University Centre **Peterborough**

Minutes of an electronic meeting of the UCP Academic Board
held at 13:00 on Friday 4th October 2024, 13:00

Present
Liz Knight (LK)	Chair & Academic Director UCP
Matt Shough (MS)	Assistant Principal- Quality
Katie McAllister (KMc)	HE Manager Business & Education
Nick Reinis-Keightley (NRK)	HE Manager - Arts/Social Science and Student Support
Daniel Lee (DL)	HE Manager Teacher Training & Partnerships
Peter Wright (PW)	HE Manager Science and Technology- Resource
Jemma Leggetter (JL)	Customer Service and Student Finance Manager
Dannie Abbott (DA)	Academic Office Manager
Kat Beeton (KB)	Student Support Officer
Blair Carter (BC)	Course Leader – Education/BA Primary/Early Childhood
Claire Bowes (CB)	Course Leader – Psychosocial Studies
Fiona Henry	Course Leader- Computing
Abigail Hunt (AH)	Independent Member
Jo Dawkins (JD)	Independent Member
James Wadsworth (JW)	Independent Member
Clanut Rinomhota (CR)	Open University Representative (Observer)
Kamila Agina	Minutes- Senior HE Business Administrator
Cory Brook	Deputy Student Officer
Daniel Logan	L6 Journalism
Lucy Payne	L6 Forensic Investigation
Rosie Harris-Aebvitivs	L4 Digital Art (Graphic Design)
Sky Sawyn	L4 History and Archaeology
Helen Johns	L4 Digital Marketing and Communication
Tilly Coles	L5 Media Production
Aisha Ahmed	L6 Psychosocial Studies

Apologies
Angela O'Reilly	Vice Principal - Curriculum + Quality
David O'Garr	Assistant Principal - Curriculum
Rachel Jolley	Course Leader -Media and Journalism
Chris Pursehouse	Course Leader – Business
Kirstie Marfleet	Student Officer

1   STANDING ITEMS
a.   All were welcomed and apologies were accepted.
b.   No notice was received of any Member becoming ineligible to hold office. The meeting was quorate and there were no unregistered interests declared.
c.   The minutes of the last meeting held on May 2024 were confirmed for electronic signature (Action 1).
d.   Actions from the last meeting have been implemented as below:

See referenced minute for full detail.		Reps	Date
Action 1	Last minutes were confirmed for signature.	Chair (LK)	Completed
Action 2	Course Leaders to provide the Admissions team with names of students suitable for the Access. This will build progression.	Admissions and HE Managers	Completed
Action 3	Student Support Officer to contact Abi Hunt regarding the development of academic skill sessions.	HE Managers/ Student Support	Completed
Action 4	Address the formatting requirements in the Attendance Policy and Gateway Regulations.	Academic Office	Completed
Action 5	w/c placed next to 06/01/25 on the Quality calendar. Distribute to staff.	Academic Office	Completed
Action 6	Training on the Peer review process and adaptations will be given on 3rd September.	DL	Completed
Action 7	The Ethics Code and Policy will be revised. The Terms of Reference will be updated. Staff training will be provided on 3rd September.	Ethics Chair and Deputy/ Academic Director	Completed
Action 8	All meetings are to be online for 24/25 academic year	Secretary	Completed

Policy	Amendments	Outcome
UCP-Ass007 Rules and Regulations for Gateway (Level 5 Diploma in Web Application Development)	• Extra space removed • Spare bullet removed • X to be replaced with a number (3)	Approved
UCP- Ass004 Higher Education Academic Integrity Policy	• Guidance moved to Canvas	Approved
UCP- ATT001 Higher Education Students Attendance Policy	• Format updated	Approved
Quality Calendar	• w/c to be added	Approved

2 STUDENT FEEDBACK

<u>Helen Johns, L4 Digital Marketing and Communication</u>
The cohort is very happy with the course. There have been minimal issues but they were quickly resolved with the support of the staff and Student Officers.

<u>Lucy Payne, L6 Forensic Investigation</u>
There was an issue with a new lecturer. This has now been resolved. Apart from this, the cohort is very happy with what they have been learning.
Peter Wright, HE Manager, will visit the lesson to ensure everything is on course.

<u>ACTION 2 -</u> Peter Wright will visit the cohort and seek feedback in a few weeks.

<u>Aisha Ahmed, L6 Psychosocial Studies</u>
Cohort is happy. Although there were worries about finding missed information from tutorials.
Any presentation slides for Mandatory joint tutorial will be made available to all students on Canvas.

<u>Rosie Harris-Aebvitivs, L4 Digital Art (Graphic Design)</u>
Due to staff sickness, the first few lessons were disrupted and the cohort is worried about any information that might have been missed.

<u>Action 3 -</u> Nick Reinis-Keightly will be visiting the cohort to talk through the issues and create a plan.

<u>Tilly Coles, L5 Media Production</u>
The cohort is very happy and impressed with how smoothly everything is going.

<u>Daniel Logan, L6 Journalism</u>
There are no issues, and any small issues were resolved swiftly.

<u>Sky Sawyn, L4 History and Archaeology</u>
The cohort is very happy.

3 STUDENT OFFICER FEEDBACK

<u>Cory Brook Deputy Student Officer</u>
He is available for student support on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM. His primary focus for this academic year is enhancing communication, fostering engagement, and bridging the gap between UCP and Stamford College.

The Student Officers delivered the first joint tutorial with Kat Beeton and Cory delivered this to Stamford students. Their close working relationship with student representatives has led to positive feedback.

During the summer, the Student Officers reviewed and updated the Student Charter and collaborated on the guidance for societies.
The Freshers event witnessed a surge of interest in student societies, with the Creative Writing Society receiving ten sign-ups. Additionally, Level 4 Forensics students will be running the Forensics Society. The Give It a Go Society will be organising biweekly events and has attracted sixteen sign-ups.

Feedback from the Freshers event highlighted the need for a more balanced schedule a mix of business-related and fun activities throughout the week. Students found that the events on separate days were either too corporate or too 'childish'.

To provide a better experience, particularly for continuing students, Freshers events will be in week two of academic year 25/26. This adjustment will allow students to settle into their courses before participating in the orientation activities.

Action 4 – Freshers to be moved to week two of the Academic year 25/26

Agenda item 9 moved forward.

9   APPROVAL OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL SUBMISSION

Several areas of strength have been identified and incorporated into the institutional submission, including academic skills, resources, student support, staff development, information consolidation, calendar updates, employability, communication, staff training, and NSS performance. Areas highlighted for improvement include communication between UCP and External Examiners, access to Canvas for External Examiners, programme marketing, and student awareness of recent information and system changes.

It was noted that the action plan section 4/A2 at the bottom of page 18, is very system and process-focused.

The Board was happy to approve.

The Board wants to commend the addition of the reference table enabling students to understand the academic regulations.

Action 5 – The action plan would be reviewed to enhance student focus where possible.

4 STUDENT NUMBERS

FTE Targets and Course Offerings
UCP's current FTE (Full-Time Equivalent) stands at 350, which is 48 below the target of 398. The January enrolment is expected to contribute to achieving this target. The non-prescribed courses, such as Code Institute and Aim, have an FTE target of 40.5. The September enrolments have closed for this academic year but applications will reopen shortly for January enrolments.

The upcoming January enrolment is anticipated to be the largest in the last three years. Notably, the OU Diploma in Leadership Management and Adult Social Care will be offered for the first time at the Peterborough campus. Additionally, this will be the first-time modular courses are being offered, allowing students to enrol in individual modules from the degree programme at full cost. The advertisement for these courses will be released shortly.

HTQ numbers were discussed under item 11.

5   STUDENT SUPPORT UPDATES

In response to student feedback, the Academic Hub is undergoing revisions to align with the previous Canvas amendments. These changes will be implemented throughout the academic year.

The induction sessions for the improved Hub have been highly successful, generating positive feedback from students. The Academic Skills sessions offered last year were underutilised, mostly due to the Academic Hub's inaccessibility for students with needs and students' reluctance to forego their lunch breaks.

To address these challenges, a review of resources will be conducted to determine the most effective approach moving forward.

Spectrum Life and Student Well-being

A new well-being platform, Spectrum Life, has been introduced to the student body, providing 24/7 access to trained counsellors, and various other wellbeing services. Information about this service has been included in the Student Briefing. In conjunction with World Mental Health Day on October 10th, Student Support will be hosting demonstrations on the first floor. Additionally, the Deputy Student Officer, Cory Brook, will be conducting mindful taster sessions during lunch breaks.

Student Representative Structure and Mentor Programme

The Student Representative (Reps) structure has been adapted to better accommodate the diverse needs of students. A mentor programme is being implemented for final-year students to support and guide new Level 4 Reps.

Student Experience Hub

The Student Experience Hub will be maintained by the Student Officers with the assistance of Student Support. This will serve as a centralised platform for student experiences and feedback.

The feedback from one-to-one and drop-in sessions has been positive, emphasising the importance of transparent communication. Student Support is committed to providing honest feedback to students, regardless if the outcome is negative or positive. Questions raised by students in meetings such as SELT and the Academic Board will be addressed in the Student Briefing. The mechanism which students use to raise the issues, such as Student Officers, will determine the corresponding feedback channel.

Recognition of UCP's Efforts

Abigail Hunt commended Student support for their commitment to listening to student feedback and implementing improvements. The university's ability to test processes, review feedback, and adapt accordingly, demonstrates a consistent focus on putting UCP students first.

6   COURSE CLOSURES AND DEVELOPMENTS -COUNTRYSIDE RANGER PEARSON VALIDATION

Course Closures

Due to staffing shortages and low student numbers, several courses will be temporarily closed for the 24/25 academic year: Acting Stage and Screen, Journalism, Psychosocial,

Criminology, English Literature, Foundation Degree Forensic Investigation, and Digital Arts (Photography strand only). It is anticipated that these courses will be reinstated for the 25/26 academic year.
The Biological Science degree is currently in the 'teach out' phase with only Level 5 and Level 6. This decision was made due to staffing and the availability of a similar course from a local competitor.

Course Revision
The Sports Coaching degree has undergone significant revisions in collaboration with the Open University (OU). The primary objective of these revisions is to enhance the rigour and relevance of all course modules. To achieve this, the number and weighting of in-class tests have been reduced, and more appropriate alternatives have been implemented.

New Course Offerings
Higher Teaching Qualifications (HTQs) are being taught in Sports, Engineering, and Digital Technologies.
A collaboration with Pearson is underway to review the Animal Management qualification and align with the new standards set by IfATE for Countryside Ranger Certification. This validation has been approved by Pearson and is currently awaiting approval from IfATE. The target for the first teach is September 2026.

January Starts and Degree Apprenticeships
The January intake will include Business, HTQs, DipHE in Leadership Management and Adult Social Care, CBT Person-Centred Counselling Micro-credentials and Code Institute's Level 5 Web Development.
An overview of the Degree Apprenticeship bid and new curriculum is provided in item 12.

7   POLICY UPDATES AND APPROVALS
a. UCP-FIN001 Tuition Fee Policy
The Fee Policy has been amended to reflect the latest funding guidelines for micro-credentials.
b. UCP-ASS001 HE (Non-Examination) Assessment Policy for OU
To correct the discrepancy between the Non-Examination Policy and the Extension Policy. The time frame for requesting an extension has been reduced from 5 days to 2 days prior to the deadline to ensure consistency across validating partners.
c. UCP-EXT001 HE- Extension Request Procedure
Due to the same as reasoning stated under UCP-ASS001
d. UCP-AT001 HE-Student-Attendance-Policy V1.2
This is a procedural update, to clearly state UCP does not allow for students to attend online and be marked as present. The majority of courses are not validated for online learning. In exceptional circumstances, students can apply for a leave of absence.
e. UCP-EXM001 HE- Examination Policy v2.1
Invigilators are now required to verify the access arrangements that are in place on the day of examination and to handle any work that is stored on memory sticks for those who use laptops.
f. Academic Committee Structure
Research and Scholarly Activity Group terms of reference have been updated.

8 ETHICS PROCESS AND ADAPTATIONS

The Ethics process has been reviewed and updated based on student feedback. There is now one process for all courses, removing all block approvals. All ethics applications will now be reviewed by the Ethics committee. Ethics applications are now to be submitted through Canvas, in line with other UCP processes. Supervisors will sign off the application and upload it to Canvas on behalf of the student. Feedback will be placed on Canvas and for the student to review. The revised policy, documentation and term of reference were approved

L6 Journalism

The cohort found the Ethics guidelines extremely restrictive. Several students wanted to consider subjects such as domestic abuse or transgender issues but were advised that these subjects would not be approved.

The Chair of the Ethics Board advised this would not be the case if the students were using secondary research. However, should students want to interview people on these subjects it would not be approved. UCP must keep not only the students safe but also vulnerable people. This information is provided in the Ethics Policy and Procedures.

The Board noted that the policy is very sensible and understands the response given to students. This is in line with the sector and best practice. The use of secondary research has a lot of potential and there is a lot of data already available that students can make use of.

ACTION 6 - Blair Carter to review the Course Leaders understanding of Ethics approved applications and safeguarding and make himself available to students who may want to discuss this further.

(Agenda Item 9 moved to after Agenda Item 3)

10 NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY AND QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PLAN

This survey reviews various aspects of student experience, including academic support, organisation, learning resources, and student voice. In the 24/25 academic year, over 520 higher education establishments participated in the NSS survey. UCP achieved a 75% response rate, surpassing the sector average of 72%.

Comparison to Other Higher Education Establishments

UCP was the only higher education provider in the East of England ranked within the top 50 in the NSS (42nd). In comparison to the closest provider, ARU ranked 125th. UCP's results were exemplary.

Several areas were identified as requiring attention based on the NSS results:

- Library Resources: while slightly below the benchmark, UCP has taken steps to address this by providing a Hub space and conducting library induction sessions for all students. Efforts may be needed to simplify access and the location of information. HTQ funding has also been used to improve resources.
- Student Voice: UCP's student voice score was slightly above the benchmark, indicating positive progress. Mandatory tutorials on freedom of speech, guest

speakers, freedom of information, and academic freedom contribute to fostering a strong student voice.
- Mental Well-being: UCP's mental well-being score was below the benchmark. However, the introduction of systems like Spectrum Life this year will show improvements. Student Support has also been collaborating with FE to enhance mental health services

ACTION 7 - Improvements made to the library systems to allow students to locate information simply, possibly in one database.
ACTION 8 –Confirm whether NSS benchmarks are contextualised
ACTION 9 –The action plan will be tracked and an update provided in Feb 2025.

11   HTQ PROJECT DELIVERY
Capital Installations and Course-Specific Investments
This academic year capital expenditure included the installation of two meeting hubs on the first floor, the relocation of the reception area, the creation of two immersive suites, the modernisation of classroom technology infrastructure, upgrade of classroom equipment, and the renovation of room UCP014 into a versatile meeting and teaching space.

In addition to this there have been course-specific capital investments have been made, such as the Cyber room, Esports facilities, the Sports Science lab and animal enclosures at Stamford.

Course Enrolment and Targets
As of October 24/25, Engineering and Manufacturing courses have reached their enrolment targets. However, Digital Technology, Health and Sport Science, and Education and Childcare courses have fallen short of their targets. The Education and Childcare programme were particularly impacted by the changes implemented by IfATE.

Letter to the Department for Education (DfE)
UCP sent a letter to the DfE outlining the issues faced by UCP during the implementation of the HTQs. A series of mitigations were presented. These actions include the January intake, modularised course delivery, the introduction of a full-time Engineering course, and promotional efforts through Whatuni, UCAS, and social media. Additionally, UCP has conducted numerous taster sessions, workshops, and masterclasses.

UCP has asked for an extension to the recruitment/intake points.

Addressing Information Gaps
A meeting has been held with the DfE/HTQ project team and further information was provided regarding external factors that had impacted recruitment.

12 DEGREE APPRENTICESHIP BID
Wave 3 degree apprenticeship bid
In response to the government's initiative to address skills. A series of degree apprenticeship bids were released. Wave 3 of this initiative was designed for providers

new to degree apprenticeships. Information regarding UCP's successful bid can be found on the OfS website and in the bid template provided at the meeting.

UCP will be delivering five standards: Creative Digital Design Professional Standards Marketer, Complex Crime Investigators Standards, UX Experience and Teacher Training These courses will offer a traditional degree pathway alongside the option of an apprenticeship. A dedicated Project Leader role is being advertised to support UCP in achieving the project millstones. They will be delivered as integrated degree apprenticeships.

Action 10 - A comprehensive implementation plan is currently being developed and will be discussed in detail at the next Academic Board meeting in November.

13 UPDATES ON TEACHING, SCHOLARSHIP AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS
Staff training
The HE Conference held in July engaged with current topics in higher education, including Artificial Intelligence (AI) and neurodiversity. This event featured guest speakers who shared their expertise on Canvas, Lesson Up, and other relevant technologies.
The September event focused on the practical aspects of teaching, encompassing technology integration, ethics, academic regulations, and student support.

Peer-on-peer reviews have been organised, and the training plan for the academic year has been disseminated to lecturers. Training sessions are scheduled for October 16th, 18th, and 28th, with observations commencing in early November.

CPD and Training Initiatives
Based on feedback from previous peer reviews, training has begun with Lesson Up. The aim is to equip staff with the knowledge and skills of how to use the new systems and equipment

To monitor the effectiveness of the CPD and training provided, UCP receive feedback from staff, student surveys and the peer-on-peer reviews. The feedback will help identify areas where lecturers may require additional training. The impact is apparent from student surveys and NSS data.

14   UPDATES ON EMPLOYABILITY AND GRADUATE OUTCOMES
UCP Futures: A Rebranded Employability Service
UCP Futures, formerly known as Employability, has undergone a rebranding process in response to student feedback. A new software platform called "Potentially." allows UCP to track student progress and jobs available. UCP Futures actively engages with employers to gain insights into the skills and experiences students may need when entering the workplace.

Events and Support Services
UCP Futures has organised several events, including the Macmillan event, which provided an opportunity for students to connect with each other. The Brave career visit on 10th October will provide career and industry insights.

For postgraduate students, the Masters' Support Lincoln team offers one-to-one discussions to provide guidance and assistance. Networking sessions, progression support, and "Power Up" sessions which are one-hour sessions designed to equip students with essential information.

Action 11 – An update on the implementation and impact of Potentially will be presented at the February meeting.

15   UPDATES ON OTHER COMMITTEES
No issues were raised

16   AOB
No business was raised.

ACTION TABLE

See referenced minute for full detail.		Reps	Date
Action 1	Last minutes were confirmed for signature.	Chair (LK)	29/11/24
Action 2	Peter Wright will visit the Forensic cohort and seek feedback.	PW	07/11/24
Action 3	Discussion with Digital Art cohort to create a plan.	NRK	04/11/24
Action 4	Freshers to be moved to week two of the Academic year 25/26	JL	Sept 25
Action 5	The action plan would be reviewed to enhance student focus where possible in the OU annual monitoring submission.	Academic Office/ OU	11/10/24
Action 6	Review of the Course Leaders understanding of Ethics approved applications and safeguarding.	Blair Carter	11/10/24
Action 7	Improvements made to the library systems to allow students to locate information simply, possibly in one database	KS/Library	29/11/24
Action 8	Confirm whether NSS benchmarks are contextualised	DL	29/11/24
Action 9	Bring an NSS update to February Academic Board	DL	28/02/25
Action 10	Degree Apprenticeship implementation plan shared with Board	Academic Director	29/11/24
Action 11	An update on the implementation and impact of Potentially will be presented at February meeting.	JL	28/02/25

Policy	Amendments	Outcome
OPEN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL SUBMISSION		Approved
UCP-FIN001 Tuition fee Policy		Approved
UCP-ASS001 HE (Non-Examination) Assessment Policy for OU		Approved
UCP-EXT001 HE- Extension Request Procedure		Approved
UCP-AT001 HE-Student-Attendance-Policy V1.2		Approved
UCP-EXM001 HE- Examination Policy v2.1		Approved
Academic Committee Structure Ethics Policy SELT Policy ACQC Policy AWAS Policy RSAG Policy		Approved

19   DATE & TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING online

- 29th Nov 24
- 28th Feb 25
- 23rd May 25