

About Us



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1. About UCSA

The University Campus St Albans (UCSA) is a new and exciting Joint Venture between the University of Hertfordshire and Oaklands College. It was established in September 2013 in order to offer high value and innovative flexible degree based provision with multiple entry points. All degrees are validated by the University of Hertfordshire. UCSA builds upon the established reputation and quality of its two parent organisations in offering a recognised and trusted University of Hertfordshire branded degree delivered principally from Oaklands College campus in St Albans.

UCSA is located at the site of Oaklands College, St Albans Campus, established in 1920. Delivery of the courses will typically take place both at Oaklands College (evening weekdays) and some Saturdays at the University of Hertfordshire. Students will have access to the rich range of resources offered by both Institutions. .

UCSA is developing a portfolio of degrees that is complementary to the existing range of courses provided by both partners. The portfolio of courses will build upon the integration of three overarching principles embraced by both parties to the Joint Venture:

- to be business facing
- to be engaged with the local community
- to be creative and innovative

UCSA offers education shaped to fit around the lives of people of all ages. We offer a focussed and flexible higher education experience without the traditional campus full time experience normally associated with Higher Education, but with a high quality and innovative approach to learning and teaching.

2. Strategy

Our Vision

To be a nationally recognised centre of excellence for delivering innovative, affordable and employer engaged degrees to people of all ages in a flexible way to suit their lives.

Our Mission

To shape Higher Education to deliver highly flexible and affordable degrees, enabling people of all ages and backgrounds to realise their potential.

Our Values

UCSA is dedicated to each student realising their aspirations and ambitions by a commitment to:

Collaboration

Respect

Excellence

Achievement

Trust

Enjoyment in learning

Learning and Teaching Principles

All courses developed will be underpinned by the following principles that together seek to ensure a distinctive high quality educational experience by:

- Creating cross cutting curricula, informed by employers, that develop the knowledge and skills required for the workplace.
- Providing a personalised and work orientated learning experience.
- Creating choice through a highly flexible structure.
- Widening participation and expanding opportunity.
- Create learning experiences that enable students to apply ideas and concepts in practice through both simulations and work related learning.
- Enabling graduates to enhance their career opportunities by focussing on employability as a central underpinning theme.
- Seeking partnerships with both employer and community organisations that can enrich the learning experience for students.
- Offering learning opportunities at both Oaklands College and the University of Hertfordshire campuses.
- Developing a learning and teaching strategy that integrates face to face teaching with interactive web based and work based learning.
- Embedding and accrediting work related learning within the curriculum.

3. Student Charter

Introduction

Students undertaking a course at University Campus St. Albans (UCSA) have the dual benefit of taking a University of Hertfordshire degree delivered principally at Oaklands College by academic staff with expertise from both Institutions. You will have full access to the rich learning and social resources of both Institutions. The course has been developed especially for part time students and is shaped around your busy lives. As a part-time student, you will have different priorities and commitments which will need to be juggled with your study.

This document helps you understand what you may expect from the course delivery team. It also emphasises what your teaching team expects from you in order for you to be successful on this course.

Central to the values of UCSA is the creation of a strong partnership between students and staff to learn together and a commitment to producing graduates who either employers see as absolutely fit to work in a modern organisation or who wish to set up their own businesses. We wish to fully meet equip graduates with the knowledge, skills and attributes to equip them for life in a complex and rapidly changing world.

Central to the values of UCSA is the creation of a strong partnership between students and staff to learn together. A commitment to produce graduates who employers see as meeting the needs to work in a modern organisation or for those students who wish to set up their own businesses.

We will strive to ensure that graduates are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attributes that will enhance their prospects in a complex and rapidly changing world.

Values

UCSA is dedicated to each student realising their aspirations and ambitions by a commitment to:

Collaboration

Respect

Excellence

Achievement

Trust

Enjoyment in learning

Each of these values is underpinned by particular behaviours:

Collaboration:

We will show this by:

- Encouraging the sharing of best practice
- Working together to discuss issues and identify solutions
- Supporting each other
- Working together in a co operative manner

Respect:

We will show this by:

- Respecting and capitalising on individual's different experiences and background
- Challenging unacceptable behaviours
- Treating people according to their individual circumstances
- Embracing diversity

Excellence:

We will show this by:

- Being a positive role model and leading by example
- Reflecting on feedback and taking action to improve
- Seeking to continuously improve

Achievement:

We will show this by:

- Having challenging but also realistic expectations
- Celebrating the successes of every individual

Trust:

We will show this by:

- Being open and honest in our communications
- Expecting everyone to act with honesty and integrity
- Expecting everyone to commit to decisions taken

Enjoyment in Learning:

We will show this by:

- Making learning fun as well as challenging
- Make learning interactive so that it also becomes enjoyable

Expectations

You can expect:

- to be treated with respect and be supported as an adult learner
- encouragement to develop academically and personally by academic staff with both professional and academic expertise
- the opportunity to work with enthusiastic and passionate academic staff who have expertise in teaching within their disciplines and who are actively supported to develop and deliver high quality teaching
- to have a clear induction process at whatever point you commence the programme

- to experience a variety of effective approaches to learning, teaching and assessment
- an assessment system which is fair and transparent
- the opportunity to receive academic advice on the academic standards and requirements of your programme and also on your academic development
- access to a wide range of learning resources and facilities appropriate to your programme of study both at Oaklands College and at the University of Hertfordshire
- timely provision of accurate and up-to-date information about all aspects of teaching, learning and assessment
- access to effective and timely student feedback mechanisms, including student representation, which enable you to be involved in the management and development of your course
- access to a wide range of social facilities at both Institutions as well as involvement with both student unions at the College and University
- to live and study in a safe culturally diverse environment where all people are treated equally with fairness and respect
- opportunities to enhance your employability by developing your skills through your course and the wide range of services available at the College and University
- to receive clear information on student finance and the costs of studying as well as, for those in need of assistance, clear information about the available student support services
- academic and pastoral support

You are expected to:

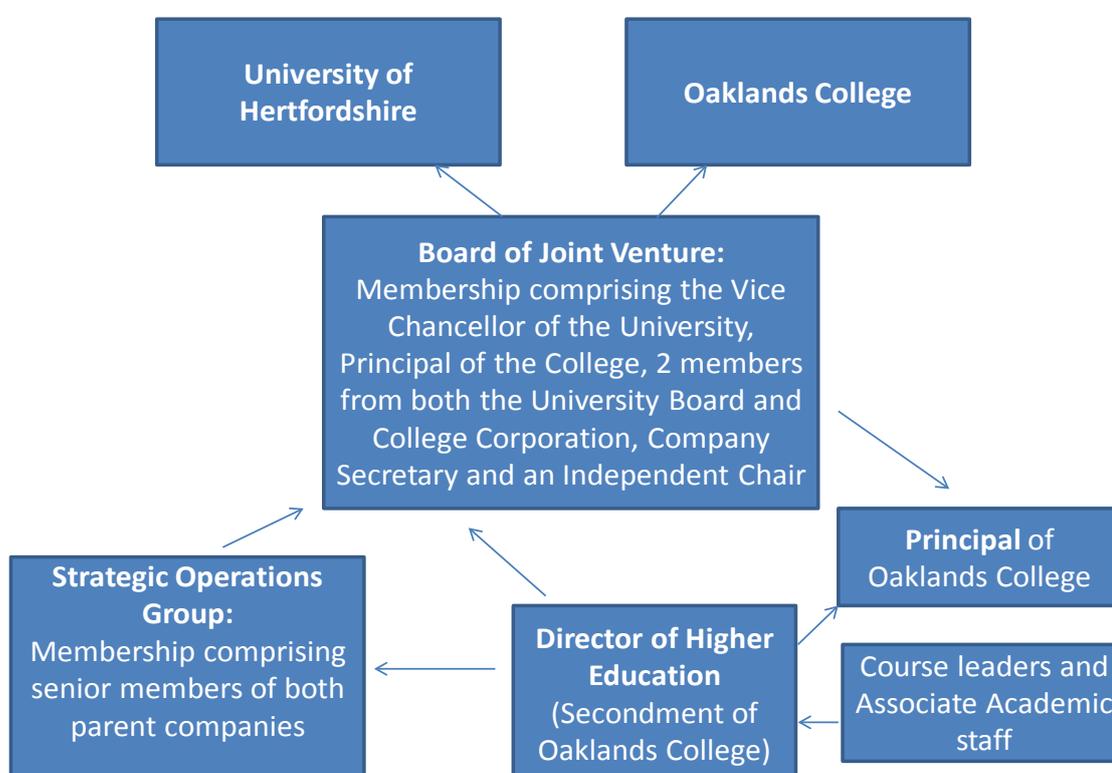
- commit to attending all taught sessions and responsibly planning your workload.
- pursue your studies in an ethical and socially responsible manner, taking the initiative to develop the skills needed to become a successful and independent learner
- ensure that you make yourself aware of and follow the requirements and regulations of your course
- provide information to the University at the earliest opportunity if there is an issue that may impact upon your studies and to seek advice where appropriate from relevant support services
- participate in the opportunities to provide feedback on aspects of your programme
- treat everyone who lives, works or studies at the University and College, with respect and to treat the environment with care and consideration
- make effective use of the opportunity to develop personally and professionally through your programme

4. Structure

UCSA is a private limited company created in September 2013 owned jointly by the University of Hertfordshire and Oaklands College. Both parties have appointed 3 members as Directors for the UCSA Board which includes the Vice Chancellor of the University and the Principal of the College. An independent Chair has been appointed to lead the Board. The Board of Directors has overall responsibility for effecting the strategic direction and educational character of UCSA. The Director of Higher Education has overall responsibility for the day to day running of UCSA.

The UCSA internal management structure is outlined diagrammatically below:

Figure 1: UCSA Internal Management Structure



5. The University of Hertfordshire

All courses are validated and quality assured by the University of Hertfordshire. Students are registered with the University and have full access to their rich range of resources. For more information go to: <http://www.herts.ac.uk/>

6. Oaklands College

UCSA is located at the site of Oaklands College (St Albans Campus). UCSA students benefit from the support of the College and its excellent facilities. Students thus have access to all the wide range resources at Oaklands College. For more information go to <http://www.oaklands.ac.uk/>

7. Equality and Diversity

At UCSA we want to take each individual needs into consideration to ensure that you have a successful and fulfilling learning experience. All staff and students are expected to adhere to the Equal Opportunity policy of Oaklands College that states that every individual will be treated fairly and as equals. For further details go to: <http://www.oaklands.ac.uk/about/about-the-college/equality-and-diversity.aspx>

8. Our Policies

UCSA students are subject to the policies of both Oaklands College with respect of all “non academic” matters and the University of Hertfordshire with respect to all “academic matters” unless otherwise stated. Details are outlined below.

A) Non academic student related policies and procedures

1. Data Protection and Freedom of Information

Data will be collated by Oaklands College on behalf of UCSA. All data collected on our behalf is subject to the Data Protection Act. Any individual has the right to request access to any recorded information held by Oaklands College on behalf of UCSA under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. There are however some categories of information that are exempt. For further details please go to: <http://www.oaklands.ac.uk/about/corporation-information.aspx>

2. The use of IT facilities

a) IT Acceptable user policy – please go to:

http://oaklearn.oaklands.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/40830/block_html/content/Oaklands%20College%20-%20ISMS%20-%20Appendix%20C%20-%20Acceptable%20Use%20Policy.pdf

- b) Social Media policy –please go to:
http://oaklearn.oaklands.ac.uk/pluginfile.php/40830/block_html/content/Oaklands%20College%20-%20ISMS%20-%20Appendix%20QQ%20-%20Social%20Media%20Policy.pdf
3. Other non academic student policies –these can be made available upon request from Karen Wellman by email (karen.wellman@oaklands.ac.uk) :
- Alcohol and Drugs Misuse Policy and Procedure
 - Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure
 - Criminal Convictions Policy and Procedure
 - Complaints Policy and Procedure – Please note for all students there is no right of appeal, as outlined in this procedure, to the Skills Funding Agency as this is outside its jurisdiction. UCSA’s decision in respect of non-academic complaints and non-academic disciplinary matters shall be final, save and except that Students may petition the University for a procedural review of the handling by UCSA of the matter once all internal levels of appeal at UCSA have been exhausted. The University shall not have jurisdiction in such matters and will only have limited powers to review the matter which shall not include overturning the decision made by UCSA but shall include acting in an advisory capacity to UCSA.
 - Confidential Disclosure (Disability) Policy
 - Health and Safety Policy
 - Public Interest and Disclosure Policy
 - Safeguarding Policy and Procedure
 - Student Attendance and Punctuality Policy - at enrolment each student will be given a copy of the UCSA student charter (this replaces the learning agreement which is referred to in this policy) which outlines the expectations.
 - Student Disciplinary Policy and Behaviour

B) Academic related student policies:

- Academic Quality – UPR AS17 (Academic Quality):
<http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/AS17.htm>
- Admissions Policy- UPR SA03 (Admissions):
<http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/SA03.htm>
- Assessments and Examinations Policy – UPR AS12 (Assessments & Examinations, including assessment offences and appeals, Appendix III is assessment information for students): <http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/AS12.htm>
- Learning and Teaching Policy – UPR TL03 (Learning & Teaching policy, Graduate Attributes): <http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/TL03.htm>
- Structure and Assessment regulations – UPR AS14 (Structure & Assessment regs):
<http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/AS14.htm>
- Student Complaints policy - UPR SA05 (Student Complaints):
<http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/SA05.htm>
- Student Disciplinary policy - UPR SA13 (Student discipline):
<http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/SA13.htm>
- Student Withdrawal policy - UPR SA14 (Student withdrawal):
<http://sitem.herts.ac.uk/secreg/upr/SA14.html>

9. UCSA legal status

UCSA been incorporated as a joint venture company to be operated by the University of Hertfordshire and Oaklands College as a private college. University Campus St. Albans Ltd has been registered with Companies House on 4^d June 2013 and its company number is 8338085.