

February 2012  
Edition

Dear International Student,

In this edition you will find:

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## Interview:

Volunteering  
gives you the  
opportunity to:

- Improve your confidence and self-esteem
- Take part in training and learn new skills
- Discover things you enjoy doing
- Gain work experience and enhance your CV
- Work as a part of a team
- Meet new people and make friends
- Have fun outside the university
- Gain an insight into work in a particular sector
- Develop networking skills and make contacts

## John Braime - Manager of the UCLU Volunteering Services Unit

### Q: What is volunteering about?

Volunteering is about connecting students with the community. London is a busy and multicultural city worth exploring; volunteering gives students the opportunity to become part of the London community.

Volunteering is about helping other people but also about helping you. Students who get involved with voluntary work often tell me that helping others makes them happier, enhances their confidence and skills, and helps them meet new people.

### Q: What is your advice to students who think that they are too busy with their studies to get involved with volunteering?



The [Volunteering Services Unit](#) offers about 300 different activities with 10-20 new opportunities coming in every week. We run a very big [one-off programme](#) so even students who cannot make a regular commitment can get involved. Some students volunteer just one afternoon a year and others get really involved and put a lot of hours into it. Our service is very flexible and we try to meet the individual needs of each student.

### Q: How can students register with the Volunteering Services Unit?

We try to make registering with us as easy as possible for the students. They can send us an email to [volunteering@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@ucl.ac.uk), come to our office in the [Lewis's Building](#) any time or come along to one of our drop-in sessions on Tuesdays and Fridays between 1pm – 4pm. Students can sign up to receive our Newsletter by emailing us at [volunteering@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:volunteering@ucl.ac.uk) to stay up to date with the new volunteering opportunities that come in.

### Q: Can you name some of the volunteering recruiters who you work with?

We work with around 300 charities, including The British Heart Foundation, Oxfam, Keen London and many others. Students can get involved with projects such as *Beat Bullying* to support school children who have suffered bullying or work with Westminster Befriend A Family to support refugee families. We have also worked with some graduate recruiters who run community challenge type events, such as Morgan Stanley and PricewaterhouseCoopers.

**Q: Can the Volunteering Services Unit support students who have an idea how to help the local community?**

Yes, students can receive funds of up to £750 and training to devise their own community project. For instance, we have provided such support to a group of maths students who organised a maths competition for primary school children. We have also supported *VIBE* – which aims is to create opportunities for befriending people who have visual impairments and *Sew Fair*, a Fair Trade and fashion recycled project run by the Fashion Society for primary school children.

**Q: In your opinion, does volunteering improve student's career prospective?**

Graduate recruiters tell us that they value volunteering as it helps distinguish candidates who are confident, organised and have the ability to relate to other people. Volunteering is also a way for students to develop skills and discover things that they really enjoy and are good at.

## Careers:

To find out more about the skills employers want and how to prove you have them, download [What do graduates do?](#) or visit the [UCL Careers service](#).

### The top 3 types of skills most employers want to see

**Skills. Competencies. Values. Requirements.** Employers call them all sorts of different things within their job advertisements. What it all means is these are things an employer wants of their 'ideal' employee. This is quite a UK based way of recruiting staff, so what are these skills and what is the best way to show you have them? Research has shown that the top 3 types of skills most employers want to see are:

**Self-reliance Skills** – being proactive, networking, taking action, motivated and enthusiastic  
**People Skills** – team working, communication, negotiation, customer service and presenting  
**General Employment Skills** – IT skills, problem solving, analytical skills, flexibility and commercial awareness

(Source: HESCU/AGCAS 2011, *What do graduates do?*)



Employers often tell us at the careers service that graduates have problems proving to them that they do have these skills. The recent *Futuretrack* study has also confirmed that graduates think their skill levels are higher than what employers believe they are.

So what is the best way to show an employer you've got the ability to do their job? Tell them stories, providing lots of action words that give the employer evidence you have what they need. A handy acronym to this is the **STAR format**. Firstly, explain the Situation and the Task you had to do. Then go on to spend the majority of your time talking about the Actions that you took to achieve the Result. For example if you were asked to show initiative a good story may be:

- **S:** I worked at the Museum of London in Summer 2011 and
- **T:** was asked to help increase visits to the events page of their website.
- **A:** I *conducted* an audit of similar sites and *presented* my findings to the development team, *recommending* the use of 'pop-ups' to advertise forthcoming events. Mindful of industry scepticism regarding their use, I *researched* available data and *prepared* visual design ideas. Despite their initial concerns, I *persuaded* them to allocate funds for an initial trial period.
- **R:** Click-through rates were encouraging and the pop-ups are now a permanent addition to the website. This process taught me that by showing initiative and constructing a solid argument for an idea I can achieve set tasks.

## Culture:

Picasso & Modern British Art is on until 15 July 2012.

Tickets cost £14 but with a valid UCL student card you can purchase tickets at £12.20 per person.

If you are a member of the [Tate](#) you can go in for free.

## Picasso & Modern British Art

[Picasso & Modern British Art](#) opened on 15<sup>th</sup> February at [Tate Britain](#). The exhibition explores Picasso's lifelong connections with Great Britain and his impact on British modernism and on artists such as Wyndham Lewis, Francis Bacon and David Hockney. There are more than 160 works on display of which at least 60 are Picasso's own works from different periods of his life.



Highlights of the exhibition include Picasso's [Nude Woman in a Red Armchair](#) (1932) and [Nude, Green leaves and Bust](#) (1932). In 2010 [Nude, Green leaves and Bust](#), based on Picasso's muse Marie-Therese Walter, was sold for £70m making it the world's most expensive painting ever sold at auction.

You will also be able to see a reproduction of [Guernica](#) (1937), Picasso's protest at the bombing of the Basque city of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). The original work is displayed at [Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía](#) in Madrid.

In the last room, you will find [The Three Dancers](#) (1925), Picasso considered this to be one of his two greatest works alongside [Les Femmes d'Alger \(O.J.\)](#) (1911-19) - displayed in the [Museum of Modern Arts](#), New York. Picasso sold [The Three Dancers](#) to the Tate Gallery in 1965.

Enjoy!

## Completion:

The winning translations from previous years can be read at the [Stephen Spender website](#) or free booklets can be obtained by [emailing](#) the organisation.

## The Times Stephen Spender Prize for poetry in translation

The annual Times **Stephen Spender Prize** for poetry in translation celebrates the often under-rated art of literary translation. Entrants translate a poem from any language, modern or classical, and submit the original poem with their translation and a commentary of not more than 300 words in which they consider the translation process and justify their decisions regarding metre, rhyme and vocabulary (guidelines for the commentary can be found along with the rules and entry forms at the [Stephen Spender website](#)).

There are three categories – **14-and-under**, **18-and-under** and **Open** – with prizes in each category, the best entries being published in *The Times* newspaper and in a commemorative booklet produced by the Trust. Because the competition is not language-specific, it has been restricted to UK citizens and residents, though the latter includes anyone studying in the UK.

The judges enjoy the variety of the entries, not only the linguistic range (in 2011, some 43 languages were represented) but also the choice of poem. Some are familiar poems, justly famous, which bring with them their own problems – how do you make them new and fresh and improve on existing translations? – while others may be by poets unknown to the judges. Some are extracts from epic poems, while others are as brief as the Catullus ode, 'Odio et amo', which was presented as a text message: 'I h8 + I luv. / Y, u may ask. I dunno. / But 'strue + kills me.' We look forward to seeing what 2012 brings.

The closing date for this year's entries is **Friday 1 June 2012**.

Good luck!

## Immigration:

Further information is available on the UKCISA [website](#).

Changes in the UK immigration system are published on the UK Border Agency news and updates [webpage](#).

If you have any questions, you can email the International [Support Team](#)

The ATAS scheme does not apply to EEA or Swiss nationals or to anyone studying with any type of immigration permission other than a Tier 4 student visa.

Further information is available on the [FCO website](#)

## Information for students on a Tier 4 student visa

### Immigration changes to be introduced on 6 April 2012

On 13<sup>th</sup> February the Government issued a [Statement of Intent](#) about its plans to make changes to Tier 4 Students and Tier 1 Post-study work routes of the points-based system. **All changes will come into effect on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2012.** The full details should be available on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

As outlined in the Statement of Intent, the changes will be:

- If you are applying to extend your current leave as a Tier 4 student, on or after 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012 you need to show that you have £1000 per month for maintenance funds. (Page12)
- After 5<sup>th</sup> April 2012 you will no longer be able to apply for a Tier 1 Post-Study Work. (Page 8)
- A new provision will be introduced under the Tier 2 General route for graduates wishing to seek employment in the UK after completing their studies. You need to have an offer of a skilled job from a [licensed sponsor](#) and be paid at least £20,000 per year to be eligible to apply. (Page 8-9)
- A new Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur scheme will be introduced for students who have developed world class innovative ideas. To qualify you need to be sponsored by the higher education institution from which you have qualified. (Page9)

If you are looking to apply for Tier 4 leave extension on or after 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012 the fee will be:  
Postal application in the UK - £394

**In person** at one of UKBA's public enquiry offices in the UK - £716

The fees to apply for a Tier 1 Graduate Entrepreneur will be:

Postal application in the UK - £700

**In person** at one of UKBA's public enquiry offices - £1,000

The full list of fees to be introduced as of 6<sup>th</sup> April 2012 is available on the UK Border Agency [website](#).

You will be able to read more information on this topic in the next month's edition of this Newsletter. We will also put in place interactive workshops where experienced immigration professionals will be able to give you information and answer your questions on how the changes will affect you. Online registration for these workshops will open in April 2012 and you will be informed of this via email.

### Academic Technology Approval Scheme (ATAS)

The UK Border Agency amended the rules in relation to ATAS from 1 October 2011 to increase the range and level of programmes requiring ATAS clearance. These amendments will affect you if you intend to start a course or extend your leave to complete a programme of study on or after **1 January 2012** and your CAS was issued on or after 1 October 2011. You will also need to apply for a new ATAS clearance if you are changing your course or institution.

You will be required to obtain an ATAS clearance certificate if you are a Tier 4 student and your CAS letter indicates that you need ATAS clearance to study on a programme at UCL. The full list of four year undergraduate, research and taught masters programmes requiring ATAS clearance is available on the [UCL website](#) and is subject to change at short notice, in line with changes to the immigration rules.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) who is responsible for issuing ATAS certificates, aims to process applications within four weeks of the date of receipt. If you are looking to extend your current leave, you need to have received your ATAS clearance before submitting your immigration application. If you are using the batch scheme run by the [UCLU Rights & Advice Centre](#), you may be able to submit your application to the UK Border Agency when your ATAS clearance is still pending.

The **Student Centre** is on the Ground Floor of the Chadwick Building, [Bloomsbury Map](#), reference 3C

The opening times are Monday to Friday 10am – 4pm. You may find it most convenient to call in on a Wednesday afternoon.

### Visa checking

It is a condition of your Tier 4 visa that you bring your visa to the **Student Centre** for it to be copied and stored on your file and your electronic record to be updated. Please do remember that if you have recently been issued with a new visa you must bring it in with your passport as soon as you can.

Sessions to check the visas of those students who were not required to show them as a part of the enrolment process this year will be put in place soon. They will be for those of you with Tier 4 visas who re-enrolled for the second or subsequent year of your programme on-line via Portico in the summer. Reminders about this will be sent out shortly by email so do please remember to act on this as soon as you can.

It is also important that if your current visa expires before the end of your programme you allow plenty of time to apply for an extension. You'll find information on how to do this on the Current student's [webpage](#).

### UCL Students Union:

Work deadlines and exams are fast approaching.

If you, your flatmate or someone around you is starting to feel **stressed** or generally **feeling low** and **finding things difficult** - we have a lot of services to support you

[Gower Place Practice](#)

[Psychological Services](#)

[Nightline](#)

[Dean of Students \(Welfare\)](#)

**Please do not suffer in silence!**

### Events and updates

#### Rights & Advice Centre – changes to opening hours

Opening hours during Term-time

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 10am-4pm

Wednesday 10am-2pm

During vacations and reading weeks the Centre will be closed for lunch from 1pm-2pm

#### UCLU Elections

Please vote for the next International Students' Officer (part time) and Welfare & International Officer (full time). Voting opens on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and closes March 9<sup>th</sup> 2012

More information is available at: [www.uclu.org/elections](http://www.uclu.org/elections)

#### Language Cafe

The International Students' Forum recently set up the Language Café - an event that aims to bring together students who wish to learn a new language or practice their discussional language skills. The first forum took place on 14<sup>th</sup> January and was a great success – turning into a great way to make new friends. The Café was originally a one off event, but due to the positive feedback received it will become a regular occurrence, running on fortnightly basis! New languages will feature every month. February's languages will be: ENGLISH (International Students), POLISH, FRENCH, JAPANESE and PORTUGUESE!

If you have a particular language request for the Language Cafe, please leave a message on the [Facebook wall](#).

The next Language Café will take place on Saturday [25th February 2012](#). This is a FREE event.

So go along to the Language Café to meet new people, enjoy a cup of coffee and start your weekend off with a leisurely morning conversation to boost your foreign language skills. All levels welcome



## Travel:

**Amsterdam** is referred to as one of the most beautiful and romantic cities in Europe.

**Amsterdam** is also famous for being a city of tolerance and diversity.

**Brussels** is the capital of the European Union.

**Bruges** is referred to as the 'Venice of the North'. It is one of Europe's best preserved medieval cities.

## Easter Tours

If you need some inspiration to decide where to go during the Easter Holidays, [International Friends](#)'s special offer might be exactly what you need.

**A four day coach tour to Amsterdam with visits to Brussels and Bruges, starting Friday 6<sup>th</sup> April to Monday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2012.**



The package includes travel, 3 night accommodation and breakfast in Amsterdam, in a 2 star hotel, a canal cruise, visits to Brussels and Bruges and services of a tour guide. The price is from £289, but as an UCL student you are entitled to a £10 discount with the discount code ALLIS10.

**Day 1** – The tour starts on Friday morning 6<sup>th</sup> April from London and the first stop is Brussels, the capital of the European Union. Following a short walking tour there, you will have some free time in the famous Grand Place. The next stop is Amsterdam where you will arrive early evening for a guided walking tour of the Red Light District after the check in.

**Day 2** – You will visit Zaanse Schanse, a living Dutch Museum with windmills, cheese-makers, clog makers and typical Dutch dress. The afternoon back in Amsterdam is free to visit Van Gogh Museum, Rijksmuseum, Heineken Brewery, Anne Frank House and Dam Square. In the evening you will have a canal cruise in one of Amsterdam's famous tour boats and will be able to enjoy the nightlife of this unique city.

**Day 3** is free or you can enjoy an optional excursion to see the world famous flowers of Keukenhof (£29 extra).

**Day 4** – You will depart Amsterdam after breakfast and stop in Bruges, the 'Venice of the North' and one of Europe's best preserved medieval cities where you can buy some Belgian specialties, beer and chocolate. You will depart Bruges late afternoon for the return ferry and arrive back in London in the evening.

Further information about this and other Easter Tours is available on the [International Friends](#) website.

Please email questions, comments and recommendations about this newsletter to the [International Support Team](#) .

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*The International Students Support Team*