

# UCML Executive Committee



Friday 8 November 2019 16.00-18.00

room 2.45, Franklin-Wilkins Building (Waterloo campus),  
King's College London

## MINUTES

**EXEC MEMBERS** (alphabetical order of surname; *inset/italics* =- *apols*)

<i>Sarah Bowskill</i>	<i>N. Ireland</i>	<i>SB</i>
Caroline Campbell	IWLP	CEC
<i>Joe Carson</i>	<i>Scotland</i>	<i>JC</i>
Ana de Medeiros	VC Communications	AdM
Alexander Ding	ELT	AD
Connor Doak	Slavonic & EE	CD
<i>Jo Drugan</i>	<i>VC Research</i>	<i>JD</i>
<i>Federico Faloppa</i>	<i>Linguistics</i>	<i>FF</i>
Allyson Fiddler	Germanic & Low countries	AF
Olga Gomez-Cash	Hon Treasurer	OGC
Claire Gorrara	Chair	CG
Derek Hird	E. Asian	DH
<i>René Koglbauer</i>	<i>Schools Liaison</i>	<i>RK</i>
<i>Par Kumaraswami</i>	<i>Hispanic</i>	<i>PK</i>
<i>El Mustapha Lahlali</i>	<i>Middle Eastern studies</i>	<i>ML</i>
<i>Imogen Long</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>IL</i>
Hilary Owen	Lusophone	HO
Begoña Rodríguez	T&I	BR
Naomi Segal	Hon Secretary	NS
Claire St John Eve	Admin Assistant	CSJE
Gigliola Sulis	Italian	GS
<i>Frances Weightman</i>	<i>Area Studies</i>	<i>FW</i>
Liz Wren-Owens	Wales	LWO
<i>Vicky Wright</i>	<i>VC Education</i>	<i>EP</i>
<u>Visitors (for item 14)</u>		
Beth Bramley	Institute of Physics	BB
Georgina Phillips	Institute of Physics	GP

## OTHER ACRONYMS

APCs	Article Processing Charges (Open Access)
ATC	Association of Translation Companies
AULC	Association of University Language Centres
BA	British Academy
ECRs	Early-career researchers
GA	Gender Action
GLA	Greater London Authority (the Mayor's office)
HESA	Higher Education Statistics Agency
ISMLA	Independent Schools Modern Languages Association
JACS	Joint Academic Coding System
JH	joint honours
LAG	Language Advisory Group
MLs	Modern Languages
NRPSI	National Register of Public Service Interpreters
NTU	Nottingham Trent University
RiL	Routes into Languages
SH	single honours
SIG	Special Interest Groups

## 1. Welcome and apologies for absence

CG

Apols: JD, FW, JC, IL, PK, ML, RK, SB, FF, VW.

## 2. Minutes

### 2.ab Executive Committee meeting of 26 April 2019

CG

#### 2.a Accuracy and approval

No points were raised.

#### 2.b Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

§2b *Joint event between AULC and UCML:* We are keen to develop a joint endeavour with AULC: the University of Durham conference in April 2020 on Future Directions for Modern Languages will be a good chance to begin this.

§3.i *BA LAG:* They document is ready to go, but due to the political environment it will not be released until early 2020. It is an ambitious strategy which covers many areas. AdM: as they now have more time, might they consult with other groups before publishing?  
**Action: CG** to contact Neil Kenny to ask re sharing a version of the document.

§10e *Exec reports:* CG raised the question of how Exec members report back on Subject Associations' activities. As suggested by CD & HO, surveys (eg on google docs) can be a good tool to gauge opinion etc. But NB there has been a problem recently of members not submitting a report at all, which is not satisfactory. CG reiterated the need for all colleagues to consult with their constituencies before each Executive meeting and report to represent their collective interests.

§10l *SIGs:* this was mentioned at the AGM and is worth pursuing. **Action: All** to suggest SIGs to the Executive for development

§10m *ATC:* We should invite Mike Orlov of the NRPSI to the next Plenary to discuss formal collaboration: **Action: CG & BR.**

§11 *Surviving and thriving:* The toolkit created at the July Plenary has been finalised & circulated: it has been very well received. One HEI is actively using it and other language associations have asked to display it on their own websites.

### 2.cd Plenary AGM of 5 July 2019

CG

#### 2.c Accuracy and approval

No points were raised.

#### 2.d Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

§3.iv *Severe grading:* it had been proposed to invite Ofqual to the January 2020 plenary, but since the Ofqual review is still ongoing, we will postpone till it is complete. Katrin Kohl, with support from UCML and others, has been lobbying Ofqual: they are now looking at changing grade boundaries for French & German (not Spanish or other MLs) to allow a fair reflection of achievement at the higher grades. They are currently reviewing the content of the GCSEs; however, the review group includes no teaching staff or UCML, though Katrin Kohl is on the panel. There is no regional representation and it is unclear if consultation will occur. DH regretted representatives from East Asian languages are not included (eg Chinese), as students are avoiding A levels. **Action: CSJE** to share the link to the severe grading report: colleagues can contact Ofqual directly. OGC: HoDs were

sent an email asking to complete survey about perceptions of languages at GCSE.  
**Action: OGC** to share so it can be passed on to colleagues.

- §4.v We would like to invite the British Council to a future Plenary, eg the Summer 2020 AGM to tie in with launch of Routes into Languages. **Action: CG** to invite Vicky Gough of the British Council to come to the next AGM.

### 3. Chair's Report CG

- 3.i *NTU* has paused recruitment to JH ML programmes for 2020-21. This has been attributed to current institutional priorities, HE market for languages and graduate employability. CG has spoken to colleagues and the Dean: it is challenging, but there is a positive outlook. We are supporting them at all levels of management and staff.
- 3.ii *BA annual Strategic forum for the humanities*. CG has been invited to attend to represent UCML **Action: all** to let CG know which ML issues she can raise. Has suggested topics but mainly on education side. AF: suggests that the possible re-introduction of British Academy travel awards could be broached as a topic.

### 4. Report of Vice Chair Languages & Intercultural Education VW

- 4.i *The joint survey with AULC* will be posted on the UCML website: it includes both IWLP and degree programmes. Questions focus on Brexit, where languages sit within the HEI, and the place of language in the HEI's international strategy.
- 4.ii In future all nations, including Northern Ireland, should be included in the VC Education 'Language landscape' reports: **Action: VW**.
- 4.iii *UCAS Granularity project*: In the absence of VW some general points were discussed. The project was decided some years ago & the data from UCAS are now acquired & paid for (jointly by UCML & the BA). It was noted that languages other than French, German and Spanish are always grouped as 'other', but the UCAS data analysis will look into all languages individually. Once the total figures – not only SH as at present but all JH combinations – are identified, this will allow us to propose revisions to JACS codes. A small working group will produce the report, and work with the BA (**Action: VW**) & the BA must be invoiced (**Action: CSJE**).

### 5. Report of Vice Chair Research JD

- 5.i *ECRs*: JD would like to focus on ECRs in her role. DH suggested we should also think about how the wider research community can integrate languages as well as vice versa. It was decided that this point should be included in the upcoming Plenary Workshop (see §11 below). **Action: JD & CG**.
- 5.ii *REF*: JD was asked to raise issue of impact for Modern Languages and Area Studies with Charles Forsdick and to seek reassurance that a holistic and inclusive approach would be taken. GS raised the problem of submissions in other languages than English and measurement of impact when references etc are in other languages. JD to investigate with UoA leads for 25 and 26; **Actions: JD**.

### 6. Report of Vice Chair External Engagement & Communications AdM

- 6.i AdM reported that we continue to be active on facebook and twitter. Up to 4000-5000 people react to our content, from a variety of places, in and outside academia. Colleagues are encouraged to keep following UCML.

- 6.ii *Website (see also §15.i below):* We have moved – thanks to CSJE – to a new website in the latest version of WordPress; it is not hosted through an HEI, so more colleagues can make changes, including integrating PayPal and having a UCML email address which can be accessed by multiple people. The cost is minimal and definitely worth the extra functionality.
- 6.iii *Gender Action (see also §14 below):* UCML is a founding partner (no cost). The project is currently funded by the GLA, has been going for a year & now has over 125 schools pledged to engage actively with gender-related questions; 40 have gone on the next stage of the badge system. GA is developing a module focusing on undergrads going into schools, available to all disciplines. **Action: AdM** to write a paragraph describing UCML's founding partnership with HA to go under UCML Projects on new website.
- 6.iv It was agreed to invite colleagues from the OWRI project Multilingualism: Empowering Individuals, Transforming Societies to the Plenary, to bring the Pop-Up world of Languages, aimed at years 5 to 7 in schools.. **Action: CG** to invite PI Wendy Ayres Bennett to bring the Pop-up to the Plenary in the summer.

## 7. **Hon. Secretary's Report**

**NS**

- 7.i The election of the French rep on Exec will close at noon on Wed 20 Nov 2019. *Post-meeting result: Dr Emmanuelle Labeau was elected.*
- 7.ii There were some updates to the turnover of Exec members announced in NS's report.
- Leaving on 31 March 2020 AdM, NS
  - Leaving on 31 July 2020 SB, CEC, PK, FF
  - Leaving on 31 July 2021 OGC, DH, HO
- 7.iii NS & AdM were thanked for their long service to UCML.

## 8. **Hon. Treasurer's Report**

**OGC**

- 8.i *General:* We are spending more but on very worthwhile things which are active and engaging.
- 8.ii *HEI members:* There are still a few to contact. Staff from non-paid-up HEIs cannot stand for Exec or attend Plenaries.
- 8.iii *Subject Association members:* Exec members are asked to remind the Subject Associations they cover to pay their subs: **Action: OGC & all.** There is a new text listing UCML's aims & the benefits of membership. These are to be sent to members & incorporated into the flier & a banner: **Action: CSJE.**
- 8.iv AdM: when a Language Centre or School/department is under threat and their HEI refuses to pay UCML subs it ceases to be a member: could we waive fees for a limited period of time? It was decided that if a member has paid for 3 years they can have this waiver on request; **Action: OGC.**

*The other reports were discussed only as and if points were raised by those present.*

## 9. **National reports**

*Note:* It was noted that £500 pa is available to the devolved nations for their ML activities. This is separate from the Small Grants scheme (which might be used for the regions, as long as bids are from individuals). This year it has been taken up by Scotland and Wales.

- 9.a Northern Ireland** **SB**
- 9.b Scotland** **JC**
- 9.c Wales** **LWO**

9.c.i LWO thanked UCML for funding UCML Wales's first conference. It had been attended by colleagues from across Wales and was very successful.

9.c.ii CG was thanked for her work at Routes Cymru. LWO is now taking over as Chair.

## 10. Reports from other Executive members

- 10.a Area studies** **FW**
- 10.b French studies** **IL**
- 10.c Germanic/Low countries studies** **AF**

AF underscored the wide variety of activities in the Low Countries studies community: UCL has recently celebrated 100 years of Dutch: there are now few HEIs providing Dutch, but they are looking creatively at partnerships (with commercial companies and employers).

- 10.d Hispanic studies** **PK**
- 10.e Lusophone studies** **HO**

HO drew attention to ABIL's statement in solidarity of colleagues in Brazil, expressed in terms of supporting fellow academics. It was agreed that UCML should support this statement: **Action: AdM.**

- 10.f Italian studies** **GS**

CG noted that *Choose Italian* is a very interesting model, with focus on enrichment, involving partnerships with different types of organisation eg ISMLA. **Action: GS** to tell CG more about this initiative.

- 10.g Middle Eastern studies** **ML**
- 10.h East Asian studies** **DH**

10.h.i DH raised the issue of librarians needing more coordination with Subject Associations. CG agreed there is a desire for the library and curation sector to engage. **Action: CG** to put colleagues in contact with WESLINE (British Library network of language librarians)

10.h.ii DH described the usefulness of Confucius Institutes based at HEIs.

- 10.i Slavonic & East European studies** **CD**

*No report had been received*

- 10.j Linguistics** **FF**

*No report had been received*

- 10.k IWLP (including the UCML/AULC report)** **CEC**

- 10.l English Language Teaching** **AD**

- 10.m Translation & Interpreting** **BR**

**10.n Schools Liaison****RK****11. Advance planning of Plenary Workshop of 17 Jan 2020****ALL***The timing for Winter Plenaries is:*

Time	Session
10.00-10.30	Registration and coffee
10.30-12.00	Business meeting
12.00-13.00	Lunch
13.00-16.30	Workshop theme/suggestions

- 11.i *Proposed Workshop topic:* JD and CG had discussed a workshop theme, research-focused, around supporting ECRs and their pathways. This could be done in collaboration with VITAE, who support ECR development. This proposal was agreed as being very timely; **Action: JD & CG.**
- 11.ii *Constituency:* There should be a definition of 'ECR'. It was agreed that ECR teaching fellows & PGRs would be included. The issue was both temporary short-term contracts (often teaching-only) & those just finishing PhDs with no job yet. Re the latter: it had been suggested that HEIs should give completed PhDs a status for ca 1 year allowing continued access to library etc.: some HEIs do this (eg Cardiff) but many charge high fees for it.
- 11.iii *Cost of attendance:* JD had suggested that each member HEI should be asked to fund one ECR to attend. NS explained that attendees at Plenary are not delegates but simply have to belong to a member HEI. Costs of attendance can be applied for under Small Grants.
- 11.iv *Detail:* It was agreed that the focus should be career development. LWO noted that one outcome of the July 2019 Plenary was that we needed to speak more to management: this could be extended to ECR matters, with invited speakers talking about best practice. GS: UCML could also offer mentoring eg for CV writing. Eg ECRs with teaching-only contacts can be shown what they can do with their skill sets. AdM commented that HEIs have been devaluing PhDs, by offering students with PhDs poor contracts that devalue the entire staff structure: there is little financial gain in offering these contracts and they have a big impact psychologically. CG noted that Society for French Studies is offering 6-month funding to post-PhDs.

**12. Progress on UCML ownership of Routes into Languages****CG**

We are at the final stages of transfer. The deed has been received, had feedback and been approved. VW will review all the intellectual property of Routes England and then the transfer will be signed by UCML/OfS before Christmas 2019.

**13. UCML Small Grants allocation****CG**

- 13.i *General:* There had been many excellent applications. It was agreed to run two rounds per year, deadline 4-5 weeks after each Plenary so it can be advertised then.
- 13.ii *Excluded items:* Open Access APCs: these are very costly; conference speaker fees (though speaker expenses & other conference costs may be applied for).
- 13.iii *Partnerships* AdM noted that the Small Grants scheme had been very successful in the OWRI projects & could be jointly funded with the BA. DH suggested seeking commercial partners to co-fund grants. **Action: CG** to raise this with the BA & the ATC.

**14. Gender Action programme****AdM**

- 14.i *BB & GP presented GA:* UCML is one of four partners of Gender Action. In all subjects, school students are still taking very gendered pathways. GA works through tiered progression, addressing implicit biases, parental involvement etc. It is tailored by educators to their settings and is impact-focused.
- 14.ii *Questions/Comments:*
- DH: How intersectional is GA & how does it engage with the gender binary? BB/GP: The project is flexible enough to be intersectional, but mainly it is introducing intersectionality by working with other projects. Eg one with a focus on race.
  - LWO: After conversations with head-teachers there is interest in this in Wales. BB/GP: A school in Wales is doing a pilot with feeder primaries so hoping to roll out, currently in conversation about making this a wider campaign.
  - NS: Parents may change pronoun gender when reading to children, but when they learn to read that flexibility is lost. BB/GP: Talking to publishers might be an interesting avenue: the Fawcett Commission is working on marketing and books.
  - AF: In timetabling, 'gendered' subjects are grouped together, which prevents students from going beyond them. BB/GP: The project is subject agnostic: it grew out of physics but incorporates all subjects and disciplines. GA is aware of 'boys' block' & 'girls' block' in timetables, but schools are trying to challenge these complex structures.
  - CG: the new school curriculum in Wales is positive & GA may be interested in inputting on this. **Action: CG** to ask VW for engagement with GA and language outreach work in RiL sub-committee.

**15 Any Other Business****all**

- 15.i *Website:* CSJE introduced the new website (<https://university-council-modern-languages.org/>). She proposed that Exec members could all be users who can contribute news items; this would be moderated by VC Comms; **Action: AdM**. Guidelines: length = half a page of A4; template: title, minimum size for picture etc. CG suggested Exec reps could pick out one thing from their report to post about; the moderator could schedule them across the 6 months between Exec meetings. Also these news items can be cross-posted onto facebook/twitter; **Action: all**.
- 15.ii *Admin Assistant role:* CSJE proposed that UCML could separate the subs administration (RiL and UCML subs) and the web development into two smaller roles. To be discussed; **Action: CG & CSJE**.
- 15.iii GS suggested we might add a PGR/ECR rep to the Exec.
- 15.iv *Italian at A level.* GS had attended a meeting of the BA giving advice to students doing GCSE/A levels. **Action: GS** to send info to CG and CSJE who will forward to VW for discussion.

**16 Dates of next meetings (2020, all Fridays)**

17 January	Winter Plenary	British Academy
mid-March	Spring Steering Group	by slack
mid-April	Spring Exec	Leeds c/o ML
June/July	Summer Plenary	??