



Human Resources Policy Committee

Wednesday 7 July 2021, 10:00 am

Minutes

Present Members:

Dr Michael Spence (Chair); Ms Wendy Appleby; Dr Matthew Blain; Professor Stella Bruzzi; Professor Piet Eeckhout; Professor Dame Hazel Genn; Professor Deborah Gill; Professor Li Wei; Ms Collette Lux; Professor Ivan Parkin; Professor David Price; Professor Geraint Rees; Professor Sasha Roseneil; Ms Fiona Ryland; Professor Alan Thompson; Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker

Apologies:

Professor Mark Emberton; Professor Graham Hart; Professor Christoph Lindner; Professor Anthony Smith; Dr Andy Smith

In attendance:

Ms Clare Goudy; Ms Chloe Milano; Mr John Phillips; Ms Lorren Rea; Ms Laura Tomson.

Officer(s):

Ms Hannah Swallow (Secretary)

Part I: Preliminary Business

1. Minutes (3-01)

- 1.1. Human Resources Policy Committee (HRPC) approved the minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2021.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

2. New International Safeguarding Policy (Paper 3-02)

- 2.1. Ms Lorren Rea, Head of Employment Policy presented the draft UCL International Safeguarding Policy and provided background as to why it was required and how it would be implemented. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. The policy had been drafted to ensure compliance, due diligence, and best practice.
 - b. Funders had previously requested such a policy.
 - c. UK law may not be relevant overseas, so it was beneficial to have a specific policy for UCL staff and students overseas.
- 2.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
- a. Professor Ivan Parkin raised that overseas organisations that UCL students attended often had their own policies that would largely mirror this policy. Would UCL be able to accept another organisations policy if it mirrored its own safeguarding policy? Ms Lorren Rea confirmed that this would be acceptable, and the wording could be adapted to reflect this in the policy.
 - b. Professor David Price raised that due diligence groups and ethics reviews would need to include this policy. It would need to be embedded into current procedures. Ms Lorren Rea confirmed that once approved there would be a full roll out which would include briefing and training for all relevant parties.
 - c. Professor Sasha Roseneil raised the following suggestions and questions:
 - i. the onus should be on an individual such as the HoD rather than the whole department to ensure responsibility was taken;
 - ii. what does the cultural competency training comprise of;
 - iii. the section on personal contact details needed to be revised as there were instances where personal phone numbers may need to be given to research participants;
 - iv. where the term PI was used, this should be replaced with “or PhD supervisor”.
 - d. Professor David Price raised that this policy would need to be incorporated into the code of conduct for research.
- 2.3. HRPC approved the policy in principle subject to the agreed amendments being incorporated.

3. Pilot Internal Recruitment Scheme (Paper 3-03)

- 3.1. Ms Laura Tomson, Senior Employment Policy Advisor presented proposed guidance on the pilot of advertising Professional Services roles internally only. The following points were made during the presentation:
- a. The pilot was hoped to assist with career progression opportunities across UCL, promote diversity in senior roles and retain skills and knowledge learnt at UCL within UCL.
 - b. The pilot aimed to find out the impact on diversity, whether it would be appropriate across all grades and roles, and how the scheme could be most efficiently implemented.
 - c. Roles would be advertised internally for a minimum of two weeks, re-deployees would still be advertised to first, staff who have worked at UCL

for a period of 12 weeks or more could apply, temporary or agency staff would not be able to apply and different to secondments, staff would not need to seek permission from line managers.

- 3.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
- a. The pilot was a good idea, but concern was expressed that we would need to be cautious not to create an echo chamber. There was a risk that the scheme would not encourage change or new ideas from coming into UCL.
 - b. In response to a question whether a line manager reference would be obtained for internal candidates, Ms Laura Tomson confirmed this would be the case.
 - c. The group had some concerns over candidates who were performing poorly being able to apply for a new role across UCL. Dr Matthew Blain confirmed that there were processes in place to manage poor performance and this should prevent line managers being able to recommend those who are under review. Ms Lorren Rea confirmed that a line could be added to confirm that if someone was under review for poor performance, they would be unable to apply for an internal role.
- 3.3 HRPC approved the pilot and asked that the results be reported to HRPC in due course.

4. Pilot Remote Working Policy (Paper 3-04)

- 4.1. Ms Lorren Rea, Head of Employment Policy, introduced a draft Remote Working Policy and Guidance to be piloted in the next year, to accompany the [Returning to UCL Campus – Interim People Management Guidance](#). The following points were made during the presentation:
- a. As there was now interim guidance on returning to campus and remote working, a policy was needed for remote working. By piloting the policy, it allowed it to be adopted for the longer term as appropriate with any changes or issues being discussed at HRPC.
 - b. The key points covered in the policy were: where remote working was approved, staff should work from UCL buildings for at least 40% of their time., remote working was a voluntary choice and the default workplace was in UCL buildings, the importance of health and safety, legal and financial implications, working overseas and how this affected taxes, social security and local health and safety laws.
- 4.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
- a. There appeared to be an internal inconsistency as the policy advised staff to complete a DSE risk assessment and report health and safety incidents at home but then the rest of the policy contradicted this as it stated that home should not be a workplace. There were also questions raised about what happened if staff's workspace was not suitable, and would then be instructed they had to work on campus.

- b. There were a very high number of academic staff who had not been to campus for over 18 months now. Dr Matthew Blain advised that there are plans for staff induction tours and for new staff who may never have been to campus. Mr Ian Dancy was working on plans for induction.
 - c. Section 10.2 of the policy could cause difficulties for staff who already worked overseas. Dr Matthew Blain raised that it will be a light touch approach to begin with but going forwards we would need to be more compliant.
 - d. The policy may have implications for staff who worked part time at UCL and part time at another institution which may not be in the UK.
 - e. Some staff had never worked for 40% of their time on campus for that amount even before the pandemic.
 - f. Ms Chloe Milano advised that this was an interim policy and a pilot so and would be evaluated how it worked in practice. There was an understanding that legal advice and investigation may be required, particularly to ensure that the equality act was met, and reasonable adjustments could be made for staff.
- 4.3 HRPC approved the pilot policy with the addition of risk assessment messaging and a revision to the wording in relation to overseas working. It was agreed that the policy should be brought back to HRPC in the future.
- 5. Confidential: Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS)/Furlough Leave Update (Paper 3-05)**
- 5.1 Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

- 6. Senior Academic Recruitment Procedure (Paper 3-06)**
- 6.1. Dr Matthew Blain, Executive Director of HR, was due to present the proposed updated Senior Academic Recruitment Procedure. This item was not discussed as there was not enough time.
 - 6.2. Dr Michael Spence advised that this should be discussed at the Senior Management Team meeting on Tuesday 13 July 2021. HRPC members agreed this was a suitable forum.
 - 6.3. The minutes from the discussion at SMT were included as [appendix 1](#).

Hannah Swallow
July 2021

Appendix 1: SMT minutes - Tuesday 13 July 2021

1. Senior Academic Recruitment Procedure (Paper 3-06)

- 1.1. Dr Matthew Blain, Executive Director of HR, presented the proposed updated Senior Academic Recruitment Procedure to SMT. This procedure was created with recommendation from the Academic Board Commission of Inquiry. The following points were made during the presentation:
 - a. This procedure related to the recruitment of Deans, Heads of Department (HoD) and Vice Provosts. It had been created based on recommendations from the AB Commission of Inquiry. It aimed to meet most recommendations and be a sensible procedure for UCL to standardise recruitment.
 - b. The procedure included the addition of a formal faculty engagement with candidates and performance feedback for renewals of contracts. However, it did not include the mandatory introduction of 360 feedback, this had been advised for developmental purposes but not for review. The procedure also did not include the recommendation that terms of office should be limited to 2 terms.
 - c. HRPC had been given decision making rights on this policy with Council input.
- 1.2. The following points were raised in the discussion:
 - a. 360 feedback could be valuable but also could be resource heavy and required HR support to be done effectively. It could be useful to report on how many 360 feedbacks were taking place across UCL.
 - b. It was queried whether more clarity was required on the section regarding membership of panels as the wording could be considered confusing. It needed to be broken down into HoDs and Deans for clarity. Dr Matthew Blain agreed that this could be redrafted to make it clearer.
 - c. The definition of a HoD needed to be clarified as there are quasi HoDs across many different areas. Council members would like them included in the policy for reasons of standardisation, but it was noted that this could increase workload if these roles are added. In response, Ms Wendy Appleby advised that there is a live project updating the official list of academic departments in our regulations for management, and that this will establish who is considered to be a HoD across UCL. The policy will then follow this list.
 - d. In section 7.5, the terms men and women were used but there was no mention of non-binary. Dr Matthew Blain agreed that the language could be redrafted.
- 1.3. SMT/HRPC agreed to move forwards with the procedure with consideration of the points above. HRPC approved the policy in principle subject to the agreed amendments being incorporated.