

award. In the longer term, however, it was noted that EdCom should expect UCL to be positioned as highly for education as it was for research.

51.4. There were persistent challenges for UCL with regards to data on the quality of the student experience and there would be a focus on this over the next 10 years.

~~51.5.~~ The financial context was challenging as no further funding from government was expected and income from student fees would continue to reduce in real terms. It was not feasible to increase international student fees to the level required to plug the funding gap. EdCom's role would therefore be to remove barriers which were within the control of the institution in order to address the persistent difficulties that staff and students were experiencing and reporting.

51.6. The Chair observed

would enable certain activities, where appropriate, to be delivered online enabling staff to use in-

variability as to the expectations for staff in particular roles to undertake teaching. It was suggested that it would be useful for the need to address workloads to be identified as a principle given the ambition for education to have the same status and success as research, and for education leadership roles to have better recognition.

Action: Chair to ensure this element is included in draft principles

52.6.

- There were a relatively small number of positive and negative comments about facilities.

522 The presentation concluded with what students were trying to telling UCL about their needs in the areas of assessment and feedback, organisation and management, student voice, student support and learning community. Overall, there was a mismatch between student expectations and what they were receiving, and a need to

feedback as this would just add to workloads, but to ensure that feedback was high quality and could be used by students in their future learning. For example, the revise and resubmit model used in research and also for dissertations, which provided formative and summative assessment opportunities alongside timely feedback that students were able to act on, could usefully be adopted for other types of assessment.

54.4. Many of the current challenges that staff and students were experiencing could be at least partially addressed by a semester system with assessment of modules taught in a semester completed by the end of that semester. This would also be in line with the expected future funding model that was set out in a recent DfE consultation on the Lifelong Learning Entitlement. No system was perfect and may require programmes to adapt accordingly, e.g. a revised approach might be needed for summer exams for term 1 modules which currently acted as a refresher to prepare students for the following year. There may be practice at other institutions that already had a semester system that it would be helpful for UCL to consider. It was clarified that there was no intention that a proposed semester system would extend the current length of the academic year for undergraduate students beyond the middle of June. Moving to semesters and completing assessments for modules within the semester in which they were taught would also provide a better experience for Affiliate students and would reduce administrative burden by removing the need for separate assessments and assessment deadlines.

54.5. The Chair noted that the proposed adoption of a standard module size of 30 credits had arisen from suggestions made to her by UCL staff. It could address the rather disconnected learning experience of many students, result in students being able to study in greater depth, reduce the bunching of assessments and reduce staff workloads as there were fewer components within programmes to manage thereby reducing administration. It was clarified that it was intended that if 30 credit modules were adopted, they would be delivered within one term/semester rather than across two. A member queried whether moving to 30 credit modules would make it more difficult to provide students with a high level of individualisation. The Chair not

including assessment and feedback and it would be helpful to consider how staff could be supported to engage with these.

~~54.7~~ The Chair informed EdCom that she was planning to propose that UCL move away from the traditional anonymous end of term module evaluation form as this did not provide an opportunity to address issues to benefit the students who had raised them. The intention was to move to an ongoing 'dialogue' between students and staff through a module. For example, the focus could be on asking three questions on a weekly basis so that fixes could be implemented by the following week, such as 'Do you understand the module?', 'Do you understand the assessment?' and 'Can you access the resources?'. This could be supplemented by an end of term programme-level assessment by students, which would not be about evaluating individual members of staff but about ensuring that students were properly supported. Students would be taught to offer feedback in a professional manner, i.e. in a style that would be acceptable in their future workplaces.

54.8. Surprise was expressed about the relatively small number of student comments in last year's NSS and PTES relating to facilities which students had routinely complained about prior to Covid. Colleagues noted that there had been a loss of departmental space in recent years which led to staff and students becoming dispersed and was a barrier to building a learning community. The Chair noted that under-investment in the campus over several years had resulted in the quality of facilities becoming poor and it was now significantly behind many other institutions. UCL's tuition fee income was relatively high due to high student numbers so in theory it should be able to invest in improvements. However, it had a bigger research burden than other comparable institutions and tuition fee income was partly being used to support research.

54.9. There were a number of basic hygiene factors that needed to be addressed, which would improve the experience of staff and students. For example, if programmes were structured more effectively, this could reduce the high number of extenuating circumstances claims, which would free up staff time. It was noted that staff spent a significant amount of time writing student handbooks, which could be saved by improving the UCL student website and communications with students via other channels.

54.10. Members were broadly in favour of Project Three which would bring together Arena, with careers and student skills development to form a sector-leading Institute for Higher Education Development and Support. However, care should be taken to ensure that the work of Arena did not become diluted. It was suggested that this project could provide an opportunity to consider how student engagement with existing academic communication skills provision could be improved.

55. Vision and Aspirations for Education at UCL – draft 'principles'

55.1. This was discussed under item 54.

56. Next steps

56.1. AB had charged EdCom with consulting on the draft paper and producing recommendations on an updated draft along with an Academic Impact Statement covering each component of the proposal separately. Following deliberation by AB, EdCom would be required to produce a final document, which would be considered by AB for final approval alongside all other Strategy documents. The following was agreed:

- i. EdCom endorsed the existing consultation on the Education Priorities and Programmes paper which would close on 29 April 2022. It would consider the feedback arising from the consultation and prepare a summary for Academic Board.
- ii. The feedback would be synthesised and themed for discussion by EdCom at its meeting on 9 June 2022. A presentation on the Enablers paper would be provided, which could be helpful in understanding how it was planned that student experience challenges identified by EdCom which were outside of its control would be addressed (e.g. physical and digital facilities).
- iii. The meeting on 9 June would take place in person and the time allocated would be extended to accommodate discussion of the Strategy and other EdCom business. EdCom would consider in due course whether it would be helpful to form sub-groups to consider particular themes.
- iv. Given that progress on any projects to improve education was reliant on the outcomes of Project One, it was agreed that in the summer term Faculties and departments would be asked to discuss and provide views on a set of draft principles, agreed by EdCom, on UCL's vision and aspirations for Education to inform a revised version of the paper

Action: Chair to propose a first set of draft principles for discussion at the next EdCom meeting

57. Any other business

57.1. Derfel Owen, Interim Registrar, would be moving to the role of Director of Change and Improvement on 26 April 2022 when the newly appointed permanent Registrar took up their post and this was therefore his last EdCom meeting. EdCom noted its thanks for his contributions and wished him well in his new role.

58. Dates of Future Meetings

58.1. The dates of the EdCom meetings for the rest of the 2021-22 session were:

- Tuesday, 26 April 2022, 14:00 - 16:30 on MS Teams
- Thursday, 9 June 2022, 10:00 - 14:00 to be held in person (room TBC).
- Reserved Meeting: Tuesday 19 July 2022, 14:00 - 16:30* on MS Teams

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EdCom 7 April 2022

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