

Approval of proposed new name for University College of Estate Management

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The Office for Students (OfS) has consented to the use of the word 'university' in the provider's change of name from 'University College of Estate Management' to 'University of the Built Environment'.

The Higher Education and Research Act 2017 (HERA) amended relevant legislation to give the OfS the power to consent to the use of the word university in a registered higher education provider's name. In consenting to the inclusion of the word 'university' in any name the OfS has regard to the need to avoid names which are, or may be, confusing.¹

The OfS has published guidance for registered higher education providers that wish to use either university or university college as part of their name ('university title' or 'university college title'). It states that we will consult on a provider's proposed new name and assess the extent to which the proposed name is, or may be, confusing or misleading.²

University College of Estate Management applied to the OfS for consent to the use of the word university in its proposed new name 'University of the Built Environment' in July 2024. Having considered the OfS's general duty, under section 2 of HERA, to use the OfS resources in an efficient and effective way, we ran a targeted consultation that focused on interested parties that were considered to have a particular interest in the provider's proposed name.

The targeted consultation was to determine whether the new name could be confusing or misleading, and we received 81 responses.

Considering the responses

Some consultation responses indicated that the proposed name could potentially create confusion in some limited circumstances:

- The name may be confusing as it is similar to the names of individual departments or faculties within other providers.
- There is a risk of loss of recognition and legacy associated with UCEM.
- The proposed name could cause some confusion regarding the provision of the provider.

¹ See [Legislation.gov.uk](https://legislation.gov.uk), [Higher Education and Research Act 2017](#).

² See [Regulatory advice 13: How to apply for university college and university title - Office for Students](#).

However, we concluded that the confusion raised by respondents to the targeted consultation were unlikely to occur. This was because we considered the following would lower any risk of confusion or harm:

- The inclusion of 'University of' in the name clarifies that it is a university and not a department or faculty within another provider.
- Awareness of the name change through the provider's insight gathering and due diligence with key stakeholders.
- Appropriate marketing and communications strategies to raise awareness of the name change, including clearly explaining this information on the provider's website, with links to relevant articles, posts and communications during the transition period.
- The provider's website clearly outlines the courses that are on offer.

The consultation responses also highlighted that many consider the name to more accurately articulate the provider's provision.

Therefore, we decided to consent to the proposed new name of 'University of the Built Environment'.