Provider name: University for the Creative Arts
UKPRN: 10006427

UNIVERSITY FOR THE CREATIVE ARTS – TEF 2023 PROVIDER SUBMISSION

1. Provider context

University for the Creative Arts (UCA) is a small, specialist institution based on four UK campuses (Farnham – 2,020 FTE, Epsom – 1,140 FTE, Canterbury – 910 FTE, Rochester – 790 FTE with a single course at Maidstone TV Studios) and joint centre in Xiamen, China (530 students). Through seven specialist Schools and two multi-disciplinary colleges[1], we offer 53 full-time, on-campus undergraduate courses preparing students for careers in the creative industries (arts, technology, business). A further 3,530 (1,168 FTE) students study through partnerships in the UK and overseas, with 2,153 in a single open access distance-learning partnership – the Open College of the Arts (see pg. 15 for a full explanation of this partnership).

Over the TEF Period (only 2018-19 to 2020-21 available), we have consistently been recognised as the number one or two specialist Creative University in all three major UK league tables (9 times out of 9 for Overall and 8 times out of 9 for Teaching Quality). We are also the only Creative University to feature in the Times Higher 'Tables of Tables' which combines the results (Ref 1).

Our educational mission is to prepare diverse, high-quality graduates for long-term careers in the creative industries. To achieve our mission, through our education strategy ('UCA Academic Plan' – Reference 2) we embed five education principles into the design, development, approval and delivery of all UCA degrees (whether delivered on our own campuses or through partnerships):

Personalisation – We offer a high level of study choice, individual tutorials, and personal projects to enable students to develop portfolio creative careers. Over the TEF period, on average 71% of our students studied for creative sub-sectors where more than 70% of workers are freelancers - six times greater than in the wider UK economy (Ref 3). Our distinctive approach to the personalisation of curriculum and delivery focuses on building and meeting students' individual needs in the context of this entrepreneurial and predominately freelance career environment (Ref 2).

Practice-led, knowledge-applied – We focus on the application of creativity and include a compulsory work placement or industry experience in the 2nd Year of all UG courses (inc. 1-year sandwich-degree placement option). This industry exposure is a highly evidenced way for students to rapidly close the skills and knowledge gaps they experience on entry due to the ~35% decline in creative GCSEs and A-Levels (Ref 3 & 4) and also serves to build the networks our students need to succeed as the most diverse Creative University student body in the UK (Ref 4 & 36).

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[1] Canterbury School of Architecture and Design; School of Communications; School of Fashion and Textiles; School of Film, Media and Performing Arts; School of Fine Art, Craft and Photography; School of Games and Creative Technology; Business School for the Creative Industries (only one in the UK dedicated to the study of creative industries); UCA International College; UCA Doctoral College.

Interdisciplinary – All our courses include significant elements developing students' creativity inside, outside and between disciplines (Ref 2 & 9). This prepares students as leaders of creativity: the skill most desired by employers in all sectors (Ref 5), and the least threatened skill as robotics, artificial intelligence and service automation (RAISA) replace 58% of human work by 2035 (Ref 6).

Technologically engaged – All our degrees include a significant focus on the direct use of and training in industry-standard software and access to a wide range of micro-qualifications (Ref 2 & 9). This supports students as high-level technology is the most in-demand skill for creative industry employers and the 'CreaTech' sub-sector is the fastest growing part of the UK Economy (Ref 7).

Globally inclusive – Each degree includes a minimum 30% of materials and assessment briefs from non-dominant contexts (Ref 2 & 9) to support our students with disabilities (46% of all students) and students from disadvantaged-background (30% of all students) for employment in a global context. This prepares students to compete in an employment context where students from a privileged background is 5.5 times more likely to secure a creative role (Ref 8).

Our unique multi-campus, single-discipline context delivers excellence for our students as:

1. Courses and curricula are designed and approved at an institutional level (e.g., in 2021-22 all UG programmes were concurrently redesigned and revalidated – Ref 9). This enables the co-creation of courses with students, staff and industry across UCA's network of campuses to maintain interdisciplinarity; coherence as a learning community; structured development in both practical disciplinary skills and theory; and innovations in the subject and pedagogy.

2. All staff that underpinned our REF 2021 position as the leading Creative University for world-leading research outputs are engaged in teaching as part of our People Strategy (Ref 10). This constant collaboration between research and education ensures 14% of undergraduate teaching is delivered by research-active staff with 3* or 4* research outputs (Ref 11).

3. Our single discipline nature means our above sector expenditure on resources benefits all students (£2,730 per UCA student / +£266 above sector / +£695 above Creative Universities – Ref 12) and ensures professional standard environments with access to accredited additional qualifications in a number of fields (e.g., Avid Certification; Google Digital Marketing Awards).

In combination, this approach has brought extraordinary institutional success and produced a global pipeline of diverse talent and leadership to the creative sector. Oscar, BAFTA and Golden Globe winning filmmakers and animators, world-renowned fashion designers, RIBA Gold Medal, Pritzker and Stirling Prize-winning architects, and Turner Prize winners and nominees are just some of UCA's high-profile graduates who shape the creative industries with their talent (Ref 1).

In recognition of the excellence of our teaching and learning, we are extremely proud to have been named Modern University of the Year 2019 and awarded TEF Gold in June 2019. Over the TEF period, we have been consistently ranked in the top 20-35 of all UK Universities for teaching quality in the Times/Sunday Times League Table (Ref 1).

We believe the strengths summarised above, and the submission that follows, which was developed in association with our student representatives, demonstrate that we are globally recognised as among the very highest quality providers for diverse students in small, specialist, creative education in the UK, underpinning this submission for a TEF award.

2. Student experience

We believe that the evidence provided in this section signifies that most features reflect outstanding student experience for all our students. Our design, delivery and resourcing of teaching, feedback, and assessment is amongst the very highest quality found in small, specialist institutions with a diverse student body focussed on the creative industries.

The ethos of UCA's education and student experience is enshrined in our education strategy ('UCA Academic Plan' – Ref 2) as a 'comprehensive and radical approach to inclusive, and personalised creative education'. These 'shared characteristics and commitments are applied across all UCA courses, at all levels, on all campuses, and across all partnership delivery' (Ref 2). It provides a consistent curriculum structure and delivery and is explicitly tested at validation and review, as well as evaluated through peer observations, student surveys, consultations, and focus groups (Ref 13).

UCA's co-created curriculum offer is built on practice-led and knowledge-applied creative education, evidenced through research which shows that creative education should 'emphasi[se] interdisciplinarity, problem-based and professionally oriented approaches' and translate 'entry to the professions… into curriculum… to produce effective graduates for professional roles' (Ref 2 & 14). While TEF student experience data shows most indicators on or above benchmark, the effectiveness for our mix of students and courses is shown in Table 1 as UCA's TEF period 4-year average is statistically significantly above other UK Creative Universities[2] in all NSS areas (Ref 15).

This approach was also recognised in the comments from the 2020-22 QAA Scrutiny Process for Research Degree Awarding Powers about all undergraduate course revalidations: *"Course validation […] indicates <u>strong engagement</u> with key stakeholders, including students, <u>in co-creating the curriculum</u>. The team's observations of [validation] events provided strong evidence that the University's strategic approach to practice-led and professionally contextualised learning, as well as employability embedded within its provision […], is being realised and supported through engagement with industry and students"* (Ref 16, Paragraph 159, emphasis added).

NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY – QUESTION AREAS	UCA	Creative Universities	Difference
4-Year All Student, All Course Average (2018-2022)	**% agree**	**% agree**	**+/- pp**
The teaching on my course	80.75	77.55	+3.20
Learning opportunities	82.66	79.49	+3.17
Assessment and feedback	77.29	72.88	+4.41
Academic support (UCA only)	78.92	76.43	+2.49
Organisation and management	66.96	63.72	+3.24
Learning resources (UCA only)	80.32	76.22	+4.10
Learning community (UCA only)	72.90	69.32	+3.58
Student voice (UCA only)	71.91	68.82	+3.09
Overall satisfaction	75.12	71.06	+4.06

Table 1: Four-Year NSS Averages by Question Group (2018 to 2022) for UCA and UK Creative Universities

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[2] This benchmark group comprises all single discipline UK Creative Arts Providers who had University Title between 2018-2022, regardless of size constructed according to Advertising Standards Authority Online Advice 'Universities: Comparisons – Oct 22'.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

The coronavirus pandemic had a significant impact on the creative industries (including creative education) with many activities completely 'shuttered' for significant periods (Ref 17).

While UCA's response was recognised as excellent, with a Pearson's National Teaching Award 'Lockdown Hero Award for Learner and Community Spirit 2021', we have also seen a significant impact on the quality of our student experience. Figure 1 shows above benchmark performance in the first two years of the TEF Period, but a material impact in the final two years. Some metrics increased again in 2021-22, but as we were seeing further declines, we instigated research into the two most affected cohorts (2020 and 2021 entrants) (Ref 18).
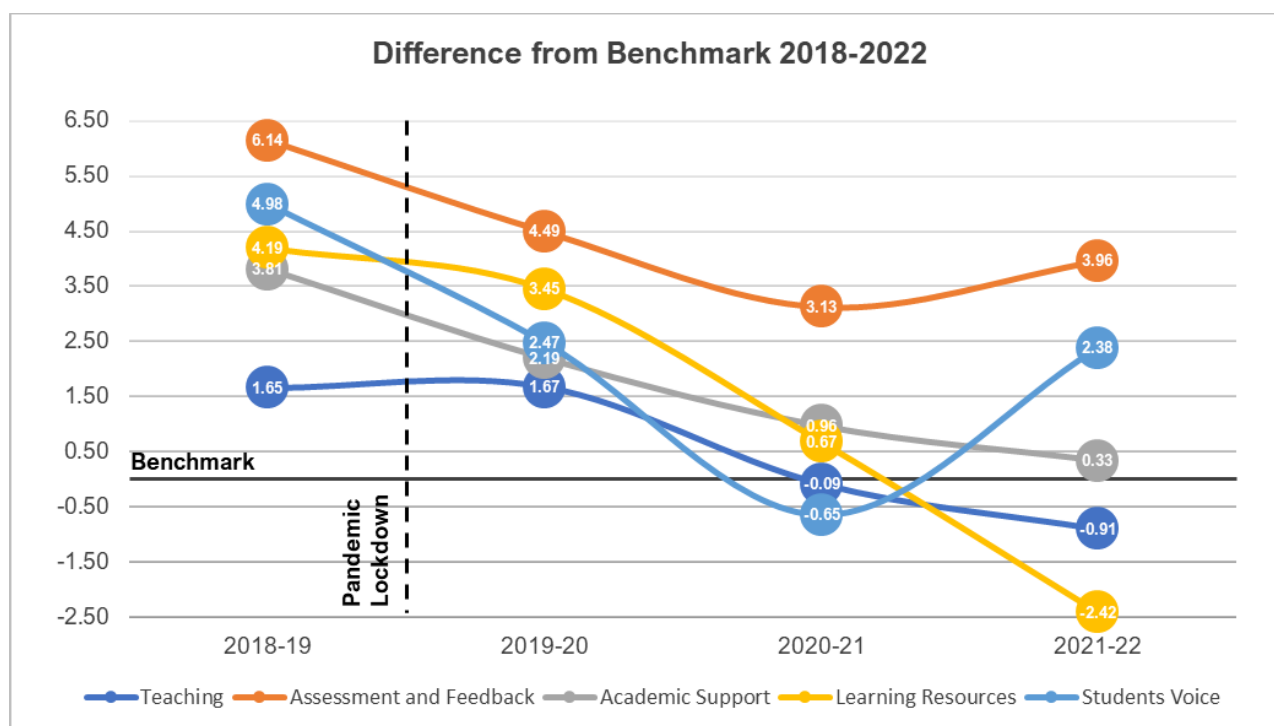

Figure 1: 2018-2022 Difference of UCA Indicator Metrics against Benchmark

While many Creative Universities and others were hit, our research with students, staff, employers and communities show UCA-specific factors affected our students' ongoing issues (Ref 18):

UCA offer on average 19.4 scheduled contact hours per course per week against a Creative University average of 13.6 and a national Creative Arts average of 12.2 (Ref 15 & 19). Our students and staff reported that the withdrawal of studio contact time had an ongoing significant effect as the students identified 'studio-based pedagogies' as a primary reason for choosing UCA.

The pandemic disproportionately affected diverse members of the Creative Industries with only 29% of workers from diverse backgrounds working in 2020-21 – a huge drop of 22 percentage points (pp) in 2019-20. Further, 58% had changed primary income sources and 30% of these had left the creative industries (Ref 17). As the most diverse Creative University, our students reported that these effects were felt disproportionately, particularly as creative freelancers in the UK have declined by 43% since the start of 2020 with the steepest decline among 21-29 year olds (Ref 17).

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Academic experience and assessment

SE1. What is the evidence that UCA has embedded teaching, feedback and assessment practices that are highly effective and tailored to our students?

Our teaching and learning practices are characterised by their studio-based context (82% on average of teaching is conducted in practical studio spaces), high-challenge and high-contact hours (see above). This approach develops the knowledge and cognitive/haptic skills our graduates need to thrive in the creative sector and means that UCA is number one for 'assessment and feedback' and number two for 'teaching on my course' in the all student, all course NSS averages (2018-2022) for all Creative Universities (Ref 15).

Following the strong evidence base for the most effective creative education, students predominately work in dedicated studios and workshops (including the Business School), developing their practice and conceptual thinking within a carefully sequenced set of progressively demanding theoretically and professionally contextualised tasks (block mastery learning), underpinned by longer-term developmental modules for sustained engagement (Ref 2, 9 & 25).

Students on every course – including those delivered by partners – work collaboratively and supportively alongside lecturers, tutors, technicians, industry professionals and other students to undertake a series of authentic 'live briefs' (real current challenges set and briefed to students by creative sector companies sourced by the teaching team). This allows students to apply their knowledge working individually and in teams; develop their understanding of the complex problems faced by the creative professions; and receive feedback from industry professionals.

This approach is consistently commented on by our External Examiners across all UG courses (26% of overall reports / 63% of reports with comments on average between 2018-21 – Ref 20). For example, it is clearly expressed in the Fashion Photography 2020 Report: *"The […] work is imaginative, original, and critically engaged, […] surpassing the quality of the work produced on comparable courses. […] I'm impressed by the way that individual modules […] do not follow a set time pattern […] students take a number of fairly short projects, which give them a chance to work in a more fluid, intuitive mode, in a timeframe more aligned with that of the […] industry. The opportunities engendered by this mode of working are reflected in the creativity and spontaneity of the work. The other strength lies in the staff team's own impressive level of industry experience, and with the efforts made to align units as closely as possible with the sort of conditions that students will encounter in real life."*

This pedagogic approach requires our students to be dextrous and flexible and must also be exemplified by our teaching staff. To achieve this, through the People Strategy (Ref 10), we encourage staff to develop their creative work alongside students in the same spaces and to include students in their projects (see SE3 for further information). This approach is shown to be successful, as in our 2018 Strategic Consultation Survey sent to all students, 26% of the UG student body in that year responded with 52% referring to the developmental block approach to delivery; and 72% referring to 'live brief' opportunities to collaborate with industry or staff as one of the three most 'distinctive or valuable' aspects of a UCA education (Ref 21).

In addition, our creative education has demonstrated outstanding assessment and feedback processes. We are materially above benchmark except for part-time, mature students studying at the Open College of the Arts (see page 15 for commentary inc. students with disabilities).

In the annual Internal Student Survey, which includes all students and all courses, the free-text comments on assessment refer to the 'Critical Dialogues' or 'Crits' as the most important positive feature of assessment (61% of positive comments on assessment on average over the TEF Period – Ref 24). 'Crits' are iterative individual and group meetings throughout a project and include self, peer, and tutor reflections in a dialogue with the student (Ref 23). In addition, our assessment is focused on authentic tasks which often mirror the 'live briefs' from the students' development projects and our Assessment & Feedback Policy states that 'constructive feedback' is 'essential for successful learning, motivating and supporting reflection', and is balanced between 'valid criticism' and 'appropriate positive commentary' on 'the student's learning not the artefact'. The success of the application of this is evidenced by the Internal Student Surveys with 82% of UG students, on average over the TEF period, in agreement that 'marking and assessment has been fair' and 'I have received helpful comments on my work' (Ref 24).

<u>SE2. What is the evidence that UCA's course content and delivery inspires our students to actively engage in and commit to their learning, and stretches them to develop to their fullest potential?</u>

As outlined in our Academic Plan, we require that UCA teaching teams (both within and between Schools) design teaching syllabi for all units in collaboration. Further, educational research has shown that our design principles, including aligning course content with students' interests and career goals ('personalisation'); diverse content that mirrors the student body ('globally inclusive'); real-world examples ('live briefs', see SE1) and a focus on 'learning, not output', all increase student engagement which is supported by our engagement metrics (for example, Tables 3 & 5). The data in Table 2 also shows the impact on our students' experience with statistically significant positive differences for the level of challenge, depth, consolidation, and application of learning.

In addition, our academic staff design delivery within the guidance on four principles which have been shown in learning science to deepen knowledge, and skills, and build student challenge:

Spaced repetition, our staff deliberately construct the intervals between studying elements which have been shown to deepen understanding and improve long-term retention (Ref 25 (a)).

Interleaving, our staff ensure a mix of different topics within a session or task which has been shown to improve performance on transfer tasks and enable tailoring to individuals (Ref 25 (b)).

Varied practice, our staff ensure students practice a skill in a variety of contexts and for a variety of outputs which has been shown to improve haptic skill levels, speed, and confidence (Ref 25 (c)).

Deliberate practice, our staff ensure that they are setting further tasks for students which are focussed on areas of weakness, as this is crucial for expertise development (Ref 25 (d)).

This approach is shown to be very effective with 64% of UG students in our Strategic Consultation Survey (see pg. 5) when asked to give three words to describe their course, used words such as 'inventive', 'innovative', 'ambitious', 'challenging' 'testing', 'imaginative', 'exciting', 'inspiring', 'dynamic', 'evolutionary', 'exploratory' or 'experimental' (Ref 21).

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National Student Survey	UCA	Creative Universities	Difference
4-Year All Student, All Course Average (2018-2022)	% agree	% agree	+/- pp
The teaching on my course			
The course is intellectually stimulating	79.28	72.50	+6.78
My course has challenged me to achieve my best work	80.78	74.77	+6.01
Learning opportunities			
My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth	83.46	80.79	+2.67
My course has provided me with opportunities to bring information and ideas together from different topics	84.33	80.73	+3.60
My course has provided me with opportunities to apply what I have learnt	84.44	79.80	+4.64
Assessment and feedback			
The criteria used in marking has been clear in advance	74.61	69.74	+4.87
Marking and assessment has been fair	76.97	70.76	+6.20
Feedback on my work has been timely	78.39	76.44	+1.95
I have received helpful comments on my work	81.64	77.04	+4.60

Table 2: Four-Year NSS Averages by Question (2018 to 2022) for UCA and UK Creative Universities

We evaluate student engagement through a variety of learner analytics including measuring attendance and participation in class, completion of assignments, and time in the studio. Surveys and focus groups are also used to gather students' perceptions of their engagement and sense of belonging (e.g., to enhance this, we have added an autumn survey which is completed during week 6 of the course and includes questions on community and belonging – Ref 13).

2022 AUTUMN STUDENT SURVEY	UCA
	% positive
To what extent do you feel part of a community on your course?	90%
To what extent do you feel personally and emotionally supported?	80%
To what extent are you enjoying your course?	92%
How well communicated was information about UCA's wellbeing support?	85%

Table 3: Results from the Autumn Survey 2022 for all courses, all campuses (ex. OCA)

SE3. What is the evidence that UCA uses research in relevant disciplines, innovation, scholarship, professional practice and employer engagement to contribute to an outstanding academic experience for its students?

In REF 2021, UCA was the top UK Creative University for world-leading research outputs, and we strongly believe that this brings extraordinary benefits to teaching and learning by embedding and integrating research into our curriculum and delivery. This was commented on in our RDAP Scrutiny report: "*panel members were very positive about the prominence given to practice-based study and the integration of practice and research*" (Ref 16, Paragraph 162).

To achieve this, all permanent academic staff (regardless of lead specialism) are contracted to undertake research, scholarly activity, and pedagogic development (UCA has no teaching-only contracts). Furthermore, the student as co-researcher is a key part of our educational ethos at all levels. In the TEF Period, 27.5% of internally-funded research projects included student participation, and externally funded research also involved students (Ref 11). For example:

The Fast Forward, Women in Photography research project involves students in its conferences, workshops and mentoring programmes, and most recently in the AHRC-funded '*Putting Ourselves in the Picture'* photobook created with marginalised communities.

Tansa: Japanese Threads of Influence exhibition at the Crafts Study Centre included the work of student researchers alongside creative practice research from world-leading figures such as Reiko Sudo and Chiyoko Tanaka.

In addition, the relevance of our curriculum is further developed by systematic engagement with employers and working professionals as a compulsory part of our course design, development and approval process (Ref 9). In our recent whole institution UG validation, commendations on industry engagement were made in 48% of our validation (Ref 26 – see also QAA comments on pg.3). Students in the National Student Survey also comment with 23% of positive free-text comments referring to industry engagement (only two courses without comments in the 2022 results). For example, a Business School student remarked "*we've had a vast amount of guest lecturers which have been key to our understanding of the industry and really enhanced our projects*" and an Interior Architecture student remarked "*[UCA] provide interesting and interactive talks with people in industry and offering us a professional mentor, I feel was very useful and considerate*" (Ref 15).

We nurture the right balance between permanent and sessional staff, guided by our published Sessional Staffing Principles that advise that 20% of teaching hours are provided by sessional staff as working practitioners to ensure that highly experienced, permanent staff teams are augmented by diverse professional voices (Ref 27). In the Strategic Plan consultation, 59% of students referred to the value of 'workshops with industry-leading visitors' and the 'strong sense of industry engagement' as key factors that 'make [UCA] stand above other universities' (Ref 21). And the impact on students' experience is noted in the QAA Scrutiny Report: *"[o]bservations of teaching undertaken showed that academic and professional practitioners worked alongside each other, bringing their academic and practice-based experience to bear to ensure the currency of teaching and industry-relevance while also providing employability advice to students"* (Ref 16, Para 225).

Resources, support and student engagement

<u>SE4. What is the evidence that UCA has embedded outstanding support for staff professional development and excellent academic practice across the institution?</u>

UCA received the Staff Development Forum Developing Excellent Practice Award 2018 for the work our Learning & Development Team has been doing to support staff development across the University in terms of both professional and academic practice. This is supported further through tailored professional development in our three academic career fields (creative education, professional practice and research), which has driven professional development and promotion across the entire TEF period (Ref 28).

Examples that are representative of professional development activity across all courses include:

Staff in the Creative Education Career Field are supported by our Creative Education Network Portal: a platform for teaching and technical staff which provides webinars, recordings, podcasts, publications, and discussion boards focused on current pedagogic issues. This has been accessed on average 144.8 times per teaching staff member, per year during the TEF Period (Ref 11).

Staff in the Professional Practice Career Field organise and are engaged in our Creative Leadership Lecture Series through which, on average, 787 high-profile industry practitioners deliver lectures each year. This is also open to our students, providing access to organisations such as Alexander McQueen, EA Sports, Jaguar Land Rover, Adidas, UN Studios, Heatherwick Studio, Disney/Lucas Arts and Marvel Studios; and we have speakers who are nominated for or are winners of the Turner Prize, Book Designer of the Year, Golden Globes and Oscars (Ref 15).

Staff in the Research Career Field are supported by School-level mentoring and researcher development webinars to share training in, for instance, bidding for funding, planning research or getting published. Professors share their research in inaugural lectures, and a range of other research staff, from ECRs upwards, are invited to present research talks. The internal research fund supports projects and leads to the development of external funding bids and partnerships.

All staff who contribute to undergraduate delivery (academic staff and technicians) are required to study for a teaching qualification before the end of their 2nd year under our 'Professional Teaching Qualifications and CPD' (Ref 29). As a result, on average over the TEF Period, 69% of all academic staff (including Professors) hold a teaching qualification which is 7.3% points above the sector and 5.5% above Creative Universities (Ref 15). In addition, we have a high level of HEA Fellowship – 44% of teaching staff, 3% Associate Fellows, 33% Fellows, 7% Senior Fellows, and 1% Principal Fellows (Ref 15) which AdvanceHE demonstrates a clear link to teaching excellence (Ref 30).

Our technical teaching and support teams (on average 108 FTE during the TEF period) are a vital feature of our educational model and learning community. They are responsible for the teaching of practical skills and techniques aligned to learning outcomes and, unusually for the sector and Creative Specialist Universities, UCA recognises technical staff as teachers – combining subject and pedagogical content knowledge (Ref 10). We specify that all technicians who teach and support learning also work towards a teaching qualification and participate in the University Teaching Observation Scheme. During the four-year TEF period, an average of 42.3% of technicians were qualified teachers and we have the only Technician PFHEA in the UK (Ref 15).

The result of this is that UCA is among the top providers of technical education that supports the student experience. We were the first Creative University to join The Technician Commitment and we have the only Creative Arts-focussed Commissioner on the UKRI-funded National Policy Commission on 'Technical skills, roles and careers'. Further, we were runner-up for 'Contribution to Technical Teaching' in the 2019 National Papin Prize and were the winner of the 'Best Technical Team' Papin prize in 2021 (Ref 31). Additionally, as the impact of excellent technical education is an under-researched field, we have invested in supporting scholarship, innovation, and research in this area. We are a recognised authority in this field and contribute widely to other HEIs, the National Technician Development Centre, the European League of Institutes of the Arts (ELIA) and the European Technical Heads Organisation (ETHO) (Ref 32).

SE5. What is the evidence that UCA ensures a supportive learning environment, and our students have access to a range of outstanding quality academic support tailored to their needs?

As set out in the Provider Context, UCA is a very diverse creative specialist provider for both staff and students (e.g., a higher number of mature +15.5pp above Creative Universities; female +9.2pp above sector; non-white +4.4pp above sector; students from disadvantaged-background +1.44pp above Creative Universities). Student support is therefore vital as diverse communities are less likely to apply to Creative Universities, less likely to succeed and less likely to enter the creative industries (Ref 3). In line with the global research on effective support for creative students (e.g., the meta-analytics studies of Lui et.al, 2017 and Bryon et. al, 2010 – Ref 35) our approach is to provide individualised, embedded long-term support interventions via the curriculum and a wide range of academic support that is accessible either on a self-referral or staff-referral basis (Ref 34).

The core components of embedded programmes focus on raising the attainment and aspiration of our students; supporting curriculum engagement of our diverse student body; and ensuring that students develop the skills to support one another. We heavily invested in this programme in 2020-21 (see Table 4) and in all, we have run on average 897 curriculum interventions per year across all UG courses during the TEF period and the myUCA programme is now 20 interventions per course, per year following the 20-21 / 21-22 pilot years (Ref 34). The three components are:

Metacognitive development, oracy, and resilience – For example, we run a series on resilience and emotional wellbeing with each session tailored using student information from the request form and diagnostic questionnaires. The sessions focus on topics such as academic reading and writing; participating in assessment and feedback; communication and presentation skills; critical thinking; organising concepts, theories and arguments; and building knowledge, skills and confidence to find and use library resources and services effectively (see Table 4).

Social and peer support programmes – For example, in conjunction with the Student Union, we run the 'Chasing the Stigma' programme for all undergraduate students aimed at promoting the importance of peer support in mental health. This was extended in a wellbeing support programme which included an app called 'myWellbeing' that delivers social engagement activities, self-help and options to build positive habits. The impact was that 68% of students agreed it helped them to communicate in challenging situations and build positive behaviours (Ref 38).

Practical support at critical moments – This focus is particularly on preparation and the transition between years and preparation for dissertations. Our Induction Programme is a comprehensive approach to student entry into the institution and is provided to all students on all undergraduate courses through an integrated course, school and institutional level timetable. In response to this, the Autumn Term Survey, which was responded to by 1,246 students (or 24% of UG students) in 2022, noted that 81.4% felt confident in asking for support with their course (Ref 37).

Learning and Development Workshop					
	2018-19	**2019-20**	**2020-21**	**2021-22**	**Total**
Number of Workshops	582	468	1,446	1,093	3,589
On-Demand (in Student Hours)	10,361	10,262	29,509	26,761	76,893

Table 4: Learning and Development Curriculum Interventions

Further, our Learning Development Tutors ran on-demand interventions on a variety of requested topics (see Table 4 for On-Demand Hours). All students have access to 18,780 (and growing) online interactive professional development courses which are offered in 5 languages (English, Spanish, French, Mandarin, and Hindi) through our online professional development portal. These sessions were accessed by 67% of our undergraduate students each year, on average.

Established in 2019, University's Gateway Hub delivers a high-quality, one-stop front-facing service for student support services and provides an integrated and seamless approach to the provision of information, wellbeing, academic advice and guidance, and signposting (Ref 38). As a result of this integration, all referrals and assessments are undertaken within the targeted timeframes resulting in no waiting lists for support, and the integration has resulted in targeted early intervention mechanisms: the 'support to study programme' and 'wellbeing plans' which in turn have led to a steady decline in the cause for concern reports between 2018 and 2021 (-18% on average per year decline). The impact of this is seen through the Internal Student Survey in which students remark on 'academic support' in 48% of their responses and where the overall satisfaction with academic support is increasing against 2020 declines (Year 0 – 2020-21 60%, 2021-22 71% / Year 1 – 2020-21 79%, 2021-22 81% / Year 2 – 2020-21 66%, 2021-22 78% – Ref 24).

In addition, our individual tutorial culture, with close relationships between teaching staff and students, supports close monitoring and the ability to refer students to necessary support quickly and effectively. Students in the National Student Survey also comment with 31% of positive free-text comments referring to tutor relationships (with only one course without comments in the 2022 results). For example, an Interior Architecture student remarked: "*the support on the course […] has been amazing, […] working more personally and closely alongside tutors to develop my work. They make the course very enjoyable and interactive, pushing us to our limits but with the right support has made me produce the best work […] They are always looking out for us and providing the best they can for our experience on the course.*" (Ref 15).

SE6. What is the evidence that UCA's physical and virtual learning resources are tailored to our students and used effectively to support outstanding teaching and learning?

Our Academic Plan states that courses 'use a wide variety of technologies and facilities to develop, enhance and organise learning, teaching and assessment' (Ref 2). The sufficiency (type, scale, mix, and specification) is monitored and maintained through the course planning and validation processes where resources are benchmarked (against industry and peer institutions) (Ref 9). Further, with our studio culture, it is essential that each discipline has bespoke studios equipped to industry standards enabling students to operate in a professional context.

As such, over the TEF Period, 72% of our undergraduate provision was rated as 'high-cost' for delivery (Ref 15) and we not only provide a range of state-of-the-art facilities such as virtual production, motion capture or AR/VR, but also traditional facilities such as hot-type-setting, loom weaving, or dark-room. To tailor this to our students' needs, they can also pre-book 'making spaces' and equipment with specialised training for self-directed, autonomous working. In 2021/22, the effectiveness of this approach was shown by our 231 spaces being booked by students (across all courses) a total of 4,867 times; and they borrowed equipment a total of 28,109 times (Ref 39).

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Effective facilities usage and utilisation are informed by space surveys, monitoring of student populations and forecasts by the Space Management Group and at a local level by Campus Operations Groups. Data is also used to identify patterns, heat maps, and usage trends, to extend capacity or deploy investment more effectively tailored to current student usage patterns. This is particularly effective with praise for the 'making spaces' and 'equipment hire', a consistent theme in student feedback across the TEF period (except for the 2020/21 pandemic period). Students in the Internal Student Survey also comment with 28% of positive free-text comments referring to equipment and 'maker spaces' (with the lowest in 8% of Business School 2022 results – Ref 24).

In addition to studios, UCA has library facilities and collections of global significance. We develop and maintain specialist arts collections and library learning spaces to stimulate excellence in learning and teaching, inspire creativity and independent learning, and promote a vibrant research culture. Our Archives & Special Collections provide a rich range of original primary sources. The half-kilometre of materials includes original letters, artists' papers, sketchbooks, film reels and artwork. Materials include the works of Oscar-winning animator   photographer   and graphic designer   whilst our Crafts Study Centre houses a world-leading collection of modern and contemporary craft objects and archives (Ref 34).

Our Centre for Digital Scholarship has developed an international reputation for research in the management, delivery, engagement, and preservation of digital assets in the creative arts (Ref 34). We host the national Visual Arts Data Service (VADS) which provides over 140,000 images, collected from publicly funded arts research projects, including the Zandra Rhodes Digital Study Collection and the National Inventory of Continental European Paintings. The VADS collections are made freely available for educational and research use worldwide.

We also review library usage annually to ensure collections are responsive to course teams and students, benchmarking against data from SCONUL, and the engagement of our students with our library is impressive (Table 5 & Table 6):

SCONUL SURVEY VISITS PER STUDENT (AVERAGED)	2018/19 Academic Year	2019/20 Academic Year	2020/21 Pandemic	3-year Average
University for the Creative Arts	159	93	42	98
Creative Universities	63	43	–	
Difference (+/-)	+96	+50	+34	+60

Table 5: Three-Year SCONUL Averages (2018 to 2022) for UCA and UK Creative Universities

UCA also takes pride in the links and partnerships with leading creative industries that support students' learning through placements, live projects, competitions, and professional input. UCA has several formal partnerships that provide additional delivery locations, for instance, the Farnham Maltings and Turner Contemporary (both Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisations), the Royal School of Needlework and Maidstone Television Studios. And our Crafts Study Centre provides a unique international focus for craft education and research as a fully accredited University Museum and Gallery located at UCA Farnham since 2000. Farnham is the UK's only World Craft City, a World Crafts Council designation based, in part, on UCA's reputation.

Provider name: University for the Creative Arts
UKPRN: 10006427

INFORMATION AND LEARNING RESOURCES ENGAGEMENT 2018 - 2022					
	2018*	**2019***	**2020**	**2021****	**2018 - 2021**
Total Engagements	3,275,012	3,165,991	2,545,408	2,901,762	11,888,173
- per student	559	515	419	517	502
Information Resource Spend	£477,095	£435,815	£474,930	£484,043	£1,871,883
- per student average	£81	£71	£78	£86	£79

Table 6: Four-Year SCONUL Averages (2018 to 2022)

<u>SE7. What is the evidence that UCA embeds engagement with its students that leads to continuous improvement to the experiences and outcomes of its students?</u>

Formal and informal quality assurance and enhancement mechanisms underpin and propel a culture of continuous improvement with student feedback actively sought, recorded, and actioned through a variety of mechanisms, including:

- Course Representatives on Course Boards, School Boards and University Committees.
- Weekly 'Coffee and Chat' sessions with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience).
- Student meetings with their Programme Directors and Academic Teams.
- Autumn Term Survey and Internal Student Survey each year of each student's studies.
- Course comments or suggestion boxes.
- Students Focus Groups.
- Students on both academic and senior staff appointment panels.
- Pro Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience) meets with Student Union Presidents and Chief Executive fortnightly to discuss any issues relating to the student body and how the University and Student Union can work together to enhance the student experience.

The rigorous form and quality of student engagement was foregrounded by QAA in their recent RDAP Scrutiny Report, where they highlighted the calibre of UCA's embedded approach to '*working in partnership with its students who are engaged and supported to engage.*' Noting, the University's '*diligent and often inventive responsiveness to student feedback*' that materially impacts the development of '*courses, student experience, and cross-curriculum work.*' It also underscores the cross-departmental, coordinated approach in which student views are aligned with processes for '*Annual Monitoring and Quality Enhancement Review developments in direct response to student engagement and outcomes*' (Ref 16, Paragraph 45, 123, 205 & 268).

All courses have elected student representatives for each year of study, supported in their leadership role through tailored training and guidance (see also the Course Representatives Handbook available through the UCA SU website – Ref 40). Working in partnership with our SU, Programme Directors work closely with these Reps to support positive changes to the nuanced learning experiences of each course. Students also form a constituent part of our senior-level Boards and are given supplementary training and induction with senior University staff to support their broader professional development and understanding of the value of their contributions to UCA committees. In 2021-22, 96% of participants in inductions agreed it improved their ability to make contributions and 93% reported improved confidence to do so (Ref 41).

Each year, there are clearly set thresholds on student experience and outcome metrics for each course, programme and School. Courses which fall below these thresholds are meticulously reviewed and supported to improve through an annual Quality Enhancement Review (QER) process. Thresholds are determined such that a minimum of 20% of our courses are proactively supported through termly meetings, which include senior management and planning staff and external expertise. QER actions are targeted and evidence-based interventions continually monitored through course level Quality Improvement Plans (QIP). This holistic approach to supporting enhancement has proved highly effective, with an average of 71% of QER courses improving student experience or outcomes within 12 months over the TEF period (Ref 42).

3. Student Outcomes
We submit that the evidence provided in this section, when considered in the context of the impacts of the pandemic on creative education and industries, demonstrates most features of very-high or outstanding performance for our groups of students. In particular, our approach to education gain is amongst the very highest quality found in small, specialist institutions focussed on the creative industries and with a diverse student body.

For student outcomes, TEF data presented for UCA on completion is materially in line with benchmark (only 21.2% of spilt metrics for this measure have a majority of performance materially above benchmark), likewise, continuation data is materially in line with benchmark (but materially above benchmark in Integrated Foundation provision) and progression metrics are materially below benchmark across all areas of performance.

However, as explored on Page 4, the pandemic has had a significant impact on UCA's performances during the TEF Period and in particular 2019-20 and 2020-21 with some ground recovered in the 2021-22 Academic Year. As data for the later years of the TEF period are not included for student outcomes, this section will explore our internal data to provide an overview of the significant number of interventions, activities and developments to support these areas since the 2020 declines. It will also explore the current data on the impact of these interventions.

Of particular importance is that for continuation and completion, we have reconstructed the data by removing two factors: the February 2020 cohort; and the Open College of the Arts.

February 2020 Cohort – After two years of preparation, UCA received our first Spring Semester intake in February 2020. This was a cohort of mainly Business Management entrants who were 98% international students, predominately from South-East Asia and the majority entered our Foundation Year. These students enrolled on 24 February 2020 and had completed only three weeks of teaching prior to the full UK lockdown in March 2020. The continuation figure of this cohort was 27.3% with 86% of these students returning to their country of origin within a month of lockdown. We have controlled the data for these as unforeseeable and uncontrollable events.

Open College of the Arts – In addition, on Page 15, we explore the impact of our partnership with the Open College of the Arts (OCA) focusing on our spilt metrics, and in particular, our poor data in 31+ and part-time students, and performing arts. Due to a quirk of the registration system, these students are shown in UCA data, not partnership data, but they are taught and supported entirely separately by the Open College of the Arts, which has a separate Board of Trustees. Therefore, OCA-derived data requires careful contextualisation and controlling for the impact on UCA data.

Open College of the Arts (OCA)

OCA was founded in 1987 by Michael Young (co-founder of the Open University) to offer open access, part-time, distance-learning, unit-delivered provision in arts education primarily to mature (31+) students. In 2018, UCA formed a strategic partnership with OCA and due to the specific requirements of OCA's charitable structure is a wholly owned subsidiary trust of UCA. Due to this model, students of OCA do not show in our TEF data as registered at a partner institution, but as registered at and taught by UCA. However, OCA is a separate body, with a separate Board of Trustees, and employees of OCA are not employees of UCA.

Throughout the association, UCA has worked with OCA to stabilise its sustainability as an independent institution and from August 2023 the Open University will replace UCA as OCA's awarding body bringing like-minded pedagogic institutions together and ending the relationship between UCA and OCA.

While UCA and OCA share a pedagogic approach based on personalisation, differences include the fact that OCA has significantly greater one-to-one tutorial-based teaching and independent work outside of professional studios. Further, in common with open access university provision, OCA students are significantly older with an age range of 18-93 and 92% of students > 25, 70% of students are female, 30% of students have a disability, but only 8% are from a Black, Asian, or Minority Ethnic background.

When they begin their study around 78% of OCA learners are already in employment, and in 62% of cases, when they join OCA they declare that the degree is either for self-improvement, phased retirement or as a second career to supplement their existing work and this has a particular impact on the progression to employment of these students that is seen in the TEF data.

In common with other providers of open access, all OCA's student outcomes data is significantly below the UCA benchmark (for example, the open access benchmark values from the TEF Data and OCA profiles are compared in Table 7 below).

STUDENT OUTCOMES	OCA	Open Access Benchmark	Difference
Continuation	69.84	56.2	**+13.64**
Completion	10.35	36.8	**-26.45**
Progression	74.07	77.5	**-3.43**

Table 7: OCA TEF Data Reconstructed against Benchmarks for Open Access

As OCA is a distinct organisation from UCA and it is a non-typical organisation whose metrics, while generally in line with other open-access providers, are below Creative Universities; the metrics included in the dataset have the effect of skewing UCA's metrics. Therefore, in UCA's submission below we have controlled the data for OCA to give an accurate picture of UCA's underlying performance, particularly in relation to the overall benchmarks calculated for UCA.

Provider name: University for the Creative Arts
UKPRN: 10006427

Positive Outcomes

<u>SO1. The provider deploys and tailors approaches that are highly effective in ensuring its students succeed in and progress beyond their studies.</u>

UCA's focus on the personalisation of the curriculum impacts how we support students to succeed during their course; it also shapes how our curriculum is highly effective in supporting students to progress to careers in the creative industries when they graduate. One key approach is providing tailored support that addresses the unique needs and challenges faced by students from disadvantaged backgrounds in entering the creative industries.

In constructing support interventions, we follow our principles of inclusive decision-making in line with 'no decisions about us, without us' principles which have been shown to lead to increased engagement, participation, and ownership among marginalised groups, resulting in more equitable and sustainable outcomes (Ref 43 & 44). This is shown in the outcomes of the following interventions, for example:

Completion of ABCS Quintile 1 Students – In these areas, since 2018, we have invested in the identification and support of students 'at risk' of withdrawal and non-completion. We have delivered a programme of evidence-based interventions aimed at these students, such as communication of accommodation, hardship and academic support on a targeted basis. We have provided dedicated Learning Development Tutor support to build long-term relationships; targeted mentoring and buddy systems linking students with peers, alumni and industry professionals; and a specialised programme for care-experienced students. This has led to completion rates for disadvantaged students improving from 75% to 80% with 2019 as the base year, which is above benchmark.

Progression of students with disabilities – We offer a targeted programme of support for students with disabilities with a particular focus on neurodiversity, dyslexia and mental health issues. This programme is based on providing targeted mentoring, industry internships, and advice to students and employers on how to request and identify appropriate accommodations in the workplace, all of which have been found to be effective in increasing employment opportunities for students with disabilities in the creative industries (Ref 45 & 46). As a result, UCA has shrunk its disadvantage progression gap and has the second lowest graduate outcomes variance gap between disabled and non-disabled graduates in employment/further study among Creative Universities (-1%). This is 3pp better than the sector average (-4%) and 6pp better than the Creative University average at -7%.

BAME Achievement Gap – Since 2017, the BAME Working Group (now provisionally called the Global Majority Working Group) has targeted radical closure of the achievement gaps for BAME students and focuses on their progression and representation in the creative industries. Working with high-profile BAME professionals in the creative industries such as Naomi Campbell and Dennis Asare, this work has included interventions such as reformatted UCA's existing BAME Attainment Manifesto to give an at-a-glance toolkit of actions (this was completed and disseminated November 2020) & rolled out Unconscious Bias training to all course teams (Summer Term 2020) (Ref 51). Over this period UCA has successfully seen significant closure of the BAME achievement gap from -15.9% to -4.9% (which is well below Creative Universities at -6.5%) and we have seen vast improvement in the progression of BAME students to the creative industries.

Provider name: University for the Creative Arts
UKPRN: 10006427

<u>SO2. What is the evidence that UCA has outstanding / very high rates of continuation and completion of its students and courses?</u>

Our overall continuation and completion data shows generally high quality provision that is broadly in line with benchmarks. Within this very positive overall data, continuation fell in 2019-20 and internal analysis showed significant falls for specific cohorts. As discussed above, the pandemic also disproportionately affected data for Year 4 (2019-20), Business Management and Computing, and International (Non-UK) Students.

Once controls are applied for these highly affected cohorts (OCA & February 2020) the picture of UCA data on both continuation and completion improves significantly across most spilt indicators (Tables 8 & 9). With these controls, 26 of the 36 indicators for Completion are materially above benchmark and represent outstanding quality and 4 of the 36 indicators for Continuation are materially above benchmark.

COMPLETION SPILT INDICATORS	Denominator	Indicator	Benchmark	Difference (+/-)
Year 4 (2016)	1501	91.81	88.50	+3.31
Age on Entry (21 to 30)	796	87.11	83.20	+3.91
Sex - Male	1046	88.06	85.00	+3.06
Domicile - Non-UK	799	92.37	89.80	+2.57
Disability	1139	89.46	86.20	+3.26
Deprivation (IMD) - Q1 or Q2	1252	88.19	85.30	+2.89
Level of Study - First Degree	3326	91.00	88.10	+2.90
Age on Entry (U21)	2854	91.50	89.00	+2.50
Age on Entry (31+)	105	89.91	83.80	+6.11
Sex - Female	2279	91.94	89.40	+2.54
Domicile - UK	3333	90.98	87.80	+3.18
Ethnicity - Asian	202	90.59	87.60	+2.99
Ethnicity - White	2737	91.20	88.70	+2.50
Year 1 (2013)	1346	91.10	88.30	+2.80
Subject: Creative arts and Design	683	92.83	88.00	+4.83
Deprivation (IMD) - Q3 - Q5	3333	91.40	88.90	+2.50

Table 8: UCA Completion Data Overall Metrics with Controls for OCA and February 2020 Intake

In addition, we have several interventions aimed at specific demographic groups that provide targeted support for continuation and completion. For example, in 2020-21 we began our 'Starting Strong' programme as a pre-term induction for students from underrepresented groups. The impact was that 100% of attendees from our first three cohorts (20-21, 21-22, 22-23) would recommend this programme to a peer and 50% of attendees reported a significant increase in confidence after attending just one Starting Strong session (Ref 49).

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CONTINUATION SPILT INDICATORS	Denominator	Indicator	Benchmark	Difference (+/-)
Age on Entry (31+)	20	91.81	88.5	+3.31
Ethnicity - Black	112	87.11	83.2	+3.91
Subject: Performing Arts	192	88.06	85	+3.06
Level of Study - First Degree	3007	92.37	89.8	+2.57
Age on Entry (U21)	2565	89.46	86.2	+3.26
Disability	377	88.19	85.3	+2.89
Ethnicity - Asian	154	91	88.1	+2.9
Ethnicity - White	2317	91.5	89	+2.5
Sex - Male	970	89.91	83.8	+6.11
Deprivation (IMD) - Q1 or Q2	377	91.94	89.4	+2.54
Domicile - UK	2789	90.98	87.8	+3.18
Subject: Media Journalism & Comms	89	90.59	87.6	+2.99
Subject: Architecture Building & Planning	45	91.2	88.7	+2.5

Table 9: UCA Continuation Data Overall Metrics with Controls for OCA and February 2020 Intake

<u>SO3. What is the evidence that UCA has outstanding or very high rates of successful progression for its students and courses?</u>

It is important to understand the specific nature of creative specialist progression, which cannot always be straightforwardly benchmarked against the broader sector and other industries. For this reason, we regularly monitor our performance against other creative specialist institutions to give us a benchmark of comparable achievement and success.

To support our understanding of 'positive progression' we asked our students to identify their career aspiration priorities (updated in the most recent 2020-21 Creative Careers Focus Groups with students – Ref 47). Their five highest-ranked priorities were: (1) to work long-term in the creative sector; (2) to work in a creative area or sub-sector related to their degree subject; (3) to be able to undertake work in the creative sector outside the UK; (4) to construct or develop a freelance/portfolio career; and (5) to start a creative business of their own.

Our Internal Progression Review (a social-media scrape of LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram) evaluates our success against these priorities by selecting 150 undergraduate students from UCA and 150 from each of the other Creative Universities in our benchmark set for each graduating cohort at six months (Ref 50). This shows that UCA provides outstanding progression against these five areas. This is not shown in the TEF dataset (Table 10) but is of particular importance to us in showing that we are number one for students progressing from a creative degree to work in the creative industries (Question 1). Table 11 shows our similar long-term outcomes analysis looking at students at 10 years post-graduation to support our evaluation of our success in achieving 'long-term careers in the creative industries'. In this we look at the same five factors, however, this is a smaller comparison data set, as the younger age of many of our benchmark sets excludes three of them from this analysis.

Provider name: University for the Creative Arts
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PROGRESSION REVIEW (2020 & 2021 Graduates)	UCA	Creative Universities	Difference	Rank against Creative Uni
2-Year Average for Graduates at 6 months	%	%	+/- ppt	Order
Working in the creative sector	68%	59%	+9	1st
Working in area(s) related to degree subject	71%	63%	+8	2nd
Some work in creative industries outside of the UK	37%	31%	+6	2nd
Self-identify as freelancer	69%	58%	+11	1st
Founded a creative business (current only)	11%	9%	+2	3rd

Table 10: LinkedIn Progression Review (2018 – 2021 Graduates)

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES REVIEW (2010 & 2011 Graduates)	UCA	Creative Universities	Difference	Rank against Creative Uni
2-Year Average for Graduates at 10 Year	%	%	+/- ppt	Order
Working in the creative sector	72%	65%	+7	2nd
Working in area(s) related to degree subject	62%	58%	+4	3rd
Some work in creative industries outside of the UK	64%	47%	+17	1st
Self-identify as a freelancer (current)	43%	36%	+7	1st
Founded a creative business (current or past)	18%	14%	+4	3rd

Table 11: LinkedIn Progression Review (2018 – 2021 Graduates)

The Academic Plan places significant emphasis on delivering both 'embedded employability skills' and significant stand-alone activities to support students' positive progression to creative careers. This is managed through the UCA Careers & Professional Practice Hub which has developed a Careers Core Curriculum that aligns with the academic curriculum. The integration of this is supported by the appointment of a School Academic Lead (SAL) for Employability & Industry Engagement for each School. These positions provide an important conduit between the careers and academic teams to support the development and tailoring of inclusive and embedded careers information, advice, and guidance.

This equips students with the knowledge and skills for highly skilled employment, including self-employment and for further study. Our Careers and Professional Practice support is particularly tailored to the high level of freelancing within UCA students' career aspirations and supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds to enter the creative industries. Interventions include:

Working with Creative Access provides specialised support to meet the needs of under-represented groups, providing opportunities for over 300+ students, across 62% of courses to network with industry professionals and gain support with securing paid training and employment opportunities in creative companies. This partnership and subsequent interventions specific to under-represented groups have contributed to a 5% decrease in highly skilled employment/further study performance gap between our white/other graduates and BAME peers compared to their White/Other peers (17/18: -12.5% to 19/20 -5.3% = 7.2% close to attainment gap).

Working with Inspiring Enterprise provides specialised and in-depth bespoke business advice and 1:1 mentoring that complements curriculum delivery. In its pilot year, Inspiring Enterprise supported 14 students through the process of a Creative Company Start-up.

Improving outcomes data: Careers & Professional Practice

We recognise the significant development needed in the Careers & Professional Practice (CPP) service, which is vital for us to foster a sustainable creative life. In this way, from 2022-23, following a 2-year review, UCA is putting in place new policies, processes and initiatives to ensure all students leave with a personalised careers education with a lifetime support offer upon graduation.

Careers Registration – UCA will be implementing Careers Registration from September 2023 to enable the Careers & Professional Practice team to design targeted interventions in an agile manner based on student feedback. Knowing more about our students and graduates and developing lead indicators are key to our service development.

Self-Service Careers Development – Integration of a new, fully customisable digital careers platform from 2023-24 Academic Year will allow our students 24/7 access to a comprehensive suite of employability resources driven by the latest AI technology. From personalised assessments and soft skills training to practical support with CVs and interviews, the platform will further allow the CPP team to create content specific to creative careers, complementing the integrated core careers curriculum already in place.

Freelance Careers Support – 71% of our students, on average over the TEF period, study in creative sub-sectors where more than 70% of UK workers are freelancers. UCA will be enhancing support for students with ambitions to enter self-employment or freelance careers. This support will include the development of further incubator spaces on each campus; the development of interdisciplinary entrepreneurship opportunities; and opportunities for students to undertake placements, live briefs and international mobility placements in every programme of study.

Educational Gains

<u>SO4 and SO5. What is the evidence that UCA clearly articulates the educational gains it intends our students to achieve, and its approaches to supporting its students to achieve these gains are evidence-based, highly effective and tailored to our students and their different starting points?</u>

With the Creative Industries Federation showing that the creative industries are growing at nearly 1.8 times the rate of the rest of the UK economy, the creative sub-sectors provide a wealth of job opportunities for graduates with the right social, leadership, technology and practice-based skills and qualifications and we work through the 'Academic Plan' to embed these in all UCA degrees. **PLEASE NOTE:** *We have included substantial information and evidence on the delivery and tailoring of educational gains throughout our response to the Student Experience and Outcomes features above. In this section, we particularly look at the core evaluation processes for our students.*

Educational gains of a UCA degree are expressed and achieved primarily across three areas:

(1) Ability to be creative – It may seem redundant to say 'creativity' is an educational gain of a creative degree. However, research from the UK and globally has shown a discernible difference between 'creative thinking' as a highly sought-after skill in all industries, and individuals who can exercise expert and skilled 'creativity' (Ref 45). UCA's heavy emphasis on interdisciplinarity

supports this focus on 'creativity' to a higher level than other Creative Universities that focus on developing students within disciplinary boundaries. For instance, Vogue UK recently acknowledged UCA as the world leader in education for 'digital fashion' as a disciplinary convergence between fashion and games (Ref 52). This is tailored to students through individual tutorial support from their Year Lead and Personal Tutor and agreed project plans. This is particularly evident in our ATOM activities which are 15 credit units outside of the student's main discipline and are individually selected by the student with tutor support in all years of the curricula (Ref 2 & 9).

(2) Ability to work in global creative industries – Creative graduates have access to professions with the highest global mobility opportunities of any professional group in the UK. Creatives spend the highest percentage of their time of any graduate group working outside of the UK in the first five years of their careers (Ref 3 & 45). Between 2018-2022 UCA worked with 49 exchange institutions to facilitate long-term student study exchanges (N=280) with a very positive impact (Table 12). Further, the introduction of Turing Scheme funding in the 21/22 academic year, has enabled UCA to significantly enhance opportunities for more accessible short-term Summer placements abroad with 71% of outgoing students qualifying as widening participation students.

UCA ERASMUS BENEFICARY REPORT (2019)	% of students who reported an improvement
I am able to find solutions in difficult or challenging contexts (problem-solving skills)	94.12%
I see the value of different cultures	97.06%
I am more able to adapt to and act in new situations	91.18%
I am more able to reach decisions	88.24%
I know better my strengths and weaknesses	85.30%

Table 12: UCA ERASMUS Beneficiary Report 2019

(3) Ability to work in project-based teams – Studies by the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, UK Department for Business, Innovation and Skills, and the World Economic Forum have outlined the ability to work in project-based teams as particular benefits of a creative degree. Creative graduates have been found to develop stronger delivery skills and stronger teamwork and communication skills due to being given professional briefs which are responsive to changing trends, employer needs and skills requirements (Ref 6 & 45). It is also key to the development of UCA graduates that project-based study supports them as a freelancer and ensures coherence in joining and exiting teams throughout their careers is a skill well-developed prior to graduation from UCA.

(4) Ability to work in an entrepreneurial way – At UCA, we begin the discussion of the educational gains of studying a creative degree before application and focus on applicants' ambitions for a long-term career in the creative industries. Career ambitions are included in our Open Day and Applicant Day presentations, and in School and Programme discussions at portfolio review days. They also form an important part of our tailored student induction programme and are embedded in our marking criteria and feedback – Experimentation & Innovation; Research & Analysis; Engaging with Practice; Realisation & Communication; Personal & Professional Connectivity – ensuring that students and staff focus on these professional contexts throughout their study at UCA.

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<u>SO6. What is the evidence that UCA evaluates the gains made by its students, and demonstrates its students are succeeding in achieving the intended gains?</u>

As explored above, UCA has over 160 years of supporting excellence in the creative industries. Due to the embedded nature of our assessment and its focus on individual learning, the evaluation of student education gains is also a key feature of a student's assessment and feedback. The 'Crits' (see page 6) focus, not only on the assessment criteria for the task, but also the student's broader development as a creative practitioner, and due to their nature, 'crits' often also include feedback from industry professionals on the process, not just product of the task or project.

For UCA, monitoring and evaluating alumni success is important to assist us with our understanding of the impact of their course, and to identify areas for improvement. For this reason, alumni are important stakeholders in both our periodic and curriculum review processes (Ref 9). Before the presentation for validation, course teams are required to both survey and hold focus groups for alumni, the majority of whom must have graduated within the last 3 years. In the 2021 whole institutional validation (see page 2), in total 649 alumni across all courses (on average 10-12 alumni per course) were involved in detailed discussions on course content and where they felt educational outcomes could be improved. These are submitted to the validation panel through a coordinated 'Stakeholder Input Form' which combines input from Current Students; Alumni; External Examiner(s); Industry professionals and employers; and PSRBs. In total, the validation events received 378 pages of feedback that were considered, and curriculums were developed to enhance the students' experience and outcomes, such as the University-wide Equality, Diversity and Inclusion units; and the ATOM and Professional Learning Experience units (Ref 53).

To enhance our ability to engage with students and evaluate not only their curriculum-based learning but also their broader education gains, since 2019 we have been piloting a 'Minimum Expected Outcomes (MEO)' process. This process assesses students' progress three times a year against the predicted outcomes that are reprofiled each year at transition points, this is shared as part of the student's one-to-one tutorials and enables students to focus on the next steps in their broad educational journey (Ref 54). In 2019 and 2020, approximately 300 students on each campus across Further and Higher Education were involved in the development accounting for about 15-20% of our overall FE & HE student cohorts. From the 2023 Academic Year, we will be rolling this process out to all undergraduate students and including further diagnostic instruments such as resilience and cognitive skills profiles to further evaluate broader education gains (Ref 54).

End statement

We firmly propose that the evidence above demonstrates that we deliver teaching excellence which is among the very best for our mix of students and courses. Our argument is based on the pursuit of a unique approach that provides a caring, stimulating and challenging environment. Our data indicates, as with many other HEIs, that we have been adversely affected by the pandemic. Our Students' Union states: 'The University for the Creative Arts provides an environment that supports students to embrace and explore their creative potential while preparing them for professional life beyond the institution. Students are taught to form their identity and evolve a unique approach to their discipline designed to develop the creatives of tomorrow.'

4. References

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