

## UCU/University Negotiating Committee

### Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 21 November 2017

Present: Professor Philippa Browning (PB), Professor Aneez Esmail (AE), Dr Gregory Lane-Serff (G L-S) (in the Chair), Dr Adam Ozanne (AO), Professor Luke Georghiou (LG), Karen Heaton (KH), Andrew Mullen (AM)

Apologies: Will Spinks, Dr Adel Nasser

#### **1 Minutes of the meeting held on 14 July 2017**

The minutes were accepted as a true record.

#### **2 Matters arising**

##### **2.1 Use of fixed term contracts in the Faculty of Humanities**

AM reported that following the audit in 2016 of fixed term contracts in use in the Faculty, there was now just one case where a clear reason had not been identified. Further work was taking place to establish the reason or, failing that, steps would be taken to review the individual's contractual status.

**AM**

##### **2.2 Academic probation**

It was noted that AM had supplied UCU with details of cases reviewed in the third or fourth year of academic probation in 2017 where a decision had been taken not to confirm probation. There were 28 cases where a decision had been taken to require a fourth year of probation and one case where a decision had been taken not to confirm probation at the end of the fourth year. The vast majority of cases were in the Faculty of Humanities and it was agreed that a breakdown of their incidence would be supplied by School.

**AM**

Of those cases where there was a requirement to serve a fourth year of probation it was noted that most would be expected to pass probation at that point. The cases were often in areas where it was difficult to establish the necessary publication record within a shorter time frame. Some of our UK competitors addressed this by having a five year period of probation.

##### **2.3 Equal Pay Audit and Gender Pay Gap reporting arrangements**

AM noted that arrangements for preparing and publishing a report on the 2017 equal pay audit were well advanced. Notwithstanding that UCU had wished to broaden the audit's terms of reference, its nominated representatives, Professor Wendy Olsen and Dr Adel Nasser, would be invited to a meeting of the Joint Working Group in January 2018 for a discussion of the audit report in advance of its publication.

AM reported that arrangements for compliance with the new annual statutory Gender Pay Gap reporting were also in hand and the results would be published in advance of the deadline at the end of March 2018. It is expected that there will be a gap in favour of men as we know there is an underrepresentation of women at the most senior levels, particularly in academic ranks. This reflected in the University's equality and diversity targets and is a distinct from measures of equal pay for work of equal value which form part of the Equal Pay Audit. It was noted that this distinction

is often misunderstood and it is important that reporting and communication of the two matters addresses this.

#### 2.4 Academic promotion statistics by gender and ethnicity

UCU asked for details of the analysis of academic promotions in terms of gender. KH responded that as part of the APR process, for each Faculty, the application rates and success rates for promotions were examined at HR Sub-Committee by gender and ethnicity. These figures were obviously important in examining the rate of progress in addressing underrepresentation of women and BAME colleagues at senior academic levels.

It was agreed that senior members of HR would meet with UCU representatives to review and discuss this information.

**KH/AM**

### **3 General University Update**

#### 3.1 REF 2021

LG reported that the arrangements for the next Research Excellence Framework had been announced on the HEFCE web site earlier in the day. Notable headlines based on an initial review are as follows:

- All staff with a significant responsibility for research are to be submitted. The core eligibility criteria for return is 'academic staff with a contract of employment of 0.2 full-time equivalent (FTE) or greater, on the payroll on the census date, whose primary function is to undertake either 'research only' or 'teaching and research'.
- The average number of outputs required per FTE will be 2.5.
- Output portability: A transitional approach is being adopted whereby outputs may be submitted by *both* the institution employing the staff member on the census date and the originating institution where the staff member was previously employed when the output was demonstrably generated.
- The census date will be 31 July 2020.
- Impact: Submissions will include a total of one case study, plus one further case study per up to 15 fte staff submitted, for the first 105 returned (with a reduced requirement above this).

#### 3.2 Student admissions 2017

Student admissions for 2017/18 were broadly on target.

#### 3.3 Financial performance

It was noted that preparation of the final accounts for the year 2016/17 was being concluded.

The sector continued to be in the spotlight in terms of media coverage of VC remuneration and student fees.

LG reported that, to date, in year research grant income was ahead of last year, but below budget. Last year Manchester's RCUK research grant awards were fifth in the UK with only Oxford, Cambridge UCL and Imperial College exceeding our total of £53m.

#### 4. M2020

##### 4.1 Staff still at risk of Compulsory Redundancy (CR)

KH reported that two PSS staff remained formally “at risk” following the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) Faculty Office restructure. Of these, one has been redeployed to another role on a trial basis in accordance with the University’s Redeployment Policy. Both individuals can be considered as redeployees until June 2018. The second individual was in a substantive Grade 7 role and had declined a possible redeployment opportunity which was accepted by the University. She has been informed that she would be given pay protection if she accepts a suitable Grade 6 role. She has appealed her selection for CR. The Head of HR for FSE will continue to meet with the individual on a fortnightly basis in order to support her with redeployment.

G L-S expressed surprise that there had not been more opportunities at Grades 6 and 7 given staff turnover in recent months. KH noted that some vacant roles had been held back as potential redeployment opportunities whilst the PSS M2020 projects were in progress, but most were released after their suitability was considered. So, there is no reason to suspect that any vacancies are being held back. KH noted that the University will continue to review Grade 7 vacancies in relation to the individual(s) and reiterated that the FSE Head of HR will continue to provide support to them.

##### 4.2 Workload issues following Voluntary Severance (VS) departures

UCU expressed concern that colleagues in areas losing staff due to VS will suffer an inordinate increase in workload as a result and asked what is being done in those areas to avert this risk.

KH noted that most academics in AMBS were leaving in 2018 at the end of the current academic year. The management of the areas affected were planning for and managing the impact of these departures in terms of covering or ceasing particular activities. It was agreed that HR would check that appropriate communication is taking place with staff to provide the necessary degree of assurance.

**AM**

UCU cited SALC as a particular area of concern and as an example suggested Archaeology could not continue its undergraduate programme from 2018/19 without a greater workload for remaining staff or without teaching content being delivered from other disciplines.

##### 4.3 Recruitment of Early Career Academics (ECAs)

UCU asked about plans for recruiting as part of this initiative. In particular, it wanted to know more about the type of contracts to which such recruits would be appointed and where they would be recruited.

In response, AM noted that the initiative remained in the planning stages, though it was currently proposed that:

- The positions would be advertised in January.
- The total number (80 to 100) would be split more or less evenly between the three Faculties.

- The vast majority would be appointed as permanent Lecturers (T&R) subject to a normal four year probation period.
- Some may be appointed initially to fixed term contracts so as not to preclude their eligibility to apply for research grants from important funding bodies.
- No replacements will be made for posts lost through VS as part of the M2020 programme.

#### 4.4 Board of Governors matter

UCU sought to raise a question as to why AE, an elected member of the Board of Governors, was prevented, on grounds of conflict of interest, from contributing to a Board discussion on 4 October 2017 regarding M2020.

University representatives replied that as this was a matter outside of the remit of the Negotiating Committee and a matter for the Board of Governors, it was not appropriate to discuss it at this forum.

Both parties agreed to differ on this point, though AE noted that he was due to meet with the Chair of the Board to discuss the matter.

#### 4.5 Communication with VS applicants

UCU raised concerns that some individuals who had applied and been accepted for VS had received inordinate levels of contact from managers and HR in an attempt to conclude formalities. They felt that in some instances this had bordered on harassment.

KH noted that it had been important and necessary to remind individuals of deadlines for formalising VS offers in order that the University could monitor progress towards target staff reductions and so that, where possible, pools could be closed and staff still at risk of CR could be given assurances at the earliest opportunity.

KH suggested that a separate meeting be convened between University and trade union representatives to consider lessons learned from the exercise. It was noted that UCU remained technically in dispute with the University, so it undertook to seek advice from its Regional Office before responding to this offer.

**G L-S/UCU**

#### **5. Performance management, capability procedure and protected conversations**

It was noted that discussions about the introduction of a Capability Procedure and changes to Statutes and Ordinances would resume in either December 2017 or January 2018.

#### **6. Disciplinary and Grievance processes**

G L-S reported that an initial helpful and constructive discussion had taken place on Monday 20 November between trade union representatives and senior members of HR about the operation of disciplinary and grievance processes and the associated handling of cases.

It had been agreed to provide the trade unions with material used for training investigating managers.

KH had agreed to consider other suggestions and requests, including the rules and process for identifying investigating managers, and the level of detail given to staff at the point they are notified that disciplinary proceedings are being initiated against them. UCU believed that these notifications often lacked sufficient detail.

**KH/AM**

**7. FSE Review**

UCU asked whether a guarantee could be given that there would be no compulsory redundancies as a result of the review of FSE.

KH noted that the review was an advisory report to the Faculty that the Review Group's report and recommendations were currently under consideration and the subject of wide consultation. In general the University could never provide a guarantee of the type UCU was seeking. The review did not address staffing levels.

UCU expressed concern about the process and sequence of consultation and observed that the School Boards in FSE had passed motions criticising the proposals. LG observed that School Boards were not the only means for the constituencies to express their views.

**8. USS review**

It was reported that there had been a meeting this month between KH, the Director of Finance and UCU representatives to discuss the subject.

UCU requested a copy of the University's submission to the UUK on the response to the USS 2017 valuation.

KH noted that UCU remained in negotiation with the employers nationally about how to address the scheme's funding deficit. Manchester had made clear it could not increase the current 18% employer contribution to USS as any additional payment would divert monies from important strategic University investment.

UCU expressed the view that UUK's proposal to move to a Defined Contribution (DC) scheme would be detrimental to the University and its staff. It predicted that such a change would result in many staff moving to post-92 universities which ran unfunded schemes, to the private sector and to overseas universities. Its own valuation differed from the actuarial valuation of USS provided by Mercer. UCU expressed disappointment that the University had not challenged USS's assessment and UUK's response to it.

KH acknowledged that this question of change to USS benefits was a highly emotive subject and undertook to report UCU's views to the University's Senior Leadership Team and to consider whether to release to UCU a copy of the University's submission to UUK's consultation on the 2017 valuation.

**9. Next meeting**

The next meeting will take place on a date to be arranged in March 2018