

Career Essentials: Considering a Masters

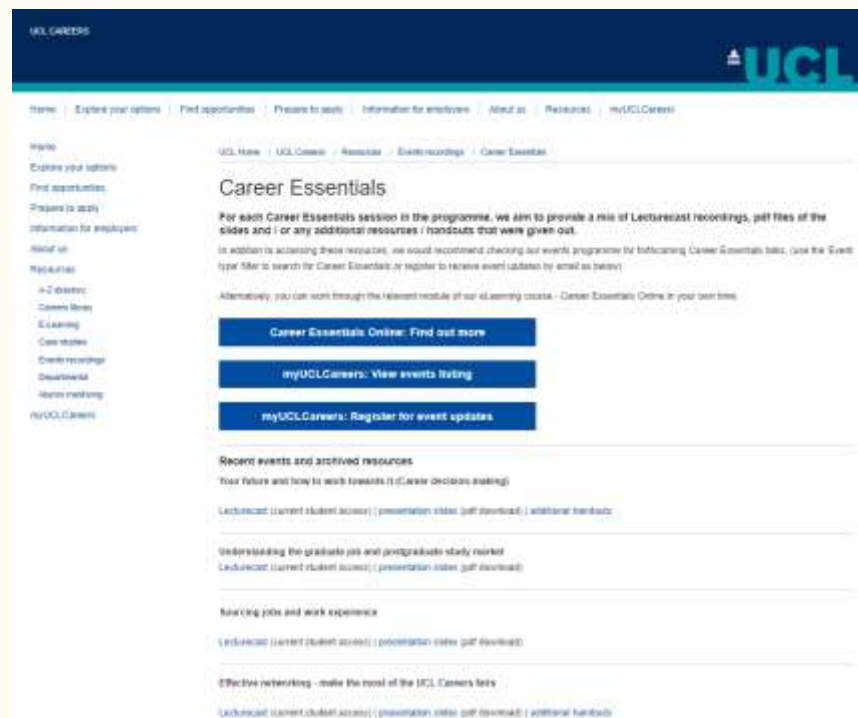
Career Essentials programme 2019 - 2020

- 12 title lunchtime talks.
- Small Group Work sessions (CV).
- 3 title workshops covering LinkedIn, Mock Assessment Centres and MBTI Personality Profiling.
- 6 module e-learning course.

Slides and recordings

<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/careers/resources/slides/career-essentials>

Search 'UCL Career Essentials'



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Career Essentials

For each Career Essentials session in the programme, we aim to provide a mix of Lecturer recordings, pdf files of the slides and / or any additional resources / handouts that were given out.

In addition to accessing these resources, we would recommend checking our events programme for forthcoming Career Essentials talks. Use the 'Event type' filter to search for Career Essentials or register to receive event updates by email as below.

Alternatively, you can search through the relevant module of our eLearning course - Career Essentials Online in your own time.

[Career Essentials Online: Find out more](#)

[myUCLcareers: View events listing](#)

[myUCLcareers: Register for event updates](#)

Recent events and archived resources

Your future and how to work towards it (Career decision making)

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#) | [additional handouts](#)

[Understanding the graduate job and postgraduate study market](#)

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#)

[Finding jobs and work experience](#)

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#)

[Effective networking - make the most of the UCL Careers fairs](#)

[Lecturecast \(current student access\)](#) | [presentation slides \(pdf download\)](#) | [additional handouts](#)

Talks coming up Oct 2019

Make the most of the UCL Careers fairs	1 st , 8 th , 16 th
Cover letters & application forms	3 rd
Improve your CV	4 th
An introduction to the graduate job market	7 th
Find and fund a PhD	9 th
Your future and how to work towards it	14 th
Better PhD Applications	15 th

Small group CV sessions

- New this year
- Work on your CV in a group of up to 6 students, with an Applications Advisor
- October 3rd, 17th, 31st
- November 14th, 28th, December 12th
- 1.00 – 1.50pm, UCL Careers

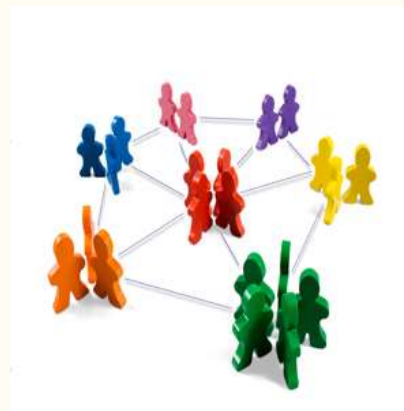
What we'll look at today

- What is a masters?
- Motivation for considering postgraduate study
- Choosing a course
- Costs and funding
- Professional Qualifications
- Key information sources and further support

Where are you now? Masters decision scaler



Sharing thoughts



In groups of 2/3, discuss the following:

Your motivations for considering a masters

The potential differences between undergraduate and masters-level study

What is a Masters?

Length:

1-2 years full-time, 2-4 years part time

Compared with undergraduate:

Focused on particular area of a wider subject

More flexible modules, study options and smaller classes

Intensive, advanced and faster-paced

Research or Taught?

Taught (MSc, MA)

taught courses approx. 1/3 time on research project

PhD entry possible

roughly 10,000 courses on offer in UK

Research (MRes)

research masters approx. 2/3 time on research project

excellent preparation for PhD

roughly 800 courses on offer in UK

Range of Degrees

- BCL - Bachelor of Civil Law (Oxford)^{[9][19]}
- BPhil - Bachelor of Philosophy (Oxford)^{[9][20]}
- EMBS - European Master in Business Sciences^[21]
- LLM - Master of Laws^[8] (Master of Law at Cambridge^[22])
 - LLM(Res) Master of Laws (Research)^[21]
- MA - Master of Arts^[4]
- MArch - Master of Architecture^[23]
- MAST - Master of Advanced Study^[24]
- MBA - Master of Business Administration^[4]
- MBL - Master of Business and Law^[21]
- MCD - Master of Civic Design^[25]
- MCh - Master of Surgery^[9]
- MCL - Master of Corporate Law^[22]
- MClinDent - Master of Clinical Dentistry^[11]
- MDes - Master of Design^[4]
- MEd - Master of Education^[26]
- MEng - Master of Engineering^[12]
 - MEng(Eur) - Master of Engineering (European)^[12]
- MEP - Master of Educational Practice^[11]
- MFA - Master of Fine Art^[9]
- HMHW - Higher Master in Health and Wellbeing
- MJur - Master of Jurisprudence^[8] (Law) (*Magister Juris* at Oxford)^[27]
- MLib - Master of Librarianship^[21]
- MLit - Master of Literature^[5]
- MLitt - Master of Letters^[8]
- MMin - Master of Ministry^[21]

There are a number of [Degree abbreviations](#)

- MMus - Master of Music^[8]
- MPA - Master of Public Administration^[11]
- MPH - Master of Public Health^[26]
- MPhil - Master of Philosophy^[4] (under the Framework, the MPhil is "normally reserved" for longer master's courses with a significant research element, or for PhD candidates who do not reach sufficient level for the award of a doctorate^[1])
- MPP - Master of Public Policy^[9]
- MProf - Master of Professional Studies^[28] or Master of Professional Practice^[8]
- MRes - Master in Research^[8]
 - MbyRes - Master by Research
- MSc - Master of Science^[4]
 - MSc(Eur) - Master of Science (European)^[12]
 - MScEcon - Master of Science in Economic and Social Studies^[11]
 - MScD - Master of Science in Dental Science^[11]
 - MSchW - Master of Science in Health and Wellbeing
- MST - Master of Studies^[9]
- MSW - Master of Social Work^[8]
- MTL - Master of Teaching and Learning^[8]
- MTh - Master of Theology^[9]
- MTheol - Master of Theology^[8]
- MUniv - Master of the University (the MUniv is only ever an honorary degree)^[29]
- MusM - Master of Music^[30]

Sounds Amazing!

“World class...”

“Students love studying here...”

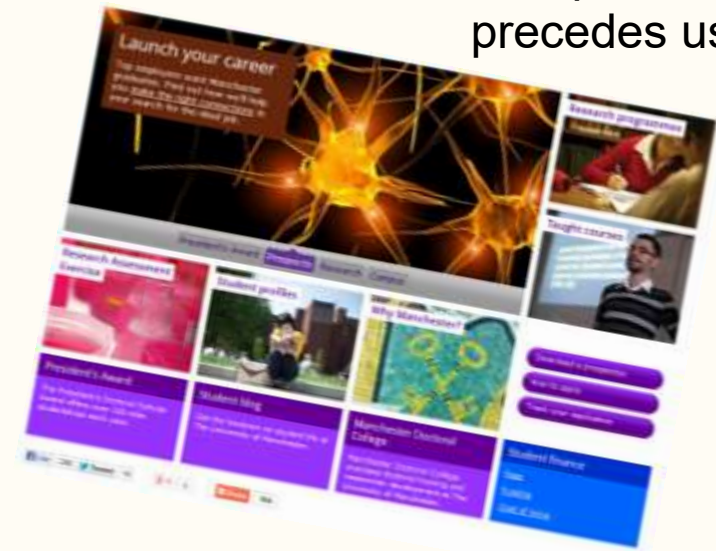
“Academic excellence...”

“Knowledgeable tutors...”

“Unbeatable career prospects...”

“Incredible facilities...”

“A reputation that precedes us...”



Is a Masters right for you?

Case studies

What are the positive and negative motivators?

What are some of the issues raised?

How do the themes involved relate (if at all) to your situation?

Case study 1 – Fatima: Interest in MSc Finance

I'm in the final year of my maths degree and am starting to panic about what to do on leaving my course. I've applied (along with most of my friends) to a number of prestigious grad schemes in areas such as consulting, finance and banking.

In reality, I have little knowledge of what the work in these sectors entails and no substantive commercial work experience that seems to be so important to employers given how competitive these roles are. I'm also struggling with the online aptitude tests and initial interviews. I'm considering applying for an MSc Finance to boost my knowledge and give me a more vocational background/ transferrable skills so that I can apply with more confidence and a stronger CV in the future. By applying for postgrad study, it will also allow me to concentrate for the remainder of the year on my exams as at the moment my results indicate I'm on for a 2.2. In many ways it delays having to make a decision about jobs which I'm finding¹⁴ really quite daunting....

Review: Case study 1 – Fatima

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Some home truths...

Many applicants **wrongly believe** that a Masters will **automatically** enhance career and earnings:

Professional exams may take precedence (issue of study fatigue)

More likely to benefit from a Masters if complemented by relevant work experience

Is there the opportunity for in-course placements?

Majority of grad scheme employers **do not** require a Masters and it will **not** compensate for a 2.2

A Masters can be an expensive way of buying time and being in a familiar environment:

what will you do to ensure you won't be in this same position the following year?

For consideration...

Are your careers goals clear?

Better to spend time in the workplace or research your options in a gap year?

Is the course accreditation the industry standard (e.g. BPS for psychologists)/ is qualification internationally transferrable?

Will the qualification definitely improve your career prospects?

Is it a requirement for jobs you're interested in?

What are course employment rates and calibre of outcomes?

Case study 2 – HAKOB: Interest in MSc African Studies with Health at UCL

Having studied a BA History, I am currently on a gap year including working in administrative office-based roles to help fund some future travel. I'm considering applying for an MSc course because of my interest in Africa - I believe that business development is likely to be a key driver of economic prosperity so I want to learn more about the continent both professionally and personally.

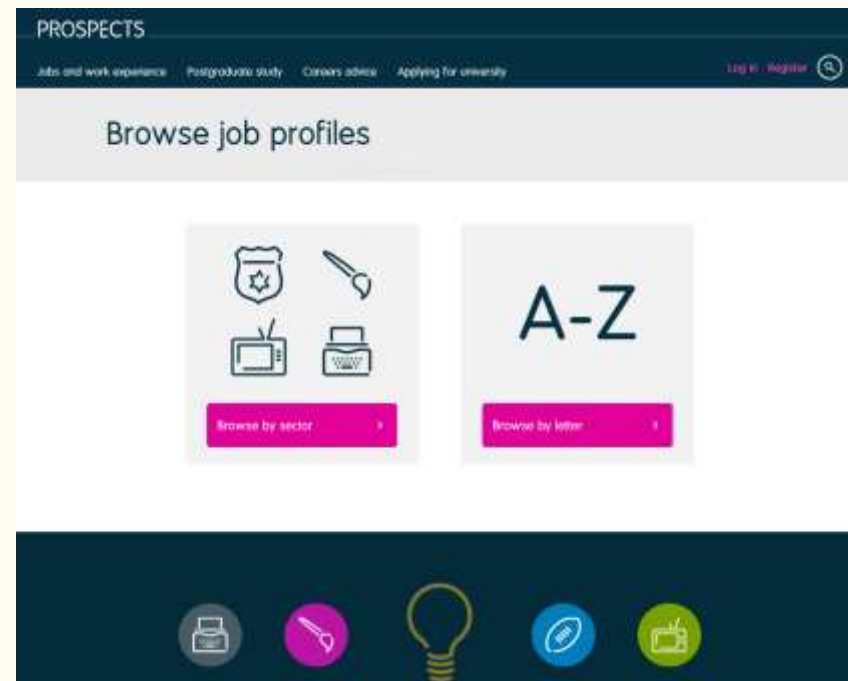
I have a long-term ambition to either start my own or join a large, international NGO or political organisation focused on the already bright future of Africa. Having spoken to alumni and other contacts who have worked in the region, it's clear a Masters course would be considered an essential requirement to enter the sector. I'm particularly interested in a global health module and further research possibilities that I hope will allow me to research how politics, economics and urban studies affect health challenges from a business development perspective.

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Prospects.ac.uk – Browse Job Profiles



Job research: Working backwards

Looking forwards 1 step at a time



Working backwards:
research ideas for what you'd like to
be doing beyond a Masters course

What are the typical routes in?
Academic qualifications vs work
experience

Is a relevant masters required at
entry level or for future progression?



Sector Themed Careers Week programme

-  Government & Policy: 21st- 25th October
-  Museums, Arts and Cultural Heritage: 11th-15th November
-  Media: 25th-29th November
-  Charities & NGOs: 27th-31st January
-  International Development: 3rd-7th February
-  Careers in Health: 10th-14th February
-  Sustainability Fortnight: 24th February- 6th March
-  Careers in Life Science– 9th-14th March

Themed weeks

[UCL Home](#) » [UCL Careers](#) » [Resources](#) » [Themed Weeks](#)

Themed Weeks

With a mix of panel discussions, presentations, information sessions, networking events and one-to-one coaching, Sector Themed Weeks are an ideal opportunity for you to hear from industry professionals, UCL alumni and Careers Consultants.

Make sure to visit our website to view this year's [Themed Week schedule](#).



FIND *your* FUTURE

THEMED CAREERS **Week** **Government & Policy**

ucl.ac.uk/careers/themedweeks

The banner features a red background with a white 'FIND your FUTURE' logo at the top. Below it, the text 'THEMED CAREERS' is in small white letters, followed by 'Week' in large white font and 'Government & Policy' in bold white font. A yellow circle with a white silhouette of a building is on the left. The URL 'ucl.ac.uk/careers/themedweeks' is at the bottom right.

Government & Policy

Interested in a career that makes a difference? Government & Policy week is your chance to hear from those working at the heart of government.



FIND *your* FUTURE

THEMED CAREERS **Week** **Museums, Arts & Cultural Heritage**

ucl.ac.uk/careers/themedweeks

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Museums, Arts & Cultural Heritage

Considering a career in Arts, Museums or Cultural Heritage? Find out more about these sectors from professionals working in various roles within these sectors.



FIND *your* FUTURE

THEMED CAREERS **Week** **Media**

ucl.ac.uk/careers/themedweeks

The banner features a red background with a white 'FIND your FUTURE' logo at the top. Below it, the text 'THEMED CAREERS' is in small white letters, followed by 'Week' in large white font and 'Media' in bold white font. A blue circle with a white silhouette of a camera is on the left. The URL 'ucl.ac.uk/careers/themedweeks' is at the bottom right.

Media

Gain tips on routes into the media industry from experienced professionals and learn what you can start doing now to increase your chances of success!

UCL Alumni careers mentoring

Welcome to The UCL Alumni Online Community

JOIN NOW

Connect with

- in LinkedIn
- f Facebook
- Email

Why is it safe to register with LinkedIn / Facebook?

Connect
Find class mates, make new friends and expand your professional network

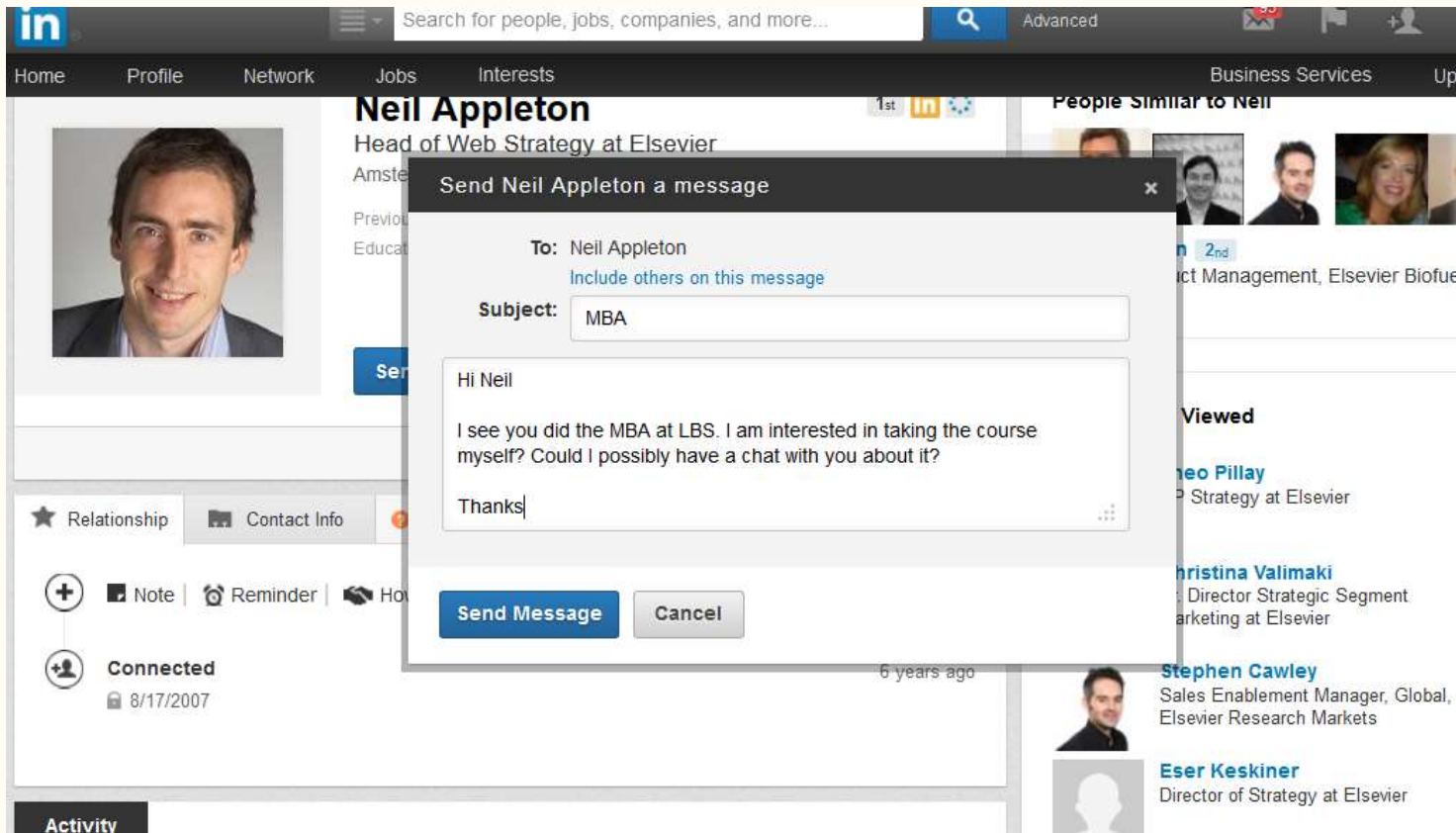
Support
Share your knowledge by offering to be a mentor or by giving professional advice to UCL students and alumni

Network
Use your international UCL network and get introduced to people you should know

Jobs
Find and post jobs exclusively within your alumni community

[Connect with UCL Alumni](#)

LinkedIn



Timing

It may be beneficial to have time away from education to reflect:

- Is postgrad study really the right decision?
- Which programme to pursue?
- 61% of taught postgrads 25+y at start of study (2017/18)
- Highest proportion of postgrads enter after a break of 3+ years
- Employers may well sponsor and give study-release for experienced staff who want to develop their career

Is a masters course right for me right now?

Will a Masters help with my career?

Masters degrees in the UK highly regarded by employers

90% of 44K leavers in 2016/17 in work or further study 6 months after graduating

88% of those in work professional or managerial role

Full-time employed young graduates under 30y (in 2017):

Highly skilled employment: 73% postgrad vs 57% undergrad

Median salary: £28,500 postgrad vs £25,000 undergrad

Some roles a Masters is an essential requirement, e.g. Speech & Language Therapy

Can accelerate career progression or facilitate career change

Source: DLHE Survey / Grad labour market statistics 2016/17

Masters vs PhD

Increasingly, a Masters is becoming more common in terms of those who go on to pursue a PhD

More attractive/ credible to potential supervisors

Useful if:

- unsure about areas of specialist interest
- lack research experience
- MRes vs MA / MSc vs other research experience

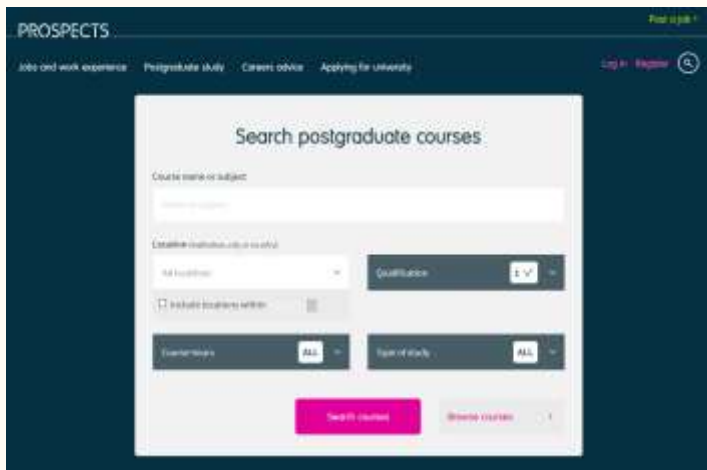
PhD entry without a Masters is still possible:

- contact potential supervisors
- check what is typical for your field

Choosing a course

- Do your homework!
- Institution subject specific strength
- Teaching quality
- Similar titles, varying content
- What are your interests?
- Optional modules, research projects
- Links with industry
- Accreditation
- Masters valued by future sector employers?
- Open days

Masters course search websites



Search postgraduate courses on [Prospects](#) and [Find a Masters](#)

Masters Funding

English postgraduate loans

- Borrow up to £10,609 in 2018/19.
- UK nationals - normally live in England, in UK last 3 years
- Attend any UK university
- Separate loans if you live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
- Don't already have a Masters degree or higher qualification
- EU nationals & others may be eligible (check detail)
- [Government website](#)
- Repayment @ 6% when income >£21,000, concurrent with undergrad loan

Additional funding resources

- Erasmus+ programme (until 2020)
- [Find A Masters](#)
- [Scholarships](#)
- Institution websites
- Employer sponsorship

Applications

- Directly to Institution
- Application fee £50 - £75
- Check timings and deadlines – early closing!
- Typically need an Upper Second Class (2.1) Bachelors degree
- Personal statement



Personal statements

The most difficult bit – allow time!

- Typically 500 words / 1 side A4
- Tailor it to the course
- Reasons for applying - why the university / department, interests, career goals
- Preparation – how has undergrad prepared you
- Why you – skillset
- [Prospects](#) and [Find a Masters](#) offer useful advice
- Get it reviewed at UCL Careers!

(non Masters)

Professional Qualifications in the UK

There is some form of professional qualification available in most industries in the UK. Among the best known are those awarded by organisations including:

Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)

BCS - The Chartered Institute for IT

Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD)

Institution of Civil Engineers (ICE)

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS)

Additional Professional Qualifications in the UK

- Finance qualifications
- How to become an engineer
- HR courses
- IT training
- Management courses
- Marketing courses
- Sales training courses
- Travel and tourism courses

UCL Careers 1 to 1 Support

- Applications advice (20 minutes)
- Short guidance (20 minutes)
- Practice Interview (60 minutes, on condition of real employer interview)

Find us

4th Floor, Student Central Building, Malet Street

Mon-Thurs 9:30 - 17:00

Fri 11:00 -17:00

careers@ucl.ac.uk

020 7866 3600



Questions?

