



# **UNIVERSITY CENTRE SOMERSET HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP POLICY**

**Effective for all UCS and UCS College Group Staff**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

1.1. This policy sets out University Centre Somerset's (UCS's) approach to the enhancement, development and support of research and scholarship across UCS and the wider University Centre Somerset College Group (UCS College Group).

1.2. The policy supports UCS's long term strategic vision for scholarship, which includes:

- Expansion of UCS and further growth of the quality and reputation of its Higher Education (HE) provision
- As an adoptee of the national AoC/HEFCE scholarship framework, put scholarship development into practice
- Growth in applications for Fellowship of Advance HE
- Longer term in-house bespoke programme of Postgraduate Certificate in Teaching Higher Education (PGCTHE) offer linked to the Professional Standards Framework (UK PSF) accreditation
- Further development of opportunities to support staff to engage in research and scholarship.

1.3. Scholarship that is productive and has purpose is a critical feature and characteristic of the work undertaken by staff teaching at higher levels. It is the primary mechanism for ensuring that academic standards are maintained, by assuring the currency and advancement of subject and pedagogical knowledge. Scholarship has the potential to be transformational for UCS by helping to give a more structured form and purpose to its community. UCS intends that, through actively encouraging and providing means to engage with scholarship, demonstrable impacts are seen, including:

- Enhancing the student experience by providing a scholarly environment, thus enabling the achievement of the best outcomes possible and increasing employability
- Improving opportunities for students to engage in high quality research through a shared understanding of approaches gained through being scholarly
- Encouraging the application and process of research to learning and teaching
- Developing a close community of scholars who demonstrate confidence in their own scholarship and openly share the outcomes of their scholarly activities
- Industrial updating
- Enhancing the reputation of UCS and heavily contributing towards achieving world class characteristics for its higher education.

## **2. SCOPE**

2.1. This policy is written specifically for UCS but is relevant to all staff at UCS College Group, of which UCS forms a part. It is applicable to all provision although it is particularly designed to complement the expectations of the Office for Students (OFS), the UK Quality Code as published by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), the UK Professional Standards Framework for HE and bodies within the context of UCS's particular setting and approach. This policy is relevant when considering the requirements of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) and HE Annual Monitoring. Staff should also refer to the College Group's Staff Development & CPD Policy & Procedure.

## **3. POLICY STATEMENT**

3.1. UCS defines scholarship as activities that increase and improve subject knowledge or pedagogy. They are activities which contribute to enhancing the student

experience. They promote engagement with research and support research led/informed learning, teaching and assessment. Scholarship must be purposeful and have a demonstrable impact on the HE community at UCS. These activities go beyond Continuing Professional Development (CPD) or training and promote a deeper understanding of the subject matter or the knowledge creation process, either to the individual and/or to a wider audience.

### **The Boyer Model of Scholarship**

3.2. UCS has adopted Boyer's (1990) four models of scholarship: discovery, integration, application and teaching<sup>1</sup>. The scholarship of discovery advocates discovery through new research, which adds to the advancement of knowledge. The scholarship of integration focuses on integration of knowledge from different sources and disciplines, as well as integration of theory and practice. Application of scholarship refers to the implementation and application of new knowledge. The scholarship of teaching involves the search for innovative approaches and best practices to develop skills and disseminate knowledge.

3.3. Examples of activities that are recognised by UCS as being scholarship are (but are not limited to):

- Undertaking research activities into the subject discipline and/or pedagogy
- Networking with the wider HE community both internal and external.
- Studying for a relevant higher level subject-based or pedagogical qualification
- Subject updating
- Reading and engaging with subject discipline or pedagogy
- Industry engagement/experience/updating/consultancy
- Attendance at & reflection on relevant conferences (internal and external)
- Mentoring/ coaching of other staff
- Applying for the Professional Standards Framework Fellowship recognition
- Taking higher qualifications – i.e. Master's, Doctorates and teaching qualifications
- Delivering a session that is HE relevant and promotes deeper understanding on a subject
- Attending talks by and reflecting on talks by external speakers
- Curriculum/programme development, review or approval
- TLA Peer Observation or other formal observation of teaching and learning
- Participation in programme/HE review processes
- Presenting a self-authored paper at a conference
- Publishing in peer reviewed journals, chapters in books and authored/edited books
- Participating in exhibitions, performances or demonstration of activities
- Being involved in knowledge transfer groups
- Being an External Examiner
- Professional memberships
- Engagement with government agencies, policy makers, employers or other stakeholders as part of an academic and/or professional community
- Leading staff development sessions.

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<sup>1</sup> Boyer, E. (1990) *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professoriate*. New York: The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

3.4. UCS has embedded research and scholarship into its appraisal process as part of being an adoptee in the national Scholarship Framework (The Education and Training Foundation, 2021)<sup>2</sup>. The list above should assist with identifying scholarly activities to be recorded.

3.5. Types of activity that may be directly supported by UCS:

- Internal research and scholarship opportunities (annual Research & Scholarship Awards)
- Action research which may or may not involve students
- Student-led research involving a member(s) of staff
- Applying for external research opportunities and bids
- Publication of research in internal/external journals
- Industry led research and participation or contribution to it
- Individually-led research
- Collaborative research
- Published research leading to writing books, chapters in books and articles in peer-reviewed journals
- Engagement in research and scholarly activities with partner universities
- International research and scholarship opportunities (e.g. ERASMUS)
- Academic subject-specific research
- Pedagogical research
- Research linked to curriculum development (i.e. writing or re-writing a HE degree programme).

## **4. PROCEDURE**

### **4.1. HE Staff Engagement in Research Activities**

4.1.1. UCS is committed to supporting this policy through the provision and/or utilisation of resources, finances, facilities and staff time. UCS annually reviews and agrees staff development budgets within each area, as well as a central budget that supports staff development for the whole college. It also holds a budget for the annual research and scholarship awards overseen by the Dean of UCS. Research and Scholarship applications will be carefully considered and approved where appropriate and there is available budget left.

4.1.2. It is the responsibility of all staff and managers involved in the delivery of teaching, learning and assessment of HE to promote scholarship and professional reflective practice. Senior Leadership and the Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee are responsible for leading and supporting opportunities for staff to engage with scholarship. UCS's support managers (with responsibilities for staff development and teaching, learning and assessment and higher education) are responsible for ensuring processes are available and can be used to support and promote engagement with scholarly activities for staff with a role in HE. Engagement in scholarship is monitored via the annual staff appraisal process and staff surveys sent by People Management.

4.1.3. Teaching staff are responsible for engaging with this policy in a way that directly helps to support their personal development, as well as the enhancement of their teaching, course development and improvement and/or support they give

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<sup>2</sup> The Education and Training Foundation (2021) *The Scholarship Framework*. Available at: <https://scholarship.excellencegateway.org.uk/> (Accessed: 30 September 2021).

to students. Ultimately, they must be able to demonstrate that any scholarship they undertake, where support is sought from UCS to enable them to do it, must relate to the UCS's commitment to enhance teaching and learning and the student experience.

- 4.1.4. HE teaching staff will be expected to have (or be working towards) appropriate teaching and learning qualifications. This can be through the provision available at UCS, independently or through one of UCS's partner universities.
- 4.1.5. All staff are encouraged to share professional practice with peers and students through formal and informal means. UCS has a responsibility to provide a formal means of sharing professional practice such as meetings, online platforms, HE Courses Meetings, symposia and conferences.
- 4.1.6. All staff are responsible for maintaining their personal development records and log of activities in accordance with the UCS College Group's Staff Development & CPD Policy & Procedure.

## **4.2 Research and Scholarship Awards**

- 4.2.1 The annual staff research and scholarship awards, led by the Research Scholarship and Ethics Committee, enable staff to 'buy themselves out' of some of their contractual obligations, or to carry out a research project in their own time and be paid for it, following discussion and with the agreement of the line manager. Priority is given to applications that both meet the criteria set and support current key strategic objectives or initiatives within UCS.
- 4.2.2 The funding may be sought to enable a formal academic research project or action research activity, or potentially one of a wide range of scholarly activities. A proposal may be submitted by an individual or by a group of individuals.
- 4.2.3 The activity does not need to be limited to focusing on pedagogy (how to improve the way teaching is delivered), but can focus on a specific subject. The activity may be focused on academic updating or pushing forward the academic boundaries of a subject. It can also be more industrially focused, updating on the latest activities in a particular industry/sector or on employability skills within that sector.
- 4.2.4 The research and scholarship awards are managed by the Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee. The application form, together with other supportive documents are available via the Research & Scholarship SharePoint site. All applicants have to seek support from their line managers prior to submitting their application forms.
- 4.2.5 UCS has a UCS HE Research Ethics Policy which sets out guidelines for research involving human and animal subjects. All staff projects that involve adults or children who are perceived to be vulnerable or who are in vulnerable positions, animal subjects, sensitive materials and data, have to seek ethical clearance via the Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee. If a project also requires external ethical approval, this cannot be guaranteed by the Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee and must be obtained in writing by the relevant body before the project may begin (please note that research is not permitted by the NHS Health Research Authority at undergraduate level,

please see 4.4.1 and visit [Student research - Health Research Authority \(hra.nhs.uk\)](http://hra.nhs.uk) for further information).

- 4.2.6 Students engaging in research will need to seek approval through their Curriculum Area Ethics Committee. Unless specific criteria is met, in which case this would need to be approved through the Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee.
- 4.2.7 When a research project is approved, the project leader(s) is responsible for initiating and carrying out the research using the support provided by UCS appropriately and in line with the research and scholarship awards' terms and conditions. Progress of the project will need to be reported back to the Committee each term. Any grant or external funding received as an outcome of the project is held by UCS in accordance with the requirements and Terms and Conditions of the individual project and is not the property of the individual grant recipient. It will be allocated to the individual via appropriate claim forms as appropriate to the specific project.

### **4.3 Recording, capturing and disseminating scholarship**

- 4.3.1 UCS encourages staff to disseminate their research and scholarship internally and externally, for example, at conferences and symposia. UCS provides a number of routes for staff to disseminate the outcomes of their projects internally:
- Annual staff research and scholarship conference
  - UCS's research and scholarship publication
  - Staff Research & Scholarship SharePoint site and other online platforms
  - Staff meetings and TLA/TeachMeets
  - Annual staff appraisals
  - HE Community of Practice
  - HE Conference
  - Informal Research & Scholarship Self-Support groups
  - Peer Review
  - Noticeboards (virtual and/or physical)
  - Student conferences
  - Through social media.
- 4.3.2 In addition, staff are encouraged to disseminate their research to student groups and external audiences. Other opportunities involve writing for external publications: articles in peer-reviewed journals (printed and online), books and chapters in books.
- 4.3.3 UCS has a well-established system for the requesting of time/finances to support staff development, and this process will continue to be applied to staff development activities and scholarly activities where specific UCS input is needed. UCS also provides resources to enable staff to have a means to record their own scholarship and staff development, and staff are expected to engage with those resources and maintain a log of their personal development activities via the My Appraisal management system.

## 4.4 Engaging Student in Research and Inquiry

4.4.1 Designing a course of study that includes research and inquiry led by students and facilitated and supported by staff can help to enhance the students' learning experience, as well as the opportunities for scholarship with which individuals and groups of staff can engage. Involving students as partners in research led by a member of staff is another approach that can be considered. UCS is committed to promoting Boyer's (1990) four scholarships that relate to students' learning activities. These include:

- Engagement in inquiry-based learning; undergraduate research and consultancy projects; co-research projects with staff
- Engagement in integrating material from different sources, including across disciplines; integrating life and work experience with academic studies; reflecting on implications of studies for personal development
- Engagement with local, national, and international community service projects; volunteering; knowledge exchange projects; applying knowledge and skills in work-based placements
- Engagement in mentoring; peer support and assessment; collaborative group work; learners as explicit partners in educational development and inquiry (The Education and Training Foundation, 2021)<sup>3</sup>.

### Health and Social Care

Undergraduate level standalone research that requires ethics review and/or Health Research Authority (HRA) and Health and Care Research Wales (HCRW) Approval (or devolved administration equivalent) cannot take place. As a college we will promote awareness of research in health and social care, including:

- research types
- carrying out research
- ethics
- getting research approved
- consent in research
- analysing and presenting data
- public involvement

Thus, promoting understanding and skills development in research. Therefore, research planning and applications may be included in the curriculum and mock Research Ethics Committees (RECs) may be held to simulate the process. Actual research will not be permitted to be carried out unless it is:

- research that is carried out in an area that is not health or social care and is fully approved
- research that does not involve patients and/or service users or NHS staff
- secondary research, such as a literature review<sup>4</sup>

Further information is available via the link below:

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<sup>3</sup> The Education and Training Foundation (2021) *What is scholarship? Background and definitions of scholarship*. Available at: <https://scholarship.excellencegateway.org.uk/framework/what-is-scholarship> (Accessed: 29 September 2021).

<sup>4</sup> Anon (2021) Student research, Health Research Authority, NHS , [Student research - Health Research Authority \(hra.nhs.uk\)](https://www.hra.nhs.uk/what-is-scholarship), accessed 07/10/2022

#### **4.5 Self-Evaluation and Developing a Culture of Scholarship**

As noted previously, UCS has adopted Boyer's (1990) four scholarships model in relation to research and scholarship planning and evaluation. Healey, Jenkins and Lea (2014, p. 56) recommend the use of this model as a means of self-assessment by institutions to ascertain 'how well-rounded these activities are; and, importantly, how they might contribute to the engagement of students in their scholarship, or in linked ways.'<sup>5</sup> Through the use of Boyer's different types of scholarship UCS can model its offer to staff and enhancement of the student experience.

Staff are encouraged to apply for the annual UCS Research & Scholarship Awards (internal bids), to develop their own departmental strategies for engaging in such opportunities when they present themselves, or to pro-actively seek out opportunities or to create them. The Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee provides further support and signposting with engagement in research and scholarship; and the electronic repository on the Staff research & Scholarship SharePoint site, where staff can also seek external research funding opportunities with guidance and signposting provided via the same site.

Designing a comprehensive and cohesive teaching and assessment strategy is a key consideration when seeking course approval or re-approval. It is vital that scholarship, of both staff and students, is evident within the strategies as part of the course documentation. Such strategies must be appropriate to each level of study and must be especially visible for courses at level 6.

#### **4.6 CBHE Scholarly Activity and Research Toolkit"**

UCS is part of the national Advance HE CBHE (College-Based Higher Education) Network. The purpose of it is to co-create spaces for College HE leaders and managers to share practices and solutions on the following themes:

- Developing a Higher Education (HE) ethos (culturally and physically) and creating an HE community within FE contexts.
- Collaboration opportunities for continuing professional development, research and scholarly activity, and sharing best practice.
- Marketing of the CBHE distinctiveness, graduate attributes, and currency of skills.
- Collective campaigns.
- Regulatory bodies and changes, and learning from other national bodies (Advance HE, 2020).

UCS takes part in its annual Festival of Scholarly Activity and Research, and can tap into resources via the Scholarly Activity & Research Toolkit and Advance HE CBHE Network Collection on the National Teaching Repository. The toolkit provides links and resources to help the college to further advance its research and scholarship culture.

Resources include:

- Understanding research and scholarly activity in CBHE
- Embeddedness of scholarly activity and research in CBHE
- Collaboration with students

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<sup>5</sup> Healey, M., Jenkins, A. and Lea, J. (2014) *Developing research-based curricula in college-based higher education*. York: Higher Education Academy.

- Advance HE Fellowships and the process of application (Advance HE, 2023).

## **5. Staff Development and Recognising Professional Standards in Higher Education**

### **5.1 Staff Development and Continuing Professional Development Definition**

Staff development or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is broadly defined by UCS as a series of activities that ensure staff are proficient at key tasks and can perform them well. These types of activities are not generally recognised as being 'scholarly' in their nature, but are also important to UCS and individuals. It can be hard to disaggregate CPD/staff development from scholarship but examples include:

- Attending training/development for specific activities
- CPD for all UCS College Group staff through Teaching, Learning & Assessment (TLA) sessions
- Compulsory training
- Competency testing.

### **Expectations of staff engagement with scholarship and research**

UCS expects that all staff engage with personal development and/or scholarship pertinent to their role and proportionate to their impact directly on enabling the student experience.

It is expected that all who can attend UCS / UCS College Group activities should attend wherever possible in line with the UCS College Group's Staff Development and CPD Policy.

### **5.2 Developmental Observation Process and Peer Review**

In order to support and facilitate continuous improvement and development of high quality Teaching Learning and Assessment, UCS has a Developmental Observation Process in which all teaching staff (regardless of the level or type of teaching) are observed each year using a developmental, non-graded approach. In addition to this, those delivering HE programmes are strongly encouraged to engage in Peer Review.

Peer Review provides a platform through which individuals can receive constructive feedback on their teaching, within a HE context, from a colleague. When taking on the role of the reviewer it provides the opportunity to reflect on your own teaching practice. Peer review also involves students as active participants in the learning process, thus adding another view and deepening the opportunities for reflection and impact on pedagogical approaches employed.

Participation in the Developmental Observation and Peer Review processes are key elements of UCS's approach to staff scholarship and their engagement in keeping up-to-date with their subject specialisms and embedding it into teaching. These processes will monitor the use of scholarship to inform teaching and raise awareness of it amongst students. They also provide some of the evidence needed to support an application for Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy through Advance HE.

### **5.3 The role of Teaching, Learning Coach**

The Teaching and Learning Coaches support the enhancement of teaching, learning and assessment. They aim to achieve this through providing mentoring, support and championing of scholarship. Staff are encouraged to engage with the TLC Team either through requesting mentoring support, other support, giving feedback or participating in the

scholarly and development opportunities they provide. The 7 Ways Evaluation of TLA Policy and the Peer Review Policy provide more information and guidance on this activity.

#### **5.4 University partnership expectations and opportunities**

UCS has an expectation that teaching staff should be qualified to at least a level above the level of the course on which they are teaching but also values and consider extensive industry experience where appropriate. However, UCS provides relevant and adequate training and development opportunities for staff. Allowances can sometimes be made in relation to staff having up-to-date industry knowledge and experience instead of the higher qualification. UCS holds evidence of qualifications, experience and recent scholarship and involvement in research when determining suitability of staff to teach on UCS validated awards and maintain up-to-date CVs on file which can be shared with the University partners if appropriate.

Pearson also expect that UCS employs appropriately qualified and experienced staff and that it supports their training and subject updating as necessary. This is monitored by Pearson via their annual External Examining process and Annual Quality Monitoring Review.

UCS encourages staff to achieve higher level qualifications wherever this is needed. Applications for qualifications to support course delivery will be considered on a case-by-case basis by their Assistant Principal, as appropriate.

#### **5.5 Fellowship and The UK Professional Standards Framework (UK PSF) published by Advance HE**

The Advance HE Fellowship 'demonstrates commitment to teaching, learning and the student experience, through engagement in a practical process that encourages research, reflection and development.'<sup>6</sup>

All staff teaching, supporting and managing HE are encouraged to seek recognition of their impact on HE teaching and learning through applying to Advance HE for recognition against the UK PSF<sup>7</sup>. The UK Quality Code for Higher Education holds this up as a worthwhile scheme for HE providers to engage in and many universities align their structures to this framework. Engagement in this scheme demonstrates a personal and institutional commitment to professionalism in teaching and learning in higher education. It provides staff with recognition of their practice, impact and leadership of teaching and learning.

Advance HE awards four different categories of Fellowship of the Higher Education Academy (HEA):

- Associate Fellowship (AFHEA)
- Fellowship (FHEA)
- Senior Fellowship (SFHEA)
- Principal Fellowship (PFHEA).

To achieve the Fellowship, HE staff have to provide evidence of personal professional practice which meets the requirements of the UK Professional Standards Framework, a

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<sup>6</sup> Advance HE (2023) *Fellowship*. Available from: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/fellowship> (Accessed: 18 November 2024).

<sup>7</sup> Advance HE (2023) *Professional Standards Framework (PSF 2023)*. Available at: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/teaching-and-learning/psf> (Accessed: 19 November 2024).

nationally recognised framework for benchmarking success within HE teaching and learning support. Training opportunities are available to UCS staff about the HEA Fellowship application process and its terms and conditions. There are accreditation routes available via some of the UCS partner universities.

Depending on the number of applications in a year, the intention would be for a partial cost of the application fee to be covered by UCS and in some cases fees to be aided by a partner university, where such an arrangement is possible. Staff should apply to the Dean of UCS for funding.

Fellowship brings a range of benefits for individual UCS staff:

- Consolidates personal development and evidence of professional practice in their higher education career
- Provides a valuable measure of success in HE professional practice
- Demonstrates commitment to teaching, learning and the student experience, through engagement in a practical process that encourages research, reflection and development
- Individual expertise is acknowledged with the use of post-nominal letters (AFHEA, FHEA, SFHEA, PFHEA)
- Provides institutional assurance that Fellowships are an important indicator that UCS is fully aligned with UKPSF practice and demonstrates a badge of assured quality (Advance HE, 2023).<sup>8</sup>

UCS provides access to templates and guidance documents to support HE staff with their HEA Fellowship applications. Staff can access these documents via the HE Staff Info Hub Teams site as well as the Staff Research & Scholarship SharePoint site. New applicants are also supported via the internal buddying/mentorship scheme.

UCS holds an Affiliate institutional membership to Advance HE. This membership provides a number of benefits:

- An online network and community of practice - Advance HE Connect
- Discounts on Fellowship applications for individual members of staff
- A dedicated Advance HE membership contact
- Collaborative Development Fund to support project
- Access to Strategic Advisory Groups
- Opportunities to apply for the Teaching Excellence Awards
- Access to EDI Advice Line
- Access to an extensive portfolio of Advance HE programmes, conferences and events with member discounts.

## **5.6 Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF)**

The decision to engage with the Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework (TEF) gives students an indication of the quality of teaching, learning and student outcomes at UCS. The TEF has a focus on Teaching Quality, Learning Environment and Student Outcomes and Learning Gain. It uses student opinion as expressed through the National Student Survey (NSS) and data provided by former students through a destinations survey to inform the rating given.

The 'Learning Environment' element of the TEF includes a focus on Scholarship, Research and Professional Practice, the expectation being that 'the learning environment

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<sup>8</sup> Advance HE (2023) *Fellowship benefits*. Available at: <https://www.advance-he.ac.uk/fellowship/fellowship#benefits> (Accessed: 8 September 2024).

is enriched by student exposure to and involvement in provision at the forefront of scholarship, research and/or professional practice'.<sup>9</sup>

## 5.7 Key Performance Indicators

UCS will judge its success on enhancing the student experience through supporting scholarship and personal development through the monitoring of the following indicators and by using them to populate the Self-Evaluation tool provided in the appendices:

- Student satisfaction surveys
- Student destinations
- Feedback from External Examiners
- Feedback from university partners (e.g. through approval/institutional review)
- Student performance data (including retention, success and overall classifications)
- Outcomes of external monitoring/review processes
- Outcomes from HE Peer Reviews

UCS will review these key performance indicators through normal internal quality processes including (but not limited to):

- Self-Evaluation at Course and area level
- Senate
- TLC meetings
- SMT
- Research, Scholarship and Ethics Committee (where applicable)

## 5.8 Reward and Recognition for Staff Engaged in Scholarship and Personal Development

UCS recognises that much of the time spent by staff on scholarship and personal development may be within their own time or embedded within normal activities. UCS, wherever possible, seeks to give opportunities for engagement in scholarship and personal development to be recognised.

The following opportunities may be available to staff who can demonstrate, on a case by case basis, their engagement with, and intended impact of, scholarship or personal development activities:

Reward/recognition	Description/purpose	How to access
Time/remission or flexibility within your role	To pursue defined scholarly activities such as research projects, investigations, delivery at external conferences, undertaking of higher level study and being employed as an External Examiner by another institution.	Normal staff development and/or flexible working request. Staff can request a supportive statement from the HE Team to help demonstrate the benefits of the proposed activity mapped to this policy and HE strategic aims.

<sup>9</sup> Department for Education (2017) *Teaching Excellence and Student Outcomes Framework Specification*, p.25. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/658490/Teaching\\_Excellence\\_and\\_Student\\_Outcomes\\_Framework\\_Specification.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/658490/Teaching_Excellence_and_Student_Outcomes_Framework_Specification.pdf) (Accessed: 1 October 2021).

Recognition of Fellowship by Advance HE	One-off contribution towards the cost of Fellowship application to Advance HE for well-developed applications for recognition against the Professional Standards Framework (PSF).	Email the Dean of UCS to request funding and apply for internal Fellowship support. Applications will be considered on an individual basis taking account of the number of applicants each year.
Financial contributions for higher qualifications	To support higher level study and achievement of relevant qualifications.	Normal staff development form. Request supportive statement from the HE Team to help demonstrate the benefits of the activity mapped to this policy and HE strategic aims.
Annual Research & Scholarship Awards	To support small scale individual/team research projects that seek to enhance the student experience/outcomes in line with the strategic aims of the UCS College Group.	Submit an application form to the Research and Library Services Manager. All relevant documents are available via the Staff Research & Scholarship SharePoint site.

## 6. Related policies at UCS College Group / University Centre Somerset

- Staff Development & CPD Policy & Procedure
- 7 Ways – Evaluation of Teaching, Learning and Assessment Policy
- UCS HE Staff Research Ethics Policy
- Quality Handbook

### 6.1 External reference points

- The revised UK Quality Code for Higher Education (2024) that came into force in June 2024 expects that ‘staff draw on scholarship, research and professional activity to facilitate student learning which may include conventional research (discovery of new knowledge), innovative application or integration and synthesis of existing knowledge (for example, in professional practice), or the study of learning and teaching processes and practices (pedagogic development). Teaching staff model good academic practice to students which reinforces their understanding and appreciation of ethical research behaviours and academic integrity<sup>10</sup>.
- ‘Capturing an HE ethos in college higher education practice’<sup>11</sup> paper which examines the context of HE in FE settings and how to create an HE ethos which, they found ‘needs to be soundly underpinned by a culture of ‘scholarship and research’<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> QAA (2024) *UK Quality Code for Higher Education: Advice and Guidance Learning and Teaching*. Available at: <https://www.qaa.ac.uk/the-quality-code/2024> (Accessed: 4 December 2024).

<sup>11</sup> Simmons, J. & Lea, J. (2013) *Capturing an HE ethos in college higher education practice*. Available at: <https://scholarship.excellencegateway.org.uk/resources/capturing-he-ethos-college-higher-education-practice> (Accessed: 27 September 2021).

<sup>12</sup> Lea, J. (ed.) (2015) *Enhancing learning and teaching in higher education*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

- UCS is part of the Advance HE CBHE Network and engages in its activities to enhance research and scholarship culture.
- UCS works in line with the latest Office for Students (OfS) guidance in relation to Degree Awarding Powers. Its latest guidance sets out specific research and scholarship characteristics for institutions seeking to award degrees. These requirements include ‘a responsibility for ensuring that staff maintain a professional understanding of current developments in research and scholarship in their subject and, where applicable, keep in touch with practice in their professions and for ensuring that structured opportunities for them to do, so are both readily available and widely taken up. It also means that teaching for degree-level qualifications should reflect, in a careful, conscious and intellectually demanding manner, the latest developments in the subject of study’<sup>13</sup> .

## **7. Review of Policy**

This policy and associated guidance documentation is subject to regular review, scrutiny and monitoring of impact through UCS’s Senate. It is approved and signed off by the Senior Management Team (SMT). The content and relevance of the policy and associated documents is also subject to scrutiny from UCS’s partner universities and other stakeholders as appropriate.

Feedback to the HE Team from all who engage with this policy is always welcome.

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<sup>13</sup> Office for Students (2018) *Securing student success: regulatory framework for higher education in England*. Available at: <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/securing-student-success-regulatory-framework-for-higher-education-in-england/> (Accessed: 27 September 2021).