Why UCL?

At UCL we're proud of our pioneering history, our distinguished present and our exciting future. UCL is a great place to be a student – here are some of the reasons why.

About UCL

// UCL is one of the world’s very best universities, consistently placed in the global top 20 in a wide range of world rankings.
// We continually review all the teaching for our undergraduate degrees, to make sure that it includes the latest discoveries and developments in the field – so you’ll be on the cutting edge.
// UCL is a world-leader in research, with outstanding results in the latest Research Excellence Framework.
// We are London’s Global University – your studies will provide a global perspective that will help you understand the major issues facing the world and will equip you to contribute to solutions.
// We’ve found that intellectually curious students learn best when they experience first-hand the challenges of conducting research – so many of our degree programmes offer the opportunity to undertake original research alongside our academic staff.
// Our students are, and always have been, selected on the basis of their talent and potential, whatever their personal, social or national background.
// Around 41% of our students come from outside the UK, so UCL has a cosmopolitan, friendly and inclusive atmosphere.
// We’re based in the heart of London – giving you outstanding academic, professional and social benefits.

Research Excellence Framework

The Research Excellence Framework (REF) carried out jointly by the UK’s Higher Education funding bodies, assesses the research strength of UK universities.

In the latest REF (December 2014), UCL was the top-rated university in the UK for research strength, by a measure of overall quality of research multiplied by the number of staff submissions. Subject entries in this Prospectus give the percentage of staff producing research of ‘world-leading’ (4*) or ‘internationally excellent’ (3*) quality.

www.ref.ac.uk
www.ucl.ac.uk/ref2014
Nobel Prize winners

There has been at least one Nobel Laureate from the UCL community every decade since the establishment of the prizes in 1901.

1900s
Chemistry: Sir William Ramsay

1910s
Literature: Rabindranath Tagore
Physics: Sir William Henry Bragg

1920s
Chemistry: Frederick Soddy
Physiology or Medicine: Archibald Vivian Hill
Physics: Owen Willans Richardson
Physiology or Medicine: Sir Frederick Gowland Hopkins

1930s
Physiology or Medicine: Sir Henry Hallett Dale
Physiology or Medicine: Otto Loewi
Physiology or Medicine: Corneille Jean François Heymans

1940s
Chemistry: Otto Hahn
Chemistry: Robert Robinson

1950s
Chemistry: Vincent du Vigneaud
Chemistry: Jaroslav Heyrovsky

1960s
Physiology or Medicine: Peter Brian Medawar
Physiology or Medicine: Francis Harry Compton Crick
Physiology or Medicine: Andrew Fielding Huxley
Chemistry: George Porter (Baron Porter of Luddenham)

1970s
Physiology or Medicine: Sir Bernard Katz
Physiology or Medicine: Ulf Svante von Euler

1980s
Physiology or Medicine: Sir James Black

1990s
Physiology or Medicine: Bert Sakmann

2000s
Economics: James Heckman
Physiology or Medicine: Sir Paul Nurse
Physiology or Medicine: Sir Martin Evans
Physics: Charles Kao

2010s
Physics: Peter Higgs
Physiology or Medicine: James Rothman
Physiology or Medicine: John O’Keefe

UCL’s firsts

- The first English university to admit students regardless of class or religion
- The first English university to admit women students on equal terms with men
- The first university to be founded in London
- The first university in England to teach English Literature, French, Geography, German and Italian at university level, and the first to offer the systematic teaching of Engineering, Law and Medicine
- The first university in England to be the sole sponsor of an academy – a non-selective mixed state school in our home borough of Camden.

Sir William Ramsay discovered five noble gases (argon, helium, krypton, neon and xenon) in the 1890s whilst at UCL

UCL in facts and figures*

- Founded in 1826
- More than 39,000 students, of whom around 18,200 are undergraduates
- 58% female and 42% male students
- More than 16,000 students from countries outside the UK
- 60 academic departments/units in eleven faculties
- Staff to student ratio of 1:10.2
- Our academic community includes 29 Fellows of the Royal Society, 26 Fellows of the British Academy, 13 Fellows of the Royal Academy of Engineering and 82 Fellows of the Academy of Medical Sciences.

*All figures correct as of 1 February 2017

Archaeology undergraduates undertaking excavations in the Preseli Hills, the source of the Stonehenge bluestones, with world-leading authority, Professor Mike Parker Pearson

The UCL Observatory at Mill Hill in North London is a great resource for students of Astrophysics. Students at the Observatory even discovered a supernova in 2014!