



## STUDENT RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS AND FUNDING COMMITTEE

25 June 2019

### MINUTES

*PRESENT:*

Professor Anthony Smith (*Chair*)

Ms Wendy Appleby, Dr Simon Banks, Dr Julie Evans, Mr Neil Green, Mr Kevin King, Ms Collette Lux, Ms Bella Malins, Ms Angharad Milenkovic, Professor Michael Munday, Ms Julie Rolls, Dr David Steven and Ms Olga Thomas,

*In attendance:* Professor John Mullan (for Professor Stella Bruzzi), Mr Kris Ilic (for Item 18) and Mr Rob Traynor (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from: Dr Tracey Allen, Ms Fernanda Bates, Professor Stella Bruzzi, Professor Mark Emberton, Dr Elinor Jones, Professor Norbert Pachler, Ms Katy Redfern, Dr David Sim and Professor Nigel Titchener-Hooker

*Key to abbreviations:*

BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CAM	Communications and Marketing
CoP	Community of Practice (TOPS)
DBS	Disclosure and Barring Service
EdCom	Education Committee
OfS	Office for Students
StRAFC	Student Recruitment, Admissions and Funding Committee
TOPS	Transforming our Professional Services
UG	Undergraduate

### PART 1: PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

#### 13 MINUTES OF 17 DECEMBER 2018 MEETING

[*StRAFC Minutes 1-12, 2018-19*].

13.1 **Approved** – the Minutes of the StRAFC meeting held on 17 December 2018.

## 14 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

### 14A Enabling Online Programme Delivery (Admissions) – Proposed Changes to the Academic Manual

(Minute 7, 17.12.2018)

14A.1 **Noted** - the proposed changes to the Academic Manual (Chapter 1: Student Recruitment and Admissions Framework) to enable four starting points each session for on-line programme was noted by Education Committee at its meeting on 25 February 2019 (*EdCom Minute 50, 25.02.2019*). The amendment will appear in the Academic Manual when published for 2019-20.

## PART 2: MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

### 15 ADMISSIONS UPDATE

(PAPER 2-01)

15.1 **Received** – Paper 2-01 on the Undergraduate Intake Forecast for 2019-20 by the Director of Access and Admissions, who reported:

- a) Faculties had been provided with comprehensive modelling data and the paper summarised this and an institutional overview in two tables which showed the anticipated position for enrolments.
- b) This was similar to last year, with UCL expected to be around 550 students short of the overall target (-443 for UK, -26 for EU and -81 for Overseas). The target figures were higher than last year, especially for Overseas and were rather ambitious. In order to meet them UCL would need to take near-miss applicants again.
- c) There were continuing discussions between Access and Admissions, the Planning Office and Finance Division in changing the process for targets and their oversight and ensuring that changes in the figures were not missed or lost track of, which had been a problem in some faculties this year.

15.2 The following points were noted in the discussion:

- a) It was asked whether faculties which achieved the target figures might be able to move “surplus” applicants from over-subscribed programmes for programmes which had not met the target. This would be discussed by Access and Admissions and the Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs) in August who would consider whether faculties could go over the target a little to fill any programme that might have been under it.
- b) There was some concern that changes to “A” level Mathematics curriculum might have lowered the grades being achieved by students. This would need to be considered once the A level results were out and the overall position known.
- c) It was suggested that some thought needed to be given to ensuring that the planning discussions held in the Autumn, which were highly detailed

in setting the target figures, were not undermined by a less rigorous process in the Spring, when targets were reviewed.

- d) It was noted that detailed discussions were required on meeting the 2019 targets, but the overall solution was as last year, to look at high quality students through Adjustment to make up the shortfall. However, it was agreed that UCL should continue to stay out of Clearing for practical and reputational reasons.

## 16 ADMISSIONS EQUALITY STATEMENTS

(PAPER 2-02)

- 16.1 **Received** – Paper 2-02 from the Director of Access and Admissions, outlining a proposal to change the wording of the equality statement in the introductory paragraphs of the admissions policy, to also cover the Access UCL scheme which will start from 2019. This would change the wording of the policy from:

*In the recruitment and selection of students the only consideration must be that the individual meets, or is likely to meet, the requirements of the programme or course....*

To (additional text in bold):

*In the recruitment and selection of students the only consideration must be that the individual meets, or is likely to meet, the **standard requirements or the relevant contextual offer requirements (where relevant)** of the programme or course....*

- 16.2 It was suggested that the statement focussed too much on academic status and that this might be changed to focus on the offer itself. It was noted that programmes were not all just about academic requirements, for example NHS funded programmes would also focus on values and behaviour, which “standard requirements of the programme” would cover. These specific requirements should be defined elsewhere (such as the programme summary) rather than being explicit in the admissions policy. It was agreed that the current statement met the needs of UCL and therefore should remain unchanged.

### **RESOLVED:**

- 16.3 **Agreed:** to maintain the current equalities statement without revision.  
**Action: Bella Malins to note**

## 17 EX-OFFENDERS POLICY FOR PROSPECTIVE AND CURRENT STUDENTS

(PAPER 2-03)

- 17.1 **Received** – Paper 2-03 regarding the proposed addition of an Ex-Offenders Policy to the Academic Manual to ensure that UCL is compliant with the requirements of the Disclosure and Barring Service. The Director of Access and Admissions reported the following:

- a) The DBS had conducted a recent audit of UCL and found that it felt short of compliance in some areas. Following the audit, remedial action, including new guidance and template forms were produced for use by those departments which requested DBS checks for their study.
- b) The DBS audit also required that UCL produce an Ex-Offenders policy to clearly state that it will not discriminate against ex-offenders and that their data will be processed and held appropriately. The draft policy was based on a template provided by the DBS.
- c) The policy was linked to the wider UCL Criminal Conviction Declarations Policy, approved by StRAFC at its last meeting and subsequently noted by EdCom. It was proposed that the Ex-Offenders policy would join that as a separate annexe in Chapter 1: Student Recruitment and Admissions Framework of the Academic Manual for 2019-20.

17.2 StRAFC members noted a minor grammatical error in the text for correction. It was also queried on whether applicants would receive offers of admission before or after DBS checks were conducted. It was noted that applicants would receive offers first, though conditions may be applied depending on the outcome of the DBS check. Some programme also applied DBS checks much later, for example where students were due to go on placements requiring them in later years.

**RESOLVED:**

17.3 **Approved:** the Ex-Offenders Policy, subject to correction of the minor error in the text. This will be added to Chapter 1 of the Academic Manual, with the EdCom Secretary to be informed.

**Action: Bella Malins**

**18 THE FUTURE OF THE HARD COPY PROSPECTUS**  
(PAPER 2-04)

18.1 **Received** – Paper 2-04, introduced by the Head of MarComms (CAM), which outlined forthcoming research with prospective students and influencers to assist understanding of their views on the current printed UG prospectus and to consider whether it was still fit for purpose or required change. The Head of MarComms noted the following:

- a) The printed prospectus was expensive to produce, disseminate and store and although recently re-vamped, was already approaching its size limits as new programmes were constantly coming on-line. The pressure on content and space would be amplified when the UCL East programmes started to recruit.
- b) The printed prospectus was also challenging in terms of UCL's sustainability and green policies as it required large resources in terms of materials and energy. It was a major contributor to UCL's carbon footprint.
- c) The new generation of students had grown up accessing information digitally and were more likely to use on-line content than refer to a

printed prospectus. The New to UCL 2018 survey showed that four times more students considered the UCL website to be a key influence on coming to UCL than those that answered for the printed prospectus.

- d) CAM was thus commissioning research into the need for the printed prospectus and would be seeking the views of prospective and current students, their influencers and others. This would be a large piece of research conducted over four to five months. It would focus on what form the prospectus might take in future, whether there was actually a need for printed information and in what form it should take if so.

18.2 The following points were noted in the discussion:

- a) StRAFC members were broadly positive regarding the research into the printed UG prospectus, with some considering it long overdue.
- b) It was noted that printed prospectuses were useful in some circumstances, for example as information to hand out to potential students at UCL Open Days and British Council fairs held overseas. It was also noted that parents seemed to be particularly keen on receiving printed versions. However, whilst there was clearly a desire to receive printed information at these events it was queried whether they had to be prospectuses; more targeted subject information might be as well received.
- c) It was suggested that CAM's research also seek views widely across UCL, from departments and faculties as well as other staff involved in recruitment activities.

**RESOLVED:**

18.3 That StRAFC strongly supports the approach proposed by CAM to conduct research into the printed UG prospectus and that it keeps StRAFC updated on its progress and outcomes.

**Action: Kris Ilic and CAM officers to note**

**19 STUDENT RECRUITMENT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (TOPS) UPDATE**

19.1 The Head of Business Partnering (CAM) informed StRAFC of the following:

- a) The Student Recruitment Community of Practice was the first to be established in the TOPS programme and had brought together academic and professional service staff involved in recruitment from across UCL, from faculties and departments as well as central services. The CoP was led by CAM officers who were able to bring the disparate people together to explore different approaches to recruitment.
- b) The first year had considered a range of projects including mapping recruitment activity across UCL, communications, Brexit and campus tours. Some of this activity was continuing.
- c) The second year had focussed on knowledge sharing and how the input could be disseminated across UCL. Activities explored included the use

of social media in recruitment, such as Instagram and how to get the most out of Open Days.

- d) The CoP was continuing to draw people together and it was noted that there was intense competition for the places to lead it in the next session.

19.2 StRAFC would be kept updated of the work of the Student Recruitment CoP in the future. A PowerPoint slide illustrating the range of the CoP was also available on the StRAFC SharePoint.

## **20 UPDATE ON THE KANO MODEL FOR PRIORITISING STUDENT RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES BETWEEN CAM AND THE FACULTIES**

20.1 The Head of Business Partnering (CAM) provided an update on the use of the Kano model in student recruitment activities and noted the following:

- a) The Kano Model began life as a product development model, and understanding how product features relate to customer needs. An example was given of cars, where mirrors come as standard to enable parking and other manoeuvres and thus met the drivers' needs. The development of parking sensors and cameras went beyond those expectations, though also becoming seen as standard later. Despite this, mirrors were still needed and would be missed if not there.
- b) Kano is a customer satisfaction model which identifies the basic things which organisations need to get right and that their audience take for granted. However, there is also a need to look beyond ways in which audience needs are met, to exceed expectations. As with product development, the right new features would excite people at first, but over time become standard. Meanwhile, people still expected all the basics.
- c) The Kano Model was applied to student recruitment work to help understanding of how well prospective student needs are met. The model enables identification of the features that are basic, that all universities are expected to deliver and would be missed if not there, creating dissatisfaction. 'Performers' are actions that are appreciated and may be anticipated but not expected, and 'exciters' are activities which audiences will become excited over and were unexpected. However, these are wasted if the basics are not in place.
- d) Kano is a dynamic model. Activities that are currently performers and exciters may become basics over time, hence Kano is also a model of continuous improvement. It should be reviewed at least annually.
- e) An example was provided of how the Kano model was used in a joint CAM and Faculty working group to identify what the basics are (also known as the hygiene factors). This also helps to prioritise and push resources to where they are most needed and that activities that fall into 'performer' or 'exciter' category could be prioritised for degree programmes that needed to do more to meet their targets and need the most support.

- 20.2 It was asked whether all departments were now meeting their Kano identified hygiene factors. This was unfortunately not the case, though at least the hygiene factors were being identified so that they could be addressed. The Kano model could be used to build in identification of these basic factors into programme planning to ensure that they met all the essential needs from their inception.
- 20.3 It was suggested that the Student Recruitment CoP might wish to disseminate knowledge and use of the Kano model to faculties and across UCL. The slides from the presentation are available on the StRAFC SharePoint.

### **PART 3: OTHER MATTERS FOR APPROVAL OR INFORMATION**

#### **21 REPORTS OF SUB-GROUPS, WORKING GROUPS OF StRAFC**

*(PAPERS 2-05 and 2-06)*

- 21.1 **Approved** – the minutes of the Access and Participation Steering Group meetings of 28 March 2018 and 7 November 2018. The minutes are also available on the StRAFC SharePoint.

#### **22 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

##### **22A Access and Participation Plan**

22A.1 The Director of Access and Admissions reported that the Office for Students had informed UCL of the reform of its Access and Participation plan, with more stringent requirements than its predecessor, the Office for Fair Access. The OfS expects universities to eliminate the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged groups at entry in the next twenty years, expecting significant improvements in the next five years. The ratio expected nationally between the highest and lowest polar groups would be 3:1, reduced from the current ratio of 5:1. This would be difficult for UCL as the ratio was currently 14:1 and the aim was to reduce this to 9:1.

22A.2 UCL was required to re-draft its plan at relatively short notice and this may require significant changes to target setting and admissions practice in future. UCL was also expected to close the BME attainment gap (currently 4%) over the next 5 years. StRAFC will be kept updated of developments and progress of the UCL Access and Participation Plan.

##### **22B Open Days Update**

22A.1 The Director of CAM reported on the Open Days at UCL. There had been record numbers of prospective students in attendance and the interactive activities introduced were well received by them. The prospective students were also impressed by the new student centre, with positive feedback received.

**23 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

23.1 The dates for the StRAFC meetings next year are as follows:

- Monday 9 December 2019 (10am – Venue tbc)
- Tuesday 10 March 2020 (10am – Venue tbc)
- Tuesday 9 June 2020 (10am - Venue tbc)

Rob Traynor  
StRAFC Secretary

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