



Employability Strategy 2025-2030



Senior Leadership Responsibility	Adam Fahey
Policy Author	Sharon Dunphy
Roles Responsible for Reviewing	Deputy Executive Director HE and Quality
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University Centre South Essex Employability Strategy (2025–2030)

Empowering Students for Life-Long Opportunity and Regional Impact

1. Purpose and Vision

This Employability Strategy sets out how University Centre South Essex (UCSE), as part of South Essex College Group, will support all students to achieve beyond their expectations equipping them with the knowledge, confidence, and skills they need to shape their futures and contribute to the economic, cultural, and social life of the region.

It supports the College's vision to be "the heart of community transformation" and delivers on the mission of "providing knowledge, education, and skills development for all."

2. Strategic Context

The Employability Strategy is grounded in the College's core values and supports the delivery of the five institutional strategic goals:

Strategic Goal	Employability Strategy Contribution
1. Outstanding Teaching & Learning	Embeds real-world experience, graduate attributes, and career relevance into the curriculum, expanding student horizons and long-term choices.
2. Attracting & Retaining Talent	Develops students into confident, resilient, and employable graduates; supports staff CPD to embed employability; positions UCSE as a destination for ambition.
3. Sustainability	Prepares students for emerging green and digital roles; embeds future-focused skills for long-term adaptability and employment.
4. Brand & Social Value	Builds UCSE's reputation as a provider of highly skilled, work-ready graduates; enhances social mobility and local economic outcomes.
5. Collaboration	Actively engages with employers, alumni, and community stakeholders to co-create innovative, career-aligned learning and pathways.

This strategy also fully supports the college's culture and values, especially by:

- Inspiring learners to be extraordinary in their careers
- Fostering ambition, resilience, and community-mindedness
- Supporting a diverse and inclusive approach to success
- Promoting student well-being and mental health as a foundation to employability and career resilience.

3. Core Employability Attributes

This Employability Strategy is closely aligned with the University Centre South Essex Graduate Attributes Framework. By embedding the framework's defined skills, knowledge, and values into teaching and assessment, we ensure that employability development is an integral part of the student journey. This alignment guarantees that graduates leave with a coherent and distinctive profile that meets both academic standards and employer expectations.

UCSE graduates will leave with a distinctive and future-ready profile built around the following core attributes:

1. Industry-Specific Knowledge
2. Practical Skills
3. Critical Thinking
4. Strong Communication
5. Resilience
6. Adaptability
7. Confidence
8. Proactive Learning
9. Digital and Future Work Skills
10. Enterprise and Entrepreneurial Thinking

These attributes are cultivated through teaching, assessment, personal tutoring, student support services, and employer-facing activities.

4. Key Priorities and Commitments

a. Curriculum Integration

- Embed employability across the curriculum using real-world assessment, reflective practice, and digital portfolios.
- Map graduate attributes to learning outcomes and track development over time.
- Collaborate with employers in the co-design and co-delivery of curriculum to ensure industry relevance.

b. Work-Related and Experiential Learning

- Expand access to placements, live briefs, industry set competitions, simulated work environments, and freelance opportunities.
- Align work-based experiences with regional industry needs in health, education, engineering, digital and creative sectors.
- Host annual Industry Insight Weeks to connect students with current practice and expectations.

c. Inclusive and Equitable Employability

- Provide additional, tailored support for students from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Work with employers to promote inclusive hiring and workplace practices, supporting diversity across all protected characteristics, including neurodiversity and disability
- Enhance student co-creation and feedback mechanisms for employability initiatives to ensure responsiveness to student needs and aspirations

- Close graduate outcome gaps using data-driven interventions and inclusive careers education.
- Promote diverse role models and challenge barriers to progression.

d. Digital and Future Skills

- Deliver digital literacy training, including AI awareness, data skills, and platform fluency.
- Ensure students are prepared for hybrid work environments and future job trends, including green jobs and automation.

e. Enterprise and Entrepreneurship

- Support entrepreneurial students with freelance training, business start-up support, and enterprise competitions.
- Encourage entrepreneurial mindsets and innovation across disciplines.

f. Postgraduate and Lifelong Learning Progression

- Provide tailored advice, workshops, and resources to support students exploring postgraduate study (e.g., Master's, PGCE, professional qualifications).
- Partner with universities and professional bodies to create clear progression pathways and employer-recognised postgraduate routes.
- Embed postgraduate awareness into careers guidance, including funding, application preparation, and research skills.
- Highlight postgraduate study as part of life-long learning and career adaptability.

g. Alumni Engagement

- Build and maintain an active alumni network offering mentoring, placements, guest talks, and career inspiration.
- Celebrate alumni success stories that reflect the College's values and enhance brand equity.

h. Employer Engagement and Regional Alignment

- Align employability strategy with regional labour market intelligence and strategic economic plans across Essex and East London.
- Partner with local employers to deliver joint projects, influence curriculum, and offer authentic professional opportunities.
- Collaborate with employers on embedding sustainability, inclusivity, and global skills within job opportunities and projects.
- Contribute to community transformation by ensuring students gain skills that meet both social and economic regional needs.

- Strengthen industry credibility through engagement with professional accreditation schemes and membership of recognised industry bodies (e.g., Association of Illustrators, British Psychological Society).
- Extend partnerships to include local community groups and cultural organisations (e.g., Creative Basildon) to broaden opportunities, support place-based growth, and embed civic impact.

i. Staff Empowerment and CPD

- Support academic and support staff to champion employability through training and resources.
- Share good practice in embedding careers into teaching and learning.
- Provide staff with access to current industry insights and tools to maintain curriculum currency.
- Provide professional development on mental health awareness, inclusive practices, and digital tools to equip staff as employability champions

5. Measuring Success

To ensure this strategy leads to meaningful outcomes, progress will be tracked using:

- Graduate Outcomes Survey (GOS) data.
- Progression gap analysis for target student groups.
- National student survey and internal feedback on career confidence and relevance of learning.
- Engagement metrics from careers events, workshops, enterprise programmes.
- Employer feedback on placements, live briefs, and curriculum partnerships.
- Alumni success stories and mentor uptake.
- Graduate employment in priority sectors across Essex and East London.
- Student wellbeing and resilience indicators linked to employability outcomes.
- Employer diversity and inclusion practice adoption rates
- Student and employer feedback on sustainability, financial literacy, and global competence initiatives

6. Oversight and Review

Governance for the Employability Strategy will sit with the Employability Steering Group, which reports into:

- Student Experience Committee
- Curriculum and Quality Committee
- Higher Education Executive Board

To ensure diverse perspective and meaningful stakeholder involvement, the employability steering group will include student representatives and alumni, fostering co-creation and a strong voice in decision making.

This strategy will be reviewed annually and aligned with:

- Access and Participation Plan (APP)
- Annual Monitoring Reports
- Strategic Plan and Financial Planning
- Regional Economic Development Frameworks

