



Research, Innovation and Global Engagement Committee

Thursday 8th February 2024, 10:00am

South Wing Council Room with facilities to join the meeting online via MS Teams

Minutes

Present Members:

Professor Geraint Rees (Chair); Professor Lynn Ang; Dr Paul Ayris; Jeremy Barraud; Michael Brown; Sarah Chaytor; Andrew Cooper; Professor Carsten Gerner-Beuerle; Megan Gerrie; Alex Hall; June Hedges; Professor Jacqui Glass; Claire Glen; Professor Jennifer Hudson; Dr Jane Kinghorn; Sarah Lawson; Dr Nick McNally; Martin Moyle; Ciaran Moynihan; Professor Courtenay Norbury; Professor James Phillips; Issy Smith; Professor Cheryl Thomas KC; Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker; Emma Todd; Nicholas Tyndale; Kirsty Walker; Dr Kathryn Walsh; Professor Andrew Wills; Professor Peter Zusi

Apologies:

Professor Ibrahim Abubakar; Professor David Bogle; Professor Stella Bruzzi; Sarah Cows; Rebecca Edwards; Fran Hartop; Professor Simon Walker-Samuel

In attendance:

For Minutes 28-35: Adam Cresswell, Head of Reporting and Evaluation and UCL REF Manager

For Minutes 28-35: Rachel Fishwick, Head of Strategic Partnerships for the Faculties of Brain Sciences and Population Health Sciences (vice-Professor Abubakar)

For Minutes 28-35: Professor Sue Hamilton, Vice-Dean Research and Global Engagement, SHS Faculty

For Minutes 33-35: Dr Anne Lane, CEO, UCL Business Ltd

For Minutes 33-35: Roger de Montfort, Managing Director, UCL Consultants Ltd

Officer:

Rachel Port, Governance Manager: Research Integrity

Part I: Preliminary Business

28. Minutes

- 28.1. RIGEC approved the minutes of the meeting held on 14 December 2023 [Minutes, 16-27, 2023-24].
- 28.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

29. Matters Arising

- 29.1. Arising from Minute 18.1, the revised UCL Research Integrity Annual Statement 2022-23 had been approved via Chair's Action and would be submitted for formal approval by Council at its meeting to be held on 15 February 2024.
- 29.2. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.
- 29.3. Exempt from publication, please see confidential minutes.

Part II: Strategic Items for Discussion

30. Chair's Report

- 30.1. The Chair gave an oral report on relevant developments since the last RIGEC meeting and the following points were made:
 - a. The UK had agreed a deal to associate to Horizon Europe in September 2023. UCL researchers were continuing to submit applications to Horizon Europe although there was a shortfall across the UK. It was noted that there was intense scrutiny at a national level about take up of the scheme and if all available monies were not used, the value in associating with this funding scheme could be queried.
 - b. UKRI had launched a funding opportunity to identify and select organisations with the ability to host and operate large-scale advanced supercomputers for Artificial Intelligence (AI) research. This followed the 2023 Autumn Statement where some £500 million in compute for AI was available over the next two financial years. The call for submissions would end on 13 February 2024.
 - c. It was reported that the RIGE Operations Committee that was a formal sub-committee of RIGEC had been disestablished as its work was now covered by RIGEC or had been transferred elsewhere. The Chair thanked members for their work on this Group.
 - d. The Chair was pleased to report that Professor Nick Wood, Institute of Neurology, was to take over as Chair of the Clinical Research Governance

Committee for an initial period. The Group had not met for some time and its Terms of Reference and membership would be revamped so it could be the centre of academic input to and oversight of clinical governance at UCL.

31. Update on REF2029 and UCL's Future REF Action Plan (3-17)

31.1. Adam Cresswell, Head of Reporting and Evaluation and UCL REF Manager introduced the summary of recent updates to the rules for the next REF exercise and their possible impact on UCL, along with an update on UCL's Future REF Action Plan. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. The UK Higher Education Funding Bodies published 'Initial Decisions Next Steps' an update on the proposed rules for the next REF exercise in December 2023. The major decision was an extension of the timing of the next REF exercise, to be known as REF2029, with results published in December 2029 with a likely submission deadline of 24 November 2028. However, a number of the funding bodies' decisions required further clarification.
- b. A pilot for the expanded People, Culture and Environment (PCE) element of submissions would be run this year with applications for pilot HEIs currently being sought, and UCL was likely to participate in the pilot. In parallel, further work had been commissioned on indicators relating to the PCE element given concerns about how it would be measured.
- c. UCL's REF Strategy Group was reconvened in November 2023 and would lead in all matters related to REF, and regular updates and risk indicators would be submitted to RIGEC.
- d. In relation to UCL's REF Action Plan, the Impact Module in UCL's Research Publications Service system was under development; a consultant had been commissioned to facilitate a project related to Equality, Diversity and Inclusions in the REF; and a UCL Task and Finish Group would be established to explore reporting on PCE data, and that would require an academic lead.

31.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. In terms of eligibility for those staff on teaching contracts, it was noted that within the Faculty of Laws there was no requirement for them to produce outputs, but there was a soft expectation that such staff would undertake research. Moreover, SSESS had a number of linguists in a similar situation. The UCL REF Team were aware of teaching contract issues and any conditions when such staff would be eligible would revolve around UCL's HESA data return and reference to research in individual job descriptions.
- b. In terms of the HESA data, it was suggested that Heads of Department be kept informed about the return given it would be used to determine the

volume measure also the decision regarding joint submissions with partner institutions (notably Birkbeck and Institute of Zoology) would need to be clarified, with decisions fed back to the relevant stakeholders.

- c. In relation to the PCE element of submissions, it was considered that some areas were considered very likely to be required for inclusion ahead of any formal guidance in this area. Members noted the volume of potential material in this area and it was suggested that templates be developed to gather information on research culture, especially in relation to EDI. It was proposed that a communication be sent to all Faculty Vice-Deans (Research) to indicate the research culture information that was likely to be required for inclusion for REF2029 so departments could start to collate their material.
- d. In terms of the research culture pilot, the HEIs would be selected in March 2024 and 8 Units of Assessment (UoAs) would be covered as part of their work.
- e. It was suggested that the Vitae report “Research Culture Initiatives in the UK” (available at: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/UKRI-180124-ResearchCultureInitiativesInTheUK.pdf>) and its framework set out in the report could underpin the research culture consultation at both the funding bodies and institutional levels. It was considered that the framework would inform the research culture indicators.
- f. It was noted that further work was needed around breaking the link between individual staff members and minimum and maximum outputs that could be submitted and unit submissions. It was noted that the focus of REF2029 was about the research by the whole institution, nevertheless this required culture change and anxiety at the level of individual was recognised. It was noted also that there was a lack of clarity from Research England in this area but decisions about the non-inclusion of staff and/or outputs at UCL was not related to an individual’s status in the institution.
- g. For those individuals that were not eligible for submission to REF2029, it was suggested that work could be undertaken with Human Resources and Organisational Development to ensure consistent messaging. It was noted that the issue of how departments and faculties managed such situations was raised during the last REF exercise.
- h. It was anticipated that a UCL REF Operations Group would be established in due course but that the Main Panel Group would not be set up for some time internally.
- i. In relation to UoA alignment, it was anticipated that a separate meeting would be held with relevant parties to decide the best way forward for UCL in certain UoAs in due course.

31.3. RIGEC:

- a. Proposed that the Director of Research Culture and UCL REF Manager prepare some guidance for Faculty Vice-Deans (Research) about

research culture information that was likely to be required for inclusion in UCL's REF2029 submissions.

- b. Received the update on the REF2029 and the UCL Future REF Action Plan.

32. Annual Report on the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers (3-18)

32.1. Emma Todd, Director of Research Culture, introduced the Annual Report outlining UCL's activity in the three principles of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers of: research environment, employment and professional development. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. UCL became a signatory of the Concordat in 2019. The Annual Report was a reporting requirement and preparation of the document had passed from Organisational Development to the Research Culture team internally.
- b. The reporting for the Concordat aligned with UCL's research culture roadmap.
- c. RIGEC was asked to act as the governing body to approve the report before its publication.

32.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. Members welcomed the report and noted that it was useful to see all the work that had been undertaken in one place. It was noted, however, that there was no scope to cover impact within the annual report template.
- b. The report would be published on the UCL Organisational Development webpages for now, and would be publicly available. It was suggested the report be shared internally with Faculty Deans and Directors of Operations as well as Council, as RIGEC was acting on their behalf as the governing body to approve the report, to also increase awareness of the work being undertaken.

32.3. RIGEC:

- a. Approved the Annual Report on the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers.
- b. Endorsed the proposal that the Annual Report be submitted to the April meeting of Council for its members to note.
- c. Endorsed the proposal that the Annual Report be shared with Faculty Deans and Directors of Operations for information.

33. UCL Business Ltd Annual Report 2022/23 (3-19)

33.1. Dr Anne Lane, CEO, UCL Business Ltd introduced the Annual Report for financial year 2022/23. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. UCLB had published its first *Impact* report yesterday (<https://www.uclb.com/impact/>) to mark its 30th anniversary. It was being promoted via UCLB's social media channels as well as being shared with its spinouts, partners, funders and other external stakeholders and throughout UCL.
- b. UCLB had raised £2.85billion in external investment by spinouts in 5 years. UCL was ranked second in the UK for external investment.
- c. UCL was also recognised as a sector leader in intellectual property and commercialisation in the Knowledge Exchange Framework (KEF) 3 exercise. UCLB provided a service provision in this area and had recently recruited a Marketing Director.
- d. UCLB did not intend to receive a management fee next year given its income received in 2022/23 was almost double the management fee paid.

33.2. The following points were raised in discussion:

- a. UCL did not need to subsidise UCLB's activities, but it was queried whether UCL was in fact under-paying for its services.
- b. It was considered that UCLB's biomedical activities were doing well with some 22 therapeutics in development.
- c. UCLB was keen to build its portfolio in the non-biomedical areas in the future. It would also like to increase its commercialisation activities although the future shape of UCLB required consideration.
- d. Next year's report would include benchmarking of activities in the UK and at international levels.
- e. It was noted that internal communications about UCLB were difficult and the CEO welcome help from RIGEC to increase awareness of its activities.

33.3. RIGEC received the UCL Business Ltd Annual Report 2022/23.

34. UCL Consultants Ltd Annual Report 2022/23 (3-20)

34.1. Roger de Montfort, Managing Director, UCL Consultants Ltd, introduced the Annual Report for financial year 2022/23. The following points were made during the presentation:

- a. Turnover had substantially increased from £32m in 2021/22 to £43m in 2022/23, with 875 live projects of which 486 were new. UCLC had paid £23.3m over to UCL.
- b. In terms of consultancy revenue by UCL's peer institutions, UCLC was way ahead by some £20m.
- c. It was noted that UCLC put people at the centre of its Values and Mission statement and strived to make it easy for internal and external clients to engage in consultancy and bespoke short courses.
- d. UCLC had diversified its consultancy activity and increased its bespoke short course activity that had increased overall income to £2.1m.

- e. The key drivers of growth in 2022/23 had been large scale projects for the UK Department of Education and international capacity development projects. This included its fourth major teacher training contract to improve Modern Foreign Language uptake in schools and pass rates.
 - f. In terms of maximising the impact of consultancy and capacity development, UCLC had some 300 separate clients with new consultancy engagements signed with clients based in 47 countries. UCLC would work with colleagues across RIGEC to streamline data capture and reporting for the REF2029 exercise.
- 34.2. The following points were raised in discussion:
- a. It was noted that UCLC's bespoke short course offer was distinct from the traditional executive education offer.
 - b. As part of its executive education offer, UCL had two new centres with the School of Management and Global Business School for Health. It was considered that there was demand for executive education courses but the issue of capacity in terms of delivery remained.
 - c. In relation to Due Diligence with new clients, it was noted that UCLC considered sector, country, and financial risks. Any potential country risks would be considered with Global Engagement. In addition, UCLC worked closely in this area with UCLB.
 - d. In terms of consultancy activities by peer institutions, it was known that other institutions had experienced in developing consultancy and UCLC did not view them as competition.
 - e. It was suggested that UCLC's Annual Report could also be flagged to UMC and that Faculty Deans be made aware of its capabilities.
- 34.3. RIGEC received the UCL Consultants Ltd Annual Report 2022/23.

Part III: Other Business for Approval or Information

35. Date of the next meeting

- 35.1. The next meeting of RIGEC would take place on Thursday 18th April 2024 at 10:00am-12 noon and be hybrid in the South Wing G12 Council Room.

Rachel Port
Governance Manager: Research Integrity
March 2024