



## HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY COMMITTEE

Wednesday 9 October 2013

### MINUTES

Present:

Professor Michael Arthur (Chair)  
Professor Stephen Caddick  
Professor Anthony Finkelstein  
Professor Mary Fulbrook  
Professor Dame Hazel Genn  
Mr Phil Harding  
Professor Graham Hart  
Mr Rex Knight  
Professor Alan Penn  
Professor David Price  
Professor Anthony Smith  
Professor Alan Thompson  
Professor Jo Wolff

Apologies for absence: Professor Richard Catlow; Professor Mary Collins; Professor David Lomas;  
Professor Sir John Tooke.

In attendance: Mr Gary Hawes (Secretary); Mr Nigel Waugh (Director of Human Resources)

#### *Key to abbreviations*

HRPC	Human Resources Policy Committee
NIHR	National Institute for Health Research
SLMS	School of Life and Medical Sciences
SMT	Senior Management Team
STEMM	Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics or Medicine

## 1 CONSTITUTION AND 2013-14 MEMBERSHIP; TERMS OF REFERENCE

### ***Received:***

- 1.1 The constitution, 2013-14 membership and terms of reference of HRPC at HRPC 1-01 (13-14).

## 2 MINUTES OF 24 APRIL 2013 MEETING

### ***Confirmed:***

- 2.1 The Minutes of the previous meeting of HRPC held on 24 April 2013 [*HRPC Mins. 1-9, 24.4.13*].

## 3 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES

*[see Minute 4 below]*

#### **4 UPDATE ON THE UCL STAFF SURVEY**

*[HRPC Min. 4, 24.4.13]*

##### ***Received:***

- 4.1 An oral report by Professor Graham Hart, SMT Lead for the 2013 UCL Staff Survey.

##### ***Reported:***

- 4.2 The 2013 UCL Staff Survey, which would run from 4-22 November 2013, was a critical exercise from a managerial perspective as it served to generate significant data on UCL staff opinion – of their experience of work and the working environment and how this impacted on their goals. It was also important in terms of serving UCL staff interests through the 'You Said, We Did' follow-up process, the purpose of which was to highlight key themes that emerged from the Survey and the actions that took place in response to these.
- 4.3 One of the key objectives of the 2013 Staff Survey was to achieve a significant improvement in the response rate of 48% that was achieved for the 2011 Staff Survey. Academic/managerial leadership would be crucial in this regard, and all Deans and senior managers, together with the designated Staff Survey Faculty Champions, would be urged to play an active role in taking this forward in their faculties and areas and encouraging staff to complete the Survey. One suggestion for helping Deans and senior managers to facilitate this was the inclusion of a banner at the bottom of all email communications, including a direct link to the UCL Staff Survey page. As a further incentive to staff to complete the Survey, for every completed response, UCL would donate £10 to the Student Hardship Fund.
- 4.4 A survey project group chaired by Professor Hart and including representatives from across UCL had reviewed the Survey questions in some detail. Representatives of UCL's Trade Unions had also been actively engaged in this process through representation on the project group, and had negotiated a commitment to ensuring that the summary findings of the Survey would be made available to all senior managers and then generally to UCL staff as soon as possible after these were presented to the SMT. However, in spite of this and the rationale that encouraging participation in the Survey would also serve in their members' best interests, none of UCL's Trade Unions had confirmed that they would be actively supporting the Survey.
- 4.5 Professor Hart would provide regular update reports to the SMT during the course of the Survey, including breakdowns of the response rates for each Faculty. He would also report back to the next meeting of HRPC on the outcome of the Survey. The Provost would also be championing staff participation in the Survey through his weekly Provost's View newsletter.

##### ***Discussion:***

- 4.6 In order to ensure that all staff, including those colleagues from industry and other sectors who were on fractional UCL appointments, were contacted by the independent survey provider, ORC International, to take part in the Survey, the Director of HR advised Deans where applicable to contact Fiona Daffern in HR with a list of these colleagues' email addresses.
- 4.7 Some members of HRPC highlighted the importance of allowing sufficient time to enable the SMT to undertake to cogitate on the outcome of the Survey and to undertake a collective detailed analysis of the findings. For this purpose, it would be important to receive a breakdown of the Survey findings that would allow it to distinguish responses made by different staff groups and categories.

**RESOLVED:**

- 4.8 That Dean of Faculty members of HRPC be advised where applicable to supply Fiona Daffern with the email addresses of staff colleagues from industry and other sectors who were on fractional UCL appointments, with a view to ensuring that these colleagues were contacted by the independent survey provider, ORC International, to take part in the UCL Staff Survey.

**ACTION: Dean of Faculty members of HRPC**

**5 ACHIEVING AN ATHENA SWAN SILVER AWARD FOR UCL**

**Received:**

- 5.1 The report and recommendations at HRPC 1-02 (13-14), introduced by the Director of HR.

**Reported:**

- 5.2 UCL had been an Athena SWAN member since 2005 and had received its first Athena SWAN Bronze award in 2006. UCL's Athena SWAN Bronze award status had subsequently been renewed in 2009 and 2012. However, other Russell Group universities, including Queens University Belfast, Nottingham, Warwick and Imperial College London, were starting to achieve Athena SWAN Silver award status.
- 5.3 The announcement linking the next round of NIHR funding to achievement of Athena SWAN Silver award status had prompted many of UCL's STEMM departments to apply for this status. While Silver award status at university level was not a prerequisite for NIHR funding, it was recognised that achievement of this status institutionally would help to facilitate and encourage these UCL departments to develop and maintain the strategies necessary to support their applications for Silver status award. However, before UCL could apply for an Athena SWAN Silver award, at least half of its departments would need to have achieved this status.
- 5.4 The report at HRPC 1-02 (13-14) included a number of recommendations for helping UCL to achieve Athena SWAN Silver award status institutionally, based on feedback that had been received from the SWAN assessment panel for UCL's most recent Athena SWAN Bronze award status renewal. These included, amongst other things, the recommendations for the establishment of a single group at institutional level with responsibility for leading on gender issues and the development of UCL's Athena SWAN Silver application, and the appointment of a member of the SMT to chair this group.

**Discussion:**

- 5.5 The Chair of HRPC proposed to serve as Chair of the group that would be tasked with leading on gender issues and the development of UCL's Athena SWAN Silver application. It was further proposed that Professor Mary Collins, who currently served as UCL's Gender Equality Champion and Chair of UCL's Equalities and Diversities Committee, should be invited to serve as Vice-Chair of this group in the event that a colleague was required to deputise for the Provost in chairing any of the group's meetings.
- 5.6 Members of HRPC noted that the group that would be established for the purpose of leading on UCL's Athena SWAN Silver application would wish to take account of the learning and good practices arrangements that had been amassed and put into place

by UCL departments within SLMS in developing their applications for Athena SWAN Silver award status.

- 5.7 The Chair of HRPC noted that quite apart from issues around the procurement of NIHR funding, UCL's application for Athena SWAN Silver award status should be championed because of UCL's alignment with the principles of the Athena SWAN Charter and recognition of the benefits that Silver award status would bring institutionally in terms of advancing the representation of women across the STEMM disciplines.
- 5.8 Some members of HRPC noted that the group that would be established for the purpose of leading on gender issues and UCL's Athena SWAN Silver application would need to be attentive to the significant workload and time-commitment implications that developing UCL's applications for Athena SWAN award status had for senior female staff colleagues – particularly those who were leading on and championing developments within UCL as well as fulfilling representational commitments.

**RESOLVED:**

- 5.9 That the recommendations set out in the report at HRPC 1-02 (13-14) be approved and actioned.
- 5.10 That i) the Chair of HRPC be appointed to serve as Chair of the group that would be established at institutional level and tasked with leading on gender issues and the development of UCL's Athena SWAN Silver application, and ii) Professor Mary Collins be invited to serve as Vice-Chair of this group.

**ACTION: Nigel Waugh/HR colleagues**

## **6 ACADEMIC INCENTIVE AND REWARD**

**Received:**

- 6.1 A draft discussion paper at HRPC 1-03 (13-14), introduced by the Director of HR.

**Reported:**

- 6.2 A steering group chaired by the former President and Provost, Professor Sir Malcolm Grant, had developed a draft discussion paper seeking the views of HRPC on proposals for possible reforms to academic incentive and reward, including amongst other things:
- the creation of a common career path for academic staff at UCL through the creation of the title of Assistant Professor in addition to that of Associate Professor;
  - introduction of the title of 'Distinguished Professor' for professors in band A of the professoriate.
  - a review of the academic promotions process to ensure that the promotions criteria more transparently reflected the full range of activities in the UCL Excellence framework.
  - a review of the appointment process for honorary staff and the use of honorary titles.

- 6.3 The note accompanying the draft discussion paper suggested a gradual consultative process around the draft discussion paper, involving various focus groups and small groups of staff within UCL, eg HR forum meetings and faculty- and departmental-level committees or forums. The note also acknowledged that should consultation indicate support for the principles and proposals explored within the discussion paper, further work would need to be undertaken to translate them into detailed proposals.
- 6.4 In addition to taking the opportunity to give their views on the draft discussion paper at the meeting, members of HRPC were encouraged by the Chair of HRPC and the Director of HR to submit their more detailed comments to the Director of HR by email outside the meeting.

***Discussion:***

- 6.5 While there was no consensus view emerging from HRPC's discussion of the principles and proposals that were explored in the draft discussion paper at HRPC 1-03 (13-14), the following points were acknowledged:
- that greater clarity around the relationship between the Senior Lecturer and Reader grades would be seen as desirable in many areas of UCL, particularly as the current lack of distinction meant that there was inconsistency across the institution in how these two grades were currently viewed in terms of career progression;
  - that greater clarity around the appointment of honorary staff and the use of honorary titles would also be welcomed, particularly in SLMS
  - that further discussion and consultation around the draft discussion paper would need to consider more fully how some of the possible reforms proposed therein might impact on:
    - UCL's ability to continue to attract and retain the best academic staff globally
    - Academic staff career progression and staff expectations around this;
    - The application of UCL's current grading structure and pay scales.
- 6.6 Some members of HRPC noted that they would welcome the introduction of the title of Professor of Practice as a means of allowing UCL to avail itself of the expertise and experience of senior persons with successful professional track records in business and industry who did not otherwise meet UCL's criteria around research excellence.
- 6.7 It was suggested that it might be useful as part of any further consultation process to find out more about the experiences of other HEIs that had already implemented changes to their academic incentive and reward processes, eg LSE.

***RESOLVED:***

- 6.8 That members of HRPC be asked to submit their further views and comments on the principles and proposals explored in the draft discussion paper at HRPC 1-03 (13-14) to the Director of HR outside the meeting.

***ACTION: HRPC members***

## **7 STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES FRAMEWORK**

***Received:***

- 7.1 The draft discussion paper at HRPC 1-04 (13-14), introduced by the Director of HR.

**RESOLVED:**

- 7.2 That i) owing to shortness of time, the draft discussion paper at HRPC 1-04 (13-14) be brought back for discussion at HRPC's next scheduled meeting and ii) in the meantime, HRPC members be invited to submit any comments on the draft discussion paper to the Director of HR outside the meeting.

**ACTION: HRPC members**

**8 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY REVIEW UPDATE**

**Received:**

- 8.1 The report at HRPC 1-05 (13-14), introduced by the Director of HR.

**Noted:**

- 8.2 The latest drafts of each of the policies referenced in the report at HRPC 1-05 (13-14) were available to view on the HRPC SharePoint site at <https://sharepoint.adm.ucl.ac.uk/sites/hrpc/default.aspx>

**Reported:**

- 8.3 While it was agreed that owing to shortness of time, the report at HRPC 1-05 (13-14) should be brought back for discussion at HRPC's next scheduled meeting, the Director of HR drew HRPC's attention in the meantime to some of the following high-level changes that were proposed to each policy:

*Discipline Policy*

- increased emphasis on the responsibility of Heads of Department to manage disciplinary matters;
- reduction in the appeal panel membership from three to one panel members to enable Hearings to be set up more promptly and free up managerial time.

*Grievance policy*

- inclusion of an expectation that parties would attempt mediation before progressing to the formal stage to emphasise the importance of mediation rather than arbitration of disputes;
- emphasis on the responsibility of Heads of Department to manage grievances;
- reduction in panel membership from three persons (including one Trade Union representative) to one senior manager to enable hearings to be arranged more quickly and lead to earlier resolution of grievances;
- more guidance on types of written submissions that could be forwarded with the aim of reducing the level of paperwork not directly relevant to the grievance that needed to be produced and absorbed;

*Harassment and Bullying Policy/Dignity at Work Statement*

- Harassment and Bullying Policy to be replaced with a Dignity at Work Statement that would ensure a single streamlined process.

**RESOLVED:**

- 8.4 That i) owing to shortness of time, the report at HRPC 1-05 (13-14) be brought back for discussion at HRPC's next scheduled meeting and ii) in the meantime, HRPC members be invited to submit any comments on the report and draft policies to the Director of HR outside the meeting.

**ACTION: HRPC members**

**9 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

***Noted:***

9.1 The next meetings of HRPC in the current session were scheduled as follows:

Wednesday 18 December 2013, 8.30am

Wednesday 26 March 2014, 8.30am

Wednesday 9 July 2014, 8:30am

[All meetings to take place in the South Wing G12 Council Room]

GARY HAWES

Academic Support Officer (and Committee Operations Co-ordinator)

Academic Services

Student and Registry Services

[telephone 020 7679 8592, UCL extension 28592, email: g.hawes@ucl.ac.uk]

31 October 2013