



## ACADEMIC COMMITTEE

Tuesday 10 December 2013

### MINUTES

*PRESENT:*

Professor Mike Ewing (Acting Chair)<sup>1</sup>

Provost and President

Mr David Ashton

Dr Paul Ayris

Professor David Bogle

Dr Caroline Essex

Dr Julie Evans

Mr Marco Federighi

Professor Anthony Finkelstein

Professor Mary Fulbrook

Dr Dilly Fung

Mr Keir Gallagher

Ms Tracy Herman

Dr Christine Hoffmann

Dr Arne Hofmann

Dr Helen Matthews

Professor Alan Penn

Mr Tim Perry

Dr Hilary Richards

Professor Elizabeth Shepherd

Dr Ruth Siddall

Dr Eva Sorensen

Ms Olga Thomas

Mr Ben Towse

Professor Gabriella Vigliocco

(vice Professor Alan Thompson)

Ms Soo Ware

In attendance: Mr Jason Clarke (Secretary); Ms Clare Goudy; Ms Judith Hillmore; Mr Peter Murray; Dr Hazel Smith.

Apologies for absence were received from: Professor Robert Brown; Professor Steve Caddick; Professor Richard Catlow; Professor Dame Hazel Genn; Ms Leonie Hannan; Professor Graham Hart; Professor David Price; Ms Mary Rimington; Professor Anthony Smith; Professor Jonathan Wolff.

*Key to abbreviations*

AC	Academic Committee
EdCom	Education Committee
F&BA	Finance & Business Affairs
ILTS	Institutional Learning and Teaching Strategy
JSSC	Joint Staff Student Committee
KIS	Key Information Set
NSS	National Student Survey
QMEC	Quality Management and Enhancement Committee
RDC	Research Degrees Committee

<sup>1</sup> The meeting was chaired by the Dean of Students (Academic) in the absence of the Vice-Provost (Education)/AC Chair, who was away on UCL business.



taken place with the Director of F&BA and a further meeting was to be held shortly, although it was not clear whether any progress would be made on this issue.

- Student health centre provision – the report noted concerns which had been raised by students about the future location of the Gower Place Practice, although Dr Siddall observed that the position had moved on since the report had been prepared to a more positive outcome.

**Discussion:**

- 11.3 Concern was expressed about the low profile of the StARS system in some departments. This was attributed in part to the fact that the representatives were being selected by staff rather than being elected by the departments' students. It was agreed that Faculty Tutors should liaise with their departments to ensure that the StARs scheme is taken seriously and that representatives are being elected by the students themselves. The Provost noted that it was important that the student representation system is working effectively in all departments within UCL, as there was a correlation between good NSS scores and effective student representation. This was, in his view, not solely a matter for the Faculty Tutors but also a management issue for Heads of Department and Deans, and if necessary, he would work through the line management chain to make sure that the scheme is operating fully in every depart2p3ureOe maw -2T Tcculto9 fohtNsue o26 the repmeetu2 Td( )i1ppt10on: acu 6 thCID 4 B

- Guidance on addressing poor performance in respect of research students – new guidance had been received by RDC and this was available from the *Academic Manual*.
- RDC's review of issues highlighted in Faculty Graduate Teaching Committees – one issue which had been identified by RDC was that research students generally would welcome more opportunities to teach but that the availability of such opportunities was uneven across UCL departments.

**Discussion:**

12.3 There was a wide-ranging discussion relating to teaching opportunities for research students, during the course of which the following points were noted:

- It was argued that in some departments, postgraduate teaching assistants are being overworked and are undertaking duties which should more properly be undertaken by academic staff.
- In some departments, research students were not being provided with opportunities to teach as it was believed that UCL rules meant that any additional teaching responsibilities have to be offered to Teaching Assistants before they can be offered to other individuals, including research students.
- A balance needed to be struck between providing research students with opportunities to teach whilst also ensuring that academic staff are fully engaged in teaching, as undergraduate students come to UCL expecting to be taught predominantly by academic staff.
- It was agreed that Deans should monitor how their departments approach this issue so that there is reasonable degree of consistency within their faculties.

**RESOLVED:**

12.4 That AC approve the annual report from RDC for session 2012-13 at AC 2-6 (13-14).

**[ACTION: Professor David Bogle, Mr Gary Hawes – to note]**

12.5 That Deans of Faculty monitor the provision of teaching opportunities for postgraduate research students across the constituent departments within their faculties.

**[ACTION: Deans of Faculty]**

**13 EDUCATION COMMITTEE – ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2012-13**

**Received:**

13.1 The annual report from EdCom for session 2012-13 at AC 2-5 (13-14)

Department of Chemistry on its approach to personal tutoring had been submitted to the Committee in order to disseminate good practice.

- Barring and academic insufficiency – EdCom had developed and approved a revised procedure.
- Calculating scheduled learning percentages for the purposes of the Key Information Set – following research and analysis, EdCom had agreed that ‘scheduled learning and teaching activity’ should be defined as 1200 hours per year for the purpose of the KIS (which was the scheduled learning element of the total UCL undergraduate learning year of 1500 hours).

***Discussion:***

- 13.3 AC agreed that it would be important for EdCom to keep the operation of the Personal Tutor scheme under review to ensure that this is being implemented effectively across all faculties and departments.

***RESOLVED:***

- 13.4 That AC approve the annual report from EdCom for session 2012-13 at AC 2-5 (13-14).

***[ACTION: Professor Mike Ewing, Ms Sandra Hinton – to note]***

**14 QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE - ANNUAL REPORT FOR SESSION 2012-13**

***Received:***

- 14.1 The annual report from QMEC for session 2012-13 at AC 2-8 (13-14), introduced by the Chair of QMEC, Professor Mike Ewing.

***Received:***

remunerated for taking part in IQR. The general feeling among AC members was that this would not be in keeping with the spirit of collegiality which underpins IQR and UCL's approach to quality management and enhancement generally.

**RESOLVED:**

- 14.4 That AC approve the annual report from QMEC for session 2012-13 at AC 2-8 (13-14).

**[ACTION: Professor Mike Ewing, Ms Sandra Hinton – to note]**

<p><b>Business for Information</b></p>
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**15 UCL INSTITUTIONAL LEARNING AND TEACHING STRATEGY**

**Received:**

- 15.1 The following papers from the Office of the Vice-Provost (Education) relating to the UCL ILTS:

- Update report on progress against the 2010-15 ILTS Implementation Plan at AC 2-9 (13-14) [tabled at the meeting];
- Revised ILTS 2013-15 at AC 2-10 (13-14);
- Implementation Plan for ILTS 2013-15 at AC 2-11 (13-14).

**Discussion:**

- 15.2 The Provost observed that one of the issues at the top of his agenda was the need to increase and improve UCL's teaching and learning spaces for students and he advised AC that a number of announcements would shortly be made regarding the acquisition of additional space and a major refurbishment programme for key buildings on the main Bloomsbury campus. AC welcomed the Provost's update and noted that designing curricula, thinking about innovative ways of delivering programmes, and increasing the use of technology in teaching had to be integrated with planning for the estate. The Director of Education Planning noted that these issues would be addressed in a new UCL Education Strategy which was being developed by the Office of the Vice-Provost (Education).

**16 REPORTS OF SUB-COMMITTEES, WORKING GROUPS ETC OF ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

**Noted:**

- 16.1 The AC officers had received on behalf of AC, since the last meeting of AC, Minutes of the following:
- Education Committee (4 October 2013);
  - Programme Review Working Group (27 November 2013);
  - Scholarships and Student Funding Committee (12 November 2013).

**17 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

***Noted:***

17.1 The next meeting will be on Thursday 20 March 2014 at 9.00am in the Old Refectory.

***Secretarial Note:*** *the March meeting was subsequently cancelled. The next meeting will therefore be on **Thursday 8 May at 9am in the Haldane Room.***