



Academic Quality Framework

Section 10: Student Voice 2023-2024

Academic Quality Framework

Section 10: The Student Voice

This Section of the Academic Quality Framework should be of particular interest to all students and staff including those at Collaborative Partners.

Version number	Dates produced and approved	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.
V2.0	Sept 2016 Academic Council	Reviewed to update staff role and policy titles and to reflect current practice.	Student Experience Officer	Master Version: J:\1 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	Student Experience Officer	Master Version: J:\1 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.	Head of Quality	Master Version: J:\1 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.	Head of Quality	Master Version: J:\1 Quality Team \0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website	Annually and on an “as required” basis.
V6.0	Aug 2020 PRAG Chair	Administrative amendments to reflect new committee structure, update weblinks & inclusion of student questionnaires as section documents.	Head of Quality	Master Version: J:\1 Quality Team \0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website	Annually and on an “as required” basis.
V7.0	Aug 2021 PRAG Chair	Administrative amendments to reflect current practice and section appendices.	Head of Quality	Master Version: J:\1 Quality Team \0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website	Annually and on an “as required” basis.

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V8.0	July 2022 Academic Council	Major Amendments to reflect current practice including changes to reflect Student Evaluation Questionnaire process.	Head of Student Services	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Website	Annually and on an “as required” basis.
V9.0	June 2023 TQSC	Minor amendments to better reflect and incorporate the roles and responsibilities of Collaborative Partners, to update SSLCG and Drop- in Session Student Voice mechanisms.	Head of Student Services	Master Version: SharePoint – Quality Team 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					

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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 and Collaborative Partner institutions through giving their views and feedback, known as using “The Student Voice”.
- 10.1.2 The UCO and Partner institutions consider 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 Engagement¹.
- 10.1.3 The main purposes of promoting student engagement at the UCO and Collaborative Partner institutions and encouraging students to use the Student Voice, are to:
- a) Enhance the student experience.
 - b) Contribute to monitoring and reviewing academic quality and standards.
 - c) Ensure the effectiveness of course design and delivery.
 - d) Identify good practice.
 - e) Identify the need for change.
- 10.1.4 The UCO’s Academic Council is responsible for agreeing and monitoring effective Student Voice mechanisms which are appropriate for students and the UCO, and at Collaborative Partner institutions through the UCO’s Partner Approval Process (see AQF Section 16: Collaborative Activity)
- 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 drop-in sessions by appointment, student representation, evaluation questionnaires, focus groups, course approval, modification and review processes (see AQF Section 4: Course Approval & Modification and Section 6: Periodic Review), and complaints and appeals procedures.
- 10.1.6 Systems of student engagement may also be considered as part of course and institutional approval and review processes undertaken by external approval bodies (see AQF Section 4: Course Approval & Modification and Section 6: Periodic Review).
- 10.1.7 Responses to issues arising from student feedback are considered on an ongoing basis at both the UCO and Partner institutions and as part of the UCO’s Evaluation, Reporting and Monitoring processes (see AQF Section 5: Evaluation, Reporting & Monitoring).

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. Collaborative Partners likewise inform students studying on courses leading to UCO awards about how they can engage through approved Partner platforms.

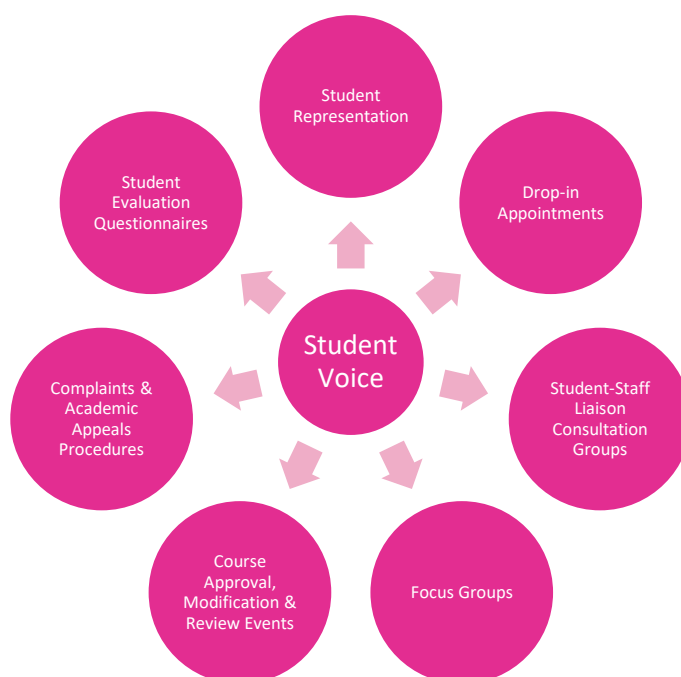
¹<https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/quality-code/advice-and-guidance/student-engagement>

- 10.2.2 During induction sessions, students are also informed about how the UCO or Collaborative Partners 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 or through an approved Collaborative Partner platform.
- 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 the UCO Student Portal (or Partner equivalents).

10.3 STUDENT VOICE MECHANISMS

- 10.3.1 A variety of formal and informal Student Voice Mechanisms are utilised at the UCO and Collaborative Partners through which students may provide feedback on their learning, institutional and overall student experience. These are designed to be accessible, effective and appropriate for all students and are summarised in [Figure 1](#) below.
- 10.3.2 Student Voice Mechanisms are reviewed and reported on annually to ensure that they remain accessible, effective and appropriate.
- 10.3.3 The range of Student Voice Mechanisms in place are outlined in more detail in the sections below.

FIGURE 1: STUDENT VOICE MECHANISMS



10.4 STUDENT REPRESENTATION

10.4.1 Student representation provides the opportunity for students to:

- a) Act as a channel of communication between the student body and staff.
- b) Become active committee members and thereby influence UCO / Partner policy and decision-making.
- c) Enhance the provision and services by gathering and reporting the views of the student body.

A) STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ROLES

10.4.2 There are two types of Student Representative role:

- a) The Course / Year Group Student Representative who represents the views of the course / year group to which the student belongs.
- b) The Committee Student Representative who represents the wider student body's views as a full member of a particular committee.

10.4.3 The above Student Representative roles may be shared so that students are more easily able to participate at committees. 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.

B) STUDENT & STAFF LIAISON CONSULTATION GROUPS

10.4.4 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. Partner institutions may operate an equivalent committee as approved at Partner Approval.

10.4.5 An indicative agenda for an SSLCG meeting is as follows; additional items are added as necessary:

- a) Minutes of the last meeting.
- b) Matters arising from the last meeting.
- c) Comments, Compliments & Concerns (3Cs) raised by student representatives.
- d) Institutional matters for consultation by the UCO.

10.4.6 The Students' Union President is invited to co-chair meetings of the SSLCG.

10.4.7 SSLCG meetings are normally held by cohort / year group so that discussion is focussed on items relevant to the year group concerned.

C) COMMITTEES WITH STUDENT REPRESENTATION

10.4.8 UCO committees that include a Student Representative as part of their membership to represent the wider student body are listed in [Table 10.1](#) which also outlines the role function of the Student Representative. Partner institutions may operate to a different committee structure providing students studying at a Partner institution with similar opportunities to participate in committee discussion and decision-making.

10.4.9 The UCO's Committee Handbook (available on the UCO Portal and by request from quality@uco.ac.uk) provides guidance for committee members and Chairs of committees which involve student members to support Student Representative engagement.

TABLE 10.1: 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)
Research & Scholarship Strategy Committee	Leads research and scholarship strategy and initiatives	1 Student studying for a research-based award.	Contribute with views from the UCO's research degree students.	4 times per year (Reports to Academic Council)
Access & Student Success Committee	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)
Student-Staff Liaison & Consultation Groups	Consultation forum for institutional matters raised by students and staff.	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 meeting per term with each cohort / year group (Reports to Course Teams)
Course Teams	Manages the day-to-day operation of a course	1 representative per course. NB usually these representatives would be a Level 6 or 7 student who are familiar with the UCO.	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) (Reports to the Teaching Quality & Standards Committee)

D) ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTING & SUPPORTING STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES AT THE UCO

- 10.4.10 Students are provided with information about the UCO's Student Representative process and roles annually, normally during the Autumn Term.
- 10.4.11 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.
- 10.4.12 UCO's Head of Student Services is responsible for organising the nominations and election process, with support from the Students' Union.
- 10.4.13 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.
- 10.4.14 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 (AQF10-01).

E) ARRANGEMENTS FOR APPOINTING & SUPPORTING STUDENT BOARD MEMBERS AT THE UCO

- 10.4.15 When vacancies for new UCO Student Board Members arise, they are appointed following a successful application process at the UCO's Annual General Meeting.
- 10.4.16 Student Board Members normally serve for a term of up to 3 years.
- 10.4.17 Student Board Members are provided with specific training which is facilitated by the Clerk to the Board.
- 10.4.18 The roles of both Student Representatives and Student Board Members are underpinned by job descriptions, which specify roles and responsibilities.
- 10.4.19 Induction and training sessions for both roles are provided and a staff point of contact provides ongoing guidance.

F) ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTING, APPOINTING & SUPPORTING STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES AT PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

- 10.4.20 Partner institutions are normally responsible for instituting their own arrangements for electing, appointing and supporting Student Representative. Where this is the case, these arrangements are approved as a variance to UCO Student Voice Mechanisms at Partner Approval.

10.5 DROP-IN APPOINTMENTS

- 10.5.1 Students are encouraged to raise concerns or questions immediately with relevant staff and are able to do so by arranging a mutually convenient appointment. Drop-in appointments can be arranged through Student Representatives raising a year group or matter on behalf of another student, or directly by individual students themselves.

10.6 FOCUS GROUPS

- 10.6.1 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.

10.7 COURSE APPROVAL, MODIFICATION & REVIEW EVENTS

- 10.7.1 UCO and Partner Student Representatives and the wider student body are invited to contribute to course approval and review events, including roles as panel members and as attendees. All students are also invited to comment on proposed course modifications (see AQF Section 4: Course Approval & Modification).

10.8 COMPLAINTS & ACADEMIC APPEALS

- 10.8.1 Detailed information is published to students regarding the procedures to follow in complaints (through the Student Complaints Policy and Procedures²) and academic appeal matters (through the Academic Appeals Policy³). Partner institutions likewise publish equivalent information to their students.
- 10.8.2 Complaints and appeals policies are designed to deal with students' specific concerns that cannot be resolved through other available Student Voice Mechanisms.
- 10.8.3 The way in which students may make a complaint or academic appeal is contained within the relevant policies noted above.
- 10.8.4 In both cases students are provided with impartial advice and support by the UCO's Head of Student Services and Students' Union (or Partner equivalents). Mediation is also offered where appropriate.

10.9 STUDENT EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES

A) STUDENT PULSE SURVEYS

- 10.9.1 UCO generated student pulse surveys (AQF10-02) are normally administered to all students on an annual basis by the Quality Team to gather formal anonymous student feedback that is used to inform annual monitoring reports, periodic reviews, new course development and modifications to existing courses and units.
- 10.9.2 Pulse Surveys are disseminated to students at different points throughout the year to gather feedback on different aspects of the student experience enabling the UCO to respond to matters of concern in a timely way.
- 10.9.3 Results of Pulse Surveys are collated and disseminated to relevant staff members, including Course Leaders, Unit Leaders and Senior Managers by the Quality Team,

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>

identifying the extent of student satisfaction using the traffic light system provided in [Table 10.1](#).

- 10.9.4 Course and Unit Leaders in liaison with the Head of Student Services are responsible for disseminating results and response to feedback arising from Pulse Surveys to students and for using the feedback to inform annual reports, periodic reviews and course developments and modifications.

B) SERVICE AREA QUESTIONNAIRES

- 10.9.5 Senior Managers may also use student evaluation questionnaires to 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.

C) SUBJECT SPECIFIC EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES

- 10.9.6 Subject teaching staff can choose to gather and use student feedback in ways that are tailored to them and their area.
- 10.9.7 Tutors are provided with guidance, including sample questions, which they can draw from and suggestions on methods to increase response rates using the Subject Survey Guidance & Example Survey (AQF10-03).
- 10.9.8 It is not compulsory for subject tutors to gather subject feedback from students, but the process and outcomes can be used to inform course and unit modifications and form part of an individual's Professional Development Review (PDR).
- 10.9.9 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 subject specific survey/s for the current and/or new cohort of students.

D) PRACTICE EDUCATOR EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES

- 10.9.10 In the clinical centre, student group feedback on Practice Educators is undertaken. This involves students providing group-moderated feedback on individual Practice Educators. Themes from group feedback and any related actions are normally summarised by the Head of Clinic every six months.

E) THE NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY

- 10.9.11 All final year undergraduate students are invited to complete the National Student Survey (NSS) administered by Ipsos MORI, an independent market research company.
- 10.9.12 The NSS is intended to give final year students an opportunity to report back on their student experience.
- 10.9.13 NSS results are published on the Discover Uni website⁴, the official website for comparing UK higher education course data that helps prospective students to choose the right course and university for them.

⁴ <https://discoveruni.gov.uk/>

- 10.9.14 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.
- 10.9.15 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 Teaching Quality & Standards Committee and Student-Staff Liaison and Consultation Groups.
- 10.9.16 The action plan undergoes a mid-point review midway through the year to review progress.
- 10.9.17 NSS results and responses are included in student induction presentations and disseminated throughout the UCO via the UCO Student Portal, Vice-Chancellor's briefings, and relevant UCO committees.

F) RESPONDING TO STUDENT EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FEEDBACK

- 10.9.18 Results of and responses to student feedback received and action planning is informed by pre-set thresholds for levels of satisfaction and categorising student evaluation questionnaire results as shown in [Table 10.2](#).

TABLE 10.2: PRE-SET THRESHOLDS (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).

- 10.9.19 The Quality Team produces summary reports of student evaluation questionnaire results which they administer identifying levels of student satisfaction in line with Table 10.2. These are forwarded to relevant staff and Course Teams and considered by relevant committees for action planning and monitoring.
- 10.9.20 UCO student evaluation questionnaires results are normally summarised and collated into a Student Survey Annual Report by the Quality Team to review practice and results across the UCO and to compare results with those of previous years where these are available.
- 10.9.21 Action plans made in response to student evaluation questionnaires are considered, agreed and monitored by the Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups, Course Teams the Teaching Quality & Standards Committee, Academic Council and the Senior Management Team as appropriate Action plans normally undergo a mid-point review midway through the year to review progress.

10.10 STUDENT EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRES AT PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

- 10.10.1 Partner institutions may implement their own student evaluation questionnaire system. Where this is the case, this is approved as a variance to UCO Student Voice Mechanisms at Partner Approval.

AQF10: APPENDICES

Appendix Reference Number	Appendix Title
AQF10-01	Student Representatives' Handbook
AQF10-02	Student Pulse Surveys
AQF10-03	Subject Survey Guidance & Example Survey