Third-party listings sites and graduate programme promotion toolkit
UCL Publications and Marketing Services

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1. Introduction

This toolkit was prepared by the UCL Graduate Marketing Manager (GMM) to provide information on various third-party listings sites which offer opportunities for online marketing and promotion of graduate degree programmes.

It should be used in conjunction with the ‘New programme promotion toolkit’ also available on the UCL Communications & Marketing website.

We hope that you find it useful and would like to invite colleagues in departments to share their experiences in this area with the GMM.

2. Advertising PhD studentships online

These are some of the options for online advertising of PhD studentships:

- Rome – the UCL HR database
- FindAPhD.com (see section 5.9)
- Postgraduatetestudentships.co.uk (see section 5.6)
- PhDPortal.eu (see section 5.8)
3. Promoting Master’s programmes online

All officially approved degree programmes are included in the UCL online graduate prospectus. They will also automatically be added to a number of external graduate listings sites. This is managed centrally by the Graduate Marketing Manager (GMM). For more information see section 4.

In addition, departments/faculties can decide to purchase additional online advertising for their programmes. There are different options available depending on the budget and specific circumstances. Advice is available from the GMM. For more information see section 5.

Departmental website is a very important promotional tool which should highlight the key advantages of the programme to prospective students and invite them to interact and submit an application. For advice please contact the GMM or Publications and Marketing Services (PAMS).

4. UCL’s central presence on graduate listings sites

There is an increasing number of listings websites which provide prospective students with the opportunity to search for graduate programmes in the UK, Europe or worldwide and institutions to advertise their degree programmes.

Currently UCL has a central PG presence on the following websites:

- **Hotcourses.com / whatuni.com / postgraduatesearch.com**
  (graduate profile and listings of all PGT programmes)

- **FindAMasters.com**
  (all UCL PGT programmes are listed on the website)

- **Prospects.ac.uk**
  (UCL PGT and PGR programmes are listed on the website)

- **Postgrad.com**
  (all UCL PGT programmes are listed on the website)
5. Other external listings sites and additional paid advertising opportunities.

The following list is not exhaustive but it includes some of the more popular listings sites (in addition to the websites mentioned earlier).

- Gradschools.com
- Masterscompare.co.uk
- Postgraduatestudentships.co.uk
- Masterstudies.com
- Mastersportal.eu / PhDportal.eu
- FindAPhD.com
- Educations.com

Each of the listings sites offers various paid advertising opportunities. They vary depending on the website but usually include:

- Featured (paid) course listings which will place the programme higher in search results
- Banner advertisement
- Email campaigns to specific target groups (filtered by subject interest, nationality etc.)
- Departmental profiles linked to all programmes in the department
- Open days advertisement

For more information or if you are interested in paid advertising, please contact the Graduate Marketing Manager.

5.1 Hotcourses.com / postgraduatesearch.com / whatuni.com

Quick facts:
- 4 million visits per month across the HE Network
- UCL degree programmes listings linked to our institutional profile in hotcourses

Further advertising options:
- Departmental or faculty profile linked to the UCL institutional profile (KCL example)
- Featured course linked to 5 specific searches (it can link directly to department’s own website)
- Banner advertising (leader board or skyscraper banners that can be linked to specific subjects, regional searches, IP address or run of site)
- Emails to hotcourses registered users looking for HE courses (target by subject level, location and subject area)

5.2 FindAMasters.com

Quick facts:
- 200,000 visits per month
- All courses now also listed on the Guardian website: careers.guardian.co.uk/find-masters

Further advertising options:
- Buttons and banners to draw attention to the programme. For more info see: http://www.findamasters.com/advertisers/featured.aspx
- Dedicated Open Day section to promote an upcoming event
- FindAMasters email campaigns to registered prospective students who expressed interest in Master’s programmes (target by subject area)
5.3 Prospects.ac.uk

Quick facts:
• 1 million unique visits per month
• Well established website with basic listings of all UCL Master’s programmes

Further advertising options:
• Online department profiles to support your course listings in Prospects. An international profile published into a variety of languages.
• Buttons and skyscrapers to raise the profile of the programme/promote a new programme. Positions include the Search courses, Funding my further study and International student pages.
• Subject/keyword sponsorships within the online postgraduate course database.
• Email messaging to the database of Prospects students (target by degree discipline, region or subject of study).

5.4 Postgrad.com

Quick facts:
• 65,000 unique visits per month
• 60% of traffic from overseas
• Linked to Hobsons

Further advertising options:
• Online department profiles linked to all graduate programmes your department offers. An international profile published into a variety of languages.
• Case study examples detailing students’ experience in your department (e.g. current students from a range of target countries)
• HTML emails sent to registered students (target by subject or geographical region)
• Web buttons (with logo, message and direct links back) located on specific subject pages on postgrad.com

5.5 Gradschools.com

A successful US-based website with almost 60,000 programmes listed in its free directory (both US and international opportunities)

Due to its reach, the website may be of special interest to UCL programmes interested in targeting the US market.

Professional service and access to analytics.

Although basic programme listings are free and a contact email address for the programme/department can be included in the listing, only the postal address of a student who expressed an interest will be provided by gradschools.com (unless it is the paid ‘enhanced’ listing option).
5.6 Postgraduatestudentships.co.uk and Masterscompare.co.uk

Postgraduatestudentships.co.uk
A dedicated website that brings together different sources of research and taught postgraduate student funding.

Masterscompare.co.uk
It lists graduate taught programmes in the UK and allows students to compare them by prioritising the factors they find most important when selecting courses. **Standard listings are free.** They include basic course fields such as course name, qualification, contact details, start month and fees, PLUS short description (up to 100 words) and entry requirements. UK-focused, although some European opportunities also advertised.

Common features:

- Partnership with the Student Room
  The ads now receive extra exposure via the live ad feed shown on The Student Room.

- Free departmental descriptions
  **On both websites you can register your department for free and add a brief general overview of postgraduate provision in your department.** If you have specific funding or study opportunities, you can pay for additional advertising (from £45 for a single advert, discounts are offered for more listings). The websites are linked so if you already have an account with one of them your login will also work for the other one.

- Course comparison reports
  Individual course comparison reports are now available. They give a ranked list of the courses your programme has been compared with on masterscompare.com, from your own and other institutions. More information is available at [http://www.masterscompare.co.uk/advertisers](http://www.masterscompare.co.uk/advertisers).

5.7 Masterstudies.com

Quick facts:

- 650,000 visits per month
- Local sites in over 31 languages (multilingual SEO)
- 18,000 programmes advertised from over 60 countries

One of the distinct features of Masterstudies.com is the fact that the website is translated into 31 languages to maximise search engine exposure.

**Special discounted offer for UCL programmes (contact Graduate Marketing Manager):**

- **OPTION 1:** Mini package at £25 per month (one programme promoted, exposure in 31 languages, access to real-time analytics, standard visibility on the portal)

- **OPTION 2:** Upgraded mini package at £75 per month (one programme promoted, exposure in 31 languages, access to real-time analytics, maximum visibility on the
5.8 StudyPortals.eu

Quick facts:
- Over 22,000 degree programmes listed at 960 universities from 39 European countries
- 1.7 million visits per month

Their portfolio consists of the following websites:
- BachelorsPortal.eu
- Mastersportal.eu
- PhDPortal.eu
- ScholarshipPortal.eu
- ShortCoursesPortal.eu

Advertising options:

Premium programme listings
- Sorted on top in search results. On average 5 times more effective than the basic listing
- UCL logo displayed in search results on the programme pages
- Buttons and links to invite students to act upon their interest
- Average price: €345 per programme per year (but may be negotiable)

Banner advertisement
- Three types of banners offered: standard banner, in-programme banner and in-search banner
- Banners can be displayed to specific visitor groups (based on a max. of three filters: country of origin, discipline of interest and country of interest)
- You can set budget and duration

5.9 FindAPhD.com

Promotion of single defined PhD projects (falling into the “Project entries” category) is coordinated at the institutional level via the Graduate Marketing Manager and academic departments can advertise such studentships at no extra cost.

Such project entries must not
(i) announce the availability multiple studentships,
(ii) announce the general availability of one or more studentships within a department or research group,
(iii) list multiple or broad research areas.

Where a limited number of studentships are available across a choice of research projects, an entry is required for each proposed or potential project.

In order to advertise a studentship, please email the Graduate Marketing Manager (m.harms@ucl.ac.uk) with the following information:
- The name of the primary and (if applicable) secondary supervisor
- The title of the project
- Application deadline
- Funding status (Home, EU, Overseas, etc.)
• Project description (max. 500 words)
• Funding notes incl. any eligibility requirements (max. 100 words)
• Up to 10 keywords selected from the list

If you would like to advertise a different type of studentship on FindAPhD.com, you are welcome to contact the Graduate Marketing Manager for advice. The department will need to cover the cost of the advert.

5.10 Educations.com

Quick facts:
• 93,000 visitors per month
• International focus
• Various types of education promoted (incl. UG, PG, study abroad, summer schools etc.)

Advertising options:
• Departmental profiles linked to course listings
• Geographically targeted or field of study targeted banners – these can be booked monthly and will appear only to visitors to the site from specific countries OR those who are looking at a specific field of study. The banners always appear on the top right hand corner of the banner layout on the site.
• Direct Emailing – individual university advertisement enabling the promotion to a select targeted group of prospective students by the field of interest.
• Post Graduate Newsletter – directed towards approx. 18,000+ members who have specifically registered an interest in studying a Master’s degree.

6. Measuring the results. Statistics and the jargon

All listings sites should provide you with traffic statistics for your campaign giving an overview of how your programmes are performing on the website. The following terms are often used:

• Page impressions / Programme views (clicks): The number of times ad / programme has been shown in search results.
• Unique users - the number of different individuals visiting a site within a specific period. Sites often use identifiers such as cookies to differentiate between users.
• Click through rate (CTR): The percentage that followed the link to the programme page in the search result
• Conversion rate (C/R): The percentage that sent a lead based on the number of page views
• Leads / Filtered leads: The number of potential students who sent a request for more information
• CPM - cost per mille, i.e. the cost for 1,000 impressions of an ad

More does not always mean better!

It is very difficult to predict the quality of the leads/enquiries, hence a trial period is often the best way move forward.

Depending on your subject area and target audience, different listings sites may offer a better return on investment.
7. Contact details and feedback

We very much welcome your feedback on the content of this mini-guide. Please feel free to contact the GMM if you have any queries.

We particularly welcome comments from colleagues who would like to share their experiences of using external listings sites for graduate programme promotion and/or have any tips which would be of benefit to others.

Graduate Marketing Manager based in UCL Publications and Marketing Services can provide further advice on various aspects of graduate programme marketing.

Contact Monika Harms on m.harms@ucl.ac.uk

International Office has a wealth of expertise and offers advice on promotion and marketing of UCL programmes internationally.

Contact Julie Rolls, International Liaison and Recruitment Manager on j.rolls@ucl.ac.uk