



HE Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy 2025-2030



Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

University Centre South Essex 2025–2030

1. Introduction

This Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy (LTAS) outlines our commitment to delivering inclusive, high-quality, and employment-focused higher education. As a small, student-centred HE provider, University Centre South Essex (UCSE) offers a personalised, supportive, and dynamic environment. Our approach is rooted in enhancing student success and driving educational gains.

This strategy aligns with, our validating partners' academic standards, Office for Students (OfS) priorities, and South Essex College's strategic plan. It complements and reinforces both our Employability Strategy and our Graduate Attributes Framework, ensuring all students are equipped not only with knowledge but with the skills and qualities they need to thrive in their chosen careers and in wider society.

2. Strategic Aims

We will:

1. Deliver excellent teaching that is innovative, inclusive, and evidence-informed.
2. Embed employability and graduate attributes across all programmes, aligned with our Graduate Attributes Framework.
3. Design learning and assessment that is authentic, fair, and constructive.
4. Ensure personalised support for students' academic and professional development.
5. Continuously enhance the student experience using feedback, data and partnerships with students and employers.

3. Our Principles

Learning, teaching, and assessment at UCSE will be:

- Student-centred – built around the goals, needs and strengths of our learners.
- Inclusive and accessible – removing barriers and ensuring participation for all.
- Employability-led – preparing students for success in a rapidly changing job market.
- Flexible and responsive – adapting to learners' contexts and aspirations.
- Research- and practice-informed – grounded in evidence and scholarship.

4. Embedding Graduate Attributes and Employability

Our Graduate Attributes Framework (GAF) is a central pillar of our curriculum design, delivery and assessment. Developed as part of our Employability Strategy, the GAF describes the core skills, behaviours, and qualities we aim to foster in all UCSE graduates:

Our Graduate Attributes

1. Applying What You Learn

- Industry Knowledge
- Practical Skills
- Enterprise & Entrepreneurship

2. Facing Challenges with Confidence

- Critical Thinking
- Resilience
- Adaptability

3. Growing as a Professional

- Strong Communication
- Confidence
- Proactive Learning
- Digital & Future Skills

These attributes are developed through course projects, placements, enrichment, personal tutoring, and assessments. They are embedded across learning outcomes, curriculum design and teaching practice.

Each programme team maps its modules/units to the GAF and ensures that assessments provide opportunities for students to evidence and reflect on these attributes. Students are supported to articulate their attributes in CVs, interviews, and portfolios, with employability embedded in Personal Development Planning (PDP), careers workshops and extracurricular learning.

5. Learning

5.1 Active and Applied Learning

We adopt active learning strategies such as:

- Project-based and practice-based learning
- Live briefs and real-world problem-solving
- Industry input, guest lectures, and employer collaboration
- Simulated work environments and case-based learning

These approaches ensure students develop both disciplinary knowledge and key employability skills aligned with the GAF.

5.2 Inclusive Curriculum Design

- Inclusive reading lists, content and pedagogy
- Curriculum decolonisation and anti-racism principles
- Flexible, hybrid and accessible delivery modes

5.3 Education for Sustainable Futures

- Embedding sustainability, ethics and global awareness
- Encouraging students to consider their impact as professionals and citizens

6. Teaching

6.1 Teaching Excellence

- Professional development through PGCerts, HEA Fellowship, and scholarly activity
- Structured teaching observations, peer review, team teaching, and cross-programme collaboration
- Teaching informed by educational research and industry practice

6.2 Student Partnership

- Students co-create learning through feedback, curriculum input and representative roles
- Partnership in review processes and enhancement initiatives
- Emphasis on inclusive pedagogies that reflect and value student diversity

7. Assessment

7.1 Assessment for Learning

- Emphasis on early and formative assessment to build confidence
- Constructive feedback and feedforward embedded in all modules
- Assessment literacy activities to support understanding of standards

7.2 Authentic and Inclusive Assessment

- Assessments aligned to real-world tasks (e.g. portfolios, presentations, reports, exhibitions)
- Mapped to Graduate Attributes and programme learning outcomes
- Alternative assessment arrangements and accessibility built into design

7.3 Academic Integrity and Standards

- Clear expectations on academic conduct and AI usage
- Rigorous moderation and second-marking processes
- Student education on ethical scholarship and digital literacy

8. Digital Learning and Innovation

- Digital platforms (e.g. VLE, MS Teams) used to enhance flexibility and inclusion
- Support for staff and student development in AI, digital tools, and online assessment
- Learning analytics used to identify and respond to engagement and progression issues

8.1 Online and Blended Learning

Where courses are delivered fully or partly online, UCSE is committed to ensuring the same high standards of teaching, engagement, and support as in face-to-face delivery. Our approach to online learning is student-centred, inclusive, and underpinned by sound pedagogical principles. We:

- Design interactive, accessible, and engaging online learning through a mix of synchronous and asynchronous activities
- Provide staff with training and resources in digital pedagogy and online assessment
- Use virtual learning environments to build community, support collaboration, and foster belonging
- Monitor student engagement and outcomes in online settings to ensure equity and continuous improvement
- Embed flexibility and personalisation to meet the needs of diverse and remote students.

Online delivery is fully aligned with our Graduate Attributes Framework, ensuring that students, regardless of location or mode of study, gain the skills, knowledge, and experiences needed for their future careers.

9. Personalised Academic and Employability Support

- Academic tutoring embedded in all programmes, linked to Personalised support and development and Graduate Attributes
- Careers and employability workshops contextualised to each discipline
- Integrated support from Learning Support, Library, and Employability Teams
- Targeted interventions to support underrepresented or disadvantaged groups

10. Evaluation and Enhancement

- Continuous enhancement via Annual Programme Monitoring, Student Surveys and NSS
- Mapping of Graduate Attributes through Curriculum and Quality reviews
- Use of student outcomes, graduate destinations, and TEF metrics to guide improvement
- Cross-referencing with our Access and Participation Plan to ensure equitable impact

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Area	Responsibility
Strategic Leadership	Higher Education Executive Board

Curriculum Delivery	Programme Leaders, Heads of Department
Pedagogic Enhancement	Teaching and Learning Specialists
Student Partnership & Support	Personal Tutors, Student Support Team,

12. Conclusion

This strategy reflects the distinctive strengths of UCSE: our scale, our values, and our commitment to graduate success. Through the alignment of learning, teaching and assessment with our Graduate Attributes Framework and Employability Strategy, we ensure that every student graduates not only with a degree, but with the knowledge, skills and mindset to make a positive contribution in work and in life.

Appendix

Action plan

Theme	Objective	Implementation Activity	Responsibility	Success Measure / Outcome
1. Embedding Graduate Attributes	Ensure Graduate Attributes are embedded in curriculum, teaching and assessment	- Map GAF to all programme and module/units specifications - Include GAF in PDP, assessments and feedback - Deliver CPD workshops on embedding attributes	Programme Leaders Programme Partnership Managers	100% of programmes show GAF mapping. Student surveys show increased awareness of attributes 85% Graduate Outcomes data shows improved employability 75%
2. Enhancing Active and Applied Learning	Increase real-world and industry-based learning in all programmes	- Embed live briefs, simulations, work placements - Develop project-based modules in each level of study - Co-design activities with employers	Programme Leaders Programme Partnership Managers	80% of programmes include live/industry-based learning
3. Inclusive and Flexible Curriculum	Develop curriculum and delivery that is	Inclusive curriculum audits and	Programme Partnership Managers	80% of programmes demonstrate evidence of

	inclusive and accessible to all students	- decolonisation reviews - Expand online/hybrid options where appropriate - Train staff in Universal Design for Learning (UDL)		inclusive design with improved student satisfaction on inclusivity and accessibility of 85%+
4. Authentic Assessment	Ensure assessment tasks are inclusive, aligned to real-world contexts and GAF	- Conduct annual assessment reviews - Embed alternative and authentic assessments (e.g., portfolios, presentations, exhibitions) - Update templates to include GAF and employability alignment	Programme Partnership Managers	100% of new assessments show authentic assessment principles. NSS scores on assessment and feedback to be above 85%
5. Digital and Future Skills	Equip students and staff with digital capabilities to enhance learning and employability	- Deliver digital skills curriculum for students - Provide staff CPD in AI, EdTech, and digital pedagogy - Integrate digital skills into assessments	Learning technology team. Learning resources team. Careers team Programme Teams	Digital skills mapped in all courses. Increased student self-efficacy in digital confidence.
6. Personalised Support and Development	Strengthen academic and employability support through tutoring and	- Embed Graduate Attributes into PDP - Train tutors to provide careers-linked	Academic Tutors Careers team MIS	85% of students demonstrating progress in graduate attributes through surveys.

	career planning	academic guidance • Develop student dashboards using learning analytics		
7. Student Partnership	Engage students in shaping teaching and assessment practices	• Create student co-creation panels • Include students in curriculum review and approval • Facilitate student-led L&T enhancements	Student support SU/course Reps, Programme Leaders	Evidence of student-led changes in annual monitoring. Increased student perception of "student voice being heard" 85%+ (NSS)
8. Evaluation and Continuous Improvement	Monitor and evaluate strategy effectiveness to inform enhancement	• Annual Strategy Progress Reviews • Align LTA metrics with TEF, APP and partner KPIs • Regular updates to HE Exec Board	Deputy Executive Director HE Programme partnership managers	Annual action plans Published Positive TEF outcomes and external examiner feedback



Senior Leadership Responsibility	
Policy Author	
Roles Responsible for Reviewing	
Issue date of current version	
Date to be reviewed	
Type of Policy	Public / Internal