



University College
of Osteopathy

Strategic Plan 2018-2023

An Agenda for
Excellence

Chairman's Foreword

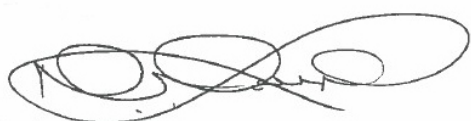
On behalf of the University College of Osteopathy (UCO), it is my pleasure to introduce our new strategic plan for the 2018-2023 period. This Strategic Plan affirms the UCO's mission and vision and sets out the priorities which will guide the UCO in the future. It introduces the UCO's Agenda for Excellence.

The UCO has been shaping its future since its foundation in 1917. The new strategic plan keeps this vision at its heart, recognising that it is only through the pursuit of excellence that the UCO can empower its students and staff to shape their own future and shape the future of the UCO. Through its ambitious plan the UCO aims to ensure continued growth in its stature, reputation and influence, achieve a step change in its performance and safeguard its academic, financial and environmental sustainability.

The plan is the result of comprehensive consultation and has been warmly endorsed by the Board of Directors and Academic Council. I extend my grateful thanks to all who contributed to the development, drafting and refinement of the new strategic plan.

UCO planning is a continual process and must be able to respond and adapt to the constantly evolving landscape of the higher education sector and the changing needs of the wider world. We are confident that this new strategic plan provides an aspirational and robust framework within which the UCO can develop its plans on an annual basis and continue to thrive in the uncertain but exciting period that lies ahead.

Implementation of the strategic plan is the responsibility of everyone at the UCO. I look forward to working with all colleagues to achieve the plan's objectives and ensure the sustained success of the University College of Osteopathy.



David Barrett

We must become the destination of choice – for staff as well as students – because of the exceptional quality of everything that we do.

Vice-Chancellor's Introduction

The recent past has been a remarkable time for the University College of Osteopathy (UCO) with the granting of degree awarding powers, designation as an institution eligible to receive public funding and the successful application to be granted University College title.

Our previous strategic plan was developed in 2015 and was a plan for delivering degree awarding powers and institutional designation followed by a period of consolidation to embed these large changes. Both major projects were achieved, thus providing the UCO with many options about its future.

There have been significant changes in the environment in which the UCO operates: new entrants to the osteopathic education sector, reforms of regulatory frameworks, the introduction of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), the new Higher Education and Research Act 2017 with the introduction of the Office for Students and implications arising from this, and a high degree of political uncertainty. There is an increasing emphasis on supporting students to succeed and to be employable and the widening participation agenda is focusing on supporting BME and white males from under privileged backgrounds. Students' expectations continue to rise in a range of areas but particularly in terms of value for money from their higher education experience. The decision to leave the EU presents uncertainty in a variety of areas for Higher Education. The UCO needs to rise to these challenges in addition to the increase in competition for applicants, the need for enhancing the evidence base supporting osteopathy and responding to the challenge facing osteopathy in a changing healthcare environment.

Our strategy for 2018–2023 builds on work already underway and launches a number of new initiatives. The plan has been designed to take advantage of our distinctive features, including our heritage, successful delivery in osteopathic education, research strengths, our clinical experience and our highly rated student experience.

To achieve our Vision of becoming an internationally recognised university the UCO must grow as an institution. We must follow a clearly defined path to support our desire for a step change in the UCO's performance in order to deliver on our Vision that **"By 2027, the University College of Osteopathy will be an internationally recognised university for both education and research in osteopathy and associated health care subjects; a vibrant community of staff and students keen to explore and exploit new ideas and challenge existing views, whose work will positively influence the quality of health care and shape future clinical practice locally, nationally and internationally."**

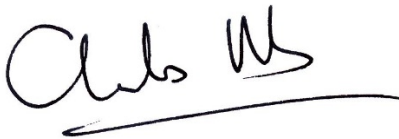
Our ambitions are bold and challenging. We will pursue our vision with a determination to exceed expectations; this capability has been demonstrated in recent history with the award of taught degree awarding powers and designation. To achieve our vision, we must commit to proactively contributing, to create a better future and not passively react to the world around us.

Our Strategic Intent is to compete on quality. We will follow an excellence agenda; this will seek to ensure that quality and excellence are ingrained at the UCO; there can be no excuses for not being excellent in what we do.

We will prioritise our support and investment in those activities we consider to be, or which demonstrate the potential to be, excellent. We will pursue targeted excellence in:

- our learning and teaching
- our research and scholarship
- our student experience
- the services we deliver
- our partnerships
- the environment we create
- our leadership, management and governance

This Strategic Plan has been developed to steer the University College of Osteopathy through a period that will be characterised by a rapidly changing and increasingly competitive higher education environment.

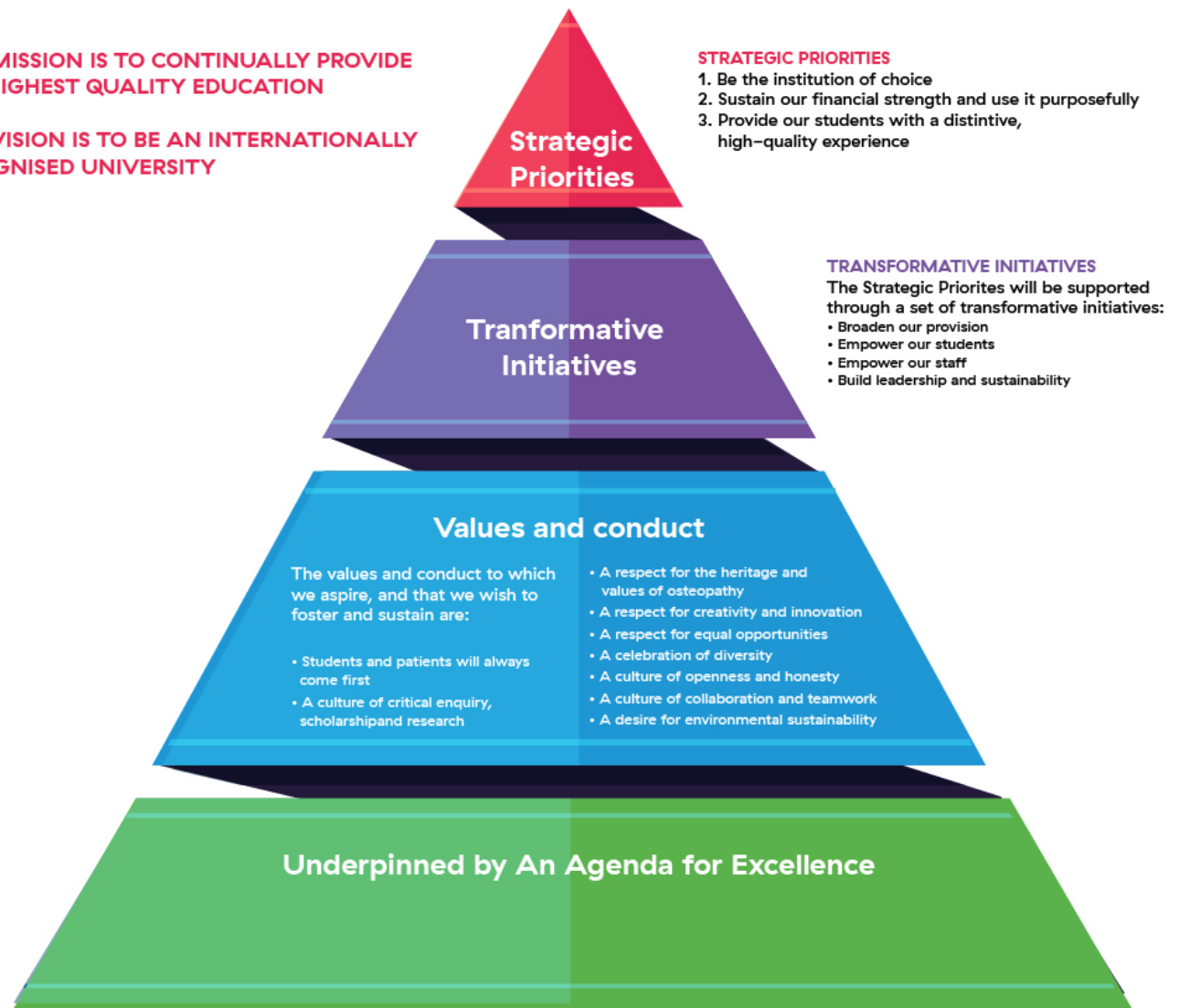


Charles Hunt

The UCO will build on its 100-year reputation as the British School of Osteopathy and deliver a sustainable future for the UCO, ensuring excellence in all it does.

OUR MISSION IS TO CONTINUALLY PROVIDE
THE HIGHEST QUALITY EDUCATION

OUR VISION IS TO BE AN INTERNATIONALLY
RECOGNISED UNIVERSITY



Our mission, vision and values

Our mission...

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

We interpret our mission with a renewed focus on excellence in learning, teaching, research and sustainability. Faithful to our founding principles, we remain committed to delivering education and healthcare to our communities. We will ensure that we remain accessible to all students with the potential to succeed.

Our vision...

“By 2027, the University College of Osteopathy will be an internationally recognised university for both education and research in osteopathy and associated health care subjects; a vibrant community of staff and students keen to explore and exploit new ideas and challenge existing views, whose work will positively influence the quality of health care and shape future clinical practice locally, nationally and internationally.”

Our ambitions are bold and challenging. We will pursue our vision with a determination to exceed expectations; this capability has been demonstrated in recent history with the award of taught degree awarding powers, designation and University College title. To achieve our vision, we must commit to proactively contributing to create a better future and not passively react to the world around us.

Our values...

The University College of Osteopathy aspires to have a value driven organisational culture – thus empowering the institution to be the best it can be. The Strategic Plan can only succeed when the UCO's Values underpin all that we do. Bringing about cultural change is an integral part of this new strategic plan and the Values play an intrinsic part in this cultural change.

The values and conduct to which we aspire, and that we wish to foster and sustain are as follows:

- Students and patients will always come first
- A culture of critical enquiry, scholarship and research
- A respect for the heritage and values of osteopathy
- A respect for creativity and innovation
- A respect for equal opportunities
- A celebration of diversity
- A culture of openness and honesty
- A culture of collaboration and teamwork
- A desire for environmental sustainability

Our strategic priorities

To deliver the ambition we have set ourselves, we have identified three strategic priorities to help us deliver our strategic position:

1. Be the institution of choice

In a more competitive fee environment, we must become the destination of choice – for staff, students and other institutions who we would want to collaborate with– because of the exceptional quality of everything that we do. Excellence will inform many of our strategic ambitions, from undergraduate curriculum innovation to increasing our market share of postgraduate education.

Being the destination of choice is about our ability to attract, develop and retain the highest quality students and staff from around the world, being the University College that other higher education institutions compete to collaborate with.

2. Sustain our financial strength and use it purposefully

We will use our financial strength to invest in: improved academic performance, both research and teaching; our estate, facilities and infrastructure; our excellent professional services; partnerships with other Higher Education institutions and our community partnerships.

We will become better at taking difficult decisions to disinvest from those areas which do not support our strategic ambitions, and take measures to support those areas which do but which are underperforming.

3. Provide our students with a distinctive, high-quality experience

The University College of Osteopathy student experience is grounded in a distinctive combination of academic excellence in a small institution focused on osteopathy and associated subjects providing outstanding opportunities associated with studying in the capital city of the UK, London.

Our teaching and learning focuses upon an approach that challenges and stretches our students and is infused with research, creating a culture of criticality, enquiry and investigation.

Transformative initiatives

To demonstrate our commitment to our Strategic Vision, we have identified four transformative initiatives which are currently being implemented or are in the planning stages for delivery over the next few years:

1. Broaden our provision

See page 9

2. Empower our students

See page 11

3. Empower our staff

See page 13

4. Build leadership and sustainability

See page 15

1.

Broaden our provision

By investing in our academic portfolio, research and our clinical services we will ensure that the UCO's current and future portfolio is academically rigorous, current, aligned to student and employer demand and sustainable. Our research and scholarship will inform our educational and clinical offer and contribute to the wider academic community. Our clinical services will be of high quality, regularly evaluated and innovative.

1.1 Academic portfolio

We will invest in diversifying and increasing academic programmes to ensure that the UCO's current and future academic portfolio is academically rigorous, current, aligned to student and employer demand and sustainable.

We will:

1.1.1 Develop an increased number of undergraduate and postgraduate high quality taught programmes in addition to osteopathy.

1.1.2 Engage with employers from all relevant sectors, increasing awareness of our academic quality, working to better understand the changing needs of employment markets, and better preparing our graduates for their chosen careers.

1.1 Research engagement

We will build on our existing areas of research activity and further develop research related teaching to empower staff and students to engage with exploring and developing new knowledge related to osteopathic practice and musculoskeletal care and rehabilitation.

We will:

1.2.1 Develop and enhance our capacity to supervise student research related learning.

1.2.2 Disseminate best practice, contemporary research and innovative work to support teaching and learning at the UCO and develop professional knowledge within osteopathy and related fields.

1.2.3 Collaborate with clinicians, researchers and other higher educational institutions to develop innovative research.

1.2.4 Increase the numbers of successful funding applications.

1.2.5 Develop our relationships to deliver new opportunities for Doctoral level learning for staff and others.

1.3 Clinical provision

We will build on our exiting clinical provision offering affordable, high quality evidence informed clinical health care in a variety of settings. The Clinic at the UCO aspires to provide patient-centred provision, and high quality, compassionate healthcare with integrity. The UCO clinic aims to provide osteopathic healthcare to a wider population and to those who would have difficulty accessing it.

We will:

1.3.1 Involve patients in all service developments.

1.3.2 Review the provision of all our clinical services including the strengthening of our community clinic and specialist clinical provision.

1.3.4 Embed measurement of our clinical activities into our routine practice using appropriate tools.

1.3.5 Report critical incidents and share information to improve practice.

1.3.6 Evaluate our clinical provision and report these findings to the appropriate audience and to use them to drive improvements in our clinical services.

1.3.7 Develop and enhance clinical services to reach a wider population.

2. Empower our students

Students are the lifeblood of the UCO. The student experience encompasses a lifelong engagement with other allied health professionals. We will provide a high-quality student experience, prioritising the continual improvement of all measures of student satisfaction, at all levels of study and in all parts of the UCO, ensuring that our students obtain value for money.

2.1 Enhancing the student experience

We recognise that in a diverse student population there can be no single student experience. It means different things to different people at different stages in their lives and at different levels of study as they progress through their student journey from prospective students to students enrolled in our institution, whether at undergraduate or postgraduate level, to alumni.

We will:

2.1.1 Equip our students with the knowledge and skills to serve them over a lifetime and ensure that their student experience is an integral part of their learning.

2.1.2 Ensure that our students can participate fully in an academic community that is diverse, inspiring and culturally vibrant, stimulating, healthy, safe and supportive.

2.1.3 Ensure that our students obtain value for money.

2.1.4 Shape an experience that is deep, distinctive and personal, and create an environment where our students are empowered to grow and develop as responsible citizens.

2.1.5 Ensure that our courses enhance employment prospects, provide career development support to students and alumni, and aid their transition to graduate employment.

2.1.6 Take a proactive, inclusive approach to supporting all students throughout their learning journey, and provide professional support for students with disabilities, specific learning differences, mental and emotional health issues and financial hardship.

2.1.7 Ensure that our support and pastoral care services are sensitive to the diversity of cultures and beliefs within the UCO community.

2.1.8 Maintain lifelong relationships with alumni, friends and supporters of the UCO.

2.1.9 Respond to student feedback and all survey measures of student satisfaction (such as the National Student Survey (NSS)) at institutional and subject level.

2.2 Academic student experience

Teaching and learning and the student experience are now coming centre-stage through the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF); the revised National Student Survey (NSS) with its increased focus on academic communities, student voice, and stretch and rigour in the curriculum; and national projects to define, measure and analyse Learning Gain. For an ambitious university the UCO aims to achieve excellence across these areas.

We will:

2.2.1 Ensure that all our student cohorts, including those at our collaborative partners receive an outstanding higher education.

2.2.2 Focus on the quality of provision through courses which are designed to ensure their relevance with employability skills embedded in the curriculum.

2.2.3 Prioritise retention and empower our students by engaging them as full partners in the development and creation of their learning and learning environments.

2.2.4 Provide accessible academic and skills development support services which empower students to unlock, grow and fulfil their potential.

2.2.5 Provide personalised information which will enable students to monitor their engagement with their studies and their learning development relative to their cohort.

2.2.6 Help our students to understand their own progress and pace relative to their peers, and to identify ways to enhance their own performance to ensure that their attainment is properly reflected in their graduate outcomes.

2.2.7 Prioritise closer integration of feedback to and from students and provide assessment and feedback that is constructive, timely and supports further learning.

3. Empower our staff

Our vision is that of an engaged workforce committed to the UCO's success and excellence agenda, sharing our vision and values, and supported and inspired to maximise collective potential.

The contribution of all staff of the UCO is important and valued. We have high expectations for ourselves and one another and our aim is to provide the environment, motivation, support and opportunity for our people to work together to exceed their own expectations. We must ensure that we have an empowered workforce that is capable and inspired to deliver our ambitious institutional strategy with commitment and confidence.

3.1 Shared mission, vision and values

Every staff member must understand their unique role in contributing to our common strategic goals. The strategic plan provides a framework for every individual staff member's personal plan and objectives.

We will:

3.1.1 Draw our staff together with a common purpose and shared commitment to our vision and mission, and ensure that our staff and their individual contributions to the UCO are valued highly.

3.1.2 Provide a workplace where all our staff enjoy professional satisfaction, rewarding careers and the opportunity to advance and grow in a stimulating, safe, welcoming and collegial environment.

3.1.3 Empower our staff through:

- recognition of mutual expectations;
- the authority to act with corresponding responsibilities and clear allocation of accountability.
- responding to individual ambitions and talents;
- effective communication, transparency of decisions and clear delegation.

3.1.4 Empower our staff to be successful as individuals and as members of high-performing teams.

3.2 Attracting and investing in talent

The UCO's success, achievement of our mission, vision and strategic objectives and particularly the delivery of an outstanding student experience depends on the attraction and retention of motivated, inspired and empowered staff who are committed to and will deliver our excellence agenda in a sustainable manner.

We will:

3.2.1 Focus on investment in talent, building capacity for excellence, increasing workforce flexibility, supporting career pathways, and recognising and rewarding contribution and impact.

3.2.2 Ensure that all our staff have the opportunity of a career which they find personally rewarding, that individuals are empowered and inspired to develop with the UCO, and that successes are shared and celebrated.

3.2.3 Continue to celebrate diversity and promote equality of opportunity, removing barriers and challenging assumptions which limit the aspirations, potential and achievements of our staff.

3.3 Engaging and learning

Equality, diversity and inclusion, health, wellbeing and work–life balance are important parts of fulfilling potential.

We will:

3.3.1 Invest in the development of our formal employee relations and focus on enhancing organisational communications, creating the opportunity for staff to better understand and actively engage in issues which are important to them.

3.3.2 Develop a culture in which staff are comfortable to give and receive constructive feedback, are empowered to generate innovative ideas, and where individual and team efforts are clearly seen to contribute to the UCO's goals.

3.3.3 Be creative in our approach to continuous learning, and share knowledge, encourage ownership and create opportunity for excellence and innovation.

3.3.4 Support and empower staff as part of wider teams to maximise their contribution.

3.4 Performance and transformation

In our pursuit of excellence and sustainability, we know that effective leadership and management are critical to our success.

We will:

3.4.1 Invest in the support and development of our leaders and managers at all levels of the UCO and empower them to provide the direction, guidance and support necessary for their teams, and the UCO, to achieve ambitious goals.

3.4.2 Ensure that our leaders and managers have the vision and skills to deliver transformation, ensuring effective planning, development of knowledge and skills and the organisation of time and resources in such a way that individuals and teams have the maximum opportunity for positive impact.

3.4.3 Ensure that staff understand how they contribute to shared objectives, and that we assess organisational and personal performance openly and constructively, and that, committed to continuous improvement, we strive for excellence.

4. Build leadership and sustainability

Growth, excellence, empowerment and innovation can only be achieved if they are founded on a sustainable basis. The UCO must generate the resources needed to compete on quality, for without this nothing else is possible. Sustainability depends on our ability to leverage our competitive advantages, our ability to constantly renew and adapt, and our ability to invest in the future.

We will take a leadership role within the osteopathic world and play a greater role in Higher Education more generally. Sustainability depends on our ability to leverage our competitive advantages, our ability to constantly renew and adapt, and our ability to invest in the future.

4.1 Building effective partnerships

The UCO seeks to ensure a coherent approach to developing, sustaining and reviewing partnerships which harness the UCO's expertise and will enhance its reputation and establish new routes to income and sustainability.

We will:

4.1.1 Build high-quality partnerships with educational institutions in the UK and abroad, and strengthen existing ones.

4.1.2 Expand our academic reach by developing new innovative partnerships and educational models to deliver our academic offer.

4.1.3 Enhance our active participation in national and regional sector bodies and professional associations.

4.1.4 Contribute to and provide leadership on discussions surrounding the role of osteopathy taking place within the sector and wider public arena.

4.1.5 Champion osteopathy and raise awareness of it as both a profession and a form of healthcare, particularly within the NHS.

4.2 Community partners

We recognise the value of our relationships with our local communities and the local authorities in our surrounding regions.

We will:

4.2.1 Continue to build relationships with our donors, friends and neighbours as well as our community partners.

4.3 Attracting and retaining students

Being the destination of choice is about our ability to attract, develop and retain the highest quality students and staff from around the world.

Attracting an increasing and diverse cohort of students who strengthen our excellence agenda and retaining students that enrol with us through to successful completion will be high priorities. We remain committed to our goals of widening participation, promoting social mobility, equality and fair access and will continue in our efforts to make the UCO attractive and accessible.

We will:

- 4.3.1 Ensure that our academic offer and student experience appeal to prospective applicants.
- 4.3.2 Enhance our marketing, recruitment, application and admissions processes and structures.
- 4.3.3 Enhance the information prospective applicants need to make an informed choice about their studies.
- 4.3.4 Engage our alumni in recruiting, mentoring and giving career advice to current students.

4.4 Academic sustainability

Our ability to deliver our vision and mission is dependent on our ability to maintain and develop a sustainable infrastructure that is not only fit for purpose but brings a competitive advantage to the UCO. We need to ensure that our academic structures and the way we organise them are effective, efficient and sustainable.

We will:

- 4.4.1 Review our academic portfolio to determine which academic disciplines and areas (new or existing) need additional investment and how they can be improved further, as well as which will be phased out.
- 4.4.2 Ensure that we develop our academic staffing profile to support our excellence agenda.
- 4.4.3 Consider the balance of academic staff with teaching and research responsibilities and those who focus on teaching and scholarship, noting the introduction of the TEF and the positioning required to enter the REF.
- 4.4.4 Develop a new workload model for academic staff as a key step towards empowering them and bringing about productivity enhancements.

4.5 Professional services

We need to ensure that the shape and size of our professional services and their staffing profiles support our excellence agenda in a sustainable manner.

We will:

- 4.5.1 Ensure that our professional services are empowered, fit for purpose, productive, effective, efficient and support the excellence and sustainability agendas, emphasising service excellence.

4.6 Productivity, efficiency and competitiveness

In an increasingly competitive student market how the UCO perform is an increasingly important element of student choice. We influence our students through our curriculum, teaching and research and also by the environment we provide, our decision-making and through the leadership of the UCO, we strive to be a well-managed university.

We will:

- 4.6.1 Empower budget holders to have more control of costs and cost structures.
- 4.6.2 Review academic and business processes and support these with appropriate information technology.
- 4.6.3 Continue to review governance, management, planning and decision making structures, processes and delegations to:
 - a. enhance the quality and transparency of decision making;
 - b. ensure that decisions are supported by excellent management information;
 - c. maintain robust and systematic processes for the assessment and management of risk;
 - d. ensure processes and procedures are fit for purpose and proportionate.

4.7 Our physical and information technology environment

We will continue to develop our infrastructure to improve the experience of our students, staff and stakeholders. The infrastructure includes our buildings, facilities, estates, and information and communication technology.

We will:

- 4.7.1 Complete the major project of implementing solutions to the issue of the diminishing lease of the Borough High Street building.
- 4.7.2 Refresh our estates strategy, driven by the academic and clinical strategies.
- 4.7.3 Continue our rolling programme for the continuous refurbishment and long-term maintenance of lecture theatres, practical rooms, student areas, clinical provision and ensure a coordinated and strategic approach to the use of space, facilities and equipment.
- 4.7.4 Continue to invest in information and communication technology (ICT) to provide a competitive advantage; by creating a more digitally enabled and enhanced institution, we will improve the student experience, our ability to deliver high-quality courses and research, and the management and administration of the UCO.

4.8 Environmental sustainability

The UCO remains committed to promoting sustainable development. Our commitment to a sustainable environment will be manifested in our academic endeavours and our approach to managing and developing our estates, facilities, ICT and activities.

We will:

- 4.8.1 Implement green strategies to further reduce our carbon footprint and waste, conserve energy and water, and promote clean and renewable sources.

4.9 Marketing and communications

Marketing and communications are key to positioning the UCO, enhancing our stature and reputation and making our voice heard. Marketing and communication operations will be enhanced by increased emphasis on our online presence, especially with regards to our website and social media.

We will:

4.9.1 Monitor and adapt marketing and communications messages and channels to meet the evolving needs of our audiences, internally and externally.

4.9.2 Provide high-quality, engaging and relevant information to ensure our audiences can make positive, informed decisions about our services.

4.9.3 Ensure that UCO communications are accurate, honest and truthful, and adhere to legal guidance and regulations.

4.9.4 Protect and embed the University College of Osteopathy brand.

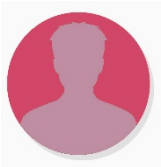
An inclusive plan

Formulating this Strategic Plan has taken a highly inclusive approach, building upon the successful changes over the past few years: the granting of degree awarding powers, designated status and becoming a University College. These changes have reinvigorated the UCO community, and have permeated the development of the Strategic Plan. The success of the Strategic Plan is wholly dependent on the commitment and contributions of our staff and student bodies, and so it was important that they had opportunities to engage in its development.

The Strategic Plan is not a prescriptive blueprint. Rather it raises the ambition for the UCO as outlined in our vision, and sets our direction of travel. It enables the UCO to adapt to changing external circumstances. It provides a coherent framework, a sense of ambition, and a direction for supporting strategies and operational plans.

What does it mean for me?

The view of success:



Student

I am proud to have won a place to study at the University College of Osteopathy. I am confident that the academic opportunities I have here are of the very highest standard and will equip me well for life beyond university. I am sure that, at the end of my studies, I will be well placed to get a graduate-level job. I want to make the most of being here and I feel that others will see my university as the place to be.

Academic

The University College of Osteopathy gives me the opportunity to develop my career in an intellectually stimulating, challenging and rewarding environment, where I can interact with world leaders in my field. I enjoy delivering inspirational and motivational teaching to bright students from around the world. I benefit from working in an environment where everyone aspires to achieve their personal best.

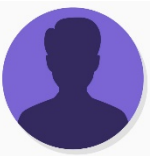
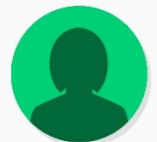


Alumni

I am proud to have studied at the University College of Osteopathy. I was challenged and developed academically, intellectually and personally as a student, and this prepared me for a rewarding life as an osteopath. I am proud of the success UCO has had, and appreciate staying in touch and contributing to its ongoing success. I enthusiastically recommend the UCO to my family, friends and colleagues, confident that people recognise the value of my degree.

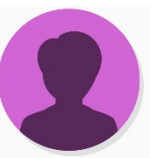
Professional

The University College of Osteopathy presents me with opportunities which are often challenging, but always fulfilling. I enjoy the teamwork, relish the opportunity to demonstrate leadership when required, and I know how my work contributes to making the UCO a better place for our staff and students. I feel that the UCO values me, and I particularly enjoy working in partnership with my academic colleagues. There are well defined structures for supporting my professional development, and exciting opportunities to further my career.



Partner

I have actively sought to engage with the University College of Osteopathy to validate our own provision. This is due to its internationally recognised high quality teaching and research... I welcome the opportunity that partnership with the University provides to contact other highly skilled academics.



Patient

I have been a patient at the UCO for over 10 years and have seen it develop and grow. One thing that has never varied is the quality of treatment I receive. The students and tutors are amazing and provide the best care for me. I have been in a lot of pain and am always treated with the upmost care and compassion. It also helps that my treatment is subsidised too otherwise I could not afford to have any osteopathic treatment at all.

