



University College
of Osteopathy

Academic Quality Framework 2017-2018

Section 10: The Student Voice

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.
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:\ 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 UCO of Osteopathy to the University College of Osteopathy	Student Experience Officer	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 framework significantly reduces inequalities)	X
Neutral equality impact (i.e. no significant effect)	
Negative equality impact (i.e. increasing inequalities)	

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 assurance processes, in line with the following Expectation of Chapter 5: Student Engagement of the Quality Code:
- “Higher education providers take deliberate steps to engage all students, individually and collectively, as partners in the assurance and enhancement of their educational experience.”¹*
- 10.1.3 The main purposes of promoting student engagement at the UCO and encouraging students to use the Student Voice, are to:
- Enhance the Student Experience;
 - Contribute to monitoring and review of quality and standards;
 - Ensure the effectiveness of course design and delivery;
 - Identify good practice.
- 10.1.4 The Academic Council² 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 Review³).
- 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 & Reporting⁴).

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 online Student Handbook⁵ 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.
- 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.

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.

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)⁶ 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 E-Forum 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's intranet⁷.

10.3.13 The UCO's Committee Handbook⁸ 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 Student Experience Officer.

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 Student Experience Officer. Guidance is also provided in the Student Representatives' Handbook⁹.

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 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 Corporate Services Director. The Students' Union is invited to contribute to the training.

10.3.22 The roles of both Student Representatives and Student Board Members are underpinned by job descriptions¹⁰, 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 E-FORUM

10.3.24 When on or off-site, all students can post matters of concern to the FirstClass Student Voice E-forum, 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 e-forum 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 e-forum are received by the Student and Staff Liaison Consultation Groups (SSLCGs)¹¹.

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 FirstClass 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.

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 Procedures¹²) and academic appeal matters (through the Academic Appeals Policy¹³).

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 Online Student Handbook¹⁴.

10.3.37 In both cases students are provided with impartial advice and support by the Student Experience Officer 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 focuses on student services across the institution, including Teaching, Learning Opportunities, Assessment & Feedback, Academic Support, Organisation & Management, Learning Resources, Learning Community, Student Voice, School Environment, 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 Institutional 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](#).

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 also summarised and collated into a Student Survey Annual Report by the Head of Quality & Student Experience Officer 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.

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 Unit Handbooks, BONE, the UCO newsletter and poster campaigns.

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 website¹⁵, 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 in conjunction with UCO Student Evaluation Questionnaire results and an NSS Annual Report¹⁶ is produced by the Vice-Principal (Education). 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.

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 (D.Ost).	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
N/A	N/A

AQF10: ENDNOTES

¹ <http://www.qaa.ac.uk/assuring-standards-and-quality/the-quality-code/quality-code-part-b>: Chapter 5: Student Engagement

² http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/: Academic Council Terms of Reference

³ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/academic_quality/

⁴ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/academic_quality/

⁵ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/student_handbook/

⁶ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/: Student-Staff Liaison Consultation Group Terms of Reference

⁷ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/

⁸ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/guidelines_and_handbooks/ : Committee Handbook

⁹ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/guidelines_and_handbooks/: Student Representatives' Handbook

¹⁰ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/guidelines_and_handbooks/: Student Representatives' Handbook & Board Member Induction Booklet

¹¹ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/UCO_Committees/: Student & Staff Liaison Consultation Groups Terms of Reference

¹² http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/students: Complaints Policy & Procedures

¹³ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/policies_and_procedures/students: Academic Appeals Policy

¹⁴ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/student_handbook/: Student Handbook

¹⁵ <https://unistats.direct.gov.uk/>

¹⁶ http://intranet.uco.ac.uk/Academic_Quality: Section 5: Annual Monitoring & Reporting