

Plenary Business Meeting  
Friday 18 January 2019, 10.30 – 12.00



Churchill Room, Europe House, 32 Smith Square  
London SW1P 3EU

## REPORT of the VICE-CHAIR RESEARCH

UCML has been involved directly and indirectly in a number of meetings, consultations and communications over the last three months, with the Institute for Modern Languages Research (IMLR), the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), the British Academy (BA), United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI) and through the Arts and Humanities Alliance (AHA).

### **Research Infrastructure**

On 16 November 2018 there was a workshop held at the BA and organised by or for UKRI and the AHRC seeking views from the Arts and Humanities and Social Sciences. As I was not able to attend, UCML was represented through AHA whose rep reported back. We are being encouraged to 'think big' and imagine what the equivalent of the new Crick Institute next to King's Cross might look like and to bid for funds for it. UKRI will publish a progress report very soon, a brief period of consultation will follow during which we are encouraged to act quickly to make our points, with a final report due for publication in April 2019.

### **AHA Press Release on Dangers of Hard or no-deal Brexit**

This was published on 3 December with input from us. It made some good points but not too many waves.

### **IMLR Advisory Council**

On 7 December in Senate House with Janice Carruthers in the chair, we discussed the future of AMLUK, the loose gathering of heads of subject associations in the Modern Languages which has met on an annual basis these last three years. Catherine Davies planned to canvas Claire's views. Catherine also said that through its involvement in the OWRI project Cross-Language Dynamics the IMLR had funds to disburse to researchers who engaged with that project's themes and that interested colleagues should get in touch with her. On a less happy note, perhaps, she also announced her intention to step down from her role as director of the IMLR at the end of this academic year, expressing the hope that her successor would be appointed on a permanent basis and encouraging ML researchers to apply when the post was advertised (on the assumption that it would be, of course!).

Catherine has been a keen supporter of UCML as a director of the IMLR and I would like to thank her for that and wish her well in her retirement.

### **Developing [the] AHRC's Strategic Delivery Plan**

I received a letter, also addressed rather bizarrely to 'Mr Wyburd', on this from the AHRC on 14 December. We contributed to a consultation over the summer along with 55 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), 19 other Subject Associations, 8 Independent Research Organisations and 6 Other Institutions. A full report is expected in April. The interim notes conveyed seem rather anodyne to me and did not pick up our points about challenging monolingual paradigms in Arts and Humanities research. Let's hope that the report in April has space to correct this.

As my three-year stint in this role is coming to an end very soon I would like to thank all involved with UCML over this time, especially the Steering and Executive Committees and including three different chairs, for their support, good humour and collegiality. On the one hand, the outlook for our subject can seem bleak, but there are so many initiatives and exciting ideas, as well as above all clever and dedicated people working together to make things better that we have reasons to be hopeful.

Julian Preece

Swansea University, 8 January 2019