

University Centre Quayside: TEF Student Submission

Student Body Representatives

Date: 15 December 2022

Approach to Evidence-Gathering

This student submission is to form part of University Centre Quayside's (UCQ) Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) application.

Student Representative and supporting students were involved in the development of this document: (Student Representative), (second year student) and (third year student). The students are studying on UCQ's Chartered Manager Degree Apprenticeship (CMDA) and were chosen to guarantee a higher level of objectivity and transparency in writing the student submission. All students are from different employers, which means that different sector experiences are considered for this review.

UCQ effectively uses a range of feedback to ensure high quality learning and to inform improvements.

The supporting evidence used for the student submission has been obtained from three different sources:

- student surveys, which are completed online and voluntarily
- student feedback obtained periodically and for each module
- minutes from meetings held with student representatives and other students on the higher education (HE) programme.

Through the supporting evidence, students have the opportunity to voice their opinions regarding various areas of their academic experience as HE students at UCQ.

Student representatives and UCQ staff agreed the format of the student feedback meetings, the key topics to be covered and the questions to be asked to ensure consistent feedback was obtained. At the time of the meetings being held, the higher education course offered by UCQ includes the BA (Hons) Professional Management, delivered as part of the CMDA.

In 2022, Student Representative, circulated an additional independent on-line student survey to all CMDA students, to collect up-to-date perceptions, in preparation for the TEF submission. This survey was anonymous, and responses were sent directly to the Student Representative, to ensure independence. Survey results are included in this submission.

The content of this report has not been unduly influenced by University Centre Quayside (UCQ).

Student Experience

TEF Indicator 1: Teaching on my course

UCQ students are confident that the courses are providing the correct level of academic standards. Feedback from students is positive: "I have a lot of confidence in the Professional Development Assessors and academic lecturers and that we are covering appropriate academic material. Support from the PDA has been especially important, providing guidance and reassurance throughout. Digital Business and New Technologies were of particular relevance and interest in an NHS setting where the introduction of patient portals and use of robotics is fast becoming part of business as usual and learning from those modules taken forward into a live environment." This is further confirmed by the recent survey where 100% of students state that the course has challenged them to achieve their best work; and 100% of students agree/strongly agree the design, content and organisation of the programme is a good standard. (TEF student survey 2022).

Students have based this opinion on:

- Experiences compared to other courses previously undertaken with other educational establishments
- The increase in the depth of study over levels of study previously undertaken
- Confidence in the information provided by UCQ
- Meetings with representatives of The Open University
- Development of knowledge, skills and behaviours

Annually, students are asked to complete the annual Quayside Student Survey (QSS), which mirrors the question statements in the National Student Survey (NSS). Students have provided feedback on the learning and teaching received and are satisfied with the support available to them provided by lecturers and the PDAs. 98% of students state they are satisfied with the quality of the course and 100% feel they received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to the course (QSS 2021/22). Feedback has included quotes such as "It has been a great experience to be able to study for a degree at my age."

The QSS 2021/22, confirms 95% of students state that staff at UCQ have made the subject interesting; 97% state that the course has provided them with opportunities to apply what they have learnt. 100% of student responders agreed that UCQ engages with them sufficiently to ensure the quality of their educational experience (TEF student survey 2022).

The QSS 2021/22 found that "My course has provided me with opportunities to explore ideas or concepts in depth" scored 100% which is above the national teaching provider average (+21%). The learning opportunities section of the QSS has continued to improve since 2018. It is suggested this is largely due to UCQ actively collecting and responding to student feedback over the last five years. The extended questions of the QSS further reflects this, with 98% of students believing that undertaking the CMDA helps them to achieve their career aspirations and 95% agreeing the academic assessment improves their performance within their role (QSS 2021/22). Similarly, during the 2021/22 Employer/Employer Mentor Survey, 100% of employers agreed that the training provided is having a positive impact on employee performance in their job roles.

Students are represented on UCQ's Academic Council and attend meetings with course tutors and representatives of the current validating body, The Open University, where they can input on organisational and curriculum matters.

Students have had the opportunity to help reshape the programme, and have then been consulted about any alterations made to the work required for the course; information regarding the changes is disseminated via emails and verbally in meetings. "We are routinely consulted about any changes to the programme, where we are given the opportunity to share our thoughts, which are always taken into consideration".

UCQ received a full Ofsted inspection in December 2021. A number of CMDA students were interviewed by Ofsted as part of their deep dive.

The completed Ofsted report confirms UCQ's overall effectiveness as Good, including the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development, leadership and management, adult learning programmes and apprenticeships. Ofsted states that learners and apprentices enjoy their programmes and are proud to be part of UCQ. Learners find UCQ welcoming, safe and inclusive. Ofsted highlighted that UCQ need to accelerate plans to enhance the initial assessment of apprentices' knowledge, skills and behaviour, and use the results from initial assessments to ensure that all apprentices make as much progress from their starting points as possible, through individual curriculum plans.

In response to this feedback, UCQ have made the following changes:

- An individual curriculum plan template has been developed and implemented
- PDAs meet students within the first two weeks on programme to discuss their individual curriculum plan, using their initial assessments, Individual Learning Plan, initial knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) confidence scan, in conjunction with discussions on their current role and responsibilities. All year one modules are discussed, and students and line managers determine where additional opportunities are required within the workplace, through on the job training, to develop new KSBs.

All information is recorded on the individual curriculum plan and reviewed periodically, throughout the programme.

TEF Indicator 2: Academic Support

UCQ confirm, in 2021/22, academic support achieved an average satisfaction score of 99%, again exceeding the 2021 benchmark (81%) by 18 percentage points and overall sector average (73%) by 26%. Academic support has improved by 2 percentage points since 2020/21 (97%). Exceptionally, 100% of students agreed they have received sufficient advice and guidance in relation to their course and good advice was available when they needed to make study choices on their course (Q13 and Q14). (QSS 2021/22; 2021/22 BA (Hons) Professional Management Programme Report).

Feedback from students completing the student representative survey is positive: "Support has been excellent", "Amazing staff and very clear direction"; "UCQ are by far the best training provider I have come across". 100% of students agree/strongly agree UCQ supports them well to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes and 100% feel UCQ communicates effectively and that opinions and views are valued". (TEF student survey 2022).

“The support and guidance offered by UCQ is outstanding and has made me want to do well in my course.” (QSS 2021/22). 100% of students confirm they have been able to contact staff, when needed and 90% agree good advice was provided when making study choices on their course (NSS 2021/22).

95% of students agree that if there are any changes on courses, they are communicated effectively (QSS 2021/22) and students have the opportunity to comment on them during tutorial sessions or by email. Feedback states that “The support from my PDA assessor [staff name] has been especially strong, she has been there with me at every turn so a huge thank you to her. Equally the support from all the lecturers, their availability, their support and their responsiveness has been fantastic throughout” (QSS 2021/22).

100% of responders found staff to be approachable and always available to offer support and 100% agreed there are a variety of different ways they can engage, either individually or collectively. (TEF student survey 2022).

100% of respondents said the admission process was fair and their experience of enrolling onto the programme at UCQ was positive (TEF student survey 2022).

A degree apprenticeship admission must involve the employer, the employee (student) and UCQ. 100% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the admissions process was fair and efficient. (TEF student survey 2022).

Most students were very satisfied with their induction onto the degree apprenticeship program where they received all necessary information. During 2021/22, 45% of students completed an induction survey which identified the same or higher satisfaction across 63% of questions on the previous year. In 2020/21 a satisfaction rate of 86% achieved the lowest score on the survey, relating to students feeling ‘at ease’ with their peers during their induction and related information sessions. This has declined further to 82% in 2021/22 (2021/22 Induction Survey). This is to be expected when new students meet for the first time and this develops over the course. UCQ are looking to reintroduce face-to-face inductions in 2022/23 to support cohort identity.

TEF Indicator 3: Assessment and Feedback

The views of students are regularly collected, officially, through student module feedback and surveys, or informally, whilst engaging with Module Leads/ PDA. Quarterly professional reviews are undertaken between, student, employer and PDA, where students are able to express their views during the course. Feedback is acted upon by UCQ in a ‘you said, we did’ format.

Students confirm they are provided with written guidelines on the marking and grading criteria and how these can be achieved; this is provided to the student at the start of each module. Additionally, they are able to discuss this in more detail verbally with the course lecturers on a one-to-one basis if they are unclear of requirements. 97% of respondents agree the criteria used in marking have been clear in advance (QSS 2021/22) and 100% of respondents have found the assessment process to be fair (TEF student survey 2022).

98% of students agree the academic assessment and theoretical elements of the programme improve their performance within their role and 98% confirm the work-based assessment and portfolio elements improve performance within my role (QSS 2021/22).

Within the first week on programme, Professional Development Assessors (PDAs) deliver sessions to discuss and demonstrate Ecordia. Additional workshops are scheduled, on a one-to-one basis, as required. The Academic Support Tutor (AST) provides bespoke workshops to students across all years to further develop academic writing, research and reading skills. Sessions include: Citations and Referencing; Structured Academic Essays; Finding and Evaluating Sources; Reading Strategies and Critical Thinking; Effective Presentation Skills; and Undertaking and Writing Literature Reviews. The AST also supports students requiring Level 2 Functional Skills maths and/or English which is a requirement of achieving the Apprenticeship standard.

Students are made aware of the governing rules on plagiarism during induction and this is further reiterated during lectures. Students are provided with handbooks and policies at the start of their programme, which include detailed information on plagiarism and an overview of the AMBeR Tariff, which UCQ follow in relation to plagiarism misconduct. Students are advised to use plagiarism checking tools to check their work prior to submitting, and UCQ has recently introduced Turnitin for draft and assignment submission.

100% of students found feedback on assessed work to be timely and 96% confirm they found feedback helpful. (QSS 2021/22).

100% of students said they understand the complaint or appeal process and that it is fair and transparent (TEF student survey 2022). UCQ confirmed that they had not received any complaints or appeals.

TEF Indicator 4: Learning Resources

UCQ continue to invest in improvements to IT infrastructure and learning environment, including purchasing Perlego, an online library, where students can access core text and resources via the student portal. This was in response to satisfaction with the learning resources, including the library and SharePoint/Office 365, being below average in 2018, however, some of these issues related to firewalls at students' employers, which UCQ has no control over. Following these improvements, 86% of students found the online library resources have supported their learning well and 92% have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g., Teams/Ecordia) when they needed to (QSS 2021/22). 100% of respondents stated, UCQ has good quality facilities, learning resources and support services to deliver a high-quality learning experience, although student also felt there were too many platforms and logins. (TEF student survey 2022).

The CMDA is a work-based programme which includes taught sessions and workplace assessment through an interactive online model. UCQ has an adaptable and responsive approach to the use of learning spaces. Lectures are held online via MS Teams and recorded for students who cannot make the session. Students also have online one-to-ones with their PDA. The shift to online learning has been a welcome change for the majority of students. One student previously stated "I think this type of hybrid learning is exceptionally well suited and beneficial for me and has helped me morph

my perspectives and develop my character...” (2021/22 BA (Hons) Professional Management Programme Report, p. 26).

Feedback on learning resources is collected throughout the programme, including within the NSS, QSS and module feedback. 92% of students confirm they have been able to access course-specific resources (e.g. Teams/Ecordia) when I required and 86% agree the e-books and online library, e.g. Perlego, have supported their learning well. (QSS, 2021/22).

Overall, 89% of students were satisfied with the efficacy of student learning resources. This has dropped slightly from 2020/21 (94%), however remains above the 2021 benchmark (79%) and 2022 sector average (81%). Q18 *The IT resources and facilities provided have supported my learning well* has been removed from the QSS following the permanent move to online hybrid learning. Building a robust virtual learning environment continues to remain a priority for UCQ to ensure learning resources continue to support learning, meet the needs of students and have parity with other national providers.

After the introduction of the e-portfolio system, Ecordia, an additional question was added to module feedback to capture student feedback. Of the 39 responses gathered across a number of modules (20 students), 86% of student respondents agree/strongly agree they find Ecordia easy to navigate. Following analysis of the 14% of student respondents who disagree/strongly disagree that they find Ecordia easy to navigate, these responses are generally within the first 3 modules of the programme. Once students complete Module 1.4, 90% of students are satisfied with Ecordia; this increases to 99% by Module 1.5, indicating the system becomes easier with use.

TEF Indicator 5: Student Voice

Student feedback is collected using a range of quantitative and qualitative methods, including the annual student survey. Quayside Student Survey (QSS). Overall, in 2021/22 the feedback was very positive. 100% of students agree they have the right opportunities to provide feedback on their course (NSS, 2021/22).

Overall satisfaction with the quality of the course was exceptionally high at 98%. The majority of core questions (25/26) and all 10 sections of the survey, on average, exceeded both the 2021 OfS/NSS organisational benchmark and the 2022 NSS teaching provider sector average.

The 2021/22 QSS collected a response rate of 52% (+11% on the previous year). Two actions identified following the 2020/21 QSS have now been achieved in 2021/22:

- Increase the QSS respondent rate to 50% for 2021/22 (52% achieved)
- Increase QSS satisfaction to 95% for Q9 'I feel the use of Ecordia (e-portfolio system) supports my learning well' (97% achieved).

In response to this feedback, UCQ made the following changes:

- HE academic staff, work-based assessors and UCQ administrative staff have been proactive in reminding and encouraging all CMDA students to engage with and complete the annual QSS. This has included emails to students, classroom reminders, individual reminders and inclusion in the HE Programme Team meetings. These meetings have also discussed how to improve the completion rate.

- A prize draw is now offered to encourage students to participate. A £50 Amazon Gift Card was awarded to one randomly selected participant for 2020/21.

Student feedback shows that they had been expecting a traditional university experience such as formal lectures and that they were very happy with the style of UCQ delivery. Before starting the course, students felt they would have limited or no support and said they have been very pleased with the amount of support they get from UCQ staff.

Student Representative stated, "Initial thoughts and concerns from students prior to starting their studies, regarding remote support and operational delivery of lectures, were alleviated once students commenced their studies. First-hand experience of UCQ approaches and the level of support provided were very well received and reflected in student feedback."

Student engagement is measured on several levels. UCQ monitors attendance at lectures and tutorials, and for PDA meetings. As students at UCQ complete their work independently, engagement is also monitored via submitted work, informal and formal reviews. During lectures, engagement is monitored via observation of participation in the activities of the session. Robust feedback processes are in place to further monitor student engagement.

Meetings with students has confirmed they feel their opinions are taken into consideration by UCQ staff. Their needs and suggestions for the enhancement of their programme of learning is dealt with promptly. It is not uncommon for some smaller changes suggested by students to be implemented within weeks, or even days, from when they were first raised. Issues regarding the access to the specialised equipment or rooms have been dealt with flexibly on a few occasions and to the satisfaction of everybody. At a recent Staff/Student Liaison Committee, the student representative, outlined the importance of face-to-face induction, in supporting her cohort to work collaboratively as a team. UCQ are planning to implement face-to-face inductions to enhance the hybrid programme, where all students spend a day together to undertake team activities, workshops and discussions.

A further aspect of the involvement of students is demonstrated with the formalised structures of student participation, such as Student Representatives and Programme Champions. Currently, there is one Student Representative from a student in year three and Programme Champions across all years of the course. The students have been either nominated by their peers or by the staff. Their role is: to participate in Academic Council meetings; participate in the Staff/Student Liaison Committee, to liaise with the student body on matters relating to the programme; to provide feedback to UCQ on behalf of other students. In 2021/22, the Student Representation section of the annual QSS achieved 97% satisfaction; a 20 percentage points increase from 2020/21.

Student engagement has become fully structured since UCQ's Quality and Standards Review in 2019. Further improvements will be made, as student numbers increase, to establish an independently operating student representation body, to provide students with wider involvement opportunities in the decision-making processes. UCQ ask for volunteers to join the official student body, on an annual basis, but appreciate students undertaking the BA (Hons) as part of the CMDA are working full-time whilst managing the demands of the role, study, and homelife; student time is therefore limited.

Two new actions for the 2022/23 academic year have been identified following the 2021/22 QSS:

Increase QSS satisfaction to 90% for Q16 'The schedule works efficiently for me' (currently 81%)





Increase QSS satisfaction to 95% for Q6 'The work-based assessment and portfolio elements improve my performance within my role' (currently 89%)

Student Outcomes

An overview of student outcomes is provided to the student body, through official committees, including Academic Council and Staff and Student Liaison Committee. UCQ have provided the following summary of student outcomes. Although some of the data is slightly below benchmark, as the programme is delivered as part of a degree apprenticeship, this brings additional challenges for students undertaking this programme, while working as managers and leaders.

University Centre Quayside Limited (Apprenticeship)

Overall indicator (Apprenticeship)

Split indicator type	Split indicator	Measure	Denominator	Indicator value (%)	Indicator (%)	Difference from benchmark (ppt)	Benchmark value (%)	Proportion of statistical uncertainty distribution			Contribution to own benchmark (%)	Survey response rate (%)
					50	-40 -20 0 20 40		Materially below benchmark	Broadly in line with benchmark	Materially above benchmark		
Overall indicator	Overall indicator	Continuation	110	78.3			86.1	93.2%	6.6%	0.2%	3.4	[N/A]
		Completion	30	47.7			72.3	99.9%	0.1%	0.0%	18.5	[N/A]
		Progression	[low]	[low]			[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]	[low]

Students who remain on their programme to complete the BA (Hons) Professional Management, have a positive outcome. Current degree classifications breakdown is outlined below:

First: 53%
 2:1: 39%
 2:2: 7%
 Third: 0%

There are good progression outcomes for students in their workplace: of those students who have graduated, 100% sustained employment, 86% taken on additional responsibilities and 64% progressed into a higher position/promotion at work.

Throughout the programme, students are regularly developing new knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) which has seen had a positive impact in the workplace. PDAs assess existing KSBs at enrolment, then again at 6 months, 12 months, 24 months and at completion. This is to determine distance travelled and impact on employment and job role. 98% of students agree their KSBs are continually improving throughout the programme. This is also confirmed by employers: 100% of employers confirm the training provided by UCQ has had a positive impact on the organisation and 100% agree it has had a positive impact on employee performance in their workplace and within their role. (UCQ Employer/Mentor Survey 2021/22).

Conclusion

When assessing the overall quality of HE at UCQ, several factors are taken into consideration.

Covid-19 brought about new challenges for students and higher education providers. Despite the significant disruption brought on by the pandemic, UCQ students have felt satisfied by UCQ's response. One student stated "UCQ are extremely supportive and flexible. They have adapted their delivery throughout COVID with little impact on the students. All lecturers are passionate about their subjects and very accommodating." 100% of respondents reported UCQ had responded well to Covid and made adjustments to ensure [student safety]; and 100% agreed hybrid working works well and has enabled a positive learning experience noting "UCQ has adapted really well in delivering the modules. They constantly checked up on students and communicated effectively". One student noted that although "hybrid working has worked well, face to face opportunity, especially for new cohorts on induction, should be considered". (TEF student survey 2022).

Our findings in conducting this report are that UCQ has succeeded in improving student experience year on year and are committed to continue to make improvements to the provision and for the student experience. UCQ continues to receive regular feedback from students and acts on this wherever practicable.

Feedback from all respondents, across all questions, is extremely positive. There are, however, a small number of areas highlighted for further consideration including the number of platforms and log-ins; time allocated for self-directed study; consistency of module delivery and student engagement within online sessions. We believe achieving Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) accreditation will have a positive impact on the continued improvement to provision.

The delivery staff and management of UCQ have displayed a genuine willingness to listen to student feedback, needs or concerns, whether positive or negative. Where practical improvements or changes have been suggested or requested, UCQ has shown itself to be willing to implement swift decisive change and communicate these changes effectively. This flexibility and the ability to self-reflect should lead to continually improving as a high-quality provider of HE programmes.