



Special Meeting of Academic Board

Friday 9 June 2023¹

MINUTES

Present: Dr Michael Spence, President and Provost (Chair)

Professor Klaus Abels; Dr Ali Abolfathi; Professor Ibrahim Abubakar; James Agar; Hamza Ahmed; Simona Aimar; Jennifer Akinola; Dr Tamara Alhilfi; Adnan Ali; Professor Lynn Ang; Professor Haki Antonsson; Dr Seth Anziska; Professor Kathleen Armour; Professor Anasuya Aruliah; Professor Jonathan Ashmore; Professor Jan Axmacher; Dr Paul Ayris; Dr Sakiru Badmos; Professor Gianluca Baio; Professor Jamie Baker; Professor Simon Banks; Professor Matthew Beaumont; Professor Costante Bellettini; Professor Michael Berkowitz; Professor Chris Blackman; Robert Bodden; Professor Iain Borden; Professor Douglas Bourn; Dr Neus Bover Fonts; Dr Jeff Bowersox; Professor Georgina Brewis; Dr Damian Bright; Professor Annie Britton; Professor Clare Brooks; Professor Duncan Brumby; Professor Stella Bruzzi; Dr Suzy Buckley; Professor Vishwanie Budhram-Mahadeo; Professor Neil Burgess; Professor Fiona Burns; Dr Tim Button; Professor Fabio Caccioli; Professor Francesca Cacucci; Tadhg Caffrey; Noël Caliste; Professor Luiza Campos; Professor Benjamin Caplin; Professor Licia Capra; Dr Velia Cardin; Professor Claire Carmalt; Professor Matthew Carmona; Dr Brent Carnell; Professor Madeline Carr; Professor Philip Cavendish; Professor Paola Ceccarelli; Professor Richard Chandler; Aimie Chapple; Professor Joanna Chataway; Nidhi Chaudhary; Andrew Churchill; Professor Olga Ciccarelli; Professor Chris Clack; Professor Lucie Clapp; Professor Barbara Conradt; Kimberly Cornfield; Professor Codina Cotar; Dr Ludovic Coupaye; Professor Anna Cox; Professor Sebastian Coxon; Professor Izzat Darwazeh; Professor Nathan Davies; Dr Jason Davies; Professor Gareth Davies; Professor Julie Davies; Professor Neil Davies; Professor Paul Davis; Professor Sally Day; Professor Robertus De Bruin; Professor Andreas Demosthenous; Professor Janice Derry; Professor Alison Diduck; Professor Mathias Disney; Professor Jason Dittmer; Dr Megan Donaldson; Dr Alex Donovan; Dr Johanna Donovan; Dominique Draï; Professor Paulo Drinot; Dr Oliver Duke-Williams; Dr Mark Dyble; Dr Karen Edge; Dr Ian Edwards; Dr Alex Elwick; Dr Emily Emmott; Professor Rebecca Empson; Dr Russell Evans; Professor Susan Evans; Professor Joanna Faure Walker; Professor Federico Federici; Dr Alexander Fedorec; Professor Delmiro Fernandez-Reyes; Professor Margot Finn; Professor Maria Fitzgerald; Dr David Foster; Professor Stuart Foster; Dr Richard Freeman; Dr Lisa Fridkin; Professor David Frost; Dr Martin Fry; Professor Jonathan Gale; Professor Jeffrey Galkowski; Professor Caroline Garaway; Professor Tamar Garb; Dr Claire Garnett; Dr Malu Gatto; Professor Haidy Geismar; Professor Dame Hazel Genn; Hayley Gewer;

would naturally expect that UCL had taken the impact of the industrial action into account and had graduated all students where sufficient information was available, so long as it could be shown that they had met the learning outcomes of their programme. In many instances, for example where a student was not a borderline case and the missing marks could make no difference to the classification, there would be no justification for delaying the graduation of a student.

- b. Responsibility for determining whether a student had met the learning outcomes of their programme lay with the local Board of Examiners. It was not for Academic Board or for the EACP to tell the Boards of Examiners what those decisions should be. There was provision for escalation of issues to the EACP by way of the Faculty Board of Examiners.
- c. The EACP² was a body of the Education Committee, drawing heavily on the Education Committee membership³. It has been established in 2019 in response to feedback from the OIA, and reinstated in February 2023 as provided for in the regulations⁴. In doing so, and in view of the need to act quickly, Education Committee explicitly devolved to the EACP powers in respect of regulations and requests for individual guidance. The resulting EACP guidance drew together the existing emergency regulations. The approach had been developed with a view to giving Boards of Examiners the flexibility to address different cases while minimising additional workload.

44.4 During the course of the discussion the following further points were made:

- a. There was a wide range of potential approaches to mitigation, from simply waiting for marks to become available (which would have a serious impact on some students, particularly in respect of employment or onward study), to the scaling up of available marks (which risked making awards to students who had not met the learning outcomes). The EACP provide Exam Boards with the tools to reach a position that was as close as possible to the right balance between these extremes.
- b. Members read out a series of written statements from students. The issues raised in these included: the impact of mitigations on the perceived value of a UCL degree; the differential impact of the mitigations on different students; and the need for UCL as a leading institution in the sector to work to find a solution to the dispute by calling publicly for UCEA to return to negotiations. Others however noted the differing positions of students on the issue, for example in respect of their prioritisation of the timeliness or the completeness of marks, and in

² [eacp-membership.pdf \(ucl.ac.uk\)](#)

³

particular the pote
employment prospects and visa status.

- c. AB was reminded of the requirements of accreditation bodies, and noted the need to maintain communication with those organisations during the current situation and to adhere to the processes agreed with them. It was suggested that the provision for elements of decision-making to move to Faculty Boards of Examiners or to the EACP risked undermining the mechanisms for meeting those requirements.

44.5 In respect of the proposal in the motion to instruct Education Committee and its subcommittees to rescind any guidance introduced solely for the purpose of mitigating the marking and assessment boycott that were in contradiction of a set of specified principles, AB was advised of the elements of the guidance that were new. These were:

- (i) amended rules in respect of quoracy for Boards of Examiners
- (ii) streamlining of the administrative procedure⁵ to be followed by Boards of Examiners in the absence of external examiners; and
- (iii) provision for Faculty Board of Examiners to confirm progression and award decisions if the local Board was unable to meet.

Other key elements of the guidance, such as the provision for delegation to BoE chairs to decide on out-of-cycle matters, the use of algorithmic calculations in classification decisions or the temporary exclusion of modules from progression and award decisions, were not new. EACP guidance did not permit the condonement of non-condonable modules. In light of this, the Provost advised members to vote with him for the resolution as it was essentially compatible with the position of Education Committee aside from

considered that there was little to be gained in his making a public call to UCEA because of the financial position of many of the institutions participating in that process. It was vital that the university do what it could for the current generation of students, who had faced significant challenges, and ensure that those who could graduate on time would do so.