

MA Situated Practice

2018-19

This programme information sheet includes details of the structure and content of the course, and FAQs



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MA Situated Practice

Programme Director: James O'Leary

OVERVIEW

Situated practice is a key development in arts and humanities, where expertise comes not from a focus on a pre-defined discipline or subject (art, architecture or design for example) but from a creative and critical position that operates across and beyond these categories. It is a rapidly growing and highly active post-disciplinary domain.

Situated Practice is internationally understood as a domain that may encompass activity and research in curatorship, public engagement, event design, creative regeneration, participation design & activism, site-writing, situated film & video making, information design & new media work, communication design & publishing, online environment design & civic media, and management of associated institutes.

This pioneering programme will lead students into making work that is situated physically and engages with contemporary social, cultural and political conditions. Outcomes will combine media – comprising site-specific and performative installations, interventions, designs and events – that engage with their contexts and particular publics.

Located within The Bartlett School of Architecture, the programme will examine the fertile territories where the discipline of architecture cross-pollinates with the other creative arts. Graduates from MA Situated Practice will be uniquely educated and highly equipped to pioneer new forms of hybrid practice between art and architecture in the domains of urban design, spatial design, event design, critical and theoretical writing, performance and craft. The neighbourhood of Hackney Wick, where the programme will be located, is home to the greatest concentration of artists in the UK.

Broadly, the MA programme has two goals:

- To provide a high-quality stand-alone qualification which trains critical, innovative and transdisciplinary practitioners in the making of projects which address the specific concerns of particular sites, and to develop modes of research response and propositional transformation appropriate for those sites.
- To provide high-quality practice-led research training to enable students to carry out future doctoral and action research in the field.

The programme will provide knowledge and training in the principles and skills of situated practice in relation to conceptual spatial theories in art, architecture, performativity, urbanism and writing. Its objectives include a strong understanding of appropriate research methodologies in art and design practice-led research, specifically relating to approaches to criticality, performativity and textuality. In addition to this focus, students will develop and make 'situated practice' projects that are site related. These may vary from physical installations to digital interventions, to site writings. These projects will be the host of critique using a combination of actions, artefacts, images and words, establishing the individuals' final thesis in the field.

The MA course aims to prepare students in the following four ways:

1. **SITE IDENTIFICATION**
To be able to identify interesting sites and their associated problematics in order to frame appropriate and pertinent research questions, and to define relevant project parameters through initial scoping.
2. **SITE ANALYSIS & RESPONSE**
To be able to develop relevant and potentially original practice-led research methodologies for investigating the social, cultural and political pasts, presents and futures of specific sites, and their particular material, visual, textual and spatial conditions.
3. **INTERVENTION & PROPOSITION**
To be able to create rigorous, innovative and ambitious interventions which respond to particular site conditions, combining critical and creative modes of situated practice, developed out of empirical, material and conceptual research, and in response to specific the issues, needs and problematics associated with the site.
4. **EXHIBITION & DOCUMENTATION**
To be able to reflect upon initial interventions, to conduct further research to produce final site-specific projects and associated high quality modes of documentation and dissemination, that are appropriately and precisely resolved technically, materially and aesthetically, and which engage ethically and effectively with relevant audiences.

This programme will draw upon the related and internationally recognised expertise within the Bartlett Faculty of the Built Environment, as well as across UCL generally, including our fine art practice at the Slade and our urban practice through the Urban Laboratory, as well as anthropology, art history, film and gender studies, literature, material culture, political science and urban geography. For several years now, the Bartlett has run a highly successful BSc in Architecture and Interdisciplinary Studies, a programme that offers undergraduates an opportunity to understand architectural design in an expanded field.

The Bartlett also hosts one of the leading PhD by Design (PhD AD) programmes in the world, with candidates drawn from across the spatial disciplines, including architects, artists, and curators. One of the key figures in the PhD programme is Bartlett Professor of Architecture and Art, Jane Rendell, who has developed internationally recognised, award-winning works in the field. Prof. Rendell will occupy a leading role on the MA. The course will be directed by James O’Leary, whose work with Kreider + O’Leary has been exhibited at Tate Britain, The Whitechapel Gallery and Lisbon Architecture Triennale.

As a host for the MA, the Bartlett School of Architecture possesses an internationally recognised profile in the subject of architecture as an expanded field, with a reputation for engaging closely with fine art processes, alongside visual, material and technological expertise. Students will be located in an ambitious and high-achieving context at Here East, providing an ideal environment in which to balance intellectual curiosity and creative flair, with an essential requirement to excel. The MA Situated Practice is thus well positioned to occupy a leading international position in this exciting new domain, defining new forms of practice that concern the history, culture, and future of artistic and architectural sites as critical and creative territories.

STRUCTURE

Duration

The Programme is normally taught over a 15-month period, starting in September and finishing in the following December. In this time, students must complete and pass 180 credits. 90 credits are completed in approved taught modules, and 90 credits are gained from the 'Major Project' module. Where relevant, students may replace 15 credits with another UCL department's graduate module, with the permission of the Programme Director and the respective Department.

Modules

Term 1

SITUATED PRACTICE: RESEARCH METHODS (BENVGSP1 - 15 credits)

MEDIATED ENVIRONMENTS (BENVGSP2 - 30 credits)

Term 2

CRITICAL SPATIAL PRACTICE: SITE WRITING (BENVGSP3 - 30 credits)

THE OPEN WORK (BENVGSP4 - 15 Credits)

Term 3 & 4

MAJOR PROJECT (BENVGSP5 - 90 credits)

- Stage 1: Intervention
- Stage 2: Documentation
- Stage 3: Exhibition

MA Situated Practice - 15-month programme, 180 credits

Term 1 Sept-Dec	Term 2 Jan-March	Term 3 April-June	Summer July-Sept	Term 4 Sept-Dec
Field Trip		Live projects		Final Examinations and show
<p>Situated Practice: Research Methods Core - 15 credits Jane Rendell</p> <p>10 seminars on practice-led research methods; 10 lectures by theorists and practitioners; two tutorials to guide the drafting of the project proposal and choice of relevant optional modules to develop skills for executing the project.</p>	<p>Critical Spatial Practice - Site Writing Core - 30 credits Jane Rendell</p> <p>A combination of seminars, workshops, tutorials and crits.</p> <p>Skills taught: creative writing and book-making.</p>	<p>Major Project Core - 90 credits James O'Leary</p> <p>Stage 1: Intervention (formative assessment in late June - 30 credits)</p> <p>Students allocated individual tutor, studio working, tutorials, group crits, specialist training workshops</p>	<p>Stage 2: Documentation (formative assessment mid-September - 30 credits)</p> <p>Students allocated individual tutor, tutorials, off-site working</p>	<p>Stage 3: Exhibition (final assessment in mid-December of all 90 credits)</p> <p>Students allocated individual tutor, studio working, tutorials, group crits, preparing work for final exhibition in specific sites and the studio</p> <p>- Verbal presentation</p>
<p>Mediated Environments - Core 30 credits James O'Leary</p> <p>A combination of seminars, workshops, tutorials and crits.</p> <p>Skills taught: audio and video environments - theory and practice.</p>	<p>The Open Work Optional - 15 credits James O'Leary</p> <p>A combination of seminars, workshops, tutorials and crits.</p> <p>Skills taught: situated research and practice specific to students' interests</p>			
Previous cohort				Next cohort

Teaching modes

Tutorials and seminars are the leading teaching modes, together with: lectures, group working, writing workshops, research seminars, film screenings and reviews of student work by Bartlett School of Architecture staff and visiting researchers; building and gallery visits in London and further afield and an annual fieldtrip. Modules use these advanced-level teaching approaches to encourage innovative student-led work. The Major Project provides students with an opportunity to conduct their own original research into a specific subject of their own choosing.

CONTENT

The Modules

Situated Practice: Research Methods

BENVGSP1 is a module that uses a weekly series of lectures and seminars to introduce the students to the main types of research method adopted in situated practice. It provides an underlying conceptual framework concerning practice-led research, and also makes reference to examples of significant site-specific theories, criticism and practice. The perspective provided will look both at the situation in London and the UK in detail, as well as exemplars from around the world. In terms of specific approaches to situated practices to be addressed, these include (but are not limited to):

- Critical Spatial Practice, Theory/Practice/Poiesis
- Installation Art and Spectatorship
- Scenography and Curating
- Practice-led and -related approaches to research in art and design
- Discourses and Practices concerning Site-Specificity in and outside the Gallery
- Action and Participatory Research
- Questions of Ethics and the Relation to the Other
- Critical Architecture and Design Research
- Public Art, Regeneration and Urbanism
- Performativity and Subjectivity

Above all, the module aims to provide students with a wide-ranging perspective on how practitioners from across the spatial disciplines including, art, architecture, design, performativity, and urbanism have articulated their practice in relation to concepts and theories concerning space, place, site and location; and how working in specific sites opens up the possibilities of practice, from responses to the formal and material conditions of location; to the social, cultural, political and historical pasts, presents and futures of a site; to engaging with inhabitants and their roles as spectators and possible co-producers and/or collaborators. Topics will be introduced through lectures by contemporary theorists and practitioners, and by an accompanying series of seminars, each one focusing on a key aspect of situated practice with readings and exemplars of practice. In doing so this module introduces students to the kinds of approaches and questions they will need to tackle when it comes to developing their own individual approach to situated practice later in the course. The module hence places a particular emphasis on transdisciplinary ways of working, and on the importance of situating one's own work in relation to existing theoretical ideas and practices. In this respect the module serves as the foundation for all the subsequent modules. Assessment will be through a 1250-word project proposal, and accompanying portfolio, the production of which will be supported through a tutorial. This proposal and its accompanying practice-led portfolio will provide the basis for each student's subsequent project

work, to be developed in Term 2 through the choice of specific modules to help develop skills relevant to the type and mode of situated practice adopted, and for the Major Project to be developed through Terms 3 and 4.

Mediated Environments

BENVGSP2 is designed to impart skills in new forms of research dissemination, focussing on the development of 'new media' practice as a method of framing arguments and posing questions in relation to specific sites. Mediated Environments addresses the intersection of media theory, contemporary technology and architectural practice, charting the development of the contemporary mediated spatial paradigm. This module will explore the complex interplay of spatial, sonic, filmic, networked and performative practices through early manifestations of Mediated Environments, through the work of Xenakis, Charles & Ray Eames, Dan Graham, Stan Van Der Beek, Steina & Woody Vasulka, Joan Jonas, Wodiczko, etc. The module will then progress to examine the impact of the development of networked environments and the pervasive spread of personal media devices, apps and the impact of social media and new forms of publishing in the present day.

Throughout this module, students will engage with and develop processes within an expanded field of creative practice including urbanism, architecture, fine art, time-based media and performativity, focusing particularly on the making of a Sound Broadcast and a Film Essay.

The module is 30 credits, focusing on the understanding of theories relating to contemporary media and the development of a practice related to mediated environments. Initially, students will construct a sonic environment, developing skills in sound recording, field recordings, multi-track audio editing and podcasting, ending with the submission of a podcast in response to a specific site. Following this, students will develop the sound work into a film essay, through the development of skills in video recording, narrative development, scriptwriting, and scoring. The module will consist of a series of seminars, cinematic presentations, tutorials and practical workshops to introduce students to the potential of the film-essay to discuss architectural themes. At the end of this module, students will submit a 5-minute film-essay in response to a specific site.

Critical Spatial Practice - Site-Writing

BENVGSP3 is designed to impart skills in the development of site-writing as a form of critical spatial practice. Critical spatial practice (Rendell, 2006) defines an approach to site-specific practice comprising projects that critique the sites into which they intervene, as well as question their own disciplinary limits. Site-writing (2010) is a textual mode of critical spatial practice which considers situatedness and positionality in relation to writing, specifically in terms of voice, style, word and page, and explores how voice and textual strategies can be adopted as ways of responding to sites.

This module has been running for 10 years in different forms, taught by Prof. Jane Rendell, with input from fiction writers Sarah Butler and Tony White, artist/poet Kristen Krieder, and graphic designer Marit Munzberg. The module is 30 credits and consists of a series of seminars, project presentations, tutorials and practical workshops to introduce students to site-writing through methods drawn from fiction and creative writing to graphic design and book binding. Students will develop skills in creative and situated writing, through the development of a site-specific piece of prose in which they develop a new kind of voice in response to a specific site. They will go on to develop an artist's book out of their prose piece, learning the

potential of font, typography, layout, paperstock and binding for spatial writing.

The Open Work

BENVGSP4 is designed to impart skills in the development of situated research that forms a foundation toward a form of critical spatial practice. The intention of this module is to encourage a broad range of interdisciplinary practices and skills to inform the developing research domain of the student. This module is designed to facilitate students to frame a self-directed research question to answer in order to gain specific knowledge related to the development of their wider project. If relevant, students can opt to take a 15 credit module from across the BSA, Bartlett Faculty or UCL or frame their own research questions or programme to be supervised by the Course Director. In doing so this module develops the kinds of approaches and questions they encountered in BENVGSP1 in a practical way that is focused on their own research domain, and helps to define further questions they will need to tackle when it comes to developing their own individual approach to situated practice later in the course.

Assessment will be through a 1250-word project, and accompanying portfolio, the production of which will be supported through tutorials and presentations. This research work and its accompanying portfolio will provide the basis for the development of each student's subsequent Major Project work, to be developed for the Major Project to be developed through Terms 3 and 4.

Major Project

This module is based around the preparation of an original piece of situated practice in the form of a Major Project, submitted first in the form of a live intervention into a site (or sites), then documented and reflected upon through an artist's book or digital archive, and finally remade in an exhibition format, which can include film-making, artwork and gallery installations, digital scripting, curation, scenography, live art, participatory works, and or a conceptual design proposition. All final submissions must contain a substantial piece of written text of no less than 5000 words that outlines the theoretical investigation, conceptual positioning and critical response to the particular site and approach chosen.

In some cases, the final project might take a written form, for example a script for a performed piece, but in this case 5000 words of the project need to consist of writing that is critical reflection rather than prose, fiction or creative writing. In no cases, however, can the written element that critically situates the work, which has been undertaken for a Major Project, be less than 5,000 words.

Students will be asked to plan out their project work and define the format of their final submission, repeatedly from the early stages of Term 1 and the submission of a project proposal at the start of Term 2, through to the final submission. The subject and approach to situated practice to be adopted for the Major Project will be agreed in discussion with the allocated supervisor/tutor, plus with the overall approval of the Course Director.

The aim of the module is for students to be able to produce a unique work of situated practice, which responds to a specific site or sites, in form as well as content. The module will be taught through a series of individual tutorials between the student and allocated supervisor, with a strong expectation being placed on the student to drive the intellectual agenda and practical development of their Major Project.

STAFF

Programme Director

[James O'Leary](#)

Programme staff

[Professor Jane Rendell](#)

Henrietta Williams

David Roberts

Affiliated staff

Professor Bob Sheil, Dr Ben Campkin, Professor Murray Fraser, Dr Barbara Penner, Dr Peg Rawes, Dr Tania Sengupta, Dr Robin Wilson, Professor Jonathan Hill, Professor Steven Gage, Dr. Yeoryia Manolopolou, Elizabeth Dow, Matthew Butcher, Paul Bavister, Dr. Jan Kattein, Ruairi Glynn, Dr. Penelope Haralambidou. Dr. Guan Lee.

In addition, visiting professors, architects, critics and researchers will regularly contribute to the programme.

FAQs

General Information

How long is the Masters course?

15 months, from late September to December in the following year.

How can I apply?

You may apply online via clicking on the 'Application and next steps' tab here: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/taught/degrees/situated-practice-ma>

When can I apply?

You are advised to apply as early as possible as competition for places is high and we expect to fill places early. You may apply from October for admittance to the School the following September.

Is there a deadline for applying?

The deadline for full-time and part-time study is normally early September.

Is there an application fee?

There is an admissions processing fee per online application. This was £75 for 2017-18 applications.

How many programmes can I apply for?

You may apply for as many programmes as you wish. However, you will need to submit a separate application for each one and, if you receive more than one offer, you will only be able to accept one.

What are the entry requirements?

You will need the minimum of an upper second-class (2:1) Honours degree

at undergraduate level, or the international equivalent. A strong portfolio of design work is also required, further details below. International Students may click on this link to ascertain [qualification equivalents](#).

What does the admissions process involve?

Your online application, once submitted, will be received by the College Central Admissions Office. Once your details have been logged, your application will be sent to the Department for consideration. Provided that you meet the minimum entry requirements you will then be asked to submit a portfolio and may subsequently be asked to attend an interview, more details are included below. Once a recommendation has been made, your application will be returned to the Admissions Office where an official letter will be produced and sent to you informing you of the admissions decision.

How long should my Personal Statement be?

One side of A4 is usually sufficient.

Can I visit in person to talk to staff about my application and/or tour the facilities?

No, unfortunately this will not be possible, as The Bartlett is not open to the public. Applicants for some programmes may be asked to attend for interview in person post-submission where it is deemed warranted (or interviewed by telephone/Skype if it is more convenient) or invited to attend an Open Day, but speculative visits are not possible. Additionally The Bartlett hosts a series of open lectures and exhibitions throughout term time. These are all open to the public and may provide a chance to speak to current students. Please check the [Bartlett website](#) for further details and updates. Alternatively, if you'd like to visit the main UCL campus (the Bartlett buildings are not included), you can book yourself onto one of the guided tours given by current UCL students during the summer. If you're not able to get to the UCL main campus, you can also enjoy a virtual tour through the [Meet UCL website](#).

When do interviews take place?

Interviews normally start in December and end around June. Interviews are conducted in person, or via Skype for overseas applicants. If you cannot attend a particular date a new one is normally arranged, but please be aware that there is a large waiting list for interviews and you may wait a while for a date.

Portfolios

What format should my portfolio be in?

Your portfolio should be no larger than A4 in size and should be clearly labeled with your name, student ID number and the programme(s) you are applying for. Applicants are normally asked to send a printed copy portfolio. Portfolios that have been uploaded or sent on CD are not considered.

What should I include in my portfolio?

The portfolio that you submit will depend on your first degree or prior experience. You must demonstrate skills in engagement with specific sites.

Otherwise no specific skills are required but a design capability must be demonstrated. Both static image and time-based media are acceptable in digital format. The latter should be edited to give a maximum 5-minute sample.

How do I upload/or send my portfolio?

Please do not send or upload a portfolio at the initial application stage. The Department will contact you regarding your design work once your completed application form has arrived in the Department. This will only be once your referees have uploaded their references.

When and how do I submit my portfolio?

You should upload it to your application (if it's compressed to 2MB or smaller) or you can post it. Please do not supply it with your application but await receipt of an email asking for you to deliver it to a specific address. Please do not provide it until requested.

English Language Proficiency

What are the English Language requirements?

UCL's full English language requirements can be viewed here: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospective-students/graduate/life/international>. The Bartlett requires the 'Standard' level in all cases. (IELTS: Overall grade of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each subtest.) Please note that tests or pre-session courses not listed on the above webpage will not be accepted by UCL.

I am going to take an English test later in the year, can I still apply now?

You may apply now for a place on a programme without a current English test as long as you send your qualification as soon as you receive it. If you are offered a place, it will be conditional on your providing evidence of English before you will be allowed to enrol.

References

Do both of my references need to be academic?

At least one of your references should be from an academic source. Your application will not normally be processed without one. The other may be from an employer or colleague who has worked with you closely.

What happens if I graduated a long time ago and I cannot provide an academic reference?

Please note that your academic referee does not necessarily need to be someone that knows you from your undergraduate degree – they may know you through another programme of study. As long as they can comment on your performance in an academic capacity, this will suffice. If this is not possible, please provide two employment references and we will contact you if we require further information.

Admissions Process

How long should I expect to wait for an admissions decision?

We aim to turn around applications in approximately 60 working days. However, this may take longer during busy times of the year.

Why has no decision been made on my application yet?

We will only consider complete applications. Any that are missing a reference(s) and/or an academic transcript will not be sent on to us for consideration. Therefore please check your application to see if anything is missing and if it is, please supply it at your earliest convenience.

What happens after I have been made an offer?

Once you have been made an offer the Department and the Registry will contact you with any relevant information regarding your time as a UCL student - this will be sent by post/email. Over the summer months the Department will send you induction information by email before the course commences.

Can I ask for feedback on an unsuccessful application?

No, we regret that we cannot offer feedback on unsuccessful applications.

If my application is unsuccessful can I claim a refund of the admissions processing fee?

No, a refund is not possible. This is because the fee covers the cost of processing your application regardless of the admissions decision.

Deferring Entry

If I cannot take up my offer of a place can I defer it to next year?

It is not usually a problem to defer your offer of a place to the following year. Applicants will need the authorisation of the Programme Director and the Admissions Office will need to issue a renewed and updated offer letter.

How can I defer my offer of admission?

You can request to defer entry to postgraduate programmes by emailing admissions@ucl.ac.uk citing your name and student number.

Can I defer entry more than once?

No, you may only defer entry once. If you cannot take up your deferred offer you will forfeit your place and will need to re-apply.

What is the deadline for deferring entry?

Usually you can defer entry any time before enrolment.

Visas & Immigration

How do I apply for my visa?

The [UCL visa information web pages](#) have detailed information on how to apply for a visa. Visa applications will be only open three months before the start of your Master's programme (i.e. 30 June).

How can I request a CAS?

If you have an unconditional offer you have formally accepted you will receive an email from admissions with information on how to request a CAS.

When will I receive my CAS?

CAS numbers will be issued 3 months before your programme start date. For example if your start date is 28 September you will not receive your CAS before 29 June. This is because UKVI will refuse any visa application that is made earlier than three months before the programme start date. CAS numbers will usually be issued within 5 working days of receiving your CAS request form (from 29 June onwards).

Employment & Money

Are there any scholarships available?

Unfortunately, funding for students is very scarce. Most of our students are self-funding through loans or saving although the Bartlett has offered [some funding](#) to Masters students in recent years. Information on funding opportunities may be found on UCL's main [Scholarships and Funding page](#).

Will the Bartlett help me find a part-time job?

No, although the UCL careers service will make you aware of the different options open to you. They may also offer tips and/or advice on finding part-time work. Please also look at the [Student Union Job shop](#).

How much money will I need to live on per month/year?

This differs from student to student but there are many websites such as [The Student Calculator](#) which help you to answer this question.

When will I be able to open a UK bank account?

Students will enrol during the first week of the course and once enrolment is complete, can use their student ID to open a bank account. This should be complete within the first 3 or 4 days.

How can I open a bank account when I arrive in the UK?

Please see the page on [opening a UK bank account](#) for information. It is recommended that you discuss your move to the UK with your bank at home and seek advice on what the best option is regarding the withdrawal of cash in the UK using their cards.

Joining UCL

Faculties can't advise on this issue but the UCL Accommodation Office can. Please see all sorts of queries answered in the [Accommodation FAQs](#):

When is induction and orientation?

Induction Week takes place in the last week of September. Students from outside the UK can apply to attend UCL's Orientation programme, which takes place the week prior.

Is there an airport pick-up?

No, unfortunately there is no airport pick-up but our central London location makes UCL very accessible from all major airports, train stations and bus stations.

Where should I go on my first day?

You will be sent information about this at a later stage – meanwhile please check the [new student website](#). If not advised where and when your first session is taking place by e-mail, please report to your School Office on arrival.

Can I get a programme timetable?

Timetables are only available to new students in the first week of term as they can change yearly.

When do I choose my modules?

Module registration cannot be completed before the start of term. Further information on how to complete this process will be made available at the start of session. To help you decide which modules are of interest, you will be given access to course outlines in Induction Week.

Graduation

When is graduation?

Graduation ceremonies take place in the year after you complete your studies. For example, if you finish your programme in September 2016, your graduation ceremony will usually take place in early autumn 2017. You will be sent your degree certificate by postal delivery around 3 months after you complete your studies (to the 'contact address' in your personal records which you can update as and when necessary).

Further Information

Can I study part-time?

The programme can be taken part-time on a flexible basis over a maximum of 5 years (most students complete within 2 years). The courses offered are not run separately as evening classes for part-time students. While we try to make part-time study as flexible as possible, our Masters programmes are demanding and we advise students that, if they intend to work alongside the programme, their work should be flexible in nature.

Is there more than one intake a year?

No, we only have one intake to taught programmes every year in September.

I am already studying at another institution. Can I enrol at UCL at the same time?

No, you cannot be enrolled in two institutions at once, so you would need to de-register from your current course.

Can I transfer my studies to UCL?

No, UCL does not accept transfer to Masters programmes.

Can I study by distance learning?

No, it is not possible to study any Bartlett programmes by distance learning or online.

What are the term dates?

Information on term dates can be found here: <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/staff/term-dates/>