Experience in the room:

In groups of 2/3, discuss the following statements:

- the potential differences between undergraduate and Masters-level study
- your motivations for considering a Masters
CONSIDERING A MASTERS
UCL CAREERS ESSENTIALS PROGRAMME

DAVE CARTER
UCL Careers Consultant
Postgraduate study fair

- Wednesday 25 January 2017 11.30am - 5pm
  Senate House, University of London
- 90 universities and colleges
CAREERS ESSENTIALS talks and workshops programme
www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/events/essentials

Find and Fund a PhD
Improve your PhD applications
Mock aptitude, etray and other selection tests
Succeeding at Interviews
MBTI personality profiling
Improve your CV
Better applications, cover letters and personal statements

Beyond the advertised job market:
Successful job hunting
Mastering Linkedin and social media in your job search
Introduction to the graduate job market
Your future and how to work towards it
Considering a Masters
How to build and utilise networks in effective job hunting
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Be the first to know about what’s new by signing up to personalised email alerts through your My UCL Careers account.

You’ll find out about current jobs, events happening at UCL Careers and The Careers Group including when they are open for booking as well as all the latest news.
Career Essentials: Talks and Workshops Programme

This series of workshops is aimed at current students and recent graduates.

New for 2016/17, a series of lunchtime talks and experiential workshops providing insight, advice and interactive opportunities to engage with aspects of career management and navigating selection processes no matter where you are in your career thinking.

From understanding the graduate job and postgraduate study market to career decision-making, mock interview talks to interviews practice, finding and funding a PhD to getting to grips with LinkedIn and social media - the programme aims to equip you with the essential know-how to begin to move forward and engage more confidently with 'Finding your Future'.

Talks and workshops titles will be repeated on a regular basis in the Autumn, Spring and post-exam season.

How to prepare...

Presentation Slides

Where possible, any materials used at an event will be made available to download here. Please check this page after the event but be aware, it may take up to a week for materials to be uploaded.

- Introduction to the graduate job and postgrad study market (Talk given 11th October)
- Find and fund a PhD (Talk given 12th October)
- Find and fund a PhD (Talk given 31st October)
- Better PhD Applications (Talk given 3rd November)
- Improve your CV (Talk given 18th October)
- Better applications, cover letters and personal statements (Talk given 25th October)
- Example cover letters and personal statements (Talk given 25th October)
- Example applications form answers (Talk given 25th October)
- Succeeding at interviews (Talk given 27th October)
- Behind the Competencies (Handout as part on interviews talk 27th Oct)

Decisions, Decisions - How to find your future (Talk given 28th Oct)
Insights and actions

Register for UCL Careers ALERT!
ucl.ac.uk/careers/news

Download Slides
www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/events/essentials
Presentation slides area
What we’ll look at today

- What is a Masters?
- Motivation for considering a Masters course
- Choosing a course
  - Costs and funding
- Effective applications
- Key information sources and further support
Experience in the room:

In groups of 2/3, discuss the following statements:
- the potential differences between undergraduate and Masters-level study
- your motivations for considering a Masters
What is a Masters?

- **Length**: Full-time 1 to 2 years (Part-time 2 to 4)
- **Compared to Undergraduate**:
  - focused on one particular area of a wider subject
  - more flexible modules and study options
  - intensive, advanced and faster-paced
  - typically smaller class-sizes
- **Taught v research**:
  - **Master of Arts (MA) and Master of Science (MSc) degrees/ Other (eg LLM)**
    - Taught courses (roughly 1/3rd time spent on a research project)
    - PhD entry still possible.
    - Roughly 10,000 courses on offer in UK
  - **Master of Research (Mres)**:
    - Research courses with roughly 2/3rds time on a research project (some taught)
    - Excellent preparation for PhD
    - Roughly 800 courses on offer in UK.
UCL CAREERS ESSENTIALS

FIND → your → FUTURE

UCL

Don't believe the hype!

- Do your research
- Choose with your head and your heart

Sounds AMAZING!!

"World class…"

"Academic excellence…"

"Unbeatable career prospects…"

"A reputation that precedes us…"

"Students love studying here…"

"Knowledgeable tutors…"
Is a Masters right for you?

- Compare and contrast the case studies and highlight positive and negative motivators
- What are some of the issues the case studies raise?
Case study 1 – HAKOB: MSc African Studies with Health at UCL

Having studied a BA History, I decided to embark on a gap year including some administrative office-based roles that helped fund some travel. On my return, I decided on the MSc course because of my interest in Africa. I believed that business development would be one of the key drivers of economic prosperity so wanted to learn more about Africa both professionally and personally. I had a long-term ambition to either start my own or join a large, international NGO or political organisation focused on the already bright future of Africa. Having spoken to alumni and other contacts who had worked in the region, it was clear a Masters course would be considered an essential requirement to enter the sector. I was particularly interested in a global health module that I hoped would allow me to research how politics, economics and urban studies affect health challenges from a business development perspective.

On completion of the Masters, I now work as a management consultant working across business issues including those interested in the African market. It’s doubtful I would’ve secured this highly competitive position had I not had developed a wide-ranging knowledge of the continent through course modules as well as research and analytical skills from my dissertation. I see this role as a stepping stone to learning key professional experience to later move into a role where I can drive business opportunities in Africa in a responsible way.
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Timing

- often beneficial to have time away from education to reflect on whether
  - postgrad study really is the right decision
  - which programme to pursue
- 58% of postgrads are 25+ when enter study
  - highest proportion of postgrads enter after a break of 3+ years*
  - employers may well sponsor and give study-release for experienced staff who want to develop their career

To Consider:
- Is a masters course right for me right now do I need more time to reflect?

* Source: HEFCE
Will a Masters help with my career?

Masters degrees in the UK highly regarded by employers

- 90% of 41K leavers in 2014/5 in work or further study 6 months after graduating
  - 86% of those in work professional or managerial role
- Full-time employed young graduates under 30:
  - **Highly skilled employment**: 74% postgrad Vs 56% undergrad
  - **Median salary**: £28,000 postgrad Vs £24,000 undergrad
- some roles a Masters is an essential or highly desirable requirement
  - eg. International development, environmental, cultural heritage
- can accelerate career progression or facilitate career change

*Source: DLHE Survey/ Grad labour market statistics 2015/16*
Careers Essentials

- How to build and utilise networks in effective job hunting
- Thursday 2\textsuperscript{nd} February 2017: 4 to 6pm
Hi Neil,

I see you did the MBA at LBS. I am interested in taking the course myself? Could I possibly have a chat with you about it?

Thanks,

[Message to Neil Appleton]
Case study 2 – Fatima: MSc Finance at Bath Spa

In the final year of my maths degree, I had started panicking about what to do on leaving my course and applied along with most of my friends to a number of prestigious graduate schemes in areas such accounting, finance and banking. I had little knowledge of what the work in these sectors entailed and no commercial work experience that seemed to be so important to employers on their application forms. Having struggled with the online aptitude tests and initial interviews, I received no offers and decided to concentrate for the remainder of the year on my exams.

On graduating with a 2.2, I found it difficult to find grad scheme roles that would accept this degree class and still had very little idea of what I wanted to do. I took some time off, did some temping and the following September, I secured a place on an MSc Finance course that I’m hoping will give me more of a vocational background and transferrable skills so that I can apply with more confidence and a stronger CV in the future. It also delays having to make a decision about jobs which is quite daunting. The course is far more intensive than at undergraduate level and I’m finding difficult to find the space to understand what I should be applying to let alone make applications.
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However………

- Many applicants **wrongly believe** that a Masters will automatically enhance career and earnings
  - Professional exams may take precedence (study fatigue)
  - Likely to only benefit from a Masters if complemented by **relevant work experience**
    - Is there the opportunity for in-course placements of work experience?
    - Would you be better off using the time to build workplace experience?
- Majority of grad scheme employers do **not** require a Masters and it will not compensate for a 2.2
- A Masters is an expensive way of buying time…..
  - What will you do to ensure you won’t be in this same position the following year?

**To Consider:** Are your careers goals clear?
- better to spend time in the workplace or research your options in a gap year?
- Is the course accreditation the industry standard (eg BPS for psychologists)/ is qualification internationally transferrable?
- will the qualification definitely improve your career prospects?
  - is it a requirement for jobs you’re interested in?
- What are course employment rates and calibre of outcomes.
Prospects.ac.uk – Browse job profiles
https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles

Environmental manager

Environmental managers, also increasingly known as sustainability managers, are responsible for overseeing the environmental performance of private, public and voluntary sector organisations.

They develop, implement and monitor environmental strategies, policies and programmes that promote sustainable development.

Environmental managers examine corporate activities to establish where improvements can be made and ensure compliance with environmental legislation across the organisation.

Environmental managers have a wide remit and will review the whole operation, carrying out environmental audits and assessments, identifying and resolving environmental problems and ensuring necessary changes are implemented.

They also carry out important staff training and ensure all members of the workforce recognise and understand their own contributions to improved environmental performance.

**Responsibilities**

Environmental managers have an extremely varied workload and one that usually entails a range of strategic tasks, such as:

- **[Responsibilities](#)**
- **Salary**
- **Qualifications**
- **Skills**
- **Work experience**
- **Career prospects**
- **Related jobs and courses**

See how well you match this job profile and over 400 others.

Try Career Planner >
Job research: Working backwards

Where would you like to be?
Case study 3: Robert – MSc Biomedical Engineering

I’m currently in my final year of a Biomedical Engineering degree, on course for a 2.1 and have a goal to pursue a PhD leading to a career in academia. My research skills have been honed through multiple lab-based projects along with substantive summer experience both in academic and industry in research labs. Friends have told me that pursuing a PhD is highly competitive and will be difficult without a Masters so even though I’m worried about incurring additional debt, I’m considering applying to a range of relevant Masters courses.
Masters Vs PhD

Masters motivation:
- unsure about areas of specialist interest
- more attractive to potential supervisors
- additional research experience
  - MRes v MA/ MSc v other research experience
FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN CHOOSING A COURSE
Subject

What specific subject areas interest you?
- consider modules, teaching-styles, research areas
- confirm all modules will be available

Are you:
- prepared for the intensity of Masters Vs undergrad study
- excited by opportunity to write (another, even longer) dissertation?

If you’re changing subject:
- Are you really interested in this new area – why?
- Do you really know what it is?
- Research hard and investigate niches
Masters course search websites

www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-courses

www.findamasters.com/
Postgraduate Open days

Department of Philosophy

Postgraduate open day

The Department participates in the University’s postgraduate open day each year. Open days provide the opportunity to:

- see the Department
- meet the admissions officer
- see the campus
- attend presentations
- find out information about what it’s like to be a postgraduate student
- find out information about ways to fund postgraduate study.

We would be delighted to meet you at the open day and talk to you about our postgraduate courses, research opportunities and funding for postgraduate study here at Nottingham. Of course, you don’t have to wait for an open day if you have a question. Simply get in contact with us. We’re looking forward to hearing from you.

Did you miss the last open day?

No problem. The University has compiled a number of video presentations so you can catch up on the following topics:

- Welcome to The University of Nottingham

Useful links

- Campus video and virtual campus tours
- Nottingham life
# Postgraduate Subject Tables (Guardian)

## Biosciences

Click on any header to rank scores in order. Expenditure per student is ranked out of 10 and is based on full-time equivalent (FTE) study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Institution</th>
<th>Number of Full time students</th>
<th>Number of Part time students</th>
<th>% Students from Outside UK</th>
<th>Expenditure per student ($/10)</th>
<th>Student:staff ratio</th>
<th>FT Completion Rate</th>
<th>PT Completion Rate</th>
<th>Tuition Fees: Home/EU students</th>
<th>Tuition Fees: Overseas students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
<td>£4,500</td>
<td>£11,250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aberystwyth</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td></td>
<td>£4,500</td>
<td>£12,800-£17,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangor</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>23.3</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td></td>
<td>£4,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Too big? Too small?**
- **New ideas? International contacts? Communication/cultural challenges?**
- **How much attention will you get?**
- **If low, why?**
- **Can you afford it?**
COSTS AND FUNDING
Costs: course fees vary upon subject and institution’s reputation:
- UK and EU £4-9K per year (STEM tend to be higher)
- International – £14K
- Overseas fees and living costs can be much cheaper
  - eg Netherlands Vs UK perhaps by as much as 50%
Living costs – NUS suggest accommodation and living costs outside London circa 8-12K (London closer to £13K)
- Possibility of living at home?
- 50% FT Masters students work part-time
  - 10-15 hours per week depending upon course intensity

Source: UCAS/ NUS research
Funding

Scholarships: tuition fees/ living costs up to £3K
- Awarded for academic excellence/ potential outstanding research
- Discounts to returning students
- Apply after received conditional offer
- [www.scholarship-search.org.uk](http://www.scholarship-search.org.uk)

Grants, foundations and trusts: £100 to £1,000 tuition/ other costs (e.g., childcare)
- Apply and receive for unlimited number awards
- Stronger case: disadvantaged – lower income, disabilities, research linked to community or disadvantaged country
- Typically apply after received conditional offer

Sources:
- online: trustfinding.org.uk/ charitychoice.co.uk
- Grants register 2017 available in UCL Careers Library
- University/ Departmental website
Funding continued….

- **Masters loans (New from 2016/17)**
  - Non-means-tested and repayable up to £10K for UK and EU students
  - Repayable at 6% of earnings over £21K
  - [https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/funding-postgraduate-study/masters-loans](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/postgraduate-study/funding-postgraduate-study/masters-loans)

- **Research Council Grants:**
  - Selected research Masters and new route PhDs
  - Easier for STEM than Arts and humanities
  - Definitive list available studentships on individual research council websites:
    - [http://www.rcuk.ac.uk](http://www.rcuk.ac.uk)

- **Professional and Career development loan (PCDL)**
- **Crowdfunding eg [https://hubbub.net](https://hubbub.net)**
- **Employer Sponsorship**
- **Disabled Student Allowances (DSAs)**
APPLICATIONS
Applications

Process and requirements:
- Normally require a 2.1 at Bachelors level
- those with lower class may be considered with relevant experience (contact department)
- what grades can you expect? – spread the risk (apply at several levels)
- apply directly to chosen institution(s)
- no limit to courses can apply to (likely 5 to 8)
- Lead time on decisions - 2 weeks to 2 months
- outcomes: unconditional/ conditional offer/ interview/ unsuccessful

Deadlines: most courses accept applications continuously
- offers on a first come, first served basis
- ideally apply at least 8 months before course begins
  - Especially if looking to secure funding)
- late enrolments are common however
Personal statements

Background
- 1-2 pages of A4 (some prescriptive on wordcount)
- No two statements likely to be the same

Potential content
- Why do you want to do the course/ research?
  - Why this subject?
  - Modules/ work experience opportunities
  - Why this institution?
- What are your future goals and how the course will help you meet them?
- Your preparation
  - How has undergrad study prepared you?
  - research projects or independent work
- Your skills-set
  - What academic/ higher-level study skills do you have to offer?
1to1 coaching

Current students:
- CV/ Application coaching - 15 minutes (Mon – Fri) lunch/ early evening
- Short guidance – 15 minutes (Mon – Fri)
- Long guidance – 60 minutes on referral from short guidance
- Interview coaching – 60 minutes (on condition ‘real’ employer interview)

Recent leavers:
- Graduates appointment – 30 minutes (Mon – Thu) inc. lunchtime/ early evening/ phone/ skype (recommended use especially if 1st Graduates coaching session)
- CV/ Application coaching – 15 minutes – same service as for current students
- Interview coaching – 60 minutes (on condition of ‘real’ employer interview)

Booking
- Online: up to 7 days in advance: My Careers Service
  - http://www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/students/mycareersservice
- By phone: (call 020 3549 5900 after 9.30am)/ in person
Summary

Is Masters-level study the right option right now?
  - Motivation
  - Timing

Apply early
  - Some course are competitive
  - Funding dependent upon offers

Seek support through UCL Careers
  - 1to1 coaching with decisions
  - 1to1 coaching with applications
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