SMILE matched Anna Matthew’s business, University Mentoring Organisation (UMO), with mentor Kim Dolman after Anna approached UCL Advances for support. Her company was receiving increasing uptake from universities in its provision of mentoring by highly qualified professionals to students in London universities. New staff had been hired to meet the demands, and Anna wanted to ensure that “all was being done that could be to create and establish a solid and sustainable organisation which provided scope for growth and development of a much needed social enterprise.”

Kim has mentored several other businesses through the SMILE programme and has set up his own company providing business and technical support.

“The mentor aimed to identify and focus on specific aspects of the business within 12 sessions. This enabled a clearer understanding of the major issues involved in the enterprise. Growth and development were considered as main themes throughout – this involved focusing on the dynamics of the relationships within the team as well as discussing the administrative aspects of finance.”

Through helping Anna draw up financial projection spreadsheets Kim has enabled her to get a much clearer overall picture of the business, showing its potential for growth. Looking at communications in the company has immediately benefitted the team, as well as setting processes in motion for the future.

“Discussions about recruitment were particularly valuable. These highlighted the importance of recruiting mentors who not only met the requirements of the role but also fitted the ethos of the organisation… since working with a business mentor, there is a sense of UMO being monitored in a positive way.”

Since working with Kim, UMO has been able to expand the number of London universities accessing their services, enabling them to continue the positive impact they have on students’ lives. The demand has been such that there has been an expansion in the recruitment of mentors by 25%, with a projected rise of 50% by spring 2013.

“By having regular meetings with an experienced business person, discussing the organisation, reflecting on what is working and that which needs to be changed as well as what is potentially being missed in a straightforward pragmatic way, has helped to shape UMO and has enabled its growth and development.”

Anna Matthew, Founder, University Mentoring Organisation
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

For more information see:
www.ucl.ac.uk/enterprise