



Financial Performance and Planning Committee (FPPC)

Thursday 27 October 2022, 10:30-12:00

Hybrid meeting: South Wing Council Room/MS Teams

Minutes

Present Members:

President and Provost (Chair); Mr Simon Buller; Mr Paul Clark; Mr Ian Galloway; Dr Thea Gibbs; Ms Charu Gorasia; Professor Jennifer Hudson; Professor Ivan Parkin; Professor Geraint Rees; Mr Andy Smith; Ms Julie Smith

Apologies:

Ms Beth Beasant
Professor D'Maris Coffman
Ms Sara Collins
Professor Duncan Craig
Mr Geoff Dunk
Ms Clare Goudy
Ms Tansy Jones
Ms Natasha Lewis
Ms Kate Pearce
Professor Anthony Smith
Mr Matthew Swales

In attendance:

For Minutes 9-16: Mr Steve Glover, Director of Financial Planning and Analysis
For Minutes 9-16: Ms Donna Dalrymple, Chief People Officer
For Minutes 11-12: Ms Rosie Ingham, Head of Finance, Change Projects
For Minutes 11-12: Mr Ian Holmes, Senior Reporting Accountant
For Minutes 11-12: Mr Gary Brown, Head of Finance, Estates
For Minute 13: Ms Kathryn Smuland, Finance Analyst
For Minute 13: Mr Derfel Owen, Director of Change and Improvement
For Minute 14: Ms Sonia Virdee, Strategic Planning Integration Director

Officer:

Mr Harry McMahon, Secretary to FPPC

Part I: Preliminary Business

9. Minutes of the previous meeting

- 9.1. The minutes of the previous meeting held on 28 September 2022 were approved.

10. Matters arising from the minutes

- 10.1. Arising from Minute 1, University Management Committee (UMC) had approved the amendments to FPPC's name and Terms of Reference at its meeting held on 4 October 2022.
- 10.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 10.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 10.4. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 10.5. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 10.6. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

11. Confidential: September (P2) Management Accounts (2-01)

- 11.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 11.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 11.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 11.4. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

12. Forecast 1 position (2-02)

- 12.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 12.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 12.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

13. Analysis of staff categorisation by function (2-03)

- 13.1. Ms Charu Gorasia, Chief Financial Officer, thanked the Directors of Operations (DoOs) for helping UCL Finance collect the information for this report. Ms Kathryn Smuland, Finance Analyst, introduced the update to FPPC on the work to understand the proportion of non-academic staff working within different functional families and made the following points:
- a. The report data should be used at a high level to gain a pan-UCL view of the size, shape and distribution of staff in each function, rather than to drive localised decisions about individual roles.
 - b. In terms of next steps, access to a dashboard would be made available to Budget Holders, DoOs and Functional Leads shortly. This would allow users to review the data and identify areas for investigation. This would enable potential administrative duplication and related savings opportunities to be identified.
 - c. Further insight could be gained by aligning each Function against the drivers its support; for example assessing Education and Student Experience Function as a proportion of student FTE for each Faculty. This might help contextualise job functions, highlight areas of good practice and suggest potential efficiencies.
- 13.2. FPPC received the update, raising the following points in discussion:
- a. Members noted that there were 96 Executive Assistants across all the faculties.
 - b. The report data would be mapped against the Cubane Data, once it was made available, to provide contextual benchmarks to inform UCL's medium-term targets for the size and shape of Functions.
 - c. FPPC agreed it would be useful if the size of the Faculty was taken into an account as this could be used to identify inefficiencies. It would also be useful if this data looked at income profile of each Faculty.
 - d. It was important to look at this data from a place of curiosity and consider what sort of ratios looked right in this context.
 - e. FPPC agreed that a strategic consensus needed to be met on how the data should change over coming months and years.
 - f. It was noted as UCL defined functions (top-down), this brought people who undertook the same professional discipline together. The communities of practice would often exist inside a profession or function, and they might be superseded in time with functional communities.
 - g. FPPC noted that previously much of this conversation has been dominated by physical proximity of staff and teams; new technology such as MS Teams had shifted the conversation, enabling colleagues to move around the organisation within a function more easily.
 - h. There was a desire to move away from a language of Professional Services staff being based either in a 'faculty' or 'the centre' to functional models.

14. New programme proposal (2-04)

- 14.1. Mr Paul Clark, Vice-President (Strategy), introduced the new Programme Proposal process and made the following key points:
- a. The July Student Number Planning (SNP) process this year applied greater scrutiny to new programmes and the resources required for their delivery. Earlier this year, UMC supported the recommendation for the introduction of early (Stage 0) scrutiny of new programme proposals.
 - b. The Stage 0 approval gateway was intended to help address concerns around student experience, infrastructure, and market demand.
 - c. The first new programme proposal for consideration was the BA Youth, Society and Sustainable Futures (YSSF).
- 14.2. A number of points were raised in the discussion, including:
- a. FPPC noted the criteria for Stage 0 programme approval and its role in determining whether programmes should be allowed to progress to the full programme development phase and consideration by the Programme and Module Approval Panel (PMAP).
 - b. FPPC noted the indicative timetable for known new programme proposals and significant programme amendments.
- 14.3. FPPC considered whether the new programme proposal for BA Youth, Society and Sustainable Futures (YSSF) met the criteria for approval.
- a. Concerns were voiced around the new course (YSSF). These included:
 - i. This was a small course, and it was not clear to what extent it would cover its costs.
 - ii. It was felt insufficient market testing had been done to check if there was demand for this course. This should be investigated, including how many overseas students could be expected to sign up for this course. It was suggested that hiring an external company to test how many students would enrol on this course could be useful.
 - iii. Members queried where a blend of face-to-face teaching was permitted.
 - iv. More detail was needed on how the placement module would work, who would these be with, how many were needed, and how many organisations had been scoped as possibilities.
 - v. Whilst the proposal that students would be able to access any module that was suitable on BA Early Childhood programme, written agreement would be required.
 - vi. The proposal needed a stronger plan for how teaching space would be managed. The proposal stated “it is hoped they will split across several option modules and share rooms...”. FPPC was not reassured by the use of the word “hope”.
 - vii. Exit arrangements needed to be in place if this course was initiated but then did not succeed.

- 14.4. FPPC considered the new programme proposal process and made the following points in discussion:
- a. Clarification was needed on the role of FPPC in this process, and the information requirement needed to be reduced.
 - b. In new programme proposals, there was a need to set student numbers, within the context of the overall Student Number Planning framework, once it was finalised.
- 14.5. FPPC:
- a. Agreed that the new programme proposal for BA Youth, Society and Sustainable Futures (YSSF) should be revised and resubmitted for consideration at a future FPPC meeting.
 - b. Agreed that the information requirement for new programme proposals be reduced.
 - c. Considered that feedback to the Faculty for new programme proposals should accompany the sign-off process.
 - d. Sought clarification on its role in the new programme proposal process

(Action: Vice-President (Strategy))

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

15. Tuition Fee Setting 2023/24

- 15.1. FPPC was provided with the following update on Tuition Fee Setting 2023/24:
- a. The tuition fees for 2023/24 were now set and advertised on the website for prospective students, available at <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/fees/pay-your-fees/schedules>.
 - b. 9% inflation had been applied to the new entrant unregulated fees bandings. The fee bands had been adopted for all unregulated PGR new entrants. MRes and PhD programmes had been moved to the nearest banding after the 9% inflation had been applied.
 - c. Postgraduate returning students were subject to a 3% inflationary uplift, whilst UG returners were capped at their entrant fee.
 - d. Fee banding changes that had been submitted by Faculties and approved by UMC had been actioned.

16. Date of next meeting

- 16.1. The next meeting of the Financial Performance and Planning Committee was scheduled for Monday 28 November 2022, 14:00-15:30. However, it was noted this date was under review and might be rescheduled to Friday 9 December 2022.

Harry McMahon, FPPC Secretary
22 November 2022