



Arena Centre Annual Report 2020-2021

Introduction

The UCL Arena Centre for Research-Based Education had a busy and productive year in 2020/21, leading education development activity across the institution and supporting colleagues at institutional, faculty, departmental, and individual level with the development of their teaching and supporting learning activities.

As we navigated the ongoing impacts of Covid-19, our efforts concentrated on developing policy, creating new materials and training, updating the UCL community and working closely with Faculty and Department colleagues as they put in place measures to meet the needs of the 2020/21 Operating Model.

In order to support colleagues most effectively, the team offered increased time and support to faculties, working closely with Faculty Education Teams, Faculty Learning Technology Leads and Connected Learning Leads.

Two key areas of focus across the year were around programme development and the move towards digital assessment.

The Arena Staff Development Programme continued to run, with colleagues across UCL keen to engage in their own continuing professional development, and taking the move to remote teaching as an opportunity to reflect and evaluate on their development as educators.

This document reports on our impact for the 12 months to the end of July 2021.

1. Resources, guidance, support and strategic projects

1.1 Arena Faculty Support

The Arena Centre continued to provide dedicated faculty support through a named Arena Centre Faculty Liaison in each of the 11 UCL faculties. Feedback from faculties has been very positive, with the Arena Faculty Consultants continuing much of the work, guidance and support provided during the emergency pivot in 2019/20 and becoming further embedded in faculty education teams.

The Arena Centre Faculty Liaison role allows Arena Centre Teaching Academics to take a sensitive and flexible approach to faculty support, which inevitably varies between faculties. Examples of the wide-ranging support include: attending regular faculty education meetings; designing and running bespoke workshops; consultation on assessment and feedback practices; running evaluation activities; assisting with assessment mapping; reviewing and synthesising trends across ASER action plans; co-running or providing guidance on ChangeMakers projects; programme design consultation; creation of faculty and department level resources such as a Student Support Hub for FMS; advising on faculty education strategy, reviewing programme and module approval and amendment documents; providing advice to education leaders to support their career development.

traditional text paragraph. The [UCL Personal Tutoring webpages](#) have been updated to reflect the new stages, training options and wider resources available.

Faculty	AFHEA	FHEA	SFHEA	PFHEA	Total
Arts and Humanities	11	12	1	1	25
Brain Sciences	21	16	3	2	42
Built Environment	6	7	3		16

sessions,

2020, 12 research supervisors participated in the Arena support programme, which comprises small weekly discussion and peer review groups, led by an Arena colleague, supplemented by effective practice guidance and administrative liaison with UKCGE. All 12 participants were successful in achieving recognition, which includes access to a community of practice and use of a UKCGE RSR programme email signature. In April 2021, 11 colleagues participated in the support programme, with notifications due in August 2021.

2.10 Community Engaged Learning Service

The [Community Engaged Learning Service](#) (CELS) is a partnership between UCL Arena and UCL Engagement (UCL Culture) which promotes experiential learning for students to collaborate with external partners to address real-world challenges and opportunities as part of their assignments and research

CELS has three strands: CEL for academics, CEL for students and CEL for partners.

CEL for academics focused on transitioning CEL projects online during 20-21:

1:1 consultation sessions and support to UCL academics who wish to use CEL as part of their teaching (over 27 academics from across UCL received support with embedding CEL in their practice and/or transition existing CEL projects online).

3. Student Partnership

3.1 UCL ChangeMakers

In 20-21 ChangeMakers supported 93 projects, mainly happening at departmental level although there were a number of faculty projects (in Arts & Humanities, Institute of Education, Maths & Physical Sciences and Social & Historical Sciences). The success of 20-21 could be seen at the result of two factors. First, that the pandemic led to an increase in interest in working with students in partnership to address the challenges of remote learning/working and to learn from what was going well. Secondly, to support this momentum, some of the procedural barriers were removed to make it easier to apply for projects during an already challenging year for the community. This meant we reduced the criteria for funding and re-opened applications to the whole UCL community, rather than needing to get sign-off at relevant departmental committees. Student projects, however, did need to get sign-off from a member of staff to demonstrate there was support in the departments. We also continued to transfer funding out to departments, but implemented a new ethics process that prevented the need for individual projects to apply for their own project ethics. All these changes were felt to balance ease of access to ChangeMakers

first Covid lockdown which has led to the development of a position paper to explore and support future first-year capstones as UCL (two students).

Open-book exams evaluation: ongoing work to ensure the student learning experience is considered when making decisions about the future of digital assessments including online exams (two students).

[Academic Support and Study Skills hub](#): initial work with students to develop an academic support and study skills hub. This work will continue to be developed in partnership with students (five students).

Unitu: developing resources for staff and students to help them effectively use the platform (three students).

3.2 Student Quality Reviewers

Disruption due to Covid-19 continued to impact on the programme during 20-21. The @TESTA and ASER facilitator roles were paused but Student Reviewers of Teaching Practice, PMAP, Student Curriculum Partners and Community Engaged Learning Ambassadors pivoted to run online. During the Spring and Summer terms,

The 2021 Education Awards, which are organised and hosted collaboratively between Arena and @AVOSUc â^} • W, ã } Ê took place online this year with a virtual celebration over a two-week period.

Evaluation questions focussed not on overall satisfaction but questions about how

Conference presentations and external speaker invitations (for example, Change Agents Network, Kingston University Annual Teaching and Learning Conference, Keynote at Liverpool John Moores University, Active, Blended Learning Symposium, AdvanceHE Accredited Programme Leaders Network)
Publications (for example case study in The Making of Doctoral Supervisors: International Case Studies of Practice, journal articles in Scholarship and Practice of Undergraduate Research and Teaching Mathematics and its Applications: An International Journal of the IMA)
Hosting and editing open access journals, The Journal of Educational Innovation, Partnership and Change and the newly launched [Postgraduate Pedagogies](#), dedicated to promoting the voices and experiences of Graduate Teaching Assistants.

External speakers to us: Dr. Kay Guccione, University of Glasgow, delivered an online workshop for UCL research supervisors and graduate tutors on