

18 MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF 24 OCTOBER 2012, 21 NOVEMBER 2012 AND 30 JANUARY 2013

Confirmed:

Reported:

21.2 In his presentation the Vice-Provost (Research) highlighted the following:

- UCL was ranked 16th in the world on the number of citations of its research publications.
- UCL, Imperial, and Cambridge had similar levels of research income for the past two years, at around £275-300K. Oxford had achieved significantly higher levels of research income of over £400K. UCL should consider the actions taken by Oxford to increase its research income.
- UCL's success rate for funding has remained constant at around 40%. In 2012, UCL research staff had applied for funding worth £1.2bn. Approximately 1500 funding bids had been successful in 2011-12. The majority of UCL's research funding came from the MRC, the Wellcome Trust and EPSRC. An increasing amount of UCL's research funding was from the European Commission.
- In the past four years, numbers of FTE research staff and research students at UCL had increased from 1875 to 2475 and from 1000 to 1500 respectively. This growth reflected UCL's research excellence, although increasing numbers of staff and students would put pressure the UCL estate.
- Although UCL's research output was growing, there were some key challenges ahead: (i) completing UCL's REF submission which would need to be finalised in time for submission in November 2013; (ii) Research Councils UK were undertaking a review, the results of which could threaten future funding; (iii) there were issues arising from Open Access, however UCL funding to facilitate Open Access publishing would be made available and a paper outlining UCL's approach to Open Access was being prepared; (iv) short notice availability of capital investment opportunities created challenges in forward planning, although it was anticipated that more notice would be provided in the future; (v) UCL should increase collaborations with other HEIs in order to share facilities and expensive equipment; not only would this be positive for UCL, but it could also increase regional investment; (vi) as noted above, UCL's growth created space issues and it was anticipated that these issues would be addressed over the coming years.

Discussion:

21.3 In response to a question from the Provost regarding how UCL's research within arts and humanities and the social sciences could be benchmarked against competitor institutions, the Vice-Provost (Research) noted that reputational comparisons could be made by subject group. In such comparisons, UCL was ranked within the top ten universities. For example, the 2008 RAE submission data had been used to rank UCL in a format used by US universities, thus enabling UCL departments to be ranked alongside their US counterparts. In such comparisons, UCL's Department of English Language and Literature would be the strongest in the US.

21.4 AB members enquired further regarding UCL's research income compared to that of Oxford, which was significantly higher. The Vice-Provost (Research) noted that Oxford and Cambridge tended to have a higher success rate for Wellcome Trust funding bids compared to UCL. Also, Oxford used a larger proportion of philanthropic funding to support research. UCL received approximately £25m of industry funding for research and studentships; although relationships between universities and industry were complicated, UCL ranked in the top three for levels of funding received from industry.

21.5 The Provost commended the strength of UCL's research community, and thanked colleagues in the Office of the Vice-Provost (Research) and staff involved in supporting UCL's research grants. The Provost noted the challenges facing the sector in terms of future research funding and urged members of AB to press upon MPs and others in positions of

influence, the importance of university research and the serious damage which could be done should research budgets be cut.

22 SCHEDULE OF DELEGATED POWERS - REVISION

[This item had been deferred from the AB meeting on 24 October 2012 due to lack of time]

Noted:

- 22.1 The schedule of delegated powers of AB, which was last approved by AB in 2008, had been updated to reflect a number of changes in committee structures, nomenclature and other organisational changes which have taken place since that time. A copy of the updated schedule, together with an explanatory covering note from the AB Secretary, was at AB 2-13 (12-13). AB was invited to approve the updated schedule.

Discussion:

- 22.2 AB members commented on the proposed change to the Schedule relating to Statute 7(10)(B) at Annex 1 of the paper at AB 2-13 (12-13) (ie 'to consider and advise the Council upon the conditions and tenure of appointment of Members of the Academic Staff') which involved a delegation of that power to Human Resources Policy Committee. It was noted that elements of Statute 7(10)(B) had previously been delegated by AB to the (former) Academic Staff Appointments and Promotion Committee, which, unlike HRPC, had included elected members of AB. Also, it was important that committees involved in the promotions process reflected the diversity of the academic community in terms of gender and ethnicity. It was also noted that the membership of the HRPC was essentially the same as that of the Provost's Senior Management Team.
- 22.3 In response to the above comments, it was noted that HRPC was a management-focused committee and was not directly responsible for staff promotion, which remained the responsibility of the Academic Promotions Committee, which reported to AB, although much of the work in assessing applications for promotion was now undertaken by School-level committees. The Provost endorsed the importance of diversity and agreed that the composition of the School-level committees which discussed academic promotions should be kept under regular review.
- 22.4 The Provost thanked members for their comments and noted that the AB officers would wish to reflect on the points which had been raised, with a view to bringing a further paper

