



ACADEMIC BOARD

Wednesday 29 February 2012

MINUTES

PRESENT¹:

President and Provost (*Chair*)

Dr Robin Aizlewood, Professor David Attwell,

Key to abbreviations

AB	Academic Board
AC	Academic Committee
JSC	Joint Selection Committee
REF	Research Excellence Framework
UCU	University and College Union
WIBR	Wolfson Institute for Biomedical Research

12 **MINUTES**

Approved

- 12.1 The Minutes of the AB meeting held on 26 October 2011 [*AB Minutes 1-11, 2011-12*] were confirmed by the Board and signed by the Chair.

13 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

13A **Council approval of Academic Board recommendations**

[*AB Minute 6, 2011-12*]

Noted

- 13A.1 At its meeting on 23 November 2011 Council had approved, on the recommendation of AB:

that UCL Australia be established as an academic unit of UCL, outwith the faculty structure but reporting to the Vice-Provost (International) and ultimately to the Provost, with effect from 1 January 2012;

that the UCL School of Energy and Resources be disestablished as an academic unit of UCL with effect from 1 January 2012;

that the Division of Population Health be renamed the Institute of Epidemiology and Healthcare with effect from 1 January 2012.

13B **Election of non-professorial academic staff, Teaching Fellow staff and non-academic staff to serve on Academic Board in sessions 2012-13 and 2013-14**

[*AB Minute 7, 2011-12*]

Received

- 13B.1 APPENDIX 2/12 (11-12) – a note on the outcome of the recent election of non-professorial academic staff, Teaching Fellow staff and non-academic staff to serve on AB in sessions 2012-13 and 2013-14.

RESOLVED

- 13B.2 That AB ratify the outcome of the above election.

14 **AWARDS TO UCL STAFF**

Received

- 14.1 APPENDIX AB 2/13 (11-12) – a note on the award of major prizes *etc* to members of the academic community of UCL since the last meeting of AB.

15 **UCL INTERNATIONAL STRATEGY**

Received

- 15.1 An oral report and a presentation (APPENDIX AB 2/20 (11-12)) by Professor Michael Worton, Vice-Provost (International).

Noted

- 15.2 The draft revised Strategy would be considered by Academic Committee at its meeting on 22 March 2012 and then revised as appropriate in light of the discussion at both the AB and AC meetings. It was envisaged that the Provost, as Chair of AB, would then be invited to endorse formally the revised Strategy on behalf of AB before its submission to Council for final approval at its meeting on 4 April 2012.

Reported

- 15.3 The strategy embodied a step-change in the intensity and reach of UCL's overseas engagements. The perceived success of UCL's approach to date was reflected in the extent to which it was now being imitated elsewhere in the sector.
- 15.4 In the course of his presentation Professor Worton drew particular attention to the following issues:
- the pressing need to consider whether the benefits of UCL's MPhil/PhD upgrade system were sufficient to justify the difficulties caused to many overseas applicants seeking funding for study at PhD level;
 - the end of the Bologna Process in 2010, and the need to consider whether a separate UCL Bologna Strategy was still required;
 - the extent of the Widening Participation challenges with respect to overseas students; the consideration being given to extending the existing Undergraduate Preparatory Certificate (UPC) to an equivalent Graduate programme, and the proposed extension of the transition programme to international Masters' students;
 - the development of UCL's academic profile in International Relations, including the creation of an MSc in that discipline;
 - the optimum use of the period following examinations for eg outreach and volunteering activities;
 - the demand from UCL students for study abroad opportunities, and the resourcing implications of meeting this;
 - the need for UCL to retain its 'highly trusted sponsor' status;
 - the need to engage with government over such issues as student visas and student right to work in the UK immediately following graduation.

The draft International Strategy would be made available on the AB web page in due course.

Discussion

- 15.5 Applications for entry to the BAsC programme in September 2012 had been high in both quality and quantity. With the lifting of the student numbers quota the future growth of the programme could reflect demand; it was currently envisaged that, from an intake of 80 in 2012-13, the programme would expand to admit approximately 100 students in 2013 and 200 in 2014.
- 15.6 The convenor of the AB non-professorial group requested details of the criteria used in considering potential international partnerships, and sought an undertaking that UCL staff would be protected from human rights abuses in areas where UCL might in future choose to become involved. On the former point, Professor Worton said that a revised and improved statement of the non-negotiable criteria would be put to Council in due course, but for commercial reasons would not be made publicly available. He noted however that any overseas engagement would need to involve significant research opportunities for UCL, and would have to be in an area of the world of strategic importance to the UK. On the issue of protection of UCL staff working overseas, Professor Worton noted that UCL worked closely with the British Embassy in any such countries, and that the protection of UCL staff was one of the key risks which was kept under regular review by the country-specific boards which oversee UCL's overseas partnerships.
- 15.7 AB members were invited to contact the Vice-Provost (International) in due course with any further comments or queries on the Strategy.

16 PROVOST'S BUSINESS

16A UCL School of Pharmacy

- 16A.1 The Provost drew the attention of AB to the recent merger with the School of Pharmacy, and welcomed Professor Anthony Smith, former Dean of the School of Pharmacy and now Vice-Provost (Education), to his first meeting of Academic Board.

16B Information Services Division

- 16B.1 AB members were in receipt of an open letter from the UCU to the Provost regarding the current restructuring of the Information Services Division. The Provost proposed to make a report to the next meeting of AB once he had had an opportunity to review the operation of the Lead Officer arrangements in this area.

16C New Campus Development

Received

- 16C.1 An oral report and a presentation (APPENDIX AB 2/21 (11-12)) by the Provost.

Reported

- 16C.2 In common with other urban universities around the world, UCL found itself effectively landlocked by the unavailability or high price of the land around it. Whilst the Bloomsbury Masterplan demonstrated that additional space of approximately 15% could be secured by more efficient use of the campus, any expansion in student numbers on a scale comparable with that seen over the past decade could only be possible if an additional site were to be secured elsewhere. The Provost drew attention to plans for expansion at Columbia and Yale Universities, at MIT, and at the Imperial College site at White City.
- 16C.3 Opportunities for significant expansion had only previously arisen outside the M25. The speed of public transport links between Stratford, Bloomsbury and the rest of London meant the Olympic Park site represented a unique opportunity. By 2018 the Crossrail project would realise a transfer time of 35 minutes from Heathrow. The site was almost exactly the same size as the Bloomsbury campus, and there was opportunity for further expansion into adjacent areas.
- 16C.4 UCL had 24,000 students but was currently able to offer only 4,500 places in UCL-owned student accommodation. There was also a pressing need to be able to provide accommodation for younger academic staff. The site had the potential for providing space to accommodate industrial collaboration, mitigating the current risk to future academic activity caused by the lack of suitable sites for such partnerships in Bloomsbury.

Discussion

- 16C.5 In response to a question about the proposals in the Masterplan for the Housman Room, the Director of Estates confirmed that a survey of staff views about staff facilities had recently been conducted, the results were being considered and would be discussed with an established stakeholder group. The plans for the development and improvement for the Wilkins Building were at an early stage and no decisions about the future of the Housman Room were imminent, though it remained the view of the Director of Estates that staff facilities would be relocated and enhanced in due course.

17 FACULTIES AND ACADEMIC UNITS OF UCL

Noted

- 17.1 UCL Statute 10(1) provided that:

There shall be such academic units of the College as the Council on the advice of the Academic Board may from time to time determine, with such powers as determined by the Council on the advice of the Academic Board. ... The academic units of the College shall have such designation as the Council on the advice of the Academic Board may from time to time determine.

19 **RESEARCH EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK 2014 – CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE SELECTION OF STAFF**

Noted

- 19.1 A draft UCL code of practice on the selection of staff for UCL's REF 2014 submissions had been drawn up and would be posted on the intranet on 8 March 2012, when an e-mail would be issued to all AB members, drawing attention to, and inviting their comments (by 22 March 2012) on, the draft code of practice. Comments on the draft code of practice would also be invited from UCU.

20 **APPOINTMENTS**

Received

- 20.1 At APPENDIX AB 2/17 (11-12) – a list of recent appointments (i) of Vice-Provosts (ii) of Deans of Faculty (iii) of Heads of Academic Departments and (iv) to established Chairs and Readerships tenable at UCL.

21 **ACTION TAKEN BY THE BOARD**

22 **APPOINTMENT OF THE NEXT PRESIDENT AND PROVOST OF UCL**

[The Provost left the meeting at this point in the proceedings and the remainder of the meeting was chaired by Professor Michael Worton, Vice-Provost (International)]

Noted

- 22.1 Professor Malcolm Grant intended to retire as Provost of UCL in September 2013. According to UCL Statute 11(1), the Provost was appointed by the Council of UCL after consultation with the Academic Board of UCL. The procedure for appointment of the Provost was detailed in UCL Regulation for Management 6. The selection process for a new Provost was carried out by a Joint Committee of Council and Academic Board – known as the Joint Selection Committee.

Received

- 22.2 APPENDIX AB 2/19 (11-12) – a joint note by the Secretary to Council and the Secretary to AB on the process for nominating members of AB to serve on the JSC.

RECOMMENDED (to Council)

- 22.3 **That the names proposed in APPENDIX AC 2/19 (11-12) for membership of the Joint Committee be approved.**

23 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Noted

- 23.1 The next meeting of AB would be held on Wednesday 23 May 2012 at 4.00 pm in the Darwin Lecture Theatre.