UCP University Centre Peterborough

University Centre Peterborough

Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018

Welcome

University Centre Peterborough (UCP) represents the single most important development in providing higher education in Peterborough's history. The University Centre offers a diverse portfolio of courses covering a range of subject areas and we are rapidly developing specialisms in a number of key areas. Our portfolio is constantly being revised and updated to take account of the emerging needs and aspirations of both our local, national and global market.

To achieve our ambitions we seek to work with key stakeholders who are committed to developing a higher education provision that responds to the challenges of the 21st Century. The 2014-18 Strategy outlines our ambitions and key objectives to ensure we are able to meet the needs of the City of Peterborough and region.

Students remain at the heart of all that we do and are integral to the decision making process. We aim to ensure that the attributes of the UCP graduate result in personal and academic success. The University Centre Peterborough Graduate demonstrates:

• Resilience
• Engagement in and promotion of continuous academic and professional development
• A global perspective and cross –cultural sensitivity and awareness
• Clarity of communication and purpose
• Information and skill expertise
• Intellectual autonomy and enquiry
• Adaptability

This Strategy outlines our commitment to making a sustainable, socially responsible contribution to the economic development of the region, UK and global community.

Liz Knight
Academic Director UCP

Professor Mike Thorne
Vice Chancellor ARU

Angela Joyce
Chief Executive PRC

Introduction

University Centre Peterborough (UCP) formed in 2007 and is a joint venture between Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) and Peterborough Regional College (PRC). University Centre Peterborough opened its purpose built £9 million facility in November 2009 on the campus of PRC. The joint venture agreement outlines the responsibilities of both parties for managing academic standards. While the Anglia Ruskin University Senate has the ultimate responsibility for standards through its Quality Enhancement and Standards Committee, the Centre is responsible for managing the quality and delivery of teaching, learning and assessment in line with academic regulations and procedures. The joint venture is overseen at a strategic level by a Board of Directors made up by ARU, PRC and an independant chair.

The quality of provision and student experience is monitored by internal and external bodies. A successful QAA IQER (Institutional Quality Enhancement Review) took place in February 2012 and the Summative review team identified a number of features of good practice in:

'University Centre Peterborough's management of its responsibilities for academic standards and for the quality of learning opportunities of the awards the Centre offers on behalf of its awarding bodies.'

In May 2013 the good practice was further recognised by the Anglia Ruskin University Institutional Review Panel who identified the following areas for commendation:

- Student satisfaction with particular reference to teaching and study support
- The extensive and structured work to enhance the employability of graduates
- The evident commitment to, and strength of, the collaborative links at all levels
- The impressive efforts made to provide effective study support to students
- Providing a quality experience for their students

UCP has grown in size since its formation and has a strong track record in student satisfaction and attainment. UCP actively seeks partnerships to enhance opportunities for both individuals and businesses in the region. This strategy outlines the next steps for UCP and its development as the higher education offer for Greater Peterborough and the surrounding area.

Our Successes

At UCP we are incredibly proud of everything our students achieve throughout their studies. Our ethos is to develop learning partnerships with all of our stakeholders.

Progression rates into employment or higher study are impressive with many students working in their chosen fields and developing their CV's alongside their studies. Companies and organisations are now approaching us to establish recruitment and progression opportunities for our undergraduates. One recent successful initiative has been the Academic Mentor Scheme launched in partnership with a local school and is now being adopted by others. Our students work as mentors and intervention workers. Our Computing degree students have also had success in industry alongside their studies when they were offered a 12 week paid internship with a national software company. Some of these students are subsequently offered a full time job after graduation on the strength of their performance. As a way to help students find employment, each year we hold Employability Days combining lectures, job fairs, LinkedIn workshops and CV and cover letter workshops.

In 2014 UCP also launched the Peterborough Graduate Scheme which offered twelve graduates paid employment and mentoring for six months. This was part of the nationally and internationally recognised Peterborough DNA and Future Cities initiative.

Choosing a career in teaching is a popular choice for many of our graduates. Acceptance rates on to Masters Degrees are also high. We have embedded a successful Student Ambassadors scheme to ensure effective and prompt support for students .Our Ambassadors develop transferable skills and reflective practice which enhances both their employability and academic acumen.

We work with our Sports students to provide a Sports Council, with a mission to promote sports, health and wellbeing to all UCP students. We actively promote the achievements of teams and individuals and seek opportunities to engage in national, regional and local events. We support both competitive and recreational sports and work closely with Active Anglia.

As part of the STEM festival each year the university centre hosts a number of events including in 2014 the inaugural Peterborough Raspberry Pi Jam. This is a national event where enthusiasts come along for workshops and information regarding the use of the Raspberry Pi. Outreach and engagement activities are focused on aspirations and skill development and include summer schools .UCP has delivered a number of innovative summer schools and, as an accredited learning destination, has hosted successful events for the Children's University.

UCP makes a significant contribution to the cultural development of the city. As part of Peterborough Cathedral's planned celebrations for its 900 year anniversary in 2018, the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded a grant for the "Peterborough 900: Letting it speak for itself" project. Over the next three years UCP students will be involved in a number of opportunities in conjunction with the project, including Management and Education Internships, an Arts and Photography competition, Cloister Archaeology, a Library project with an online catalogue, the creation and maintenance of a website and Media and IT students will take an active role in the marketing and promotion of the project.

The mission of University Centre Peterborough is:

'To engage, enable and empower students to meet the challenges of the future'

The Values of UCP are:

1. Student and Employer Centred

    UCP aims to achieve a high quality learning and training experience for every customer

2. Excellence

    UCP strives for excellence in all areas of activity

3. Respect, Openness and Trust

    UCP treats all individuals with respect, celebrates diversity and recognises each other's contributions

4. Collaboration

    UCP seeks to work in partnership to support our mission

Context

The HEFCE Common Evidence Base clearly denoted the Peterborough sub-region as an area which the University Challenge process has identified not just as a 'cold spot' but as a 'huge cold zone' for higher education. University Centre Peterborough has worked hard to address this and since 2009 1000 graduates have entered the economy. A significant number have stayed within the city bringing economic and cultural benefit. Since HEFCE's statement the impact of the 2011 Higher Education White Paper and the introduction of the tuition fee have resulted in an increasingly competitive HE market place which has changed the UK HE landscape. The proposed removal of Student Number Controls and the National Scholarship Programme for undergraduate students means that the curriculum offer must meet the needs of all customers and stakeholders.

University Centre Peterborough not only increases university participation in the city, but also provides essential links with businesses helping to improve workforce productivity and business development within the region. Over the past twenty years Peterborough has seen its population rise by 25% compared with a national figure of 14 %, a trend that is predicted to increase still further. Peterborough is a designated growth area with government targets of 100,000 new homes and over 50,000 new jobs. Census 2011 data suggests that a total of 183,700 people live in the city of Peterborough. The city has a younger profile in comparison to England and the Eastern region with 41% aged 29 and under compared with 38% in England and 36% in the East. The mean age in Peterborough has stayed at 36.9; both comparators saw an increase in their mean age. The percentage of people locally with a level 4 qualification or higher has increased to 20.2% (compared to 14.86% in 2001). However, it still remains lower than both comparators: 25.7% for East of England and 27.4% for England.

The Ofsted 2012 Annual Report identifies that academic attainment locally is lower than England averages. GCSE attainment at the age of 16 years in the Peterborough local authority remains significantly below England average and as a result only 49% of young people gain a level 3 qualification by the age of 19 years.

Although committed to supporting educational improvement within the city, UCP also recognises that recruitment is both regional and nationwide. In 2013 74% of applicants came from the East of England and 26% from across the UK. Since 2011/12 the 18-25 age profile of the student body has increased. In 2013/14 18-25 year old students comprised 68% of the student body. 55% of students currently studying at UCP are female.

UCP has seen full-time numbers grow each year with 207 full-time learners in 2009 and 500 in 2013/14. Part-time study has reduced in line with the national picture but overall learner numbers equate to 650, inclusive of the PRC higher education student numbers. UCP offers a wide range of degree provision from HND to Postgraduate courses across Arts and Humanities, Science and Technology, Business and Finance and Education.

UCP aims to attract, retain and facilitate achievement for learners from a variety of backgrounds and as such has a strong widening participation agenda. The Centre aims to provide equality of opportunity for students and staff and to actively promote equality, for example, for people with disabilities and those from the variety of social and multi-racial groups represented in the locality. In 2012/13 58% of undergraduates qualified for the £1500 fee waiver as they had household incomes below £25,000.

Employer engagement has been an area of development with new provision tailored to the needs of business in the form of blended learning programmes, short courses and more importantly as a resource to provide well qualified talented employees. Companies are employing students both before and after graduation with many realising the benefits of an intern.
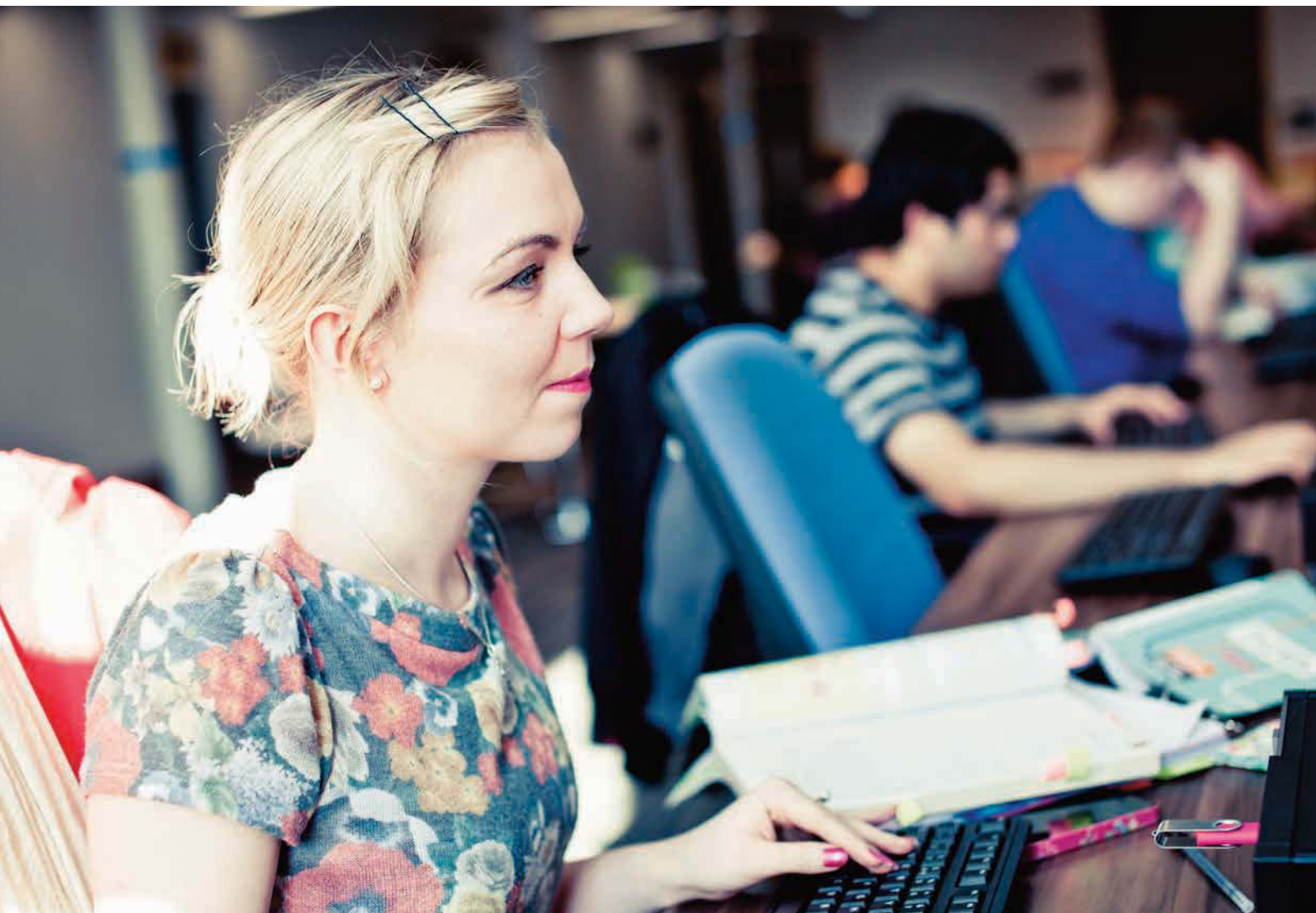
The Strategic Objectives are:

1. To provide a higher education offer that meets the needs of students, employers and the wider community
2. To deliver innovative and high quality teaching and learning that exceeds the expectations and ambitions of students
3. To enhance students' employability and ensure a positive destination for all.
4. To achieve University College status and taught degree awarding powers
5. To increase and diversify income to enhance the financial and physical resource
6. To develop a scholarly and research community to support local stakeholders and partners
7. To grow the talent pool of graduates available to employers in Peterborough

Provide a higher education offer that meets the needs of students, employers and the wider community

Key Performance Indicators	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Student Numbers	700	800	900	1000
Recruitment from the East of England	490	544	585	600
Retention on Year 1	89%	90%	91%	92%

Provide a higher education offer that meets the needs of students, employers and the wider community

We will achieve this by:

- Engaging Employers with Curriculum Development through employer groups
- Providing opportunities to apply theoretical understanding in commercial and industry settings/sectors
- Tailoring the curriculum to reflect students' needs and continuing to involve them in key decision making opportunities
- Meeting the needs of the local community and stakeholders
- Offering clear progression opportunities for students from a variety of diverse backgrounds and educational providers
- Developing progression routes and accords with local schools, colleges and private providers
- Seeking opportunities to expand student accommodation and improve the student experience in the City
- Developing progression routes from the University Technical College by enhancing the offer of Engineering, Construction and Environmental Sustainability provision.
- Strengthening brand awareness and profile by celebrating the success of UCP graduates
- Using labour market intelligence to develop and review the curriculum offer
- Developing Masters provision and leading in curriculum specialisms such as Heritage, Computing and Sustainability
- Enhancing part-time and flexible provision to meet the needs of those in employment
- Continuing to provide a highly supportive environment focused on student success and achievement

Objective 2

Deliver innovative and high quality teaching and learning that satisfies the expectations and ambitions of students

Key Performance Indicators	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Delivery of learning graded good or better	89%	90%	91%	92%
Module Evaluation scores	> 7.5	> 7.7	> 7.9	> 8
National Student Satisfaction	83%	85%	86%	88%

Deliver innovative and high quality teaching and learning that satisfies the expectations and ambitions of students

We will achieve this by:

- An on-going strategic commitment to enhancement and review
- Involving students and employers in pedagogic developments and review
- Sharing good practice
- Providing subject and industry specialist staff
- Seeking HEA accreditation for staff
- Supporting staff to achieve higher and professional qualifications
- Using innovative teaching and learning strategies and resources
- Enhancing the reflective practice of students and staff
- Investing in resources to support teaching and learning
- Ensuring that VLE usage continues to be innovative and accessible for all
- Developing the skills, qualities and employability of undergraduates
- Continuing to provide a uniquely supportive and personalised learning environment
- Empowering learners and communities and supporting aspirational activities such as The Children's University
- Monitoring satisfaction data at module and course level and implementing positive change
- Ensuring education for sustainable development will influence the whole curriculum and we shall equip students with "knowledge and understanding, skills and attributes needed to work and live in a way that safeguards environmental, social and economic wellbeing, both in the present and future generations." (QAA ,2014)

Objective 3

To enhance students' employability and ensure a positive destination for all

Key Performance Indicators	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Good honours classification	57%	59%	60%	62%
Destination : Employment or higher study within 6 months	80%	83%	85%	90%

To enhance students' employability and ensure a positive destination for all

We will achieve this by:

- Facilitating internships, work experience and project opportunities with employers and organisations
- Establishing an Employer Forum to guide and support students' development
- Supporting graduate recruitment and employment
- Developing an Alumni and measuring engagement and participation with UCP
- Providing HE specific careers advice for employment and higher study
- Enhancing transferable skills and developing a sustainable workforce to provide employers with the skills that they are seeking
- Collaborating with partners to achieve aims
- Supporting students in taking responsibility for their personal, professional and academic development
- Developing entrepreneurial thinking and attitudes to allow self-employment and business creation
- Continuing to embed employability throughout the curriculum
- Developing skills and academic practice for higher and professional study
- Adding value to the student experience by engagement with employers and entrepreneurs

To achieve University College status and taught degree awarding powers

To achieve University College status and taught degree awarding powers

We will achieve this by:

• Working with partners and stakeholders to achieve the ambitions of UCP
• Developing an independent academic infrastructure
• Achieving validation status from Anglia Ruskin University to develop unique provision in the areas of Heritage, Engineering, Construction and Environmental Sustainability
• Continuing to develop an Academic Community and enabling staff to become External Examiners
• Developing a distinct identity and brand
• Enhancing and maintaining a distinct HE culture within the centre
• Reviewing the financial contributions of each partner
• Demonstrating that UCP achieves the TDAP criteria in:
    - Governance and Academic Management
    - Academic Standards and Quality Assurance
    - Critical self assessment
    - Scholarship and pedagogical effectiveness of academic staff
    - The environment supporting the delivery of taught higher education programmes
• Establishing a network of advocates and ambassadors to promote and support the ambitions of the centre

Objective 5

To increase and diversify income to enhance the financial and physical resource

Key Performance Indicators	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Grant/research/project income (growth on previous year)	1%	2%	3%	5%
Number of events which engage with employers and local communities	18	20	22	25

To increase and diversify income to enhance the financial and physical resource

We will achieve this by:

- Reviewing tuition fees and bursaries in line with the HE marketplace
- Increasing student numbers
- Developing more employer responsive provision in partnership with Degrees at Work and Think Peterborough
- Offering bespoke full cost provision
- Increasing commercial revenue streams
- Increasing the number of organisations we engage with by 5% each year
- Seeking sponsorship and endorsements from external patrons in a systematic manner
- Promoting philanthropic support with the creation of a UCP Alumni and Friends Fund
- Developing distance and blended learning programmes
- Increasing International student numbers
- Establishing UCP as a HE Conference Centre and Business School
- Establishing partnerships to apply for grant and research income
- Establishing partnerships to invest in and develop the physical resource

To develop a scholarly and research community to support local stakeholders and partners

Key Performance Indicators	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
% of staff engaged in pedagogic research	10%	15%	25%	40%

To develop a scholarly and research community to support local stakeholders and partners

We will achieve this by :

- Establishing a Research Unit that links with businesses and stakeholders
- Implementing a range of development initiatives to increase scholarly activity
- Engaging undergraduate students in the Research Unit and wider academic communities
- Increasing the publication of pedagogic and academic journals and papers
- Maintaining a mature and critical academic community engaged with research and scholarship
- Establishing an internal online research journal
- Developing and implementing a research strategy
- Complying with robust research ethic procedures
- Supporting bid writing to enable research and project opportunities for staff and students
- Celebrating and recognising the research and academic achievements of students and staff
- Developing collaborative partnerships with employers and stakeholders to realise research and scholarly ambitions
- Recruiting and developing qualified staff

To grow the talent pool of graduates available to employers in Peterborough

Key Performance Indicators	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
% increase in involvement from industry partners	20%	30%	40%	50%

To grow the talent pool of graduates available to employers in Peterborough

We will achieve this by:

- Being the first choice for graduate recruitment in the city
- Continually enhancing the reputation of UCP amongst employers
- Increasing opportunities for learner progression into employment by developing relationships with individual employers to offer:
  - Work placements
  - Mentoring
  - Internships
  - Bursaries
  - Sponsorship
  - Employment
  - Guest Speakers
  - Staff secondments
- Continuing to develop the UCP Graduate Scheme
- Developing an Employer Engagement Strategy
- Monitoring the satisfaction levels of employers and enhance following review
- Identifying and cultivate Employer Ambassadors who endorse UCP's provision
- Providing innovative learning solutions to local training, growth and development issues within the city
- Identifying academic entrepreneurs who promote a business facing ethos
- Empowering students to contribute to innovations in line with the city's policies and ambitions