Academic Quality Framework

Section 1: Welcome

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework Section 1: Welcome & Introduction

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be read by <u>all members</u> of the UCO.

Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	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.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
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Equality Impact	
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)	
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Academic Quality Framework

Section 1: Welcome & Introduction

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1.1 WELCOME TO THE ACADEMIC QUALITY FRAMEWORK

1.1.1 The University College of Osteopathy (UCO) has a long and distinguished history of providing learning experiences for students that are challenging and rewarding. We are strongly committed to maintaining its academic standards and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching provision.

1.1.2 Our high standards and ambitions for quality enhancement are achieved through the objectives contained within the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy and other initiatives. Our approach is predicated on the professionalism and creativity of our staff, individually and collectively, which enables innovative and stimulating learning. Quality is enhanced through attention to students' experiences as learners, the development of subject disciplines, and engagement with teaching practice. Additional vital resources complement and augment the high standards of provision viz. the clinic, library, IT, general facilities, and the wide range of support services.

1.1.3 We also use the activities that are the subject of this Academic Quality Framework to support, assure and enhance quality. This framework brings together into one convenient source comprehensive information about our quality processes. It explains what it is we do, why we do it, and how it is done. It also explains the UCO's place within the wider context of national and professional requirements.

1.1.4 This Academic Quality Framework (AQF) is aimed at staff colleagues, students and external readers. We are pleased to direct student readers to the 'Welcome for Student Readers' section provided below that addresses aspects of the framework that are particularly student-related. Quality assurance and enhancement and their associated procedures can be difficult areas to relate to. We therefore hope that this framework makes "Quality Assurance" more accessible to you and that you find it helpful.

1.1.5 If you have any questions regarding this framework, please direct your enquiries to the UCO's Quality Assurance Team: quality@uco.ac.uk.

1.2 WELCOME FOR STUDENT READERS

1.2.1 The UCO is committed to ensuring that your experience as a student is the best the institution can provide, and that where further improvements can be made, they happen. The UCO has an excellent reputation for the quality of its teaching and the facilities that support learning.

1.2.2 To help the UCO be sure that it continues to provide a high-quality student experience, it makes use of the procedures set out in this Academic Quality Framework (AQF). You will see that a wide range of UCO staff as well as other organisations are involved in these procedures. Your role as a student is also critical. The UCO sees students as partners in monitoring and improving what we offer; this is why we ensure that you have access to this framework, which provides you with information about our monitoring processes and why we use a variety of methods to gather your feedback.

1.2.3 ***Your feedback is highly important to us; you can instigate change at the UCO that enhances your own and others' Student Experience, as well as that of students who follow you. All your comments and suggestions are welcome!***

1.2.4 The UCO uses a variety of methods to gain your feedback to help us identify what is working well for you and what could be enhanced to ensure that you receive a high-quality student experience. These are detailed further in AQF Section 10, but include:

a) ***Questionnaires, Surveys and Focus Groups:*** Student feedback methods include questionnaires for individual units, surveys that cover a year of study and, in some cases, the opportunity to take part in focus groups and similar activities. Final year students also participate in the National Student Survey (NSS) and the results of this are published online through the UNISTATS website, the official website for comparing UK higher education course data that helps prospective students to choose where to study by comparing results of student feedback on our courses with others in the UK.

b) ***Student & Staff Liaison Consultation Groups:*** You will see from the AQF that we operate Student & Staff Liaison and Consultation Groups (SSLCGs). These provide opportunities for you to inform us of your views and suggestions, for us to consult with you on institutional matters and to engage in discussions with you about matters of concern and ideas for enhancements.

c) ***Student Committee Members:*** Students are also represented on a range of committees that are mentioned in this framework, from the Board of Directors to individual Course Teams. These enable you to participate fully in consultation and decision-making processes at all governing levels.

d) ***Student Representation:*** You can also make your views known to your Student Representatives, or volunteer to become a representative yourself. Student Representative training is organised by the Head of Student Services in conjunction with the Students' Union. Many students find the experience of acting as a Student Representative a valuable and rewarding chance to influence what the UCO does. As a representative, you are also likely to develop useful transferable skills that enhance your opportunities as you progress from the UCO into employment, including leadership, diplomacy and negotiating skills. When you fulfil this role, we will recognise this on the formal transcript that records your academic achievements.

e) ***Involvement in Review Processes:*** There are further ways in which you can inform us about how well the UCO is doing. For instance, each course is reviewed periodically (See AQF Section 6) where panels that review courses normally meet with groups of students to discuss their views and include a student member so that the student voice is directly included in any decision-making. The UCO is also subject to institutional reviews by external bodies to ensure that we meet their requirements for standards and quality as well as governance and management. As you read through this framework, you will also see that the role of the student voice is again central to most of the associated processes undertaken as part of these reviews. The positive collaborative partnership the UCO promotes with its student body is therefore valued very highly.

1.2.5 We make every effort to inform you about what actions we take in response to your feedback including informing you about actions taken at induction sessions, via student representatives throughout the year, through posters posted in student areas and on the Student Portal "You Said – We Did" page.

1.2.6 We recognise the importance of reporting back to you on actions that we have taken in response to your comments and hope that this encourages you to play your part in identifying further actions that could be taken and participating in the UCO's Quality Assurance processes to improve your Student Experience. We therefore strongly encourage you to take all opportunities to provide feedback when invited to do so throughout your time at the UCO.

1.2.7 We are equally delighted to hear about aspects of the UCO that are particularly good especially if it is something that we can adopt elsewhere so that everyone can benefit!

1.2.8 We hope that this AQF will provide you with much useful information about the activities that take place regarding the management and organisation of your course and how you can be involved in this.

1.2.9 If you have any comments or questions about the AQF or any of the activities it describes, please do not hesitate to contact the Quality Team: quality@uco.ac.uk.

1.3 AN INTRODUCTION TO THE ACADEMIC QUALITY FRAMEWORK

1.3.1 The Academic Quality Framework (AQF) defines the procedures for the management of academic quality and standards in teaching and learning at the UCO. The UCO has the largest student population amongst the UK osteopathic educational institutions and we play a central role in driving and delivering osteopathic education in the UK both at undergraduate and postgraduate levels. The UCO also delivers courses in allied health care subjects in line with its Strategic Plan to broaden and diversity its taught degree provision. A key underpinning core value of the UCO is that students are central to everything that happens within the institution. All teaching and support staff work towards this and have a collective responsibility both for ensuring a high-quality learning experience for students, and for maintaining the standard of the awards conferred.

1.3.2 The AQF is informed by the UCO's Strategic Plan, its Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy and by key external reference points primarily provided by the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body standards and guidance.

1.3.3 The AQF refers to procedures, polices, regulations and other core documentation relating to all activities associated with managing and maintaining quality within teaching, learning and assessment. Although this can appear bureaucratic, it is necessary to ensure the transparent, smooth and effective running of the institution.

1.3.4 The AQF is comprised of the following sections:

1) Welcome and Introduction to the Academic Quality Framework
2) An Overview of Teaching and Learning at the UCO
3) The Assurance and Enhancement of Academic Quality and Standards in Teaching and Learning at the UCO
4) Course & Unit Approval and Modification
5) Periodic Review

6) Annual Monitoring & Reporting
7) Academic Regulations
8) Student Recruitment and Admissions
9) Student Guidance and Learner Support
10) Student Voice
11) External Examining
12) Boards of Examiners
13) Staff Recruitment and Development
14) The Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy (Validated by the University of Bedfordshire)
15) The Access to Higher Education Diploma (Validated by Laser Learning Awards) & Pre-entry Courses
16) Collaborative Activity
17) Academic Policies and Procedures
18) Glossary of Terms

1.4 HOW TO USE THE ACADEMIC QUALITY FRAMEWORK

1.4.1 The AQF, in its entirety, is made available to all stakeholders through the UCO's Academic Quality Framework Webpage. This provides readers with immediate access to the UCO's academic quality processes, to understand more about the UCO's history and to be well-informed about the context that the UCO currently operates in.

1.4.2 Each section of the AQF begins with a 'Suggested Readers' box, which serves to highlight the content that is considered most relevant to different readers.

1.4.3 It is recognised that some readers may wish to focus on particular sub-sections of the AQF therefore some information is repeated throughout the AQF to enable each section to be considered in isolation.

1.4.4 Additional information and documentation referenced as footnotes are available on the UCO Quality Assurance Portal or may be requested from the UCO's Quality Team (quality@uco.ac.uk).

1.4.5 The AQF is regularly reviewed by the UCO's Policy, Regulations and Audit Group to ensure that the information contained within it remains up to date and that timely amendments are made as appropriate.

1.4.6 Readers are recommended to utilise the version of the AQF published on the UCO's Academic Quality Framework Webpage when referring to any AQF content to ensure that the current information is being referred to.

1.5 RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACADEMIC QUALITY AND STANDARDS AT THE UCO

1.5.1 The UCO's Academic Council is the custodian of academic quality and standards at the UCO, and its work is informed by reports from the UCO's Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Chairs of its sub-committees.

1.5.2 The UCO's academic governance structure places responsibility for quality and standards on individuals: the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) has responsibility for quality and standards, specifically for undergraduate and postgraduate taught provision; the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) has responsibility for quality and standards specifically for research. The Deputy Vice-Chancellors are supported in these roles by a number of senior committees with staff and student representation. These committees, via the Deputy Vice-Chancellors, provide regular reports to the Academic Council.

1.6 THE ACADEMIC QUALITY FRAMEWORK AND EXTERNAL REQUIREMENTS & DEVELOPMENTS

1.6.1 External policy and regulatory developments continue to have a significant impact on the policies and procedures contained within this framework. These include those produced and monitored by the UK's independent regulator of higher education in England (the Office for Students) and the Quality Assurance Agency (the designated body to carry out quality and standards reviews of UK higher education providers on behalf of the Office for Students).

1.6.2 In order to align with OfS and QAA requirements regarding quality and standards, the UCO has mapped the AQF and its policies, procedures and processes to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). which will continue to be reviewed and, where necessary updated, as and when the the Quality Code is revised and published to ensure that they continue to reflect best practice.

1.6.3 The UCO also uses a wide range of external information and best practice in benchmarking our own performance and remains confident that the broad principles which underline our Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy are consistent with the Quality Code.

1.6.4 This continual monitoring of external developments and their impacts on the UCO's procedures ensures that our quality assurance mechanisms are robust, take account of the Quality Code and prove to be fit for purpose.

1.6.5 We are mindful that there are continual enhancements to Higher Education policies and procedures internally and externally. We therefore keep these procedures under review through regular committee and annual monitoring.

1.6.6 The UCO's ability to demonstrate the robustness of these procedures depends on a critical resource: our staff. Colleagues responsible for managing and providing support for taught courses should therefore ensure that they are aware of the procedures and apply them consistently.

1.7 QUALITY AT THE UCO AND WITHIN HIGHER EDUCATION

1.7.1 In 2015 the QAA granted the UCO Taught Degree Awarding Powers (TDAP). The UCO also works with Laser Learning Awards to approve its Access to Osteopathic Sciences and Healthcare Diploma, and the University of Bedfordshire, which approves and awards a doctoral level qualification in osteopathy..

1.7.2 Alongside other Higher Education Providers in the UK, the UCO has opted in to the Department for Education's (DfE's) new Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF), which assesses excellence in teaching and how well education providers ensure excellent outcomes for their students regarding further study or graduate-level employment. The results of the UCO's TEF awards are as follows:

TEF Year	Date	TEF Award
TEF Year One	2015-2016	Received the "meets expectations" award meaning that the UCO passed a baseline quality standard and was judged to be operating at national levels in teaching quality and standards.
TEF Year Two	2016-2017	Bronze
TEF Year Three	2016-2017	Silver

1.7.3 In common with other Higher Education Providers in the UK, the UCO ensures that its educational provision operates to appropriate academic standards and offers students learning opportunities of acceptable quality. Our approach to quality recognises the importance of ongoing improvement and enhancement within these areas. To ensure that the UCO meets these requirements and aims regarding academic standards and quality assurance and enhancement, the UCO utilises a number of quality procedures as described within this framework. Some of these procedures are managed by the UCO itself, whereas others are managed by external approval and validating bodies. Both internal and external procedures operate according to national frameworks.

1.7.4 Much of this framework pertains to taught courses that are approved, delivered and awarded by the UCO. Relevant information regarding quality processes for foundation, partner, research and professionally regulated provision is also included.

1.7.5 Key terminology regarding quality in Higher Education is given below.

a) **Academic Standards**: Threshold academic standards are the minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student must demonstrate to be eligible for an academic award. Academic standards should be at a similar level across the UK.

b) **Academic Quality**: Academic quality is concerned with how well the learning opportunities made available to students enable them to achieve their award. It is about making sure that appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning opportunities are provided for them.

c) **Quality Assurance**: Quality assurance refers to a range of review procedures designed to safeguard academic standards and promote learning opportunities for students of acceptable quality.

d) **Quality Enhancement**: Quality enhancement refers to taking deliberate steps to bring about continual improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experience of students.

1.8 RELATIONSHIP TO EXTERNAL BODIES AND QUALITY MECHANISMS

1.8.1 The UCO works with a number of External Bodies to assure the quality of its provision these as described below.

A) THE OFFICE FOR STUDENTS (OFS)

1.8.2 The UCO is regulated as a Higher Education Provider in England by the Office for Students (OfS). The OfS was established in April 2018 superseding the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) to regulate English higher education providers on behalf of students. The OfS works closely with the Department for Education to ensure that English higher education is delivering positive outcomes for students – past, present, and future.

1.8.3 Further information about the OfS and its work can be found here:

https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/

B) THE QUALITY ASSURANCE AGENCY (QAA)

1.8.4 The Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)[1] was established in 1997, replacing the former Higher Education Quality Council and the quality assessment divisions of the higher education funding councils for England and Wales. Its mission is to safeguard standards and improve the quality of UK Higher Education. The Secretary of State has designated the QAA to carry out the quality and standards assessment functions set out in the Higher Education and Research Act on behalf of the OfS.

1.8.5 To support standards and promote quality enhancement, the QAA publishes a range of reference points and guidance. Its UK Quality Code for Higher Education[2] is the definitive reference point for all those involved in delivering higher education which leads to an award from or is validated by a UK higher education provider.

1.8.6 The Quality Code is one of the main benchmarks to which the UCO sets its quality assurance practices. The Quality Code is complemented by additional guidance on particular topics or qualification types.

1.8.7 The QAA also undertakes reviews of the UCO's osteopathic Recognised Qualifications on behalf of the General Osteopathic Council[3].

1.8.8 Further information about the QAA and its work can be found here: http://www.qaa.ac.uk//en/home

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/home
[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/general-osteopathic-council-review

C) THE UNIVERSITY OF BEDFORDSHIRE (UOB)

1.8.9 In 2004 the UCO entered into a collaborative arrangement with the University of Luton (now the University of Bedfordshire) to provide approval for the UCO's courses and funding for the UCO's undergraduate and postgraduate students. In 2012 the University of Bedfordshire (UoB) awarded the UCO "Accredited Partner Status" and devolved a number of quality processes to the UCO, confirming its confidence in the UCO's ability to take significant responsibility for its own affairs. In 2015 the UCO was granted Taught Degree Awarding Powers by the QAA and subsequently became solely responsible for its taught undergraduate and postgraduate awards. The UCO does however maintain a collaborative arrangement with the UoB regarding its doctoral level course, which the UoB continues to approve and award

1.8.10 With regard to the doctoral course, responsibility for the following ultimately lie with the UoB:

a) Assurance of quality and standards;

b) Confirmation of regulations;

c) Appointment of External Examiners;

d) Conduct and discipline, complaints, academic offences and appeals;

e) Approval of partner staff;

f) Collaborative partner staff development;

g) Certificates and transcripts.

1.8.11 Students on UoB-awarded courses have access to UoB learning resources, careers, advice and support services in addition to those provided at the UCO.

D) LASER LEARNING AWARDS (LASER)

1.8.12 Laser Learning Awards (LASER) is a national awarding organisation regulated by Ofqual to offer qualifications and is approved by the Security Industry Association (SIA) to offer licence-linked qualifications in the security sector under the brand name Trident Awards. LASER is also a QAA regulated Access Validating Agency for Access to Higher Education qualifications.

1.8.13 Access provision is specifically intended to prepare students from under-represented groups for study within the UK higher education sector.

1.8.14 The UCO's Access provision (Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care)) is validated by LASER which has responsibility for approving and monitoring the quality of the UCO's Access provision.

1.8.15 Further information about LASER can be found here: https://www.laser-awards.org.uk/

E) THE GENERAL OSTEOPATHIC COUNCIL (GOSC)

1.8.16 In the United Kingdom (UK), osteopaths must register with the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) in order to practise osteopathy legally in accordance with the Osteopaths Act (1993).

1.8.17 The GOsC regulates the practice of osteopathy in the UK as the profession's Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB). It works with the public and osteopathic profession

to promote patient safety by registering qualified professionals, and setting, maintaining and developing standards of osteopathic practice and conduct.

1.8.18 Registration with the GOsC requires possession of a Recognised Qualification (RQ) in osteopathy. This is achieved by successfully completing a pre-registration programme of study which has been inspected and accredited by the GOsC and granted approval by Privy Council. The GOsC contracts the QAA to conduct RQ inspections and institutional inspections on its behalf[4]. The UCO has undergone four successful RQ inspections since 2000 and the RQ Review Reports are published by the GOsC on their website.

1.8.19 The GOsC publishes the Osteopathic Practice Standards (OPS). These set out the standards required of osteopaths practising in the UK to ensure quality care for their patients. These in addition to the Quality Code are used as key reference points for the UCO's osteopathic taught degree courses.

1.8.20 The UCO is required by the GOsC to complete a Recognised Qualification Annual Report that is considered by their Education and Registration Standards Committee (ERSC) as part of its quality assurance and annual monitoring processes regarding RQ accredited training courses in osteopathy.

1.8.21 The UCO also meets with the GOsC three to four times a year as part of its Osteopathic Institution Liaison (OIL) meetings where all Osteopathic Educational Institutions (OEIs) who have recognised qualifications accredited meet to discuss policy and share good practice.

1.8.22 Further information about the work of the GOsC can be found here: http://www.osteopathy.org.uk/home/

AQF01: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

[4] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/general-osteopathic-council-review

Academic Quality Framework

Section 2: Overview of Teaching & Learning at the UCO

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 2: An Overview of Teaching & Learning at the UCO

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to all faculty, academic management and students.

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2.1 The History & Charitable Status of the UCO

2.1.1 The University College of Osteopathy (UCO) is the largest and oldest osteopathic educational institution in the United Kingdom. The UCO was founded as the British School of Osteopathy (BSO) in 1917 by John Martin Littlejohn who was a student of Andrew Taylor Still, the founder of osteopathy. The UCO was based in Westminster for a large proportion of its life and since 1997 has been based in Southwark.

2.1.2 From 1917 to 1989 the BSO delivered its own self validated award of a Diploma in Osteopathy (DO). In 1989 the BSO gained validation from the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) and started delivering a BSc degree. When CNAA was disbanded in 1992 the validation passed to the Open University Validation Services (OUVS).

2.1.3 The BSO was one of the first osteopathic educational institutions to be granted Recognised Qualification (RQ) status in 2000. At that time the degree was privately funded by students and validated by the OUVS. The BSO wanted to widen access for students to osteopathic education and sought funding for its course through the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). HEFCE through the QAA inspected the BSO and judged the work of the BSO was of sufficiently high quality to gain funding, but the policy in existence at that time prevented small institutions from being able to receive direct HEFCE funding. Therefore, HEFCE suggested a collaborative arrangement with the University of Bedfordshire, then the University of Luton, which would provide funded places for BSO students. Subsequently in 2004 the BSO entered into a collaborative arrangement with the University of Bedfordshire to provide approval for the BSO's courses and funding for the BSO's undergraduate students.

2.1.4 In April 2008 the BSO purchased and designed a new state-of-the-art clinic at 98 – 118 Southwark Bridge Road, SE1 just 10 minutes away from the School's Borough High Street teaching site. The new clinic provided better facilities for consultations and an excellent learning environment for students, including 34 treatment rooms (all with sinks and air conditioning), tutorial rooms, a teaching space and student facilities.

2.1.5 In August 2013 the BSO submitted its application for Taught Degree Awarding Powers to the QAA which were successfully granted in July 2015.

2.1.6 In October 2014 the School applied to be recognised as an institution designated to be eligible to receive support from funds administered by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). Our application was successful, and this was confirmed in November 2016.

2.1.7 In October 2016 the BSO submitted an application to HEFCE for University College title which was confirmed in March 2017 and also consulted with its students, staff and other stakeholders to change the name of the BSO to the University College of Osteopathy (UCO), which was granted in July 2017, coinciding with our centenary year.

2.1.8 In 2017 the UCO was awarded a Bronze rating in the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) which is managed by the Office for Students (OfS) (the regulator of English higher education providers) and in 2018 the UCO was awarded a Silver rating.

2.1.9 For much of its life as well as being a higher education institution, the UCO was also a registered charity (Number 312873) reporting annually to the Charity Commission. In November 2015, the UCO became an exempt charity enabling us to continue our charitable work that encompasses the education of students and osteopaths, as well as access to healthcare within the community.

2.1.10 Our charitable osteopathic healthcare has been recognised nationally and locally with many nominations and awards including:

a) The "Outstanding contribution to the local community award" by the Times Higher Education awards in 2012.

b) The "Complementary and Alternative Medicine Magazine Outstanding Contribution to the Community award", to Steven Vogel, UCO Vice-Vice-Chancellor (Research) in 2011.

c) Shortlisted for the "Charity of the Year (income 1m+) award" by the Charity Times in 2010.

d) The "Liberty of the old Borough of Southwark award" in recognition of our contribution to healthcare in Southwark in 2008.

e) The UCO's charitable objectives are detailed in the Objects of the Company of the UCO's Articles of Association.

2.2 The UCO's Mission and Strategic Priorities

2.2.1 The UCO's Mission Statement is to:

"*Continually provide the highest quality education and research for all and the very best care, for each patient, on every occasion."*

2.2.2 The strategic priorities of the UCO to provide Quality Higher Education include:

a) To be the institution of choice.

b) To sustain our financial strength and use it purposefully.

c) To provide our students with a distinctive, high-quality experience.

2.3 Institutional Governance

a) The Board of Directors

2.3.1 The UCO is a company limited by non-equity share capital (Company registration number 146343) and an Exempt Charity. Its Patron is HRH, The Princess Royal.

2.3.2 The UCO's Articles of Association define its governance arrangements.

2.3.3 The UCO is governed by a Board of Trustees, known within the UCO as the Board of Directors (or the Board). At least half the Board members are Independent Directors who are not employed by the UCO and includes at least two student members.

2.3.4 The Board is responsible for:

a) Approving and reviewing the delivery of the UCO's mission, vision and Strategic Plan.

b) Approving the UCO's annual budgets, long term business plans and its duty to deliver public benefit according to the Charities Act 2011[1].

c) Managing risks related to the management of the UCO and its Strategic Plan.

d) Reviewing its own effectiveness as a Board of Directors including the effectiveness of its sub-committees.

e) Monitoring institutional performance against the Strategic Plan and approved Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

f) Oversight of all academic issues.

[1] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/25/contents/enacted

b) The Vice-Chancellor 's Group and Senior Management Team

2.3.5 The Vice-Chancellor's Group (PG) is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and consists of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Finance Director and has ownership of overseeing the delivery of the UCO's Strategic Plan and monitoring its performance. It also has a remit to horizon scan and to share this information and its implications for the UCO's function and direction. This group normally meets informally on a weekly basis. This group is also responsible for the UCO-wide staff remuneration process that occurs each year.

2.3.6 The Senior Management Team (SMT) is also chaired by the Vice-Chancellor and is responsible for the operational management of the UCO's business. Its membership includes a wide range of staff from across the UCO including the:

- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)
- Finance Director
- ICT Director
- Dean of Academic Development
- Head of Clinical Practice
- Head of Estates
- Head of Quality
- Head of Marketing and Communications
- Head of Student Services
- Head of HR
- Trusts & Foundations Manager
- Registrar
- Finance Manager

2.4 Academic Governance

a) The Board of Directors

2.4.1 Academic governance at the UCO is represented by the UCO's committee structure (AQF02 Appendix 01). This provides the UCO's framework for the assurance of quality and the securing and enhancing of standards at the UCO. It consists of a number of committees each with its own Terms of Reference and responsibility for ensuring the efficient and transparent operation of the UCO's academic provision.

2.4.2 The Board has oversight of the UCO's academic management structure including Academic Council and its sub-committees.

b) Academic Council & its Sub-Committees

2.4.3 The Academic Council is the ultimate academic authority of the UCO (subject to the Board of Directors). The Academic Council is responsible for promoting, regulating and directing the academic work of the UCO, including teaching and research. It oversees the UCO's academic

management and all aspects of quality and standards associated with the academic development and standards of the UCO.

2.4.4 In order to carry out its work in a timely and effective manner, the Academic Council delegates specific areas of activity to the following key functional committees:

a) **The Quality Assurance Committee**: The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) reports to the Academic Council and communicates with the Senior Management Team. On behalf of the Academic Council, the QAC is responsible for overseeing the implementation and development of the UCO's systems for setting, maintaining and monitoring academic standards and its quality assurance systems and procedures, for all taught provision.

b) **The Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee**: The Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee (EESC) reports to Academic Council on initiatives for enhancing pedagogy at the UCO through defining and monitoring educational strategy. The EESC directs educational activity based on external scanning and internal action planning, to promote innovation and enhancement in teaching, learning and assessment. Academic policy guidance and regulations are developed by the EESC and are sent to the QAC for consideration before being recommended to the Academic Council.

c) **The Research and Scholarship Strategy Committee**: The Research and Scholarship Strategy Committee (RSSC) reports to the Academic Council and focuses on research and scholarship activity and development across the UCO. The RSSC is responsible for the implementation of the Research and Scholarship Strategy. Embedded within this, the RSSC develops and considers the implementation of new areas of research, as well as enhancing scholarship amongst staff and students and monitoring the research elements of the Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy course.

d) **The Widening Participation and Admissions Strategy Group**: The Widening Participation and Admissions Strategy Group (WPASG) reports to the Academic Council and is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the UCO's strategy for admissions and widening participation.

e) **Boards of Examiners**: Boards of Examiners report to the Academic Council and are responsible for considering the results of assessments at all stages of a course, determining student progression and recommending awards.

c) Other Academic Committees

2.4.5 Other primary academic committees that are involved in academic governance include:

a) **Portfolio Boards**: Reporting to the EESC, the Portfolio Boards (PBs) are responsible for overseeing the courses at the relevant level of study (Foundation, Pre-registration and Postgraduate). The role of the PBs is to ensure coherence in education at the UCO. The PBs maintain an overview of curriculum content, structure, organisation, assessment, learning resources and delivery of the teaching timetable. The PBs are also sub-committees of the Board of Examiners. They review interim (provisional) examination and coursework results and approve them for publication.

b) **Course Teams**: Course Teams are responsible to the relevant Portfolio Board for the day to day administration and management of the Course. The Course Teams ensure that the validated curriculum is delivered and assessed in accordance with the relevant course information and unit information forms.

c) **Research Ethics Committee**: The Research Ethics Committee (REC) is a sub-committee of the Research and Scholarship Strategy Committee. Its purpose is to review and consider all proposed research work from participants both within and external to the UCO. This currently

includes students and staff from the UCO and applications from students from other institutions who would like to carry out work with our faculty, students or patients

2.4.6 Additional committees with responsibility for academic quality can be found in AQF Section 3: The Assurance and Enhancement of Academic Quality and Standards in Teaching and Learning at the UCO.

2.4.7 Each of the committees mentioned above have their own Terms of Reference that clearly state their remit and membership:

2.5 Senior Management Structures

a) Senior Management Responsibilities

2.5.1 Responsibility for ensuring that the institution is directed, managed and administered effectively on a day-to-day basis rests with the Vice-Chancellor. It is the Vice-Chancellor's responsibility to inform the Board of Directors about all aspects of the academic and operational management of the UCO. The Vice-Chancellor is supported by two Deputy Vice-Chancellors; the Deputy - Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Deputy -Vice-Chancellor (Research). The Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellors together with the Finance Director comprise the Vice-Chancellor's Group (PG).

2.5.2 Each member of the PG has specific responsibilities as follows:

a) **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research):** strategic overview and responsibility for delivery of all research and scholarship activities, quality assurance and quality processes for the research area, research ethics, the learning resources department and the student support department.

b) **Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education):** strategic overview and responsibility for delivery of all current academic courses; the development of new courses; quality assurance and quality processes for all taught provision; student recruitment; student admissions; and the academic registry.

c) **Finance Director:** financial strategy and management; responsibility for budgetary planning and reporting, as well as ensuring that the UCO has a robust system of internal control and financial regulation.

2.6 Academic Management Structures

a) Roles of Staff in Academic Management

2.6.1 The Deputy -Vice-Chancellor (Education) is supported by a number of key staff:

a) **The Dean of Academic Development;** The Dean of Academic Development oversees academic development and quality enhancement across the UCO's academic portfolioand is responsible for developing and supporting the approval and arrangements with new and existing collaborative partners of the UCO. They are also responsible for overseeing the development and monitoring of the UCO's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy.

b) **The Head of Quality:** The Head of Quality oversees the UCO's quality assurance and enhancement processes working collaboratively with academic staff.

c) **The Registrar**: The Registrar has an overarching role covering both student and academic course administration and is responsible for student registration, student advice, attendance monitoring, maintaining student records, assessments and examinations, academic regulations, course timetabling, and providing data for annual reporting. This role also has overall responsibility for the Registry Department.

d) **Academic Provision** – Each course has a designated Course Leader who is normally supported by one or more Heads of Area and Unit Leaders:

i. **Course Leaders** maintain an oversight of each course and co-ordinate the activities of the Course Team. They report either to the Head of Area (in the case of the Postgraduate Education) and/or to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (in all other cases). They take responsibility for ensuring the operational effectiveness of their course on a day-to-day basis. They also ensure that the course is being delivered effectively and efficiently by all academic staff.

ii. **Heads of Areas** report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and are responsible for curriculum development and management of these areas across all pre-registration courses.

iii. **Unit Leaders** report to the relevant Head of Area and take responsibility for the day-to-day management of units. They ensure that each unit is delivered and assessed in line with the validated course documentation.

2.6.2 The roles and responsibilities of academic provision management are detailed in Table 2.1 below.

TABLE 2.1: ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES OF ACADEMIC MANAGEMENT STAFF

Area of Responsibility	Head of Area	Course Leaders	Unit Leaders	Core Course Team
Academic Tutors	N/A	Identifies role of academic tutor in relation to the curriculum.	N/A	N/A
Academic Offences & Concerns	Sits on conduct / discipline and Fitness to Practise panels and other tasks related to Academic Offences and Concerns.	Sits on conduct / discipline and Fitness to Practise panels and other tasks related to Academic Offences and Concerns.	Ensures consistency in line with procedures and sits on conduct / discipline and Fitness to Practise panels.	N/A
Annual Monitoring & Reporting	Inputs into annual reports as appropriate.	Maintains Course Journal and drafts the course annual report.	Complete unit annual reports to feed into course annual report.	Contributes to annual reporting and considers final course annual report at course team meetings.
Assessment Administration	Monitors assessment production and grading. Chairs scrutiny boards as required.	Co-ordinate assessment dates with the Academic Registrar and course team.	Provides assessments, exam papers and grades to deadlines.	N/A
Assessment Practices	Monitors assessment practices identifying issues and disseminating effective practice. Identifies and implements minor changes.	Identifies issues for consideration by Course Team.	Provides appropriate developmental feedback on assessments in line with policy.	Monitors assessment strategy to ensure that it is coherent and developmental and enables students to demonstrate defined learning outcomes.
Course Information (Handbooks and BONE)	Defines area specific content and ensures accuracy in line with UCO expectations.	Defines course content and ensures accuracy in line with UCO expectations.	Prepares unit handbooks and/or populates BONE sites in line with UCO expectations.	Monitors course level information and guidance to students.
Course Teams	Attends course team meetings as required.	Chairs course team meetings establishing agenda. Maintains course journal.	Attends course team meetings. Adds to the Course Journal.	Feedback to Unit Leaders to inform discussion at course team and are core members of course teams.
Curriculum	Ensures appropriate research underpinning, liaising with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) and the Head of Research, as appropriate.	Proposes any modifications to courses and units liaising with the relevant Head of Area/s.	Ensure Unit Information Forms are up to date proposing modifications where appropriate to Course Leaders.	Monitors curriculum and the extent to which it meets needs of target student group, subject benchmarks and supports the employability of students.
Equality & Diversity	Discusses with Course Leader adjustments to assessments, teaching and learning.	Ensures appropriate adjustments are made at the course level.	Ensures appropriate adjustments are made at the unit level.	Monitors Equality & Diversity issues in relation to course delivery.

Student Induction	Leads Area induction programme.	Leads course academic induction programme.	Leads Unit Specific induction.	Designs course appropriate induction.
Pastoral support	Acts as an additional point of contact for student issues. Directs students to relevant support where appropriate.	Acts as a key point of contact for student issues directing students to relevant support where appropriate.	Directs students to wider support where and when appropriate.	Supports the Course Leader.
Pedagogy & Delivery	Identifies staff development needs and ensures technology is appropriately used.	Monitors the effectiveness of the pedagogical approach. Briefs Unit Leaders.	Briefs and supports other unit tutors.	Monitors coherence of syllabus and its delivery.
Public Information	Contributes to course-related information.	Provides drafts of marketing and recruitment material. Monitors that marketing material is accurate and up-to-date.	Provides unit-related information.	Contributes to course-related information.
Resource Requirements	Works with the Course Leader & Course Team to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of course delivery in their Area.	Monitors and advises on resource requirements.	Monitor overall allocation of resources.	Provide feedback to Unit Leaders regarding resources for delivery.
Staff Management	Takes overall responsibility for the line management, recruitment and appraisal of Unit Leaders in their areas.	Takes day to day responsibility for staffing of their courses. Ensuring that the curriculum is delivered and assessed in a timely fashion.	Takes responsibility for the line management, recruitment and appraisal of lecturers in their units.	N/A
Student Achievement & Progression	Represents Area at Exam Boards as applicable. Attends Portfolio Assessment Board meetings.	Attends Exam Boards and ensures all students have appropriate decisions in line with UCO regulations.	Attends Exam Boards as applicable.	N/A
Student Attendance & Engagement	Proposes overall framework for student attendance and engagement.	Monitors student engagement at course level.	Monitors student engagement at unit level.	Considers and responds to course-related issues identified through the Student Attendance & Retention Group.
Student Recruitment	Supports open days and other activities.	Liaises with Admissions to ensure appropriateness of recruitment processes. Supports open days and other activities.	Supports open days and other activities.	Supports open days and other activities.
Student Voice	Where appropriate, responds to issues that cannot be handled by the Course Leader, Course Team or Unit Leaders.	Responds to issues raised by students at course level in an appropriate and timely manner.	Responds to issues raised at unit level in an appropriate and timely manner.	Responds to issues raised by students through course committee in an appropriate and timely manner.

Teaching Quality	Supports activities to monitor and enhance the quality of teaching.	Co-ordinates the course team. Monitors quality of teaching and advises Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) / Head of Area of issues.	Co-ordinates the unit teaching team to ensure units are effectively delivered as specified in the Unit Information Forms	Identifies & disseminates good practice.

2.7 External Quality Assurance & Enhancement

2.7.1 The UCO is committed to maintaining a high academic standard and ongoing enhancement of the quality of our programmes. In order to achieve this the UCO seeks to engage with a number of external reference points to ensure that quality is maintained, monitored and enhanced as appropriate. These are outlined below.

A) QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education

2.7.2 The UK Quality Code for Higher Education[2] published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)[3] is the definitive reference point for all UK higher education providers. The UCO has mapped against the Quality Code to assure that it meets the regulatory expectations for standards and quality and core practices that it describes.

B) QAA Qualification & Credit Frameworks

2.7.3 The QAA Qualification and Credit Frameworks[4] describe the requirements of the different levels of higher education qualifications in the UK. These are used to inform the design and development of the UCO's courses to ensure that the correct level of learning and credit values are reflected and include the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ) and Higher education credit framework for England: guidance on academic credit arrangements in higher education in England.

C) QAA Subject Benchmark Statements

2.7.4 QAA subject benchmark statements[5] are external reference points used to inform the design and development of the UCO's courses. For example, relevant courses have been mapped against the QAA Osteopathy Benchmark Statement to ensure that their curricula and learning outcomes have been developed and are reviewed and evaluated against an agreed standard within the academic arena. These mapping documents are made available and are considered at course approval events and as part of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) accreditation processes.

D) SEEC Credit Level Descriptors

2.7.5 SEEC[6] is a respected authority within the UK regarding the Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CATS) at higher education levels and serves as a reference point for credit-based learning. In conjunction with the above key QAA reference points, the UCO also uses SEEC Credit Level Descriptors to ensure that units are assigned to the appropriate academic level and to clearly establish the standards expected of students. The UCO's courses are normally mapped to the SEEC Credit Level Descriptors to verify that each unit has been designed and developed and is monitored in accordance with this guidance.

E) GOsC Osteopathic Practice Standards

2.7.6 The Osteopathic Practice Standards (OPS)[7] developed and produced by the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) are central to osteopathic training. They outline the safe, competent and ethical practice of osteopathy and are a fundamental external reference point in

[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/home
[4] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks
[5] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
[6] http://www.seec.org.uk/
[7] https://standards.osteopathy.org.uk/

the development and delivery of our relevant courses. These courses are mapped against the OPS to ensure that all students develop a comprehensive understanding of these standards so that they are able to explicitly and implicitly demonstrate in practice the national standards of being a competent, safe and ethical health care practitioner.

F) Other External Reference Points

2.7.7 In addition to the above, the UCO is also an active member of GuildHE[8], which represents smaller institutions within the higher education sector. It is an inclusive body, an advocate for institutional diversity across higher education and a champion for the high-quality and distinctive educational provision its members offer. GuildHE provides a forum for members and their institutions to share best practice and to disseminate and discuss guidance. The UCO participates in its consultative and information exchange exercises and is an active member of its governance network.

2.7.8 The UCO is also a member of the Council of Osteopathic Educational Institutions (COEI), which is a forum for all providers of osteopathic education to meet to discuss matters and share good practice.

2.7.9 The UCO is also a partner member of the Osteopathic International Alliance[9] (OIA), an international body which represents some 85,000 members. It enables osteopathic institutions to share information and develop practice with regard to standards of education, legislation and registration of practitioners worldwide. The UCO's Vice-Chancellor currently sits on the Board of Directors of the OIA.

2.7.10 The UCO has Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with a number of health care education providers around the world. These MoUs encourage staff and student exchange and the sharing of good practice. The UCO currently has these relationships with institutions in Italy, the UK, Australia and Norway.

2.7.11 The UCO draws on external guidance from the wider academic community when benchmarking and developing its quality assurance activities. It has a strong record of seeking, valuing and acting upon critical appraisal from its previous validating institution (the University of Bedfordshire) and the QAA, acting on behalf of its Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (the GOsC).

2.7.12 The UCO externally references a range of sources when developing its portfolio of courses. In establishing the threshold standards for academic awards, course units and individual study tasks and the manner in which assessments are conducted, academic staff must make use of the appropriate external reference points mentioned above.

2.7.13 Extensive use is also made of input from external examiners who have a wide knowledge of standards in the sector as a whole.

2.7.14 The UCO is a member of a range of professional bodies and associations, enabling it to keep abreast of current thinking and research in the osteopathic field.

2.7.15 UCO staff and faculty also hold a number of external roles, including committee membership at the GOsC, and external examining at other institutions. The UCO draws on these links to keep its portfolio of courses up to date and to maintain academic standards.

2.7.16 UCO faculty are also involved in evaluating applicant osteopaths from overseas and the EU seeking registration with the GOsC and those returning to osteopathic practice.

[8] http://www.guildhe.ac.uk/
[9] https://oialliance.org/

2.8 Internal Quality Assurance & Enhancement

2.8.1 Internally the UCO has specific aims and objectives for academic quality assurance and enhancement. These are articulated in the UCO's Strategic Plan. The evolution of our quality and enhancement process has been informed by external reference points, including the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education.

2.8.2 To ensure that the UCO meets its aims with respect to academic quality and standards, we have developed comprehensive academic policies and regulations as presented in this framework[10].

2.8.3 Further information about staff responsibilities for Quality Assurance and Enhancement can be found in AQF Section 3: The Assurance and Enhancement of Academic Quality and Standards in Teaching and Learning at the UCO.

2.9 Course Portfolio & Teaching & Learning Practices

2.9.1 The UCO is an educational provider of courses that ranges from foundation to doctorate level, each following the teaching and learning practices according to its validating body as appropriate. These are described below.

a) Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences Course

2.9.2 The UCO recognises that it receives a large number of applications from students who wish to study our Integrated Master of Osteopathy (M.Ost) course who have proven academic achievement but who lack a solid grounding in the sciences required to study osteopathy. In response to this issue, the UCO has been running for many years the Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences (IOS) course to enable students to gain this background in the basic sciences. This course is developed by the UCO, is non-credit bearing and does not have an external approval body.

b) The Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care) Course (Validated by Laser Learning Awards)

2.9.3 The Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care) course (the Access Course), validated by Laser Learning Awards[11], consists of 12 units, each of which is worth a specified number of credits.

2.9.4 Access Course units are delivered at both FHEQ Level 2 and Level 3 over one academic year.

2.9.5 Classes are normally delivered in three or four-hour block sessions on Friday evenings and all day on Saturdays during the UCO's term structure.

2.9.6 The Access Course is aimed at mature students returning to education so is delivered in a manner that allows learners to work and study. Within every three or four-hour session there is a mix of discussion and didactic teaching with students often given time to work in groups and individually. Learner's ideas and points of learning are fed back to the whole class allowing consolidation of key facts and skills as well as conversation about misconceptions and misunderstandings. There are also formative learning opportunities within sessions.

[10] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[11] http://laser-awards.org.uk/

c) Integrated Masters in Osteopathy (Full-Time) Course

2.9.7 The Integrated Masters in Osteopathy (Full-Time) (M.Ost FT) course is normally delivered over four academic years. Each academic year is divided into three terms, the first two terms normally consisting of twelve weeks and the third consisting of eight weeks.

2.9.8 The M.Ost FT course is divided into four phases, each corresponding to a year of study and reflecting students' progression: Orientation Phase (Year 1), Development and Integration Phase (Year 2), Integration and Synthesis Phase (Year 3) and the Pre-Professional Phase (Year 4).

2.9.9 Students are required to study concurrently and successfully complete a specified number of units each worth a specified number of credits within each phase before progressing to the next. Units are delivered at FHEQ Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 and Level 7 appropriate to the phase and the level of learning.

2.9.10 The M.Ost FT course is delivered in traditional and virtual learning environments. The emphasis is on providing students with an integrated approach to theory and clinical practice with a strong focus on self-managed learning and learner ownership of learning.

2.9.11 A wide range of teaching methods are utilised, including traditional lectures, one-to-one and small group tutorials, practical sessions and practice, workshops, seminars and clinical observation and experience. Case-based learning is used throughout the course to support the application of the required academic knowledge to a clinical scenario.

2.9.12 Students are expected to manage their own learning and become independent learners as preparation for the expectations of modern professional life as an osteopath, with its emphasis on continuing professional development and life-long learning.

d) Integrated Masters in Osteopathy (Part-Time) Course

2.9.13 The Integrated Masters in Osteopathy (Part-Time) (M.Ost PT) course is normally delivered over five years which correspond to five phases, each delivered across an academic year normally from September to August: Academic Year 1, Academic Year 2, Academic Year 3, Academic Year 4 and Academic Year 5.

2.9.14 Students attend classes at weekends which are arranged into two to four-hour teaching sessions.

2.9.15 Students are required to study concurrently and successfully complete a specified number of units, each worth a specified number of credits, within each phase before progressing to the next. Units are delivered at FHEQ Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 and Level 7 appropriate to the phase and the level of learning.

2.9.16 The M.Ost PT course is delivered in a blended format with integration of traditional lectures, one-to-one and small group tutorials, practical sessions and practice, workshops, seminars and clinical observation and experience.

2.9.17 Students are expected to study outside of contact time and be prepared for classes sufficiently. Interactive resources to advance student learning are utilised, including on-line forum discussions between classes. Online tests are used for formative assessments and staff are available for email discussions.

2.9.18 The emphasis of teaching and learning practice for the M.Ost PT course is on providing students with an integrated approach to theory and clinical practice with a strong focus on self-managed learning and learner ownership of learning.

e) The MSc in Osteopathy (Pre-Registration) Course

2.9.19 The MSc in Osteopathy (Pre-Registration) (MScPR) course, designed for physiotherapists and other medical practitioners, is normally delivered over two years each consisting of 45 weeks full-time.

2.9.20 Students study six 30-credit units, three in year 1 and three in year 2, all at FHEQ Level 7.

2.9.21 A wide range of learning and teaching practices are used to deliver this course including Case Based Learning tutorials, lectures, practical osteopathic skills tutorials, seminars, e-learning tasks and group discussions, clinical experience and self-directed study, thereby exposing students to a meaningful, collaborative and challenging educational experience that draws upon knowledge and skills acquired at undergraduate level as well as the experiential learning acquired as a professional health care practitioner. This promotes deep and meaningful learning underpinned by scholarship and research to students, whilst providing them with opportunities to develop and practise core knowledge and skills in a supportive environment.

g) The Postgraduate Certificate in Academic & Clinical Education Course

2.9.22 The Postgraduate Certificate in Academic & Clinical Education (PGCertACE) course is normally delivered over one year part-time and consists of two 30 credit units studied at FHEQ Level 7.

2.9.23 Students attend weekend study days.

2.9.24 A wide range of established learning and teaching practices are used to deliver this course including: seminars/tutorials, workshops, e-learning tasks and group discussions, self-directed study and group work (e.g. a team appraisal of relevant educational papers). Students will be exposed to a meaningful, collaborative and challenging educational experience that draws upon knowledge and skills acquired at undergraduate level as well as the experiential learning acquired as a professional health care practitioner.

2.9.25 The teaching and learning framework for this course emphasises to students the importance of an active approach to their learning.

i) The Postgraduate Certificate in Specialist Paediatric Osteopathic Practice Course

2.9.26 The Postgraduate Certificate in Specialist Paediatric Osteopathic Practice (PGCertSPOP) course, designed to develop and enhance practising osteopaths' knowledge, practical and clinical skills in the specialist area of paediatric osteopathic practice, is normally delivered over one year part-time and consists of two units – a 15 credit theoretical unit and a 45 credit clinical unit both studied at FHEQ Level 7.

2.9.27 Students attend weekend study and clinical days where students are provided with valuable hands-on experience of working within the clinic under the supervision of experienced osteopaths.

j) The Postgraduate Certificate in the Osteopathic Care of the Paediatric Patient Course

2.9.28 The Postgraduate Certificate in the Osteopathic Care of the Paediatric Patient (PGCertOCPP) course is designed to provide practising osteopaths with thorough, evidence-informed grounding in paediatric osteopathic care and equip them with a deeper understanding of the evaluation, theory and safeguarding skills for autonomous practice. The course is designed to

be delivered using a flying faculty, so that it can be delivered wherever the opportunity arises providing the place of study meets all the requirements of the UCO and the students who register are eligible to study.

2.9.29 The course is delivered over one year part-time with students attending (normally) weekend study days.

2.9.30 The course consists of two 30 credit units studied at FHEQ Level 7.

k) The Postgraduate Certificate in The Integrated Care of Older Adults Course

2.9.31 The Postgraduate Certificate in The Integrated Care of Older Adults (PGCertICOA) course is designed to provide registered practising osteopaths, physiotherapists and chiropractors with evidence informed knowledge, clinical and practical skills in the specialist area of advanced osteopathic management of older adults. The course is a blend of theoretical, practical and clinical instruction centred on geriatric musculoskeletal practice and encourages multidisciplinary healthcare practice.

2.9.32 The course is delivered over one year part-time with students attending weekend study days.

2.9.33 The course consists of two 30 credit units studied at FHEQ Level 7.

l) The Postgraduate Certificate in Animal Osteopathy Course

2.9.34 The Postgraduate Certificate in Animal Osteopathy (PGCertAO) is delivered by the Osteopathic Centre for Animals, who is an Associate Partner of the UCO. The UCO formally validated this course in March 2017. The course is designed to enable practising osteopaths to their undergraduate learning to postgraduate training in the treatment of animals, enabling them to be autonomous in the osteopathic evaluation, treatment and management of small and large animals.

2.9.35 The course is delivered over one-year part time with students attending weekend study days.

2.9.36 The course consists of two 30 credit units studied at FHEQ Level 7.

m) The Doctorate in Osteopathy (PhD) Course (Validated by the University of Bedfordshire)

2.9.37 The PhD course is normally of 4 years duration. The course is organised around a four/six year cycle with the final two/four years devoted to the development and generation of linked pieces of original high level scholarship.

2.9.38 Due to the nature of and its focus on a professional discipline rather than an academic area, the PhD course focuses on critical investigation and research rather than teaching. Teaching is therefore more by way of providing resources and stimuli to achieve the main purpose which is the generation and dissemination of a major piece of investigative scholarship. Experts from a range of disciplines and with specialised or first-hand knowledge will be invited to provide input. Otherwise the major part of the learning process is self-managed and motivated depending on the particular area of interest students are pursuing.

2.10 Academic Resourcing

2.10.1 The system of resource allocation at the UCO aims to:

a) Achieve more effective, evidence-based decisions about the UCO's strategic and operational priorities.

b) Make staff more aware of the costs of the services that we provide and receive, and the potential for savings.

c) Measure and manage performance.

d) Ensure financial sustainability.

2.10.2 The Resource Allocation Model (RAM) in place at the UCO is integrated into its budgeting processes enabling academic staff, in particular Heads of Areas and Course Leaders, to assess how undergraduate and postgraduate courses and other academic and income generating activities contribute to the UCO's overall surplus.

2.10.3 The model also establishes a means of allocating resources between undergraduate and postgraduate courses as well as the UCO's income generating functions - business development (Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses and room hire) and fundraising. In addition, it provides a framework to help determine future viability and cost effectiveness of current programmes and a mechanism for the evaluation of new programmes.

2.10.4 The Resource Allocation Group (RAG) is tasked to make recommendations to the Senior Management Team (SMT) on issues concerning the RAM to ensure that it supports and incentivises the achievement of the UCO's strategic objectives and targets. This group consists of the SMT, Heads of Areas and Course Leaders, which allows financial decision-making to be made from both a business and academic perspective.

2.11 Assessment and Monitoring: Principles of Assessment

2.11.1 High quality assessment practices contribute to the maintenance of academic standards. To help achieve the assessment strategy, each course is constructed to ensure that it meets the following 'Principles of Assessment':

a) **Validity** - Assessments should measure the learning outcomes of the unit or course and there should be a clear and obvious link in this regard.

b) **Fairness** - Assessments should be reasonable in the expectations placed on students and be demonstrably conducted in an equitable and consistent manner. The assessment result should be dependent only on measures of the learning outcomes of the unit or course and should be free from bias caused by the individual or group background, either of the assessors or the students. Assessment questions should therefore be intelligible to all those being assessed. Assessment strategies should allow for an accommodation of functional differences arising from disability, learning styles and physical issues. Assessment and examination practices should provide disabled students with the same opportunity as their peers to demonstrate the achievement of learning outcomes.

c) **Reliability** - Assessments should deliver repeatable and accurate judgements. Consistent results should be obtainable for different assessors on each assessment decision.

d) **Rigour** - Assessments should measure performance at the level of the unit or course, and defined procedures, processes and standards should be strictly adhered to.

e) **Discrimination** - Assessments should enable assessors to distinguish between students who meet and those who fail to meet the intended learning outcomes. Where performance is to be graded, they should ensure that students who perform better are appropriately rewarded in the marks given.

2.12 Student Support

2.12.1 The UCO acknowledges the value of supporting students' learning to ensure as much as possible that students are successful in their studies. In order to achieve this, the UCO's Student Support Department provides a wide range of support services for students. This is detailed in AQF Section 9: Student Guidance & Learner Support.

2.13 Student Voice

2.13.1 All students are encouraged to have input into improving quality and standards at the UCO through giving their views and feedback, known as using their student voice. Student voice mechanisms include student representation and student evaluation questionnaires.

2.13.2 All staff and the Students' Union are committed to encouraging the student body to engage and to ensuring that student input contributes to decision-making at the UCO. Student voice mechanisms are described in detail in AQF Section 10: Student Voice.

2.14 Management Information and the Student Record

a) Registry and Admissions

2.14.1 Management information is supported by the provision of Unit4's Agresso Campus for HE Student database system. This system was introduced at the UCO in 2002. This software underpins the UCO's recruitment, attendance management and assessment processes, and is therefore able to produce management reports on key UCO performance indicators. It also provides all of the tools necessary to respond to the data requirements of external agencies such as the Office for Students and HESA.

b) Clinical Information

2.14.2 In 2012 the UCO adopted the use of TM2 as the foundation for patient management and recording clinical information to enable the production of better management reports on the functioning of the Clinic. The software was also significantly tailored to meet the needs of the UCO in managing students during their clinical experience. This system provides individual students and tutors with better reporting on patients who have been treated at the clinic with regards to their symptoms and the treatments that were undertaken. This information can be applied to enhance clinical learning by facilitating more informed reflection upon clinical approaches and outcomes, as well as laying the foundations for further osteopathic research based upon patients within the UCO clinic.

c) Freedom of Information

2.14.3 The Freedom of Information Act 2000[12] gives the public the right, subject to certain exemptions enumerated in the Act, to access information held by public authorities (such as universities). It also requires such public authorities to make information available proactively through a publication scheme.

2.14.4 Any person who makes a request to the UCO for information not made available through the publication scheme is entitled (subject to the exemptions enumerated in the Act) to be informed in writing whether the UCO holds the information requested and if so, to have the information communicated to him or her. The request must be in writing (including electronic formats such

[12] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/36/contents

as email), must state the applicant's name and an address for correspondence, and must contain a description of the information required.

d) Data Protection

2.14.5 Staff should be aware that the Data Protection Act 2018[13] and the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)[14] gives students the right to request access to personal data relating to them, including since 2005 data held in manual datasets which are not structured by reference to individuals. This could include examination scripts, sub-course marks and copies of references received (though not references given) regarding them.

2.14.6 If a member of staff receives a formal request from a student for disclosure of personal data held by the UCO on the student, the UCO should refer the request to the UCO's Data Protection & Freedom of Information Officer (dpfio@uco.ac.uk).

2.15 Communication at the UCO

2.15.1 The UCO always works hard to ensure that good communication is a priority for all staff and students. With two teaching sites, part-time students and many part-time staff, the UCO is aware that communication is key to success and to enhancing the student experience. The UCO uses a variety of methods for communicating with staff, students and the public as appropriate.

a) The UCO's Website

2.15.2 The UCO's website has recently been completely rewritten and redesigned to reflect our new University College status and our new name. The new site focuses on the needs of two main groups of readers; potential students and potential patients. The site is organised around their needs and interests. There is also information about the UCO and its structure, as well as news and events.

2.15.3 The work involved in updating and re-writing the website is sustained with regular reviews, and updates have been implemented where courses and services have evolved. The news page is regularly refreshed and takes the form of a 'blog', with guest stories from students, qualified osteopaths and patients. Each news item has a moderated 'comments' feature, where readers can engage with the subject and give their views.

2.15.4 The website includes Unistats data, which is information about the UCO's full-time and part-time undergraduate courses and is designed to meet the information needs of prospective students. A link to the Unistats website, which publishes Unistats information for all UK higher education courses, is also provided enabling prospective students to compare the UCO's courses with those of other providers.

b) The UCO's Email System

2.15.5 Microsoft Outlook is used as the UCO's email system.

2.15.6 It is used as the UCO's main means of communication with students and staff concerning day-to-day organisation and for information that is of immediate, or short-term, relevance and can be accessed via smartphone or any web-connected computer.

2.15.7 Students and staff are provided with a UCO email address which they are expected to use for exclusively for UCO business.

[13] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted
[14] https://ec.europa.eu/commission/priorities/justice-and-fundamental-rights/data-protection/2018-reform-eu-data-protection-rules_en

c) The UCO's Virtual Learning Environment – BONE

2.15.8 The UCO recognised in 2007 that it would need to invest in a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). Consequently, the UCO's VLE, the British UCO of Osteopathy On-Line Environment (BONE), was developed and went live in September 2007 using the Open Course Management System, Moodle. It is used largely as a depository for text-based learning resources that can be accessed by students and staff via the internet from anywhere in the world, the value of which is recognised by the UCO's students.

2.15.9 BONE also provides the means for forum discussions, quizzes, electronic submission and grading of assignments, and other interactive activities. The UCO is keen to develop and utilise a wider range of resources Moodle provides to enhance blended and e-learning at the UCO.

d) The UCO Portal

2.15.10 The UCO Portal acts as the UCO's intranet and provides students with essential information, notifications and news about the UCO and their course. It also provides students with the main gateways into the Virtual Learning Environment, Journal and Library searches and Registry and Student Support services.

2.15.11 The UCO Portal also offers access to some key core documents, including the AQF, committee terms of reference and governance structures, guidelines, handbooks, and policies and procedures.

e) Vice-Chancellor 's Briefings

2.15.12 To improve communication of UCO-level issues, the Vice-Chancellor delivers briefings to staff and students approximately three times a year. These briefings are informal and cover strategic issues facing the UCO and reporting back on the current activities and plans for the future. The briefings are also an opportunity for staff and students to discuss these issues, raise any general concerns and ask relevant questions. Each briefing is held multiple times across an approximately two-week window in order to facilitate the widest possible staff and student participation.

2.15.13 Staff briefings are held at both of the UCO's sites to allow better access for all staff, and on every day of the week to enable all staff to attend. These sessions may also be recorded and made available electronically for those staff unable to attend in person.

2.15.14 Student briefings occur on weekdays and on weekends to coincide with part-time study days to ensure that both full and part-time students have the opportunity to attend.

f) The UCO's Newsletter

2.15.15 A termly newsletter is written and circulated to all staff, students, alumni and stakeholders. The newsletter covers news about the UCO and its plans, as well as updates from and about: the Students' Union; fundraising; Course Teams; continuing professional development; postgraduate plans; the quality team; research; estates; student admissions; public relations and marketing; and the clinic.

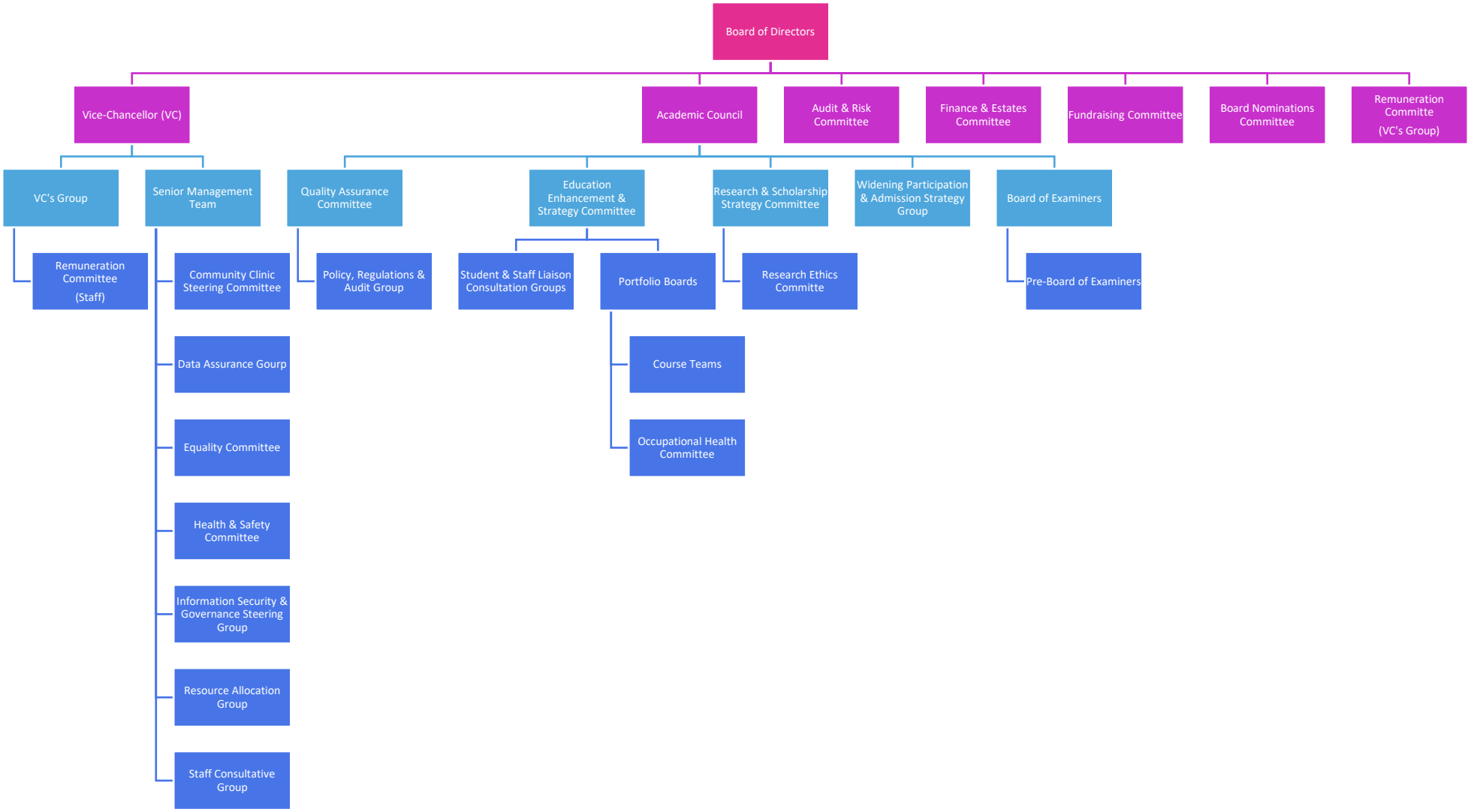
2.15.16 The newsletter is circulated electronically, with printed copies on notice boards and in staffrooms and clinic team points.

g) Staff Conference

2.15.17 The UCO's annual Staff Conference is an important annual event in the UCO calendar. Normally running over a Saturday and Sunday in the spring term, the weekend event addresses a range of issues relevant to the UCO that academic year. As well as keynote presentations from

external speakers, managers and specialists run workshops that staff can select to attend to improve their skills, all of which contributes to communicating best practice.

AQF02: Appendix 01 – Academic Governance Structure



AQF02: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

Academic Quality Framework

Section 3: Assurance & Enhancement of Academic Quality & Standards in Teaching & Learning at the UCO

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 3: The Assurance and Enhancement of Academic Quality and Standards in Teaching and Learning at the University College of Osteopathy

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to academic staff, and of particular interest to Course Leaders and Heads of Area, and members of relevant UCO Committees.

Version number	***Dates produced and approved (include committee)***	***Reason for production/ revision***	***Author***	***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.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF 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.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Aug 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*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sept 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Annual Review: Administrative Amendments to update role titles, HE regulatory body and web links.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2019 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative amendments to update staff role titles, weblinks & footnotes and to reflect current practice.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF 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)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

Section 3:

The Assurance and Enhancement of Academic Quality and Standards in Teaching and Learning at the University College of Osteopathy

Contents

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3.1 Responsibility for the Assurance & Enhancement of Academic Quality & Standards

3.1.1 The University College of Osteopathy (UCO) takes responsibility for assuring and enhancing quality and academic standards, adhering to national frameworks, as well as aligning with procedures in place at its validating partners as appropriate. Within the UCO, overall responsibility for academic quality and standards rests with the Academic Council. The UCO's academic governance structures are designed to ensure that responsibilities for quality are clearly defined and owned throughout the UCO.

3.2 Academic Governance Structure

3.2.1 The primary UCO committees with responsibility for academic quality are outlined below. Each has Terms of Reference, which determines the committee's remit, membership, frequency of meetings, quoracy and reporting lines which are diagrammatically represented within the UCO's Committee Structure diagram.

a) **Academic Council**: The Academic Council (AC) is the main decision-making committee for all academic matters at the UCO (subject to approval by the Board of Directors). It is responsible for promoting, regulating and directing the academic work of the UCO, including teaching and research. It also oversees the UCO's academic management and all aspects of academic quality and standards associated with the UCO. The Academic Council is also the forum where the strategic academic development of the UCO is debated, critically reviewed and proposed to the Board for consideration and / or approval. The Academic Council is chaired by the Principal and includes members from a cross section of the institution, including academic management, Faculty Representatives (from full-time and part-time courses), the Students' Union, Student Representatives (from full-time and part-time courses) and External Representatives (normally one from a Higher Education Institution and one from another Health Care profession).

b) **Quality Assurance Committee**: The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) is a sub-committee of the Academic Council and also communicates with the Senior Management Team (SMT) on institutional matters. It is responsible to the Academic Council for overseeing the implementation and development of the UCO's systems for setting, maintaining and monitoring academic standards and its quality assurance systems and procedures for taught provision at the UCO. It is responsible to the SMT for monitoring the effectiveness and the extent to which the UCO meets its institutional quality assurance obligations. The QAC also receives minutes from the Policy, Regulations and Audit Group (PRAG). The QAC is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and its membership includes academic management, faculty, Learning Resources and HR representatives.

c) **Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee**: The Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee (EESC) is a sub-committee of the Academic Council and reports on initiatives for enhancing pedagogy at the UCO through defining and monitoring educational strategy. It directs educational activity based on external scanning and internal action planning to promote innovation and enhancement in teaching, learning and assessment. The EESC also has responsibility for the initial approval of new courses and curriculum development in general as proposed by and in liaison with Portfolio Boards. In addition, academic policy guidance and regulations are developed by the EESC. The EESC receives minutes from the Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups (SSLCGs) and Portfolio Boards (PBs). The EESC is chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and its membership includes senior academic management staff and faculty, and representatives from various areas including research, student support and the student body.

d) **Research and Scholarship Strategy Committee:** The Research and Scholarship Strategy Committee (RSSC) reports to the Academic Council and focuses on research and scholarship activity and development across the UCO. The RSSC is responsible for the implementation of

the Research and Scholarship Strategy. Embedded within this, the RSSC develops and considers the implementation of new areas of research, as well as enhancing scholarship amongst staff and students.

e) **Portfolio Boards**: Reporting to the EESC, the Portfolio Boards are responsible for overseeing the course provision at the relevant level of study (Foundation, Pre-registration and Postgraduate). The role of Portfolio Boards is to ensure coherence in education at the UCO. They maintain an overview of curriculum content, structure, organisation, assessment, learning resources and delivery of the teaching timetable. Reporting to the Board of Examiners, Portfolio Boards review interim (provisional) examination and coursework results and approve them for publication to students. In addition, Portfolio Boards peer-review and approve changes to courses and units and Annual Course Monitoring Reports as appropriate.

f) **Course Teams**: Course Teams report to the relevant Portfolio Board regarding the day-to-day administration and management of each Course. Course Teams ensure that the validated curriculum is delivered and assessed in accordance with the relevant course information and unit information forms. Course Teams are chaired by Course Leaders and consist of Unit Leaders and a Student Representative.

g) **Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups**: Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups (SSLCGs) report to the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee (EESC). They serve as the forum for students to discuss with faculty and staff significant group issues connected to learning, teaching, student support, and UCO services and environment. They also provide an opportunity for staff to consult with students about institutional developments under consideration. They are co-chaired by the Head of Student Services and Student Union President and consist of student representatives, Course Team members and senior academic staff. There is an SSLCG for both full- and part-time students including both undergraduate and postgraduate students.

h) **Scrutiny Boards**: Scrutiny Boards are sub-committees of Course Teams. Scrutiny Boards are responsible for the receipt, consideration and modification of all examination material for the specified course, ensuring that: all assessment items are at the appropriate level; all appropriate learning outcomes are assessed for the year being considered; a high level of written English is maintained throughout all printed assessments; overlapping subject areas do not duplicate the content of questions unnecessarily; and that a diverse range of assessments is used and that assessment methods used are appropriate for the subject they are examining. Scrutiny Boards are chaired by the Registrar and consist of the Course Leader relevant to the assessment under scrutiny, Heads of Area concerned relevant to the assessment under scrutiny, Unit Leaders relevant to the assessment under scrutiny, the Student Support Manager and appropriate Internal Examiners. All staff involved in the writing and development of assessment questions are also invited to Scrutiny Board meetings.

i) **Student Attendance and Retention Group**: The Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARG) is a sub-committee of all Course Teams. Its purpose is to monitor student attendance and to notify the relevant support staff, Course Leaders, Unit Leaders and the Student Support Manager in cases of concern regarding a student's attendance. The SARG is chaired by the Registrar and consists of Course Leaders, Heads of Areas and Student Support Manager. Other members of staff are invited to attend the SARG on an 'as required' basis.

3.3 Staff Responsibilities to Academic Quality

a) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

3.3.1 The UCO's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) provides management of the entire academic portfolio and has overall responsibility for academic quality assurance and enhancement. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) is supported by a number of staff in respect of ensuring that the UCO's quality assurance procedures are undertaken effectively and in promoting the

enhancement of quality. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) chairs the Quality Assurance Committee and the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee.

B) The Dean of Academic Development

3.3.2 The Dean of Academic Development oversees academic development and quality enhancement across the UCO's academic portfolio and reports to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) on these matters.

C) Course Leaders, Heads of Areas and Unit Leaders

3.3.3 Course Leaders take responsibility for ensuring the effectiveness of the day to day quality of the course and for ensuring that operational delivery is being carried out effectively and efficiently by all academic staff. Course Leaders normally chair Course Team committees.

3.3.4 Heads of Areas are responsible for the curriculum development and management of common areas across pre-registration courses.

3.3.5 Unit Leaders take responsibility for the day to day management of a unit of a course and ensures that it is delivered and assessed in line with the validated course documentation.

3.3.6 The roles and responsibilities of Course Leaders, Heads of Areas and Unit Leaders are detailed in AQF Section 2: An Overview of Teaching & Learning at the University College of Osteopathy.

c) The Registrar and Academic Registry

3.3.7 The Registrar has an overarching role covering both student and course administration. The Registrar is also the Lead Secretary of the Academic Council.

3.3.8 The Academic Registry's main role is to act as the definitive record keeper about students and courses on behalf of the UCO. Its work underpins a student's academic experience from application through to graduation, including enrolment, assessment, timetabling, complaints, discipline, and transcript production on behalf of the UCO. The Academic Registry guides and supports the work of academic and administrative staff in a number of areas including regulations and student assessment.

d) The Quality Team

3.3.9 The UCO's Quality Team is overseen by the Head of Quality and is responsible on an operational basis for ensuring that day-to-day management of, and compliance with, the quality assurance and enhancement of the Academic Council.

3.3.10 The Quality Team also manages the UCO's Quality Assurance processes including: course approvals, changes to courses and units, course and institutional reviews and annual monitoring.

3.4 UCO Policy regarding Academic Standards

a) Overall Policy regarding Academic Standards

3.4.1 The UCO's overall policy in regard to academic standards for undergraduate and postgraduate taught degrees is to ensure that the standards achieved by students completing a particular programme of study are comparable both within and between cohorts and with awards granted and conferred throughout the university sector in the United Kingdom, in compliance with the UCO's Academic Regulations (AQF Section 7) and agreed schedules of variance to these Regulations.

3.4.2 Through taught course approval, course documents clarify full details of the learning and assessment structures of courses approved by the UCO. Students are referred to the

appropriate course handbook or other course materials for fuller guidance and details on the learning and assessment structures of their course or programme of study.

3.4.3 Full details of the learning and assessment arrangements for PhD students are clarified through the University of Bedfordshire's Academic Regulations[1].

b) The Definition of, and Responsibility for, Academic Standards

3.4.4 Academic Standards are made up of three primary elements:

a) The composition of a course in terms of prescribed units and pass levels;

b) The aims and learning outcomes of courses;

c) The methods of awarding marks/grades which are based on assessment criteria, marking schemes and a Common Assessment Grading Scale to assure that effective means of verifying the standards of awards in terms of these elements are in place.

3.4.5 The definition of the academic standards of specific subject areas / units / courses of study and their associated awards is the responsibility of those with the experience and expertise in the subject / unit / course area. Several individuals or groups of individuals therefore share the responsibility for defining and maintaining academic standards relating to the design, delivery, assessment and review of subject areas and courses of study and include:

a) **Individual Tutors** who design the delivery and assessment and review their subject area, as appropriate;

b) **Unit Leaders** who, as members of Course Teams, collectively design, deliver, assess and review units that comprise courses of study in consideration of the QAA Subject Benchmark Statements, as applicable;

c) **Heads of Areas and Course Leaders**, who oversee unit and course design, stipulate the course curriculum and organise its delivery, identify resources required for successful delivery, and co-ordinate the review of courses of study;

d) **Members of Academic Committees**, who are responsible for developing and enhancing existing courses of study, endorsing proposals for new courses, major changes to existing courses, the discontinuation of existing courses and approving new units, title changes, major changes to the curriculum, existing assessments and Course Information Forms for existing degree courses as recommended by the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee (EESC).

e) **Members of Academic Council**, who are responsible for maintaining academic standards and recommending the regular review of all courses in conjunction with, where applicable, the various examining, validating and accrediting bodies, for planning, co-ordinating, developing and overseeing the academic work of the UCO and associated activities, and monitoring and implementing student feedback and for advising on matters of resourcing necessary to support the work of the UCO;

f) **Internal and External Panel Members** who approve new courses, re-validate existing courses, approve changes to units and courses and oversee and approve annual monitoring and periodic course review activities;

g) **Internal and External Examiners, Moderators and Assessors**, who are responsible for setting and marking course assessments to a sufficient standard and determine the final marks/grades awarded to students

3.4.6 The quality and capability of staff who support these activities or who are responsible for these activities is fundamental in maintaining academic standards. The UCO ensures that the staff it

[1] http://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/academic-information

employs are of a sufficient standard and character that enables them to carry out their designated responsibilities adequately.

3.4.7 Staff recruitment and development procedures are discussed more fully in AQF Section 13: Staff Recruitment & Development.

3.4.8 There is also corporate responsibility for academic standards and their continuing review. It is important for an institution to establish rigorous mechanisms to ensure that the levels of academic and personal support and the teaching and learning environment are appropriate to enable students to fulfil their potential and achieve the highest level of award as possible.

c) The Maintenance, Verification and Monitoring of Academic Standards

3.4.9 The primary mechanisms by which academic standards within the UCO are maintained include:

a) Approval and periodic review of courses, which includes verification that relevant external standards and reference points, such as the national subject benchmark statements and SEEC Credit Level Descriptors, have been used appropriately in the design of learning outcomes and level of an award;

b) Accreditation of courses and awards by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) (e.g. the General Osteopathic Council), where appropriate;

c) Implementation of a comprehensive Appraisal and Professional Development Review Policy[2] applicable to all UCO staff;

d) Ongoing monitoring of student attendance and coursework assessment;

e) The use of a Common Assessment Grading Scheme throughout the UCO for its taught courses, and appropriate grading of the Access Course provided by Laser Learning Awards[3] and research degrees approved by the University of Bedfordshire[4];

f) The implementation of a comprehensive double and second marking policy across assignments for foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate taught students, and anonymous marking (i.e. by candidate number and not by name) as appropriate;

g) The requirement for all final examination marks to be agreed by a Board of Examiners consisting of internal markers and External Examiners;

h) The role of External Examiners and Moderators to ensure academic standards regarding the assessment of students, including the moderation of the standard of work carried out by students, and examining and providing judgements on the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment process and the standards of student performance;

i) The experience of internal examiners who serve as External Examiners in other educational institutions to ensure comparability of standards.

3.4.10 External Examiners play a fundamental role in monitoring and verifying the UCO's academic standards, within the UCO and across the higher education sector. Further details of the UCO's practices and policies regarding external examining in foundation and taught courses and programmes are given in AQF Section 11: External Examining.

d) The Review of Academic Standards

3.4.11 The UCO reviews its Academic Regulations regularly and amends its policies and procedures in response to any sector changes as appropriate.

[2] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[3] https://www.laser-awards.org.uk/
[4] http://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/academic-information

3.4.12 Performance indicators including entry criteria, retention rates, progression rates, assessment outcomes and first-destination statistics are analysed and reviewed on an annual basis as part of the UCO's Annual Reporting activities as described in AQF Section 5. Where appropriate, academic standards associated with a particular course may be reviewed, and this review may lead to changes in relevant areas such as learning outcomes, assessment criteria and methods and delivery.

3.4.13 Any change made to a UCO approved course or unit is discussed with relevant students and External Examiners as appropriate, is considered by the UCO's relevant academic committees, and is approved by the UCO's Academic Council according to the UCO's quality process as described in AQF Section 4.

3.4.14 Any change made to a University of Bedfordshire approved course or unit is discussed with the relevant students and External Examiners as appropriate, is considered by the UCO's relevant academic committees, and is approved by the University of Bedfordshire following its quality process[5].

3.4.15 Any change made to the Access Course validated by LASER follows the LASER quality processes for amendments to units and courses.

3.5 QUALITY ENHANCEMENT

3.5.1 The UCO has a strategic commitment to enhancing quality and standards and this is encapsulated within the UCO's Strategic Plan.

3.5.2 Quality and standards are enhanced using a number of mechanisms including:

a) **The UCO's Academic Committees,** which individually operate according to prescribed Terms of Reference that enable each committee to fulfil its remit transparently and efficiently, and together form part of a cohesive academic committee structure. Committee Terms of Reference and the committee structure is monitored by the Policy, Regulations and Audit Group and is normally reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that committee effectiveness is maintained or enhanced appropriately.

b) **Course Team Minutes,** which are completed by Course Teams enabling them to disseminate good practice and identify issues and actions for development and enhancement with each other.

c) **The Annual Staff Conference,** where both academic and non-academic staff participate in a weekend of staff development. Activities include the presentation of Annual Course Reports and discussion of key issues, with the aim of disseminating good practice and enhancing institution-wide standards and quality.

d) **Unit Annual Reporting,** whereby Unit Leaders complete a Unit Annual Monitoring Report (UAMR). These annual reports review measurable actions based on student and external examiners' feedback to ensure the quality review and enhancement of each unit.

e) **Course Annual Reporting,** whereby Course Leaders complete a Course Annual Monitoring Report (CAMR). These reports review measurable actions based on the Unit Report Forms, as well as student and staff feedback, to assure that each course undergoes sufficient quality review.

f) **Periodic Course Reviews / Course Revalidation**, whereby Course Teams substantively review course provision, identify areas for enhancement, and disseminate good practice. These events provide an in-depth process that enables greater reflection than annual monitoring and covers progress over a longer time frame (typically five years).

[5] http://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/quality/handbook

g) **Institutional Annual Reporting**:

   a. Of the UCO to inform students and the wider public whether the UCO meets academic standard and provision expectations of the higher education sector.

   b. Of Collaborative Partners, whereby senior members of collaborative partner institutions appraise their partnership with the UCO.

h) **Peer Review of Teaching,** which takes place as part of the UCO's annual Performance Development Reviews in line with the UCO's Appraisal & Professional Development Review Policy[6].

i) **Student Feedback Mechanisms** including termly Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Group meetings, the Student Voice e-forum, annual course and institutional surveys and the UCO's open-door policy.

3.6 TEACHING, LEARNING & ASSESSMENT

3.6.1 A key priority at the UCO is ensuring effective teaching, learning and assessment of its students.

3.6.2 The UCO's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Operational Plan includes actions and targets to ensure that progressive approaches to learning, teaching and assessment are incorporated into an engaging curriculum that fully meets our students' needs.

3.6.3 This operational plan is developed and reviewed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee to ensure that it remains current, reflects the UCO's short and long-term goals regarding teaching, learning and assessment, and is amended appropriately in response to changes in the HE and health care sectors.

3.6.4 The UCO's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy also considers its diverse student population, and aims to accommodate the different teaching, learning and assessment needs of students by providing a variety of options regarding attendance patterns, learning styles, and assessment methods.

3.6.5 Student support mechanisms are also considered as part of this strategy, to enable students to become active, independent and responsible learners, achieving their maximum potential and enabling them to demonstrate their achievement fully and successfully. In support of this goal, the UCO recognises the need for well-educated, resourceful and proactive staff fully committed to best practices in teaching and associated scholarship.

3.6.6 The Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy is designed to align closely with other elements of the UCO's Strategic Plan to achieve and continually develop high quality learning and teaching, which embraces the diversity of its student population and the osteopathic and healthcare professions.

[6] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

AQF03: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

Academic Quality Framework

Section 4: Course and Unit Approval & Modification

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 4: Course & Unit Approval and Modification

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to Course Leaders and Heads of Area, Unit Leaders and members of relevant UCO Committees including Student Representatives.

Version number	***Dates produced and approved (include committee)***	***Reason for production/ revision***	***Author***	***Location(s)***	***Proposed next review date and approval required***
V1.0	*June 2014 Academic Council*	*To define the procedures for the management of academic quality and standards in teaching and learning at the UCO.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF 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.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Aug 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*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*June 2018 Academic Council*	*Amendments to Course Approval Process to enable flexibility in the Course Approval Timeline and to reflect current practice of External Panel Member nominations.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sept 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Annual Review: Administrative Amendments to update role titles, agency titles and web links & Diagrams for clarity.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2019 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative amendments to update staff role titles, weblinks & footnotes and to reflect current practice.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF 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)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

Section 4: Course and Unit Approval & Modification

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

4.1.1 This section of the Academic Quality Framework details the processes that the University College of Osteopathy (UCO) uses to design, develop and approve new taught courses and units, details how modifications may be made to such courses and units following approval.

4.1.2 Staff at the UCO are required to review all courses and units on an annual basis as part of the UCO's Annual Monitoring and Reporting processes as described in AQF Section 5. This provides staff with the opportunity to evaluate the quality and standards of the UCO's taught provision and stimulates curriculum development. The development of new courses and modifications to existing courses that may arise from annual reviews of courses involve external peer review and consultation, thereby ensuring that practices and experiences of external peers are utilised and considered.

4.1.3 The overall aims of course and unit approval, review and modification are:

a) To assure all stakeholders of the UCO and the public of the quality and standards of the UCO's taught course provision.

b) To ensure that the UCO secures a high quality academic and educational experience for its students.

4.2 DESIGNING NEW COURSES AND UNITS

4.2.1 The design of new courses and units takes a significant amount of research and development, and it is supported by consultation within the UCO (involving both staff and students) and through engagement with external advisors.

4.2.2 The design phase culminates in Course or Unit Approval Events which are based on the peer review of documentation and meetings with staff and students. These events enable the UCO and external approval bodies to evaluate the academic strength, standards, quality, appeal and viability of the provision in detail.

4.3 MODIFYING EXISTING COURSES AND UNITS

4.3.1 Modifications to existing courses and units may be made between course approval and periodic review points to enhance provision, being instigated by student feedback or changes to sector or Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements.

4.3.2 The modification processes involve consultation and peer review to a depth which is proportionate to the level of the proposed modification(s).

4.4 COURSE AND UNIT APPROVAL AND MODIFICATION PROCESSES

4.4.1 The UCO's processes for approving and modifying courses and units are agreed by the Academic Council and are designed to adhere to requirements of external approval bodies and to the relevant Expectations and Practices regarding Course Design and Development as detailed within the UK Quality Code for Higher Education[1].

4.4.2 The overall aims of course approval and modification processes are:

a) To ensure that the UCO maintains strategic oversight of the process for the development and approval of courses;

b) To ensure that courses are strategically and academically appropriate, and are developed in line with the UCO's Mission, Strategic Plan and Academic Regulations (AQF Section 7).

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code

c) To assure that the UCO approves courses that meet the appropriate quality and academic standards as defined by the UCO, the Quality Code and expectations of relevant professional, statutory or regulatory bodies (PSRBs);

d) To ensure that learning and other resources are adequate and available to support course delivery and students;

e) To ensure that the course learning environment is fit for purpose;

f) To ensure that new course proposals are designed and developed appropriately according to prescribed criteria and decision-making processes;

g) To ensure that the course is coherent and provides students with a developmental educational experience;

h) To ensure that the quality and standards of teaching and assessment of the course are in line with national practice and will be continuously enhanced;

i) To ensure that the responsibility for academic ownership and quality management of courses by Course Teams, teaching teams and other UCO departments are clearly communicated and acknowledged;

j) To ensure that post-graduation, courses have prepared students sufficiently to enable them to meet employer expectations as appropriate.

k) To ensure that external reference points and expertise are drawn upon to maintain and enhance quality standards regarding current developments and practices outside the UCO's environment;

l) To ensure that students, faculty and staff are appropriately involved in the design, development and approval of courses;

m) To ensure that appropriate External Examiner appointments for new courses are considered by the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee and recommended for approval by the Academic Council before the course starts.

4.5 Responsibilities Regarding Course and Unit Approval and Modification

4.5.1 Generally, the primary responsibility for course and unit development, approval and modification rests with the Dean of Academic Development, Course Leaders, Unit Leads, and Heads of Area, overseen by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

4.5.2 Normally the Head of Quality provide process support and to monitor the completion of the required approval and modification stages.

4.5.3 Academic and institutional management committees also have roles in the review and approval of proposals. Further details about specific responsibilities are contained in the sub-sections below.

4.5.4 Course approval and modification processes are regularly audited by the Policy, Regulations and Audit Group to ensure that they are followed appropriately and remain effective.

4.6 The Length of Time for which Courses and Units are Approved

4.6.1 Courses and units are normally approved for five years unless otherwise specified at the Course Approval Event, or until the next Periodic Review point, whichever occurs sooner.

4.6.2 Courses are normally subject to a Periodic Review every five years, the processes of which are described in AQF Section 6.

4.6.3 Where a single course is recommended for periodic review on the basis of a substantial proposed change or concern, this will be considered and recorded as an 'approval' event and the course approval process will apply.

4.7 Alignment with the Quality Code

4.7.1 Course and unit approval processes are developed and operated at the UCO in-line with external body requirements and aligns to the UK Quality Code for Higher Education published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) regarding Course Design and Development[2].

PART 2: COURSE APPROVAL

4.8 Drivers for New Course Development

4.8.1 The UCO's portfolio of taught courses is regularly reviewed in order to maintain and enhance academic quality and standards. Course portfolios evolve over time in response to a number of drivers including:

a) the gradual development of existing courses;

b) securing entry into new subject areas;

c) securing entry into new subject areas through a collaborative partnership;

d) evidence of demand in student markets;

e) developments in academic strategy;

f) the identification of new areas through staff research and enterprise;

g) demand from employers or professional bodies;

h) feedback from External Examiners;

i) opportunities or threats from competitor institutions;

j) changes in patterns of student progression;

k) changes in government policy.

4.8.2 In addition to responding to the above to ensure that the UCO's taught course portfolio remains current and attractive to prospective students, new courses proposed for development should also meet at least one of the following criteria within the resource capacity of the UCO:

a) Attract viable new cohorts of students to the course;

b) Increase the conversion of applicants and prospective applicants to registered students in existing courses;

c) Increase the progression opportunities for students at the UCO including progression to Continuing Professional Development and postgraduate courses;

d) Includes a more effective and sustainable use of UCO expertise than on existing courses.

4.8.3 The drivers for, development of, and approval of courses with collaborative partners are considered separately in AQF Section 16: Collaborative Activity.

4.9 Framework for New Course Approvals

4.9.1 Course design and approval processes are developed and operate in line with external body requirements and the Quality Code.

4.9.2 Each new course proposal requires significant research and development, and detailed criteria to guide the approval process. The approval process is rigorous to assure the quality of the proposed provision.

[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/course-design-and-development

4.9.3 Development of the course portfolio must be coherent and consistent with the UCO's strategy, and must make business sense in terms of student demand, income generated, and the resources required to run the proposal.

4.9.4 All proposals must consider relevant external inputs, including subject benchmark statements and the requirements of professional and statutory bodies where applicable.

4.9.5 New course proposals are assessed against criteria in areas including strategic fit and viability, quality and standards, assessment, staffing, and learning resources.

4.10 Timescales of the Course Approval Process

4.10.1 Each new course proposal will require significant research and development from the Course Development Team and this is normally accommodated by the schedules of the various approval events and oversight bodies.

4.10.2 The expected timeframe for the Course Approval Process is 12 months from initial course development to delivery.

4.10.3 The Stage 1 Course Approval Event will normally take place 3 months prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event.

4.10.4 The Stage 2 Course Approval Event will normally take place before the 30th April for courses due to commence in the following September and by the 31st July for courses starting the following January.

4.10.5 The required Course Approval Documentation should be submitted to the Head of Quality at least 3 weeks prior to each Course Approval Event.

4.10.6 The typical timescales of the Course Approval Process are shown in Diagram 4.1.

4.11 New Course Approval Process Overview

4.11.1 The approval process for new courses is divided into two main stages:

4.11.2 Approval of the New Course Proposal: during which it is determined whether the proposed course fits with the UCO's strategic objectives and academic and research strategy, whether the appropriate human and physical resource are available, and whether it will meet market demand. If it is deemed to meet each of these criteria, the proposal should progress to the Course Development stage.

4.11.3 Approval of the New Course, which normally consists of the following stages:

a) Course Development: during which the Course Development Team develop and produce the required course approval documentation, with reference to relevant external reference points and benchmarks, and in consultation with staff, committees, students and PSRBs as appropriate.

b) Approval in Detail: during which the Stage 1 and Stage 2 Course Approval Events are held and the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel, satisfied with the Course Development Team's responses to course approval conditions, recommends approval of the new course to the Academic Council by way of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.

c) Formal Approval: during which the Academic Council approves the new course and the Course Development Team receive formal notification of approval.

d) Post Approval: during which the course documentation for the new course is submitted to the Core Documentation Holder and provided to the Academic Registry, Admissions and Recruitment, and Marketing Departments, and an External Examiner is nominated and approved for the course by the Course Team Leader.

4.11.4 The Head of Quality will normally liaise with the Course Development Team regarding details of timelines and documentation requirements, to provide process support, and to monitor the completion of the required approval stages as outlined below.

4.11.5 Progress of the Course Approval process will be reported to the Quality Assurance Committee by the Head of Quality.

4.12 Approval of the New Course Proposal

4.12.1 Initial scoping documentation is considered at the Approval of the New Course Proposal stage of the New Course Approval Process.

4.12.2 The Course Development Leader should complete a New Course Proposal Form[1] in addition to a New Course Proposal Business Case Form[2] and a New Course Costings Form[3] to ensure that development of a course is appropriate and viable financially.

4.12.3 The New Course Proposal Form is considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee to consider the academic case for the proposal and, if successful, recommends approval of the new course proposal to the Academic Council for approval. Course proposals must be approved by the Academic Council and be updated as required during the Course Development and Approval in Detail stages.

4.12.4 The New Course Proposal Business Case Form identifies any resource and cost implications. The New Course Costings Form includes information such as teaching staff costs, course fees and projected student numbers. The Course Development Team is responsible for producing these forms in liaison with the Finance Director and in conjunction with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education); they must be approved by the Senior Management Team and be updated as required during the Course Development and Approval in Detail stages.

4.12.5 As the New Course Proposal Business Case Form and New Course Costings Form include business-sensitive information it is not normally shared with Course Approval Panel members and should therefore be produced with an internal audience in mind.

4.12.6 The Course Approval Proposal Process is shown in Diagram 4.2.

4.12.7 Table 4.1 identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for each of the Approval of the New Course Proposal stage of the New Course Approval Process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

Table 4.1: Approval of the New Course Proposal Tasks & Responsibilities

Stage No.	Approval of the New Course Proposal Task	Responsibility
1	A New Course Proposal Form (for each course proposed) is completed in liaison with Recruitment and Marketing, Admissions, Learning Resources, Human Resources, Student Support departments and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) as appropriate. A New Course Proposal Business Case Form (for each course proposed) is completed in liaison with Recruitment and Marketing, Admissions, Learning Resources, Human Resources, Student Support departments and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) as appropriate. A New Course Costings Form (for each course proposed) is completed in liaison with the Finance Director and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).	Course Development Leader

	Consideration of the New Course Proposal & Approval Form to confirm that the proposed course fits with the UCO's academic and research strategy, with the following possible outcomes: Approval to progress to Course Development Stage. Approval to progress to Course Development Stage subject to recommended changes / further actions. Approval of the proposal is not granted (or may be recommended for re-submission at a later date).	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (EESC) to recommend the outcome to the Academic Council
2	Consideration of the New Course Proposal Business Case Form and New Course Costings Forms to confirm that the proposed course fits with the UCO's strategic objectives, human and physical resource availability, and meets market demand, with the following possible outcomes: Approval to progress to Course Development Stage. Approval to progress to Course Development Stage subject to recommended changes / further actions. Approval of the proposal is not granted (or may be recommended for re-submission at a later date).	Senior Management Team (SMT)
3	Progression to the New Course Approval process.	N/A

4.13 New Course Approval Process

4.13.1 The process for the approval of a new course (following approval of new course proposal) is shown in Diagram 4.3.

4.13.2 The following process stages of the approval of a new course are documented below:

a) Course Development

b) Development of Course Approval Documentation

c) Nomination of External Panel Members for the Stage 2 Course Approval Event

d) Approval in Detail

e) Stage 1 Course Approval Event

f) Stage 2 Course Approval Event

g) Formal Approval

h) Post Approval

A) Course Development

4.13.3 The Course Development stage of the New Course Approval Process will normally involve a range of activities to ensure that all academic areas and issues are addressed. These will include the consideration of internal and external benchmarks, consultation with Finance, Human Resources, Student Support, Equalities and Learning Resources Departments and other relevant staff, and consultation with students (e.g. Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Group discussion).

4.13.4 Where areas within a course are developed, discussions with Heads of Areas should also take place to ensure that efficiency and effectiveness of design and effective internal and external communication and involvement are considered.

4.13.5 Specific Course Approval Documentation should also be developed during this stage of the New Course Approval process as detailed below.

B) Development of Course Approval Documentation

4.13.6 Responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of Course Approval Documentation rests with the Course Development Team and is overseen by the Course Development Team Leader unless otherwise specified; procedural guidance is available from the Head of Quality.

4.13.7 Version control processes should be used when completing Course Approval Documentation as documented in the UCO's Version Control Policy[3]. This includes the use of footers to show the date and version of each document.

4.13.8 The Course Approval Documentation should be produced using the referenced forms and templates.

4.13.9 The Course Approval Documentation that is normally required is listed in the Table 4.2 and shall be confirmed at the course development stage.

Table 4.2: Required Course Approval Documentation

Document Number	Required Course Approval Document	Document Description
AQF04_03	Course Information Form (CIF)[4]	One CIF should be produced for each course. The CIF provides essential information about the course. The CIF should be written with students as the intended audience. The CIF is also normally published on the UCO's website to provide prospective students with information about the course. It is important that all sections of the CIF are accurate and completed in full.
AQF04_04	Unit Information Forms (UIFs)[5]	One UIF should be produced for each unit. UIFs provide essential information about specific units. UIFs should be written with students as the intended audience. It is important that the UIF accurately reflects what is delivered and is completed in full.
AQF04_05	Course Handbook[6]	The Course Handbook provides students with more detailed information about their course referencing course specific requirements, resources and regulations. The Course Handbook forms part of our contract with students stating what they can expect from the UCO and what we expect from them. The Course Handbook should be written with students as the intended audience.

[3] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

		The production and content of the Course Handbook is the responsibility of the Course Leader. It is important that the Course Handbook is accurate and reflects UCO Academic Regulations (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations) and approved policies and procedures.
AQF04_07	An Academic Rationale[7]	The Academic Rationale should provide evidence about the following regarding the proposed course: Academic strength and significance. Strategic fit and viability. Quality of the learning experience. Quality and standards of the course. Course structure. Assessment. Regulatory and technical compliance. Staffing and resources. Student support and guidance. Course management. Quality of flexible delivery arrangements. The Academic Rationale should be written with the New Course Approval Panel as the intended audience. Guidance for writing the Academic Rationale is provided in the Academic Rationale Template.
AQF04_08	External Benchmark Mapping[8]	The External Benchmark Mapping document should demonstrate how the course maps onto appropriate external benchmarks. It is expected that courses will be mapped to the following external benchmarks as a minimum: QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education[4], including: • Qualifications Frameworks • Characteristics Statements (if applicable) • Credit Frameworks • Subject Benchmark Statements SEEC Level Descriptors[5] Professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs) standards of practice (if applicable).
AQF04_10	Staff CVs[9]	The CVs of all staff expected to manage and deliver the proposed course should provide details of relevant expertise and sector

[4] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[5] http://seec.org.uk/resources/

		engagement pertinent to the course in question. These should be provided in PDF format. Alternatively, a Recruitment Plan for prospective staffing of the course should be provided.

4.13.10 The Stage 1 Course Approval Event Panel will normally receive all documentation listed in Table 4.2 and some guidance relating to the event[10].

4.13.11 The Stage 2 Course Approval Event Panel will normally receive all course documentation listed in Table 4.2 (revised as appropriate in response to the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel's conditions and recommendations) in addition to the Stage 1 Course Approval Event Outcome Report[11] and the Course Development Team's responses to that panel's conditions / recommendations (the Course Approval Outcome Response Form[12]).

4.13.12 The required Course Approval Documentation should be submitted electronically to the Head of Quality no later than three weeks before each Course Approval Event. It is the responsibility of the Course Development Team Leader to ensure that the correct documentation is submitted by the agreed deadline.

4.13.13 It is the responsibility of the Head of Quality to ensure that the correct Course Approval Documentation is circulated to Course Approval Panel members normally three weeks before the Course Approval Event.

4.13.14 Normally documentation is provided in electronic format only, however Course Approval Panel members may request hard copies from the Quality Team.

C) Nomination of External Panel Members for the Stage 2 Course Approval Event

4.13.15 At this stage of the course approval process the Course Development Team in liaison with the Head of Quality and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) will also be required to nominate two External Course Approval Panel Members for the Stage 2 Course Approval Event, one Academic External Representative and one Industry External Representative, using the appropriate nomination form[13]. The CV of nominated External Panel Members should accompany each nomination form.

4.13.16 Initial identification of the External Panel Members should normally be made six months prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event.

4.13.17 The nominated External Panel Members should not have:

a) been an external examiner (including for the directed studies element of research degrees) or member of staff at the UCO within the last three years;

b) been involved with the development of the proposed course.

4.13.18 It is the responsibility of the Course Development Team Leader to ensure that External Panel member nomination forms and CVs are endorsed and signed off by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and then submitted to the Head of Quality no later than three months prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event (see Diagram 4.1).

4.13.19 The Head of Quality will then confirm acceptance of the nominations to the Course Development Team and Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.

4.13.20 The Quality Team will thereafter be responsible for liaising with the nominated External Panel Members regarding the arrangements and logistics of the Stage 2 Course Approval Event. This will normally include providing guidance to the External Panel Members regarding the expectations of External Panel Members, their expected time commitment, fees and expenses and opportunity for a pre-panel meeting to ensure that they are clear about their role.

4.13.21 Any proposed change to an External Panel Member will require approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

D) Course Development Tasks & Responsibilities

4.13.22 Table 4.3 identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for each of the Course Development stage of the New Course Approval Process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number normally take place concurrently.

4.13.23 Overall responsibility for coordinating the work to produce and gather the required Course Approval Documentation and meet approval criteria rests with the Course Development Team Leader.

Table 4.3: Course Development Tasks & Responsibilities

Stage No.	Course Development Task	Responsibility
1	Further to approval of the New Course Proposal by the Academic Council and Senior Management Team a timeline of the "Course Development" and "Approval in Detail" stages of the new course approval process are confirmed with the Course Development Team.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality Course Development Team
	The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) is informed of the commencement of the New Course Approval Process and undertakes subsequent monitoring of the progress of the process.	Head of Quality
	If the proposed course relates to Recognised Qualification provision the appropriate Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) shall be notified.	Course Development Team
2	Nomination of two External Panel Members for the Stage 2 Course Approval Event to be endorsed and signed off by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and submitted to the Head of Quality normally no later than 3 months prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event.	Couse Development Team in liaison with the Head of Quality and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
	Development of all Course Approval Documentation. This should include liaison with appropriate Senior Management Team members (regarding resources, costings, market demand, etc.) and students as appropriate.	Course Development Team
3	Confirm acceptance of the External Course Approval Panel Members with the Course Development Team.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality
4	Submit the required Course Approval Documentation electronically to the Head of Quality normally at least three weeks prior to the Course Approval Event.	Course Development Team

E) Approval in Detail

4.13.24 The Approval in Detail stage of the Course Approval Process normally involves two Course Approval Events, at which a Course Approval Panel reviews the submitted Course Approval Documentation with the Course Development Team and others as appropriate:

4.13.25 The Stage 1 Course Approval Event, to assure that the submitted Course Approval Documentation is of an adequate standard and provides the Course Development Team with recommendations and the opportunity to enhance their new course approval submission prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event.

4.13.26 The Stage 2 Course Approval Event, to assure that the new course meets the required quality standards for delivery and to recommend approval the proposed new course to the Academic Council.

4.13.27 For each Course Approval Event the Quality Team appoints a Course Approval Panel (see Table 4.4) that collectively is responsible for assuring that the proposal meets the criteria for the approval of new courses.

4.13.28 The Approval in Detail stage culminates in recommending that the new course is formally approved by the Academic Council.

F) Stage 1 Course Approval Event

4.13.29 The Stage 1 Course Approval Event is normally held no less than three months prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event.

4.13.30 Stage 1 Course Approval Events are normally held at the location where delivery of the course is to take place or, if the course is depends substantially on flexible / distance delivery, at the UCO.

4.13.31 The purpose of the Stage 1 Course Approval Event is to assure that all submitted Course Approval Documentation is of an adequate standard, and provides the Course Development Teams with recommendations and the opportunity to enhance their new course approval submission prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event.

4.13.32 The Stage 1 Course Approval Event normally follows a set agenda which is detailed in Table 4.9.

4.13.33 The Head of Quality will normally have responsibility for liaising with the Course Development Team about the arrangements for the consideration of the proposal, communicating with panel members, drawing up a draft agenda for the Course Approval Event and making logistical arrangements for the event.

4.13.34 The appointed Secretary shall normally prepare the outcome report of the event in liaison with the Chair of the panel.

G) Stage 1 Course Approval Panel

4.13.35 The membership of the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel is detailed in Table 4.4, which also details the appointment criteria of each panel member and their role on the panel.

4.13.36 Stage 1 Course Approval Panel Members are provided with guidance about their role by the Quality Team upon appointment, including information about the location and time of the event and payment of fees and expenses.

4.13.37 Stage 1 Course Approval Panel Members will normally receive Course Approval Documentation electronically three weeks in advance of the Course Approval Event. They may request a hard copy of the documentation from the Quality Team.

4.13.38 The Stage 1 Course Approval Panel is responsible for and is required to:

a) Review the Course Approval Documentation and identify lines of enquiry that they wish to pursue at the Stage 1 Course Approval Event prior to the event.

b) Attend the Stage 1 Course Approval Event in its entirety and to contribute to discussions and decision-making as required of their role (see Table 4.4).

c) Consider the new course proposal in accordance with the stipulated Criteria for the Approval of New Courses (Section 4.16).

d) Identifying and agreeing conditions and recommendations to enhance the course approval documentation.

e) Confirming the deadline within which conditions and recommendations to the course approval documentation should be completed.

f) Agreeing a date for the Stage 2 Course Approval event with the Course Development Team.

g) Produce a Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Report structured on the Criteria for the Approval of New Courses using the appropriate template.

4.13.39 Stage 1 Course Approval Panel Members should not normally serve as Stage 2 Course Approval Panel Members for the same course proposal, with the exception of the Quality Assurance Representative and Secretary.

TABLE 4.4: STAGE 1 COURSE APPROVAL PANEL MEMBERSHIP, CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT & PANEL ROLES

Panellist	**Criteria for Appointment**	**Panel Role**
Chair	The Chair is a senior member of UCO academic staff who has not had direct involvement with the development of the proposal.	The Chair of the panel is expected to ensure that discussions during the event are developmental and enhance the proposal being considered. The Chair should use the initial private meeting of the panel to agree who will lead on which themes, which areas should be highlighted for clarification as well as the order of topics. The Chair will open the event by clarifying the aims and objectives of the event and will close the event by summarising the conclusions and outcomes. Issues which are not fully clarified should be pursued and any areas of concern should be shared with the Course Development Team at an early stage. The Chair approves the Course Development Team's response to any conditions arising from the event.
An Internal Academic Representative.	The Internal Academic Representative is a member of UCO academic staff normally within the same subject area as that of the proposed course and should not have been involved in developing or submitting the proposal.	The role of the academic representative is to draw upon his/her experiences within his/her own academic area to provide an objective and independent view of the quality of the proposal.

A Student Representative	The Student Representative should be a student of the UCO and to have been a student for at least one year or a recent graduate (of not more than two years) within the same subject area as that of the proposed course.	The role of the student panel member is to contribute to the assessment of all areas of the proposal, but with a particular focus on the student experience.
A Quality Assurance Representative	The Quality Assurance Representative should be a member of the UCO's Quality Assurance Team.	The role of this representative is to advise on quality assurance and regulatory issues and to confirm that the proposal adheres to UCO regulations and policies and to raise any variations to UCO requirements or expectations in the proposed course, as conditions of approval.
Secretary	The Secretary is usually assigned by the Head of Quality.	The role of the Secretary includes taking notes at the event and preparing the report of the event in liaison with the Chair of the Panel.

H) Stage 1 Course Approval Possible Outcomes

4.13.40 Possible Outcome of Stage 1 Course Approval Events are:

a) Approval without conditions.

b) Approval with delivery conditions (where the additional work required is related to documentation prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event).

c) Approval with approval conditions (where the additional work required is necessary to secure academic standards and/or quality as represented by the scrutiny requirements specified above prior to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event).

d) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit the proposal to a Stage 1 Course Approval Event at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).

4.13.41 The Chair of the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel will normally report outline feedback orally to the Course Development Team at the event's final feedback session. However, formal confirmation of the event outcomes is given in the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Report following the event.

I) Stage 1 Course Approval Reporting & Responding to Outcomes

4.13.42 The Secretary to the panel drafts the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Report, normally within two weeks of the event.

4.13.43 The report should include the outcome of the event as stipulated in Section 4.13b above including the reasons for the panel's conclusions. Any conditions for progression to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event should be specified, together with their requisite deadlines and responsibilities and any recommendations for enhancement should be listed.

4.13.44 The Secretary to the panel circulates the report to the members of the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel for confirmation, final approval and sign-off by the Chair of the panel.

4.13.45 The Chair of the panel forwards the signed report to the Head of Quality who then circulates the report to the Course Development Team Leader and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) with the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Response Form[14].

4.13.46 It is the responsibility of the Course Development Team Leader, in consultation with the Course Development Team and other staff (e.g. Senior Management Team) as appropriate, to respond to the conditions detailed in the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Report by completing the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Response Form by the requisite deadline/s. All approval conditions should be responded to and fulfilled by the Course Development Team in the response.

4.13.47 Recommendations are not required to be met however it is expected that consideration will be given to the recommendations by the Course Development Team and that action or comment will be given as appropriate in the response. It is advised that this includes consideration of disseminating strengths identified during the approval process.

4.13.48 The response should be submitted to the Head of Quality who will forward it on to the Chair of the panel for approval and sign off.

4.13.49 The Chair of the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel must be satisfied with the Course Development Team's responses to their conditions and recommendations before the proposal may progress to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event. They will confirm that the response is satisfactory by signing the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and returning this to the Head of Quality, who will forward this to the Course Development Team Leader and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), and confirm that the proposal may progress to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event.

J) Stage 2 Course Approval Event

4.13.50 The Stage 2 Course Approval Event is normally held three months after the Stage 1 Course Approval Event or within the timeline agreed by the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel, and no less than four months before the proposed course start date, to enable the Course Development Team to respond to Stage 1 conditions and recommendations appropriately.

4.13.51 Stage 2 Course Approval Events are normally held at the location where delivery of the course is to take place or, if the course is depends substantially on flexible / distance delivery, at the UCO.

4.13.52 The purpose of the Stage 2 Course Approval Event is to approve the new course proposal and to assure that the new course meets the quality standards for delivery.

4.13.53 The Stage 2 Course Approval Event normally follows a set agenda which is detailed in Table 4.9.

K) Stage 2 Course Approval Panel

4.13.54 The membership of the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel is detailed in Table 4.5, which also details the appointment criteria of each panel member and their role on the panel.

4.13.55 Stage 2 Course Approval Panel Members are provided with guidance about their role by the Quality Team upon appointment, including information about the location and time of the event and payment of fees and expenses.

4.13.56 Stage 2 Course Approval Panel Members will normally receive Course Approval Documentation electronically three weeks in advance of the Course Approval Event. They may request a hard copy of the documentation from the Quality Team.

4.13.57 The Stage 2 Course Approval Panel is responsible for and is required to:

a) Review the Course Approval Documentation and identify lines of enquiry that they wish to pursue at the Stage 2 Course Approval Event prior to the event.

b) Attend the Stage 2 Course Approval Event in its entirety and contribute to discussions and decision-making as required of their role (see Table 4.5).

c) Consider the new course proposal in accordance with the stipulated Criteria for the Approval of New Courses (Section 4.16).

d) Contribute to producing the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report[15] structured on the Criteria for the Approval of New Courses.

4.13.58 Stage 2 Course Approval Panel Members should not normally serve as Stage 1 Course Approval Panel Members for the same course proposal with the exception of the Quality Assurance Representative and Secretary.

TABLE 4.5: STAGE 2 COURSE APPROVAL PANEL MEMBERSHIP, CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT & PANEL ROLES

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
Chair	The Chair is a senior member of academic staff who has not had direct involvement with the development of the proposal.	The Chair of the panel is expected to ensure that discussions during the event are developmental and enhance the proposal being considered. The Chair should use the initial private meeting of the panel to agree who will lead on which themes, which areas should be highlighted for clarification as well as the order of topics. The Chair will open the event by clarifying the aims and objectives of the event and will close the event by summarising the conclusions and outcomes. Issues which are not fully clarified should be pursued and any areas of concern should be shared with the Course Development Team at an early stage. The Chair approves the Course Development Team's response to any conditions arising from the event.
An Internal Academic Representative	The internal academic representative is a member of UCO academic staff normally within the same subject area as that of the proposed course and should not have been involved in developing or submitting the proposal.	The role of the academic representative is to draw upon his/her experiences within his/her own academic area to provide an objective and independent view of the quality of the proposal.
Two External Panel Members; one academic and one industry	External members of the panel should not have been an External Examiner or former member of staff at the UCO within the last three years nor involved in the development of the proposal. Neither should any of the Course Development Team putting forward the proposal be acting as an External	The role of the external panel members is to draw upon their subject specialism and professional experience to provide an objective and independent judgement of the quality, standards and coherence of the proposal. It is expected that external panel members will undertake the role of "critical friend" and

	Examiner on a course with which the external nominee is associated.	constructively challenge viewpoints or assumptions that are held by the Course Team or institutionally.
A Student Representative	The Student Representative should be a student of the UCO and to have been a student for at least one year or a recent graduate (of not more than two years) within the same subject area as that of the proposed course.	The role of the student panel member is to contribute to the assessment of all areas of the proposal, but with a particular focus on the student experience.
A Quality Assurance Representative	The Quality Assurance Representative should be a member of the UCO's Quality Assurance Team.	The role of this representative is to advise on quality assurance and regulatory issues and to confirm that the proposal adheres to UCO regulations and policies and to raise any variations to UCO requirements or expectations in the proposed course, as conditions of approval.
A Secretary	The Secretary is usually assigned by the Head of Quality.	The Secretary's duties include taking notes at the event and preparing the report of the event in liaison with the Chair of the Panel.

L) Stage 2 Course Approval Possible Outcomes

4.13.59 The possible outcomes from Stage 2 Course Approval Events are:

a) Approval without conditions;

b) Approval with delivery conditions (where the additional work required is related to documentation);

c) Approval with approval conditions (where the additional work required is necessary to secure academic standards and/or quality as represented by the scrutiny requirements specified above);

d) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).

4.13.60 The Chair of the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel will normally report outline feedback orally to the Course Development Team at the event's final feedback session. Formal confirmation of the Stage 2 event outcomes is given in the formal Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report following the event.

M) Stage 2 Course Approval Reporting & Responding to Outcomes

4.13.61 The Secretary to the panel drafts the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report normally within two weeks of the event.

4.13.62 The report should include the outcome of the event including the reasons for the panel's conclusions. Any delivery and approval conditions should be specified, together with their requisite deadlines and responsibilities, and any recommendations for enhancement should be listed.

4.13.63 The report should specify any proposed / approved variations to UCO regulations and policy, and any transition arrangements in respect of continuing students, as well as the start date confirmed at the course approval event (subject to conditions).

4.13.64 The panel may report on areas of strength in its feedback to the Course Development Team and note these in the report.

4.13.65 The report should also provide a clear indication of the discussions to explain the panel's conclusions.

4.13.66 Where more than one award/title is considered at a single event, outcomes must be reported separately for each award/title.

4.13.67 The Secretary to the panel circulates the report to the members of the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel for confirmation and final approval and sign off by the Chair of the panel. The Secretary then circulates the confirmed report to the Course Development Team Leader, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality.

4.13.68 It is the responsibility of the Course Development Team Leader, in consultation with the Course Development Team and relevant staff (e.g. the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Senior Management Team) as appropriate, to respond to the conditions detailed in the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report by completing the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form[16] by the requisite deadline/s. All delivery and approval conditions should be responded to and fulfilled by the Course Development Team in the response.

4.13.69 Recommendations are not required to be met, however it is expected that consideration will be given to recommendations by the Course Development Team, and that action or comment will be given as appropriate in the response. It is advised that this includes consideration of disseminating strengths identified during the approval process.

4.13.70 The Course Development Team's response should be submitted to the Head of Quality, who will forward it to the Chair of the panel for approval.

4.13.71 The Chair of the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel must be satisfied with the Course Development Team's responses to their conditions and recommendations prior to the commencement of the course. They will confirm that the response is satisfactory by signing the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and returning it to the Head of Quality.

4.13.72 The Head of Quality will forward the signed response form to the Course Development Team Leader, with confirmation that this, together with the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report, will be considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee prior to being submitted to the Academic Council for final and formal approval of the course as recommended by the Chair of the panel.

4.13.73 When a course is not approved by the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel, or there is disagreement regarding the approval / delivery conditions that cannot be reconciled between the Panel Chair and Course Development Team, the Chair of the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee (EESC) shall be advised immediately and, in consultation with the Head of Quality and the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel Chair, shall determine whether it is appropriate for the course to be considered by a Course Approval Review Panel or should be re-presented to another Stage 2 Course Approval Panel at a later date. The composition of a Course Approval Review Panel shall be determined by the EESC Chair. The Course Approval Review Panel shall produce a report on the outcome of their discussions and present their findings directly to the EESC.

4.13.74 In the case of Recognised Qualification (RQ) courses / courses that are accredited by another organisation, approval for delivery may also subject to approval from the relevant Professional, Statutory & Regulatory Body (PSRB), e.g. the General Osteopathic Council for the UCO's pre-registration osteopathic courses.

N) Approval in Detail Tasks & Responsibilities

4.13.75 Table 4.6 identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for each of the Approval in Detail stage of the New Course Approval Process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

TABLE 4.6 APPROVAL IN DETAIL: TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Stage No.	Approval in Detail Task	Responsibility
1	Stage 1 Course Approval Documentation is circulated to the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel normally three weeks prior to the event.	Head of Quality
2	***Stage 1 Course Approval Event*** (Course Level Assurance and Peer-Review) Outcome, conditions and recommendations regarding the proposed new course are agreed.	Stage 1 Course Approval Panel
3	The Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Report is drafted and circulated to the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel normally within two weeks of the event.	Secretary of the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel
4	The Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Report is approved, signed off and forwarded to the Head of Quality.	Chair of the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel
5	The Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Report is circulated to the Course Development Team Leader and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) in addition to the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Response Form.	Head of Quality
6	Stage 1 Course Approval Panel conditions and recommendations are responded to and the proposed course documentation is revised as appropriate by the Course Development Team in consultation with appropriate staff (e.g. Senior Management Team). The completed Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Response Form is submitted to the Head of Quality within the requisite deadline.	Course Development Team
7	The completed Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and revised documentation is forwarded to the Chair of the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel for approval and sign off.	Head of Quality
8	The Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and revised documentation is approved, signed off and forwarded to the Head of Quality in addition to confirmation that the new course proposal can progress to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event.	Chair of the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel
9	Approval of the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and confirmation of progression to the Stage 2 Course Approval Event is forwarded to the	Head of Quality

	Course Development Team and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).	
10	Submission of the revised Course Approval Documentation for the Stage 2 Course Approval Event is submitted to the Head of Quality normally at least three weeks in advance of the event.	Course Development Team Leader
11	Stage 2 Course Approval Documentation, the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Report and the Stage 1 Course Approval Outcome Response Form from the Course Development Team are circulated to the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel normally three weeks prior to the Stage 2 event.	Head of Quality
12	***Stage 2 Course Approval Event*** (Course Approval) Outcome, conditions and recommendations regarding the proposed new course are agreed.	Stage 2 Course Approval Panel
13	The Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report is drafted and circulated to the Stage 1 Course Approval Panel within two weeks of the event.	Secretary of the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel
14	The Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report is approved, signed off and forwarded to the Head of Quality.	Chair of the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel
15	The Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report is circulated to the Course Development Team Leader and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) in addition to the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form.	Head of Quality
16	Stage 2 Course Approval Panel conditions and recommendations are responded to and the proposed course documentation is revised as appropriate by the Course Development Team in consultation with appropriate staff (e.g. Senior Management Team). The completed Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form is submitted to the Head of Quality within the requisite deadline.	Course Development Team
17	The Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and revised documentation is forwarded to the Chair of the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel for approval and sign off.	Head of Quality
18	The Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and revised documentation is approved, signed off and forwarded to the Head of Quality in addition to	Chair of the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel

	confirmation that the new course is recommended for approval.	
19	Approval of the Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and confirmation that the new course is recommended for approval is forwarded to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee for consideration.	Head of Quality
20	The approved Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report and Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form are considered and approval of the new course is recommended to the Academic Council.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee

O) Formal Approval

4.13.76 The Academic Council considers the approved Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report and Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form and the recommendation from the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee that the course is approved.

4.13.77 Further to the Academic Council agreeing that the responses to the approval conditions are sufficient, a Course Approval Confirmation Form[17] is produced and signed by the Chair of the Academic Council. The confirmation form details the start date of the new course, the length of time for which the course is approved and the date of the periodic review of the course.

4.13.78 The confirmation form is then circulated to the Course Development Team Leader, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Quality Assurance Committee by the Head of Quality and serves as confirmation that the Course Approval Process has concluded.

4.13.79 Monitoring of ongoing approval conditions is overseen by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee in respect of educational matters and the Senior Management Team in respect of institutional matters.

P) Formal Approval Tasks & Responsibilities

4.13.80 Table 4.7 identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for the Formal Approval stage of the New Course Approval Process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

Table 4.7 Formal Approval: Tasks and Responsibilities

Stage No.	Formal Approval Task	Responsibility
1	The approved Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Report and Stage 2 Course Approval Outcome Response Form are considered and the new course is formally approved.	Academic Council
2	A Course Approval Confirmation Form is produced.	Head of Quality
3	The Course Approval Confirmation Form, CIF and UIFs are signed off.	Chair of the Academic Council

4	The signed Course Approval Confirmation Form is circulated to the Course Development Team Leader, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Quality Assurance Committee as confirmation of approval and the end of the New Course Approval Process.	Head of Quality
	The approved CIF and UIFs and Course Handbook are circulated to the Course Development Team Leader and Core Documentation Holder.	Head of Quality
5	The approved CIF, UIFs and Course Handbook are stored as Core Documents.	Core Documentation Holder
	The Institutional Calendar is updated to record the date of the Periodic Course Review of the new course.	Head of Quality
6	Ongoing monitoring of course approval recommendations.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (for academic matters) Senior Management Team (for institutional matters)

Q) Post Approval

4.13.81 On receipt of the Course Approval Confirmation Form, the Quality Team will ask the Course Leader of the new course to nominate an External Examiner for the course in line with the UCO's External Examiner nomination process described in AQF Section 11. The External Examiner should be appointed by the start date of the new course.

4.13.82 Course and unit codes are assigned to each as appropriate and completed on the approved Course Information Form and Unit Information Forms by the Head of Quality prior to being circulated to the Course Development Team Leader, Admissions Team, Academic Registry and Core Documentation Holder.

4.13.83 The Course Team for the new course prepare for delivery of the new course, liaising with UCO staff as appropriate (e.g. the HR Department for staff recruitment, the Recruitment & Marketing Team for course publicity, Admissions Team for Interview Events, the Academic Registry for induction and timetabling of the new course, the ICT Department for online learning resources, etc.).

4.13.84 The Admissions Team and Academic Registry are responsible for updating the UCO's Information Management Systems to reflect the addition of the new course.

R) Post Approval Tasks & Responsibilities

4.13.85 Table 4.8 identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for the Post Approval stage of the New Course Approval Process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

TABLE 4.8 FORMAL APPROVAL: TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Stage No.	Post Approval Task	Responsibility
1	Nomination of an External Examiner for the new course in line with the UCO's External Examiner nomination and approval process.	Course Leader of the new course
2	Assignment of course and unit codes to each as appropriate, and inclusion of these codes on the approved Course and Unit Information Forms.	Head of Quality in liaison with the Academic Registry
3	Circulation of completed and approved Course and Unit Information Forms to the Course Development Team Leader, Recruitment & Marketing Team, Admissions Team, Academic Registry and Core Documentation Holder.	Head of Quality
4	Preparation for delivery of the new course, liaising with UCO staff as appropriate.	Course Team of the new course.
	Uploading of approved course documentation to the UCO's website, and production of marketing materials in consultation with the Course Leader.	Recruitment & Marketing Team
	Updating of Admissions Database to reflect the new course in consultation with the Course Leader.	Admissions Team
	Updating of Student Information Management System with new unit codes and assessment data, in consultation with the Course Leader.	Academic Registry

4.14 CRITERIA FOR THE APPROVAL OF NEW COURSES

4.14.1 Course Approval Panels (of both Stage 1 and Stage 2 Events) are required to consider the following criteria when reviewing and approving a new course proposal. They will typically structure the Course Approval Outcome Report on these criteria, noting practice that is innovative and/or likely to be of interest to other Course Teams.

4.14.2 These criteria should also inform the development of the course and its documentation throughout the design and approval process. Course Development Teams are therefore recommended to consider and structure the Academic Rationale on these criteria listed below.

A) ACADEMIC STRENGTH AND SIGNIFICANCE

i. The proposed course constitutes a significant and sector-benchmarked academic offering in the subject area(s) it represents.

ii. The course is accurately understood and evidenced by the Course Development Team as distinctive, developmental, or comparable with others within HE provision.

B) STRATEGIC FIT AND VIABILITY

i. The proposed course supports the UCO's mission and strategic direction.

ii. There is market research and/or quantitative evidence to support the viability of the proposed provision.

iii. The proposed course constitutes a worthwhile extension of the UCO's existing provision in terms of its curriculum and proposed market(s).

C) Quality of the Learning Experience

i. The proposed course provides students with a coherent and developmental educational experience.

ii. The graduate/postgraduate outcomes for students, including those who achieve specified intermediate target awards, represent a good return on their investment.

iii. Engagement with relevant employers and/or professional bodies throughout the course is sufficient to confirm that the student experience is informed by current and contemporary practice.

iv. The expectations of students, employers and other relevant professional bodies have been considered within the course development process.

v. The provision is consistent with the UCO's equal opportunities and diversity policies, and promotes an inclusive environment for learning by anticipating the varied requirements of learners (for example, because of a declared disability, specific cultural background, location, or age), and aims to ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities.

vi. The experience of students studying in part-time, distance, flexible modes and/or partnership can be confirmed as equivalent to those of students studying full-time on the same/similar provision.

D) Quality and Standards of the Course

i. The aims and objectives of provision are consistent with the UCO's educational aims and objectives.

ii. The proposed course complies with the UCO's Academic Regulations, unless a variation to these regulations is proposed and detailed within the approval documentation (e.g. on the recognition of prior learning, admissions etc.).

iii. The UCO's policies on the design of courses and units have been met.

iv. The course has been appropriately aligned with the QAA Quality Code, including the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ).

v. Relevant benchmarks, including QAA subject benchmarks and qualification characteristics documents, and appropriate industry/professional standards, have been considered and addressed appropriately within the development process.

vi. The intended learning outcomes for the course, and the standards that will be achieved, are appropriate to the level of the proposed award and title, and are appropriately distinct from any other awards and/or titles offered or already proposed for approval.

vii. There are opportunities for academic progression to and from the proposed course, with entry and exit requirements in line with UCO policies and regulations.

E) Course Structure

i. The curriculum and intended learning outcomes match the rationale for the course.

ii. The educational rationale is sound and the curriculum is coherent, with clear progression in the subject matter.

iii. The teaching methods are appropriate to the curriculum, and the intended learning outcomes reflect the educational aims of the course.

iv. The course is balanced in terms of subject specialism, skills development and professional standards.

v. The course structure takes into account the entitlements of students with diverse characteristics, including ensuring that intended learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities, learning environments, and planned assessment methods do not create any unnecessary barriers.

vi. There is evidence that the quality of teaching and standards of assessment in the subject are likely to be consistent with national practice.

F) Assessment

i. The intended learning outcomes are tested through the assessment process.

ii. The assessment strategy is clear, with students exposed to a range of assessment types.

iii. Individual assessments within units are clearly identified and provide an effective measurement of performance, with an acceptable and balanced overall student workload.

iv. The assessment strategy and individual assessments is designed to support student performance.

v. UCO policy and processes associated with assessment management are recognised and met.

vi. Assessment practices are inclusive and equitable, and the methods, tasks and processes do not advantage or disadvantage any group or individual.

G) Regulatory and Technical Compliance

i. The course does not contain any elements or processes at variance with UCO Academic Regulations, other than any exceptions for which approval is explicitly sought as part of the approval process.

ii. The UCO's policies and operational processes are applied consistently, or identified and justified as variations.

iii. UCO expectations in respect of academic provision and its delivery are met in full.

iv. Any relevant PSRB requirements are met and aligned appropriately with UCO requirements and expectations.

v. External requirements relevant to the provision are met.

vi. The course complies with the UCO's policies on equality and diversity.

H) Staffing and Resources

i. The human and physical resources available (or the plans that are in place to provide them), and the environment within which the course will be offered, are satisfactory.

ii. There is confidence that the Course Team can deliver and develop the course.

iii. Library and information resources are available and adequate.

iv. The Course Team is externally engaged with relevant subject and professional communities.

v. The quality of provision and its further enhancement are fully supported by research, scholarship and academic enterprise within the Course Team.

vi. There is a staff development policy in place that values and encourages academic and professional development activity by staff.

vii. The research and scholarly activity of the delivery team is sufficient to maintain the standards of provision and enrich the curriculum with contemporary developments in the subject, particularly to underpin work at Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level 6 and FHEQ Level 7[6].

[6] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks

I) Student Support and Guidance (excluding standard UCO support systems)

i. There are appropriate opportunities for, and sound arrangements in place for the management of work-based learning, mentoring, projects, etc.

ii. Induction arrangements are appropriate to any specific course features.

iii. Support is available to students in respect of any critical course-related choices or decisions (e.g. electives, placements).

iv. Arrangements are in place for any language or other support required by particular groups of students (overseas, direct entry with advanced standing etc.), and provision is made for students from diverse backgrounds and/or prior educational experience, and students with a range of characteristics including protected characteristics.

J) Course Management

i. There are procedures in place for the management of quality assurance processes, such as the appointment and reporting of External Examiners, annual monitoring, and course review.

ii. The Course Team understands its responsibilities in respect of the management of student learning opportunities with regard to teaching, learning and assessment processes and learning resources.

iii. There are clear lines of responsibility and communication for any collaborative proposals.

iv. There are appropriate mechanisms in place for obtaining and responding to student feedback on the course and the student experience.

v. Arrangements for any cross-portfolio and/or cross-institutional co-ordination are described and adequate.

K) Quality of Flexible Delivery Arrangements

4.14.3 These criteria are for use in respect of courses that are identified for flexible / distance delivery at the time of proposal. It is expected that during the process of approving such courses, all areas relating to the criteria above will be addressed. The criteria in this final section must also be addressed in respect of any units in which the learning experience depends substantially on flexible / distance delivery (a matter to be determined by the Stage 2 Course Approval Panel). Any change from the approved mode in the transition to or from the flexible / distance delivery of a unit must be re-approved within the process for major modifications.

i. The nature, outcomes and progress of the learning experience are clearly and accurately conveyed to applicants and students.

ii. The UCO's expectations of students are clearly identified, scheduled and supported, through the provision of appropriate information and criteria, study plans and contact points.

iii. Arrangements for induction appropriate to the learning environment and delivery systems have been made.

iv. Study materials and assessment are equivalent in quality, and the learning experience they support, to those provided by the UCO in other learning contexts.

v. Assessment and feedback, including opportunities for formative assessment appropriate to contexts of independent study, can be managed securely in terms of quality, standards, and operational effectiveness, with verification and contingency arrangements in place.

vi. The structure of the provision is in place, and sufficient sample materials have been reviewed, to assess the quality and standards of the learning experience.

vii. There is a project plan for the finalisation of any outstanding materials, confirmed by the UCO's Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee as achievable within projected timeframes.

viii. The proposed delivery systems are accessible by the intended student population, are appropriately reliable and secure, and are consistent with UCO policies on equality and diversity.

ix. The proposed delivery systems have been tested for reliability, and appropriate contingency plans are in place.

x. The longevity of delivery systems and materials has been considered, and appropriate plans are in place for development, updating and replacement.

xi. The Course Team has appropriate experience and knowledge to support students and maintain quality and standards within flexible delivery.

4.15 Agenda for Course Approval Events

4.15.1 The indicative agenda in Table 4.9 below would typically apply for both Stage 1 and Stage 2 Course Approval Events. This agenda may be adapted as necessary.

Table 4.9: Indicative Agenda for a Course Approval Event

Time	Meeting	Expected Attendance
10.00	Private meeting of the panel to discuss the format for the day and lines of enquiry.	Panel
10.30	Meeting with senior staff to discuss how the course fits with institutional and faculty strategic aims, staffing, resourcing and staff development.	Panel Principal (or equivalent) Senior Management Staff
11.30	Private meeting of panel to consider comments made by senior staff in the light of the next meeting.	Panel
12.00	Meeting with Course Development Team and teaching staff to discuss the structure, curriculum, delivery, assessment, pedagogic and operational issues of the proposed course, and especially the relationship to the QAA Benchmarks and the UCO's Academic Regulations. This meeting should include all of the staff who will deliver the course together with Student Support representatives.	Panel Course Development Team Leader Course Development Team Proposed Course Tutors Student Support Staff Learning Resources Staff
1.30	Lunch: private meeting of the panel, or meeting with students on cognate courses.	Panel Students
2.30	Tour of the facilities, if appropriate.	Panel Course Development Team Leader

3.30	Provisional feedback to the Course Development Team.	Panel Principal (or equivalent) Senior Management Staff Course Development Team Leader Course Development Team Proposed Course Tutors Student Support Staff Learning Resources Staff

4.16 Accelerated New Course Approval Process

4.16.1 In some cases, for example due to market or employer needs, an 'accelerated' process of course approval may be appropriate. Possible reasons include:

a) The proposal is a subset of a recently successfully approved / revalidated course (for example, it is a short course for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) purposes);

b) The proposal shares a large number of units with a recently successfully approved / revalidated course;

c) The proposal is one of a portfolio of closely linked courses of which one has been recently successfully approved / revalidated.

4.16.2 In cases where it is thought this would be appropriate, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) should be contacted for advice in the first instance. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality will then decide on whether this is appropriate, and if so, will agree a timescale for the accelerated new course approval process.

4.16.3 The same process as outlined in Section 4.13 will normally be undertaken but using an accelerated timescale.

4.16.4 Where an accelerated timescale is approved, it shall be recorded on the Variation to Course Approval Process Form[18].

4.17 Publicity for and Marketing of New Courses

4.17.1 In-line with the guidance and advice published by the Competitions & Marketing Authority[7], the UCO works to ensure the accuracy of public information.

4.17.2 Information presented through the UCO's public website[8] is verified as accurate by the Course Leader in conjunction with the Head of Quality and the UCO's Admissions, Recruitment and Marketing Departments following approval of the course, and thereafter on an annual basis.

4.17.3 Where new provision is being considered the course may only be advertised formally once a Stage 2 Course Approval Event has been held. At this point the course must be marketed as "subject to approval". Following receipt of the Course Approval Confirmation Form confirming that all conditions have been met, this caveat may be removed. Any publicity for the new provision first requires the internal approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

4.17.4 Published materials should always include the UCO logo in the approved format, refer to the UCO by its correct title, state that the course leads to an award of the UCO, and state the entry requirements for the course, including any English-language requirements.

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cma-advises-universities-and-students-on-consumer-law
[8] https://www.uco.ac.uk/

4.18 Approval of New Awards

4.18.1 A new award is one not currently offered by the UCO.

4.18.2 Proposals for new awards must be submitted using the New Course Proposal Form[19] and will be approved concurrently with the associated new course through the New Course Approval Process detailed above.

4.18.3 Proposals for new awards will be considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (along with any variances to the UCO's Academic Regulations (AQF Section 7) that the proposed new award may require) and the Senior Management Team. If approved by these committees the new award will be recommended for approval by the Academic Council.

4.18.4 All new awards must be formally approved by the Academic Council.

4.19 The Recognised Qualification Approval Process for Pre-Registration Osteopathic Courses: General Osteopathic Council/ Quality Assurance Agency

4.19.1 All pre-registration osteopathic courses delivered by the UCO are subject to Recognised Qualification (RQ) approval by the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) following course approval.

4.19.2 Decisions concerning the granting of RQ status are made following a recognition review, which is conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), under contract from the GOsC[9] and approval is granted by the Privy Council.

4.19.3 For new pre-registration courses, the GOsC must receive a formal application (on the required GOsC template) not less than 18 months before the proposed start date. This is to allow both the review to take place and the GOsC to progress the review outcomes through the Privy Council. However, the GOsC cannot guarantee that applications made 18 months before the proposed start date will result in a decision by the Privy Council within that period.

4.19.4 Pre-registration courses with RQ status are also subject to reviews and renewal of their RQ status by the GOsC. The process for recognition review is the same as that for renewal review. This process is outlined in full in AQF Section 6: Periodic Review.

PART 3: COURSE & UNIT MODIFICATIONS

4.20 Modifications to Courses & Units

4.20.1 Courses and units are typically approved for a period of five years, but it is acknowledged that modifications may be made following approval to enhance provision.

4.20.2 Staff may identify opportunities for enhancing approved courses and units as part of routine monitoring and other reflective activity.

4.20.3 As with new course development, modifications to courses and units must be coherent and consistent with the UCO's Strategic Plan, must make business sense, and must be approved through the relevant modification approval process outlined below. In all cases, a rationale for the proposed modification must be provided by the Course or Unit Leader as appropriate. They must also identify the modifications to course documentation and undertake appropriate consultation with stakeholders.

4.20.4 Modifications to courses and units are reflected through new versions of the following course documentation:

[9] https://www.osteopathy.org.uk/training-and-registering/becoming-an-osteopath/training-courses/

a) Course Information Forms

b) Unit Information Forms

c) Course Handbooks

4.21 Consideration and Approval of Course and Unit Modification Proposals

4.21.1 Course and unit modification proposals are considered by committees with educational oversight of the provision in question as appropriate; major changes which have a resource implication are also considered by the Senior Management Team. Proposed modifications are then approved through the relevant process according to the level of modification.

4.21.2 Proposals for course and unit modifications are subject to peer-review and external and internal consultation to provide assurance of the maintenance of academic quality and standards prior to their final approval.

4.21.3 Course and unit modifications may only be approved further to the completion and submission of the appropriate approval documentation as detailed in the sections below.

4.21.4 Consultation may be undertaken at relevant committee meetings and through electronic communication. Where electronic consultation is undertaken in place of discussion at a committee meeting, this should be noted at the next available meeting and documented in the minutes.

4.21.5 In the case of consultation with students, a 10-day consultation period is recommended as a minimum to enable all affected students to consider and feedback on the proposed modifications.

4.21.6 For all minor and major modification proposals the Head of Quality shall liaise with the Course Leader and Unit Leader as appropriate regarding details of timelines and documentation needs, to provide process support and to monitor the completion of the required approval stages as outlined below. The Head of Quality will monitor that the minor and major modification approval stages are followed, and will report this to the Quality Assurance Committee.

4.21.7 Procedural support for course and unit modifications is also provided by the Head of Quality.

4.22 Alignment with the Quality Code

4.22.1 Course and unit modification processes are developed and operated at the UCO in line with external body requirements, and in line with the UK Quality Code of Higher Education regarding Course Design & Development[10].

4.23 Drivers for Modifications to Courses and Units

4.23.1 Courses and units are typically approved for a period of five years from the point of approval to the point of periodic course review. During this period it may be identified that modifications to a course or its units would enhance the provision. Course and Unit Leaders may propose in response to a number of sources of information, including:

a) External Examiners' reports;

b) Reports from accrediting or other external bodies;

c) Staff, student and graduate feedback;

d) Student progress and other relevant data;

e) Institutional goals and mission;

[10] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/course-design-and-development

f) Strategic academic and resource planning;

g) Subject sectoral developments;

h) Changing external environment;

i) Good practice in other courses or units at the UCO, or other sources of good practice.

4.24 Framework for Modifications to Courses and Units

4.24.1 The approval of course and unit modifications is subject to clear identification of the modifications, the production of a sound rationale, and evidence of undertaking appropriate consultation with stakeholders.

4.24.2 As with new course and unit development, modifications to courses and units must be coherent and consistent with the UCO's Strategic Plan, make business sense, and be academically sound and appropriate.

4.24.3 The following areas of the approved CIF and UIF may not be changed:

a) QL Code

b) UCAS Course Code

c) Unit Code

4.25 Timescales of Course & Unit Modifications

A) Planned Modifications

4.25.1 A planned change is one that is approved before the end of July in the academic year preceding implementation (or at least one month before a course start date).

4.25.2 There are normally three time points within the year when course and unit modifications may be proposed for approval and implementation in the next academic year: 1) November/December, 2) February/March and 3) May/June. This ensures that proposals are approved for delivery before the end of July in the academic year preceding implementation.

4.25.3 An immediate change is one approved outside of this timeframe.

B) Immediate Modifications

4.25.4 Immediate modifications required, for example, in response to External Examiner recommendations or operational issues arising or identified at a time that does not permit the proposal of a Planned Modification (see above), must in all cases be presented to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Chair of Academic Council for approval.

4.25.5 Actions to approve modifications by the Academic Council Chair will be recognised by the Academic Council at its next meeting.

4.26 Levels of Modification: Administrative, Minor & Major

4.26.1 Modifications to courses and units are normally identified depending on the type of modification being proposed, and the section of the Course or Unit Information Form affected by the proposed modification as follows:

a) Administrative

b) Minor

c) Major

4.26.2 The extent of approval and scrutiny is designed to be proportionate to the level of modification(s) being proposed.

4.26.3 The processes for making each level of modification are explained in detail below.

4.26.4 As part of the modification processes the cumulative effect of a number of small changes will also be considered to ensure that:

a) The course / units continue to align with their aims;

b) The course / units continue to align with their intended learning outcomes;

c) The course / units continue to align with the UCO's strategy and mission;

d) The criteria for course / unit design, development and approval are always met.

4.26.5 Where a cumulative effect of 'minor' modifications is considered substantial, the 'major' modification process may be initiated; where a cumulative effect of a 'major' modification is considered substantial, a course periodic review event may be initiated.

4.27 Administrative Modification Process

4.27.1 The Administrative Modification Process is shown in Diagram 4.4.

4.27.2 Administrative modifications to courses and units include amendments to the Course Information Form (CIF) or Unit Information Form (UIF) that are of a factual nature only, and will normally include:

a) Corrections to typographical errors.

b) Corrections to staff role titles;

c) Corrections to names or titles of external organisations;

d) Names of Course or Unit Leaders to reflect those currently in post;

A) Administrative Modifications Required Approval Documentation

4.27.3 Administrative modifications may only be approved further to the completion and submission of the approval documentation detailed in Table 4.10.

Table 4.10: Administrative Modification Approval Documentation Requirements

Document	Guidance
A Microsoft Word version of the CIF / UIF displaying the proposed modifications using "Track Changes".	Word Versions of CIFs / UIFs are available from the Core Documentation Holder.
An Administrative Modification Form[20] completed as appropriate for the proposed change.	Advice on completing this form may be sought from the Head of Quality.

4.27.4 Responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of course and unit modification approval documentation production rests with the Course Team and is overseen by the Course or Unit Leader as appropriate unless otherwise specified.

4.27.5 The relevant Course or Unit Leader is responsible for ensuring that the approval documentation is completed prior to submitting the proposed administrative modification to the Head of Quality for approval.

4.27.6 Version control processes should be used when completing course and unit modification approval documentation as documented in the UCO's Core Documentation Policy and Version Control Policy[11]. This includes the use of footers to show the date and version of the document.

B) Administrative Modifications Approval Process

4.27.7 Administrative modifications may be made at any point in the academic year by Unit Leaders or Course Leaders and do not normally require consultation with students or External Examiners.

4.27.8 In all cases administrative modifications must be made with the agreement of the Course or Unit Leader (and Head of Area if applicable) in question.

4.27.9 The relevant Unit or Course Leader should submit the required modification approval documentation to the Head of Quality electronically.

4.27.10 The Head of Quality will then approve the proposed administrative modification, complete the "Modifications" section of the CIF / UIF as appropriate, and inform the Unit and Course Leader by providing them with the approved modified CIF / UIF.

4.27.11 The Head of Quality shall then provide the approved modified CIF / UIF to the Core Documentation Holder, Recruitment, Marketing and Admissions Team, and Academic Registry for their information and records.

C) Administrative Modifications Post Approval

4.27.12 Following approval of the administrative modification the Course / Unit Leader is responsible for informing relevant students and staff of the approved modified outcome, ensuring that Course Handbooks are updated to reflect the modification/s, and ensuring that marketing and modified course documentation is updated and published as appropriate.

4.27.13 The Core Documentation Holder is responsible for storing the approved modified documentation and noting the modification on the Core Documentation Register.

4.27.14 The Head of Quality shall ensure that the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committees are informed of the outcome of administrative modifications at the next available meetings.

D) Administrative Modifications Approval Process Tasks & Responsibilities

4.27.15 Table 4.11 shows the tasks and responsibilities of the Administrative Modification process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

Table 4.11: Administrative Modification Process Tasks and Responsibilities

Stage No.	Administrative Modification Task	Responsibility
1	Proposal and agreement of the administrative modification with the Course Leader.	Course Leader / Unit Leader (as appropriate)
2	Completion of the Administrative Modification Approval Documentation.	Course Leader & Unit Leader (as appropriate)

[11] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

3	Submission of the Administrative Modification Approval Documentation to the Head of Quality.	Course Leader (for CIF modifications) Unit Leader (for UIF modifications)
4	Approval of the proposed administrative modification.	Head of Quality
5	Circulation of the approved modified CIF / UIF to the Couse and Unit Leader, Core Documentation Holder, Recruitment, Marketing and Admissions Team and the Academic Registry.	Head of Quality
6	Relevant staff and students are informed of the modified CIF / UIF.	Course / Unit Leader
	The modified CIF / UIF is uploaded to the UCO's website and online learning environment as appropriate, replacing the outdated version.	Course Leader / Unit Leader in liaison with relevant staff (e.g. Marketing and Recruitment and Admissions staff)
	Prospective students are informed of the change to the CIF / UIF.	Admissions Team
	The approved modifications are reflected in the Course Handbook as appropriate and submitted to the Head of Quality and Core Documentation Holder.	Course / Unit Leader
	The approved modified CIF / UIF and Course and Unit Handbook are stored as Core Documents.	Core Documentation Holder
	The Core Documentation Register is updated to record the modification.	Core Documentation Holder
7	The Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee are informed of the outcome of the administrative modification approval proposal and the conclusion of the approval process.	Head of Quality
8	The outcome and conclusion of the administrative modification approval process is noted and documented in meeting minutes.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee

4.28 Minor Modification Process

4.28.1 The Minor Modification Process is shown in Diagram 4.5.

4.28.2 Minor modifications must be agreed by the relevant Portfolio Board and formally approved by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee before they are implemented.

4.28.3 Modifications to sections of the CIF and / or UIF that normally qualify as a Minor Modification are shown in Table 4.12.

4.28.4 The Head of Quality should be consulted to confirm whether the proposed course or unit modification qualifies as a minor change.

4.28.5 A significant number of proposed 'minor' modifications in combination may need to be considered through the 'major' modification process. In such instances advice should be sought from the Head of Quality at an early stage.

Table 4.12: Modifications to sections of the CIF and / or UIF that normally qualify as a Minor Modification

CIF / UIF	Section
CIF	Course Summary, Distinctive Features, Further Study & Employability
	Teaching & Learning Strategy, Assessment Strategy, Course Assessment Map
	Student Support during the Course, Support for Students with a Disability
	Skills Development
UIF	Learning Outcomes, Assessment Criteria
	Student Learning
	Outline Teaching Schedule
	Assessment Strategy & Methods
	Assessment Grid
	Recommended Resources

A) Minor Modifications Required Approval Documentation

4.28.6 Minor modifications may only be approved further to the completion and submission of the approval documentation detailed in Table 4.13.

Table 4.13: Minor Modification Approval Documentation Requirements

Document	Guidance
A Microsoft Word version of the CIF / UIF displaying the proposed modifications using "Track Changes".	Word Versions of CIFs / UIFs are available from the Core Documentation Holder.
A Minor Modification Form[21] completed as appropriate for the proposed change.	Advice on completing this form may be sought from the Head of Quality.
Evidence of internal and external consultations undertaken.	This should include email communications and a record of minutes of meetings where the proposed change/s have been discussed and agreed.

4.28.7 Responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of course and unit modification approval documentation production rests with the Course Team and is overseen by the Course or Unit Leader and Head of Area (if applicable) unless otherwise specified.

4.28.8 The relevant Course Leader is responsible for ensuring that the approval documentation is completed prior to submitting the proposed administrative modification to the Head of Quality for approval.

4.28.9 Version control processes should be used when completing course and unit modification approval documentation as documented in the UCO's Core Documentation Policy and Version Control Policy[12]. This includes the use of footers to show the date and version of the document.

B) Minor Modification Approval Process

4.28.10 Planned minor modifications may normally be made by Unit and Course Leaders at three points in the academic year (normally November, March and June) to coincide with EESC meetings at which minor modifications are formally approved.

4.28.11 In all cases, minor unit modifications must be made with the agreement of the Course Leader and appropriate Head of Area in question.

4.28.12 All minor modifications require peer-review and external and internal consultation to provide assurance of the maintenance of academic quality and standards prior to their final approval and should follow the process shown in Diagram 4.5.

4.28.13 Minor modification approval documentation should be submitted electronically and be signed off by the appropriate staff at each stage of the approval process as outlined in Table 4.14.

4.28.14 All minor modifications are agreed by the relevant Portfolio Board following their review of the required approval documentation (Table 4.13) and should:

a) Consider the impact of previous minor changes and provide confirmation that the modification and associated modifications to date (since initial approval or re-approval) do not constitute a major modification;

b) Confirm that students and External Examiner consultation has been undertaken and considered.

c) Arrange for revised documentation to be provided to the Quality Team for operational implementation.

4.28.15 Planned minor modifications must be formally approved by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and noted by the Academic Council.

4.28.16 Immediate minor modifications made mid-year, for example those recommended by an External Examiner or in response to operational issues, must in all cases be approved through the Major Modification process, i.e. agreed by the relevant Portfolio Board, recommended for approved by the Chair of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee Chair and formally approved by the Chair of the Academic Council.

C) Minor Modification Post Approval

4.28.17 Following approval of the minor modification the Course or Unit Leader is responsible for informing relevant students and staff of the approved modified outcome, ensuring that Course Handbooks are updated to reflect the modification/s, and ensuring that marketing and modified course documentation is updated and published as appropriate.

4.28.18 The Core Documentation Holder is responsible for storing the approved modified documentation and noting the modification on the Core Documentation Register.

4.28.19 The Head of Quality shall ensure that the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee are informed of the outcome of minor modifications to course and units at the next available meetings.

D) Minor Modification Approval Process Tasks & Responsibilities

[12] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

4.28.20 Table 4.14 shows the tasks and responsibilities of the Minor Modification process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

4.28.21 Some of the stages may take place through electronic communication as appropriate.

TABLE 4.14: MINOR MODIFICATION APPROVAL PROCESS TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Stage No.	Minor Modification Approval Process Task	Responsibility
1	Initial proposal of CIF / UIF minor modification/s in consultation with the Course Leader and appropriate Head of Area if applicable. Seek confirmation of the level and advise the Head of Quality of the proposed modification.	Course Leader / Unit Leader
2	The timeline, required modification approval documentation and process requirements is confirmed with the Course / Unit Leader.	Head of Quality
3	Seek agreement of the proposed modification in principle with the relevant Course Team and Head of Area (if applicable). (Confirmation of approval in principle should be recorded in the minutes of the Course Team meeting.)	Course Leader / Unit Leader
4	Consultation with finance, learning resources, student support, human resources and other departments as appropriate to consider resource implications of the modification/s. Produce / update a Costings Statement Form in liaison with the Finance Director if there are any resource implications. Seek approval of the Costings Statement Form for the proposed modification/s with the Senior Management Team (SMT) if applicable. Consultation of the proposed modification/s with the relevant External Examiner. Consultation of the proposed modification/s with the relevant PSRB if applicable. Consultation of the proposed modification/s with students who would be affected by the modification/s and others as considered relevant.	Course Leader / Unit Leader
5	Completion and submission of the required modification approval documentation to the Chair of the Course Team for peer-review and to recommend approval of the proposed modification/s by the relevant Course Team.	Course / Unit Leader

6	Peer-review and recommendation of approval of the proposed modification/s to the relevant Course Team. (Confirmation of peer-review and approval recommendation should be recorded in the minutes of the Course Team meeting.)	Relevant Course Team
	Sign off of the Minor Modification Form by Course Team Chair. Agreement of proposed modification recorded in Course Team minutes. If no revisions to the required modification approval documentation are recommended by the Course Team the approval process may proceed directly to Stage No. 10. If revisions are required the approval process should proceed to Stage No. 7.	Chair of the Relevant Course Team
7	Revision of the required modification approval documentation as recommended by the Course Team.	Course / Unit Leader
8	Submission of the revised required modification approval documentation to the Chair of the Course Team for final approval and sign off.	Course / Unit Leader
9	Approval of the revised required modification approval documentation as recommended by the Course Team. Sign off of the revised Minor Modification Form on behalf of the Course Team.	Chair of the Relevant Course Team
10	Submission of the Course Team approved required modification approval documentation to the relevant Portfolio Board for agreement and recommendation of approval by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.	Course / Unit Leader
11	Review and approval of the Course Team approved required modification approval documentation. (Confirmation of approval should be recorded in the minutes of the Portfolio Board meeting.)	Relevant Portfolio Board
	Sign off of the Minor Modification Form and completion of the “Modifications” section of the CIF / UIF. If no revisions to the required modification approval documentation are recommended the process may proceed directly to Stage No. 14c. If revisions are required the process should proceed to Stage No. 12.	Chair of the Relevant Portfolio Board

12	Revision of the required modification approval documentation as recommended by the Portfolio Board.	Course / Unit Leader
13	Submission of the revised required modification approval documentation to the Chair of the Portfolio Board for final agreement and sign off.	Course / Unit Leader
14	Formal approval of the revised required modification approval documentation as recommended by the Portfolio Board. Minor Modification Form signed off and completion of the "Modifications" section of the CIF / UIF on behalf of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. Approval of proposed modification recorded in Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee minutes. Submission of the approved and signed modification documentation to the Head of Quality.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
15	Circulation of the approved modified CIF / UIF to the Couse and Unit Leader, relevant Head of Area if applicable, Core Documentation Holder, Recruitment, Marketing and Admissions Team and the Academic Registry.	Head of Quality
16	Relevant staff and students are informed of the outcome of the minor modifications approval process.	Course / Unit Leader
	The modified CIF / UIF is uploaded to the UCO's website and online learning environment as appropriate replacing the outdated version in line with when the modification is to be implemented.	Course / Unit Leader in consultation with relevant staff (e.g. Marketing and Recruitment and Admissions staff)
	Prospective students are informed of the course / unit change as appropriate.	Admissions Team
	The UCO's Information and Assessment Management System is updated as appropriate.	Academic Registry Staff
	The approved modifications are reflected in the Course Handbooks as appropriate and submitted to the Head of Quality and Core Documentation Holder.	Course / Unit Leader
	The approved modified CIF / UIF and Course and Unit Handbook are stored as Core Documents.	Core Documentation Holder
	The Core Documentation Register is updated to record the modification.	Core Documentation Holder

17	The Quality Assurance Committee and Academic Council are informed of the outcome of the minor modification approval proposal and the conclusion of the approval process.	Head of Quality
18	The outcome and conclusion of the minor modification approval process are noted and documented in meeting minutes.	Quality Assurance Committee & Academic Council

4.29 Major Modification Process

4.29.1 The Major Modification Process is shown in Diagram 4.6.

4.29.2 Major modifications must be agreed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and formally approved by the Academic Council before they are implemented.

4.29.3 Modifications to sections of the CIF and / or UIF that normally qualify as a Major Modification are shown in Table 4.15 below.

4.29.4 In addition modifications to the following are also identified as 'major' modifications, but are not recorded on the CIF or UIF.

a) Closure or suspension of a course.

b) Changing a course or unit title.

c) Adding or changing a cohort start-date.

d) Adding or changing the mode of delivery.

e) Adding or changing the delivery location.

f) Adding or altering an intermediate qualification of the course.

g) Any other change not recorded on the CIF or UIF that is considered a major modification further to consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

4.29.5 The Head of Quality should be consulted to confirm whether the proposed course or unit modification qualifies as a major modification.

4.29.6 A significant number of proposed major modifications in combination may need to be considered through the periodic course review process contained in AQF Section 6. In such instances advice should be sought from the Head of Quality at an early stage.

Table 4.15: Modifications to sections of the CIF and / or UIF that normally qualify as a Major Modification

CIF / UIF	Section
CIF	Course Details
	Course Entry Requirements
	Course Aims, Learning Outcomes, Regulations & Structure
UIF	Unit Details

A) Major Modifications Required Approval Documentation

4.29.7 Major modifications may only be approved further to the completion and submission of the approval documentation detailed in Table 4.16.

TABLE 4.16: MAJOR MODIFICATION APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS

Document	Guidance
A Microsoft Word version of the CIF / UIF displaying the proposed modifications using "Track Changes".	Word Versions of CIFs / UIFs are available from the Core Documentation Holder.
A Major Modification Form[22] completed as appropriate for the proposed change.	Advice on completing this form may be sought from the Head of Quality.
Evidence of internal and external consultations undertaken.	This should include email communications and minutes of meetings where the proposed change/s have been discussed and agreed.

4.29.8 Responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of course and unit modification approval documentation production rests with the Course Team and is overseen by the Course Leader unless otherwise specified.

4.29.9 The relevant Course Leader is responsible for ensuring that the approval documentation is completed prior to submitting the proposed administrative modification to the Head of Quality for approval.

4.29.10 Version control processes should be used when completing course and unit modification approval documentation as documented in the UCO's Core Documentation Policy and Version Control Policy[13]. This includes the use of footers to show the date and version of the document.

B) MAJOR MODIFICATION APPROVAL PROCESS

4.29.11 Planned major modifications may normally be made by Course and Unit Leaders at three points in the academic year (normally November, March and June) to coincide with Academic Council meetings at which major modifications are approved

4.29.12 In all cases, major modifications must be made with the agreement of the relevant Course Leader and appropriate Head of Area in question as outlined in Table 4.17.

4.29.13 All major modifications require peer-review and external and internal consultation to provide assurance of the maintenance of academic quality and standards prior to their final approval, and should follow the process shown in Diagram 4.6.

4.29.14 Major modification approval documentation should be submitted electronically and be signed off by the appropriate staff at each stage of the approval process.

4.29.15 Planned major modifications are agreed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and then recommended to the Academic Council for approval following their review of the required approval documentation (Table 4.16), to:

a) Confirm that the proposed modification/s requiring approval are appropriate;

b) Confirm that adequate consultation has been undertaken for the proposed modification/s;

c) Consider the impact of previous major changes and provide confirmation that the modification and associated modifications to date (since initial approval or re-approval) do not warrant further action, e.g. course periodic review.

[13] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

d) Arrange for revised documentation to be provided to the Quality Team for operational implementation.

4.29.16 Immediate major modifications, for example those recommended by an External Examiner or in response to operational issues, must in all cases be approved by the Academic Council through the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) who will recommend appropriate action.

C) Major Modification Post Approval

4.29.17 Following approval of the major modification the Course and Unit Leader is responsible for informing relevant students and staff of the approved modified outcome, ensuring that Course Handbooks are updated to reflect the modification/s and ensuring that marketing and modified course documentation is updated and published as appropriate.

4.29.18 The Core Documentation Holder is responsible for storing the approved modified documentation and noting the modification on the Core Documentation Register.

4.29.19 The Head of Quality shall ensure that the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee are informed of the outcome of major modifications to course and units at the next available meetings.

D) Major Modification Approval Process Tasks & Responsibilities

4.29.20 Table 4.17 shows the tasks and responsibilities of the Major Modification process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently. Some of the stages may take place through electronic communication as appropriate.

Table 4.17: Major Modification Approval Process Tasks & Responsibilities

Stage No.	Major Modification Approval Process Task	Responsibility
1	Initial proposal of CIF / UIF major modification/s in consultation with the Course Leader and appropriate Head of Area if applicable. Seek confirmation of the level of modification from the Head of Quality. Advise the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality of the proposed major modification.	Course / Unit Leader
2	The timeline, required modification approval documentation and process requirements is confirmed with the Course / Unit Leader.	Head of Quality
3	Seek agreement of the proposed modification in principle with the relevant Course Team. (Confirmation of approval in principle should be recorded in the minutes of the Course Team meeting.)	Course / Unit Leader

4	Consultation with finance, learning resources, student support, human resources and other departments as appropriate to consider resource implications of the modification/s. Produce / update a Costings Statement Form in liaison with the Finance Director if there are any resource implications. Seek approval of the Costings Statement Form for the proposed modification/s with the Senior Management Team (SMT) if applicable. Consultation of the proposed modification/s with the relevant External Examiner. Consultation of the proposed modification/s with the relevant PSRB if applicable. Consultation of the proposed modification/s with students who would be affected by the modification/s and others as considered relevant.	Course / Unit Leader
5	Completion and submission of the required modification approval documentation to the Chair of the relevant Portfolio Board for peer-review and to recommend approval of the proposed modification/s by the relevant Portfolio Board.	Course / Unit Leader
6	Peer-review and recommendation of approval of the proposed modification/s to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. (Confirmation of peer-review and approval recommendation should be recorded in the minutes of the Portfolio Board meeting.)	Relevant Portfolio Board
	Sign off of the Major Modification Form. If no revisions to the required modification approval documentation are recommended by the Course Team the approval process may proceed directly to Stage No. 10. If revisions are required the approval process should proceed to Stage No. 7.	Chair of the Relevant Portfolio Board
7	Revision of the required modification approval documentation as recommended by the Portfolio Board.	Course / Unit Leader
8	Submission of the revised required modification approval documentation to the Chair of the Portfolio Board for final approval and sign off.	Course / Unit Leader
9	Approval of the revised required modification approval documentation as recommended by the Portfolio Board. Sign off of the revised Course & Unit Modifications Form on behalf of the Portfolio Board. Forward confirmation of approval of the revised modification approval documentation and notify the Course Leader that this will	Chair of the Relevant Portfolio Board

	be recommended for approval by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.	
10	Submission of the Portfolio Board approved required modification approval documentation to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee for review and to recommend approval of the proposed modification/s to the Academic Council.	Chair of the Relevant Portfolio Board
11	Review of the Portfolio Board approved required modification approval documentation to recommend approval of the proposed modification/s to the Academic Council (Confirmation of approval should be recorded in the minutes of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee meeting.)	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
	Sign off of the Major Modification Form and completion of the "Modifications" section of the CIF / UIF. If no revisions to the required modification approval documentation are recommended the process may proceed directly to Stage No. 15. If revisions are required the process should proceed to Stage No. 12.	Chair of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
12	Revision of the required modification approval documentation as recommended by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.	Chair of the Relevant Portfolio Board in consultation with the Course / Unit Leader
13	Submission of the revised required modification approval documentation to the Chair of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee for final approval and sign off.	Chair of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
14	Formal approval of the revised required modification approval documentation as recommended by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. Sign off of the Major Modification Form and completion of the "Modifications" section of the CIF / UIF on behalf of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.	Chair of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
15	Submission of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee approved required modification approval documentation to the Academic Council for formal approval.	Chair of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
16	Formal approval of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee approved required modification approval documentation. Approval of proposed modification recorded in Academic Council minutes.	Academic Council

	Sign off of the Major Modification Form and completion of the "Modifications" section of the CIF / UIF on behalf of the Academic Council. Submission of the approved and signed modification documentation to the Head of Quality.	Chair of the Academic Council
17	Circulation of the approved modified CIF / UIF to the Chair of the Portfolio Board, Couse and Unit Leader, relevant Head of Area if applicable, Core Documentation Holder, Recruitment, Marketing and Admissions Team and the Academic Registry.	Head of Quality
18	Relevant staff and students are informed of the outcome of the minor modifications approval process.	Course / Unit Leader
	The modified CIF / UIF is uploaded to the UCO's website and online learning environment as appropriate replacing the outdated version in line with when the modification is to be implemented.	Course / Unit Leader in consultation with relevant staff (e.g. Marketing, Recruitment, Admissions and Registry staff)
	Prospective students are informed of the change to the course as appropriate.	Admissions Team
	The UCO's Information and Assessment Management System is updated as appropriate.	Academic Registry Staff
	The approved modified CIF / UIF and modified Course Handbook are stored as Core Documents.	Core Documentation Holder
	The Core Documentation Register is updated to record the modification.	Core Documentation Holder
19	A Word Version of the Course Handbook is provided to the Course Leader with a request to make Track Changed amendments to reflect the approved modifications.	Core Documentation Holder
20	Track Changed amendments of the Course Handbook are made as appropriate. Submission of the amended Course Handbook to the Head of Quality and Core Documentation Holder.	Course / Unit Leader
21	Course Handbook amendments verified and accepted and submitted to the Core Documentation Holder.	Head of Quality
22	Verified Course Handbook provided to the Course Leader for publication to students.	Core Documentation Holder
23	Publication / uploading of verified Course Handbook to relevant students.	Course / Unit Leader
24	The Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee are informed of the outcome of the major	Head of Quality

	modification approval proposal and the conclusion of the approval process.	
25	The outcome and conclusion of the major modification approval process are noted and documented in meeting minutes.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee

4.30 Informing PSRB's of Course & Unit Modifications

4.30.1 It should be noted that in some circumstances (such as Recognised Qualification courses) the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) of such courses must be informed of any modifications to courses or units.

4.30.2 The General Osteopathic Council's Education Committee must be alerted regarding significant changes to osteopathic courses which have Recognised Qualification status. This may include, but is not limited to:

a) Substantial changes in finance

b) Substantial changes in management

c) Changes to the title of the qualification

d) Changes to the level of the qualification

e) Changes to franchise agreements

f) Changes to validation agreements

g) Changes to the length of the course and the mode of its delivery

h) Substantial changes in clinical provision

i) Changes in teaching personnel

j) Changes in assessment

k) Changes in student entry requirements

l) Changes in student numbers (an increase or decline of 20 per cent or more in the number of students admitted to the course relative to the previous academic year should be reported)

m) Changes in patient numbers passing through the student clinic (an increase or decline of 20 per cent in the number of patients passing through the clinic relative to the previous academic year should be reported)

n) Changes in teaching accommodation

o) Changes in IT, library and other learning resource provision.

4.30.3 If any of these apply, then the Head of Quality should be contacted to alert the General Osteopathic Council (see also AQF Section 4.19: Recognised Qualification Approval: General Osteopathic Council/ Quality Assurance Agency for further information).

4.31 Modifying Course Handbooks

4.31.1 Course Handbooks are considered as approved course documentation. Subsequently, these documents should be reviewed annually, as outlined in AQF Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting, to ensure that they contain accurate and up to date information for publication.

4.31.2 Any amendments identified further to the annual review should be made in line with the UCO's Developing and Reviewing UCO Policies, Procedures and Regulations Procedure[14], to ensure that an appropriate level of scrutiny and approval of the proposed modifications is undertaken.

4.31.3 Following approval of modifications to courses and units, Course Handbooks should be modified in line with the course and unit modification process described above.

PART 4: CLOSING A COURSE OR PARTNERSHIP

4.32 CLOSING A COURSE

4.32.1 The UCO may decide to withdraw a course from its portfolio of provision for several reasons, including:

a) An outcome of course monitoring or review;

b) Changes in patterns of demand from prospective students;

c) Changes in staffing;

d) Strategic realignment of the UCO's portfolio of provision;

e) A major organisation change;

f) Circumstances beyond the UCO's control.

4.32.2 When closing a course, due consideration must be given to students currently enrolled on the course, and the protection of their student experience. Wherever possible, students will normally be given the opportunity to complete their course within the standard time frame, with access to all learning opportunities and resources available.

4.32.3 Students will normally be informed at the earliest opportunity if their course is to be withdrawn from the UCO's portfolio of provision, and discussions will be held with students to consider the implications.

4.32.4 The process for closing a course follows that for a major modification and should be made using the Major Modification Form.

4.32.5 The effect on partners, delivery organisations, and support providers with whom they work to offer the course, and on the students studying with them, must be considered, and these stakeholders should be informed and consulted about the closure.

4.32.6 As with other major changes, students who would be affected by the modification(s) must be consulted.

4.32.7 Approval for the modification ultimately rests with the Principal on behalf of Academic Council and Senior Management Team.

4.32.8 The Head of Quality in liaison with admissions and marketing teams is responsible for ensuring that course information is updated appropriately on records systems, promotional material, and websites by appropriate staff.

4.33 CLOSING A PARTNERSHIP

4.33.1 Should a decision be made to terminate a partnership between the UCO and another institution, the Principal of that institution must be notified at the earliest opportunity by the UCO's Vice-Chancellor.

4.33.2 An exit strategy will be developed (led by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)) following the contract clause regarding termination and the reasons for the termination. This will aim to ensure a smooth departure from the relationship, whilst preserving the integrity and continuation of students' education.

4.33.3 This should also be agreed by the UCO's Academic Council, Senior Management Team, UCO's Board of Directors and by the main decision-making committee of the partner institution.

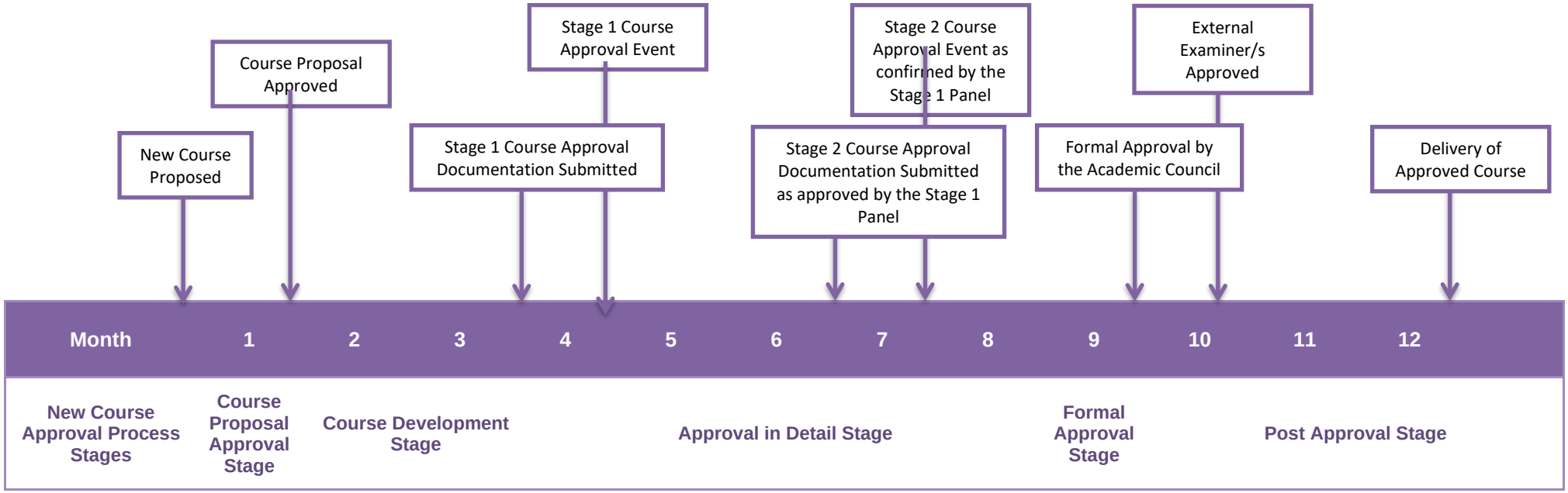
4.33.4 See AQF Section 16: Collaborative Activity for further details.

[14] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

AQF04: FORMS & TEMPLATES

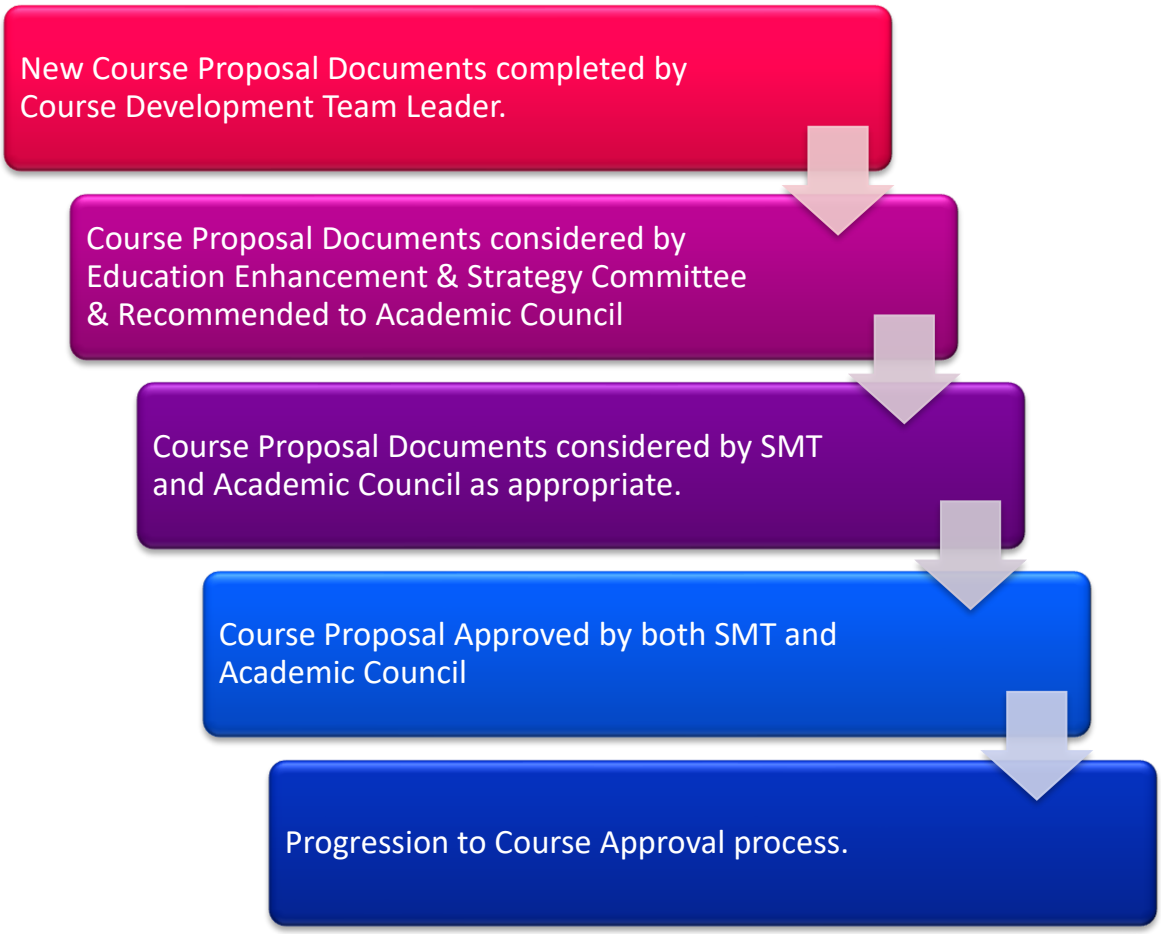
Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
AQF04_01a	New Course Proposal Form
AQF04_01b	New Course Proposal Business Case Form
AQF04_02	New Course Costings Form
AQF04_03	Course Information Form
AQF04_04	Unit Information Form
AQF04_05	Course Handbook Template
AQF04_06	Unit Handbook Template
AQF04_07	Academic Rationale Template
AQF04_08	External Benchmark Mapping Template
AQF04_09	Staff CV's Coversheet
AQF04_10	New Course Approval External Panel Member Nomination Form
AQF04_11	Course Approval Outcome Report Template
AQF04_12	Course Approval Outcome Response Form
AQF04_13	Course Approval Confirmation Form
AQF04_13a	Agreed Variation to Course Approval Process Form
AQF04_14	Course & Unit Administrative Modification Form
AQF04_15	Course & Unit Minor Modification Form
AQF04_16	Course & Unit Major Modification Form
AQF04_17	External Panel Member Guidance: Course Approvals
AQF04_18	External Student Member Guidance: Course Approvals
AQF04_19	Variance to Academic Regulations Forms

DIAGRAM 4.1: TYPICAL TIMELINES FOR THE APPROVAL OF NEW COURSES



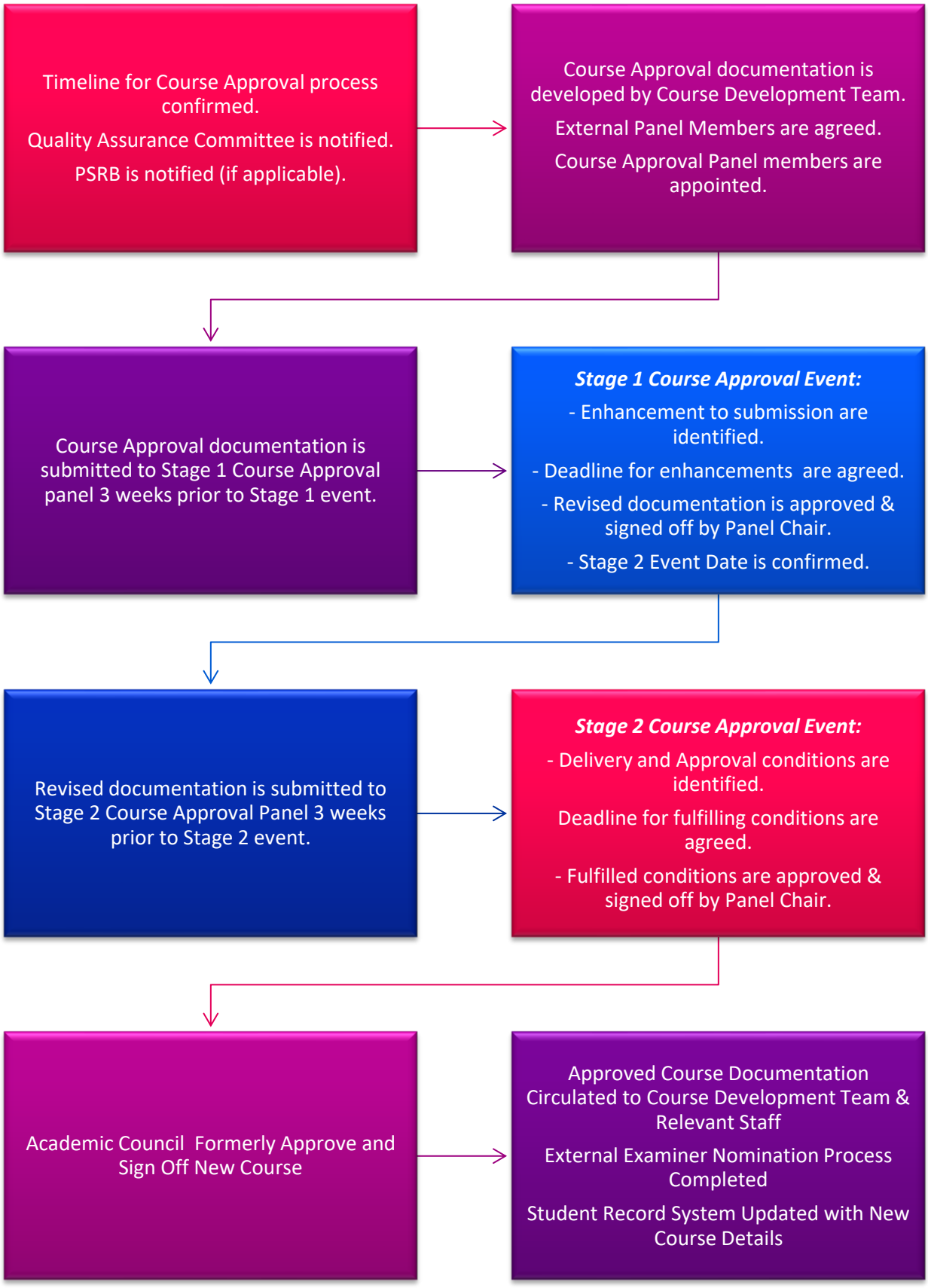
(*Return to Section 4.10: Timescales of the Course Approval Process*)

DIAGRAM 4.2: APPROVAL OF NEW COURSE PROPOSALS PROCESS



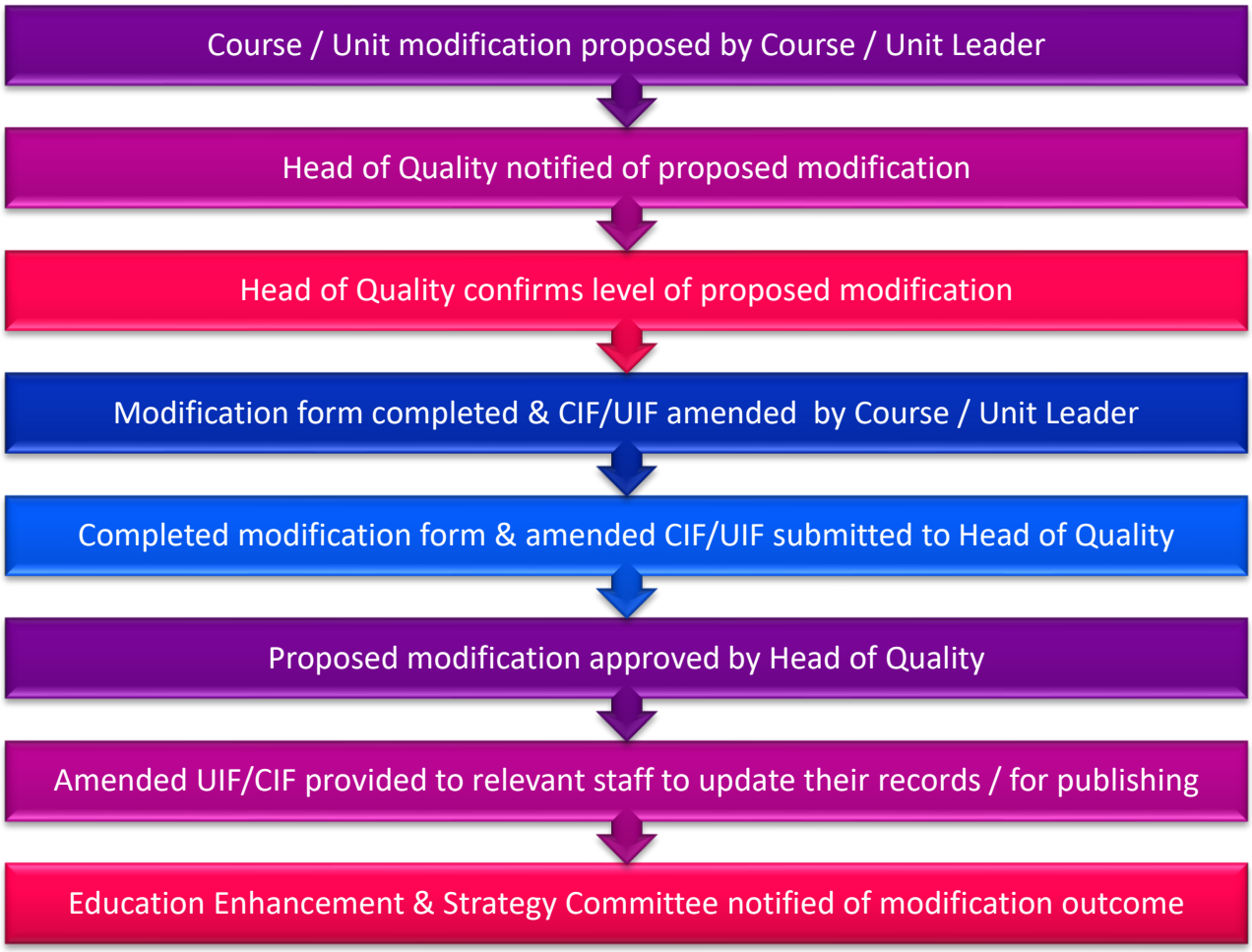
(*RETURN TO SECTION 4.12: APPROVAL OF THE NEW COURSE PROPOSAL*)

DIAGRAM 4.3: THE APPROVAL OF NEW COURSES PROCESS



(*Return to Section 4.13: Approval of the New Course*)

DIAGRAM 4.4: THE ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION PROCESS

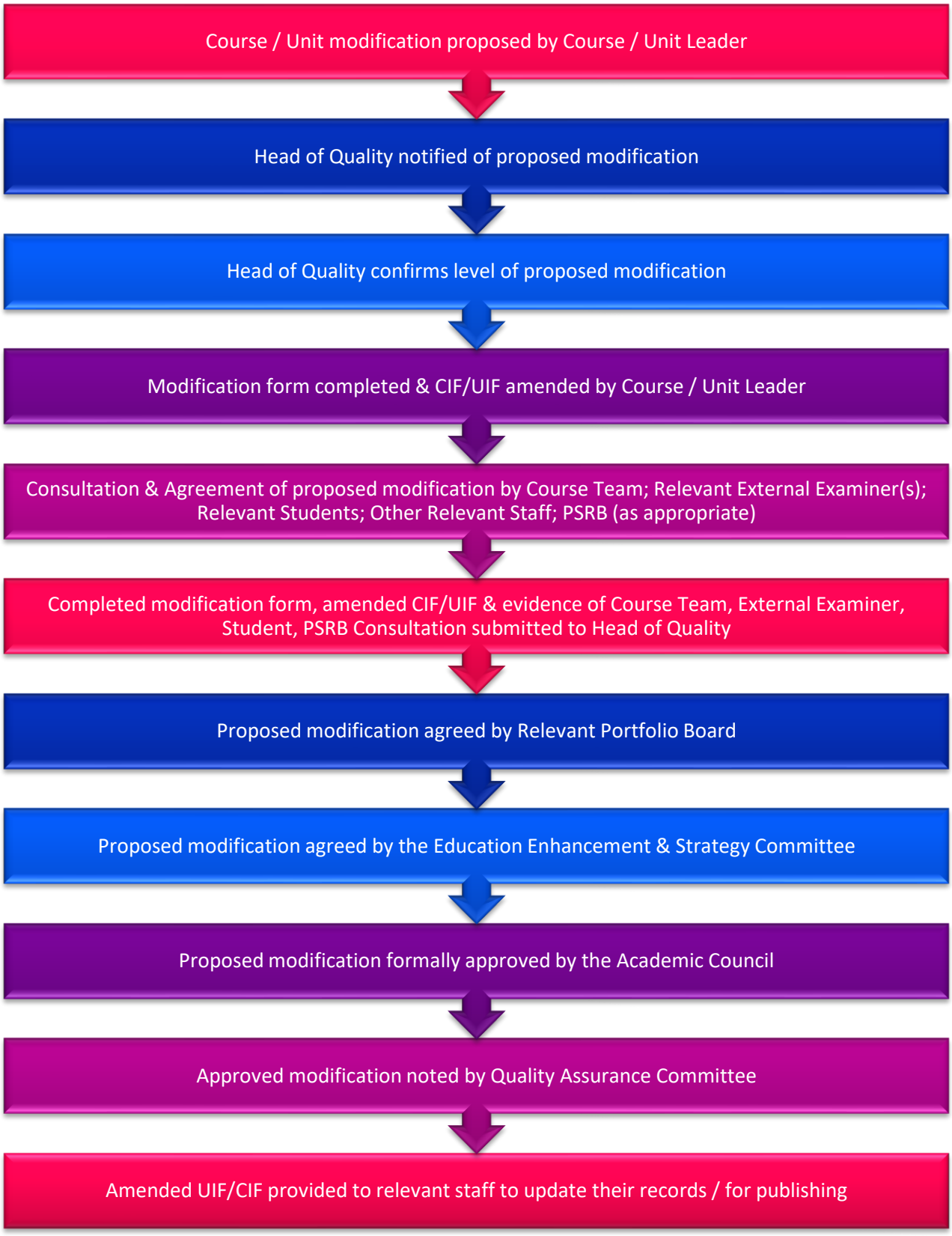


(*Return to Section 4.27: Administrative Modification Process*)

DIAGRAM 4.5: THE MINOR MODIFICATION PROCESS

(*Return to Section 4.28: Minor Modification Process*)

DIAGRAM 4.6: THE MAJOR MODIFICATION PROCESS



(*Return to Section 4.29: Major Modification Process*)

AQF04 ENDNOTES

[1] AQF04_01a_New_Course_Proposal_Approval_Form

[2] AQF04_01b_New_Course_Proposal_Business_Case_Form

[3] AQF04_02_Course_Costings_Form

[4] AQF04_03_Course_Information_Form

[5] AQF04_04_Unit_Information_Form

[6] AQF04_05_Course_Handbook_Template

[7] AQF04_07_Course_Approval_Academic_Rationale_Template

[8] AQF04_08_External_Benchmark_Mapping_Template

[9] AQF04_10_Staff_CV_Coversheet_Recruitment_Plan

[10] AQF04_17 & AQF04_18 Guidance for External & Student Course Approval Panel Members

[11] AQF04_11_Course_Approval_Outcome_Report_Form

[12] AQF04_12_Course_Approval_Outcome_Response_Form

[13] AQF04_11_ Course_Approval_External_Panel_Member_Nomination_Form

[14] AQF04_12_Course_Approval_Outcome_Response_Form

[15] AQF04_11_Course_Approval_Outcome_Report_Form

[16] AQF04_12_Course_Approval_Outcome_Response_Form

[17] AQF04_13_Course_Approval_Confirmation_Form

[18] AQF04_13a Variation to Course Approval Process Form

[19] AQF04_01a_New_Course_Proposal_Approval_Form

[20] AQF04_14_Administrative_Course_Unit_Modification_Form

[21] AQF04_15_Minor_Course_Unit_Modification_Form

[22] AQF04_16_Major_Course_Unit_Modification_Form

Academic Quality Framework

Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 05: Annual Monitoring & Reporting

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to Course Leaders, Heads of Area, Unit Leaders and members of relevant UCO Committees including student representatives.

Version number	***Dates produced and approved (include committee)***	***Reason for production/ revision***	***Author***	***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.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\0 Head of Quality – AQF 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.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Aug 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*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sep 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Annual Review: Administrative Amendments to update role titles, agency titles and web links & Diagrams for clarity.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2019 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative amendments to update staff role titles, weblinks & footnotes and to reflect current practice.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF 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)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

Section 5: Annual Reporting & Monitoring

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5. Annual Monitoring & Reporting

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 In addition to Course and Unit Approval and Modifications (AQF Section 4) and Periodic Review (AQF Section 6), Annual Monitoring and Reporting forms part of the UCO's cycle of assuring and enhancing the academic standards and quality of its courses and units.

5.1.2 The UCO's Annual Monitoring and Reporting processes are agreed by the Academic Counciland have been designed to align to the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Monitoring and Evaluation[1].

5.1.3 At the UCO, monitoring activity is overseen by the Quality Assurance Committee on behalf of the Academic Council, co-ordinated by the Head of Quality, and undertaken by members of Course Teams, Heads of UCO Departments, and External Examiners, and involves input from a range of staff and students.

5.1.4 A range of monitoring activity is undertaken both on an ongoing basis and at specific time points to ensure that courses and units remain current and effective.

5.1.5 Ongoing monitoring includes:

a) Course Teams' reflection on good practice and areas for development throughout the year, which are captured in Course Team minutes and shared between related portfolios of courses, helping to ensure that there is coherence in planning and delivery across related courses.

b) Termly Course Team and Portfolio Board meetings to monitor the operation of individual courses and provision throughout the year, enabling these committees to respond to any course-related issues efficiently.

c) Termly Student and Staff Liaison Consultation Group meetings to monitor the Student Experience throughout the year and to respond to student-led issues efficiently.

d) Monitoring activity undertaken at specific time points includes annual monitoring and reporting. This involves reflection on progress over the past year and identification of opportunities for enhancement to be implemented and tracked through the coming year.

5.1.6 Annual monitoring and reporting activities include:

a) The production of Unit and Course Annual Reports.

b) The production of collaborative partner Institutional Annual Reports.

c) The production of Operational Annual Reports.

d) The annual review of course documentation and information.

e) The production of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) Annual Reports.

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/monitoring-and-evaluation

f) The production of External Examiner Annual Reports.

g) Dissemination of Student Evaluation Questionnaire results and feedback.

5.1.7 As noted above, the UCO undertakes monitoring activities and produces annual reports as required by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs). Currently the UCO's pre-registration Recognised Qualification osteopathic provision adheres to the annual reporting requirements of its PSRB, the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC).

5.1.8 The UCO's Annual Monitoring and Reporting Cycle in Diagram 5.1 a shows the UCO's current monitoring and reporting activities.

5.2 Principles & Objectives of Annual Monitoring and Reporting

A) Principles of Annual Monitoring & Reporting

5.2.1 The annual monitoring and reporting processes regarding provision validated by the UCO are confirmed at Course Approval and Periodic Review as appropriate.

5.2.2 The Principles of annual monitoring and reporting are:

a) To establish an effective and efficient process through which the UCO may review and monitor its provision in order to maintain quality and standards.

b) To ensure that stakeholders are involved in and contribute to the production of annual reports, to ensure that the UCO's provision is monitored and reported on as appropriate.

c) To produce a sound and evidence-based report upon which teaching faculty, at both a unit and course level, may base enhancements to the quality and operational effectiveness of the UCO's provision and the student learning experience.

B) Objectives of Annual Monitoring & Reporting

5.2.3 The objectives of the annual monitoring and reporting are:

a) To provide an evidence base for teaching faculty to improve and enhance the learning experience of students, through action at unit, course and portfolio board level.

b) To confirm (in conjunction with External Examiner Annual Reports) that the quality and academic standards of provision have been maintained in accordance with all external and internal benchmarks and requirements.

c) To collect longitudinal data and information on which basis trends and changes relevant to the longer-term quality and sustainability of provision can be assessed (including through periodic review) and actioned appropriately.

5.3 Types of Annual Report Produced

A) Unit & Course Annual Reports

5.3.1 An Annual Report is produced for each unit and course leading to an award of the UCO, using an agreed template to ensure that appropriate and common areas across all units and courses are considered, reviewed and monitored. The use of these templates also enables comparisons across units and courses to be made in addition to longitudinal comparisons with previous years' reports.

5.3.2 Unit Annual Reports (UARs)[1] and Course Annual Reports (CARs)[2] draw on a range of sources of evidence, including:

- Student progression and completion data.
- Minutes of Course Team and Student and Staff Liaison Consultation Group meetings.
- External Examiner Annual Reports and feedback.
- Outcomes of student feedback questionnaires.

5.3.3 Within each UAR and CAR, strengths and weaknesses are identified, action plans from the preceding year are updated, and an action plan for the forthcoming academic year is developed.

B) Institutional Annual Reports

5.3.4 Institutional Annual Reports (IARs)[3] are produced by collaborative partner institutions who deliver courses that lead to an award of the UCO.

5.3.5 Collaborative partner institutions normally produce an IAR in addition to UARs and CARs to enable them to report on their institutional activities of the preceding year and plans for the forthcoming year, to assure the UCO that partner institution quality and standards are being maintained.

5.3.6 IARs draw on information and evidence provided in UARs and CARs (including External Examiner Annual Reports, student progression data, student feedback and other relevant and appropriate reference points), which are appended to the IAR to provide the UCO with oversight of the partner institution's annual monitoring and reporting processes as agreed at Course and / or Institutional Approval in line with AQF Section 16: Collaborative Activity.

C) Operational Annual Reports

5.3.7 In addition to the annual monitoring and reporting of units, courses, and partner institutions, the UCO also requires each department (as determined by the Senior Management Team) of the UCO that provides services and facilities for students to produce an annual report to ensure that the quality and standards provided by these areas are maintained and to enhance the student experience as appropriate.

5.3.8 Operational Annual Reports (OARs)[4] draw on evidence, including student questionnaire feedback, relevant external reference points and operational performance to reflect on their effectiveness during the preceding year, and to produce an action plan for enhancement for the forthcoming year.

5.3.9 OARs are considered by the Senior Management Team and Academic Council as appropriate.

D) National Student Survey (NSS) Annual Report

5.3.10 All eligible final year undergraduate students are invited to complete the National Student Survey (NSS) administered by Ipsos MORI, an independent market research company.

5.3.11 The NSS is intended to give final year students an opportunity to report back on their student experience.

5.3.12 NSS results are published on the Unistats website[2], the official website for comparing UK higher education course data, which helps prospective students choose an appropriate course and university.

5.3.13 NSS results are also carefully analysed and reviewed in conjunction with UCO Student Evaluation Questionnaire results, and an NSS Annual Report[5] is produced by the relevant Course Leader of each course surveyed. This includes an action plan in response to NSS feedback.

5.3.14 The NSS Annual Report is agreed by the Academic Council and considered by the Senior Management Team and Board of Directors as appropriate. It is also considered and monitored by the Quality Assurance Committee, Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee, and Student-Staff Liaison and Consultation Groups.

5.3.15 The action plan undergoes a mid-point review midway through the year to review progress and end end-point review to monitor completion of action plan tasks.

E) External Examiner Annual Reports

5.3.16 External Examiners Annual Reports (EEARs) are produced by External Examiners in line with AQF Section 11 (External Examining).

5.3.17 EEARs are critical for ensuring that the UCO maintains threshold academic standards, and for assuring and enhancing quality.

5.3.18 Course Leaders, in consultation with Heads of Areas, produce a response to each EEAR which, having been approved by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee is provided to the External Examiner concerned, to acknowledge their report and to communicate actions taken in response to recommendations made within the report.

5.3.19 EEARs and EEAR responses are carefully considered by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), the UCO's Quality Assurance Committee, Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee, and the Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups to ensure that appropriate actions are made in response to recommendations, and to identify and disseminate good practice.

5.3.20 EEARs are reviewed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and reported on collectively through the Undergraduate and Postgraduate External Examiner Annual Synthesis Reports, which are considered and approved at an organizational level by the Academic Council.

5.4 Responsibilities for Developing Annual Reports

5.4.1 The responsibilities for developing and producing ARs are outlined below.

A) Unit Annual Reports (UARs)

5.4.2 Unit Leaders (or Course Leaders where no Unit Leaders are allocated) are responsible for developing and producing UARs using the UAR template[6] in consultation with unit teaching staff, Course Leaders, and Heads of Area as appropriate.

[2] https://unistats.ac.uk/

5.4.3 One UAR should be completed for each unit.

5.4.4 UARs should be produced within the agreed timescale as outlined in the Timeline for Unit Annual Report Completion in Diagram 5.1.

5.4.5 UARs should draw on External Examiner Annual Reports, student progression data, student feedback, and other relevant and appropriate reference points as noted in the guidance contained within the UAR template.

5.4.6 UARs should be appended to CARs.

5.4.7 Unit Leaders are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of UARs, which should be developed in line with the UCO's Version Control Policy and Core Documentation Management Policy and Procedure[3]. This includes using tracked changes to identify amendments and including footers to show the date and version number of the document.

5.4.8 Unit Annual Reports are agreed by Course Teams and then recommended for approval by the relevant Portfolio Board.

B) Course Annual Reports (CARs)

5.4.9 Course Leaders are responsible for developing and producing CARs using the CAR template[7], in consultation with Unit Leaders and Heads of Area as appropriate.

5.4.10 One CAR should be produced for each course.

5.4.11 CARs should be produced within the agreed timescale as outlined in the Annual Monitoring and Reporting Cycle (Diagram 5.2).

5.4.12 CARs should draw on UAR's, External Examiner Annual Reports, student progression data, student feedback, and other relevant and appropriate reference points.

5.4.13 Course Leaders are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of CARs, which should be developed in line with the UCO's Version Control Policy and Core Documentation Management Policy and Procedure[4]. This includes using tracked changes to identify amendments and including footers to show the date and version number of the document.

5.4.14 Course Annual Reports are agreed by Course Teams and then recommended for agreement by a Joint Portfolio Board where all Course Annual Reports from all portfolios (i.e. undergraduate and postgraduate courses) are considered together for peer review and recommendations for enhancement. The Joint Portfolio Board recommends the peer-reviewed reports to the EESC for approval.

5.4.15 The EESC approves Course Annual Reports and monitors progress of Course Annual Report Action Plans on behalf of the Academic Council.

C) Institutional Annual Reports (IARs)

5.4.16 The equivalent of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) of partner institutions is responsible for producing IARs using the IAR template[8] in consultation with Unit and Course Leaders (or their equivalents).

[3] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[4] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

5.4.17 One IAR should be produced for each partner institution delivering one or more courses that lead to an award of the UCO.

5.4.18 IARs should draw on the information provided in UARs and CARs in addition to other relevant and appropriate reference points, to provide a comprehensive and informative annual report on institutional activities over the past year and plans for the forthcoming year.

5.4.19 UARs, CARs and relevant External Examiner Annual Reports should be appended to IARs.

5.4.20 The equivalent of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) of the partner institution is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of IARs, which should be developed in line with the UCO's Version Control Policy and Core Documentation Management Policy and Procedure. This includes using tracked changes to identify amendments and including footers to show the date and version number of the document.

D) Operational Annual Reports (OARs)

5.4.21 The head of each department (as determined by the Senior Management Team) is responsible for producing OARs using the OAR template[9] in consultation with their department staff and others as appropriate.

5.4.22 One OAR should be produced for each department, as determined by the Senior Management Team.

5.4.23 OARs should draw on relevant evidence, including student feedback questionnaire results.

5.4.24 Heads of departments are responsible for the accuracy and completeness of OARs, which should be developed in line with the UCO's Version Control Policy and Core Documentation Management Policy and Procedure. This includes using tracked changes to identify amendments and including footers to show the date and version number of the document.

5.4.25 OARs are considered and approved by the Senior Management Team and may be considered by the Academic Council as appropriate.

E) National Student Survey Annual Report (NSSAR)

5.4.26 The relevant Course Leader is responsible for producing an annual report regarding NSS results, using the NSSAR template[10], in consultation with academic and non-academic staff as appropriate.

5.4.27 One NSS Annual Report should be produced for each course surveyed.

5.4.28 The NSSAR is considered by relevant Course Teams to inform CARs and is considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and the Quality Assurance Committee to make recommendations for enhancements as appropriate.

5.4.29 The NSSAR is then considered and approved by the Academic Council (for academic matters) and the Senior Management Team (for institutional matters). It is also presented to the Board of Directors for academic oversight.

F) External Examiner Annual Reports (EEARs)

5.4.30 External Examiners are responsible for producing EEARs, using the EEAR template[11], to cover the provision they are contracted to examine within the timeline stipulated in the AQF Section 11 (External Examining) and / or their contract.

5.4.31 One EEAR is required to be produced per External Examiner for each course that they are contracted to examine in line with AQF Section 11: External Examining for further information.

5.4.32 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) is responsible for reviewing and producing annual Undergraduate and Postgraduate External Examiner Synthesis Reports which are agreed by the EESC and approved by the Academic Council.

5.4.33 It is the responsibility of the Quality Assurance Committee to note receipt of EEARs and for the EESC to approve External Examiner Responses.

5.5 Annual Report Development & Approval Process

5.5.1 The development and approval process for ARs that applies to all taught degree provision at the UCO and partner institutions delivering courses that lead to an award of the UCO is provided in Diagram 5.3.

5.5.2 Guidance for developing ARs is provided within report templates to ensure a consistent approach to report production.

5.5.3 Authors of reports are recommended to liaise with other staff members when developing ARs, to avoid duplication and ensure that actions are appropriate and achievable.

5.5.4 Table 5.1 shows the development and approval stages, normal completion dates, tasks and responsibilities for developing and approving ARs. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

5.5.5 The Quality Assurance Committee and Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee monitor the completion of the following stages via update reports from the Head of Quality.

Table 5.1: Annual Report Development & Approval Stages, Tasks & Responsibilities

Stage No.	Completion Date	Annual Report (AR) Development Task	Responsibility
1	Jun / Jul	Circulation of AR templates to those responsible for developing ARs with timeline for completion. Dissemination of student feedback questionnaire results to Unit and Course Leaders, Heads of Areas & Departments as appropriate.	Head of Quality
2	End of July	Course Team Annual Review meetings take place where requirements for AR development is noted.	Course Leaders
		Undergraduate EEARs Produced.	External Examiners

3	Jul – Sep	Dissemination of Undergraduate EEARs to Unit and Course Leaders and Heads of Area as appropriate.	Head of Quality
		Dissemination of student progression data to Unit and Course Leaders and Heads of Area to produce Undergraduate EEAR Responses.	Academic Registrar
		UARs produced by Unit Leaders in consultation with unit teaching staff, Course Leaders and Heads of Areas as appropriate.	Unit Leaders
		OARs produced by Heads of Departments in consultation with Line Managers	Heads of Departments
4	Sep - Oct	CARs produced in consultation with Unit Leaders and Heads of Areas as appropriate.	Course Leaders
		Approval of Undergraduate EEAR responses and formal letters.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
5	Early Oct	Approved Undergraduate EEARs sent to External Examiners.	Head of Quality
		Course level peer review and approval of UARs and CARs. Course level review of EEARs.	Course Teams
		Student Consultation of CARs, OARs (as appropriate), NSSAR, EEARs.	Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups
6	Late Oct	Joint Portfolio Board peer review and agreement of CARs to recommend approval of this to the EESC.	Joint Portfolio Board
7	Oct - Nov	IARs produced and internally approved through approved committee system as agreed at Partner Approval.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (or equivalent) of Collaborative Partner Institution
8	Early Nov	Submission of IARs to the Head of Quality.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (or equivalent) of Collaborative Partner Institution
9	Mid Nov	Consideration of Joint Portfolio Board approved CARs and consideration of NSSAR and IARs recommending that these be approved by the Academic Council. Consideration and agreement of undergraduate EEARs and responses. Consideration and agreement of Undergraduate External Examiner Report Synthesis to recommend this for approval by the Academic Council.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
		Consideration and approval of OARs.	Senior Management Team

		Consideration and agreement of EEARs.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
10	End of Nov	Postgraduate EEARs produced.	External Examiners
11	Dec	Approval of CARs, IARs, Undergraduate EEAR Synthesis Report.	Academic Council
		Dissemination of Postgraduate EEARs to Unit and Course Leaders and Heads of Area as appropriate to produce responses.	Head of Quality
12	Mid Dec	Approval of Undergraduate EEAR responses and formal letters.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
		Approved Undergraduate EEARs sent to External Examiners.	Head of Quality
		Postgraduate Course Leaders update CARs in response to EEARs.	Postgraduate Course Leaders
13	Mar	Consideration and agreement of Postgraduate External Examiner Report Synthesis to recommend this for approval by the Academic Council.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
		Approval of Postgraduate External Examiner Report Synthesis.	Academic Council

5.6 Annual Report Monitoring Process

5.6.1 To review and update the progress of AR action plans, the UCO undertakes formal monitoring activities. These include mid-point (normally in February - April) and end-point (normally in September of the next academic year) reviews of action plans of all Annual Reports at appropriate committees, including the Academic Council and Senior Management Team as appropriate.

5.6.2 The purpose of the AR monitoring process is:

a) To enable AR owners to consider and include data that may not have been available at the time of report production.

b) To inform relevant staff and students of the progress of action plans.

c) To assure the Academic Council that actions are being completed and enhancements implemented.

5.6.3 Where concerns have been raised, for example regarding student performance or satisfaction of a particular unit, course, partner institution, or department, the AR owner will normally be required to complete an Annual Reporting Enhancement Plan[12] to respond specifically to the concerns in detail, enabling the UCO to assure that such concerns are monitored and addressed appropriately.

5.6.4 The Quality Assurance Committee on behalf of the Academic Council monitors the completion of AR monitoring activities.

5.6.5 Table 5.2 shows the stages, tasks and responsibilities of Annual Report monitoring activities.

TABLE 5.2: ANNUAL REPORT MONITORING STAGES, TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Stage No.	Completion Date	AR Monitoring Task	Responsibility
1	Feb / Mar	Mid-Point Review of UAR & CAR Action Plans.	Course Teams (including the equivalent at Collaborative Partner Institutions)
2	Feb / Mar	Mid-Point Review of IAR Action Plans to include updates made to CAR Action Plans and any student progression data and External Examiner Annual Reports not available during IAR production. Submission of mid-point reviewed IAR & CAR Action Plans to the UCO Head of Quality.	Collaborative Partner Institutions
3	Feb / Mar	Mid-Point Review of EEAR and EE Report Synthesis Action Plans. Mid-Point Review of IAR Action Plans.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
		Mid-Point Review of OAR Operational Plans	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee Quality Assurance Committee Research & Scholarship Strategy Committee Widening Participation & Admissions Strategy Group Senior Management Team
4	Mar	Noting of: Mid-Point Review of relevant OAR Operational Plans External Examiner Report Synthesis Action Plans Mid-Point Review of IAR Action Plans	Academic Council
5	Apr	Mid-Point Review of CAR Action Plans to include updates made to take account of student progression data and External Examiner Annual Reports not available during report production.	Joint Portfolio Board (including the equivalent at Collaborative Partner Institutions)
6	May	Noting of Mid-Point Review of CARs by Joint Portfolio Board	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
7	Sep	End-Point Review of UAR and CAR Action Plans.	Course Teams (including the equivalent at Collaborative Partner Institutions)

8	Sep	End-Point Review of IAR Action Plans. Submission of end-point reviewed IAR Action Plans to the Head of Quality.	Collaborative Partner Institutions
9	Sep	End-Point Review of EEAR & External Examiner Report Synthesis Action Plans. End-Point Review of CAR Action Plans. End-Point Review of IAR Action Plans.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
		End-Point review of OAR Action Plans.	Senior Management Team
10	Jun	Consideration and approval of all end-point reviewed AR action plans.	Academic Council (for academic matters) Senior Management Team (for institutional matters)

5.7 Dissemination of Annual Reports

5.7.1 The UCO disseminates approved ARs and the outcomes of monitoring mid-point reviews widely to staff, students, and External Examiners. This takes place through committees, the annual Staff Conference, and electronic circulation.

5.7.2 The responsibility for disseminating ARs rests with their authors in liaison with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor I (Education) and Head of Quality.

5.8 Annual Review of Course Documentation & Information

5.8.1 Included in the UCO's monitoring and reporting activities is the regular review of approved course documentation (i.e. Unit and Course Information Forms and Handbooks) and published course information (i.e. promotional materials, course brochures and website and intranet content), to ensure that these reflect up to date and accurate data.

5.8.2 The review of course documentation and information is normally undertaken annually in May / June, by allocated staff as identified in Table 5.3.

5.8.3 The processes that should be followed for amending approved course documentation and information are also shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Annual Review of Approved Course Documentation & Information

Documentation / Information to be Reviewed	**Responsibility for the Review**	**Amendment Process**
Course Information Form (CIFs)	Course Leaders	Couse and Unit Modification process outlined in AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modifications.
Unit Information Forms (UIFs)	Unit Leaders	Couse and Unit Modification process outlined in AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modifications.

Course Handbooks	Course Leaders	In line with the Developing and Reviewing UCO Policies, Procedures and Regulations Procedure[5].
UCO Portal and Student Portal content	Head of Quality in liaison with relevant Heads of Departments and staff	In line with the Developing and Reviewing UCO Policies, Procedures and Regulations Procedure[6].
Course information published on the UCO's website	Head of Quality in liaison with relevant staff	In line with the Developing and Reviewing UCO Policies, Procedures and Regulations Procedure[7] and Competition & Marketing Authority advice and guidance[8].
Promotional Material	Head of Marketing & Communications in liaison with Course Leaders and other relevant staff	In line with the Developing and Reviewing UCO Policies, Procedures and Regulations Procedure.

5.9 Annual Monitoring and Reporting to Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies

A) Introduction

5.9.1 In addition to annual monitoring and reporting of UCO Awards as detailed in this section of the Academic Quality Framework, the UCO also produces annual reports as required by Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs).

5.9.2 Currently the UCO's pre-registration Recognised Qualification provision adheres to the annual reporting requirements of the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC)[9].

B) Annual Monitoring and Reporting to the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC)

5.9.3 The GOsC requires osteopathic education institutions providing pre-registration Registered Qualification courses to complete an annual report.

5.9.4 The purposes of the Recognised Qualification Annual Report (RQAR) to the GOsC are:

a) To provide assurances to the GOsC, pursuant to its statutory responsibilities, about the health of osteopathic education courses with Recognised Qualification (RQ) status and their providers.

[5] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[6] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[7] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[8] https://www.gov.uk/government/news/cma-advises-universities-and-students-on-consumer-law
[9] https://www.osteopathy.org.uk/home/

b) To identify examples of good practice in osteopathic education for dissemination across the sector.

5.9.5 The UCO submits the RQAR to the GOsC, who then submits it for analysis by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). The QAA produces an analysis report, which is then considered by the GOsC's Education and Registration Standards Committee (ERSC).

5.9.6 The RQAR is produced by completing a form provided by the GOsC annually. The form includes sections that monitor the health of the UCO and identifies areas of good practice.

5.9.7 A single RQAR form includes and provides details of all courses that the UCO delivers which have RQ status and covers the preceding academic year.

5.9.8 The GOsC's process seeks to use evidence that the UCO already produces as part of course annual monitoring rather than asking for bespoke information, including appending relevant CARs, External Examiner Annual Reports, Course Information Forms, relevant insurance documentation and a copy of the UCO's most recently audited accounts.

5.9.9 The RQAR does not normally include an action plan as a requirement, however an update regarding any RQ specific conditions is provided as part of the report.

5.9.10 The RQAR is normally submitted to the GOsC annually in December / January.

C) GOsC RQ Annual Report Production, Approval and Monitoring

5.9.11 The process stages, completion dates, tasks and responsibilities for producing, approving and monitoring the RQAR are outlined in Table 5.4 below, and apply to Recognised Qualifications only.

5.9.12 The RQAR should be produced and reviewed in line with the UCO's Version Control Policy and Core Documentation Management Policy and Procedure[10]. This includes using tracked changes to identify amendments and including footers to show the date and version number of the document.

5.9.13 Responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of documentation production rests with the staff identified in Table 5.4 below, unless otherwise specified.

5.9.14 The Quality Assurance Committee and Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee monitor the completion of the following stages via update reports from the Head of Quality.

Table 5.4: GOsC RQ Annual Report Production, Approval & Monitoring Processes

a) GOsC RQ Annual Report Production & Approval			
Stage No.	Completion Date	GOsC RQ Annual Report (RQAR) Production Task	Responsibility

[10] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

1	Sep	RQAR form to be completed is provided electronically to the UCO's Vice-Chancellor.	General Osteopathic Council
2	Sep	Forward RQAR form on to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality for completion.	Vice-Chancellor
3	Sep / Oct	Agree responsibilities for completing the RQAR with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education). Circulate RQAR to relevant staff members for completion with a deadline date.	Head of Quality
4	Oct / Nov	Completion of relevant sections of the RQAR.	Relevant Staff Members
5	Nov	Collate completed RQAR sections into one single report. Gather required appendices from relevant staff members.	Head of Quality
6	Nov	Peer review and approval of the RQAR. Recommendation that the peer-reviewed RQAR is approved by the Academic Council.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
7	Dec	Consideration and approval of the RQAR and approve for submission to the GOsC.	Academic Council
8	Dec / Jan	Submission of the approved RQAR and relevant appendices to the GOsC by the deadline date.	Head of Quality
9	Dec - Feb	Analysis of the submitted RQAR and production of an analysis report for consideration by the GOsC's Education and Registration Standards Committee.	Quality Assurance Agency
10	Dec – Feb	Consideration of the QAA's analysis report. Provide the UCO's Vice-Chancellor with the paper to be considered by the GOsC's Education & Registration Standards Committee regarding the RQAR submission.	General Osteopathic Council's Education & Registration Standards Committee
11	Feb	Circulate the paper to be considered by the GOsC's Education & Registration Standards Committee regarding the RQ Annual Report submission to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality.	Vice-Chancellor
b) GOsC RQ Annual Report Monitoring			

Stage No.	Completion Date	GOsC RQ Annual Report (RQAR) Monitoring Task	Responsibility
1	Mar	Circulate the GOsC's Education & Registration Committee's outcome of the RQAR submission, including areas of good practice to be shared between osteopathic education institutions, to the UCO's Vice-Chancellor.	General Osteopathic Council
2	Mar	Forward the RQAR submission outcome to the Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Head of Quality.	Vice-Chancellor
3	Mar	Note and review the RQAR submission outcome and agree responses as appropriate.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee Academic Council
4	Mar – Jun	Disseminate areas of good practice to relevant Course Leaders (for consideration by Course Teams) and other staff as appropriate. Respond to any requests for information as stipulated in the RQAR outcome in consultation with the Vice-Chancellor (on behalf of Academic Council) and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (on behalf of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee).	Head of Quality
5	Jun	Note the RQAR submission outcomes and actions to be taken in response to these.	Academic Council
6	Jul	Monitor the progress of actions to be taken in response to the RQAR submission outcomes.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (for educational matters) Quality Assurance Committee (for institutional matters)

DIAGRAM 5.1: TIMELINE FOR UNIT ANNUAL REPORT COMPLETION

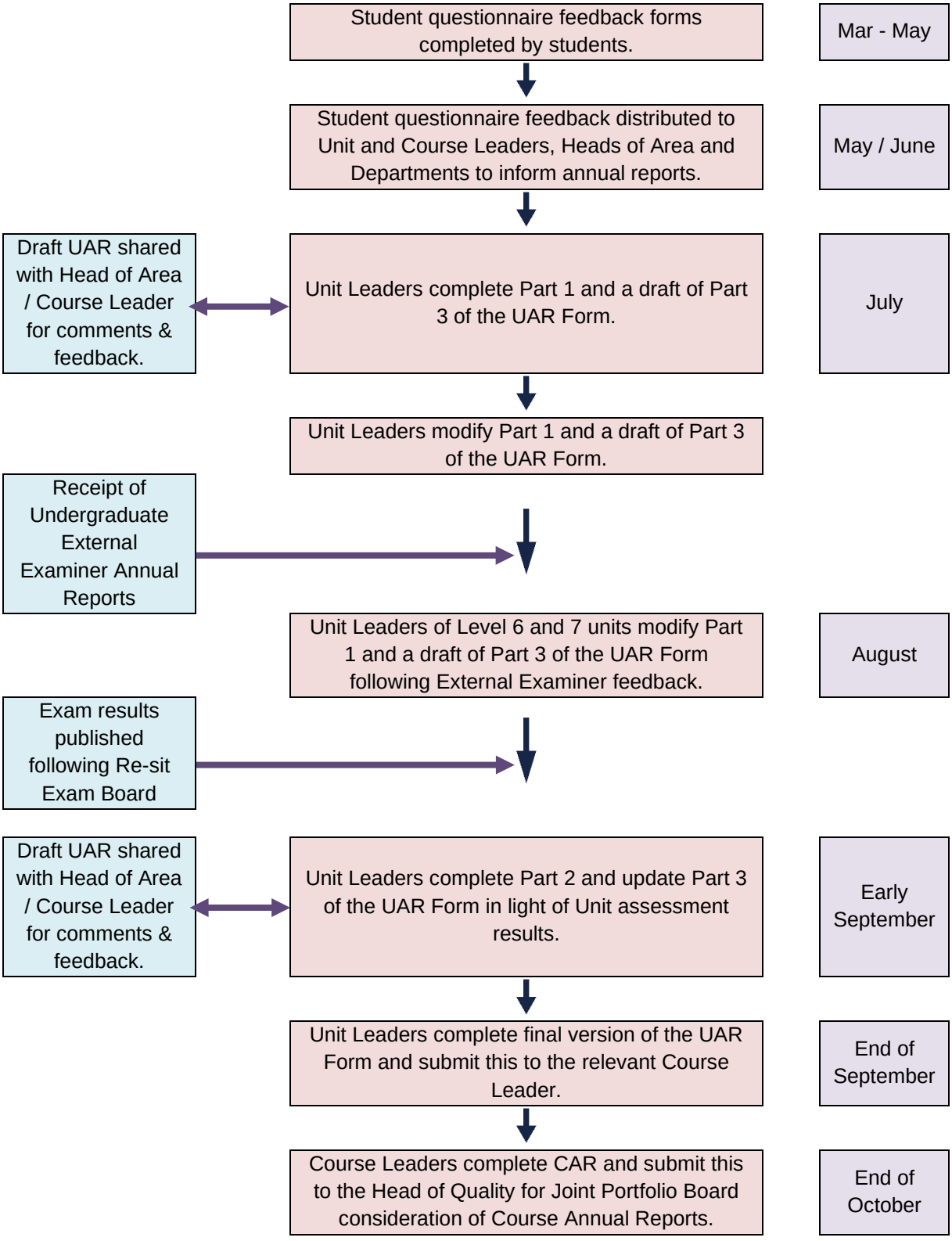


DIAGRAM 5.2: ANNUAL REPORTING & MONITORING CYCLE

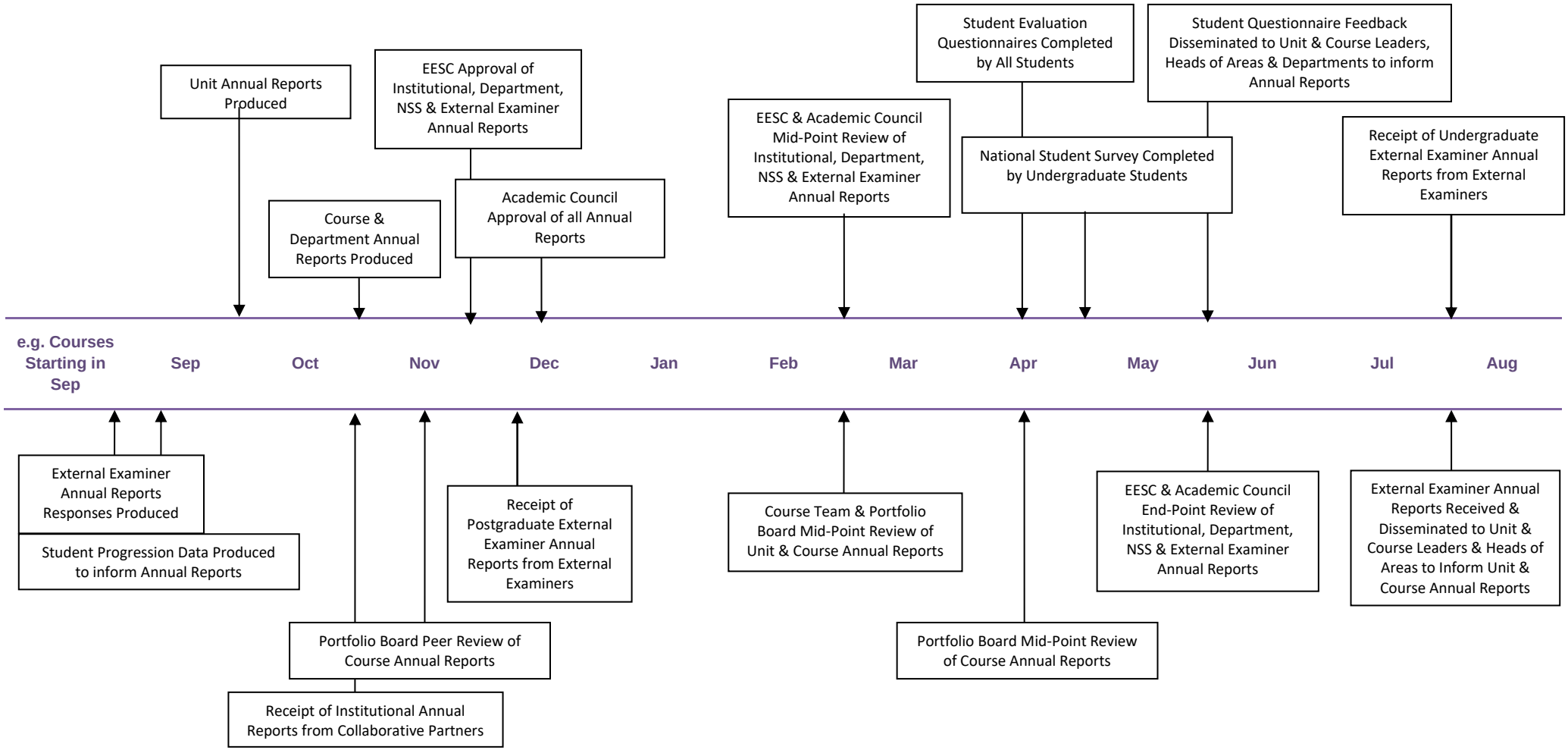
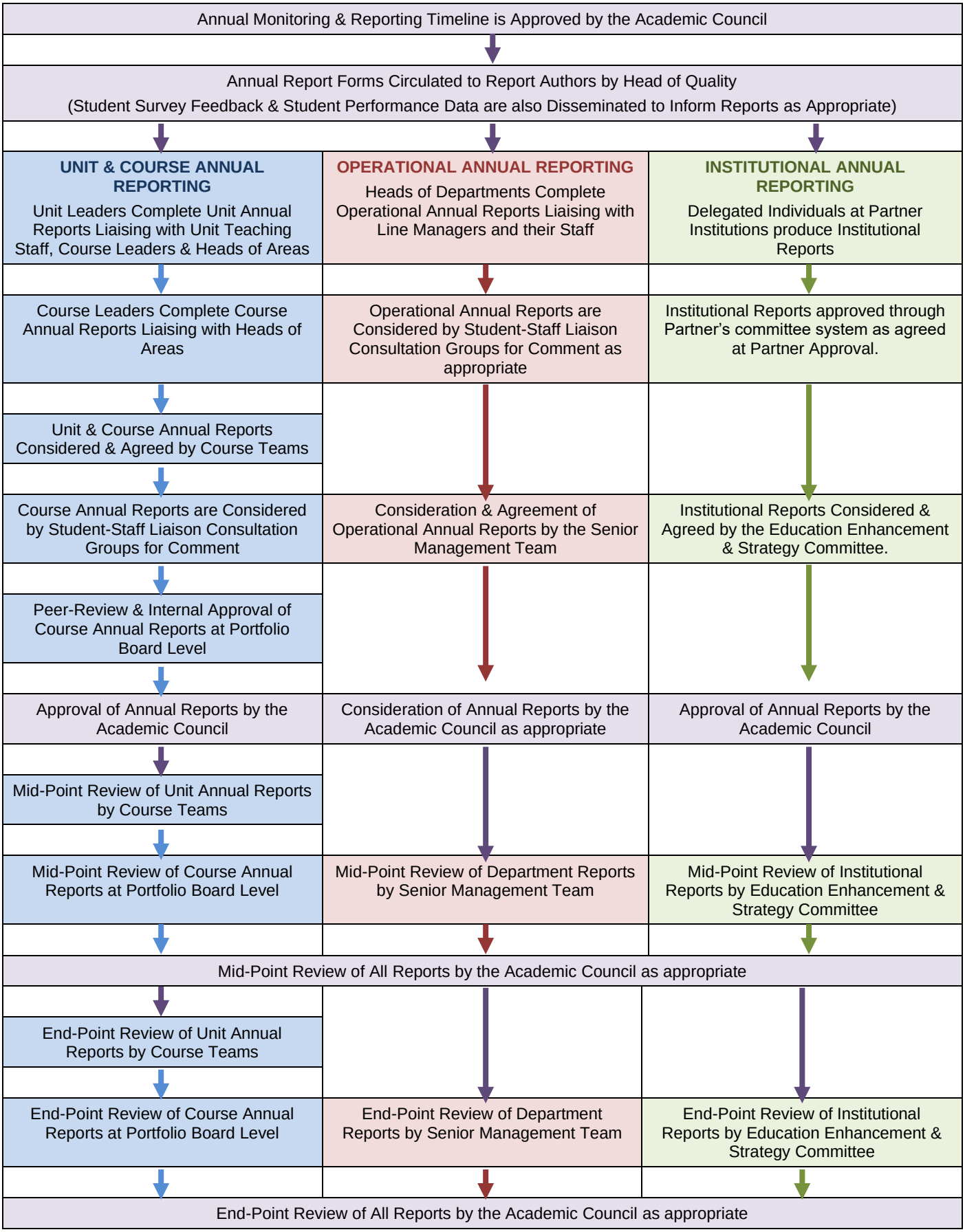


DIAGRAM 5.3: ANNUAL MONITORING & REPORTING PROCESS



AQF05: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
AQF05_01_UAR	Unit Annual Report Form
AQF05_02_CAR	Course Annual Report Form
AQF05_03_IAR	Institutional Annual Report Form
AQF05_04_OAR	Operational Annual Report Form
AQF05_05_NSSAR	National Student Survey Annual Report Form
AQF05_07_AREH	Annual Reporting Enhancement Plan

AQF05 ENDNOTES

[1] AQF05_01_Unit_Annual_Report_Form

[2] AQF05_02_Course_Annual_Report_Form

[3] AQF05_03_Institutional_Annual_Report_Form

[4] AQF05_04_Operational_Annual_Report_Form

[5] AQF05_05_NSS_Annual_Report_Form

[7] AQF05_02_Course_Annual_Report_Form

[8] AQF05_03_Institutional_Annual_Report_Form

[9] AQF05_04_Operational_Annual_Report_Form

[10] AQF05_05_NSS_Annual_Report_Form

[11] AQF11_05_External_Examiner_Annual_Report_Form

[12] AQF05_07_Annual_Reporting_Enhancement_Plan

Academic Quality Framework

Section 6: Periodic Review

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 6: Periodic Review

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to Course Leaders, Heads of Area, Unit Leaders and members of relevant UCO Committees including student representatives.

Version number	*Dates produced and approved (include committee)*	*Reason for production/ revision*	*Author*	*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.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\0 Head of Quality – AQF 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.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Aug 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*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*June 2018 Academic Council*	*Annual Review including amendments to the Periodic Review Process, updating role titles and weblinks.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2019 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative amendments to update staff role titles, weblinks & footnotes and to reflect current practice.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF 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)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

Section 6: Periodic Review

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6.1 Periodic Review Introduction

6.1.1 Periodic Review (PR) focuses on how providers (i.e. the UCO and any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) or other relevant external organisation) manage the quality of provision and maintain academic standards. It is an in-depth process which enables greater reflection than single annual monitoring activity and covers progress over a longer time frame (typically the past five years).

6.1.2 Periodic reviews of subject areas, courses and institutions ensure that academic provision is subject to effective scrutiny and self-reflection with an emphasis on constructive feedback from peers such that the student learning experience and quality processes may be enhanced and promoted as appropriate.

6.1.3 The UCO holds internal PRs of its taught course provision and is itself subject to external PIRs as required by PSRBs and other external institutions as appropriate.

6.2 Internal & External Periodic Reviews

A) Internal Periodic Review

6.2.1 PR of courses within a subject area (Periodic Course Review (PCR), also known as Course Re-approval) is an internal periodic review process which enables the UCO to check the health of its course provision, identify areas for development, and disseminate good practice.

6.2.2 PCR allows for a broad and holistic consideration of courses, through a process of self-evaluation undertaken by staff working in the area in question, and involving stakeholder input (including student involvement), peer and external review. It includes the identification of good practice and strategies for enhancement.

6.2.3 Each PCR includes related provision within its scope, as appropriate.

6.2.4 PCR at the UCO provides assurance to the Academic Council that it can have confidence in the academic standards and quality of its courses and in the structures and processes that will maintain standards and quality in the future.

6.2.5 The UCO's processes for PCR align with the Quality Code published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) regarding Monitoring & Evaluation[1].

6.2.6 Normally, PCRs of taught courses are undertaken by the UCO every five years from the date of Course Approval.

6.2.7 The UCO's internal PCR processes are agreed by the Academic Council and are regularly audited by the Policy, Regulations and Audit Group to ensure that they are followed appropriately and remain effective.

6.2.8 Procedural support for PCRs is provided by the Head of Quality.

6.2.9 Detailed criteria guide the PCR process. These may include a review of strategic fit and viability, management of quality and standards, assessment, staffing, and learning resources. Relevant staff and PCR panel members are provided with documentation specifying procedural requirements and guidance to support development.

6.2.10 It is appropriate for PCRs to include consideration of new and changed provision within a subject area in line with requirements for the approval of new provision and/or modifications to current provision (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval & Modifications). Such approval must be agreed at the Review Scoping Stage.

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/monitoring-and-evaluation

B) External Periodic Institutional & Course Review

6.2.11 As mentioned above, the UCO is subject to external periodic review as required by PSRBs and other external institutions, such as the University of Bedfordshire (for the Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy course) and LASER (for the Access to Higher Education Diploma course).

6.2.12 The UCO adheres to the periodic review processes as required and stipulated by external organisations.

6.2.13 Periodic reviews by PSRBs are not interchangeable with internal PCRs, although some areas may be common for each review, such as a focus on the curriculum and staff expertise.

C) Alignment of Internal and External Periodic Reviews

6.2.14 The UCO's internal PCR processes and the external PIR processes may be aligned if appropriate. For example, internal assurance and preparatory events often closely resemble external events. In the case of two review requirements – for instance, a PCR and renewal review for courses seeking to renew Recognised Qualification (RQ) status by the UCO's PSRB (the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC)) – the UCO may schedule these within an appropriately close timeframe. This aims to avoid duplication of workload where possible and appropriate.

6.2.15 Similarly, in some circumstances the GOsC will undertake a combined review, such as where an application for the recognition of a new course coincides with the expiry of a different course's RQ status.

6.3 Periodic Review Process Stages

6.3.1 The stages that constitute periodic review processes are outlined in the sections for PCR and PIR processes below.

6.3.2 Periodic review documentation development involves consultation with relevant stakeholders and internal peer review through the UCO's committee structure and preparatory periodic review events before submission to the final periodic review event.

6.3.3 Periodic review events are held following the submission of documentation, to enable reviewers to meet with staff and students, and to discuss and clarify lines of enquiry to inform the outcome of the periodic review.

6.4 Periodic Course Review Process

6.4.1 Taught courses approved by the UCO are normally expected to undergo a PCR once every five years (normally from the date of course approval) using the process described below.

6.4.2 A PCR typically includes all provision within a subject area and may include consideration of new and modified provision within a subject area, in line with requirements for the approval of new and modified provision (see AQF Section 4: Modifications to Courses & Units).

6.4.3 Where a single course is recommended for periodic review on the basis of substantial proposed modifications or concern, this will be considered and recorded as an 'approval' event, and the New Course Approval process will apply (see AQF Section 4: New Course Approval Process).

6.4.4 A Preparatory PCR Event is normally held at least three months prior to the PCR Event, which provides developmental experience to attendees and panellists, enabling staff to act on recommendations resulting from the preparatory event.

6.4.5 PCR documentation should normally be submitted at least four weeks prior to each PCR event, to provide adequate time for panellists to review the documentation and identify lines of enquiry.

6.4.6 Processes for course and partnership closure are provided in AQF Section 4: Closing a Course and AQF Section 4: Closing a Partnership.

6.5 Objectives of Periodic Course Review

6.5.1 Periodic Course Review provides an opportunity in particular for the evaluation of:

a) Subject standing and development, in the context of the UCO's strategy and sector norms and development;

b) Management of quality and standards in the provision offered within a subject, including the maintenance of core documentation (Course and Unit Information Forms) and the appropriate management of modifications to provision;

c) Academic standards and the maintenance of structures and processes designed for their support (including external examination, annual monitoring, unit and course reporting, and academic due process in the assessment and grading of student performance);

d) The quality and the student-led enhancement of the learner experience and opportunity in the context of the UCO's mission;

e) External engagement and benchmarking, e.g. with the QAA Quality Code, sector benchmarks, PSRBs (where relevant), employers, alumni and other external reference points that support the development and enhancement of provision and the learner experience;

f) Engagement and compliance with UCO policy (e.g. peer observation of teaching) and initiatives over the period of review.

6.6 Preparation & Timescales for Periodic Course Reviews

6.6.1 The Head of Quality will normally manage the PCR process at the UCO in liaison with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

6.6.2 Each PCR will commence in the academic year preceding review (and no less than 9 months prior to the Final PCR Event) with a PCR Scoping Meeting between the following staff (as a minimum): the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Chair of the Portfolio Board, Heads of Area and Course Leaders of the provision within the review, and the Head of Quality.

6.6.3 At this scoping meeting:

a) the Periodic Course Review Form[1] will be finalised;

b) the scope of the review and of the provision within it will be finalised;

c) the date and duration of the PCR Event will be confirmed;

d) the institutional benchmark set will be confirmed;

e) the requirement for externality at the Periodic Course Review Event will be established on the basis of subject and course breadth and level;

f) the inclusion of any planned course approval within the review will be confirmed (subject to completion of the UCO's New Course Approval processes); additional approvals may be added later, in which case the relevant form (New Course Approval Form / Course & Unit Modification Form) will be appended to the Periodic Course Review Form;

g) any relationship between the PCR and PSRB engagement will be established.

6.6.4 The Head of Quality will submit the Periodic Course Review Form to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee to consider and recommend for approval by the Academic Council.

6.6.5 Following the PCR Scoping Meeting relevant staff will prepare the required documentation as agreed at this meeting, which will normally be peer-reviewed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee prior to being reviewed at the Preparatory PCR Review Event, which takes place no later than two calendar months prior to the proposed Final PCR Event.

6.6.6 The typical timescale for PCR's is shown in Diagram 6.1.

6.7 Appointment of Periodic Course Review Panels

6.7.1 The Head of Quality, in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), will appoint and invite the panel for the PCR Event, including internal panel members, external subject specialists, and student representation.

6.7.2 The initial identification of external subject specialists should be made at least six months prior to the PCR Event.

6.7.3 The Course Leader/s of the course/s being reviewed in consultation with their Course Team/s and in liaison with the Head of Quality and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) are responsible for nominating appropriate external subject specialists by completing the Periodic Course Review External Panel Member Nomination Form[2], which should be accompanied by the CV of the nominated individual.

6.7.4 External panel member nominees should have sufficient specialist knowledge but not have been engaged in teaching, research or scholarly activity relating to the course(s) under review, including recently serving as an External Examiner for the course(s) under review. Neither should any of the Course Team putting forward the proposal be acting as an External Examiner on a course with which the external nominee is associated.

6.7.5 Nomination forms and CVs should be submitted to the Head of Quality for approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) no later than three months prior to the PCR Event.

6.7.6 The Quality Team will thereafter be responsible for liaising with the nominated External Panel Members regarding the arrangements and logistics of the review event. This will normally include providing guidance to the External Panel Members regarding the expectations of External Panel Members, their expected time commitment, fees and expenses and opportunity for a pre-panel meeting to ensure that they are clear about their role.

6.7.7 The typical membership for the Preparatory PCR Event Panel will be as that for the Final PCR Event (see Table 6.1) but normally without the External Panel Members.

6.7.8 The Preparatory PCR Event Panel members should be different from those for the Final PCR Event in order to ensure that there is sufficient independence and objectivity in any decision-making for both events, the exception to this being the Quality Assurance Representative and Secretary.

6.7.9 Table 6.1 shows the typical membership of a PCR Event Panel, the criteria of appointment of each panel member, and their role for this event. PCR Event panel members should not normally serve as Final PCR Event panel members for the same PCR, with the exception of the Quality Assurance Representative and Secretary.

TABLE 6.1: TYPICAL PCR EVENT PANEL MEMBERSHIP, CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT & PANEL ROLES

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Role
Chair	Normally an academic member of the UCO's Academic Council or Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee not involved in the submission.	The panel chair will lead the panel and ensure that the requirements of the review process are achieved effectively. The chair approves the responses to any conditions from the event.
One or Two (depending on subject breadth) Academic External Panel Members	The Academic External Panel Members should be specialists in the field of the subject provision under review. External academic specialists will be selected on the basis of their coverage of subjects under review at an appropriate level of seniority. They will be independent of the UCO, i.e. not have been engaged in teaching, research or scholarly activity relating to the course(s) under review such as recently serving as External Examiners for the course(s) under review. Neither should any of the Course Team putting forward the proposal be acting as an External Examiner on a course with which the external nominee is associated. Where a review includes a range of subjects deemed sufficiently broad to require additional external academic input (as indicated, for example, by the range of subject benchmarks to which the provision responds), this will be specified on the Periodic Course Review Form.	The role of the external panel members is to draw upon their subject specialism and professional experience to provide an objective and independent judgement of the quality, standards and coherence of the provision under review. It is expected that external panel members will undertake the role of "critical friend" and constructively challenge viewpoints or assumptions that are held by the Course Team or institutionally.
An Industry External Panel Member	The Industry External Panel Member should be a practitioner from a practice field related to the subject provision. External practitioners must have substantial practitioner expertise	

	relevant to graduates of the provision under review. The practitioner may not be involved in the direct delivery or support of the provision under review.	
One or Two Senior Academic Internal Representatives	The senior academic representatives should be from outside of the subject provision under review.	To give an internal but independent view on general teaching and learning issues, the learning experience and environment and general resource issues.
A Student Representative (or an approved representative if a student representative is formally noted at the review panel event and documented in the final report as not available)	Student representatives must have current or recent experience as a student of UCO (within the previous two academic years).	The role of the student panel member is to contribute to the assessment of all areas of the review, but with a particular focus on the student experience.
A Quality Assurance Representative	The Quality Assurance Representative should be a member of the UCO's Quality Assurance Team.	To look at issues relating to continued compliance with UCO processes and with QAA requirements / external reference points.
A Secretary	The Secretary is normally appointed by the Head of Quality.	The Secretary's duties include liaising with the Head of Quality about the arrangements for the periodic review process, communicating with panel members, drawing up a draft programme for the panel review event and preparing the review report. The Secretary is responsible for acting as conduit between the panel and the Course Team regarding initial observations prior to the event and in the response to the outcomes of the review.

6.8 Periodic Course Review Required Documentation

6.8.1 Responsibility for preparing the PCR submission documentation resides with the Course Teams concerned in liaison with the Head of Quality.

6.8.2 It is usually expected that consultation with students and relevant staff (faculty, student support, learning resources and human resources as appropriate) will be undertaken regarding proposed

modifications which arise from the review preparation process, in line with AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval & Modification.

6.8.3 Periodic Course Review documentation should be produced and reviewed in line with the UCO's Version Control Policy[2]. This includes using tracked changes to identify amendments and including footers to show the date and version number of the document.

6.8.4 Responsibility for the accuracy and completeness of documentation production rests with the Course Leader/s of the provision under review.

6.8.5 Documentation requires internal peer review before submission to either the preparatory or final Periodic Course Review Event.

6.8.6 Table 6.2 shows the documentation required to be produced and submitted for PCRs. In all cases coverage should normally include the period since the previous PCR or Course Approval Event unless otherwise stated.

TABLE 6.2: REQUIRED PERIODIC COURSE REVIEW (PCR) DOCUMENTATION

Document Number	Required PCR Document	Document Description
PCR01	A Critical Self-Evaluation Document (SED)[3]	The SED is a critical self-evaluation of the subject and its provision in the context of UCO benchmarks and policies, and external benchmarks and requirements. The SED should be approximately 20 pages long and provide evidence that sufficient and effective attention is being given to the enhancement of quality and the maintenance of standards. Guidance for writing the SED is provided in the PCR Self-Evaluation Document Template[4] and will essentially consist of four sections: i. Introduction ii. Subject Evaluation iii. Course Evaluation iv. Quality Assurance & Management It may include data and information in appendix form.
PCR02	Portfolio Information[5]	This document should include information about the portfolio within which the provision under review belongs as listed below using the guidance contained within the Portfolio Information Document Template[6]: • Research activity over the review period and benchmarking with competitors; • Consultancy and CPD development and provision over the period; • Sector engagement; • Staffing and resources including CVs; • Staff review and development.
PCR03	Course Information[7]	Course Information includes reports and updated course documentation since the previous internal / external periodic

[2] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

		review or Course Approval (whichever is the most recent) as listed below: • Annual Monitoring Reports since the previous internal / external periodic review or Course Approval (whichever is the most recent); • Current Course Information Forms of the approved courses under review; • Updated Course and Unit Information Forms for each of the courses under review with modifications track changed; • Course Handbooks finalised for provision to the first post-review student cohort; • External Examiner Annual Reports from the previous three academic years and the responses to the reports; • Any PSRB Reports from the previous three academic years and the responses to the reports or since the previous internal / external periodic review or Course Approval (whichever is the most recent), together with a statement or evidence of any action taken in response to those reports; • Outcome reports from any Course Approval Events of new courses within the subject area since the previous internal / external periodic review or Course Approval (whichever is the most recent); • The previous Periodic Course Review Outcome Report and Periodic Course Review Confirmation Form (as applicable); • Key academic committee minutes since the previous internal / external periodic review or Course Approval (whichever is the most recent); • Data from the Key Information Set (KIS), Unistats, National Student Survey (NSS) and Destination of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) data covering the provision under review. • A Course Information Checklist[8] should be submitted with the PCR03 documentation submission.
PCR04	Internal & External Reference Points[9]	This set of documentation should include reference to and evidence of mapping to appropriate internal and external reference points as agreed at the PCR Scoping Meeting, and will normally include: • The UCO's Strategic Plan; • QAA Quality Code[3]; • PSRB requirements; • Other relevant documentation that Course Teams consider would support the PCR submission.

[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code

		The External Benchmark Mapping template[10] completed at Course Approval should be updated and submitted as document set PCR04. The Reference Point Mapping Checklist[11] should be submitted with the PCR04 documentation submission indicating which reference points have been mapped to. Copies of the reference point documentation will be supplied to the PCR Event Panel by the Quality Team.
PCR05	Preparatory PCR Event Minutes, Outcome & Response	The minutes, outcomes and response to the Preparatory PCR Event (the Portfolio Board level peer-reviewed Periodic Course Review documentation) should be provided.

6.8.7 Deadlines for Periodic Course Review submission documentation are produced by the Head of Quality in liaison with relevant Course Leader/s and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

6.8.8 All Periodic Course Review documentation should normally be submitted electronically to the Head of Quality at least four weeks prior to each PCR event.

6.8.9 The Periodic Course Review documentation will be circulated to the PCR Event Panel together with guidance material and relevant benchmarking standards, to enable panel members to consider submitted documentation prior to the PCR Event and to provide them with the opportunity to put forward comments or areas for clarification to the Head of Quality.

6.9 Periodic Course Review Events

6.9.1 Two PCR Events are normally arranged:

i. The Preparatory PCR Event to peer-review the PCR submission and enhance the submission prior to the Final PCR Event.

ii. The Final PCR Event to re-approve the provision under review.

A) The Preparatory Periodic Course Review Event

6.9.2 The Preparatory PCR Event normally takes place no later than three calendar months prior to the proposed Final PCR Event.

6.9.3 The purpose of this event is peer-review of and to assure that all submitted documentation is of an adequate standard, and also to provide the Course Team/s with recommendations and the opportunity to enhance their submission prior to the Final PCR Event.

6.9.4 The Preparatory PCR Event will:

a) Confirm the quality of the self-evaluation document and make recommendations for enhancement;

b) Confirm support for course and unit modifications, and the proposed Course Information Forms (CIFs) and Unit Information Forms (UIFs);

c) Confirm that CIFs and UIFs for future delivery are complete and accurate in detail;

d) Confirm the updated FHEQ, subject benchmark, course and unit outcome mappings in relation to the proposed provision;

6.9.5 The agenda of the Preparatory PCR Event is based on that of the Final PCR Event (see Table 6.3) but may be amended as appropriate and as agreed at the initial PCR Scoping Meeting.

6.9.6 The Preparatory PCR Event will be reported on and responded to in line with that of the Final PCR Event.

6.9.7 The outcome report[12] and responses to the Preparatory PCR Event will be included in the submission documentation for the Final PCR Event.

B) The Final Periodic Course Review Event

6.9.8 The Final PCR Event normally lasts for one day, with the approval of new courses and modifications to existing courses and units occurring on the following day. The Final PCR Event Panel may, however, meet the previous afternoon if the subject is large or complex.

6.9.9 The purpose of the Final PCR Event is to:

a) Provide assurance to the UCO about the quality and standards of the provision concerned.

b) Consider the effectiveness with which UCO policies are being implemented, including approaches to teaching, learning and assessment.

c) Confirm that research, advanced professional development, and scholarly activities are impacting the provision at FHEQ Levels 6 and 7.

d) Identify good practice and particular strengths and strategies for quality enhancement.

e) Approve new courses and / or approve modifications to existing courses and units that are confirmed to occur as part of the PCR process, in line with the UCO's course and unit approval and modification processes as documented in AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval & Modifications.

6.9.10 The Final PCR Event Panel will achieve this by considering and questioning the documentation submission, meeting with Course Team members, students, teaching staff, senior and support staff and, where possible, alumni of the provision under review. A tour of the UCO may also be undertaken to review the facilities.

6.9.11 An indicative agenda for PCR events (both Preparatory and Final) is provided in Table 6.3.

6.9.12 Any variation to the agenda or to the duration of the Periodic Course Review Event, other than that produced by the addition of the approval of new courses and modifications to existing courses and units, must be agreed at the PCR Scoping Meeting or by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

6.9.13 The agenda for Periodic Course Review Events has at least three components:

i. ***Meeting senior staff (including faculty)*** to clarify issues such as staffing strategies and effectiveness in the management of academic quality, student support, and learning resources. Particular focus will be placed on the academic and administrative arrangements where the provision includes collaborative, distance-learning, work-based learning or mentoring agreements.

ii. ***Meeting lecturers and other staff not employed in a managerial capacity*** to review staff engagement in teaching, learning and assessment, provision of student services, resources and support.

iii. ***Meeting students currently on the courses under review or cognate courses, and where possible alumni***, to obtain a learner perspective on teaching quality, the nature of student support, and students' satisfaction with their experience of the course, the UCO, and the wider student experience. The panel will normally meet a representative sample of 6 to 10 students.

6.9.14 The panel will not normally observe teaching.

6.9.15 The Final PCR Event Panel will be offered a formal tour of the UCO's facilities related to the provision under review. Where this is confirmed the tour will be provided by the Quality Team and will normally take place the day before the Final PCR Event.

TABLE 6.3: INDICATIVE AGENDA FOR FINAL PERIODIC COURSE REVIEW EVENTS

Time	Individuals Involved	Agenda Item & Areas of Discussion
0900	Final PCR Event Panel	**Confirmation of Event Agenda & Identification of Lines of Questioning** • Confirmation of Event Agenda. • Identification and prioritisation of key questions and matters to discuss with staff teams and students.
1000	Final PCR Event Panel Senior Staff Course Management Staff Quality Staff	**Introduction to the Event & Meeting with UCO Management, Quality & Academic Staff** • Ten-minute introductory presentation and discussion covering: ○ Strategic issues for the subject and courses within the internal and external strategic context; ○ Perceived strengths and weaknesses of the subjects and courses; ○ Management issues related to the subject, courses, and staff.
1030	Final PCR Event Panel	**Review of Meeting with UCO Management, Quality & Academic Management Staff** • Review of discussions. • Review of lines of questioning. • Review of event agenda as required.
1100	Final PCR Event Panel Course Management Staff Academic Staff Student Support Staff	**Meeting with Course Management, Academic and Student Support Staff** • The production of Document PCR01 (Critical Self Evaluation) and exploration of issues arising from it; • Issues arising from Course Information Forms; • Student performance, retention and graduate outcomes.
1230	Final PCR Event Panel	**Review of Meeting with Course Management, Academic Management and Student Support Staff** • Review of discussions; • Review of lines of questioning; • Review of event agenda as required.
1300	Final PCR Event Panel Students Graduates	**Lunch & Meeting with Students:** • The applicant, student and graduate experience.
1400	Final PCR Event Panel	**Review of Meeting with Students** • Review of discussions;

		• Review of lines of questioning; • Review of event agenda as required.
1430	Final PCR Event Panel Course Management Staff Academic Staff Student Support Staff	**Meeting with Course Management, Academic and Student Support Staff** • The curriculum; • Teaching and learning; • Resources for learners; • Assurance and enhancement of provision and the student experience; • Staff engagement with research and professional practice; • External engagement in the provision and its development; • Staff development and expertise.
1530	Final PCR Event Panel	**Review of Meeting with Course Management, Academic and Student Support Staff** • Review of discussions; • Review of lines of questioning; • Review of event agenda as required.
1600	Final PCR Event Panel UCO Management Staff Quality Staff Academic Staff	**Meeting with UCO Management, Quality and Academic Staff** • Final questions and queries; • Opportunity for academic staff to put forward any additional information.
1645	Final PCR Event Panel	**Conclusions of the Event** • Conclusions finalised.
1700	Final PCR Event Panel UCO Management Staff Course Management Staff	**Provisional Feedback** • Provision of provisional feedback regarding the event.

6.10 Final Periodic Course Review Event Outcomes

6.10.1 The outcome of the Final PCR Event will be made based on the considerations and judgements of the Final PCR Event Panel regarding Academic Standards and the Quality of Provision as outlined below.

A) Judgements on Academic Standards

6.10.2 The panel will reach a single judgement on academic standards that is based on consideration of the specified outcomes of provision (in relation to relevant external benchmarks), including the content and design of the curriculum, and the design and effective implementation of assessments as a means of testing the outcomes. Exceptionally, different areas of provision may be subject to different judgements, although normally one judgement will be made across the provision.

6.10.3 The judgement will normally be one of the following:

a) **Confidence**; i.e. re-approve provision subject to further annual and periodic review; i.e. the panel was satisfied with current management of academic standards and quality and the prospect of these being maintained in the future.

b) **Confidence subject to specified conditions**; the panel may identify issues with some/all provision and require the Course Team/s to provide progress reports on these, normally at six-monthly intervals, until the issues are completed.

c) **No Confidence**; i.e. this judgement should only be reached if there are fundamental and very significant weaknesses that had not been identified in the Critical Self Evaluation document with appropriate plans in place to address within a suitable time-frame with appropriate arrangements for the management of any required suspension of provision.

B) Judgements on the Quality of Provision

6.10.4 The outcome of the Final PCR Event will include judgements on the quality of provision in respect of:

a) **Academic strength and viability** (i.e. the effective understanding and focus on the academic position and strategic development of the subject area and its provision, its effective use of benchmarks, staff development and external engagement, and evidence of the effective integration of its academic activities including research and teaching);

b) **Learning opportunities and resources** (i.e. the evidence that the provision and the portfolio and Course Teams provide their students with opportunities to achieve and develop);

c) **Student focus and support** (i.e. evidence that the portfolio and Course Teams are both proactive and responsive in their management and enhancement of the learner experience).

6.10.5 The judgement will normally be one of the following:

a) **Commendable**; i.e. the provision is approved; the majority of elements are of good quality, with identifiable areas of excellence. Some areas for improvement may be noted.

b) **Approved**; i.e. the provision is approved; most elements are of good quality, with identifiable, but not significant, areas for improvement.

c) **Approved, subject to the following time-limited conditions**; i.e. some identifiable and significant weaknesses that can be addressed. The nature of the weaknesses should be clearly identified and the conditions should be time-bound so that they can be effectively monitored.

d) **Failing**; i.e. the provision is inadequate, and a recovery plan is required, to include arrangements for the management of any suspension of provision.

6.10.6 The panel may also identify as commendable or failing specific areas of activity or provision within the judgements on quality of provision.

6.10.7 Recommendations may be made in respect of all judgements other than those of 'failing'. These should be monitored through the normal Annual Monitoring and Reporting processes (AQF Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting).

6.10.8 In addition to the above possible outcomes, the panel may set 'approval conditions' and 'delivery conditions' in relation to specific courses, in accordance with AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval & Modification. These will be differentiated from judgement conditions and will require a response and completion prior to the next commencement of the operation of the course to which they pertain using the approach to approval conditions specified in relation to the approval process.

6.11 Periodic Course Review Reporting and Responding to the Outcome

6.11.1 The Periodic Course Review and Course Approval processes enable the UCO to demonstrate public accountability for the standards achieved by its courses. Peer groups' academic judgements, and the evidence on which they are based, must be substantiated and accessible through reports.

6.11.2 The secretary to the Final PCR Event Panel will draft a formal Periodic Course Review Outcome Report[13], normally within two weeks of the Final PCR Event, and circulate this to the members of the panel for confirmation. The secretary then circulates the confirmed outcome report to the Course Leader(s), Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), and Head of Quality (as a minimum).

6.11.3 The outcome report will identify and confirm continued approval (or otherwise) for all provision within the review, and any approved variations to this process. It will also confirm the date of operation in post-review form of the courses reviewed. Where the panel requires essential action other than as approval conditions, it will report these as conditions, identifying responsibilities and a timescale. Other suggested actions may be reported as recommendations and should be responded to as part of the normal annual monitoring process. Approval conditions will be identified in relation to specific courses and have separate timeframes for response and completion.

6.11.4 The outcome report will provide a clear indication of the discussions to explain the panel's conclusions and any conditions and recommendations, together with the dates by which they should be met.

6.11.5 In respect of judgement conditions, specified arrangements for monitoring, review and sign-off will be specified in the outcome report.

6.11.6 Where it is found that a course requires suspension, the External Examiners for that course will be informed of the start and end dates of the suspension and provided with a copy of the outcome report.

6.11.7 The Course Team, in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), is required to respond to the Periodic Course Review Outcome Report using the Periodic Course Review Outcome Response Form[14] within an agreed timeframe.

6.11.8 The Course Team's response should be submitted to the Head of Quality who will forward it on to the Chair of the panel for review and approval.

6.11.9 The Chair of the Final PCR Event Panel must be satisfied with the Course Team's responses to their conditions and recommendations and will confirm that the response is satisfactory by signing the Periodic Course Review Outcome Response Form and returning this to the Head of Quality.

6.11.10 The Head of Quality will forward the signed response form to Course Leaders and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), with confirmation that this together with the Periodic Course Review Outcome Report will be considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee prior to being submitted to the Academic Council for final and formal re-approval of the course as recommended by the Chair of the panel.

6.11.11 Further to the Academic Council approving the outcome report and response, a Periodic Course Review Confirmation Form[15] is produced and signed by the Chair of the Academic Council. The confirmation form details the outcome of the PCR Event, the length of time for which the course is approved, and the date of the next periodic review of the course. It also serves as confirmation that the Periodic Course Review process is concluded, and that the submitted course

documentation is approved for implementation as specified in the Periodic Course Review Outcome Report.

6.11.12 The signed confirmation form and approved course documentation is then circulated to Course Leaders, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), and other relevant staff by the Head of Quality as confirmation of course re-approval and conclusion of the PCR.

6.11.13 Monitoring of ongoing approval conditions and recommendations is overseen by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee in respect of educational matters and the Senior Management Team in respect of institutional matters.

6.12 Periodic Course Review Process Tasks & Responsibilities

6.12.1 The normal Periodic Course Review process stages, tasks, and their associated responsibilities are outlined in Table 6.4. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

6.12.2 The Quality Assurance Committee will monitor the completion of PCR stages via update reports from the Head of Quality.

Table 6.4: Periodic Course Review Stages, Tasks & Responsibilities

Stage No.	Periodic Course Review Process Task	Responsibility
1	Arrangement of the initial PCR Scoping Meeting PCR Scoping Meeting between the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Chair of the relevant Portfolio Board, Heads of Area and Course Leaders of the provision within the review no less than 9 months before the Final PCR Event.	Head of Quality
2	a) Confirmation of the PCR timeline and details. b) Completion of the PCR Review Form.	Head of Quality at the PCR Scoping Meeting
3	Preparation and production of required PCR submission documentation in liaison with faculty, finance, learning resources, student support, human resources and other departments, students, committees (for example, Student-Staff Liaison & Consultation Groups, Equalities Committee) External Examiners and PSRBs etc. as appropriate.	Course Team/s
4	Peer-review of the PCR submission documentation by relevant Portfolio Boards and the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee as appropriate.	Relevant Portfolio Boards Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
5	Submission of the PCR documentation to the Head of Quality normally no later than four weeks before the Preparatory PCR Event.	Course Team/s

6	Circulation of the PCR documentation submission to the Preparatory PCR Event Panel normally four weeks before the Preparatory PCR Event.	Head of Quality
7	**Preparatory PCR Event** a) Peer review of the PCR documentation. b) Agreement of recommendations to the Course Team/s & relevant staff to enhance the submission.	Preparatory PCR Event Panel
8	Preparatory PCR Event Outcome Report prepared and circulated to the Portfolio Board for confirmation within two weeks of the event.	Preparatory PCR Event Panel Secretary
9	Confirmation and sign-off of the Preparatory PCR Event Outcome Report.	Preparatory PCR Event Panel Chair
10	Circulation of the confirmed Preparatory PCR Event Outcome Report to the Course Teams, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality along with the PCR Event Outcome Response Form for Course Teams to complete by a requisite deadline.	Preparatory PCR Event Panel Secretary
11	a) Completion of the PCR Event Outcome Response Form and revision of PCR documentation as recommended in the PCR Event Outcome Report. b) Submission of the response and revised documentation to the Portfolio Board Chair for approval and sign-off.	Course Leader/s in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Board Chair and Heads of Areas
12	a) Approval and sign-off of PCR Event Outcome Response Form. b) Circulate approved and signed response form to Course Leaders, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality.	Preparatory PCR Event Panel Chair
13	Submission of the revised PCR documentation to the Head of Quality normally no later than four weeks before the Final PCR Event.	Course Team/s
14	Circulation of the PCR documentation submission to the Final PCR Event Panel normally four weeks before.	Head of Quality
15	**Final PCR Event** a) Review of the PCR documentation.	Final PCR Event Panel

	b) Agreement of outcome, conditions and recommendations of the event.	
16	Final PCR Event Outcome Report prepared and circulated to the Final PCR Event Panel for confirmation within two weeks of the event.	Final PCR Event Secretary
17	Confirmation and sign-off of the Final PCR Event Outcome Report.	Final PCR Event Panel Chair
18	Circulation of the confirmed Final PCR Event Outcome Report to the Course Teams, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality along with the PCR Event Outcome Response Form for Course Teams to complete by a requisite deadline.	Final PCR Event Secretary
19	a) Completion of the Final PCR Event Outcome Response Form and revision of PCR documentation as recommended in the Final PCR Event Outcome Report in consultation with the Portfolio Board. b) Submission of the response and revised documentation to the Head of Quality.	Course Leader/s
20	Submission of the Course Teams' response and revised documentation to the Final PCR Event Panel Chair for approval and sign-off.	Head of Quality
21	a) Approval and sign-off of Final PCR Event Outcome Response Form. b) Circulate approved and signed response form and revised documentation to Course Leaders, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality.	Final PCR Event Panel Chair
22	Submission of approved and signed Final PCR Event Outcome Report and Final PCR Event Outcome Response Form to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee for review and to recommend the outcome to the Academic Council.	Head of Quality
23	Review and recommend approval of the Final PCR Event Outcome Report and Final PCR Event Outcome Response Form by the Academic Council.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee
24	**Formal Re-Approval** The approved Final PCR Event Outcome Report and Final PCR Event Outcome Response Form	Academic Council

	are considered and the provision is formally re-approved.	
25	A Periodic Course Review Confirmation Form is produced.	Head of Quality
26	The Periodic Course Review Confirmation Form and re-approved CIF and UIFs are signed off.	Chair of the Academic Council
27	a) The signed Periodic Course Review Confirmation Form is circulated to Course Leaders, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Quality Assurance Committee as confirmation of course re-approval and the end of the PCR Process.	Head of Quality
	b) The signed and re-approved CIF and UIFs and Course Handbook are circulated to Course Leaders, Recruitment & Marketing Team, Admissions Team, Academic Registry and Core Documentation Holder as appropriate.	
28	a) The CIF, UIFs and Course Handbook are stored as Core Documents.	Core Documentation Holder
	b) The Institutional Calendar is updated to record the outcome of the PCR and to record the date of the next PCR event.	Head of Quality
	c) Uploading of re-approved course documentation to the UCO's website and production of marketing materials in consultation with the Course Leader.	Recruitment & Marketing Team
	d) Updating of Admissions Database to reflect the re-approved course in consultation with the Course Leader.	Admissions Team
	e) Updating of Student Information Management System with new unit codes and assessment data in consultation with the Course Leader as appropriate.	Academic Registry
29	Ongoing monitoring of any recommendations.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (for academic matters) Senior Management Team (for institutional matters)

6.13 Recognised Qualification Review: General Osteopathic Council / Quality Assurance Agency

A) Introduction

6.13.1 Under the Osteopaths Act 1993 the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) is the statutory regulatory body for osteopaths and osteopathic education providers. The GOsC ensures that courses of osteopathic education meet its requirements for standards and quality, as well as governance and management of the course provider. Approved courses are awarded Recognised Qualification (RQ) status. This allows graduates from those courses to register with the GOsC and practise osteopathy legally in the UK. The RQ status is subject to approval from the Privy Council.

6.13.2 Decisions concerning the granting, maintenance and renewal of RQ status are made following reviews of osteopathic courses and course providers. These reviews are conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), on behalf of the GOsC. The review method is known as the "General Osteopathic Council Review".

6.13.3 The UCO may schedule a developmental or assurance event (a UCO-level GOsC Review Event) in advance of the GOsC Review, as agreed by the Academic Council.

6.13.4 This section of the UCO's Academic Quality Framework has been informed in detail by the information made available on the QAA's website and their Handbook for course providers[4].

B) Objectives of the GOsC Review

6.13.5 There are three different forms of GOsC Review:

i. Recognition review, for new courses seeking RQ status.

ii. Renewal review, for courses seeking to renew RQ status.

iii. Monitoring review, where the GOsC needs assurance about a particular course or provider, perhaps in relation to the fulfilment of conditions from a previous recognition or renewal review, or because of some important development in the course or provider.

6.13.6 In some circumstances, such as where an application for the recognition of a new course coincides with the expiry of a different course's RQ status, the GOsC may ask the QAA to undertake a combined review. Combined reviews may combine any of the three different types outlined above.

6.13.7 All forms of GOsC Review share the same purpose, which is to enable the GOsC to make recommendations on approval to the Privy Council, and to assure itself more generally that providers of osteopathic education are both preparing students who are fit to practice osteopathy in accordance with the GOsC's Osteopathic Practice Standards[5], and capable of evaluating and enhancing their programmes of study.

6.13.8 In this context, the GOsC review addresses the following eight areas:

i. course aims and outcomes

ii. curricula

iii. assessment

iv. achievement

[4] http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/general-osteopathic-council-review
[5] https://standards.osteopathy.org.uk/

v. teaching and learning

vi. student progression

vii. learning resources

viii. governance and management.

6.13.9 Monitoring reviews are likely to address a subset of these areas, depending on the GOsC's requirements.

C) Preparation for a GOsC Review

6.13.10 For new courses, the GOsC should receive a formal application from the course provider not less than 18 months before the proposed start date.

6.13.11 Renewal review visits should take place at least 9 months before the current RQ is due to expire.

6.13.12 In some circumstances, such as where an application for a new course coincides with the expiry of another course's RQ status, the GOsC may ask the QAA to undertake a combined review in order to minimise costs and disruption. Combined reviews may combine any of the three different types of review noted above.

6.13.13 The Head of Quality will identify a GOsC Review Co-ordinator, who will be the main point of contact with the GOsC and QAA when agreeing the documentation requirements and their deadlines; these will normally be confirmed at least six weeks before the visit.

6.13.14 Preparation of documentation should commence at least 5 months before the UCO level event is held (should this be scheduled).

D) Appointment of GOsC Review Panels

6.13.15 The Head of Quality will identify and invite UCO-level GOsC Review Event panel members (should this event be scheduled) as shown in Table 6.5.

6.13.16 The QAA nominates the GOsC Review panel members and will ask the UCO to raise any objections or concerns regarding conflicts of interests. Further to this the GOsC will normally confirm the GOsC Review Panel.

Table 6.5: UCO-level GOsC Review Event Panel Members (as a minimum)

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
Chair	The Chair is a senior member of academic staff who has not had direct involvement with the GOsC review submission.	The Chair of the panel is expected to ensure that discussions during the event are developmental and enhance the review submission. The Chair should use the initial private meeting of the panel to agree who will lead on which themes, which areas should be highlighted for clarification as well as the order of topics. The Chair will open the event by clarifying the aims and objectives of the event and will close the event by summarising the conclusions and outcomes. Issues which are not fully clarified should be pursued and any

		areas of concern should be shared with the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. The Chair approves the response to any conditions arising from the event.
Two Internal Senior Academic Representatives.	The Internal Academic Representative should not have had direct involvement with the GOsC review submission.	The role of the academic representative is to draw upon his/her experiences within his/her own academic area to provide an objective and independent view of the quality of the submission.
A Student Representative	The Student Representative should be a student within the same subject area as that of the review submission and to have been a student for at least one year.	The role of the student panel member is to contribute to the assessment of all areas of the submission, but with a particular focus on the student experience.
A Quality Assurance Representative	The Quality Assurance Representative should be a member of the UCO's Quality Assurance Team.	The role of this representative is to advise on quality assurance and regulatory issues and to confirm that the submission considers UCO regulations, policies and other quality matters.
Secretary	The Secretary is usually the assigned Course Approval Co-ordinator.	The role of the Secretary includes liaising with the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee about the arrangements for the consideration of the submission, communicating with panel members, drawing up a draft agenda for the Event and preparing the report of the event. The Secretary also makes the logistical arrangements for the event.

E) GOsC Review Documentation

6.13.17 Responsibility for preparing the GOsC Review submission documentation resides with the identified staff and faculty in liaison with the GOsC Review Co-ordinator.

6.13.18 The submission documentation requires internal peer review before submission to either a UCO-level or GOsC Review Event.

6.13.19 Version control processes should be used (as documented in the UCO's Version Control and Management of Core Documentation Policy[6]. This includes using tracked changes to identify amendments and including footers to show the date and version of documents.

6.13.20 The documentation required to be submitted by the UCO for GOsC Reviews is outlined below.

6.13.21 The QAA (or the Head of Quality in UCO-Level preparatory events) will ensure that submission documentation is passed to the Review Panels in a timely manner to allow enough opportunity

[6] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

for lines of enquiry to be identified. Accompanying this will be a copy of the agenda for the event and copies of any guidance notes.

F) The Self-Evaluation Document

6.13.22 The UCO's Self-Evaluation Document (SED) is the keystone of GOsC Reviews. The QAA visitors will refer to the SED throughout the review for information about the UCO and its courses, and for evidence that the UCO evaluates and improves its effectiveness in providing osteopathic education.

6.13.23 The GOsC provides detailed guidance on the format, content, and length of the SED. Broadly speaking, it should contain a standard description of the provider and course under review, and an account of how the provider and course reflect the expectations established by the key reference documents (the GOsC's Osteopathic Practice Standards and the QAA's Quality Code).

6.13.24 In total, the SED for a recognition or renewal review should not exceed 6,000 words (not counting the accompanying evidence). The SED for a combined review may need to be longer than this, particularly where more than one course is under review. The SED for a monitoring review may be shorter and take a different form, depending on the objectives of the review.

6.13.25 Five hard copies and one electronic copy of the SED are normally submitted to the QAA. For the hard copies, appending hard copies of the key supporting evidence is required; the remainder of the supporting evidence can be supplied electronically.

6.13.26 The SED should be submitted at least 10 weeks before the visit. Any additional documentation agreed at the preliminary meeting should be submitted at least four weeks before the visit.

6.13.27 Section outlines of the SED are as follows:

a) Section 1: Describing the Course And The Provider: Section 1 should include a description of the course and provider and statistical data for the last three student intakes which should address the following areas:

i. recruitment and admissions;

ii. entry profile (including qualifications, age, gender and ethnicity);

iii. rates of progression from one year to the next;

iv. student achievement in summative assessment;

v. progression of completing students to employment and further study.

b) **Section 2: Meeting the expectations of the key reference documents and demonstrating evaluation and improvement of the provision:** Section 2 should be organised under the following headings that match the headings in the review report:

i. course aims and outcomes (including student fitness to practise);

ii. curricula;

iii. assessment;

iv. achievement;

v. teaching and learning;

vi. student progression;

vii. learning resources;

viii. governance and management.

6.13.28 The SED for a monitoring review may focus on a subset of the areas outlined above depending on its objectives.

6.13.29 The SED should be developed as far as possible by reference to existing documentation, rather than by producing new material for the review. Thus, the SED can be seen as series of signposts, helping the QAA visitors to navigate through existing documentation for the evidence they need.

G) Key Supporting Evidence

6.13.30 The SED is supported by accompanying key evidence; this includes all of the documents that are referenced in the SED. In addition, the QAA's Review Co-ordinator may request further documentation.

6.13.31 It would be expected to include information such as:

a) past accounts, current balance sheet, financial projections;

b) articles of governance, insurance schedules;

c) strategic plans, diagrams of committee and staff management reporting lines (organograms);

d) external reports on the institution and osteopathy provision;

e) market research reports, programme development committee minutes, programme specification;

f) validation documents, validation reports, unit or module syllabuses;

g) arrangements for the appointment and training of external examiners;

h) arrangements for the involvement of external examiners in the assessment of student clinical performance;

i) student course handbook(s);

j) staff CVs;

k) statements of library holdings, statements of information technology (IT) provision;

l) plans/photographs of clinical facilities.

6.13.32 Requests for additional documentation will be confined to material which the QAA visitors need in order to complete the review effectively. The QAA's Review Co-ordinator will explain why the visitors are asking for a particular piece of additional information.

6.13.33 For the hard copy submissions, appending hard copies of the key supporting evidence is required; the remainder of the supporting evidence can be supplied electronically. All of the evidence referred to in the SED should be available to the visitors in hard copy during the visit.

6.13.34 During the visit the QAA visitors will need to see a sample of student work to determine whether:

a) student achievement matches the intended learning outcomes of the course;

b) assessment is designed appropriately to measure achievement of the intended learning outcomes;

c) the assessments set provide an adequate basis for discriminating between different categories of attainment;

d) the actual outcomes of programmes meet the minimum expectations for the award and the requirements of GOsC's Osteopathic Practice Standards.

6.13.35 The QAA's Review Co-ordinator will discuss the range and nature of student work to be provided at the preliminary meeting.

H) GOsC Review Process Tasks & Responsibilities

6.13.36 The normal GOsC Review process stages, tasks & responsibilities are outlined in the Table 6.6.

6.13.37 The Quality Assurance Committee monitor the GOsC Review process stages via reports from the UCO's GOsC Review Co-ordinator.

Table 6.6: The Normal GOsC Review Process Stages, Tasks & Responsibilities

Stage No.	GOsC Review Process Task	Responsibility
1	Timelines are confirmed by the GOsC/QAA in liaison with the GOsC Review Co-ordinator.	GOsC/QAA Point of Contact GOsC Review Co-ordinator
2	Co-ordination that identified staff prepare UCO-level review documentation in liaison with the finance, learning resources, student support, human resources and other departments, students (e.g. through the Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups), External Examiners, and others (e.g. the Equality Committee) as appropriate.	Head of Quality
3	**Peer Review of UCO-Level GOsC Review Event Documentation** Peer review and recommended approval of UCO-level GOsC Review documentation.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (Noted by the Quality Assurance Committee)
4	a) Identification and appointment of UCO-Level GOsC Review Event Panel. b) UCO-Level GOsC Review Event convened.	Head of Quality
5	**UCO-Level GOsC Review Event** a) Review of the submission documentation. b) Agreement of recommendations to enhance the submission.	UCO-Level GOsC Review Event Panel
6	a) Production of UCO-Level GOsC Review Event Outcome Report[16].	UCO-level GOsC Review Event Panel Secretary
	b) Confirmation of the report.	UCO-level GOsC Review Event Panel
	c) Sign-off of the report.	UCO-level GOsC Review Event Panel Chair
7	a) Production of the response[17] to conditions and recommendations of approval identified in the UCO-Level GOsC Review Event Outcome Report. b) Revision of submission documentation. c) Submission of responses and revised submission documentation to the Academic Council and Senior Management Team to approve.	Staff identified by the Head of Quality with Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee oversight

8	Approval of the UCO-Level GOsC Review Event report and response and revised submission documentation.	Academic Council Senior Management Team
8	a) Approval and sign off of the UCO-Level GOsC Review Event responses and revised submission documentation. b) Forward signed-off and approved submission documentation to the GOsC Review Co-ordinator.	UCO-level GOsC Review Event Panel Chair
9	**GOsC Review Panel Event (convened by the QAA)** a) Production of event outcome report. b) Forward the report on to the GOsC Review Co-ordinator.	QAA Review Team
10	a) Production of responses to conditions and recommendations of approval identified in the GOsC Review event outcome report. b) Revision of submission documentation as appropriate. c) Submission of responses and revised submission documentation to the Academic Council and Senior Management Team to approve.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (In consultation with appropriate Staff and Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Quality Assurance Committee oversight)
10	a) Approval of GOsC Review event outcome report responses and revised submission documentation.	Academic Council Senior Management Team
	b) Submission of the approved outcome responses and revised submission documentation to the QAA.	GOsC Review Co-ordinator
11	a) Approval and sign off GOsC Review Event responses and revised submission documentation. b) Forward signed-off and approved submission documentation to the GOsC Review Co-ordinator.	QAA Review Team
12	a) Approved submission documentation and GOsC Review outcome report stored and Core Documentation Register updated in liaison with the Core Documentation Holder. b) Inform and provide Admissions and Registry departments with approved course documentation and requests these departments to update UCO systems as appropriate.	Head of Quality

13	a) End of Periodic Course Review Process is confirmed to all involved in the process and to: • The Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee • The Quality Assurance Committee • Academic Council • Senior Management Team	GOsC Review Co-ordinator
14	Monitoring of ongoing actions not required to have been completed for approval to be granted.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee in respect of educational matters Quality Assurance Committee regarding institutional matters Both should include dissemination of strengths.

I) UNSOLICITED INFORMATION

6.13.38 There may be other stakeholders involved in the GOsC Review, such as teaching staff, students, or patients, who wish to bring information to the QAA visitors' attention. This is called 'unsolicited information'.

6.13.39 The GOsC Review will consider unsolicited information in writing from any individual or organisation, as long as it is relevant to the review and submitted before the review has ended.

6.13.40 The QAA visitors are obliged to corroborate any unsolicited information they receive with other sources of evidence. The QAA will also forward a copy of the unsolicited information to the GOsC and to the UCO with an invitation for a response. If the information is not relevant to the GOsC Review, the QAA will still forward a copy to the GOsC, and the GOsC may share it with the UCO, but it will not affect the review outcomes.

6.13.41 The UCO is required to circulate a QAA-standard email to staff and students as soon as the date for the visit is agreed regarding the unsolicited information facility. The UCO should also display a standard poster about the protocol in the clinic for the attention of any patients who come into contact with students.

J) GOsC REVIEW EVENTS

6.13.42 The GOsC Review Event provides the opportunity for the QAA visitors to test their understanding and interpretation of the SED by reference to other sources of evidence, including written documentation, meetings with staff and students and the observation of teaching and learning.

6.13.43 There are two key reference points that help the QAA visitors to determine how osteopathic courses and their providers are performing in the eight areas identified in Section 2 of the SED. These are:

i. the GOsC's Osteopathic Practice Standards[7]

ii. the UK Quality Code for Higher Education[8]

[7] https://standards.osteopathy.org.uk/
[8] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code

6.13.44 The GOsC Review Event usually involves a two-and-a-half-day visit to the course delivery sites to allow the visitors to meet staff and students and observe teaching. If it is a combined review, the review period may be longer.

6.13.45 An indicative agenda for the review visit is outlined in Table 6.7.

6.13.46 The Review Panel is comprised of QAA visitors.

TABLE 6.7: INDICATIVE GOSC REVIEW EVENT AGENDA

Time	Individuals involved	Topics for discussion
Day 1		
8.45	Review Panel Senior Staff	Short introduction to the provision
9.00	Review Panel	Private panel meeting
10.00	Review Panel Senior Staff Course Leaders	Initial Meeting: Discussion of recent developments (validation process, development of new courses)
11.00	Review Panel (Lay Visitors) Senior Staff	Meeting to discuss corporate management and governance issues.
11.00	Review Panel (Osteopathic Visitors) Teaching Staff Students	Class visits / clinic visits / documentation
12.30	Review Panel Students	Lunch meeting with students
13.30	Review Panel Senior Staff	Tour of facilities
14.30	Review Panel Course Leaders Course Delivery Staff	Meeting to discuss aims and intended learning outcomes and curricula for all the programmes
15.30	Review Panel	Class visits / documentation review
17.00/17.15	Review Panel Senior Staff	Feedback to key staff on progress to date
Day 2		
9.00	Review Panel Senior Staff	Meeting with key staff to confirm agenda
9.30	Review Panel (Osteopathic Visitors) Teaching Staff Students	Class visits / clinic visits / documentation

9.30	Review Panel (Lay Visitors) Senior Staff	Meeting to discuss management and enhancement of standards and quality
10.30	Review Panel	Team in base room/class visits
11.30	Review Panel Course Leaders Student Support Staff Learning Resources Staff Academic Registry Staff	Meeting to discuss teaching and learning, student progression/support and learning resources
12.30	Review Panel	Lunch
13.15	Review Panel Clinic Staff	Observation of moderation process for clinical assessment
14.30	Review Panel Teaching Staff Clinical Staff	Meeting with teaching and clinical staff
15.30	Review Panel	Panel meeting
16.00	Review Panel Course Leaders Academic Registry Staff	Meeting to discuss assessment and achievement
17.00	Review Panel Senior Staff	Feedback from second day
Day 3		
8.45	Review Panel Senior Staff	Meeting with key staff to confirm agenda for the day
9.00	Review Panel	Panel drafts initial paragraphs
10.30	Review Panel	Panel meeting to agree findings
12.00	Review Panel Senior Staff Course Leaders	Final feedback (outlining areas of strength and good practice and areas for development and any serious concerns)
12.30	Review Panel	Panel departs

K) GOsC Review Outcomes

6.13.47 At the end of the review visit, the Review Panel makes a judgement about whether, and to what extent, the course reflects or continues to reflect the expectations established by the key reference documents identified above. The judgement will be expressed as one of the following:

a) Approval without conditions

b) Approval with conditions

c) Approval denied.

6.13.48 The Review Panel's decision will be sent to the GOsC, which retains discretion over whether it accepts the findings.

6.13.49 Initial feedback is offered to the UCO at the end of the review visit, though it is non-binding.

L) GOsC Review Reporting and Responses

6.13.50 The time between the end of the review visit and the GOsC's decision on the review report is typically 20 weeks.

6.13.51 In the case of a judgement of 'approval with conditions', the report will include the conditions the Review Panel considers should be attached to the recognition of the qualification. The report will also highlight any strengths, examples of good practice, and areas for development.

6.13.52 The GOsC will send the draft report to the UCO within five weeks of the end of the visit; this will be initially disseminated to the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the UCO's GOsC Review Co-ordinator (as a minimum).

6.13.53 The report will be reviewed by the Quality Assurance Committee and Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee, and an action plan will be developed to address any conditions arising from the review, which should be produced on a template (as supplied in the appendices). The action plan is approved by Academic Council prior to submission to the GOsC.

6.13.54 Whilst the UCO is not required to respond to any identified areas for development, it is considered good practice to do so where relevant; therefore, the UCO's own action plan may include actions to address areas for development and also means to disseminate identified strengths.

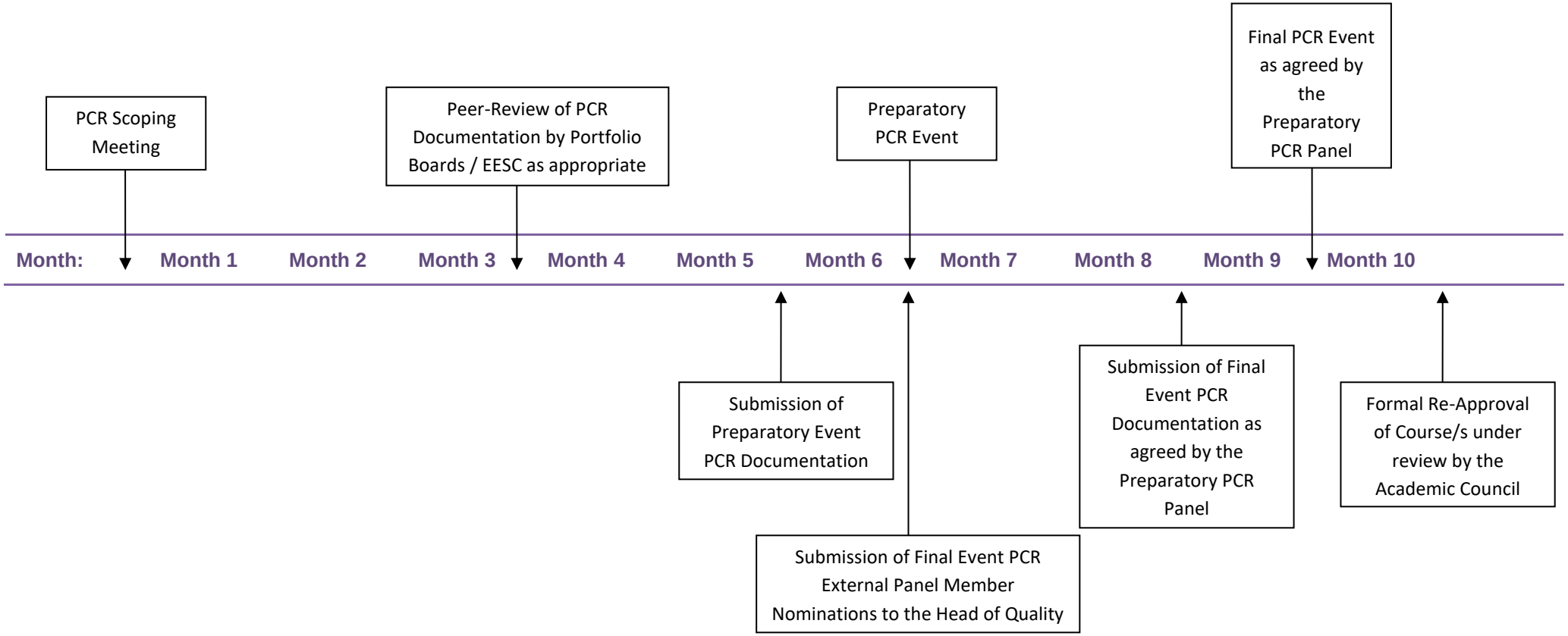
6.13.55 Monitoring of the action plan is undertaken by the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee in respect of educational actions, and the Quality Assurance Committee in respect of institutional matters.

6.13.56 To enable approval of modified documentation, version control processes should be used (as documented in the UCO's Version Control Policy[9]. This includes using tracked changes to identify modifications and including footers to show the date and version of documents.

6.13.57 Further information about the Periodic Course and Institutional Review processes by the QAA on behalf of the GOsC can be found on the QAA's website[10].

[9] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[10] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/general-osteopathic-council-review

DIAGRAM 6.1: TYPICAL TIMESCALE FOR PERIODIC COURSE REVIEW EVENTS



AQF06: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
AQF06_01	Periodic Course Review Form
AQF06_02	Periodic Course Review External Panel Member Nomination Form
AQF06_03	Periodic Course Review Self-Evaluation Document Template
AQF06_04	Periodic Course Review Portfolio Information Template
AQF06_05	Periodic Course Review Course Information Checklist
AQF06_06	Periodic Course Review Reference Point Mapping Checklist
AQF06_07	Periodic Course Review Outcome Report Template
AQF06_08	Periodic Course Review Outcome Response Form
AQF06_09	Periodic Course Review Confirmation Form
AQF06_10	GOsC Review UCO-Level Event Outcome Report Template
AQF06_11	GOsC Review UCO-Level Event Outcome Response Form
AQF06_12	Guidance for External Panel Members of Course Review Events
AQF06_13	Guidance for Student Panel Members of Course Review Events

AQF06: ENDNOTES

[1] AQF06_01_Periodic_Course_Review_Form

[2] AQF06_02_PCR_External_Panel_Member_Nomination_Form

[3] AQF06_03_PCR01_SED_Template

[4] AQF06_03_PCR01_SED_Template

[5] AQF06_04_PCR02_Portfolio_Information_Document_Template

[6] AQF06_04_PCR02_Portfolio_Information_Document_Template

[7] AQF06_05_PCR03_Course_Information_Checklist

[8] AQF06_05_PCR03_Course_Information_Checklist

[9] AQF06_06_PCR04_Reference_Point_Mapping_Checklist

[10] AQF04_08_External_Benchmarking_Mapping_Template

[11] AQF06_05_PCR03_Course_Information_Checklist

[12] AQF06_07_PCR_Outcome_Report_Form

[13] AQF06_07_ PCR_Outcome_Report_Form

[14] AQF06_08_PCR_Outcome_Response_Form

[15] AQF06_09_PCR_Confirmation_Form

[16] AQF06_10_GOsC_UCO_Level_Event_Outcome_Report_Template

[17] AQF06_11_GOsC_UCO_Level_Event_Review_Outcome_Response_Form

Academic Quality Framework

Section 7: Academic Regulations

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 7: Academic Regulations

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of interest to all members of the UCO.

Version number	*Dates produced and approved (include committee)*	*Reason for production/ revision*	*Author*	*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.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Academic Registrar*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V1.0	*Sept 2016 Academic Council*	*Reviewed to update staff role and policy titles and to reflect current practice.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Academic Registrar*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF 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*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sept 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative amendments to update staff role titles and email system.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2019 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative amendments to update staff role titles, weblinks & footnotes and to reflect current practice.*	*Head of Quality Registrar*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF 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)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

Section 7: Academic Regulations

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PART A: AWARDS & COURSES

This section of the Academic Quality Framework summarises the UCO's regulations regarding awards and courses and provides information on the approved awards delivered by the UCO, award certificates and transcripts, honorary degrees, credits awarded and language of instruction. It should be of interest to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and to all staff.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 The UCO has been recognised as an institution approved to deliver its own academic taught awards. The UCO must therefore ensure that the Degrees, Diplomas, Certificates and other academic awards and distinctions delivered and conferred by it are comparable in standard with awards granted and conferred throughout the university sector in the United Kingdom; all courses approved by the UCO must be of such an academic standard as to fulfil these requirements. Accordingly, the UCO pays due regard to the Quality Code for Higher Education[1] published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA)[2] in the management of the academic quality and the standards of its courses.

7.1.2 For each Academic Award it establishes, the UCO states a benchmarked definition with reference to The Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ)[3] published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), and detailed guidance from SEEC, a highly respected authority in the existing and developing field of Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CATS) at higher education levels[4], to ensure that all of the courses that lead to an award of the UCO are mapped against nationally recognised academic benchmarks.

7.1.3 The UCO offers programmes of study leading to credits and award qualifications at the following higher education levels:

- Level 3: Access to Higher Education Diplomas
- Level 4: Certificates of Higher Education
- Level 5: Diplomas of Higher Education
- Level 6: Bachelor's Degrees / Bachelor's Degrees with Honours
- Level 7: Postgraduate Certificates / Integrated Master's Degrees / Taught Master's Degrees

7.1.4 The UCO offers programmes of study which are validated by the University of Bedfordshire leading to credits and award qualifications at the following higher education levels:

- Level 8: Doctoral Degrees

7.1.5 Detailed description of the QAA expectations at Levels 4 to 8 is provided within the FHEQ and corresponding level descriptors are provided in the SEEC Credit Level Descriptors for Higher Education published by SEEC.

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/home
[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks
[4] http://www.seec.org.uk/

7.1.6 The UCO uses a credit scheme for taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses and qualifications leading to an award of the UCO and uses credits in a system of recognition of prior learning to support student mobility and progression. The number of credits awarded for each qualification is in line with those typical of credit value arrangements in England published by the QAA[5] (Section 7.9: Credits Awarded & Progression of Courses of Study).

7.1.7 Regulations regarding entry with advanced standing, recognition of prior learning and limitations about the re-use of credit are described in Section 7.21: Recognition of Prior Learning, and further information may be found in the UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy[6].

7.2 Approved Awards Delivered by the UCO

7.2.1 The UCO delivers its own approved awards, a Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy awarded by the University of Bedfordshire, and an Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care) awarded by LASER Learning Awards. In each case the standard of the award is that expected of a student who, having met the relevant admissions requirements, has successfully completed the programme of study to a defined threshold of knowledge and competence for a defined range of credits.

7.2.2 The UCO's own approved awards are defined with a formal award description and an abbreviated form, e.g.:

Formal Award Description:	Integrated Masters in Osteopathy
Abbreviated Form:	M.Ost

7.2.3 Approved awards at the UCO give recognition to different standards of student achievement by the award of commendation, distinction or classification (see Section 7.64: Awards with Commendation, Distinction or Classification).

7.2.4 Those achieving undergraduate or postgraduate awards may use the abbreviated form of the award after their name (e.g. Ms. Anne Other, M.Ost.).

7.2.5 Courses of study may be approved leading to any of the UCO's approved awards, and courses may be designated with more than one award outcome as an intermediate award within an approved course.

7.2.6 Approved awards such as Certificate of Higher Education, Diploma of Higher Education, Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma may be considered as intermediate or exit awards.

7.2.7 Approved awards may be discontinued for the purpose of future courses but will be retained on the UCO's records where students have been conferred with such awards.

7.2.8 A summary of the UCO's course portfolio and courses validated by external bodies can be found in AQF Section 2.9: Course Portfolio & Teaching & Learning Practices.

7.3 Approval of Academic Awards and Qualifications

7.3.1 The UCO's Academic Council holds the authority to approve and establish new academic awards and qualifications for the UCO.

7.3.2 In considering proposals for new academic awards and qualifications, the Academic Council consults widely and reviews the internal and external context, including the FHEQ, noting especially the following:

[5] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks
[6] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/how-apply/recognition-prior-learning-rpl

a) The potential position of the new award within the FHEQ.

b) The characteristics and level that would both distinguish the new award from existing UCO awards and relate it to them and to the qualifications of other higher education or awarding bodies.

c) The potential for new courses and programmes of study under such a new award.

d) The relationship to existing awards and suitability of existing awards for new courses and programme(s) of study.

e) The potential for programme(s) of study capable of leading to this award and likely scale of demand.

f) The new award's potential for recognition by the academic community, other institutions and professions, applicants, students and employers.

7.3.3 The procedure for submitting a proposal for new awards is similar to that required for a new course leading to an existing award (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modifications).

7.4 Award Certificates

7.4.1 The UCO produces one award certificate for each student achieving an approved award of the UCO.

7.4.2 The award certificate will normally include the following information:

- The student's full name.
- The title of the award (including whether a student gained the award with Distinction as appropriate).
- The name of the UCO as the awarding institution.
- The date of the award.

7.4.3 All award certificates should be signed by the Vice-Chancellor of the UCO and the Chair of the Board of Directors.

7.4.4 For awards validated by LASER Learning Awards, the UCO complies with LASER's regulations regarding award documentation and certification[7].

7.4.5 Students successfully completing the Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences or other pre-entry courses do not normally receive a certificate due to these courses being unaccredited and typically serving as a condition of entry onto either of the UCO's M.Ost courses.

7.4.6 Graduates of the UCO requiring replacement or duplicate degree certificates should contact the Academic Registry (registry@uco.ac.uk). This may incur an administrative fee.

7.4.7 Where an award is issued by the University of Bedfordshire, the UCO will comply with the University of Bedfordshire's regulations regarding the provision of certificates.

7.5 Academic Transcripts & Higher Education Achievement Record

7.5.1 The UCO provides an academic transcript to each student at the end of each academic year, which states the grade of each assessment, overall unit grade, and the number and level of credits awarded for each unit and in total for that academic year.

[7] https://www.laser-awards.org.uk/

7.5.2 Existing and past students and graduates of the UCO may request an academic transcript directly from the UCO by contacting the Academic Registry (registry@uco.ac.uk). This may incur an administrative fee.

7.5.3 Academic transcripts requested should be printed using the UCO's approved logo and stamped with the official UCO stamp.

7.5.4 Academic transcripts will normally contain the following information:

- The title of the award (including mode of study).
- The name of the validating body of the award.
- The full name of the student/graduate.
- The student's/graduate's candidate number.
- The student's/graduate's intake year.
- The grade achieved for each assessment.
- The overall unit grade as appropriate.
- The number and level of credits awarded for each unit as applicable.
- The total number and level of credits achieved for each academic year as applicable.
- The year of graduation as applicable.

7.5.5 Where requests from students with awards approved by the University of Bedfordshire are received, the UCO will comply with the University of Bedfordshire's regulations regarding the provision of academic transcripts in line with the University of Bedfordshire's Academic Regulations[8].

7.6 Honorary Degrees

7.6.1 Honorary degrees are awarded by the UCO to selected persons of distinction in line with the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards & UCO Titles or Honorary Awards Criteria & Award Structure.

7.6.2 Honorary degrees may be awarded to individuals who have made a significant contribution to the work of the UCO, or who have earned distinction at a regional, national or international level, or in a particular field, especially the development or application of an appropriate subject discipline or work aligned to the UCO's mission.

7.6.3 Those receiving an Honorary Doctorate degree are normally expected to have made a contribution to nationally significant developments in osteopathy.

7.6.4 Honorary degrees are not normally awarded to current governors, current staff or registered students of the UCO.

7.6.5 The Academic Council is responsible for determining the procedures for the recommendation of honorary degrees.

7.6.6 The Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards and Titles Committee will consider nominations in line with its Terms of Reference and will recommend nominations to the Academic Council. The Academic Council will then formally approve the conferment of the honorary degree(s).

7.6.7 Nominations for honorary degrees conferred by the UCO must include the title of the proposed honorary award, a brief biography of the nominated individual and a statement justifying the nomination in line with the stated criteria and award structure.

[8] http://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/academic-information

7.6.8 Circumstances may arise when the basis on which an honorary degree was awarded is called into question. Any decision to rescind an honorary award must be made after due investigation and consideration of the outcome by the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards and Titles Committee – this is a matter which cannot be delegated via Chair's Action.

7.7 Honorary Awards or Titles

7.7.1 Other UCO titles and recognition are given on behalf of the UCO on the authority of the Board of Directors with the approval of the Academic Council.

A) Honorary UCO Fellowship

7.7.2 The UCO may confer Honorary UCO Fellowships on individuals who have made a particular contribution to the work or development of the UCO. Nominations will be considered by the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards and Titles Committee, and decisions on whether to confer an honorary fellowship will be recommended to the Academic Council by this Committee.

7.7.3 Honorary UCO Fellowships are not conferred on current governors, current staff or registered students of the University.

B) Academic titles – Professor, Associate Professor, Fellow

7.7.4 Through its Academic Council, the UCO may, on advice from the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards and Titles Committee, confer the title of "Professor", "Associate Professor" or "Teaching/Research Fellow/Senior Research Fellow" on those staff who meet the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards & UCO Titles or Honorary Awards Criteria confirmed by the Academic Council.

7.7.5 The Academic Council may also confer the title of "Visiting Professor", "Visiting Associate Professor" or "Visiting Research Fellow/Visiting Senior Research Fellow" to individuals who meet the Honorary Degrees, Academic Awards & UCO Titles or Honorary Awards Criteria confirmed by the Academic Council.

7.8 Courses of Study Leading to Awards of the UCO

7.8.1 Courses of study leading to awards of the UCO are developed through UCO academic structures, considered in light of external academic and professional advice, and approved under delegated authority of the Academic Council through its committees.

7.8.2 The current portfolio of courses approved by the UCO can be found in AQF Section 2: Teaching & Learning at the UCO.

7.8.3 Arrangements for the approval of new courses that lead to an award of the UCO are defined in AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification.

7.8.4 Definitive information about courses is published in information forms; unit information specifications are defined in Unit Information Forms (UIFs) and course information specifications in Course Information Forms (CIFs). They, or extracts from them, serve as the basis for the information about courses provided for students in Course Handbooks and on the Virtual Learning Environment.

7.8.5 The named award to which a course leads reflects the level, nature and subject focus of the course, is determined at course approval, and is included on the award certificate.

7.8.6 Official award certificates are produced by the awarding institution.

7.9 Credits Awarded & Progression of Courses of Study

7.9.1 The normal number of credits awarded for academic awards are shown in Table 7.1 below and are in line with the FHEQ published by the QAA.

TABLE 7.1: THE NORMAL NUMBER OF CREDITS AWARDED FOR ACADEMIC AWARDS

Award	FHEQ Level	Total Number of Credits Required	Minimum Number of Credits at Highest FHEQ Level
Certificate of Higher Education	4	120	90 at FHEQ Level 4
Diploma of Higher Education	5	240	90 at FHEQ Level 5
Bachelor's Degree	6	300	60 at FHEQ Level 6
Bachelor's Degrees with Honours	6	360	90 at FHEQ Level 6 / 7
Postgraduate Certificates	7	60	40 at FHEQ Level 7
Postgraduate Diplomas	7	120	90 at FHEQ Level 7
Integrated Master's Degrees	7	480	120 at FHEQ Level 7
Taught Master's Degrees	7	180	150 at FHEQ Level 7
Professional Doctorate	8	540	-

A) CREDITS AWARDED & PROGRESSION SPECIFIC TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSES

7.9.2 The number of credits awarded per year of study of undergraduate full-time courses is normally 120.

7.9.3 The period of study of undergraduate degree courses is typically the equivalent of at least three full-time academic years.

7.9.4 Students are expected to complete an undergraduate course within the normal period of time as approved at validation, i.e. typically three years for full-time courses and four years for part-time courses.

7.9.5 The maximum time for a student to complete an undergraduate course is the normal period of time as approved at validation plus 2 years.

B) CREDITS AWARDED & PROGRESSION SPECIFIC TO INTEGRATED MASTER'S DEGREES

7.9.6 Integrated Master's degrees normally comprise of 480 credits of which 120 must be at FHEQ Level 7.

7.9.7 The period of study of Integrated Master's degrees is typically the equivalent of at least four full-time academic years.

7.9.8 Students are expected to complete an Integrated Master's course within the normal period of time as approved at validation, i.e. four years.

7.9.9 The maximum time for a student to complete an Integrated Master's course is the normal period of time as approved at validation plus 2 years.

C) Credits Awarded & Progression Specific to Taught Postgraduate Certificates

7.9.10 The number of credits awarded per year of study of Postgraduate Certificate courses is normally 60.

7.9.11 The period of study of Postgraduate Certificate courses is typically the equivalent of at least one-third of a full-time academic year.

7.9.12 Students are expected to complete Postgraduate Certificate course within the normal period of time as approved at validation, i.e. one year.

7.9.13 The maximum time for a student to complete a Postgraduate Certificate course is the normal period of time as approved at validation plus 2 years.

D) Credits Awarded & Progression Specific to Taught Master's Degrees

7.9.14 The number of credits awarded per year of study of postgraduate full-time Master's courses is normally 180.

7.9.15 The period of study of Taught Master's degrees is typically the equivalent of one year of a full-time academic year.

7.9.16 A Master's course comprises 180 credits at FHEQ Level 7 which normally include a dissertation or equivalent assignment of independent work of value up to 60 credits at FHEQ Level 7 (normally of 20,000 words). Where the dissertation or equivalent unit is less than 60 credits, the remaining units comprising the dissertation stage shall be agreed at course approval and published in the Course Information Form or Course Handbook.

7.9.17 Students are expected to complete a Master's course within the normal period of time as approved at validation, i.e. one year.

7.9.18 The maximum time for a student to complete a Master's course is the normal period of time as approved at validation plus 2 years.

E) Credits Awarded & Progression Specific to PSRB Requirements

7.9.19 At course approval, and as a requirement of Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs), the Academic Council of the UCO may agree that it is a prerequisite for progression that:

a) Students pass certain specified units.

b) Students pass a certain number of credits at a particular stage.

c) Failure in certain units cannot be compensated.

7.9.20 At course approval, the Academic Council may agree a specific attendance policy that applies to a particular course, or one which specifies regular attendance for prescribed parts of the curriculum. Such information is recorded in the Course or Unit Information Forms.

7.10 Language of Instruction

7.10.1 English is the language of instruction and assessment on all courses of study.

7.10.2 Exceptions to this regulation may only be approved through the course approval processes detailed in AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification.

7.10.3 Support is provided to students with English as a second language (see AQF Section 10: Student Guidance & Learner Support).

7.11 Learning & Teaching Methods

7.11.1 The following table provides details about the indicative learning and teaching methods used at the UCO:

Learning & Teaching Method	**Definition**	**Description**
Lecture	A presentation or talk on a particular topic.	The term 'lecture' covers everything from the traditional model, where a single member of the institution's staff or an affiliate[9] introduces ideas or delivers facts to a group of students, to approaches that might be much more interactive, involve a variety of contributors, make use of a range of media and technologies, and take place virtually as well as in person. Lectures are assumed, in general, to involve larger groups of students than do seminars and tutorials but size will vary depending upon the nature of what is being taught, the size of the overall student cohort, and practical concerns.
Seminar	A discussion or classroom session focusing on a particular topic or project.	Seminars are defined as sessions that provide the opportunity for students to engage in discussion of a particular topic and/or to explore it in more detail than might be covered in a lecture - the extent of interaction will depend on the delivery method. A typical model would involve a guided, tutor-led discussion in a small group. However, the term also encompasses student or peer-led classes with a staff member or affiliate present. As with lectures, use of technology means seminars may take place virtually. Seminars are assumed in general to involve smaller groups of students than lectures, but size will vary depending upon the nature of what is being taught, the size of the overall student cohort, and practical concerns.
Tutorial	A meeting involving one-to-one or small group supervision, feedback or detailed discussion on a particular topic or project.	Tutorials may be distinguished from seminars for the stronger emphasis that they place on the role of the tutor in giving direction or feedback. Tutorials can happen virtually as well as face-to-face.

[9] i.e. a lecturer, researcher, technician, member of support staff or graduate teaching assistant of the institution or a visiting or external specialist.

Project supervision	A meeting with a supervisor to discuss a particular piece of work.	The term 'project supervision' is used to refer to the meetings that a student or group of students would have with a supervisor, to plan, discuss, and monitor progress on a particular piece of work, such as a dissertation or extended project. Meetings can take place virtually or in person. The size of a project supervision meeting will depend upon the number of students involved in the work concerned and the nature of that work but supervisions will frequently also take place on a one-to-one basis.
Demonstration	A session involving the demonstration of a practical technique or skill.	Examples might include the demonstration of laboratory skills, clinical skills, performance art or fieldwork techniques. Demonstrations can take place virtually or in person. The size of a demonstration is likely to depend upon the number of students involved in the work concerned, as well as the nature of that work, but could also take place on a one-to-one basis
Practical classes and workshops	A session involving the development and practical application of a particular skill or technique.	Examples are wide ranging and could include a laboratory class, recital, artefact handling/identification, language conversation, sports match and so on. Practical classes and workshops might incorporate elements of teaching or guided learning, and they are at least likely to be supervised or observed. These sessions are more likely to take place in person but, depending on the nature of the subject, may also be conducted remotely. The size of a practical class or workshop will depend upon the nature of the activity. Workshops are likely to involve at least a small group of students but practical classes could take place on a one-to-one basis.
Supervised time in studio/workshop	Time in which students work independently but under supervision, in a specialist facility such as a studio or workshop.	Examples might include time spent in an art or design studio, or in a rehearsal space such as a workshop theatre. It could be timetabled or take place on an ad hoc basis. Peers as well as staff or affiliates may be involved. Due to the nature of the activity, it is unlikely to take place virtually. Supervised time in a studio/workshop might involve a group or individual.
Fieldwork	Practical work conducted at an external site.	Examples of fieldwork might include survey work and other forms of data collection, excavations and explorations. The work might be unsupervised or supervised, and supervision could be provided by staff or appointed representatives. Some fieldwork may be conducted virtually. Fieldwork might be conducted in groups of various sizes, or by individuals, depending

		on the nature of the work involved.
External visits	A visit to a location outside of the usual learning spaces, to experience a particular environment, event, or exhibition relevant to the course of study.	Examples are wide ranging and could include a visit to a business or industrial site, built environment site, museum or collection, to attendance at a performance or exhibition. These visits might be unsupervised or supervised, and supervisors could include staff or appointed representatives. Site visits may be carried out in groups of varying sizes, or by individuals, depending on the nature of the visit and the location.
Work-based learning	Learning that takes place in the workplace.	The term covers any learning that takes place through an organised work opportunity, rather than in a university or college setting, and includes managed placements. Some supervision or monitoring is likely be involved, and may be carried out either by a member of staff or a mentor within the host organisation. Due to the nature of the activity, work-based learning is unlikely to take place virtually. Students might undertake work-based learning individually or in groups, depending on the nature of the workplace and the learning involved.
Clinic Observation / Experience	Learning that takes place in the UCO Clinic.	Pre-registration osteopathic students are required to undertake at least 1000 hours of timetabled osteopathic clinic practice learning in the clinical environment[10]. Learning within the clinic consists of managing and treating patients and clinic tutorials.
Independent Study / Directed Study	Autonomous learning with little or no supervision.	Students undertake study on their own to advance and consolidate their learning typically using course materials and other recommended learning resources provided by their tutors.

[10] http://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/types-of-review/general-osteopathic-council-review

PART B: ADMISSION & REGISTRATION

This section of the Academic Quality Framework summarises the UCO's regulations regarding student admission and registration and provides information about student admission, entry requirements, registration, attendance, withdrawal and recognition of prior learning. It should be of interest to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and to all staff involved in these areas.

7.12 ADMISSION OF STUDENTS TO THE UCO

7.12.1 Admission is the process through which an individual (the applicant) applies to become a student of the UCO.

7.12.2 Each applicant is considered on their own merit in line with the UCO's Admissions Policy and Procedures[11] and the entry requirements specific to each course of study.

7.12.3 The admission of a student to the UCO is at the UCO's discretion, and is based on the reasonable expectation that the student is able to:

a) Show the ability to study at Higher Education (HE) level.

b) Complete the objectives of the course or programme of study.

c) Achieve the standard required for the award.

7.12.4 An applicant must fulfil specific entry requirements for the course and subject to be studied prior to entry which normally include specific educational levels and / or qualifications that align with the academic level of the course and subject to be studied, a required level of written and spoken English, and other pre-requisites as agreed at course approval.

7.12.5 Applicants are admitted to study and can become students of the UCO on condition that they:

a) Have fulfilled all entry requirements satisfactorily before the start date of the course for which they have applied.

b) Attended and participated in all required interview events.

c) Have confirmed their place on the course with the Admissions Department.

d) Have received confirmation of a place on the course for which they have applied from the Admissions Department.

e) Attend and complete all registration, orientation and induction events and procedures.

f) Agree to comply with the UCO's academic regulations, rules, codes of conduct, policies and other procedures as approved by the Academic Council, Vice-Chancellor and / or the Board of Directors.

g) Have paid the required tuition fees.

7.12.6 If someone is under 18 years old when they expect to register and become a student of the UCO, formal consent is required from those legally responsible for the applicant. This must be through a consent form signed by the parent or legal guardian and by someone who is ordinarily resident in the UK to confirm their approval. The person resident in the UK is responsible for the student concerned until they are over 18 years old. Where the parent or guardian is not ordinarily resident in the UK, the UCO requires evidence that satisfactory

[11] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/how-apply

arrangements for guardianship of the applicant are in place prior to the registration of the prospective student.

7.12.7 Applicants are required to disclose all facts and information that might be relevant to their application for admission.

7.12.8 The UCO reserves the right to withdraw any offer of admission to study at the UCO, or cancel any acceptance of such an offer, where the offer has been made as a result of using false or misleading information, or by the non-disclosure of information that would have affected the decision about the application for admission.

7.12.9 The UCO similarly reserves the right to stop the registration or terminate the studies of an existing student who is subsequently found to have gained admission by providing false or misleading information, or non-disclosure of information in support of the application. Such students will have no right to a refund of their fees, and any credits or awards they have achieved may be withdrawn.

7.12.10 The UCO establishes arrangements for students with disabilities to be supported and assessed as appropriate and will make reasonable adjustments as required to enable disabled students to follow the course of study on which they register.

7.12.11 Applicants with a disability are encouraged to declare their disability to the UCO during the admission process or as soon as possible thereafter.

7.13 Entry Requirements

7.13.1 The UCO publishes detailed information on the qualifications and pre-requisites required for admission to its courses on its website and on Course Information Forms.

7.13.2 Satisfying the indicated entry requirements does not guarantee an applicant a place on the course for which they have applied. Applicants must comply with the selection and admission processes outlined in AQF Section 8: Student Recruitment & Admissions and published Admissions Policy & Procedures.

A) Minimum Entry Qualifications for Undergraduate Awards

7.13.3 The minimum entry requirement qualifications for undergraduate awards are shown in Table 7.2 below.

7.13.4 Extended undergraduate degrees may have specific entry requirements that are agreed at course approval.

7.13.5 The UCO may also accept evidence of experience in appropriate employment as qualifying the applicant for entry.

Table 7.2: Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications for Undergraduate Awards

Undergraduate Award	**Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications**
Foundation Degrees	One A-Level (or equivalent)
Higher National Diplomas	One A-Level (or equivalent)
Certificate of Higher Education	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)
Diploma of Higher Education	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)

Bachelor's Degrees	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)
Bachelor's Degrees with Honours	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)
Integrated Master's Degrees	Two A-Levels (or equivalent)
Graduate Diplomas	A Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)

B) Minimum Entry Qualifications for Postgraduate Awards

7.13.6 The minimum entry requirement qualifications for postgraduate awards are shown in Table 7.3 below.

Table 7.3: Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications for Postgraduate Awards

Postgraduate Award	**Minimum Entry Requirement Qualifications**
Postgraduate Certificates	A Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)
Postgraduate Diplomas	A Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)
Taught Master's Degrees	A Bachelor's Degree with Honours from a UK University (or equivalent)

7.13.7 The UCO may exceptionally accept evidence of previous advanced study, research or professional experience as an alternative to the minimum entry requirement qualifications shown in Table 7.4.

C) Minimum English Qualifications for All Awards

7.13.8 Applicants with English as a second language or whose previous education has not been delivered in the English language are required to provide evidence of their proficiency in English.

7.13.9 Students requiring a visa to study in the UK will be required to provide evidence of specific English as appropriate to comply with policies published by the UK Home Office (UK Visas & Immigration).

7.14 Student Registration

7.14.1 Student Registration is the process whereby new and existing students are formally confirmed as students of the UCO.

7.14.2 Students must complete Student Registration when they commence their course of study, and re-register annually as and when required throughout their course of study.

7.14.3 Student Registration includes a binding contractual commitment by a student who has been accepted onto / is currently studying on a course of study at the UCO, providing a declaration acknowledging their obligations to the UCO, including payment of tuition fees, and compliance with the UCO's regulations, policies, and procedures.

7.14.4 This binding contractual commitment takes place when the student signs the Student Registration Form or otherwise indicates an intention to be bound by its terms in a way that is

acceptable to the UCO, following provision of personal and academic information electronically and / or in person and paying all they owe or a part of the tuition fees with an agreed payment plan.

7.14.5 Every student must complete Student Registration (or Re-Registration for continuing) within the first four weeks of their course start date (or the first day of the academic year for continuing students).

7.14.6 If a continuing student does not re-register within the specified registration period at the start of a programme, they may be presumed 'withdrawn'.

7.14.7 No person is recognised as being registered as a student of the UCO (and is therefore not a student) until:

a) Tuition fees have either been paid in full for the current academic year, or other arrangements have been approved for that payment of fees which are acceptable to the UCO.

b) All other fees and sums due to the UCO incurred in the previous academic year or academic period have been discharged in full.

7.15 Course Registration

7.15.1 Course Registration takes place as part of Student Registration (see Section 7.13 above) and occurs when the student signs the Student Registration Form electronically and / or in person.

7.15.2 The UCO may exceptionally permit students to register for two courses of study concurrently.

7.15.3 The establishment, delivery and continuation of courses of study are subject to the availability of viable numbers of students and their continuing attendance.

7.15.4 Where the circumstances are reasonable, the UCO reserves the right to discontinue a course, to divide, discontinue or combine units or classes, to vary the time or place of classes, and to alter courses of study as circumstances may require. This will be processed and approved through the appropriate Course and Unit Modification process contained in the Academic Quality Framework (AQF) Section 4.

7.15.5 Course structures are subject to annual review. All units comprising a course of study are listed in the relevant Course Information Form and are offered subject to the constraints of the timetable, the availability of specialist staff, and any restrictions on the number of students who may be taught on a particular unit.

7.15.6 The establishment, delivery and continuation of units are subject to the availability of viable numbers of students and their continuing attendance, and therefore units comprising a course may not necessarily be offered every year.

7.15.7 Students are expected to complete their course/s of study within the normal period of time as designated at course approval and as stipulated on the Course Information Form.

7.15.8 Students are considered to have exited their course of study and have concluded their registration with the UCO once they have been conferred with an award by the appropriate Board of Examiners.

7.15.9 A student may lose the right to continue on a course or study, have their registration with the UCO terminated, and be withdrawn from the UCO where:

a) The student's academic performance has been considered by a Board of Examiners and, having failed to make sufficient academic progress in their view, there is an academic decision that the student shall not be allowed to continue on their course of study or remain registered as a student of the UCO.

b) The student has not completed Student Registration by the published date for end of registration for new or continuing students as appropriate.

c) The student is not in good financial standing with the UCO / partner institution and has failed to make acceptable arrangements to pay what is owed.

d) The student is absent from their course(s) of study without the agreement of the UCO / partner institution on grounds of absence, and therefore assumed withdrawal.

e) The student has demonstrably not engaged with their course(s) of study.

f) The outcome of the investigation of an academic offence, or of the presentation of false or misleading documentation, or the non-disclosure of information, recommends that the student is withdrawn from their course(s) of study, their registration terminated and is withdrawn from the UCO.

g) The Vice-Chancellor has accepted a recommendation that the student's registration should be terminated on disciplinary grounds under the terms of the Student Code of Conduct.

7.15.10 A student whose studies are terminated and is withdrawn from the UCO as a consequence of any of the above must formally apply for re-admission if they wish to return to a course of study with the UCO. The circumstances of the student's withdrawal from the UCO will be taken into account when their application is considered.

7.16 Student Induction

a) New Students

7.16.1 The UCO is aware that the start of a student's experience in higher education is a critical and sensitive period. The UCO provides an induction programme that aims to ease the transition and helps prepare students for their academic and social experiences.

7.16.2 Induction for all new students includes a welcome to the UCO by the Vice-Chancellor; introduction to key personnel including the Registrar (or equivalent), course leaders and student support team, and sessions from course tutors to introduce students to the units of study they are about to embark upon. There are also sessions from the library and ICT teams to introduce learning resources.

7.16.3 Student induction is normally complemented by social events, a freshers' fair, and a welcome event hosted by the Vice-Chancellor and / or Students' Union.

7.16.4 In addition, part-time students, both undergraduate and postgraduate, are invited to induction events. These cover topics such as: returning to study (in recognition that these students have often been out of education for a number of years), an introduction to higher education, and how to study on a part-time programme.

b) Continuing Students

7.16.5 Continuing students are provided with a modified induction programme, which introduces them to the next phase of the course they are undertaking.

7.16.6 This covers issues such as regulatory changes, changes to support, and how the UCO responded to the feedback from students in the last academic cycle. The UCO believes that it is very important to 'close the feedback loop' with students, so they can see what actions the UCO has taken in response to the issues they raised.

7.17 Timetabling of Courses

7.17.1 Courses are timetabled in line with the UCO's Timetable Policy[12], which provides a framework for support staff involved in the preparation and production of the teaching timetable, and aims to:

i. Support the delivery of high-quality learning and teaching in appropriate accommodation.

ii. Provide access to timely and accurate timetabling and room booking information.

iii. Optimise utilisation of general teaching space.

iv. Ensure that a single central system contains a live, up to date record of all learning and teaching activities which use the UCO's resources, which is available on-line 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

7.18 Monitoring Student Progression

7.18.1 The academic progress of students throughout their course is determined by Progression Criteria that are agreed at course approval. These are specific for each course and published in Course Information Forms and / or Course Handbooks.

7.18.2 Progression Criteria ensure that students fulfil the requirements of each phase of their course before being permitted to progress to the next.

7.18.3 Student progression between phases is agreed and confirmed by Boards of Examiners (see AQF Section 12: Boards of Examiners)

7.18.4 Students' progress throughout their time at the UCO is monitored using a number of mechanisms, including:

i. Formative assessment.

ii. The review of interim assessment results by Portfolio Boards.

iii. Academic Tutor interviews.

iv. The regular monitoring of student attendance by the Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARG).

7.19 Student Transfer

7.19.1 A student who is registered on a course may be permitted to transfer to another course via the transfer process[13]. Informal advice regarding this issue can be sought from the Registrar.

7.19.2 Any student wishing to transfer from one course to another should in the first instance discuss their circumstances with their Course Leader.

7.19.3 Students wishing to transfer to another institution should formally withdraw from their course (see Section 7.21 on Suspension of Studies & Withdrawal) and apply directly to that institution.

7.20 Student Attendance

7.20.1 All students are expected to maintain their academic progress, registration, and attendance, and have any absence period approved as an agreed interruption to their study on a course.

[12] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[13] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.20.2 Every student registered with the UCO on a course of study is expected to attend regularly and engage with all formal learning opportunities, scheduled classes, and other supervised studies of their course/s, undertake independent and other studies as required, and complete all assessment requirements, as confirmed through the course approval process and in line with the Student Attendance Policy[14].

7.20.3 Students must comply with course and unit specific attendance requirements as stipulated on Course and Unit Information Forms.

7.20.4 Student attendance at formal learning opportunities is monitored through the use of attendance registers, which are produced and maintained by the Academic Registry.

7.20.5 Tutors are responsible for monitoring registration for their class.

7.20.6 Students are responsible for registering their attendance and must not register attendance for any other student and will be subject to Disciplinary procedures should they do so.

7.20.7 All tutors are responsible for monitoring the attendance of their class/es and should raise any issues concerning the attendance of students to the relevant Unit or Course Leader. In addition, the Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARG) also monitors student attendance and will notify relevant support staff, Course Leaders, and the Student Support Manager in cases of concern.

7.20.8 Non-attendance is used as a measure of engagement in study and as an indicator of students experiencing difficulties with their studies or personal life. Identifying students with a low level of attendance enables the UCO to implement appropriate support measures and solutions to address issues that may be affecting a student's attendance, and thereby increase the student's likelihood of success.

7.20.9 Where a student is unable to attend or will knowingly be absent from a formal teaching session, they should follow the procedure for notifying the UCO in the Student Attendance Policy.

7.20.10 A student who fails to attend, without good cause or due notice, the course on which they are registered for a period of 15 working days, can be considered to have disengaged from the course or programme of studies, and the UCO has the right to terminate that student's studies and registration and withdraw the student from the UCO.

7.20.11 Students must also observe the reporting requirements of their funding bodies or sponsors as appropriate.

7.21 Suspension of Studies & Student Withdrawal

7.21.1 Students may elect to suspend and return to their studies at a later date (normally in exceptional circumstances), or withdraw from their course, at any point during their course.

7.21.2 A student who is considering suspending their studies or withdrawing from their course should follow the Suspension of Studies & Student Withdrawal Policy and Procedure[15] to ensure that they receive the appropriate support and complete the required suspension of studies/withdrawal procedures as necessary.

7.21.3 Students who suspend their studies surrender eligibility to apply for and participate in student schemes or discounts, including Council Tax exemptions and student travel or photo card schemes, for the duration of the suspension of their studies. Eligibility is restored following their return to study upon receipt of a completed Student Registration Form.

[14] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[15] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.21.4 A student who is intending to withdraw from their course must inform the UCO's Finance Department using the procedures published in the Tuition Fee Policy[16].

7.21.5 Students who withdraw from the course must return (as appropriate) their:

i. Student card.

ii. Locker key.

iii. Borrowed library books / resources.

7.21.6 Where a student has been unable to fulfil the specific regulations of their course of study, but has fulfilled the UCO's Academic Regulations for progression, the UCO, on the recommendation of the Board of Examiners, may withdraw the student from the course of study for which they were originally registered, and transfer them to an alternative course.

7.21.7 Where a student withdraws or has been withdrawn from the UCO, the Board of Examiners will consider the student's performance and the credits they have achieved to date and confer the highest award for which the student is eligible. A student receiving an award in this way may be subsequently considered for re-admission under the arrangements for Recognition of Prior Learning.

7.22 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

7.22.1 The UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy[17] demonstrates its commitment to support widening participation, and to acknowledge and recognise appropriately students' previous academic achievements and experience.

7.22.2 The UCO operates a transparent and responsive system for the recognition of prior learning, which considers all students equally (full-time, part-time, home and international).

7.22.3 The UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy enables students to demonstrate and provide evidence for their prior learning and to join courses at an appropriate stage commensurate to their prior academic achievements. It also enables the UCO to prepare the student for subsequent parts of the course appropriately.

7.22.4 Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) may comprise of the accreditation of prior certificated learning (APCL) and / or accreditation of prior experiential or otherwise un-assessed learning (APEL).

7.22.5 Procedures for considering RPL applications for each specific course are contained within course specific RPL handbooks, which are approved by the Academic Council, and which provide applicants with additional guidance and information on RPL applications.

7.22.6 Approval of prior learning credit must be completed as part of the admissions process, and prior to registration on a course or programme of study.

7.22.7 A tariff of fees for the consideration of RPL applications are contained within RPL handbooks.

7.22.8 For all courses, credit for prior learning (whether certificated or experiential) may count towards the requirements of a named or unnamed award, up to a specified limit as shown in Table 7.4 below, unless a variation to this is agreed at course approval.

[16] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/course-fees/tuition-fee-policy
[17] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/how-apply/recognition-prior-learning-rpl

TABLE 7.4: THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF CREDITS NORMALLY CONSIDERED THROUGH RPL APPLICATIONS

Award	Maximum Number of Credits Normally Considered through RPL	FHEQ Level
Certificate of Higher Education	60	4
Foundation Degree	120	4
Diploma of Higher Education	120	4
Diploma in Professional Studies/Professional Practice	60	4
Bachelor's Degrees	120 60	4 5
Bachelor's Degrees with Honours	120 60	4 5
Postgraduate Certificate	30	7
Postgraduate Diploma	60	7
Integrated Master's Degree	120 60	4 5
Master's Degree	90	7

7.23 ACADEMIC APPEALS

7.23.1 Although rigorous procedures are followed to ensure that all student assessments and examinations are conducted and marked fairly and appropriately (see Section C: Assessment Regulations for Taught Degrees), students may appeal against a decision made by the Board of Examiners in the following circumstances:

i. Exceptional extenuating circumstances.

ii. Operational problems impacting on academic outcome.

7.23.2 Academic appeals should be considered in line with the Academic Appeals Policy[18].

7.24 ACADEMIC OFFENCES

7.24.1 Academic offences include:

i. Collusion.

ii. Fabrication.

[18] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

iii. Cheating.

iv. Impersonation.

v. Plagiarism.

7.24.2 This above list is not exhaustive. More information regarding academic offences and their prosecution, along with guidance on good academic practices, is described in detail in the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy & Procedures and the UCO's Plagiarism Policy[19].

7.25 Student Fitness to Study

7.25.1 There is a growing awareness of the need for Higher Education Institutions to respond appropriately to situations where visible signs of ill health (including mental health difficulties, psychological, personality, or emotional disorders) may have an impact on the functioning of individual students, and the wellbeing of others around them. Students who present with difficulties should, wherever possible, be considered from a supportive perspective.

7.25.2 The UCO is committed to promoting positive attitudes towards students with physical or mental ill health.

7.25.3 The UCO also has a duty of care to respond appropriately where there are substantial concerns relating to a student's health and wellbeing, and the impact that may have upon the individual and/or other members of the UCO's community.

7.25.4 The UCO's Support to Study Policy[20] outlines the procedures and the support available where a student's health and wellbeing deteriorates to the point where they may not be fit to study, including where they may be at risk of harm to themselves and/or others and is designed to ensure a consistent and sensitive approach to managing situations.

7.25.5 Academic Tutors and Course Leaders are the staff members most likely to identify issues and are therefore provided with guidance and advice from the Student Support Department to enable them to manage situations where students' fitness to study is of concern.

7.25.6 The UCO aims to support students with physical and mental ill health to enable them to fulfil their potential and complete their chosen course of study.

7.26 Student Fitness to Practice

7.26.1 Students registered on courses that lead to a professional osteopathic qualification are made aware of their responsibilities regarding the standard of professional behaviour expected of them as detailed in the Student Fitness to Practice & Professional Behaviour Policy[21], which has been produced in line with the General Osteopathic Council's Osteopathic Practice Standards.

7.26.2 This acknowledges the responsibility the UCO has towards its students, and their interactions with the general public, regarding professional behaviour, responsibility, and safety, and clearly communicates:

i. The meaning of Student Fitness to Practice.

ii. The threshold of acceptable behaviour.

iii. Categories of concern highlighted by the General Osteopathic Council.

iv. Student support mechanisms at the UCO.

[19] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[20] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[21] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

v. Acceptable professional behaviour at the UCO – Good clinical care, recording and maintaining clinical information, maintaining good osteopathic practice, teaching and training, appraising and assessing, issues of safety relating to assessment, relationships with patients, working with colleagues, probity and health.

vi. Student Fitness to Practice Procedures – Disciplinary Procedures, Disciplinary Hearings and Panels, Sanctions and Appeals.

7.27 Conduct

7.27.1 The UCO is a community that expects its students and staff to behave professionally and respectfully to each other, its patients, the public, and UCO property at all times.

7.27.2 Codes of Conduct are expected to be followed by students and staff to ensure that a pleasant and supportive environment for study and work is provided for all. Should these be contravened, disciplinary procedures as contained in the Code of Conduct Policies will be initiated as appropriate.

7.27.3 The following policies[22] are in place should any misconduct need to be reported:

i. Anti-bullying & Harassment Policy.

ii. Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy.

iii. Relationships between Students & Staff Policy.

7.28 Complaints & Grievance Procedures

7.28.1 The UCO encourages students and staff to resolve academic and non-academic issues of concern on an informal level where possible. However, if this is not possible, established Complaints and Grievance Procedures[23] may be used to report and seek redress for both academic and non-academic issues.

7.28.2 Support for students and staff (as specified in policy documents) is provided where required in cases of conduct, complaint or discipline.

[22] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[23] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

PART C: ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS FOR TAUGHT DEGREES

This section of the Academic Quality Framework summarises the UCO's assessment and examination policies and practices and provides information on graduation and transcripts. It should be of interest to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and to all staff involved with assessments and examinations.

7.29 INTRODUCTION

7.29.1 This section provides information on the regulations, policies, and procedures relating to assessment, along with guidance on the design and use of assessment methods and tools.

7.29.2 The UCO recognises that assessment practice and processes must be robust and conform to internal and national expectations, ensuring confidence in the reliability, validity and authenticity of grading.

7.29.3 The UCO identifies the purposes of assessment as follows:

- To objectively measure students' achievements against the intended learning outcomes of the unit and course (summative assessment).
- To assist student learning by providing appropriate feedback on performance (formative assessment).
- To provide a reliable and consistent basis for Boards of Examiners to determine the progression of, and conferment of awards to students.

7.29.4 Assessment is an integral part of our approach to facilitating student learning. It prepares students for life after study and is part of a progressive process by which students learn to develop their criticality and their ability to analyse and take responsibility for their own work.

7.29.5 The UCO's approach to assessment is designed to align to the QAA's Quality Code of Higher Education regarding Assessment[24].

7.30 ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

7.30.1 When assessing learning, we are primarily concerned with supporting and assessing the achievement of the course learning outcomes and progress towards those outcomes. Unit outcomes should clearly contribute to the achievement of those at the course level.

7.30.2 Assessment strategies should:

- Be coherent and developmental across the course, supporting learner development and enabling students to achieve their potential.
- Strike a balance between low risk formative assessment and higher risk summative assessment.
- Enable students to experience a wide range of increasingly complex assessment activities designed to support the development of their wider attributes and skills.

7.31 ASSESSMENT STANDARDS

7.31.1 Assessment practices and processes must be robust and conform to internal and national expectations and standards, thereby ensuring confidence in the reliability, validity and authenticity of grading.

[24] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment

7.31.2 Assessment criteria should be clearly specified, aligned to the level of the unit, and used as the basis for marking and grading.

7.32 Assessment Tasks

7.32.1 Assessment tasks should relate to the learning outcomes of the unit and support the overarching assessment strategy. Assessment practices should be inclusive and equitable; the methods, tasks and processes should not advantage or disadvantage any group or individual, and assessment task design should support academic integrity and minimise opportunities for plagiarism.

7.33 Engaging Students in the Assessment Process

7.33.1 Students should be supported in developing an understanding of expectations through detailed assessment briefs and active engagement with the assessment process and criteria.

7.33.2 Assessment tasks should enable student self-regulation and reflection, giving students the confidence and skills to use the variety of feedback available to them to monitor and regulate their performance.

7.33.3 Realistic and balanced assessment workloads should spread the assessment loading and ensure adequate time for the associated learning.

7.34 Reviewing and Evaluating Assessment

7.34.1 Assessment is a collegiate activity, which necessitates Course Teams discussing and agreeing assessment expectations and sharing experiences.

7.34.2 Assessment practice should be continuously reviewed and refined to ensure that it effectively supports students and their learning and meets stakeholder requirements.

7.35 Types of Assessment

7.35.1 In general, the UCO seeks to follow a mixed method of assessment appropriate to the nature of individual courses.

7.35.2 Assessment at the UCO is divided into two categories: formative assessment and summative assessment.

a) Formative Assessment

7.35.3 All courses are required to have effective mechanisms in place to ensure that students receive feedback that enables them to continuously improve their academic performance (i.e. formative assessment).

7.35.4 The UCO emphasises the value of early formative assessment to promote both the development of skills and engagement with course material.

7.35.5 Participating in formative assessment is not normally a requirement for progression.

b) Summative Assessment

7.35.6 The purpose of summative assessment is to enable students to demonstrate that they have fulfilled the learning outcomes of their course, and the units therein, to the standard required for the award for which they are registered.

7.35.7 Learning outcomes are specified on Course Information Forms (CIFs) and Unit Information Forms (UIFs) at the time of approval of courses and units, or through subsequent modification

through the UCO's agreed processes (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification).

7.36 Setting and Arranging Assessments

a) Assessment Elements, Methods, and Tasks for Taught Courses

7.36.1 The method of assessment and relative weighting of assessments is determined at the time of course approval or revision of a unit and are specified on Unit Information Forms (UIFs).

7.36.2 Each 30 credit unit, based on 300 notional learning hours, should normally have a minimum of two, and a maximum of three, assessment elements.

7.36.3 Each 15 credit unit, based on 150 notional learning hours, should normally have a maximum of two assessment elements.

7.36.4 Assessment elements represent the reporting point for Boards of Examiners.

7.36.5 Each assessment element may be made up of one or more assessment components (i.e. individual tasks) combined together for reporting purposes. Where multiple assessment components contribute to an assessment element, the means of determining the overall grade should be indicated on the UIF (for example, whether students need to complete all of the tasks successfully or only a set number of them).

7.36.6 The methods of assessments and their weighting should be the same for all students taking a unit, regardless of their mode of study, unless an alternative method has been agreed to respond to the needs of a particular student (for example, a student with a disability, or where learning outcomes are to be demonstrated through work-related assessment).

7.36.7 In designing the core and optional components within a subject area, Course Teams must ensure that the students' experience encompasses a balance of assessment methods, and that these are appropriate to the objectives of the course. Assessment methods should be varied in order to enable different aspects of students' aptitudes and skills to be developed and tested, and in order to provide the UCO with sufficient evidence to verify the authenticity of individual students' work.

b) Timings of Assessment for Taught Courses

7.36.8 The timings of assessments are specified on UIFs, with the weeks of assessment being clearly noted to aid student planning of work.

7.36.9 The period for which a unit runs must be clearly specified on the UIF so that it concludes with the final assessment. Exceptions will rarely be permitted. Where units depend heavily on field work or work based learning outside the normal academic year, the period allowed for this must be defined and specified on the UIF.

7.36.10 Course Leaders should ensure that there is an appropriate spread of examination and assessment submission dates across the academic year.

7.36.11 The Registrar will provide a definitive schedule of examinations and assessment submission dates which will be published on the UCO's Virtual Learning Environment well in advance of the examination period.

c) Assessment Framework & Workload for Taught Courses

7.36.12 The UCO uses a broad assessment framework to enable assessment workload for taught courses to be considered by Course Teams. Course Teams are expected to have a clearly articulated assessment strategy that is benchmarked against the framework, with variances to the framework considered and justified as part of the course approval and review process.

7.36.13 The assessment framework is designed to enable Course Teams to:

- Design effective assessment strategies.
- Reduce the potential for over-assessment which can lead to a 'surface' approach to learning.
- Ensure that students are informed about the amount of time typically required to complete any given assessment task to an acceptable standard.
- Enable students to plan their workload.

7.36.14 The framework uses notional learning hours as the measure for comparability, since measuring assessments in terms of word length focuses students on outputs and may encourage a 'copy and paste' approach, where students see the number as a target and are not concerned about the quality of the work they are producing. Furthermore, it recognises that it may take more student time to produce quality work within a low word limit than within a high word limit.

7.36.15 This information can be useful for students in gaining a better understanding of the effort required, and thus the planning of their studies. It is therefore the total time (i.e. the projected time taken for the preparation and compilation framework components combined) that should be used in estimating the workload associated with a particular assessment.

7.36.16 In some subjects it is recognised that it is hard to differentiate assessment from teaching and learning activities. In such cases, and where activities can be variable in terms of assessment time depending on their nature and scope, Course Teams should use the framework as a reference point when seeking to estimate the notional learning hours associated with each task.

7.36.17 In defining assessment strategies for units and courses, Course Teams should ensure that the percentage of the notional learning hours associated with assessment is between 20% and 30% of the total notional learning hours for a unit. Higher and lower values are permissible depending on subject, level and purpose, but should be justified as part of the approval process (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification).

7.36.18 It is recognised that, where appropriate, there will also need to be clear specification of word lengths, intended as 'guardrails' so that students understand the volume of work they are expected to produce, and to prevent staff from having to read and grade voluminous assessments.

7.36.19 The total word-count associated with assessment for a 30 credit unit should not normally exceed 10,000 words and the total word-count for a 15 credit unit should not normally exceed 5,000 words.

7.36.20 The Assessment Framework referred to above is outlined in Table 7.5 and is used as guidance that informs assessment strategy design to ensure that assessment methods are effective, appropriate, clear, and comprehensive to students.

TABLE 7.5 INDICATIVE LIST OF ASSESSMENT METHODS

An indicative list of Assessment Methods described below may be used by the UCO to assess students.

Assessment Type	Definition	Description
Written Exam	A question or set of questions relating to a particular area of study.	Written exams usually occur at the end of a period of learning and assess whether students have achieved the intended learning outcomes. They may be 'seen', where the student is aware in advance of the question(s) they are expected to answer, or 'unseen', where the questions are only revealed 'on the day'. In an 'open-book' exam, a student is allowed to use a selection of reference materials during the assessment. The questions asked as part of a written exam may be essay, short answer, problem or multiple-choice. Written exams usually (but not always) take place under timed conditions.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	An exercise completed in writing.	Written exercises that typically have deadlines attached but which are not carried out under timed conditions. A well-known example is the essay, where students are required to write about a particular topic or answer a question in depth. Other examples include written briefings on particular topics.
Report	A description, summary or other account of an experience or activity.	There are many different kinds of report - often students are required to produce a report after participating in a practical activity such as fieldwork, laboratory work, work experience or placement. Reports typically have a prescribed format.
Dissertation	An extended piece of written work, often the write-up of a final-year project.	A dissertation is a substantial piece of writing deriving from research that a student has undertaken. Dissertations are the result of a student's independent work, carried out under the guidance of a supervisor. Different subject areas may follow different conventions in relation to the production of dissertations. (Note that other outputs from projects are listed separately.)
Portfolio	A collection of work that relates to a given topic or theme, which has been produced over a period of time.	Typically, a portfolio contains a number of pieces of work, usually connected by a topic or theme. Students are usually required to organise the collection of examples and the portfolio often includes some reflective accounts (diaries/logs). Examples include, in education, that students may collect in a portfolio essays around particular teaching methods, lesson plans, teaching

		materials that they have developed and a report about the teaching experience itself.
Project output (other than dissertation)	Output from project work, often of a practical nature, other than a dissertation or written report.	Students are assessed on the output of a period of project work (other than in the form of a dissertation or written report). Examples are diverse and include the staging of a play or other performance, a piece of artwork, a new product or a poster.
Oral assessment and presentation	A conversation or oral presentation on a given topic, including an individual contribution to a seminar.	Examples of oral assessments and presentations might include conversations, discussions, debates, presentations and individual contributions to seminars. This category would also include the viva voce exam which is typically used by institutions in specific circumstances such as clarifying assessment decisions reached via other means.
Practical skills assessment	Assessment of a student's practical skills or competence.	Practical skills assessment focuses on whether, and/or how well, a student performs a specific practical skill or technique (or competency). Examples include clinical skills, laboratory techniques, identification of or commentary on artwork, surveying skills, language translation or listening comprehension, and so on.
Set exercises	Questions or tasks designed to assess the application of knowledge, analytical, problem-solving or evaluative skills.	Examples might include data interpretation and data analysis exercises and problem-based or problem-solving exercises.

d) Changing Assessments and Assessment Weightings for Taught Courses

7.36.21 The assessment strategy for a unit will normally be agreed when the unit is approved and may only be varied subsequently through the appropriate quality assurance process (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval and Modification).

e) Design of Assessment Tasks for Taught Courses

7.36.22 Unit Leaders are responsible for preparing assessments, in consultation with those involved with the delivery of a course, and in line with the UIF. While questions should relate to the course actually delivered, they may include reference to material not actually taught, provided that students have been told explicitly (e.g. in the course documentation and assessment brief) that a particular subject would form part of the course aims and learning outcomes, and that students would be expected to undertake self-directed learning on such material.

7.36.23 The appropriate External Examiner must be asked to approve final assessments and should be sent all relevant Assessment Briefs and UIFs to enable them to ascertain whether draft questions are fair and appropriate in relation to the course aims and learning outcomes.

7.36.24 Once all substantive changes requested by the External Examiner have been incorporated into an examination paper, the Head of Area may ratify the final version.

7.36.25 Where a Unit Leader does not act on all changes required by the External Examiner, or makes additional substantive changes to the paper, it must be returned to the External Examiner for final approval.

7.36.26 Course Leaders should ensure that full details of their course assessments, including a course assessment timetable, are submitted to the Academic Registry by 31 October each year, thus ensuring that all examination papers are approved by the External Examiner and considered by the Scrutiny Board in good time.

7.36.27 Wherever possible, a model answer and marking scheme should also be sent to the External Examiner, indicating how total marks for each question can be achieved.

7.36.28 If a question paper is structured and / or if a question is in several parts, the question paper should indicate the weighting that will be apportioned to each component; this will assist candidates in allocating an appropriate proportion of the examination time to answer a particular question.

7.36.29 The UCO provides guidance on designing assessments, and different assessment methods, to faculty as and when required.

7.36.30 In finalising draft assessments, Heads of Area (or equivalent) must ensure that tutors prepare students sufficiently for assessment, and should ensure that assessments:

a) Vary as appropriate from year to year.

b) Are developmental from level to level.

c) Are distinctive and require the demonstration of higher order skills and application of knowledge, not just the knowledge itself, especially at FHEQ Levels 6 and 7.

d) For highly weighted elements, such as projects and dissertations, contain mechanisms to monitor progress and the development of the final submission.

e) Are unit specific.

f) Are set in relation to any practical skills that may be required.

7.36.31 The Scrutiny Board must approve all assessment briefs, examination papers, and associated assessment guidance prior to their publication to students.

7.37 Student Self-Assessment

7.37.1 Students are provided clear Learning Outcomes and Assessment Criteria for each unit that they study, which is contained within each UIF.

7.37.2 Students are also provided with detailed assessment briefs.

7.37.3 When submitting assignments, students should be encouraged to engage in self-assessment by using the aforementioned information.

7.38 Assessment of Group Work

7.38.1 Group and team working skills are important abilities and are features of most curricula. The importance of group working skills to students' employability (the ability to listen, question, persuade, participate and, where necessary, lead) means that group work should feature in assessment practices. However, for the purpose of summative assessment students' grades at all levels must reflect their individual abilities rather than those of the group of which they are part. Therefore, no collective group grades are normally permissible.

7.38.2 Unit Leaders must have in place processes to ensure that individual grades can be ascribed. This may include a range of activities including supervisory meetings, observation, journals,

individualised activities within a group project, personalised reflection, etc. It may not use a process in which students ascribe grades to other students' contributions, although such practices can be used for formative feedback.

7.38.3 In some subject areas the production of collective output can be fundamental to the learning outcomes of the unit. In such circumstances group grades may be permissible. However, they are:

a) Only allowed at FHEQ Levels 4 and 5 (because of the increased significance of grades to distinction calculations at FHEQ Levels 6 and 7).

b) Restricted to a maximum of 20% of the overall assessment weighting of a unit.

c) Permitted only once at any academic level.

7.38.4 Claims for exemption must be explicitly identified on the appropriate UIF and agreed through the course approval and review process by justification to academic peers in the context of the course and its intended outcomes.

7.39 Written Examination Papers

7.39.1 Written examinations have an important role to play in assessment strategies and help to authenticate the level of attainment of the student.

7.39.2 In designing written examinations, the following should apply:

a) Written examinations must test the higher order skills appropriate to the academic level of study.

b) Written examinations must vary appropriately from year to year.

c) Written examinations should not normally be of more than three hours' duration.

d) FHEQ Level 4 examinations should not normally be of more than two hours' duration.

e) Alternative forms of written examination may be shorter; for example, multiple-choice and computer-based examinations may be of one-hour duration.

f) Since written examination papers are available to students, examiners are advised that questions should not generally be repeated within a period of three years.

g) Where a written examination is of the open book kind, in which students are permitted access to texts and other materials during examinations, the nature of the questions must not be such that students are dependent on one or more specific texts to which not all may have access. If students require access to specific material, such as a case study, or a professional standard, or a statute, copies should be provided for any student who has not brought a copy to the examination room.

7.40 Computer-Based Examinations

7.40.1 Computer-Based Examinations (CBEs) are subject to the same regulations as any other examination, and are normally undertaken only using server-based, centrally-supported system(s) scheduled through the Academic Registry Department.

7.40.2 CBEs may be set at any level of study up to and including FHEQ Level 7, provided that the assessment approach and question design are appropriate.

7.40.3 Students must be familiar with the CBE system to be used before they undertake a summative exam.

7.40.4 The procedure for converting the percentile outcome of a CBE to the UCO's 16-point Grading Scale should be agreed in advance.

7.40.5 A paper copy of each CBE must be available in the Academic Registry Department for duplication in the event that the electronic delivery of the CBE cannot be accomplished.

7.41 Re-sit Assessments

7.41.1 Re-sit assessments should be set at the same time as initial assessments and undergo the same level of scrutiny and approval.

7.41.2 The type and format of the re-sit assessment should, as far as is practical, be similar to those of the assessments of the initial presentation.

7.41.3 Re-sit written examination papers should differ from those set in the initial assessment but be of a similar format.

7.41.4 In determining the nature of the re-sit task for assessments other than written examinations, Unit Leaders should consider how students can demonstrate the learning outcomes whilst maintaining the integrity of the assessment system. The academic level and nature of the assessment task will be a key factor. For example, assessments based on project work may require re-submission whilst those based on essay topics may require a new topic to be set to prevent plagiarism.

7.41.5 Re-sit tasks will be completed to a specified deadline ensuring that students have adequate time to complete the task set.

7.41.6 Re-sit examinations will be held at specified time periods, unless otherwise confirmed through academic appeal or Special Circumstances.

7.41.7 Re-sit assessments or re-submission of failed work will be awarded a maximum (capped) grade of D-. However, students will be provided with the grade that the work would have received prior to being capped.

a) Re-sit Requirements

7.41.8 Students will be notified of the nature and timing of re-sit examinations and assessments.

7.41.9 Students are responsible for observing information about re-sit requirements, including details of the re-sit assessment and dates and times of re-sit examinations.

b) Re-sit Attempts

7.41.10 Normally students are only allowed to re-sit an assessment once, and only within the re-sit assessment period scheduled at the beginning of each academic year.

7.41.11 If the student fails to pass the assessment at the re-sit attempt, the Board of Examiners may offer the student the opportunity to retake the Unit, including all of its assessment components, in the next academic year, in line with the progression criteria for the course of study.

7.42 Providing Information to Students regarding Assessments

7.42.1 Unit Information Forms must inform students about the form and likely timings of examinations and assignments. In addition, students must be informed about how they may access regulations specific to their course of study, including regulations for progression (progression criteria), eligibility for awards, and appealing against academic decisions.

7.42.2 The Registrar will provide a definitive schedule of examinations and assessment submission dates which will be published on the UCO's Virtual Learning Environment (BONE) well in advance of the examination period.

7.42.3 All academic staff must be made aware of the following information concerning assessments and communication with students:

a) That great caution must be exercised when informing students about the content (as opposed to the structure) of an assessment and should be sufficiently broad so as not to give students an unfair advantage in completing the assessment.

b) That the structure and / or content of an assessment should be provided in writing and made available to all students (preferably in the Unit Information Form).

c) That the actual examination paper must be consistent with the information provided to students.

d) That all assessments must relate to the learning outcomes for a course and should be indicated in the Course Information Form given to all students at the start of a course.

7.42.4 Information for students in regard to assessments, including the deadlines for submission of in-course assignments and the consequences and penalties for late or non-submission of material for assessment, should be provided to all students at the beginning of each academic year.

7.43 Assessment Briefs

7.43.1 For each assessment, students should be provided with clear details of the nature of the assessment task, the associated assessment criteria and other relevant information in the form of an assessment brief.

7.43.2 Typically, an assessment brief will include the following elements:

a) Title of the assignment.

b) The task clearly articulated.

c) Contribution of the assignment to the unit overall grade (as a % weighting, or, where multiple assessments contribute to the final grade point, the nature of the contribution from this assessment).

d) The relationship of the task to the unit through details of the learning outcomes being assessed.

e) Information on how the task can be completed successfully through guidance and / or the provision of the associated assessment criteria, and any additional appropriate guidance.

f) Details / entitlement of any support available during the period up to submission, including any opportunities for the developmental review of progress.

g) Any word-limit / time-limit specifications.

h) Any expectations about the presentation of work (for example the file format accepted: PDF, MSWord, etc.).

i) Opportunities for reflection on the task, including self-assessment opportunities.

j) The procedures for submitting the work, making the presentation, etc.

k) The projected date for the return of assessed work where appropriate (students should receive feedback on in-course assessments within 6 weeks of submission).

l) Details of how the feedback will be provided.

7.44 Assessment Criteria

7.44.1 Assessment criteria set out what is expected of students and should relate to the learning outcomes set for the unit.

7.44.2 The broad criteria for assessment are set out in the UCO's Common Assessment Grading Scheme (CAGS).

7.44.3 Assessment criteria should be shared with students in advance of the completion of assessments via UIFs or assessments briefs where applicable.

7.45 Marking Schemes

7.45.1 Marking schemes are aids used by examiners to assist in the marking of student assessments. They vary with the nature of assessments and should be considered as a much more detailed version of assessment criteria, since individual marks may be attached to identifiable components of the assessment.

7.45.2 While assessment criteria are made known to students via UIFs and assessment briefs to assist them in preparing their assessments with the necessary content and to the necessary standards, marking schemes are normally withheld from students as they contain details of acceptable answers or solutions to questions. They may be disclosed to students as part of the feedback process.

7.45.3 Marking schemes should be prepared at the same time as when the assessment is designed and should be submitted for scrutiny in the same way as assessment questions. Comparisons between what the students have been requested to do for the assessment and the associated marking scheme may highlight areas of ambiguity in the question or the task.

7.45.4 Marking schemes must be sent to the External Examiner along with draft examination papers, for their approval prior to being implemented.

7.45.5 An agreed marking scheme is essential in cases where there is more than one first marker, and to support consistency across work that is double or second marked.

7.45.6 Where appropriate, it is good practice to modify the marking scheme after reviewing a sample of student work to ensure that common misinterpretations of the questions or unforeseen alternative answers can be accommodated within the marking scheme.

7.45.7 Tutors are provided with sample marking schemes to assist them in preparing their own. Ultimately, Tutors are expected to exercise autonomous judgement concerning the extent to which learning outcomes have been demonstrated by students.

7.46 Feedback on Draft Assessments

7.46.1 The UCO does not prohibit feedback on draft assessments. However, any such practices must adhere to the policy and guidance provided in the Draft Assessment & Proof-Reading Policy and Guidance for Students and Staff[25], and should be noted on specific Assessment Briefs.

7.46.2 Tutors should not provide feedback on drafts that individual students submit to them for comment other than that specified on assessment briefs, since this may unintentionally favour those students.

7.46.3 All tutors must consistently use the agreed approach to the provision of feedback on draft work.

[25] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.46.4 Only one instance of feedback per assessment is normally permissible (i.e. students cannot submit, amend, and then re-submit for additional formative feedback) before the final submission, unless this has been agreed as part of the approval process as in some subject areas. Where such feedback is provided, it should be within a set timeframe, which enables students to receive the feedback from the tutor at least two weeks before the final submission date to allow students to respond to any issues raised.

7.46.5 Feedback on draft assessments may be constrained by a specific word limit (e.g. a rough draft of not more than 1000 words or an outline structure).

7.46.6 Feedback on draft assessments should give guidance on general areas of improvement but must not include re-writing of text or other forms of direct tutor amendment of the student's work.

7.46.7 Assessment briefs should give an indication of the scope of the feedback that will be provided. For example, in some instances, tutors may agree only to briefly scan a submission and provide feedback on style and presentation, whilst in others they may decide to provide more detailed general comments.

7.46.8 There is no grading of formative work and students should be informed that any feedback provided for a formative assessment is not indicative of the final grade that summative work will receive.

7.47 Examining and Assessment where a Member of Staff has a Personal Interest, Involvement or Relationship with a Student

7.47.1 Whist it is actively discouraged for staff and students to pursue any form of relationship other than that of student and tutor, the UCO is aware that in exceptional circumstances a relationship between a member of staff and a student that extends beyond this professional boundary may develop. This includes friendship as well as any romantic relationship.

7.47.2 The UCO has therefore established a policy aimed at ensuring the integrity of the teaching, learning, and examining environment within the UCO regarding relationships between students and staff.

7.47.3 The Relationships between Students & Staff Policy[26] provides important safeguards for staff and students in close personal relationships, with the objectives of ensuring that the progression of the student is managed entirely on a professional basis and protecting staff from potential allegations of favouritism and unfairness.

7.47.4 Members of staff are required to declare any personal interest, involvement or relationship with a student to their Line Manager.

7.47.5 The member of staff shall not have advance sight of questions which are to be answered under examination conditions across all units in the course of study in the year in which the student is enrolled.

7.47.6 It is mandatory that a member of staff does not undertake assessment of the student's work, and examination papers should be prepared independently of the member of staff.

7.47.7 The student's assessed and examined work (in the particular year of study) shall be double marked and forwarded to the relevant External Examiner(s) for approval as appropriate.

7.47.8 The member of staff shall temporarily withdraw from any meetings, including Boards of Examiners, when the student's specific case is being discussed.

[26] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.48 Examination and Assessment Procedures

7.48.1 There are specific rules and regulations regarding the conduct of examinations. These are detailed in the Examination and In-Course Assessment Regulations[27] and in the Examination Invigilators' Procedures & Guidelines[28].

7.49 Completing Assessments on Time

7.49.1 It is the responsibility of students to make themselves aware of and available to attend examinations at the specified time and place, properly equipped and prepared, and to submit assessments as required in line with the UCO's Examination and In-Course Assessment Regulations.

7.49.2 Tutors may not approve extensions to deadlines for assessments. Only the Registrar may approve extensions to deadlines for assessments.

7.50 Special Circumstances

7.50.1 Students must provide the Registrar with any relevant information regarding personal circumstances that may have affected their on-going performance or a specific assessment, which they wish to be taken into account. This information should be provided as soon as is reasonably possible, using the Special Circumstances Policy & Procedure[29].

7.50.2 All claims for Special Circumstances should be considered in line with the approved UCO process detailed in this policy.

7.51 Standards of Academic Practice

7.51.1 A guide to good academic practice is included in the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy and Procedures[30].

7.51.2 If a student is found to have cheated or has attempted to gain an unfair advantage in an assessment, disciplinary procedures will be implemented.

7.51.3 The Academic Conduct Panel has the authority to deem the student to have failed part or all of the assessment and may determine whether the student shall be allowed to be reassessed.

7.52 Accessing Feedback and Grades

7.52.1 Assessment feedback is normally provided electronically, in line with the UCO's Student Feedback Policy (Section 7.58).

7.52.2 Provisional assessment grades are also made available to students electronically.

7.52.3 Students are responsible for collecting, accessing and engaging with any assessment feedback provided.

7.53 Submission of Work

7.53.1 Written assignments must be submitted by students in accordance with the procedures in the Examination & In-Course Assessment Regulations, and by the deadlines specified in assessment briefs.

[27] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[28] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[29] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[30] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.53.2 Proof of submission will be provided and must be retained by the student as evidence that the work has been submitted.

7.53.3 Other forms of in-course assessments, such as oral presentations, must be acknowledged by written confirmation given to the student that the assessment task has been carried out.

7.53.4 When submitting work for assessment, students are expected to comply with all instructions issued in the assessment brief.

7.53.5 All text-based assignments are normally submitted by the UCO to the Turnitin Plagiarism Detection Service.

7.53.6 Where the assessment brief specifies that both on-line and hard copy submission is required, then failure to submit either element counts as a failure, and will receive a fail grade (Grade F or 0%).

7.53.7 Students are responsible for submitting the correct piece of work and version, and for any work submitted on their behalf and at their request by another.

7.53.8 Written work presented for assessment must be word processed (unless stated otherwise), legible and comprehensible.

7.53.9 Examiners may reject work which does not meet reasonable standards of presentation, and this may result in a fail grade being awarded.

7.53.10 All written work must be presented in English or the language of study confirmed at course approval.

7.54 Assignment Deadlines

7.54.1 The week in which assignments are due for submission is stated in the UIF.

7.54.2 The date and time by which submission is required is determined by the Unit Leader and will be included on the assessment brief.

7.54.3 Submission, whether by electronic or other means, is normally by 3pm (15.00) for full-time students and 8pm (20.00) for part-time students on the designated date.

7.55 Anonymity

7.55.1 All written examination scripts and assignment submissions must be anonymous, meaning students should only be identified by candidate number to markers.

7.55.2 Wherever feasible, in-course assessments should be submitted and graded anonymously. The following exemptions apply:

a) Assessments in which the identification of candidates is central to the process (e.g. OSPEs, MCEs, presentations, vivas, the observation of professional practice, etc.).

b) Assessments in which the production of the work has been closely supervised by the assessor (e.g. projects, dissertations, some form of portfolio etc.).

c) Assessments for which anonymous grading would be in contravention of a code of practice of a professional accredited course.

d) Assessments which have a significant formative purpose (e.g. assessments early in the first stage) and which account for 20% or less of the grading for the unit.

e) Other circumstances which may be identified by Course Teams in accordance with the above principles.

7.55.3 Where students' assessments have been graded anonymously, the student's identity may be established as soon as internal grading and moderation is complete.

7.55.4 The staff who enter assessment grades and compile lists for Boards of Examiners should list students by name and not by number. Feedback to students may refer to students by name.

7.55.5 Exceptionally, in the student's interests, the "anonymity" rule may be waived and the circumstances relating to an individual candidate brought to examiners' attention by prior approval of the student and Registrar (for example students with disabilities).

7.56 Work Lost After Submission or Examination

7.56.1 In the exceptional event of the grade for an assessment (recorded or receipted as completed) not being available due to unforeseen circumstances, students will be asked for a duplicate copy of the lost assessment where appropriate. If students are unable to provide a duplicate copy and there is clear evidence of a submission, then the Board of Examiners will derive an appropriate grade based on the overall performance by the student.

7.56.2 If work or grading sheets are lost by an examiner, the Unit Leader with the Course Leader and the External Examiner will review the situation and make a recommendation to the Chair of the Board of Examiners on students' performance. This may be based upon class performance or other sections of the assessment completed.

7.57 Marking and Grading

a) Common Assessment Grading Scheme

7.57.1 The UCO uses a Common Assessment Grading Scheme (CAGS) (shown in Table 7.6) that is used to grade all taught courses leading to an award of the UCO. This ensures that a consistent and transparent approach to the way in which student assessment is marked and reported on across all taught courses is used. It also enables comparable levels of student achievement to be recognised (in line with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Assessment[31]).

7.57.2 A variance to the CAGS, for instance due to specific course requirements, must be agreed at course approval. In such cases a Schedule of Variance will be confirmed at course approval noting the modified grading scheme and will be communicated to students through their Course Handbook.

Table 7.6: Common Assessment Grading Scheme (CAGS)

PASS GRADES		
Grade	**Equivalent Point on the Sixteen Point Grading System**	**Signifies**
A +	16	Excellent work. Fully achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
A	15	
A -	14	
B +	13	Generally good work but with some minor defects. Ably achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the
B	12	

[31] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment

B -	11	Level Descriptors.
C +	10	Generally sound work, but with a small number of errors or omissions. Satisfactorily achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
C	9	
C -	8	
D +	7	Adequate work but with a number of significant errors or omissions. Marginally achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
D	6	
D -	5	
FAIL GRADES		
Grade	**Equivalent Point on the Sixteen Point Grading System**	**Signifies**
E +	4	Unsatisfactory work with a significant number of serious errors and omissions. Marginally fails to achieve the Learning Outcomes according to the Level Descriptors.
E -	3	
F	2	Work of a very poor standard containing little of discernible merit. Clearly fails to achieve the Learning Outcomes according to the Level Descriptors.
F – N/S	0	No submission of course work.
G	0	Work contains cause for concern on issues of safety.

b) Using the Common Assessment Grading Scheme

7.57.3 The CAGS uses a 16-point grading scale which equates to an alphabetical grade providing a measure of achievement.

7.57.4 Students' work should be graded using the alphabetical grade; the corresponding 16-point grading scale numbers are used to calculate average unit grades from individual pieces of work.

c) Pass Grade and Condoned Passes

7.57.5 The pass grade for assessments is a Grade D-. This pass grade applies to each piece of work in each unit and to each unit overall.

7.57.6 Assessors should be aware that students who gain an aggregate unit grade of a D- (5 Points), with a minimum grade of an E+ (4 Points) in any one element of assessment and thus has demonstrated achievement of the specified learning outcomes, will be awarded a condoned pass for the E+ grade and will therefore pass the unit concerned and obtain credit ascribed to that unit.

7.57.7 No more than one assessment may be condoned in any one year.

7.57.8 Further details of progression criteria can be found in Course Handbooks.

7.57.9 Grades awarded by assessors are subject to review through moderation processes and approval through the Boards of Examiners process (see AQF Section 11: External Examining and AQF Section 12: Boards of Examiners).

D) % Grading Scheme

7.57.10 The % Grading Scheme in Table 7.7 has been developed as a variance to the CAGS and shall normally be applied to taught degree courses where awards are classified, i.e. Bachelor's degrees.

Table 7.7 % Grading Scheme Variance

% Grading Scheme		Common Assessment Grading Scheme		
PASS MARKS		PASS GRADES		
Grade	**Mark Descriptor**	**Grade**	**Equivalent Point on the Sixteen Point Grading System**	**Signifies**
70% - 100%	Excellent work. Fully achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.	A +	16	Excellent work. Fully achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
		A	15	
		A -	14	
60% - 69%	Generally good work but with some minor defects. Ably achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.	B +	13	Generally good work but with some minor defects. Ably achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
		B	12	
		B -	11	
50% - 59%	Generally sound work, but with a small number of errors or omissions. Satisfactorily achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.	C +	10	Generally sound work, but with a small number of errors or omissions. Satisfactorily achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
		C	9	
		C -	8	
40% - 49%	Adequate work but with a number of significant errors or omissions. Marginally achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.	D +	7	Adequate work but with a number of significant errors or omissions. Marginally achieves the Learning Outcomes in accordance with the Level Descriptors.
		D	6	
		D -	5	

7.57.11 It shall be confirmed at Course Approval whether the % Grading Scheme shall be applied to a course and this shall be communicated clearly to students in their Course Handbooks.

7.58 Awarding of Academic Credit

7.58.1 As defined by the QAA, academic credit is "*a means of quantifying and recognising learning whenever and wherever it is achieved*"[32].

7.58.2 Students may gain academic credit at the UCO by:

a) Being awarded a pass grade for a unit in which case the credit given is specific credit.

b) Being credited with a unit on the basis of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) in which case the credit given may be specific credit for an individual in line with the RPL Policy.

7.59 Threshold Standards and External Benchmarks

7.59.1 In establishing the threshold standards for awards, units, individual assessment tasks, and the manner in which assessments are conducted, academic staff must make use of appropriate external reference points. These include:

[32] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks

a) The QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education[33]. This external reference point helps establish the standards of awards by providing expectations about the use of:

   i. Qualification Frameworks including the Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of UK Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ)[34] which applies to degrees, diplomas, certificates and other academic awards (other than honorary degrees and higher doctorates) granted by a higher education provider in the exercise of its degree awarding powers.

   ii. Characteristic Statements[35] that describe the distinctive features of qualifications at a particular level within the Qualifications Frameworks.

   iii. Credit Frameworks[36] as a means of quantifying and recognising learning whenever and wherever it is achieved.

   iv. Subject Benchmark Statements[37] that help to establish the standards set by different subjects at undergraduate level, and in some areas at Master's level, by providing expectations about the subject and qualification level of programmes of study.

b) Credit level descriptors produced by SEEC, which help establish the academic level in a range of settings[38].

c) Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) standards or proficiencies, e.g. the Osteopathic Practice Standards[39] produced by the GOsC, which play a central role in the requirements for osteopathic training.

7.59.2 Each course that the UCO approves is required to be mapped to the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education to ensure that it meets QAA requirements.

7.60 Constructive Alignment

7.60.1 The constructive alignment of learning outcomes, teaching, and assessment must be evident in the design of all courses and units and in the associated assessment tasks.

7.60.2 Assessment tasks are designed to test the attainment of stated learning outcomes at the appropriate level of learning; teaching activities and the learning opportunities provided should help and support this process.

7.61 Assessment Elements, Methods & Tasks

7.61.1 Methods of assessment together with their relative weightings are determined at the time of course approval or revision of a unit and are specified on Unit Information Forms.

7.61.2 The UCO has a defined range of assessment methods for recording and reporting purposes, including statutory data returns.

7.61.3 The UCOs agreed assessment methods are shown in Table 7.8.

Table 7.8: Agreed Assessment Methods

[33] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[34] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks
[35] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/supporting-resources
[36] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks
[37] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/subject-benchmark-statements
[38] http://www.seec.org.uk/resources/
[39] https://standards.osteopathy.org.uk/

Assessment Type	Assessment Title	Description
Written Exam	Timed Written Exam	The traditional, timed written exam usually consists of a choice of questions - the number, degree of choice and length of answer required depending on the length of the exam – that is undertaken on paper.
Written Exam	Multiple Choice Question Exam	A timed exam whereby students are required to select the correct answer from a list of possible answers - the number of questions depending on the length of the exam.
Written Exam	Computer Based Exam	A timed exam consisting of a choice of questions - the number, degree of choice and length of answer required depending on the length of the exam – that is undertaken on a computer.
Written Exam	Patient Management Problem (PMP)	PMPs are 'paper patients' that enable students the opportunity to see how they manage a standardised clinical situation. Students are given information about a patient and asked to outline their thinking about the problem, including what additional information they require. They are then given more information and asked how this changes their view. PMPs assess students' thinking and analytical ability.
Written Exam	Script Concordance Test (SCT)	An SCT assesses reasoning skills, specifically in situations with uncertain scenarios such as those in clinical subjects. It presents initial information and intended course of action or hypothesis. It then shows some further information and asks to what extent this supports the original course of action/hypothesis. This type of question does not have a correct answer so the marks for the different options are calculated from the opinions given by a number of experts. SCTs are typically undertaken using a computer.
Written Exam	Open Book Exam	A timed exam where students are permitted to take notes, texts or resource materials into the exam, enabling them to find and apply information and knowledge. Open Book Exams are normally used to assess subjects where reference to written materials are required, e.g. legislation or statistics.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	In-Course Essay	In-course essays usually consist of essay-type questions that students complete in their own time over a pre-determined period of time.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	Reflective Essay	Reflective essays enable students to analyse their experiences in order to gain further insights into their

		knowledge and to learn and improve by reflecting on their own experiences, opinions, events and new information.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	Portfolio Essay	An essay drawing on evidence and information collected as part of a Portfolio (see below). Relevant use of literature to critically inform the essay may also be expected as part of this assessment.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	Case Study	A written account providing information about a particular individual, group or situation over a period of time.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	Project Proposal	A Project Proposal is a detailed description of a series of activities aimed at solving a certain problem or research question. The proposal shall normally include: • A valid and feasible research question or focused argument; • A background literature search on the research question or argument; • An appropriately justified Methodology section, including proposed methods for data collection and/or analysis; • Ethical considerations and approvals needed; • A project management plan.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	Business Plan	A formal statement of intended career development including business goals and plans for attaining them.
Written Assignment (including Essay)	Poster	A Poster assessment usually involves a topic for the student to research and present on a poster.
Portfolio	Portfolio	A portfolio consists of a collection of learning materials comprising a representative sample of students' work to demonstrate their ability and progress. Portfolios are normally used in association with practical and clinical work. They have two main purposes: the first is to provide students with an on-going record of their achievement and progress on the course; the other is to provide evidence that students have met the learning outcomes associated with the programme. Portfolios are not normally assessed directly. Instead, a Portfolio Report is assessed to demonstrate what students have learned and the developments they have made, by drawing on the material in your portfolio which is used as evidence to demonstrate students'

		achievement.
Report	Portfolio Report	A written report drawing on evidence from a Portfolio (see below) to demonstrate what students have learned and the developments they have made.
Report	Portfolio Action Plan	An action plan drawing on evidence from a Portfolio (see below) that may be related to personal or professional development and may also draw on students' learning experiences, class room based learning and relevant literature.
Report	Clinic Tutor Reports	Clinic Tutor Reports are produced by clinic tutors and assess students' progress within the clinic environment. They are based on what clinic tutors observe during students' work in the clinic and will assess a number of elements including communication skills, diagnostic ability and students' ability to apply the more theoretical aspects of the course to patient problems as well as using osteopathic concepts in order to understand the conceptual nature of the patient's problem. Clinic Tutors will also report on students' professionalism including their general manner, behaviour and dress in and around the clinic.
Practical skills assessment	Video Analysis	A video analysis may be used to assess a practical task or simulate a particular environmental setting, such as clinical case history taking. The assessor evaluates students' performance and subsequently reviews the recording with the student.
Practical skills assessment	Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE)	An OSCE is a more practical version of the PMP. The aim of an OSCE is to assess students' data-gathering skills, clinical reasoning and clinical management of a patient. Students are given information about a clinical case, but this time shall be asked to demonstrate the clinical procedures they would use to gain information to obtain an evaluative a hypothesis (or hypotheses). Students discuss the case with an assessor rather than writing their response, which gives them more opportunity to demonstrate the depth of their knowledge and understanding. An OSCE normally comprises of a number of 10-20-minute short assessments (known as stations).
Practical skills assessment	Objective Structured Practical Examination (OSPE)	Similarly to an OSCE an OSPE comprises of a series of 10-20 minute stations, each asking students a different question, normally related to performing an osteopathic technique (or equivalent). OSPE's are generally of a practical nature, but may

		also contain written stations.
Practical skills assessment	Objective Structured Clinical & Practical Examination (OSCPE)	A combination of the OSCE and OSPE as detailed above.
Practical skills assessment	Mini Clinical Exam (MCE)	An MCE is a clinical assessment that assesses students in relation to their competency and fitness to practise as an osteopath. Students will normally be asked to see new and continuing patients, gather relevant historical and examination evidence and critically discuss their understanding of the patient with the examiners. Assessors will be looking to see that students are able to competently assess, evaluate, diagnose and treat patients osteopathically by employing appropriate and effective skills and techniques in a logical and reasoned fashion, whilst maintaining a professional standard of practice, are able to take responsibility for making justified and safe clinical decisions in the best interests of the patient, and are able as to treat and manage them appropriately.
Oral assessment and presentation	Group Presentation	Students work in small groups to produce a presentation based on a specific topic or question. During the presentation students shall be required to discuss their views and be expected to support their work by drawing on classroom and experiential evidence to inform your discussion. Students will then normally answer questions from a panel of assessors at the end of their presentation.
Oral assessment and presentation	Case Presentation	Case Presentations are opportunities for students to present a case study in depth. Case Presentations include identifying the salient features of the problem, clarifying difficult or ambiguous issues and coming to some kind of conclusion. Normally a Case Presentation will have a particular focus – for example to demonstrate some of the health care concepts inherent in a clinical case.
Oral assessment and presentation	Dissertation Oral Presentation	The Dissertation Oral Presentation requires students to provide a synopsis of their research which integrates new knowledge by taking into account provided feedback on the written submission. Students may also be required to reflect on how osteopathy may be integrated with their existing clinical practice, taking excellence in patient care into account.
Oral assessment and presentation	Viva	An examination where students answer questions verbally.

Dissertation	Research Paper / Project / Dissertation	A major piece of academic research work enabling students to demonstrate that they have an enquiring and analytical mind.

7.61.4 Additional assessment methods for inclusion in the above listing may be included at Course Approval (see AQF Section 4: Course and Unit Approval Modification).

7.62 Work not meeting the Threshold Standard

7.62.1 The established pass mark of all assessments leading to an award of the UCO is a Grade D- (or approved % equivalent). Similarly, the established unit pass mark is also a Grade D-(or approved % equivalent).

7.62.2 If a summative assessment does not meet the threshold standard (i.e. the established pass mark), assessors will be asked to make an academic judgement as to whether it can be condoned by good performance elsewhere in the unit. If assessors judge that it is condonable this is reported to the Board of Examiners. The Board of Examiners may then award a Condoned Pass for that assessment.

7.62.3 Normally Grades of E+ and E- (or approved % equivalents) only are considered to be in the condonable range provided the Unit has been passed with a Grade D- (or approved % equivalent) overall.

7.62.4 Pre-registration osteopathic students may be eligible to have Level 4 and 5 units compensated in line with the UCO's Compensation & Condonement Policy for Pre-Registration Osteopathic Courses[40] should they not attain the threshold standard.

7.62.5 Some units may not be eligible for condonement or compensation due to professionally-relevant or practical elements. These units shall be identified in Course Handbooks and / or Course Information Forms or in a policy, such as the Compensation & Condonement Policy for Pre-Registration Osteopathic Courses, as appropriate.

7.62.6 Students may hand in assignments up to a week after the deadline date. These will be identified as a late submission). Grades for late submissions will be capped at a Grade D- (or approved % equivalent).

7.62.7 Students who do not hand in their assignments over a week late (and have no approved special circumstances) are deemed to have failed that element of assessment, and will receive a non-submission (F - N/S or 0% in the grade column and a 0 score.

7.62.8 Internal examiners should use the full range of grades available to them in the process of confirming the mark for a composite assessment task, in line with the relevant Grading Scheme (see Table 7.6 and Table 7.7).

7.62.9 If a student has failed to meet the threshold standard due to particular circumstances, for example a student with disabilities or Special Circumstances, these may be brought to examiners' attention by prior approval of the student and the Registrar. This will then be considered by the Board of Examiners.

7.63 Grading on a Pass/Fail Basis

7.63.1 Grading on a pass/fail basis is not permitted except for zero weighted assessments. All other assessments leading to the award of academic credit must be graded on the 16 point grade or equivalent % grading scale.

[40] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.64 Word Length and Format of Assignments

7.64.1 If written assignments exceed the stipulated number of words by a margin of more than 10%, normally the first part of the text up to the assignment limit only should be graded.

7.64.2 If work is not submitted in the specific format required, the work may be downgraded or the Board of Examiners may resolve that it should not be graded.

7.65 Viva Voce Examinations

7.65.1 Examiners may exceptionally choose to examine any student using a viva voce examination in addition to the assessment/s specified on the UIF.

7.65.2 This form of assessment should be applied only sparingly, but may properly be used:

a) As part of the validated assessment for a unit; typically vivas are used for extended pieces of work such as dissertations or projects, and it is important that the assessment process is open to the same security as other forms of assessment, including provision for the External Examiner to review the outcomes.

b) Where recognised disability means that a viva is an appropriate and approved form of assessment replacing the normal assessment task.

c) Where, whatever the initial assessment task, there are concerns about the authenticity of the student's work; in these circumstances vivas must not be used to grade work.

7.65.3 The UCO does not viva students in borderline distinction classifications.

7.65.4 Students must attend viva voce examinations as required. Students should normally be given at least five working days written notice of a potential viva. Where students do not attend, tutors will make judgements on the basis of the information available to them, and students will have no right to request another viva opportunity.

7.65.5 Further information is provided in the Guidance on the Conduct of Viva Examinations[41].

7.66 Awards with Commendation, Distinction or Classification

a) Integrated Master of Osteopathy (Full-Time)

7.66.1 The UCO awards distinction for its M.Ost (Full-Time) award according to the following calculation:

i. For the final two years of the M.Ost (Full-Time) course (i.e. for those units studied at FHEQ Level 6 and Level 7) students' overall unit grades are allocated scores as follows:

A = 6

B = 5

C = 4

ii. These scores are totalled over the final two years of study.

iii. Students who achieve a total score of 45 or more over the final two years of study are eligible to be awarded an M.Ost with Distinction.

7.66.2 Boards of Examiners do not have the discretion to award an M.Ost with Distinction where the totalled score is 44 or less.

b) Integrated Master of Osteopathy (Part-Time)

[41] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.66.3 The UCO awards distinction for its M.Ost (Part-Time) award according to the following calculation:

i. For both FHEQ Level 6 and Level 7 units studied during the final three years of the M.Ost (Part-Time) course, students' overall unit grades are allocated scores as follows:

A = 6

B = 5

C = 4

ii. These scores are totalled over the final three years of study.

iii. Students who achieve a total score of 45 or more over the final two years of study are eligible to be awarded an M.Ost with Distinction.

7.66.4 Boards of Examiners do not have the discretion to award an M.Ost with Distinction where the totalled score is 44 or less.

c) BSc (Hons) in Osteopathic Studies (Full-time) Exit Award

7.66.5 Students who satisfy the requirements for a BSc (Hons) in Osteopathy (Full-Time) as an exit award may be awarded one of the following levels of classification:

- First
- Upper Second
- Lower Second
- Third

7.66.6 A formula, based on overall unit grades at FHEQ Level 5 and FHEQ Level 6, shall be used to calculate the level of classification. Any Level 7 credits are counted as Level 6 for the purpose of classification calculation.

7.66.7 Points are allotted for the unit total grade for each unit completed at Level 5 and Level 6 as follows:

- A = 4 points
- B = 3 points
- C = 2 points
- D= 1 point

7.66.8 Students are required to successfully complete all units at Level 5 and Level 6.

7.66.9 Any units that have been credited through Recognition of Prior Learning will not contribute to the calculation.

7.66.10 There are five units at Level 5 and five units at Level 6. Each overall unit grade is given a value that is weighted in relation to the number of credits the unit carries. Level 6 units are also counted at twice the value of Level 5. The total score for each student is calculated as follows:

Number of Points of Level 5 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x Grade Point Equivalent)

+

Number of Points of Level 6 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x (Grade Point Equivalent x2))

= Total Number of Points Awarded

7.66.11 The range of scores for which a classification may be awarded is between 1440 and 360. Classifications are awarded within 4 bands within this range:

- First: 1171-1440
- Upper Second: 901-1170
- Lower Second: 631-900
- Third: 360-630

d) BSc (Hons) in Osteopathic Studies (Part-time) Exit Award

7.66.12 Students who satisfy the requirements for a BSc (Hons) in Osteopathy (Part-Time) as an exit award may be awarded one of the following levels of classification:

- First
- Upper Second
- Lower Second
- Third

7.66.13 A formula, based on overall unit grades at FHEQ Level 5 and FHEQ Level 6, shall be used to calculate the level of classification. Any Level 7 credits are counted as Level 6 for the purpose of classification calculation.

7.66.14 Points are allotted for the unit total grade for each unit completed at Level 5 and Level 6 as follows:

- A = 4 points
- B = 3 points
- C = 2 points
- D= 1 point

7.66.15 Students are required to successfully complete all units at Level 5 and Level 6.

7.66.16 Any units that have been credited through Recognition of Prior Learning will not contribute to the calculation.

7.66.17 There are seven units at Level 5 and six units at Level 6. Each overall unit grade is given a value that is weighted in relation to the number of credits the unit carries. Level 6 units are also counted at twice the value of level 5. The total score for each student is calculated as follows:

Number of Points of Level 5 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x Grade Point Equivalent)

+

Number of Points of Level 6 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x (Grade Point Equivalent x2))

= Total Number of Points Awarded

7.66.18 The range of scores for which a classification may be awarded is between 1440 and 360. Classifications are awarded within 4 bands within this range:

- First: 1171-1440
- Upper Second: 901-1170
- Lower Second: 631-900

- Third: 360-630

7.66.19 If a student successfully completes the Research and Enquiry credits at level 7 in year 4, for the purpose of this calculation, these credits may be considered equivalent to level 6 credits if the student fails to achieve 20 credits at level 6 in either The Functioning Human or Patient Care. If their grade for Research and Enquiry in year 4, Level 7 is higher than either of Functioning Human or Patient Care in year 4, level 6 it will contribute to their honours classification calculation and will replace the lower grade in either of the other two 20 credit units in year 4.

e) % Grading Scale BSc / BA Classification Calculation

7.66.20 For BSc or BA Courses that use the % Grading Scheme described in Table 7.7 the following calculation is used to determine the classification of the award.

7.66.21 Students who satisfy the requirements may be awarded one of the following levels of classification:

• First (70% - 100%)

• Upper Second (60% - 69%)

• Lower Second (50% - 59%)

• Third (40% - 49%)

7.66.22 A formula, based on overall unit grades at FHEQ Level 5 and FHEQ Level 6, shall be used to calculate the level of classification.

7.66.23 Students are required to successfully complete all units at Level 5 and Level 6.

7.66.24 Any units that have been credited through Recognition of Prior Learning will not contribute to the calculation.

7.66.25 Each overall unit percentage is given a value that is weighted in relation to the number of credits the unit carries. Level 6 units are also counted at twice the value of Level 5. The total score for each student is calculated as follows:

Total Number of Points of Level 5 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x Overall Unit Mark (%))

+

Total Number of Points of Level 6 Units (Level 5 Credit Value x Overall Unit Mark (%) x2))

= Total Number of Points Awarded

7.66.26 The maximum number of points available is 36000. This theoretical maximum is calculated on each unit mark being 100% and then multiplied by the credit value.

7.66.27 The range of scores for which a classification may be awarded therefore is between 36000 and 14400. Classifications are awarded within 4 bands within this range:

• First (70% +): 25200 - 36000

• Upper Second (60% - 69%): 21600 - 25199

• Lower Second (50% - 59%): 18000 - 21599

• Third (40% - 49%): 14400 – 17999

7.66.12 The overall percentage achieved by an individual student can be calculated as follows:

Total Number of Points Awarded / 36000 x 100

f) Master's Taught Awards

7.66.28 Students who satisfy the requirements for a Master's degree may be awarded a Master's degree with Distinction if they have fulfilled the following criteria:

i. Attained a grade of 14/A- or above in 60 credits, including the dissertation stage, and

ii. Attained a grade of 13/B+ or above in at least half the remaining credits.

7.66.29 Students who satisfy the requirements for a Master's degree may be awarded a Master's degree with Commendation if they have fulfilled the following criteria:

i. An average grade of 11/B- or greater, and

ii. no more than 30 credits with a grade of less than 8/C-.

iii. If there are 15 credits of less than 8/C- there must be 15 (or more) credits with a grade of more than 13/B+, or

iv. If there are 30 credits of less than 8/C- there must be 30 (or more) credits with a grade of more than 13/B+.

g) Postgraduate Diploma Awards

7.66.30 Students who satisfy the requirements for a Postgraduate Diploma as an exit award may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Distinction if he or she has attained a grade of 13/B+ or above in at least 60 academic credits.

7.66.31 Students who satisfy the requirements for a Postgraduate Diploma as an exit award may be awarded a Postgraduate Diploma with Commendation if a majority of his or her credit is at 11/B- or higher.

7.67 Factors affecting Assessment and Boards of Examiners

7.67.1 This section provides information specifically on marking and other factors affecting assessment and its relationship to the Board of Examiners. Full details about the function of Boards of Examiners are provided in AQF Section 12: Boards of Examiners.

7.67.2 Where a member of the academic staff believes that one or more students have been impacted by UCO action, or by circumstances other than personal circumstances processed by the Registrar (an example being unexpected disturbance of an examination, or an assessment profile that does not appear to have operated effectively etc.), this must be raised in advance of the Board of Examiners with the relevant Course Leader and Head of Area, thus allowing them to consider any actions that might be recommended to the Board of Examiners.

7.67.3 Such factors affecting assessment must be considered by the relevant Portfolio Board and Pre-Board of Examiners.

7.67.4 Similarly, where the performance profile of a unit is at variance with the general performance of the cohort, or reflects a continuing problem in the operation of the unit such that the grades may reasonably be held not to reflect satisfactory assessment of a unit, this should be identified by the relevant Heads of Area to the relevant Portfolio Board for consideration in advance of the Board of Examiners.

7.67.5 In all of the above cases:

a) The relevant Portfolio Board and Pre-Board of Examiners must have considered the issues in advance of the Board of Examiners.

b) Portfolio Boards must consider the circumstances and their impact to determine whether there was material impact on a students' performance (e.g. in respect of their performance in other similar assessments and units).

c) External Examiners must be part of the process of consideration of any alteration to be made to the expected outcome (e.g. an additional attempt allowed).

d) The decision and the reasons must be minuted in detail to ensure that the basis for any changes made is clear.

7.67.6 Students have the right to appeal against decisions made by the Board of Examiners. The UCO has an established Academic Appeals process and the criteria for any academic appeal against a Board of Examiner's decision are detailed therein.

7.68 Sanctioned Students

7.68.1 Students who are not in good financial standing but submit work for assessment will have their work assessed alongside that of other students for consistency, but may not have their grades processed by the Board of Examiners.

7.69 Providing Feedback after Assessment

7.69.1 The provision of timely and high quality assessment feedback to students following assessment is considered to be of particular importance. It contributes to students' learning and enables them to identify areas in which they have performed well and areas in which they need to improve.

7.69.2 The UCO has an institutional policy regarding the provision of feedback to students (see Section 7.68), offers staff guidance on providing effective feedback to students and provides students with guidance on how to use the feedback they receive to effectively improve their performance.

7.69.3 Course tutors should emphasise to students the importance of using feedback to improve their performance.

7.70 Assessment Feedback Policy

a) Feedback on Assignments

7.70.1 Work which is assessed during the course or unit, including project work and written assignments, must be returned as quickly as possible if it is to have a formative value for students (normally within six weeks of the submission date).

7.70.2 Exceptionally, where this is not achievable (for example due to staff absence), students must be notified as soon as is reasonably possible of the revised date and the reason behind the change.

7.70.3 All in-unit summative assignments must provide post-marking formative feedback via the approved UCO process as a minimum unless otherwise agreed as part of the approval of the unit concerned.

7.70.4 Students may have other opportunities to receive formative feedback, for example through in-class activities, practical classes and clinic. Where this is an additional part of the curriculum, Unit Leaders are free to amend such processes without further UCO approval, provided that all students within the cohort are treated equitably.

b) Feedback on Examinations

7.70.5 Students may be provided with generic or specific feedback on their individual performance in final assessments (including examinations) on request.

7.70.6 The Unit Leader or the tutor responsible for that assessment will, by appointment, review the paper with a student. Students will not be given their examination scripts to take away.

7.70.7 In addition, students normally receive generic examination feedback that considers their performance as a cohort.

7.71 Access to Material after Assessment

a) Access to Marked Assignments & Examination Scripts

7.71.1 Hard copies of written coursework assignments, other than copies retained for external examining and archiving purposes, will normally be returned to students with any associated feedback.

7.71.2 Where students are not available to receive returned assignments, any uncollected work held by the Academic Registry will be confidentially destroyed at the end of the calendar year following the academic year of submission (e.g. uncollected work submitted at any point in the 2015/2016 academic year would, therefore, be destroyed on or after 31st December 2016).

7.71.3 All examination scripts will be retained until the end of the calendar year following the academic year of completion (e.g. exam scripts relating to the 2015/2016 academic year, would be destroyed on or after 31st December 2016), except for a sample of scripts, which will be retained for the full academic year (e.g. a sample of examination scripts relating to the 2015/2016 academic year would, therefore, be retained until the end of the 2016/2017 academic year).

b) Access to Past & Specimen Examination Papers

7.71.4 The Academic Registry releases past examination papers to students two years after the original assessment was taken.

7.71.5 The Academic Registry is also responsible for publishing past examination papers and associated marking schemes on the Virtual Learning Environment for reference by students; exceptions may be determined at the request of the Unit Leader with the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

7.71.6 Papers not normally released are multiple choice papers, computer-based examination papers, and those based on case studies which may be in part individual to particular students.

7.71.7 Specimen papers, however, for all types of assessment are made available to students.

7.72 Administration of Assessments

7.72.1 The UCO has in place a range of assessment processes to ensure that standards are set at an appropriate level and are consistently applied. These involve assignment setting, moderation, external examining, and collective decision making at Boards of Examiners.

a) Drafting of Examination Papers & Assignments

7.72.2 Unit Leaders draft examination papers and assignments for assessment, and present them to the appropriate Head of Area for consideration, in line with dates confirmed by the Registrar.

The Registrar convenes the Scrutiny Board, whose role it is to ensure the peer review of all assessments, assessment briefs, and marking guidelines.

7.72.3 Cover sheets are required be prepared for every examination paper in accordance with the specimen cover sheet. The cover sheet should provide details of the title, the duration of the examination, any special conditions that may apply, any materials that should be supplied to candidates, and direction to candidates about the choice of questions.

7.72.4 The Academic Registry is responsible for inserting the date and start time of the examination onto the cover sheet in line with the Assessment Schedule for the course of study.

7.72.5 The Registrar is responsible for the distribution of examination papers to External Examiners for comment, and will liaise with External Examiners, Unit Leaders and Heads of Area to ensure that standards are achieved, and that there are appropriate audit trails regarding the drafting and production of examination papers and assignment questions for Quality Assurance purposes.

b) Assessment Moderation Process

7.72.6 In seeking to achieve equity, validity and reliability in the assessment of student work, a range of moderation processes are employed at the UCO.

7.72.7 In the case of practical assessments such as Objective Structured Practical Examinations (OSPEs)and Mini Clinical Exams (MCEs), a moderator is present at and oversees the assessment, to ensure that all examiners are assessing at the appropriate level and in a similar style.

7.72.8 In the case of in-course assessments and examinations, the Registrar ensures that all are marked in line with the UCO's Double and Second Marking Policy (see Section 7.71: Double and Second Marking Policy).

7.72.9 Heads of Area are responsible for agreeing at Portfolio Board level the appropriate moderation process for each assessment. This may involve the moderation of an initial sample prior to full grading, or moderation after the initial assessment of all the work by the principal marker.

7.72.10 Heads of Area may find it helpful to identify designated "moderation days" when all markers are present to engage in the moderation process.

c) Moderation of Examination Papers & Assignments

7.72.11 External Examiners are given the opportunity to moderate draft examination papers and assessment briefs where the work contributes to an award. Where computer-based examination is used, guidance on the moderation of such papers should also be given to External Examiners.

7.72.12 It is the responsibility of External Examiners and Course Teams to agree the extent to which assignments are considered. Such moderation is not normally applied to draft examinations and assessment details at FHEQ Level 4, however the UCO considers it good practice to provide all assessments at all FHEQ levels to External Examiners for review.

7.73 Double & Second Marking Policy

a) Double & Second Marking Processes

7.73.1 Double and second marking are moderation processes put in place to help ensure fairness and objectivity in the assessment process.

7.73.2 In "double marking" a second assessor reviews a representative sample of students' scripts unaware of the grade or comments awarded by the principal marker.

7.73.3 In "second marking" a second assessor reviews a representative sample of students' scripts with full knowledge of the grade and comments made by the first marker. This process is normally used at FHEQ Levels 4 and 5 where its purpose is to help ensure fairness and objectivity.

7.73.4 Second marking is also used to assist assessors less familiar with assessment at HE level and/or the UCO's standards. In this case the second marker will be an experienced member of staff and should provide feedback to the principal marker on both the level and the nature of the feedback provided.

7.73.5 The double and second marking processes employed in relation to the range of the UCO's provision are shown in Table 7. 9 below.

TABLE 7.9: DOUBLE & SECOND MARKING PROCESSES

Context	**Process**
FHEQ Levels 4 and 5	Sample second marking: 20% of the cohort, all A's and fail grades.
FHEQ Levels 6 and 7 (with the exception of projects and dissertations)	Sample second marking: 20% of the cohort (a minimum of 2 from each pass grade band), all A's and fail grades; if concerns or questions regarding marking/performance arises a broader sample should be reviewed.
FHEQ Levels 6 and 7 Project and Dissertations	Complete double marking by the UCO.
G Grade (safety issues)	Complete double marking by the UCO. In the cases of practical assessments, review by the Head of Area and Course Leader of all of the markers comments and rationale for the award of the G Grade.

b) DOUBLE & SECOND MARKING SAMPLE SIZE AND SELECTION

7.73.6 The sample size for double and second marking should typically represent 20% of the assessment with a minimum of eight and a maximum of 35.

7.73.7 Sampling should pay particular attention to students awarded grades A, E, and F.

7.73.8 Where scripts for an assignment are divided between several principal markers the sample must include scripts marked by each principal marker.

7.73.9 If any student is awarded a G grade as part of any assessment staff are referred to the Student Fitness to Practise & Professional Behaviour Policy[42].

c) DOUBLE MARKING OF ORAL PRESENTATIONS

7.73.10 Although presentations should be moderated in the same way as other assessments (that is by an appropriate sample), it is regarded as good practice for two members of lecturing staff to be present during the assessment of oral presentations.

7.73.11 Double marking or second marking must take place on a sample basis.

[42] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.73.12 Where operational considerations make the attendance of two members of staff impractical, some other means of recording and reviewing the event (such as video) must be utilised.

7.73.13 Sample presentations at FHEQ Levels 5, 6 and 7 must be available for scrutiny by External Examiners.

d) Double Marking of Computer Based Assessments

7.73.14 Computer marked work is not double marked, but the system of checking results must be secure enough to obviate the necessity for additional scrutiny.

7.74 Assessment Samples sent to External Examiners

7.74.1 External Examiners receive samples of examination scripts and other assessed work in good time before Boards of Examiners meetings for moderation.

7.74.2 The minimum basis for sampling is outlined in Section 7.73b: Double & Second Marking Sample Size and Selection may be extended through agreement with External Examiners in advance.

7.74.3 Boards of Examiners should only be held after External Examiners have had the opportunity to scrutinise and moderate scripts for any or all the assessments in a unit, especially the end of unit assessments.

7.74.4 A clear schedule must be set and maintained for the dispatch and return of work for scrutiny. If the schedule is not adhered to, the Board of Examiners should be provided with a report for the internal and external examiners regarding the reasons for the deviation from the schedule.

7.75 Visiting Lecturers and External Assessors

7.75.1 The UCO appoints External Assessors in line with the External Assessors' Policy[43].

7.75.2 Where visiting lecturers and external assessors are involved in the assessment of students, Unit Leaders are responsible for ensuring that the grading of the visiting lecturer or external assessor is included in the moderation process, and that appropriate additional steps are taken depending on his/her experience of the UCO and its standards.

7.76 Agreeing Grades

7.76.1 Further to the Assessment Moderation Process (see Section 7.59b), first and second markers should seek to reach a consensus about the grade to be awarded for an assessment. In reaching agreement, markers should take into account a range of factors such as level of experience, detailed subject knowledge, and differing levels of scrutiny by first and second markers.

7.76.2 Where consensus is not possible, and where the first assessor is an inexperienced member of staff, then for 'second marking' the entire set of scripts should be reviewed and the grades awarded by the second marker applied after moderation by another experienced member of staff.

7.76.3 Where consensus is not possible, and where the first assessor is an experienced member of staff, then for 'second marking' and all 'double marking':

i. Where there is close agreement (typically within a grade band, i.e. two grade points difference or less) between the first and second markers, the grade awarded will be the average of the two grades.

[43] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

ii. In the event of a serious disagreement on a piece of work between markers after discussion (typically more than a grade band, i.e. three grade point difference or more) a third marker may be assigned internally.

iii. Exceptionally, if agreement proves impossible the work may be submitted to the External Examiner for final adjudication.

7.76.4 Where scripts are double or second marked both grades should be recorded but only the final agreed grade should be notified to the student.

7.77 Rounding Up and Rounding Down

7.77.1 The UCO does not round up or down the grades for individual assessment points as recorded on its database. However, where multiple assessments contribute to one reporting point (e.g. multiple practical assessments contributing to one coursework mark) then the average grade for the assessments is determined to provide the final overall grade to be recorded on the UCO's database.

7.78 Annotation of Examination Scripts

7.78.1 Students should receive clear and consistent feedback in line with the UCO's Assessment Feedback Policy (see Section 7.68: Assessment Feedback Policy).

7.78.2 There is no requirement to show on students' work that second or double marking has taken place. However, a clear record of the nature and extent of second and double marking should be kept by the Registrar and provided to the External Examiner.

7.78.3 Principal markers must mark all examination scripts, adding an indication where necessary of the reason(s) for the chosen grade.

7.79 Moderation of Late Submissions

7.79.1 Late submissions (i.e. after the moderation of the standard submission set), including any late submissions accepted on the basis of Special Circumstances or academic appeal, must be subjected to moderation, regardless of whether the moderation process has been completed in full within the standard submission set.

7.80 Collecting and Collating Grades

7.80.1 The Registrar is responsible for dispatching a document containing a list of student candidate numbers of all students registered for particular units(s) to individual assessors, on which the assessors should record grade(s) awarded to each student.

7.80.2 It is the assessor's responsibility to ensure that the file is completed and returned to the Registrar within the timeline agreed by Course Teams.

7.80.3 The Unit Lead should check for accuracy the document containing students' grades prior to its return to the Registrar.

7.80.4 Assessors should indicate instances where students have not submitted an assignment, or have not attended an examination, on the candidate list. The Registrar will then cross-check that this correlates to submissions received by the Academic Registry and examination registers, to ensure that all scripts / assignments have been provided to the assessor.

7.80.5 When all assessments for a unit have been graded and confirmed to the Academic Registrar, Academic Registry Staff input the grades into the exams database.

7.80.6 A unit result report is produced and cross-checked against the assessor's candidate list by Academic Registry Staff, to ensure that data entry has been accurate.

7.80.7 The unit result report is produced, considered and confirmed by the relevant Portfolio Board. If there are disparities with the results these should be discussed immediately and action points decided.

7.81 Internal Monitoring of Assessment Processes

7.81.1 The UCO places great emphasis on reviewing and improving assessment and examination processes.

7.81.2 The administrative processes associated with assessment are under constant internal scrutiny; grade entry and Boards of Examiners' processing are subject to a number of mechanisms to ensure that data is accurate and that outcomes are monitored continuously.

7.81.3 In addition, assessment moderation and external examining processes are constantly reviewed, to ensure that standards are of the highest quality.

7.81.4 The Academic Registry confirms assessment submission by students through a series of reports and logging methods, ensuring that records are auditable.

7.81.5 Unit information regarding assessment deadline dates and submission type is collated each academic year and is audited for accuracy by its comparison to Unit Information Forms.

7.81.6 Registers of attendance to examinations are maintained throughout examination periods. Non-attendance at examinations is monitored and reported to relevant Assessment Portfolio Boards and the Student Attendance & Retention Group.

7.81.7 Registers also enable the accuracy of unit registration to be monitored, and any inaccuracies to be noted to the Academic Registry.

7.82 The Conduct of Examinations

7.82.1 The Academic Council has approved Rules for the Conduct of Prescribed Assessments and Written Examinations for Degrees or Diplomas[44], which state that:

i. The Academic Registry will centrally co-ordinate formal invigilated examinations as noted in the UCO's academic cycle. These may be a mix of main examination and referral examination sessions.

ii. The Academic Registry will communicate with internal staff and students the main source of information with regard to examination timings, locations, timetables, guidance, instructions for candidates, and a variety of other necessary information, normally via BONE.

iii. The UCO will deliver examinations in a number of locations, details of which are made available to students; it is the student's responsibility to ensure that they are in attendance at the specified location in a timely manner.

iv. The timetable for each period of examination will be prepared as soon as practically possible after students are successfully registered for their units or for referral assessments, and as soon as Boards of Examiners have completed their deliberations. Normally the Academic Registry will aim to deliver exam timetables six weeks after the start of the course. However, these may be subject to change, and timetables should be checked regularly on the Virtual Learning Enviornment, where the most up to date copies are held.

[44] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.82.2 If it is necessary to deliver examinations in consecutive sittings, for example OSPE's, the Academic Registry Department will notify candidates of their individual time, date and venue for the examination.

7.82.3 Changeovers between consecutive examination sessions will be controlled to ensure that student groups are kept separate.

7.82.4 In the case of some practical assessments where students complete their assessment before the last session of assessment has started, students will be allocated to a 'holding room' to ensure that they do not meet students yet to take their assessments. Once the last examination session has started, students will be permitted to leave the 'holding room'.

7.82.5 Mobile phones or other electronic devices that can connect to the Internet are not allowed into examination rooms or 'holding rooms'.

7.83 Examination Results

a) Recording and Notification of Results

7.83.1 The Registrar is responsible for ensuring that robust and reliable systems are in place for the computation, checking, and recording of assessment decisions, and for providing relevant information in time for the final meetings of Boards of Examiners.

7.83.2 Assessment data is centrally stored electronically within the UCO's Student Database, and on the Academic Registry Server where access is limited to Academic Registry staff.

7.83.3 The UCO's ICT Department runs regular back-ups of data to ensure that records are saved securely.

7.83.4 Staff involved in the marking, recording and collating of assessments should regard electronic and hard copies of assessment results and decisions as confidential documents, and should store and dispose of them appropriately.

7.83.5 Provisional marks for undergraduate and postgraduate taught courses should be agreed by the relevant Portfolio Assessment Board, entered into the exams database, and on the list printed for the Board of Examiners meeting. During the meeting, the lists should be annotated and signed by External Examiners and the Chair of the Board of Examiners convened. Students are then notified of their results by the Academic Registry, and consideration is given to the implications for student progression / graduation as appropriate.

7.83.6 Access to assessment results and information regarding assessment judgements about individual students is restricted to Academic Registry staff, and may be viewed by course teaching and support staff by request only.

7.83.7 Results are recorded using the following conventions:

i. A grade per assessment is indicated using the relevant Common Assessment Grading Scheme (see Table 7.4).

ii. An overall grade for each unit is indicated which has been calculated using the appropriate weightings of each assessment of that unit.

iii. Non-submission of coursework, or non-attendance at a written or practical assessment or presentation, is awarded an F - N/S Grade (or equivalent).

iv. Any candidates who have experienced Special Circumstances affecting their continuous or exam performance have this information brought to the attention of the Board of Examiners, indicated by a tick in the 'SC' column on the results spreadsheet. Particulars of Special Circumstances (following agreement with the student in question) are considered by Pre-Boards of Examiners, who make any relevant recommendations to the

Board of Examiners itself without compromising the confidentiality of the circumstances themselves.

7.83.8 Course results are processed as quickly as possible following confirmation by the Board of Examiners.

7.83.9 Students are normally informed in advance of the date of the release of results through their Assessment Schedule.

7.83.10 Results of assessments taken during the academic year are normally released to students' personal UCO email inbox by the Academic Registry. End of year progression results will normally be emailed at 13.00 on the date published on the Assessment Schedule. Information about who students can contact should they require clarification of their results or advice about their results will be included. Students will normally be notified through UCO email when results will be sent.

7.83.11 No results should be divulged to candidates until after the results, duly confirmed by the Board of Examiners and signed by External Examiner(s) and Chair of the Board of Examiners, have been submitted to, and published by, the Academic Registry. This regulation may be varied if it is deemed in the best interest of a student to notify them of their examination results early, e.g. due to exceptional circumstances or ill health. The decision to release examination results to students early must be made in consultation with and approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education). A file note shall be produced and retained in the student's file to record that their results were released to them early.

7.83.12 Results should only be given to students in person or by phone if steps have been taken to confirm the student's identity: they should NOT be disclosed to third parties (including parents) without a student's explicit consent. In view of the above, it is recommended that staff do not release any marks or results to candidates, but instead refer students to their UCO email accounts.

b) Amended Results

7.83.13 Where examiners, including External Examiner(s), agree that a candidate's marks and / or course result should be amended as a consequence of an academic appeal being upheld, the Academic Registry will inform the student of the examiners' decision in writing, on receipt of confirmation of the amended mark or result.

7.84 Disposal and Retention of Work that Contributes to a Degree Assessment

a) Retention of Examination Scripts

7.84.1 Examination scripts which contribute to a final award are to be retained until the 31st of December following the date on which the student qualified, or was due to qualify, for an award.

7.84.2 Other work is retained for six months following the relevant Board of Examiners. For the purposes of archiving and review, sample assessments may be retained for longer periods.

b) Retention of Coursework

7.84.3 Submitted coursework is the physical property of the UCO.

7.84.4 Students retain the copyright and intellectual property of the coursework submitted for any form of assessment.

7.84.5 In accordance with UCO regulations, coursework may be returned to students (see Section 7.69: Providing Feedback after Assessment).

7.84.6 If coursework contributes to the final award, it should be retained until the 31st of December following the date on which the student qualified. Other work is retained for six months following the relevant Board of Examiners.

7.84.7 Students should be advised that they might be required to return coursework to the UCO at any time within these periods. This is communicated to students via the results letters they receive as the course progresses.

7.84.8 Students should keep copies of any coursework submitted for assessment, and maintain portfolios of their work, for scrutiny by External Examiners or tutors if required.

7.85 Academic Appeals

7.85.1 A student may appeal against an examination mark or final award using the Academic Appeals Policy[45], but specific rights of such appeals against a decision involving academic judgement are very limited.

7.85.2 Academic appeals will be considered only in matters of procedure, competency and / or prejudice. Further details are provided in the Academic Appeals Policy.

7.86 Assessment of Students with Disabilities

a) General Provisions

7.86.1 If a student is unable, through disability, to be assessed by the normal methods prescribed for the course, the Student Support Officer will liaise with the Course Leader in order to determine a 'reasonable adjustment' to the method of assessment (bearing in mind the objectives of the course and the need to assess the student on equal terms with other students). This may involve the Occupational Health Committee.

7.86.2 The onus is on the student to ensure that the UCO is made aware of their disability and to apply for consideration of variation in assessment conditions commensurate with the disability; written evidence must be provided in the form of a medical or diagnostic report provided by a doctor or other appropriately qualified professional.

7.86.3 Students with a disability must be assessed in such a way that they are neither systematically penalised nor systematically advantaged compared with other students. In order to make judgments as to the nature and extent of the variation in assessment methods appropriate to any particular candidate, the Student Support Officer must make use of all the information available, including taking advice from within and outside the UCO where appropriate.

7.86.4 Students wishing to be considered for special assessment conditions must do so in good time for the first assessment. It may not be possible to accept applications received close to assessments, although the UCO will always attempt to deal with genuine cases of unforeseen need.

7.86.5 If students have disabilities, temporary or permanent, which are demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Student Support Officer but cannot be dealt with in the form of special conditions for assessment, the student will normally be expected to carry out the assessment under normal conditions, and the Board of Examiners will make whatever adjustments it considers appropriate when reviewing students' achievement and progression.

b) Specific Allowances for Students with Disabilities

[45] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

7.86.6 Upon the recommendation of the Student Support Officer or the Occupational Health Committee, students with evidence of a specific learning disability are identified on examination papers by a system of coloured adhesive labels, which must be inscribed with the student ID number.

7.86.7 Students whose disability (e.g. dyslexia) permits them extra time in written and practical assessments allows the student to attempt the same content / number of questions as their cohort. The adhesive labels allow markers to compensate for presentational weaknesses, which no amount of extra time could put right.

7.86.8 Such students are normally permitted 25% extra time.

7.86.9 Additional examples for consideration are given below:

i. Students with mobility impairment may be granted a number of breaks during an examination or similar task, in order to ease or exercise joints or muscles. This applies also to those with long term or short term (e.g. broken limb) disabilities. Some students in this category may have no need of such breaks.

ii. Students with impaired manual dexterity may need to dictate answers and therefore be separate from fellow students. Alternatively, a tape recorder may be used. If the student can write, but more slowly than most students, time may be allowed for this during the period of the examination, but this would normally be balanced by the student being required to undertake a lesser load under examination requirements and within the stipulated time period. Some limited extra time may be appropriate when an amanuensis is used.

iii. Students with a visual impairment, up to and including total blindness, may be provided with an amanuensis for written exams, who will read the question paper and write answers at the student's dictation. Consideration may be given to the use of appropriate technology for the production of answers by the candidate. In examinations, extra time may be needed for reading and re-reading of the questions, but this would normally be accommodated within the stipulated time period.

iv. Students with a mental health or stress-related disorder, or with physical conditions which cause excessive fatigue may, at the discretion of the Student Support Manager, and only where medical evidence is available to support the claim, be permitted additional time and / or be allowed to take an examination alone, with provision for breaks at suitable intervals if required. In severe cases, an alternative form of assessment may be used, such as a viva voce, but care must be taken that the standard of the assessment is safeguarded. Clear evidence of need must be provided in the form of a medical report from a GP or specialist.

v. Students with chronic conditions causing excessive fatigue may be permitted to sit an examination in a separate room and have access to assistive technology, with provision for breaks at suitable intervals if required. In severe cases, a reduced load in the examination or an alternative assessment may be used, such as a viva voce, but care must be taken that the standard of the assessment is safeguarded. Evidence of need must be provided in the form of a medical report from a GP or specialist.

vi. Students with specific learning disabilities (e.g. dyslexia) and related problems will normally be permitted extra time beyond the normal duration for the reading of the examination paper and for the writing of their answers. Such students may be permitted additional time for examinations and / or the use of an amanuensis, reader, or appropriate assistive technology. Question papers may be provided in alternative formats.

7.86.10 Students whose first language is not English will not normally be regarded as requiring special consideration in the sense of this section (British Sign Language is formally recognised as a language) and will be required to provide answers to questions in English.

7.86.11 Students are not normally permitted the use of any reference tools such as dictionaries in examinations.

7.87 Reviewing the Effectiveness of Academic Standards of Assessment

7.87.1 As part of the UCO's quality assurance and enhancement procedures, a review of the effectiveness of the assessments used to measure student learning is undertaken at assessment and unit level. This is considered by Course Teams and also by Boards of Examiners in their meetings. In addition, External Examiners are required, as part of their annual report, to comment upon the effectiveness of assessment procedures and how academic standards have been maintained.

7.88 Disclosure of Examination Grades

7.88.1 It must be made clear to students that where grades have not yet been considered by External Examiners or a formal Board of Examiners, these grades are provisional, pending endorsement by the appropriate Board of Examiners and may be subject to change.

7.89 Appeals against Decisions of Boards of Examiners

7.89.1 Academic appeals are the route by which students may seek reconsideration of Boards of Examiners' decision. They are the only basis on which changes, other than the correction of administrative errors, may be made. The criteria for appealing against a decision of the Board of Examiners are detailed in the UCO's Academic Appeals Policy[46].

7.89.2 The UCO will not consider appeals based solely on a student's disagreement with the examiners' academic judgement.

7.89.3 Complaints upheld in respect of Board of Examiners' decisions already made are transferred to the UCO's Academic Appeals process for action.

7.89.4 Where a student lodges an appeal that is upheld after the relevant Board of Examiners and is found, after submission, to be a valid academic appeal, notification of the outcome of the complaint should be sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), who will initiate a review by the Board of Examiners as an outcome of an appeal.

[46] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

PART D: CONFERMENT

This section of the Academic Quality Framework summarises the UCO's regulations regarding the conferment of awards and provides information on conditions of receiving and rescinding awards, award certification and graduation ceremony procedures. It should be of interest to all undergraduate and postgraduate taught students and to all staff.

7.90 CONFERMENT OF AN AWARD

7.90.1 The UCOs Academic Council establishes authorised committees to make recommendations for the conferment of approved awards on students who, having been registered as a student at the UCO, have followed an approved course or programme of study, and satisfied the relevant UCO's Boards of Examiners as follows:

i. The UCO of Osteopathy Undergraduate Board of Examiners for taught courses up to and including FHEQ Level 6 and Level 7 in the case of an Integrated Master's degree.

ii. The UCO of Osteopathy Postgraduate Board of Examiners for taught courses above at FHEQ Level 7 and above.

7.90.2 An award of the UCO is deemed to be conferred on a student at the time of a UCO's Board of Examiners' decision. This conferment is through authority delegated by the UCO's Vice-Chancellor as the chair of the Academic Council to the designated Chair of the Boards of Examiners. Such conferment includes action taken by the chair of the respective Board of Examiners subsequently on its behalf.

7.90.3 Conferment is not made in absentia but face to face with the individual so honoured and in exceptional circumstances, as approved by the Academic Council, the award will be made through a ceremony specifically arranged for this purpose.

7.90.4 An honorary academic degree of the UCO is conferred on an individual at the UCO Graduation Ceremony in person by the chair of the Academic Council or designated senior member of the Academic Council acting in that capacity.

7.90.5 Students are considered to have exited their course of study and completed their registration with the UCO once the appropriate Board of Examiners has conferred them with an award.

7.90.6 Conferment of a UCO award is evidenced by the UCO through:

i. A formal degree award document which is provided to the student as certification that the academic award has been achieved and (i.e. the Award Certificate).

ii. A transcript or similar record document setting out in greater detail the course or programme of study followed, the units taken, the credits awarded and the grades received from the UCO.

7.91 CONDITIONS FOR RECEIPT OF AN ACADEMIC AWARD

7.91.1 An award of the British UCO of Osteopathy will be conferred when the following conditions are satisfied:

i. The individual was a registered student of the UCO at the time of his or her assessment for an award, and was in good financial standing with the UCO.

ii. The details of that individual's legal full name, date of birth, gender, course or programme of study followed, and award to be conferred have been registered by the UCO.

iii. The award to be conferred is one approved by the Academic Council under its taught degree awarding powers.

iv. It has been confirmed that the individual as a student of the UCO has completed a course or programme of study approved by the Academic Council as leading to the award being recommended.

v. The conferment of the award has been recommended by the Board of Examiners convened, constituted and acting under regulations approved by the Academic Council under its taught degree awarding powers.

vi. The recommendation of the award has been signed by the Chair of the Board of Examiners and by the chair of the Academic Council or their appointed representative, confirming that the assessments have been carried out in accordance with the UCO's requirements and that the recommendations have received the consent of the External Examiners.

7.91.2 Once an academic outcome has been achieved, and an award conferred, that qualification is not withdrawn if a higher qualification is subsequently achieved.

7.91.3 In cases where students do not complete the course of study for which they are registered through lack of academic progress, withdrawal or premature termination of their studies and cancellation of their registration, the appropriate Board of Examiners may propose conferment of a lower level qualification to recognise the level and extent of achievement provided the conditions indicated above are met.

7.92 Conferment of an Aegrotat Award

7.92.1 An award may be conferred as an aegrotat award where the following conditions are satisfied in addition to those in Section 7.76.1: Conditions for Receipt of an Academic Award above:

i. The individual was a registered student of the UCO, but had been unable to complete all the requirements for the award they sought, because they could not complete the course of study due to illness or similar valid cause for which evidence is provided at the time of consideration by the Board of Examiners.

ii. The appropriate Board of Examiners has sufficient evidence to judge that the student would have reached the required threshold standard for the qualification and, where feasible, secures additional evidence to make a judgement on the award of a distinction or similar.

7.92.2 A candidate may choose to decline an aegrotat award and continue to complete the course of study. However, the candidate cannot then claim the aegrotat award in the event of subsequent failure.

7.92.3 The term "aegrotat" will not be recorded on the Award Certificate or transcript unless the appropriate Board of Examiners decides it has insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the award of a distinction or similar.

7.93 Conferment of an Award Posthumously

7.93.1 An award may be conferred posthumously and accepted on the deceased student's behalf by a parent, spouse or other appropriate individual.

7.93.2 The following conditions must be satisfied in addition to those in Section 13.55: Conditions for Receipt of an Academic Award above:

i. The individual was a registered student of the UCO but had been unable to complete all the requirements for the award they sought, at the time of their death.

ii. The appropriate Board of Examiners has sufficient evidence to judge that the student would have reached the required threshold standard for the qualification and, where feasible, secures additional evidence to make a judgement on the award of a distinction or similar.

7.93.3 At the discretion of the Vice-Chancellor financial good standing conditions may be waived in the case of a posthumous award.

7.94 Rescinding an Award

7.94.1 In exceptional circumstances (e.g. as a consequence of the investigation of an academic offence or an academic appeal) the Academic Council may rescind an award that has been conferred on a student.

7.94.2 Where an honorary award is to be rescinded, the decision cannot be delegated but must be formally considered by the Academic Council with the agreement of a majority of members.

7.94.3 Granting of an honorary award includes the decision to bring the award holder into the scholarly community of the UCO, and behaviour, actions, or the support of actions that run counter to the UCO's mission or damage its work will be considered in such cases.

7.94.4 Where an award is to be rescinded as a consequence of the investigation of an academic offence or an academic appeal, the decision to rescind may be taken on behalf of the Academic Council for UCO awards via Chair's action.

7.95 Award Documentation and Certification

7.95.1 The UCO issues documents as formal award certificates to provide formal and legal evidence of the fact that an academic award has been made to an individual under the UCO's taught degree awarding powers.

7.95.2 The name of the individual appearing on award certification is the name held on the student's registration record at the time the award is conferred.

7.95.3 The printed format for the name normally follows the UK convention, but if the student's identity documents present the names in a different order from the norm in the UK, or evidence of an alternative international naming convention (as approved by the Registrar) is presented, names may appear in a different order.

7.95.4 Once issued, there is normally no change permitted to the wording on an award certificate, unless a specific inaccuracy is proved (e.g. a misspelling). However, a replacement certificate may be issued in the case of gender reassignment or legal name change, on production of documentary evidence of the change.

7.95.5 The document provided as a certificate of an award conferred by the UCO shall record:

i. The name of the UCO together with, if appropriate, the name of any other institution collaborating in the provision of the course of study leading to the award.

ii. The student's full and legal name as recorded on the UCO's registration record.

iii. The name and designation of the award as appropriate.

iv. The title of the award as agreed through the approval process for the course of study by the Academic Council, for the purposes of the certification.

v. The award of distinction or similar achieved by the student within the award, where appropriate.

vi. An approved endorsement or clarification, where appropriate (e.g. that the course was delivered through the medium of English, was by distance learning, etc.).

vii. The date on which the award was conferred which shall normally be the final date of the month in which the award was approved by the Board of Examiners.

7.95.6 The formal academic award document shall bear the signature of the chair of the Academic Council and have suitable security marking.

7.96 Statement of Credit –Transcript

7.96.1 The UCO currently issues a statement of credit or transcript to a student who has successfully completed approved units of study or a stage of a taught course leading to an approved award.

7.96.2 The transcript shall record:

i. The student's full and legal name as recorded on the UCO's registration record.

ii. The units and elements of study successfully completed, with details of their length and level, grade achieved (where appropriate) and dates of registration and completion.

iii. The details of any periods of supervised work experience or placement in the UK or abroad with grades where appropriate and dates.

iv. The details of exposure to transferable skills if appropriate.

7.96.3 The UCO intends to include the transcript part of a Higher Education Achievement Record (HEAR) in a format approved by the Academic Council. The UCO's transcript and HEAR document shall be signed on behalf of the Academic Council by an authorised person approved by the Chair of the Academic Council. This process is currently in development by the UCO.

7.97 Graduation Ceremony

7.97.1 All students who have been conferred an award from the UCO are entitled to attend the British UCO of Osteopathy Graduation Ceremony.

7.97.2 Those attending the graduation ceremony as participants are required to wear the appropriate academic dress for which they are eligible, to comply with the UCO's regulations on professional behaviour and dress code, and to conform to graduation ceremonial procedures.

a) Academic Dress

7.97.3 Ede and Ravenscroft Ltd is the graduation gown maker appointed by the UCO. They aid with the specification of the academic dress, and make the robes associated with the different awards.

7.97.4 All graduates and academic staff attending the graduation ceremony are required to ensure that they wear the correct gown, hat and hood when in full academic dress.

7.97.5 It is an academic offence to wear the gown associated with an award for which an individual is not eligible.

7.97.6 Gowns, hats or hoods for awards of the UCO may not be replicated without the express authorisation of Ede and Ravenscroft[47] and the UCO's Vice-Chancellor.

[47] https://www.edeandravenscroft.com/

AQF07 FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

Academic Quality Framework

Section 8: Student Recruitment & Admissions

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 8: Student Recruitment & Admissions

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 – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
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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 – AQF 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 – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
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Equality Impact	
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)	
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If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

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 Procedures[1] is aligned with Quality Assurance Agency's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access[2]., 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 Group (WPASG). The WPASG is, in turn, responsible to the Academic Council, which is chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. Individual Course Teams have admission sub-groups (Course Recruitment Groups) 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) website[3] (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.

[1] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access
[3] https://www.ucas.com/

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) Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL), 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. 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 form.

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 £1000 non-refundable deposit as a condition of the release of their Confirmation of Acceptance of Studies[4] 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)[5].

8.7.2 The £1000 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 service[6] 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.

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.

[4] https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/sponsorship-information-for-employers-and-educators#codes-of-practice
[5] https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration
[6] https://www.ucas.com/undergraduate/applying-university/filling-your-application/fraud-and-similarity

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)[7] 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 Pre-Registration courses will normally 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)[8].

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 Registrar will then notify the applicant of the outcome of the risk assessment procedure.

[7] https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/disclosure-and-barring-service
[8] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

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[9].

8.12.3 Most full-time and part-time undergraduate 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 to UCO students and details about loan, bursary and funding schemes are published on our website[10].

8.12.6 Students are encouraged to contact the Student Support Officer if they have any queries about financial matters, before or during their studies.

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 Committee (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 Officer, as Chair of the OHC, will inform the applicant as soon as possible.

8.13.5 All successful applicants to Pre-Registration Courses are required to complete a Health Questionnaire 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 Officer to discuss your needs'.

[9] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/course-fees
[10] https://www.uco.ac.uk/life-uco/student-support/financial-support

AQF08: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

Academic Quality Framework

Section 9: Student Guidance & Learner Support

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 9: Student Guidance & Learner Support

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of general interest to all students, and of particular interest to staff involved in the provision of support to students.

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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.*	*Student Support Manager*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
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9.1 Supporting Students at the UCO

9.1.1 The UCO recognises that supporting students throughout their studies is paramount if they are to achieve their highest potential and be successful in their studies and their future career paths.

9.1.2 A dedicated Student Support Department provides students with welfare, learning, counselling and disability support. Other staff, including Academic Tutors, Course Leaders, the Academic Registry and Finance Departments, and Head of Student Services also provide a range of support services, including advice regarding matters such as suspending studies, appeals, complaints and other academic and pastoral issues. In addition, the UCO's Library and ICT Departments provide students with services and support that enable them to develop independent study and research skills.

9.1.3 At an institutional level, guidance is provided to both teaching and non-teaching staff about identifying and responding to students in difficulty, and the Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARG) closely monitors the attendance of students to identify those who, through non-attendance, may be experiencing difficulties with their studies. There is also a Student-Staff Liaison Consultative Group for full-time and part-time students (SSLCGs), an Equality Committee, and a Student Voice email mailbox where students may raise any issues or concerns as appropriate.

9.1.4 Support is offered throughout the students' time at the UCO. For pre-registration students this includes support following graduation to support them in their first year of practise.

9.1.5 Student support policy has taken into consideration the UK Quality Code for Higher Education, regarding Enabling Student Achievement[1].

9.2 Student Charter

9.2.1 The UCO's Student Charter[2], produced jointly by the UCO Students' Union and the UCO, outlines what students can expect from the UCO, and what is expected from students in return.

9.2.2 The UCO's Strategic Plan puts students at the centre of the UCO's activities, and the Student Charter is a contribution towards that goal, aiming at all times to provide high quality courses and services in alignment with national expectation and good practice.

9.2.3 The UCO and UCO Students' Union normally review the Student Charter together annually.

9.3 Staff Responsibilities for Student Support

a) The Head of Student Services

9.3.1 The **Head of Student Services** has overall responsibility for student support at the UCO, and line manages the Student Support Officer. Together, they oversee the Student Support Department, which consists of the Student Learning Advisor and the Student Counsellor whose duties are outlined below.

9.3.2 The Head of Student Services also provides students with a point of contact for support and guidance regarding their student experience and in this capacity their role is to:

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/enabling-student-achievement
[2] https://www.uco.ac.uk/life-uco/student-life

a) Develop and coordinate the UCO's Student Voice activity, in liaison with the Students' Union and senior management, including mechanisms for student consultation, surveys, and responding to student-raised issues;

b) Chair the UCO's Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups jointly with the Student Union President;

c) Develop and deliver training, in conjunction with the Students' Union, for student representatives;

d) Provide an impartial advisory service to students regarding appeals, disciplinary and complaints procedures, in liaison with the Students' Union

b) The Student Support Officer

9.3.3 The **Student Support Officer** is responsible for:

a) Providing a welfare and disability advisory service for all students and to advise staff on related matters.

b) Providing specialist advice, information and support regarding student finance and disabled students allowance, health and personal issues and accommodation.

c) Advising on Higher Education student finance, bursaries, and loan schemes available within the UCO, and is able to provide students with assistance in sourcing other funding from outside organisations such as educational charities.

d) Providing support to all students with declared disabilities, initiating and supporting students through the process involved in applying for Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), and ensuring that a student's needs, once identified, are met by the UCO; this is a confidential and impartial service.

e) Co-ordinating and arranging the dyslexia provision within the UCO; if students believe that they may have dyslexia or another specific learning difficulty, they are advised to see the Student Support Manager who, if appropriate, may arrange for the student to undertake a full diagnostic assessment.

f) Providing a confidential impartial service, where no information is disclosed without students' written consent.

g) Referring students on to appropriate help within the UCO and the local community.

c) The Student Learning Advisor

9.3.3 The **Student Learning Advisor** supports students with study skills, including:

a) Essay writing skills

b) Note taking

c) Memory techniques

d) Presentation skills

e) Exam preparation and revision techniques

f) Time management

9.3.4 One-to-one tutorial sessions with the Student Learning Advisor may also be arranged in any of the key areas mentioned above.

9.3.5 Students are encouraged to seek the support of the Student Learning Advisor if they have concerns about their learning.

9.3.6 Students with English as an additional language are also encouraged to book tutorials with the Student Learning Advisor.

D) The Student Counsellor

9.3.7 The **Student Counsellor** provides a confidential service, which supports students with personal and emotional issues and is available to help students deal with crises or issues affecting their mental well-being.

9.3.8 Sessions with the Student Counsellor are made by appointment only and may be made anonymously using an anonymous sign-up sheet to book an appointment (using an 'X' to book out an appointment time) or through emailing the Counsellor directly.

9.4 Students with Disabilities

9.4.1 In addition to the support provided by the Student Support Officer in their role as the Disability Advisor, the UCO implements a comprehensive Student Disability Policy[3]. This policy has been produced in line with the Equality Act 2010[4], and with appropriate guidance.

9.4.2 The following Information is included in the policy:

a) Who to contact should a student wish to disclose or discuss a disability

b) Accessibility and the UCO environment

c) Library and learning resources for students with a disability

d) Support services

e) Financial advice and Disabled Students' Allowance

f) Special examination arrangements

g) General aims and aspirations of increasing disability awareness at the UCO

9.4.3 The UCO's Equality Committee is also instrumental in supporting students with a disability. This committee reports directly to the Senior Management Team and has a member of the Board of Directors as a member. It meets to promote an inclusive, supportive, and equitable learning environment for all students, and is responsible for the generation of objectives and the implementation of the UCO's Equality Report and Objectives[5], which is reviewed annually.

9.5 Academic Tutors

9.5.1 In addition to the learning support provided by the Student Learning Advisor, Academic Tutors also provide support to students with their academic studies by:

a) Assisting students in evaluating their own learning, making action plans and learning goals, using the Professional Development Portfolio as appropriate.

b) Referring students to other staff members for support, as appropriate.

c) Meeting with students once every term to discuss their academic progress, and to review any grades and feedback from assessments as appropriate.

d) Encouraging students to use their Professional Development Portfolio as an aid for improving their learning independently, evaluating the way in which they learn, and reflecting on the feedback they have received.

[3] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[4] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents
[5] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/vacancies/equal-opportunities

9.5.2 More information about the role of Academic Tutors can be found in the Academic Tutors' Handbook[6].

9.6 Course Leaders

9.6.1 Course Leaders act as key points of contact for student issues and direct students to appropriate support as needed.

9.6.2 Course Leaders also advise students should they wish to change their mode of study or are considering an interruption of studies.

9.7 The Academic Registry

9.7.1 In addition to the Student Support Department, the Academic Registry also supports students throughout their studies by providing specific services.

9.7.2 This department operates an open-door policy and is in contact with students on a day-to-day basis.

9.7.3 The Academic Registry provides a wide range of student services as listed below:

a) Student Registration & Attendance

b) Course Withdrawals and Deferrals

c) Exam & Lecture Timetables

d) Special Circumstances Claims

e) Assessment Submissions, Results and Certificates

f) Student Details & Confirmation Letters

g) Graduation

h) Postgraduate Information

i) Support provided for issues relating to the academic content of the course

9.7.4 The Academic Registry also acts as a centralised Academic Advisory Service for students, the aims of which are to:

a) Offer independent impartial advice

b) Advise students if they are having difficulties in attending lectures or meeting coursework deadlines

c) Advise students if they wish to interrupt their studies

d) Advise students on issues relating to examination results and referrals

e) Advise students about applying for extensions of assignment deadlines

f) Advise on Special Circumstances

9.8 The Finance Department

9.8.1 The Finance Department offers financial advice to students.

9.8.2 The UCO recognises that students may encounter difficulties in paying tuition fees. In order to support students with their financial commitment to the UCO, a number of mechanisms have been implemented to enable students to continue with their studies. These include:

[6] AQF09-01 Academic Tutors' Handbook

a) Payment Plans, whereby students may request to pay their tuition fees by instalments, which are offered at the discretion of the UCO and are available to those students who are unable to pay their tuition fees in full at the beginning of term;

b) Discounts offered to 'overseas' and 'ELQ' students only, who pay in full on or before the beginning of the academic year;

c) The UCO Student Loan Scheme, which offers interest free loans, primarily to students whose change in financial circumstances makes it difficult for them to pay their tuition fees;

d) The UCO Bursary Scheme was established to support the UCO's commitment to broadening access for students from low-income households.

e) The Access to Learning Fund for students who are facing extreme financial difficulties or unexpected financial crises.

9.9 Library Services

9.9.1 The Library seeks to support the academic development of all students and staff. It aims to promote self-directed, independent, active, and continuing education by providing a wide range of resources. It is staffed by an experienced team of librarians, all of whom are on hand to assist students to locate appropriate resources.

9.9.2 Staff and students benefit from the most extensive osteopathic library outside the USA, with a unique collection of osteopathic texts, audio visual materials, anatomical models, and flexi-spines. Library collections are regularly reviewed to ensure an appropriate supply of up to date and key texts.

9.9.3 The Library is a bright and open space, with room for private study and group work.

9.9.4 Computers in the Library and computer rooms provide Internet access to academic resources and medical databases, for which assistance and training is available.

9.9.5 The Library team provide inductions for new users and are a port of call for electronic resource queries.

9.9.6 The Library is open all year, including holiday periods and at weekends when part-time students are attending classes, or when assessments are due, to ensure that all available resources are accessible to students when needed.

9.10 The ICT Department & Computing Services

9.10.1 The ICT Department provides ICT, Audio Visual (AV), Multimedia and Web support services to teaching teams and departments within the UCO. This entails hardware and software support for all AV equipment, AV user support, technical support for academics engaged in producing high quality learning resources, and Multimedia and Web support for the UCO's Internet, portal and virtual learning environment.

9.10.2 Computing services at the UCO are overseen by the ICT Department.

9.10.3 The main computer and printing provision for study purposes is based on the third floor of the UCO's Borough High Street building.

9.10.4 The UCO has networked computers with a range of software including MS Office, Internet, e-mail, and digital information products and software to assist students with disabilities.

9.10.5 All students are allocated their own personal Office 365 OneDrive for their personal use in line with the UCO's ICT Acceptable Use Policy[7] and Code of Conduct Policy & Disciplinary Procedure for Students[8].

9.10.6 Wireless access to the Internet is available throughout the UCO's Borough High Street and Southwark Bridge Road buildings.

9.11 ICT Induction & Training

9.11.1 All students are formally introduced to computing services by attending an ICT Training Session with the UCO's ICT Department during their first weeks at the UCO. During this session, students are issued with their UCO username and password (to register on and access relevant computer services) and their email address. UCO students also receive training in the use of their UCO email account and BONE (the UCO's Online Learning Environment), to ensure that they become proficient users of these facilities.

9.11.2 Students are also provided with relevant computing information and assistance through a number of self-help resources that have been produced by the ICT Department and are available on the UCO Student Portal.

9.11.3 Further information about the UCO's computing services, and the ICT Department, can be found on the UCO Portal.

9.12 Virtual Learning Environment (BONE)

9.12.1 All students have access to the UCO's Online Learning Environment (BONE).

9.12.2 BONE utilises Moodle software and is a web-based learning environment that can be accessed from anywhere in the world, providing important resources for the UCO's student body.

9.12.3 The UCO's Teaching, Learning and Assessment Strategy guide the development and enhancement of BONE.

9.12.4 Tutors are able to upload electronic learning content in a range of file types, as well as utilising other teaching and learning aids, including online quizzes and discussion forums.

9.12.5 The UCO ensures that its tutors are supported through its ICT and audio-visual departments.

9.13 The Students' Union

9.13.1 The UCO believes that a strong, healthy and vibrant Students' Union is vital to enhancing the student experience. The UCO has had a Students' Union for many years, and it works to support students, promoting the student voice within the UCO and organising social events.

9.13.2 The Students' Union Officers and Student Representatives are involved in the UCO's business as a whole, as defined in the Students' Union Constitution[9].

9.13.3 The Students' Union as a whole also plays an important role in the development and review of key UCO documentation, such as the Student Charter[10].

9.13.4 The Head of Student Services is the Students' Union nominated point of contact for advice on matters such as appeals and complaints.

[7] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[8] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[9] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[10] https://www.uco.ac.uk/life-uco/student-life

9.13.5 The Students' Union President is a member of the UCO's Academic Council, co-chairs the Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups with the Head of Student Services and is also a member of disciplinary panels and fitness to practice panels as required.

9.14 The Student Voice & Student Representation

9.14.1 By encouraging students to use the Student Voice, staff and the Students' Union hope that students will gain a greater sense of ownership over their experience at the UCO, and that their views will enhance the experience of the entire student body (see AQF Section 10: Student Voice for more information).

9.14.2 Pre-registration students are reminded that opportunities to give constructive feedback is an important aspect of being a healthcare professional, and that developing and using this skill is of importance during their training.

9.14.3 All students are reminded that they have a responsibility to participate in the UCO's Quality Assurance processes for providing constructive feedback when asked to, in order to develop and enhance the UCO's provision and services, which will ultimately enhance their own Student Experience.

9.14.4 Student Representatives are elected from each cohort on an annual basis. They support their fellow students by voicing the views and suggestions of the student body to UCO management, staff and faculty. In addition, they can assist individual students by signposting them to relevant services and staff. The Head of Student Services provides them with training and on-going support in their role.

9.14.5 More information about Student Representation can be found in AQF Section 10 (The Student Voice).

9.15 Student Appeals, Complaints & Discipline

9.15.1 The UCO aims to deal openly, fairly and effectively with student appeals, complaints and disciplinary matters, and to offer appropriate support and remedy.

9.15.2 A range of formal appeals, complaints and disciplinary procedures are established at the UCO, which are published to students through the UCO's website[11], and which are introduced during induction sessions each year.

9.15.3 The UCO encourages such matters to be addressed informally and discretely, to resolve any issue expediently and to the benefit of all parties where possible.

9.15.4 Both the Students' Union and the Head of Student Services are able to provide advice on submitting appeals and complaints. In all cases students are strongly encouraged to seek impartial advice concerning their complaint.

9.15.5 More information can be found within each of these procedures[12], which are as follows:

a) Academic Appeals Policy

b) Academic Discipline Policy

c) Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy for Staff & Students

d) Code of Conduct Policy & Disciplinary Procedure for Students

e) Complaints Policy & Procedure for Students

f) Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy

[11] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[12] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

g) Fitness to Practice & Professional Behaviour Policy

9.16 Careers Advice

9.16.1 The UCO acknowledges that the academic programmes it provides are a key stage in students' lives as they progress along their chosen career paths.

9.16.2 Students will receive guidance on careers advice during their studies as appropriate, and can contact the Student Support Officer, who is able to advise students on where they may find out more about careers advisory services.

9.16.3 Students who choose to withdraw from the course attend an Exit Interview with the relevant Course Leader or the Student Support Officer, who provides impartial advice about their future choices.

a) Pre-Registration Students

9.16.4 Students studying on the UCO's pre-registration courses are studying to become qualified and practising health care professionals. The standards of practice of the relevant professional, statutory and regulatory body are embedded within each of these courses to ensure that they adequately prepare students for their chosen career.

9.16.5 Pre-Registration Course Information Forms (CIFs) include a section on career/further study opportunities, and students are advised to read their CIF to be aware of future opportunities as outlined on these forms.

b) Postgraduate Students

9.16.6 Students studying on the UCO's postgraduate courses are primarily developing their careers as effective practitioners, educators and researchers.

9.16.7 These courses are designed to enable students to immediately integrate new knowledge and skills into professional practice, and to develop specialist interests.

9.16.8 Postgraduate Course Information Forms (CIFs) include a section on career/further study opportunities, and students are advised to read their CIF to be aware of future opportunities as outlined on these forms.

AQF09: Forms & Templates

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
AQF09-01	Academic Tutors' Handbook

Academic Quality Framework

Section 10: The Student Voice

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 10: The Student Voice

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to all students. It is also relevant to all staff.

Version number	*Dates produced and approved (include committee)*	*Reason for production/ revision*	*Author*	*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.*	*Student Experience Officer*	*Master Version:* *J:\0 Quality Team – AQF* *Published Version:* *Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
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Equality Impact	
Positive equality impact (i.e. the policy/procedure/guideline significantly reduces inequalities)	
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)	X
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Academic Quality Framework
Section 10: The Student Voice

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10.1 Introduction to "The Student Voice"

10.1.1 All students are encouraged to have input into improving quality and standards at the UCO through giving their views and feedback, known as using "The Student Voice".

10.1.2 The UCO considers students as partners in monitoring and improving the student experience and encourages them to participate and engage in quality assurances processes, in line with the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Student Engagement[1].

10.1.3 The main purposes of promoting student engagement at the UCO and encouraging students to use the Student Voice, are to:

a) Enhance the Student Experience;

b) Contribute to monitoring and review of quality and standards;

c) Ensure the effectiveness of course design and delivery;

d) Identify good practice.

10.1.4 The Academic Council is responsible for agreeing and monitoring effective Student Voice mechanisms which are appropriate for students and the institution.

10.1.5 The range of informal and formal routes for students to make their views known and to contribute to decision-making at the UCO include an open-door policy, student representation, evaluation questionnaires, and complaints and appeals procedures.

10.1.6 Systems of student engagement are considered as part of course and institutional approval and review processes undertaken by external approval bodies (see AQF Section 4: Course & Unit Approval and Modifications and Section 6: Periodic Review).

10.1.7 Responses to issues arising from student feedback are considered on an ongoing basis and as part of the UCO's Annual Monitoring and Reporting processes (see AQF Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting).

10.2 Keeping Students Informed

10.2.1 Students are informed about the ways in which they may engage with Quality Assurance and Enhancement processes at the UCO through the UCO Student Portal and during annual induction sessions.

10.2.2 During induction sessions, students are also informed about how the UCO uses their feedback and what enhancements have been made directly in response to their comments and suggestions. These are also communicated to students through the UCO Student Portal.

10.2.3 Throughout the academic year students are kept informed of Quality Assurance and Enhancement updates that may directly affect the Student Experience via Student Representatives, poster campaigns and newsletter items, and the UCO Student Portal.

10.3 Student Voice Mechanisms

10.3.1 The UCO has in place a variety of formal and informal Student Voice Mechanisms through which students may provide the UCO with feedback on their learning, institutional and overall student experience. These are designed to be effective and appropriate for all students at the UCO and are provided in Figure 1 below.

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/student-engagement

10.3.2 Student Voice Mechanisms are reviewed and reported on annually to ensure that they remain effective as part of the UCO's Annual Monitoring and Reporting processes outlined in AQF Section 5.

10.3.3 The UCO's Student Voice Mechanisms are outlined in more detail in the sections below.

FIGURE 1: STUDENT VOICE MECHANISMS

a) STUDENT REPRESENTATION

10.3.4 Student representation is an important Student Voice mechanism, providing the opportunity for students to:

a) Act as a channel of communication between the student body and staff;

b) Become active UCO committee members and thereby influence UCO policy and decision-making;

c) Enhance the UCO's provision and services by gathering and reporting the views of the student body.

i. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ROLES

10.3.5 There are two types of Student Representative role:

i. The Course / Year Group Student Representative who represents the views of the course / year group to which the student belongs.

ii. The Committee Student Representative who represents the wider student body's views as a full member of a particular committee.

10.3.6 The above Student Representative roles may be shared so that students are more easily able to participate at committees across the UCO. In some instances, a student may hold a committee role due to a particular interest or experience in the committee's business but not stand as a Student Representative for their course or year group.

ii. Student and Staff Liaison Consultation Groups

10.3.7 All Course / Year Group Student Representatives are members of the Student and Staff Liaison Consultation Group (SSLCG) to discuss and represent the views of their course and / or year group regarding institutional matters.

10.3.8 An indicative agenda for the SSLCG is as follows; additional items are added as necessary:

a) Minutes of the last meeting.

b) Matters arising from the last meeting.

c) Summary of Student Voice mailbox feedback and actions.

d) Institutional issues raised by Student Representatives.

e) Institutional matters for consultation by the UCO.

10.3.9 The Students' Union President is invited to co-chair meetings of the SSLCG.

10.3.10 Two SSLCGs are in operation at the UCO, one for full-time students (the meetings of which take place during the week) and one for part-time students (the meetings of which take place on part-time course weekends).

iii. Committees with Student Representation

10.3.11 UCO committees that include a Student Representative as part of their membership to represent the wider student body are listed in Table 10.2 which also outlines the role function of the Student Representative.

10.3.12 Terms of Reference for all committees are available on the UCO Portal.

10.3.13 The UCO's Committee Handbook (available on the UCO Portal) also provides guidance for committee members and Chairs of committees which involve student members to support Student Representative engagement.

iv. Arrangements for Electing & Supporting Student Representatives

10.3.14 Students are provided with information about the UCO's Student Representative System and roles annually, normally during the Autumn Term.

10.3.15 Each year group will be asked for nominations for Course / Year Group and Committee Student Representatives and a vote taken by student peers, if necessary.

10.3.16 The Students' Union is responsible for organising the nominations and election process, with support from the UCO's Head of Student Services.

10.3.17 New Student Representatives will typically be appointed to commence their term in the January of each academic year, enabling awareness-raising of student representation and Students' Union roles to take place in the autumn term. Student Representatives normally serve for a one-year term from January to December.

10.3.18 All Student Representatives are provided with training and ongoing support by the Students' Union and Head of Student Services. Guidance is also provided in the Student Representatives' Handbook[2].

v. Arrangements for Appointing & Supporting Student Board Members

10.3.19 When vacancies for new Student Board Members arise, they are appointed following a successful application process at the UCO's Annual General Meeting.

10.3.20 Student Board Members normally serve for a term of up to 3 years.

10.3.21 Student Board Members are provided with specific training which is facilitated by the Clerk to the Board.

10.3.22 The roles of both Student Representatives and Student Board Members are underpinned by job descriptions, which specify roles and responsibilities.

10.3.23 Induction and training sessions for both roles and a staff point of contact to provides ongoing guidance.

b) The Student Voice Mailbox

10.3.24 When on or off-site, all students can post matters of concern to the Student Voice mailbox, where the email will be forwarded to the appropriate staff member for a response.

10.3.25 Responses are emailed back to the forum as appropriate ensuring that all students are kept informed of issues raised and resolved.

10.3.26 This Student Voice Mechanism can address issues quickly.

10.3.27 The Student Voice Mailbox route can be anonymous through a Student Representative raising an issue on a student's behalf.

10.3.28 Summaries of the issues raised through the Student Voice Mailbox are received by the Student and Staff Liaison Consultation Groups (SSLCGs).

c) The Open-Door Policy

10.3.29 The UCO operates an "Open Door Policy" whereby students are encouraged to discuss their suggestions and feedback with relevant members of staff directly, in person or by email as appropriate.

10.3.30 This is an efficient and direct mechanism that enables students to discuss their Student Experience directly with relevant staff members.

d) Steering Groups and Working Parties

10.3.31 Students are invited to contribute to projects at the UCO which affect the student experience through membership of steering groups and working parties.

e) Focus Groups

10.3.32 Student may be asked to participate in Focus Groups to gain more in-depth student feedback about particular areas, for example on themes identified in questionnaire responses.

f) Course/Unit Reviews and Approval Events

10.3.33 Student Representatives and the wider student body are invited to contribute to course/unit reviews and approval events; including roles as panel members and as attendees.

[2] AQF10-01 Student Representatives' Handbook

g) Complaints & Academic Appeals

10.3.34 The UCO publishes detailed information to students regarding the procedures to follow in complaints (through the Student Complaints Policy and Procedures[3]) and academic appeal matters (through the Academic Appeals Policy[4]).

10.3.35 The UCO's complaints and appeals policies are designed to deal students' specific concerns that cannot be resolved through the other Student Voice Mechanisms that have been implemented at the UCO as part of ongoing engagement with students to collect their individual and collective feedback about academic standards, quality of learning opportunities and their student experience.

10.3.36 The way in which students may make a complaint or academic appeal is contained within the above policies.

10.3.37 In both cases students are provided with impartial advice and support by the Head of Student Services and Students' Union. Mediation is also offered where appropriate.

h) Student Evaluation Questionnaires

i. UCO Student Evaluation Questionnaires

10.3.38 UCO generated student evaluation questionnaires are administered to all students on an annual basis by the Quality Team to gather formal student feedback that is used to inform annual monitoring reports, periodic reviews, new course development and modifications to existing courses and units. They are normally administered between March and June.

10.3.39 Two types of UCO student evaluation questionnaire are normally circulated to all students studying course delivered at the UCO:

i. Unit Experience Questionnaires, which focus on unit learning experience and feedback on progress and assessment.

ii. The Student Experience Questionnaire, which reflects questions on course teaching, learning opportunities, assessment and feedback, academic support, organisation and management, learning resources, learning community, student voice, the Students' Union and overall satisfaction.

10.3.40 Results to both types of questionnaire are collated and disseminated to relevant staff members, including Course Leaders, Heads of Areas and Unit Leaders in the case of Unit Experience Questionnaires (and Heads of Department in the case of Student Experience Questionnaires) by the Quality Team.

10.3.41 Heads of Departments may also survey students about their services independently to gather feedback on how students view their service, to consider enhancements and monitor student satisfaction in their area.

10.3.42 Responses to student feedback received and action planning is informed by pre-set thresholds for satisfaction and categorising student survey results as shown in Table 10.1.

[3] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[4] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

TABLE 10.1: PRE-SET THRESHOLDS (THE TRAFFIC LIGHT SYSTEM) FOR CATEGORISING UCO STUDENT EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES

Red	**50% or More Dissatisfaction / Mean Rating = 0.00 - 2.50** Response required including an explanation of why this area has been raised as an issue (as appropriate). Action plan to be developed and monitored to address the issue.
Amber	**Neutral + Satisfaction > 50% / Mean Rating = 2.51 - 3.50** Recommended to be reflected upon in departmental / annual / unit reports and discussed with colleagues as an area to enhance.
Green	**60% or More Satisfaction / Mean Rating = 3.51 - 5.00** **(80% or More Satisfaction = Recognition of Very High Performance)** Indicative of Good Practice. Action plan for disseminating the Good Practice to other areas to be developed (as appropriate).

10.3.43 UCO student evaluation questionnaires results are summarised and collated into a Student Survey Annual Report by the Head of Quality to review practice and results across the UCO and to compare results with those of previous years. An action plan is developed to address areas for development within annual reports.

10.3.44 Action plans are agreed by the Academic Council and the Senior Management Team as appropriate and are considered and monitored by the Quality Assurance Committee, Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Student and Staff Liaison Consultation Groups. Action plans undergo a mid-point review midway through the year to review progress.

10.3.45 As part of their induction programme at the beginning of each academic year, students attend a presentation which summarises the outcomes of student evaluation questionnaire feedback of the preceding year.

10.3.46 Outcomes may also be disseminated through BONE, the UCO newsletter and poster campaigns and the UCO Student Portal.

ii. SUBJECT SPECIFIC EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES

10.3.47 Subject teaching staff can choose to gather and use student feedback in ways that are tailored to them and their area.

10.3.48 Tutors are provided with guidance, including sample questions, which they can draw from and suggestions on methods to increase response rates.

10.3.49 It is not compulsory for subject tutors to gather subject feedback from students, but the process and outcomes can form part of an individual's Professional Development Review (PDR).

10.3.50 Tutors are advised to inform colleagues of significant matters arising from student feedback or those which are relevant to other subjects and are encouraged to close the loop to describe the main points of action that arise from the survey/s for the current and/or new cohort of students.

10.3.51 In the clinical centre, group feedback on clinic tutors is undertaken. This involves students providing group-moderated feedback on individual clinic tutors. Themes from group feedback and any related actions are normally summarised by the Head of Clinic every six months.

iii. THE NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

10.3.52 All final year undergraduate students are invited to complete the National Student Survey (NSS) administered by Ipsos MORI, an independent market research company.

10.3.53 The NSS is intended to give final year students an opportunity to report back on their student experience.

10.3.54 NSS results are published on the Unistats website[5], the official website for comparing UK higher education course data that helps prospective students to choose the right course and university for them.

10.3.55 NSS results are also carefully analysed and reviewed and an NSS Annual Report is produced by the relevant Course Leaders. This includes an action plan in response to NSS feedback.

10.3.56 The NSS Annual Report is agreed by the Academic Council and considered by the Senior Management Team and Board of Directors as appropriate. It is also considered and monitored by the Quality Assurance Committee, Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Student-Staff Liaison and Consultation Groups.

10.3.57 The action plan undergoes a mid-point review midway through the year to review progress.

10.3.58 NSS results and responses are included in student induction presentations and disseminated throughout the UCO via the UCO newsletter and poster campaigns.

[5] https://unistats.ac.uk/

TABLE 10.2: STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP ROLES

Committee	Summary of committee functions	Student representative roles normally available	Student representative role function	Meeting frequency and committee reporting line
Board of Directors (BoD)	Sets the vision and strategy of the UCO. It governs the function of the UCO by overseeing its work and managing risk.	Two student members.	Contribute to BoD's work with views from the UCO's whole student body.	4 times per year plus the Annual General Meeting
Academic Council	Main academic decision-making body	1 representative from full time courses. 1 representative from part time courses. NB usually these representatives would be students who are familiar with the UCO and therefore at least in their second year at the UCO (where this applies).	Contribute to Academic Council's decision-making with views from the UCO's whole student body.	4 times per year (Reports to Board of Directors)
Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee (EESC)	Leads educational strategy and initiatives	1 representative from all courses at the UCO. NB usually these representatives would be students who are familiar with the UCO and therefore at least in their second year at the UCO (where this applies).	Contribute to EESC's work with views from the UCO's whole student body.	4 times per year (Reports to Academic Council)
Research & Scholarship Strategy Committee	Leads research and scholarship strategy and initiatives	1 representative from the research degree.	Contribute with views from the UCO's research degree students.	4 times per year (Reports to Academic Council)
Widening Participation & Admissions Strategy Group	Develops strategy for admissions and widening participation	1 representative from all courses at the UCO.	Contribute with views from the UCO's whole student body.	1 per term (Reports to Academic Council)

Committee	Summary of committee functions	Student representative roles normally available	Student representative role function	Meeting frequency and committee reporting line
Student-Staff Liaison & Consultation Groups	Consultation forum for institutional matters raised by students and staff. Receives summary reports from the Student Voice E-Forum.	1-2 representatives per course and year group.	Bring forward matters for consultation with staff from the course/year group and respond to matters for consultation from staff.	1 weekday meeting per term and 1 weekend meeting per term (attendance at either weekday or weekend is required, not both) (Reports to Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee)
Course Teams	Manages the day-to-day operation of a course	1 representative per course. NB usually these representatives would be students who are familiar with the UCO and therefore at least in their second year at the UCO (where this applies).	Contribute to the Course Team's work with views from the course/year group and bring forward course-specific matters from students to be discussed. Student representatives do not attend / participate during matters of confidential student business.	Monthly (this may involve electronic discussions rather than formal meetings) (Report to Portfolio Boards)

AQF10: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
AQF10-01	Student Representatives' Handbook

Academic Quality Framework

Section 11: External Examining

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 11: External Examining

This Section should be of particular interest to Course Leaders and External Examiners, and all those involved in the assessment and examination of undergraduate and postgraduate taught students.

Version number	*Dates produced and approved (include committee)*	*Reason for production/ revision*	*Author*	*Location(s)*	*Proposed next review date and approval required*
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Academic Quality Framework

Section 11: External Examining

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11.1 INTRODUCTION

11.1.1 External examining and moderation plays a fundamental role in assuring academic standards by providing an external perspective on student performance and on the conduct of the assessment process at the University College of Osteopathy (UCO).

11.1.2 The UCO appoints External Examiners for all taught courses through which credit is achieved and qualifications that lead to an award of the UCO.

11.1.3 External Examiners provide one of the principal means by which the UCO ensures it maintains nationally comparable standards regarding assessment processes and practices within autonomous higher education institutions.

11.1.4 External Examiners may be appointed to report on assessment processes, academic standards and quality at course or unit level, or both.

11.1.5 The main purposes of external examining are:

a) To verify that academic standards are appropriate for the award and its component parts by reference to published national subject benchmarks, the QAA Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications of Degree-Awarding Bodies (FHEQ)[1], institutional programme specifications and other relevant information;

b) To help institutions to assure and maintain academic standards;

c) To help institutions to ensure that the assessment process measures student achievement appropriately against the intended learning outcomes of the course;

d) To verify that institutions' assessment processes are sound, fairly operated and in line with their policies and regulations.

11.1.6 The following procedures have been developed to align with the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education Expectations and Practices regarding Assessment[2] and External Expertise[3].

11.2 PRINCIPLES OF EXTERNAL EXAMINING

11.2.1 The principles of External Examining of the UCO's awards include that:

a) No taught degree or other academic distinction of the UCO shall be awarded without the participation in the examining process of at least one External Examiner who shall be a full member of the relevant Board of Examiners;

b) External Examiners are responsible to the UCO's Vice- Chancellor;

c) The correspondent between the UCO and an External Examiner on contractual matters will be the UCO's Head of Quality;

d) The number of External Examiners for any particular course shall be appropriate to cover the full range of studies / units.

e) A maximum of 12 units of thirty credits each or equivalent may be examined throughout the External Examiners' term of office.

11.3 THE ROLE OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS

11.3.1 External Examiners are members of, and attend, Boards of Examiners and are expected to:

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/qualifications-and-credit-frameworks
[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment
[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/external-expertise

a) Ensure that the standards of the UCO's awards are consistent with those elsewhere in the sector, and that the UCO is examining the qualities typically found in students across the sector at any specific stage of their course;

b) Moderate the standard of work carried out by students to consistent standards to ensure that grades awarded are similar to those that would apply in other comparable higher education institutions and are in line with current best practice in the discipline concerned;

c) Witness (by attendance at Boards of Examiners) the fair and consistent application of the UCO's regulations for dealing with students' assessments, progression from one stage to another and the determination of students' awards;

d) Endorse the outcomes of the assessments they have been appointed to scrutinise;

e) Comment and give advice on course design, pedagogy and assessment processes;

f) Produce a written report which will include a commentary and judgements on the validity, reliability and integrity of the assessment process and the standards of student attainment.

11.3.2 Depending on the requirements of a particular subject or course, External Examiners may be called upon to undertake the observation of clinical practice, practical examinations or viva voce examinations.

11.3.3 External Examiners have the right to comment on any matter at the Board of Examiners, although the ultimate responsibility for making recommendations as to the award of degrees rests with the relevant Board of Examiners as a whole.

11.3.4 The Board of Examiners is not ultimately required to defer to the judgement of External Examiners in taking decisions but, where the Board of Examiners chooses to disregard the views of an External Examiner, the reasons for the Board's decision shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting and reported to the Vice-Chancellor.

11.4 Selection & Appointment of External Examiners

a) Criteria for External Examiner Appointment – Person Specification

11.4.1 External Examiners from outside the higher education system, for example from industry or other professions, may be appointed where appropriate; however, each course should normally have at least one External Examiner with experience in a higher education institution that is familiar with the standards required for comparable courses.

11.4.2 External Examiners shall be appointed according to the following criteria (see also Appendix 1):

a) Their knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality, including their range and scope of experience and understanding of quality and standards in other higher education institutions.

b) Their competence and experience in the fields covered by the course of study, or parts thereof, including their experience of teaching and examining students following courses which lead to the level of award for which they are being considered as External Examiners.

c) Their relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience as appropriate; experience and qualifications which should be at least at the same level as the course they are examining, and preferably above that level.

d) Their competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures.

e) Their sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers, i.e. their recognition within the relevant discipline and / or profession as appropriate.

f) Their familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed.

g) Their fluency in English, and where courses are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s) (unless other secure arrangements are in place to ensure that External Examiners are provided with the information to make their judgements).

h) Their meeting applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.

i) Their awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula.

j) Their competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.

k) Their present post and their expertise in the relevant subject area, including current evidence of scholarship / research / consultancy related to the awards to be externally examined;

l) Their independence from the UCO and relevant Course Teams.

b) Criteria for External Examiner Appointment – Conflicts of Interest

11.4.3 External Examiners **shall not** be appointed as an External Examiner if they:

a) Are or have been within the last five years a member of staff, a governor, an External Examiner or a student of the UCO or one of its partners, delivery organisations or support providers.

b) Are or have been within the last five years been closely associated with any member of the Course Team.

c) Have a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of staff or student involved with the course of study.

d) Are required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the course of study.

e) Are, or knows they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the course of study, i.e. knows of a conflict of interest.

f) Are significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the course(s) or units in question.

g) Are a former staff member or a student of the UCO unless a period of five years has elapsed and all students taught by or with the proposed External Examiner have completed their course(s).

h) Are involved in a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate courses at another higher education provider.

i) Are from the same department and institution as the retiring External Examiner.

j) Are from the same department or higher education provider as an existing External Examiner.

k) Are from a department in an institution where a member of the UCO is serving as an External Examiner.

l) Are from an institution which has been the source of External Examiners for the same or a closely related programme in the recent past (normally five years);

m) Are from the same place of employment as an existing External Examiner who is already on the relevant Board of Examiners.

11.4.4 In addition, an External Examiner **should not** normally be appointed if they:

a) Already hold two other external examiner appointments for taught courses / units at any point in time.

b) Concurrently act as a consultant to the relevant Course Team on course design, or act as members of a panel established to review the course they examine.

c) Are personally associated with the sponsorship of students on the course.

d) Are in a position to influence significantly the future employment of students on the course.

e) Are likely to be involved with placements of students on the course or with their training in the External Examiner's organisation.

c) Process for External Examiner Appointment

11.4.5 External Examiner appointments are approved under arrangements determined by the Academic Council.

11.4.6 The Academic Council is responsible for ensuring that:

a) Criteria for the identification, nomination and appointment of candidates are understood and accessible to all staff initiating appointments.

b) Nominations are assessed effectively and rigorously.

c) Any potential intellectual property difficulties, such as might arise from the need for commercial confidentiality, are resolved prior to appointment.

11.4.7 The Course Leader in consultation with Heads of Area / Unit Leaders identifies and contacts a suitable candidate to be appointed as an External Examiner who, after agreeing to the nomination, provides the Course Leader with their curriculum vitae (CV).

11.4.8 The Course Leader in consultation with Heads of Area and Unit Leaders as appropriate completes an External Examiner Nomination Form[4] and External Examiner Contact Details & Duties Form[5] supplying the prospective External Examiner's details of teaching, research and examination experience, present and former appointments and associations (if any) with the UCO or its staff and details of the course and / or units for which the nominated External Examiner will be responsible.

11.4.9 In cases where it is proposed that the appointment of an existing External Examiner be extended or their duties reallocated, the Course Leader in consultation with Heads of Area / Unit Leaders as appropriate completes the appropriate an External Examiner Extension of Duties Form[6].

11.4.10 External Examiner Nomination Forms and CVs are considered by the Education Enhancement Strategy Committee in line with the criteria for External Examiner Appointment listed above and then recommends the nominations to the Academic Council for final approval.

11.4.11 It is the responsibility of the Education Enhancement Strategy Committee and Academic Council to ensure that in cases where proposed External Examiners do not fully meet the Criteria for External Examiner Appointment outlined above:

[4] AQF11-01 External Examiner Nomination Form
[5] AQF11-02 External Examiner Contact Details & Duties Form
[6] AQF11-03 External Examiner Reallocation & Extension of Duties Forms

a) That these cases are carefully considered and approved and that arrangements for providing oversight of the provision are robust.

b) That where there is a legitimate case for making an appointment that does not fulfil all the criteria, appropriate training is provided and / or that they are not the sole examiner for the award and are part of an External Examiner Team where their expertise is complemented by that of others who do satisfy the criteria.

11.4.12 Exceptions to appointing an External Examiner who does not fulfil all the appointment criteria may include:

a) Nominations drawn from business, industry or the professions who may possesses considerable professional experience but not the formal qualifications anticipated, the academic background, or sufficient experience of assessment.

b) Nominations required for disciplines which are very small and specialist where the pool of potential external examiners is therefore restricted.

11.4.13 Once approved by the Academic Council the External Examiner candidate shall be contacted by the Head of Quality to confirm the appointment and, in liaison with the HR Department, arrange for a formal contract of services to be signed stating the agreed fee which will be paid on completion of the necessary duties, including timely submission to the UCO's Vice-Chancellor of a detailed annual report[7]. A response to each will be provided to the External Examiner acknowledging their recommendations and comments[8].

11.4.14 A record of all External Examiner appointments is held by the UCO's Quality Team.

11.4.15 The UCO's Human Resources Department also retains a record of all UCO academic staff that hold External Examiner appointments at other institutions.

11.4.16 Newly appointed External Examiners will receive relevant briefing material and be invited to participate in the annual External Examiner's Training Day to support them in their role by the Head of Quality.

11.5 Term of Office / Tenure of External Examiners

11.5.1 External Examiner appointments are normally of four years' duration but may exceptionally be extended subject to formal approval for a further period of one year to ensure continuity if there is a strong rationale for extension.

11.5.2 Normally, External Examiner appointments will run from the beginning of an academic session of the course to which they are contracted to examine and the normal term of office will be one which allows the External Examiner to be involved in the assessment of four successive cohorts of students (i.e. 4 years).

11.5.3 New External Examiners should take up their appointments on or before the retirement of their predecessors.

11.5.4 External Examiners should remain available after the last assessments with which they are to be associated in case of any subsequent reviews of decisions.

11.5.5 An external examiner may be reappointed in exceptional circumstances but only after a period of five years or more has elapsed since their last appointment.

11.5.6 External examiners normally hold no more than two external examiner appointments for taught courses / units at any point in time.

11.5.7 External Examiner contracts will normally be renewed on an annual basis.

[7] AQF11-04 External Examiner Annual Report Form
[8] AQF11-05 External Examiner Annual Report Response Form

11.6 Termination of Contract

11.6.1 An External Examiner's appointment may be terminated by either party (the External Examiner or the UCO), normally subject to 3 months' notice, at any time.

11.6.2 An External Examiner whose performance or conduct is not satisfactory may be warned or advised (in the first instance) of remedial action that should be taken, or have their contract terminated prematurely.

11.6.3 The decision to terminate the contract may be based on one or more of a number of factors, including:

a) Changes to the curriculum/deletion of courses;

b) Failure to carry out duties in accordance with the contract and annual agreement, including failure to attend Boards of Examiner meetings where attendance is required, failure to submit reports, provision of incomplete reports, and failure to communicate effectively with the UCO.

c) Conflict of interest through changed circumstances;

d) Evidence that the information contained in the External Examiner's nomination form was inaccurate;

e) Evidence that the External Examiners' judgement / reporting is insufficiently thorough, critical or objective.

11.6.4 Should a conflict of interest arise during an External Examiner's term of office, External Examiners should notify the UCO immediately and resign from the role by writing to the Vice-Chancellor.

11.6.5 Should the grounds for premature termination of the contract be due to the alleged non-fulfilment of duties on the part of the External Examiner, the UCO's Head of Quality (or other appropriate senior manager) shall carry out an investigation to ensure that any decision to terminate the contract is based on sound evidence.

11.6.6 The outcome of the investigation shall be considered by the Vice-Chancellor who will make the final decision regarding the termination of the contract.

11.6.7 Should either party wish to terminate an External Examiners contract, they shall do so in writing, normally giving three months' notice. External Examiners should address their letter informing the UCO of their intent to terminate their contract to the Vice-Chancellor of the UCO, outlining the reason/s why.

11.7 Briefing & Training of External Examiners

11.7.1 The UCO's Head of Quality will ensure that once appointed, each External Examiner is sent the following relevant to the course and / or units for which the External Examiner is contracted to examine;

a) A copy of the UCO's Academic Quality Framework (which includes the UCO's Academic Regulations);

b) Previous External Examiner reports (normally for the last 3 years) including a copy of the report made by the retiring External Examiner at the end of their term of office;

c) The External Examiner's Handbook[9];

d) Relevant Course and Unit Information Forms;

e) Relevant Course Handbooks;

[9] AQF11-06 External Examiners Handbook

f) Documentation relating to specific professional issues (such as fitness to practise) or subject disciplines, including reference to any guidance or advise produced by sector bodies or subject communities;

g) Board of Examiners Terms of Reference;

h) The assessment schedule for the course (including dates when scripts will be available for moderation), related grading schemes, model answers etc. as appropriate;

i) Dates of meetings of the Board(s) of Examiners;

j) The last Course Annual Monitoring Report and Course Periodic Review Report as appropriate;

k) Professional body requirements as appropriate;

l) External Examiner Induction and Training Materials.

m) Assessment tasks.

11.7.2 The UCO holds an annual External Examiners' Induction and Training Day (detailed in the External Examiners' Handbook) to which all External Examiners are invited. If an External Examiner is unable to attend the annual training day, alternative arrangements will be made, i.e. training through Skype or another appropriate medium.

11.7.3 The UCO's Head of Quality will make arrangements for new External Examiners to be briefed as soon as possible after appointment and to meet with students as appropriate.

11.7.4 Where a new External Examiner has no previous experience of the role, they will, where practicable, be assigned to an External Examiner Team and allocated a mentor. The mentor will typically be an experienced External Examiner from the same team to provide support and guidance. Where it is not practicable to assign the new External Examiner to an External Examiner Team, for example due to the size or nature of the provision, they will normally be allocated a mentor from another field of study.

11.7.5 The Head of Quality shall act as a point of contact for all External Examiners during their term of office to answer questions and provide appropriate documentation.

11.8 Participation of External Examiners in Assessment Procedures

11.8.1 External Examiners are normally expected to undertake the following duties:

a) To attend, at their discretion, the annual External Examiner's Induction and Training Day;

b) To participate in the UCO's Scrutiny Process and comment

c) To confirm the academic standards of a final award, i.e. at final award level (normally Level 6 and Level 7), and in so doing endorse the level and standards of its component parts as appropriate to the structure of that award;

d) To be given the opportunity to comment on the approved assessment methods, procedures and regulations which directly affect students on the course / unit;

e) To consider a sample of graded scripts from each unit for which the External Examiner is contracted to examine in order to confirm that the scripts have been graded in accordance with the criteria stated, to the proper standard, fairly and accurately. The sample will not normally include work at Level 4 and Level 5 but may be included for the purposes of good practice. Samples will normally comprise scripts based on borderlines, fails and a selection of grades comprising an A, B, C and D (or the % equivalents of these grades);

f) To moderate the grades awarded by internal examiners and to adjust the overall range of grades, if warranted, but not to alter individual grades;

g) Exceptionally, to conduct a viva voce examination of any student, where this is judged necessary;

h) To ensure that the assessments are conducted in accordance with UCO and course regulations;

i) To attend all final meeting(s) of the Board of Examiners at which decisions on progression and awards are made and to ensure that the decisions accord with the UCO's regulations and normal practice in higher education;

j) To ensure that decisions regarding the award of grades / marks / awards are collectively made by relevant Boards of Examiners only.

k) To participate in reviews of decisions about individual students' awards taken during their period of office;

l) To report to the UCO on the effectiveness of the assessments and any lessons to be drawn from them;

m) To report in writing immediately to the Vice-Chancellor of the UCO on any matters of serious concern arising from the assessments which put at risk the standard of the award;

n) To submit an annual report, normally by the 31st July each year for undergraduate courses and by the 30th September for postgraduate courses (for courses that do not operate on an annual basis or on a normal academic year these dates may be modified to accommodate the nature of the provision);

o) To submit a written confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor, separate from the annual report, where it is necessary, for example to name a member of staff;

p) Where an external examiner has a serious concern relating to systemic failings with the academic standards of a programme or programmes and has exhausted all published applicable internal procedures, including the submission of a confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor, he/she may invoke the QAA's concerns scheme[10] and/or inform the relevant professional, statutory or regulatory body.

11.9 Resolving Disagreements Regarding Marks Awarded

11.9.1 If an External Examiner disagrees with the marks awarded by internal markers within a mark sample, they may request that the UCO undertakes an additional level of moderation or re-marking. However, this must apply to all students who have completed the assessment in question, not just those within the work sample.

11.9.2 The UCO does not allow External Examiners to change the mark of an individual student's work from the sample.

11.9.3 Disagreements between internal markers are expected to have been resolved before the marked work is provided to and scrutinised by an External Examiner (e.g. through the use of additional internal markers). However, in exceptional circumstances where a mark has not been agreed internally the views of the external examiner can be taken into account when agreeing the final mark.

[10] For information about how the concerns scheme applies to external examining, reference should be made to the QAA's *Concerns Scheme: Guidance for External Examiners (*https://www.qaa.ac.uk/reviewing-higher-education/how-to-make-a-complaint). Recourse to the scheme will only take place in cases where internal mechanisms for following up concerns have been exhausted. The scheme's focus is explicitly on systemic failings in an institution's management of standards or quality. Therefore, the scheme cannot be used for one-off cases of ineffective practice, or to raise a personal grievance or issues relating to an External Examiner's appointment.

11.9.4 Should the UCO decide not to take any action recommended by the External Examiner, the UCO shall inform the External Examiner accordingly.

11.10 External Examiner Reporting Process

a) External Examiner Annual Reports

11.10.1 External Examiners are required to provide an annual report to the UCO using the UCO's External Examiner Annual Report Form which specifies the areas on which the UCO welcomes comments and includes a checklist that External Examiners are required to complete to enable the UCO to determine that they have based their report on sufficient evidence.

11.10.2 External Examiners' Annual Reports provide important evidence about the standards prevailing in the UCO and are used by Course Teams as part of the basis for their annual monitoring.

11.10.3 At the end of their appointment External Examiners will be required to provide a summative report of the period of the appointment.

11.10.4 External Examiners' Annual Reports should be sent to the Vice-Chancellor after which payment of the fee will be made.

11.10.5 All reports of External Examiners should be submitted to the Head of Quality on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor electronically from the preferred email identified in External Examiners' contracts. The Head of Quality will then forward the reports on to the Vice-Chancellor and relevant staff.

11.10.6 External Examiner Annual Reports will then normally be disseminated by the UCO's Registrar to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Head of Quality, Heads of Areas and Course Leaders for onward dissemination to students and relevant staff as appropriate.

11.10.7 Course Leaders are required to provide a written response to External Examiners' reports accompanied by a formal letter sent to the External Examiner thanking them for their work that year.

11.10.8 The deadline for providing External Examiners a written response to their report is 30th September for undergraduate courses and the 17th December for postgraduate courses.

11.10.9 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) should review and approve External Examiner responses and formal letters before they are sent to External Examiners.

11.10.10 The Head of Quality is responsible for sending approved External Examiner responses and formal letters to External Examiners.

11.10.11 External Examiners' reports and responses are considered at relevant Course Team meetings in the presence of Student Representatives. They are also considered at relevant Portfolio Boards and at UCO committees where Student Representatives are present, including the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and the Academic Council.

11.10.12 External Examiners' Annual Reports are also read centrally at the UCO by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) who prepares a summary report for the UCO's Academic Council. Any issues requiring attention are identified and appropriate action proposed. Good practice identified by External Examiners is highlighted and disseminated for wider consideration and adoption as appropriate.

11.10.13 External Examiner reports and responses to those reports are made available in full to students through the UCO's Virtual Learning Environment (BONE).

11.10.14 External Examiner reports may be amended in consultation with the External Examiner where individuals are identified or in very exceptional cases where the content may cause harm to the UCO or bring it into disrepute.

11.10.15 Should External Examiner's need to report any confidential matter / concern to the UCO, they should do so by providing a separate report / writing directly to the Vice-Chancellor.

b) Responding to External Examiner Reports

11.10.16 The role of External Examiners is fundamental in assuring academic standards by providing an external perspective on student performance and on the conduct of the assessment process at the UCO in addition to providing comments on and recommendations for developing and enhancing assessment processes.

11.10.17 It is the responsibility of the Course Leader in consultation with Heads of Area and Unit Leaders to carefully consider reports of External Examiners, to review their comments and recommendations and to formulate appropriate action plans in response.

11.10.18 Responses to External Examiner reports are written using the External Examiner Response Form. These forms record actions to be taken as recommended by the External Examiner and the action planned / taken in response to the recommendations in addition to recording the External Examiners' comments identifying areas of good practice.

11.10.19 It is the responsibility of the Course Leader, Heads of Area and Unit Leaders to complete the External Examiner Report Response Form, to ensure that responsibility is allocated to each action and to disseminate the areas of good practice for wider consideration and adoption as appropriate.

11.10.20 The completed External Examiner Annual Response Form template and formal letter are considered by relevant UCO committees for comment and agreement. These include Course Teams, Portfolio Boards and the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.

11.10.21 The UCO's Academic Council considers a summary report of External Examiners' annual reports and UCO responses.

11.10.22 It is the responsibility of Course and Unit Leaders to consider and review relevant External Examiner reports and responses and to incorporate these into Course and Unit Annual Monitoring reports (see AQF Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting) as appropriate, recording areas of good practice and producing an action plan for the next academic year specific to their unit in response to recommendations identified by the External Examiner.

11.10.23 Course and Unit Annual Monitoring reports are reviewed by Course Teams in the presence of Student Representatives as part of the UCO's Annual Monitoring and Reporting requirements and processes (see AQF Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting).

c) Monitoring Action Plans Generated in Response to External Examiners Reports

11.10.24 It is important to regularly monitor action plans generated by Course Teams in response to External Examiner reports to verify that appropriate action is being taken in a timely manner to assure the enhancement of quality and academic standards relating to assessment processes at the UCO.

11.10.25 Course Teams hold mid-point review meetings part way through the academic year to review each unit's and course's Annual Monitoring Report action plan and to ensure that the resources required and deadlines for actions are on track to be reasonably achieved.

d) Publication of External Examiner Reports & Responses to Students

11.10.26 External Examiner annual reports and Course Teams' responses to these are normally published in full to students through the Virtual Learning Environment for their information in addition to a brief overview of External Examining and reference to this section of the Academic Quality Framework.

11.11 The External Examiner Team

11.11.1 The External Examiner team should complement each other in terms of expertise and experience appropriate to the course assessed.

11.11.2 There should also be an appropriate balance between academic and professional practitioners within the External Examining team, which should reflect the range of academic / vocational perspectives required for the course.

11.11.3 The phasing of appointments to the team should be structured to ensure continuity.

11.12 Support for New External Examiners

11.12.1 In circumstances where an appointee is new to the role of external examining, they must be supported in their role by an experienced External Examiner within the team covering the same broad curriculum or, where this is not practicable, by an experienced External Examiner in another field of study.

11.12.2 A training day for all External Examiners is arranged annually by the UCO providing an opportunity to brief new examiners about their role and to keep existing External Examiners briefed about developments at the UCO.

11.12.3 All External Examiners have access to the UCO's Virtual Learning Environment where they can find resources to assist with their role.

11.12.4 External Examiners receive information and any support required from the UCO's Head of Quality and Registrar through the induction process and thereafter for the duration of their tenure.

11.13 Procedure for Dealing with Complaints by External Examiners

11.13.1 If an External Examiner has cause to complain about any matter relating to the contract, payment, or the conduct of UCO employees, the complaint should be addressed to the UCO's Vice-Chancellor in a letter separate from the External Examiner's report.

11.13.2 As a general principle, an attempt should be made to resolve the complaint through dialogue before entering a formal phase.

11.13.3 The UCO's Head of Quality will normally investigate any formal complaint raised by an External Examiner and report the outcome of the investigation to the Vice-Chancellor.

11.13.4 If the Head of Quality cannot resolve the complaint to the External Examiner's satisfaction, then case notes will be sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) who will act to resolve the complaint.

11.13.5 If the complaint involves the Head of Quality, it will be investigated by the Registrar and the resolution will be reported to the Vice-Chancellor.

11.14 External Examining Responsibilities

a) Responsibilities of the External Examiner

11.14.1 To exercise the right to see all examination scripts and samples of coursework, theses, projects etc.

11.14.2 To attend all final Boards of Examiner meetings except in exceptional circumstances.

11.14.3 To endorse the outcome of the assessment process by signing the final results lists.

11.14.4 To offer comments and advice as appropriate.

11.14.5 To submit a written report annually to the Vice-Chancellor using the External Examiner Annual Report Form.

11.14.6 To exercise the right to submit a written confidential report to the Vice-Chancellor, separate from the annual report, where it is necessary, for example to name a member of staff.

11.14.7 To refer any direct contact from students to the UCO immediately by contacting Registrar.

b) Responsibilities of the UCO's Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

11.14.8 To ensure that External Examiner nominations are considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and approved by the Academic Council.

11.14.9 To ensure that the annual External Examiners' training day is provided.

11.14.10 To ensure that the decisions of the Academic Council are executed, and the External Examiners are provided with the detail of their duties.

11.14.11 To ensure appropriate action is taken in response to comments of the External Examiner(s).

11.14.12 To prepare synoptic summaries of External Examiners' comments for consideration by the Academic Council (in the presence of student representatives).

c) Responsibilities of Course Leaders

11.14.13 To complete and provide the required nomination form for the appointment of a prospective External Examiner for the UCO's Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Academic Council to consider and approve.

11.14.14 To contribute to the organisation of the UCO's External Examiner training day together with the Registrar and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education);

11.14.15 To provide a written response to the External Examiner's Annual Report using the External Examiner Report Response Form in consultation with Heads of Area and Unit Leaders;

11.14.16 To ensure that External Examiners' Annual Reports are considered by Course Teams (in the presence of Student Representatives).

11.14.17 To respond to the External Examiner's Annual Report via a formal letter;

11.14.18 To forward the response to the External Examiner's Annual Report to the Registrar;

11.14.19 To review and consider External Examiner Annual Reports with Heads of Areas when completing Unit and Course Annual Monitoring Reports and to ensure that these are considered by all stakeholders prior to their submission;

11.14.20 To ensure that Unit and Course Annual Monitoring Reports are considered as part of a mid-point review by Course Teams to monitor and update progress on action plans resulting from External Examiner recommendations.

d) Responsibilities of Heads of Areas

11.14.21 To complete nomination forms for the appointment of prospective External Examiners in consultation with the Course Leader as appropriate.

11.14.22 To review and consider External Examiner Annual Reports with the Course Leader when completing Unit and Course Annual Monitoring Report Forms and to ensure that these are considered by all stakeholders prior to its submission.

11.14.23 To assist the Course Leader with drafting the response to the External Examiner's Annual Report.

e) Responsibilities of Unit Leaders

11.14.24 To contribute to the response to External Examiner's Annual Reports.

11.14.25 To review and consider the External Examiner Annual Reports and responses when completing Unit Annual Monitoring Reports as part of the UCO's Annual Reporting and Monitoring processes and to formulate action plans in response to External Examiner recommendations as appropriate.

11.14.26 To provide an update on Unit Annual Monitoring Report action plans at mid-point review Course Team meetings to monitor their progress.

f) Responsibilities of the UCO's Registrar

11.14.27 To be the primary contact for External Examiners to enable them to fulfil their duties.

11.14.28 To provide the External Examiner with up-to-date information about the course and associated course regulations, together with a schedule of assessments and of the main dates when examiners are expected to consider students' work; draft assessment tasks and copies of all examination papers together with details of assessment criteria.

11.14.29 To organise the UCO's annual External Examiner training day with the Course Leaders and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality.

11.14.30 To manage the Scrutiny Process.

11.14.31 To send to the External Examiner samples of students' work, graded and annotated by internal examiners as appropriate, together with full results sheets which demonstrate how the sample of scripts relates to the population from which they have been selected.

11.14.32 To provide for the Board of Examiners statistical material on the performance of the students under consideration in consultation with Unit Leaders.

11.14.33 To provide the External Examiner the internal examiners' agreed results for each student in every unit and the profile of results for each student under consideration.

11.14.34 To support the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality in discharging their responsibilities.

11.14.35 To ensure that a meeting between students and External Examiners takes place as appropriate.

g) Responsibilities of the UCO's Head of Quality

11.14.36 To produce and maintain External Examiner contracts of appointment.

11.14.37 To maintain a register of External Examiners and regularly review this to ensure that External Examiner details and tenures are kept up to date.

11.14.38 To be the correspondent between the UCO and an External Examiner on contractual matters.

11.14.39 To send out the generic induction pack.

11.14.40 To send a new External Examiner a copy of the report of the retiring External Examiner.

11.14.41 To arrange for payment of External Examiner expenses and examining fees.

11.14.42 To receive External Examiner Annual Reports on behalf of the Vice-Chancellor and forward these to relevant staff for responses.

11.14.43 To investigate any formal complaint raised by an External Examiner and report the outcome of the investigation to the Vice-Chancellor.

h) Responsibilities of the UCO's Vice-Chancellor

11.14.44 To oversee receipt External Examiners' Annual Reports.

11.14.45 To receive and act upon matters of serious concern raised by External Examiners.

APPENDIX 1: EXTERNAL EXAMINER APPROVAL OF APPOINTMENT CHECKLIST

In order to ensure that proposed External Examiners fulfil the stated appointment criteria, the following checklist may be used by individuals and committees involved in their nomination and appointment:

Appointment Criteria	Criteria Met		How
a) Person Specification **"Yes" indicates that the appointment criteria have been met.**			
Sufficient knowledge and understanding of UK sector agreed reference points for the maintenance of academic standards and assurance and enhancement of quality, including their range and scope of experience and understanding of quality and standards in other higher education institutions.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Sufficient competence and experience in the fields covered by the course of study, or parts thereof, including their experience of teaching and examining students following courses which lead to the level of award for which they are being considered as External Examiners.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Relevant academic and/or professional qualifications to at least the level of the qualification being externally examined, and/or extensive practitioner experience as appropriate; experience and qualifications which should be at least at the same level as the course they are examining, and preferably above that level.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Sufficient competence and experience relating to designing and operating a variety of assessment tasks appropriate to the subject and operating assessment procedures.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Sufficient standing, credibility and breadth of experience within the discipline to be able to command the respect of academic peers and, where appropriate, professional peers, i.e. their recognition within the relevant discipline and / or profession as appropriate.	Yes ☐	No ☐	

Sufficient familiarity with the standard to be expected of students to achieve the award that is to be assessed.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Sufficient fluency in English, and where courses are delivered and assessed in languages other than English, fluency in the relevant language(s) (unless other secure arrangements are in place to ensure that External Examiners are provided with the information to make their judgements).	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Sufficiently meets applicable criteria set by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Sufficient awareness of current developments in the design and delivery of relevant curricula.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Sufficient competence and experience relating to the enhancement of the student learning experience.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Their present post and their expertise in the relevant subject area, including current evidence of scholarship / research / consultancy is related to the awards to be externally examined.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
They are independent from the UCO and the relevant Course Team/s.	Yes ☐	No ☐	
b) Conflicts of Interest **"No" indicates that the appointment criteria have been met.**			
Has the proposed examiner been within the last five years a member of staff, a governor, an External Examiner or a student of the UCO or one of its partners, delivery organisations or support providers?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Has the proposed examiner been within the last five years closely associated with any member of the Course Team?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Does the proposed examiner have a close professional, contractual or personal relationship with a member of	Yes ☐	No ☐	

staff or student involved with the course of study?			
Is the proposed examiner required to assess colleagues who are recruited as students to the course of study?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Will the proposed examiner, or do they know that they will be, in a position to influence significantly the future of students on the course of study?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Has the proposed examiner been significantly involved in recent or current substantive collaborative research activities with a member of staff closely involved in the delivery, management or assessment of the course(s) or units in question?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner involved in a reciprocal arrangement involving cognate courses at another higher education provider?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner from the same department and institution as the retiring External Examiner?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner from the same department or higher education provider as an existing External Examiner?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner from a department in an institution where a member of the UCO is serving as an External Examiner?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner from an institution which has been the source of External Examiners for the same or a closely related programme in the recent past (normally five years)?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner from the same place of employment as an existing External Examiner who is already on the relevant Board of Examiners?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Does the proposed examiner already hold two other external examiner appointments for taught courses / units?	Yes ☐	No ☐	

Does the proposed examiner expect to concurrently act as a consultant to the relevant Course Team on course design, or be members of a panel established to review the course they examine?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner personally associated with the sponsorship of students on the course?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner in a position to influence significantly the future employment of students on the course?	Yes ☐	No ☐	
Is the proposed examiner likely to be involved with placements of students on the course or with their training at the UCO?	Yes ☐	No ☐	

APPENDIX 2: EXTERNAL EXAMINER ANNUAL REPORTING PROCESS CHECKLIST

The following checklist may be used to ensure that the External Examiner annual reporting process is undertaken by the appropriate staff and within the timelines outlined in this section of the AQF:

Item	**Responsibility**	**Deadline**	**Completed**	
Organisation of External Examiner Induction Day	Registrar	September	Yes ☐	No ☐
Circulation of External Examiner Annual Report Forms to External Examiners with submission deadlines.	Head of Quality	June	Yes ☐	No ☐
Submission of External Examiner Annual Reports to the Head of Quality by the submission deadline.	External Examiners	July (Undergraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
		September (Postgraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
Circulation of completed External Examiner Reports to Course Leaders with External Examiner Response Forms with submission deadlines.	Head of Quality	July (Undergraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
		September (Undergraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
Completion of External Examiner Response Forms and Formal Letters.	Course Leaders in consultation with Heads of Areas and Unit Leaders	September (Undergraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
		December (Postgraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
Agreement of External Examiner Responses and Formal Letters.	Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee	November (Undergraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
		February (Postgraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
Posting of Formal Letters and External Examiner Responses to External Examiners.	Head of Quality	November (Undergraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐
		February (Postgraduate)	Yes ☐	No ☐

AQF11 FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
AQF11-01	External Examiner Nomination Form
AQF11-02	External Examiner Contact Details & Duties Form
AQF11-03	External Examiner Reallocation & Extension of Duties Form
AQF11-04	External Examiner Annual Report Form
AQF11-05	External Examiner Annual Report Response Form
AQF11-06	External Examiner Handbook

Academic Quality Framework

Section 12: Boards of Examiners

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 12: Boards of Examiners

This Section should be of particular interest to Course Leaders and External Examiners, and all those involved in the assessment and examination of foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate taught students.

Version number	***Dates produced and approved (include committee)***	***Reason for production/ revision***	***Author***	***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.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Registrar*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF 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.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Registrar*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Aug 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.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality Registrar*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sept 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative Amendments to update staff role titles and weblinks.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality Registrar*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative Amendments to update weblinks and footnotes, correct typographical errors and to include reference to the new QAA UK Quality Code for HE to clarify how UCO Exam Board processes align to this. Added "Associated UCO Documents" section for ease of reference.*	*Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) Head of Quality Registrar*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF 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)	

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Academic Quality Framework

Section 12: Boards of Examiners

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12.1 Introduction to Boards of Examiners

12.1.1 For every course leading to an award of the University College of Osteopathy (UCO), the Academic Council will appoint a Board of Examiners to make final judgements and decisions on the awarding of academic credit and qualifications awarded by the UCO in line with the Expectations and Practices of the QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education, specifically those regarding assessment[1].

12.1.2 Boards of Examiners operate within the Board of Examiners Terms of Reference which clearly specify the powers, authority and accountability within its remit.

12.1.3 The Board of Examiners is accountable to the UCO's Academic Council; no recommendation for the progression of a student, award of academic credit or conferment of an award of the UCO may be made by anybody other than the appropriate Board of Examiners.

12.2 Types of Boards of Examiners

12.2.1 The UCO has three types of Boards of Examiners that contribute to decision-making on student progression and awards:

a) ***Portfolio Boards*** that review interim (provisional) examination and course work results and approve them for publication.

b) ***Pre-Boards of Examiners***, a non-decision-making Board that take place in advance of Boards of Examiners meetings and consider Portfolio Board approved student award, progression, and assessment profiles and then make proposals for consideration by the Boards of Examiners in accordance with the UCO's regulations.

c) ***Boards of Examiners***, the ultimate decision-making Boards that consider the results of assessments at all stages of a course, determine progression and recommend awards, including the classification of awards where appropriate.

12.2.2 All three types of Boards of Examiners operate within defined Terms of Reference to ensure that academic decisions are considered and ratified appropriately.

a) Portfolio Boards

12.2.3 Portfolio Boards review interim (provisional) examination and course work results and approve them for publication.

12.2.4 If a particular assessment within any unit shows an anomalous range of grades (which may further lead to irregularity or aberration within the unit grades), the appropriate Head of Area, Course Leader and Unit Leader should consider the reason for the apparent anomaly and what adjustment to those grades might be recommended to the Board of Examiners.

12.2.5 Any proposed adjustments should then be discussed with the appropriate External Examiner and confirmed at the next Board of Examiners meeting.

12.2.6 Portfolio Boards consider:

a) Unit statistics which normally include the mean and standard deviation of the marks in each assessment;

b) The impact of any complaint that may impact negatively on a student's performance. Where a complaint procedure is completed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) prior to a Board of Examiners, and is claimed to have impacted negatively on a student's performance, it is

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/assessment

legitimate, where that complaint has been upheld through the UCO's complaints process, for the Board of Examiners to consider any impact of that complaint on the performance of the student (it is only after Board of Examiners confirmation that such consideration is confined to the academic appeal process). Complaints that have not been upheld (i.e. both those specifically not upheld, and those not yet decided) cannot be considered by Boards of Examiners;

c) The impact of any action taken by the UCO that may impact negatively on a students' performance. Where a member of academic staff believes that one or more students have been impacted by the UCO's action or by circumstances arising within the teaching and learning process (but excluding the conduct of examinations) other than personal circumstances processed by Student Support Department (an example being unexpected disturbance of an examination, or an assessment profile that does not appear to have operated effectively etc.), this must be raised at the appropriate Pre-Board of Examiners, by the relevant Head of Area;

d) Whether the performance profile of a unit is at variance with the general performance of the cohort or reflects a continuing problem in the operation of the unit, such that the grades may reasonably be held not to reflect satisfactory assessment of a unit, as identified by the relevant Heads of Areas to the relevant Portfolio Board for consultation in advance of the Board of Examiners.

12.2.7 Portfolio Boards will ensure that Boards of Examiners are made aware of any complaints or action that may have impacted on students' performance and of any variance in the general performance of a cohort. In all of the above cases:

a) Boards of Examiners must consider the circumstances and their impact to determine whether there was material impact on a student's performance (e.g. in respect of their performance in other similar assessments and units);

b) External Examiners must be part of the process of consideration of any alteration to be made to the expected outcome (e.g. an additional attempt allowed);

c) The decision and the reasons must be minuted in detail to ensure that the basis for any changes made is clear.

b) Pre-Boards of Examiners

12.2.8 Pre-Boards of Examiners are held prior to each Board of Examiners' sitting, for both postgraduate and undergraduate courses, in order to prepare proposed decisions on the awards and course progression based on the student profiles and unit results which will be recommended to the Board of Examiners.

12.2.9 Pre-Board of Examiners also considers any legitimate Special Circumstances submitted to the Registrar and makes recommendations to the Board of Examiners in light of those circumstances. This is to ensure that students' circumstances are appropriately weighted and also to protect students' right to privacy by not discussing the case at the full Board of Examiners meeting.

12.2.10 Pre-Boards of Examiners are attended by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Registrar, the Course Leader of the relevant course and a Student Support Representative.

12.2.11 Pre-Board of Examiners also considers the unit statistics which are to be presented to the Board of Examiners.

c) Boards of Examiners

12.2.12 Boards of Examiners consider the results of assessments at all stages of a course and determine the progression of students and recommend awards to the Academic Council, including awards of distinctions or similar where appropriate.

12.2.13 The membership of Boards of Examiners should consist of one or more External Examiners and all members of academic teaching staff as appropriate.

12.2.14 The business of the Board of Examiners will be noted by the Registrar who will also advise on matters of regulation.

12.2.15 The responsibilities of Boards of Examiners are:

a) To ensure the assessment programmes enable students to demonstrate that the course learning outcomes have been met, and to make observations as appropriate to the Course Leader or the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education);

b) To determine action to be taken where a student fails to complete all or part of the assessment for a unit and agree arrangements for the consideration of the performance of those students who have been reassessed, ensuring that External Examiners are appropriately involved;

c) To make recommendations on final awards for students within their remit; Boards of Examiners will report to the Academic Council on any matters of policy which may arise for the assessments and their conduct;

d) To formally minute the reasons should Boards of Examiners recommend a different award from that estimated;

e) To consider issues raised at Portfolio Boards and Pre-Boards of Examiners such as complaints, circumstances arising within the teaching and learning process and performance on profiles which are at variance with the general performance of the cohort.

12.2.16 In all the above cases Boards of Examiners must consider the circumstances and their impact and keep a full and definitive record of discussions.

12.2.17 All External Examiners present shall confirm their endorsement of decisions of final Boards of Examiners by signing final results lists.

12.3 Membership & Terms of Reference of Boards of Examiners

12.3.1 The Membership and Terms of Reference of Boards of Examiners stipulate the frequency and quorum of Board of Examiner meetings.

12.3.2 The Chair will normally be an External Senior Academic.

12.3.3 The Chair has overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate arrangements are made with External Examiners, for chairing the meetings of Boards of Examiners and for monitoring all aspects of the examination process. They also ensure that appropriate weight is given to the comments of the External Examiners and confirm the final list of examination results.

12.3.4 The Secretary to the Board of Examiners is the Registrar who is responsible for:

a) making appropriate arrangements for liaison with the External Examiners;

b) prompt notification of the dates and times of Board of Examiner meetings to those required to attend;

c) the circulation of course assessment regulations, marking schemes used by internal examiners, the full draft mark sheet including a profile of the marks awarded to each student in

each piece of assessed work and an analysis of the mean and standard deviation of the marks in each assessment and recommendations on decisions;

d) taking accurate and comprehensive minutes of Board of Examiner meetings and recording decisions taken and any comments made.

a) Chair's Action

12.3.5 Chair's Action **may** be used for:

a) the input of grades not available to a prior formal Board of Examiners at which the student and/or the unit were considered;

b) administrative correction of input and recording errors;

c) decisions regarding special circumstances recorded as identified by the Student Support Department as in process at the time of the Board of Examiners;

d) implementing academic appeal decisions reached through the UCO's academic appeals process;

e) when a student completes their course of study (i.e. submits assessment) after the standard Board of Examiners schedule; Chair's Action may only be used where the work involved is subject to moderation and / or external examination, to ensure that cohort standards are maintained;

12.3.6 In all cases, Chairs' Actions must be recorded (i.e. reasons for changes) and be noted at the next meeting of the Board of Examiners at which the decision should have been recorded (i.e. the Chair's Action has to be recorded at the next Board of Examiners meeting);

12.3.7 Every Chair's Action must also be recorded in the appropriate Course Team's records to identify the cause of any administrative delay and to provide a clear record demonstrating that any grade change is made on the basis of one or more of the above grounds and, where a student completes assessment outside standard schedules, to confirm that moderation and / or external examination has been conducted;

12.3.8 Chair's Action **may not** be used to:

a) decide the results of students or cohorts meeting outside the standard schedule;

b) change the results of any student on the basis of appeal or complaint.

12.3.9 Once Chairs' Actions have been agreed and recorded in detail by the Board of Examiners, they should be submitted to the Chair of the Academic Council via the minutes of the appropriate Board of Examiners meeting, for ratification.

12.4 Presentation of Data to the Board of Examiners

12.4.1 The Board of Examiners records its decisions on a series of summary reports and through minutes.

12.4.2 On each report the students are listed in rank order by name with the estimated outcome.

12.4.3 The Board of Examiners will focus on borderline students.

12.4.4 A complete assessment profile is provided for each student.

12.4.5 Where amendments are necessary, these are recorded by altering the decision by marking the appropriate result. These amendments must be made immediately after the meeting by the Secretary to the Board of Examiners and a report of amendments will be produced to be checked by the Chair and appended to the minutes of the meeting.

12.4.6 There are broadly six possible decisions that may be made by the Board of Examiners regarding a student's performance as follows:

P = Pass and free to progress on a course of study

DEF = Defer assessment(s)

REF = Refer assessment(s)

F = Fail (indicating that student either left the UCO or is required to do so)

CP = Condoned Pass

NS = Non-Submission

LS = Late Submission

NA = Not Answered

ABS = Absent

12.5 Unscheduled Boards of Examiners

12.5.1 Unscheduled Boards of Examiners (in addition to those scheduled) must be conducted where a cohort completes its study at a time outside the standard Boards of Examiners schedule. They must be formed and operated in accordance with the UCO's Academic Regulations (AQF Section 7).

12.5.2 Unscheduled Boards of Examiners must be quorate and be preceded by standard arrangements for moderation and external examination.

12.6 Confidentiality of Boards of Examiners

12.6.1 All discussions at meetings of Portfolio Boards, Pre-Boards of Examiners and Boards of Examiners shall be regarded as confidential, as will the minutes of Boards of Examiners meetings.

12.6.2 Details of the discussion and deliberation at Boards of Examiners meetings will not be disclosed to students, except in very exceptional circumstances and then only with the agreement of the Registrar.

12.7 Conflicts of Interest

12.7.1 Any examiner who has family or other personal connection to or relationship with any student other than the normal professional relationship required by his or her role as an academic shall declare that relationship and shall take no part in any discussion relating to that student's performance.

12.8 Disclosure of Examination Grades to Students

12.8.1 It must be made clear to students that where grades have not yet been considered by External Examiners or a formal Board of Examiners that these grades are provisional, pending endorsement by the appropriate Board of Examiners.

12.9 Appeals against Decisions of Boards of Examiners

12.9.1 Academic appeals are the route by which students may seek reconsideration of the decision of a Board of Examiners. They are the only basis on which changes, other than the correction of administrative errors, may be made.

12.9.2 The criteria for appealing against a decision of the Board of Examiners are detailed in the UCO's Academic Appeals Policy[2].

12.9.3 The UCO will not consider appeals based solely on a student's disagreement with the examiners' academic judgement.

12.9.4 Complaints upheld in respect of Board of Examiners' decisions already made are transferred to the UCO's Academic Appeals process for action.

12.9.5 Where a student lodges a complaint that is upheld after the relevant Board of Examiners and is found, after submission, to be a valid academic appeal, notification of the outcome of the complaint should be sent to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), who will initiate the Board of Examiners review as an outcome of an appeal.

AQF12: Forms & Templates

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

AQF12: Associated UCO Documents

Document Name	Published Location
Academic Council Terms of Reference	UCO Portal – Governance & Management – The UCO's Committee Structure
Board of Examiners Terms of Reference	UCO Portal – Governance & Management – The UCO's Committee Structure
Pre-Board of Examiners Terms of Reference	UCO Portal – Governance & Management – The UCO's Committee Structure
Portfolio Board Terms of Reference	UCO Portal – Governance & Management – The UCO's Committee Structure
Academic Appeals Policy	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

[2] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

Academic Quality Framework

Section 13: Staff Recruitment & Development

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 13: Staff Recruitment & Development

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to <u>all staff</u>.

Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	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.*	*Corporate Services Director HR Manager*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF 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.*	*Corporate Services Director HR Manager*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Aug 2017 and on an "as required" basis.*
V3.0	*Sept 2017 PRAG Chair*	*Annual Review including amendments to reflect the name change of the British School of Osteopathy to the University College of Osteopathy.*	*HR Manager*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sept 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative Amendments to update committee role titles and weblinks.*	*HR Manager*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2019 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative amendments to update weblinks and footnotes, titles of external bodies, to correct typographical errors and to reflect teaching staff from other health care professions. Added "Associated UCO Documents" section for ease of reference.*	*Head of HR Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF 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)	

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Academic Quality Framework

Section 13: Staff Recruitment & Development

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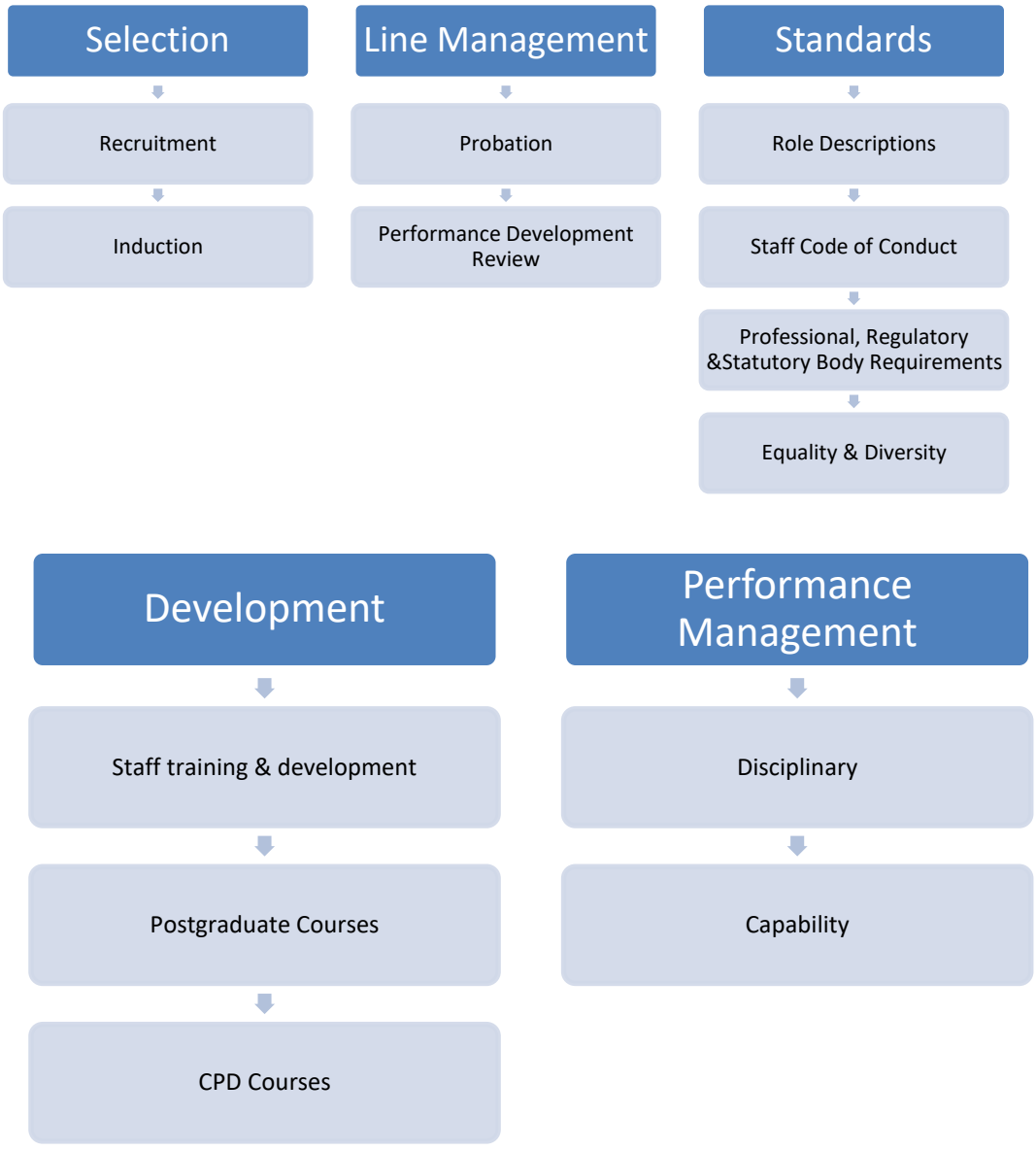
13.1 INTRODUCTION

13.1.1 The mechanisms by which the University College of Osteopathy (UCO) assures itself that all teaching faculty have the necessary skills, commitment and knowledge to teach effectively are signposted below.



13.1.2 Individual teaching staff and their line managers have the key responsibilities for ensuring that they carry out their roles to a sufficient standard but are also supported and advised by the Human Resources team.

13.1.3 Information about current vacancies may be found on the UCO website[1].

[1] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/vacancies/current-vacancies

13.2 Staff Recruitment

13.2.1 The key mechanisms for the assurance of quality and standards regarding academic staff recruitment include:

a) A comprehensive Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedure[2] ensuring that all staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of their responsibilities for ensuring equality in recruitment practices and ensures that fair and responsible decisions are made regarding which applicant best matches the requirements within the agreed specifications.

b) Successful implementation of the Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedure is monitored through statistical monitoring, probationary reviews and exit interviews. Upon appointment, teaching staff are welcomed to the UCO and during their general induction to the UCO are shown where they may access information about the UCO and relevant staff policies, procedures and guidelines.

13.2.2 All new staff are provided with an induction programme suitable to their role at the UCO that is undertaken by their Line Manager in line with the UCO's Staff Induction Procedure[3]. The Induction is designed to provide an initial orientation and will assist in supporting the UCO's mission, aims and values and to enable the understanding and application of UCO policies, procedures, culture and expectations.

13.3 Line Management

13.3.1 Direct line managers play a key role in assuring quality and standards within the teaching faculty. From the point of selection onwards, the new member of staff's contribution is supported and assessed during the probationary period. The Staff Induction Procedure identifies training and development (see below) which is needed during the probationary period to support the new employee.

13.3.2 Post-probation, each member of teaching faculty is moved onto the Professional Development Review (PDR) system, or appraisal. Mapped against the UK Professional Standards Framework[4], the PDR system identifies specific actions to support the development of faculty. In advance of the meeting with their Line Manager, each member of faculty identifies the key areas within the framework they wish to focus on in their professional development. The PDR meeting is then structured around identifying suitable targets and training to support this goal and agreeing a reasonable timescale for completion. The PDR process is designed in line with the UCO's Strategic Plan to promote continuous enhancement of quality through the development of a culture of critical reflection on learning and teaching, informed by best practice and also to ensure that excellence in teaching is promoted, recognised and rewarded. While training and development identified through the process could relate to teaching or to the subject specialism, the nature of the dual professional status of most members of faculty focuses attention on pedagogy and academic development. All staff are encouraged to use or request feedback to inform the PDR processes - including peer review of practical sessions, student surveys, 360-degree feedback and formal observation. The PDR process is carried out in line with the UCO's Appraisal & Professional Development Review Policy[5].

13.3.3 Line Managers receive support and guidance in their management roles from the HR team. They also have access to a range of Managers' Briefings including Recruitment and Selection,

[2] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[3] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[4] https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ukpsf
[5] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

Professional Development Review and Managing Induction. Specific training courses in related areas are run when the need arises.

13.4 Standards & Quality of Staff

13.4.1 All roles within the UCO have agreed role descriptions, which are updated periodically within the PDR meetings held. While these documents necessarily evolve to meet the changing requirements of the institution, the broad responsibilities are defined and shared.

13.4.2 The UCO sets clear standards of behaviour and quality for its faculty. As well as the information issued to faculty relating to assessment and feedback, the UCO's website contains policies that relate to assuring academic quality within the teaching faculty – including the Staff Code of Conduct, Disciplinary Policy, Data Protection Policy, Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy, Equality & Diversity Policy, Health & Safety Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Policy[6].

13.4.3 With more than 90% of faculty also qualified and in practice as Registered Osteopaths, the requirements of the regulatory body (the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC)) are relevant to the quality standards set for faculty. The GOsC's Osteopathic Practice Standards[7] combine the standards of practice and code of conduct for osteopaths. As professionals, our faculty must abide by these standards. The Osteopathic Practice Standards also require 30 hours of continuous professional development (CPD) to be completed each year, relevant to the Standards.

13.4.4 Similarly, faculty recruited to teach into courses who are health care practitioners and registered with another relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) are also required to abide by the standards expected of that PSRB.

13.4.5 The UCO has a strong commitment to Equal Opportunities within its Equality & Diversity Policy. Guidance about respecting students in a healthcare environment gives clear examples from medical education about appropriate ways to support and challenge students.

13.5 Staff Development

13.5.1 The UCO is committed to providing necessary and appropriate training to all staff members to ensure that roles can be fulfilled to a high standard and in line with current government policy.

13.5.2 The UCO is committed to encouraging each member of staff and faculty to achieve their potential within their careers. In this way, the standards of learning and clinical care provided to students and customers can continue to be improved each year. All members of staff, whether providing a direct service to students or an indirect service to the building or the UCO's resources, are valued and will be encouraged to develop appropriately. Responsibility for learning and improvement is shared between the individual and the UCO.

13.5.3 Staff training and development opportunities are identified in a number of different ways, as set out below. Teaching faculty are for the most part dual professionals – with careers in osteopathy and in education – and their development and scholarship needs must cover both of these areas.

13.5.4 The UCO provides osteopathic development and scholarship through a range of means, including guest speakers at staff conferences, free access to the broad portfolio of CPD

[6] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[7] https://standards.osteopathy.org.uk/

courses run at the UCO, clinic tutorials, journal clubs, research presentations and e-fora to discuss relevant clinical issues.

13.5.5 Osteopathic faculty must also maintain registration with the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) where it is a requirement of the role (e.g. clinical staff) – as such they must annually demonstrate that they have undertaken requisite CPD to support the Osteopathic Practice Standards.

13.5.6 Faculty from other health care professions must also maintain registration with their relevant PSRB where it is a requirement of their role and similarly undertake any requisite CPD requirements.

13.5.6 The UCO provides pedagogic development and scholarship which aligns closely with the Higher Education Academy (HEA) Professional Standards Framework. Faculty can develop within the framework either by completing a postgraduate teaching qualification, for example the UCO's Postgraduate Certificate in Academic and Clinical Education (see below) or by accrediting their skills and experience by mapping these against the framework and seeking membership of the HEA directly. In addition, ongoing development opportunities are provided at the UCO's staff conferences and within team meetings and workshops.

13.5.7 The UCO, in line with its Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy employs an E-Learning Manager to provide training and support to teaching staff in the use of the UCO's virtual learning environment. The ICT Department also provides support in the use of multimedia technology, including video and audio in teaching.

13.5.8 All staff are provided with the opportunity to attend an institution-wide annual Staff Conference. All staff contracts stipulate that staff must attend the annual conference at least every 2 years. The conference involves external speakers presenting on a variety of subject matters, staff consultation over strategic planning, development workshops that are tailored to specific groups of staff and staff presentations disseminating information on current research projects. The Staff Conference is also where good practice in teaching and learning is disseminated and the work of UCO staff is celebrated.

13.5.9 Non-teaching staff are provided with appropriate training and support to ensure that administrative roles at the UCO are fulfilled to a high standard. These include bespoke minute taking courses and the provision of a Committee Handbook to committee secretaries to ensure that committee servicing is carried out efficiently and accurately, student and clinic database training to ensure that all relevant staff are familiar with its use, inputting and amending of student details and activities and attendance at seminars to ensure that current government legislation is complied with.

13.5.10 The UCO has a number of staff who act as external examiners, assessors and advisors at other institutions and organisations. The UCO actively encourages staff to undertake these roles in recognition of the value this external engagement brings to the member of staff's work at the UCO.

13.5.11 Development opportunities are also made available for all faculty through the postgraduate courses run at the UCO. New teaching staff are encouraged to complete the UCO's Postgraduate Certificate in Academic and Clinical Education (PgCertACE)[8] within their first two years of teaching. The PgCertACE is a credit bearing programme designed to develop the skills of health professionals in the field of manual medicine as educators. Fee-waiver places are granted on the PgCertACE to all members of faculty, and a number of free places on the rest of the range of UCO postgraduate courses are reserved for faculty.

[8] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/pgcert-academic-and-clinical-education

13.5.12 All faculty are expected to work towards the strategic target of completing the PgCertACE qualification (or equivalent) or becoming members of Advance HE (previously the Higher Education Academy)[9].

13.6 Performance Management

13.6.1 Where a staff member does not meet the standards required of the role (established through the role description and / or other standards / policies as set out above), the UCO's Disciplinary and Capability Procedure[10] is instigated to manage performance and disciplinary related issues.

13.6.2 This procedure sets out the way that the UCO will investigate and respond to performance issues in order to support and resolve any problems that arise.

13.6.3 Disciplinary cases are considered by a Staff Disciplinary Panel, which reports to the Vice-Chancellor's Group. Such panels are constituted as and when required.

AQF13: Forms & Templates

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

AQF13: Associated UCO Documents

Document Name	Published Location
Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy,	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
Data Protection Policy	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
Equality & Diversity Policy	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
Health & Safety Policy	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
ICT Acceptable Use Policy	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
Staff Appraisal & Professional Development Review Policy	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
Staff Code of Conduct	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
Staff Disciplinary & Capability Policy	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedure	https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
UCO Committee Handbook	UCO Portal – Governance & Management – The UCO's Committee Structure

[9] https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/about-us
[10] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

Academic Quality Framework

Section 14: The Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 14: The Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework will be of particular interest to students studying and staff delivering the Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy research degree, approved by the University of Bedfordshire.

Version number	*Dates produced and approved (include committee)*	*Reason for production/ revision*	*Author*	*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.*	*Professional Doctorate Course Leader* *Head of Quality*	*Master Version:* *J:\0 Quality Team – AQF* *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.*	*Professional Doctorate Course Leader* *Head of Quality*	*Master Version:* *J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF* *Published Version:* *Intranet*	*Aug 2017 and on an "as required" basis.*
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V4.0	*Sep 2019* *PRAG Chair*	*Annual Review* *Administrative amendments to update weblinks and footnotes.*	*Professional Doctorate Course Leader* *Head of Quality*	*Master Version:* *J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF* *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)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to:
quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

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14.1 The Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy

14.1.1 The University College of Osteopathy (UCO) works in collaboration with the University of Bedfordshire to deliver the Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy (D.Prof (Ost)) award.

14.1.2 The D.Prof (Ost) is approved by the University of Bedfordshire and subsequently is subject to the University's quality assurance regulations and procedures and, specifically, those regarding Research Degrees[1].

14.1.3 The D.Prof,(Ost) was approved by the University of Bedfordshire in July 2010. It is normally of 4 years duration. and is organised around a four/five-year cycle with the final two/three years devoted to the development and generation of linked pieces of original high-level scholarship.

14.1.4 The D.Prof,(Ost) culminates in a of major piece of original work that demonstrates students' ability to engage in critical inquiry into osteopathy, either in the clinical or educational field.

14.1.5 Due to the nature of and its focus on a professional discipline rather than an academic area, the D.Prof,(Ost) focuses on critical investigation and research rather than teaching. Teaching is therefore more by way of providing resources and stimuli to achieve the main purpose which is the generation and dissemination of a major piece of investigative scholarship.

14.1.6 Experts from a range of disciplines and with specialised or first-hand knowledge will be invited to provide input, otherwise the major part of the learning process is self-managed and motivated depending on the particular area of interest students are pursuing.

14.2 Academic Regulations specific to the D.Prof (Ost)

14.2.1 The title of the degree Doctor of Osteopathy was approved by the University's Research Committee and reported to their Academic Board and reflects the professional practice nature of the qualification and the programme of related studies.

14.2.2 The D.Prof,(Ost.) shall be awarded to a candidate who, having critically investigated and evaluated an approved topic resulting in an independent and original contribution to professional practice and demonstrated an understanding of research methods appropriate to the chosen field, has presented and defended a thesis, by oral examination, to the satisfaction of the examiners.

14.2.3 The D.Prof (Ost.) is subject to the University of Bedfordshire's Academic Regulations for Research Degrees[2].

14.3 Admission

14.3.1 Applicants may apply for the course, subject to the requirement that the proposed research is capable of leading to a scholarly outcome contributing to the advancement of professional practice in osteopathy and to its presentation for assessment by appropriate examiners.

14.3.2 An applicant will normally be a registered osteopath and either working or in a teaching post; the workplace will normally be used for the case study element in the proposal.

14.3.3 An applicant holding qualifications other than a first or upper second-class Honours degree from a UK institution with degree-awarding powers, or equivalent, will be considered on their merits and in relation to the nature and scope of the programme of work proposed.

14.3.4 Professional experience, publications, written reports or other appropriate evidence of accomplishment shall be taken into consideration.

[1] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/quality/handbook (Chapter 12)
[2] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/academic-regulations/

14.3.5 An applicant wishing to be considered under this regulation must provide the names of suitable persons from whom the UCO may seek an opinion about his/her academic attainment and fitness for research.

14.4 Assessment

14.4.1 Approval of the research topic is normally expected after completion of the taught stage and any other programme of related studies, and normally within the first half of the maximum period of study.

14.4.2 The assessment of the professional doctorate comprises two stages: the taught stage and the thesis stage. The taught stage must be passed before a candidate can submit his/her thesis for examination. The grades assigned to the taught stage do not contribute to the final assessment of the award, which is based on submission of the thesis and oral examination.

14.4.3 The D.Prof (Ost.) is subject to the University of Bedfordshire's Assessment Regulations regarding Research Degrees[3].

14.5 Supervision

14.5.1 Students shall have at least two, and not normally more than three, supervisors during their course of study.

14.5.2 One of the supervisors shall normally be an appropriately qualified or experienced individual in osteopathy.

14.6 External Examining

14.6.1 External Examining arrangements for the D.Prof (Ost) are made in accordance with the University of Bedfordshire's quality processes contained within their Quality Handbook[4].

14.7 Boards of Examiners

14.7.1 Board of Examiner arrangements are made in accordance with the University of Bedfordshire's quality processes contained within their Quality Handbook[5].

14.8 Annual Monitoring & Reporting

14.8.1 Annual Monitoring and Reporting arrangements are made in accordance with the University of Bedfordshire's quality processes contained within their Quality Handbook[6].

14.9 The Review of Academic Standards

14.9.1 Any changes proposed to the D.Prof (Ost) are considered through the University of Bedfordshire's course modification processes outlined in their Quality Handbook[7].

[3] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/academic-regulations/
[4] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/quality/handbook (Chapter 5)
[5] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/quality/handbook (Chapter 6)
[6] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/quality/handbook (Chapter 3)
[7] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/quality/handbook (Chapter 2)

14.10 INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

14.10.1 As an accredited partner of the University of Bedfordshire, the UCO is expected to undergo institutional review once every five years following the University's processes contained within their Quality Handbook[8].

14.11 PERIODIC REVIEW EVENTS

14.11.1 As an accredited partner of the University, the D.Prof (Ost) is expected to undergo a course review once every five years following the University's processes contained within their Quality Handbook[9].

AQF 14: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

[8] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/quality/handbook (Chapter 7)
[9] https://www.beds.ac.uk/about-us/our-university/quality/handbook (Chapter 7)

Academic Quality Framework

Section 15: Access to Higher Education & Pre-Entry Courses

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 15: Access to Higher Education & Pre-Entry Courses

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to prospective students, existing Access to Higher Education students and faculty delivering pre-entry courses at the UCO.

Version number	*Dates produced and approved (include committee)*	*Reason for production/ revision*	*Author*	*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.*	*Head of Foundation Studies Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF 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.*	*Head of Foundation Studies Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Aug 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*	*Head of Foundation Studies Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sept 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative Amendments to update weblinks.*	*Head of Foundation Studies Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2019 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative Amendments to update weblinks, footnotes and to reflect current practice.*	*Head of Foundation Courses Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*

Equality Impact	
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Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)	X
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

Section 15: Access to Higher Education & Pre-Entry Courses

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15.1 Introduction to the UCO's Access to Higher Education and Pre-Entry Courses

15.1.1 The UCO is committed by its mission and values to providing access to higher education for learners from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education. It very much endorses the view that higher education should be made accessible to all, regardless of background or financial status, to promote social justice and economic competitiveness.

15.1.2 In recognition of the need to widen participation, the UCO also designed, and had accredited by Laser Learning Awards (LASER)[1], an Access to Higher Education Diploma course specifically designed for students who wish to study osteopathy but are new or returning to higher education. This course provides them with the foundation of knowledge required of them to prepare and succeed on our Integrated Master of Osteopathy (M.Ost) courses. Successful completion of this Access to Higher Education course guarantees students a place on the full-time or part-time M.Ost course at the UCO.

15.1.3 The UCO also recognises that an increasing number of applicants for our M.Ost courses have proven academic achievement but lack a solid grounding in the sciences required to study Osteopathy. In response to this the UCO runs a short non-accredited pre-entry course (the Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences (IOS) course) enabling students to gain the required background knowledge in the basic sciences to prepare them adequately for M.Ost study.

15.2 The Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences & Healthcare) Course

15.2.1 The UCO works with Laser Learning Awards (LASER), a leading Access Validating Authority, to approve its Access to Higher Education Diploma in Osteopathic Sciences and Healthcare course. LASER is licensed by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) to award the Access to Higher Education Diploma.

15.2.2 Access provision in the UK is specifically intended to prepare students from under-represented groups for study within the higher education sector. Subsequently LASER has responsibility for approving and monitoring the quality of the UCO's Access provision.

15.2.3 The Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care) course is aimed at mature students new or returning to education so is delivered in a manner that allows learners to work alongside their studies.

15.2.4 The course consists of twelve units, each of which is worth a specified number of credits.

15.2.5 Access Course units are delivered at both Level 2 and Level 3 over one academic year.

15.2.6 Classes are delivered through three- or four-hour sessions on Friday evenings from 6:00pm and all day on Saturdays during the UCO's term time structure. Within every three- or four-hour session there is a mix of discussion and didactic teaching with students often given time to work in groups and individually. Learner's ideas and points of learning are fed back to the whole class allowing consolidation of key facts and skills as well as conversation about misconceptions and misunderstandings. There are also many formal formative learning opportunities within sessions.

[1] https://www.laser-awards.org.uk/

a) The Review of Academic Standards

15.2.7 The UCO works with LASER to ensure that Academic Standards are reviewed regularly and appropriately. Access courses are regularly re-validated periodically every five years to ensure that courses continue to meet the QAA Specification for Access to Higher Education (HE) Diplomas[2].

15.2.8 Similarly, amendments to course titles and units are made through LASER's quality processes which include the completion of appropriate amendment forms and confirmation by both an External and Internal Reviewer.

15.2.9 Guidance regarding revalidations of and amendments to Access to HE courses is provided by LASER.

b) External Moderation

15.2.10 The Access to HE Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care) course adheres to the External Moderation processes stipulated by LASER.

15.2.11 LASER appoints an Access Diploma External Moderator to the UCO who act in accordance with their quality and moderation processes.

15.2.12 The External Moderator conducts visits to and is in continuous contact with the UCO to check for and produces moderation reports about:

a) Robust quality systems and processes.

b) Consistent appropriate documentation and record keeping.

c) Consistent and high-quality assessment practice.

d) Student satisfaction with the course experience.

15.2.13 Laser Awards is licensed as an Access Validating Agency (AVA) by the QAA. The External Moderator also acts as the AVA's representative at Access Awards Boards and acts on behalf of the AVA to confirm the award of Access to HE Diploma to students at Final Awards Boards.

15.2.14 The UCO responds to External Moderator reports in accordance with LASER's processes.

c) Access to HE Diploma Awards Board

15.2.15 Access to HE Diploma Awards Boards are conducted in accordance with the QAA Recognition Scheme for Access to Higher Education Grading Scheme Handbook Section E: Student Results and Awards Boards.

15.2.16 Awards Boards for the Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care) are normally held at the UCO.

d) Careers Advice

15.2.17 The majority of students undertaking the UCO's Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care) course do so in order to gain entry onto an osteopathic degree course.

15.2.18 As well as developing students' underpinning academic skills this course also helps students to develop efficient study techniques, improve their communication and critical thinking skills and give an insight into what it is like to study and practise osteopathy.

[2] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/access-to-he

15.2.19 As a nationally recognised Diploma it can be used to gain access to other relevant undergraduate courses.

15.2.20 Students who do not complete the full programme may be awarded partial credits and may be able to use these to pursue other studies in Higher Education.

15.3 Other Pre-Entry Courses

15.3.1 The UCO recognises that it receives a large number of applications from students who have proven academic achievement but who lack a solid grounding in the sciences required to study osteopathy. In response to this issue, the UCO has, for many years, been running short pre-entry courses to enable students to gain this background in the basic sciences.

15.3.2 Currently the UCO offers one pre-entry course, the Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences course.

a) The Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences (IOS) Course

15.3.3 The IOS course is aimed at applicants who already hold a non-science degree or equivalent but lack a solid grounding in the sciences required to study Osteopathy.

15.3.4 This course is a non-credit bearing short course that has been developed by the UCO to specifically support and prepare these students for studying the UCO's M.Ost courses and is therefore not transferable to another Higher Education Institution.

15.3.5 The IOS course lasts from 4 – 6 weeks and is a period of intensive science study. Students attend several days of lectures at the UCO which are mainly scheduled at weekends and course materials are made available through the UCO's Online Learning Environment (BONE) allowing for home study.

15.3.6 Formative assessments are held within the units, providing students with feedback on their progression. The summative (final) assessment consists of online quizzes and a written examination.

15.3.7 Students are required to pass the summative assessment in order to secure their place on either of the UCO's M.Ost courses.

i. External Moderation

15.3.8 The IOS course is a non-credit bearing course, is not accredited by an external body and does not result in a recognised qualification. Subsequently official external moderation of this course is not normally undertaken. There are, however, internal moderation mechanisms in place to ensure that IOS course assessments are fairly and rigorously considered including:

a) The second/double marking of all borderline pass/fail grades by course tutors.

b) In the event of a students' academic appeal against an assessment grade a tutor external to the course may be asked to re-mark the assessment.

ii. Boards of Examiners

15.3.9 Similarly, due to the IOS course not being credit bearing, accredited by an external body or leading to a recognised qualification, full Board of Examiner meetings for this course are not normally scheduled. Final assessment grades are instead reviewed and confirmed by the Head of Foundation Studies and the Registrar.

AQF15: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

Academic Quality Framework

Section 16: Collaborative Activity

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 16: Collaborative Activity

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to current and prospective Collaborative Partner institutions and all UCO staff.

Version number	***Dates produced and approved (include committee)***	***Reason for production/ revision***	***Author***	***Location(s)***	***Proposed next review date and approval required***
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V2.0	*Sept 2016 Academic Council*	*To streamline procedures and make them operationally consistent with UCO structures.*	*Dean of Academic Development*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V3.0	*Sept 2017 Academic Council*	*Annual Review including amendments to reflect the name change of the British UCO of Osteopathy to the University College of Osteopathy*	*Dean of Academic Development*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Jun 2018 Academic Council*	*Annual Review including amendments to approval process timelines, the External Panel member nominations process and to update staff role titles and weblinks.*	*Dean of Academic Development*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
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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)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

Section 16: Collaborative Activity

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

16.1 INTRODUCTION TO COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY

16.1.1 This section of the Academic Quality Framework focuses on the collaborative activity of the UCO. This includes the principles, processes for approving and management of collaborative provision with others. It has been developed to align to the QAA Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships[1].

16.1.2 "Collaborative provision", which encompasses a number of different arrangements for delivering learning opportunities with others both nationally and internationally, is defined by the Council for Validating Universities (CVU) as:

"…*the process whereby a degree-awarding body judges one or more programmes of study, courses, or modules offered by another body to be appropriate to lead to a qualification and/or credit of that degree awarding body. The programmes of study may be designed and developed by either the degree-awarding body or the other body or a partnership of the two*."[2]

16.1.3 The UCO welcomes opportunities to work with others in collaborative arrangements and views these as valued additions to its portfolio of educational and corporate activities.

16.1.4 The UCO recognizes that collaborative arrangement opportunities serve to broaden and enrich staff and student experiences through educational and scholarly activity. Some arrangements may involve the exchange or transfer of staff and students, giving both a new perspective regarding the business, social and educational practices in other institutions and cultures. Others may provide students access to higher education that may otherwise have been denied the opportunity to learn at that level. In addition, collaborative arrangements enrich the intellectual life of the UCO, promote international co-operation and enhance cross-institutional sharing of good practice.

16.1.5 When considering a collaborative arrangement to offer provision in either the UK or overseas, the UCO must satisfy itself that the arrangement has a potential long-term benefit and will enrich the experiences of both staff and students. The UCO's Academic Council is responsible for making this decision and may delegate authority of approval to a named sub-committee. This responsibility will be set out in the following sections of this part of the Academic Quality Framework, which also describes the approval and review processes for collaborative partners, provision and modes of operation.

16.1.6 Collaboration proposals that are based solely on the prospect of income generation are not acceptable, and awareness of the academic and financial risk(s) involved in the management of the relationship should be paramount.

16.1.7 The UCO is committed to ensuring the success of all collaborative arrangements and works hard to achieve this. This involves ensuring that the considerable benefits to the students and staff of both the UCO and partner are sustained appropriately. The UCO takes ultimate responsibility for:

a) The academic standards and the quality of any awards granted in its name.

b) The academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities provided regardless of where these opportunities are delivered and who provides them.

c) The accuracy of any formal transcript or record of achievement confirming any awards granted in its name.

[1] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships
[2] http://www.cvu.ac.uk/about/

16.2 Guiding Principles of Collaborative Activity

16.2.1 In approving any collaboration, the UCO must be certain that students are receiving an appropriately high quality of educational experience, that intended learning outcomes are being achieved, and that the standard of awards conferred in the UCO's name are being upheld. The UCO achieves this by taking into account guidance issued by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), through the UK Quality Code Section B10: Managing Higher Education Provision with Others and of the good practice described by other appropriate external reference points and guidance.

16.2.2 The guiding principles for the establishment and maintenance of collaborative activity are that:

a) The decision to enter into a collaborative partnership is the UCO's, and that agreements between a department, individual faculty member or other and a potential collaborative partner are not permitted.

b) A judgement will be made by the Senior Management Team about the nature of the institution with which the collaboration is proposed, and its strategic fit with the UCO, at an early stage in any development. A process of risk assessment shall be undertaken to supplement this, to acknowledge potential hazards and ensure that any necessary mitigation is put in place.

c) An investigation into the good standing of a prospective collaborative partner shall be undertaken to establish its legal status and capacity in law to contract with the UCO. Partnerships should not endanger the reputation of the UCO.

d) It shall be established whether the delivery of provision through a partnership is financially viable for the UCO, by employing a suitable costing mechanism, and whether it will strategically enhance the educational / research ability of the UCO.

e) All collaborative activity must be initiated and managed within the UCO's framework of academic quality assurance policy and practice, as set out in the Academic Quality Framework, and should be articulated through an appropriate legal agreement.

f) The UCO maintains responsibility for setting and maintaining academic standards and managing the quality of student learning opportunities when working with collaborative partners. The UCO will therefore apply its quality assurance processes to the provision, including annual monitoring and periodic subject and course reviews.

g) All dealings with collaborative partners shall be carried out in line with the UCO's 'Code of Conduct for Staff'[3] to safeguard against any financial temptations and preserve the integrity of the process. It is incumbent on staff not to accept hospitality of a degree greater than that which could be reciprocated at the UCO's expense, and gifts other than those with limited monetary value should be refused.

h) In accordance with the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships , the UCO retains responsibility for the academic standards of awards delivered in its name, and for the quality of the learning experience delivered by collaborative partners. All other obligations under the UK Quality Code for Higher Education[4] must be demonstrably fulfilled.

i) The UCO must be able to assure itself of the accuracy and completeness both of information provided to students and of information that is publically available (whether in hard copy or on the UCO's or partner's website).

[3] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[4] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code

16.3 Collaborative Activity Register

16.3.1 In line with the requirements of the QAA's UK Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships (Principle 6), the Quality Team maintains the UCO's Collaborative Activity Register[1].

16.3.2 Only once a collaborative partnership and the associated provision have been formally approved by the UCO will the details will be entered onto the Collaborative Activity Register.

16.3.3 The information held on the Register includes:

- The name and location of the collaborative partner.
- The award level and course title.
- The nature of the provision (validated, franchised etc.).
- The UCO staff member responsible for the collaborative partnership.
- The name of the Link Tutor for the provision.
- The name of the External Examiner attached to the provision.
- The date for the Periodic Course Review and Institutional Review.

16.3.4 The Collaborative Activity Register will be held by the Quality Team and can be made available on request.

16.4 Taxonomy of Collaborative Activity

16.4.1 The UCO may enter into a number of different types of relationship with collaborative partners both in the UK and overseas which are reflective of the accountability, oversight, management and approval requirements and related terms that the partnership may entail.

16.4.2 A taxonomy (shown in Table 16.1) has been ascribed to each type of relationship and should be described as such when referring to a specific collaborative partnership.

Table 16.1: Taxonomy of Collaborative Activity

Type of Collaborative Partner	Definition of Collaborative Partner	Type of Collaborative Provision	Definition of Collaborative Provision
Associate Partner	A partner institution that has been approved by the UCO to deliver courses which lead to awards in the UCO's name. Associate Partnerships are approved via Collaborative Activity Initial Approval (Part 2), Collaborative Partner Approval (Part 3), and the relevant Collaborative Provision Approval (Part 4)	Dual Award	Where the UCO and the partner institution, which has its own degree awarding powers, collaborate to provide a course at the partner institution, which leads to successful students achieving an award from both.
		Franchised	Where the UCO authorizes the delivery of its own approved course/s wholly by a partner institution retaining oversight of for the course's content, delivery method and pattern, assessment and quality assurance arrangements.
		Validated	Where the UCO has judged that a course developed and delivered by another institution without degree awarding powers is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to a UCO award.

Link Partner	A partner institution that has a formal relationship with the UCO that does not involve the partner delivering a course leading to an award in the UCO's name. Link Partnerships are approved via Collaborative Activity Initial Approval (Part 2), and the relevant Collaborative Provision Approval (Part 4)	Study Centre Arrangement	Where an approved partner's premises are used to deliver a UCO approved course using a 'flying faculty' arrangement.
		Articulation Arrangement	Where a course provided by an approved partner institution is formally recognized by the UCO and grants guaranteed admission with advanced standing to a UCO award (subject to the availability of places).
		Progression Arrangement	Where the successful completion of a course provided by an approved partner institution is formally recognized as an entry qualification for a specified UCO course.
		Memorandum of Understanding	Where the UCO has a non-binding written agreement with the partner institution to promote cooperation, detailed discussions and collaborative activities.

16.5 Selecting Collaborative Partners

16.5.1 The UCO aims to establish good working relationships with its collaborative partners, which will normally be institutions that share the UCO's values and support its vision and mission.

16.5.2 When seeking and entering into a collaborative partnership with an external organisation, the UCO considers the advantages and benefits that the relationship will bring to both itself and the partner.

16.5.3 Advantages may enhance the student experience; deliver benefits and opportunities for learners, staff and employers; or may bring financial benefits.

16.5.4 In addition to the advantages a partnership brings, the risks of the relationship are equally considered. These are formally assessed, quantified and mitigated as far as possible.

16.6 Collaborative Partner Selection Criteria

16.6.1 The UCO considers several criteria for selection of a partner including:

a) Alignment with the UCO's mission, vision and aims.

b) Alignment with the UCO's strategic plan.

c) Shared understanding of the proposed collaborative arrangements.

d) Financial viability, including new avenues of income generation.

e) Potential collaborative research and scholarship activities.

f) Potential participation in student exchange activities.

g) Other benefits, such as reputational advantage to the UCO, Continuing Professional Development (CPD), and engagement with employers.

16.6.2 Regardless of where delivery takes place, the UCO is responsible for any awards delivered in its name and therefore must have confidence that:

a) There is an institutional commitment by senior management and teaching staff to the academic success of the collaboration.

b) The partner institution is able to provide and sustain an ethos and learning environment appropriate to UK higher education in the subject(s) concerned.

c) The learning opportunities provided by the partner are appropriate for the delivery and support of HE provision and the partner is capable of providing a suitable learning experience.

16.6.3 The UCO's Academic Regulations (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations) do not permit students registered on courses leading to the UCO's awards to be taught and assessed in a language other than English, other than in exceptional circumstances approved on a case-by-case basis by the Academic Council.

16.6.4 Sponsors of proposed collaborative arrangements should initially consult with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) before any collaborative partner and provision approval process is initiated.

16.6.5 A visit to the proposed partner institution by a senior representative of the UCO to explore and assess the viability of the proposed collaboration and explore the expectations of each party may also be undertaken prior to progression of the proposal.

16.6.6 Initial discussions between and visits to prospective partners only constitutes sharing of information; collaborative partnerships are subject to approval in line with the UCO's policies and procedures outlined below.

16.7 Approval of Collaborative Partners & Provision

16.7.1 The UCO uses specific processes to approve collaborative partner institutions and their provision appropriate to the type of collaborative activity proposed. These processes may involve approval of the partner institution (Collaborative Partner Approval) or approval of a specific course (Collaborative Provision Approval) or may entail both.

16.7.2 The first phase in all circumstances is Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval (Part 2)

16.7.3 The second phase entails Collaborative Partner Approval (Part 3) and/or Collaborative Provision Approval (Part 4) as necessary, depending upon the type of partnership proposed.

16.7.4 Normally, Collaborative Partner Approval (Part 3) and Collaborative Provision Approval (Part 4) for a given institution will run in parallel, culminating in a single on-site event and decision timeline.

16.7.5 Where collaborative partners will be involved in the delivery of UCO awards an appropriate level of externality is incorporated into the approval process.

16.8 Collaborative Partnerships: Legal & Contractual Matters

16.8.1 All collaborative partnerships require an appropriately written agreement (a formal contract), setting out the key details of the relationship including details concerning courses leading to an award of the UCO, where the partner has been approved to deliver. Draft contracts will only be signed and come into force following the appropriate approval event.

16.8.2 The purposes of the contract are to:

a) Define the high-level arrangements for managing the partnership.

b) Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of both parties concerning the security of the academic standards of the provision are clearly set out, and that signposts are given to appropriate attendant documents describing these in greater detail.

c) Identify clear channels of authority, accountability and executive action.

d) Specify the financial arrangements for the proposed collaboration.

e) Stipulate all legal details, including the resolution of disputes and termination of the contract.

16.8.3 It is the responsibility of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) to draft a Collaborative Agreement for any new / changes to approved collaborative activity.

16.8.4 Drafts of the agreement should not include terms which are in direct contradiction to the Academic Regulations or quality assurance processes of the UCO. The contract must cover any provisos in place as a result of any approval/review event.

16.8.5 Each agreement is tailored to the individual requirements of the partnership.

16.8.6 All agreements must be signed by the Chair of the Academic Council to be enforceable. Notwithstanding this, there are a number of aspects which will be common to all agreements, unless otherwise explicitly stated:

a) Disputes will be resolved within the jurisdiction of English law.

b) Courses will be managed and assessments conducted in accordance with the UCO's regulations and all assessment and examination arrangements must be approved by the UCO.

c) The UCO will specify the quality assurance arrangements for the provision concerned.

d) The partner's procedures for student discipline, complaints and grievances shall apply and the partner will conduct the Stage One of academic appeals process, following the UCO's regulations. Stage Two of the process, if so required, shall be the responsibility of the UCO.

e) The UCO is responsible for the appointment of External Examiners.

f) The UCO reserves the right to arrange for an independent audit of the academic integrity of the examinations process.

g) Where Boards of Examiners are held at the partner, at least one member of staff of the UCO will be present, and a member of UCO staff will chair the Board.

h) The partner will provide the UCO with full, accurate personal details of students enrolled on courses leading to the UCO's awards, so that they may be registered with the UCO and entered on the UCO's student record system (failure to do so may result in students not having access to online resources and, ultimately, in not receiving an award from the UCO).

i) The UCO will be responsible for issuing award certificates to students who successfully complete the courses on which they are registered.

j) All publicity and promotional material is to be approved by the UCO, according to procedures as specified in each contract.

k) That each party must retain and, if requested, produce documentation and full records in relation to courses.

l) That serial franchising of any UCO provision is expressly prohibited.

16.8.7 The agreement should also be appropriate to the relationship with the partner and specify:

a) The names of the parties to the agreed contract, in addition to the UCO.

b) The provision associated with the partnership and the mode of its operation.

c) Contextual matters of a legal nature, for example intellectual property rights.

d) Procedures for resolving any differences that might arise in respect of the provision or the partnership.

e) The action to be taken if either partner is shown to be in serious breach of the contract, and the procedures to be followed in the event of a dispute between partner institutions.

f) Financial arrangements governing the provision of resources, both physical and human, actual fees, costs and charges.

g) Procedures and responsibilities in respect of the academic management of the course, particularly noting where these differ from those expressed in the UCO's Regulations or Academic Quality Framework, including academic appeals and student complaints.

h) The period of notice required for its termination and how the 'run out' of the course(s) associated with the contract will be handled, focusing on the rights of the students.

16.8.8 The agreement must include its period of validity, which would normally not exceed five years.

16.8.9 Following approval of the final version of the agreement by all parties, it must be signed by the appropriate members of UCO staff. It is then sent to the partner for their signature and on its return a copy is lodged with the Head of Quality.

16.8.10 Collaborative agreements must not come into force until after the approval or review event is concluded to allow for any additional clauses emerging as a result to be incorporated.

16.8.11 Collaborative agreements must only be signed by the Vice-Chancellor or their nominated representative on behalf of the Academic Council in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the UCO.

16.8.12 In some circumstances it may be appropriate for senior staff to cement a prospective collaborative relationship with an overseas institution by signing a non-legally-binding Memorandum of Understanding. The Memorandum of Understanding template should be used for this purpose[2].

16.8.13 Although not falling into the category of collaborative partnerships there may be a need to contract with agents for the recruitment of students. In these circumstances the collaborative agreement contents should comply with the guidance contained in the British Council document 'Recruitment Agents: A Legal & Regulatory Overview'[5].

[5] https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/recruitment-agents-a-legal-and-regulatory-overview.pdf

PART 2: COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY INITIAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL

16.9 INITIAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL PROCESS: ASSOCIATE PARTNERS

16.9.1 The Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process ensures that all proposed collaborations are in line with the Collaborative Partner Selection Criteria (see Section 16.6), are risk assessed and meet due diligence and site delivery requirements.

16.9.2 The Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process is outlined in Diagram 16.2a and is explained in detail below. A recommended timeline for the Collaborative Activity approval process is provided in Diagram 16.2b.

A) CONFIRMATION OF THE PROPOSAL

16.9.3 Sponsors of proposed collaborative activity should first consider the selection criteria for collaborative partners listed in Section 16.6 and discuss and agree this with the relevant Course Team and Portfolio Board as appropriate.

16.9.4 Sponsors of proposed collaborative activity should then inform the Dean of Academic Development and Head of Quality of the proposal.

16.9.5 The Head of Quality will confirm the type of collaborative activity being proposed and advises the sponsor of the approval processes required.

16.9.6 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) will confirm that the proposal may be taken forward formally.

B) PROPOSAL DOCUMENTATION

16.9.7 Following confirmation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) that the proposal may be taken forward, the sponsor will liaise with the Head of Quality to confirm the proposal documentation to be completed. In all cases this will normally consist of the following:

a) ***Collaborative Activity Rationale Form***[3]: a formal rationale for the proposal which includes preliminary costings (to provide a projection of income and expenditure based upon an initial description of the activity, and to estimate the fee level that may be required to generate sustainable income to support the activity) and any other non-financial benefits or detriments that may arise from partnership.

b) ***Collaborative Activity Initial Risk Assessment Form***[4]: to categorise the proposal as low, medium, or high risk and enable key risk indicators to be identified and addressed during the development process. This form should consider the partner's status and capacity, its quality assurance arrangements, the country in which it is located, its collaborative experience, and its financial stability.

c) ***Collaborative Activity Due Diligence Form***[5]: to examine whether the prospective partner is an organisation with which the UCO would wish to work and be associated with, including financial, academic quality, and reputational perspectives. The partner must have the legal, financial and resource capacity to enter into a productive and sustainable relationship. Due diligence should be undertaken in liaison with the Finance Director.

d) ***Collaborative Activity Delivery Site Visit Report***[6]: to verify reported information and provide assurance that the proposed partner is of good standing, will provide an educational experience of the quality and to the standard required and that the premises where provision is to be delivered is suitable and appropriate in liaison with the Head of Quality. The process for undertaking Delivery Site Visits is provided below.

e) ***New Course Approval Form (Validation) OR Major Course & Unit Modification Form (Franchise):*** to enable initial review of the proposed course, whether it is a validated provision, franchise arrangement, or dual award.

f) ***New Course Costings Form***: to allow initial review of the financial viability of the proposed provision.

g) ***Recruitment & Admissions Summary:*** to demonstrate the viability of the proposed provision in terms of its recruitment of students and its admissions policies. Where the proposed partner receives HEFCE funding, a statement evidencing the (continuing) ability of the partner to be responsible for selection, recruitment, admissions and induction and alignment with the Quality Code Chapter B2.

h) ***Learning Resources Summary***: for initial appraisal of the learning resources available to students on the proposed provision, a statement confirming the availability / equivalency of resources at the partner OR confirm 'buy in' to UCO resources.

i) ***Academic Staff Summary***: to provide initial information on the staffing of the proposed provision, including teaching staff CVs, an up-to-date matrix of teaching responsibilities, and a summary of academic support staffing.

16.9.8 The sponsor of the proposal is responsible for submitting the proposal documentation to the Dean of Academic Development and Head of Quality within an agreed timeline.

C) Delivery Site Visit

16.9.9 Where courses leading to a UCO award are delivered at sites other than those at UCO premises, a delivery site visit is required to ensure that the facilities are appropriate for the provision.

16.9.10 Site visits are normally undertaken by the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and / or the Dean of Academic Development, who will liaise between the team and the partner to confirm logistical arrangements and a partner representative to host the visit.

16.9.11 If a partner has multiple sites of delivery that they wish to include in the approval process an independent site visit will be required for each centre.

16.9.12 The delivery site visit will result in the production of a delivery site visit report[7].

16.9.13 It is the responsibility of the allocated visitors to produce the report and should include confirmation about the site's suitability as a delivery location.

16.9.14 It is expected that the proposed partner institution will cover costs associated with the site visit, and these costs will be agreed in advance of the visit.

D) Approval of the Proposal

16.9.15 The Dean of Academic Development will be responsible for presenting the proposed collaborative activity accompanied by the proposal documentation to the Senior Management Team for consideration and approval (specifically regarding the nature of the institution with which the collaboration is proposed, its strategic fit with the UCO and the completed risk assessment to acknowledge potential hazards and ensure that any necessary mitigation may be put in place) and the Academic Council for consideration from an academic perspective.

16.9.16 Following approval of the proposed collaborative arrangement by the Senior Management Team and Academic Council:

a) The Head of Quality initiates the appropriate approval process for the type of collaboration being proposed.

b) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) begins drafting a Collaborative Agreement for the collaborative activity (seeking legal advice where necessary) in liaison with members of the Vice-Chancellor's Group and Senior Management Team as appropriate.

16.9.17 Table 16.2 identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for the Collaborative Activity Initial Approval Process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

16.9.18 Table 16.2 may be used as a checklist to ensure that each stage of the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process is completed as appropriate. The Head of Quality is responsible for completing the "Completed" column in liaison with relevant staff.

TABLE 16.2: INITIAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL PROCESS TASKS & RESPONSIBILITIES CHECKLIST

Stage No.	Stage One Task	Responsibility	Completed
1	New collaborative activity is proposed and discussed with the Dean of Academic Development.	Proposing Team Leader / Sponsor	
2	Proposal approval process, documentation requirements (in line with the partner / provision proposed) and timelines for their completion are confirmed with the Proposing Team Leader / Sponsor.	Dean of Academic Development Head of Quality	
3	Proposal approval documentation is completed in liaison with appropriate staff. Delivery Site Visit (if necessary) is arranged in liaison with the Head of Quality.	Proposing Team Leader / Sponsor	
4	a) Consideration of the completed proposal approval documentation to confirm that the proposal fits with the UCO's academic and research strategy and conforms to the overarching principles of Collaborative Activity with the following possible outcomes: i. Approval to progress the proposal. ii. Approval to progress the proposal subject to recommended changes / further actions. iii. Approval of the proposal is not granted.	Academic Council (AC)	
	b) a) Consideration of the completed proposal approval documentation to confirm that the proposal fits with the UCO's strategic objectives, human and physical resource availability and meets market demand as appropriate with the following possible outcomes: i. Approval to progress the proposal. ii. Approval to progress the proposal subject to recommended changes / further actions. iii. Approval of the proposal is not granted.	Senior Management Team (SMT)	

5	a) Further to AC and SMT approval of the proposal approval documentation and a timeline and requirements of subsequent stages of the approval process are confirmed with the Proposing Team Leader / Sponsor.	Head of Quality	
	b) A Collaborative Activity Approval Co-ordinator for the duration of the subsequent approval process stages is allocated and identified to the Proposing Team.	Head of Quality	
	c) The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) is informed of the proposal approval outcome and undertakes subsequent monitoring of the progress of subsequent approval process stages.	Head of Quality	
	d) If the proposed provision relates to Recognised Qualification provision the appropriate Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) is be notified.	Proposing Team Leader / Sponsor	

16.10 Initial Proposal Approval Process: Link Partners

16.10.1 The Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process ensures that all proposed collaborations are in line with the Collaborative Partner Selection Criteria (see Section 16.6), are risk assessed and meet due diligence and site delivery requirements.

16.10.2 The Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process is outlined in Diagram 16.2 and is explained in detail below.

A) Confirmation of the Proposal

16.10.3 Sponsors of proposed collaborative activity should first consider the selection criteria for collaborative partners listed in Section 16.6 and discuss and agree this with the relevant Course Team and Portfolio Board as appropriate.

16.10.4 Sponsors of proposed collaborative activity should then inform the Dean of Academic Development and Head of Quality of the proposal.

16.10.5 The Head of Quality will confirm the type of collaborative activity being proposed and advises the sponsor of the approval processes required.

16.10.6 The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) will confirm that the proposal may be taken forward formally.

B) Proposal Documentation

16.10.7 Following confirmation from the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) that the proposal may be taken forward, the sponsor will liaise with the Head of Quality to confirm the proposal documentation to be completed. In all cases for both proposed collaborative partnerships and provision this will normally consist of the following:

a) ***Collaborative Activity Rationale Form***[8]: a formal rationale for the proposal which includes preliminary costings (to provide a projection of income and expenditure based upon an initial description of the activity, and to estimate the fee level that may be required to generate sustainable income to support the activity) and any other non-financial benefits or detriments that may arise from partnership.

b) ***Collaborative Activity Initial Risk Assessment Form***[9]: to categorise the proposal as low, medium, or high risk and enable key risk indicators to be identified and addressed during the development process. This form should consider the partner's status and capacity, its quality assurance arrangements, the country in which it is located, its collaborative experience, and its financial stability.

C) Delivery Site Visit

16.10.8 For proposed Link Partners, a site visit is only required where the proposed outcome is a Study Centre Arrangement, in which case the process is as detailed above and in Table 16.2.

d) Approval of the Proposal

16.10.9 The Dean of Academic Development will be responsible for presenting the proposed collaborative activity accompanied by the proposal documentation to the Senior Management Team for consideration and approval (specifically regarding the nature of the institution with which the collaboration is proposed, its strategic fit with the UCO and the completed risk assessment to acknowledge potential hazards and ensure that any necessary mitigation may be put in place) and the Academic Council for consideration from an academic perspective.

16.10.10 Following approval of the proposed collaborative arrangement by the Senior Management Team and Academic Council:

a) The Head of Quality initiates the appropriate approval process for the type of collaboration being proposed.

b) The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) begins drafting a Collaborative Agreement for the collaborative activity (seeking legal advice where necessary) in liaison with members of the Vice-Chancellor's Group and Senior Management Team as appropriate.

16.10.11 Table 16.2 identifies the tasks and individual / committee responsibilities for the Collaborative Partner & Provision Proposal Approval Process. Tasks should be undertaken in numerical order. Those listed under the same Stage Number take place concurrently.

16.10.12 Table 16.2, previously displayed in Section 16.8, should be used as a checklist to ensure that each stage of the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process is completed as appropriate. The Head of Quality is responsible for completing the "Completed" column in liaison with relevant staff.

PART 3: COLLABORATIVE PARTNER APPROVAL

16.11 ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL PROCESS

16.11.1 The Associate Partner Approval Process is undertaken at an institutional level; this process is not normally applicable for Link Partners as these are institutions that the UCO has a formal relationship with, but which do not involve the partner delivering a course leading to an award of the UCO. Link Partners are therefore not normally approved at an institutional level but are approved according to the type of collaborative provision that will be undertaken with them (see Section 16.10).

16.11.2 An Associate Partner is a partner institution that has been approved by the UCO to deliver courses which lead to an award in its name.

16.11.3 All Associate Partner relationships must adhere to the requirements of the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships[6]..

16.11.4 Following approval of the proposal to approve a new Associate Partner as outlined in Part 2, an institutional approval process is initiated to assure the UCO that the proposed partner institution fulfils the criteria detailed in Section 16.6: Collaborative Partner Selection Criteria, and additionally establishing and confirming whether:

a) The partner's mission, strategy and aims are compatible with those of the UCO.

b) The partner's approach to teaching, learning and assessment are consonant with those of the UCO.

c) Research carried out by staff at the partner underpins the curriculum.

d) Suitable learning resources and a learning environment appropriate to higher education are available at the partner.

e) The student experience at the partner will be equivalent to that at the UCO.

f) There is an institutional commitment by senior management and teaching staff to the academic success of the collaboration.

g) The partner institution is able to provide and sustain an ethos and learning environment appropriate to UK higher education in the subject(s) concerned.

h) The learning opportunities provided by the partner are appropriate for the delivery and support of HE provision and the partner is capable of providing a suitable learning experience.

i) The partner possesses the financial collateral to guarantee the sustainability of the proposed collaborative agreement, at least for an appropriate period into the foreseeable future.

16.11.5 If a prospective partner has multiple sites of delivery that they wish to include in the approval process, independent approval for each centre will be required to ensure that they fulfil the UCO's criteria detailed in section 16.6: Collaborative Partner Selection Criteria.

16.11.6 Approval of a proposed Associate Partner of the UCO includes the following stages:

a) ***Contact & Communication***: The identification of one of the partner's staff to act as the point of contact with the UCO throughout the institutional approval process to enable efficient communication regarding the submission documentation and event organization.

[6] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships

b) ***Approval Documentation***: The production and submission of a standard set of documentation by the partner together with the sponsor of the proposed collaborative arrangement.

c) ***Approval Panel Appointment***: Appointment of an approval panel of appropriately qualified members to consider the approval of the proposed collaborative partnership.

d) ***Approval Event:*** An approval event where the approval panel review the documentation submission and meet with partner staff and students to fully review and evaluate the proposed collaboration enabling them to make an informed judgement to approve the partner at an institutional level in line with the approval criteria.

e) ***Approval Event Outcome***: The production of an approval event outcome report to formally communicate these to the partner and relevant UCO staff.

f) ***Reporting & Responding to Event Outcomes***: The production of a formal response to the outcome report by the partner and arrangements for monitoring the completion of approval conditions.

g) ***Formal Approval***: Confirmation of approval of the partner by the Academic Council and agreement and signing of the Collaborative Agreement cementing the partnership between the UCO and the partner.

A) Associate Partner Approval Contact & Communication

16.11.7 The UCO's Quality Team will ask the partner to nominate an individual to act as the primary point of contact for the duration of the partner institutional approval process. This individual will normally be responsible for:

a) Liaising with the UCO's nominated point of contact as appropriate.

b) Submitting the required documentation to the UCO.

c) Communicating approval event details and requirements to partner staff as appropriate.

16.11.8 Similarly, the UCO will nominate an individual, normally a member of the Quality Team (or nominated individual), as the partner's primary point of contact for the duration of the partner institutional approval process. This individual will be responsible for:

a) Liaising with the partner's nominated point of contact as appropriate.

b) Confirming, requesting and receiving submission documentation from the proposed partner.

c) Drafting the approval event agenda in liaison in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

d) Confirming the membership of the approval panel in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

e) Circulating submission documentation to the approval panel in good time.

f) Taking minutes at the approval event.

B) Associate Partner Approval Documentation

16.11.9 The partner together with the UCO's sponsor proposing the collaborative partner will be required to produce a standard set of documentation that will be considered at the partner institutional approval event. At a minimum this will normally consist of a Self-Evaluation Document (SED) and prescriptive supporting documentation. However, if the nature of the partner requires it additional documents may be requested.

16.11.10 Documentation requirements will be confirmed by the Head of Quality to the partner at the beginning of the partner institutional approval process in addition to an agreed submission deadline, which will normally be at least four weeks prior to the event.

16.11.11 Documentation should be submitted to the Head of Quality in electronic format.

I) The Self-Evaluation Document (SED)

16.11.12 The Self-Evaluation Document (SED) should be produced by the partner together with the UCO's sponsor proposing the collaborative arrangement using the UCO's SED template[10].

16.11.13 The SED should describe what the partner's current status and processes are.

16.11.14 The SED provides the following information:

1) SED Section 1 (Rationale): A rationale for the proposed partnership from the partner's point of view.
2) SED Section 2 (The Partner Institution): Details about the nature of the partner institution, its background and context within Higher Education. Its current HE provision, the aims and objectives of this provision and how this provision is managed, including any collaborative relationships and provision and their context. Information about the partner institution's strategic direction and ethos and details about staff and student numbers.
3) SED Section 3 (Governance & Management): The partner institution's governance, management (both academic and administrative) and committee structures.
4) SED Section 4 (Student & External Feedback Arrangements): Details regarding the arrangements for seeking student and external (including employer) feedback, what course committee / staff-student committee system is in place, how these mechanisms are used to enhance the students' learning experience and how this is used to enhance the curriculum.
5) SED Section 5 (Quality Assurance Arrangements): Details regarding the arrangements for quality assurance (including course approval, annual monitoring, managing changes to courses and units, external examining, academic policies and procedure, the approval of marketing and publicity information as appropriate) and who holds responsibility for these arrangements.
6) SED Section 6 (Critical Commentary): a critical commentary on the following:
    a) The quality of the students' educational experience provided by the partner, considering student admission, progression and completion data over the past three years, with a particular focus on Higher Education.
    b) The academic standards of courses currently delivered with reference to External Examiner reports and any reports from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies as appropriate.
    c) How teaching, learning and assessment strategies (including any concerning technology enhanced learning) align with those of the UCO.
    d) Procedures for student complaints, academic appeals and discipline.
    e) The arrangements for student academic support and pastoral guidance including feedback to students on their assessment, careers advice and welfare services and how these align with those of the UCO.
    f) Staffing resources including staff development and scholarship, research and professional activities that underpin the subjects delivered by the partner at Higher Education level.

g) The provision of learning resources including information technology, library, teaching and private study facilities.

7) SED Section 7 (Conclusion): Conclusions, including identification of areas of strength and weakness.

II) Supporting Documentation

16.11.15 The partner is also required to submit documentation in support of the SED as outlined in Table 16.3. Where the partner intends to utilize UCO procedures, this should be clearly stated within the SED.

Table 16.3: SED Supporting Documentation

SED Section	Supporting Documentation to be Submitted in Support
Section 1: Rationale	N/A
Section 2: The Partner Institution	Strategic Plan (or equivalent). Mission Statement (or equivalent). Staff data (number of part-time and full-time staff, academic and administrative). Student admission, progression and completion data for the past three years.
Section 3: Governance & Management	Governance / Management / Committee Structure Diagrams. Committee Terms of Reference.
Section 4: Student & External Feedback Arrangements	Course Team Committee Terms of Reference. Student-Staff Committee Terms of Reference. Student Voice Mechanism Diagrams. Examples of questionnaires used to gather student feedback.
Section 5: Quality Assurance Arrangements	Quality Handbook or equivalent, including course approval, annual monitoring, managing changes to courses and units, external examining, academic policies and procedure as appropriate. Mechanisms for approving marketing and publicity information with clear lines of responsibility. External Quality Assurance Reports (e.g. from the QAA, IQER or overseas report, in-county professional quality assurance bodies and professional bodies).
Section 6: Critical Commentary	Student admission, progression and completion data for the past three years. Most recent External Examiner reports and responses. Recent reports from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies. Teaching, learning and assessment strategies (including any concerning technology enhanced learning).

	Student Complaint Procedure with clear lines of responsibility. Academic Appeal Procedure with clear lines of responsibility. Academic Discipline Procedure with clear lines of responsibility. Samples of assessment feedback provided to students. Student academic support and welfare arrangements and procedures. Careers advice arrangements and procedures. Staffing list and CVs.
Section 7: Conclusion	N/A

C) Associate Partner Approval Panel Appointment

16.11.16 The membership of the approval panel for the Associate Partner institution approval event is shown in Table 16.4 and is constructed to allow for each member to focus on a specific set of areas; panel members may, however, pursue any relevant line of questioning outside of their area of focus.

16.11.17 Any change in the composition of the panel must be agreed in advance by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) who will ensure that the membership is appropriate for the context of the event.

16.11.18 Approval panel members are provided with guidance about their role by the Head of Quality upon appointment, including information about the location and time of the event and payment of fees and expenses where applicable[11].

16.11.19 Approval panel members will normally receive Approval Documentation electronically four weeks in advance of the approval event; they may request a hard copy of the documentation from the Head of Quality.

16.11.20 The Associate Partner Approval Panel is responsible for and is required to:

a) Review the Approval Documentation and identify lines of enquiry that they wish to pursue at the approval event prior to the event.

b) Attend the approval event in its entirety and to contribute to discussions and decision-making as required of their role.

c) Consider the partner proposal in accordance with the stipulated Partner Institution Approval Criteria (see Section 16.9E).

d) Produce an Associate Partner Approval Outcome Report structured on the Criteria for the Approval of New Courses using the appropriate template.

I) External Panel Member Nomination Process

16.11.21 The partner institution will be required to nominate the external panel member in liaison with the Head of Quality and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) normally no later than three months before the date of the event.

16.11.22 External Panel Member nominations should be made using the appropriate nomination form[12]. Nominations should be accompanied by the CV of the nominated individual.

16.11.23 The partner is responsible for submitted nominations to the Head of Quality within the requisite timeline.

16.11.24 The Head of Quality will forward the nomination and CV on to the Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the Partner and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) of the UCO for approval and sign-off.

16.11.25 Once approved, the Head of Quality will liaise with the external panel member as to their remit. This will normally include providing guidance to the External Panel Members regarding the expectations of External Panel Members, their expected time commitment, fees and expenses and opportunity for a pre-panel meeting to ensure that they are clear about their role.

TABLE 16.4: NORMAL MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATE PARTNER APPROVAL EVENT PANELS

Panelist	**Criteria for Appointment**	**Panel Role**
A Chair	A member of the Senior Management Team (normally also a member of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee) or an academic Head of Area outside of that proposing the collaboration.	To lead discussions and to look at the congruence of the partner's mission and strategy with that of the UCO's.
A Senior Member of UCO Staff	A senior staff member un-related to provision in the institution.	To give an internal but independent view on issues relating to compliance with UCO processes, general teaching and learning issues, the learning experience and environment and general resource issues.
An External Member	An external member who has experience of working in a collaborative partnership, nominated by the partner but approved by the UCO. The external member should be appropriate for the scope of the event and, if possible, the nature of the course/s proposed to be delivered at the partner institution and should not have had a link with either the UCO or the partner during the previous five year period.	To look at general teaching and learning issues, the learning experience and environment, general resource issues and comparisons with the sector.
A member of the Quality Team	Appointed by the Head of Quality.	To look at issues relating to compliance with UCO processes and with QAA requirements and other external reference points.
A Secretary	Appointed by the Head of Quality.	To liaise with Panel members regarding logistical arrangements and to minute the approval event.
A Student Member	A current student or recent alumnus.	To take a lead on issues about the student experience.

D) Approval Event

16.11.26 The date and agenda for the partner approval event will be confirmed by the Head of Quality in liaison with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), the partner and relevant UCO staff members.

16.11.27 The approval event is normally held at the partner institution to enable the approval panel to tour and assure the quality and standard of the partner's facilities.

16.11.28 The approval event will normally follow the standard agenda (Table 16.5) and include the following:

a) A meeting with senior staff of the partner institution and senior staff from the UCO faculty to which they will be linked through the provision it is proposed they deliver, to discuss strategic and management issues.

b) A meeting with 6-10 students representing those studying on each of the UCO's courses at the partner institution, normally from different stages of the course(s) and including student representatives.

c) A tour of the partner institution's facilities to include any specialist facilities.

16.11.29 The standard approval event agenda may be tailored to suit the requirements of the event.

16.11.30 It is expected that the proposed partner institution will cover costs associated with the approval event, and these costs will be agreed in advance of the visit.

Table 16.5: Standard ASSOCIATE PARTNER Approval Event Agenda

Time	Meeting	Required Attendance
10:00	Private meeting of the panel to set the agenda for the first meeting and agree lines of enquiry.	The Approval Panel.
10:30	Panel meeting with the Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the partner institution.	The Approval Panel. The Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the partner institution.
11:00	Tour of the partner institution's facilities.	The Approval Panel. The Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the partner institution.
11:30	Short presentation from the partner institution's Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) to provide an overview of current activities at the institution and their strategic direction, followed by a meeting with partner management team to discuss issues surrounding the institutional partnership (and how the proposed partnership would fit in with the UCO's strategic aims) staffing, resourcing and staff development.	The Approval Panel. The Vice-Chancellor (or equivalent) of the partner institution. The partner institution's senior management team.

12:30	Meeting with course management and student support leads from relevant departments to discuss the setting and maintenance of academic standards and support for the quality of provision and the student experience.	The Approval Panel. Course Management Team. Student Support Leads.
13:30	Lunch including meeting with a representative sample of students, including student representatives, to discuss the student experience.	The Approval Panel. Representative Sample of Students. Student Representatives.
14:30	Private meeting of the panel to confirm whether an additional meeting is required or, if not, to confirm outcomes of the approval event.	The Approval Panel
15:30	Feedback of approval event outcomes to the partner and close of meeting (preceded by an additional meeting if required).	The Approval Panel. The partner institution's senior management team.

E) Associate Partner Approval Criteria

16.11.31 The panel is required to consider the following criteria when reviewing and approving an Associate Partner proposal. They will typically structure the event outcome report on these criteria, noting practice that is innovative and/or likely to be of interest to others.

16.11.32 These criteria form the basis of the SED and partners are therefore recommended to consider and structure the SED on these criteria:

a) Rationale

i. The rationale for the proposed partnership is clearly articulated and aligns with the UCO's selection criteria for collaborative partners.

b) Nature of the Partner

i. The nature of the partner institution is clearly articulated.

ii. The aims, objectives and management of the partner's higher education provision are clearly articulated and align with the UCO's.

iii. The partner's strategic direction and ethos is clearly articulated and is in line with that of the UCO's.

iv. Other collaborative relationships which the partner has are clearly articulated.

v. The staffing profiles (e.g. numbers, range of qualifications of staff, diversity, etc.) of the partner are clearly articulated and healthy.

vi. The student profiles (e.g. student numbers per cohort, admission and progression data, diversity of student body, immigration compliance and reporting, etc.) are clearly articulated and healthy.

c) Governance & Management

i. The academic and administrative governance and management structures of the partner are clearly articulated.

ii. Committee membership and terms of reference are appropriate.

d) Quality Assurance Arrangements

i. The partner institution's arrangements for quality assurance and management (including course approval, annual monitoring, managing changes to courses and units, external examining, academic policies and procedure, the approval of marketing and publicity information as appropriate) are clearly articulated and appropriate.

ii. Responsibilities for quality assurance arrangements and management are clearly articulated and appropriate.

e) Feedback Arrangements

i. The partner institution's arrangements for seeking student and employer feedback are clearly articulated and appropriate.

ii. There are appropriate mechanisms in place for obtaining and responding to student feedback on the student experience;

iii. Appropriate student feedback and consultation mechanisms are in place at the partner institution and enhance the students' learning experience.

iv. There is evidence that student and employer feedback is used to enhance the curriculum.

f) The Student Experience

i. There is evidence that the students' educational experience is of a high standard.

ii. Study materials and assessment are equivalent in quality and the learning experience they support to those provided by the UCO in other learning contexts.

g) Academic Standards

i. The partner has clear and appropriate processes in place to verify and benchmark academic standards.

h) Teaching, Learning & Assessment

i. Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategies are clearly articulated and align with those of the UCO.

i) Student Appeals, Complaints & Discipline

i. There are policies and procedures in place at the partner institution regarding student appeals, complaints and discipline and align with those of the UCO.

ii. Confirmation is made whether the partner's or the UCO's policies and procedures will be used should the partner be approved.

j) Academic & Pastoral Support

i. There are appropriate opportunities for, and sound arrangements in place for academic and pastoral support at the partner institution.

ii. The partner makes available support to students in respect of any critical course-related choices or decisions (e.g. electives, placements).

iii. Arrangements are in place for any language or other support required by particular groups of students (disability, overseas, etc.).

k) Staffing Resources

i. The human resources available (or the plans that are in place to provide them) and the environment within which provision will be offered, are satisfactory.

ii. There is confidence in the partner to develop and deliver provision.

iii. Staff are externally engaged with relevant subject and professional communities, such as the Higher Education Academy[7] and through external examining and other networking roles.

iv. The quality of provision and its further enhancement are fully supported by research, scholarship and academic enterprise within the academic staff.

v. There is a staff development policy in place that values and encourages academic and professional development activity by staff.

vi. The research and scholarly activity of delivery teams are sufficient to maintain the standards of provision and enrich the curriculum with contemporary developments in subject areas, particularly to underpin work at Frameworks for Higher Education Qualifications (FHEQ) Level 6 and FHEQ Level 7[8].

l) Physical Resources

i. Library, learning resources, ICT and teaching resources and facilities are available and adequate.

ii. Processes are in place to manage ongoing improvements / replacements to resources.

m) Financial Resources

i. Institutional financial statements demonstrate an appropriate level of financial stability.

ii. The institution has a viable strategy for its financial stability in future years.

F) Associate Partner Approval Event Outcomes

16.11.33 At the conclusion of an approval event a series of provisional outcomes will be determined by the approval panel and communicated verbally by the Panel Chair to the partner at the end of the event.

16.11.34 These outcomes will identify:

a) Any conditions that are required for the approval of the partnership which may include either or both of the following:

i. Approval Conditions - where the additional work is substantial and required to satisfy the panel that the partnership meets UCO requirements in respect of standards and / or quality.

ii. Delivery Conditions - where updates to paperwork and course documentation are required.

b) Any recommendations that the panel feel will enhance the partnership; by their very nature recommendations do not have to be addressed, but it is expected that actions taken to progress them or reasons for not doing so should be included in the partner's response to the approval event outcomes.

c) The dates by which conditions should be fulfilled.

d) The name of the person responsible for managing the response to conditions and for providing the final formal response.

16.11.35 Both conditions and recommendations can be directed towards the partner and/or the UCO.

[7] https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/
[8] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships

16.11.36 The partner will be formally notified of the confirmed approval event outcomes in writing through an event outcome report (see below).

G) Reporting & Responding To Associate Partner Approval Event Outcomes

16.11.37 Following the approval event, an Approval Event Outcomes Report[13] to formally communicate the event outcomes to the partner in writing will be prepared by the Panel Secretary. The report will contain a full record of the event including discussions held, the agreed approval conditions and recommendations and reasons for the panel's conclusions.

16.11.38 The Secretary to the panel circulates the report to the members of the approval panel for confirmation and final approval and sign off by the Panel Chair.

16.11.39 The Panel Secretary then circulates the approved report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Head of Quality, the partner and appropriate UCO colleagues. The Panel Secretary will also provide the partner with the Approval Event Outcome Response Form[14] and a deadline for its completion.

16.11.40 The partner will be responsible for completing and returning the Approval Event Outcome Response Form within the requisite timeframe to the Head of Quality which will be forwarded to the Panel Chair for approval and sign off.

16.11.41 The Approval Event Outcomes Report and the Response Form will then be reviewed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (EESC). Following its endorsement, the EESC, will recommend approval of the partnership to the Academic Council.

16.11.42 Should the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee require amendments to be made to either report for accuracy or completeness the Head of Quality will distribute an updated version to all parties.

16.11.43 Similarly, the initial risk assessment may be re-visited and mitigation factors amended as appropriate. The Head of Quality will distribute the updated version to all parties.

H) Associate Partner Formal Approval

16.11.44 The Academic Council is responsible for considering and formally approving the proposed partnership.

16.11.45 Following approval of the new partnership by the Academic Council:

i. The Chair of the Academic Council will sign off the Response Form which serves as confirmation of approval.

ii. The Head of Quality shall confirm the approval of the new partnership with the partner institution and relevant internal colleagues by circulating the signed Response Form.

iii. The new partner will be entered into the Collaborative Activity Register by the Head of Quality.

iv. The draft Collaborative Agreement is agreed and signed between the partner and the UCO.

16.12 Link Partners & Part 3

16.12.1 Link Partners are institutions that the UCO has a formal relationship with, but which do not involve the partner delivering a course leading to an award of the UCO. Subsequently they are not normally approved at an institutional level but are approved according to the type of collaborative provision that will be undertaken with them (see Section 16.17). Therefore, potential Link Partners do not engage in Part 3, instead moving directly to the relevant section

of Part 4, depending on whether the provision sought is an articulation arrangement, progression arrangement, memorandum of understanding, or study centre arrangement.

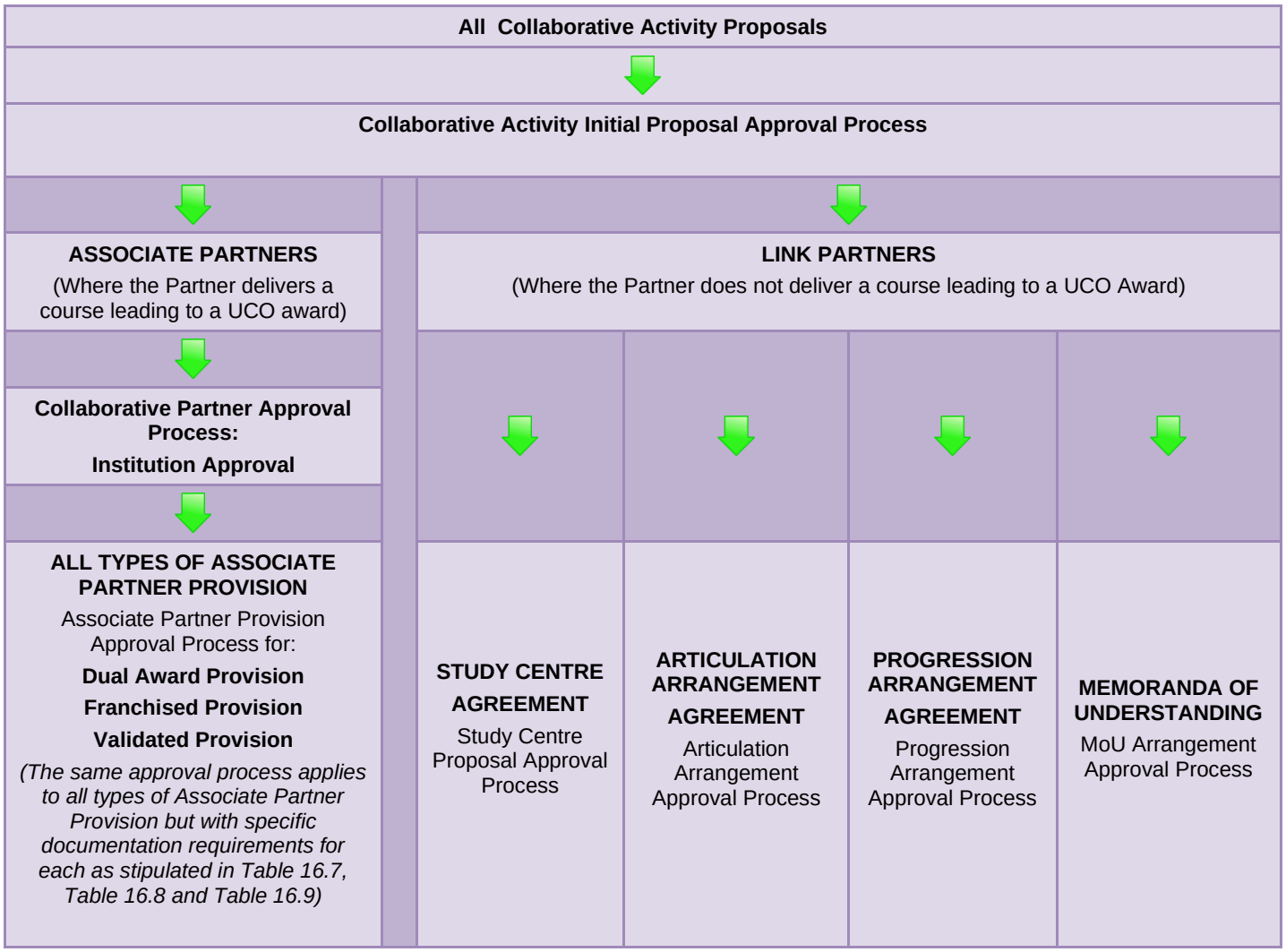
16.12.2 If a Link Partner wishes to progress to a relationship where they deliver a course leading to an award of the UCO, they will be required to follow the Associate Partner Approval process detailed in Part 3 and the Associate Partner Provision process detailed in Part 4.

PART 4: COLLABORATIVE PROVISION APPROVAL

16.13 OVERVIEW OF COLLABORATIVE PROVISION APPROVAL PROCESSES

16.13.1 For clarity there is an approval process for each type of collaborative provision that is proportionate to the provision being approved as outlined in Diagram 16.1.

DIAGRAM 16.1A: COLLABORATIVE PROVISION APPROVAL PROCESS OVERVIEW



16.14 Quality Assurance & Management of Collaborative Provision

16.14.1 Whilst different types of collaborative provision will involve differences in the ongoing quality assurance and management of the collaboration, there are certain elements which are relevant to all circumstances which include:

a) ***Assurance of Quality and Standards***: In accordance with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Partnerships[9], the UCO is responsible for securing and maintaining the academic standards of all credit and qualifications granted in its name; these responsibilities are never delegated to the partner institution.

b) ***Confirmation of Academic Regulations***: Unless variations are expressly confirmed through collaborative provision and course approval, the UCO's Academic Regulations will apply in all circumstances (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations). A rationale will be required for any variance, e.g. the need to adhere to requirements of a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB).

c) ***Appointment of External Examiners:*** The UCO retains full responsibility for the selection and appointment of External Examiners for all collaborative provision as documented in AQF Section 11: External Examining. For all collaborative arrangements it additionally requires that:

i. Prospective External Examiners must have had no connection in the previous five years with the UCO or partner institution.

ii. Where the Academic Council has exceptionally approved that the language of instruction and/or assessment is not English, that External Examiners have the necessary language skills.

iii. Where the provision is franchised it will normally be the case that the current External Examiner is also asked to cover the collaborative iteration of the course.

iv. Where the provision is validated the UCO may agree a procedure with the partner whereby they are able to nominate External Examiners for approval by the UCO. In such cases this will be recorded in the Collaborative Agreement for the partnership. However, in all cases it will be the UCO's responsibility to issue contracts to External Examiners and to pay their fees and expenses.

v. The UCO will prepare the External Examiner to undertake their role. Where the provision contains a specialist form of assessment, supplementary preparation may be provided by the partner, in conjunction with the UCO. The UCO will also hold an annual training day for new and continuing External Examiners.

vi. On appointment, the External Examiner will receive a contract, a letter detailing requirements and expectations and a copy of the UCO's Academic Quality Framework and other necessary regulations.

vii. Any request to extend an External Examiner's duties beyond the normal requirements must be expressly approved by the Academic Council.

viii. The arrangements for responding to External Examiners' reports regarding collaborative provision are described at Section 16.37.

d) ***Student Conduct & Discipline***: In all matters of conduct and discipline (other than matters included within the UCO's policy on academic conduct) students are subject to the relevant rules and procedures of the partner institution. Where a disciplinary matter

[9] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/partnerships

has implications for quality and standards (in the case of assessment irregularities, for example) the matter will normally be referred to the UCO for consideration under its Academic Discipline Policy & Procedures[10].

e) ***Student Complaints***: All complaints should be addressed through the student complaints procedure of the partner in the first instance. If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the partner's complaints procedure they may bring the complaint to the attention of the UCO. The UCO will only consider complaints in relation to issues concerning the delivery or assessment of the course of study or the resources provided directly to support study on the course. Other issues, including non-academic matters, may not normally be referred to the UCO.

f) ***Academic Offences***: Cases of academic offences (collusion, fabrication, cheating, impersonation and plagiarism) will normally be dealt with under the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy & Procedures. Academic offences will normally be investigated jointly by the UCO and the partner and considered by the UCO's Academic Conduct Panel.

g) ***Academic Appeals***: Academic appeals against a Board of Examiners' decision submitted by students at a partner institution will be processed according to the UCO's Academic Appeals Policy[11], unless exceptionally agreed at collaborative partner and / or provision approval. Where appropriate, responsibility for undertaking Stage One investigations under the policy and responding to the appellant may be delegated to the partner, and this will be confirmed at partner / provision approval. Irrespective of this, students will still be able to request a review of the initial judgement via the UCO's Appeal Review Board, as described in Stage Two of the policy.

h) ***Approval of Partner Staff***: At events to approve and review delivery of collaborative provision the approval of partner staff will be required as follows:

   i. Partners will be required to submit CVs of all staff teaching on the course(s) along with confirmation from the appropriate senior UCO faculty that they have all been approved as appropriate to deliver the approved course(s) of study.

   ii. It is recognized that between approval and review events staff at the partner may change and that the UCO must continue to assure itself that new members of staff are suitability qualified.

   iii. In these circumstances the partner will submit a copy of the new member of staff's CV plus information regarding which units they will teach on to the Head of Quality using the Staff CV Coversheet[15].

   iv. The Head of Quality will then confirm with the relevant senior UCO faculty the suitability of the new partner staff member and the partner will be informed of this decision.

   v. Partner staff who have not been approved will not be eligible to teach on the course of study leading to an award of the UCO.

i) ***Collaborative Partner Staff Development***: The UCO aims to ensure that, wherever practicable, staff teaching on courses leading to an award of the UCO at partner institutions are invited to participate in its subject-based and pedagogical staff development courses, and that they are engaged in the business of the relevant department. Partner staff are therefore provided with the following development opportunities:

[10] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy
[11] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

i. Staff at Collaborative Partner institutions have open access to relevant procedural documents, useful web links and guidance produced by the UCO. They may also be provided with relationship-specific information, including a Collaborative Provision Operations Manual (CPOM)[16].

ii. Transnational education (TNE) partners (i.e. those based overseas) will be provided with an intensive set of development and assimilation sessions at the beginning of the collaboration, normally at the UCO. Members of partner staff will meet with the Quality Team, Academic Registry, and the Faculty to familiarise them with key UCO processes.

iii. Depending on the precise nature of the collaborative relationship, Link Tutor s (or their equivalent) are charged with continuing to provide appropriate staff development and with facilitating the attendance of staff at collaborating institutions at departmental and Faculty events. This may include providing staff development and instruction with regard to academic policy and procedures, moderation and assessment etc. Reporting structures are in place which, where appropriate, feed into the UCO's Annual Monitoring Reporting cycle (see AQF Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting).

iv. The UCO also provides opportunities for professional and personal development during the course of the relationship. Fee waivers are available in most cases to promote and encourage engagement. These opportunities include:

a) Relevant activity-specific training sessions for staff in associate partner institutions, such as training on the use of relevant electronic platforms.

b) Professional development courses such as the Post Graduate Certificate in Academic and Clinical Education and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses.

c) Support for developing the curriculum through the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee.

d) Support through Course Teams, Portfolio Boards and the Quality Team, where needed, typically covering subjects such as assessment, moderation, and changes to quality assurance processes.

e) Access to other academic courses run by the UCO not linked to their role.

v. In addition, staff development is provided where needed to align partner institutions with the implementation of strategic initiatives, such as the use of learning technologies.

vi. Other, specific, staff development requirements may need to be addressed as a result of approval / review events, feedback from s and through the outcomes of annual reporting processes (see AQF Section 5: Annual Reporting and Monitoring).

j) ***Certificates and Transcripts***: As the awarding body, the UCO retains sole responsibility for issuing award certificates. The responsibility for providing students with transcripts may be devolved to the partner. In the case of dual awards, the UCO will retain responsible for the production of certificates. If it is agreed that the UCO will not produce both, this will be explicitly agreed and incorporated into the Collaborative Procedures Manual. In all circumstances it is the UCO's responsibility to ensure that certificates and transcripts are only issued to students who have satisfied the assessment and examination requirements for the award. The following will also apply:

i. Student information which appears on the certificate and transcript will only be taken from that formally recorded on the UCO's student record system. Partners must ensure that the information they provide to the UCO regarding students is accurate

and must inform the UCO immediately if any details change, for example if a student changes their name upon marriage.

ii. The wording on the certificate or transcript will be consistent with the UCO's general words and terms for these documents. For transcripts issued to students studying with collaborative partners this will also record the name of the partner institution.

iii. Where an exceptional variation has been approved to the language of instruction and/or assessment from English, this will also be stated.

k) The location of the awards ceremony for graduands from partners will be a matter for negotiation between the partner and the UCO in the light of preferences expressed by the graduands and financial considerations.

16.15 Associate Partner Provision: Types of Provision

16.15.1 The types of collaborative provision that may be undertaken by Associate Partners are:

a) Dual Award Provision – where the UCO and the partner institution, which has its own degree awarding powers, collaborate to provide a course at the partner institution, which leads to successful students achieving an award from both.

b) Franchised Provision – where the UCO authorizes the delivery of its own approved course/s wholly by a partner institution, while retaining oversight of the course's content, delivery method and pattern, assessment and quality assurance arrangements

c) Validated Provision – where the UCO has judged that a course developed and delivered by another institution without degree awarding powers is of an appropriate quality and standard to lead to a UCO award.

16.16 Associate Partner Provision: Modes of Delivery

16.16.1 Different modes of delivery may be considered when proposing associate partner provision as shown in Table 16.5. The modes of delivery and requirements for the approval of each and are described in detail below.

16.16.2 The approval of modes of delivery is undertaken as part of the provision approval process described below.

Table 16.5: Associate Partner Provision: Modes of Delivery

Mode of Delivery	Definition & Requirements
a) Partner Delivery	Where partner staff deliver the provision at the partner institution (on their premises).
b) Flying Faculty	Where UCO staff deliver the provision at the partner institution (on their premises) as a "flying faculty", with an element of support (i.e. resources, pastoral and academic support) provided by partner staff.

A) Partner Delivery

16.16.3 Partner Delivery – whether dual award, franchise or validation provision – is the most common form of delivery mode.

16.16.4 Approval will be considered under the standard provision approval processes.

16.16.5 For UK-based collaborations what must also be considered is how any funding through HEFCE associated with the provision is attributed, i.e. whether the partner has their own number of students which are directly funded by HEFCE or whether the funding (and therefore the student numbers) belongs to the UCO. This is particularly pertinent where Further Education colleges engage in bidding for core / margin funding.

16.16.6 Although the UCO's responsibilities in relation to quality assurance will remain the same, directly funded partners will be responsible for the following:

a) The recruitment and selection of students.

b) The admission, guidance and induction of students.

c) The provision of all necessary learning resources.

16.16.7 As the awarding body the UCO must assure itself that the partner has the necessary staff resources and processes in place to administer (a) and (b), and that these processes are aligned with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Participation[12].

16.16.8 Regarding (c) the UCO must assess and confirm whether the learning resources available at the partner are sufficient to replace any formerly offered by the UCO, or whether the partner will 'buy in' to use the UCO's resources. 'Buying in' to use the UCO's resources should be negotiated and confirmed between the UCO and the partner during the Proposal and Development Stage (Stage One) of the provision approval process.

16.16.9 It is advised that if a partner wishes to pursue the Partner Delivery mode using their own student numbers, the provision approval process is initiated as early as possible in the academic year, as the results of core / margin funding bids are usually not known until late in the session; the UCO reserves the right to decline to undertake an associate partner provision approval event where there are concerns as to whether due process can be followed in the timeframe available.

B) Flying Faculty

16.16.10 Where a partner wishes UCO staff to deliver the provision at the partner institution (on their premises) as a "flying faculty" with an element of support (i.e. resources, pastoral and academic support) provided by partner staff, a standard Associate Partner provision approval event should be convened, following the same stages with the same documentation requirements.

16.16.11 Given the students' geographical separation from the teaching staff and the mode of delivery (which may often by block teaching), the panel's questions at the approval event should focus on:

a) The suitability and availability of the learning materials.

b) The provision of student support.

c) The efforts taken by the course team to safeguard the student experience.

d) The way in which the course will be delivered.

16.17 Associate Partner Provision Approval Process

16.17.1 The approval of Dual Award, Franchised and Validated Provision is undertaken using the same three-stage process:

a) Stage One: Proposal Approval (completed during Part 2)

[12] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access

b) Stage Two: Approval Documentation Development & Submission

c) Stage Three: Formal Approval

A) Stage One: Proposal Approval (Completed During Part 2)

16.17.2 All new Associate Partner provision proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2. A summary of the documents submitted during the Initial Proposal Approval is shown in Table 16.7.

Table 16.6: Associate Partner Provision Proposal Approval Documentation

Type of Associate Partner Provision Proposed	**Stage One Documentation Required**
Dual Award	a) Major Course & Unit Modification Form[17] b) New Course Costings Form[18]
Franchised	a) Major Course & Unit Modification Form b) New Course Costings Form
Validated	a) New Course Approval Form[19] b) New Course Costings Form
All	c) A statement evidencing the (continuing) ability of the partner to be responsible for selection, recruitment, admissions and induction and alignment with the Quality Code Chapter B2. d) A statement outlining which learning resources would be lost and confirming the availability / equivalency of resources at the partner OR confirm 'buy in' to UCO resources. e) Teaching staff CVs and an up-to-date matrix of teaching responsibilities.

16.17.3 Once the proposal has been approved the Head of Quality will confirm approval documentation and submission requirements and convene the required approval events in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Proposing Team.

B) Stage Two: Approval Documentation Development & Submission

16.17.4 Following the successful completion of Stage One, the Head of Quality will confirm documentation requirements and timelines for their production and submission with the Proposing Team Leader.

16.17.5 At a minimum, the standard set of documentation shown in Table 16.7 should be produced for all types of Associate Partner Provision (i.e. Dual Award, Franchised and Validated provision).

16.17.6 Dual Award Provision requires additional documentation to be submitted as shown in Table 16.8.

16.17.7 In all cases the required documentation will be produced by the Proposing Team in consultation with the partner.

16.17.8 If the nature of the partner requires it, additional documentation may be requested, for example where student numbers are directly funded to the partner by the Office for Students. This will be confirmed with the Proposing Team at the earliest opportunity.

TABLE 16.7: REQUIRED ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION

Document Number	Required Course Approval Document	Document Description
CPA01	Collaborative Activity Rationale[20]	The Collaborative Activity Rationale should include the following information: • The rationale and market demand for the proposal as recorded on the approved New Course Approval Form / Course and Unit Modification Form. • The delivery pattern of units and staff mapped to units. • A list of resource requirements for the provision (hard copy and electronic / through the VLE) and confirmation of whether their provision is the responsibility of the partner or the UCO. • A description of the management of the provision, focusing particularly on the issues pertaining to the student experience and hearing the student voice, and to quality assurance procedures. • A description of the management of any work-based learning and / or the use of mentors where required by the provision. The Collaborative Provision Rationale should be written using the Collaborative Activity Rationale template with the Collaborative Provision Approval Panel as the intended audience. Guidance for writing the Collaborative Activity Rationale is provided in the Collaborative Activity Rationale Template.
CPA02	The signed New Course Approval Form / Course and Unit Modification Form.	The completed and signed New Course Approval Form / Course and Unit Modification Form approved at Stage One to enable the approval panel to consider the rationale and market demand of the proposal.
CPA03	Course Information Form (CIF)[21]	The CIF relevant to the provision proposed.
CPA04	Unit Information Forms (UIFs)[22]	The UIFs relevant to the provision proposed.
CPA05	Course Handbook[23]	The Course Handbook based on the UCO's Course Handbook template, and tailored for the partner. Further details about the Course Handbook can be found in AQF Section 4).
CPA06	Staff CVs	The CVs of all staff delivering the provision. CVs of partner staff should be accompanied by confirmation of their suitability by the Proposing Team Leader. These should be provided in PDF format.

16.17.9 Additional paperwork is required for proposed Dual Award provision which will allow students to gain an award from the UCO and the partner on the basis of the same assessed work. Despite this duality, the UCO must ensure that the academic standards of the award given in its name are safeguarded. This additional paperwork ensures the panel has the opportunity to consider whether these safeguards are in place and is shown in Table 16.8.

TABLE 16.9: REQUIRED ADDITIONAL APPROVAL DOCUMENTATION FOR DUAL AWARD PROVISION

Document Number	Required Course Approval Document	Document Description
DAP01	Legal Confirmation	Confirmation by the partner that it has the legal capacity to enter into a dual award partnership.
DAP02	Unit Mapping	A mapping at unit level, prepared by the Proposing Team, confirming that the partner's course is equivalent to the UCO's in terms of curriculum, FHEQ level, notional effort, and assessment load. The mapping should clearly identify where there are discrepancies.
DAP03	Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy.	A copy of the partner's learning, teaching and assessment strategy.
DAP04	Quality Assurance Handbook & Mapping	A copy of the partner's Quality Assurance Handbook (or equivalent) and a mapping, prepared by the staff team, comparing this against the UCO's Academic Quality Framework.
DAP05	Academic Regulations & Mapping	A copy of the partner's Academic Regulations and a mapping, prepared by the staff team, comparing this against the UCO's Academic Regulations (AQF Section 7).
DAP06	PSRB Confirmation (if appropriate)	Confirmation of approval from relevant Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies for the dual award of a qualification for successful completion of the programme.

16.17.10 The approval documentation should be submitted to the Head of Quality by the Proposing Team Leader electronically at least four weeks prior to each of the formal approval events.

16.17.11 The Head of Quality will ensure that the documents are electronically disseminated to approval panel members in a timely manner, normally four weeks prior to the event, to allow enough opportunity for lines of enquiry to be identified. Accompanying this will be a copy of the agenda, a briefing note clarifying the scope of the event and copies of any guidance notes[24].

C) STAGE THREE: FORMAL APPROVAL

16.17.12 Stage Three of the Associate Partner Provision Approval Process normally involves two formal approval events following a similar process as that for internal provision (see AQF

Section 4.2: New Course Approval) and culminates in formal approval of the collaborative provision proposed by the Academic Council:

i. An **Initial Approval Event** to assure that the submitted Approval Documentation is of an adequate standard and to provide the Proposing Team with recommendations and the opportunity to enhance their new course approval submission prior to the Final Approval Event.

ii. A **Final Approval Event** to approve the new provision proposal and to assure that the new course meets the required quality standards for delivery.

16.17.13 The Initial Approval Event is normally held no less than three months prior to the Final Approval Event to enable the Proposing Team to consider and implement recommended enhancements to the proposal.

16.17.14 The Proposing Team may wish to hold a rehearsal event for partners before the Initial Approval Event, particularly if they are new partners, to focus on the partner's understanding of the delivery requirements of the course.

16.17.15 The normal agenda for both the Initial and Final Approval Events is shown in Table 16.9 and may be tailored to suit the provision being approved and level of scrutiny required.

16.17.16 Approval events will always include a meeting with staff from the partner and a meeting with a representative group of students, who will be sourced by the partner.

16.17.17 Panel members are required to attend the entire approval event in person.

16.17.18 UCO and partner staff will be required to attend specific agenda meetings as shown in Table 16.9.

TABLE 16.9: NORMAL AGENDA FOR ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION APPROVAL EVENTS

Time	Meeting	Attendance
10:00	Private meeting of the panel to set the agenda for the first meeting.	The Panel.
10:45	Tour of facilities.	The Panel. Proposing Team Leader.
11:15	Presentation from the partner as appropriate to set the scene regarding current activities of the institution and their strategic direction followed by a meeting with senior management team / course leaders to discuss how the course fits with partner and UCO strategic aims, staffing, resourcing and staff development, and the management of the proposal.	The Panel. Proposing Team Leader. Proposing Team. Prospective Partner Coordinator (if different from the Proposing Team Leader). Portfolio Board Chair that the 'home' version of the course resides in. Course Leader/s of the 'home' version of the course. ***For Initial Approval Events Only:*** Appropriate representative(s) from the partner, either in person or by video conference.

		For Final Approval Events Only: Senior management and teaching staff representatives from the partner.
12:15	Lunch including meeting with representative sample of students to discuss the student experience.	The Panel. Student representatives identified by the partner institution.
13:00	Meeting with course team to discuss the capability of the partner to deliver, support, monitor and assess the course/s; the suitability of the staff teaching on the course/s; the student experience and its equivalency to that gained if the student were studying at the UCO or through another partner; the suitability of the learning and support environments and resources.	The Panel. Proposing Team Leader. Proposing Team. Prospective Partner Coordinator (if different from the Proposing Team Leader). Portfolio Board Chair that the 'home' version of the course resides in. Course Leader/s of the 'home' version of the course.
14:30	Panel to confirm whether an additional meeting is required otherwise a private meeting of the panel to confirm outcomes.	The Panel.
15:00	Feedback of outcomes to the partner and close of meeting (subject to whether an additional meeting is required).	The Panel. Proposing Team Leader. Proposing Team. Prospective Partner Coordinator (if different from the Proposing Team Leader). Portfolio Board Chair that the 'home' version of the course resides in. Course Leader/s of the 'home' version of the course. ***For Initial Approval Events Only:*** Appropriate representative(s) from the partner, either in person or by video conference. ***For Final Approval Events Only:*** Senior management and teaching staff representatives from the partner.

D) Associate Partner provision Initial Approval Event

16.17.19 The Initial Approval Event is normally held no less than three months prior to the Final Approval Event.

16.17.20 Initial Approval Events are normally held at the location where delivery of the course is to take place or, if the course is depends substantially on flexible / distance delivery, at the UCO.

16.17.21 The purpose of the Initial Approval Event is to assure that all submitted Approval Documentation is of an adequate standard and provides the Proposing Team with recommendations and the opportunity to enhance their approval submission prior to the Final Approval Event.

16.17.22 The Initial Approval Event normally follows a set agenda which is detailed in Table 16.9.

I) Initial Approval Event Panel

16.17.23 The membership, criteria for appointment and role for Initial Approval Event panels is shown in Table 16.10.

16.17.24 Approval panels will be assembled by the Head of Quality from a pool of suitable candidates.

16.17.25 Costs associated with the Initial Approval Event are expected to be paid by the proposed partner and should be agreed in advance.

Table 16.10: Membership of the Initial Provision Approval Event Panel

Panellist	**Criteria for Appointment**	**Panel Role**
Chair	Normally a member of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.	To lead discussions and to look at the fit between the proposed provision and UCO's strategic plan and the market for the provision.
An Internal Academic Representative.	The Internal Academic Representative should not have been involved in the development or submission of the proposal.	To give an internal but independent view on issues relating to compliance with UCO processes, the learning experience and environment and resource issues specific to the provision. ***For Validated Provision only***: To give an internal but independent view on issues relating to the pedagogy of the course, assessment strategy and issues relating to learning outcomes with regard to UCO standards.
A Quality Assurance Representative	The Quality Assurance Representative should be a member of the UCO's Quality Assurance Team.	To look at issues relating to compliance with UCO processes and QAA requirements. ***For Validated Provision only:*** To consider the use of external reference points.
Students' Union Representative	A nominee from the Students' Union (where possible).	To take a lead on issues surrounding the student experience.
Secretary	A suitable nominee identified by the	To record the proceedings and produce minutes and outcome reports of the

	Head of Quality.	event.

16.17.26 Any change in the composition of the panel must be agreed in advance by the Head of Quality who will ensure that the membership is appropriate for the context of the event.

16.17.27 Initial Approval Event panel members are provided with guidance about their role by the Quality Team upon appointment, including information about the location and time of the event and payment of fees and expenses.

16.17.28 Initial Approval Event panel members will normally receive Approval Documentation electronically four weeks in advance of the Approval Event. They may request a hard copy of the submission documentation from the Quality Team. Panel members shall be provided with clear instructions and expectations of their role in addition to timelines and projected hours of effort for their work. This shall be outlined in the panel guidance document for each event.

16.17.29 The Initial Approval Event Panel is responsible for and is required to:

a. Review the Approval Documentation and identify lines of enquiry that they wish to pursue at the Initial Approval Event prior to the event.

b. Attend the Initial Approval Event in its entirety and to contribute to discussions and decision-making as required of their role.

c. Consider the provision proposal in accordance with the stipulated Associate Partner Provision Approval Criteria (Section 16.16).

d. Produce an event outcome report structured on the Associate Partner Provision Approval Criteria using the appropriate template[25].

II) Initial Approval Event Possible Outcomes

16.17.30 Possible outcomes of Initial Approval Events are:

i. Approval without conditions.

ii. Approval with delivery conditions (where the additional work required is related to documentation prior to the Final Approval Event).

iii. Approval with approval conditions (where the additional work required is necessary to secure academic standards and/or quality prior to the Final Approval Event).

iv. Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit the proposal to an Initial Approval Event at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).

16.17.31 The Chair of the Initial Approval Event Panel will normally report outline feedback orally to the Proposing Team at the event's final feedback session. However, confirmation of event outcomes is given in the formal Initial Approval Event Outcome Report following the event.

III) Initial Approval Event Reporting & Responding to Outcomes

16.17.32 The Secretary to the panel drafts the Initial Approval Event Outcome Report normally within two weeks of the event.

16.17.33 The report should include the outcome of the event including the reasons for the panel's conclusions. Any conditions for progression to the Final Approval Event should be specified, together with their requisite deadlines and any recommendations for enhancement should be listed.

16.17.34 The Secretary shall then forward the report to the Panel Chair to review and edit as appropriate within three weeks of the event.

16.17.35 The Secretary to the panel shall then circulate the report to the other members of the Initial Approval Panel for confirmation, final approval and sign-off by the Chair of the panel which shall normally be completed within 4 weeks of the event.

16.17.36 The Chair of the panel forwards the signed report to the Head of Quality who then circulates the report to the Proposing Team Leader and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) with the Collaborative Activity Approval Event Outcome Response Form[26].

16.17.37 It is the responsibility of the Proposing Team Leader, in consultation with the Proposing Team and other staff (e.g. partner staff and management team) as appropriate, to respond to the conditions detailed in the Collaborative Provision Event Outcome Report by completing the Initial Approval Event Outcome Response Form by a requisite deadline. All approval conditions should be responded to and fulfilled by the Proposing Team in the response.

16.17.38 Recommendations are not required to be met, however it is expected that consideration will be given to the recommendations by the Proposing Team and that action or comment will be given as appropriate in the response. It is advised that this includes consideration of disseminating strengths identified during the approval process.

16.17.39 The response should be submitted to the Head of Quality who will forward it on to the Chair of the panel for approval.

16.17.40 The Chair of the Initial Approval Event Panel must be satisfied with the Proposing Team's responses to their conditions and recommendations before the proposal may progress to the Final Approval Event. They will confirm that the response is satisfactory by signing the Initial Approval Event Outcome Response Form and returning this to the Head of Quality.

16.17.41 The Head of Quality will disseminate the approved response to the Proposing Team Leader and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) confirming that the proposal may progress to the Final Approval Event.

E) ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION FINAL APPROVAL EVENT

16.17.42 The date of the Final Approval Event shall be determined in consultation with the partner to ensure that there is adequate time to complete any approval/delivery conditions, but this shall normally be no less than four months before the start date of the course/s under consideration as part of the provision proposal. This is to allow the Proposing Team time to respond to Initial Approval Event conditions and recommendations appropriately.

16.17.43 Final Approval Events are normally held at the location where delivery of the course is to take place or, if the course depends substantially on flexible / distance delivery, at the UCO.

16.17.44 The purpose of the Final Approval Event is to approve the provision proposal and to assure that this meets the quality standards for delivery.

16.17.45 The Final Approval Event normally follows a set agenda which is detailed in Table 16.12.

16.17.46 Costs associated with the Final Approval Event are expected to be paid by the proposed partner and should be agreed in advance.

F) FINAL APPROVAL EVENT PANEL MEMBERSHIP

16.17.47 The membership, criteria for appointment and role for Final Approval Event panels is shown in Table 16.11.

16.17.48 Approval panels will be assembled by the Head of Quality from a pool of suitable candidates.

TABLE 16.11: MEMBERSHIP OF THE FINAL APPROVAL EVENT PANEL

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
Chair	Normally a member of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.	To lead discussions and to look at the fit between the proposed provision and UCO's strategic plan and the market for the provision.
An Internal Academic Representative.	The Internal Academic Representative should not have been involved in the development or submission of the proposal.	To give an internal but independent view on issues relating to compliance with UCO processes, the learning experience and environment and resource issues specific to the provision. ***For Validated Provision only***: To give an internal but independent view on issues relating to the pedagogy of the course, assessment strategy and issues relating to learning outcomes with regard to UCO standards.
An External Academic Representative.	External members of the panel should not have been an External Examiner or former member of staff at the UCO within the last five years nor involved in the development or submission of the proposal. Neither should any of the Proposing Team putting forward the proposal be acting as an External Examiner on a course with which the external nominee is associated.	To look at the learning experience and environment, resource issues specific to the provision and comparisons with the sector. ***For Dual Award Provision only***: To consider the equivalency of the partner's course mapped against the UCO's in terms of curriculum, FHEQ level, notional effort, and assessment load. ***For Validated Provision only:*** To consider the curriculum and pedagogy of the course, assessment strategy and issues relating to learning outcomes with regard to sector benchmarks.
For Validated Provision Only: An External Industry Representative.	External members of the panel should not have been an External Examiner or former member of staff at the UCO within the last five years nor involved in the development or submission of the proposal. Neither should any of the Proposing Team putting forward the proposal be acting as an External Examiner on a course with which the external nominee is associated.	To look at issues surrounding employability and graduate preparedness.
A Quality Assurance	The Quality Assurance Representative should be a member of the UCO's	To look at issues relating to compliance with UCO processes and QAA

Representative	Quality Assurance Team.	requirements. ***For Validated Provision only:*** To consider the use of external reference points.
Students' Union Representative	A nominee from the Students' Union (where possible).	To take a lead on issues surrounding the student experience.
Secretary	A suitable nominee identified by the Head of Quality.	To record the proceedings and produce minutes and outcome reports of the event.

G) Appointment of Final Approval Event External Panel Members

16.17.49 External members for Final Approval Event panels should be jointly nominated by the Proposing Team and the partner and in liaison with the Head of Quality and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) using the required nomination form[27]. The nominations should be appropriate to the nature of the course/s proposed. The CV of nominated External Panel Members should accompany each nomination form.

16.17.50 Initial identification of External Panel Members should normally be made six months prior to the approval event.

16.17.51 External panel members should not have:

a) Had a link with either the UCO or the partner during the previous five-year period.

b) Been an external examiner (including for the directed studies element of research degrees) or member of staff at the UCO within the last five years;

c) Been involved with the development of the proposed provision.

16.17.52 It is the responsibility of the Proposing Team Leader to ensure that External Panel member nomination forms and CVs are endorsed and signed off by the Chair of the relevant Portfolio Board and then submitted to the Head of Quality no later than three months prior to the approval event.

16.17.53 The Head of Quality will then confirm acceptance of the nominations to the Proposing Team Leader and Portfolio Board Chair.

16.17.54 The Quality Team will thereafter be responsible for liaising with the nominated External Panel Members regarding the arrangements and logistics of the approval event. This will normally include providing guidance to the External Panel Members regarding the expectations of External Panel Members, their expected time commitment, fees and expenses and opportunity for a pre-panel meeting to ensure that they are clear about their role

16.17.55 Any proposed change to an External Panel Member will require approval by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

H) Final Approval Event Possible Outcomes

16.17.56 The possible outcomes of Final Approval Events are:

a) Approval without conditions

b) Approval with delivery conditions (where the additional work required is related to documentation);

c) Approval with approval conditions (where the additional work required is necessary to secure academic standards and/or quality as represented by the scrutiny requirements specified above);

d) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).

16.17.57 The Chair of the Final Approval Panel will normally report outline feedback orally to the Proposing Team at the event's final feedback session. However, confirmation of event outcomes is given in the formal Final Approval Event Outcome Report following the event.

I) Final Approval Event Reporting & Responding to Outcomes

16.17.58 The Secretary to the panel drafts the Final Approval Event Outcome Report normally within two weeks of the event.

16.17.59 The report should include the outcome of the event as stipulated in Section 16c, including the reasons for the panel's conclusions. Any delivery and approval conditions for should be specified, together with their requisite deadlines and any recommendations for enhancement should be listed.

16.17.60 The report should specify any proposed / approved variations to UCO regulations and policy, and any transition arrangements in respect of continuing students, as well as the start date of the delivery of the course/s considered as part of the provision proposal (subject to conditions).

16.17.61 The panel may report on areas of strength in its feedback to the Proposing Team and note these in the report.

16.17.62 Where more than one award/title is considered at a single event, outcomes must be reported separately for each award/title.

16.17.63 The Secretary to the panel circulates the report to the members of the Final Approval Event Panel for confirmation and final approval by the Chair of the panel. The Secretary then circulates the report to the Proposing Team Leader, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality.

16.17.64 It is the responsibility of the Proposing Team Leader, in consultation with the Proposing Team and relevant staff to respond to the conditions detailed in the Final Approval Event Outcome Report by completing the Final Approval Event Outcome Response Form by the requisite deadline. All delivery and approval conditions should be responded to and fulfilled by the Proposing Team in the response.

16.17.65 Recommendations are not required to be met however it is expected that consideration will be given to the recommendations by the Proposing Team and that action or comment will be given as appropriate in the response. It is advised that this includes consideration of disseminating strengths identified during the approval process.

16.17.66 The Proposing Team's response should be submitted to the Head of Quality who will forward it on to the Chair of the panel for approval.

16.17.67 The Chair of the Final Approval Event Panel must be satisfied with the Proposing Team's responses to their conditions and recommendations prior to the commencement of the provision. They will confirm that the response is satisfactory by signing the Final Approval Event Outcome Response Form and returning this to the Head of Quality.

16.17.68 In the case of Recognised Qualification (RQ) courses, approval for delivery will also subject to approval from the relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body in line with their requirements.

16.17.69 The Head of Quality will forward the signed response form on to the Proposing Team Leader with confirmation that this, together with the Final Approval Event Outcome Report, will be considered for endorsement by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee prior to being submitted to the Academic Council for formal approval.

16.17.70 Once the full report and response has been endorsed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee, the provision will be formally approved by the Academic Council. A Provision Approval Confirmation Form[28] will be signed by the Chair of the Academic Council as confirmation of approval.

16.17.71 Following approval by the Academic Council the Head of Quality will:

a) Disseminate the signed Provision Approval Confirmation Form to the Final Approval Event Panel, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Proposing Team Leader and Quality Assurance Committee (as a minimum) which will serve as confirmation that the Provision Approval Process has concluded.

b) Notify any professional bodies of the approval if relevant.

c) Enter the approved provision onto the Collaborative Activity Register which will thereafter be subject to the relevant quality assurances processes outlined in the Academic Quality Framework as agreed at provision approval.

d) Arrange for the provision and the unit delivery structure for the course/s to be established on the UCO's student record system through the Academic Registry.

16.17.72 The legal agreement with the partner will be updated by the Vice-Chancellor to reflect the approved provision. Updates should include details of the financial arrangements agreed with the partner, which must:

a) Be compliant with statutory and funding council requirements (including the requirement that HEFCE funded provision should not cross-subsidise non-funded provision).

b) Contain safeguards so that, should the economic climate change, academic quality and standards, and the interests of students are not compromised.

c) Have contingencies in place to deal with currency fluctuations where necessary.

d) Specify which party will be responsible for expenses incurred as a result of undertaking collaborative activity.

J) Final Approval Event Monitoring Outcomes

16.17.73 Monitoring of ongoing approval conditions will be overseen by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee in respect of educational matters and the Senior Management Team in respect of institutional matters.

16.17.74 Review of Dual Award and Validated provision will be undertaken as outlined in Section 16.40.

16.17.75 The review of Franchised Provision will be carried out as part of an internal UCO event in accordance with the process set out in AQF Section 5: Periodic Review.

16.18 Associate Partner Provision: Approval Criteria

16.18.1 The approval criteria to be considered at the Stage Two approval events will normally be determined by the nature of the provision being approved.

16.18.2 Table 16.13 shows the criteria that should be met for each type of provision that may be proposed.

16.18.3 Outcomes of Associate Partner Provision approval events should be based on the full consideration of these criteria.

TABLE 16.12: ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION APPROVAL CRITERIA

Type of Provision	Criteria for Approval
Franchised	***Academic Integrity & Strategic Fit*** a) The proposal has academic integrity and fits with UCO strategic aims and those of the partner. ***Market Demand*** b) There is market demand for the proposed provision and the anticipated cohort size, entry points and mode of study have been considered and are appropriate. ***Staff Resources*** c) Staff resources for the proposal are appropriate. d) Partner staff are qualified to deliver the course/s to the academic level required. e) Partner staff are familiar with the role of intended learning outcomes in curriculum design and assessment, and (where necessary) able to assess students' work to the relevant academic standard. ***Learning Resources*** f) The learning resources available to students will adequately support them in achieving the course learning outcomes (to include proposed use of the UCO's virtual learning environment). ***Management of the Provision & Quality Assurance*** g) Arrangements for quality assurance and enhancement, risk management, securing of standards (including assessment) and liaison between the staff team and the partner are clear and appropriate. ***Research & Scholarly Activity*** h) The way in which research and scholarly activity will underpin the design or delivery of the curriculum has been articulated and are appropriate. i) Established or proposed links between the institutions regarding research and scholarly activity have been articulated and are appropriate. ***Student Experience*** j) Students studying at the partner will have an experience that is sufficiently equivalent to that encountered by students studying at the UCO. ***Student Support*** k) Appropriate support mechanisms for students are in place at the partner. l) Access to support mechanisms provided by the UCO have been articulated as appropriate.
Validated	As for Franchised Provision, plus: ***Course Construction***

	a) The proposed course structure, curriculum, delivery, assessment strategy / load are appropriate. b) Any pedagogic issues have been identified and addressed sufficiently. ***Reference Points*** c) Mapping to the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education, other relevant benchmarks, and the UCO's Regulations has been completed and is appropriate.
Dual Award	As for Franchised Provision, plus: ***Equivalency to UCO Awards*** a) The partner's course/s is equivalent to that of the UCO's in terms of the level of study (taking into account the FHEQ), the content of the curriculum, the unit assessment load and the notional effort involved in obtaining the awards. ***Compatibility to the UCO's Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategy*** b) The partner's Teaching, Learning and Assessment strategy is comparable to the UCO's. ***Compatibility with UCO Quality Assurance Processes & Regulations*** c) Quality assurance handbook and regulations are appropriate and in line and compatible with the UCO's. ***Mitigation of Differences*** d) Partner and UCO documents and methods to mitigate differences where appropriate are comparable.
All	***Where a "Partner Delivery" Mode of Delivery is proposed and the partner (receiving direct funding from HEFCE) intends to use its own student numbers:*** a) The partner is able to take on the responsibilities for the recruitment, selection, admission and induction of students in line with the Chapter B2 of the Quality Code. b) The partner is able to provide students all necessary learning resources that are equivalent and comparable to those of the UCO (given that automatic access to UCO resources will no longer available) or that sufficient arrangements have been made for the partner to 'buy in' to necessary resources that will be provided by the UCO.
	Where a "Flying Faculty" Mode of Delivery is proposed: a) Given the students' geographical separation from the teaching staff and the mode of delivery (which may often by block teaching): i. The learning materials provided at and by the partner are suitable and available as appropriate. ii. The student support facilities provided at and by the partner are suitable and available as appropriate. iii. The efforts taken by the course team to safeguard the student experience are clearly articulated and appropriate. iv. The way in which the course will be delivered is appropriate.

16.19 Link Partner Provision: Types of Provision

16.19.1 Link Partners and their provision is approved according to the type of provision being proposed which may include:

a) A Study Centre Agreement – where an approved partner's premises are used to deliver a UCO approved course by UCO staff through a 'flying faculty' arrangement.

b) An Articulation Agreement – where a course provided by an approved partner institution is formally recognized by the UCO and grants guaranteed admission with advanced standing to a UCO award (subject to the availability of places).

c) A Progression Arrangement – where the successful completion of a course provided by an approved partner institution is formally recognized as an entry qualification for a specified UCO course.

d) A Memorandum of Understanding – where the UCO has a non-binding written agreement with a partner institution to promote cooperation, detailed discussions and collaborative activities.

16.20 Link Partner Provision: Study Centre Approval Process

16.20.1 In certain circumstances the UCO may wish to contract with another institution (within the UK or abroad) to use their premises and, in some cases, their on-site learning resources as a study centre for the delivery of a pre-existing UCO course.

16.20.2 It must always be the case that the teaching, academic and pastoral support is carried out by UCO staff.

16.20.3 Students will be registered with the UCO and shall therefore have full access to the UCO's online learning resources.

16.20.4 As the awarding body the UCO must assure itself through the approval of the study centre that the institution's premises are a suitable learning environment for teaching at HE level.

16.20.5 In addition, it must be established that students studying at the external site are not disadvantaged in comparison to those studying at the UCO's site in terms of:

a) The appropriateness of learning resources available locally (where used), supported by those available through the UCO's online system.

b) The suitability of opportunities for students to access support mechanisms (both academic and pastoral) that are in place.

16.20.6 Approval of Study Centre provision consists of the following stages:

- Stage One: Proposal Approval
- Stage Two: Convening Approval Events and Panels
- Stage Three: Approval Event Documentation
- Stage Four: The Approval Event & Approval Criteria
- Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes
- Stage Six: After the Approval Event

A) Stage One: Proposal Approval

16.20.7 All new Link Partner Study Centre provision proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2 before Stage Two of the Study Centre Approval Process may be initiated.

B) Stage Two: Convening Approval Event and Appointing the Panel

16.20.8 Following approval of the Study Centre proposal, the Head of Quality will convene a Study Centre Approval Event and appoint members to the approval panel in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

16.20.9 The panel for this event is shown in Table 16.13 (as a pre-existing and approved course would be delivered by UCO staff at the Study Centre an external panel member is not normally required).

16.20.10 Any changes to the panel must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

Table 16.13: Membership of the Study Centre Approval Panel

Panellist	**Criteria for Appointment**	**Panel Role**
Chair	The Chair of the relevant Portfolio Board.	To lead discussions.
Two Internal Academic Representatives	Senior Academics from other Course Teams.	To give an internal but independent view about the proposed Study Centre.
The Head of Quality	N/A	To act in an advisory capacity.
Secretary	A suitable nominee identified by the Head of Quality.	To record the proceedings and produce minutes and outcome reports of the event.

C) Stage Three: Approval Event Documentation

16.20.11 The approval event documentation required to be considered by the approval panel is shown in Table 16.14 and will be confirmed with the proposing faculty by the Head of Quality.

16.20.12 The Course Leader of the course to be delivered at the study centre is responsible for producing and submitting the approval event documentation to the Head of Quality in electronic format at least three weeks prior to the event.

16.20.13 The Head of Quality will be responsible for circulating the approval event documentation to the panel members three weeks prior to the event to provide sufficient time for them to review the documentation and form lines of enquiry.

TABLE 16.14: REQUIRED STUDY CENTRE APPROVAL EVENT DOCUMENTATION

Document No.	Documentation Required

SCA01	A Study Centre Statement[29] providing:
	• Background information on the proposed study centre.
	• Learning Resources & Student Support Statements which should describe:
	  ○ The required learning resources for the courses/units, confirming how students are able to access them – whether through the study centre and/or through the UCO's online resources.
	  ○ The access to academic and pastoral support in respect of the geographical separation from the UCO.

SCA02	A Course & Unit Modification Form/s outlining the proposal for delivery at the new study centre.
SCA03	Amended CIF(s) and/or UIF(s) for the courses/units to be delivered at the study centre that includes Tracked Changed where amendments have been made to reflect the new delivery site, resources and support facilities / arrangements.
SCA04	A Course Handbook[30] tailored to the delivery site.

D) STAGE FOUR: THE APPROVAL EVENT & APPROVAL CRITERIA

I) THE APPROVAL EVENT

16.20.14 The Study Centre Approval Event should be held at the proposed Study Centre to enable panel members to tour the facilities in person.

16.20.15 A standard agenda for the event is shown in Table 16.15; the start time may be tailored as appropriate.

16.20.16 The relevant Portfolio Board Chair (or their nominee), the relevant Course Leader, key members of the teaching team of the course to be delivered at the study centre and relevant staff from the external organization should be present at the approval event to discuss the proposal with the panel.

16.20.17 The Head of Quality will advise and confirm with the Course Leader which key staff will be attending the approval event.

16.20.18 The Head of Quality will be responsible for confirming the date, time, agenda and location of the approval event with the panel and key staff.

16.20.19 Panel members and key staff are expected to attend for the entire event.

TABLE 16.15: STANDARD AGENDA FOR STUDY CENTRE APPROVAL EVENTS

Time	Item
10:00	Private meeting of the panel to allocate lines of questioning.

10:30	Tour of the facilities at the proposed study centre.
11:30	Discussion regarding the facilities and availability of student support between the panel and representatives from both the teaching team and the external organization.
12:00	Private meeting of the panel to discuss and agree outcomes.
12:30	Feedback to the teaching team.

E) The Approval Criteria

16.20.20 The panel is responsible for assessing the approval event documentation and for providing assurance to the UCO that the proposal fulfils the following criteria:

a) The proposal aligns with the UCO's Strategic Plan, mission and aims.

b) The partner institution is of good standing.

c) Appropriate learning resources at the study centre are in place and comparable with those of the UCO.

d) Appropriate student support arrangements are in place and comparable with those of the UCO.

e) Management of the on-going relationship is clearly articulated, with particular reference to periodically assuring that the learning resource and student support arrangements are maintained as comparable with those of the UCO.

16.20.21 In summary, the UCO will seek to assure itself that the students studying at the proposed Study Centre are provided with appropriate learning and student support facilities comparable with those provided by the UCO.

F) Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes

16.20.22 The possible outcomes from Study Centre Approval Events are:

a) Approval with no delivery or approval conditions.

b) Approval with delivery conditions (where the additional work required is related to documentation).

c) Approval with approval conditions (where the additional work required is necessary to secure academic standards and/or quality).

d) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).

16.20.23 Recommendations for enhancements to the Study Centre may also be made by the panel, and although these are not required to be met it is expected that they will be considered by the Study Centre and that action or comment on them will be given as appropriate in the response.

16.20.24 The Chair of the approval panel will normally report outline feedback orally to the Course Leader and key staff at the event's final feedback session. However, confirmation of event outcomes is formally provided in the Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Report following the event.

G) Stage Six: After the Approval Event

16.20.25 Following the approval event a Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Report[31] will be produced by the panel Secretary normally within two weeks after the event. This will contain a brief narrative of the event and detail the event outcomes together with the requisite deadlines and any recommendations for enhancement. Reasons for the panel's decisions should also be included.

16.20.26 The Secretary will circulate the outcome report to the panel for agreement following which the Chair should sign the report to verify approval.

16.20.27 The Secretary will then disseminate the approved report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Head of Quality, Dean of Academic Development, Course Leader and key staff who attended the event with a Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Response Form[32] with a deadline for its completion by the Course Leader.

16.20.28 The Course Leader, in consultation with the study centre staff, should complete the response form and return it to the panel Secretary within the requisite timeline.

16.20.29 The Secretary will circulate the response form to the panel for their consideration and approval. The panel is responsible for ensuring that the responses to the conditions are satisfactory; all approval conditions are required to be addressed before any teaching can take place. The chair of the panel should then sign the response form on behalf of the panel to indicate approval of the response and forward this to the panel Secretary.

16.20.30 The panel Secretary will then circulate the approved and signed response form to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) for authorisation and sign-off prior to being shared with the Course Leader and key staff.

16.20.31 The authorized response form, together with the event outcome report, will be submitted to the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee for sign-off by this committee's chair.

16.20.32 The Academic Council will consider the approved Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Report and Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Response Form and will confirm approval of the Study Centre; the Chair of the Academic Council shall sign off the Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Response Form as confirmation of approval.

16.20.33 Once approved by the Academic Council:

a) Confirmation of approval will be communicated to the Course Leader and key staff by the Head of Quality in writing.

b) A contract / agreement must be drawn up and signed (or an existing contract added to) describing the nature of the relationship; there should be a requirement in the contract for the external organisation to commit to making all reasonable upgrades to facilities in order to retain its study centre status and this should be for a fixed period of time not normally longer than five years.

c) The partner institution will be entered into the Collaborative Activity Register.

16.20.34 No teaching should commence at the Study Centre until the contract has been signed by the UCO and partner.

16.21 Link Partner Provision: Articulation Arrangement Approval Process

16.21.1 An articulation arrangement recognises the study completed by a student elsewhere (the 'originating course') as equivalent – in terms of level, curriculum and 'effort' – to a specified amount of credit on a named course at the UCO.

16.21.2 Entry with advanced standing to a course leading to an award of the UCO (the 'destination course') is guaranteed, subject to the UCO's English language requirements and the issuance of an appropriate visa.

16.21.3 The originating course should be taught and assessed in English in line with the UCO's Academic Regulations (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations).

16.21.4 Articulation arrangements may be agreed from an originating course at a partner institution onto a destination course running at the UCO.

16.21.5 It is expected that institutions seeking articulation arrangements have their own quality assurance procedures with many also having their own degree-awarding powers.

16.21.6 Initial enquiries about proposing an articulation arrangement should be directed to the relevant Course Leader and / or Dean of Academic Development as appropriate for consideration and discussion.

16.21.7 Articulation arrangements should only be set up where a reasonable number of students are expected to enter the UCO via that route on a regular basis, and where this entry will be guaranteed. Individual students, or small numbers of students wishing to enter (with advanced standing), should be dealt with through the UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy[13].

16.21.8 Contracts associated with articulation arrangements should last for no more than five years to allow the arrangement to lapse unless a review of the collaboration is undertaken.

16.21.9 Wherever possible, the UCO will endeavour to simplify articulation arrangements with partners who do not use a recognised credit transfer system such as the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)[14] by translating their non-traditional credit system into an ECTS equivalent to the best extent possible.

16.21.10 Students on originating courses are not registered with the UCO and have no entitlement to UCO services unless written into the collaborative activity contract by exception. The course offered by the partner as the initial stage in the articulation does not lead to an award of the UCO.

16.21.11 The maximum amount of credit a student can bring to the UCO under an articulation arrangement will be in line with that permitted under the UCO's Academic Regulations regarding Recognition of Prior Learning (see AQF Section 7); these credits will not normally be recorded at unit level on transcripts but will document what amount and level of credit has been accepted from the other institution.

16.21.12 The approval process for Articulation arrangements consists of the following stages:

- Stage One: Proposal Approval
- Stage Two: Convening Approval Events and Panels

[13] https://www.uco.ac.uk/courses/how-apply/recognition-prior-learning-rpl
[14] https://ec.europa.eu/education/resources-and-tools/european-credit-transfer-and-accumulation-system-ects_en

- Stage Three: Approval Event Documentation
- Stage Four: The Approval Event & Approval Criteria
- Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes
- Stage Six: After the Approval Event

A) Stage One: Proposal Approval

16.21.13 All new Link Partner Articulation Arrangement proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2 before Stage Two of the Approval Process may be initiated.

B) Stage Two: Convening Approval Events and Panels

16.21.14 Following authorization of the articulation arrangement proposal, the Head of Quality will convene an Articulation Approval Event and appoint members to the approval panel in consultation with the Dean of Academic Development.

16.21.15 The panel for this event is shown in Table 16.16.

16.21.16 Any changes to the panel must be approved by the Dean of Academic Development.

Table 16.16: Membership of the Articulation Approval Panel

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
Chair	The Chair of the relevant Portfolio Board to which the UCO course being articulated to belongs to.	To lead discussions.
Two Internal Academic Representatives	A Vice-Chancellor lecturer from the UCO course being articulated to.	To give an internal academic view about the proposed articulation arrangement for the course being articulated to.
The Head of Quality	N/A	To act in an advisory capacity.
Secretary	A suitable nominee identified by the Head of Quality.	To record the proceedings and produce minutes and outcome reports of the event.

C) Stage Three: Approval Event Documentation

16.21.17 The approval event documentation required to be considered by the approval panel is shown in Table 16.17.

16.21.18 Documentation for the event should be prepared by the Course Team at the UCO, based on information supplied to them by the partner and submitted to the Head of Quality in electronic format at least three weeks prior to the event.

16.21.19 The Head of Quality will be responsible for circulating the approval event documentation to the panel members three weeks prior to the event to provide sufficient time for them to review the documentation and form lines of enquiry.

TABLE 16.17: REQUIRED ARTICULATION APPROVAL EVENT DOCUMENTATION

Document No.	Documentation Required
AA01	An Articulation Rationale[33] This should include: a) The rationale for the proposal. b) Information about the articulation model (how much credit is being requested against which course). c) An overview of the originating course. d) Information regarding the partner's teaching, learning and assessment strategy. e) A critical description of the partner's physical and human resources (whether there are sufficient learning resources in place to support the originating course and whether staff are appropriately qualified). f) Confirmation of arrangements for the operational and quality assurance management of the articulation. g) Details of how progression will be managed and how students will be supported on their entry to the course (i.e. through induction and provision of academic and pastoral support, etc.).
AA02	Articulation Mapping[34] This should consider the equivalency of the originating course to an amount of credit on the destination course in terms of the level of study expressed through Learning Outcomes (with reference to the FHEQ), the content of the curriculum and the amount of 'effort' required to successfully complete the originating course. This should be carried out at a unit level.

D) STAGE FOUR: THE APPROVAL EVENT

i. THE APPROVAL EVENT

16.21.20 A standard agenda for the event is shown in Table 16.18; the start time may be tailored as appropriate.

16.21.21 The Head of Quality will advise and confirm with the Course Leader of the destination course which staff will be attending the approval event.

16.21.22 The Head of Quality will be responsible for confirming the date, time, agenda and location of the approval event with the panel and staff.

16.21.23 Panel members and staff are expected to attend for the entire event.

TABLE 16.18: STANDARD AGENDA FOR ARTICULATION ARRANGEMENT APPROVAL EVENTS

Time	Item
10:00	Discussion of: a) The rationale for the proposal. b) The equivalency between the initial years of study at the partner and the levels for which credit is being sought. c) The coherence of the curriculum when viewed as a single entity rather than two separate courses. d) The preparedness of students upon transfer to the final year(s) of the destination course at the UCO. e) Arrangements for liaison between the partner and the UCO going forward, with particular emphasis on curriculum drift, ensuring student preparedness, staff development.
12:00	Agreement of outcomes.

E) THE APPROVAL CRITERIA

16.21.24 The panel is responsible for assessing the approval event documentation and for providing assurance to the UCO that the proposal fulfils the following approval criteria:

a) The proposal aligns with the UCO's Strategic Plan, mission and aims.

b) The partner institution is of good standing.

c) Management of the on-going relationship is clearly articulated, with particular reference to periodically review the arrangement to ensure that course curricula remain compatible.

d) The academic level of the originating course curriculum is aligned with the UCO's level descriptors and the FHEQ.

e) The subject coverage at the collaborating institution is comparable with that which students would have experienced at the UCO (which is in turn mapped on to Subject Benchmark Statements).

f) The teaching and learning methods prepare students for a 'student-centred' learning experience characteristic of higher level academic work.

g) The quality of learning opportunities and the educational experience students will have on the originating course are satisfactory.

h) Appropriate learning resources at the partner institution are in place and comparable with those of the UCO.

16.21.25 In summary, the UCO will seek to assure itself that the students it admits through articulation arrangements are likely to succeed if they transfer to the UCO.

F) Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes

16.21.26 The possible outcomes from articulation approval events are:

a) Approval of the proposed articulation arrangement without conditions.

b) Approval of the proposed articulation arrangement subject to conditions and / or additional information.

c) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).

16.21.27 Recommendations for enhancements to the articulation arrangement may also be made by the panel, and although these are not required to be met it is expected that they will be considered by the Course Leader and that action or comment on them will be given as appropriate in the response.

16.21.28 The Chair of the approval panel will normally report outline feedback orally to the Course Leader and key staff at the event's final feedback session. However, confirmation of event outcomes is formally provided in the Articulation Approval Event Outcome Report following the event.

G) Stage Six: After the Approval Event

16.21.29 Following the approval event an Articulation Approval Event Outcome Report[35] will be produced by the panel Secretary normally within two weeks after the event. This will contain a brief narrative of the event and detail the event outcomes together with the requisite deadlines and any recommendations for enhancement. Reasons for the panel's decisions should also be included.

16.21.30 The Secretary will circulate the outcome report to the panel for agreement following which the Chair should sign the report to verify approval.

16.21.31 The Secretary will then disseminate the approved report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Head of Quality, Dean of Academic Development, Course Leader and key staff who attended the event with an Articulation Approval Event Outcome Response Form[36] with a deadline for its completion by the Course Leader.

16.21.32 The Course Leader, in consultation with partner staff, should complete the response form and return it to the panel Secretary within the requisite timeline.

16.21.33 The Secretary will circulate the response form to the panel for their consideration and approval. The panel is responsible for ensuring that the responses to the conditions are satisfactory. The chair of the panel should then sign the response form on behalf of the panel to indicate approval of the response and forward this to the panel Secretary.

16.21.34 All approval conditions are required to be addressed before the articulation arrangement can be implemented.

16.21.35 The panel Secretary will then circulate the approved and signed response form to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) for authorisation and sign-off prior to being shared with the Course Leader and other key staff.

16.21.36 The authorized response form, together with the event outcome report, will be submitted to the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee for approval and sign-off by this committee's chair, and then to the Academic Council to note.

16.21.37 Once approved by the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee:

a) Confirmation of approval will be communicated to the Course Leader and key staff by the Head of Quality in writing.

b) A contract must be drawn up (or an existing contract added to) describing the nature of the relationship; approval of the level and volume of credit for a fixed period of time not normally longer than five years should be reflected in the validity period of the contract.

c) The partner institution will be entered into the Collaborative Activity Register.

16.21.38 The articulation arrangement should not be implemented until the contract has been signed by the UCO and partner.

16.22 Link Partner Provision: Progression Arrangement Approval Process

16.22.1 A progression arrangement is where the UCO recognizes the award a student receives at another institution having successfully completed a course of study (the 'originating' course) as an entry qualification for specified UCO courses ('destination' courses), thereby creating a formal link between the UCO and the other institution.

16.22.2 Progression arrangements:

a) Guarantee students' admission to the destination course as long as they meet specified conditions listed in the agreement (e.g. minimum grades in the originating course) and meet published UCO admissions requirements.

b) Do not recognise and grant specific credit to applicants from the partner institution.

c) Normally specify a maximum number of students per year who may progress under the terms of the agreement, with progression agreement candidates nominated by the partner institution.

16.22.3 Under progression arrangements, final admissions decisions are made by an appropriate academic staff member on the basis of evidence of the student's achievement in line with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education regarding Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access[15] and through the UCO's Recognition of Prior Learning processes, specifically the accreditation of certificated learning.

16.22.4 The approval process for Articulation arrangements consists of the following stages:

- Stage One: Outline Approval
- Stage Two: Convening Approval Events and Panels
- Stage Three: Approval Event Documentation
- Stage Four: The Approval Event & Approval Criteria
- Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes
- Stage Six: After the Approval Event

A) Stage One: PROPOSAL Approval

16.22.5 All new Link Partner Progression Arrangement proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2 before Stage Two of the Approval Process may be initiated.

[15] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/admissions-recruitment-and-widening-access

B) Stage Two: Convening Approval Events and Panels

16.22.6 Following authorization of the progression arrangement proposal, the Head of Quality will convene a Progression Approval Event and appoint members to the approval panel in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

16.22.7 The panel for this event is shown in Table 16.19.

16.22.8 Any changes to the panel must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

Table 16.19: Membership of the Progression Arrangement Approval Panel

Panellist	Criteria for Appointment	Panel Role
Chair	The Chair of the relevant Portfolio Board to which the destination course belongs to.	To lead discussions.
Two Internal Academic Representatives	Two senior academics from the destination course.	To give an internal academic view about the proposed progression arrangement.
The Head of Quality	N/A	To act in an advisory capacity.
Secretary	A suitable nominee identified by the Head of Quality.	To record the proceedings and produce minutes and outcome reports of the event.

C) Stage Three: Approval Documentation

16.22.9 The approval event documentation required to be considered by the approval panel is shown in Table 16.20.

16.22.10 Documentation for the approval event should be prepared by the Course Leader of the destination course in consultation with relevant partner staff and submitted to the Head of Quality in electronic format at least three weeks prior to the event.

16.22.11 The Head of Quality will be responsible for circulating the approval event documentation to the panel members three weeks prior to the event to provide sufficient time for them to review the documentation and form lines of enquiry.

Table 16.20: Required Progression Arrangement Approval Documentation

Document No.	Documentation Required
PA01	Progression Arrangement Rationale[37] This should include information on: a) A statement outlining the strategic rationale for the proposal with reference to the UCO's Strategic Plan. b) Details of the partner(s) from which progression is sought and the course(s) offered by the partner(s) which are involved. c) For overseas agreements evidence of the general level of the partner(s)

	course(s) against UK HE qualifications as established by UK NARIC[16] or other external benchmarks. d) An indication of any minimum entry requirements (e.g. GPA) consistent with UK expectations and any available pre-entry support and details of entry and exit requirements of such support to allow progression onto the UCO's course. e) A brief record of communication (e.g. visits, physical and electronic meetings) undertaken by key staff with the partner(s) and the purpose of those meetings. f) A description of how the on-going relationship will be managed, with particular reference to periodically assuring that the mapping of the curriculum remains appropriate. g) A statement supporting the proposal from the Course Team of the destination course.

D) Stage Four: The Approval Event & Approval Criteria

16.22.12 A standard agenda for the event is shown in Table 16.21; the start time may be tailored as appropriate.

16.22.13 The Head of Quality will advise and confirm with the Course Leader of the destination course which staff will be attending the approval event.

16.22.14 The Head of Quality will be responsible for confirming the date, time, agenda and location of the approval event with the panel and staff.

16.22.15 Panel members and staff are expected to attend for the entire event.

Table 16.21: Standard Agenda for Progression Arrangement Approval Events

Time	Item
10:00	Discussion of: a) The rationale for the proposal. b) The preparedness of students upon admission to the destination course. c) Arrangements for liaison between the partner and the UCO going forward, with particular emphasis on curriculum drift, ensuring student preparedness, staff development.
12:00	Agreement of outcomes.

16.22.16 The panel is responsible for assessing the approval event documentation and for providing assurance to the UCO that the proposal fulfils the following approval criteria:

a) The proposal aligns with the UCO's Strategic Plan, mission and aims.

b) The partner institution is of good standing.

c) The general level of the originating course is benchmarked against UK HE qualifications as established by UK NARIC[17] and other appropriate external benchmarks.

[16] https://www.naric.org.uk/naric/
[17] https://www.naric.org.uk/naric/

d) The minimum entry requirements (e.g. GPA) of the originating course are consistent with UK expectations.

e) Any available pre-entry support and details of entry and exit requirements of such support allowing progression onto the UCO's course are clearly articulated and appropriate.

f) Management of the on-going relationship is clearly articulated, with particular reference to periodically assuring that the mapping of the curriculum remains appropriate.

16.22.17 In summary, the UCO will seek to assure itself that the students it admits through progression arrangements are likely to succeed if they are admitted onto a destination course at the UCO.

E) Stage Five: Approval Event Outcomes

16.22.18 The possible outcomes from progression approval events are:

d) Approval of the proposed progression arrangement without conditions.

e) Approval of the proposed progression arrangement with conditions and / or request for additional information.

f) Non-approval (either with a recommendation to resubmit at a later date or to withdraw the proposal).

16.22.19 The chair of the approval panel will normally report outline feedback informally to the Course Leaders of the destination and originating course and key staff immediately after the event. However, confirmation of event outcomes is formally provided in the Progression Approval Event Outcome Report[38] following the event.

F) Stage Six: After the Approval Event

16.22.20 Following the approval event a Progression Approval Event Outcome Report will be produced by the panel Secretary normally within two weeks after the event. This will contain a brief narrative of the event and detail the event outcomes together with the requisite deadlines and any recommendations for enhancement. Reasons for the panel's decisions should also be included.

16.22.21 The panel Secretary will circulate the outcome report to the panel for agreement following which the Chair should sign the report to verify approval.

16.22.22 The Secretary will then disseminate the approved report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Head of Quality, Dean of Academic Development, Course Leader and key staff who attended the event.

16.22.23 The Course Leader is required to complete a response form[39] to address approval conditions and recommendations. All approval conditions are required to be addressed before the progression arrangement can be implemented. The response form shall be authorized by the Panel Chair.

16.22.24 The authorized response form, together with the event outcome report, will be submitted to the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee for approval and sign-off by this committee's chair, and then to the Academic Council to note.

16.22.25 Once approved by the Education Enhancement and Strategy Committee:

d) Confirmation of approval will be communicated to the Course Leader and key staff by the Head of Quality in writing.

e) A contract must be drawn up (or an existing contract added to) describing the nature of the relationship; approval of the fixed period of time not normally longer than three years should be reflected in the validity period of the contract.

f) The partner institution will be entered into the Collaborative Activity Register.

g) Course and publicity documentation should be amended to inform students that a progression agreement exists between the UCO and the partner.

16.22.26 The progression arrangement should not be implemented until the contract has been signed by the UCO and partner institution.

16.23 Link Partner Provision: Memoranda of Understanding Approval Process

16.23.1 The UCO recognizes that there may be opportunities for collaboration and positive academic engagement with other institutions that benefit both parties without establishing a formal legal relationship between the two institutions. To enable such collaboration, the UCO may enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with another institution.

16.23.2 Memoranda of Understanding are intended to promote cooperation, detailed discussions and collaborative activities between the UCO and other institutions and to establish a commitment to explore the potential for:

a) Co-operation on new or existing academic courses.

b) The development of joint research activities, including joint supervision of research students, collaboration on research investigations and doctoral student training and development.

c) Staff exchange or mutual visits to both institutions.

d) Student exchange or mutual visits to both institutions.

e) The exchange of information in the form of publications and journals, reference materials and other results of teaching and research.

f) Joint organisation of meetings, conferences and seminars.

g) Any other activities viewed to be potentially beneficial.

16.23.3 In addition a Memorandum of Understanding may be entered into during the development of a more formal relationship with another institution, for instance with overseas institutions, where a Memorandum of Understanding may be entered into at an initial stage where it sets out a basis for working towards a more formal agreement without committing the UCO to any legal obligations or financial transactions.

16.23.4 The UCO acknowledges that entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with another institution can have several potential effects on the UCO, including:

a) Legal

b) Financial

c) Reputational

16.23.5 Although the UCO should not be exposed to binding legal relations on entry into a Memorandum of Understanding with another party, any individual who is contemplating negotiating or entering the UCO into a Memorandum of Understanding must ensure they have appropriate delegated authority to be able to negotiate and/or enter the UCO into any such proposed arrangement before they commence negotiations and/or reach

agreement. Subsequently it is important that Memoranda of Understanding are approved through an appropriately robust process.

16.23.6 Memoranda of Understanding require the approval and oversight of the UCO, which is exercised through the Senior Management Team on behalf of the Academic Council, to ensure that partner institutions share the UCO's mission and vision and align with its strategic aims and objectives.

16.23.7 Approval of Memoranda of Understanding consist of three Stages:

a) Stage 1: Proposal Approval

b) Stage 2: Formal Approval

c) Stage 3: Following Approval

A) Stage One: Proposal Approval

16.23.8 The Dean of Academic Development and Head of Quality are the first points of contact in relation to any new Memoranda of Understanding, who will provide advice on the proposal and approval processes.

16.23.9 All new Link Partner provision proposals must be approved in line with the Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approval Process outlined in Part 2 before Stage Two of the Approval Process may be initiated.

B) Stage Two: Formal Approval

16.23.10 Following approval of the Memorandum of Understanding proposal, the Head of Quality shall confirm the documentation requirements for Formal Approval with the proposing party.

16.23.11 A draft Memorandum of Understanding should be developed by the Head of Quality and Dean of Academic Development and submitted for consideration by the Senior Management Team.

16.23.12 The Senior Management Team may make recommendations to enhance or request further information to clarify the proposed Memorandum of Understanding. In these instances the sponsor of the proposal is responsible for addressing any recommendations and re-submitting the approval form to the SMT until the proposal is signed off by the chair, indicating approval of the proposal.

16.23.13 The Senior Management Team will then recommend the proposed Memorandum of Understanding for formal approval by the Academic Council (indicated through the Academic Council chair's signature).

C) Stage Three: Following Approval

16.23.14 Following formal approval by the Academic Council the Memorandum of Understanding is agreed and signed by the appropriate authorised signatories of the UCO. Memoranda of Understanding may only be signed by the Vice-Chancellor or a Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the UCO and should not be implemented until sign-off by both UCO and partner parties have been completed.

16.23.15 Two copies of the Memorandum of Understanding should be signed; one will be lodged with the Head of Quality, the other with the partner institution.

16.23.16 Once the Memorandum of Understanding has been signed, the partner institution will be added to the Collaborative Activity Register by the Head of Quality.

16.23.17 A Memorandum of Understanding should be signed for a maximum of 5 years.

PART 5: MANAGEMENT OF COLLABORATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

16.24 INTRODUCTION

16.24.1 Where the partner is responsible for the delivery of provision they will also undertake most of its day-to-day management. To maintain oversight of this, and to act as the liaison point for a particular course or courses, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) will appoint a Link Tutor.

16.24.2 Matters of concern regarding quality, standards or the student experience of collaborative partnerships or provision should be raised with the Link Tutor or Dean of Academic Development. A review of the risk assessment for the partnership may be recommended, on which basis further action may be required.

16.25 THE LINK TUTOR ROLE

16.25.1 All collaborative partnerships will have a Link Tutor appointed to act as the main line of communication between the UCO and partner. Link Tutors are assigned to oversee the relationship at an institutional level and to provide liaison across UCO portfolios; they will act as a single point of contact internally and for the partner.

16.25.2 Link Tutorswill manage the relationship to help ensure that academic standards, the quality of learning opportunities and the equivalency of the student experience are maintained and enhanced. This involves two-way communication and exchange of good practice. Link Tutors will provide the UCO with the assurance that standards are being maintained.

16.25.3 The Link Tutor role is predominantly one of customer relationship management, and it is expected that the Link Tutor will maintain regular contact with the partner electronically and through visits to the partner in person (at least once per academic year).

16.25.4 It is expected that Link Tutors have experience of course management, knowledge of the UCO's quality assurance processes and have a high level of inter-personal skills. They will not have any formal affiliations to the partner, such as teaching on or being an External Examiner for the course or have a personal relationship with partner members of staff.

16.25.5 The main responsibility of the Link Tutor is to facilitate good working relationships between the UCO and the partner institution, maintaining regular contact with the course coordinator at the partner institution and supporting them in fulfilling their responsibilities.

16.25.6 The Link Tutor will produce a Partnerships Annual Report[40] per course and partnership as appropriate that should be submitted to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee for approval and the Academic Council to note. The report will assist in enabling effective monitoring of the relationship.

16.25.7 The specific responsibilities of the Link Tutor will depend on the category of partner and the type of provision involved. It is expected, however, that the following is carried out as standard:

a) To support the partner and ensure that responsibilities assigned to them with regard to the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education are fulfilled, and that responsibilities allocated through the approval / review process as stated in the Academic Quality Framework are discharged.

b) Maintenance and updating of the risk register associated with the partnership.

c) Undertaking regular reporting on the health of the partnership to the relevant UCO committee(s) and creating and monitoring associated action plans.

d) Carrying out reviews of public information presented on the partner's website.

e) Monitoring the implementation of arrangements for admissions and progression.

f) Coordinating the assessment process – which includes the approval of assessment tasks, marking and moderation of work, and feedback to students – in line with the UCO's Academic Regulations and policies.

g) Receiving reports on unit feedback from students where partners operate an in-house system and providing these to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) to allow for central monitoring and action through the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.

h) Coordinating approval of CVs of new staff teaching on UCO courses at the partner and providing the Head of Quality with a copy of approved documentation.

i) Acting as a critical friend in relation to institutional review.

j) Supporting the partner and ensuring that responsibilities assigned to them are discharged and that UCO regulations and policies are applied correctly.

k) Ensuring that existing provision is operating as agreed and delivered according to the Course Information Form.

l) Liaising with UCO appointed External Examiners and providing the partner with copies of External Examiner Reports.

m) Coordinating the transfer of data from the Partner to the UCO for the production of award certificates and transcripts, and for the preparation of funding and other statutory returns.

n) Assisting with the induction of staff at new partners, undertaking ongoing course-specific staff development for partner staff and hosting visits at the UCO whenever required, including inviting staff from partner institutions to relevant staff development events.

o) Assisting in procedures regarding the proposal and approval of new provision.

p) Reviewing marketing and publicity materials and information provided to students regularly to ensure that the relationship with the UCO and the information regarding the course(s) and is portrayed accurately and that standards regarding the use of the UCO's name and logos are adhered to, and where this is not the case, reporting issues to the Dean of Academic Development.

q) Keeping other relevant UCO colleagues informed of activities, successes and problems, as appropriate on a timely basis.

16.25.8 In addition to the standard duties listed above, the responsibilities assigned Link Tutors for franchise and validated provision are:

a) Participating, wherever possible, in student induction procedures at the partner to facilitate new students' understanding of the expectations, values and ethos of the UCO so that new students feel part of the UCO and its student body.

b) Attending course committee meetings at the partner institution whenever possible and providing guidance on effective methods of eliciting student feedback and closing the feedback loop to ensure that the student voice is heard.

c) To liaise with UCO-appointed External Examiners.

d) Ensuring that staff at the partner fully consider issues raised within External Examiner Reports with the input of student representatives.

e) Attendance at Boards of Examiners as Member/Chair.

f) Ensuring that students have the opportunity to view External Examiner Reports and approve responses for their course.

g) Keeping course delivery staff in partner institutions updated with relevant changes within the course, portfolio and UCO.

h) Where provision is franchised, keeping the partner advised as to changes to the curriculum at the UCO and the transition arrangements. Where the provision is validated, ensuring that changes to the curriculum are processed appropriately (particularly where partners have been granted delegated responsibility for minor modifications).

i) Providing advice and guidance on course and unit modification and review processes as appropriate for the type of provision and acting as a critical friend when required.

16.25.9 For Link Tutors appointed to articulation agreements the responsibilities – in addition to the standard duties – are:

a) Ensuring that any adjustments to curricula at both institutions are closely managed and clearly communicated, and that the curricula and assessment regimes continue to be matched. Where adjustments jeopardise the mapping exercise carried out through the approval/review process, alerting the Head of Quality that an additional review of the provision may be required.

16.26 Reporting on Partnerships

A) Partnership Visit Logs & Summary Reports

16.26.1 The Link Tutor is responsible for developing and overseeing an annual schedule of visits to a partner in any given academic year. Normally this will be one visit each year. This schedule will be approved by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and will ensure that visits are coordinated to confer maximum benefit to the partnership and its students, while minimising the burden placed on them. Deviations from the schedule will be noted and justified through reporting to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.

16.26.2 Following a visit made by a Link Tutor (or other member of academic or administrative staff in con nection with a specific course) or any other specific contact with the partner regarding provision, the Link Tutor must update the Partnership Course Visit Log. This must be submitted to the rDeputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) for signature within two weeks of return, to ensure that any issues are picked up and addressed in a timely fashion.

16.26.3 Following sign-off by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Link Tutor will produce a summary report based on the visit logs and any issues which will be presented to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee for information and / or discussion.

16.26.4 A record of visit logs submitted will be maintained by the Head of Quality.

B) Partnership Annual Reports

16.26.5 Drawing on visit logs, the Link Tutor, in consultation with relevant UCO and partner staff, produces a Partnership Annual Report (one per collaborative partnership). This provides an overview of the year's activity, allows for confirmation that annual duties have been undertaken, and enables the reporting of any issues and good practice and opportunities for enhancements.

16.26.6 Partnership annual reports should be considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee for endorsement and recommendation for approval by the Academic Council.

16.27 Collaborative Provision Operations Manual

16.27.1 A Collaborative Provision Operations Manual (CPOM) may be produced for some associate partners. The CPOM will clearly describe the roles and responsibilities of both the UCO and partner regarding the management of the partnership and expectations regarding quality assurance matters and will generally build on the information contained in the contract as required.

16.27.2 The CPOM will also contain information regarding the approved provision that the partner delivers and contact details for both parties.

16.27.3 CPOMs will be updated on an annual basis by the relevant Link Tutor to ensure that the information presented within them remains current.

16.27.4 Updates to CPOMs will be endorsed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee on behalf of the Academic Council.

PART 6: QUALITY ASSURANCE & ENHANCEMENT PROCESSES

16.28 INTRODUCTION

16.28.1 Following the approval of a partner, provision and mode of delivery there are a number of activities undertaken to ensure the smooth management (see Part 3) and the fulfilment of quality assurance and enhancement processes of the partnership.

16.28.2 UCO and partner staff should familiarise themselves with these activities. Clarification regarding their applicability should be sought from the Head of Quality at the earliest opportunity.

16.28.3 To manage the quality assurance, enhancement and management activities on an ongoing basis, there must be appropriate academic and administrative resources in place for the smooth operation of the collaborative provision portfolio. While the UCO maintains ultimate control and oversight through the monitoring and review procedures appropriate to the relationship, certain operational processes may be delegated to the partner.

16.28.4 The activities set out in this section may be relevant to all circumstances or may be differentiated as a consequence of the level of relationship with the partner, the provision or mode of delivery.

16.29 CONFIRMATION OF REGULATIONS

16.29.1 Unless variations to the UCO's Academic Regulations are expressly confirmed by the Academic Council through the collaborative partner and provision approval processes, the UCO's Academic Regulations will apply in all circumstances.

16.29.2 A rationale will be required for any variance, the most common being the need to adhere to requirements of a professional, statutory or regulatory body (PSRB), which should be submitted through the Link Tutor for action through the UCO's Course and Unit Modification Process (see AQF Section 4).

16.30 STUDENT ADMISSIONS

16.30.1 Responsibility for the admittance of students may be delegated to the partner, based on the UCO's standard entry criteria (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations) and decided on a case by case basis depending on the type of partner, provision and maturity of the relationship with the UCO.

16.30.2 Where responsibility is delegated to the partner, the UCO will remain the final arbiter of admissions decisions and there may be additional measures put in place by the UCO to ensure entry criteria are applied consistently, such as the screening of applications by an appropriate member of staff at the UCO.

16.30.3 Where delegation has been agreed this will be detailed in the CPOM for the partnership.

16.30.4 Candidates may be admitted to courses provided through collaborative partners using either a defined articulation route set up by the UCO or through standard UCO RPL procedures (see AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations) with the UCO determining the point for admission of potential students.

16.31 Student Registration

16.31.1 Any student being taught on a course leading to an award of the UCO must be registered with the UCO at the start of their course. The partner is not permitted to allow students who are not registered with the UCO to attend classes in any capacity.

16.31.2 Student registration is managed within the UCO using information provided by the partner, which must be accurate and complete to ensure that students' certificates and transcripts are correct.

16.31.3 To ensure ongoing accuracy the partner is required to communicate regularly with the UCO regarding matters affecting students' registration details and status, for example:

a) Suspension of registration or permanent withdrawal.

b) Extensions of registration period or repeat periods of study.

c) Change of student's name or title.

16.31.4 In registering for a UCO award, students confirm that they undertake to observe the UCO's Academic Regulations as applicable for their course of study and any regulations in force at the partner institution; the collaboration contract and Course Handbook should clearly state under which circumstances each set of regulations take precedence.

16.32 Information Provided to Students

16.32.1 The UCO ensures that students are given accurate and comprehensive information about their course, which is comparable to that given to students studying courses at the UCO; this is particularly important for franchised provision where the course will be taught at the UCO as well as through the partner.

16.32.2 Course information is confirmed as accurate through approval and review events, and the Link Tutor will also be responsible for making these assurances on an ongoing basis.

16.32.3 Procedures relating to publicity, marketing and publically available information are detailed below.

16.32.4 The UCO requires that all students at partners studying for a UCO award have access to a copy of the approved Course Information Form (or equivalent).

16.32.5 In addition, it is expected that students on franchised or validated courses have access to:

a) A student / course handbook which explains the students' relationship with the UCO and provides information about complaints and appeals procedures, how they can contact the UCO and key contacts at the partner.

b) Unit Information Forms.

c) Information regarding the opportunities for students to use the UCO's learning resources and entitlement to use other resources (as agreed in the contract).

16.32.6 A Course Handbook template is produced by the UCO to ensure that standard course-specific information is included for all courses and which Course Leaders can populate as necessary. For partnerships there will also need to be some contextualisation of the information to make it relevant for the relationship, particularly around student support. It is expected that, wherever possible, course handbooks for collaborative provision will be produced in this way.

16.32.7 In the case of articulation agreements, this information will also include:

a) Information about the progression to the specified UCO degree, including any relevant terms and conditions.

b) Information about fees and any other expenses payable to the UCO and when these are to be paid.

16.33 Feedback from Students

16.33.1 The UCO recognises the importance of providing students studying at partners with the opportunity to comment on their experience, but also that there are challenges inherent in making this representation effective.

16.33.2 The UCO's standard mechanisms for obtaining student feedback are described in AQF Section 10: The Student Voice, which should be read in conjunction with this section.

16.33.3 Partners are expected to implement the UCO's Unit Experience Questionnaire (UEQ) with the help of their Link Tutor. An exception may be made to the implementation of the UEQ where is can be demonstrated that the partner's in-house measures provide the same opportunities for feedback. If this is approved, then the Link Tutor will be responsible for ensuring that feedback is considered centrally by the UCO by providing results to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Head of Quality for consideration by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. Any exceptions to the UEQ will be written into the CPOM.

16.33.4 Link Tutors are required to take the opportunity to meet with students whenever possible to gain their feedback. A report of these discussions is expected to be captured in course visit logs.

16.33.5 One of the ways for partners to seek comment from students is to have in place a course committee system which includes representation from the student body. Although this system is recommended by the UCO it recognises that these will not always be the most effective way of hearing the student voice, particularly where the numbers on the provision are small. In these cases staff-student committees or focus groups may be more appropriate.

16.33.6 The system of student representation, and the methods for closing the feedback loop, will be considered as part of the approval / review process and be described in the CPOM.

16.34 Academic Offences, Academic Appeals, Conduct and Discipline and Complaints

A) Academic Offences

16.34.1 Academic offences (collusion, fabrication, cheating, impersonation and plagiarism) will normally be dealt with under the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy and Procedures[18], and involve joint investigations by the UCO and the partner.

16.34.2 Academic offences will be considered by the UCO's Academic Conduct Panel.

16.34.3 Variations to this will be considered at collaborative partner / provision approval or review, and formally approved through the Academic Council via the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. These will be recorded in the CPOM.

B) Academic Appeals

[18] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

16.34.4 Academic appeals submitted by students at associate partners against a decision of a Board of Examiners will be dealt with under the UCO's Academic Appeals Policy[19], unless exceptionally agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review and formally approved through the Academic Council via the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.

16.34.5 Where appropriate, responsibility for undertaking Academic Appeal Policy Stage 1 investigations and responding to the appellant may be delegated to the partner. This will be agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review and formally approved through the Academic Council via the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and recorded in the CPOM. Irrespective of this, students will still be able to request a review of the initial judgement via the UCO's Appeals Review Board as described in Stage 2 of the policy.

16.34.6 Students studying at a collaborative partner where their course of study does not lead to an award of the UCO will have the ultimate right of appeal to that partner institution.

C) Conduct & Discipline

16.34.7 In all matters of conduct and discipline (other than matters included within the UCO's Academic Discipline Policy) students are subject to the relevant rules and procedures of the partner institution.

16.34.8 Where a disciplinary matter has implications for quality and standards (in the case of assessment irregularities for example), the matter will normally be referred to the UCO for consideration under its Academic Discipline Policy.

D) Complaints

16.34.9 All complaints raised by students studying at the partner institution should be addressed through the procedure of the partner in the first instance.

16.34.10 If a student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint they may bring the complaint to the attention of the UCO.

16.34.11 The UCO will only consider complaints in relation to issues concerning the delivery or assessment of the programme or the resources provided directly to support study on the programme.

16.34.12 Students studying at a collaborative partner where their course of study does not lead to an award of the UCO will have the ultimate right of complaint to that partner institution.

16.35 Assessment and Examinations

16.35.1 Depending on the type of collaborative relationship and provision there may be instances when partners are delegated responsibility for particular aspects of the assessment or examination process.

16.35.2 In all cases the lines of responsibility for assessment and examination processes must be made clear through the contract and / or CPOM.

16.35.3 The initial stages of a collaborative relationship provide an opportunity for ongoing development of partner staff, including support regarding development of the capacity to undertake marking duties.

16.35.4 External Examiners must approve assessment tasks prior to them taking place (see AQF Section 11: External Examining).

[19] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

16.35.5 The UCO's standard assessment and examination procedures are detailed in AQF Section 7: Academic Regulations (Section C: Assessment Regulations), which includes the setting and approval of assessments, marking and moderation protocols and the provision of formative and summative feedback.

16.35.6 Any deviation from standard practice must be formally approved and written into the collaboration contract.

16.35.7 The responsibility for the setting of assessments, the development of marking schemes and assessment criteria, and the marking and moderation of assessments is dependent on the type of provision as follows:

a) For franchised provision this responsibility is taken by the UCO's Course Team;

b) For validated provision this will normally be devolved to the partner, although it is expected that the Link Tutors provides oversight to ensure that the standard procedures referred to in the AQF are adhered to.

16.35.8 Unless these responsibilities are determined otherwise at approval or review (or exceptionally approved outside of these timeframes) and incorporated into the CPOM for the partnership it will always be assumed that responsibility follows this format.

16.35.9 Feedback on assessments will be given to students by the party responsible for marking.

16.35.10 It is expected that, wherever possible, students will submit their assessments through the UCO's virtual learning environment as appropriate.

16.35.11 Written submissions are processed through the UCO's plagiarism detection software. Where the use of the UCO's virtual learning environment is not possible, the partner will be required to demonstrate to the UCO the mechanism it uses to ensure that students' work is their own.

16.35.12 In all cases the External Examiner/s assigned to the course will be expected to receive samples of assessed work in line with the requirements described in Section 11: External Examiner of the AQF. Liaison with the External Examiner on this matter will be undertaken by the Link Tutor.

16.35.13 Where necessary the Link Tutor must ensure that partners are supported in developing appropriate systems for the collation and storage of any examination papers, scripts, assessment data etc. to ensure the integrity of assessment.

16.35.14 Partners should also be advised by the Link Tutor on the legal implications of Data Protection legislation and the Freedom of Information Act.

16.35.15 The Link Tutor will also ensure that assessment and examination procedures are monitored on a regular basis, and the UCO reserves the right to attend any examination sessions at their collaborative partners to ensure that procedures are being followed.

16.36 Appointment of External Examiners

16.36.1 As the awarding body, the UCO retains responsibility for the selection and appointment of External Examiners for all collaborative provision in line with the selection criteria and appointment process detailed in AQF Section 11: External Examining).

16.36.2 For collaborative arrangements it additionally requires that:

a) Prospective External Examiners must have had no connection in the previous five years with the UCO or partner institution.

b) Where the Academic Council has exceptionally approved that the language of instruction and/or assessment is not English, that External Examiners have the necessary language skills.

16.36.3 Where provision is franchised it will normally be the case that the External Examiner(s) currently assigned to the course / course units are also asked to cover the collaborative iteration of the units.

16.36.4 For validated courses the UCO may agree a procedure with the partner whereby they are able to propose potential External Examiners to the UCO, such as nomination by partner faculty and approval by the UCO. This will be recorded in the CPOM.

16.36.5 In all cases the UCO will be the institution to contract with the External Examiner and prepare the External Examiner to undertake their role.

16.36.6 Where the provision contains a specialist form of assessment, supplementary preparation may be provided by the partner, in conjunction with the UCO.

16.36.7 Arrangements for responding to External Examiners reports are described below.

16.37 Responding to External Examiners

16.37.1 External Examiners for collaborative provision will prepare a formal Annual Report[41] and submit this to the Quality Team of the UCO regarding the course to which their appointment relates in accordance with the standard time scales set out in Section 11 of the AQF.

16.37.2 The Quality Team will disseminate the reports to the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Partner and Link Tutor Link Tutor.

16.37.3 The Link Tutor is responsible for ensuring that the partner has received the report and that it is fully considered by staff and student representatives at the partner.

16.37.4 The responsibility for drafting and submitting responses to External Examiner reports for each type of collaborative partnership is detailed in Table 16.24.

16.37.5 Arrangements for dealing with any concerns raised by External Examiners which relate to the provision delivered by a partner are normally facilitated through the Link Tutor. Progress with addressing these concerns will be noted through the course annual report.

16.37.6 The Link Tutor is also responsible for ensuring that students are provided with the opportunity to view External Examiner reports and responses for their courses.

Table 16.23: Responsibilities for Responding to External Examiner Annual Reports for Collaborative Partnerships

Type of Collaborative Partner	Type of Collaborative Provision	Responsibility for Responding to External Examiner Annual Reports
Associate Partner	Dual Award Provision	The Course Leader (or equivalent) at the partner institution.
	Franchised Provision	The Course Leader at the UCO.
	Validated Provision	The Course Leader at the partner institution.
Link Partner	Study Centre Agreement	The Course Leader at the UCO.

	Articulation Agreement	N/A
	Progression Agreement	N/A
	Memorandum of Understanding	N/A

16.38 Boards of Examiners

16.38.1 The UCO is responsible for making progression decisions relating to all students on collaborative provision courses that lead to an award of the UCO.

16.38.2 The UCO will maintain up-to-date records on student progression and achievement for review purposes. Subsequently the partner must inform the UCO of all cases of withdrawal or non-progression and the reasons for these.

16.38.3 Full details regarding Boards of Examiners are detailed in Section 12 of the AQF and should be read in conjunction with this section.

16.38.4 Boards of Examiners meetings will normally be held at the UCO unless, due to the category of partner and / or the type of provision delivered, it has been agreed that they will take place at the partner's premises This will be agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review and formally approved through the Academic Council via the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and recorded in the CPOM.

16.38.5 In all cases the UCO requires that Boards of Examiners considering collaborative provision are chaired by a senior member of UCO staff and that the terms of reference of the Board are approved as consonant with those of Boards of Examiners at the UCO.

16.38.6 External Examiners for the course/s under consideration should attend the relevant Board of Examiners with additional membership that will be agreed with the partner.

16.38.7 Award recommendations will be made on the basis of assessed work and decisions will be confirmed through the UCO's Boards of Examiners (see AQF Section 12: Boards of Examiners).

16.39 Certificates and Transcripts

16.39.1 As the awarding body, the UCO retains sole responsibility for issuing certificates to those students who have satisfied the assessment and examination requirements for awards.

16.39.2 The responsibility for providing students with transcripts may be devolved to the partner with the format of the transcript being the subject of agreement between the two parties. Delegation of this function will be agreed at collaborative partner / provision approval or review, formally approved through the Academic Council via the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and recorded in the CPOM.

16.39.3 Student data which appears on the certificate and transcript will be taken from that formally recorded on the UCO's student record system. Partners must therefore ensure that the data they provide to the UCO regarding students is accurate and must inform the UCO immediately if any details change, for example if a student changes their name upon marriage.

16.39.4 The wording on the certificate and transcript will be consistent with the UCO's general words and terms for these documents, including the name and location of the partner institution. Where an exceptional variation has been approved to the language of instruction and / or assessment from English, this will also be stated.

16.39.5 The location of the awards ceremony for graduands from partners will be a matter for negotiation between the partner and the UCO and will normally be written into the partnership agreement and/or the CPOM.

16.40 Annual Monitoring & Reporting

16.40.1 Following approval to deliver provision collaborative partners enter into the UCO's monitoring and reporting cycle (AQF Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting) which covers a number of separate activities. The outcomes of these activities are reflected upon and drawn together in annual reports, to present an overall view of the collaboration. The standard monitoring and reporting cycle is described fully in in Section 5 of the AQF, which should be read alongside this section.

16.40.2 Annual monitoring and reporting is a separate process from course and institutional review, the latter of which is normally a periodic event providing an opportunity for greater reflection over a longer timeframe.

16.40.3 The responsibility for the different monitoring and reporting activities is dependent on the nature of the collaborative partnership and will be documented in the CPOM. The processes that will typically apply to the different type of collaborative partner are detailed in Table 16.24.

Table 16.25: Typical Annual Monitoring & Reporting Processes for Different Collaborative Partnerships

Type of Collaborative Partner	Type of Collaborative Provision	Typical Annual Monitoring & Reporting Process
Associate Partner	Dual Award Provision	a) **Course Team Minutes** To record ongoing Course Team activities. b) **UCO Unit & Course Annual Reports**[42] These reports should cover all delivery locations of the unit or course to allow for cross-site comparison and comments on the effectiveness of the sites where the courses are delivered should be included. These reports should be completed by relevant partner Unit and Course Leaders (or their equivalents) respectively. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team and Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. c) **Institutional Annual Report**[43]. This should be completed by the partner staff member assigned to complete this report. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee on behalf of the Academic Council.
	Franchised Provision	a) **Course Team Minutes** To record ongoing Course Team activities. b) **UCO Unit & Course Annual Reports**[44]

		These reports should cover all delivery locations of the unit or course to allow for cross-site comparison and comments on the effectiveness of the sites where the courses are delivered should be included. These reports should be completed by relevant partner Unit and Course Leaders (or their equivalents) respectively. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team and Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. c) **Institutional Annual Report**[45] This should be completed by the partner staff member assigned to complete this report. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee on behalf of the Academic Council.
	Validated Provision	a) **Course Team Minutes** To record ongoing Course Team activities b) **Unit Annual Reports**[46] These should be completed by relevant partner Unit Leaders (or equivalent) respectively. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team. c) **Course Annual Report**[47] This should be completed by the partner Course Leader (or equivalent). These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team and Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. d) **Institutional Annual Report**[48] This should be completed by the partner staff member assigned to complete this report. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee on behalf of the Academic Council.
Link Partner	Study Centre Agreement	a) **Course Team Minutes** To record ongoing Course Team activities. b) **UCO Unit & Course Annual Reports**[49] These reports should cover all delivery locations of the unit or course to allow for cross-site comparison and comments on the effectiveness of the sites where the courses are delivered should be included. These reports should be completed by relevant partner Unit and Course Leaders (or their equivalents) respectively. These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the relevant Course Team and Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. c) **Institutional Annual Report**[50]. This should be completed by the partner staff member assigned to complete this report.

		These reports are considered, approved and signed off by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee on behalf of the Academic Council.
	Articulation Agreement	Brief annual summary of student numbers, other pertinent data, and any updates to the risk assessment prepared by the Link Tutor and sent to EESC.
	Progression Agreement	Brief annual summary of student numbers, other pertinent data, and any updates to the risk assessment prepared by the Link Tutor and sent to EESC.
	Memorandum of Understanding	Brief annual summary of student numbers, other pertinent data, and any updates to the risk assessment prepared by the Link Tutor and sent to EESC.

16.40.4 The Link Tutor will be responsible for coordinating the completion and submission of annual reports with partners and for forwarding completed reports on to the Head of Quality which are then considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and Academic Council.

16.40.5 Where processes for annual monitoring and reporting are reviewed and amended by the UCO, it is the responsibility of the Link Tutor to fully brief their partner in relation to the changes.

16.40.6 In cases where monitoring indicates that there is a potential risk to quality and / or standards, the UCO reserves the right to invoke an extraordinary institutional review event or to suspend the collaborative provision until it is satisfied that faults have been rectified and, if this does not prove to be the case, to terminate the provision in line with the processes described in Part 6.

16.41 Course and Unit Modifications

16.41.1 All courses delivered through collaborative partners must be taught as approved by the UCO and information published to students must be drawn from the approved documentation only.

16.41.2 Any proposed modifications to courses or units delivered through partners must be processed through the UCO's standard course and unit modification procedures described in Section 4 of the AQF.

16.41.3 Partners may also be permitted to make an amendment to the pattern of unit delivery. This must be discussed with the Link Tutor for the course to ensure that the new pattern remains appropriate. Any changes must be approved through the UCO's standard course and unit modification procedures and communicated to the Head of Quality who will ensure that the course unit structure on the student record system is updated.

A) Franchised Provision

16.41.4 In the case of Franchised Provision, the partner may make suggestions for improvements to the course to relevant UCO faculty. Where suggestions are agreed by the Course Team amendments to the course and / or units should be processed through the UCO's course and unit modification procedures described in AQF Section 4: Course & Unit Approval & Modification.

16.41.5 It may also be the case that UCO faculty initiates changes to a course / unit which requires implementation at the partner. In such circumstances transition arrangements for implementation at the partner will be considered through the UCO's standard course and unit modification procedures.

16.41.6 In both cases it is the responsibility of the Partner Manager to communicate the approved changes to the partner.

B) Validated Provision

16.41.7 In the case of Validated Provision, the partner may propose a course or unit modification.

16.41.8 Course and unit modifications will normally be discussed with partner faculty to ensure that the alterations are appropriate and then be processed through the UCO's standard course and unit modification procedures.

16.42 Approval of Partner Staff (Associate Partnerships)

16.42.1 At events to approve the delivery of provision, partners will be required to submit CVs of all staff teaching on the course(s) under consideration, a list of which units they will be teaching on, and confirmation from the UCO's relevant Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee that they have individually been approved as appropriate to deliver the unit(s).

16.42.2 It is recognised, however, that between approval and review events partner staff delivering provision may change. The UCO will continue to assure itself of the suitability of new members of staff by requesting the partner to submit to the UCO a copy of new partner staff CVs plus information as to which units they will teach on when such changes occur.

16.42.3 Approval of new partner staff must be sought from the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee, who will update and sign the Collaborative Partner Staff CV Record Form[51] indicating approval, followed by confirmation of this to the partner.

16.42.4 Partner staff who have not been approved will not be eligible to teach on the course.

16.42.5 The Link Tutor will be responsible for receiving CVs from the partner and coordinating signature through the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee unless described otherwise in the relevant CPOM.

16.42.6 The Link Tutor will ensure that the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee is provided with a copy of the signed Collaborative Partner Staff CV Record Form to note the update to this record.

16.43 Collaborative Partner Staff Development (Associate Partners)

16.43.1 The UCO aims to ensure that, wherever practicable, staff teaching on courses leading to an award of the UCO at partner institutions are invited to participate in its subject-based and pedagogical staff development courses, and that they are engaged in the business of the relevant course.

16.43.2 Partner staff have open access to relevant procedural documents, useful web links and help guides produced by UCO and will also be provided with relationship-specific information, which includes the CPOM.

16.43.3 Partners based overseas will be provided with a set of developmental sessions at the beginning of the collaboration through the portfolio with which they are linked. Members of partner staff may also have the opportunity to meet with key contacts from administrative departments to familiarise them with UCO processes.

16.43.4 The Link Tutor provides appropriate staff development opportunities and facilitates the attendance of partner staff at course team and portfolio and UCO events. This may include providing staff development and instruction with regard to academic policy and procedures, moderation and assessment, etc. Reporting structures on this activity are in place which, where appropriate, feed into the annual monitoring reporting cycle.

16.43.5 The UCO also provides opportunities for professional development during the course of the relationship. Fee waivers may be available to promote and incentivise engagement; these opportunities are negotiated on an individual basis and include:

a) Relevant activity-specific training sessions such as training on the use of the UCO's VLE, data management and quality assurance workshops, etc.

b) Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses provided by the UCO.

c) Support through faculties and central services where needed, typically covering subjects such as assessment, moderation, and changes to quality assurance processes.

d) Access to other academic courses provided by the UCO.

16.43.6 In addition, staff development may be accessed by partner institutions with the implementation of strategic initiatives, such as the use of learning technologies, on an individually negotiated basis.

16.43.7 Other, specific, staff development requirements may need to be addressed as a result of approval / review events, feedback from External Examiners and through the outcomes of the annual monitoring process. These will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

16.43.8 Unless otherwise agreed in advance and included in the CPOM, costs associated with staff development will be borne by the partner institution.

16.44 Public Information, Publicity & Marketing

16.44.1 The UCO aligns with guidance and advice regarding consumer law published by the Competition and Marketing Authority[20], ensuring that such information is valid, reliable, useful and accessible.

16.44.2 For all collaborative activity, the UCO ensures that it maintains effective control of public information as well as of recruitment, publicity and marketing materials, especially where these are published directly by a partner institution. The UCO specifically seeks to ensure that these materials, irrespective of the medium in which they are produced, avoid:

a) Inaccurate information about the contents or status of the award or the relationship between the partner and the UCO.

b) Inappropriate or misleading comparisons with other providers.

c) Misleading statements about the recognition of awards by public or other authorised bodies.

d) Incorrect advice about the recognition of awards by professional bodies or bodies in other countries.

e) Bringing UK higher education into disrepute.

16.44.3 No marketing material will be produced by the partner regarding the beginning of a new collaboration with the UCO until the formal collaboration agreement has been signed.

[20] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/higher-education-consumer-law-advice-for-providers

16.44.4 Where new provision is in Phase 1 (Initial Proposal Approval), the partner will normally not be permitted to advertise the course either formally or informally in any manner.

16.44.5 Where the new provision is in Phase 2 (Partner/Provision Approval), the partner will normally only be permitted to advertise the course either formally or informally until an Initial Approval Event has been held successfully. At this point the course must be marketed as 'subject to approval'. Once the Final Approval Event has been held successfully, all approval and delivery conditions have been signed off, and the confirmation letter has been produced, the partner may remove this caveat.

16.44.6 If the partner organisation is to produce publicity and marketing materials, they will ensure that they state that the course leads to an award of the UCO but is delivered by the partner. Where entry requirements are given for the course this will include any English language requirements. Materials must always include the UCO logo in the approved format and refer to the UCO by its full and correct title.

16.44.7 Information presented by the partner through their public website will be verified as accurate by the Partner Manager, in conjunction with the Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment and Communications departments, following approval of the partner or a course, and thereafter on a periodic basis. This process will give assurance that the information conforms to the appropriate UCO policies.

16.44.8 A standard report[52] verifying that information published on the partner's website will be completed, and details of any transgressions noted and evidenced. Partners will be required to correct or update information that has been found to be inaccurate or misleading.

16.44.9 The final draft of any hard copy materials must be checked by the UCO to ensure that all information presented is accurate and does not mislead a student as to the nature of the collaboration and the standing of the award offered. The Quality Assurance Committee shall be responsible for signing off all publicity information verification forms.

16.44.10 Course information presented will be verified against the approved documents held by the Quality Team. The area of the UCO responsible for verification will be described in the CPOM and records of verification will be maintained by the Quality Team.

16.44.11 If as a result of this the partner is required to make any amendments to the materials, final versions must be copied to the UCO for final verification of their accuracy.

16.44.12 Additionally, the Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment and Communications departments will undertake a periodic web search to ensure that there are no institutions claiming to be in a collaborative partnership with the UCO that have not been approved.

PART 7: REVIEW OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS & PROVISION

16.45 INTRODUCTION

16.45.1 The UCO reviews collaborative partnerships and provision periodically (normally every five years) to review collaborative activity at a greater depth and over a longer timeframe than annual monitoring allows.

16.45.2 The process used for reviews is normally undertaken according to the type of collaborative partner and provision as detailed in Table 16.25.

TABLE 16.25: THE NORMAL REVIEW PROCESS FOR DIFFERENT TYPES OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNER & PROVISION

Type of Collaborative Partnership / Provision		**Normal Review Process**
Associate Partner		Institutional Review (see Section 16.48)
Associate Partner Provision	Franchised	Standard Periodic Review (see AQF Section 6: Periodic Review)
	Validated	Standard Periodic Review (see AQF Section 6: Periodic Review)
	Dual Award	Standard Periodic Review (see AQF Section 6: Periodic Review)
Link Partner		According to the type of provision as listed below.
Link Partner Provision	Articulation	Articulation Review (see Section 16.51b)
	Progression	Progression Review (see Section 16.51c)
	Study Centre	Study Centre Review (see Section 16.51a)
	Memorandum of Understanding	Memorandum of Understanding Review (see Section 16.51d)

16.45.3 Institutional reviews may be scheduled alongside Periodic Course Reviews of collaborative provision.

16.45.4 Schedules for collaborative partner and provision review are considered annually by the Quality Assurance Committee and noted by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and the Academic Council.

16.45.5 At the start of the year in which a review is required the Partner Manager will ensure that an updated due diligence check on the partner is undertaken. This will be presented to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee for consideration and any changes between the original due diligence and the updated version will be noted and actions set accordingly.

16.45.6 The organisation of all collaborative partner and provision reviews is the responsibility of the Quality Team. Course Teams are encouraged to support the partners they are linked with by holding 'rehearsal' review events in advance as appropriate.

16.45.7 As a separate process to those described here, the UCO will carry out periodic review of the financial management of all partnerships.

16.46 Associate Partner Institutional Review

16.46.1 All associate partners undergo an institutional review by the UCO once every five years, unless an extraordinary review is invoked by the UCO's Academic Council upon recommendation by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee. This may be due to significant concerns raised through monitoring and reporting processes, through External Examiners reports or where the nature of the relationship with the UCO changes significantly.

16.46.2 For institutional reviews the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee is also required to review the partnership from their perspective. Coordinated by the Link Tutor and the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee Chair, a brief report will include the following:

a) A description of the processes used in management of the quality of the courses drawing on any recorded meeting with the partner institution's staff.

b) A summary of issues identified in External Examiner and Annual Reports and how they have been addressed by the UCO's and the partner's staff.

c) A copy of the legal agreement/s held with the partner.

16.46.3 The main aims of institutional review of associate partners are:

a) To consider whether the partnership is operating in accordance with:

i. The relevant processes set out in the UCO's AQF and other overarching UCO policies.

ii. The procedures and responsibilities outlined in the contract between the UCO and the partner and the CPOM, paying particular attention to those aspects which have been delegated to the partner.

iii. Any requirements of the QAA (for example alignment with the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education).

b) To provide continued assurance to the UCO that the partner's governance and management and mechanisms for quality assurance and enhancement remain robust regarding the type of provision delivered.

c) To assist partners in the evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses at an institutional level in regarding to teaching and learning and the strategic management of the provision.

d) To draw on feedback from External Examiners and students to identify potential improvements to the management of the partnership that will enhance the student experience.

e) To affirm the continuation of the collaborative partnership.

16.46.4 The institutional review is intended to be a two-way process and to provide for greater reflection on the operation of the course than any single annual monitoring activity.

16.46.5 Aims of periodic subject and course review are detailed in Section 6: Periodic Review of the AQF.

16.47 The Institutional Review Process for Associate Partners

A) Before the Institutional Review Event

16.47.1 The partner will identify a coordinator to act as the point of contact with the UCO. The Link Tutor will normally lead on the review from the UCO's perspective.

16.47.2 The specific date within the review year for the event, the agenda and documentation requirements will be confirmed by the Head of Quality (in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), the Link Tutor and partner staff.

16.47.3 The Quality Assurance Committee will be informed of review events and their progress through regular updates at committee meetings.

B) The Review Panel

16.47.4 Membership of the Review Panel is the same as that for the Collaborative Partner Approval Process as detailed in Table 16.5 and allows members to focus on their specific areas of expertise and to pursue any other lines of enquiry as appropriate.

16.47.5 Any change in the composition of the panel must be agreed in advance by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) who will ensure that the membership is appropriate for the context of the review.

16.47.6 Review Panel members will be provided with guidance regarding the scope of their role by the Head of Quality prior to the event.

16.47.7 Review Panel members are required to attend for the entire review event. They are expected to have reviewed the documentation submitted prior to the event and should come to the event prepared with appropriate lines of enquiry.

C) Nomination of an External Panel Member

16.47.8 The partner will liaise with the Partner Manager in liaison with the Head of Quality & Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) to nominate an external panel member for the review panel to act on behalf of the UCO normally no later than three months before the date of the event.

16.47.9 The External Panel Member will be appropriate for the scope of the event and, if possible, the nature of the course/s delivered at the partner. It is not necessary for the External Panel Member to be an academic; a senior member of professional services staff may be appointed if they have relevant experience.

16.47.10 External panel members should not have had a link with either the UCO or the partner during the previous five-year period.

16.47.11 Nominations will be made on the appropriate nomination form[53] and should be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

16.47.12 The Quality Team will then liaise with the external adviser as to their remit. This will normally include providing guidance to the External Panel Members regarding the expectations of External Panel Members, their expected time commitment, fees and expenses and opportunity for a pre-panel meeting to ensure that they are clear about their role

D) Institutional Review Documentation

16.47.13 The partner will be required to prepare and provide a standard set of documentation (detailed in Table 16.26) that will be reviewed by the institutional review panel. If the

nature of the partner requires it additional documents may be requested. Documentation requirements will be confirmed by the Quality Team to the relevant Partner Manager who will communicate this to the partner.

16.47.14 With the exception of the Self-Evaluation Document (SED) (see below) all documentation should cover the previous three academic years (unless specified otherwise).

16.47.15 All documents should be supplied electronically to the Quality Team at least four weeks prior to the institutional review event.

TABLE 16.26: COLLABORATIVE PARTNER INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW DOCUMENTATION

Document Set Number	Document
1	Self-Evaluation Document (SED)
2	Current Course & Unit Information Forms (CIFs & UIFs)
3	Current Course Handbook/s
4	External Examiner Reports & Responses
5	Unit, Course & Partner Annual Reports
6	Course Periodic Review Reports and Evidence of Meeting Conditions (where applicable)
7	Key Information Set (KIS) Data (UK only), National Student Survey (NSS) Data and Destinations of Leavers from Higher Education (DLHE) Data covering the provision delivered in the UCO's name
8	An Updated Risk Assessment
9	Overseas Partners Only: Current Equalities Policies (if changed since previous submission, or not provided previously)
10	Overseas Partners Only: Current Health and Safety Policy (if changed since previous submission, or not provided previously)

16.47.16 The partner is responsible for preparing the Self-Evaluation Document (SED)[54]. The Link Tutor will act as critical friend to ensure that the documentation meets the UCO's requirements and that the SED accurately describes the processes in place at the partner. Where processes are described these should be processes which govern the UCO's courses only.

16.47.17 The structure of the SED and guidance about what should be included is contained within Table 16.27.

TABLE 16.27: THE STRUCTURE AND CONTENT OF THE SED

SED Section Title	Recommended Contents
1) The Partner	What is the nature of the institution? What are the aims and objectives of

Institution	its higher education provision and how this provision is managed? What is the institution's strategic direction and ethos? Does it have any other collaborative relationships? Are any governmental registrations required for the partnership or the delivery of provision? What changes have there been since the original approval/most recent review? This section should be supported by submission of the institution's current strategic plan (or equivalent) and evidence of ongoing governmental recognition (where required).
2) The History of the Relationship with the UCO	How and when did the relationship with the UCO begin? How has the portfolio of UCO courses being delivered changed over time? What UCO provision is currently delivered and when is this being reviewed? What conditions / recommendations were set at the original approval / most recent review event? What progress has been made in their implementation?
3) Governance & Management	What is the structure of the institution in relation to governance, management (both academic and administrative) and committees? What changes in structure have there been since the original approval / most recent review? What does the staffing profile look like, what range of qualifications does staff have? What are its student numbers (broken down by course area, gender etc.)? This section should be supported by the inclusion of a committee structure diagram, terms of reference and membership for the committees, and by copies of CVs for the partner's management team.
4) Quality Assurance Arrangements	What processes are in place for quality assurance (including procedures for admissions, student complaints, academic appeals and discipline and the approval of marketing and publicity information)? Who holds responsibility for these arrangements? What changes have there been since the original approval / most recent review? This section should be supported by the submission of any relevant policies or procedures, and any relevant recent external quality assurance reports (e.g. from the QAA [IQER or overseas report], from Ofsted, from in-country quality assurance bodies such as the MQA or from professional bodies).
5) Feedback Arrangements	What are the processes in place for seeking student and external (including employer) feedback? What course committee / staff-student committee system is in place? How are these mechanisms used to enhance the students' learning experience? How is this fed into enhancements to the curriculum? What changes have there been since the original approval/most recent review?
6) Critical Evaluation of the Student Experience	What is the quality of the educational experience of the students provided by the partner? What is the nature of any negative or positive student feedback? How has this feedback been acted on? What is the student entry, progression and completion data over the past three years, for the courses delivered in the UCO's name? How does this compare to other delivery sites of the course? This section should be supported by reports / committee minutes

	considering student and employer feedback and the inclusion of the student entry, progression and completion data for the past three years.
7) Critical Evaluation of Academic Standards	How are academic standards of the UCO's courses delivered by the partner verified / benchmarked? Have External Examiner reports or reports from external bodies identified any areas for concern? If so, how have these been addressed? Reference should be made, where applicable, to External Examiner reports and any reports from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies. This section should be supported by the latest versions of any reports referred to.
8) Teaching, Learning & Assessment Strategies	What teaching, learning and assessment policies (including any concerning technology enhanced learning) are in place and how do they align with those of the UCO? How effective are these strategies in enabling student learning? This should be supported by submission of these policies.
9) Academic Appeals, Complaints & Discipline	What policies are used for academic appeals, student complaints and student discipline? What appeals and complaints have been made by students since the original approval/most recent review? How have they been resolved? Do they represent any systemic issues with the course(s) or its delivery? This section should be supported by submission of the procedures in use (including any UCO policies in use).
10) Academic & Pastoral Support	How effective have the arrangements for student academic support and pastoral guidance been (including feedback to students on assessments, careers advice and welfare services)? Where the arrangements are those of the partner, how do they align with UCO equivalents?
11) Staffing Resources, Development and Scholarly Activity	What are the institution's arrangements for staff development for both academic and administrative staff? What examples of opportunities and scholarly activities have academic staff undertaken which underpin the courses being delivered since the original approval/most recent review? This section should be supported by the institution's recruitment and staffing strategy and staff development policy.
12) Facilities & Resources	What facilities and resources does the partner have in place (including information technology, library, teaching, and private study facilities)? Do they continue to be sufficient for the delivery of the provision, or will additional resources need to be purchased? How does the institution manage ongoing improvements/ replacements to resources?
13) Financial Resources	What financial resources does the partner have to ensure its financial stability and viability? How has the financial stability of the partner institution evolved since institutional approval?
14) Quality Assurance	What are the institution's key policies and processes that contribute to the

Management	management of quality and standards at the partner? How have these evolved since institutional approval?
15) Conclusion	What are the institution's areas of strength and weakness? How are any weaknesses being addressed?

E) Pre-Institutional Event Administration Stages, Tasks and Responsibilities

16.47.18 Table 16.28 identifies the pre-institutional event administration stages, tasks and responsibilities.

Table 16.28: Pre-Institutional Event Administration Stages, Tasks and Responsibilities

Stage	Task	Responsibility
1) Event Confirmation	Confirmation of date, agenda, documentation requirements and submission.	Head of Quality (in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), UCO & Partner staff)
2) Event Panel Appointment	a) Appointment of the Review Panel at least eight weeks prior to the event date.	Head of Quality
	b) Nomination of an External Panel Member at least eight weeks prior to the event date.	Link Tutor (in consultation with partner staff & the Head of Quality and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education))
	c) Approval of nominated External Panel Member.	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
3) Document Preparation	Preparation of the SED and collation of other review documentation and submission of documents.	Partner Staff (in consultation with the Link Tutor)
4) Document Submission	Collation of review documents from the partner and submission of these electronically to the Head of Quality four weeks prior to the event date.	The Link Tutor
5) Document Distribution	Electronic circulation of the review documents to event panel members four weeks prior to the event date.	Head of Quality

F) The Review Event

16.47.19 Institutional review events must always be held at the partner's main teaching premises. Any variation to this requires the approval of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

16.47.20 The agenda for the event will be based on the standard format shown in Table 16.29.

16.47.21 Usually the event will last for one day and will include at least:

a) A meeting with senior staff to discuss strategic and management issues.

b) A meeting with course management and student support leads to discuss academic standards and support for the student experience.

c) A meeting with a representative sample of students, normally comprising 6-10 students including those studying on each of the UCO's courses at the institution, from different stages of the course(s) and including student representatives.

d) A tour of facilities to include any specialist facilities.

16.47.22 Having reviewed the documentation submission, the event will provide the Review Panel an opportunity to pursue their lines of enquiry with partner staff, and for partner staff to clarify matters and respond to their questioning as appropriate.

16.47.23 Review Event discussions will enable the Review Panel to make an informed judgement about whether to recommend re-approval of the partnership, which may be granted with or without conditions in line with the Associate Partner Approval Criteria.

16.47.24 If the panel arrive at a decision to recommend re-approval of the partner to the Academic Council a series of provisional outcomes will normally be determined by the panel and communicated by the Panel Chair to the partner at the feedback session at the end of the event. Formal notification regarding the outcome of the event will be provided to the partner in writing.

TABLE 16.29: THE STANDARD AGENDA FOR ASSOCIATE PARTNER INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW EVENTS

Time	Meeting	Required Attendance
10:00	Private meeting of the panel to set the agenda for the first meeting.	Review Panel
10:45	Greeting from the head of the partner institution or their representative.	Review Panel Head of the Partner Institution Link Tutor
11:00	Tour of facilities.	Review Panel Head of the Partner Institution Link Tutor
11:30	A short presentation from the partner to review current activities of the institution followed by a meeting with the partner's management team to discuss issues surrounding the institutional partnership, staffing, resourcing and staff development.	Review Panel Partner's Management Team Link Tutor
12:30	Meeting with course management and student support leads to discuss the maintenance of academic standards and support for the quality of provision and the student experience.	Review Panel Partner Course Team/s Partner Student Support Leads

		Link Tutor
13:30	Lunch including a meeting with representative sample of students to discuss the student experience.	Review Panel Partner Student Representatives
14:30	Panel to confirm whether an additional meeting is required otherwise a private meeting of the panel to confirm outcomes.	Review Panel
15:30	Feedback of outcomes to the partner and close of meeting (time to be revised if an additional meeting is required).	Review Panel Partner's Management Team Partner Course Team/s Partner Student Support Leads Link Tutor

G) Possible Review Event Outcomes

16.47.25 Possible outcomes of Review Events are:

a) Re-Approval of the partnership is granted with no conditions.

b) Re-Approval of the partnership is granted with conditions.

c) Re-Approval of the partnership is not granted and will be terminated.

16.47.26 The Review Panel may also provide the partner with any recommendations that it feels will enhance the partnership; recommendations do not have to be addressed by the partner but it is expected that actions taken to progress them, or reasons for not doing so, will be included in the partner's response to the event outcomes.

16.47.27 Both conditions and recommendations can be directed towards the partner and / or the UCO.

16.47.28 Good practice may also be identified for wider dissemination by the partner and UCO.

H) After the Review Event – Reporting & Responding to Event Outcomes

16.47.29 Following the review event, an event outcome report[55] to formally communicate the event outcomes to the partner in writing will be prepared by the Panel Secretary. The report will contain a full record of the event including discussions held, the agreed approval conditions and recommendations and reasons for the panel's conclusions.

16.47.30 The Panel Secretary to the panel will circulate the outcome report to the members of the review panel for confirmation and final approval and sign off by the Panel Chair.

16.47.31 The Panel Secretary will then circulate the approved outcomes report to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Head of Quality, the Link Tutor Link Tutor, and relevant partner staff. The Panel Secretary will also provide the partner with an event outcome response form[56] and a deadline for its completion.

16.47.32 The partner (in consultation with the Link Tutor) will be responsible for completing and returning the response form, within the requisite timeframe to the Head of Quality, which will be forwarded to the Panel Chair for approval and sign off.

16.47.33 The outcomes report and the response form will then be considered and endorsed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and recommend re-approval of the partnership to the Academic Council.

16.47.34 Should the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee or the Academic Council require amendments to be made to either report for accuracy or completeness the Head of Quality will distribute an updated version to all parties.

16.47.35 Following approval of the new partnership by the Academic Council:

a) The Chair of the Academic Council will sign off the response form which serves as confirmation of re-approval.

b) The Head of Quality shall confirm the re-approval of the new partnership with the partner institution and relevant internal colleagues (including the Quality Assurance Committee and Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee) by circulating the signed response form.

c) The Collaborative Activity Register will be updated by the Head of Quality to reflect the re-approval of the partnership.

d) The partnership contract is updated as necessary, agreed and signed between the partner and the UCO.

e) The Link Tutor shall update the risk assessment which will continue to be monitored through regular Link Tutor reports to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee.

16.48 Associate Partner Provision Review: Franchised Provision

16.48.1 The review of Franchised Provision will normally take place through the UCO's standard Periodic Review process detailed in Section 6 of the AQF.

16.48.2 At this event partner faculty will be required to include a number of additional documents for the review panel, in addition to the normal requirements specified in Section 6 of the AQF. These include:

a) An updated delivery site report[57] confirming the ongoing suitability and availability of resources.

b) An evaluation document[58] prepared by partner faculty which describes any changes to the institution since original provision approval and provides an evaluative commentary on the relationship covering academic quality and standards, student experience, and course management and liaison.

c) An updated Initial Risk Assessment Form[59] provided by the Link Tutor.

16.48.3 Re-approval of the collaborative relationship for a further five-year period will be made through the standard Periodic Review process, subject to conditions and recommendations to be addressed by partner faculty.

16.48.4 Confirmation that the outcomes have been fulfilled will be noted at the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and subsequently by the Academic Council.

16.48.5 Following approval by the Academic Council:

a) The Head of Quality will confirm re-approval in writing by disseminating the Periodic Course Review Confirmation Form[60] to relevant partner and UCO colleagues.

b) The Head of Quality will update the Collaborative Activity Register.

c) The collaboration contract will be updated as appropriate.

16.49 Link Partner Provision Review

16.49.1 The review of Link Partners involves a review of the provision being delivered; an institutional level review is not normally undertaken as the provision delivered does not lead to an award of the UCO.

16.49.2 The review date of Link Partners is noted on the same schedule as for institutional reviews to ensure that a full picture of collaborative activity is maintained.

A) Study Centre Arrangements

16.49.3 Following approval, study centre arrangements with Link Partners must be monitored to ensure that the quality and standards of the facilities of the premises remain of an appropriate quality and standard for the provision being delivered.

16.49.4 The date for review of study centre arrangements will be included on the overarching on the overarching list of institutional reviews considered by the Quality Assurance Committee annually.

16.49.5 A review of a Link Partner's premises as a study centre is required at the end of the original period of approval / re-approval (i.e. a minimum of every five years).

16.49.6 The Head of Quality will provide confirmation that review is due in the current academic year to the appropriate Course Leader to produce a short reflective report on the provision.

16.49.7 The report will include:

a) A comparison of the achievement of students taught at the study centre against those taught elsewhere.

b) A reflective summary regarding how issues raised within External Examiner reports have been addressed; copies of External Examiner reports and responses for the provision during the previous three years should be submitted as evidence for and in support of this summary.

c) An update to the description of required learning resources considered at approval, and confirmation regarding how students are currently able to access them.

d) An update to the statement describing the provision of academic and pastoral support considered at approval and confirmation regarding how students are currently able to access these.

16.49.8 In addition, the following should be reviewed and updated as appropriate:

a) Risk Assessment Report.

b) Due Diligence Report.

c) Delivery Site Report.

16.49.9 The Study Centre Review report will be considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee to ensure that the student experience at the study centre remains appropriate and sound. If there is any doubt as to this, a panel will be convened to review the collaboration, in accordance with the Study Centre arrangement approval process.

16.49.10 The Study Centre Review report (and response if required) will be considered and endorsed through the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and formally re-approved by the Academic Council.

16.49.11 The Chair of the Academic Council will sign-off a Study Centre Review Confirmation Form.

16.49.12 Following re-approval by the Academic Council:

a) The Head of Quality will confirm re-approval of the arrangement in writing by disseminating the Study Centre Review Confirmation Form to relevant partner and UCO colleagues.

b) The Head of Quality will update the Collaborative Activity Register.

c) The collaboration contract will be updated as appropriate.

B) Articulation Arrangements

16.49.13 Following approval, articulation arrangements with Link Partners must be monitored to ensure that the quality and standards of teaching are maintained and that the curricula and assessment on the originating course do not depart from the destination course through the natural process of curriculum development thereby invalidating the confirmation of equivalency gained through the original mapping exercise.

16.49.14 The date for review of articulation arrangements will be included on the overarching list of institutional reviews considered by the Quality Assurance Committee annually.

16.49.15 A review of an articulation arrangement is required at the end of the original period of approval / re-approval (i.e. a minimum of every five years) if the UCO and Link Partner wish to continue with the arrangement.

16.49.16 A review is also required at an intermediate point if the originating or destination course undergoes a significant change or series of cumulative changes which alter it significantly from that originally approved. This is identified through the ongoing liaison between the partner and the UCO through the Link Tutor (or equivalent). In either case the Head of Quality will convene an Articulation Review Panel to discuss the nature and quality of the existing agreement, and whether it should be reaffirmed. To facilitate discussion, the Link Tutor should prepare the following brief document:

a) An Articulation Arrangement Review Report[61] which critically reflects on the management of the articulation arrangement during the previous approval period and:

i. Provides details of the number of students who have progressed following this route, comparing their achievement to the cohort as a whole.

ii. Includes an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the arrangement, highlighting how improvements could be made.

iii. Provides information relating to relevant issues raised in External Examiner reports and information as to how these have been addressed.

16.49.17 Where aspects of either the risk assessment or due diligence have changed significantly, the Head of Quality will bring this to the attention of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

16.49.18 The Articulation Arrangement review report and response will be considered and endorsed through the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and formally re-approved by the Academic Council.

16.49.19 The Chair of the Academic Council will sign-offthe report.

16.49.20 Following re-approval by the Academic Council:

a) The Head of Quality will confirm re-approval of the arrangement in writing by disseminating the Articulation Arrangement Review Confirmation Form to relevant partner and UCO colleagues.

b) The Head of Quality will update the Collaborative Activity Register.

c) The collaboration contract will be updated as appropriate.

16.49.21 Where the destination course is discontinued, every effort will be made to provide a suitable replacement for the articulation. In these circumstances the Head of Quality should be informed to ensure that centrally held information, including contracts, is kept up to date.

C) Progression Arrangements

16.49.22 Following approval, progression arrangements with Link Partners must be monitored to ensure that the course provided by the partner institution remains a suitable and appropriate entry qualification for the specified UCO course.

16.49.23 Where there are sizeable student numbers involved in a progression arrangement from a particular institution, UCO faculty may wish to identify a member of staff to carry out liaison duties and to report on the achievement of students from that institution as a discrete group within the relevant monitoring report.

16.49.24 The date for review of progression arrangements will be included on the overarching list of institutional reviews considered by the Quality Assurance Committee annually.

16.49.25 A review of a progression arrangement is required at the end of the original period of approval / re-approval (i.e. a minimum of every five years) if the UCO and Link Partner wish to continue with the arrangement.

16.49.26 The review of progression arrangements will require the following documentation considered at initial approval / previous review to be reviewed and updated as appropriate:

a) The Course Mapping document considered at initial approval to ensure that the originating and destination courses have not departed from that considered at initial approval and therefore remains useful in making judgements for progressing students onto specified UCO courses as appropriate.

16.49.27 The Course Leader will be responsible for undertaking the review of the Course Mapping document and Risk Assessment Report, both of which will be considered by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and recommended to the Academic Council for formal re-approval.

16.49.28 Following re-approval by the Academic Council:

a) The Head of Quality will confirm re-approval of the arrangement in writing by disseminating the Articulation Arrangement Review Confirmation Form to relevant partner and UCO colleagues.

b) The Head of Quality will update the Collaborative Activity Register.

c) The collaboration contract will be updated as appropriate.

D) Memorandum of Understanding

16.49.29 Memoranda of Understanding shall be reviewed in line with the review date agreed by the UCO and the Partner and stated in the Memorandum of Understanding.

16.49.30 The Partner Institution shall complete an Institutional Annual Report Form and review the current Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that the arrangement remains appropriate for both parties.

16.49.31 The Institutional Annual Report shall be considered by the Senior Management Team.

16.49.32 Any recommended amendments made to the Memorandum of Understanding shall be approved by the Senior Management Team, following which the Memorandum of Understanding shall be updated and signed by both parties.

PART 8: TERMINATION OF COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS & PROVISION

16.50 INTRODUCTION

16.50.1 Collaborative partnerships and provision may be terminated by either party. In all cases an exit strategy must be agreed with the partner to safeguard the experience of all students and staff involved and to ensure that they are provided with the opportunity to successfully complete the agreed activities; all collaborative relationships are governed by a legally binding agreement which includes a clause dealing with termination that must be followed.

16.50.2 Notification to terminate a collaborative relationship (either at the request of UCO or partner faculty) must be provided to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and the Head of Quality in writing at the earliest opportunity.

16.50.3 Collaborative relationships will automatically lapse if they are not reviewed, at which point the collaborative contract will also expire.

16.50.4 Whatever the reason for the termination, and whoever it is instigated by, the proposal to terminate must first be approved by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee using the Collaborative Activity Termination Form[62].

16.50.5 If approved, the Head of Quality will facilitate a meeting or correspondence with the partner to discuss the proposed termination and agree an exit strategy, both of which must be approved by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and the Academic Council.

16.50.6 Once the termination proposal and exit strategy have been approved, the Head of Quality will prepare a formal termination letter for the partner which will set out the agreed exit strategy. If any communication to continuing students at the partner institution is planned, the Head of Quality must be consulted about the wording and mode of this communication.

16.50.7 The exit period is a high-risk phase of any partnership. To facilitate this, the exit strategy will be monitored by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee through regular updates which will be noted on the Collaborative Activity Termination Form.

16.51 EXIT STRATEGIES

16.51.1 The Exit Strategy will aim to ensure a smooth departure from the relationship while preserving the integrity and continuation of the students' education. The only exception to this will be in situations where there are no students registered on any of the provision delivered in the UCO's name. In these circumstances confirmation of termination will be provided to the partner in writing on receipt of a fully completed and signed Course and Unit Modification Form from the partner (to formally request termination of the partnership / closure of the provision).

16.51.2 Consideration must be given to students currently enrolled on collaborative provision and the student experience during the run-out period; students will normally be given the opportunity to complete their course within the standard time frame.

16.51.3 Production of the Exit Strategy is the responsibility of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (or through delegated authority), in conjunction with the relevant UCO and partner faculty and will include an update to the Risk Management Report.

16.51.4 The Exit Strategy will:

a) State the titles of the courses associated with the partnership.

b) Clarify key dates, such as the end of the 'run out' period, the enrolment deadline for the final cohort and the final Board of Examiners.

c) Provide details regarding student support, quality assurance and academic liaison that will apply during the 'run out' period.

d) List any action to be taken to inform students of the termination and monitor the 'run out' period.

e) Include information regarding the formal monitoring requirements for the implementation of the strategy, and the requirement to confirm to the Academic Council that the exit has been concluded.

f) Confirm when the courses can be removed from the UCO's student record system and from the UCO and partner websites.

16.51.5 All exit strategies devised as a result of termination of a collaborative relationship will be presented to the Academic Council by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) for approval.

16.51.6 The "run-out" of the relationship will be monitored by the Link Tutor in accordance with the approved Exit Strategy.

16.52 Following Conclusion of the Exit Strategy

16.52.1 Following confirmation to the Academic Council of the conclusion of the strategy by the Link Tutor, the Head of Quality will:

a) Issue a formal letter to the partner confirming termination of the relationship and the date from which this applies.

b) Notify the Admissions Department and Academic Registry to ensure that the relevant courses have closed as agreed.

c) Request through the Marketing Department that relevant publication and promotional material relating to the closed courses be removed from the UCO's website and other locations as appropriate.

d) Update the Collaborative Activity Register to reflect the termination of the relationship.

16.53 Closing a Course Delivered through a Partner

16.53.1 To close a course delivered through a partner, either on an individual basis or as a result of the termination of the relationship, the relevant faculty should submit a Major Modification Form to the Head of Quality for sign-off by the Academic Council.

16.53.2 The modification form will confirm that suitable arrangements have been made for students currently registered on the course that will allow them to complete their studies, as appropriate.

16.53.3 Where more complex arrangements are required it may be necessary to also implement an Exit Strategy, which identifies roles and responsibilities in greater detail.

PART 9: STUDENT EXCHANGES

16.54 INTRODUCTION

16.54.1 Student exchanges are formal agreements the UCO has with other institutions to enable students to continue their studies whilst experiencing a different educational environment.

16.54.2 They provide students with the opportunity to study their subject from a different perspective, experience a new culture should the exchange be international and meet new colleagues. Student exchanges can also serve to broaden students' horizons and may demonstrate to future employers that they are adaptable to new and challenging situations, a useful transferable skill.

16.54.3 Students studying an eligible subject are able to spend a period of time studying at a partner institution in another country. Students on an exchange at a partner institution will continue to pay the required tuition fees to the UCO (as their home institution) but will not pay any tuition fees to host institution. Students will, however, be liable for their living costs and transportation expenses.

16.54.4 The academic work that students complete at a partner institution as part of an exchange programme will be credited to their UCO degree, subject to advance approval.

16.54.5 This section sets out the UCO's formal quality assurance arrangements for student exchanges, including Erasmus exchanges, taking into account the need for sound planning prior to a student's departure (with particular attention to student support).

16.54.6 Any course may permit a student to undertake a student exchange provided the exchange meets the criteria set out below and the exchange is with an approved partner institution.

16.55 APPROVAL OF STUDENT EXCHANGES

16.55.1 Student Exchanges will normally be arranged with an approved partner institution or with an organization with which the UCO has a Memorandum of Understanding.

16.55.2 The approval of student exchange arrangements depends on whether the exchange is offered on an occasional or standing basis for individual students and / or groups students as outlined below.

A) OCCASIONAL EXCHANGES

16.55.3 Occasional exchanges do not require approval beyond that of the Course Team, except where a key aspect of the curriculum is altered to facilitate the exchange. In such cases, approval of the relevant Portfolio Board is required.

16.55.4 Students must receive full recognition for their exchange period. This may be in the form of a certificate or on their transcript.

B) STANDING EXCHANGES

16.55.5 A standing student exchange will need to be approved by the Course Team and by the relevant Portfolio Board. Approval by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee is not normally required.

16.55.6 Portfolio Boards should consider variations of student exchanges proportionately, i.e. scrutinise specific exchange proposals rather than scrutinise the specifics of the course or its units.

C) Accredited Exchanges

16.55.7 A student exchange may enable students to transfer any credits they gain to their UCO award (i.e. an accredited exchange).

16.55.8 For an accredited exchange, the Course Team must map the learning to be achieved during the Erasmus exchange against the Learning Outcomes that would have been achieved on the 'home' course to ensure a reasonable match between the exchange learning and that of the 'home' course.

16.55.9 Students gaining credits during their student exchange should normally complete the 'home' course within the normal planned duration of that course i.e. the exchange credits should replace the credits a student would have gained had they studied at the UCO for that period of time.

16.55.10 If students' study is prolonged for a further year or part year, funding and resourcing implications must be considered (particularly in respect of undergraduate courses and especially in the case of a standing arrangement for groups of students).

16.55.11 Students on an accredited exchange should receive full recognition of the credits on their transcript and be issued with a year abroad (or similar) certificate.

16.55.12 It is anticipated that the credit points assigned at the partner institution will normally conform to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). In such cases, 2 UK Credits = 1 ECTS credit point. Similarly, the marks/grades achieved on an exchange should be transferred using a mutually recognised ECTS method that enables marks/grading to be readily translated into their 'home' equivalents.

16.55.13 The chair of the Board of Examiners and the UCO's External Examiners should be informed about any student exchange arrangements in advance of the Exam Board meeting to enable them to seek clarification on any aspects of the exchange for progression or award purposes. All assessment mark/grade conversions should be completed and confirmed before the award Board.

16.55.14 For standing exchange arrangements for groups of students, the Course Team Leader, Head of Quality and relevant Portfolio Board chair should also be informed. Proposals for these will also need to gain business approval from the Senior Management Team (SMT).

16.56 Student Exchange Approval Requirements

16.56.1 A learning agreement must be negotiated before a student departs on any exchange. This agreement must set out the details of the student's programme of study or work placement. For accredited exchanges the learning agreement will ensure that all essential parts of the 'home' course have been considered and taken into account.

16.56.2 Student support arrangements must be agreed between the Course Team and each student. Normally an appropriate UCO member of staff is allocated to a student (or group of students) as a key contact for the duration of the exchange.

16.56.3 Students' linguistic ability should be sufficient for study at the partner institution before the student departs.

16.56.4 Students should be made particularly aware of cases where an accredited exchange makes a significant contribution to the classification of the 'home' award, especially if the student will be studying in a foreign language.

16.56.5 Any issues or good practice arising out of student exchanges should be notified to relevant UCO staff (Course Team Leader, Head of Quality and relevant Portfolio Board chair) to ensure that student exchange policy and practice is enhanced across the UCO as appropriate.

16.56.6 Approved Course Information Forms should be amended to include a reference to the potential for student exchanges, particularly in respect of standing arrangements for groups of students.

16.56.7 Where student exchanges necessitate a change to course outcomes or the award or course title to be conferred on a student, this will require approval by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee through the UCO's Major Change to Courses process (AQF Section 4) and will require business approval from the Senior Management Team and Academic Council.

16.56.8 A fact sheet providing details of each student exchange opportunity will be provided detailing eligibility criteria, language of instruction and details about the partner institution as a minimum. This shall be provided to students through the UCO's website.

16.57 Review of Student Exchanges

16.57.1 Student Exchanges will be reviewed annually and periodically in line with the UCO's Annual Monitoring and Reporting and Periodic Review processes.

16.57.2 Students participating in any Student Exchange will be asked to evaluate their experience normally through an evaluation questionnaire, the results of which shall inform annual reporting and periodic review of the course to which the exchange relates.

DIAGRAM 16.2A: COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY INITIAL PROPOSAL APPROVAL PROCESS (PART 2)

Collaborative Activity is proposed by Faculty / Partner Staff to the Dean of Academic Development

Dean of Academic Development confirms that the Collaborative Activity Initial proposal may be taken forward

Sponsors of the collaborative activity proposal liaise with the Head of Quality to confirm proposal approval documentation requirements and timelines

Sponsors of the collaborative activity complete required proposal approval documentation:

Rationale for Collaboration **Initial Risk Assessment** **Due Diligence** **Site Visit**	**New Course Approval** **New Course Costings** **Recruitment & Admissions Summary** **Learning Resources Summary** **Teaching Staff CVs**

Proposal approval documentation is submitted to the Senior Management Team for approval

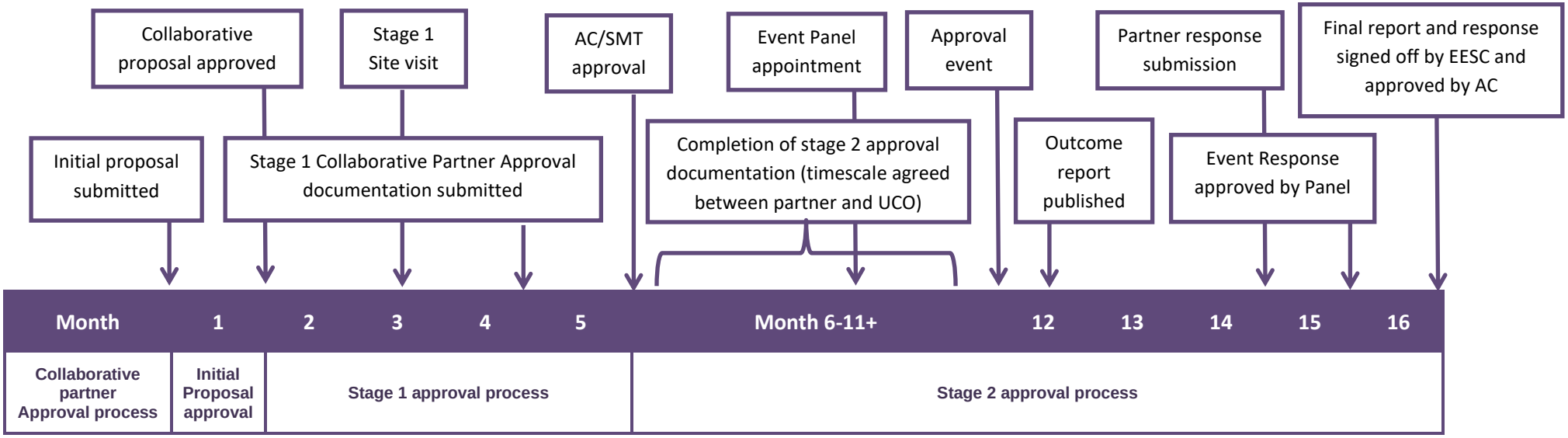
Proposal approval documentation is submitted to the Academic Council for approval

Senior Management Team & Academic Council approve the proposed collaborative activity

Quality Assurance Committee notes initiation of Collaborative Activity Approval Process	Head of Quality liaises with sponsors of the Collaborative Activity regarding next approval stages

Collaborative Activity Proposal proceeds to the appropriate Collaborative Partner/Provision Approval Process

DIAGRAM 16.2B: THE RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR THE COLLABORATIVE ACTIVITY APPROVAL PROCESS



Submission of Initial Proposals for Collaborative Partnerships

To align with the UCO institutional calendar it is recommended that initial collaborative proposals should be submitted at least 4 months prior to scheduled Academic Council meetings.

Recommended Submission dates:

- Last week of July for Stage 1 approval by SMT/Academic Council in December
- Last week in October for Stage 1 approval by SMT/Academic Council in March
- Last week in January for Stage 1 approval by SMT/Academic Council in June
- Last week in April for Stage 1 approval by SMT/Academic Council in September

DIAGRAM 16.3: COLLABORATIVE PARTNER APPROVAL PROCESS (PART 3)

	Collaborative Activity Initial Proposal Approved (Diagram 16.2)
	⬇
Contact & Communication	The proposed partner and UCO each nominates an individual to act as the primary point of contact for the duration of the partner institutional approval process
	⬇
Approval Documentation	Head of Quality liaises with the partner and the team proposing the collaboration to confirm the required approval documentation and timelines for the process
	Self-Evaluation Document (SED) SED Supporting Documentation
	⬇
Approval Panel Appointment	Partner nominates the External Panel Member at least 6 weeks prior to the Approval Event
	⬇
	The Head of Quality appoints the remaining members of the Approval Panel in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)
	⬇
Approval Event	Head of Quality liaises with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Approval Panel, the partner and the team proposing the collaboration to confirm the date and agenda for the Approval Event
	⬇
	Approval Event is undertaken at the Partner Institution
	⬇
Approval Event Outcome	Approval Panel produces an Approval Event Outcome Report identifying conditions and recommendations for approval as appropriate
	⬇
Reporting & Responding to Collaborative Partner Approval Event Outcomes	The partner and the team proposing the collaboration complete the Approval Event Outcome Response Form responding to conditions and recommendations and submits this to the Approval Panel
	⬇
	Approval Panel confirm that all approval conditions have been responded to appropriately and recommend approval of the Collaborative Partner
	⬇
Formal Approval	The signed off Approval Event Outcome Report and Approval Event Outcome Response Form are endorsed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and approval of the partner is recommended to the Academic Council
	⬇
	The Academic Council approve the proposed Collaborative Partner
	⬇ Chair of Academic Council signs off the response form which serves as confirmation of approval ⬇ The Head of Quality confirms approval of the Collaborative Partner with all relevant staff ⬇ The Head of Quality enters the Collaborative Partner into the Collaborative Activity Register ⬇ Collaborative Agreement is signed by the UCO and the Partner

DIAGRAM 16.4: ASSOCIATE PARTNER PROVISION APPROVAL PROCESS (PART 4)

Stage 1: Proposal Approval	**Preliminary discussion held with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) regarding new Associate Partner provision proposals**			
	⇩			
	Completion of proposed Associate Partner provision proposal approval documentation appropriate to the type of provision proposed by the Proposing Team which is then submitted to the Head of Quality			
	⇩			
	Head of Quality submits the Associate Partner provision proposal approval documentation to the Senior Management Team & Academic Council for approval			
	⇩			
	Associate Partner provision proposal is approved by the Senior Management Team & Academic Council			
	⇩			
Stage 2: Approval Documentation Development & Submission	Head of Quality confirms approval documentation, submission requirements and convenes the required approval events in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) and Proposing Team			
	⇩			
	Submission of approval documentation to the Head of Quality by the Proposing Team at least 4 weeks prior to the Initial Approval Event			
	⇩			
	Head of Quality appoints the Initial Approval Event Panel Proposing Team submit External Panel Member Nominations for the Final Approval Event			
	⇩			
	Head of Quality disseminates approval documentation to Panel at least three weeks in advance of the Initial Approval Event			
	⇩			
Stage 3: Formal Approval	**Initial Approval Event:** Initial Approval Outcome Report is produced by the Panel			
	⇩			
	Proposing Team Respond to any approval conditions / recommendations made by the Panel			
	⇩			
	Response confirmed and approved by the Initial Approval Event Panel			
	⇩			
	Final Approval Event: Final Approval Event Outcome Report is produced by the Panel			
	⇩			
	Proposing Team Respond to any approval conditions / recommendations made by the Panel			
	⇩			
	Response confirmed and approved by the Final Approval Event Panel			
	⇩			
	Approval of Associate Provision endorsed by the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee and recommended to the Academic Council			
	⇩			
	Associate Provision approved by the Academic Council			
	⇩	⇩	⇩	⇩
Following Approval	Head of Quality confirms approval with relevant staff (including PSRBs as appropriate)	Head of Quality enters the approved provision onto the Collaborative Activity Register	Head of Quality liaises with the Academic Registry to update the Student Record System with provision details	The Collaborative Agreement is updated by the Vice-Chancellor and Partner Institution as appropriate
	⇩			
	Provision may be Delivered			

DIAGRAM 16.5: LINK PARTNER STUDY CENTRE AGREEMENT APPROVAL PROCESS

Stage 1: Proposal Approval	**Proposing Course Leader completes the Collaborative Activity Rationale Form that is agreed by the relevant Course Team & Portfolio Board**		
	⇩		
	Collaborative Activity Rationale Form is submitted to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) for authorisation		
	⇩		
	Authorised Collaborative Activity Rationale Form is submitted to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee & Quality Assurance Committee to approve and note initiation of Stage 2 of the Study Centre Agreement Approval Process		
	⇩		
Stage 2: Convening Approval Event & Panel	Head of Quality covenes a Study Centre Approval Event at the Study Centre and appoints the Study Centre Approval Panel in consultation with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)		
	⇩		
Stage 3: Approval Event Documentation	Head of Quality confirms required approval event documentation with Partner and UCO staff as appropriate		
	⇩		
	The Course Leader produces the required approval event documentation and submits this to the Head of Quality at least three weeks prior to the event		
	⇩		
	The Head of Quality circulates approval documentation to Study Centre Approval Panel three weeks prior to the event		
	⇩		
Stage 4: Approval Event	**Approval Event at the Study Centre** The Approval Event is held at the proposed Study Centre where the Approval Panel tour the facilities and meet with the Course Leader, Study Centre and other relevant staff and discuss the approval documentation and facilties in line with the Study Centre Approval Criteria		
	⇩		
Stage 5: Approval Event Outcomes	The Approval Panel agree the outcomes of the Study Centre Approval Event, providing informal oral feedback to the Cousrse Leader and relevant staff at the event feedback session		
	⇩		
Stage 6: After the Approval Event	The Panel Secretary produces a Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Report within 2 weeks of the event that is agreed by the Panel		
	⇩		
	The Panel Secretary circulates the Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Report to the Course Leader with the Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Response Form and an agreed deadline for submission of the response		
	⇩		
	The Course Leader completes the Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Response Form and submits this to the the Approval Panel for approval and sign-off by the Panel Chair		
	⇩		
	The approved Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Response Form is authorised and signed off by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)		
	⇩		
	The authorised Study Centre Approval Event Outcome Response Form is submitted to the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee to recommend approval of the Study Centre to the Academic Council		
	⇩		
	The Academic Council confirms approval of the proposed Study Centre		
	⇩		
	The Head of Quality confirms approval of the Study Centre with the Course Leader and relevant staff (including any PSRBs)	**The Head of Quality enters the approved Study Centre onto the Collaborative Activity Register**	**A Collaborative Agreement is drawn up / updated by the Vice-Chancellor and Partner Institution as appropriate**
			⇩
			The Course May Be Delivered at the Approved Study Centre

AQF16: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
AQF16_01	AQF16_01_Collaborative_Activity_Register_Template
AQF16_02	AQF16_02_Collaborative_Activity_Rationale_Form
AQF16-03	AQF16_03_Collaborative_Activity_Initial_Risk_Assessment_Form
AQF16_04	AQF16_04_Collaborative_Activity_Due_Diligence_Form
AQF16_05	AQF16_05_Collaborative_Activity_Delivery_Site_Visit_Report_Form
AQF16_06	AQF16_06_ Collaborative_Activity_Delivery_Site_Visit_External_Team_Member_Nomination_Form
AQF16_07	AQF16_07_Collaborative_Partner_SED_Template
AQF16_08	AQF16_08_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_External_Panel_Member_Nomination_Form
AQF16_09	AQF16_09_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Event_Outcome_Report_Form
AQF16_10	AQF16_10_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Event_Outcome_Response_Form
AQF16_11	AQF16_11_Collaborative_Activity_Operations_Manual
AQF16_12	AQF16_12_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Panel_Guidance
AQF16_13	AQF16_13_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Confirmation_Form
AQF16_14	AQF16_14_Study_Centre_Statement
AQF16_15	AQF16_15_Study_Centre_Approval_Event_Outcome_Report_Form
AQF16_16	AQF16_16_Study_Centre_Approval_Event_Outcome_Response_Form
AQF16_17	AQF16_17_Articulation_Arrangement_Rationale
AQF16_18	AQF16_18_Articulation_Mapping_Template
AQF16_19	AQF16_19_Articulation_Approval_Event_Outcome_Report_Form
AQF16_20	AQF16_20_Articulation_Approval_Event_Outcome_Response_Form
AQF16_21	AQF16_21_Progression_Arrangement_Rationale_Template
AQF16_22	AQF16_22_Progression_Approval_Event_Outcome_Report_Form
AQF16_23	AQF16_23_Progression_Approval_Event_Outcome_Response_Form
AQF16_24	AQF16_24_Collaborative_Partner_Course_Journal_Template

AQF16_25	AQF16_25_Partner_Staff_CV_Record_Form
AQF16_26	AQF16_26_Published_Information_Verification_Form
AQF16_27	AQF16_27_Collaborative_Partner_Institution_Review_SED_Template
AQF16_28	AQF16_28_Collaborative_Partner_Institutional_Review_Event_Outcome_Report_Form
AQF16_29	AQF16_29_Collaborative_Partner_Institutional_Review_Event_Outcome_Response_Form
AQF16_30	AQF16_30_Franchised_Provision_Evaluation_Document_Template
AQF16_31	AQF16_31_Articulation_Arrangement_Review_Report_Form
AQF16_32	AQF16_32_Collaborative_Activity_Termination_Form

AQF16: ENDNOTES

[1] AQF16_01_Collaborative_Activity_Register_Template

[3] AQF16_02_Collaborative_Activity_Rationale_Form

[4] AQF16_03_Collaborative_Activity_Initial_Risk_Assessment_Form

[5] AQF16_04_Collaborative_Activity_Due_Diligence_Form

[6] AQF16_05_Collaborative_Activity_Delivery_Site_Visit_Report_Form

[7] AQF16_05_Collaborative_Activity_Delivery_Site_Visit_Report_Form

[8] AQF16_02_Collaborative_Activity_Rationale_Form

[9] AQF16_03_Collaborative_Activity_Initial_Risk_Assessment_Form

[10] AQF16_07_Collaborative_Partner_SED_Template

[11] AQF16_12_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Panel_Guidance

[12] AQF16_08_Collaborative_Partner_Approval_External_Panel_Member_Nomination_Form

[13] AQF16_09_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Event_Outcome_Report

[14] AQF16_10_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Event_Response_Form

[15] AQF04_11_Staff_CV_Coversheet

[16] AQF16_11_Collaborative_Activity_Operations_Manual

[17] AQF04_Course_&_Unit_Modification_Forms

[18] AQF04_02_New_Course_Costings_Form

[19] AQF04_01_New_Course_Approval_Form

[20] AQF16_02_Collaborative_Activity_Rationale_Form

[21] AQF04_03_Course_Information_Form

[22] AQF04_04_Unit_Information_Form

[23] AQF04_05_Course_Handbook_Template

[24] AQF16_12_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Panel_Guidance

[25] AQF04_12_Course_Approval_Outcome_Report_Template

[26] AQF16_10_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Event_Response_Form

[27] AQF04_11_Course_Approval_External_Panel_Member_Nomination_Form

[28] AQF16_13_Collaborative_Activity_Approval_Confirmation_Form

[29] AQF16_14_Study_Centre_Statement

[30] AQF04_05_Course_Handbook_Template

[31] AQF16_15_Study_Centre_Approval_Event_Outcome_Report_Form

[32] AQF16_16_Study_Centre_Approval_Event_Outcome_Response_Form

[33] AQF16_17_Articulation_Arrangement_Rationale_Template

[34] AQF16_18_Articulation_Mapping_Template

[35] AQF16_19_Articulation_Approval_Event_Outcome_Report_Form

[36] AQF16_20_Articulation_Approval_Event_Response_Form

[37] AQF16_21_Progression_Arrangement_Rationale_Template

[38] AQF16_22_Progression_Approval_Event_Outcome_Report_Form

[39] AQF16_23_Progression_Approval_Event_Outcome_Response_Form

[40] AQF05_05_Institutional_Annual_Report_Form

[41] AQF Section 11 – External Examiner Annual Report Form

[42] AQF Section 05 – Course Annual Report Form and Unit Annual Report Form

[43] AQF05_05_Institutional_Annual_Report_Form

[44] AQF Section 05 – Course Annual Report Form and Unit Annual Report Form

[45] AQF05_05_Institutional_Annual_Report_Form

[46] AQF Section 05 – Unit Annual Report Form

[47] AQF Section 05 – Course Annual Report Form

[48] AQF05_04_Institutional_Annual_Report_Form

[49] AQF Section 05 – Course Annual Report Form and Unit Annual Report Form

[50] AQF05_04_Institutional_Annual_Report_Form

[51] AQF16_25_Partner_Staff_CV_Record_Form

[52] AQF16_26_Published_Information_Verification_Form

[53] AQF16_08_Collaborative_Partner_Approval_External_Panel_Member_Nomination_Form

[54] AQF16_27_Collaborative_Partner_Institution_Review_SED_Template

[55] AQF16_28_Collaborative_Partner_Institutional_Review_Event_Outcome_Report_Form

[56] AQF16_29_Collaborative_Partner_Institutional_Review_Event_Outcome_Response_Form

[57] AQF16_05_Collaborative_Activity_Delivery_Site_Visit_Report_Form

[58] AQF16_30_Franchised_Provision_Evaluation_Document_Template

[59] AQF16_03_Collaborative_Activity_Initial_Risk_Assesessment_Form

[60] AQF06-09_Periodic_Course_Review_Confirmation_Form

[61] AQF16_31_Articulation_Arrangement_Review_Report_Form

[62] AQF16_32_Collaborative_Activity_Termination_Form

PART 10: PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATORS

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10.1 INTRODUCTION

10.1.1 The UCO is committed to developing student employability and working with employers to produce graduates who have the knowledge, professional standards, competences and proficiencies for successful employment. Practice-based learning as an integral component of a program of study contributes to students' developing professional and employability skills.

10.1.2 The following processes describe the UCO's requirements for the approval and management of practice-based educators that provide placements for students studying on programs of study for which practice based learning is integral.

10.1.3 These processes follow good practice to ensure that the UCO meets its responsibilities regarding the management and quality of the student learning experience in addition to their safety and wellbeing whilst on practice-based placements.

10.2 PRINCIPLES

10.2.1 The principles upon which practice-based educators are chosen should include the following:

a) The learning associated with a practice-based educator must be designed to take account of relevant external reference points (e.g. the Quality Assurance Agency's UK Quality Code, any Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body expectations and UCO policies.

b) Courses must have in place arrangements for the quality assurance of practice-based education placement opportunities, including management of risks relating to health and safety, quality and other risks associated with the specific proposals for a given course.

c) Students must be registered as a student of the UCO (or of an approved collaborative partner organization) for the duration of the practice-based placement.

d) Learning outcomes that contribute to the overall aims and learning outcomes of the course and/or unit(s) must be appropriate for the practice-based learning experience and should be clearly defined within the course and/or unit information forms.

e) Practice-based learning opportunities must be of an appropriate length and quality to ensure that the identified learning outcomes can be achieved.

f) Any professional considerations and Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) expectations must be taken into consideration.

g) Information provided to prospective and current students (e.g. Course and Unit Information Forms, Course Handbooks, Course Prospectus or Brochures and web-based course pages must clearly state the nature and duration of any practice-based learning and that this is integral to the course.

h) Documentation must be clear to all parties, including any reasonable adjustments to accommodate needs of disabled students.

i) The arrangements for practice-based learning within courses must be approved through the normal course approval processes (Academic Quality Framework Section 4 – Course & Unit Approval & Modification). Approval must include consideration of draft guides/handbooks or equivalent for students and for practice-based educators and, where applicable, for practice-based supervisors/mentors.

j) The responsibilities of students, academic staff and practice-based educators must be clearly defined and communicated to all parties concerned, and there must be evidence that all parties accept their responsibilities, i.e. through a Placement Agreement, Practice Education Handbooks (or equivalent).

k) Any assessment of practice-based learning must form part of a coherent learning strategy for the course and be subject to the normal processes of assessment and moderation and the standards of student achievement overseen by appropriately qualified external examiners.

l) Where practice-based educators are involved in monitoring student progress and/or assessment of student work, they must be trained appropriately, and a record kept of this.

10.3 RISK-BASED APPROACH

10.3.1 In line with good practice , the UCO takes a risk-based approach to approve and manage the practice-based educators it works with to ensure academic standards and quality and the appropriateness of the placement regarding the health, safety and welfare of students and any associated liabilities.

10.3.2 The following risk management principles are used to achieve this:

a) Having appropriate processes for the approval and review of prospective placements.

b) Placements accepting the UCO's health and safety expectations whilst students are on placement.

c) Clarity of understanding by each party of their roles and responsibilities.

d) Preparation of the student/s prior to their placement to enable them to be in a position to understand any risks and make informed judgements.

e) Having appropriate processes for enabling problems, including any health and safety issues, to be raised and resolved prior to, during, and at the conclusion of the placement.

f) Having contingency plans in case there are exceptional circumstances regarding the placement.

g) Providing appropriate training or briefings to UCO staff and practice-based educators regarding the placement and any policies, regulations and arrangements that they must follow.

h) Having appropriate processes for the monitoring and evaluation of placements.

i) Assessing the needs of disabled students in order that reasonable adjustments can be made at placements.

j) Assessing risks associated with working with clients who may be vulnerable.

10.3.3 The planning, procedures, and information requirements associated with the practice-based education provider will vary according to the level of risk identified ('Low Risk', 'Medium Risk', and 'High Risk') with actions to address risks being dependent and proportional upon the issue, the country/region and the level of risk involved.

10.3.4 Where the provider does not initially meet the required standard, additional information from the provider will be required and reasonable control measures may need to be put in place (see guidance provided with the Practice-Based Educator Provider Risk Assessment Form (Appendix 1).

10.3.5 Placements assessed as 'High Risk' by the Placement Coordinator upon completion of the Practice-Based Educator Provider Risk Assessment Form (Appendix 1) must be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) for a decision as to whether the placement can proceed and what control measures are required.

10.4 HEALTH & SAFETY

10.4.1 The UCO has a statutory duty of care to protect, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its students during placement activities and must therefore take reasonable steps to ensure that all practice-based learning environments are compliant with statutory health and safety requirements.

10.4.2 Students undertaking practice-based placements are, in effect, acting as an employee of practice-based educator for the duration of the placement, and as such are owed an identical duty of care by the practice-based education provider.

10.4.3 Students are also responsible for taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others who may be affected by their actions whilst on placements.

10.4.4 As part of the approval and review process of practice-based education providers a suitable and sufficient risk assessment must be undertaken, and appropriate control measures should be identified and adopted. The Risk Assessment Form for Practice-Based Education (Appendix 1) must be used to undertake an evaluation of risk and as a record of risk assessment for the practice-based education partner being proposed.

10.4.5 Practice-based education partners must confirm that they take proper account of health and safety considerations and must ensure that students who undertake a placement with them receive appropriate briefing on health and safety matters related to their organization by completing a Practice-Based Education Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix 2) which must be received by the Placement Coordinator prior to the student commencing the placement.

10.4.6 All accidents / incidents involving students during their placement must be reported to the Placement Coordinator and the Placement Provider.

10.4.7 Although the UCO cannot accept responsibility for matters over which it has no control, in circumstances where matters of health and safety arise, the UCO shall undertake a prompt investigations and give due consideration to the implications for any other student(s) who may be engaged in the same or a similar placement.

10.4.8 The placement provider and students must be informed of who and how to contact the UCO, in case of an accident or emergency involving a student whilst on their placement.

10.4.9 Details of where and when students are on placements should be held centrally by the Placement Coordinator. Students' personal details are held centrally by the UCO Registry and students required to keep these up-to-date to enable contact with themselves and/or next of kin as necessary.

10.4.10 In the case of an emergency involving a student on placement or major incident (for example, a natural disaster in the vicinity of the student placement), the UCO's process for dealing with emergencies and major incidents must be followed. At the University, all emergency situations/issues should be directed through the Vice-Chancellor's Group via the UCO's Main Switchboard (+44 (0)020 7089 6106) in the first instance. The Incident Management Team shall be convened and make the decision to invoke the Disaster Recovery Plan as necessary.

10.5 INSURANCE

10.5.1 Appropriate insurance should be considered as part of the risk assessment for proposed Practice-Based Education Providers. The following guidance is provided regarding insurance and liability.

A) LEGAL LIABILITY

10.5.2 Normally, students shall be the legal liability of the practice-based education provider for the duration of their placement. Therefore, any injury, loss or damage caused or suffered by the student whilst they are under the supervision of the placement provider is the responsibility of the placement provider.

B) PUBLIC LIABILITY

10.5.3 The UCO's Public Liability insurance covers the UCO in the event of a claim arising out of our own negligence (where a claim could be brought by the student against the UCO) and covers the UCO and the student for any claim made as a result of a negligent act carried out by the student whilst they are on placement (where a claim could be brought by the placement provider against either the student or the UCO).

C) EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY

10.5.4. Practice-based education providers are normally asked to accept liability for the student for the duration of the placement as the student is directly under their control and supervision. Where this is agreed a copy of the Employer's Liability Certificate of Insurance is asked for, so that we are aware of the policy number, limit of liability, date of expiry and insurance company. Within the UK a reciprocal arrangement is in place within the Insurance sector and most Employer's Liability insurance policies accept the student as a 'temporary employee'.

D) TRAVEL AND PERSONAL ACCIDENT COVER IN RELATION TO OVERSEAS TRAVEL

10.5.5 Appropriate travel and personal accident cover for students should be considered if the proposed Practice-Based Education Provider is based overseas, taking into consideration advice from the British Foreign Commonwealth Office.

E) MEDICAL MALPRACTICE / CLINICAL NEGLIGENCE / PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE

10.5.6 Students working within NHS hospitals in the UK are covered for professional risks under the Clinical Negligence Scheme for Trusts. If the placement is in a GP's surgery, independent practice (such as a physiotherapy practice), private hospital, hospice or nursing home, the Placement Coordinator needs to ask the provider if their insurance covers the liability of the student for injuries to third parties, including clinical errors, or property damage arising from their duties within the organisation. If such cover is not provided, they should liaise with the UCO's Vice-Chancellor's Group for further advice. It may be necessary for the student to be a member of a relevant professional body in order for Clinical Negligence cover to be in place.

F) MOTOR INSURANCE

10.5.7 Students wishing to use their private car whilst on placement for business purposes, other than driving to and from the placement, must check with their motor insurers to ensure that they have 'business use' on their policy, not just 'social, domestic and pleasure' use.

G) CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

10.5.8 Any criminal acts committed by the student are not covered under any insurance arrangements.

10.6 SAFEGUARDING AND DISCLOSURE AND BARRING SERVICE (DBS)

10.6.1 The UCO has clear policies related to safeguarding, including processes for checking where DBS is required (please see the UCO's Safeguarding Policy and DBS Policy & Procedure for further details)

10.6.2 Placements which involve engagement in regular and unsupervised 'regulated activity' (as defined by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012) with children or in certain adult settings may require students to undergo an enhanced DBS check and gain a satisfactory DBS before they start their placement.

10.6.3 For some PSRB courses an enhanced DBS will be required prior to the student commencing their course.

10.6.4 Where a satisfactory DBS is a prerequisite for a course or a placement that is a required element of the course), this must be clearly communicated to applicants in advance of entry to the course, and/or to students prior to undertaking units that include a mandatory placement, through published materials, including the course / unit information forms, prospectus / brochure and course web-pages and any other relevant information and guidance.

10.6.5 DBS checks are normally arranged through the University and should be initiated in sufficient time to ensure that the student's course, placement can go ahead. Occasionally they may need to take place through a placement provider.

10.6.6 Students must be fully briefed about the UCO's safeguarding and DBS policies and procedures prior to the commencement of their placement or work-based learning activity.

10.7 LONE WORKING

10.7.1 In circumstances where a situation of lone working may be required this should be identified in the Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix 2) and taken into consideration in the risk assessment and approval of the placement.

10.7.2 The placement provider is normally responsible for risk assessment if sending a student into a situation of lone working and may have procedures that apply. For further information the UCO's Out of Hours Working Policy and the Health and Safety Executive guidance regarding Lone Workers.

10.8 APPROVING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS & PLACEMENTS

10.8.1 Every practice-based education provider and placement must be approved before the student commences the placement.

10.8.2 All practice-based education provider and placement must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) or their nominee (normally the Placement Coordinator), depending on the level of risk provider poses, before the student commences the placement.

10.8.3 It is the responsibility of the Placement Coordinator, in liaison with relevant staff, to complete the following documents to evaluate the suitability of a placement provider (the overall content of these documents should not be changed however they can be adapted to reflect local nomenclature relevant to particular programs or formatting of the document can be changed to suit local needs):

a) Appendix 1: Risk Assessment Form for Practice-Based Education Providers

b) Appendix 2: Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire

c) Appendix 3: Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement

d) Appendix 4: Practice-Based Education Audit Record

A) UCO RISK ASSESSMENT FORM FOR PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS (APPENDIX 1)

10.8.4 All practice-based education placements must be approved in line with the level of risk established through the UCO Risk Assessment Form for Practice-Based Education Providers (Appendix 1).

10.8.5 This should identify the level of risk the placement provider poses and once completed should assure the individual approving the placement that the placement will:

a) Provide the opportunities and resources for the student to achieve the intended learning outcomes at the required standard and level as per the course / unit information form/s.

b) Provide support for the student from a designated member of staff in the placement setting.

c) Fulfil their responsibilities under health and safety legislation.

d) Provide an experience that complies with the requirements of any relevant PSRBs, as appropriate.

e) Make reasonable adjustments as identified through a needs assessment for students with disabilities.

10.8.6 If any residual risks are high, the placement provider must be approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education).

10.8.7 If the residual risk is low-medium, the placement provider is normally approved by the Placement Coordinator.

B) PLACEMENT PROVIDER HEALTH AND SAFETY QUESTIONNAIRE (APPENDIX 2)

10.8.8 The Placement Coordinator must be assured before the commencement of the placement that placement providers are willing and able to provide the student with a safe, legal (legislation in respect of the country where the placement provider is located) and appropriate working environment and that they are aware that it is their legal responsibility to provide this.

10.8.9 The Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix 2) must be completed by the Placement Coordinator in liaison with the proposed placement provider. Following this the Placement Coordinator must be assured that the placement provider is:

a) Aware that they have responsibilities to ensure that the student placed with them receives adequate support and guidance pertaining to their role and/or activities within the placement provider.

b) Aware of and willing to undertake any role they may have in the assessment of students in a fair and appropriate manner.

c) Aware that they are expected to provide the UCO with feedback about the progress of the placement as requested.

10.9 ALLOCATING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS & PLACEMENTS

10.9.1 Where the UCO is responsible for allocating students to a placement, the Placement Coordinator shall ensure that each student has an equal opportunity to undertake a placement at each available placement provider.

10.9.2 Where the student is responsible for selecting, organising and securing a placement, they must be given sufficient notice of this responsibility as per course/module requirements and must be given adequate guidance from the Placement Coordinator. This guidance may include:

a) The expectations for the type of placement/WBL activities to fulfil module/course requirements and the appropriateness for level of study.

b) Considerations of the specific needs of the student with respect to their achievement of the learning outcomes and those arising from any student entitlements, e.g. in relation to disabilities.

c) Considerations of equal opportunities and inclusivity.

d) The extent to which the student's preference for type and/or geographical location of placement can be facilitated and supported.

10.9.3 The student must not commence a placement prior to the approval of the Placement Provider. Where students organise their own placements, the student must understand that any change made to the originally approved placement provider will require a new placement approval process.

10.9.4 An auditable trail should be kept of all requests to obtain information from both the placement provider and student.

10.9.5 Students who commence placements without UCO agreement will not be insured. This must be made explicit in guidance to students and placement providers.

10.10 MANAGEMENT & QUALITY ASSURANCE OF PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION

10.10.1 The UCO retains overall responsibility for the quality management and oversight of placements that form an integral part of any award delivered in its name.

A) THE PLACEMENT COORDINATOR

10.10.2 The Placement Coordinator has overall responsibility of overseeing the management of all practice-based education placements. Their responsibilities normally include:

a) Ensuring that the risk assessment of the placement is undertaken.

b) Arranging and/or approving placement providers.

c) Supporting students in identifying relevant placement.

d) Ensuring that students are appropriately prepared for their placement, including their responsibilities and induction.

e) Ensuring that a record/database of students in placement is maintained.

f) In the case of Tier 4 (International) students, monitoring and reporting to Registry any changes in students' circumstances whilst on placement, e.g. attendance.

g) Providing advice and guidance to staff, students, placement providers in relation to placements.

h) Supporting students for the duration of the placement.

i) Arranging and/or making visits to students during their Placement for assessment and/or other purposes.

j) Undertaking and completing an audit record of Practice-Based Education Providers and Placements to provide assurance that that due consideration has been given to the management of placements regarding course design, approval and periodic review and that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage the placement/ experience in liaison with Course Leaders and other relevant staff.

B) AUDITING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS & PLACEMENTS

10.10.3 To provide assurance that due consideration has been given to the management of placements regarding course design, approval and periodic review and that appropriate arrangements are in place to manage the placement/ experience, an audit of each Practice-Based Education Provider shall be undertaken:

a) As part of the approval process when a new course / programme / unit for which practice-based education is integral is approved.

b) As part of the periodic review process for an existing course / programme / unit for which practice-based education is integral.

c) As part of the annual monitoring and reporting process for an existing course / programme / unit for which practice-based education is integral.

d) When is it deemed necessary by the Placement Coordinator, e.g. in response to any concerns or poor feedback raised by the student or the provider.

10.10.4 The Managing Placements and Work-Based Learning Audit Record (Appendix 4) should be used to record the outcome of the audit and should be included as an appendix to any documentation submitted as part of the UCO's course / unit approval and modification, periodic review and annual reporting and monitoring processes.

C) APPROVING & MANAGING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PLACEMENTS CHECKLIST

10.10.5 To enable the effective approval and management processes of Practice-Based Education Placements the checklist provided in Appendix 5 should be used to ensure that all elements are considered pre-, during and post-placement. This checklist should be used in conjunction with the approval process described above.

10.11 TERMINATION OF A PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PLACEMENT

10.11.1 As part of their briefing, students must be made aware of any consequences for failing to successfully complete any required practice-based learning activity.

10.11.2 The Placement Coordinator and Course Leader should ensure that procedures are in place to identify at an early stage any potential problems which may prevent the progress of the student or the satisfactory completion of the learning outcomes. Students should be informed of the procedures which they should follow and the UCO staff with member whom they should make contact if problems do occur.

10.11.3 Courses must have in place an appropriate process for considering and supporting students who have failed placement, including opportunities to retrieve the failure, in line with UCO Regulations.

10.11.4 If it is necessary for the UCO to withdraw a student in situations where they have consistently demonstrated an unacceptable level of engagement with their placement or, in the event of a student wishing to leave the placement and suspend their studies, the UCO's regulations and procedures for student withdrawal or suspensions of studies will apply.

10.11.5 The relevant Fitness to Practice Policy may also be applied for the suspension and exclusion of students from their course on the grounds of professional unsuitability, where a student who is registered on a course leading to a professional qualification or conferring practitioner status is deemed to have become professionally unsuitable for that qualification or status.

10.11.6 The Practice-Based Education Provider must have clear information about the action to be taken if they are no longer able to offer the learning opportunity or if they have any problem or complaint concerning the conduct of the student.

APPENDIX 1: RISK ASSESSMENT FORM FOR PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS

This form is to be completed by Placement Coordinator (or equivalent) in liaison with the Practice-Based Education Provider prior to approval of the proposed placement for each Practice-Based Education Provider.

The guidance provided at the end of the document should be used to complete this Risk Assessment.

Section 1: General Information	
Practice-Based Education Provider Name:	
Practice-Based Education Provider Address:	
Student Name(s) and Number: *Note: More than one student may attend the same provider on a placement.* *One risk assessment is sufficient per Practice-Based Education Provider as long as a record is held by the Practice-Based Education Provider for each student attending the placement and individual student needs have been considered.*	
Programme / Course / Unit:	
Location of placement (please circle):	UK EU International
Placement Start Date:	
Placement End Date:	

Section 2: Provider Insurance and Health &Safety Information			
Has the Provider confirmed that they have:	**Please circle**		**Describe any necessary action**
Employer's Liability Insurance?	Yes	No	
Public Liability Insurance?	Yes	No	
Has **Appendix 2 (Practice-Based Education Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire)** been completed?	Yes	No	
If yes, do any concerns remain unresolved?	Yes	No	

Does the Provider have a Health and Safety Adviser or a contact for Health and Safety?	Yes	No	
Has the provider been provided with information about the placement, including their responsibilities and agreed to support the learning objectives of the placement?	Yes	No	
Is a placement agreement in place with the placement provider?	Yes	No	
Has the student(s) been provided with information about the placement, including their responsibilities and the importance of the placement to the Programme/Course i.e. via the Placement Handbook or equivalent?	Yes	No	
Has the student(s) signed the Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement (Appendix 3)?	Yes	No	
Do any concerns remain unresolved?	Yes	No	

Section 3: Record of Insurance Received

Note: Do not make multiple requests. This information should be submitted by the placement organisation with Appendix 2 (Health and Safety Questionnaire) and checked on an annual basis for the period of cover.

	Insurer	**Policy Number**
Employer Liability		
Public Liability		
Other Insurance e.g. professional indemnity, medical malpractice		

Section 4: Risk Assessment

Note: The Placement Coordinator (or equivalent) completing this risk assessment should refer to the UCO's Risk Management Policy to identify and determine the risk level.

Risk assessment and further specific actions necessary for the student or student group, based on guidance provided at the end of this form.	**Original Risk Level (High, Medium or Low) (Based on guidance provided at the end of this form)**			**Describe any necessary action to reduce the risk, based on guidance provided at the end of this form.**	**Has the action been completed? (Please circle)**	**Risk profile, following action taken (high, medium or low)**
	Risk Level					
	Low	**Medium**	**High**			
a) Contractual status of placement provider					Yes No	
b) Provider's relationship with the UCO					Yes No	
c) Provider's experience in providing placements					Yes No	
d) Cultural, educational and work context: staff and student welfare/equal opportunities					Yes No	
e) Activities undertaken within placement					Yes No	
f) Contact within placements with vulnerable clients					Yes No	
g) Students' preparation for placements					Yes No	
h) Placement mentor arrangements					Yes No	
i) Placement provider involvement in assessment					Yes No	
j) Feedback from students/staff contacts on previous placements with provider					Yes No	
Please note an Additional Risk Factors & Controls in the space below (additional rows may be added)						

Conclusions	**Please Circle**	**Describe any necessary action**	**Has the action been completed?**
Is a site safety visit required before placement is approved?	Yes No		
Are the risks tolerable such that the placement can be approved?	Yes No		
Total Risk of Placement: (Please circle)	High Medium Low		

Section 5: Additional Considerations

Note: This section is specific to individual students and should be reviewed annually by the Placement Coordinator to reflect current students on placements.

Students with Entitlements (see over page) *Please liaise with the Student Support Team as necessary regarding this section*		
Do any students attending this placement require any additional needs or entitlements due to a disability of specific learning difficulty before, during or after the placement? **(Please circle)**	Yes No	List advice below and/or attach correspondence to form.
Overseas Placements		
Will any part of the placement take place outside of the UK? **(Please circle)**	Yes No	If yes, please note what addition advice or requirements may be need (e.g. travel insurance, travel advice, visas, etc.). List advice below and/or attach correspondence to form.
Students from outside of the EU *Please liaise with the Registry Department regarding this Section*		
Are any students from outside the EU?	Yes No	If yes, please note what addition advice or requirements may be need (e.g. to ensure that the placement is compliant with visa and immigration rules and to arrange support, etc). List advice below and/or attach correspondence to form.
Please retain and copy relevant correspondence to the Placement Coordinator and/or Practice-Based Education Provider.		

Section 6: Authorisation			
Form Prepared by (Name & Role):			
Signed:		**Date:**	
Have the above actions been completed? **(Please circle)**		Yes	No
Placement Approved by (Name & Role):			
Signed:		**Date:**	
OR Refer this placement to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) where any of the factors mentioned in Section 4 above remain high risk after the required action has been taken.			
Referred by:		**Signed:**	
		Date:	
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)			
Placement approved/Not approved (please attach an explanation):			
Name:			
Signed:			
Date:			

NB: This document **must** be retained for 6 years in line with the UCO's Retention Schedule and UK Data Protection legislation.

RISK ASSESSMENT GUIDANCE FOR PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDERS - RISK PROFILING & RISK REDUCING ACTIONS

Please note: the purpose of this **Guidance on Risk Assessment Categories** is to enable the person approving a placement to complete Section 4 of the above (Appendix 1: UCO Risk Assessment Form for Practice-Based Education Providers).

Risk factor	***Characteristics***	***Category***	***Guidance in relation to management arrangements***	***Check***
1 Contractual status of placement provider	1.1 UK Government regulated public provider e.g. NHS, Schools, Colleges.	Low	Standard documentation/agreements likely with good mutual understanding of obligations.	
	1.2 UK or international large Company or Charity working within established jurisdiction under international law.	Medium / High	Standard documentation/agreements likely with reasonable mutual understanding of obligations. Consider other risk factors.	
	1.3 Private company or organisation not covered by above.	Medium / High	Consider the need to request further information e.g. policies on health and safety (see example form appended), equality and diversity etc and/or provide more detailed information about requirements / responsibilities. Consider other risk factors.	
2 Provider's relationship with University	2.1 Formal partnership or contractual relationship to provide placements.	Low		
	2.2 Established partner in providing placements.	Low		
	2.3 New partner to providing placements.	Medium	Ensure written information about requirements / responsibilities provided and discussed.	
	2.4 No formal relationship with the UCO.	High	Ensure information about requirements / responsibilities received and agreed by provider in writing.	
3 Provider's experience in providing placements	3.1 Established provider with several years of experience of similar type of placement.	Low	Check provider is fully up to date with latest guidance/expectations.	
	3.2 New or recent provider with experience of providing similar placements with other organisations.	Medium	May be possibility of using shared audit/approval processes or access existing records re placement responsibilities. Ensure UCO focused induction and briefing.	
	3.3 Provider new to programme and to placement provision.	High	Mechanism should be put in place to check and approve provider status and, if appropriate, audit placement opportunities for suitability. Expect to provide detailed induction and briefing.	

4 Cultural, educational and work context: staff and student welfare/equal opportunities	4.1 Fully meets UK legislation with respect to health and safety and equality legislation, including for disabled people.	Low		
	4.2 Fully meets EU legislation with respect to health and safety and equalities legislation, including for disabled people and consideration of gender, sexual orientation and race.	Low / Medium	May have different approach/requirements re accessibility and learning differences, so may need specific checks and specifications; need to brief and induct students/provider staff.	
	4.3 Does not meet UK and EU legislation.	High	Request information on health and safety (see example form appended) and consider need for additional content to employer agreement. Ensure all parties (UCO staff, provider staff and students) are fully briefed and they understand and agree requirements. Consider if placement should not go ahead due to concerns related to safety and gender, sexual orientation and race.	
5 Activities undertaken within placement	5.1 Higher Education level accredited study.	Low	Ensure details agreed and on record.	
	5.2 Work based learning within closely defined job role.	Medium	Ensure details agreed and on record; likely to require provider agreement and additionally check content for risk factors which might raise risk level.	
	5.3 Work based learning without closely defined job role.	High	Likely to require formal agreement between UCO, provider and student.	
6 Contact within placements with vulnerable clients	6.1 Vulnerable clients are not involved.	Low		
	6.2 Vulnerable clients are involved.	High	Likely to require formal agreement between University, provider and student, including specific risk assessment. May require formal audit of placement re suitability in terms of quality of learning environment. Students require full briefing on responsibilities.	
7 Students' preparation for placements	7.1 Preparation is delivered through a pre-requisite unit.	Low		
	7.2 Preparation is through taught sessions not part of credit-rated unit.	Medium	Arrangements for monitoring and formalising participation should be in place.	

	7.3 Students provided with written briefing and/or have access to a web-site/can request assistance.	High	Consider how will evaluate engagement and, if electronic, consider monitoring how often students access information and levels of understanding; ensure rapid response available to contact students.	
8 Placement mentor arrangements	8.1 No mentors used.	Low	Ensure student experience not compromised by lack of formally identified mentor.	
	8.2 Mentors optional.	Low	Consider issues re equivalence of experience of students with/without mentors. Where mentors opt in, consider how they are briefed/trained/ supported, e.g. access to on-line training/briefing.	
	8.3 Mentor arrangements essential.	Medium	Mentors will require formal systematic briefing and training relevant to their role. Consider how this is delivered, participation monitored and evaluated.	
9 Placement provider involvement in assessment	9.1 Sign off attendance / no attendance or 'validate' experience and/or student's work as their own.	Low	Ensure there is clear criteria and understanding of reporting and extenuating circumstances procedures.	
	9.2 Formative assessment only.	Medium	Assessors will require training and support, probably including examples of good feedback practice as well as knowledge of/standards required with ongoing updates. Consider setting up on-line site.	
	9.3 Involvement in summative assessment (pass / fail / competence).	Medium / High	As above with strong emphasis upon pass/fail borderline. If assessors have specific practice expertise (possibly assessor accreditation might be required by a PSRB) in competence judgements, support from UCO may be less intensive. May require joint moderation of judgements made.	
	9.4 Involvement in summative assessment (graded).	High	Assessors will require training and support in marking and feedback including access to examples of judgement at different marking bands together with ongoing updates. Clarity of criteria particularly important. Consider setting up on-line site. A method to provide feedback on marking practice as well as system to moderate/discuss judgements is good practice.	
10 Feedback from students/staff contacts on previous	10.1 Positive feedback with no major issue.	Low		
	10.2 Student level of satisfaction of placement aspect or on relevant	Medium	Should identify action to address this.	

placements with provider	unit lower than (mean) average.			
	10.3 No information/data from evaluation or feedback.	High	Ensure system put in place.	

APPENDIX 2: PLACEMENT PROVIDER HEALTH AND SAFETY QUESTIONNAIRE

To be completed by the Placement Coordinator in liaison with the Placement Provider.

Please note that placements cannot commence until the UCO has received a satisfactorily completed health and safety checklist accompanied by the relevant documentation as specified in the checklist below.

Students should receive a health and safety briefing on the first day of their placement.

PROVIDER DETAILS:

Placement Provider Name:	
Placement Provider Address:	
Placement Provider Supervisor Name:	

HEALTH & SAFETY QUESTIONS

Question	**Yes**	**No**	**Copy of Policy / Document Provided?**	**If no policy / document is available, please explain why not / alternative arrangements.**
Do you have a Health & Safety Policy? If yes, please provide a copy.				
Do you have a policy regarding health and safety training for people in your organisation? If yes, please provide a copy.				
Is your organisation registered with the Health and Safety Executive?				
Is your organisation registered with the Local Authority Environmental Health Department?				
Is Public Liability insurance held? If yes, please provide a copy.				
Is Employer's Liability insurance held? If yes, please provide a copy.				
Will your insurances cover any liability incurred by a placement student as a result of a result of his/her duties as an employee?				
Have you carried out a risk assessment of your work practices to identify possible risks whether to your				

own employees or to others within your undertaking? If yes, please provide a copy.				
Are risk assessments kept under regular review?				
Are the results of risk assessment implemented?				
Is there a formal procedure for reporting and recording accidents and incidents in accordance with RIDDOR?				
Do you have emergency procedures to be followed in the event of serious or imminent danger by people at work in your undertaking? If yes, please provide a copy.				
Will you report to the UCO all accidents involving placement students?				
Will you report to the UCO any illness involving placement students which may be attributable to the work they are doing?				

PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PROVIDER HEALTH & SAFETY CONTACT INFORMATION

Please state the name of your nominated contact for implementing health and safety in your workplace:

Name:	
Role:	
Email:	
Phone:	

DECLARATION

The above information and statements are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Name:	
Role:	
Date:	

APPENDIX 3: STUDENT PLACEMENT CONDUCT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY AGREEMENT

This agreement is to be completed by each Student prior to the commencement of each placement.

This agreement may be substituted by equivalent documentation, e.g. where required by a PSRB.

This agreement may be placed in a unit guide or practice-based education handbook, allowing the student to sign a copy and make this available to the Placement Coordinator and / or Practice-Based Education Provider when requested.

Students attending multiple placements may complete one copy for each academic year/duration of the course, as long as they inform their Placement Coordinator of any changes in their circumstances.

Student Name:	
Course / Programme:	
Year of Study:	

THE AGREEMENT

This agreement outlines the expectations of the UCO and the responsibilities of you, the student, regarding the provision of practice-based education (i.e. placements) that are required as part of your UCO course / programme of study.

As a representative of the UCO (and its collaborative partners), you will behave in a professional and responsible manner and in accordance with UCO Regulations, Policies and Procedures.

You will attend any pre-placement briefing, induction and/or health and safety training offered by the Practice-Based Education Provider or the UCO (or its collaborative partners).

If you have to be withdrawn from a placement for disciplinary reasons, action may be taken in accordance with the UCO's Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

Where placements form part of an academic qualification leading to a professional qualification and eligibility to register with a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB), the UCO must be satisfied that you will be a safe and suitable entrant to the given profession. The UCO's Fitness to Practise Policy for your course / programme is relevant here and these procedures will apply in investigating cases where there are grounds for concern regarding a student's fitness to practise.

On a placement you agree:

a) To not act in any way that brings the UCO (and its collaborative partners) into disrepute and to actively work to promote a good reputation for the UCO (and its collaborative partners) and their fellow students.

b) To inform the UCO of any personal factors or changes to personal factors (e.g. health, disability, linguistic or cultural) that may affect the level of risk or may require reasonable adjustments to be made whilst on your placement.

c) To attend/complete any health, safety or other briefing provided as part of your placement and familiarise yourself with all information provided.

d) To abide by all rules regarding health and safety requirements, and other practices and procedures of the Placement Provider.

e) To carry out the work specified by the Placement Provider under the supervision of the specified Supervisor/Mentor(s)/Contact(s), agreed to be appropriate to the learning experience.

f) To evaluate your learning experience providing feedback to the UCO as required.

g) When on placement, to report to the UCO's Placement Coordinator if any incidents or issues occur or if you have any concerns about health and safety at your placement provider, that may jeopardise your welfare and/or the success of the learning experience.

h) To allow personal data which is reasonably believed to be relevant to the placement provider to be shared by the UCO and the Placement Provider, as appropriate.

i) To confirm that any vehicle insurance covers travel to/from work and business use if requested to travel during the placement (if driving to the placement by private vehicle).

j) To consult with the UCO prior to seeking any changes in the terms and duration of the placement.

k) To share next of kin information with the Placement Provider if required

Please use the space below to state any information that the UCO's Placement Coordinator should be aware of in relation to your personal circumstances while on placement:

Declaration:	
I confirm that the information I have provided above is accurate and true. I have read and agree to the above.	
Student's Signature:	
Print Name:	
Date:	

Please retain a copy of this completed form in your course/unit handbook or placement handbook for the duration of the placement/course and be prepared to make this available when requested by the Placement Coordinator.

You are required to this completed form to the Placement Coordinator in writing or electronically before the placement is due to commence.

UCO Office Use Only

Further action required: Yes/No

Approved by the UCO Placement Co-ordinator for and on behalf of the UCO.

Signed:

Print name:

Job title:

APPENDIX 4: PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION AUDIT RECORD

Course / Programme Title:		
Course Leader Name:		
	Unit Titles / Codes	**Credits and/or Placement Hours**
Mandatory placement(s)		
Optional placement(s)		
Other (please give detail)		
Brief description of purpose and nature of placement(s)		

Please use the following abbreviations to complete the tables below and indicate which apply with an "X":

Y = Yes
N = No
N/A = Not Applicable
FD = For Development

1	**Programme design: Learning Outcomes**	**Y**	**N**	**N/A**	**FD**
1.1	Do the learning outcomes for the placement contribute to the aims and overall learning outcomes of the programme?				
1.2	Have learning outcomes been benchmarked to:				
	• QAA FHEQ?				
	• QAA Characteristic and/or Subject Benchmark statements?				
	• National Occupational Standards?				
	• Professional & Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements?				
	• Other (please specify)?				
1.3	Is there a process for approving any student negotiated learning outcomes to ensure these are appropriate?				
1.4	Is there a process for ensuring the student and the placement provider / employer / mentor understand the learning outcomes (e.g. through a learning contract or agreement)?				
Further information/comments/hyperlinks/actions:					

2	Programme Design: Assessment	Y	N	N/A	FD
2.1	How is the placement assessed?				
	• Specific practice standards/competencies must be demonstrated?				
	• Portfolio of competence and associated evidence of learning?				
	• Reflective portfolio of learning through work?				
	• Placement project?				
	• Other (please specify)?				
2.2	Is the placement provider/employer or placement mentor involved in the assessment?				
2.3	If yes, indicate how this works:				
	• Provides informal/developmental feedback on student competence and achievement in the work-place				
	• Formally assesses student competence on pass/fail basis				
	• Formally assesses student competence and grades achievement				
	• Contributes to the grading of student's work in conjunction with academic staff				
	• Other (please specify).				
2.4	Where a placement provider/employer is formally involved in the assessment process, are there arrangements in place for:				
	• Briefing for their role in assessment?				
	• Moderation?				
	• Recording outcomes?				
2.5	Is the external examiner involved in moderating the standards of placement outcomes?				
2.6	If yes, please indicate if:				
	• The role of the external examiner(s) in moderating standards of placement outcomes is articulated in course documentation				
	• Arrangements are in place to communicate to the external examiner(s) their role in moderating standards of placement outcomes				
Further information/comments/hyperlinks					

3	**Programme Design: Information**	**Y**	**N**	**N/A**	**FD**
3.1	Is there a specific handbook/guide for students setting out processes/procedures and associated information about the placement?				
3.2	Is there a specific handbook/guide or equivalent for placement providers setting out processes/procedures and associated information about the placement (including role in assessment if applicable)?				
3.3	Is there a specific handbook/guide or equivalent for placement mentors (or equivalent) setting out processes/procedures and associated information about the placement (including role in assessment if applicable)?				
3.4	Is the placement tutor aware of and prepared for their responsibilities with regards to risk assessments, and to health and safety and equalities legislation?				
Further information/comments/hyperlinks					

4	**Procedures: Securing a placement experience**	**Y**	**N**	**N/A**	**FD**
4.1	Is the student responsible for securing the placement?				
4.2	Are students given support in identifying possible employers/companies providing appropriate placements?				
4.3	Do students receive a timely formal briefing about the placement process?				
4.4	If applicable to securing placements, are students offered help in completing application forms, producing CVs and preparing for interviews?				
4.5	Are students made aware of their responsibilities prior to commencing a period of placement, including:				
	• As representatives of the University and, where appropriate, the partner institution towards the placement provider and its customers/clients/patients and employees?				
	• In relation to health and safety and related risks, including in relation to themselves for managing their learning and professional relationships?				
	• For appropriate understanding and awareness of ethical and health and safety issues?				
	• For recording their progress and achievements?				
	• For alerting the placement provider and University to problems with the placement that might prevent the progress or satisfactory completion of the placement?				

	• In relation to whistleblowing and/or raising concerns or complaints about specific matters of concern whilst in placement?				
	• The requirement to sign the Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement **(Appendix 3)?**				
4.6	Are students made aware of their rights concerning a period of a placement, including their rights to:				
	• A safe working environment?				
	• Be treated in accordance with equalities legislation?				
Further information/comments/hyperlinks					

5	**Procedures: Placement Approval**	**Y**	**N**	**N/A**	**FD**
5.1	Is there a clear written procedure for approving placements?				
5.2	Does this involve a risk assessment undertaken and recorded by the placement coordinator/tutor?				
5.3	Is evidence relating to Employer and Public Liability Insurance required, recorded and the record kept up-to-date for each placement provider?				
5.4	Where satisfactory DBS is required, is there an effective process in place for monitoring and recording DBS status before the student goes on placement?				
5.5	Is there a written agreement specifying the responsibilities of each of the parties during placement:				
	a. The HE institution?				
	b. The student?				
	c. The placement organisation/company?				
	d. The placement mentor?				
5.6	Is this agreement signed by each party?				
5.7	Is there a named contact/supervisor responsible for the student in the placement/company?				
Further information/comments/hyperlinks					

6	Placement Support	Y	N	N/A	FD
6.1	Is there a named, suitably prepared or experienced, and approved UCO Placement Coordinator responsible for the students?				
6.2	Is there clear written information for placement providers on their responsibilities and role?				
6.3	Is there clear written communication for the placement provider/mentor/supervisor or similar covering the following:				
	• Learning outcomes for the placement and programme?				
	• Roles and responsibilities of the student, the University and the placement provider?				
	• Contact details for the placement coordinator/tutor or placement office?				
	• Guidance on the expectations, responsibilities etc of the placement supervisor/mentor?				
	• Details of policy and procedures relating to how students and placement providers should raise concerns and/or complaints?				
	• Details of how student progress will be monitored, assessed and recorded?				
	• The procedures for reporting information about student progress, and for providing feedback on the placement process?				
	• Clear information about the action to take if they are no longer able to offer placement learning opportunities?				
6.4	Is there an ongoing process to monitor progress in the placement and to monitor the student experience?				
6.5	Is this clearly communicated to the student and to the placement mentor?				
6.6	Are all parties provided with advice and guidance on what to do if there are concerns about the placement experience and/or the progress of the student?				
6.7	Are there processes in place for the student to reflect on learning from the placement when it has been completed and to evaluate the placement learning experience?				
Further information/comments/hyperlinks					

7	Monitoring and Review	Y	N	N/A	FD
7.1	Is feedback collected from students on the placement processes and procedures, and on the placement experience and the support provided by the placement provider/employer and mentor?				
7.2	If so, is this done through:				
	• Unit / Course evaluation?				
	• Placement feedback questionnaires?				
	• Focus groups?				
	• Other (please specify)?				
7.3	Is the feedback used to monitor the quality of the placement providers and the experiences offered to students?				
7.4	Is the feedback used to identify enhancement opportunities in relation to process, support, etc?				
7.5	Is feedback collected from the placement supervisors/mentors or equivalent on the placement arrangements and support provided by the UCO?				
7.6	If so, is this done through:				
	• Feedback questionnaires?				
	• Annual briefing/review events/meetings?				
	• Other (please specify)?				
7.7	Do placement supervisors/mentors or equivalent receive information on the results of the feedback (from themselves as a group, and also from students), with any developments for improvement identified?				
7.8	Is feedback collected from the placement provider/employer or equivalent?				
7.9	If so, is this done through:				
	• Feedback questionnaires?				
	• Liaison meetings?				
	• Other (please specify)?				
7.10	Do employers receive information on the results of feedback?				
7.11	Do Annual Reports make specific reference to evaluation of the placement experience?				
7.12	Does the placement co-ordinator make regular use of external quality reports (e.g. from Care Quality Commission or Ofsted) in relation to placement providers?				

Further information/comments/hyperlinks

Areas for development		
Action	**Responsibility**	**Deadline**

Name & Role of person completing audit:	
Date of completion of audit:	
Signature of Course Leader:	

APPENDIX 5: APPROVING & MANAGING PRACTICE-BASED EDUCATION PLACEMENTS CHECKLIST

KEY STEPS IN PLACEMENT APPROVAL AND MANAGING PLACEMENT EXPERIENCE			
Key Roles in Managing Placement/ Experience	**Actions to be completed**	**Relevant Sections of Policy and Documentation**	**Institute specific roles responsible for key activities**
STEP 1: PRE-PLACEMENT - Placement Experience integral to course / unit			
Placement Coordinator (or equivalent)	Check principles for design and approval of placement. Identify who will undertake key roles in the management of placement.	Section 10.10A Appendix 4	
STEP 2: PRE-PLACEMENT - Sourcing Placement and Suitability **Identify whether the UCO or the Student is responsible for sourcing potential placement**			
2a If the UCO sources placement NB: Students must not commence placement prior to the UCO's full approval of the Placement.	Agree who fulfils this role for the course. Establish contact with potential placement provider and provide information setting out expectations, relative roles and responsibilities and placement processes. Ensure proposed placement meets appropriate learning outcomes/expectations.	Appendix 1	
2b If student is responsible for finding and securing the placement NB: Students must not commence placement prior to the UCO's full approval of the Placement.	Brief and support students for their role in sourcing placements and understanding of the approval process. Receive information from student to assess suitability of proposed placement to meet learning outcomes. Institute completes risk assessment and approval of placement (see Step 3) Ensure students understand that any change made to the originally approved placement provider will require a new placement approval process.	Appendix 1	

STEP 3: PRE-PLACEMENT - Risk Management in Placement Approval			
3a Risk Assessment [Appendix 1] **Completed prior to student commencing placement**			
The **Placement Coordinator (or equivalent)** must ensure placement activities are covered by a suitable and sufficient risk assessment and appropriate control measures adopted.	Check requirements for placement paperwork and process for type of 'placement' proposed. **Complete Risk Assessment Form (Appendix 1)** – forms initial evaluation and judgment of risk, record of risk assessment and actions taken. **Establish provision of support for the student** from a designated member of staff in the placement setting. **Placements judged High Risk (and International Placements) must be referred to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)** for decision as to whether placement can proceed and necessary control measures. Additional requirements exist for **International placements and students studying in the UK with a Tier 4 Visa (International Students).**	Appendix 1 Appendix 2 Appendix 3	
3b PRE-PLACEMENT - Risk Management in Placement Approval: Placement Provider Health and Safety Questionnaire and Agreement **Received prior to student commencing placement**			
The **Placement Provider** must confirm that they take proper account of health and safety considerations and agree to treat the student as equivalent to their employee in relation to health and safety matters	Maintain contact with placement provider and provide information setting out module/course expectations, relative roles and responsibilities and placement processes **Ensure Placement Provider completes the Placement Providers' Health and Safety Questionnaire (Appendix 2).** This acts as evidence of the Placement Provider's agreement to accept their health and safety responsibilities for the student on placement. **Maintain record of placement providers' current Employer and Public Liability Insurance** (annual receipt of evidence)	Appendix 2 [NB. The signatory of the placement provider must have the necessary seniority and authority to formally commit the host organisation or entity to the terms of this agreement]	
3c PRE-PLACEMENT - Risk Management in Placement Approval: Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement Received prior to student commencing placement			

The Student must confirm acceptance of their role and responsibility for their conduct, and to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others affected by their actions on placement	**Ensure student completes and signs Student Placement Conduct and Health and Safety Agreement (Appendix 3)** prior to placement.	Appendix 3	
3d PRE-PLACEMENT - Additional requirements for placement approval may include consideration of:			
Safeguarding and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) **Occupational Health Check (specific to some courses who will have necessary arrangements in place)**		DBS Policy & Procedure Safeguarding Policy	
Disclosure of disability and reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities/specific learning needs. Disabled students have a general entitlement to the provision of inclusive educational opportunities in a manner that meets their individual requirements, including placements experiences.		Take advice from Student Support Team Appendix 3	
STEP 4: PRE-PLACEMENT PREPARATION AND INFORMATION			
4a Preparation and Information for Students and raising concerns/issues			
Placement Coordinator/Unit Leader clarifies expectations with students	Brief and provide specific handbook/guide or equivalent setting out relative roles and responsibilities, processes/procedures, entitlements and associated information for placement	Practice-Based Education Handbook	
4b Preparation and Information for Placement Providers and raising concerns/issues			
Placement Coordinator/Unit Leader clarifies expectations with placement providers	Provide specific handbook/guide or equivalent for placement providers setting out relative roles and responsibilities, including unit/course information and whom to contact to raise concerns or make a complaint. **Placement Providers, employers or mentors who have a designated role in the formal summative assessment of students**, **must be briefed and prepared for this role.** A record of placement provider staff involved in the summative assessment of students should be maintained.	Practice-Based Education Handbook	

STEP 5 – PLACEMENT APPROVAL: Notification of student and placement provider of approval decision/conditions			
Student cannot attend placement and count placement hours/experience until placement is formally approved.	Placement is approved on basis of assessment of suitability of placement for learning experience and all aspects of risk assessment. Specific control measures may need to be put in place. A placement agreement identifying learning objectives, relative roles, responsibilities and expectations for learning experience.	**Approved on basis of complete and satisfactory:** Appendix 1 Appendix 2 Appendix 3 Any other specific requirements, e.g. DBS	
STEP 6 - DURING PLACEMENT/WBL EXPERIENCE: Key Contacts/Supervision			
Placement Coordinator and/or the Placement Supervisor or Unit Tutor must support and monitor students on placement	Check and clarify minimum expectations for direct contact / supervision / visits and support for students on placement.		
STEP 7 - RECORD KEEPING			
Record keeping is an essential element of the management of student placement experiences	Maintain secure centrally held records of placement approval and details of where and when students are in placement experiences (within the relevant placement provider). Maintain accurate and up-to-date records of student participation and progress in placement experiences, and where relevant record achievement of placement requirements on Registry student record.		
STEP 8 - FOLLOWING PLACEMENT			
Processes are in place to evaluate and review placement experiences alongside other learning, teaching and assessment experience	Evaluate student experience of placement (normally as part of unit evaluation). Evaluate placement providers' feedback in order to identify areas for improvement and enhancement	NB. Placement questions are incorporated in the NSS	

Academic Quality Framework

Section 17: Academic Policies & Procedures

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 17: Academic Policies & Procedures

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest of <u>all members</u> of the UCO.

Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	Location(s)	Proposed next review date and approval required
V1.0	*June 2014 Academic Council*	*To define the procedures for the management of academic quality and standards in teaching and learning at the UCO.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\0 Quality Team – AQF 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.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Aug 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*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sept 2018 PRAG Chair*	*Administrative Amendments to update weblinks.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V5.0	*Sept 2019 PRAG Chair*	*Annual Review: Administrative Amendments to update weblinks & footnotes.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF 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)	

If you have any feedback or suggestions for enhancing this document, please email your comments to: quality@uco.ac.uk

Academic Quality Framework

Section 17: Academic Policies & Procedures

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17.1 Introduction to Academic Policies & Procedures

17.1.1 A wide range of academic policies and procedures are in operation at the UCO. These have been developed to promote and support student achievement and to enhance and promote operational efficiencies.

17.1.2 The following terminology is used at the UCO regarding policies and procedures:

a) Policy: A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual[1].

b) Procedure: An established or official way of doing something[2].

17.1.3 Ensuring that appropriate academic policies and procedures are in place directly impacts on maintaining academic standards and quality assurance and enhancement at the UCO. They provide students, faculty and staff with clear processes to follow and ensure that actions and decisions are considered by appropriate individuals in a consistent and responsible way.

17.2 Alignment of Academic Policies & Procedures with External Reference Points

17.2.1 The UCO's academic policies and procedures are developed and reviewed in line with the UCO's Developing & Reviewing UCO Policies Procedure. This procedure provides assurance that appropriate consultation is included as part of a review or development of a policy or procedure and that external reference points are considered as appropriate. This includes ensuring that policies and procedures align with the UK Quality Code for Higher Education[3].

17.3 Reviewing & Evaluating Academic Policies & Procedures

17.3.1 The UCO's Policy, Regulations and Audit Group (PRAG) working on behalf of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of and overseeing the review and development of UCO academic policies and procedures as well as this Academic Quality Framework, the academic governance committee structure, institutional policies and procedures and management of the UCO's Core Documentation. The PRAG normally meets four times a year and provides regular reports in the form of meeting minutes and summaries to the QAC, which then reports to the UCO's Academic Council.

17.3.2 Faculty and staff should follow the Developing & Reviewing UCO Policies Procedure if they wish to develop a new or review and amend an existing academic or institutional policy or procedure.

17.3.3 The Developing & Reviewing UCO Policies Procedure stipulates that student consultation for the development of new and the review of existing policies and procedures through electronic consultation, focus groups and discussion at relevant committees with student members is a requirement.

17.4 Publication of Academic Policies & Procedures

17.4.1 All UCO policies and procedures, including academic policies and procedures, are published and made available to all faculty, staff and students through the UCO's website[4], which is accessible from both within and outside of UCO premises. Faculty are encouraged to link to

[1] http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/policy?q=policy
[2] http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/procedure?q=procedure
[3] https://www.qaa.ac.uk/quality-code
[4] https://www.uco.ac.uk/about-uco/who-we-are/policies-procedures-and-privacy

this area of the website when referring to academic policies and procedures to ensure that the correct and most current version of a policy or procedure is utilized and referenced.

17.5 Academic Policies & Procedures as Core Documents

17.5.1 Academic policies and procedures are classed as UCO Core Documentation and are subsequently considered in line with the UCO's Core Documentation Management Policy and Procedure. This ensures that academic policies and procedures are developed, reviewed and maintained using a document control system to provide assurance that current versions only are published, are easily identified and located and are registered with the UCO's Core Documentation Holder.

17.5.2 As Core Documents, academic policies and procedures are listed on the UCO's Core Documentation Register. In addition to keeping a record of all UCO Core Documentation, the Core Documentation Register also includes information about the document owner, the date for review and documentation history of documents. This ensures that academic policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate.

17.5.3 The Core Documentation Register is managed by the PRAG on behalf of the QAC. All academic policies and procedures should be registered with the Core Documentation Holder.

17.5.4 For further information about the Core Documentation Register, please contact the Core Documentation Holder:

Head of Quality | quality@uco.ac.uk

AQF17: Forms & Templates

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A

Academic Quality Framework

Section 18: Glossary of Terms

2019-2020

Academic Quality Framework

Section 18: Glossary of Terms

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be read by <u>all members</u> of the UCO.

Version number	Dates produced and approved (include committee)	Reason for production/ revision	Author	Location(s)	Proposed next review date and approval required
V1.0	*Sept 2016* *Academic Council*	*To define and clarify terminology and abbreviations used throughout the Academic Quality Framework..*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version:* *J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF* *Published Version:* *Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V2.0	*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*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version:* *J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF* *Published Version:* *Intranet*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V3.0	*Sept 2018* *PRAG Chair*	*Annual Review* *Administrative Amendments to update change in HE regulatory body.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version:* *J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF* *Published Version:* *Website*	*Annually and on an "as required" basis.*
V4.0	*Sept 2019* *PRAG Chair*	*Annual Review* *Updated to include reference to the HCPC and Unistats and to remove reference to Unit Handbooks and KIS/WIS.*	*Head of Quality*	*Master Version:* *J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF* *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)	

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Abbreviation / Term	Description
AC	Academic Council; the main decision-making committee of the UCO for academic matters.
Academic Quality	Academic quality is concerned with how well the learning opportunities made available to students enable them to achieve their award. It is about making sure that appropriate and effective teaching, support, assessment and learning opportunities are provided for them.
Academic Standards	Threshold academic standards are the minimum acceptable level of achievement that a student has to demonstrate to be eligible for an academic award. Academic standards should be at a similar level across the UK.
AQF	Academic Quality Framework; the document that sets out the UCO's procedures for the management of academic quality and standards in teaching and learning at the UCO.
ARC	The Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) is responsible for overseeing the UCO's audit and risk management and to report thereon to the Board of Directors.
Board of Directors	The UCO's governing body.
Board of Examiners	Boards of Examiners consider the results of assessments at all stages of a course, determine progression and recommend awards, including the classification of awards where appropriate.
BONE	The UCO's Virtual Learning Environment
CAR	Course Annual Report
CIF	Course Information Form
Course Handbook	A student-focused document that provides students with detailed information about each course of study.
Course Recruitment Groups	Course Recruitment Groups keep under review the course admissions policy and practice, including matters related to Widening Participation, student numbers, and makes recommendations accordingly to the Senior Management Team. It promotes fairness and consistency in the UCO's Admissions Policies.
Course Teams	Course Teams are responsible to the relevant Portfolio Board of Studies for the day to day administration and management of the Course. The Course Teams ensure that the validated curriculum is delivered and assessed in accordance with the relevant Course Information Forms and Unit Information Forms.
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
DBS	Disclosure & Barring Service
EC	The Equality Committee (EC) assures, improves and promotes equality for all UCO users, within the UCO, as required under the Equality Act 2010.

EESC	The Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (EESC) reports to Academic Council on initiatives for assuring and enhancing education and teaching standards at the UCO through defining and monitoring educational strategy.
ERSC	Education and Registration Standards Committee of the GOsC; promotes high standards of education and training in osteopathy (referred to in The Osteopaths Act as the Education Committee).
FEC	The Finance & Estates Committee (FEC) is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the UCO's financial and estates strategies and to report thereon to the Board.
FHEQ	The framework for higher education qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland; an important reference point for providers of higher education. The FHEQ, and associated guidance for implementation, has been written to assist higher education providers to maintain academic standards; to inform international comparability of academic standards, especially in the European context; to ensure international competitiveness; and to facilitate student and graduate mobility.
GOsC	The General Osteopathic Council; the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body for Osteopathy.
HCPC	Health & Care Professions Council – a statutory regulator of health and care professions in the UK.
HEI	Higher Education Institution; higher education providers regulated in England which have one or more of the following features: receive direct public grants for HE, have courses which have been specifically designated by the Government as eligible for the purposes of English student support funding, are higher education institutions (HEIs), have the right to award one or more types of UK degree.
HSC	The Health & Safety Committee (HSC) is responsible for overseeing health and safety matters at the UCO.
IAR	Institutional Annual Report
IOS	Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences – a non-accredited pre-entry course for the M.Ost courses.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator; a set of quantifiable measures that a company or industry uses to gauge or compare performance in terms of meeting their strategic and operational goals.
LASER	Laser Learning Awards; develops, accredits and quality assures courses and qualifications at all levels of education and training and is licensed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) to award the Access to HE Diploma.
M.Ost	Integrated Masters in Osteopathy Award
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding

NSS	National Student Survey; a widely recognised authoritative survey completed by students at all publicly funded Higher Education Institutions in England, Wales, Northern Ireland, and Scotland, as well as other providers of higher education.
OAR	Operational Annual Report
OEI	Osteopathic Education Institution; an educational institution providing osteopathic education.
OfS	Office for Students; the independent regulator of higher education in England.
OHC	The Occupational Health Committee (OHC) is a standalone committee that meets when required to consider reasonable adjustments to the methods of learning and assessment through which students acquire and demonstrate osteopathic competences, for students/potential students who have declared or have an observed significant health issue or disability.
OPS	Osteopathic Practice Standards; The Osteopathic Practice Standards are published by the GOsC and describe the standards expected of osteopaths and include guidance to assist osteopaths in meeting these standards. The purpose of the standards is to ensure quality care for patients and to protect them from harm.
PBE	Pre-Boards of Examiners (Pre-Boards) (PBEs) take place in advance of Boards of Examiners meetings and consider Portfolio Board approved student award, progression, and assessment profiles and then make proposals for consideration by the Boards of Examiners in accordance with the UCO's regulations as approved by its validating bodies.
PDR	Professional Development Review
Policy	A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organization or individual.
Portfolio Boards	Portfolio Boards report to the EESC and oversees the courses under their remit to ensure coherence, maintain an overview of curriculum content, structure, organisation, assessment, learning resources and delivery of the teaching timetable. There are three Portfolio Boards: Foundation Education, Pre-Registration Education and Postgraduate Education.
PRAG	Policy, Regulations & Audit Group; a subcommittee of the Quality Assurance Committee which evaluates the effectiveness of academic policy and regulations, the quality assurance framework, and the Academic Council governance committee structure.
Procedure	An established or official way of doing something.
PSRB	Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body; the body that sets and monitors the standards and outcomes of programmes of study leading to professional accreditation.
QAA	The Quality Assurance Agency; the independent body entrusted with monitoring and advising on standards and quality in UK higher education.
Quality Assurance	Quality assurance refers to a range of review procedures designed to

	safeguard academic standards and promote learning opportunities for students of acceptable quality.
QAC	The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) is a subcommittee of Academic Council and is responsible for overseeing the implementation and development of the UCO's systems for setting, maintaining and monitoring academic standards including its quality assurance systems and procedures, for all taught provision.
Quality Code	The UK Quality Code for Higher Education; this gives all higher education providers a shared starting point for setting, describing and assuring the academic standards of their higher education awards and programmes and the quality of the learning opportunities they provide.
Quality Enhancement	Quality enhancement refers to taking deliberate steps to bring about continual improvement in the effectiveness of the learning experience of students.
RAG	Reporting to the Senior Management Team (SMT), the Resource Allocation Group (RAG) is responsible for making recommendations concerning the UCO's resource allocation model.
REC	The Research Ethics Committee (REC) is responsible for undertaking ethical consideration of research proposals whether it involves participants within the institution or outside the institution; this currently includes students and staff from the UCO and applications from students from other institutions who would like to carry out work with our faculty, students or patients.
RPL	Recognition of Prior Learning
RQ	Recognised Qualification; Under the Osteopaths Act 1993 the GOsC is the statutory regulatory body for osteopaths and osteopathic education providers. The GOsC ensures that courses of osteopathic education meet its requirements for standards and quality, as well as governance and management of the course provider. Those that do are recognised and awarded Recognised Qualification (RQ) status. This allows graduates from those courses to register with the GOsC and practise osteopathy legally in the UK. The RQ is subject to approval from the Privy Council.
RSSC	The Research and Scholarship Strategy Committee (RSSC) reports to Academic Council and focuses on research and scholarship activity and development across the UCO. It takes responsibility for the assurance and enhancement of research activities of the UCO.
SARG	The Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARD) is a stand-alone group which consists of the appropriate Course Leaders, Heads of Area and the Student Support department. Its purpose is to monitor student attendance and to notify the relevant support staff, Course Leaders and the Student Support Manager of cases for concern.
SB	The Scrutiny Board is a sub-committee of the relevant Course Team and is responsible for the receipt, consideration and modification of all examination material for the specified course.

SCG	The Staff Consultative Group (SCG) provides a forum for staff consultation and participation, with specific responsibilities for health and safety and policy review.
SMT	The Senior Management Team (SMT) ensures there is effective leadership, management and co-ordination of all the major academic and support activities undertaken by the UCO.
SEEC	SEEC Level Descriptors; Credit level descriptors define the level of complexity, relative demand and autonomy expected of a learner on completion of a module or programme of learning. They provide a description of levels of learning through a hierarchy of knowledge and skills.
SSLCGs	Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups (SSLCGs); these groups are subcommittees of the Education Enhancement & Strategy Committee (EESC). They serve as the arena for students to discuss with faculty and staff significant group issues connected to learning, teaching, student support, and UCO services and environment. They also provide an opportunity for staff to consult with students about institutional developments under consideration.
TDAP	Taught Degree Awarding Powers; Taught degree awarding powers (TDAP) give UK higher education providers the right to award bachelor's degrees with honours and other taught higher education qualifications, but not postgraduate research degrees.
The Charity Commission	Regulates the administration and affairs of registered UK charities.
UCO	University College of Osteopathy
UAR	Unit Annual Report
UIF	Unit Information Form
Unistats	The official website for comparing UK higher education course data, which includes official data for undergraduate courses on each university and college's satisfaction scores in the National Student Survey, jobs and salaries after study and other key information for prospective students.
VCG	The Vice-Chancellor's Group collectively acts to ensure effective leadership of the UCO and to oversee strategic planning processes.
WPASG	The Widening Participation and Admissions Strategy Group (WPASG) is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of the UCOs strategy for admissions and widening participation.

AQF18: FORMS & TEMPLATES

Form / Template Reference Number	Form / Template Title
N/A	N/A