

Plenary Business Meeting

Friday 15 January 2021

10am-11.30am via Zoom



UCML BUSINESS MEETING 2021

MINUTES

Nb Reports can be found at <https://university-council-modern-languages.org/2020/12/21/ucml-winter-plenary-2021-adapting-shaping-change/>

Initials: see Attendance List. Other acronyms:

AHA	Arts & Humanities Alliance
APPG	All Party Parliamentary Group on Modern Languages
AULC	Association of University Language Centres
BA	British Academy
BERA	British Educational Research Association
DAAD	Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst
DfE	Department for Education
ECA	Early Career Academics
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IMLR	Institute of Modern Languages Research
IWLP	Institution-Wide Language Programme
ML	Languages
MOOC	Massive Open Online Course
REF	Research Excellence Framework
RiL	Routes into Languages
SHAPE	Social Sciences, Humanities & Arts for People & the Economy
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths
UCAS	Universities & Colleges Admissions Service
UUKi	Universities UK international

1. Welcome, apologies & announcements

The following Exec members sent apologies: Joe Carson, Jo Drugan, Federico Faloppa, and El Mustapha Lahlali.

2. Minutes of last meetings

2.ab UCML Executive Meeting of 4 December 2020

2.a Accuracy & approval

No amendments were noted.

2.b Matters arising

§2.4a/§5.d/§5.e As JD was unable to attend the meeting we will follow up with her.
Action: CG and JI to follow up with JD

§6.a EC notes that an ECA Instagram account could be the most effective means for the visibility of the UCML ECA SiG.

§8.a See 3.f below.

§8.d JI to canvas views on UCML logo on subject association website. AF also proposes this be dated.

Action: JI to Doodle Poll

§9.a.ii BERA meeting to be followed up.

Action: SJ to chase meeting with BERA

§10.d.ii CG sits on SHAPE education committee and notes there are big names (David Willetts, Tristram Hunt) on the SHAPE committee and hopefully these points on measuring graduate outcomes for SHAPE subjects can be raised. She will raise at the next meeting.

§11 JI and CG have produced a UCML presentation template for reps to adapt.

Action: JI to circulate

§13 Letter has been added to the UCML website, and the potential solution for DAAD lector posts has been sent to the German embassy. AF also notes that a letter has been sent to the German embassy on student visas for current year abroad students caught in bureaucratic issues resulting from Brexit.

2.cd UCML Plenary AGM of 10 July 2020

2.c Accuracy & approval

No amendments were noted.

2.d Matters arising

§2.b. Gender Action paragraph has been added to the website.

§2.b.10.ii Lusophone survey and findings have been circulated to the Exec.

§2.b.15.i Library group contact details have been circulated to Exec.

§2.2.d.iv This became §2.4a in the Exec minutes above.

§5.c No additional REF nominations were received.

- §10.a This was taken forward with Baroness Coussins at APPG, but no response.
Action: CG to chase with APPG.
- §10.b Translating Cultures event was advertised via the UCML website.

3. Reports from UCML Steering Group

3.a. Chair

CG

- 3.a.i *Languages Strategy*: BA now putting together a strategic committee for HE, one of the key recommendations from the *Towards a National Languages Strategy* report.
- 3.a.ii *Erasmus*: Letter has been sent. CG has managed to secure a meeting with Sir Steve Smith and two colleagues from DfE next week. Colin Riordan, VC at Cardiff and Chair of Student Mobility Working Group at UUKi, has expressed strong support for Turing in an all-staff email at Cardiff. If colleagues have queries following an anticipated press release on Turing this weekend/next week, then please do send them to CG and JI in advance of next Thursday. DH drew attention to the need for any scheme, whether Erasmus+ or Turing, to encompass the full range of language study in the UK, beyond the EU languages. SW notes that we must be careful not to be seen to endorse Turing to avoid this being used against us if Turing proves insufficiently robust.
Action: ALL to consider any concerns about the Turing Scheme and send them to CG and JI that can be taken to a meeting with Steve Smith
- 3.a.iii *Granularity Report*: BA has sent coded data and writing of report has begun. We hope to have this out by Easter. Many thanks to Harriet Barnes at the BA for all her help coding the data sets.
- 3.a.iv *Year Abroad*: MOOC in Cardiff well received by the 340 students who attended. Southampton/British Council MOOC will launch on 24 January and there are currently 1100 students (and counting) to whom this will be offered. CG asks for colleagues to contact UCML should they support the current relationship/MOOC offer with FutureLearn being maintained beyond this year.
- 3.a.v *Small Grants*: Next deadline for small grants fund is Friday 22 January.

3.b Vice-chair Languages & Intercultural Education

VW

- 3.b.i *A-levels*: Slight increase in higher level grades following the reversion to teacher estimated grades in Summer 2020. Decrease in the A-level ML cohort
- 3.b.ii *UCAS Statistics*: VW analysed the UCAS end-of-cycle report produced in December to discern any possible trends. Looking at the last three years VW noted an overall slight decline in ML admissions. This seems particularly to be

in single-honours degrees. There are slight increases in certain combinations (especially with STEM), though social science combinations are slightly down. The Granularity Report will unearth these trends in a more substantial way.

- 3.b.iii *AULC-UCML Annual Survey*: This is now ready and will be circulated to HEIs with a view to establishing a complete picture of the ML/IWLP landscape at the moment. The survey will also interrogate the impact of COVID-19 and Brexit on the discipline.
- 3.b.iv *RiL*: Final stage of transfer has been held up by legal teams at Southampton, but VW is chasing as best she can.

3.c Vice-chair Research

JD

No report was received.

3.d Vice-chair Engagement & External Communications

EC

- 3.d.i *Online presence*: Social media presence is steadily increasing, in particular following our intense lobbying around the British Council and Erasmus+. Website engagement has also increased significantly in 2020.
- 3.d.ii *Strategic Forum for Humanities*: EC attended these meetings and presented the UCML 'Surviving and Thriving in Difficult Times' toolkit, which was well received.

3.e Hon. Secretary

MAC

MAC notes that we have extended the call for nominations for Lusophone Studies representative, as no nominations were received, but HO notes that she has been contacted by interested parties. CG thanks HO for all her work for UCML over the past 4 years, and for agreeing to stay on for an additional two months.

3.f Hon. Treasurer

OGC

- 3.f.i Subscriptions: These are in a good place with 2019 now largely covered, and 2020 well on the way. OGC proposes that we amend the subscription fee for language teaching units that are not part of a broader languages department to £50 per year. **This was agreed *nem con*.**
- 3.f.ii *Expenses*: these have been much lower than in previous years in light of the shift to virtual events and the updated subscription fees, meaning that we are in a much healthier position than we have been in the past. OGC notes that we once held joint Subject Centre/UCML/AULC conferences and suggests that we resurrect this for 2022. MC notes that AULC already has an annual conference focused on language teaching in an IWLP context, but that AULC would be happy to take these forward so long as these events do not substantially overlap. CG proposes also involving the IMLR and making this as international as possible. EL suggests we find ways of acting with the school

and FE sector. AF mentions that legal advice on visas might be useful. CG notes that UUKi have employed a firm of immigration lawyers to provide a framework of advice on study/work placements post-Brexit. AF suggests paying for professional, UCML-badged videos produced aimed at 6th form students, or perhaps paying ECA colleagues to do this. Short videos around our campaigning areas might be useful too. CB notes that IMLR would be very happy to work on conferences in the future, and mentions a possible event around what ML study/work abroad would look like under/post Turing. CG suggests that the UCML website operate as a portal for these ML videos etc already out there to avoid doubling up on content.

Action: CG, MC, JI, OGC and EC to meet with AULC and IMLR to discuss taking forward proposal for a conference.

Action: EC and JI to create web pages to direct and house relevant ML materials.

3.f.iii OGC also notes that the paperwork has now been submitted to make CG a signatory on the UCML accounts.

3.f.iv OGC presented the year-end report and **this was approved *nem con***.

4. [Reports from Nations and Early Career Academics](#)

4.a Northern Ireland

SJ

SJ highlights the pressing questions surrounding Erasmus+ in Northern Ireland and the offer from the Republic of Ireland to give Northern Irish students access to the scheme. She also notes that Ulster University are keen to re-join UCML.

4.b Scotland

JC

No report was received.

4.c Wales

LWO

Erasmus+: A Wales-facing letter has been produced following the model of UCML's UK Erasmus+ letter, which has received widespread report from across Wales. A petition has also been circulated in Wales (not generated by UCML) asking for Welsh access to Erasmus+. The petition currently has 1000 signatures, but if it reaches 10,000 it has to be debated in the Senedd. CG draws attention to an announcement from Welsh government that EU students will pay home fees to study in Wales.

4.d Early Career Academics

LL

4.d.i *Mentoring*: LL extended thanks to colleagues who have volunteered as mentors.

4.d.ii *Survey*: LL alerts colleagues to the survey the ECA Group will circulate a survey seeking ideas and feedback on the ECA charter and encourages colleagues to respond/circulate.

4.d.iii *Current climate:* LL reminds colleagues that while the current climate is extremely challenging for all of us but ECAs in particular, especially those coming to the end of PhDs. If any colleagues have suggestions of initiatives for activities/initiatives that can support ECAs please do send them on to LL.

5. Any other business

AF notes that a response has been received stating that the student loan will not be accepted to meet the financial burden of study/residency abroad, where the Erasmus grant was. This means students will have to have ca €10,000 in a blocked account in order to get a study/work visa. SW notes that this will surely create a situation where only wealthier students can meet the burden of proof, creating an iniquitous situation. GS states that at Leeds a similar burden of proof is required for United States/Canada exchanges, meaning solutions exist, though AF points out that countries differ in terms of what counts as proof.

ATTENDANCE LIST (37)

Surname	First Name	Initials	Member Organisation
Astbury	Kate	KA	Warwick
Birmingham	Nicola	NB	Liverpool/Exec
Burdett	Charles	CB	IMLR
Cayley	Emma	EC	Leeds/Exec
Cazzoli	Marcela	MAC	Durham/Exec
Colomer	Vicens	VC	ELEUK
Cotgrove	Louis	LC	AGS
Critchley	Mark	MC	AULC
Doak	Connor	CD	Bristol/Exec
Fiddler	Allyson	AF	Lancaster/Exec
Gomez-Cash	Olga	OGC	Lancaster/Exec
Gorrara	Claire	CG	Cardiff/Exec
Gough	Vicky	VG	British Council
Harris	Ashley	AH	Queen's University Belfast
Herrero	Carmen	CH	Manchester Met
Hicks	Jeremy	JH	Queen Mary, London
Hird	Derek	DH	Lancaster/Exec
Ho	Mavis	MH	Edinburgh
Illingworth	James	JI	Leicester/DMU/Exec
Inglada	Ramon	RI	Heriot-Watt
James	Katie	KJ	DAAD
Jones	Sharon	SJ	Stranmillis UC/Exec
Labeau	Emmanuelle	EL	Aston/Exec
Laurent	Caroline	CL	King's College London
Lewis	Liam	LL	Liverpool/Exec
Owen	Hilary	HO	Manchester/Exec
Rabadán-Gomez	Marina	MRG	Liverpool/Exec
Rodríguez	Begoña	BR	Portsmouth/Exec

Santos	Emanuelle	ES	Birmingham
Sanz Mingo	Carlos	CSM	Cardiff
Stollhans	Sascha	SS	Lancaster
Sulis	Gigliola	GS	Leeds/Exec
Taylor	Claire	CT	AHGBI/Liverpool
Vialleton	Elodie	EV	Open University
Wharton	Steve	SW	Bath/ASMCF
Wren-Owens	Liz	LWO	Cardiff/Exec
Wright	Vicky	VW	Southampton/Exec