



# Student Welcome Handbook 2023-24

## Welcome to University Centre Colchester.

The purpose of this concise student handbook is to help you get started in your studies, and to enable you to know who to contact if you have any specific questions.

The handbook focusses primarily on **non-academic** matters such as enrolment, important policies, and some student services. There is also a link to Frequently Asked Questions.

For all **academic** enquiries, please refer to your course handbook and/or the relevant module guide. If you are unsure about any aspect of how to get started on your course, UCC Academic Services (see below) is the to-go-to department.

### About you

The information in this handbook is relevant to all our students: full-time, part-time and distance-learning. You are part of a small (below 500) and varied student community from a wide of different backgrounds, which is what makes University Centre Colchester what it is.

Whether coming to University Centre Colchester straight from school, or commencing degree-level studies later in life, we find that most of our students combine working and studying, have active lives outside University Centre Colchester, but come together here for one shared purpose: to develop themselves and their careers through academic up-skilling.

### Our history

University Centre Colchester can trace its origins back to 1885, when the Albert School of Art and Design first opened its doors on Colchester's High Street. By 1912, it had moved to North Hill and was re-named Colchester School of Art shortly afterwards. From the 1950s onwards, the development of what was to become Colchester Institute mirrored the social and economic changes of the post-war decades. In 1954, the current campus on Sheepen Road was opened, combining the School of Art with the North-East Essex Technical College. 1965 witnessed the introduction of Higher Education courses. By 1976, the organisation had merged with St Osyth College of Education to become Colchester Institute, which now operated on campuses in Colchester and Clacton. The organisational expansion continued with a further merger in 2010, this time with Braintree College, which added a third campus to Colchester Institute's wider regional presence.

In 2016 the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) granted permission for the higher education provision at Colchester Institute to be delivered under the identity of University Centre Colchester (UCC).

## Some must-read policies

Please take time to familiarise yourself with some of our essential policies which we recommend strongly you read before enrolling on a course at Colchester. The reason for highlighting the following policies in particular is that they set out the following things:

- The institutional ethos that students and staff subscribe to  
<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/UCC-Student-Charter-2023-24.pdf>
- Your rights and responsibilities as a student  
<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/UCC-Student-Contract-2023-24.pdf>
- Where to turn to if you have concerns or complaints  
<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/UCC-Compliments-Comments-and-Complaints-Procedure-Version-3.0-1.pdf>
- The cost of studying and how University Centre Colchester spends its income  
<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/UCC-Fee-Policy-2023-24-Final-Approved-new.pdf>

## The campus

### How to find us

Our campus is close to the town centre of Colchester, just off the A12.

If you are coming by train, we are a 20 minute walk from the Colchester's main train station.

Once on campus, use the following map to find the building you are looking for:



Where can I find?

Costa - 55 Degrees Cafe	A
Art and Design Building	H
CI Business Solutions	B
Engineering Building	ENG
Facilities	A
Hair and Beauty Salons	D
Hay Gallery	L
Lecture Theatre	D
Library	S
Main Hall	C
Main Reception	B
Main Refectory	C
Sheepen House	SH
South Wing	S
Swinburne Hall	J
The Colne and Balcerne Restaurants	R
The Kent Blaxill Decorating Skills Centre	E
The Learning Shop	J
University Centre Colchester	A



If you are accessing our campus online, please use the following links to get to the right department:

[www.colchester.ac.uk/ucc](http://www.colchester.ac.uk/ucc)

## UCC Academic Services

UCC Academic Services is the go to department for advice regarding all academic aspects of your studies, including course work submissions, institutional regulations, additional learning resources and advice, careers guidance and transcripts.

Contact details: [uccacademicservices@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:uccacademicservices@colchester.ac.uk) or (01206) 712613

(Office hours are Monday to Friday, 9.00am-4.30pm GMT)

## Registration & enrolment

Registry is able to advise on the registration process and deal with queries relating to Student Loans. Registry also issues student ID cards, which must be worn at all times when on campus, student status letters and processes changes of personal details. Distance learning students will receive an electronic version of the ID card to ensure they have access to the same benefits.

Contact details: [registry@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:registry@colchester.ac.uk) , or telephone (01206) 712555

You can also find useful information in our Registration Guide, accessible at <https://www.colchester.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/UCC-Registration-Guide-2023-24.pdf>

## ILT

The IT department has a dedicated system support centre, which can be contacted on [itservicedesk@colchester.ac.uk](mailto:itservicedesk@colchester.ac.uk) , or by calling (01206) 712222.

Once you have emailed IT you will receive an automatic response, allocating you a query case number which forms the basis for any subsequent communication.

## Library

Colchester Institute's library offers a wide range of services to students, including inductions sessions for students (by subject as well as individually), referencing and study skill support sessions (also by subject or individually), as well as access to a wide range of book and journal resources.

To find out more about the support available to you, please go to <https://www.colchester.ac.uk/ucc/ucc-library/>

## Finance

For information about Finance, please see our website on

<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/ucc/higher-education-finance/>

## Careers

University Centre Colchester strongly encourages students to think about their future careers as early as day one of their course. That is why all UCC students are automatically registered on the digital careers and employability platform **Careers Plus** as soon as they have completed their registration.

**Careers Plus** offers access to the latest sector information and careers resources, including interactive CV Builders and Interview training material. It can be accessed at:

<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/ucc/careers-plus/>

Further information can be found on the UCC Moodle site.

## Getting started

### Timetables, attendance & participation

Timetables for each semester are published one week before the semester commences, to ensure that all information, including building and room numbers, are captured as accurately as possible. However, we are usually able to advise prospective students at the point of interview of the likely weekdays when classes take place. Please note that timetabling information given at this point is indicative only and considered to be non-binding.

University Centre Colchester expects students to achieve a lecture attendance and participation quota of 85% per module. We believe that Students not taking part in sessions automatically lose out on the opportunity of peer learning and input, as well as not benefitting from the informal learning opportunities that are embedded in our lecture/workshop delivery.

For resources about your programme and other learning opportunities, please see the UCC Academic Services Moodle site:

<https://moodle.ccacolchester.com/course/view.php?id=7027>

### Course work submissions

At University Centre Colchester, we use a combination of a virtual learning platform (Moodle) and our student record system (ATS2) to support learning and course work submissions.

The Moodle pages for your course will house lecture notes and any other learning resources that your tutor wants you to have access to, including the module guides.

To submit electronic course work, please go to Moodle and follow the relevant links.

What you upload to Moodle will then be accessed by your tutor through ATS2, which also records your tutor's assessment. Once completed, you'll be notified that it is ready to be viewed which you can do by again accessing Moodle, which will give access to the completed feedback form.

For the submission of all non-electronic course work, please see the relevant module guides for details.

## **Getting involved – Student Voice**

Many HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) have a Student Union, which is largely modelled on a traditional Student Union membership profile: an 18–21 year-old undergraduate, living in residential housing and usually far away from home.

The UCC student population is different. Around 70% of students are adults over the age of 24, and most live within 20 miles around Colchester (if not closer!), making their profile that of a 'commuter student'.

Consequently, UCC students are less likely to be on campus when not in class, and the way their views should be heard is different too. Instead of a Student Union, UCC has a number of Student Reps and Super Reps, who are elected by students, and who represent student views and suggestions in dialogues with UCC management.

## **UCC Student Reps**

Student feedback on teaching and resources and student contribution to course development and validation events are very important to UCC. Over the past few years, many students have received commendations from validation panels for their involvement with, and contribution to, degree course re-validations and programme innovation.

To find out more about becoming a student rep, or the different ways in which UCC encourages the student voice, please see our Student Engagement policy, which can be found at:

<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/student-engagement-policy-ucc-2023-24.pdf>

## **Raising concerns**

There are a number of ways in which you can raise concerns, depending on what feels most comfortable to you.

Firstly, UCC encourages informal conversations between students and staff, which can often address issues that are quite straight forward to resolve, from timetabling and room issues to topics you may wish to explore as part of your pastoral tutorials.

Secondly, if anonymity is important, you can leave a note for us in UCC Academic Services's letterbox outside the office in HE103. However, please remember that we can't respond to you directly if this is the route you choose.

Thirdly, you can ask a student rep to act on your behalf by contacting the relevant member of staff.

Fourthly, for more formal concerns, please see the relevant UCC policy, which sets out what you can do, and what you can expect from the institution in response:

<https://www.colchester.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/UCC-Compliments-Comments-and-Complaints-Procedure-Version-3.0-1.pdf>

### **Some Frequently Asked Questions**

The following document addresses some FAQs, from general questions about studying to explain the basics of a course structure, and what to do if you need to intermit or withdraw from a programme. [www.colchester.ac.uk/ucc/faqs](http://www.colchester.ac.uk/ucc/faqs)