

UCML Winter Plenary 2020

Friday 17 January 2020 10.00–16.00

The Reading Room, British Academy,
10–11 Carlton House Terrace,
London SW1Y 5AH



BUSINESS MEETING

Item 4c: VC Research Report

I took over from Julian Preece at the start of September. Thanks to Julian for his work on the role and a useful handover briefing.

V-C Research Role and Remit

The UCML Constitution and Standing Orders indicate the following responsibilities in relation to research:

- i. **Promoting research** in modern languages, literatures, cultures and societies, linguistics and language teaching in higher education in the UK;
- ii. **Representing UCML's institutional & associate membership** in consultations on strategic matters of research in all our disciplines with bodies such as Modern Humanities Research Association, AHRC, ESRC, British Academy, IMLR;
- iii. **Liaison and consultation** with Members/Associate Members **on Research and REF issues and strategies;**
- iv. **Representing agendas related to Post Graduate Research provision and funding** for UK HEIs.

The V-C Research may also help organise UCML **workshop events**, where these focus on **strategic and operational leadership agendas related to research in higher education language departments**.

During my tenure, my own priorities will be:

- i. Postgraduate research/researchers, particularly around issues of precarity and anti-casualisation;
- ii. Achieving a more diverse, inclusive research culture.

Chair Claire Gorrara (CG) and I recently discussed how UCML can make a difference in these areas, and agreed, with the Steering Group then the Exec, to use this afternoon's workshop as a starting point.

January 2020 UCML Plenary

Possible title: *Early Career Academics in Modern Languages*

Early career academics in modern languages have different experiences of issues including funding challenges, the research 'pipeline', increasing casualization, and precarity. Co-hosted by CG and I, this workshop would focus on listening to the experiences and hopes of our early career colleagues, both to learn from them, and to make sure that they feel that UCML is working for them.

To ensure their voices are heard, we suggest that:

- Each department or subject association sending a representative to the AGM also select and fund one postgraduate or early career academic to accompany the representative;
- An Early Career Working Group be created, to establish how UCML can provide support;
- We invite relevant organisations to join us on the day, including the AHRC, UK Graduate Council for Education, and Vitae (further suggestions welcome).

REF

31 July deadline for any impact case study-related activities. Details of additional assessment phase panel members are online at <https://www.ref.ac.uk/media/1260/all-panel-members-v13-060120.pdf> I have taken over from Julian as contact point and will liaise on behalf of UCML in relation to any further requests on REF issues.

Representation, Subject Associations

I have replaced Julian as the UCML representative on the Institute for Modern Languages Research Advisory Council and the Arts and Humanities Alliance. I will report back after meetings and on relevant campaigns. If anyone is aware of other relevant organisations I should join on behalf of UCML, please let me know. Julian suggested reaching out to the various subject associations which are represented on UCML in relation to research; please do put me in touch if you know who represents the research remit for your own subject associations.

Research Integrity

I responded formally on behalf of UCML to the Vitae survey on research integrity in the autumn (the organisation which supports researcher development).

AOB

Apologies but using report to publicise an event at UEA:

AFLS-Funded Workshop on French Studies and Employability University of East Anglia (Norwich), 11/09/20 Call for Contributions

Are we preparing our students for professional work? In his foreword to *Employability: a Handbook*, Mike Kelly reports that "*recent research for the 'Born Global' project suggests that languages are not identified as a priority by employers at the time when staff are recruited. Applicants for jobs need to satisfy other priorities at that point. The language advantage comes into play at a later stage*". Fluency in French is of course a prerequisite for industries such as translation or MFL teaching, but many graduates will not use French at the beginning of their future career. They will, however, certainly use the acute problem solving, proofreading, public speaking and many more skills they also developed while at university. They might also use some technical skills developed during their French degree, such as video/audio file editing, or text analysis tools.

A workshop on French Studies and Employability will take place at the University of East Anglia (Norwich) on **Friday 11 September**, and are looking for contributions from colleagues who could either present a research paper on the topic, or an activity/project they run in class with a particular focus on transferable skills awareness, or on the development of technical skills.

If you are interested, please send a 200 word abstract in French or English to Claire Cuminatto (c.cuminatto@uea.ac.uk) before **Friday 20th March**.

Jo Drugan, 17 January 2020