

UCML Executive Committee

Friday 20 April 2018

12.30 – 16.00

Europe House, 32 Smith Square, London SW1P 3EU



EXEC MEMBERS (alphabetical order of surname; *italics = absent*)

Sarah Bowskill	N. Ireland	SB
Caroline Campbell	IWLP	CEC
Catherine Chabert	Wales	CC
Ana de Medeiros	VC Communications	AdM
Joanna Drugan	T&I	JD
Federico Faloppa	Linguistics	FF
Allyson Fiddler	Germanic & Low countries	AF
Olga Gomez-Cash	Hon Treasurer	OGC
Michael Gratzke	Chair	MG
Derek Hird	E. Asian	DH
<i>Hilary Kalmbach</i>	<i>Middle Eastern studies</i>	<i>HK</i>
René Koglbauer	ALL	RK
Par Kumaraswami	Hispanic	PK
<i>Shirley Lawes</i>	<i>ITT</i>	<i>SL</i>
Imogen Long	French	IL
Carole MacDiarmid	ELT	CMcD
<i>Matthias Neumann</i>	<i>Slavonic & EE</i>	<i>MN</i>
Hilary Owen	Lusophone	HO
<i>Giuliana Pieri</i>	<i>Italian</i>	<i>GP</i>
Elena Polisca	VC Education	EP
Julian Preece	VC Research	JP
Naomi Segal	Hon Secretary	NS
Marion Spöring	Scotland	MS
Claire St John Eve	Admin Assistant	CStJE
Frances Weightman	Area Studies	FW

Also, by invitation

Joe Carson	upcoming Scotland	JC
Connor Doak	upcoming SEE	CD
Charles Hymas	journalist	CH

MINUTES

NB all reports for this meeting can be found on <https://kcl-digi-prod-wa-wordp-ne-02.azurewebsites.net/ucml/2018/04/20/ucml-executive-committee-meeting-20-april-2018/>

- 1 **Welcome and apologies** for absence MG
 - MG welcomed new members Allyson Fiddler & Frances Weightman.
 - Apologies: Shirley Lawes, Giuliana Pieri. A third upcoming Exec member, Liz Wren-Owens (Wales) was invited but unable to attend. Absent: Hilary Kalmbach, Matthias Neumann.

- 2 **Minutes** MG

Executive Committee meeting of 3 November 2017

2.a Accuracy and approval

Corrections:

- §1 also absent: HK
 §3.b *Westminster*: the last few words shd read: 'risks increasing the problem of elitism in ML'
 §10.m the can sector → the sector can

2.b Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda*The following Actions have not yet been taken:*

- 2.d/9.a No approach had been made to Celtic studies: this may be pursued by the new Chair & Wales rep (**Action: LWO/new Chair**).
 7.b Unfortunately the BA had not produced minutes for the FP9 meeting.
 10.b The two issues raised by RV (effect of *ab initio* at HEIs on take-up in secondary schools & problem of 'ML degrees' for UCAS info) had not been discussed. *But see below §12*.
 10.j Biennial conference with AULC: this will not take place at the OU in 2018; IL to check with staff at Hull to see if the conference can go ahead there in 2018 or 2019: **Action: IL**.
 10.m The Prince's Trust has not yet been approached.

Plenary Business meeting of 5 January 2018**2.c Accuracy and approval***Correction:*

- 4.e i organisations → organisation

2.d Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the agenda

- 4.a iii OGC asked what was happening with Routes into Languages. MG: it is agreed that there should be a RiL 3.0, universities engaging with secondary sector & employers. UUKI is assisting but resources are needed. The process has been stalled through the strikes.

3 Chair's Report & discussion

MG

- i. The BA has set up a Language Advisory Group to discuss ML issues (HE, secondary and supplementary schools). Jocelyn is chair, MG also in it; the new Chair may replace him. They are hoping to create a Language Strategy for England & the UK. UCML will support in this. A statement is being drafted to send to the four national Academies, taking in feedback. It would be very useful to have a Chief Languages Officer in Whitehall. MS: Is Janice Carruthers in this group? She has an important place in this process. MG: yes, the group is comprehensive and has been widely publicised.
- ii. At the moment MG has not heard of any threats of closure to ML depts./Schools. A language review is in process at University of Hull.
- iii. Re the strike: as a lobbying group with HEI members, UCML does not take a position on the industrial action.
- iv. MG will be handing over to the new chair, and will stress to them that UCML is an umbrella organisation which should be making connections wherever possible.
- v. AMLUK: There have been no new developments; it is not yet solidified as an organisation with defined membership, just meets informally once a year. It has been in this position since it first arose ca 3 years ago.
- vi. One sentence was to be removed from the Chair's report: **Action NS**.

MG was warmly thanked for all his work as Chair since January 2017.

4 Report of Vice Chair Languages & Intercultural Education & discussion

EP

- i. There is an overall increase in A level applications across the UK, but ML is declining within this. However, there are still positives to be found in the data, eg upturn in non-EU students/international students. EP's summary report has been uploaded to the website.

- ii. Re Group T, it was noted that this may be Mandarin; DH noted an increase in women studying Mandarin; he also asked if the increase is enough to neutralise the fall in UK applicants. EP: No, bcs the increases are too small to make a significant impact. Overall, the drop is not too dramatic, the numbers are low (100s), but still significant. OGC has also looked into these figures, and has seen similar increases and decreases globally.
- iii. EP has been working on two projects. One is to extract more granular data from UCAS stats, ie for joint honours degrees. They are currently in the process of coding data, and then we will obtain figures from UCAS to create a report. The other project is a joint ML mapping project with Inma Alvares & Carlos Montoro (both OU) and Caroline Campbell (AULC). Many HEIs provide languages, but it is difficult to obtain data. There is a survey which has provided some results, although many HEIs are resistant. Data should be ready to publish soon, and can help us to make the case for our sector. NS suggested this may be a good topic for the Winter Plenary 2019.

5 Report of Vice Chair Research & discussion

JP

- i. JP represents UCML on a number of committees, including the AHRC Modern Languages Advisory Group, and has also attended the APPG. These are often more than talking shops, showed ML working together, and there is resolve, especially with OWRI legacy, to exercise lasting influence, all of which he finds energising.
- ii. REF panels have been announced for ML. UCML played a full role in the nomination process. Selection was more open this time. More assessors will be appointed at a later stage. Chinese will hopefully be included in final selection, DH to push Chinese representation.
- iii. Open Access: at the SG meeting, JP was asked to write a letter with various signatories. The Arts & Humanities Association [AHA] is meeting soon to discuss this issue, and Subject Associations will air their views there. JP will attend to represent UCML. Our particular interest is in publication in non-UK outlets.
- iv. JP has created two new pages on the website re research funding and opportunities for publication.

6 Report of Vice Chair External Communication and Engagement & discussion AdM

- i. AdM reported uptake on social media.
- ii. She had attended an APPG meeting on secondary uptake: Hackney Learning Trust is now giving all primary/secondary students the opportunity to learn Spanish. As allocation of class time for ML is inadequate, they have found creative ways to provide this through other subjects. Have been working with a consultant, and with support of British Council/ERASMUS/Spanish govt. All children have the chance to do immersion programme in Spain (1-2 weeks). The correlation between time spent studying a language and proficiency is recognised by the pupils. Also they are working on throughput primary/secondary. AdM plans to develop a research group to work to analyse the project and assess, and suggest ways that the project could be duplicated and assess the impact.
- iii. Discussion: RK: most of these projects are in Spanish, though eg Mandarin may be added. MG: whatever language is used it creates linguistic capability to be extended to other MLs. OGC: French is still dominant in schools. MS: diversifying relies on languages supporting each other and the infrastructure eg teacher supply. CC: how long does the project support students? AdM: through primary and secondary, longterm support through KS3, GCSE and A level.

7 Hon. Secretary's Report & discussion

NS

- i. NS welcomed new & upcoming members of Exec.
- ii. Chair election: deadline 3 May 3rd at 12 noon. Encouraged reps to help get votes in.
- iii. Meeting dates confirmed for 2018 and decided for 2019 – *see below §13*. There was discussion of finding a non-London venue, with the possibility of Manchester (**Action EP** to sound out colleagues). Exec to be consulted: **Action NS**.

8 Hon. Treasurer's Report & discussion

OGC

- i. Finances are fully operational now and looking positive. OGC has full access and payments of expenses are up to date. OGC has started spending UCML funds, and is writing to institutions for this year's subscriptions. Also updating contact lists.
- ii. OGC was working with DH to get in touch with Korean Studies who had lapsed. DH announced that they were rejoining.
- iii. Exec members are invited to send expense claims to ucml.expenses@gmail.com.
- iv. UCML has agreed to support UCMLS in their annual conference.

9 National reports & discussion

9.a Northern Ireland

SB

- i. Issue raised by NI Council – were looking for a UK languages strategy, will report back re: updates from this meeting.
- ii. Queen's Belfast no longer offers German, which may be what is impacting German provision in the secondary sector.

9.b Scotland

MS

- i. MS had given evidence to a Scottish parliamentary committee. The commitment to ERASMUS+ was emphasised (*see link in Scotland report*).
- ii. SCILT & UCMLS: have joint initiatives across Scotland: Business Brunches (Businesses linking with schools and HE): Word Wizard spelling competitions in several MLs; Mother Tongue Other Tongue – many entries (can be viewed from Scotland report); SCILT website has a UCMLS link, showing activities (including Language Linking, Global Thinking, Languages Lost and Found).
- iii. They are trying to expand activities across the whole of Scotland, not just Glasgow and Edinburgh, using skype to connect more rural areas. This has helped with sharing info and developments. A follow-on event to Languages Lost and Found, tying in with British Council's int'l week in Nov 2019, nationwide activities at universities and communities to promote language learning.
- iv. UCMLS Conference *New Perspectives on Cross-Sector Collaboration in Languages* on 15 September at the University of Dundee marks its 25th anniversary. Colleagues are encouraged to attend. Bringing in perspectives from Ireland and Wales: Janice Carruthers will speak on NI lang policy & Claire Gorrara and Lucy Jenkins on Wales Language Ambassadors' project. Hannah Doughty and MS will speak on their research project of impact of Business Brunches in Scotland. The annual UCMLS Action plan for 1+2 support will be updated.
- v. Discussion: AF: have Highers undergone similar changes in marking patterns to A levels? MS: SCILT website has an analysis of Highers (there is an increase in Higher uptake but decreases in the lower level qualification, national 5). Harsher marking has not been an issue in Highers. The topic of severe marking was continued in AoB (*see below §12*).

9.c Wales

CC

- i. CC had contacted 9 universities in Wales.
- ii. Aberystwyth won the Universities Association for Lifelong Learning [UALL] prize for its language exchange platform.
- iii. Routes Cymru gives an idea of what is happening at grassroots level. CC circulated leaflets from Routes, a guide for school governors to encourage them to put pressure on their schools to promote languages. Members are encouraged to send comments/questions to Routes Cymru: **Action all**.
- iv. The Student mentoring programme has successfully worked with 69 schools. It is having an impact on students' decisions and is a memorable experience.

10 Reports from other Executive members & discussion

10.a Area studies

FW

- i. FW reported initial conversations with colleagues, who highlighted that AS was one of the smallest returning panels in the 2014 REF.
- ii. Discussion: NS: which AS are language-based and which are not? useful info for UCML. Also can AS incorporate smaller regions or just nations? FW: both these issues are much discussed & will be revisited at the next meeting of UKCASA. The first relates back to the definition of Area Studies and its relationships with languages. MG: it can be worrying that AS, Ling and Lang are often separate. Further discussion is warranted.

10.b French studies

IL

- i. IL has been in contact with 4 groups for French studies, 2 have responded.
- ii. AUPHF ran a successful event on *Leading in difficult times* in Cardiff (slides available online). They are considering rebranding themselves to include the word 'leadership' in their title. This would more accurately reflect the changing formations within university structures where modern languages are now part of larger schools rather than constituted as separate departments.
- iii. Discussion: OGC highlighted usefulness of the AUPHF documents. MG/IL/OGC suggested putting a link on the website **Action CSJE**.

10.c Germanic/Low countries studies

AF

- i. AF has consulted colleagues, no responses yet, but has collated information about conferences. Innovative developments are happening, more updates at conferences.
- ii. She is interested in Swiss Associations, & invited colleagues to suggest if they know of any: **Action all**.
- iii. Re the voting system for election of Exec reps etc, NS clarified that member organisations (HEIs & Subject Associations) are listed on the website at <https://kcl-digi-prod-wa-wordp-ne-02.azurewebsites.net/ucml/membership-of-ucml/>. Exec members represent fields, not particular Subject Associations (though in cases where there is only one in the field this may seem to overlap).

10.d Hispanic studies

PK

- i. PK reraised the issue of the gender pay gap: while UCML was not directly involved in the union action, she suggested that colleagues might be able to gather information on the ground. MG/MS agreed that this was appropriate for Exec members to do: **Action all**. OGC suggested the upcoming Plenary may touch on this: the role of women in languages and how roles may be gendered – there is scope to look at this specifically. PK to remain involved.
- ii. Correction required to the report: Neil Kenny is BA not BC. **Action NS** to update & upload.
- iii. There is pressure from senior management at HEIs to look at international/EU/non-EU recruitment in the light of Brexit.
- iv. PK raised another issue: is it generally the case that an award for research projects is sent directly to the dept/university and so does not 'belong' to that project & may not meet its needs. JD added: projects are calculated as a percentage of your workload, often projects take more work hours than staff are available (eg. with projects some colleagues may be on 130%) and so full funding is not allocated to them; timing can also disrupt funding allocations. But there is a chain of communication between funders, staff and institutions which can be used to apply pressure. When funding is not additional it does not incentivise funding applications.

10.e Lusophone studies

HO

Re overlaps of coverage: some Lusophone Subject Associations are dealt with by both the Lusophone and AS reps. **Action HP & FW** to collaborate so work is not duplicated.

10.f Italian studies

GP

GP had sent apologies; the report shows that the general outlook in Italian studies is very positive.

10.g Middle Eastern studies

HK

No report had been received.

10.h East Asian studies

DH

- i. Chinese: a detailed report had been received from BACS President Naomi Standen. There was also discussion of the distribution of China Scholars across different depts etc. Awareness could be raised that Chinese scholars might work more closely, rather than being spread across departments/disciplines. Putting scholars together on projects etc. could increase research intensity.
- ii. DH also raised the issue of the need for more extensive ML training for research students in the case of East Asian etc. languages. It was agreed that a case could be made that the 6 month research extension may not be enough for such langs – Janice Carruthers is involved in this.
- iii. DH also queried the sex imbalance in the nominees for UCML Chair (5 men / 2 women). Ways should be found to increase applications from women, especially given the predominance of women in ML and in the Exec. PK suggested that applications be especially encouraged from women. NS: all UCML calls for nominations state: 'UCML seeks to ensure a balance of sexes, regions and types of HEI (pre- and post-92) among the members of its Steering Group and Executive Committee'.

10.i Slavonic & East European studies

MN

Connor Doak (the incoming SEE rep) was introduced to committee. No report had been received from MN. CD mentioned how publicity, even negative, increases visibility and thus interest in fields like Russian studies. *CD supplied a retrospective report, later uploaded to the webpage.*

10.j Linguistics

FF

FF apologised for not sending a report. However, he made the following points:

- i. He is in contact with 3 associations, will attend and report back to Exec.
- ii. As in ML, there has been a drop in UG linguistics admissions. FF is planning to create a survey regarding linguistics provision within ML degrees. Asked if EP's project includes linguistics, as it would be useful to do so; EP agreed: **Action EP & FF** to liaise.
- iii. FF is often asked to provide teacher training etc in linguistics, UCML could support colleagues in this generally, in schools and more widely as a skill. Linguistics can become a selling point for languages – first it is necessary to assess if there is a need for this.
- iv. FF is involved in *Bilingualism matters* – a charity funded by universities. They provide parents/schools with information on bil-/multilingualism. Multilingualism is a good way to connect with people and promote languages, as it is not just a teaching issue but a wider phenomenon. UCML to display the Salzburg Statement on the website (**Action AdM**): <https://education.salzburgglobal.org//index.php?id=8547>.

10k IWLP (including the UCML/AULC report)

CEC

- i. The Report was issued yesterday and is available with other Exec documents online. CEC thanked those who have responded to the survey; 64 is the target for responses, we need to think of ways we can increase responses.
- ii. Mapping Project: Part of the "Language Provision in UK MFL Departments Survey 2018" seeks to identify the connections between IWLP and ML provision. It was suggested that including linguistics could enrich the picture.
- iii. Participation in UNILANG is being developed through workshops: Working to getting more universities accredited through UNILANG. Mark Critchley, Director of the Centre for Foreign Language Study, Durham University, has led the project which maps teaching hours and possible attainment levels. EP added that the Mapping project will provide core information, there is potential to expand. CEC encouraged colleagues to get in touch with their HEIs and get them to respond, take the responsibility for this; **Action EP** to circulate request to Exec members.

10.l English Language Teaching

CMcD

- i. CMcD voiced continuing general concerns about Brexit from English UK.
- ii. Colleagues in BALEAP are making use of webinars for CPD in order to reach a wider audience, particularly for those out of the UK or unable to travel to events. CEC suggested UniLang could create a webinar. They can be very successful/wide reaching.

10.m Translation & Interpreting

JD

- i. ITI is keen to promote links between professionals and researchers. Their Event will be held in London on 16 June (see report). They will suggest key themes as a spur for debate. Colleagues are welcome. Sarah Griffin-Mason (Portsmouth University) is the contact for this.
- ii. PG figures: JD has spoken to various course leaders, results are not clear yet though, by contrast to other areas, there is much recruitment happening within translation.
- iii. Posts in T&I: Dublin City vacancy still open. More vacancies to come.

10.n Initial Teacher Training

SL

SL had sent apologies & no report.

10.o ALL

RK

- i. British Council scholarships are now worth £28,000. The interviews have started. The idea is to address the "teacher recruitment crisis", schools have guidance that 75-80% of GCSE cohort should be being taught a language. Head-teachers can be hesitant, and use different guidelines. Thus the policy strategy is there but not being implemented.
- ii. The issue is paired with changes to GCSE and A level curriculum. The exam is now more rigorous, which is affecting GCSE/A level figures. There is likely to be another drop; colleagues should be aware that the media may pick this up in August. We should have positive stories (eg Hackney project) ready to respond to potential negative press.
- iii. The DoE looking for HEIs to apply for regional centres.
- iv. The National German Teacher Association have published their recommendation for language policy resolutions, which may be of interest.
- v. A new recommendation about 1+2 is in draft, to be published in summer 2018.
- vi. Discussion: Re good news stories: OGC highlighted the positive presentations at the last plenary. CSJE: blog section on the website was discussed: there is potential for positive stories there.

11 Advance planning of Plenary Workshop on 29 June 2018

AdM

AdM presented the discussion paper for plenary.

Proposed Workshop

13:00-14:00	Talk: Jo Drugan (confirmed) for 30m + 30m Q/A about the use of languages in various professions.
14:00-15:00	Debate: Paul Bishop (confirmed), Shirley Lawes (confirmed), each ca 15m → 2 respondents (TBC) from within the UCML group each ca 5m → ca 20m audience discussion
15:00-15:30	<i>coffee break</i>
15:30-16:00	15m Talk + 15m Q/A: Ann Carlisle (confirmed)
16:00-16:30	15m Talk + 15m Q/A: Possible speakers – Fiona Waye UUKI? TBC
16:30-17:00	15m Talk + 15m Q/A: Possible speaker from BBC World Service?
	<i>OR</i>
16:30-17:00	Roundtable discussion?

- i. In this plenary, it is important to make senior management aware of languages, as languages is underrepresented in senior university staff. The perception is that teaching

is the only career path for ML graduates, but this is not the case. ML can be used for many sectors/businesses/careers. Awareness should be raised. Time abroad and 4-year degree structure sets students up well for success in top professions. Studies exist about this but the message is not strong enough. This Workshop will help us to gather data, ie get a comprehensive idea of what is available & show what universities can use to promote langs. Issues:

- Accreditation – how are lang professions accredited?
- Ensuring that lang profession recruitment is effective (eg the most qualified language graduates are being employed), with specific regard to translating & interpreting.
- Gender: *see §10.d.i above.*

The Workshop schedule is designed to encourage debate, with plenty of time allotted for responses and discussion. AdM emphasised that the above structure is a suggestion and remains to be finalised.

ii. Discussion:

- *Speakers:* PK suggested inviting Gary Younge of The Guardian to speak on journalism. JD suggested Michael Arthur, in senior management (Russell Group university) who is aware of languages and the importance of language competency. NS suggested Adam Marshall, head of the British Chambers of Commerce. JC suggested Lorna Milne, who is a professor of French. AF Colin Riordan. CD: BBC Russian Service Journalist, formerly Portuguese (linguist): Ben Taverner; he can talk on how languages is a route to media professions.
- *Audience:* AF asked if the event open to the public? NS Plenaries are normally open to anyone who is part of a member organisation. AF suggested disseminating videos/summaries etc. to reach a wider audience; the data cd be very useful. OGC suggested interviewing speakers, or filming talks for the website. JD is involved in postcards about 'a day in the life' of different lang professions: we shd emphasise business etc., rather than HE sector. Further points on publicising: AdM plans to follow up and create newsletters etc.

Plenary day structure (at Europe House)

<u>Time</u>	<u>Session</u>
10.00-10.30	Registration and coffee
10.30-12.00	AGM
12.30-13.30	Lunch
13.30-17.00	Workshop

12 Any Other Business

- a. There was a discussion about severity of marking, raised by JC, who had attended a workshop organised by OFQUAL. He learned that grade boundaries are not fixed or criteria-driven. JC looked at French specifically but gathers this is similar across all languages. Grammar only accounted for 25% of final grade; students were asked to 'tell the story'. It looked as though papers which were extremely similar, but marking is not consistent and this means that papers which would get an A one year could get a B the next. Comprehension etc. is all assessed in English.

Discussion:

- NS: is the inconsistency driven by focus on percentages? JC: papers are moderated but are marked differently by different examiners. OGC: it is common that papers are re-marked and re-graded. JC amplified: The boundary movements are statistically driven, by content of the paper and number of candidates, rather than papers being set to the same standard. Boundaries are set at different levels each year to avoid candidates overachieving/underachieving year on year.
- CD: research has shown students get more upset by unfair marking than low marking; how does that OFQUAL grading influence students perceptions and choices? JC: It is

easier for schools not to run languages for fear of its effect on league rankings. HEI ab initio provision also makes schools complacent re languages.

- AF: Could languages be provided as a multiple qualification like science A level? OGC: language diplomas were being developed previously, with linguistics components, broader perspective. AF: exam boards may be open to a more IB approach to language GCSEs. HO: language proficiency as a skill is being taught at Y7.
- OGC worked with Jocelyn Wyburd on OCR Board & also with Pearson EdExcel & Paul Rowlett (former UCML VC Ed) had worked with AQA. There may be others who have had working relationships with A level boards & cd enter into conversations about this.
- AF: what about a BTEC in languages, ie a vocational pathway? JC: this was raised at the workshop: OFQUAL can't change curricula, they can only change boundaries. A level is seen as HE entry, which alters perceptions.
- MG: the key thing is learning to be a language-learner rather than specific languages. OGC: problem of transition between primary and secondary: a greater focus on language-learning skills would mitigate this issue. NS: it might also cross the boundary with home languages, and highlight the non-academic skills bilingual speakers already have. CC: Triple literacy, there are changes happening at the moment which are looking at widening the types of qualifications in languages which are offered.

Action SG to appoint somebody to take the lead on this.

- b. Further on threatened ML depts/Schools:
Westminster has just conducted a languages review re structure etc. with a positive outcome, through debate and discussions. MG: It's important to remember that reviews do not usually directly lead to closures, eg Roehampton where the opportunity was given to colleagues to propose a new strategy and outcome was positive.
- c. CH raised points: Prepare press releases, identify education correspondents and get their contact details, and make sure statement is issued at least 48 hours before announcements of GCSE & A level results. Back up statements with data which highlight complexity and anticipate negative press. Also keep in touch with press officers at universities, with case studies: press officers are responsible to academics, proactiveness will yield results. Identify stories and share widely, eg. Korean/Russian links raised by CD are interesting.

13 Dates of next meetings (2018 & 2019) *(all Fridays)*

29 June 2018	Summer Plenary & AGM	
5 October	Autumn Steering Group	
2 November	Autumn Exec	
January 2019	Winter Plenary	<i>Date agreed: 18 January</i>
March	Spring Steering Group	<i>22 or 29 March: to be doodled Action: NS</i>
April	Spring Exec	<i>Date agreed: 26 April</i>
June/July	Summer Plenary & AGM	<i>Date agreed: Friday 5 July</i>

The meeting ended at 4 pm.