

UCEM Code of Practice chapter

Student Engagement

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UCEM Code of Practice – Student Engagement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 UCEM values student contribution and is committed to working in partnership with the student community to develop the student experience.
- 1.2 Partnership for the purpose of this policy is defined as joint working between students and staff, based on the values of trust, openness, honesty and the shared goal to work together for the benefit of the UCEM student experience.
- 1.4 The policy outlines how UCEM:
 - Embeds a framework for student engagement and representation;
 - Clarifies the roles and responsibilities of all involved in Student Engagement and Representation.
 - Sets out the guidelines for the operation of the Student Representative process, including methods of nomination and elections;
 - Details the way in which student engagement and feedback is captured from the student community, and acted upon by UCEM as part of the quality assurance process;
- 1.5 This policy document forms part of UCEM's Code of Practice, and has been informed by the expectations and indicators in the [QAA UK Quality Code for Higher Education Section B5: Student Engagement](#).

2. Principles of student engagement

- 2.1 For the purpose of this policy the definition used for student engagement is from the QAA (2012) the participation of students in quality enhancement and quality assurance processes, resulting in the improvement of their educational experience.
- 2.2 The [Student Charter](#) sets out how UCEM staff in academic and support departments work closely together to ensure a high-quality learning experience. The Charter encourages students to provide feedback on their experiences either individually or via student representatives. The Charter also sets out the responsibilities of student representatives.
- 2.3 The following principles underpin how UCEM works with students:
 - the student voice is valued
 - students are partners in their educational experience
 - all students have the right and the opportunity for their voice to be heard in the delivery of their education
 - UCEM will facilitate opportunities for formal and informal feedback
 - students are represented at all levels within UCEM's governance structure
 - UCEM will feedback to students on the outcomes and actions taken in response to their feedback
 - Students who take on roles as student representatives and panel members will be provided with guidance and support relevant to these roles

3. Student representation

- 3.1 UCEM has a student representation system which involves student representation at several different levels including a Lead Student Representative, Programme Student Representatives, student representation at deliberative committee meetings and student panel members.
- 3.2 All students are provided with the opportunity to apply to become a student representative when vacancies arise.
- 3.3 Student Representatives represent the student community and work in partnership with UCEM through a variety of mechanisms related to their specific role, including membership of UCEM's deliberative committees, through the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), and, for the Lead Student Representative, as a member of the Board of Trustees.
- 3.4 UCEM encourages Student Representatives to regularly address and communicate issues for review and discussion, as well as highlighting areas of good practice.
- 3.5 UCEM will provide all Student Representatives with a letter formally acknowledging their activities as a Student Representative upon completion of their studies. In addition, UCEM may invite Student Representatives to prestigious events, such as the UCEM Property Awards Luncheon.

3.1 Lead Student Representative

- 3.1.1 There is one Lead Student Representative (LSR) position available at UCEM which is a salaried position.
- 3.1.2 The LSR role is advertised as a two-year fixed term appointment to be filled by a current student or a member of the UCEM alumni community who graduated less than one year prior to the date of appointment. The successful candidate is appointed following a selection and interview process.
- 3.1.3 The LSR holds specific responsibilities for student engagement, as set out in the Lead Student Representative Job Description.
- 3.1.4 The LSR represents the student body as a member of the UCEM Board of Trustees, therefore ensuring that the views and interests of the UCEM student community are considered during decision-making and monitoring activities.
- 3.1.5 The LSR is responsible for leading discussion on the Student Hub area of the VLE

3.2 Programme Student Representatives

- 3.2.1 Each Programme has at least one Programme Student Representative (PSR), with more than one PSR appointed for programmes with high student numbers.
- 3.2.2 During the appointment process for PSR positions, all students are notified of the application requirements and are invited to submit an application following the process set out in the advertisement. Applicants are asked to complete a short statement containing their reasons for wanting to become a PSR.
- 3.2.3 If the number of students wishing to become a PSR is greater than the positions available, students will be invited to stand for election on the VLE.
- 3.2.4 The process for nomination and election of PSRs is transparent to all students and is published on the VLE, as well as in the Student Representation Handbook.

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- 3.2.5 PSRs are provided with an induction advising them of their role and responsibilities including the UCEM Student Representation Handbook and access to the Student Representative VLE area.
- 3.2.6 Student Representatives will receive on-going support from a designated UCEM Student Representative Liaison Officer to enable them to fulfil their roles effectively.
- 3.2.7 The main responsibilities of a PSR are set out in the role specification and they include:
- Providing a link between UCEM staff and students;
 - Representing students on issues relating to teaching, learning and student support;
 - Using the Student Representative VLE to liaise with UCEM on matters relating to teaching, learning and assessment and the student experience;
 - Using the VLE to collect student feedback from the student community on the student experience during each year through a programme of online discussion topics
 - Using the Student Representative VLE Forum to report to students on decisions made by UCEM, where appropriate disseminating relevant committee minutes;
 - Working with UCEM on initiatives and communicating information to students on their relevant programme via the VLE;
 - Undertaking the role responsibly within the guidelines provided;
 - Attending Programme Leader and Student Representatives Meetings (usually through web conferencing) to share student issues and concerns at least twice a year, feeding into a meeting of all Programme Student Representatives with the Lead Student Representative.
- 3.2.9 PSRs term of appointment is for a maximum period of three-years subject to annual review and renewal
- 3.2.8 PSRs will receive payment for each semester's representation activity at the end of the semester upon confirmation from the Programme Leader/Student Representative Liaison Officer that expected activities were completed. The details of the payment value is confirmed upon appointment.

3.3 Student representation as part of academic governance

- 3.3.1 All of the UCEM main deliberative committees must have at least one Student Representative Committee Member (SRCM), with the details of the available appointments set out in the Terms of Reference for each deliberative committee.
- 3.3.2 SRCMs play an important role in decision making in relation to the academic quality and standards of UCEM awards. Representing the wider UCEM student community at their committee, to provide a student perspective on the matters under discussion.
- 3.3.3 SRCMs are appointed to ensure that the student voice is considered during decision-making and monitoring activities within the academic committee structure. SRCMs are appointed for a maximum period of three-years subject to annual review and renewal.

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- 3.3.4 Where there are vacancies for SRCMs on deliberative committees, all students will be invited to obtain one or more nominations for election (as advised in the advertisement), and where appropriate an election will occur on the VLE.
- 3.3.5 Before attendance at their first meeting SRCMs will attend an induction meeting (either in person or via teleconference/skype) with the Chair and the secretary to ensure that the SRCM is fully briefed on the purpose of the committee and is encouraged to participate as a full member of the committee (except for reserved items that relate to individual students).
- 3.3.5 SRCMs receive remuneration for preparing for and attending their appointed committee, including consulting with the student body over discussion items and disseminating feedback from the committee. The details of the remuneration each SRCM will receive is set out in the role advertisement at the time of appointment.

3.4 Student Panel Members

- 3.4.1 In addition to student representation as part of the formal governance structure, students also participate in other quality events. These include the Independent Appeals Board, panels for validation and periodic review and re-validation events, accreditation panels and student panels for external quality assurance events.
- 3.4.2 At these events students are equal members of the panel upon which they sit and are given the opportunity to participate fully in panel discussions.
- 3.4.3 Student panel members will receive full guidance on their role and support from the panel secretary.

4. Student surveys

4.1 External surveys

- 4.1.1 UCEM participates in the i-grad International Student Barometer external survey and this survey is issued to UCEM students on an annual basis. UCEM students are able through this survey to provide anonymous feedback on their experience studying with UCEM. The results of this survey are monitored by UCEM and are presented at the Annual Programme Review meeting for each respective programme. UCEM also uses the data for internal and external benchmarking and to identify institutional level enhancement themes.
- 4.1.2 The National Student Survey (NSS) offers undergraduate students in the final year of study that are domiciled in the UK at all UK Higher Education Institutions an opportunity to provide feedback on their programme and share their experiences of their time at their institution. Therefore, UCEM students who are finishing their undergraduate programmes are able to provide anonymous feedback to this national survey. UCEM will consider the feedback provided through the NSS to further understand the experience of our students, and to help inform improvements to programmes of study and the wider student experience for future students.
- 4.1.3 UCEM students may also be asked to participate in other external surveys that take place from time to time.

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4.2 Module / unit surveys

- 4.2.1 UCEM students are encouraged to provide feedback on module/units on a weekly basis using the anonymous weekly feedback function on the VLE. Programme Leaders use this feedback to make in-delivery module changes and as part of the module evaluation process.
- 4.2.2 Module / Unit Surveys are also issued in the last taught week of each Semester so that students are able to provide feedback on each completed module. The data from these surveys is considered at module evaluation meetings for both Undergraduate and Postgraduate programmes and forms part of the Module Leader and Annual Programme Report, so that feedback is evaluated and acted on to inform future developments of the programme. All programme level actions as a result of student feedback are recorded and tracked via the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

4.3 Other internal student surveys

- 4.3.1 UCEM also conducts a number of internal surveys of student opinion, focusing on specific student groups or on areas identified for enhancement.
- 4.3.2 The focus of internal surveys is kept under review and periodically adjusted to reflect changes in the data and feedback. The current range of internal surveys includes:
- Admissions survey
 - Apprenticeship initial survey
 - Degree apprenticeship student survey
 - Surveying Technician Diploma Student Survey

5. Informal Feedback Opportunities

- 5.1 All members of staff who have contact with students are encouraged to work in partnership with students to obtain informal feedback. The informal feedback is discussed and acted on where appropriate by the Programme Team and recorded in the programme Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).
- 5.2 Each Programme has a 'Have your Say' section on the VLE, where students can post a compliment or suggestion directly to UCEM relating to their student experience. Students are also encouraged to provide informal feedback to their Module Tutors, and the Student Advice Team.
- 5.3 The 'Have your Say' VLE section is monitored on a regular basis, and suggestions are sent directly to the Programme Leader and Programme Administrator. Where possible these actions are dealt with during the programme, and recorded on the QEP with a summary included in the Annual Programme Report at the respective Annual Programme Review Meetings.
- 5.4 All compliments, suggestions and 'Have your Say' comments are logged and any actions taken recorded. All feedback is also reported every two months to the Vice Principal-Student Experience in order for cross-programme trends to be identified.

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- 5.5 Student feedback is integral to the Programme Validation and Periodic Review and Re-validation process. The views of the student community will be sought as part of both the formal approval of a new programme, and as part of the periodic review and re-validation of an existing programme. Student feedback forms part of the formal agenda for these events whereby panellists will meet representatives from the current UCEM community and alumni to discuss their perspective of the programme and studying with UCEM.
- 5.6 The views of students will inform the design phase of a new curriculum, or the re-design of existing modules, and student facing policies. The student community will be asked for feedback normally via the Student Representatives on the VLE.

6. Monitoring of Service

- 6.1 Students are encouraged to provide feedback on Student Central using a 'star' rating system. This includes an opportunity to rate the resources provided on the Frequently Asked Questions section, as well as an opportunity to rate the quality of answers provided to their queries following the resolution of the enquiry that they raised.
- 6.2 The results of the feedback ratings are reviewed monthly by the Student Advice Manager and compared with previous results so that the quality of service through Student Central is monitored. A follow up email is sent to all students that voted the service as below average or poor in order for feedback to be collected as to the reason why.
- 6.3 UCEM also has a formal [complaints policy](#) for students. Students have access to this policy from the VLE and UCEM website. UCEM actively signposts students to this policy and has a designated Complaints Officer that can offer advice and support when making a complaint. Statistics on the number of complaints received within the calendar year are reported on an annual basis to the Academic Board and quarterly to the Senior Leadership Team.

7. Dissemination of feedback

- 7.1 UCEM recognises the importance of disseminating feedback received to the student community, and demonstrating how feedback has informed the quality assurance process.
- 7.2 Feeding back to students on the responses to their feedback is important to give students an incentive to provide feedback and to facilitate discussions between UCEM staff and students on the VLE or at deliberative committee meetings.
- 7.3 The Lead Student Representative plays a key role in the dissemination of information to the student community about how UCEM has considered and acted on their feedback. The Lead Student Representative will feed back to students using a range of media, including webinars, forum posts on the Student Hub and the Student Newsletter.

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- 7.4 UCEM provides institutional level feedback to students via the UCEM Student Newsletter and on the VLE.
- 7.5 Dissemination of programme level feedback is the responsibility of the Programme Leader. This includes ensuring that a record is kept of Programme Leader and Programme Student Representative meetings on the relevant proforma and that the feedback is disseminated to relevant teams and reported to the appropriate Board of Study.
- 7.6 Programme Leaders are responsible for ensuring that responses to student surveys and actions taken as a result of the Programme Leader and Programme Student Representative meetings are communicated with Programme Student Representatives and students on their programme.
- 7.7 Module Leaders should feedback to students and Programme Student Representatives via the VLE on changes made to modules as an outcome of student feedback.
- 7.8 Changes and new developments may also be fed back to the individuals that suggested them via email, the VLE and via the Student Representatives.
- 7.9 Other information will also be shared with the student community, including reports from professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRB's), External Examiner Reports and analysis of student performance at module and programme level.

8. Policy monitoring and review

- 8.1 UCEM's Student Engagement Advisory Group is responsible for monitoring and reviewing UCEM's approach to student engagement including UCEM's use of student surveys, monitoring the effectiveness of UCEM's Student Representation system and identifying student engagement projects and themes.
- 8.2 This Student Engagement chapter is subject to regular review in accordance with the UCEM Code of Practice Review Schedule.

Appendix A Related UCEM documents

1. Student Engagement Advisory Group Terms of Reference
2. Student Representative Feedback – Record of Meeting Form
3. UCEM Student Representation Handbook (annual update, as required)
4. UCEM Student Complaints Policy and Procedures
<http://www.UCEM.ac.uk/about-us/college-policies.aspx>
5. UCEM Student Charter <https://www.ucem.ac.uk/study-with-ucem/studying-with-ucem/student-charter/>

Appendix B Sources of Further Information

1. [QAA \(2012\), UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality, Chapter B5: Student engagement](#)
2. [QAA \(2011\), UK Quality Code for Higher Education, Part B: Assuring and enhancing academic quality, Chapter B9: Complaints and appeals](#)
3. National Union of Students Resources – Rewarding reps and accreditation:
www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/highereducation/student-engagement/courserephub/supportingcoursereps/rewardingreps/ (correct as at 15/1/15)
4. Higher Education Academy (2004), Collecting and using student feedback – a guide to good practice,
www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/resource_database/id352_collecting_and_using_student_feedback (correct as at 31/10/2012)
5. [G.M van Der Velden et al. \(unknown\) Student Engagement in Learning and Teaching Quality Management: A good practice guide for Higher Education Providers and Students' Unions, QAA.](#)

Appendix C Benchmarked Policies

1. Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine (2016) Code of Practice on Student Engagement and Enhancing the Student Experience
2. London South Bank University (2013) Student Engagement
3. The London Institute of Banking and Finance (unknown) Code of Practice for Quality Assurance (Higher Education) Chapter 11 Student Engagement
4. University of Brighton (2015) Student Engagement in Quality Policy
5. University of East Anglia (2015) Student Representation Code of Practice
6. University of Kent (2016) Student Engagement in Quality Assurance and Enhancement
7. University of Liverpool (2015-16) Code of Practice on Student Representation
8. University of Oxford (2015) Policy and Guidance on Student Engagement and Representation
9. University of Surrey (2016/17) Code of Practice for Student Engagement