rise. The number of students taking their cases to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator had also increased but on the whole, the OIA had upheld the decisions made by UCL. Issues were taking a great deal of time to resolve, with the OIA recording a huge backlog of cases. For this reason departments were urged to encourage students wherever possible to resolve grievances informally and at an earlier stage.

47 **SCHEDULE OF DUTIES OF DEPARTMENTAL TUTORS**

Noted

- 47.1 The Academic Manual document 'Duties of Departmental Tutors' is out of date and has been withdrawn from the Academic Manual for review. The review of this document by the Dean of Students (Academic) and the Director of Student Services has now commenced and EdCom will receive a report on progress.

Received

- 47.2 An oral report from the **Dean of Students (Academic), Professor Mike Ewing.**

Reported

- 47.3 The document was currently being updated by the Dean of Students (Academic) and the duties of Departmental Tutors harmonised and defined across faculties with appropriate reference to and translation from the most recent job description available for the duties of a Faculty Tutor. It was fully acknowledged however, that a degree of disparity across faculties would be inevitable but the document would seek fully to define each duty in order that a Head of Department might, as necessary, nominate someone other than the Departmental Tutor to fulfil it.

RESOLVED

- 47.4 That a draft of the Schedule of Duties of Departmental Tutors be submitted to EdCom for discussion on 4 May 2012. **[Action Professor Mike Ewing]**

48 **REGULATORY INFORMATION ON THE UCL WEBSITE**

Noted

- 48.1 At the meeting of PMASG on 25 January 2012, in the context of a discussion on the holding of regulatory information on various UCL sites, it was resolved that EdCom should invite Ms Susan Farrell, Head of Web and Mobile Services, to provide an overview of her vision for the structure of the UCL website and what steps were being proposed to ensure that the UCL search engine located the most up-to-date information.

Received

- 48.2 An oral report from the **Head of Web and Mobile Services, Ms Susan Farrell.**

Reported

- 48.3 Ms Farrell reported that there were already a number of ‘quick fixes’ which staff could use to ensure optimal use of the UCL search engine. These included the insertion of the word ‘regulations’ prior to the named search item which would ensure that academic regulations were always privileged in the list. In the longer term, once a full team of staff were in post, work on a Policy Zone, which would contain all UCL’s policies, strategies, regulations etc. might begin in earnest. In terms of resource, this might take no more than three weeks to create. However, populating the Zone would raise a number of important issues including those relating to the ongoing management and ownership of its content and ‘buy-in’ from the Directors of Corporate Support Services such as (eg.) HR, whose material was currently held on their own websites. The Zone would need to be fully comprehensive for it to be a meaningful and worthwhile exercise.

- 48.4 AC had previously agreed that the development of a Policy Zone would be taken forward by the Director of Academic Support and the Head of Web and Mobile Services and a substantive report would be made to AC’s meeting of 10 May 2012.

Discussion

- 48.5 EdCom requested that any Policy Zone be extensively user-tested before going live. The Committee also noted that, while the location of regulations was vital, other important issues should be fully considered, including how they were drafted, agreed, translated and disseminated.

49 **STUDENTS WITHDRAWING FROM YEAR ONE OF A DEGREE PROGRAMME IN 2011 AND TRANSFERRING INTO YEAR ONE OF ANOTHER DEGREE PROGRAMME IN 2012**

Received

49.1 At APPENDIX EDCOM 3/28 (11-12) - a paper which sets out the official position of the Student Loans Company and clarifies UCL's position regarding fees in such transfer cases.

49.2 An oral report from the **Chair of EdCom, Professor Mike Ewing**.

Reported

49.3 EdCom was invited to (i) note UCL's position regarding fees in transfer cases and (ii) discuss whether a new student record should continue to be created for interrupting students who transferred to another programme.

Discussion

49.4 EdCom noted that the issue of whether the student transcript should contain a record of a students' entire and complete academic trajectory, complete with the transfer of any academic credit, would need to be considered in conjunction with the additional Portico functionality which would be required in order to deliver this.

RESOLVED

49.5 That the issue be discussed offline between the Chair and the Director of Student Services. **[Action: Mrs David Ashton and Professor Mike Ewing]**

50 ACTION TAKEN BY THE VICE-CHAIR

50A Approval of new programmes of study

Noted

50A.1 The EdCom Vice-Chair, Professor Vince Emery, acting on behalf of EdCom and on the recommendation of PMASG, has approved the institution of the following programmes of study:

- MSc Web Science
- MRes Web Science
- MSc Molecular Modelling
- MSc Financial Mathematics
- MRes Biodiversity, Evolution and Conservation
- MA Chinese Health and Humanity
- MA Chinese Studies (Health and Humanity)
- MA The Archaeology of the Arab and Islamic World
- MA Conservation and Museum Studies
- MSc Cardiovascular Science
- MSc ICT Innovation
- MSc Molecular Measurements in Medicine

51 MINUTES FROM STEERING GROUPS ETC.

51A Programme and Module Approval Steering Group

Received

51A.1 At APPENDIX EDCOM 3/29 (11-12) – the Minutes of the meeting of PMASG held on 28 November 2011.

52 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

52A UCL-Q – change to programmes

Noted

52A.1 The Chair of PMASG reported that the two-year MA Conservation and Museum Studies had now been reconstituted as two programmes: a two year MA in Conservation and a one year MA in Museum Studies. A revised PIQ had been circulated to PMASG members and approved by PMASG Chair's Action.

53 DATES OF MEETINGS 2011-12

Noted

53.1 Further meetings of EdCom in 2012 would be as follows:

Friday 4 May 2012, 2pm to 4pm
Friday 29 June 2012, 2pm to 4pm

53.2 All meetings would be held in the South Wing Council Room.

SANDRA HINTON

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