

To interested parties

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## Open letter consultation: proposed new name for University of Central Lancashire

University of Central Lancashire has applied to the Office for Students (OfS) to change its name to 'University of Lancashire.' This open letter invites views on whether the proposed new name is, or has the potential to be, confusing or misleading.

The OfS has the power to approve the use of the word 'university' in a registered higher education provider's name under section 77 of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 and section 39 of the Teaching and Higher Education Act 1998.<sup>1</sup>

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').<sup>2</sup> In that guidance, the OfS states that it will consult on a provider's proposed new name and assess the extent to which the proposed name is confusing or misleading.

University of Central Lancashire (<https://www.uclan.ac.uk/>) is an OfS-registered higher education provider.<sup>3</sup> It received approval under the Further and Higher Education Act of 1992<sup>4</sup> to acquire university title and the power to award its own degrees, and now proposes to change its name to 'University of Lancashire.'

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/13/section/77> and <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1998/30/section/39>.

<sup>2</sup> Regulatory advice 13: How to apply for university college and university title (OfS 2019.08). Available at: [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-advice-13-how-to-apply-for-university-college-and-university-title/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-advice-13-how-to-apply-for-university-college-and-university-title/).

<sup>3</sup> The OfS Register. See: [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/the-register/the-ofs-register/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/the-register/the-ofs-register/).

<sup>4</sup> See: [Further and Higher Education Act 1992 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1992/13).

Professor Graham Baldwin, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Central Lancashire, has provided the following statement, which is not verified by the OfS, in relation to the proposed new name:

“The University of Central Lancashire has applied to change its name to ‘University of Lancashire’. The term ‘Central Lancashire’ is a central government construct from the 1980s which is now largely obsolete with little or no current relevance or meaning. Also, given the University now has a significant campus and wider presence in the east of the county and elsewhere, the term is now also both factually inaccurate and misleading. Further, the University is now one of the largest universities in the North-West and Lancashire’s largest provider of graduate-level qualifications. The University is an established civic pillar across the county and an important member of several pan-Lancashire partnerships and works with both public and private sector organisations on various matters affecting the county.”

The purpose of this open letter is to consult, in line with Regulatory advice 13, on whether University of Central Lancashire’s proposed name ‘University of Lancashire’ is, or may be, confusing or misleading.

We are inviting views on the following questions:

1. Considering University of Central Lancashire’s proposed new name of ‘University of Lancashire’, in your view is it, or does it have the potential to be, confusing or misleading?
2. Please explain why you think this and provide any evidence to support your view.

### **Who should respond to this consultation?**

We welcome responses from anyone with an interest in the proposed new name for University of Central Lancashire.

We are particularly (but not only) interested in hearing from:

- Existing or potential future students of University of Central Lancashire
- Other providers of education with a similar geographic descriptor or based in the same geographic area
- Professional organisations and local employer groups that work with University of Central Lancashire
- Local, regional, or other bodies with similar names to the proposed name ‘University of Lancashire’
- Local emergency services to University of Central Lancashire
- Higher education membership groups.

### **How to respond**

The consultation closes at **noon on 22 February 2024**.

Please submit your response by completing the **online form** at:

<https://survey.officeforstudents.org.uk/s/N576GL/>

If you require this document or the online form in an alternative format, need assistance with the online form, or have questions about this consultation, please contact us on 0117 931 7305 or at [regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk](mailto:regulation@officeforstudents.org.uk).

### **How we will treat your response**

The OfS will process any personal data received in accordance with all applicable data protection laws (see our full privacy policy).<sup>5</sup> Further information is provided within the survey.

We may need to disclose or publish information that you provide in the performance of our functions or disclose it to other organisations for the purposes of their functions. Information (including personal data) may also need to be disclosed in accordance with UK legislation (such as the Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 2018, and Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

Yours sincerely

**Jean Arnold**  
**Deputy Director of Quality**

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<sup>5</sup> See: [www.officeforstudents.org.uk/ofs-privacy/](http://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/ofs-privacy/).