



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

14 August 2014

MINUTES

Present:

Professor Mike Ewing (*Chair*)

Mr David Ashton
Professor Chris Carey
Dr Brenda Cross
Dr Julie Evans
Dr Caroline Essex
Mr Marco Federighi
Dr Arne Hofmann
Dr Christine Kinnon
Ms Kathleen Nicholls

Dr Helen Matthews
Dr John Mitchell
Dr Hilary Richards
Dr Fiona Strawbridge
Ms Olga Thomas
Professor Derek Tocher
Dr Paul Walker
Ms Susan Ware
Dr Andrew Wills

In attendance: Ms Sandra Hinton (Secretary); Mr Mark Hodgson [for Min. 85]; Ms Irenie Morley; Dr Hazel Smith.

Apologies for absence were received from: Professor David Bogle; Dr Dilly Fung; Mr Keir Gallagher; Ms Clare Goudy; Dr Joyce Harper; Ms Valerie Hogg; Mr Ben Towse.

85 AWARD OF MERIT [EdCom Min.70, 13-14]

Noted:

- 85.1 EdCom had previously resolved that the classification of 'Merit' be applied to all MRes, MA, MSc programmes, that 'Merit' be introduced for postgraduate Diploma programmes and 'Distinction' and 'Merit' for Postgraduate Certificate programmes. The criteria for Merit will be an overall average of 60 and a minimum mark of 60 in the dissertation with no condoned passes or fails and the criteria for a Distinction will be an overall average of 70 and a minimum mark of 70 in the dissertation, with no condoned passes or fails.
- 85.2 At its meeting of 19 June, EdCom had resolved that an extraordinary meeting of EdCom be held on 14 August to finalise arrangements for the introduction of the Merit.

Received:

- 85.3 At EDCOM 6/56 (13-14) – a paper outlining options and consequences in respect of the timing of the introduction of the new Merit boundary.

Discussion:

- 85.3 During a wide ranging discussion, the following key points were made:
- To implement any of the options outlined in the paper entailed challenges which would result in discontent for one student cohort or another but EdCom should aim for the maximum fairness and efficiency and the minimum dissatisfaction.
 - Administrative convenience should not take precedence over the academic case for choosing one option over another.
 - Opting for the new system to take effect immediately, applying to students already on courses would avoid the lingering co-existence of different classification systems but might give rise to an increase in complaints to OfIA as two schemes of award would be applying to students in the same cohort with the same mark profiles. However, this would not be an obstacle, as it could clearly be demonstrated to OfIA that UCL had given the decision considerable thought and was doing what was best for students overall.
- 85.3 Having discussed the two options outlined in the paper and having taken a vote, the majority of EdCom members voted for a third option: that the new rules on the Merit should apply to all those who graduated from the date of the last day of Term 3 in 2015. This would ensure that even PG Certs and PG Dips who graduated in July and August of 2015 would be included. The LLM was allowed exemption for five years or until the implementation of the GPA, whichever was the sooner.
- 85.4 In respect of communicating EdCom's decision, and the reasons for the decision, it was agreed that:
- there should be a clear and centrally agreed upon form of words;
 - that there should be no UCL-wide announcement but rather, that specific information should be targeted at those groups of students who might be anticipated to be unhappy with the decision. The UCLU should be consulted regarding the communication strategy;
 - External Examiners and ELOs should be informed;
 - the Academic Regulations should be amended with immediate effect.

RESOLVED:

- 85.5 That the new rules on the Awards of Merit and Distinction should apply to all those students (with the exception of the LLM) who graduate from the date of the last day of Term 3 in 2015.
- 85.6 That the decision be communicated and the Academic Regulations updated as per 85.4 above. **[Action: Mr David Ashton and Ms Irenie Morley]**

86 Support to Study Policy and Fitness to Study Procedure [EdCom Min.65A, 13-14]

Noted:

- 86.1 EdCom resolved to discuss and agree the Policy at its extraordinary meeting of 14 August 2014.

Received:

- 86.2 At EDCOM 6/57 (13-14) – a paper, introduced by the Director of Student Administration.

RESOLVED:

- 86.3 That the Support to Study Policy and Fitness to Study Procedure be approved, published in the Academic Manual and published in Student Handbooks with immediate effect. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton and Mr David Ashton]**

SANDRA HINTON

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