



At the 2017 Education Conference, students worked in groups to discuss different areas of educational excellence, organised along the lines of the Student Choice Teaching Awards. The groups covered:

- Excellence in Personal Support
- Excellence in Teaching Support
- Excellence in Research Supervision
- Excellence in Teaching

What follows are the definitions they identified, and the actions they felt UCL and UCLU should take.

## **Excellence in Personal Support**

### **Excellent Personal Support is:**

- Dedicating time to get to know the students and being able to adapt support to each student's needs
- Provided by someone who has concrete departmental knowledge but **wants** to be in a support role,
- Awareness of the whole range of services for students and the ability to signpost and refer appropriately.

### **This is important because:**

- This allows students to feel comfortable talking about **any** issues that may arise
- This allows for a better understanding of the issues faced, and allows for **more focused** support
- They may not be qualified for the level of support required, and both the personal tutor and the student know what's available and where to seek further support.

### **UCL Should:**

- Learn from effective models already in place i.e. Laws and implement consistent aims, expectations and vocabulary across all departments.
- Provide mandatory initial and refresher training to all staff in these personal support roles, with specific regard to mental health and pastoral care.
- Ensure that support is also provided for the tutors themselves

### **UCLU should:**

- Commission research into personal support methods in other universities (including post 92 universities) in collaboration with CALT and IOE.
- Provide clarity on what personal support students should expect
- Conduct a mixed methods investigation on students' views on personal support.

## **Excellence in Research Supervision:**

### **Excellent Research Supervision is:**

- Personal- offering tailored support, demonstrating commitment and providing constructive feedback.
- Visionary leadership- offering expertise and developing you and your research.
- Well organised- communicating in a timely way.

### **This is important because:**

- Researchers will be more confident in producing quality assured work.
- Mental health of researchers would improve with increased happiness and motivation.
- Researchers will be better equipped for the future.

### **UCL Should:**

- Review Supervision- Ensure effective selection process and evaluate supervisors in part based on student feedback and linking incentives.
- Provide training- mandatory in-person training preferred and ensure appropriate workload for supervisors.
- Value research supervision in line with teaching and research output to reward excellent supervisors.

### **UCLU should:**

- Lobby UCL on implementing proper procedures and providing effective training.
- Provide representation to researchers and facilitate complaints about poor supervision.
- Conduct further research into possible incentives and to the UCL student experiences, including Masters and Undergraduates

## **Excellence in Teaching Support**

### **Excellent support for teaching is:**

- Great communication and interaction
- Enthusiasm for academic content and students
- Willingness to adapt to students' needs

### **This is important because:**

- Students will stay informed and up-to-date
- Students will remain engaged and enthusiastic
- Students will feel supported and valued

### **UCL Should:**

- Brief support staff on student needs
- Express mutual expectations of both students and staff
- Involve students in recruitment processes

### **UCLU should:**

- Facilitate peer-to-peer tuition for students (UG&PG)
- Lobby for student involvement in recruitment
- Lobby for faculty staff training

## **Excellence in Teaching**

### **Excellent Teaching is:**

- Passionate, informed and relevant about the subject discipline
- Inspiring the learner (student) to challenge and advance knowledge
- Using adaptable and engaging methods to teach and assess

### **This is important because:**

- The learning environment and experience is more inclusive, engaging and encouraging
- We learn better when staff and students work together towards a common goal
- We can synthesise knowledge and critical thinking to be independent and survive 'in the wild'

### **UCL Should:**

- Ensure all teaching staff are qualified, monitored and supported to teach well
- Review all assessments across the range of programmes and modules to ensure these are relevant and fair

### **UCLU should:**

- Lobby UCL to enact the above