



University College
of Osteopathy

Academic Framework 2017-2018
Section 9: Student Guidance & Learner Support

Quality

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.

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.	Student Support 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.	Student Support Manager	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 UCO of Osteopathy to the University College of Osteopathy	Student Support Manager	Master Version: J:\ Quality Team \ 0 Quality Team – AQF Published Version: Intranet	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)

Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)

X

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

Academic Quality Framework

Section 9: Student Guidance & Learner Support

Contents

9.1	Supporting Students at the UCO	4
9.2	Student Charter	4
9.3	Staff Responsibilities for Student Support.....	4
a)	The Vice-Principal (Research).....	4
b)	The Student Support Manager	4
c)	The Student Learning Advisor	5
d)	The Student Counsellor.....	5
9.4	Students with Disabilities	5
9.5	Academic Tutors.....	6
9.6	Course Leaders	6
9.7	The Academic Registry	6
9.8	The Finance Department.....	7
9.9	The Student Experience Officer	7
9.10	Library Services.....	8
9.11	The ICT Department & Computing Services.....	8
9.12	ICT Induction & Training.....	9
9.13	Virtual Learning Environment (BONE)	9
9.14	The Students' Union	9
9.15	The Student Voice & Student Representation.....	9
9.16	Student Appeals, Complaints & Discipline	10
9.17	Careers Advice	10
a)	Pre-Registration Students	11
b)	Postgraduate Students	11
	AQF09: Forms & Templates.....	12
	AQF09: Endnotes	12

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 Student Experience Officer 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 difficulty¹, and the Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARG)² 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)³, an Equality Committee⁴, and an electronic Student Voice forum 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, Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement⁵.

9.2 STUDENT CHARTER

- 9.2.1 The UCO's Student Charter⁶, 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 VICE-PRINCIPAL (RESEARCH)

- 9.3.1 The Vice-Principal (Research) has overall responsibility for student support at the UCO, and line manages the Student Support Manager. Together, they oversee the Student Support Department, which consists of the Student Learning Advisor and the Student Counsellor. Their duties are outlined below.

b) THE STUDENT SUPPORT MANAGER

- 9.3.2 The Student Support Manager leads the Student Support Team and oversees the Student Learning Advisor and Student Counsellor in addition to:
- 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

9.3.3 One-to-one tutorial sessions with the Student Learning Advisor may also be arranged in any of the key areas mentioned above.

9.3.4 Students are encouraged to seek the support of the Student Learning Advisor if they have concerns about their learning.

9.3.5 Students with English as an additional language are also encouraged to book tutorials with the Student Learning Advisor.

d) THE STUDENT COUNSELLOR

9.3.6 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.

9.3.7 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 Manager in their role as the Disability Advisor, the UCO implements a comprehensive student disability policy⁷. This policy has been produced in line with the Equality Act 2010⁸, and with appropriate guidance⁹.

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 Committee¹⁰ is also instrumental in supporting students with a disability. This committee reports directly to the Senior Management Team¹¹, 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 Single Equality Scheme and Action Plan¹², 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.

9.5.2 More information about the role of Academic Tutors can be found in the Academic Tutors' Handbook¹³.

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 study¹⁴.

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, as detailed in the UCO's Tuition Fee Policy & Financial Regulations for Students¹⁵. These include:

- 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.

9.9 THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE OFFICER

9.9.1 The Student Experience Officer provides students with a point of contact for support and guidance regarding their student experience. The role of the Student Experience Officer is to:

- 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.

9.10 LIBRARY SERVICES

- 9.10.1 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.
- 9.10.2 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, supporting UK Quality Code Expectations within Chapter BB4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement¹⁶. Library collections are regularly reviewed to ensure an appropriate supply of up to date and key texts.
- 9.10.3 The Library is a bright and open space, with room for private study and group work.
- 9.10.4 Computers in the Library and computer rooms provide Internet access to academic resources and medical databases, for which assistance and training is available.
- 9.10.5 The Library team provide inductions for new users, and are a port of call for electronic resource queries.
- 9.10.6 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.
- 9.10.7 More information about the Library for students can be found in the online Student Handbook¹⁷.

9.11 THE ICT DEPARTMENT & COMPUTING SERVICES

- 9.11.1 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, intranet and virtual learning environment.
- 9.11.2 Computing services at the UCO are overseen by the ICT Department.
- 9.11.3 The main computer and printing provision for study purposes is based on the third floor of the UCO's Borough High Street building.
- 9.11.4 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.
- 9.11.5 All students are allocated their own personal H: drive on the UCO network as a storage area for their personal use in line with the UCO's Email & Internet Policy for Students¹⁸ and Code of Conduct Policy & Disciplinary Procedure for Students¹⁹.
- 9.11.6 Wireless access to the Internet is available throughout the UCO's Borough High Street and Southwark Bridge Road buildings.

9.12 ICT INDUCTION & TRAINING

- 9.12.1 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 FirstClass (the UCO's email system) and BONE (the UCO's Online Learning Environment), to ensure that they become proficient users of these facilities.
- 9.12.2 Students are also provided with relevant computing information and assistance through a number of self-help resources²⁰ that have been produced by the ICT Department.
- 9.12.3 Further information about the UCO's computing services, and the ICT Department, can be found in the online Student Handbook²¹.

9.13 VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (BONE)

- 9.13.1 All students have access to the British UCO of Osteopathy's Online Learning Environment (BONE).
- 9.13.2 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.
- 9.13.3 The UCO's Teaching, Learning and Assessment and E-Learning Strategies guide the development and enhancement of BONE²².
- 9.13.4 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.
- 9.13.5 The UCO ensures that its tutors are supported through its ICT and audio-visual departments.

9.14 THE STUDENTS' UNION

- 9.14.1 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.
- 9.14.2 The Students' Union Officers and Student Representatives are involved in the UCO's business as a whole, as defined in the Students' Union Constitution²³.
- 9.14.3 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.
- 9.14.4 The Student Experience Officer is the Students' Union nominated point of contact for advice on matters such as appeals and complaints.
- 9.14.5 The Students' Union President is a member of the UCO's Academic Council, co-chairs the Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Groups with the Student Experience Officer, and is also a member of disciplinary panels and fitness to practice panels as required.

9.15 THE STUDENT VOICE & STUDENT REPRESENTATION

- 9.15.1 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).

- 9.15.2 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 as an osteopath.
- 9.15.3 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.
- 9.15.4 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 Student Experience Officer provides them with training and on-going support in their role.
- 9.15.5 More information about Student Representation can be found in AQF Section 10 (The Student Voice).

9.16 STUDENT APPEALS, COMPLAINTS & DISCIPLINE

- 9.16.1 The UCO aims to deal openly, fairly and effectively with student appeals, complaints and disciplinary matters, and to offer appropriate support and remedy.
- 9.16.2 A range of formal appeals, complaints and disciplinary procedures are established at the UCO, which are published to students through the UCO's intranet²⁴, and which are introduced during induction sessions each year.
- 9.16.3 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.
- 9.16.4 Both the Students' Union and Student Support Services (the Student Experience Officer or equivalent) are able to provide advice on submitting appeals and complaints. In all cases students are strongly encouraged to seek impartial advice concerning their complaint.
- 9.16.5 More information can be found in each of these procedures²⁵, 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
 - g) Fitness to Practice & Professional Behaviour Policy
 - h) Patient Complaints Procedure.

9.17 CAREERS ADVICE

- 9.17.1 The UCO acknowledges that the academic programmes it provides are a key stage in students' lives as they progress along their chosen career paths.
- 9.17.2 Students will receive guidance on careers advice during their studies as appropriate, and can contact the Student Support Manager, who is able to advise students on where they may find out more about careers advisory services.

9.17.3 Students who choose to withdraw from the course attend an Exit Interview with the relevant Course Leader or the Student Support Manager, who provides impartial advice about their future choices²⁶.

a) PRE-REGISTRATION STUDENTS

9.17.4 Students studying on the UCO's pre-registration courses are studying to become qualified and practising osteopaths. The General Osteopathic Council's (GOsC) Osteopathic Practice Standards (OPS)²⁷ are embedded within each of these courses to ensure that they adequately prepare students for a career in osteopathic practice.

9.17.5 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

9.17.6 Students studying on the UCO's postgraduate courses are primarily developing their careers as effective practitioners, educators and researchers.

9.17.7 These courses are designed to enable students to immediately integrate new knowledge and skills into professional practice, and to develop specialist interests.

9.17.8 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
N/A	N/A

AQF09: ENDNOTES

¹ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: Identifying & Responding to Students in Difficulty: A Guide for Staff

² http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/: Student Attendance & Retention Group Terms of Reference

³ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/: Student & Staff Liaison Consultation Groups Terms of Reference

⁴ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/: Equality Committee Terms of Reference

⁵ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>

⁶ www.uco.ac.uk: Student Charter

⁷ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: Disability Policy

⁸ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/equality-act-2010-guidance>

¹⁰ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/: Equality Committee Terms of Reference

¹¹ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/: Senior Management Team Terms of Reference

¹² Single Equality Scheme & Action Plan

¹³ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/guidelines_and_handbooks/: Academic Tutors' Handbook

¹⁴ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: Student Course Transfer Policy & Procedure

¹⁵ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: Tuition Fee Policy & Financial Regulations for Students

¹⁶ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>

¹⁷ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/student_handbook/

¹⁸ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: ICT Acceptable Use Policy

¹⁹ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: Code of Conduct Policy & Disciplinary Procedure for Students

²⁰ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/ICT_Resources/

²¹ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/student_handbook/

²² http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/teaching_and_learning/: Teaching, Learning and Assessment and E-Learning Strategies

²³ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: Students' Union Constitution

²⁴ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: Academic Appeals Policy, Complaints Policy & Procedure for Students, Code of Conduct Policy & Disciplinary Procedure for Students

²⁵ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/

²⁶ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/: Suspension of Studies & Student Withdrawal Policy & Procedure

²⁷ http://www.osteopathy.org.uk/uploads/osteopathic_practice_standards_public.pdf