Who is Old School Thai?
Old School Thai manufactures and distributes two lines of Thai curry paste – red and green.

How did UCL help?
Brett Cowie, one of the founders, initially approached HELO to help with putting together a business plan to use in pitching for funding. The focus changed after meeting with the student team and the brief changed to identifying aspects of the business which could be improved, in particular reducing production costs.

The initial fact finding looked at expenditure, logistics, ingredients, production and preparation and steps Old School Thai had already taken. The findings identified three ways of reducing costs, from taking the production in-house, to investing in equipment and reducing labour costs to finding a larger manufacturer and bringing down the unit cost.

“The students were hard working and delivered an invaluable piece of research which detailed the costs savings and a list of potential manufacturers. This opened up new possibilities we weren’t previously aware of.”

What were the results?
As well as showing the cost saving, the research looked at potential manufacturers leading to invaluable information for Brett. The students worked independently after the initial briefing sessions which left Brett to focus on other areas of the business.

Old School Thai’s short term objective is to secure another manufacturer and put those cost savings into practice, then improve logistics and marketing to increase sales with the longer term view being to add other products to the range.

“We are currently exploring the manufacturing options as this will reduce our costs by 30%.”

Brett Cowie, Founder, Old School Thai

The final word
“Once we have started working with a new manufacturer, we will be in a position to look to UCL Advances again for their input, possibly working with a mentor for marketing and sales needs. I would definitely recommend the UCL Advances services to help start-up businesses like mine.”

For more information see:
www.oldschoolthai.co.uk
About UCL
UCL (University College London) was established in 1826 and is ranked as one of the world’s top-ten universities. The university is a modern, outward-looking institution, with more than 4,000 academic and research staff committed to engaging with the major issues of our times. It has a global reach, with 34% of its students coming from outside the UK, from almost 140 countries.

www.ucl.ac.uk

About UCL Advances
The centre for entrepreneurship at UCL, UCL Advances, offers training, networking and business support for staff, students and external entrepreneurs to encourage and enable new enterprises to get going. Unique in the UK Higher Education sector, its primary role is to promote a culture of entrepreneurship on campus and engagement with entrepreneurs and small businesses beyond UCL’s boundaries, and currently delivers over 30 activity programmes.

UCL Advances is affiliated with UCL Enterprise, which provides UCL’s structures for engaging with business for commercial and societal benefit.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances
www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise

About Business Support
UCL Advances provides direct business support for internal and external organisations through a variety of programmes and activities such as 1–1 advice, problem solving through student consultancy, student internships, mentoring and others.

• We help London-based businesses grow and develop by analysing business needs and connecting them to relevant interventions such as industry mentors;
• Through pairing teams of UCL and LBS students with businesses we deliver short-term consultancy projects addressing specific organisation needs;
• We broker relationships and fund exchanges between new and aspiring entrepreneurs with experienced entrepreneurs in another member state of the European Union;
• Individual angel investors connected to UCL provide seed investment to SMEs engaged with UCL Advances programmes; and
• We offer fully funded SME Internships where UCL students spend eight weeks in a London SME working alongside the director(s) to deliver real results and lasting impact in the host organization whilst learning about enterprise.

www.ucl.ac.uk/advances/business/support