

ARENA CENTRE FOR RESEARCH-BASED EDUCATION



# UCL

## Arena Centre Annual Report 2021-22



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## Introduction

In 2021/22, the UCL Arena Centre focused its activities around four broad areas of work, all aimed at supporting staff to improve the quality of education that UCL students experience:

- Our staff professional development programme, including mandatory courses for PGAs, new lecturers, and new supervisors; optional courses and workshops for all staff, with some targeted at specific roles, such as personal tutors, programme leaders, professional services colleagues and postdocs; and selective courses, including for education leaders. The workshops and courses all support staff who wish to be professionally recognised for their educational practice through our Advance HE-accredited Fellowship scheme.
- Our dedicated faculty liaisons, who provide advice and guidance on educational enhancement.
- Our dedicated programme development unit, which supports colleagues developing new UG and PGT programmes.
- Our student-staff partnership activity, which includes project funding and support to students and staff who want to work together to enhance the learning experience, Student Quality Reviewers who work closely with staff members and programme teams, and piloting new and innovative ways of embedding student partnership in our own ways of working.

Alongside this, the team provided strategic input into educational development work across the institution, recognised and rewarded excellent education, and disseminated best practice across the sector.

This document reports on our impact for the 12 months to the end of July 2022.

## Highlights of the year

### Hosting three conferences and the Education Awards

The **UCL Education Conference** was held on 6 April, the topic of this year's education conference was ['Transforming Assessment'](#).

President and Provost Dr Michael Spence opened the conference, and this was followed by a keynote, which was structured as a conversation between Prof Mary Richardson (IOE), who was at the conference, interviewing Prof David Boud, who was with us via Zoom from Australia. This was very well received by the audience who were able to ask questions and engage with Prof Boud. Following the conference, Arena uploaded [short clips \(2-3 minutes\) from the keynote](#).

The conference offered a total of 111 presenters, across 52 presentations and 25 parallel sessions. Nine asynchronous presentations were also published on the [conference blog](#), highlighting more of the innovative assessment practice taking place at UCL. A total of 213 delegates attended during the day.

For more information, please see <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/teaching-learning/news/2022/apr/ditch-grade-when-giving-feedback-advises-assessment-expert-ucl-education-conference>

UCL also hosted the 20<sup>th</sup> **Academic Practice and Technology Conference (APT conference)** on 1 July. The theme of this year's conference was 'Shaping Academic Practice Through Diversity and Flexibility'. The event was preceded by an online free webinar on 23 June. The webinar was attended by 230 participants, whilst the face-to-face conference had about 70 attendees from the UK and abroad.

This was the 4<sup>th</sup> year the conference was hosted by UCL and the first face-to-face event after two online events that ran fully remotely due to the pandemic. APT is a collaboration between UCL, LSE, Imperial College London and Kings College, London. The event this year was organised in a way that maximised the benefit of the face-to-face format as presenters submitted [video-recorded presentations](#) of their work in preparation for the conference (these are available on the conference website) and were engaged in [round tables, workshops and discussions during the in-person conference](#).

We had [three keynote speakers](#) attracting great interest and participation: Prof Cate Denial for the webinar, and Prof Jonathan Grant and Dr Sarah Jones for the face-to-face event.

The conference received very positive feedback; the engagement of participants was high throughout. UCL will continue to lead the academic organising committee for next year's edition, but the 21<sup>st</sup> annual conference will be hosted by Kings College.

Thirdly, UCL hosted the **Change Agents Network Conference (CAN Conference)**, in partnership with JISC, between Wednesday 11 and Friday 13 May, bringing together over 100 students and staff from the UK and overseas to share expertise and insights on building staff-student partnership in Higher Education. The CAN conference supports and is aligned to the *Journal of Educational Innovation, Partnership and Change*, and Vol 9 No 1 will be guest edited by UCL staff and students.

And finally, in the first in-person **UCL Education Awards Ceremony** since the start of the pandemic, staff and students from across UCL came together on Wednesday 8 June on the Wilkin's Terrace and North Cloisters to celebrate the staff who excel in teaching and supporting student learning. UCL Education Awards recognise the work of colleagues that can sometimes be less visible to students; work that has enabled excellent practice or facilitated innovation in teaching and learning.

Eight colleagues were recognised for individual work, from 44 nominations, and there were five team awards from 14 nominations. An individual route was piloted allowing individual colleagues to nominate their peers. This generated a further 30 nominations which were reviewed by Arena, with four being recommended to the UCL Education Awards review panel. Feedback from colleagues across the institution is being analysed, as we look to improve the process for 2022-23.

## Transforming Assessment at UCL

The success of the Transforming Assessment at UCL project team is underpinned by a shared philosophy of trust, accountability, responsibility and ownership. UCL Arena have worked collaboratively with Information Services Division (ISD) and Academic Services to spearhead the initiative to provide a modern, end-to-end fully integrated digital solution that would become the primary platform for formative and summative assessments, including exams and protect the university in the event of further lockdowns. During the lockdown period, all UCL students had a secure and robust assessment environment. 98.2% of students successfully submitted without issue, a figure repeated again this year. Further onboarding of departments this year has seen a 60% increase in assessments and 18% increase in candidates (1700 assessments for over 57,000 candidates in 2021-2022). This transformation is not without challenge and Arena is leading efforts to (a) minimise cheating and collusion through assessment redesign (resources and training) (b) working with faculty and the supplier to identify enhancements to platform needed to improve the markers' experience , and (c) working with faculties and sector agencies to identify and test a range of assessment platforms to meet the needs of specific subjects.

## Supported 600+ staff to develop skills in 'basic hybrid'

Working closely with colleagues in ISD who had ensured over 300 rooms were equipped to manage teaching in mixed modality 'basic hybrid' mode, Arena took the lead on supporting colleagues to make informed decisions about teaching approaches with a series of workshops (600+ sign ups), supporting cascading within departments by sharing and helping nuance the resources, writing [guidance materials on teaching in hybrid mode](#) and [ways to optimise 'co-pilots'](#), providing [video summary of workshops](#) and also assisting with pedagogic troubleshooting.

One professor said of the workshop: "*[it] quelled a lot of fears of those who were coming into the session. Not only did [it] help me and my cross-faculty team, it also supported those teaching in Term 1*

*across the faculty, as I shared this information and gave a short presentation (followed up a Q&A discussion) of the information and guidance to our faculty teaching committee the following week.”*

In June 2022, Arena hosted a [mini symposium on Hybrid teaching](#) with more than 60 colleagues from a range of institutions joining and [speakers from within and outside UCL](#) contributing which in turn led to an [Arena / ISD Accessibility collaboration at the APT conference in July 22](#).

## Support for programme design and development expanded

To enhance UCL's focus on programme design and development at UCL and UCL East, a new Programme Development Unit was established in December 2021, incorporating colleagues who moved into Arena from the Digital Education Advisory unit. The Advisory team brought extensive experience of working with academic colleagues on learning design in the digital era.

Together with other Arena Teaching Academics, the Programme Development team has worked with 28 programme teams running 44 workshops. The workshops help programme teams to think deeply about the educational design of their new programme and help to prepare their PMAP proposals. Following approval, we work with the teaching team on the learning design of modules and learning activities. Workshops are preceded by a planning meeting with the programme leader to ensure any activities are well focussed and useful, and aligned to the programme team's requirements. Support activities on writing learning outcomes and authentic assessment have also been delivered.

In addition, working with our Student Quality Reviewers, eight student review workshops were facilitated with programme leaders. These one-hour online student-led workshops took place prior to final approval and provided an in-depth review and an opportunity for staff to gain a student perspective on new programmes which staff commented as being especially useful.

## First cohort of Leading Change in Education since the pandemic

Arena's Leading Change in Education programme is a bespoke professional development opportunity for colleagues in educational leadership roles. Consisting of a series of workshops and a study trip abroad, it aims to offer participants a dedicated space to learn from colleagues from both within and outside of UCL who have made significant and tangible change. This year we welcomed our first cohort of participants since 2019, as well as offering the cohort who began the programme in 2019 a chance to conclude their pandemic-interrupted programme.

The two cohorts benefitted from opportunities to work together and the highlight for everyone was our visit to the KU Leuven University in Belgium, where we were warmly and enthusiastically received by colleagues there who shared their own examples of change leadership. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive: *“The variety of topics covered; the time and space to think about strategic work and share ideas with likeminded colleagues, also keen to drive improvements; the study visit to the amazing institution that is KU Leuven...I could go on and on!”*

We also welcomed a reciprocal visit from colleagues on the University of Utrecht's educational leadership programme, providing further space to network and share practice.

### Expansion of mentoring programme for Arena Fellowships

The Fellowship mentoring scheme continued to grow in scope, with increased take up from both mentors and mentees. This year's numbers stand at: Associate Fellows – 24 mentors connected (22 passed, 1 resubmission); Fellows – 28 mentors connected (21 passed, 3 resubmissions); Senior Fellows – 14 mentors connected (11 passed). This means a total of 66 connections made in 2021-22. This compares favourably to 2020-21, which was the first full year of the scheme, when 37 connections were made.

In the coming year we are looking to expand the scheme by 1) Involving Teaching Associate Programme (TAP) and Arena for Lecturers on Probation (ALP) alumni more closely in mentoring for future cohorts. 2) Improving training for mentors and setting clearer expectations on the commitment involved. 3) Recruiting for 'Lead Mentors' from amongst our most experienced mentors to assist in moving the scheme forward in the faculties. 4) Focusing on a more sustained mentoring experience for some potential Senior Fellows, encompassing a more holistic view of developing educational leadership.

### Pilot of new teaching and supervision development programme for Postdocs

Thirty-seven postdoctoral researchers completed a new short Teaching and Supervision Development Programme in the spring term. This short course expanded our previous introductory and microteaching workshops and covered new topics including supervision, pedagogy, and evaluation methods. Feedback was positive and indicates that participants' confidence in their teaching and supervisory practice, and their intention to apply for professional recognition increased as a result of the sessions: *'the most useful aspect of the course was the level of audience participation and interaction, which made all aspects more memorable and useful, particularly surrounding leadership confidence and skills practice.'* Four cohorts of postdoctoral researchers will complete the course in 2022/23 and we will encourage many to apply for AFHEA and FHEA. Participants will also be supported to apply for UKCGE's Recognised Associate Supervisor Programme.

## Highlights of our Faculty work

In **Life Sciences** the year started with Arena contributions to the School of Pharmacy Away Day, where an assessment workshop focusing on alternatives to exams as assessments was a focal point for discussions and ongoing connections. Throughout the year the Arena liaison has worked closely with Faculty colleagues on such things as the [FLS digital education blog](#), helping to co-ordinate and [delivering a lecture](#) on the [newly established seminar series](#) for Biosciences and reviewing OSCE processes in the School of Pharmacy.

There has been a faculty-wide focus on student support and personal tutoring in **Medical Sciences**, with the Arena Centre working alongside the Faculty Tutor and Student Support and Wellbeing to create a resource hub for faculty staff, coupled with training sessions on Personal Tutoring and Coaching techniques. Both the Divisions of Medicine, and Surgery and Interventional Science have been supported in their preparations for the Internal Quality Review (IQR) and in shaping the follow up to their IQR panel reports.

In **Arts and Humanities**, we have seen increased collaboration between Arena and the Faculty Learning Technology Lead. This year we have worked on three faculty-wide projects: one on students' experiences of online learning, which led staff to request we do a similar study on staff experiences of online learning. Finally, we engaged with seven students in a faculty ChangeMakers project investigating what students see and understand as good practice in Moodle (i.e. what they would like to see more of). This final project has received faculty funding from the Dean, meaning we can present our findings at the RAISE conference in September 2022.

Following the ASER meetings, we produced an overview of discussions and good practice for departments in both **Arts and Humanities** and **Social and Historical Sciences**. The aim was to connect departments who have similar problems, and to ensure some of the great work that happens departmentally is seen by others who can use them as a starting point for their own projects or contact the department to learn more. Both faculties have fed back that the report has been helpful both to the senior leaders in the faculties and the local leads in the departments and discussions are ongoing about how to further develop a culture of sharing good practice.

In the **IOE**, Arena has been contributing to the set up and running of a new ASER data and information collection process, which was piloted in the Spring of 2022 for the first time. In addition, Arena has been key to the development of the IOE Grading Task and Finish Group. The IOE has traditionally adopted faculty-wide grade criteria to support consistency. Individualising criteria can lead to variations in interpretation of the level of an assessment across and between modules and can result in unnecessary complexity. The group is reviewing current use of grading criteria and exploring the possibility and potential implications of having numerical or letter grading. If applicable, the group will draft a grade conversion framework.

For **Engineering Sciences** Arena produced a graphic showing a detailed breakdown of assessment types and weightings for one department to provide some broad context for their IQR self-evaluative statement. A similar package of information will be provided for all 11 departments in FES each year, to help them track changes in their assessment patterns.

In **Mathematical and Physical Sciences** there has been continued high collaboration across departments and the faculty education team; areas of activity have included development of a faculty education strategy and faculty specific assessment, local discussion around 'authentic assessment' and flipped approaches, programme design/review, bespoke PGTA training and development, and supporting ChangeMakers projects exploring aspects of inclusion and understanding students' experience of hybrid and flipped learning. We also supported the faculty in hosting the Horizons in STEM annual conference.

**Brain Sciences** have had a proactive approach to developing Education, which is initiated and supported at the highest level in the faculty leadership team. They have looked to increase engagement with fellowship, and with support from Arena, have seen a doubling of successful Fellowship applications, which was previously their weakest descriptor in terms of relative numbers of applications. They have also focused on improving assessment and feedback, with Arena running at least 12 bespoke sessions for different departments and programmes in this area. Other areas of focus have been in diversifying assessment, team-based learning, engaging students, building community, and developing core teaching skills for clinical staff.

**Population Health Sciences** have a strong education leadership team and there have been several opportunities to share effective practice and for institutes to collaborate on a range of priorities identified through the ASER data. One such project was the co-design and dissemination of a Faculty-wide assessment and feedback guidance document, in consultation with a broad range of staff and student groups. We have been supporting the Institutes, in partnership with digital education colleagues, by offering a series of conversations and workshops focused on effective assessment and feedback practice, particularly in PGT programmes. The Faculty also developed a number of ChangeMakers projects this academic year, focusing on inclusive student experience, decolonisation of the curriculum, researcher development, and student and staff wellbeing.

**The Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment** have been very supportive of a student representative led initiative to investigate student rep interest in undertaking the AFHEA. This led to an Arena pilot which included an Initial Guidance session for student representatives across UCL and over the summer, in consultation with the student representative from The Bartlett, we produced a list of areas where students support teaching and learning which can help them identify areas in which they can then develop case studies. Further guidance via Moodle and development sessions will all be offered. The inaugural Bartlett Connected Learning week was supported by Arena staff and led to fruitful discussions ([Schedule – Bartlett Connected Learning Week \(ucl.ac.uk\)](#)). In the Autumn we will be discussing the NSS data and how staff can be supported in areas such as teaching delivery, programme and module content, pastoral support and wellbeing, as well as communication.

## The Arena Programme

### Arena Fellowships

	Number passed	Number asked to resubmit	Pass rate
<b>Arena (HEA) Associate Fellows (D1)</b>			
2020-21	144	4	94%
2021-22	136	3	96%
<b>Arena (HEA) Fellows (D2)</b>			
2020-21	165	28	85%
2021-22	130	34	79%
<b>Arena (HEA) Senior Fellows (D3)</b>			
2020-21	33	23	59%
2021-22	46	16	74%
<b>Arena (HEA) Principal Fellows (D4)</b>			
2020-21	6	0	100%
2021-22	3	1	75%
<b>Total number of applicants 2020-21: 403</b>			
<b>Total number of applicants 2021-22: 369</b>			

**Table 2: 20-21 and 21-22 Numbers applying for AHE accredited Arena fellowship and success rates**

There has been a slight drop in numbers of Arena fellowship applicants overall compared with the large numbers who applied in the previous year. This has been most pronounced at Fellow level (D2). It is hard to speculate why this might be. More staff may be arriving at UCL with fellowship, or there might be other recruitment-based reasons contributing to this.

Principal Fellowship numbers vary year on year and are a little low to draw many conclusions from regarding trends, as this descriptor is achievable by very few members of staff. It was interesting that all the applicants who engaged fully with both 1-1 mentoring and the pre-panel at this descriptor were successful, which implies that this is a system that works well for us.

Another aspect that has shown change is the increase in the numbers of Senior Fellows applying, and a steep increase in their success rate. Showing gain in these two areas was an objective for the team in the last year. Although it is not possible to prove causation, it might suggest the focus on 1) increased support and encouragement for potential Senior Fellows 2) an extra session focusing on leadership and impact and 3) access to paid additional training for assessors on marking at this descriptor may have made a difference.

We have seen initial pass rates drop for Fellows (D2) this year. Anecdotally this seems to mainly be due to those who have attained AF quite recently applying too soon for Fellowship. This is something we will research further, and we will look to improve our guidance in sessions and with mentors raising awareness of this.

Session Title	Number of Sessions	Number of attendees	Average number attending per session	Satisfaction rate (out of 5) of those who completed a post-workshop survey
Initial Guidance	12	333	28	4.8
Developing your application	29	289	10	4.7
SF Leadership and Impact (new)	5	77	15	4.8

**Table 3: Arena Fellowship Workshops 2021-2022**

Throughout this academic year most of these sessions have been held online. The few that were initially scheduled face-to-face were generally moved due to lack of take up or had low attendance. As these are all one-hour sessions and very focused on text and specific content it seems sensible to keep these online, but to add in more community-focused activities face-to-face, such as networking with other fellows and writing retreats. We will increase the number of sessions offering this type of interaction in the coming year.

It is interesting also to note that both capacity and attendance ratios online are much greater, so we have been able to interact with more participants. Satisfaction rates have remained high. We are still finding that sessions fill up quickly and we are not always able to meet demand, so we will be considering other ways to help support fellowship applicants by, for example, improving additional online resources.

## Arena Events Programme

Arena's core programme of events and workshops is a central part of our provision, offering training and development opportunities to all UCL colleagues who teach and support learning. This year we have delivered more than 40 events and welcomed over 750 colleagues to sessions covering a wide range of topics, from designing modules, developing inclusive curriculum, instigating flipped and collaborative approaches, tools for student engagement, applying for promotion on the education track, giving effective feedback, and working with international students.

## Arena for Lecturers on Probation

Our mandatory course for lecturers on probation welcomed 114 new colleagues to UCL and to Arena. There were five cohorts (two in autumn, two in spring, and one in summer), and all worked on a range of topics such as constructive alignment, feedback and assessment, evaluation, and how to be an effective personal tutor. The course continues to receive very positive evaluations (average score of 4.52 out of 5) and colleagues tell us of a number of concrete impacts on their teaching practices (increased confidence, new skills, broader networks, to mention a few).

## Arena for PGTAs

[Arena for PGTAs](#) remains one of the core elements of the Arena provision. In 2021/22 we ran 17 Gateway workshops and seven Teaching Associate Programme (TAP) courses. These were offered with a mix of online and face-to-face events. We noticed an increase in the number of participants across the provision which stands as a proof of the success of the courses and the increased accessibility we ensured by offering them in different formats. The feedback we received was extremely positive and it informed the decision we made to keep expanding the provision by offering a variety of non-compulsory optional sessions in 2022-23.

We strengthened the collaboration with HR and the Doctoral School by contributing to their working group on conditions and effective professional development for PGTAs and we prepared specific resources for PGTAs with key information, contact details and FAQ in relation to common queries about their roles and responsibilities, housed on the PGTA Hub.

In one indicative comment, a Gateway participant fed back, *“I found the ideas presented and the advice given extremely helpful and informative. I also really liked the way that the session itself modelled a successful interactive teaching and learning experience. Thank you so much for a really excellent session.”* Participants on the Teaching Associate Programme praised it for being *“a great opportunity to reflect on my teaching, learn how to be more confident and deliver better seminars”* and *“the materials shared on Moodle and discussed in class covering feedback forms, learning styles, and the application.”*

## Arena for Professional Services

In 2021/22, three Initial Guidance and three Developing your Application sessions were held for professional services colleague. The sessions were designed to support colleagues wishing to achieve fellowship but whose roles may not have involved teaching. 87 colleagues registered to attend the online sessions. Colleagues were also able to access individual support in the form of feedback on draft applications and encouraged to attend Developing your Application sessions and mentorship scheme offered by Arena.

## Resources, guidance and strategic projects

### Connected and Blended Learning

In the summer of 2021, Arena led on a collaboration with ISD to produce the '[Blended and Connected Hub](#)' (enrolment key: Futures) which provides resources, ideas, provocations for discussion and a portal to further curated resources on the themes of blended and connected learning. Arena have overseen updates to align with the new operating model and the [work of the digital assessment team](#).

Arena colleagues and faculty/ISD colleagues have produced 'Arena Bitesize' videos, soft launching a multimedia development resource collection designed to support existing programmes and one-off events. [Example: [asking questions when teaching](#)]. The [bitesize video collection are available via a dedicated SharePoint site](#). The site has been assessed and approved for accessibility by the Head of Digital Accessibility as part of an ongoing collaboration between their team and Arena to support digital accessibility across UCL.

Arena led on practice-based workshops framed as '[Talk Teaching; Talk Tech](#)' with a series of well-received workshops on using mobile phones for teaching, learning and assessment, Team-Based Learning and Alternative Assessment.

### Assessment and Feedback

**The Chart assessment visualisation tool** has been taken up by many programme teams. One Head of Department commented, '*The Chart tool immediately illustrates where deadlines cluster and thus makes it easy for teaching staff to re-arrange matters across an entire programme and also shows clearly for students when to expect what kind of assessment. This Tool also includes additional functionality and enables tutors, for instance, to experiment with different scenarios before committing, which is impossible with a simple spreadsheet. It can thus be an essential tool in improving, changing or setting up programmes*'. (HoD Greek and Latin)

Colleagues in Medical Sciences have also enthusiastically adopted the tool: '*The overall satisfaction score in the NSS for the Applied Medical Sciences programme was 50 and the Assessment and Feedback score was 35. These were some of the lowest NSS scores in UCL in 2018. The CHART visualisation enabled us to identify modules with too many assessment components and other modules with no formative assessment and feedback. which enabled us to identify other issues such as periods of assessment congestion, lack of variety in assessment and over-reliance on MCQ/SAQs. As a result an assessment and feedback curriculum map was recreated to remove unnecessary components, improve the distribution of assessments and increase the variety of assessment. In 2022, their overall satisfaction increased to 89.2 and was ranked the 16 highest in UCL.*' (Vice Dean Equality Diversity and Inclusion, Medical Sciences).

Arena is working with ISD and Microsoft to develop an institution-wide platform that will integrate with SITS and provide automatic assessment visualisations that can be used for designing and redesigning assessment in modules and across a programme.

In November 2021, our staff-student partnership project finished its [evaluation of UCL's 2020 emergency capstone assessment for all first-year students](#). The team comprised two students and three Arena staff, and altogether we spoke to 62 students and 18 staff. Both students and staff represented all UCL faculties and had experienced the capstone as assessment (students) or been involved in setting and/or assessing the capstone (staff). Apart from evaluating the concrete emergency capstone, the project also sought to understand attitudes to this type of assessment, with a view to considering it in the future. [The final report](#) contains a brief executive summary as well as more in-depth thematic analysis and discussion of the data.

**Assessment Hackathon, March 2022:** A group of key partners in UCL's teaching and assessment community – academics, students, Digital Assessment team and professional service staff as well as AssessmentUCL platform providers – came together to discuss how assessment could be enhanced in an increasingly digital era. Attendees were split into teams of mixed disciplines to share their experience of assessment at UCL and bring forward ideas and recommendations on how digital assessments could look in the future. Group discussions were wide ranging and often raised more questions than answers but surfaced a clear desire to continue the conversations about the issues raised and to focus on how we share knowledge to maximise the depth of expertise across departments.

**Assessment Design Student Partners:** In 2021/22, 11 students were recruited to this new role. The purpose was to develop students' understanding of assessment design and add value to the work on assessment design initiatives. The student partners worked with academics, Digital Assessment Advisors (DDAs) and Arena colleagues. Attending workshops and a hackathon, they met with DDAs in faculty, and supported six programme teams to create assessment visualisations for new programmes using Chart Tool.

**An evidence-based short workshop 'Giving Effective Feedback'** has been developed and rolled out both in the Arena Events calendar and within faculties. The workshop aims to develop staff understanding of what makes effective feedback, and follows through with practical tips on how to improve their and their students' engagement with feedback based on examples from across UCL. The workshop has been received positively and will continue to be part of Arena's portfolio.

## Personal Tutoring

We have continued to offer [the three core Personal Tutoring workshops](#) once in each term; Introduction to Personal Tutoring (47 attendees; average rating 4.97), Developing as a personal tutor (43 participants; average rating 4.79), and Approaches to supporting students for Professional & Technical services staff (34 attendees, average rating 4.33). In addition, we have delivered 19 local/departamental version of the Introduction workshop. We have also hosted 2 workshops on Coaching conversations (delivered by Management Futures) which have been attended by 80 participants across UCL staff types and levels.

The online course now hosts pre-workshop resources and has seen an increase in UCL staff members enrolled from +400 to over 670, with 80% of initial participant feedback giving a general experience score of 'good' to 'excellent' (45% 'excellent'). We are in the process of updating this online course to make sure that content and guidance is clear & up-to-date, and to simplify the structure with clear signposting of optional material/activities and estimated time required for each section. This has been informed by responses to the end of course evaluation, a short evaluation sent to active participants between May and July 2022, and engagement data. Expected completion by end October 2022.

In October 2021 we secured funding for UCL to become an Institutional Member of the UK Advising and Tutoring association (UKAT); allowing all staff to access additional resources and development opportunities. Included in the Institutional Membership we five UKAT recognition applications, a professional development and recognition scheme comparable to that currently offered by Advanced HE and UKCGE. We have run a pilot Arena support pathway across this academic year, three of the participants plan for submission in October 2022 and two for January 2023. We will be running this support pathways for 10 new applicants in the next academic year.

## Supervisor Development

This year, alongside continuing to offer our mandatory training for new supervisors, our focus has been on increasing provision of ongoing professional development, through expanding our series of workshops and supporting more colleagues to gain professional recognition through the UK Council for Graduate Education (UKCGE).

There have been 360 attendances at workshops across the year, and a further 10 colleagues receiving UKCGE recognition (taking the total number at UCL to 34 – the highest out of all participating universities). Workshops cover a range of topics, including PGR wellbeing, supporting PGR writing, co-supervision and examining doctorates.

We also worked with colleagues at LIDo Doctoral Training Partnership, a consortium of eight university partners, to pilot a half-day workshop on Inclusive Supervision, which was well received and will become part of our core offering.

## Inclusive Education

Arena have developed and successfully run a new pair of workshops, essentially one for those new to thinking about inclusion and another for those already tackling the more complex and subtle aspects, to better support colleagues at very different stages of thinking in this area.

Liberating the Curriculum (LTC) also awarded three major grants (around £1.5k) to support or stimulate projects with long-term impact on teaching practice.

LTC's online event 'Where next with decolonising the curriculum?' in November 2021 had over 100 attendees from around the world. Another UCL-wide discussion event focussing on 'Sophisticated Racism' was postponed (now running September 2022) due to illness.

Arena staff continue to be active participants in various working groups such as the BAME Awarding Gap, research with D/deaf students on automatic speech recognition and on a new digital accessibility audit.

## Intercultural Communication Skills Project (ICC)

Arena is leading on the development of an online interactive course for students and staff addressing intercultural communicative skills (ICC) in learning and teaching, research and working relationships.

The project has been funded by two different schemes, UCL Grand Challenges and a grant from UKRI, which is part of a larger research culture project. Arena has been coordinating ICC working group comprising representatives from the GEO, UCL Careers, Student Support and Wellbeing, UCL Arena, the Students' Union, and Organisational Development, in addition to staff from the IOE, Brain Sciences, the Doctoral School, EDI and the Office of the Vice-Provost Research, Innovation and Global Engagement, UCL Grand Challenges. The ICC project originally aimed to develop a consistent framework to conceptualise and support the development of intercultural skills through the mapping of existing examples of good practice across different areas of the university.

Secondly, the project is set to develop an online asynchronous course aiming to enhance awareness and effective communicative skills in an intercultural academic environment to support increased sense of belonging, community building, collaborative research practices and educational approaches. The course is currently under development and will address misconceptions and common places in relation to intercultural interactions. It will challenge taken for granted assumptions and misunderstandings occurring in intercultural interaction. Participants will engage in a critical reflection on their own cultural identity and biases and how these affect our working environment.

The course will be open to staff (academic and professional services) and students, and it will comprise common introductory and closing sections as well as three different strands, to be chosen by participants based on their needs and areas of interest. The strands are: 'learning and teaching', 'research' and 'an intercultural working environment for all'. Participants will be asked to engage in reflective activities and, upon completion, to sign a charter of shared values.

The course is developed in collaboration with students (four students were hired to develop and design resources), colleagues across UCL and external experts in the field.

## Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

As part of its Sustainability Strategy, UCL has committed that by 2024 every student should have the opportunity to study and learn about sustainability.

This year, the Arena Centre has been working in partnership with Sustainable UCL, the Sustainable Development Goals Initiative, and staff and students across the institution in ESD working groups, to develop a strategy and resources to embed Education for Sustainable Development into teaching and learning activities at curricular and co-curricular levels. The focus of the resource development is providing support and opportunities for staff development, sharing examples of effective ESD practice, developing a toolkit and a short course for academics, and facilitating a community of practice for programme and ESD leads in the faculties.

## Student Partnership

### ChangeMakers

*“The most rewarding part of this project was to be working in a relatively large group of students and staff. Just knowing that there are so many passionate people who wanted to use their experience to help others was rewarding in itself.”*

There were 88 applications for funding in 21/22, with 81 projects awarded funding by a student-staff panel and 73 going on to progress and funding being transferred.

21/22 saw us introduce themes based around student priority areas agreed at the Student Experience Committee, as follows:

Theme	Application submitted	Projects progressed past application
<b>Learning Communities and belonging</b>	38	29
<b>Academic Development &amp; Support</b>	18	15
<b>Inclusivity in the curriculum</b>	17	15
<b>Building on what we've learnt from remote and blended learning</b>	12	10
<b>Developing authentic and inclusive assessments</b>	3	3
<b>Total</b>	88	73

**Table 4: Changemakers themes**

We saw good engagement across all faculties, with only Arts & Humanities having a relatively small number of projects compared with their student population:

Faculty	Number of projects
A&H	3
Bartlett	9
Brain Sciences	7
Engineering	10
Interdisciplinary	2
IOE	17
Laws	1
Life Sciences	7
MAPS	10
Medical Sciences	7
Pop Health	7
SHS	9
Grand Total	<b>88</b>

**Table 5: ChangeMaker projects by faculty**

You can read about some of the projects on the [new UCL ChangeMakers blog](#).

It has been a strong year for ChangeMakers, with 63% of those who have submitted a reporting feeling they achieved everything they set out to and 88% feeling the partnership aspect was crucial to their project. There are indications of really useful project outputs that could lead to some substantial changes including: curriculum changes to diversify the content, assessment changes to provide more diversity and flexibility, some new mentoring schemes, development of new departmental societies and social events, reviews to personal tutoring systems and many examples of resources being developed and new technologies explored.

## Student Quality Reviewers

*“I have also noticed there have already been some positive changes since I took the modules so I am confident that my review/suggestions will also be considered seriously.”*

Which Student Quality Reviewer role have you completed?	Total
Assessment Design Student Partner	11
Inclusive Curriculum Student Partner	39
Internal Quality Reviewer	11
Programme Design Student Partner	8
Student Reviewer of Teaching	13
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>82</b>

**Table 6: Student quality reviewer roles**

- 96% of SQR students felt their contribution would lead to improvements in the student experience, with 99% feeling that their opinions and suggestions were valued by the staff they were working with.
- Students felt more strongly that their opinions and suggestions were valued by staff (73% **strongly** agreed) than that they would improve the student experience at UCL (55% **strongly** agreed), although both were positive.
- 99% of students felt their SQR roles helped them develop useful skills and/or knowledge for the future.
- 100% of SQR students felt well-supported in their roles by the SQR team.
- We trained 78 students at our Initial training, running the session both online and face-to-face. All student then received further training on the specific role they took on.
- 97% of students felt the training equipped them to take part in their SQR role.
- Students made improvements to: student workload, assessment timing and modes, curriculum content and support resources and well as generally contributing their perspective, opinions and ideas that will go on to influence decisions and changes made to modules, programme and institutional decision-making.

## Student Fellows

*“The role helped me articulate my insights regarding student experience on a wider platform, and share them with key stakeholders to catalyse tangible changes within the system.”*

We launched a new ChangeMakers Student Fellow strand of activity to involve students in the work across OVPESE, including the Arena Centre. It was also intended to enable students to build on their skills and experiences having been involved in other roles that empower students to enhance education, like being an Academic Rep, Transition Mentor, ChangeMaker or Student Quality Reviewer.

Thirteen Student Fellows were recruited across all levels and many of the faculties. You can [find out more about the 21/22 Student Fellows](#) on the ChangeMakers website. Student Fellows were involved in a range of activities across the team, including supporting the planning and delivery of the [CAN](#)

[Conference](#) 2022 (including developing a plenary assessment co-creation workshop, and acting as panel members for the opening keynote), analysing ChangeMakers Learning Communities projects and presenting their findings to the Student Experience Committee (StEC), contributing to 'Leading Change in Education' workshops, developing a Workshop to set the vision for a future Assessment Co-creation Space, amongst many others.

In September, a number of our Student Fellows will be presenting various papers at the RAISE conference hosted this year by Lincoln University.

## Dissemination and work beyond UCL

Arena colleagues engage with the wider HE sector in numerous ways; from conference presentations and keynotes, and publishing and peer reviewing scholarly work, to external examining and undertaking consultancy work. Here is a flavour of some of that work:

Arena colleagues have been invited speakers at conferences such as the QAA's 'Hybrid under the microscope' and Transformations in Medical Education (TiME), and at seminars and events at Kingston University, the University of Kent and Coventry University. Colleagues have given papers at the UKAT, RAISE and Change Agents Network conferences.

Colleagues have had publications in the *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*, *International Journal for Academic Development*, *The Higher Education Personal Tutor's and Advisor's Companion: Translating Theory into Practice to Improve Student Success*, *Doctoral Examination: Exploring Practice Across the Globe*, and *Threshold Concepts in the Moment* (lead editor). Our two hosted journals, *Postgraduate Pedagogies* and *The Journal of Educational Innovation, Partnership & Change* both published issues in 2022.

We undertake external examining at Loughborough, King's, LSE, Leicester and Royal Holloway and have been involved in consultancy projects with Poland, Austria and Bangladesh.