

UCML Executive

Friday, 26th May, 2023

UCML Report, Chair

A very warm welcome to new members joining us; grateful thanks and farewell to those leaving (see the full list in report of Honorary Secretary). This includes thanks to **Mary Newman** who stepped down as Administrative assistant in January, and welcome to **Liam Lewis** who has joined us as Project Coordinator. **Liam** was formerly ECA rep, a position now taken on by **Ashley Harris**. We are also grateful to **Marián Arribas-Tomé** for her contribution as Honorary Treasurer.

Posts are currently being advertised for Honorary Treasurer and a newly created role of Membership Secretary with a closing date of 1st June. The management of our finances has been challenging over the last year at least, and we are aware of some issues that have arisen with prompt payment of small grants. However, we are confident that we are getting back on track with the sterling work of **Liam** in his new role, and of our former treasurer, **Olga Gomez-Cash** who has been exceptionally helpful over the last months.

Summer Plenary (Friday 14th July, 10-4.30pm, ILCS, Senate House) –

UCML summer plenary sessions:

- ECA session
- Translation Studies
- Revitalising Language Learning - the new NCLE initiative
 - With a focus on specific strands, eg:*
 - transforming language and cultural learning in instructed settings
 - valorising languages spoken in the home and in our communities
 - developing multi literacy
 - progress through partnerships
 - practice led research and development
 - peer to peer support, modelling and mentoring

Deadlines and reminders:

- The ECA SIG have put out an advertisement for more ECA mentors esp Hispanic and Italian studies – contact Dr Kate Foster ecasn.contact@gmail.com (We welcome both: Mentors offering support and those seeking support.)
- PG bursary advertised - deadline 1st July

Meetings and invitations to speak:

- “Where Are We Now? The Location of Modern Languages and Cultures” 19-21 April, Durham University. UCML Chair spoke at the plenary round table on the ‘Modern Languages Department of the Future’.
- Routes organised a round table at the Durham conference on mentoring and ambassador programmes, ‘Making the case for student ambassadors: sustainability and best practice in Languages outreach across the UK’. Chaired by Marcela, and including talks by Vicky Wright, Ed Welch, Andrew Grenfell, Janice Carruthers, Nazaret Pérez Nieto, Rubén Chapela, and Charlotte Ryland.

It was a hugely successful conference and we were heartened to see so much positivity around our disciplines, and so many of our Exec and wider associates represented there. A big congratulations to Marcela for her part in the organisation of the conference.

- **British Academy Strategic Forum for the Humanities** - 26th April, pilot mini-Forum event on the health and sustainability of the disciplines. I represented UCML and gave some insights from the work we have been undertaking in Languages for many years. The next meeting of the Strategic Forum on 14th June will discuss the outcomes of the pilot mini-Forum event and next steps. I will feed back at the summer plenary. The following topics will be discussed in particular in relation to the health and sustainability of the disciplines.
 - Open Access
 - Equality, diversity and inclusion
 - Policy landscape and updates from the British Academy and Strategic Forum members
- **The Strategic Committee for Languages in Higher Education (SCLHE - jointly chaired by UCML and BA) – 23rd June**
- We have discussed convening an SCLHE working group on the HE curriculum (with scope/remit to be determined but including its relation to school-teaching as a career pathway).

Consultation, campaign and policy paper on Home and Community Languages with BA/LAGB

Working with Charles Forsdick, Yuni Kim from LAGB, Vicky, and Sky to gather data, anecdotes for a policy paper on acceptance of home/community languages. This work was presented at the Strategic Committee on Languages in Higher Education in November 2022. Charles F and the BA are working on a paper to be released shortly.

Campaign for Translation Studies

Draft report on the health of the field with Callum Walker (APTIS), Begoña Rodríguez de Céspedes, and Fransiska. We aim to launch a package of action around recruitment and closures in Translation Studies. There will be a panel arising from this work at the Summer Plenary.

BA Languages Gateway

Ongoing consultation with UCML on the new [Languages Gateway](#), one of the outcomes of the BA paper, [Towards a National Languages Strategy](#) (TNLS). Liaison with Philip Harding-Esch, APPG ML. A working site is up and running. Mark Critchley is Chair of the Editorial Board (on which I also sit), and we welcome all feedback. There is also a linked twitter account @LangsGateway

Health of the Disciplinary field:

We have written to **UEA** on behalf of UCML to offer support to the Head of School of Politics, Philosophy, Language and Communication Studies, and have written a letter to the former acting VC, and chair of governors to protest the proposed redundancies. We remain in contact with UEA colleagues to support through any further upheaval. Recent concerning developments at **Coventry** and **De Montfort** are also on our radar, and we are in touch with colleagues at both these institutions to monitor the situations and offer support as needed.

- In collaboration with the British Academy and other bodies, we have been asked to prepare a briefing, for the APPG, on HEI languages degree programme closures and how to tackle these; APPG has requested data on contraction (including on the numbers of HEIs, and for this to be set in context of uptake at school level, of cold spots, and of different kinds of institutions (cf. B. Murádas-Taylor research on low entry tariffs). We will report back on this and share the eventual paper. We also welcome all input from members to feed in.

SIGs:

We now have 7 Special Interest Groups within the UCML family.

ECA - ECA code of practice launch – this was launched last year with a short promotional video, we would urge all members to ask their Schools and Departments to engage with it: <https://university-council-modern-languages.org/early-career-academics/code-of-best-practice/>

Heads SIG – Helen Abbott at Birmingham is Co-chair with David Cowling (Durham). The SIG now has administrative support from the ILCS and will soon hold a first meeting.

YA SIG – James Illingworth and Jonathan Long have launched a campaign around Turing – there are shortfalls in the funding in many Universities this year, and no planned renewal yet confirmed of the scheme. Jonathan and James briefed the APPG on matters related to Turing.

Lesser taught languages SIG (joint AULC/UCML) – Prof Wen-Chin Ouyang (SOAS) is Co-Chair for UCML with colleagues from the AULC (Justyna Drobnik-Rogers and Sandra Torres).

Widening Participation Languages network – Chaired by Becky Muradás-Taylor. UCML have been liaising with this SIG due to recent developments with Depts at risk.

AMLUK – regular contact with Charles Burdett, and UCML steering group attendance at meetings.

***New UCML-AULC SIG** – joint SIG across AULC and UCML which was launched at the AULC conference in Edinburgh this year. The vision is for this SIG to enhance collaboration between ILWPs and degree programmes and to strengthen the status of language teaching in UK Higher Education overall. A jiscmail list has already been established. SIG Co-Chairs are Christine Schallmoser, Senior Lecturer in German Language Education and Language Director, King's College London and Marina Rabadán, Academic Director of Open Languages (IWLP), University of Liverpool. [AULC-UCML Special Interest Group – University Council of Modern Languages \(university-council-modern-languages.org\)](#)

Routes into Languages

Vicky and Sky continue to hold regular meetings. UCML will partner with other organisations through Routes to collaborate with the newly established DfE-funded National Consortium for Language Education (NCLE), UCL. Vicky and I are in regular contact with Bernardette Holmes, Director of the NCLE, and will report at the summer plenary on activities.

AULC/UCML report

We are aiming to follow through with the results of this report. Now that we have the Heads and joint AULC-UCML SIGs, communication may be easier with individual Universities to gather information for the survey. At last report we had 21 responses from 54 possible respondents.

Consultation on possible change of name for UCML:

Liam Lewis (Project Coordinator) and I have launched a consultation process. We hope to come with a concrete proposal to the plenary in July. Main drivers behind the consultation are shifts in the disciplinary field and perceptions of our area, decolonial turn, recent ILCS name change, SBS statement for our disciplinary fields.

EC: 26/05/23