



## Operations Committee

Thursday 13 October 2022, 10:00 – 11:50

### Minutes

#### Present Members:

Andy Smith (Chair); Suzy Adcock; Deniz Akinci; Paul Ayris; Jeremy Barraud; Beth Beasant; Mike Brown; Georgina Cade; Katie Canada; Sara Collins; Natalie Conway; Sarah Cows; Donna Dalrymple; Ian Dancy; Geoff Dunk; Helen Fisher; Ian Galloway; Thea Gibbs; Claire Glen; Tansy Jones; Sarah Lawson; Natasha Lewis; Sian Lunt; Ciaran Moynihan; Julie Smith; Kathryn Walsh; Becky Whitham, Donna Williamson

#### Apologies:

Simon Buller  
Richard Jackson  
Alice Mortlock  
Aloma Onyemah  
Kate Pearce

#### In attendance:

For minute 5: Joanna Marshall-Cook, Head of Sustainability Programmes, and Louise Ellis, Consultant

For minute 6: Veronique Mizgailo, Head of Business Continuity, and Ray Sykes, Business Continuity Management Advisor

For minute 7: Clare Foyle, Planning Manager

For minute 8: Sian Minett, Director of Timetabling (Service Delivery and Improvement)

For minutes 1-12: Noel Caliste, Deputy Director of Operations attending as part of the Accelerate to Leadership Programme

#### Officer:

Louise Moore, Secretary

### Part I: Preliminary Business

#### 1. Minutes (Paper 1-01)

- 1.1. Operations Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 23 June 2022.

## **2. Matters Arising (Paper 1-02)**

2.1. Arising from minute 57.2e, Net Zero Plan for UCL: Claire Glen, Executive Director Research & Innovation Services to speak to Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation & Global Engagement) about the possibility of adding a sustainability case to research funding applications.

**Completed.**

2.2. Arising from minute 58.2b, UCL Year Planner and Emerging Change Overview: Jeremy Barraud, Director of Governance & Delivery, to share the findings from the RIGE Operations Committee Audit with Operations Committee.

**Completed:** On agenda for information, item 10, paper number 1-08.

2.3. Arising from minute 59.3b, Timetabling, Space Use and Cost of Space: Sian Minett, Director of Timetabling (Service Delivery and Improvement), to collect and share the data on unused booked space with Heads of Departments, Deans and DOOs, plus UMC and Operations Committee.

**Noted:** Data to be circulated shortly.

2.4. Arising from minute 59.3c, Timetabling, Space Use and Cost of Space: Fiona Ryland, Vice-President (Operations) and Ian Dancy, Executive Director of Operations, to focus on budgetary concerns.

**Completed.**

## **3. Terms of Reference and Membership (Paper 1-03)**

3.1. Operations Committee noted the updated terms of reference and membership.

3.2. Deniz Akinci, Union Affairs Officer, Sarah Lawson, Director of ISD (Interim) and Noel Caliste Deputy Director of Operations were welcomed to the meeting.

3.3. Noted that there was a vacancy for a nominee from VP (Strategy) and Clare Foyle, Planning Manager, was invited to attend for the whole meeting.

## **Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion**

### **4. Operations Committee going forwards**

4.1. Andy Smith, Interim Vice-President (Operations) and Chair explained the importance of the operational nature of Operations Committee to get things done. The following points were made:

- a. Operations Committee was the perfect forum to take forward hard and complex issues, and to seek solutions.
- b. It was right to worry about risk and to think carefully about mitigating factors.
- c. It was important to operationalise and to make initiatives happen.
- d. As a committee the importance of addressing real and present issues was raised, and members were encouraged to bring forward agenda ideas and to be active and not passive participants.

4.2. Operations Committee:

- a. Noted the comments and agreed to propose agenda items to Louise Moore, Committee Secretary.

**5. Tackling UCL's carbon footprint (Paper 1-04)**

5.1. Joanna Marshall-Cook, Head of Sustainability Programmes, and Louise Ellis, Consultant explained how they were operationalising the next steps to achieve net zero carbon. Colleagues from across UCL had been consulted over the summer to lock down some key decisions, and it was noted that a strategic business case would go through the committee cycle during the autumn term. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. To achieve net-zero the following Carbon emissions were included:
  - i. energy,
  - ii. organisational travel,
  - iii. waste and water.

Not included:

- i. staff and student commutes,
  - ii. student travel at the start and end of term,
  - iii. products and services,
  - iv. emissions from investments.
- b. The key areas to achieve net-zero were identified as:
  - i. Cultural change and ensuring that green impact was owned by the UCL community.
  - ii. Infrastructure and investment across the UCL estate.
  - iii. Reducing travel and incentivising colleagues to travel less.
  - iv. Ensuring that carbon emissions were offset in the most effective way.
- c. Three scenarios had been presented to UMC, and it was agreed to achieve the medium level of ambition of a 69% reduction in carbon by 2030.
- d. Agreed that in order to deliver, Faculties and Professional Services were essential to ensure success, and the following next steps were identified:
  - i. To devolve accountability to Faculties and Professional Services.
  - ii. As a collective, Faculties would be responsible for a 12% reduction in carbon, reducing energy by 26% and travel by 50%.

- iii. Professional Services were critical enablers with specific activities to deliver, alongside new policies and infrastructure delivery.
- iv. Sustainable UCL would be available to support and to provide high quality data.

5.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. International student travel: noted that this was out of scope for the net zero target, but small changes could be made such as encouraging our international students to stay in the UK over Easter.
- b. Staff travel: to cut down on optional travel where possible. Noted that the Russell Group was leading an active discussion on travel and would be exerting pressure not to travel where possible.
- c. Targets for Faculties: noted that targets for Faculties would be nuanced.
- d. Technology: noted that colleagues were looking at the supply chain and looking at more sustainable avenues. Training on technology, and identifying sustainable technology, would be coming over the coming months.
- e. Small wins: important to do the small changes too, such as remove light bulbs where possible.

5.3. Operations Committee:

- a. Noted that the strategic case would go through the committee cycle and come back to Operations Committee to look at implementation.
- b. **ACTIONS:** Joanna Marshall-Cook, Head of Sustainability Programmes to:
  - i. provide details of what colleagues can start doing now to reduce UCL's carbon footprint.
  - ii. share the data and savings of weekend and evening building closures.

**6. Business Continuity Management Policy (Paper 1-05)**

6.1. Veronique Mizgailo, Head of Business Continuity, presented the Business Continuity Management Policy for approval. She explained that as part of the proposal a working group would be established and would report to Operations Committee.

6.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. A question about the reporting process of the working group to Operations Committee was raised.  
Agreed/**ACTION:** Veronique Mizgailo, Head of Business Continuity, to discuss reporting from the working group to Operations Committee with Natasha Lewis, General Counsel.
- b. Suggested and agreed that Veronique Mizgailo, Head of Business Continuity, would join the Information Risk Governance Committee (IRGC).

- 6.3. Operations Committee:
- a. Endorsed the Business Continuity Management Policy and agreed to set up the working group.
  - b. Agreed to practice crisis response on an annual basis.
  - c. Noted that the incident plan would come to the November meeting of Operations Committee for approval.

**7. Operational Risk Update (Paper 1-06)**

- 7.1. Clare Foyle, Planning Manager, provided an overview of UCL's strategic risk and explained that the most risk exposure evolved around Estates, with the three categories of risk being:
1. Financial risk (mitigating actions were in place).
  2. Space availability (more difficult to mitigate against because of growth in the numbers of students and staff, and a reduction in available space).
  3. Maintenance of buildings (mitigating actions in place).

Noted that UCL's top strategic risks were:

- a. Inflation.
- b. Geopolitics.
- c. Staff dissatisfaction.
- d. Student dissatisfaction.
- e. Climate crisis.
- f. Cyber security.

- 7.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
- a. The risk to power supply over the winter months was rising and this was being escalated to the strategic risk register.
  - b. Noted that the risk of industrial action was rising.
  - c. Noted that an annual programme of mandatory training on cyber security was about to be rolled out to all staff.

**8. Timetabling implementing scheduling to address failings in rooming an Institutional timetable (Paper 1-07)**

- 8.1. Sian Minett, Director of Timetabling (Service Delivery and Improvement) introduced the paper, explaining that in response to a very difficult and frustrating year, the Provost had issued the challenge for improvement and required a response. The appetite for change was noted and there were options to make changes and improvements and a chance for input. The following points were made during the presentation:
- a. Proposal to place sensible limits on the curriculum and to reduce complexity. This was not to limit choice but to define pathways for students to take and to enable timetabling to be constructed around the pathways. Noted that this was a big cultural shift, and it would be extremely challenging to complete by February. Agreed that extra time

would be needed, but key areas or a percentage could be targeted by February.

- b. Proposal to collect data on lecturer availability. Noted that agreed criteria and consistency across departments was necessary and that this should be done sensitively and in consultation with academics and the Unions.

8.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. Agreed that the proposals were sensible and beneficial, and members were in support. Agreed that additional time was needed to complete properly.
- b. Noted that the changes would have an impact on the prospectus, and this should be factored into the plans.
- c. Noted that any data capture may place additional burden on departments and any element that could be achieved in a self-service way, rather than in a data gathering way, would be welcomed.

8.3. Operations Committee:

- a. Agreed that it would be very difficult to complete in one year, and the response to the Provost was of strong support, but to complete in stages, with the aim to finish in 2-3 years.
- b. Agreed/**ACTIONS:**
  - i. Andy Smith, Vice-President (Operations), to inform the Provost that trying to implement the level of change necessary in one year would be difficult and 2-3 years was more achievable.
  - ii. Sian Minett, Director of Timetabling (Service Delivery and Improvement), Sarah Cows, Executive Director of Student Services and Registrar and Beth Beasant, Interim Executive Director, Faculty Operations, to agree what to focus on in the first year to have maximum impact, to engage key colleagues and to bring back to Operations Committee and University Management Committee (UMC).

## 9. Start of academic year: lessons learnt

9.1. Sarah Cows, Executive Director of Student Services and Registrar, and Ian Dancy, Executive Director of Operations, gave an update on the start of the academic year, high-lighting achievements as well as suggesting what could be improved.

9.2. Positives included:

- a. UCL 101 talks were delivered by our students and were very well attended. The Logan Hall was full.
- b. Good attendance at the international student support pre-arrival sessions.
- c. Students were met on arrival at Heathrow, St Pancras and other hubs. This initiative was launched this year and was very well received. The service was under review with the aim to increase the meeting locations.

- d. The 'meet your mentor' sessions went well.
- e. Student ambassadors from across UCL were used in queue management and bulk end enrolment and were very effective.
- f. Daily team huddle worked very well and was a good example of bringing colleagues together to sort out issues as they arose.

9.3 Areas for improvement, or to do differently included:

- a. A review of student status in Portico, and to make the systems easier.
- b. To look at the wording used when collecting data.
- c. To reduce queues for everyone, and particularly for students with disabilities.
- d. To improve the system for ID cards and collection.
- e. To look at alternative venues, as student numbers had now grown too large for the Wilkins building.
- f. To look at delivering welcoming timetables to students in advance.
- g. Biggest issue was the over recruitment of students. Noted that a paper was going to UMC next week with the recommendation that offer making should be stricter.

9.4 The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. Coordination of events was important as there had been a lot of overlap of central and departmental events.
- b. External factors should be fed into the algorithm for admission/offer rates.
- c. UCL East Pool Street would open post reading week and would be available for teaching from 14 November.

9.5 Operations Committee

- a. Noted/**ACTION**: that a paper with the lessons learnt from this year and preparations for next year, would go to UMC and Operations Committee.

### **Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information**

#### **10. RIGE Operations Committee Audit of achievements, priorities and challenges**

10.1. Operations Committee noted the paper.

#### **11. AOB**

11.1. Noted that a discussion at Financial Performance and Planning Committee around anomalous arrangements led to a suggestion that these should be picked up by Operations Committee. Agreed to bring these items to Operations Committee, if operational in nature.

**12. Date of the next meeting**

12.1. Thursday 24 November 2022, 10:00 – 11:50

Louise Moore  
October 2022