Minutes of an electronic meeting of the UCP Academic Board held at 13:00 on Friday 5th December 2025.

Present

Liz Knight (LK)	Chair and Academic Director UCP
Katie McAllister (KMc)	HE Manager Business & Education
Daniel Lee (DL)	HE Manager Teacher Training & Partnerships
Nick Reinis-Keightley (NRK)	HE Manager - Arts/Social Science and Student Support
Jemma Leggetter (JL)	Customer Service and Student Finance Manager
Dannie Abbott (DA)	Academic Office Manager
Kat Beeton (KB)	HE Student Support Co-ordinator and Officer
Claire Bowes (CB)	Curriculum Leader - Psychosocial Studies
Fiona Henry	Curriculum Leader – Computing
Raghav Kovvuri	Curriculum Leader Digital Technology
Matt Shough (MS)	Assistant Principal- Quality
Jo Dawkins (JD)	Independent Member
Dr Aristeidis Dadoukis	Independent Member
Kamila Agina (KA)	Minutes- Senior HE Business Administrator

Students

Cory Brook	Student Officer and student governor
Freshtah Nabizadah	Level 4, English Literature
Rosy Harris-Aebvtis	Level 5, Digital Art
Nicci Bowes	Level 4, Media Production
Martina Capekova	Level 5, Forensics

Apologies

David O'Garr	Assistant Principal – Curriculum
James Wadsworth (JW)	Independent Member
Sam Mackey	Curriculum Leader - Early Years and Education
Grace Theunissen	Curriculum Leader- Digital Arts

Non-Attendance – none

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 registered interests declared.

c. The minutes of the last meeting held on 10th October 2025 were confirmed for electronic signature (Action One).

d. Actions from the last meeting have been implemented as below:

See referenced minute for full details.	Action	Resp.	Date
Action One	The last minutes were confirmed for signature.	Chair (LK)	Complete
Action Two	Align MIS functions with higher education requirements and deadlines.	UCP Management Team and MIS Director	Ongoing
Action Three	Provide the Academic Board with the outcome of two validation events at the next meeting.	Academic Office and HE Manager	Complete
Action Four	Update the OU IPM to include information on E6 and update UCP's LLE status.	Academic Office	Complete
Action Five	Identify areas that would improve OU partner experience. Subject staff sitting on OU partner validation panels was one area proposed.	Academic Office	Complete
Previous actions brought forward			
Action Four	A review of the student action plan and targets will be presented at the next Academic Board	Student Officer	Complete
Action Five	Plans for the enhancement of student experience will be provided along with the new 2025-2029 Student Engagement Strategy. Which will be approved at the next meeting.	NRK HE Manager / Student Officer / Student Council	27th Feb 2026
Action Six	Implement/refine a central compliments/ feedback system in preparation for 25/26.	DA/KB/ JL Academic Office and Student Support	Complete
Action Seven	An update on the impact and launch of the UCP Award and the progression event/employability calendar to be provided at the December Academic Board.	UCP Futures/ JL	Complete

2 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES' FEEDBACK

Martina Capekova Level 5 Forensics

The cohort is happy, enjoying laboratory work and working with crime scenes. The external speaker from the Police Department was particularly helpful, offering real-life experience that has aided students in determining their post-course aspirations.
The cover for the sick Course Leader is also appreciated and the cohort have enjoyed working with her (Rosemary Saunders).

Freshtah Capekova – Level 4 English Literature
The course is engaging and maintains a positive, supportive environment. However, mature students are struggling with the IT skills. It was agreed that skill-building sessions would be arranged through the academic skills programme and will incorporate feedback on specific areas.

Action two – Provide IT training sessions and resources to students – HE Managers/ILT.

Nicci Bowes – Level 4 Media Production
The course is going well and is very busy, with no complaints from the cohort. PBO Collective bursary opportunity has been sent out to all students.

Rosy Harris-Aebvtis– Level 5 Digital Art
The cohort are enjoying the lessons and teacher (Grace Theunissen). The cohort have raised an issue regarding the broken vending machine and a poor-quality of products.

Feedback- It was confirmed that the vending machine repair has been raised and that the UCP Reception is able to report these issues to the vender and issue refund requests.

3 STUDENT OFFICER / REPRESENTATIVES FEEDBACK

The university faced several challenges such as floods, lift maintenance, enrolment, MIS, IT issues, and delays in onboarding staff. However, positive feedback/compliments were given by students regarding the staff's hard work to navigate these issues.
Helen Johns has been appointed Deputy Student Officer and will be working on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Student Representatives
A Student Representative engagement plan has been successful; the Peterborough site cohorts are now fully incorporated, with either an elected representatives or the role being shared within the cohort. The Stamford site has around two-thirds of cohorts currently engaged, but there are plans in place to ensure the remaining cohorts are brought on board.

Stamford, HE block
Work is ongoing to secure funding for the development/improvement of the Higher Education block in Stamford. In addition, a maintenance grant for low-income students in high-priority areas, is being reviewed, this information to be shared once received.

Events
The events have been successful, including the Christmas events, which were well received thanks to the efforts of student Martina Capekova and the support staff. Smaller events held throughout the term have been particularly effective, with students engaging enthusiastically and providing positive feedback. Larger events, such as Creative Spark, remain impactful but require more planning and advance notice, which is steadily improving.

Societies
Student society activity is increasing, with Creative Writing restarting and discussions regarding establishing a Warhammer society and a Forensics society.

4 STUDENT SUPPORT

Student-Facing Forms and Engagement

The introduction of new student-facing forms has already delivered immediate benefits, reducing workload for the Student Support team and streamlining engagement processes. Student feedback and engagement activities are also being strengthened, with a focus group for cohort and informal events to encourage open discussion.

Critical Reviews

Critical reviews are currently underway, focusing on ALS/ILP effectiveness, student retention patterns, and wider support processes. Findings are scheduled for presentation at the next Academic Boards 27th February 2026.

Staff Training

The need for additional staff training has been identified, particularly in relation to attendance reporting and wider student support processes. This training will be coordinated by HE Managers in January 2026, it will act as both a refresher and a means of addressing lost knowledge, ensuring staff are confident in signposting and interacting with support mechanisms.

Action three – Incorporate a Student Support session in the January 6th Staff Development event.

Health and Wellbeing

Health and wellbeing remain a growing priority, with enhanced visibility of Spectrum Life across campus and the planned launch of a mini mental health and wellbeing hub on Canvas in early 2026.

Attendance

The suspension of automated reporting systems has impacted attendance tracking, necessitating manual intervention. Despite these challenges, the team has successfully issued attendance letters and conducted necessary meetings. Currently, Bioscience is the final department required to complete the register review before the process is finalised.

Student Experience and NSS

While last year's NSS results fell below benchmark despite significant effort, continued emphasis will be placed on improving student experience and outcomes. The coordinated training and collaborative work between academic staff and the support team in January will be a key action in driving this improvement forward.

5 COURSE REVISIONS AND VALIDATION OUTCOMES

Minor changes have been made, firstly to the Digital Marketer degree, with a singular component adjustment to module DMA105 and secondly, the Engineering Top-up degree, where the assessment strategy wording for ENG105 has been updated.
Delivery of Sport and Exercise Science at the Stamford site, alongside Peterborough, remains pending approval.

Validation Outcomes

The Open University has confirmed reapproval of the BSc (Hons) Forensic and Police Investigation for five years from the 1st of September 2026, subject to the condition

requiring corrections to documentation. The revised submission deadline is 8th December 2025.

The MA Creative Writing validation event took place on 27 November 2025, with the panel recommending approval for five years from September 2026, subject to four conditions relating to staff resources, documentation alignment, the production of an assessment map, and progression maps including exit awards. The commendations highlighted the team's strong vision, relevance to the local community, enthusiastic student engagement, and effective use of staff specialisms. Conditions must be met by March 2026.

Upcoming Revalidations
Revalidations scheduled for 2026 include Psychosocial/Sociology, Business and Management Accounting, Counselling (top-up), and Criminology.

Other Open University Updates
UCP has confirmed it will not pursue HTQ Computing for England but will instead introduce the BSc (Hons) Applied Computer Science as a full degree, validated earlier this year. This programme offers greater flexibility under the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE), supports direct entry at Level 6 for students completing Gateway's Level 5 Web Application Development Diploma, and enables both face-to-face and online delivery.

6 POLICY UPDATES AND APPROVALS/ ASSESSMENT STRATERGY

UCP-ASS001 HE (Non-examination) Assessment Handbook (Appendix 1)
The approval of the Higher Education (Non-Examination) Assessment Policy is needed by the Academic Board. The Handbook clarifies assessment expectations, marking processes, submission regulations, and academic-integrity guidance. It introduces an assessment equivalence framework to standardise assessment volumes and formats, supporting industry-aligned tasks, reducing assessment burden, and fostering deeper learning. The OU marking grid is embedded to increase transparency and support consistent marking.

The Handbook significantly strengthens moderation processes through clearer procedures for internal and external moderation of assessment design and student work, ensuring compliance with OU and QAA expectations. This streamlining allows for greater oversight and centralised documentation.

Conclusion - The Board approved the HE Non-Examination Assessment Policy.

7 APPROVAL OF THE TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT OUTCOMES STRATEGY

A central aim of University Centre Peterborough is to empower learners to fulfil their potential by developing specific graduate attributes (e.g. independence, digital literacy, global perspective, creativity).
The strategy, is built on three pillars:

1. Achieving Excellence & Graduate Success: Focuses on high-quality delivery, graduate readiness, equipping students with essential skills (employability, digital literacy, resilience), authentic assessment, and commitment to Education for Sustainable Development (ESD).

2. Student Engagement & Equity: Focuses on an inclusive learning environment through co-creation of curriculum, promoting equity, diversity, inclusion (EDI), and ensuring a strong sense of belonging and wellbeing.

3. Valuing Our People & Their Development: Focuses on investing in staff development aligned with the Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF), encouraging pedagogical innovation, and embedding research/scholarship into teaching.

The strategy will be embedded in staff performance reviews and monitoring processes. Success will be monitored through UCP's KPIs which are designed to meet and exceed OfS benchmarks (Continuation, Completion, Progression) and positive student experience targets (e.g. NSS scores). The strategy reflects updates addressing AI, digital capability, and wellbeing.

Conclusion - The Board approved the Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Student Outcomes Strategy 2026-2030.

8 LIFELONG LEARNING ENTITLEMENT (LLE)

Progress is being made in preparation for the implementation of the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE). A soft launch is anticipated for January 2027, pending further guidance from government funding bodies.

University Centre Peterborough (UCP) has proactively revalidated the majority of the provision (excluding engineering) into a 30-credit basis, which is expected to simplify LLE operation and reduce the anticipated heavy administrative burden. An update with a plan/overview will be brought to the 27th February Academic board.

Action four - A detailed paper outlining progress of LLE and future plans will be presented in February.

9 COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Complaints

University Centre Peterborough (UCP) has received no formal complaints this academic year. This outcome reflects the institution's commitment to maintaining high standards of teaching, support and administration, and demonstrates the effectiveness of its processes in addressing concerns informally and constructively.

Compliments

Positive feedback was received across a range of areas, including student support, teaching and engagement, administration and events. Staff have been commended for their exceptional support with extensions and guidance, and for delivering sessions described as highly engaging and of outstanding quality. Feedback has also highlighted the genuine care shown by staff towards students, with particular praise directed at Nick Reinis-Keightley and Liz Knight for hosting the Arts and CulturED event, which was described as going above and beyond expectations.

Process Enhancements

University Centre Peterborough (UCP) has formalised its approach to capturing positive feedback through the implementation of a standardised compliments form, which is now a mandatory component of all event planning in both digital and physical formats. By

systematically integrating this qualitative data into its quality assurance framework, the institution not only celebrates excellence but actively utilises these insights to forge stronger external partnerships, exemplified by recent collaborations with the Peterborough Cultural Alliance, Stanza and Metal.

10 SEMESTER 1 STUDENT EXPERIENCE SURVEY

A comprehensive NSS action plan has been implemented. A central component of this plan was the adaptation of the internal Student Experience Survey (SES) to align directly with the National Student Survey (NSS), adopting identical questions and the same response measures. This change enables UCP to track performance more consistently and to anticipate future NSS outcomes with greater accuracy. The revised survey approach has led to a significant increase in engagement, with responses rising from 133 to 264, equating to a 68% response rate. This improvement reflects the effective work of Course Leaders in encouraging participation and provides a more representative view of the student body. Although the institutional target of 80% was ambitious, several programmes recorded exceptionally high rates. Further work will be undertaken with courses that recorded lower response rates to strengthen engagement in the next cycle.

From the recent findings the overall satisfaction across all twenty-six questions has exceeded the results from the previous two years results.

The overall positive response rate reached 92.7%, compared with 82% under the former measure, while teaching quality achieved a particularly strong positive response rate of 95%. These outcomes indicate that the adapted survey has mitigated the historical trend of disproportionately negative feedback and now provides a more balanced and accurate reflection of the student experience. A full analysis of the survey results will be shared with staff and students during the week commencing the 5th January 2026.

Action five – Provide an update on the NSS QIP in February.

11 PREVENT RETURN

Higher Education's, approach to the 'Prevent' duty monitored by the Office for Students (OfS) necessitates a careful balance, between safeguarding the community against the risks of extremism and terrorism, while upholding the principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech. To achieve this, the institution has implemented a comprehensive governance framework that includes a publicly accessible risk assessment and action plan, alongside mandatory, rigorous training for both staff and Student Officers to ensure welfare support systems and IT policies align with statutory requirements.

There has been a notable 100% increase in external speaker events, particularly within creative disciplines, which have enhanced students' understanding of democratic participation and debating skills.

The External Speaker Policy enforces a clear distinction between controversial views, which are protected under academic freedom, and illegal speech inciting violence or hatred, a balance that is further validated by positive National Student Survey (NSS) benchmarks regarding students' confidence in expressing their ideals.

12 UPDATE ON PEER REVIEW

The peer-on-peer review process is designed to enhance teaching and learning, foster collaboration, and promote accountability by mapping activities to the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) to support Advance HE fellowships.

A comprehensive analysis of the data is currently being undertaken to identify cross-year trends, comparing current findings against previous themes such as student engagement, inclusive learning environments, and technology-enhanced learning, to effectively determine future training needs and validate recent initiatives, such as the focus on Artificial Intelligence.

Action six – A detailed report on the peer review findings will be presented at the February meeting.

13 UCP AWARD AND EMPLOYABILITY UPDATE AND ACTIVITY

Student progression outcomes demonstrate sustained excellence, with the latest Graduate Outcomes data reporting a 70.3% positive progression rate for first-degree students against a sector benchmark of 60%, showing a trend of a steady improvement over the last three years.

This strong performance is underpinned by the UCP Futures initiative, which has bolstered alumni support through dedicated engagement strategies including the pivotal role of the 'Potential.ly' platform for continued career resource access and has seen increased interaction with graduates even prior to the 15-month post-graduation survey point.

Targeted employability interventions are being refined through real-time data from recent group tutorials and surveys, revealing that while 30.4% of current students remain unsure of their career path, significant portions are actively planning for graduate employment (35%) or Master's study (21%). This has prompted the development of tailored guidance and new engagement incentives like the upcoming UCP Award and alumni recognition schemes to ensure comprehensive support throughout the student lifecycle.

Action seven – A report on alumni engagement and comparisons to prior year is required.

14 UPDATE ON OTHER COMMITTEES

No request was made to review the minutes of other committees.

15 AOB

The Governors held a Development Day on the 3rd December 2025 where the UCP strategy was approved. The strategy required minor adjustments regarding design and the inclusion of private funding within sustainability initiatives. The approved UCP 2025-2030 strategy will be circulated in January.

Action eight – Distribution of the UCP 2025-2030 strategy to the Academic Board and UCP staff and students.

ACTION TABLE

See referenced minute for full details.	Action	Resp.	Date
Action One	The last minutes were confirmed for signature.	Chair (LK)	27/02/26
Action Two	Provide IT training sessions and resources to students	HE Managers/ILT	January 2026
Action Three	Incorporate a Student Support sessions in the January 6th Staff Development event.	Student Support/ HE Managers	January 2026
Action Four	A detailed paper outlining progress of LLE and future plans will be presented in February	Katie McAllister, HE Manager/ Academic director	27/02/26
Action Five	Provide an update on the NSS QIP in February	Nick Reinis-Keightley/ HE Managers	05/01/26
Action Six	A detailed report on the peer review findings will be presented at the February meeting	Dan Lee	27/02/26
Action Seven	A report on alumni engagement and comparisons to prior year is requires	Jemma Leggetter/ UCP Futures	ongoing
Action Eight	Distribution of the UCP 2025-2030 strategy to the Academic Board and UCP staff and students	Liz Knight	January 2026
Previous Academic Board actions			
Action Five	2025-2029 Student Engagement Strategy.	NRK HE Manager / Student Officer / Student Council	Ongoing Feb 26

POLICY APPROVAL

Policy	Amendments	Outcome
UCP-ASS001 HE (Non-examination) Assessment Handbook (Appendix 1)		Approval

Item	Approvals
6 POLICY UPDATES AND APPROVALS/ ASSESSMENT STRATEGY	The Board approved the HE Non-Examination Assessment Policy.
7 APPROVALS OF THE TEACHING, LEARNING AND STUDENT OUTCOMES STRATEGY 2026-2030	The Board approved the Teaching, Learning, Assessment and Student Outcomes Strategy 2026-2030.

13 DATE & TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

27th February 2026