



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

19 June 2014

MINUTES

Present:

Professor Mike Ewing (*Chair*)

Mr David Ashton
Ms Karen Barnard
Professor Chris Carey
Mr Jason Clarke
Dr Caroline Essex
Dr Julie Evans
Dr Dilly Fung
Ms Judith Hillmore
Dr Arne Hofmann
Dr Christine Hoffmann
Dr Christine Kinnon

Dr Helen Matthews
Dr John Mitchell
Ms Christine Muller
Ms Kathleen Nicholls
Dr Hilary Richards
Ms Olga Thomas
Mr Ben Towse
Dr Paul Walker
Ms Susan Ware

In attendance: Ms Wendy Appleby; Ms Clare Goudy; Ms Sandra Hinton (Secretary); Mr Mark Hodgson [for Min.70]; Ms Shanell Johnson [for Min.77]; Dr Teresa McConlogue [for Min.77]; Professor Alastair McClelland [for Min.77]; Ms Irenie Morley; Dr Hazel Smith.

Apologies for absence were received from: Professor David Bogle; Dr Brenda Cross; Mr Marco Federighi; Mr Keir Gallagher; Dr Joyce Harper; Ms Valerie Hogg; Dr Fiona Strawbridge; Professor Derek Tocher; Dr Andrew Wills.

Key to abbreviations:

AC	Academic Committee
ARWG	Assessment Review Working Group
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CALT	Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
EDCOM	Education Committee
FHEQ	framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland
FQHEIS	framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland
FTC	Faculty Teaching Committee
GPA	Grade Point Average
MAPS	Mathematical and Physical Sciences (Faculty)
PMASG	Programme and Module Approval Steering Group
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
UCLBE	UCL Board of Examiners
UCLU	UCL Union

64 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 1 MAY 2014

Received:

- 64.1 The unconfirmed Minutes of the meeting of EdCom held on 1 May 2014 [*EdCom Mins. 51-63, 1.5.14*], circulated previously.

Confirmed:

- 64.2 The minutes were confirmed subject to the following amendments:
- That Minute 54.3 (Bullet 2) first sentence be removed and that the Minute should read: *'Far from arguing the case for the retention of referrals, the MAPS proposal inadvertently made a strong argument for the institution of in-session re-sits, although it was agreed that this could not be managed within existing resources'*
 - That Minute 55.5 should read *'EdCom approved the UCLBE's recommendations, although it resolved that the Faculty of Laws should maintain its derogation. This derogation would only be valid for five years however, or until the implementation of a GPA.'*

65 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES [*see also Minutes 66, 69, 70, 73, 74 & 75 below*]

65A Support to Study Policy and Fitness to Study Procedure [*EdCom Min.56, 13-14*]

Received:

- 65A.1 An oral report from the Director of Student Administration, Mr David Ashton.

Reported:

- 65A.2 EdCom had previously agreed that UCLU Officers should consider offline an appropriate form of words to convey that a student's non-attendance at any Panel Hearing should not disadvantage the student or affect the decision of the Panel regarding the student's fitness to study. However, the Director of Student Administration confirmed that in the interim, it was felt that a neutral statement confirming that the Panel Hearing 'could continue in the absence of the student', such as that contained in the UCL Student Complaints Procedure which had recently been approved by UCL Council, might be more appropriate. Any directions to the effect that this should not disadvantage the student might then be given in accompanying Guidance.
- 65A.3 The UCLU Postgraduate Students' Officer confirmed that while he had no objection to the wording, he sought additional, written reassurance that a students' absence from the Panel Hearing would not be misconstrued.

Discussion:

- 65A.4 The following points were noted:
- The policy was very much in favour of students and that to hold up its approval any longer would be detrimental.
 - That UCL had hitherto been too detailed in its approach to drafting policies and that all an effective policy required was a clear framework, sound

principles and due process. Ensuring that the policy was implemented appropriately could be achieved by issuing appropriate guidance. Guidance was also available from the UCLU.

RESOLVED:

65A.5 No agreement could be reached on the issue and EdCom resolved to hold further discussion over to its next meeting on 14 August 2015. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton: to note]**

65B Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and Short Courses [EdCom Min.53, 13-14]

Received:

65B.1 An oral report from the Chair, Professor Mike Ewing.

Reported:

65B.2 The Chair confirmed that further iterations of the proposals would return to EdCom as the various issues were discussed and resolved.

66 STUDY ABROAD RESITS [EdCom Min.52B, 13-14]

Received:

66.1 At EDCOM 5/41 (13-14), a paper introduced by the Director of Student Administration, Mr David Ashton.

RESOLVED:

66.2 That the proposals be approved and that the regulations should be amended to allow students on Study Abroad from 2014-15 onwards to take resits during the late assessment period when they returned from Study Abroad (15 months after the original assessment). **[Action: Ms Irenie Morley]**

67 RESIT FEES

Noted:

67.1 At its meeting of 26 February, the UCLBE had recommended that the practice of charging resit fees for students who were not in attendance should be discontinued from 2014-15.

Received:

67.2 At EDCOM 5/42 (13-14), the minute of the UCLBE, introduced by the UCLBE Chair Professor Chris Carey.

Reported:

- 67.3 UCLBE had agreed that the financial benefits which provided some funding towards the setting of a resit assessment were outweighed by the administrative complexity and cost of the process. It was also noted that the best fail mark undermined the resit fee principle and it was difficult to justify an additional charge for students in the light of the increase in tuition fees. UCLBE had therefore resolved to recommend to EdCom that the practice of charging resit fees for students who were not in attendance should be discontinued.

RESOLVED:

- 67.4 That the practice of charging resit fees for students who were not in attendance be discontinued from 2014-15, subject to the continuation of the policy of requesting students to confirm in writing their re-entry intentions. **[Action: Mr David Ashton & Ms Irenie Morley]**

68 AFFILIATE STUDENTS

Received:

- 68.1 At EDCOM 5/43 (13-14), a paper introduced by the Director of Student Administration, Mr David Ashton.

Reported:

- 68.2 It was reported that management of the Affiliates programme was complex and challenging and that a review was required in order to ensure that the programme continued to be academically robust and to ensure the continuance of goodwill between UCL and its partner institutions. It was suggested that a small group be set up, with faculty representation, to scope the issues and draft some recommendations to EdCom.

RESOLVED:

- 68.3 That a working group on Affiliates be set up as suggested above. **[Action: Mr David Ashton]**

69 REFERRALS [EdCom Min.54, 13-14]

69A Assessment Loads in MAPS Faculty

Noted:

- 69A.1 At the meeting of EdCom on 1 May 2014, MAPS was permitted to retain the referral system for a further year, pending a review of assessment and assessment load within the Faculty. The Faculty Tutor in consultation with the Director of CALT was asked to formulate an action plan for conducting this review and to report back to the meeting of EdCom on 19 June.

Received:

69A.2 At EDCOM 5/56 (13-14), a paper (received after the meeting) and an oral report from the MAPS Faculty Tutor, Dr Caroline Essex.

Reported:

- 69A.3 The Faculty Tutor was in the process of establishing a Scoping Group in order to identify the full membership of the MAPS Assessment Review Working Group (ARWG).
- The Scoping Group would consider the involvement of an external facilitator for the review.
 - Both the Scoping Group and the ARWG itself would involve CALT representation.
 - The principal aim of the ARWG was to identify whether there were ways in which the assessment for the MAPS disciplines which currently used the referral system might be altered to ensure that students who were worthy of passing did so in May without the need for a reassessment in August.
 - Any recommended changes to assessment practices or patterns arising from this review would be acted on in time for the 2015-16 session where possible.
 - The Faculty Undergraduate Board of Examiners would consider the ARWG's findings at its May 2015 meeting, prior to reporting to EdCom's June 2015 meeting.

RESOLVED:

69A.4 That the MAPS Faculty Tutor submit the ARWG's report to EdCom's June 2015 meeting. **[Action: Dr Caroline Essex, Ms Sandra Hinton to note]**

69B Condonation

Noted:

69B.1 EdCom had resolved that the Chair should bring a preliminary paper to the 19 June meeting, rehearsing/outlining the main issues in respect of condonation.

69B.2 At EDCOM 5/44 (13-14), a paper introduced by the Chair, Professor Mike Ewing.

Reported:

69B.3 EdCom was invited to comment on whether or not the proposals were suitable for further exploration.

Discussion:

69B.4 The following points were noted:

- The proposals were a complicated solution to a rare occurrence. For a number of qualitative subjects, there was nothing 'condonable' about marks of around 40. To condone might suggest a lowering of academic standards.
- Nothing could be achieved without full Portico support which would require phasing in.

- The implementation of a GPA would provide a better opportunity to address the issues raised.
- The fourth year of the integrated Masters in Engineering might, however, benefit from the introduction of the proposals.

RESOLVED:

69B.5 That further consideration be given to the introduction of condonation for the fourth year of the integrated Masters in Engineering. **[Action: Professor Mike Ewing, Dr John Mitchell to note]**

70 AWARD OF MERIT [EdCom Min.55, 13-14]

Noted:

70.1 EdCom resolved to approve the UCLBE's recommendations in respect of the Merit and Distinction but had decreed that there be a 'cooling off period' until its next meeting on 19 June during which relevant colleagues would consider the implications of EdCom's decision for institutional resources such as Portico.

Received:

70.2 At EDCOM 5/45 (13-14), a paper introduced by the Director of Student Information and Data Services, Ms Kathleen Nicholls.

Reported:

70.3 The paper outlined the three options available to implement the changes in Portico required to support the Merit classification for all postgraduate taught programmes. EdCom was invited to recommend the preferred option or determine any further information required.

Discussion:

70.4 There was a wide-ranging discussion concerning the timing of the introduction of the new Merit boundary in the light of the information provided. It was agreed that the issues were complex and making the right decision was of sufficient importance to warrant an additional meeting of EdCom to take place in the third week of August to finally resolve matters.

RESOLVED:

70.5 That a meeting of EdCom be held on 14 August to finalise arrangements for the introduction of the Merit. **[Action: Sandra Hinton]**

70.6 That a paper clearly outlining options and consequences in respect of the timing of the introduction of the new Merit boundary be submitted to members by the Chair. **[Action: Professor Mike Ewing]**

71 INTERRUPTIONS

Received:

- 71.1 At EDCOM 5/46 (13-14), a paper introduced by the Director of Student Administration, Mr David Ashton.

Reported:

- 71.2 EdCom was invited to consider, alongside a number of technical and administrative issues, whether arrangements currently in place were sufficient, whether a student should have access to teaching and learning materials whilst on interruption, whether responsibility for communicating with welfare and academic advisers should rest with the student and how far overall UCL should be considered responsible for students whilst on interruption.

Discussion:

- 71.3 The paper was welcomed as useful. EdCom approved the continued provision of support from Student Psychological Services for students interrupting for health reasons and endorsed the proposed update of the Interruption Form.
- 71.4 The Postgraduate Students' Officer advocated a phased return to study for students interrupting for health reasons.
- 71.5 The Director of Student Administration noted that continuity of care would not be available for Tier 4 Students.

RESOLVED:

- 71.6 That there be a follow up meeting between the Director of Student Administration and the Sabbatical Officers and a revised paper be submitted to EdCom's Autumn Term meeting. **[Action: Mr David Ashton]**

72 STUDY LEAVE

Received:

- 72.1 At EDCOM 5/47 (13-14), a paper introduced by the Director of Student Administration, Mr David Ashton.

RESOLVED:

- 72.2 That owing to the fullness of the agenda, discussion of this item be deferred to EdCom's first Autumn Term meeting. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton to note]**

73 EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES [EdCom Min.57, 13-14]

Noted:

- 73.1 On 1 May, EdCom resolved that a working group of EdCom be set up to look at the issues and implications in detail and re-submit proposals to EdCom. The group¹ met on 11 June 2014.

RESOLVED:

- 73.2 That owing to the fullness of the agenda, discussion of this item be deferred to EdCom's first Autumn Term meeting. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton to note]**

74 DRAFT MARKING POLICY [EdCom Min.58, 13-14]

Noted:

- 74.1 On 1 May, EdCom resolved that the policy should be re-submitted to EdCom on 19 June with agreed minor amendments.

RESOLVED:

- 74.2 That owing to the fullness of the agenda, discussion of this item be deferred to EdCom's first Autumn Term meeting. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton to note]**

75 CODE OF PRACTICE FOR GRADUATE TAUGHT DEGREES 2013-14 [EdCom Min.59, 13-14]

Received:

- 75.1 An oral report from the Director of Student Administration, Mr David Ashton.

Reported:

- 75.2 EdCom was invited to note that the Code of Practice would be re-titled 'Essential Information' (this being more consonant with the document's contents) and that it was in the process of being updated. A further iteration would be submitted to EdCom in due course. **[Action Mr David Ashton]**

76 ASSESSMENT STRATEGY WORKING GROUP

Received:

- 76.1 At EDCOM 5/49 (13-14) a further report on progress, introduced by the Director of Education Planning, Ms Clare Goudy.

¹ comprising Professor Mike Ewing (Chair), Professor Chris Carey (Chair of the UCLBE), Ms Olga Thomas (Faculty Tutor, Faculty of Laws), Mr David Ashton, (Director of Student Administration), Dr Arne Hofmann, Faculty Tutor, Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences/Arts and Humanities).

Reported:

- 76.2 EdCom was invited to note that a final iteration of the Strategy and Implementation Plan would be submitted to EdCom's October 2014 meeting. In the meantime, comments were invited by email to the Director of Education Planning. **[Action Ms Clare Goudy]**

77 STUDENT EXPERIENCE FORUM – REPORT ON BME ATTAINMENT

Received:

- 77.1 At EDCOM 5/50 (13-14) - the report, introduced by Dr Teresa McConlogue, Senior Teaching Fellow, CALT, Ms Shanell Johnson, Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer, UCLU with Professor Alastair McClelland, Division of Psychology and Language Sciences.

Reported:

- 77.2 The paper concerned Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) Student Attainment at UCL and had been commissioned following a conversation between the UCLU Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Officer, Ms Shanell Johnson and the Vice-Provost (Education) Professor Anthony Smith. BME student attainment across the HE sector in the UK had been found to be lower than that of their non-BME peers and a team had carried out an analysis of student attainment statistics at UCL, a literature review and some informal focus groups/interviews. The paper presented data and early findings from the research and contained a number of recommendations for EdCom's consideration. Many of the proposed actions fitted with planned work at UCL; for example, work on the Connected Curriculum aimed at embedding research-based education, led by the Vice-Provost (Education), would include a review of curricular diversity.

Discussion:

- 77.3 EdCom welcomed the report and approved its recommendations. However, the recommendation to review IQR criteria to ensure that questions related to examining diversity in curricula and to BME student recruitment, attainment and retention while a good one in principle, would need to be supported by good quality data. EdCom noted that UCL was under-resourced in terms of the staff needed to produce data to support key quality assurance processes and this would need to be reviewed carefully.
- 77.4 The amount of time and staff resource devoted to the IQR process itself would also need to be examined if the changes proposed were to be meaningful and not merely 'box ticking'. The original duration of the IQR visit had been reduced to one day in response to pressure from Deans, concerned about burden on Departments. Teams were currently stretched to the limit to examine all the necessary issues within the day and additional issues for scrutiny and discussion should not be introduced without some further consideration of the implications.

RESOLVED:

- 77.5 That the report be approved. EdCom would continue to receive progress reports on the various areas for implementation outlined in the recommendations. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton to note]**

78 PROCEDURE FOR THE APPROVAL OF A NEW DEGREE QUALIFICATION

Received:

78.1 At EDCOM 5/51 (13-14), the procedure, introduced by the Regulations and Academic Programmes Manager and Secretary to PMASG, Ms Irenie Morley

RESOLVED:

78.2 That the procedure be recommended to AC's 3 July meeting for final approval.
[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton]

79 CL-05/14:CONSULTATION ON THE UK QUALITY CODE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION, PART A: SETTING AND MAINTAINING ACADEMIC STANDARDS, THE UK FRAMEWORKS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS (FHEQ)

Noted:

79.1 The QAA was now consulting on an updated and revised version of the UK frameworks for higher education qualifications, which were formal components of Part A of the Quality Code. The document brought together the two frameworks (the framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and The framework for qualifications of higher education institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS)) into a single publication.

Received:

79.2 The consultation document at EDCOM 5/52 (13-14). Relevant colleagues had also been separately consulted.

RESOLVED:

79.3 That UCL's response, incorporating any comments, be made to the QAA by its deadline of 27 June 2014. **[Action: Ms Sandra Hinton]**

80 APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Noted:

80.1 The PMASG Chair, acting on behalf of EdCom and on the recommendation of PMASG, had approved the following programmes of study since the meeting of EdCom on 1 May 2014:

- MA Ethnographic and Documentary Film
- MSci Human Evolutionary Sciences

81 MINUTES FROM STEERING GROUPS ETC.

81A Programme and Module Approval Steering Group

Received:

81A.1 At EDCOM 5/53 (13-14) the Minutes of the meeting of PMASG on 14 May 2014.

81B UCL Board of Examiners

Received:

81B.1 At EDCOM 5/54 (13-14) the Minutes of the meeting of the UCLBE on 26 February 2014.

82 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

Noted:

82.1 The following members would be standing down from EdCom at the end of the current Session and were thanked by the Chair:

- Professor Chris Carey, Chair of PMASG and the UCLBE;
- Mr Jason Clarke, Director of Academic Services;
- Dr Hilary Richards, Faculty Tutor, Faculty of Life Sciences;
- Mr Keir Gallagher, Educations & Campaigns Officer, UCL Union;
- Mr Ben Towse, Postgraduate Students' Officer, UCL Union.

83 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Noted:

83.1 EdCom will meet on 14 August 2014 to discuss the Merit. Dates for EdCom in the forthcoming (2014-15) session will be:

- Tuesday 7 October 2014 9-11am
- Tuesday 2 December 2014 3-5pm
- Tuesday 3 March 2015 2-4pm
- Monday 27 April 2015 10-12am
- Tuesday 16 June 2015 9-11am

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4 August 2014