Operations Committee

29 June 2023, 10:00 – 11:50

Minutes

Present Members:
Aimie Chapple (Chair); Suzy Adcock; Deniz Akinci; Jeremy Barraud; Beth Beasant; Mike Brown; Simon Buller; Georgie Cade; Sara Collins; Ian Dancy; Geoff Dunk; Helen Fisher; Clare Foyle; Marie Gallagher; Ian Galloway; Thea Gibbs; Claire Glen; Katy Hamilton; Lesley Houfe; Tansy Jones; Sarah Lawson; Natasha Lewis; Sian Lunt; Ciaran Moynihan; Kate Pearce; Kathryn Walsh; Becky Whitham; Donna Williamson.

Apologies:
Paul Ayris
Sarah Cowls
Megan Gerrie
Richard Jackson
Alice Mortlock
David Pacey
Andy Smith
Julie Smith
Margaret Spink

In attendance:
For minute 49, Mike Kelly, Head of Timetabling (interim).
For minute 50, Veronique Mizgailo, Head of Business Continuity.

Officer(s):
Louise Moore, Secretary

Part I: Preliminary Business

46.   Welcome to new members

46.1. The Chair officially welcomed the following new members to Operations Committee:

a. Megan Gerrie, Director of Projects & Planning, with attendance in the capacity of Chief of Staff or nominee. Membership was formally approved by UMC on 17 May 2023.
b. Lesley Houfe, Interim EDI Director.
c. David Pacey, University Secretary.
d. Margaret Spink, Transformation Advisor (PS Hub).

47.   Minutes (Paper 6-30)

47.1. Operations Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held on 12 May 2023.

48.   Matters Arising (Paper 6-31)

48.1. Arising from minute 41.3c, Inclusive Environments Action Plan Update: Pip Jackson, Head of Inclusive Environments, to take forward the suggestions listed under 41.2.
Response: In progress: Ian Dancy, Executive Director of Operations, and Pip Jackson, Head of Inclusive Environments, met with Megan Gerrie, Director of Projects & Planning, President & Provosts Office, on 5 June and follow up is planned. A presentation was made to the DA forum. Links with other strategies have been added to the plan and progress continues.

48.2. Arising from minute 42.3b, Confidential: Talentlink – the first six months: Angela Clark, Head of Recruitment, to take forward the suggestions listed under 42.2.
Response: In progress.

48.3. Arising from minute 43.2b, Timetabling and Facilities Update for 23/24: Mike Kelly, Head of Timetabling (interim), and Kjell Horn, Deputy Director of Faculty Estates, to work with the team to address the furniture supply chain issue and to provide an update at the next meeting.
Response/ACTION: Noted that although Timetabling was on the agenda, the Facilities update had been postponed, so the furniture supply chain issue would be picked up at a future meeting.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

49.   Timetabling Update for 2023/24 (Paper 6-32)

49.1. Mike Kelly, Head of Timetabling (interim) introduced the paper and explained that progress was ahead, compared to the same point last year, and the next stage was to room all events of 1-4 weeks duration. Availability of rooms with large flat floorspace remained elusive both internally and externally and was a risk. Noted that additional funding was needed due to the need of large flat

floorspace, and the reliance on external providers who had limited availability and had increased their costs.

49.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
   a. Noted that there was a very tight budget and additional funding would need to come from reprioritising existing budgets. Noted that Birkbeck had increased their prices by 15-20%, and new external providers were expensive and had limited availability.
   Agreed: Mike Kelly, Head of Timetabling (interim) and Kate Pearce, Director of Finance Business Partnering, would discuss further outside the meeting.
   b. Looking beyond the 23-24 academic year, the lack of rooms with large flat floorspace would continue to be an issue, because of the heavy reliance on external provers and increased programme size.
   c. Noted that timetabling was a difficult job in challenging circumstances and the team were doing very well. Noted that UCL had space, but it needed to be used better. Noted that the Better Use of Space Portfolio was looking at solutions to improve space usage at UCL, and looking at ways to increase the flat floor teaching space available.
   d. Noted that the timetabling team had experienced instances of departments overbooking, and then cancelling space later. The team were challenging this behaviour to improve the situation for everyone. It was discussed and agreed that giving visibility to this poor behaviour would help improve the situation and Operations Committee members could help with this.
   e. The key challenges for timetabling, outside teaching, included research activities and conference activities.

49.3. Operations Committee:
   a. Noted the update and thanked the timetabling team for their hard work and increased sharing of statistics, which were helpful for departments to see.
   b. Agreed: to call out poor room booking behaviour, and Operations Committee members to help with this where possible.

50.   Business Continuity Update (Paper 6-33)

50.1. Veronique Mizgailo, Head of Business Continuity, introduced the paper, highlighting the progress made to date with help from Operations Committee members. To progress further, the focus would be on governance and cultural change, as well as showcasing the service and benefits to the university. Once support and endorsement had been received from Operations Committee, the next step was to go to UMC.

50.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
   a. Noted that it was important for business continuity to become engrained in our business and was our collective responsibility.

b. Noted that Gold, Silver and Bronze command training was expensive, but was critically important and the investment was well made.

c. The synergies between business continuity and the following areas were explored:

   i. The links between business continuity and risk management were strong. It was discussed and agreed to broaden the scope of the business continuity paper to include risk management.

   ii. Important to take the lessons learnt from Gold, Silver, Bronze during Covid, and to include in the paper.

   iii. Noted that cyber safe simulations had already taken place with Gold command and further plans were in place, which were important to include in the paper.

   iv. **Agreed/ACTION:** Veronique Mizgailo, Head of Business Continuity, to work with Clare Foyle, Strategy Delivery Account Manager, Kathryn Walsh, Executive Director, UCL Innovation & Enterprise, Jeremy Barraud, Director of Operations for RIGE, and Sarah Lawson, Chief Information Security Officer & Deputy CIO, on increasing the scope of the business continuity paper to include risk management, lessons learnt during Covid and cyber security.

50.3. Operations Committee:

a. Noted that to give sufficient time to include the updates listed under 50.2.c.iv, the timescale would be:
   - Paper updated over the summer.
   - Consideration by UMC at the start of the autumn term.
   - Training scheduled in November.

b. Agreed to take the paper forward to UMC, once updated to include risk management, lessons learnt during Covid and cyber security.

c. Agreed to embed governance frameworks.

d. **ACTION:** Ian Dancy, Executive Director of Operations, to check with Nick McGhee, Head of Governance, when the business continuity and risk paper could be considered by UMC.

51. Confidential: Risk Management and Operational Risks (Paper 6-34)

51.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

52. Timetabling Policy (Paper 6-35)

52.1. Operations Committee approved the updated timetabling policy.

53.   Confidential: Security

53.1.   Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

54.   Marking and Assessment Boycott: Student Results

54.1.   Noted that due to the marking and assessment boycott (MAB), students would be without their results on 6 July (when students would expect to receive confirmation they could progress to their next year of study, or would expect to receive their degree outcome and award). For students without results amongst Russell Group institutions, the institutions were engaging directly with each other. For students without results coming into UCL, it would be for Faculty and Departments to make decisions. Noted that a set of FAQs would be available later this week and dedicated phone lines would be set up to answer student queries.

55.   Date of next meeting

55.1.   Dates for 23/24 academic year would be circulated shortly.

55.2.   Louise Moore was thanked for her work as secretary to Operations Committee over the last two years and it was noted that Operations Committee would be serviced by the Governance and Secretariat team going forwards.

Louise Moore
June 2023