

University College of Osteopathy

2019-20 Access and Participation plan

Introduction to the University College of Osteopathy

The University College of Osteopathy (UCO) (formerly the British School of Osteopathy) is the largest and oldest osteopathic educational institution in the UK. It was founded in 1917 by John Martin Littlejohn, a student of Andrew Taylor Still, the founder of osteopathy. UCO is a specialist HEP internationally recognised for providing undergraduate and postgraduate education and training in the niche area of musculoskeletal health. The UCO admitted the first cohort of students on our degree awarding title in September 2017, and in line with the UCO's strategic plan, new undergraduate courses have been developed for commencement in September 2019.

The UCO has a central role in delivering osteopathic education in the UK and has played a key part in expanding the impact of osteopathy; 42% of current UK osteopaths were educated at the UCO, and it has the largest student population of any of the UK osteopathic educational institutions. Its principal activity has been the delivery of programmes for students wishing to apply for registration with the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) and become practising osteopaths.

At the time of writing, all undergraduate provision is osteopathic with new undergraduate provision commencing in 2019/20. Our new course provision is anticipated to recruit largely from the UK market and whilst this will assist us in improving our access and participation record going forward, we do not take this for granted and our access and participation strategy will monitor progress closely.

UCO's core course is an integrated Master of Osteopathy (M.Ost) qualification, which can be taken either full-time over four years or part-time over five years. It also delivers a full-time MSc Osteopathy (Pre-Registration) course to enable other appropriately skilled practitioners to be educated as osteopaths.

The UCO aims to promote life-long learning opportunities in osteopathy. It has developed a portfolio of courses that range from pre-entry courses, such as its own Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences course and a very successful Access to Higher Education course validated by Laser Learning Awards (LASER) which promotes diversity of enrolment on the pre-registration courses. It also offers postgraduate courses, including the first Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy in the world. Other postgraduate courses are: a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic and Clinical Education, a Postgraduate Certificate in Specialist Paediatric Osteopathy, a Postgraduate Certificate in Animal Osteopathy and a new Post Graduate Certificate in Integrated Health Care for Older Adults. It is anticipated that the provision of postgraduate courses will further enhance the profile of the pre-registration programmes by developing the competences of the UCO's staff and by contributing to academic scholarship in this area and the wider body of osteopathic knowledge. The UCO also runs a variety of short courses for professionals wishing to undertake continuing professional development.

The UCO offers osteopathic health care to the local and wider community. It delivers more than 40,000 osteopathic appointments annually in its own clinic and in a range of off-site settings that promote access for patients. The UCO runs several specialist clinics many of which are free of charge to patients, for example the 1st Place Sure Start Parents and Children's Centre near Southwark's Aylesbury Estate, our clinic at the Manna Centre for homeless people and two clinics run in community settings for older patients. The UCO also

hosts free specialist clinics to support people living with HIV infection, both within the Clinical Centre and at the Royal Free Hospital. We deliver approximately 4,500 free appointments within our community clinics reach year. The UCO is projecting that it will have approximately 405 undergraduate higher education (HE) home students for the 2018/19 academic cycle.

The UCO student body comprises 97.5% Home/EU and 2.5% non-EU. We have 6 staff with 4.6 FTE working in student recruitment, support and outreach.

The UCO is committed by its mission and values to providing access and support to enable all learners from backgrounds that are under-represented in HE to be successful in higher education. We are encompassed by areas of very low participation rate for young participants. Therefore, we are continuing to promote osteopathy and the UCO within our own boundaries to promote access to HE. We aspire to increase the proportion admitted as coming from 'low participation neighbourhoods'. The lack of understanding of what osteopathy is and how it works and the fact that it is generally unavailable on the NHS presents particular challenges to improving the access agenda of the UCO.

As with many vocational degrees, for example medicine, widening access to osteopathy is particularly challenging given the high academic standards required to gain entry, the academic rigour and extensive academic and practical skills needed to successfully complete the course, the extended length of the course and that osteopathy is a relatively small profession in the UK (5,342 registered practitioners) with almost all osteopaths working in private practice. As such, osteopathy remains relatively unknown to a high proportion of the population, particularly to those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Assessment of UCO Current Performance

Access and Success

In terms of the data underpinning our access and participation plan, most of the information is self-generated from our student systems as the UCO was not included as a separate institution within the HESA Widening Participation UKPIs until 2016/7. Therefore, only one year's data is available from that source. This is further complicated by the fact that the UCO were unable to use HEIDI Plus to obtain data. The UCO also attempted to access data held by its (ex) validating University but were unable to do so. The very small size of the UCO's annual intake means that slight changes in demographics can cause large variances in statistical data.

As expected given the challenges it faces, the data in Appendix 1 indicates that the UCO is below benchmark for access for low participation for both young (State School) and particularly mature (POLAR3) full-time students. This data tallies with internal POLAR3 Data generated for earlier years (2014/5 and 2015/6).

The 2016/7 data shows that the UCO is meeting its benchmarks for access to students in receipt of a disability support allowance and indicates that we are successful in retaining those students studying on both full-time and part-time programmes although with our own internally produced measures, consistent trends are difficult to identify over time because the small numbers can result in large variations. As a small institution, there is a collegiate culture and a strong supportive interface between tutors, professional support staff and students. Our aim is therefore to continue this good work and ensure that as we diversify the range of student support services, aligned to the Equality Act 2010, benefits all students.

In addition, we are highly successful at recruiting mature students to both our full-time and part time course (over 50% and 100% of our entrants in each of our three reporting years are mature students). We are also successful at retaining mature students with our internal data showing continuation statistics for mature students greater than those for young students. Our aim is to continue this good work and ensure that we diversity the range of student support services for this group of young students. UCO will continue to monitor and invest in projects

that will continue to improve continuation rates amongst young students. This will involve further analysis of the data to investigate any trends in the students who do not continue.

The UCO data indicates that continuation is an issue for UCO students at the early stages of the course, typically, from year 1 to 2. There are many reasons for this and the UCO invites all who leave to an exit interview to explore reasons for withdrawal. Non-continuation of students typically is not due to academic fail but due to withdrawal from the course for a variety of reasons, mainly financial and personal. Whilst the data is limited there is no evidence that students from under-represented groups perform less well.

Progression

Since DLHE data was collected by the UCO's validating partner at this time it is not possible to assess if there are any differences between the employment outcomes of students from underrepresented groups compared to those who are not. This will be a priority when relevant data becomes available, especially for the new courses which will have greater variety of career outcomes than the osteopathic degree. However, it can be seen that the professional orientation of the UCO's course ensures high rates of employability; data from the DHLE survey demonstrate high employability rates with 100% of osteopathic graduates in employment or further study.

The UCO accepts that widening access does not guarantee that students from underrepresented groups succeed and progress into further employment.

In summary, our aim is to widen access to under-represented groups at the same time as supporting the retention, attainment and progression into employment or further study of all our students. We have evaluated our current metrics and set realistic strategies and targets for future access, success and progression activities, including financial support packages to place greater emphasis on helping students from low income backgrounds throughout their studies at UCO.

The UCO recognises that it's data infrastructure requires developing in order to support the evidence led approach that is required to evaluate access and participation, progression and success. Much staff resource had been invested into generating the internal data to support this plan but, as the UCO has only recently taken full responsibility for the submission of its data we recognise that our current evidence base is limited and further work needs to be done. We have already initiated an application to join Heidi plus so that we can access benchmark data and are focusing on ensuring our HESA data collection information is both accurate and submitted fully in line with HESA guidance. This has necessitated a significant piece of work to understand how our student system works in relation to HESA data requirements as well as ensuring consistency of approach when entering data. Moving forward our student system will act as the single source of data and we will be ensuring that our data is collected accurately across the academic year cycle as this is generated to ensure this can be managed properly with checks so that we are confident as to its accuracy as well as being retrievable to be analysed in a timely fashion. We will also, as a matter of priority, assess whether our systems need adapting to ensure we are collecting the data required for internal scrutiny, for example progression data as an indicator of success, as this exercise has highlighted gaps in provision where enhancements could be made.

This also extend to how we will interrogate our data. In compiling our analysis, we have alluded to the fact that, with relatively small numbers, indicators are not necessarily stable year on year so trends are difficult to discern. This can be clearly seen in respect of the year on year retention data for UK-domiciled students with a disability. We will therefore attempt to use analyse data over a three-year period to ensure trends are more clearly identified. However, even at this stage we have concluded that there is scope for work across all areas identified

as priorities in terms of access and participation, except for securing access for mature students, which we are confident our data demonstrates successful performance, even in the current absence of Heidi plus benchmark data to confirm our conclusion.

UCO Ambition and Strategy

The UCO is committed by its mission and values to providing access to higher education for learners from backgrounds that are under-represented. It very much endorses the view that higher education should be made accessible to all, regardless of background or financial status.

The UCO's strategy as agreed by the UCO Academic Council can be summarised as;

- To improve recruitment and the success of students with the greatest potential to become osteopaths, especially from diverse or under-represented backgrounds;
- To ensure that the UCO's education and other services are accessible to all, that barriers to entry are removed wherever they are identified;
- To promote a UCO culture that recognises the benefits of an increasingly diverse student body.

The UCO's Equality Statement and Objectives sets out several key principles which are represented in this plan. These include the following:

- The UCO is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in all its activities.
- The UCO recognises and appreciates the diversity of its student body and the community it serves and works to develop a curriculum to meet the needs of a varied, contemporary society.
- The UCO seeks to foster an environment where diversity is valued and celebrated.
- The UCO is committed to ensuring that all UCO policies, procedures and practices reflect these principles.

As well as its responsibilities to its students and staff, the UCO is also mindful of the implications of its policies and practices as they affect all stakeholders and the wider community in which it works.

The UCO believes that this plan and the activities undertaken help to advance equality of opportunity for all by widening educational opportunity as a counter to disadvantage by providing an educational environment where 'respect' and 'partnership' are valued.

Our equality impact assessment of our plan confirms that it supports the implementation of our equality and diversity policy and that it is designed to contribute positively to the educational opportunities and student experience of a diverse community, within and beyond the UCO. We are confident that this plan will help us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different backgrounds.

Collaboration

The UCO recognizes the benefits of collaboration and that further input into the projects identified above is essential. We intend to increase the amount of career fairs for school leavers we attend each academic year, re-engage with any schools and colleges we have

previously collaborated with and create new links with other healthcare disciplines to target mature students. The UCO will work with other Universities and agencies in the local area to target and work with those leaving care and young care givers to enter the UCO.

There are various benefits to collaborating with several external entities including building on the contacts already made with schools, colleges and other agencies to shape collaborative activity to widen participation and raise aspirations.

The UCO has worked with IntoUniversity, an educational charity supporting young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, for a number of years. Through this relationship we have delivered workshops to secondary school pupils who have an interest in medicine but may be unaware of other opportunities within the wider healthcare arena. We will continue to build upon this activity and will work with IntoUniversity to identify further opportunities to reach under-represented groups through their networks.

As a small provider this type of collaborative working allows us to focus our efforts on those students who have already been identified as educationally disadvantaged in a way that is proportionate with our limited resources and within an established and proven framework.

The UCO is also working with the other osteopathic education institutions and the professional body, the Institute of Osteopaths, to address the issue of widening the knowledge of osteopathy as a healthcare practice. These projects are being designed to access these LPN neighbourhoods promoting the value for money health care offered by the osteopathic clinic in education institutions and therefore introducing the possibility of osteopathy as a career and a University education. The majority of student osteopaths hear about osteopathy through treatment.

Targets

The UCO will carry our existing 2018/19 Access Agreement targets and milestones through to our 2019/20 Access and Participation Plan. These focus on:

- The UCO will aim to increase the proportion of BME groups at the UCO and will add an additional target of monitoring the progression rates of these students.
- The UCO will seek to increase the % of students in receipt of DSA at the UCO.
- The UCO will seek to maintain the proportion of undergraduate part-time students(40%) in 2019/2020.
- The UCO has already met its target for increasing the rates of mature undergraduate students and intends to maintain this figure.
- The UCO recognises it still has further work to do on improving non-continuation rates and this continues to be a target with a goal of reducing non-continuation rates.
- While the UCO recruited its first care-leaver in 2015-16, the target of having one care-leaver and one young carer remains for 2019/2020.
- The UCO also plans to maintain its proportion of graduates in graduate level employment based on DLHE data.
- The UCO is also aiming to increase its percentage of entrants from LPN quintile 1 and students who come from a low-income background.
- The UCO aims to maintain the % of young full-time undergraduate entrants from State Schools.
- The UCO will seek to formalise strategic relationships with schools/colleges and employers to work with them to deliver a project focused on raising attainment.
- Work with IntoUniversity to further develop the outreach work currently being undertaken.

We are undertaking extensive further analysis across access, success and progression to identify potential future targets for improvement and intervention.

Access, student success and progression measures

We have outlined above our strategic approach to improving access, success and progression. In this section we outline examples of the initiatives, actions and interventions we undertake in support of realising our strategic aims. These are examples of the work undertaken to support our students and prospective applicants to achieve their best potential.

Access and Outreach Activities

We are aware that co-ordinated outreach activities may be more effective and sustainable in the longer term in widening participation compared to direct financial support. Accordingly, we will implement several new initiatives in outreach activity, and target resources on increasing the number of entrants from under-represented and disadvantaged groups. Meanwhile, we will continue with current outreach activity including, for example, discounted fees for treatment in the UCO's training clinic for low income and disadvantaged groups as a means to widen access to the osteopathic profession's benefits; in turn this inspires a new generation of osteopathic students as the majority of students cite personal experience as important in their decision to become an osteopath.

The UCO offers a bespoke approach to access and as the UCO is a small University College it can deal with each applicant on an individualised personal basis. For example, where a prospective student may be facing barriers to accessing the course, e.g. financing their course, juggling studies with care responsibilities, concerns about the impact of a physical or learning disability on their studies, we will endeavour to arrange for them to meet a relevant staff member or, if appropriate, a current student dealing with similar challenges to discuss these during their visit.

We believe this bespoke approach plays to our strengths as a small institution and will allow us to directly support prospective students at an individual rather than group level.

Financial Support for Access

The UCO is committed to supporting students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups through our Financial Support package. Our view is that financial support should be in place throughout the period of study. All bursaries will be awarded on a year by year basis throughout the student's course. The UCO's extended length of the osteopathic course may be a deterrent to some groups, therefore this ongoing financial support is essential.

UCO Bursary Fund

The UCO Bursary fund is designed to support full-time students who have a low household income with the extra costs incurred from studying. The UCO for 2019/20 has increased the amount we give students from the fund to encourage more students with a household income of under £25,000 to join. The increased bursary will also enhance the support these students have throughout their time on the course.

		Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
a)	New undergraduate students on a household income under £25,000	£500	£500	£500	£500	£2,000
b)	New undergraduate students who have a household income of under £25,000 and has progressed from the Access to Higher Education Diploma (Osteopathic Sciences and Health Care)	£750	£750	£750	£750	£3,000

In 2019-2020, students eligible as outlined in (a) will receive £300 more per year. Students eligible as outlined in (b) will receive an additional £250 per year.

Young Carers and Care Leavers Bursary

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
Care Leavers	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£12,000
Young Carers	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£3,000	£12,000

The UCO does not receive many applications from care leavers or young carers partly because of the small size of the institution and wider profession. Furthermore, osteopathic treatment is largely privately funded meaning it is unlikely that young carers and care leavers will have extensive knowledge of osteopathy or experienced treatment – this hinders our ability to recruit these students. Nevertheless, we are still keen to continue to offer and promote UCO as a study option for these students. To encourage applications from these students and support them throughout their studies, we will introduce a Young Carers and Care Leavers Scholarship. The new award will increase the support we provide care leavers from £2,000 to £3,000 in 2019-2020 and extend support to young carers.

Access to Osteopathy Scholarship

The award will provide fully funded places for eligible students. Students are eligible if they: are from a low-income household or live in a Low Participation Neighbourhood or have a long-term disability. Successful completion of the Access to Higher Education Diploma leads to a guaranteed place on the M.Ost course. Therefore, by providing funded places to these student groups we hope to increase the number of M.Ost students from these backgrounds.

Additional fully funded places will also be made available to students who are care leavers or young carers.

UCO Excellence Scholarship

Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5 (PT Students)	Total
£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	(£5,000)

We have allocated four awards to students who meet the academic criteria and come from a low-income household. The aim of this award is to encourage academically able students from low-income households to consider studying at the UCO. The award is aimed at supporting these

Access to Learning Fund -The UCO has also allocated £20,000 to the Access to Learning Fund, which supports students who have experienced unexpected financial hardship.

Disabled Students For disabled students we contribute £300 toward a psychological assessment for dyslexia. Further funding is provided through the Access to Learning Fund to cover the cost of specialist equipment that may not be covered by DSA.

The UCO recognises that it receives many applications from students who have proven academic achievement but who lack a solid grounding in the sciences required to study osteopathy; these are often mature students who wish to study part time. In response to this issue, the UCO has been running short entry courses for many years to enable students to gain this background in the basic sciences. The Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences (IOS) course is provided free for applicants who already hold some form of qualifications but for whom the Access diploma is not appropriate. The IOS is a bridging course that is used to aid successful progression of applicants onto the M.Ost full time or part time pathways.

White males from socio-economically disadvantaged background and BAME students

Through its Access Course the UCO already recruits students from a wide socio-economic background and many of these students are white males from a socio-economically disadvantaged background and BAME students, therefore the UCO is already encompassing this group within our institution. These students may need additional academic guidance and support, and the UCO is enhancing its current Academic Tutoring system to target these groups. In order to effectively target and support these groups in a broader context, the UCO will introduce a student/peer mentoring scheme with mentors being from these diverse backgrounds so that they can identify with the particular challenges they experience coming to HE from non- traditional or disadvantaged backgrounds. However, the UCO is not as successful at attracting white males from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to study osteopathy and the UCO have plans to investigate this issue further across a number of years of data.

Outreach work

The UCO liaises with a range of organisations to promote osteopathy to secondary school pupils (11– 17 year olds) within the local community (Lambeth and Southwark) as well as the Greater London area. The UCO has participated in several outreach activities, including career and education events organised by colleges, universities and academies, and national higher education fairs. It has also worked with the company 'IntoUniversity' to meet with secondary school pupils from low participation backgrounds who have an interest in healthcare but may be unaware of the wider variety of options available within the allied health care arena. Through talks, presentations and one-to-one discussions with students, our staff have been able to provide students with an insight into osteopathy as a career, as well as provide advice and support on HE routes into the profession. The UCO has also recently attended the National Careers Guidance Show and begun to build a network of career advice professionals through which we aim to further raise awareness of osteopathy and provide more comprehensive and accessible information for prospective students who may be interested in pursuing osteopathy as a career. The UCO is particularly targeting those career advice professionals working in areas of low participation.

Working with Schools

The UCO engages with local state schools by establishing several link schools and colleges, and wherever possible those with a high proportion of under-represented groups as indicated by POLAR 3/4 data. The UCO aims to approach schools in Lambeth and Southwark with a view to supporting them with their Physical, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculums. The UCO is potentially well placed to support Key Stage 3 & 4 Health & Wellbeing themes and proposes to offer schools a service where osteopaths deliver sessions to pupils on maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The aims are to enhance health awareness amongst the local community; to demonstrate in an inspirational way the impact that small changes can make to the quality of people's lives; and to explain the role osteopaths can play in supporting the health and wellbeing of the population. The sessions would also offer the UCO the opportunity to engage directly with pupils and identify and support any who may be considering osteopathy as a future career.

We will implement a targeted and sustained programme of outreach work to raise the aspirations and attainment of younger age groups. Whilst in the beginning this will be attainment based the UCO are committed that this will be outcomes focused and should demonstrate positive results as UCO will work with local state schools to specifically address raising attainment and the challenge faced to widen participation in the context of high entry requirements, our plans are to investigate opportunities to work with link state schools/colleges.

There are close to 50 secondary schools in the Lambeth and Southwark area. As a new project the success of such a scheme is difficult to gauge, but the UCO proposes to tailor

content to the needs of individual schools and to offer sessions free of charge, with a view to encouraging take-up from 4 to 6 local schools within the academic year.

Care Leavers/Givers

We will proactively reach out to care-leavers, care givers and refugees to highlight opportunities and support available from the UCO for these under-represented groups. We will do this by tapping into existing networks and resources such as the National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) and the Refugee Support Network (RSN).

We will also participate in national campaigns such as the National Care Leavers Week, Carers Week and Refugee Week to promote the support available to these groups.

Engagement Programme

The UCO aims to establish and support the aspiration to participate in higher education among learners within school and college environments, particularly those with an interest in physical education and the sciences from low participation neighbourhoods. The aims of the sessions are to introduce osteopathy as a practice and a career, and to explore some of the subject-specific academic requirements for progression on to HE.

We deliver free activities within the school/college setting which can be tailored to the individual requirements of the student group. This may include interactive activities such as quizzes, demonstrations or Q&A sessions, as well as presentations and tutorials.

We also offer schools and colleges the opportunity to make group visits to the UCO, and again these visits can be tailored according to the requirements of the student group. Typically, this would involve a welcome and introduction from course leaders and/or admissions staff; demonstrations; a tour of our facilities (including a visit to our clinic and opportunities to see classes in action); and potentially some form of workshop or presentation as outlined above.

While we offer these opportunities to all schools and colleges, for 2019-20 we will be particularly targeting those serving our under-represented groups and communities as identified in our assessment of current performance.

One of the key challenges we face as a provider is that osteopathy is still largely unknown, particularly amongst those from disadvantaged backgrounds who may never have had access to it as a form of healthcare for financial reasons. As a specialist provider of a niche subject it often means the direct results from this sort of activity are minimal. However, we would argue that it remains important as a way of exposing prospective students to osteopathy for the first time with a view to slowly redressing some of the inequalities within the profession over a much longer period.

Supporting Student Success Activities

The UCO support for students is designed to ensure our students make a successful transition to and succeed in higher education. We undertake to interrogate our data to determine if one particular group is less successful than others, and if we discover this to be an issue, develop a plan to counteract this.

We believe that an inclusive approach is most appropriate for our students. The UCO has in place several support measures that enable students to progress through their course successfully should they encounter personal or academic challenges. One arm of support is a fully functioning Student Support Department which offers disability and welfare advice, counselling and academic support including a dedicated learning support page on our VLE. The Student Attendance and Retention Group formally and regularly monitor the attendance of pre-registration students and postgraduate students at practical and clinically relevant classes. This ensures that students who are struggling with their attendance are identified and provided with appropriate support and solutions that will enable them to improve their attendance and continue studying. In addition, an academic advisory service provided by

Registry provides students with assistance should they wish to report Special Circumstances or suspend their studies.

The UCO has a number of supportive measures in place to ensure that, once students join, they are able to progress and succeed on the course. Support for students with disabilities is led by the Student Support Department, which includes access to a specialist disability advisor.

Staff training on mental health difficulties and SpLD will also be organised to ensure all staff are able to support our diverse student population and increase the accessibility of our teaching to these students.

To ensure the UCO continues to support students learning, the Student Learning Advisor will continue to provide one-to-one learning support for students.

The changes to DSA mean universities who want to provide non-medical helpers funded by DSA have to register with the Disabled Students Allowances Quality Assurance Group (DAS-QAG). The UCO is not registered with the DSA-QAG but instead plans to train our existing staff to provide one-to-one tuition for dyslexic students.

The recent changes in DSA are the likely reason for the drop in students in receipt of DSA. We will review our data collection to ensure we get the most accurate data.

To increase the accessibility of assistive technology for students, we will be looking to install various programs on UCO computers to aid students' studies.

The UCO will also provide:

- Ring fenced money in the Access to Learning fund to enable students to access diagnostic learning assessments.
- Specialist equipment, software and adaptations to facilities.
- A Counselling and CBT service.

Student Induction

The UCO recognises that the first few weeks of study are one of the highest risk points for students deciding to leave for a number of reasons. At the UCO we firmly believe that the best start to the academic cycle across all year groups is equally important and that our students are more likely to succeed given an induction session for each cohort at the start of every new start to the year. The Student Induction developed in partnership with the UCO Students' Union, provides a series of events both academic and recreational to enable them to participate fully in the student experience at the UCO. The events focus on student and staff integration across all year groups to ensure that, due to the small specialised nature of the courses, all are included.

The investment in the student welcome will also include a 'refreshers' week. This will provide opportunity for students to further engage with support functions. This is aimed to provide further opportunities for students who may be at risk of withdrawing to further engage and enhance their chances of success whilst further enhancing and improving the student experience for the wider UCO community.

Peer-mentoring and peer assisted learning

To support students with their transition to the M.Ost courses and to support their progression, we have an academic tutor system to enhance students' educational experience and provide additional support with their studies. To supplement this, we will be starting a peer-to-peer mentoring scheme with the aim to recruit students from under-represented backgrounds to join and facilitate sessions. We will be introducing the peer-to-peer listening service Nightline to provide an out of hour's peer-to-peer listening service. By introducing these measures, the UCO aims to increase the number of students from low social economic backgrounds, UCO APP-1920-10000936

maintain and increase the number of BME students on our course and continue to reduce the non-continuation percentage after the first year rate.

The UCO is committed to ensuring students who wish to study here do not feel unfairly disadvantaged because of their disability. The UCO believe studying osteopathy is for everyone and does all it can to accommodate students' health conditions and SpLD where reasonable.

Support for mature students and part-time students

The demands of higher education have caused a widespread increase in mental health difficulties across the sector. In response to this, the UCO retains the use of a Counsellor who is available every day for appointments. To supplement this support, the Student Support Manager will be introducing a mentoring service for students who have long-term personal or mental health difficulties. With these students more likely to withdraw from the course, especially in the first year, individual support is essential to their progression and lowering our non-continuation rates for full time first year undergraduate students.

Clinical Education for Students

The clinic component of our course can be the most demanding for students. We therefore provide supervision sessions to all students, so they can debrief on difficult clients and clients with challenging behaviour. Students with disabilities can find the clinic environment disproportionately more difficult, we therefore are more flexible with clinic hours for those with disabilities. To improve the learning experience of students with SpLD, the UCO will provide more iPads with specialist Apps to assist their learning.

Student Attendance and Retention Group

The management and support of students' progression falls under the responsibility of the Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARG). This group formally monitors attendance to identify students at risk; experience has shown that when a student has difficulties, either academic or personal, it is attendance that is affected first. Supportive measures can then be put in place to support the student and enable them to complete their studies. This group will be tasked to report on the success of under-represented groups with a view to tailoring support if required to particular students/and or groups of students.

There will be a continued emphasis on student support from module leaders and course leaders. This will involve tutorials, catch-up sessions, on-line support, and immediate feedback following presentations.

We will deliver additional support for students needing extra study help and continue to develop early formative 'screening' assignments at Level 4 to identify students with writing issues.

We will continue our 'Open Door' policy of ad hoc tutorials and student support from lecturing staff.

Part-time Student Support

There has been a consistent increase in the number of part-time students attending UCO throughout the years. The vast majority of our part-time students are mature learners meaning that overall, we have high numbers of both part-time and mature students.

However, the UCO is acutely aware that part-time students generally have more outside commitments that can clash with their studies and make it more difficult to adapt to university life. Support is therefore essential to ensuring part-time students succeed during their time with us. We will continue to employ academic tutors specifically for part-time students who will be available over the weekends to provide academic support.

Our Student Support Department will provide monthly drop-in sessions for part-time students to receive learning, disability and welfare support on the weekends when most part-time students are available.

Academic Skills Workshop

To enable a smooth transition for those who have been out of higher education for an extended period, we organise study skills and academic writing workshops at the beginning of the year. The workshops are specifically designed to support the large number of part-time and mature students as well as those who have been away from education for an extended period.

Progression Activities

The UCO prepares its students for employment in many ways: the study of osteopathy and the interactions that students have with patients, tutors and other students contributes to the broader experiences that students have while on their course. The UCO aims to ensure that the students are equipped to make a smooth transition to work, but equally give them the opportunity for intellectual and personal development and to be effective and adaptable within a rapidly changing economy and society. The UCO aims to do this by providing its students with skills to enable them to be successful both in setting up their own practices as self-employed osteopaths but also as employers of others. The UCO provides opportunities for students to attend seminars covering issues such as writing a CV, attending an interview and how to run a small business.

Graduate mentoring scheme

As an institution, we recognise that moving from a teaching clinic environment to autonomous work as a sole practitioner is a transition that some of our graduates find challenging. The UCO is continuing to enhance its formal mentoring scheme for recent graduates to provide them with support after graduation with a designated tutor on hand to provide advice and support during this transitional period.

Graduate associate clinic

The UCO has an established Associate clinic that allows new graduates the opportunity to begin work in practice within a supported environment. Associate Osteopaths are appointed to treat patients independently but with an experienced mentor available for guidance and support. A key focus of the project is to provide mentoring and support to graduates who may need help in developing confidence in working independently and autonomously. The role of the mentor adapts to the experience of the Associates, with structured induction and development sessions planned over the first four weeks of an Associate's work and regular interactions each evening for the first six weeks. Contracts run for two years so that there are opportunities each year of graduating students.

Postgraduate career planning

Students are offered the opportunity to attend a careers conference and will be offered the opportunity to discuss their plans and aspirations with an experienced member of staff during the final stages of their course.

Publication bursary scheme

The UCO will enhance its scheme to encourage students to publish a paper in a peer reviewed journal utilising the research they have undertaken as part of their dissertation. Tutors are allocated to support this process.

Undergraduate conference

The UCO offers the opportunity for students to present their research work in a formal conference setting, therefore enhancing their ability to be considered for further study.

We undertake to interrogate available data to ensure that no one particular group is less successful than others in progressing into work or further study, and if we discover this to be an issue, develop a plan to counteract. As our strategic plans to diversify into other areas of the health sciences comes to fruition, we are ready to support these new students into their careers. For example, the opportunity for development of employability skills has been built into the curriculum of the new courses, including CV writing and the emphasis on presentation

skills. As our first cohort of students in these new fields will graduate in November 2022 at the earliest, this a long term ambition.

Implementation and Governance

Oversight of delivery of the annual Access and Participation Plan (APP) and for ensuring compliance with the provisions of the plan rests with the Access and Participation Working Group (APWG), chaired by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor for Education, which reports to the Academic Council. As Chair of the Committee, the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor reports annually to Academic Council highlighting successes, opportunities and risks. The APWG is responsible for the access, success and progression strategy. The UCO's Senior Management Team is responsible for risk management across the UCO and the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor's membership of this group ensures appropriate escalation. The APWG is supported by the Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARG). In future SARG sub-group reports will identify progress towards targets and identify risks to both delivery and outcomes to enable the APWG to take appropriate action and adjust if required. This group will be tasked to report on the success of under-represented groups with a view to tailoring support if required to particular students/and or groups of students. Both meet termly, with the sub-group reporting to the main group at each meeting.

Registry staff will monitor student population statistics against HESA benchmarks. Annual monitoring reports on widening access will also be made available to the Student Staff Liaison Sub-Committee and through this, to the University College's Academic Council chaired by the Vice Chancellor and to the Board of Governors. The UCO Bursary Policy is approved by Academic Board. Payments from bursaries are reported to the UCO's governors through the Finance and Estates Committee.

Consultation with Students

At UCO, there is a longstanding and deeply embedded culture of the UCO and its students working in partnership. Students are represented on all major UCO committees and, through a 'course rep' system led by our Students' Union supported by the Head of Student Services.

The UCO have a place for a student representative on the Access and Participation Working Group; this is reserved for a student from an under-represented group at the UCO. Representatives of the Students' Union and Year Student Representatives sit on the Academic Council, Board of Directors, Course Teams, Education and Enhancement Strategy Committee and to also help deliver our activities and interventions we employ a team of Student Ambassadors many of whom are themselves from under-represented groups. These student representatives also help us review and improve our courses, reflecting on their own experience.

In recent years, our dialogue with mature students, disabled students, care leavers and other key groups including students from particular faiths or BAME backgrounds has started to develop and the UCO will continue to work in this area. The UCO is in the process of clarifying recruitment and student support areas to develop the work in Access and Participation more clearly and a new role of Head of Student Services has been introduced; we believe this shows a clear commitment from the UCO to address some of the issues identified in our Assessment of Current Performance.

The UCO has an established Students' Union., The Head of Student Services works closely with the Students' Union, Student Union Officers who act on behalf of the student body, and student representatives who act on behalf of students' interests. Our students are strong supporters of the UCO and act as excellent ambassadors in promoting the osteopathic course in outreach activities and in the wider community.

In drawing up the financial support package, students were consulted and have been instrumental in shaping the financial support provided by the UCO. As an integral part of access and student retention and progress, it is critical that students play a meaningful role in the UCO's widening participation agenda and as a result consider themselves equal stakeholders in its success.

The targets, aspirations and financial support packages in the Access and Participation Plan have been developed in discussion with the Students' Union and have the support of the UCO's SU President.

In the coming year, we will be working with our Students' Union to extend our engagement with students to promote an inclusive conversation with students from a wide range of backgrounds as we develop our Access and Participation Plans for the future.

Investment

This plan sets out the commitment we make to improving access, success and progression of students from underrepresented groups. It describes a total investment of £254,561 in four areas:

- access (activities to reach out to and engage learners who are under-represented in higher education),
- student success (activities to raise the attainment and support the retention of our students) and
- progression (to enhance the progression of our students to advanced study and employment).
- financial support

An investment summary of this access and participation plan is provided below:

2019/20	Access	Student Success	Progression	Financial Support	Total
Proposed Spends	£76,689	£97,104	£16,768	£64,000	£254,561

Based on the UCO's performance to date across these areas, in 2019/20 the UCO's access and participation plan investment as a proportion of higher fee income (HFI) is 23.1%.

Ensuring continuous improvement through evaluation

The UCO places considerable emphasis on the importance of monitoring the impact and effectiveness of its initiatives. The UCO monitors on an annual basis the diversity of its intake as an evaluation of our access and student success work. Many targets (including those related to progression, completion, ethnicity, disability and age) are encompassed by the UCO's comprehensive datasets.

The UCO has in place a student information system (QL) that is continually updated and allows for year on year comparison. Data are considered at a range of meetings, from Individual Course Teams and examination boards through to the Academic Council. The UCO also has in place an Equality Committee which ensures that potential equality and diversity impacts are considered during the development of projects.

Our monitoring and evaluation strategy consists of the following key elements:

- Evaluating participation in and perceived impact of our access interventions.
- Tracking learners to determine their eventual participation in higher education.
- Tracking learners into and through the UCO and out into employment.

Historically we have targeted learners from the local areas with postcodes associated with income deprivation, educational deprivation and low participation in higher education.

The UCO recognises that its work with analysing its data and the effects of our work with under-represented groups across the student lifecycle requires significant work. Our evaluation of financial support currently takes place through our Widening Participation and Strategy Sub-Committee and has primarily focused on take up by Students. The UCO is pleased to note that the OFS has provided a toolkit for the more effective evaluation of impact and we will certainly be using this resource to ensure the more effective analysis.

The UCO is identifying ways in which this can become embedded across the UCO. As previously stated, our numbers of students from under-represented groups are low and with our previous partner relationship, historic data lies with them. The UCO aims through a revision of roles and responsibilities to ensure that data is used effectively to understand, and make a positive impact upon, access and student success for students from non-traditional backgrounds to HE. In addition, the UCO ensures that, where appropriate, data relating to non-traditional groups is embedded within other projects, such as annual reporting, making data available about the student journey more accessible.

The UCO are committed to continuous improvement in this area which will be under the remit of the new Head of Student Services.

To date we have:

- Revised roles to ensure that responsibility for monitoring and acting on data is acted on appropriately.
- Modified annual reporting of all courses to reflect the reporting on under-represented groups.
- At the start of new outreach activities, we will have a focus on evaluation of effectiveness.
- Prepared to evaluate the financial support package offered by the UCO.

The UCO has undertaken a restructure and is committed to implement an outcomes framework to routinely collect relevant data and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of our activities. In line with our targets, our focus will be on evaluating progress on the proportions of students from state schools, lower socio-economic groups and low participation neighbourhoods as well as mature entrants. Student success will be evaluated by student retention and progress into employment.

Data for destination of graduates is seen as an area that the UCO will monitor, and in time as the relevant data becomes available, outcomes in terms of degree attainment and progression to employment for different groups of students while adjusting for variables such as gender and entry qualifications will be monitored. This will not only enable us to understand 'what works' in terms of access and student success, but perhaps more importantly how we can improve our performance in the future in terms of our own provision and student population as we diversify.

We understand that systematic evaluation is a priority area. While cognisant that our data may be problematic because of small sample sizes, we will produce an annual report for internal monitoring based on the evidence that emerges from this data evaluation exercise.

The UCO have consider subscribing to the Higher Education Access Tracker however due to size of the institution this is prohibitive currently.

Provision of Information to Students

The UCO interacts with target groups in a range of ways including prospectuses, website, social media and presentations. We also provide timely information to UCAS and SLC. Unistats data on our courses is published on our website. The UCO are committed to ensuring that our information is clear, informative, relevant and understandable by our target groups. Beyond the material required by the Key Information Set, we will extend and focus information to assist our target groups - within our website, at our Open Days and through UCO liaison. It is one of the UCO's priorities to ensure prospective students and their parents and supporters are fully aware of the very latest information regarding our courses and finance options.

Specific information, advice and guidance for prospective students will include:

- Provision of financial information including fees, planning advice on how to finance their period of study, extra costs, for example purchase of diagnostic kits, and bursaries and other forms of financial assistance for eligible students in each year of their study.
- The admissions process ('how to apply') and entry requirements.
- Course information, academic support services, and Student Union facilities.
- Unistats and current student feedback data (NSS).

As well as published information, the UCO offers advice and guidance on a one to one basis with prospective students, including financial and academic information.

All public information for prospective students is regularly monitored and is the responsibility of the Head of Quality, there are clear lines of responsibility for approving the accuracy of the information, and for making it available in the public domain.

All UCO policies are published on our website under policies and procedures. This link is <https://www.uco.ac.uk/policies-procedures-and-privacy>. This would be published alongside our student refund and compensation policy as well as our student protection plan. We will publish our agreed access and participation plan here so that students and the wider public can access this.

Due to time constraints the UCO was unable to formally consult with students on the drafting of this plan. We will however ensure that the plan published to all students so that they have the opportunity to comment to student representatives and subsequent to this, ensure that these comments are considered by our main Staff Student Liaison Committees for consultation early in the next session so that we incorporate feedback into next years plan. We do currently involve students in our outreach activities, primarily through student ambassadors, and with the enhancement of resource for our student support department, which has the remit of engaging with the Student Union, as well as recruitment, we would hope to go beyond this by increasing the involvement of our students directly in our access activity.

Appendix 1 – Supplied as Supplementary information due to the possibility of identifying individual students due to the very small numbers involved.

* course type not listed.

Full-time and part-time course fee levels for 2019-20 entrants.

Please enter inflationary statement in the free text box below.

Fees for full-time 2019-20 entrants may rise in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI) in each subsequent year of study, subject to the maximum fee cap set by the UK government. For part-time 2019-20 entrants, the fee will rise in each subsequent year of study in line with the Retail Price Index (RPI), subject to the maximum fee set by the government.

Full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£9,250
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Franchise full-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		*
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*
Part-time course type:	Additional information:	Course fee:
First degree		£6,935
Foundation degree		*
Foundation year / Year 0		*
HNC / HND		*
CertHE / DipHE		*
Postgraduate ITT		*
Accelerated degree		*
Sandwich year		*
Erasmus and overseas study years		*
Other		*

Table 8a - Statistical targets and milestones relating to your applicants, entrants or student body

Reference number	Stage of the lifecycle (drop-down menu)	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target? (drop-down menu)	Baseline year (drop-down menu)	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16a_01	Access	School sponsorship	Other statistic - Low-income backgrounds (please give details in the next column)	The School are looking to establish a relationship with a local School and will consider Sponsorship relationship once details of relocation of the BSO have been finalised.	Yes	2014-15	0	0	0	1 School			This is something the UCO are currently looking into.
T16a_02	Access	Low participation neighbourhoods (LPN)	HESA T7 - Students in receipt of DSA (part-time, all undergraduate entrants)	To increase the proportion of undergraduate full-time students in receipt of DSA at the UCO.	No	2014-15	6.70%	7.80%	8%	8.20%			
T16a_03	Access	Ethnicity	Other statistic - Ethnicity (please give details in the next column)	Increase the proportion of BAME groups under-represented in higher education	No	2014-15	18%	19.60%	20%	20.40%			
T16a_04	Access	Socio-economic	Other statistic - Part-time (please give details in the next column)	Increase the proportion of undergraduate PT students at the School from POLAR 3 quintile 1 & 2	No	2014-15	23.80%	25%	40%	40%			We are at 40% PT students currently and want to sustain this %.
T16a_05	Access	Mature	Other statistic - Mature (please give details in the next column)	Maintain the proportion of undergraduate mature students	No	2014-15	44.90%	53%	60%	60%			
T16a_06	Success	Ethnicity	Other statistic - Completion/Non continuation (please give details in the next column)	Reduce our non-continuation rates for first year undergraduate students	No	2014-15	9%	7.40%	7%	6.80%			
T16a_07	Access	Care-leavers	Other statistic - Care-leavers (please give details in the next column)	Increase the number of care leavers within the undergraduate population	No	2014-15	0 students	1 student	1 student	1 student			
T16a_08	Access	Socio-economic	Other statistic - Other (please give details in the next column)	Increase the number of young carers within the undergraduate population	No	2014-15	0 students	1 student	1 student	1 student			
T16a_09	Progression	Socio-economic	Other statistic - Progression to employment or further study (please give details in the next column)	Maintain the proportion of graduates in graduate level employment or further study based on DELHE data	No	2014-15	100%	100%	100%	100%			
T16a_10	Access	State school	HESA T1b - Low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR3) (Young, full-time, undergraduate entrants)	Increase the percentage of young full-time undergraduate entrants from LPN quintile 1	No	2014-15	0	10.3	10.3	13.80%			
T16a_11	Access	State school	HESA T1b - State School (Young, full-time, undergraduate entrants)	Increase the percentage of young full-time undergraduate entrants from state schools	No	2014-15	90.9	90.9	90.9	90.9			
T16a_12	Access	Socio-economic	Other statistic - Low-income backgrounds (please give details in the next column)	Increase percentage of full-time undergraduate students from low income backgrounds who have a household residual income of less than £25,000	No	2014-15	51.9	53.2	54.4	55.8			
T16a_13	Access	Attainment raising	Other statistic - State School (please give details in the next column)	The UCO will work with local schools to strategically develop relationships that aim to raise attainment by releasing staff to deliver classes into schools. The UCO will work with local state schools to increase the numbers of young students at the UCO.	No	2014-15	0	2	3	4	5	6	Numbers of strategic partnerships with Schools planned.
T16a_14	Access	Attainment raising	Other statistic - State School (please give details in the next column)	Work with the charity IntoUniversity to further develop the outreach work currently being undertaken.	No	2014-15	0	0	0	0	0	0	In discussions with IntoUniversity as to how this can be measured.

Table 8b - Other milestones and targets.

Reference Number	Select stage of the lifecycle	Main target type (drop-down menu)	Target type (drop-down menu)	Description (500 characters maximum)	Is this a collaborative target?	Baseline year	Baseline data	Yearly milestones (numeric where possible, however you may use text)					Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)
								2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	
T16b_01	Access	Attainment raising	Strategic partnerships (eg formal relationships with schools/colleges/employers)	Local Schools will be approached with a view to delievering into their Physical, Social, Health and Citizenship Education (PSHCE) curriculums. The School is well placed to deliver sessions in these areas and will offer schools a service in which osteopaths visit and run classes on how young people can look after themselves, plan a manageable, enjoyable, safe and social exercise regime and consider what they are ingesting and how this effects their wellbeing.	No	Other (please give details in Description column)	0	1	2	2	2	2	As this is a very new project it is in it's planning stages and we are unabe to qualify the numbers of students involved. We have identified the number of Schools we are aiming to set up relationships with.

Optional commentary on milestones.
 This box is character-limited to 1000 characters; however, we are happy for you to upload additional 'supporting information' as a separate Word/pdf document.