



People and Culture Committee

Wednesday 21 June 2023, 2pm -3.50pm

Minutes

Present Members:

Kate Brooks; Georgina Cade; Sara Collins; Donna Dalrymple (Chair); Professor Alison Diduck; Professor Peter Fonagy; Felipe Fouto; Marie Gallagher; Lesley Houfe; Megan Gerrie; Professor Martin Oliver; Alison Saunders; Professor Jolene Skordis; Martin Wedlake; Donna Williamson; Joanne Wilkes; Professor Steve Wilson.

Apologies:

Professor Kathleen Armour; Dr Tim Beasley-Murray; Kirstie Buckridge; Aimie Chapple; Paul Clark; Natalie Conway; Professor Adam Dennett; Professor Paola Lettieri; Shelley McPherson; Fiona Naughton; Professor Martin Oliver; Professor Geraint Rees; Professor Anthony Smith; Ms Tania Trosini

In attendance:

Sharron Alexander; Angela Clark; Rebecca Edwards; Stephanie Esuola; Loleta Fahad; Mike Kelly; Paulina Kolańczyk-Zwierz; Harriet Lilley; Stuart McLellan; Kae Ohene-Yeboah; Vincent Preece; Lorren Rea; Claire Rowlinson; Ankur Shah; Catherine Stow; Emma Todd.

Officer(s):

Ms Hannah Swallow (Secretary)

Part I: Preliminary Business

1. Minutes (3-01)

1.1. People and Culture Committee approved the minutes of the meeting held by the People and Culture Committee on Wednesday 1 March 2023. There were no matters arising.

2. Updates to PCC membership (3-02)

2.1. Miss Donna Dalrymple, Chief People Officer (Chair) confirmed the updates which have been made to the membership and welcomed the new members to the committee.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

3. Confidential: Talentlink – first 6 months (3-03)

- 3.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 3.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

4. HR Function Development – Emerging case for Change (3-04)

- 4.1. Stuart McLellan, Head of HR, Transformation outlined the HR function development work as of June 2023 and the emerging case for change which has been approved by the development steering group. The following points were made during the presentation:
 - a. A new operating model for HR is being defined and the reasons for doing so, the requirements and how it aligns with other work at UCL is set out in the paper.
 - b. A new operating model for Professional service functions is a priority in the UCL strategy. Changes are required to the operating models to ensure they align with the vision and strategy. Processes should be clear, owned end to end, improve financial sustainability and improve efficiency.
 - c. A target operating model should be available by the end of August but to reach this point, research and planning needs to be undertaken. This is currently being done through a steering group, data analysis and quick improvements. The project is moving into the early decision stage and how changes may be implemented.
 - d. The plan is to keep the operating model high level and simple with an end to end supporting function and service focused. It also needs to identify the HR activity that are being undertaken at departmental level.
 - e. There is data available from the professional services hub on transactions that take place which show high volumes with top categories in lifecycle contracts and pay and benefits. Faculties have been asked what activity is being undertaken and by which roles. The team are undertaking interviews, compiling a day in the life to get a sense of where time is being spent on HR activity.
 - f. Findings so far show 1% of faculty staff are involved in HR, yet 40% of HR activity happens in faculties. The coordination between the professional services hub and faculties could be improved.
 - g. The next steps for this work are to undertake more research work with the Faculty of Life and Medical sciences. There will be work with business partners and generating early thinking around future operating models.
- 4.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
 - a. The information was welcomed and applauded for clarity.
 - b. It was asked whether it would be possible for other faculties to be involved. It was suggested that this would be possible.

4.3. People and Culture committee welcomed and noted the update.

5. Mandatory Training Update (3-05)

5.1. Ankur Shah, Digital Learning manager and Catherine Stow, Interim Director of HR Business Partnering presented an update on UCL mandatory training. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. The paper highlighted what has been done since KPMG audit on mandatory training. The committee was asked to approve some updated activities for the improvement required.
- b. The KPMG audit awarded a good assessment which gave partial assurance with some improvement required across role specific training and mandatory training. The compliance rate in the audit was at 26%. This has been improved to 49%. However, the audit required this to be improved to 95%. The committee was asked to approve the action plan put forward in the paper.
- c. There is now a compliance dashboard available together with SharePoint resources, the team is working with SMEs on monthly basis and looking at how compliance can be improved on particular training courses. There is a commitment to NHS trusts and working towards staff who work in both the NHS and UCL, only having to complete particular training once.

5.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. The commitment to NHS trusts was acknowledged but it was asked whether any other partners would be included in this. It was agreed that this could be an area of developing work to identify other partnerships where this could be the case.
- b. It was noted that this has been a huge piece of work and the hard work of everyone involved was acknowledged.

People and Culture Committee approved action plan.

6. Scheduling Transformation Update – Policy for Staff who Undertake Teaching (3-06)

6.1. Steph Esuola, Programme Director, Scheduling Transformation presented the update on the scheduling transformation policy. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. An outline of where the scheduling transformation project is currently at was provided. The teaching constraints have been agreed, it has been added into timetabling policies, the EDI concerns are being considered and HR policies are being incorporated into the policy.
- b. The Scheduling transformation project started in January 2023 and the plan is to run for 3 years. The aim is to produce timetables earlier, more efficiently with automation, reducing administrative burden and making better use of space and facilities. It was explained that there was a critical incident last year where UCL was at risk of not delivering timetable on time and not having enough rooms for students teaching, forcing it online

which would be a breach of contract. This was avoided, but work needs to be done to improve the situation and avoid another incident.

- c. The new approach will be used for the timetable for 2024-25. The data gathering will begin in term 2 of 2023-24. Data will be collected at a central level to ensure consistency and an equitable approach to manage availability of staff.
- d. The team are working with representatives across faculties and consulting with different groups.
- e. A draft academic impact statement has been reviewed by the executive committee of Academic Board. The committee gave feedback and considerations to be made and the team have begun the process of scenario testing to demonstrate the impacts of the proposed changes.

6.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. It was suggested that this should be taken to Academic leadership group ahead of Academic Board. It was confirmed that this would be looked into.
- b. It was asked how anomalies would be managed. It was advised that as many data points as possible would be pulled in to compensate against anomalies, but some will need to be manual and not able to automate everything.
- c. It was raised that the policy covers disability but what extent does it cover other protected characteristics and it should be considered that there may be sensitive data which people may not want to share. It may be beneficial for an Equality impact assessment to be undertaken. It was confirmed that this policy does not overwrite any other HR policies and they should all be incorporated. It was asked for more support on which policies to include. This discussion will be taken forwards outside of the committee.
- d. It was noted that it will be difficult to separate formal constraints, necessary adjustments and personal preferences and how can these be taken into account. This will need to be assessed when the requests begin coming in.
- e. It was asked whether if timetables are available earlier, how will this affect booking of other spaces for other events. If timetabling can be scheduled earlier, it should mean that it will be possible to schedule other types of events earlier too.
- f. It was noted that there may be some pushback from departments if not done in the appropriate way due to complexities across modules and multiple staff involvement. It was urged that a pilot could be beneficial.
- g. It was noted that temporal constraints are being included but will spatial needs be considered. For example, if someone has mobility issues, particular rooms may work better from an accessibility perspective. It was confirmed that this would be considered when assigning spaces.

- 6.3. People and Culture Committee noted the work and approved for further consultations. Further updates should be brought to the committee.

7. Confidential: Accelerate to leadership update (3-07)

- 7.1. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
7.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

8. Recent Updates to Research Excellence Framework (REF) (Oral Update)

- 8.1. Emma Todd presented an oral update on recent updates to the REF. The following points were made during the presentation:
- a. It was confirmed that this topic will be brought to a future meeting in more detail.
 - b. It was explained that the REF is worth 160 million pounds a year for UCL which equates to just over 9% of UCL income and in addition, there is the importance of reputational value of performing well in the REF. The updates are a reduction in weighting on outputs, a new category entitled “people culture and environment” which will count for 25% on par with impact category and the intention to use HESA staff data to determine the number of outputs that we are allowed to submit. This will also include research enabling staff which will be an additional challenge in terms of data quality.
 - c. A consultation will be run by the four funding bodies over the autumn term.
 - d. There will need to be some work done on a) aligning people and culture-focussed activity in the research space and b) improving the quality of HESA return to reduce bureaucracy in long term and investigate what needs to be included. A further update will be provided in November.
- 8.2. The following points were made in discussion:
- a. It was suggested that this links to the timetabling discussion earlier in the meeting (point 6) and it needs to be noted that teaching impacts research.
 - b. It was asked how research enabling staff would be categorised and it was agreed that this would need more thought.
 - c. It was agreed that the HESA data and improving that data was key.
- 8.3. People and Culture committee noted the update.

9. AOB

- 9.1. It was noted that there would be a special meeting of People and Culture Committee on 7 July 2023 to discuss the reward strategy.

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Hannah Swallow
21 June 2023