

Human Resources Policy Committee

Held on Wednesday 27 November 2019 from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon

In the South Wing G12 Council Room

Minutes

Members Present:

Professor Anthony Smith (Chair)

Ms Wendy Appleby

Dr Paul Ayris

Dr Matthew Blain

Professor Stella Bruzzi

Professor Piet Eeckhout

Professor Mark Emberton

Professor Becky Francis

Ms Francesca Fryer

Mr Phil Harding

Professor Graham Hart

Professor Christoph Lindner

Professor David Lomas

Ms Collette Lux

Professor Ivan Parkin

Professor Geraint Rees

Ms Fiona Ryland (not for item 9)

Attendees:

Ms Donna Dalrymple, Director of HR Business Partnering

Ms Kate Faxen, Head of Employee Experience (for item 9)

Dr Clare Goudy, Chief of Staff to the President & Provost

Mr Max Hill, Director of Workplace Health (for item 3)

Ms Lorren Rea, Head of Employment Policy

Mr Mark Rice, Head of Reward and Pensions (for item 4)

Mr Peter Scully, Technical Director, Bartlett School of Architecture (for item 8)

Ms Karen Smith, Head of Workplace Wellbeing (for item 10)

Mr Peter Warwick, Director of Employee Relations

Apologies:

Professor Michael Arthur

Dame Nicola Brewer

Dr Celia Caulcott

Mr Simon Cane

Mrs Lori Houlihan

Dr James McCafferty

Professor David Price

Professor Sasha Roseneil

Mr Tom Rowson

Mr Dean Stokes

Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker

Professor Alan Thompson

Officer:

Dr Marguerite Nolan, Governance Officer and Committee Secretary

Part I: Preliminary Business

1a. Welcome and Apologies

1a.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies were noted as listed above.

1b. Declaration of Interests

1b.1 The Chief Operating Officer declared an interest in item 9 on the agenda of this meeting and it was noted that she would not be attending for that item. Her husband has a business association with Qlearsite.

1c. Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 July 2019 and the special meeting held on 9 October 2019 (Paper HRPC 2-1a&b, 2019-20)

1c.1 **Approved:** The Committee approved the Minutes of the last meeting of the Human Resources Policy Committee (HRPC) held on 10 July 2019 and the Minutes of special meeting held on 9 October 2019.

2. Matters arising from the minutes

2.1 There were no matters arising from the Minutes.

Part II: Matters for Discussion

3. Flu Vaccination for Staff (Paper HRPC 2-2, 2019-20)

3.1 **Considered:** The Committee considered the paper on Flu Vaccination for Staff. As requested at the last meeting of the HRPC on 10 July 2019, this paper set out the cost of a vaccination programme for staff against the influenza ('flu') virus which would aim to reduce staff sickness and absence over the winter months.

3.2 The Committee discussed the cost and practicalities of in-house provision and external provision as outlined in the paper. Members also considered the percentage of staff that would be likely to take up the offer of flu vaccination. The Committee was in favour of appointing the external provider to deliver the vaccine programme due to the lower cost and the fact that the flu season would commence soon.

3.3 **Resolved:** The Committee approved the proposal to implement a flu vaccination programme to be offered to all UCL staff and delivered by the external provider as

set out in Paper HRPC 2-2, 2019-20. This would be funded centrally from faculty and department contributions.

4. London Living Wage Accreditation (Paper HRPC 2-3, 2019-20)

4.1 **Considered:** The Committee considered the London Living Wage Accreditation paper which recommended that UCL should seek accreditation as a London Living Wage employer. Although UCL was not currently accredited, it had committed to paying the London Living Wage (LLW) to its employees and contracted workers. To achieve accreditation UCL would need to review existing contracts to ensure that all on-site contracted staff were paid the London Living Wage and would have to complete the application process.

4.2 The Committee was very supportive of the recommendation to seek accreditation which would demonstrate UCL's commitment to valuing its staff. The Committee discussed the costs and risks associated with the proposal as outlined in the paper and feedback was provided by the Head of Reward and Pensions. It was asked whether Students' Union UCL would be applying for accreditation and it was agreed to check this and report back to the HRPC.

4.3 **Resolved:** The Committee approved that UCL move forward to seek London Living Wage (LLW) accreditation as set out in Paper HRPC 2-3, 2019-20. This would be led by Sustainable UCL and HR with the aim of gaining accreditation within the next six to nine months.

5. Redeployment Procedure (Paper HRPC 2-4, 2019-20)

5.1 **Considered:** The Committee considered the revised Redeployment Procedure which it was planned to incorporate into the design of the new recruitment system. The revised procedure would allow jobs to be advertised to redeployees and other internal and external candidates simultaneously. Legislation required that applications from redeployees were considered first. Legislation also required that redeployees be prioritised in a specific order as set out in the paper. However, if there were no redeployees, or those who applied did not or could not meet the essential criteria, recruiters would be able to refer straight away to the applications

from those that applied in response to the advert. This could reduce the process of advertising by at least 2.5 weeks.

5.2 The Committee welcomed the revisions to the policy but sought reassurance that this would not be disadvantageous to redeployees. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team had raised concern, as outlined in the paper, that recruiting managers could be tempted to review all the applications, including redeployees and other applicants, at the same time on the closing date. Feedback was provided by the Head of Employment Policy and the Director of HR Business Partnering. It was reported that the revised Redeployment Procedure offered an improved service to redeployees which included setting up an alert so that they would be notified automatically of suitable vacancies. Also, recruiting managers who turned down a redeployee, either at shortlisting or interview stage, would be required to consult with the relevant HR Business Partner, to ensure that such decisions were robust.

5.3 The Committee discussed the separate issue of staff performance and capability. It was recommended that the Capability Policy - Managing Poor Performance should be reviewed.

5.4 **Resolved:** The following was agreed:

- a) The Committee approved the revised Redeployment Procedure as set out in Paper HRPC 2-4, 2019-20.
- b) HR would review the Capability Policy - Managing Poor Performance and submit a note on this to the next meeting of the HRPC on 1 April 2020.

6. **BAME Accelerate to Leadership - Positive Action Placements**

(Paper HRPC 2-5, 2019-20)

Exempt from publication

7. **Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure**

(Paper HRPC 2-6, 2019-20)

7.1 **Considered:** The Committee considered the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure. This revised policy replaced two safeguarding policies: Working with Vulnerable Groups Policy; and Safeguarding Policy for Applicants and Students.

7.2 The main changes to the revised policy and procedure included:

- One policy and procedure to cover both staff and students;
- The introduction of designated safeguarding officers, their roles and responsibilities and how to contact them;
- Much clearer procedures on what would happen when a disclosure or report was made;
- Updated terminology, for example, Adult at risk instead of vulnerable adult.

7.2 **Resolved:** The Committee approved the Safeguarding Children and Adults at Risk Policy and Procedure as set out in Paper HRPC 2-6, 2019-20.

8. **UCL's Technician Commitment to address UK skills shortage**

(Paper HRPC 2-7, 2019-20)

8.1 **Considered:** The Committee considered the paper on UCL's Technician Commitment to address UK skills shortage. The Committee discussed the suggested short-term and long-term interventions to address this shortage as outlined in the paper. The Committee noted the importance of the proposal to carry out a survey of technical staff at UCL as a first step. Members discussed the problems encountered with the current de-centralised apprenticeship funding and delivery model. The HRPC supported in principle the longer term aim to introduce a centralised governance model for the recruitment of technical apprentices.

8.2 **Resolved:** The Committee agreed the following:

- a) The Committee endorsed in principle matched funding of £75k (subject to the funding source being confirmed with the Chief Operating Officer) to enable

the Technical Managers Group (TMG) to take forward the short-term interventions listed in the paper. This would start with the launch a bespoke skills and capabilities survey in March 2020 of UCL technical staff.

- b) That a working group be set up to formulate more detailed proposals for the establishment of a centralised governance model for the recruitment of technical apprentices, in collaboration with the TOPS programme and appropriate sponsorship from the HRPC as set out in the paper. Deans or their nominees would contribute to the working group and framing its terms of reference.

The Chief Operating Officer left the meeting at this point and she did not attend for item 9.

9. UCL Staff Survey: Understanding our People (Paper HRPC 2-8, 2019-20)

- 9.1 **Considered:** The Committee considered the UCL Staff Survey: Understanding our People paper. This put forward a new approach to the way UCL measured the engagement of its staff, providing deeper insights through an advanced language analysis tool and driving targeted action planning through a highly practical measurement framework.
- 9.2 It was noted that the company which currently provided staff surveys to UCL had announced this year that they would be changing their offer and would no longer be working with many of their previous higher education clients. Since then, UCL had seen pitches from nine other service providers and investigated three of these companies' offerings in more detail. Due to the conflict of interest that the Chief Operating Officer had declared at the start of this meeting, it would be necessary to ensure that Procurement gave advice on any rules around tendering or contracting.
- 9.3 The Committee discussed the advantages of moving to a survey with fewer questions that would be quicker to complete. There would also be the option to include some open questions for staff to provide feedback. The Committee discussed the disadvantage that a new set of questions would be more difficult to compare with the outcome of previous surveys. It was reported that this would be

looked at as part of the project with a view to mapping questions to the previous survey.

9.4 Members reported on the number of surveys that some staff were required to complete at UCL, for example, TRAC, Athena SWAN, and 360 Feedback. It was recommended that an audit be carried out of the surveys that UCL staff currently complete.

9.5 **Resolved:** The Committee agreed the following:

- a) The Committee supported the new approach to the way UCL measured the engagement of its staff as set out in Paper HRPC 2-8, 2019-20.
- b) HR would seek advice from Procurement around the contract.
- c) That a working group be set up by HR to review the staff surveys that UCL staff are currently required to complete with a view to streamlining this in the future if possible.

10. **Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy** (Paper HRPC 2-9, 2019-20)

10.1 **Considered:** The Committee considered the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy paper. This was an interim paper which provided an overview of the strategic themes of the refocussed Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy at UCL. It sought approval from HRPC to continue to develop the Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy based on these themes.

10.2 The Committee discussed the academic excellence in UCL regarding mental health. It was noted that HR was working with academics in the relevant areas in the development of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The Committee also discussed the lack of NHS provision for mental health.

10.3 It was noted that members of the HRPC were very supportive of the development of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and would be available to provide advice and help if required. Feedback was sought as to when the strategy would be

completed and it was noted that it would be submitted to the Senior Management Team for consideration in January 2020.

10.4 **Resolved:** The following was agreed:

- a) The Committee approved the Strategic Themes of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy as set out in Paper HRPC 2-9, 2019-20.
- b) The refocussed Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy would be submitted to the Senior Management Team in January 2020 for approval.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

11. **Constitution, Membership and Terms of Reference of the HRPC for 2019-20**
(Paper HRPC 2-10, 2019-20)

11.1 **Received:** The Committee received and noted the Constitution, Membership and Terms of Reference of the HRPC for 2019-20.

12. **Date of next meeting**

12.1 **Noted:** That the next meeting of the HRPC would be held on Wednesday 1 April 2020 from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon.

13. **Any other business**

13.1 There was no other business discussed.