



University College
of Osteopathy

Academic Quality Framework 2018-2019

Section 8: Student Recruitment & Admissions

Academic Quality Framework

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This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to academic management staff, applicants to the UCO and Course Teams.

Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author(s)	Location(s)	Proposed next review date and approval required
V1.0	March 2014 Academic Council	To define the procedures for the management of academic quality and standards in teaching and learning at the UCO.	Admissions Tutor	Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQP Published Version: Intranet	Annually and on an “as required” basis.
V2.0	Sept 2016 Academic Council	Reviewed to update staff role and policy titles and to reflect current practice.	Admissions Tutor	Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQP Published Version: Intranet	August 2017 and on an “as required” basis.
V3.0	Sept 2017 Academic Council	Annual Review including amendments to reflect the name change of the British School of Osteopathy to the University College of Osteopathy	Admissions Tutor	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQP Published Version: Intranet	Annually and on an “as required” basis.
V4.0	Sept 2018 PRAG Chair	Administrative amendments to updated staff role titles and weblinks.	Admissions Tutor	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQP Published Version: Website	Annually and on an “as required” basis.
Equality Impact					
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)					
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)					X
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)					
<p>If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk</p>					

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Section 8: Student Recruitment & Admissions

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8.1 RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS - AN OVERVIEW

- 8.1.1 The UCO's aim is to provide fair and equal access to Higher Education to all those who have the potential to succeed or benefit from it.
- 8.1.2 The UCO welcomes applications from motivated students with appropriate qualifications, traditional and non-traditional, academic and vocational. Our students come from diverse backgrounds and have a whole range of qualifications both from the UK and overseas.
- 8.1.3 The UCO considers applicants to our courses solely on the basis of their merit, ability and potential. Applications from mature students who have no formal qualifications may be considered provided they have relevant work experience.
- 8.1.4 The UCO considers all information contained within the application form and produced during the interview process. This might include past academic performance, predicted grades, personal statements, academic and personal references, and any other evidence of skills, aptitude and potential to succeed.

8.2 RECRUITMENT & ADMISSIONS POLICY & PROCEDURES

- 8.2.1 The UCO's Admissions Policy and Procedures¹ is aligned with the UCO's Institutional Mission, Vision and Values, and the Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code - Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to Higher Education², and provides further information on the recruitment and admissions processes in operation at the UCO, including the monitoring and evaluation of these processes and the Admissions Complaints and Appeals procedure.
- 8.2.2 Responsibility for the UCO's Admissions Policy and Procedures lies with the Widening Participation and Admissions Strategy Group³. The Widening Participation and Admissions Strategy Group is, in turn, responsible to the Academic Council, which is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. Individual Course Teams have admission sub groups (Course Recruitment Groups⁴) who are allocated the responsibility of reviewing all applicants to that course.

8.3 ADMISSIONS PROFILES

- 8.3.1 The UCO makes available admissions profiles for all its academic courses.
- 8.3.2 All admissions decisions will be made against the criteria detailed in the admissions profile.
- 8.3.3 Each profile specifies;
 - a) Typical academic entry requirements.
 - b) Other accepted experience and/or qualities.
- 8.3.4 Admissions profiles are normally made available via the Course Information Form (CIF) on the UCO's website, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) website⁵ (for undergraduate full-time courses), and in the relevant prospectus for all other courses.
- 8.3.5 Applicants must demonstrate they have the skills necessary for successful study, evidence of motivation, and the commitment to succeed.
- 8.3.6 In addition to traditional academic qualifications the UCO recognises prior learning of applicants, either as a basis for entry to a course or to exempt applicants from some course requirements.
- 8.3.7 Recognition of prior learning is normally considered through:
 - a) Transfer of Credit (Advanced Standing), the process whereby the UCO grants applicants credit for educational experiences or courses undertaken at another institution;

- b) Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL), the process whereby the UCO evaluates the skills and knowledge of applicants acquired outside of the UCO to recognise their competence against specific learning objectives. Both certified and experiential recognition of prior learning are considered at the UCO as defined in Section 7 (Academic Regulations) of the Academic Quality Framework.

8.3.8 The authority to consider requests for transfer of credit is delegated by the Academic Council to Course Leaders with authority to admit applicants to the relevant course.

8.4 THE APPLICATION PROCESS

a) UNDERGRADUATE FULL-TIME COURSES

8.4.1 All full-time undergraduate applications are submitted through UCAS, which forwards applications to the UCO's Admissions Department.

b) UNDERGRADUATE PART-TIME COURSES

8.4.2 Applications to undergraduate part-time courses are made directly to the UCO via the UCO's online or paper application form⁶.

c) POSTGRADUATE COURSES

8.4.3 Applications to postgraduate courses are submitted directly to the UCO using the UCO's online or paper application form.

8.5 SELECTION CRITERIA

8.5.1 Applicants are selected according to the appropriate Admissions Profile for their chosen course.

8.5.2 Those applicants not meeting the selection criteria of their chosen course may be considered for, and offered, an alternative course.

8.5.3 If an application is unsuccessful the reason for rejection is recorded to provide applicants with feedback if requested.

8.5.4 Although minimum entry requirements for undergraduate courses are set in the CIF, conditional offers may be made in the context of the qualification being studied and offered for assessment for entry.

8.6 INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS

8.6.1 Applications from prospective international students will be considered and processed consistently with Home/EU applications.

8.6.2 Applicants presenting overseas qualifications will be expected to have achieved the equivalent of the quoted minimum entrance requirements.

8.6.3 Assessment will be made using the UCAS Guide to International Qualifications.

8.6.4 All overseas applicants are required to provide the UCO with a verified copy of their qualifications and / or academic transcript in English.

8.6.5 Applicants that have English as a second language must be proficient in English in order to be admitted to a course and have the required English language qualification as stated in the relevant admissions profiles.

8.7 INTERNATIONAL APPLICATIONS - DEPOSITS AND VISAS

- 8.7.1 Applicants requiring entry clearance to enter/remain in the UK in order to study at UCO will be required to pay a £600 non-refundable deposit as a condition of the release of their Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies⁷ at the UCO. This deposit provides the UCO with a measure of confidence of the seriousness of the applicant's intention to study and is in line with the recommendations of UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI)⁸.
- 8.7.2 The £600 deposit is only required to be paid for the first year of study and will subsequently be used as payment against the balance of tuition fees, which are paid at enrolment. Students will have the option of paying the remainder of their tuition fee by instalments.
- 8.7.3 Applications from overseas students are normally processed as per the normal admissions procedures. However, wording contained within conditional and unconditional offer letters will signal to applicants the necessity of making payment of the compulsory deposit once the applicant has reached "unconditional firm" stage.

8.8 APPLICATION FORM SIMILARITY DETECTION SERVICE

- 8.8.1 The UCAS similarity detection service⁹ reviews all personal statements within incoming applications. These are checked against a library of all personal statements previously submitted to UCAS and sample statements collected from a variety of web sites and other sources, including paper publications. Each personal statement received by UCAS is added to the library of statements after it has been processed.
- 8.8.2 Any statements showing a level of similarity of 10% or greater will be reviewed by members of the UCAS Similarity Detection Service team. Universities will be notified on a daily basis of any cases where there are reasonable grounds for suspicion. Applicants will also be notified that the UCAS Similarity Detection service has found that their personal statement merits investigation. Full details can be found at:
<https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/apply-and-track/filling-your-application/fraud-and-similarity>
- 8.8.3 Following any notification from UCAS of Similarity Detection, it is the responsibility of the Admissions Officer to contact the applicant to request an explanation regarding the reasons for the similarity in their personal statement to one submitted in a previous application.
- 8.8.4 The applicant's response will then be discussed along with their application at the subsequent Course Recruitment Group meeting.

8.9 INTERVIEW EVENTS

- 8.9.1 All short-listed applicants are normally invited to attend an Interview Event at the UCO.
- 8.9.2 Applicants are informed in advance of details of the selection procedures, thus allowing them an opportunity to discuss any special requirements or needs prior to attending.
- 8.9.3 All Pre-Registration courses have their own Interview Events and these are agreed by the individual Course Teams.
- 8.9.4 The purpose of Interview Events is to confirm whether candidates have the potential aptitude, motivation, and personal qualities to succeed on their desired course.
- 8.9.5 Interview Events are designed to appeal to the needs of applicants, providing all applicants with an equal opportunity to demonstrate to Interview Teams that they have the potential to become successful students.

8.9.6 The interview process for all courses is normally reviewed annually, and is developed each year as appropriate based on feedback from students, staff and faculty, and in response to any relevant sector, institutional, or course changes.

8.10 DISCLOSURE & BARRING SERVICE (DBS) AND HEALTH QUESTIONNAIRES

8.10.1 Courses requiring Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)¹⁰ checks and the completion of a Health Questionnaire will have this clearly stated in their CIF and / or the course prospectus.

8.10.2 Successful applicants to any Osteopathic Pre-Registration course will be required to undergo a police record check (carried out by the DBS) and will be required to complete a Health Questionnaire as a condition of enrolment.

8.11 APPLICANTS WITH CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS, CAUTIONS AND ARRESTS

8.11.1 Applicants to the UCO will be asked at the application stage to declare whether they have spent or unspent convictions, cautions, reprimands, or warnings. Their attention will be drawn to the UCO's Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Policy & Procedure (for UCO Applicants & Students)¹¹.

8.11.2 A criminal conviction not yet spent shall not normally be a bar to entry to a course unless:

- a) The course provides entry to employment in an occupation covered by the Rehabilitation of Offenders (Exceptions) Order 1975;
- b) In the view of the UCO, the applicant might pose a threat to staff and/or other students;
- c) Specified by an accrediting Professional Body.

8.11.3 Whilst not wishing to penalise an ex-offender, the UCO has a duty of care to its students, patients and staff and there may be occasions when an academically suitable applicant will be refused entry based on a past offense. The UCO's policy states that applicants who declare a criminal conviction are initially reviewed on the same academic grounds that apply to all applicants.

8.11.4 It is the responsibility of applicants to inform the UCO of any convictions occurring after the application has been submitted and throughout their time at the UCO.

8.11.5 As a condition of acceptance/continuation, all registering students on courses specifying it are required to have completed and cleared an enhanced DBS check by a given deadline.

8.11.6 Where the applicant indicates a criminal conviction on the application form, following a successful interview event, in addition to an offer letter detailing all conditions of enrolment, the applicant will be provided with information regarding the UCO's DBS policy and risk assessment procedure, and will be required to complete an early enhanced DBS check. The Academic Registrar will then notify the applicant of the outcome of the risk assessment procedure.

8.12 FEES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

8.12.1 The UCO's tuition fees are approved annually by the Senior Management Team, and the fees for an individual student are determined with reference to these tuition fees, the student's course of study, mode of attendance, and their fee status.

8.12.2 Fee information for all our courses can be found on our website: www.uco.ac.uk

8.12.3 Most full-time and part-time M.Ost UK/EU students, who have not been awarded a previous degree, will be eligible for a Tuition Fee Loan from Student Finance England (SFE) which will

cover their fees. The loan, which is not dependent on household income, is paid directly to the UCO by the Student Loans Company on the student's behalf. Many students will also be eligible to apply for living cost support.

- 8.12.4 The UCO offers financial advice and support to its students, covering issues such as tuition fees, student loans, availability of grants and bursaries, and difficulties paying living expenses.
- 8.12.5 Financial assistance is available at the UCO, including payment plans, the Access Course Fee Support Fund, the UCO Bursary Scheme, the National Scholarship Programme, the UCO Student Loan Scheme, the Part Time Golf Fund, the Hardship Fund, and Access to Learning Funds, as well as support offered through external charities such as the Osteopathic Foundation.
- 8.12.6 Students are encouraged to contact the Student Support Manager if they have any queries, before or during their studies.
- 8.12.7 Further details can be found on our website: www.uco.ac.uk

8.13 DISABILITY AND DYSLEXIA SUPPORT FOR APPLICANTS

- 8.13.1 Applications to the UCO's courses are assessed purely on academic grounds.
- 8.13.2 The Admissions Team identifies applicants who have declared a disability. These applicants are invited to meet a member of the Student Support Department to identify and agree relevant support requirements.
- 8.13.3 Where an applicant has complex needs, the Course Leader will also be invited to a preliminary discussion about course requirements. This may involve the Occupational Health Committee¹² (OHC) and the use of an occupational health professional to provide guidance to the UCO on what reasonable adjustments can be made.
- 8.13.4 The OHC, guided by the Equality Act 2010, will inform the applicant of the reasonable adjustments the UCO can make in relation to their disability. Based on this information, it will be the applicant's decision as to whether or not to accept the offer of a place on a course. In the unlikely event that the UCO is unable to make a reasonable adjustment, the Student Support Manager, as Chair of the OHC, will inform the applicant as soon as possible.
- 8.13.5 All successful applicants to Pre-Registration Osteopathy Courses are required to complete a Health Questionnaire¹³ as a condition of enrolment.
- 8.13.6 The UCO will be proactive in encouraging disclosure, and will, when an offer is made, include the following sentence on its correspondence: 'If you have a disability, please contact the Student Support Manager to discuss your needs'.

AQF08: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
AQF08_01	UCO Course Application Forms

AQF08: ENDNOTES

¹ Admissions Policy and Procedures: <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>

² <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/the-existing-uk-quality-code/part-b-assuring-and-enhancing-academic-quality>

³ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/BSO_Committees/: Widening Participation & Admissions Strategy Group Terms of Reference

⁴ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/BSO_Committees/: Course Recruitment Group Terms of Reference

⁵ <https://www.ucas.com/>

⁶ AQF08_01_ UCO_Course_Application_Forms

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/confirm-acceptance-of-studies-guide-for-education-sponsors>

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators#codes-of-practice>

⁹ <https://www.ucas.com/ucas/undergraduate/apply-and-track/filling-your-application/fraud-and-similarity>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service>

¹¹ Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) Policy & Procedure (for UCO Applicants & Students): <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>

¹² http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/BSO_Committees/: Occupational Health Committee Terms of Reference

¹³ Health Policy for Pre-Registration Students: <https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy>