University Centre Colchester

Quality Assurance Policy

2024-2025

Policy Details			
Policy Owner	UCC Academic Services		
CE Sponsor	Principal and Chief Executive		
Date created this year	20 August 2024		
Version:	**Approved by:**	**Date approved:**	**To be reviewed:**
1.1	College Executive	15.10.2024	September 2025
1.1	Curriculum and Quality Committee	06.11.2024	September 2025

Version Control	
Version Number	**Changes from previous 12 months policy**
1.1	Update to job titles to refer to new college structure
1.1	Update to Institutional Values
1.1	References to Student Council Representation added.
1.1	School Quality Meetings amended to be Programme Quality Meetings
	Changes to policy in year
2	

Equality Impact Assessment Tool: UCC Quality Assurance Policy

		Yes/No	Comments
1	**Does the policy/guidance affect one group less or more favourably than another on the basis of:**		
	Race or ethnicity	No	
	Disability	No	
	Gender	No	
	Religion or belief	No	
	Sexual orientation	No	
	Age	No	
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No	
	Maternity and Pregnancy	No	
	Gender Reassignment	No	
2	**Is there any evidence that some groups are affected differently?**	No	
3	**If you have identified potential discrimination, are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?**	N/A	
4	**Is the impact of the policy/guidance likely to be negative?**	No	
5	**If so, can the impact be avoided?**	N/A	
6	**What alternatives are there to achieving the policy/guidance without the impact?**	N/A	
7	**Can we reduce the impact by taking different action?**	N/A	

Contents

Section One: Quality Assurance Policy

The University Centre Colchester (UCC) Quality Assurance Policy supports UCC's vision to become more widely recognised for its high-quality provision in vocational education and training and as an exciting place to study and work.

Its aims are to continue to improve:

- The quality of teaching and learning for all students;
- The standards achieved by all students, irrespective of background;
- The efficient and effective use of resources;
- The ability of UCC to self-assess and enhance its provision.

University Centre Colchester supports this policy by:

- Designating members of the College Executive and the College Leadership and Management Group, with responsibility for the overall development and implementation of the college's quality enhancement system;
- Assigning particular responsibilities to the Principal and Chief Executive, Head of UCC Academic Services, Head of Teacher Development & HE Education and Area Heads with HE responsibility for ensuring that these processes are effectively applied;
- Assigning to managers specific responsibility for the implementation of the quality enhancement system and driving continuous improvement through self-assessment and action-planning within their own areas;
- Monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the performance and action to secure improvements;
- Supporting individual members of staff in continuous quality improvement.

The system for enhancing quality within UCC is underpinned by:

- Quality Assurance Policy (this document);
- Quality monitoring process; a sequence of reviews from programme level student experience to the Governing Body. It consists of the following stages: ongoing quality monitoring at programme level. Summary reports of findings and recommendations are tabled at UCC Learning & Teaching Committee, and an executive summary is provided to UCC Academic Board. This report is subsequently annotated and shared with the Governing Body;
- Quality monitoring documents: Programme Monitoring Reviews (PMRs), Monitoring, Review and Enhancement (MREs), Annual Programme Monitoring Reports (APMRs) and associated action plans;
- Wider organisational policies as relevant;
- Observation of Teaching and Learning, including Peer Observation;
- Regular student feedback;
- Performance management incorporating annual performance development reviews (for appraisal of staff performance and target-setting);
- Induction and mentoring for all new staff;
- Staff training including professional and management development;
- Annual monitoring and evaluation of recruitment, success rates and learners' first destinations cross-college; course approval and monitoring of external verifier/examiner reports and responses through UCC Academic Services;
- Internal audit;
- Adherence to external quality indicators, including sector benchmarked and institutional specific data.

Section Two: Institutional Values

Institutional Values:

- We are an **INCLUSIVE** College, welcoming employees and learners of all backgrounds, ages and abilities.

- We are **COLLABORATIVE** – working in partnership internally and externally to achieve shared goals.

- We are **RESPECTFUL** of each other in our words, actions and behaviours.

- We are **AMBITIOUS** for our learners, our staff and our College, always striving for excellence.

- We are **HONEST** and open, and act with integrity in all that we do.

- We provide a physically and emotionally **SAFE** environment, where people can be themselves, try out ideas, and thrive.

Section Three: Annual Quality Monitoring process

The 2024-25 Annual Quality Monitoring (AQM) process takes into account UCC's programme offers from several validated provisions: the University of East Anglia, the University of Huddersfield, as well as Pearson accredited qualifications.

The AQM process is intended to be proportionate to the number of courses offered, the subject specificities, as well as the size of student cohorts, so that any monitoring and enhancement can be impactful and timely.

As of the 2023/24 academic year UCC moved to ongoing in-year monitoring of its provision through programme level **Programme Monitoring Reviews (PMR),** alongside institutional returns to its accrediting or validating partners.

Area level reporting has therefore been replaced by programme level monitoring for teaching, learning and student engagement and institutional reporting on student access, retention, achievement and progression.

Programme level monitoring reviews (for the attention of UCC L&T committee) are intended to capture the qualitative student experience whereas institutional reporting (for the attention of UCC Academic Board) identifies the quantitatively measured institutional performance indicators.

1 Programme Monitoring Reviews (PMR)

The UCC Programme Monitoring Review was introduced in 2023 as a replacement for the previous annual monitoring reports of:

- The Annual Review of Courses (ARC) – Previously used for University of Essex Programmes at Programme, School and Institutional level;

- The Annual Programme Review (APR) – Previously used at programme level internally by UCC;

- School level Monitoring Review and Enhancement (MRE) – Previously used for University of East Anglia Programmes

The Programme Monitoring Review (PMR) will continue to be used for the 2024/25 academic year. It is required to be completed for any ongoing programme that has **5 or more active registrations**. Programmes that have completed teach out arrangements in 2023/24 are **not** required to complete a PMR.

The PMR is a document which is updated once every Semester by the course team concerned.

2 PMRs & resulting actions

An overall programme ranking is determined from the score points awarded within the PMR relating to different course management or quality assurance mechanisms. The score points will provide a recommendation as to what actions or interventions in programme management may be required. These actions will be for the consideration of the Principal and Chief Executive in collaboration with the Head of UCC Academic Services and the Area Head.

Dependent on the volume of points, programmes may be recommended for a **Quality Action Plan** or an **Internal Course Review**.

Quality Action Plan – Is a compulsory Action Plan created in collaboration between the Head of UCC Academic Services and the Principal and Chief Executive to improve course performance.

The Action Plan will be specific, targeted and time sensitive. Failure to meet targets within a Quality Action Plan will result in a formal Internal Course Review.

Internal Course Review – Is an internal periodic review exercise where the programme is considered in detail as to whether it is still fit for purpose, sustainable and meets institutional objectives.

3   Evaluation of PMRs

Although an ongoing document, the PMR (and its associated Action Plan) should be updated and presented within the UCC Learning & Teaching Committee meetings. The PMR is expected to cover the period up to and including the previous Semester or Academic Year, depending on when it is presented.

The PMR enables the programme team and UCC Academic Services to:

- Review and evaluate the course to inform quality assurance and enhancement;
- Develop action plans that ensure the enhancement of the courses under review;
- Ensure excellence in the quality of education;
- Identify and share good practice.

The PMR also allows University Centre Colchester to have oversight of themes that are emerging across programmes that need to be acted upon, to share good practice across the institution and monitor compliance with institutional standards and expectations.

At the end of the academic year, the programme team should meet to discuss and measure the progress made on the subsequent year's action plan. Notes should be made ready for inclusion in the following year's PMR. Where action points have not been met fully, the programme team should consider what further actions are required to meet the stated objectives. Again, these should be carried through to the following year's PMR.

The reports are intended to be a useful resource for departmental staff, external examiners and external auditors.

4   Validating Partner Monitoring

In addition to its programme level, and institutional monitoring University Centre Colchester has a responsibility of reporting to its validating partners about what students undertaking their qualifications are experiencing.

The monitoring returns differ by validating partner and are subject to change within the academic year based on requirements of the partnerships.

In recent years this has included a Monitoring Review and Enhancement (MRE) report for the University of East Anglia and an Annual Programme Monitoring Review (AMPR) for Pearson.

5   Annual Quality Process – data collection and reporting points

University Centre Colchester operates a three level quality monitoring structure, which allows representation from staff and students at all levels of its provision.

For each Programme, there is a **UCC Programme Quality** meeting in weeks 3-6, held online to ensure ease of access. It is chaired by the Senior UCC Academic Services Officer

The primary role of the meeting is to review programme performance via student feedback and data metrics presented via Programme Monitoring Reports.

Programme Monitoring Reports (PMR) are data based reports with qualitative evaluations written by Programme Leaders with contributions from their Area Head, and tabled at UCC Programme Quality Meetings.

They inform course specific action plans which form part of the report itself.

All PMRs are shared with the UCC Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and are accompanied by a summary report written by UCC Academic Services highlighting emerging thematic teaching and learning issues and proposing solutions for consideration by LTC.

Monitoring Review and Enhancement reports, or their equivalents, are written by the UCC Academic Services and based on PMR improvement reports, are submitted to Academic Board, before being shared in full with College Executive and then as appropriate with the Governing Body.

Section Four: UCC Quality structure

University Centre Colchester operates a three level quality monitoring structure, which allows representation from staff and students at all levels of its provision. The three-meeting cycle is designed to allow a free flow of information up and down the organisation and is composed of:

- University Centre Colchester Academic Board
- University Centre Colchester Learning & Teaching Committee
- University Centre Colchester Programme Quality meetings

Weeks of Each Semester	Semester One September to January	Semester Two February to June
Weeks 12 – 14	**UCC Academic Board** (to note)	**UCC Academic Board** (to note)
Weeks 8 – 11	**UCC Learning & Teaching Committee** (to evaluate and decide)	**UCC Learning & Teaching Committee** (to evaluate and decide)
Weeks 3 - 6	**UCC Programme Quality Meetings** (to identify and recommend)	**UCC Programme Quality Meetings** (to identify and recommend)

Sitting outside this structure are the following groups, which report via a summative report on their activities to the UCC Learning & Teaching Committee:

- UCC Course Proposals and Variations Committee (UCCPAV)
- UCC Accreditation of Prior Learning Panel (UCCAPL)
- UCC Research, Scholarship and Knowledge Transfer committee (UCC RSKT)
- UCC Assessment Group
- UCC Student Council
- UCC Resources Committee

Documentation checklist to be tabled at meetings:

Institutional level	Written by	Received by	Decisions to be taken
UCC School Quality Meetings Programme Monitoring Reviews	Co-authored by Programme Leader and Area Head (with data from UCC AS)	UCC Programme Quality Meeting	To identify & recommend actions to UCC L&T
UCC Learning & Teaching Committee Summary report of activities and feedback from UCC Student Council Thematic summary report of Learning & Teaching issues identified and proposed solutions across three Schools Data report of NSS results and module evaluations Data update report on OfS metrics EE reports and responses UCCPAV Proposals	HoAS HoAS HoAS HoAS PLs UCC AS	UCC Learning & Teaching Committee	To evaluate, decide & recommend to UCC AB
UCC Academic Board Summary of decisions recommended by UCC L&T Summary report of good degrees Summary report of EE recommendations Summary of New/Updated Provision Summary of Discontinued/Suspended Provision Update on UCC Targets and Action Plan Update on UCC Access and Participation Plan	HoAS HoAS HoAS UCC AS UCC AS P&CE/HoAS UCC AS	UCC Academic Board	To note To note To note To note To note To note To note
CI College Executive Summary of decisions approved by UCC AB, with outcome decisions	P&CE	CI Executive	To confirm

CI Governing Body Executive summary of report submitted to College Executive, with outcome decisions and resulting actions	P&CE	CI Governing Body	To note and scrutinise

Key

HoAS – Head of Academic Services
PLs – Programme Leaders
UCC AS – UCC Academic Services
P&CE – Principal and Chief Executive

Section Five: University Centre Colchester Meetings (in person or online)

1   UCC Academic Board (University Centre-level)

Purpose:

1. To approve strategic recommendations about programme development, Learning & Teaching and other matters relating to UCC.

2. To scrutinise and approve information produced by the Learning & Teaching Committee on all aspects of the UCC's provision.

3. To note the implications for UCC of decisions taken by the College Executive and the Governing Body, and to inform decision making at both fora, as appropriate.

4. To consider regulatory requirements and ensure the institution's compliance.

Terms of Reference:

Learning and Teaching

1. To receive reports and recommendations from the Learning & Teaching Committee, and any groups which the Learning & Teaching Committee may establish from time to time to address specific issues.

2. To receive reports and updates on matters relevant to the Academic Board, including annual and periodic programme reviews, partnership policy updates and Higher Education policy development.

Quality and Standards

3. To note UCC's policies, and note the development of associated implementation plans.

4. To monitor the effectiveness of arrangements for managing academic standards and assuring the quality of students' learning opportunities.

5. To receive all relevant information applicable to the institution's conditions of registration with the OfS and determine the appropriate institutional actions arising from the terms of registration.

6. To identify and monitor risks to UCC's academic provision.

Other

7. To consider any other issues as may be referred to it by College executive and/or the Governing Body, and to report to both fora after each meeting.

Membership:

1. Principal and Chief Executive (Chair)
2. UCC Head of Academic Services
3. All UCC Area Heads or Assistant Heads
4. UCC Senior Academic Services Officer (minutes)
5. Representative of UCC Student Council
6. Governing Body HE link governor
7. Any co-opted members, as appropriate and appointed by the Chair

Frequency and Format of Meetings:

Twice per academic year, or more frequently as determined by the Principal and Chief Executive.

UCC Board Delegated Powers:

- o Curriculum Design   -   UCCPAV Meetings
- o Recognition of Prior Credit   -   UCCAPL Meetings
- o PMRs   -   Principal and Chief Executive Sign Off
- o OFFA Access Agreement   -   OFS Accountable Officer
- o TEF Submission   -   OFS Accountable Officer
- o Discontinuation of courses   -   Principal and Chief Executive
- o Responses to OFS Consultations   -   Principal and Chief Executive

Quorum

For a UCC Academic Board meeting to be quorate the following are required to be in attendance:
- The Principal and Chief Executive or their delegated Deputy
- Head of UCC Academic Services or Senior Academic Services Officer, UCC
- A Head of Area not counted above
- A member of staff from UCC Academic Services (for minutes)

1b   UCC Academic Board Standing Agenda (in person or online)

The following standing agenda provides a summary of all items that should be considered at Academic Boards during the academic year. The agenda is designed to ensure that each meeting of the Academic Board pays due regard to its terms of reference in a timely fashion but should not restrict or dictate practice.

1   Welcome

2   Apologies for Absence

3   Minutes of last meeting

4   Learning & Teaching
To receive a summary of decisions report from Learning & Teaching Committee (DTL)

5   Quality and Standards
To receive a summary report of External Examiner recommendations and course team responses (DoHE)
To receive a summary report of Good Degrees (HoAS)
To receive a summary report of Appeals, Complaints and OIA Cases

6   Policy Updates
To receive Policy Updates to note

7   Strategic Developments
To receive an update on UCC Institutional Targets and Action Plan
To receive an update on the OFS Access and Participation Plan

8   Information from Delegated Authority Groups
To receive reports from other UCC committees and/or working groups

To receive a report on New and Updated Provision
To receive a report on Discontinued and Suspended Provision

9   Any Other Business

2   UCC Learning and Teaching Committee (in person or online)

Purpose:

1. To enable staff and students to note the student experience in UCC.

2. To confirm areas for programme development, and resourcing (as appropriate), and to present decisions for approval by the Academic Board.

3. To ensure that all aspects of quality assurance pertinent to the UCC's programmes are acted upon, and that information capturing the student experience is produced for the attention of the Academic Board.

Terms of Reference:

Learning and Teaching

1. To receive reports on matters relevant to the committee, including PMRs from Academic Services and Area Heads.

2. To design and monitor effective arrangements for identifying, supporting, disseminating and rewarding effective practice and innovation in learning, teaching and assessment.

Quality and Standards

3. To ensure that effective institutional approaches are developed and implemented to enhance the quality of provision.

4. To receive and approve programme development proposals.

5. To record data sets relating to the student experience, and any other metrics relevant to the institution.

Other

6. To consider such other issues related to learning and teaching as may be referred to it by Academic Board, and to report to Academic Board after each meeting.

Membership:

- The Principal and Chief Executive
- UCC Head of Academic Services (chair)
- Senior UCC Academic Services Officer
- Area Heads
- One academic member of staff
- UCC Lecturer in Learning Technologies
- Representative of UCC Student Council
- UCC Academic Services Officer (minutes)
- Representative from Apprenticeships

Frequency and Format of Meetings:

Twice per academic year, or more frequently as determined by the Principal and Chief Executive

Quorum

For a UCC Learning & Teaching Committee meeting to be quorate the following are required to be in attendance:

- Head of Academic Services or their Delegated Deputy
- One Head of Area
- One other academic member of staff
- Member of UCC Academic Services staff (minutes)

2b   UCC Learning and Teaching Committee Standing Agenda

The following standing agenda provides a summary of all items that should be considered at Learning and Teaching Committee during the academic year. The agenda is designed to ensure that each meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee pays due regard to its terms of reference in a timely fashion but should not restrict or dictate practice.

1   Welcome

2   Apologies for Absence

3   Minutes of last meeting

4   Student Representative agenda item
To receive summary report of activities and feedback from UCC Student Council

5   Learning & Teaching
To receive a thematic summary report of learning and teaching concerns and proposed solutions across entire UCC provision (HoAS)
To receive a data report of NSS results and module evaluations (HoAS)
To receive a data update on OfS metrics (HoAS)

6   Quality and Standards
To note External Examiner Reports and course team responses

7   Policy Updates
Receive policy updates to note

8   Information from delegated authority group
To receive reports from other UCC committees and/or working groups including UCCPAV.

9   Confirmation of recommendations for UCC AB

10   Any Other Business

3   UCC Programme Quality Meetings (online only)

Purpose:

1. To provide a platform for students and staff to monitor the student experience at Programme level;
2. To reflect on the quality of learning, teaching and student performance;
3. To consider areas for module/programme improvement, and resourcing (as appropriate);
4. To make summary recommendations to the Learning & Teaching Committee.

Terms of Reference:

Learning and Teaching

1. To advise the UCC Learning & Teaching Committee on the effectiveness of Learning & Teaching within a Programme, and to monitor Learning & Teaching at module/programme levels (where available);
2. To keep under review the effectiveness of the delivery of teaching and assuring the quality of students' learning opportunities.

Quality and Standards

3. To note and document programme level performance with regard to student access, progression and attainment;
4. To identify areas for enhancement;
5. To consider student feedback at module and/or programme level.

Other

6. To consider such other issues related to Learning & Teaching as may be relevant to the student experience.

Membership:
1. Head of Area
2. UCC Senior Academic Services Officer (chair)
3. Programme leader or their nominee
4. One or more student representatives
5. Member of UCC Academic Services staff (minutes)

Frequency and Format of Meetings:
- Once per Semester

Quorum

For a UCC School Quality Meeting to be quorate the following are required to be in attendance:

- Head of Area
- UCC Senior Academic Services Officer, or Head of UCC Academic Services (Chair)
- One programme leader and/or module tutor
- One student representative
- UCC Academic Services Administrator (minutes)

3b   UCC School Quality Meetings Standing Agenda:

The following standing agenda provides a summary of all items that should be considered at UCC Programme Quality meetings during the academic year. The agenda is designed to ensure that each meeting of a UCC Programme Quality meeting pays due regard to its terms of reference in a timely fashion but should not restrict or dictate practice.

1   Welcome

2   Apologies for Absence

3   Minutes of last meeting

4   Student Representative agenda item

5   Review of Student Feedback (To be undertaken for each Programme present)
      5.1   Presentation of Student Experience Minutes and/or module evaluations
      5.2   Responses to Comments
      5.3   Confirmation of Actions

6   Review of Programme Monitoring Reports and Associated Action Plans
      6.1   Presentation of Reports
      6.2   Confirmation of Updates to Action Plans

7   Feedback from staff
      7.1   Examples of Best Practice
      7.2   Concerns not covered in sections 5 – 6.

8   Update from Academic Skills Centre

9   Confirmation of Recommendations or Items to be escalated for UCC L&T

10   Any Other Business

4 UCC Proposals and Variations Committee (UCCPAV)

All meetings are held online only.

Purpose:

The UCCPAV meeting specifically addresses course proposals or scheme variations.

Terms of Reference:

- For discussion of the completion of validating universities' forms relating to curriculum development.

- To recommend that forms agreed are sent to the validating university for review by the Partnerships Team.

- To recommend improvements to existing documentation to enhance quality and consistency in presentation.

- To recommend which proposals can be approved by Chair's Action after the recommended revisions have taken place, and which proposals will need to be brought back to the next UCCPAV meeting.

- To determine whether any proposals and variations require further discussion at the relevant UCC Learning and Teaching committee or forum.

- To report the proposals and variations to UCC's Learning and Teaching Committee, in order that other institutional departments or divisions are aware of these changes, such as Marketing and Admissions.

- Minor amendments (for example typographical errors, clarification of wording on module description) can be approved by Chair's Action by the Principal and Chief Executive.

- To approve proposals falling outside the usual round of UCCPAV meetings, (for example over the Summer) by virtual UCCPAV meeting with the Principal and Chief Executive to act as chair and agree, with the agreement of Area Heads, that proposals can be sent to the validating university for consideration. A meeting request will be sent to relevant parties asking them to diarise a slot in their calendar to review the proposal(s) and a follow up e-mail requesting their feedback. UCC Academic Services to send the proposals to the validating university once any revisions have been carried out (if necessary) and following approval from the UCC chair.

Membership of UCCPAV:

- Principal and Chief Executive (Chair) and/or Head of UCC Academic Services or their nominee
- Representative from Area presenting proposed variation / course approval **and** associated gatekeeper
- UCC Academic Services representative (secretary)

Dates and Timing of UCCPAV

Meetings will be convened upon request. Papers will be circulated to panel members at least one week in advance for review and consideration prior to the meeting. For a UCCPAV meeting to be quorate the following are required to be in attendance:

- Principal and Chief Executive (Chair) and/or Head of UCC Academic Services or their nominee
- Representative from Area presenting proposed variation / course approval **and** associated gatekeeper
- UCC Academic Services representative (secretary)

4b   UCC Proposals and Variations Committee (UCCPAV) Standing Agenda

The following agenda provides a summary of all items that should be considered at a UCCPAV meeting. The agenda is designed to ensure that each meeting of the UCCPAV pays due regards to its terms of reference.

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Variation or Proposal for consideration (*bulleted list required)*
4. Recommendations of improvements to enhance the quality and consistency in presentation
5. Recommendation for Variation or Proposal to be sent to validating partner
6. Any Other Business

5 UCC Resources Committee

Purpose

The purpose of the committee is to take an institution-wide overview of UCC resources, and to recommend an approach to investing in and improving resources that benefits students and staff.

Terms of Reference

The committee is required:

- To monitor and document the current provision of UCC resources in terms of IT, HR, and physical campus facilities;
- To identify any gaps or risks in the current provision, and to document the work required in a time scale to be agreed with those heading the relevant divisions/departments;
- To anticipate any need in longer-term resourcing, and to compile realistic capital bids, or bids to external organisations, which benefit multiple courses/student cohorts;
- To comment on the suitability and effectiveness of HR processes;
- To ensure that investments in resources are linked to UCC's and CI's wider planning documents.

Membership

- Principal and Chief Executive (Chair)
- Head of Academic Services, UCC
- Up to two Area Heads, UCC
- Representatives from Facilities, IT, HR, Library & TLR
- Senior Academic Services Officer (Minutes)

Dates and Timings

The committee meets once per Semester, usually in weeks 4 to 6.

5b UCC Resources Committee Standing Agenda

The following agenda provides a summary of all items that should be considered at a Resources Committee meeting. The agenda is designed to ensure that each meeting of the UCC Resources Committee pays due regards to its terms of reference.

1. Welcome

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

4. Current UCC Projects – specifying wider projects taking place

5. Student Feedback Report (using NSS and/or module level information)

6. Facilities Updates – Not Previously Covered

7. IT and ILT – monitor and review current provision

8. Library and TLR update

9. Human Resources

10. Future Planning

11. Any Other Business