Teachus is a London-based tuition agency, covering Camden, Islington and Hackney boroughs amongst others, founded by UCL graduates Jay Ruparelia and Remal Tailor, who had a hard time finding affordable and quality tutors to help them prepare for their exams prior to entering university. When they later met at UCL and shared their experiences with one another, a business was born.

When Jay and Remal approached UCL Advances’ SMILE mentoring programme in 2011, they were looking for guidance on how to organise the business. Through their mentor, they got so much more – the mentor helped them organise their time, strategise and motivated them. They also found ways to automate and streamline processes and to look at the most cost-effective marketing strategies. Very quickly, Jay and Remal found that they had a lot more time on their hands and they managed to open their first study centre, increased their turnover to take on two part-time employees, and freed up enough of their time to concentrate on new business deals. One centre led to another and today they have five study centres used by 1,000 students in London. A further 2,000 students have used their one-to-one home tuition service and they have more than 500 tutors.

Summer 2012 proved to be the most fruitful term for Teachus. They secured a contract, funded by the Department of Education, to have a summer school for 350 children in five schools. The mentor played a pivotal role in helping to structure the deal. The programme was such a success that it received media attention and the Minister for Children and Families attended the finale of the programme. On the back of this, Jay and Remal have been invited to sit on a steering group to consult the Department of Education on the effectiveness of summer schools and how to implement policies related to the government funding of the summer schools.

Going forward, Teachus aims to have 5,000 students in 100 schools at their government funded summer school in the summer of 2013. They want 100 study centres in London where students who cannot afford one-to-one prices can come and engage in quality small group tuition. Ultimately, they want a study centre at every primary and secondary school in London. Teachus believes every student deserves at least an hour a week of individual or small group intervention, and UCL could not agree more.

“Not only was someone listening to us, but they were giving us solutions! We could not be where we are now without the amazing support from UCL Advances.”

Jay Ruparelia
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 provides direct business support for internal and external organisations through a variety of programmes, such as grants, space provision, advice and problem solving. The SMILE programme is one of these programmes.

SMILE (Selected Mentors and Interims for London Enterprises) is an initiative that seeks to connect the wealth of corporate and entrepreneurial experience to be found in one of the world’s leading business cities, with up-and-coming small and medium-sized London businesses. By sharing their acumen over the short or long term, mentors can help businesses grow and develop – while making fewer mistakes than they might otherwise.

www.ucl.ac.uk/smile