



Operations Committee

Thursday 3 February 2022, 10:00 – 12:00

Minutes

Present Members:

Fiona Ryland (Chair); Kevin Argent; Paul Ayriss; Jeremy Barraud; Beth Beasant; Matthew Blain; Mike Brown; Simon Buller; Katie Canada; Sara Collins; Natalie Conway; Ian Dancy; Geoff Dunk; Helen Fisher; Ian Galloway; Thea Gibbs; Claire Glen; Clare Goudy; Richard Jackson; Tansy Jones; Natasha Lewis; Sian Lunt; Collette Lux; Andy Smith; Julie Smith; Dean Stokes; Becky Whitham; Donna Williamson.

Apologies:

Charu Gorasia
Alice Mortlock
Loren Moyse
Ciaran Moynihan
Derfel Owen
Kathryn Walsh

In attendance:

Sarah West for item 3
Katja Lamping and Bella Malins for item 4
Kris Ilic for item 5
Sarah Earl and Clare Foyle for item 6
Pip Jackson for item 7
Ben Stubbs for item 8
Sian Minett for item 9
Lee Standen

Officer(s):

Louise Moore, Secretary

Part I: Preliminary Business

21. Minutes (Paper 3-16)

21.1. Operations Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2021

22. Matters Arising (Paper 3-17)

22.1. Membership Update: UMC approved the changes to Operations Committee membership and the following new members were welcomed to the meeting:

- Jeremy Barraud, Director of Governance & Delivery – nominated to represent Research
- Mike Brown, Director Biological Services – member of Directors of Professional Services
- Helen Fisher, UCL East Operations Lead - member of Directors of Professional Services
- Alice Mortlock, Director of Strategy & Operations | Chief Operating Officer, UCL Partners AHSC – nominated to represent VP Health
- Ciaran Moynihan, Acting GEO Director – nominated to represent the Global Engagement Office
- Kate Pearce, Director of Finance Business Partnering - representing Finance as Deputy to Charu Gorasia. Noted that UMC approval would be sought to change this officially when we next take the TOR and membership to UMC.
- The following vacancies were noted:
 - VP (External Engagement) representative
 - VP (Education & Student Experience) representative
 - University Secretary

22.2. Arising from minute 10.3, Matters Arising: To follow up on the progress of the joint working group (to include a representative from each Faculty and the PS Hub team to address and resolve issues together).

Noted: that the Hub Leadership team was taking this forward, and setting up a customer board with faculty representation, to create an informal and positive arena to share two-way feedback. A call-out for attendees would go out in the next couple of weeks with the aim to have this live by March. Noted that the SU had requested representation on the group, and this was agreed.

22.3. Arising from minute 14.2c, Sustainability Annual Report: To share the sustainability reports with CAM, and to take the reports to UMC in the new year.

Noted:

- The Sustainability reports went to UMC on 18 January and Finance Committee on 24 January.
- CAM would develop the final published versions, and these would be shared with Operations Committee.

22.4. Arising from minute 15.3a, Strategic Risk Register: To plot the risks onto the schedule of works for Operations Committee to review regularly.

Noted: the proposal that the Schedule of Works was merged with the Change Plan / UCL Year Planner, to be reviewed regularly at Operations Committee.

- 22.5. Arising from minute 19.3, Schedule of Works Across the Year: To meet and discuss an overarching change plan and to bring back to Operations Committee for review.

Noted: Change Plan was on the agenda, item 6.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

23. Welcome & Induction (Paper 3-18)

- 23.1. Sarah West, Deputy Registrar introduced the paper explaining that welcome and induction had been identified as one of the areas that received negative student feedback and so a team had been set up to address the issues for this academic year. All aspects of welcome and induction had been transformed and improved and 94% of students surveyed responded that they were satisfied with the experience. The paper sets out proposals to build on the success of this year, with a focus on the following priorities:
- a. To secure a source of permanent funding for Welcome & Induction.
 - b. To amend the governance structure.
 - c. To establish a permanent team within Student & Registry Services, and to create a pool of volunteer Professional Services staff to help where needed.
 - d. To work closely with the campus team.
 - e. To develop the UCL Go app further.
 - f. To consider students with different needs.
 - g. To work more with academic departments.
- 23.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
- a. Noted that this was a brilliant example of colleagues from across UCL working together as a team in a one-UCL way and evidenced by the results from the student survey.
 - b. Noted that money was available for next year from the Strategic Investment pot, but that a longer-term solution to the funding problem was needed.
 - c. In order to ensure consistency across the Faculties and aligning the overall student experience, work would be undertaken with a focus group and a template of activities created.
 - d. Noted that the permanent team would be involved in activities throughout the year, but there was concern that the request for volunteers might be unsustainable over time.
 - e. Sustainability and reducing waste and reusing materials was discussed.
 - f. UCL East and the enhanced induction for the first cohort of students was raised. Noted that the plan to ensure a joined-up approach to welcome and induction was underway.

23.3. Operations Committee:

- a. **Agreed** that the Welcome & Induction project had been a great success this year and that it was important to build on the success for future years.
- b. **Approved** the recommendations to operationalise Welcome & Induction by establishing a permanent team and securing longer-term funding.
- c. **ACTION:** Sarah West, Deputy Registrar to contact Thomas Turner, Head of Finance Professional Services to discuss how to baseline Welcome & Induction into the SRS budget.

24. Review of Undergraduate Applications (Paper 3-19)

24.1. Dean Stokes, Director of Planning introduced the paper, with Bella Malins, Director of Access & Admissions comparing UCL undergraduate (UG) applications with the sector, and Katja Lamping, Director of Student Recruitment comparing UG applications across the international markets. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. UCL was 11% up on UG applications, compared to this time last year. The sector was up 2%, so UCL was continuing to prove a popular choice.
- b. UCL was 10% down on EU applications and 8% up on overseas applications, which was in line with the sector.
- c. Noted that less offers were being made to avoid another bulge. This was a strategic decision to ensure we would be close to target.
- d. Noted that guidance counsellors had been informed that offers would take longer this year and they understood the competitive market.
- e. EU markets were down, with the biggest falls from central and Eastern Europe: Hungary, Poland and Romania were down more than 20%. The exceptions were Germany, which increased by 4% and Cyprus which grew by 10%.
- f. Overseas saw the biggest growth, with a record number of applications: Saudi Arabia (25%), Thailand (22%), Australia (22%), China (17%) and Canada (16%).
- g. We have seen a decline in the overseas market in US (-12%), South Korea (-9%), Malaysia (-6%) and Hong Kong (-5%)

24.2. The following point was raised in discussion:

- a. The strategic approach to slowing down offers ensured the process was targeted and offers were given to the top applicants.

24.3. Operations Committee:

- a. Noted the report.

25. Confidential: Brand Merchandise Retail Options (Paper 3-20)

25.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

26. Change Plan (Paper 3-21)

26.1. Dean Stokes, Director of Planning introduced the paper setting out the proposal to formalise the Change Plan into the UCL Year Planner, to provide a practical forward view of upcoming deadlines and activities, to be reviewed at Operations Committee on a regular basis.

26.2. Comments were welcomed on the proposal:

- a. Noted that although the current version had an education focus the plan was to include a mix of deadlines and activities, including key estates deadlines.
- b. Noted that it was a very useful document and a tremendous piece of work.
- c. Important to ensure it was a live and dynamic document that colleagues would use.

26.3. Operations Committee:

- a. **Agreed** that this was an important first step, and to progress further.
- b. **Agreed/ACTION:** Dean Stokes, Director of Planning and Sarah Earl, Head of Centre of Excellence to produce one more iteration of the Change Plan for review by Operations Committee before rolling out further.

27. Inclusion (Paper 3-22)

27.1. Richard Jackson, Sustainability Director introduced the paper setting out the proposed approach to address the accessibility and inclusivity of our campus. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. Noted that the short-term resource was covered but that further incremental investment was necessary because of the scale of the work involved.
- b. Noted the competing challenges but the need to do more was recognised.

27.2. Operations Committee:

- a. Supported the proposed approach.
- b. **Agreed/ACTION:** Richard Jackson, Sustainability Director to develop the inclusive environments proposal, focusing on these four areas:
 - i. Establishment of an Accessibility Policy
 - ii. Review and establishment of Governance
 - iii. Key Performance Indicators
 - iv. Building Data

and to bring back a full access plan for consideration by Operations Committee.

28. Sustainability BIG Ideas (Paper 3-23)

- 28.1. Richard Jackson, Sustainability Director and Ben Stubbs, Senior Sustainability Manager introduced the paper setting out the three BIG ideas to kick-start the re-engagement exercise with staff and students around some of the main priorities and targets in the Sustainability Strategy:
- i. Building 'Switch off'
 - ii. Big Bike Week
 - iii. Big tidy up – this would be a high-profile event
- 28.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
- a. We could do a better job with switching off lights across campus.
 - b. Very supportive of the big tidy up as this was a health and safety issue as well as a sustainable issue.
 - c. Important to recycle, refurbish and reuse because of price hikes, as well as being sustainable.
 - d. Revenue opportunity from old IT equipment.
 - e. Time to consider travel in a different, more sustainable way.
 - f. Energy and building dashboard may help persuade colleagues to 'switch off'.
 - g. Important to stand together and support as leaders, and to include information on waste in the Leadership Briefing.
- 28.3. Operations Committee:
- a. Supported the approach.
 - b. **Agreed/ACTION:** Ben Stubbs, Senior Sustainability Manager to work with the Chair on a BIG tidy up event for Bidborough House.

29. Timetabling Plans for Next 2 Years (Paper 3-24)

- 29.1. Sian Minett, Director of Timetabling (Service Delivery and Improvement) introduced the paper, explaining that the first part recognised what had been achieved so far, around improvements in space utilisation, and improvements in data insight and systems, and the second part identified what still needed to be done in these four areas:
- i. Implementing timetabling/scheduling: recommended that we started now with a pilot in some areas.
 - ii. Establishing a single integrated timetabling team: noted that this was not about centralisation but was about bringing a group of timetabling professionals together as a team and embedding the timetabling

function in Faculties, taking Faculty Business Partnering to the next level. This would require an additional resource of 5 FTEs.

- iii. Teaching Space Strategy: currently teaching space was scattered over 61 buildings, creating security and accessibility issues. The importance of developing a clear teaching space strategy was noted.
- iv. Length of teaching day and structure of the academic year.

29.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. A challenging task, but supportive of the approach.
- b. Digital strategy and ensuring we had the right tools for the task.
- c. Specialist staff important, but also good to have broad knowledge.
- d. Important to address the policy and process of lecturer availability.
- e. Important to have rooms and space for research activity.
- f. Noted that the pilot would take place in Faculty of Population Health Sciences and there was some concern raised that the Faculty was not representative as it was the smallest Faculty, but also noted that because it was small it was ideal to use for a trial.
- g. Noted that once activity at UCL East started, there would be the added complexity of activity across two sites: Bloomsbury and UCL East.

29.3. Operations Committee:

- a. **Agreed** with the approach.
- b. Noted: that the paper would go to UMC for approval.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

30. Schedule of Works Across the Year (Paper 3-25)

- 30.1. Noted: Operations Committee noted that the Schedule of Works would be replaced by the Change Plan.

31. Events Policy (Paper 3-26)

- 31.1. **Approved:** Operations Committee approved the updated events policy.

32. Date of the next meeting

- 32.1. Thursday 10 March 2022, 10:00 – 12:00

Louise Moore, Secretary
February 2022