



UCL Academic Manual

Chapter 1: Admissions, Registration and Student Conduct

Annex 1.1.3

Undergraduate Recruitment and Admissions Good Practice

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Good Practice

1. Good practice means that regard is paid to UCL's Equal Opportunities Policy and to the QAA Quality Code for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education Chapter B2: Recruitment, Selection and Admission to HE.

Process prior to application

2. In this context good practice means:

- Provision of accurate information in print through the publication of the UCL Undergraduate Prospectus and on the Web
- a central information point for admission enquiries
- a person in each Department and Faculty readily available to answer admission enquiries
- an invitation to applicants with disabilities to contact UCL's Student Disability Co-ordinator to discuss what facilities are available
- appropriate open days for prospective applicants.

Response to application

3. In this context good practice means:

- all letters being personalised (Dear Mr, Ms, or Dear John) wherever possible, and not addressed to Dear Applicant
- early departmental acknowledgement of application with information about the processing timescale
- prompt processing of application.

Interviewing and Open Days

4. In this context good practice means:

- provision of relevant information about the programme/department /UCL in advance of the visit, including clear instructions on how to find the department
- a programme of events sent with the invitation to the interview/open day
- stating clearly in the invitation to attend the purpose of the interview/open day i.e. whether it forms part of the selection process or is intended to furnish the applicant with more information about UCL etc. or both
- information on what, if any, arrangements there may be should any parents decide to accompany the applicant
- ensuring that all staff and students involved are fully aware of their responsibilities and are available at the required times and venues [this is particularly relevant where more than one department is involved in this process]
- a departmental welcome point
- trained interviewers and well-briefed staff (academic and administrative) and students
- a minimum of two interviewers for every interview
- an informal tour of UCL
- the opportunity to meet current students
- realistic information about when applicants may expect to hear the outcome of any selection decision (if appropriate)
- sending written thanks for attendance at interview/open day and, if appropriate early communication to the applicant of the decision (made by the Faculty on the recommendation of the department) even if the recommendation to the Faculty is that the applicant be rejected.
- departments must not provide the details of any offer they are recommending to the Faculty in any communication with applicants, but they may indicate that they are recommending the offer of a place.

5. Attendance at an interview should not be the sole reason for any visit to UCL; additional "open day" activities should be organised including elements as described below, so that applicants can be given a better insight into the department and UCL. This also avoids the expense and inconvenience to applicants which might result from organising interviews and open days on separate occasions.

6. The purpose of the interview/open day i.e. whether or not it is to form part of the selection process, should be clearly stated in the invitation to attend.
7. Those involved in the day, be they academic or administrative staff, or students, should be well-briefed, enthusiastic and be able to give an accurate impression of the department and UCL. Current students have been found to be our most enthusiastic and helpful ambassadors in this respect.
8. Meeting current students, e.g. over coffee or other refreshments, including lunch.
9. Students are also ideal for taking applicants on tours of UCL, to include where possible a visit to a Hall of Residence and the UCL Union.
10. When applicants arrive at UCL, there should be a departmental welcome point and a member of staff and/or a student to greet them.
11. A programme outlining the activities of the day should be sent with the invitation to the interview/open day. Efforts should be made to minimise the amount of time candidates are left unoccupied. Activities departments may consider are: displays, talks by staff and students, a mini-lecture or tutorial, video or other presentation, briefing sessions on departmental structure/modules, etc.
12. Some departments may require students to be tested or assessed in some way (including speaking a foreign language). In these instances it is essential that all applicants are informed of what they may expect in advance of the visit.
13. The scheduling of interviews and other activities should take account of the distance applicants have to travel both to arrive at UCL and to return home.
14. Departments should also ensure that all staff and students involved in the interview event are fully aware of their responsibilities and available at the required times and venues (this is particularly relevant where more than one department is involved in this process).

Process prior to admission including confirmation

15. In this context good practice means:
 - at least one well-briefed member of staff in each department and faculty to deal authoritatively with student enquiries after A-level, etc., results have been released
 - individual departmental letters of confirmation and congratulation
 - information about enrolment and registration procedures, induction arrangements, reading lists, etc. sent well in advance of the start of the academic year.
16. It is one of the duties of departmental Admissions Tutors, or an appropriately informed deputy, to be in UCL when the A-level results are made available (normally three working days before their general publication) until such time as they have been able to deal with the confirmation of applicants' places. If an Admissions Tutor is unable to be in UCL at any time during this period, they must ensure that both their deputy and their Faculty Office are able to contact them throughout.
17. If not the departmental Admissions Tutor, then some other member of the department should be available to deal with student enquiries between the publication of the A-level results and the deadline for confirmation of applicants' places. Members of staff who are not adequately informed should not be left to handle enquiries. It creates a very bad impression when either nobody, or someone who cannot provide help, is left to handle enquiries.

18. All decisions and any subsequent changes must be immediately communicated to the Faculty Office or Admissions as appropriate.

19. All departments must ensure that there is cover from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm (including lunch times) to handle telephone enquiries, during the first two days after the publication of the A-level results to students. After that period, reasonable cover should be provided up until the start of the academic year.

20. At confirmation time, the applicant should be sent an individual departmental letter of congratulation (where appropriate) and welcome, which should also include additional, relevant information (see above). Some departments individualise these further by appending a short hand-written note at the end.

21. UCL does not enter Clearing and, only in exceptional situations of procedural expediency, should any student be accepted via the UCAS Clearing process.

Induction

22. In this context good practice means:

- participation in the UCL Transition Programme
- efficient enrolment and registration procedures
- an orientation programme for international students
- a formal welcome by the Dean of the Faculty and/or Faculty Tutor
- familiarisation with the whole institution
- maps
- general information booklets
- introduction to, e.g., libraries, computer facilities, UCL Union, student life in London, etc.
- familiarisation with the department and a welcome by the Head of Department
- tour of department, where appropriate
- written information about the department, its modules, facilities, who to contact, etc.
- social events with fellow students
- social events with staff
- early meeting with Personal Tutor
- student mentors
- advice on relevant study and essay writing skills.

Information supplied

23. In this context good practice means:

- a statement of the aims and objectives of the degree programme
- clear information on the structure of the degree programme

- clear information on degree programme requirements (e.g. attendance, plagiarism, rules for progression, etc.)
- clear information on individual module selection, both within and outside the department
- information about bursaries, scholarships and hardship funds
- information about staff responsibilities in the department
- information about student responsibilities
- where appropriate, information on preliminary reading.

Additional ideas for Departments

24. Smaller departments may wish to collaborate with other departments in order to share the burden associated with the organisation of interview and open days. Similarly, Faculty Interview/Open Days are a way of spreading the load.

25. The Access and Admissions Office in Student and Registry Services is happy to talk to departments about any other central input they feel they need.