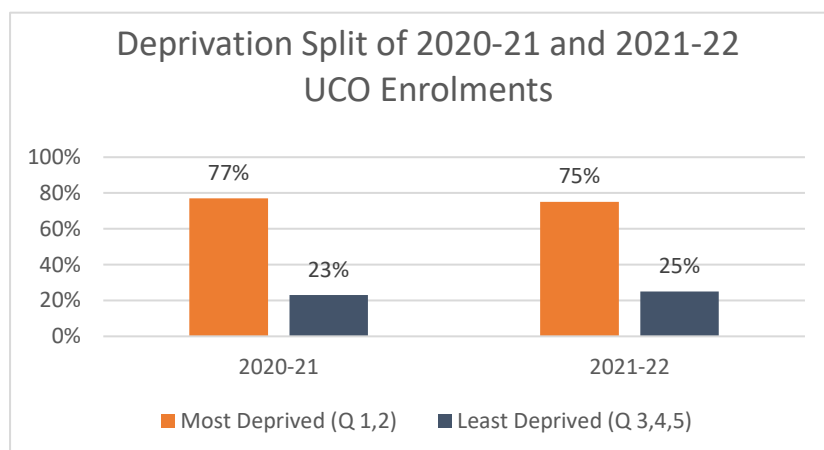**TEF – Student submission 2023 University Campus Oldham (The Oldham College)**

The purpose of this report is to highlight the experience and outcomes of the students studying at the University Campus Oldham (UCO/Campus) and will concentrate on three main areas from the students' perspective, these areas include support for students, the experience of studying throughout COVID and work readiness and employability opportunities embedded within the courses. This report will demonstrate how UCO offers a personalised learning experience that supports students' needs. The student contact has worked alongside a mentor to consider previous data collected throughout the previous three years, and where data was lacking students were canvassed and supported in taking part with interviews and surveys to bridge the gap. The student lead has studied at UCO since 2019 and acts as student representative within their course and is part of the TALC (Teaching and Learning Committee). Support was received from members of the senior management team with regular meetings;

Evidence: Supported by the Campus HE Student Experience and Quality Coordinator already existing data from students 2019-22 was reviewed, this evidence includes NSS reports and student surveys. Course induction, evaluation and satisfaction surveys were used to provide examples of the student voice within this report. Evidence that supports the demographic and diversity of the student cohorts was provided by the wider support services such as Disability and Wellbeing teams. The Learning Resource Centre also provided information on the laptop loans and workshops and the Careers Advisor provided data to support progression of previous students who have attended UCO and the employment advice and opportunities embedded into students teaching sessions and on campus to offer a continued level of support. The Academic Development team have also provided evidence on English for Speakers of Other Languages learners and provisions provided within campus. As well as already existing evidence and data, where further evidence was required, students were canvassed via the process of a short presentation which was disseminated by the academic course teams in group tutorial sessions. Also, recruitment through student forum meetings where information was provided by the student lead and students could volunteer to support the report with their feedback. Direct quotes and testimonials have been provided throughout, with the course that the student represents. This report also includes quotes from staff within UCO. Any quotes from students or minutes will be shown in italics throughout. The course the students represent will also be highlighted in bold.

Deprivation Split of 2020-21 and 2021-22 UCO Enrolments

	2020-21	2021-22
Most Deprived (Q 1,2)	77%	75%
Least Deprived (Q 3,4,5)	23%	25%

■ Most Deprived (Q 1,2) ■ Least Deprived (Q 3,4,5)

Overview: UCO is situated within Greater Manchester in the town of Oldham. Oldham is a diverse town, with areas of deprivation. Students enrolled at UCO within the Oldham Borough in 2021-22, 75% were living within the most deprived areas of Oldham. Including the area of Coldhurst which was recognised as the most deprived wards within Oldham scoring at number one out of 7180 wards. This is a recurring theme within UCO, as the evidence was similar within the previous three years of enrolment. This is welcomed by UCO and provisions such as the breakfast club, free sanitary, sexual health products, and hardship funds, reflect this and tailor to the student's needs but also the needs of the local economy. UCO staff members include people who have lived in Oldham or studied in Oldham and have been students at UCO, and are familiar with issues faced by the students, making UCO a more relatable environment for learners. Students at UCO reflect the diversity of the town, and people from different socio-economic, cultural, and religious backgrounds chose to study or return to education at the campus. Averaging percentages over the past 3 years have shown students who enrol who are white stand at 58% and students from the BAME community at 42%, and 27% disclosed they had a disability. The campus also attracts a range of ages, from 18–21-year-olds to mature students with competing priorities such as families and jobs. The locality of the campus enables people to balance studies alongside their personal lives and ensures students can complete higher education studies and gain qualifications to improve their lives. Some of the mature students attending UCO do so to upskill their already existing careers or re-train to better their job prospects. Although adolescents attend the campus, UCO attracts more mature students and the average percentage shows a clear difference between the age groups, students aged 21 and under falling at 18% and older students above 21 at 82%. UCO are part of the Greater Manchester College Group and accredited members of Advance HE. Possessing the NNECL Quality Mark and through accredited partnerships means UCO can offer courses from larger HE institutions, doing this from the students' hometown of Oldham, supporting to widen participation.

UCO is a small Campus offering a wide variety of vocational courses. This ensures that UCO provides a personalised and tailored approach, which will be discussed in further detail within the support services section. The student voice is important at UCO and utilised at

Course
BA (Hons) Accounting and Financial Services
BA (Hons) Business Management
BA (Hons) Children & Young People Top-Up
BA (hons) Children & Young People Top-Up Part Time
BA (Hons) Criminology and Criminal Justice Top Up
BA (Hons) Education and Early Years Prep Year
BA (Hons) Education and Early Years
BA (Hons) Games Art and Concept Design
BA (Hons) Graphic Design
BA (Hons) Illustration
BA (Hons) Performance and Entertainment
BSc (Hons) Health and Social Care - Top up
BSc (hons) Psychology Prep Year
BSc (hons) Psychology
FdA Children & Young People
FdA Children & Young People Part Time
FdA Criminology and Criminal Justice
FdA Health & Social Care (Mental Health)
FdA Health & Social Care (Social Care)
FdA Health & Social Care Prep Year
FdSc Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Skills
HNC Construction
HND Computing
HND Construction
MA Education (Teaching and Learning)
Teacher Training In Service
Teacher Training Pre Service

every opportunity for development purposes. Students are actively encouraged to take part in student forums and representatives are appointed from each course every year and asked to attend four meetings throughout the academic year. Two staff student panels where students can discuss their individual course cohorts' satisfactions or dissatisfaction, then two larger student forum meetings which students, management and cross campus staff such as IT and campus management attend. Students are heard and their opinions and feelings are met with plans of practical solutions going forward. In 2021's NSS survey the overall satisfaction of students surveyed at Oldham College was 83.3%, which is 7.9% above the average in the HE sectors. This placed UCO on par with some of the best rated HE provisions in the UK. This increased again to 88.7% overall satisfaction in 2022.

Topic 1) Wider student support services:

Encompassing Academic Development, Disability, Health and Wellbeing, the Library, and Careers. These services work closely together sharing information and dealing with referrals, both self and from other staff. The process of self-referral is made simple for students and appointments are booked as quickly as possible.

Please see below images of the interventions and provisions put in place by the wider support services:
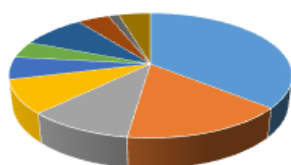

Careers and Employability: The careers service identifies that 'UCO provide distinctive higher education courses designed for the Greater Manchester labour market'. This service works closely with students across campus, providing face to face and online services. Data collected by the department and documented in their Annual Evaluation Report shows a clear level of higher engagement throughout the past 3 years, 78 appointments were booked in 2019/20 compared to the 320 in 2021/22. The careers service also delivers tailored sessions to courses across campus, considering job prospects and career paths for individual courses. Workshops are delivered around CV building, interviewing techniques and graduate attributes to all courses on each year of their studies. Dealing with current students and alumni students for up to 3 years after graduating. Employability Week is a dedicated week designed for students to engage with employers. No academic sessions run this week as the focus is on developing employability skills and graduate level opportunities. Graduate alumni are encouraged to sign up prior to completing their studies, in doing so the engagement increased from 67 students in 2021 to 106 in 2022.

The students who attended 1:1 meeting with the careers service in the period 2021-22 were asked how satisfied they were with their

appointments and what the best part about these sessions were, below are some direct quotes collected from the department: *'Helped me with CV and finding/applying for a job.'*
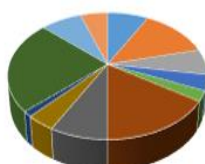
'Communicating and exploring my options, critically learning about the different job opportunities, and ways to join, discussing my skills, and how these could be embedded and useful to my career.'

Each support team works closely together and provide services which somewhat reflect and support each other, mindset and positivity sessions are also provided, providing students with tactics and strategies to keeping a positive attitude towards studies and career development.

Workshop topic

- Graduate Attributes
- Mindset Muscle
- Procrastination to Productivity
- Crafting your Career
- Crafting your CV
- Crafting your Covering Letter
- The Big Sell
- How to shine at interview
- Options with my degree
- How to get a placement

Disability and Wellbeing: The service is run by a team of professionals who are qualified in Supporting Learners with Dyslexia and Co-occurring Difficulties, Clinical psychology, and person-centred counselling. Person centred care is a vital part of the service, providing individualised support for students of all different backgrounds. Student engagement with the service is of an extremely high

Workshops

- Accountancy
- Business
- Counselling
- Construction
- CYP
- Criminology
- Games Art
- Education & EY
- Graphic Design
- Performance
- Photography
- Health & Social Care
- Psychology
- PGCE

One:One
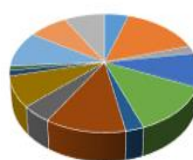
- Accountancy
- Business
- Counselling
- Construction
- Children & Young People
- Criminology
- Games Art
- Education & EY
- Graphic Design
- Performance
- Entry level Early Years
- Photography
- Health & Social Care
- Psychology
- PGCE

level. The sophisticated booking system ensures all students get the support they need and do not have to wait longer than two weeks to see someone for a 1:1 session. Although students may have to wait for an appointment the wellbeing service has a constant and immediate staff member always manning the wellbeing hub, this helps to manage risks and avoid crisis. Once a student starts at UCO an individual learning plan is built with the team and the student, outlining reasonable adjustments, this can include things such as, although not exhaustive of; assistive technology, exam concessions, extended library loans, access to RNIB book share, laptops, appropriate software

Inclusivity and diversity are embedded in the service with events and celebrations of all cultural holidays and awareness weeks/months, such as Black history month and Pride month are celebrated and acknowledged throughout the campus, through events, sessions,
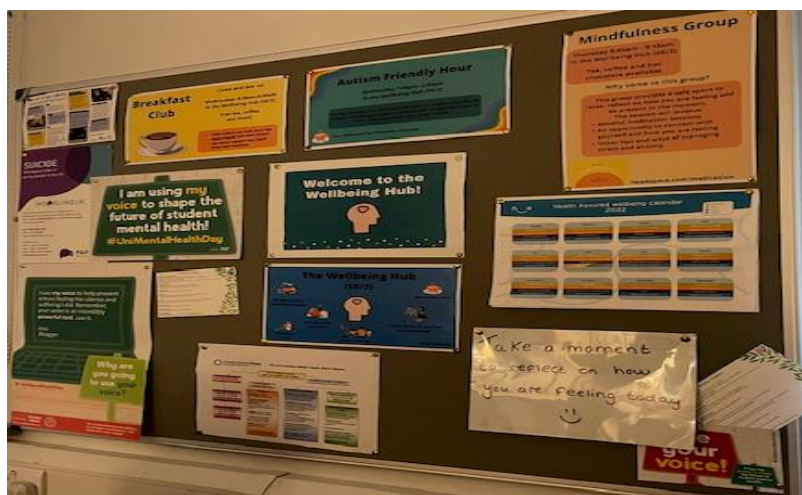
and acknowledgments on the virtual learning platform. The Wellbeing service recognised that mature student's engagement was lacking, this was noted within the 2021-22 AER where over a 12-month period the team utilised the spaces they had to market and advertise the services offered, extending this to external support, recognising that this could appeal more to older students with competing responsibilities at home. The data was collected through MYCAP (internal systems) and showed rise in mature engagement with support. Age 31-40 increased by 31 students in the year 21-22.
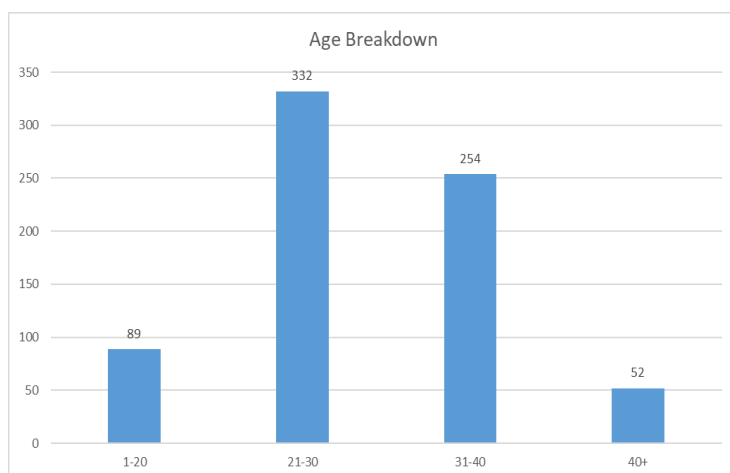

Disability services: In the year 2020/21, 624 appointments were booked with the Disability Services. This is an increase of 15% from the previous year and a 303% increase since 2018. In 20/21, 86% of appointments were attended, the same rate of engagement has followed in the past 3 years and has remained stable throughout support delivery on campus and online. 2021-2022 saw 122 students declaring a disability, equating to 24% of the student body. 1,905 appointments were conducted with 212 students being seen. Showing an increase of 69% across all services and nearly a quarter of all students at UCO accessing support at any point during their learner journey. Prior to starting at UCO students who identify as vulnerable or declare they have a disability will be invited along to meet the team, this is to ensure students who register interest in the campus can have their needs fully met by reasonable adjustments provided by the team and campus.

Dyslexia screenings: At UCO students can be screened for Dyslexia and Dyscalculia, this is done via self-referral and students are made aware of this service upon induction. Also, students can be referred via their course tutors or other support staff if any of the potential signs are identified. This service is heavily used by students

Academic skills and Library support:
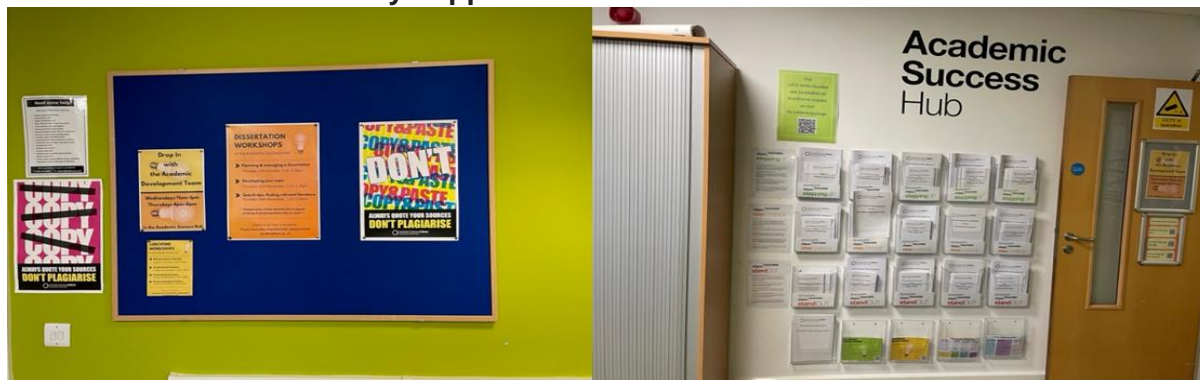
The facilities in which the library and academic success hub is placed are fantastic, for a small campus there is ample space and equipment for the number of students attending UCO. The library and Hub offer a quiet and comfortable space for students to study. A quiet study room is attached to the main library, for students who a silent environment and the student hub has facilities for students to practise any group or individual presentations. The library offers an array of different support for students and staff both on and off campus.

Other provisions which tend to locality needs are technology loans provided such as laptops to students who don't have their own. During the first year of the pandemic, the library fulfilled 254 requests for laptop loans and arranged for all students to collect and borrow devices until either a return to campus was possible or they no longer needed them. Tailored workshops are also available for all courses and levels of study, in particular research skills and database searching. These can be especially useful for the students undertaking research projects or dissertations. For those students who need further support, 1:1 tutorial can be booked with a member of library staff. Furthermore, it has been recognised that many students show poor digital literacy and lack of confidence in their digital skills upon starting at UCO. Specialised workshops and drop-in sessions have been created to support this need, based on the large number of students asking for the same type of support around general digital skills and Microsoft Word. Twelve sessions were developed in 2019 and each session was run twice throughout the 2019-20 academic year, with the aim of providing all students with the opportunity to access them. While the main intention was to introduce key skills which would help with assignments for all subject areas, it was noted that attendees were present who showed different levels of digital ability, were of various ages, and included some whose first language was not English. This suggests that these sessions can be useful to all learners, regardless of their starting knowledge, skills and experiences. These sessions have proven

very successful in building learners' confidence and have received positive feedback. Learners and staff stated that these sessions were helpful, and they felt this should be part of the course curriculum. This is something that has been actioned by some course areas, who have now requested extra-curricular workshops or tutorials. Feedback from students has been as follows: *'Possibly make it part of the Academic Skills Module as I believe lots more from my class would benefit from it.' 'Maybe these sessions could be done during group tutorial so that more people benefit or as part of Academic Skills and Development.'* Taught workshops and tutorials are updated regularly and modified to suit learners' needs. In the future, staff resources permitting, the library hopes to offer each cohort a bespoke digital skills session, working closely with each tutor to identify what their students struggle with or need to know as a priority.

Academic Development: This service

This helps to target and tailor support to a large demographic across campus. Trends were noticed by the team that ESOL learners tend to access the support regularly. During 2021-2022 it was noted within the departments AER that 49 ESOL students were seen on more than one occasion in the 591 tutorials that were booked. ESOL students accounted for 30% of the students seen during those time frames, on average four sessions per ESOL learners were attended, ESOL learners are repeat visitors throughout their time at the campus. The team is continuously developing new workshops or techniques to tailor to the needs of ESOL learners. Reading strategies and focusing on how to skim read is something that has been identified as a skill that needs more attention from the team. Academic Development recognise the different needs within different courses and vocations and attempt to tailor their services accordingly, within the AER it has been recommended that during the enrolment process the students that are identified as ESOL and highlighted to the academic skills team for them to collate the data and have a better idea of targeting support instead of relying on student/lecturer referrals. Although it was noted that the course tutors work closely with academic skills, in referrals and identifying where the cohorts are lacking and asking for tailored workshops to be embedded into the modules. Academic Development also review the assignment briefs for courses and modules to ensure they have a good understanding of brief expectations and outcomes; this helps them to give the most effective support to students.

Topic 2) Placement and Employment opportunities:

Courses:	Placement/employment opportunities:
BA (Hons) Accounting and Financial Services	Encouraged to gain placement
BA (Hons) Education and Early Years	Placement 100 hours
BA (Hons) Games Art and Concept Design	Encouraged to gain placement
BA (Hons) Graphic Design	A module built by industry professionals
BA (Hons) Illustration	Encouraged to gain placement
BA (Hons) Performance and Entertainment	Encouraged and supported to gain placement
FdA Children & Young People	Placement 100 hours
FdA Health & Social Care (Mental Health)	Placement 100 hours
FdA Health & Social Care (Social Care)	Placement 100 hours
FdSc Counselling and Psychotherapeutic Skills	Placement 100 hours
HNC Construction	Register to student placement scheme
HND Computing	Encouraged to gain placement
HND Construction	Register to student placement scheme
Criminology and criminal justice Top Up	Introducing placement for 3rd years 2023
Teacher Training Pre-Service (Cert Ed)	Placement 100 hours

Placement modules are built into some courses, where students must complete a specified amount of hours, producing portfolios and applying theory to practice.

Although not all courses include a placement module, courses embed relevant sector and employment opportunities through the Applied Learning Model, where students can conduct research or professional projects relevant to the industry the course is aimed at. A former **Health and Social Care** student noted:

'I enjoyed my time at UCO it gave me the skills and knowledge to further my career especially as my course covered leadership and management which helped me develop in my job role. It gave me the skills to progress into a leadership role and helped me understand the qualities needed to be an effective leader'

The industry company Forepoint builds a brief for **Graphics** students at UCO, giving students the opportunity to learn skills relevant to the sector they aspire to work in. Four fictitious yet feasible scenarios with briefs attached are set by Forepoint, students have support from the organisation where they return mid module to critique ideas and have input within the planning process and development of the professional projects. Staff reported they saw *'an increase in ambition and confidence, students embracing the opportunity to pitch to a high level industry specialist and potential employer'*.

The Teaching and Learning Committee had recognised that some courses are limited in offering professional placements and from this developed the Applied learning model which would require one of 3 options to be met 1) professional placement, 2) professional project or 3) research project. The aim is to support students to develop transferable graduate skills and empower students to create change within the local community of Oldham.

The wider support services team also provide UCO students with placement opportunities, working alongside the disability or wellbeing team.

which is in response to a number of graduates leaving with a satisfactory degree but struggling to find employment. This pathway provides students with the knowledge of disability rights within the job market. Working collaboratively to develop communication, self-management, and workplace skills in addition to knowledge of access to work, reasonable adjustments, and disability positive employers within the local area.

Topic 3) COVID, Blended learning and post pandemic context:

During the pandemic, courses were forced to move to online learning overnight. This was done with no course disruption for students, and MS teams, Zoom and Google classrooms were utilised by staff to ensure students were not impacted and left with no formal teaching. Adjustments were made to placement modules and practical modules were developed and altered accordingly. Throughout this uncertain time students were kept informed, with regular updates regarding changes and guidance coming through from the Department for Education. Recognising the locality needs, students were offered laptops to collect to ensure students studies were not disrupted or compromised. When guidance stated that students could return to campus, UCO along with students made the decision to return straight away. Safety measures were put in place for students with clear guidelines of home testing and registering results, PPE wearing, and social distancing always adhered to. An online student rep meeting during the pandemic addressed safety, students responded: *they had definitely felt safe thanks to the systems in place, such as the arrows, signs, masks, sanitising stations, and wipes in classrooms. they recently visited campus and used the lecture theatre and the LRC and felt completely safe on site.*
Students were also aware that if at any point it became unsafe, remote learning would resume. The newfound blended learning approach provided students with the opportunity to continue to learn from home if they did not feel ready to return to campus and cameras were installed in classrooms to record the lessons.

Blended learning was also used for times such as supervisions, as this proved to be beneficial to students with children who had limited childcare, or school closures.

Other students were asked during a remote student rep meeting how they felt blended learning was undertaken by UCO, responses were as follows **Education and Early Years**: '*The tutors are supportive and have been very helpful, providing lots of resources and extra support. Some students would occasionally lose motivation, however having a group-chat for the year group has helped with this to avoid feeling isolated. Thanks were given to all staff at UCO'.* **Children and Young People: '***The course tutors have been fantastic in supporting everything. Students are mixing childcare, work, and online learning, which has been difficult, but tutors could not have done more'.*

Each course needed individual adaptations during the pandemic, especially the more practical courses offered at UCO. One course that had to adapt drastically was performance, being a predominantly practical course, that requires group participation. A student offered insight into how the tutors and staff ensured their students could still meet their outcomes and complete their course: *'UCO supported me during covid by making sure I had the right technology to be able to participate in my lessons online, I was also offered support in my learning and I was offered a laptop. On return to face-on-face lessons there were rules to keep me safe. We had to wear masks in lesson and around campus and we had to keep a two-metre distance. We also had to test I*

think it was on a weekly basis. This made me feel safe as I knew people were testing regularly'.

The COVID project: Following the pandemic, UCO saw the importance for students to reflect on a time that had been difficult for the students who were studying. First year students were asked to contribute to the staff symposium and present a project they had developed as a group,

This report has provided information on the experience at UCO and the provisions put in place for students to meet student's needs in a person-centred way. This has especially been demonstrated through the wider support services offered within campus. It has highlighted progression from students and how they are now contributing to the Oldham and Greater Manchester labour market. Student satisfaction has been demonstrated via a range of student and course testimonials about their time at UCO, the quotes provided exhibit the passion students feel for the HE establishment they study at. This report has also highlighted a sense of belonging and community within the student testimonials. Vast data has been collected to show how these services are successfully implementing wider support into UCO and the students time studying there. A variety of courses have been represented within this report by several students across campus or student alumni from the years 2019-22. Placement and professional opportunities have been discussed and how not only these opportunities were adapted during the global pandemic but are adapted through the Applied Learning Model for courses that face difficulties gaining placement within industry. The diversity of Oldham has been explored and this report has identified how UCO tailors specifically to the local and individual needs, tackling disadvantage within the area and creating equity in opportunities for the learner's time when studying and the local labour market upon graduating. UCO is a fantastic HE provider which is successfully widening participation and doing great things within a deprived area, for local people of all backgrounds, local businesses, and services.