

Item 3: Chair's Report

UCML Chair's Report: April 2021 to July 2021

1. *Policy intervention*

Continued lobbying and intervention: The second meeting of the **Strategic Committee for Languages in Higher Education** will take on 14 July 2021. It will look at sector-wide data on languages in HE, the impact of Brexit and staff and student mobility/visa arrangements and support for heritage/community languages.

This quarter, we have worked in concert with the British Academy and other language organisations to contribute to **sector consultation on revised English GCSE specifications**. This has been led very effectively by our VC Education and Intercultural Communication and AMLUK as a Special Interest Group of UCML.

There is considerable concern on the proposals which would reduce much of the cultural dimension of the current curriculum. UCML has supported proposals to develop cultural materials for any new and/or revised specification. There may be a meeting with officials to discuss the outcomes of the consultation. UCML will be represented.

2. *Strategic planning and development*

Working with British Academy on SHAPE: SHAPE materials for schools, including languages, have now been developed and were piloted in schools in all four UK nations/jurisdictions. There are ongoing discussions on the next stage of the SHAPE project, which may focus on the connections between SHAPE subjects and careers. I presented on languages and SHAPE at a Creative Multilingualism event on 30/06/2021.

Delivery of the granular UCAS data on languages in HE. We employed Webster Research and Consulting Ltd to undertake a study of UCAS admissions data for degree programmes with languages, 2012-2018. This has now been published and promoted through our own channels and those of the British Academy. The *THE* has picked up the story thus far (05/07/2021). There is scope to consider taking the project beyond 2018 and inputting qualitative data from students and other language stakeholders in HE.

Support for the delivery of the AULC/UCML annual survey: I have supported the UCML/AULC team in delivering the annual report on the contexts for languages in HE.

Working with other Learned Societies/UKRI: I contributed to the British Academy's Humanities Learned Societies network meeting on 28/05/2021. I am attending a meeting

with AHRC colleagues looking at the future of languages research on 07/07/2021, with a specific emphasis on indigenous and minoritized languages. 4 focus groups are taking place led by the AHRC Leadership Fellow for Modern Languages.

3. *National representation and/or support*

England: I met with colleagues at the University of **Sheffield** on the proposed reconfiguration of language programmes at the institution. I met with senior leaders at the University of **Aston** on the proposed closure of language programmes. Aston closures have now been confirmed.

Our VC Communications and Engagement is working to support the **British Council** as it faces further threat to its activities.

4. **UCML small grants scheme:** 3rd round 2021: 5 projects submitted: 1 successful. A further round of funding will be available in July 2021. This scheme will now be chaired by the Honorary Secretary.

5. **Consultations/support:** I met with the Coimbra Group in April to discuss UCML's perspective on Brexit, languages and student mobility.

As this is my last report, I would like to end by thanking all of the inspiring colleagues with whom I have worked over the past three years. It has been a pleasure and privilege to work with you all and chair the work of such a vibrant and lovely community of colleagues – diolch!