



EDUCATION COMMITTEE

27 April 2015

MINUTES

Present:

Professor Anthony Smith (Chair)

Ms Wendy Appleby	Professor Tim McHugh
Mr David Ashton	Dr John Mitchell
Dr Simon Banks	Mr Derfel Owen
Ms Mariana Ceccotti	Professor Norbert Pachler
Dr Brenda Cross	Professor Don Pennington
Dr Caroline Essex	Mr Mike Rowson
Ms Leah Francis	Dr Hazel Smith
Dr Dilly Fung	Dr Fiona Strawbridge
Ms June Hedges	Ms Olga Thomas
Ms Judith Hillmore	Professor Derek Tocher
Mr Lukmaan Kolia	Ms Susan Ware
Dr Helen Matthews	

In attendance: Ms Cat Edera; Ms Fiona McClement; Ms Lizzie Vinton (Secretary).

Apologies received from: Dr Julie Evans, Dr Arne Hofmann and Ms Valerie Hogg.

Key to abbreviations:

AC	Academic Committee
APL	Accredited Prior Learning
CALT	Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
EdCom	Education Committee
EE	External Examiner
FTC	Faculty Teaching Committee
HER	Higher Education Review
MAPS	Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences
PGT	Postgraduate Taught
PMASG	Programme and Module Approval Steering Group
PT	Part time
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
QCF	Qualifications and Credit Framework
RDC	Research Degrees Committee
TOR	Terms of Reference
UCLBE	UCL Board of Examiners
UCLU	UCL Union

Preliminary Business

48 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 3 MARCH 2015**Approved:**

- 48.1 The unconfirmed minutes of the meeting of EdCom held on 3 March 2015 [31-47, 03.03.15].

49 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES [see also items 50, 51, 52 & 55]**49A External Examining Report Template**

[EdCom Min.34.3.4, 14-15]

Received:

- 49A.1 An oral update on progress from the Director of Academic Services.

Noted:

- 49A.1.1 Academic Services were working to operationalise the External Examiner Report Form approved at the last meeting. It was anticipated that the template would be ready for testing in Portico at the end of May 2015, and that EEs would be contacted once the form was working effectively. EdCom noted that EEs would be required to use the new form for the 2014-15 academic session but that this in no way impacted on the operation of forthcoming Boards of Examiners.

49B QAA Higher Education Review

[EdCom Min.39.1.2, 14-15]

Received:

- 49B.1 An oral report from the Chair of the HER Strategy Group.

Noted:

- 49B.1.1 EdCom noted that the review was scheduled for May 2016, whilst the Self Evaluation Document, evidence and Student Written Submission would be submitted to QAA in February of the same year. The HER Strategy Group were reviewing all aspects of UCL's provision to ensure that the institution met the requirements of the Quality Code and had established a larger operational group to take this work forward with the support of Academic Services.

Business for Discussion

50 QUALIFICATIONS AND CREDIT FRAMEWORK DISCUSSION PAPER

[EdCom Min. 34.4.4, 14-15]

Received:

- 50.1 At EDCOM 4-01 (14-15), a discussion paper on the key proposals for the new Qualifications and Credit Framework, introduced by the Director of Academic Services.

Noted:

- 50.1.1 The paper highlighted the following major proposals for EdCom's consideration:
- i. To align UCL UG and PGT credits, ECTS credits and learning hours with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications, where an academic year consists of 1200 learning hours, 120 credits and 60 ECTS
 - ii. To align the threshold requirements for Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas with the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications
 - iii. To credit-rate all taught programmes
 - iv. To define the minimum and maximum credit requirements of each qualification
 - v. To reduce current restrictions on the types of accredited prior learning that might be considered for advanced entry onto a programme
- 50.1.2 The consultation process had included discussion with all the faculty tutors and with the departmental leads for those programmes currently outside the main UCL regulations, with a view to ensuring that the proposals met the needs of all disciplines. The paper emphasised that the proposals were not an instruction to modularise programmes, but rather to establish UCL's threshold academic standards, provide an enabling framework for the development of programmes and facilitate student mobility within the UK and across international borders.
- 50.1.3 Following discussions with each of the faculties, the paper proposed a threshold of 90 level 7 credits for integrated masters programmes. However, EdCom noted that there was a national move to better align the requirements of an integrated masters with those of a stand-alone masters and ensure that programmes include no fewer than 120 level 7 credits. EdCom agreed that UCL should align with this expectation, but also recognised that some UCL programmes did not currently meet this threshold. There would need to be a transitional year whereby affected programmes were reviewed, with the support of Academic Services, to bring them into line with the QCF. Similarly, any programmes which did not meet the minimum and maximum credit and level requirements for any qualification would have a year to make the transition.
- 50.1.4 The proposals included a threshold standard for stand-alone masters awards of 180 credits, removing the separate definition of a '2-year masters'. At present, such programmes varied widely in structure and were technically excluded from the main UCL regulations. It was noted that a programme could still include more than 180 credits, for example where additional study was required for professional accreditation, but there should be greater scrutiny of why a higher credit-rating was needed.
- 50.1.5 Concerns were raised about the use of smaller modules (e.g. 7.5 credits or 0.25 course units) and the committee felt that the regulations should encourage more integrated learning. EdCom requested that the QCF include a minimum module size of 15 credits (0.5 course units) with smaller modules only available as part of a life-learning programme.
- 50.1.6 Concerns were raised about the feasibility of ensuring that APL applicants had passed a module at the first attempt. It was agreed that students must have achieved the pass mark (i.e. no condoned passes should be allowed) but that further discussion was needed on whether a module passed at the second attempt should be considered as such students would have demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes.

Action: Ms Lizzie Vinton

Approved:

- 50.1.7 EdCom welcomed and endorsed each of the proposals in 49.1.1, subject to the amendments discussed above, and noted that these would be incorporated into the final QCF and submitted for approval at the next meeting.

51 TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR UCL COMMITTEES WITH OVERSIGHT OF TAUGHT PROGRAMMES

[EdCom Min. 35.1.2, 14-15]

Received:

- 51.1 At EDCOM 4-02 (14-15), the proposed Terms of Reference for EdCom, the Quality Review Sub-committee and the Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Sub-committee, introduced by the Director of Academic Services.

Noted:

- 51.1.1 Following receipt of initial proposals to restructure EdCom and its sub-committees at the last meeting, the Director of Academic Services presented more detailed terms of reference of each committee. The membership of each sub-committee would be quite small to avoid replication of EdCom membership and expressions of interest would be invited for each group in due course. Each sub-committee would meet 4 to 5 times per year, although the Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Sub-committee would meet more regularly during 2015-16 to oversee the academic regulations review.

Discussed:

- 51.1.2 EdCom queried where pastoral care and tutoring should reside and requested that this be expressed more explicitly. It was also noted that institutional reporting on enhancement could be more formalised, perhaps with a requirement to report to EdCom regularly. The committee also noted the TOR's assumption that annual monitoring would be replaced with Annual Student Experience Reviews and that this would need to be confirmed once those proposals were agreed. It was confirmed that the Joint Staff/Student Consultative Committees would continue to report to AC, but that the terms of reference might need to be reviewed in light of the remit of the Quality Review Sub-committee. It was noted that programme withdrawals would fall under the Programme Approval Sub Panels.

Action: Mr Derfel Owen

Approved:

- 51.1.3 EdCom approved the TOR for EdCom, the Quality Review Sub-committee and the Academic Regulations and Quality Assurance Sub-committee for implementation in 2015-16, subject to the amendments described above. The TOR would be submitted to the next meeting of AC for final approval. EdCom agreed that the TOR should be reviewed after one year to ensure they were fit for purpose.

Action: Mr Derfel Owen

52 ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS*[EdCom Min.34.6, 14-15]***Received:**

- 52.1 At EDCOM 4-03 (14-15), proposals for the governance of academic partnerships, introduced by the Academic Standards and Quality Manager.

Noted:

- 52.1.1 Following approval of the Academic Partnerships Policy at the last meetings of EdCom and RDC, the Academic Standards and Quality Manager presented proposals for a governance and regulatory framework for Academic Partnerships with other organisations which involve or contribute to the award of UCL credit and/or qualifications. The proposals sought to establish the locus of approval and operational responsibility at UCL, faculty and department level for all domestic and international partnerships and had been drawn up with reference to the structure for international partnerships included in the Global Engagement Strategy being developed by the Vice-Provost (International).

Discussion:

- 52.1.2 EdCom welcomed the opportunity to improve UCL's processes for managing academic partnerships more effectively. The committee agreed that it was important to establish a clear difference between Memoranda of Understanding and Memoranda of Agreement, and to ensure that there were clear regulations on where the authority for the establishment of an academic partnership lay.

Agreed:

- 52.1.3 EdCom endorsed the proposals and noted that the final governance and regulatory framework would be submitted for approval at the next meeting, together with proposals for more detailed procedures and guidance for staff around developing, entering, managing and terminating partnerships.

53 STUDENTS TRANSITIONING GENDER**Received:**

- 53.1 At EDCOM 4-04 (14-15), draft proposals for new UCL guidance around students transitioning gender, introduced by the Director of Student Administration and the Equalities and Diversity Advisor.

Noted:

- 53.1.1 The paper presented best practice, advice and guidance for students transitioning gender and for staff supporting students through the process. It included practical guidance and procedures, for example to ensure that the student's name and gender were changed throughout UCL records, as well as advice for other students about how they could support their colleagues. The guidance recognised that each individual would want to decide whether staff, students, friends and relatives were made aware of their transition, and advocated the development of an individual action plan to support each student.

Discussed:

- 53.1.2 EdCom warmly welcomed and endorsed the document and thanked the Equality and Diversity team for putting together guidance which would help to raise awareness and support all students and staff in approaching a complex issue. The committee was very keen to ensure that the guidance was made available as widely as possible, and that it was actively promoted by staff and the UCLU team.

Agreed:

- 53.1.3 EdCom requested that the guidance be included in the weekly UCL circular, incorporated into the Support to Study Policy, embedded in the UCL online Equality and Diversity training modules, incorporated into the Arena seminar programme/ discussion fora etc. and added to the Personal Tutors' Handbook.

**Action: Ms Fiona McClement, Mr David Ashton, Dr Dilly Fung,
Ms Judith Hillmore**

54 UCL AUSTRALIA**Received:**

- 54.1 At EDCOM 4-05 (14-15), a paper on the teaching arrangements for the run-out of UCL Australia, introduced by the Faculty Tutor for Engineering Sciences.

Noted:

- 54.1.1 EdCom noted that, from 2017, UCL would cease its stand-alone presence in Australia, moving to partnership operation. The paper set out the faculty's proposals for teaching-out current UCL students.
- 54.1.2 A key concern was that staff might, understandably, leave UCL Australia earlier than 2017 as and when they found alternative employment opportunities. The risk was thought to be lower for the February/ March 2016 teaching period, but would increase for the June/ July 2016 period. Discussions had not yet commenced with the individual faculties but it was thought possible that some UCL staff might be needed to teach in Australia.
- 54.1.3 A further key concern was the run-out of part time programmes scheduled to finish after 2017. Full time masters programmes would finish before the deadline, with one semester to spare for deferrals and resits. However there were some PT students who would not complete before UCL's exit and this could be exacerbated further by any students needing to defer, resit or interrupt. Individual plans would be put in place for each affected student. Students would be offered the option of a UCL exit award, and would also be supported in transferring credits accrued to other HEIs.
- 54.1.4 Research Degrees Committee would oversee the run-out of the UCL Australia provision for research students. However, EdCom noted that there were four part time PhD students scheduled to complete after 2017. These were considered less problematic as it was not uncommon for a student to move HEIs with their supervisor, or to be enrolled at one institution whilst their supervisor was registered at another. Nonetheless, these students would also receive individual counselling on their options.

Discussed:

- 54.1.5 EdCom noted the importance of supporting UCL Australia staff effectively in the run out, ensuring that there was a proactive and supportive relationship with CALT. The UCL Arena scheme could be utilised to provide careers advice for staff, and could provide training for post docs in teaching and the supervision of projects. The Director of CALT would be visiting the campus soon and would work with the local team to put a programme of support in place.
- 54.1.6 EdCom noted that the PT masters students might refuse to exit their programmes early, in which case UCL would be required to complete delivery of the programme of study. There might also be further complications if a student had extenuating circumstances or needed to interrupt, although provision might also be made for in-session resits to enable students to finish in time. It was noted that the majority of students needed to study locally and would be unable to study in the UK as an alternative.

Resolved:

- 54.1.7 EdCom formally noted the plans and requested that the faculty submit regular progress updates to the committee so that UCL could be assured of the academic standards of the run-out provision. This should include more detailed information about how academic standards would be managed, for example what arrangements would be put in place for Boards of Examiners, reassessments, moderation, approval of results etc.

Action: Dr Simon Banks

- 54.1.8 A similar report would need to be submitted to the Research Degrees Committee who would oversee the run-out of the UCL Australia provision for research students.

Action: Dr Simon Banks

55 REFERRALS

[EdCom Min.37, 54 & 69, 13-14]

Received:

- 55.1 At EDCOM 4-06 (14-15), proposals to revise the academic regulations around referrals, introduced by the Director of Academic Services.

Noted:

- 55.1.1 Following discussions at EdCom during 2013-14 the following paragraph was added to section 3 of the UG regulations:

“3.2.4 ii) Referrals are not available to students beginning their programmes from September 2014 except for students beginning programmes in the Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences. This derogation for the Faculty of Mathematical and Physical Sciences is under review”.

- 55.1.2 However, a number of faculties had queried whether the regulation accurately reflected the discussion and decision of EdCom as minuted, and raised concerns that, as a result, the new regulation had not been implemented across all faculties. As institutional discussions were ongoing with regard to Autumn Resits and Extenuating Circumstances, and a full review of the taught assessment regulations was planned for 2015-16, it was suggested that regulation 3.2.4ii) be rescinded pending the outcome of

these discussions, and that faculties be allowed to offer students referrals where appropriate, until the regulations were reviewed.

Discussed:

- 55.1.3 EdCom noted that faculties would not be required to reinstate referrals – the decision would depend on what students had been told and what had been published in student handbooks etc. Where students had already been told that referrals were unavailable, this should remain. However, if students had been told that referrals were in place, this would need to be honoured. The committee agreed that the existing regulations 3.2.4 v) and 3.2.4 vi) would require amendment to reflect that referrals would be optional:

*3.2.4 v) Students who obtain a mark in the referral range for the course unit as a whole **may will** be offered referred assessment of the assessment components that have been failed by the relevant teaching department/division. Students who are successful in all such referred assessments will be given the pass mark of 40 for the course unit overall irrespective of the marks actually obtained in the referral.*

*3.2.4 vi) Students who fail a course unit despite achieving an overall mark of 40 or above because they did not achieve the qualifying mark required for one or more assessment components **may will** be offered referred assessment in those components by the relevant teaching department/division. Students who are successful in such referred assessments will be given the pass mark of 40 for that part of the assessment, irrespective of the actual mark gained, and the final mark for the course unit will be re-calculated accordingly.*

Approved:

- 55.1.4 EdCom approved the amendments to UG regulations 3.2.4ii), v) and vi) for 2014-15 and 2015-16 and highlighted that changes to the regulations must be submitted to EdCom as full proposals and minuted accurately.
- 55.1.5 As referrals would be optional, EdCom asked all faculties to take the decision to FTCs and report back to the next EdCom on whether the faculty would be offering referrals to students in 2014-15 and/ or 2015-16.

Action: Faculty Tutors

<i>Other Business for Information or Approval</i>
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56 APPROVAL OF NEW PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Noted:

- 56.1 The PMASG of the 16 April 2015 was rescheduled to 24 April 2015. The list of recommendations would be received at the next meeting of EdCom.

57 MINUTES ETC. FROM STEERING GROUPS OF EDCOM

57A UCL Board of Examiners

Noted:

57A.1 At EDCOM 4-07 (14-15), the minutes of the UCLBE meeting held on 2 March 2015.

58 SUSPENSIONS OF REGULATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE AND POSTGRADUATE TAUGHT STUDENTS

Noted:

58.1 At EDCOM 4-08 (14-15), the anonymised report for UG and PGT Students, introduced by the Director of Student Administration.

59 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

59.1 No further business was raised.

60 CHAIR'S BUSINESS

60.1 No Chair's business was raised.

61 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

Noted:

61.1 Future meetings of EdCom as follows:

- Wednesday 27 May 2015 3.30pm – 5.30pm Darwin B40

LIZZIE VINTON

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7 May 2015