The UCL London Strategy

UCL is a London university with powerful global impact. We add unrivalled value to our city. We are regarded as one of the best in global higher education, and our research, experts and innovations make significant contributions to London’s impact on the UK, Europe and globally. Working across the capital, we make a tangible difference to London’s people, economy, communities and culture.

London is one of the world’s most celebrated capital cities. Having built on its dominance in trade and governance to become a global leader in business, finance, digital technology, information and communication, health, creative industries and education, London is at the forefront of our knowledge-driven world.

UCL is intertwined with and inspired by London’s energy, diversity and innovation. We are embedded in our capital, shaped by its history and character. An illustrious past has paved the way for a cutting-edge modern day, while a cosmopolitan mindset is found within a true diversity of local communities. With an economic heart driven by commerce, the professions and business, London’s equally compelling creative core is inspired by the arts and culture. As a world-leading university, UCL has a responsibility to nurture and grow our city while addressing regional and global challenges.

Working in partnership with organisations, including the Greater London Authority (GLA) and other local authorities, UCL is playing an essential role in tackling the multifaceted challenges that confront London, from the consequences of intense urbanisation to the uncertainties of Brexit. We also share a literal direction of travel, for as London grows and goes east, so does UCL, giving the institution the scale and space to contribute further.

The UCL London Strategy builds on our already-established strengths and relationships, informing and enhancing the London-focussed elements of UCL’s aspirations expressed in the UCL 2034 strategy.

Achieving the greatest possible mutual benefit requires the alliance of existing London-related activity across UCL, centred on one cohesive plan and a shared sense of direction. Simply continuing as we are and delivering what we already do for and with London is no mean feat, yet we aspire to do more.

Working in partnership with London for local and global benefit

Our overarching approach is based on the belief that we can work with and for London to be greater than the sum of our parts, making the most of our impact locally and around the world as London’s Global University.

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1 GLA Economic Analysis 2016
Neighbourhood and community

UCL is inherently shaped by London, a distinguished global city bound by distinctive cultures, communities and a rich inter-connectedness. As a knowledge-based organisation with deep local ties, UCL embraces London’s ethos and values. In the city’s Knowledge Quarter alone, we partner with other prominent institutions such as the Francis Crick Institute and the British Library, as well as leading hospitals and major cultural institutions. Equally important are our relationships with grassroots community organisations and with local authorities. Our networks span across London, as do our people, with a 50,000-strong community of students and staff and 100,000 London-based alumni. Positively enmeshed in London’s neighbourhoods, we get involved in a host of London-relevant roles, from volunteering in communities to sitting on the boards of London’s public bodies.

Our historic campus in the heart of London is positioned amid the tradition and modernity of iconic Bloomsbury. As we continue to develop the university, we take our responsibilities seriously to do so sensitively, ensuring the feeling and heritage of London remains. We will mirror this approach in our east London developments. Already active at Here East, we will continue to engage with neighbourhoods around the Olympic Park, cultivating partnerships and shared ambitions as we develop our UCL East campus.

To enhance partnerships and benefits for our neighbourhoods and the wider community, we will:

• work with our local partners to enhance the lives of those who live, work and study in London, through meaningful and diverse partnerships, such as with the UCL Academy and other schools, local authorities and businesses, residents and their representatives
• develop our estates not only to support our academic vision and mission, but to contribute constructively to the experience of our neighbours and partners
• deliver the UCL Campaign ‘It’s All Academic’, a major engagement and philanthropy programme that aims to build UCL’s global community of alumni, supporters and advocates, with a particular focus on key locations in London
• use the reopened Bloomsbury Theatre and Bloomsbury Studio as a cornerstone of fostering enthusiasm in research, teaching, innovation and enterprise at UCL, engaging students and the wider London community.

Global leadership in higher education

London is the higher education capital of the world, home to the greatest concentration of universities, and global leaders in research and learning. UCL’s international and national academic leadership attracts outstanding staff and students from across the world, who come to UCL and London to undertake exceptional research, to become immersed in world-leading research-led teaching, and to engage with the unparalleled experience offered to those who visit, live, study or work here. London offers our staff and students unrivalled opportunities and a distinctive city experience. We give back by marshalling the intellectual and material resources of the university to address the local and global challenges faced by London.

We have a wealth of interdisciplinary research that supports London, tackling subjects as diverse as housing, sustainable cities and urban development, transport, health and wellness, migration and culture. We are also a preferred partner for London-based universities and others throughout the world. Driven by the ambition that evidence-based strategies are of benefit to everyone, we contribute to policy development too, supporting the UK and other national governments.

To enhance the impact of London’s global leadership in higher education we will:

• work with our higher education partners in London, including London Higher, other universities, and thought leaders, to strengthen and enhance London as the higher education capital of the world
• use our relationships with the leaders of London, including the Mayor and GLA, to support the ambition of maintaining London’s position in the world
• mobilise our world-leading educational research and expertise to help build capacity and excellence across London’s education system
• work with entrepreneurial UCL alumni in London to support our student and staff entrepreneurs.

Policy, enterprise, innovation and the economy

UCL is a global leader in knowledge exchange, enterprise and open innovation with societal impact. We are committed to galvanising positive and sustainable outcomes in London, both economically and socially. Delivering ideas through meaningful partnerships with business and industry, we are focussed on playing our part in making London great. We apply our thinking and discoveries to our partnerships, while developing the next generation of innovators through teaching, ground-breaking research and encouraging entrepreneurial approaches to the creative industries.

Our campus development at the Olympic Park will contribute to London’s prospective workforce and economy. At UCL East, we will engage in research, education and enterprise in areas as diverse as robotics, advanced propulsion, cultural heritage, the urban environment and innovative finance. We will simultaneously support local neighbourhoods, including through our partnership with the Stratford-based Centre for Access to Justice, assisting vulnerable communities. Advancing London’s economy and its people by cultivating cutting-edge thinkers and leaders, we help to strengthen our city to be influential on a global stage.

To inform and influence policy and enhance London socially and economically, we will:

• build partnerships with businesses and entrepreneurs in London, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and high-growth businesses, bringing economic benefit to London and the UK
• expand our research in digital technologies spanning sectors and disciplines, encouraging inward investment by leading global experts from across the world
• grow our programme of engagement with the GLA and national governments, supporting evidence-based policy creation
• contribute directly to professions that have their global centres in London, including through the Institute of Real Estate at Here East, applying the strength of our legal research and activities, as well as our world-rated training of health professionals
• draw together a combination of existing activity and new initiatives by a number of faculties, to pursue pioneering work in the creative humanities, performance, communications, screen cultures and new media.

Social justice and the challenge of inequality

London is an economic, cultural and educational success story, yet social injustices and inequality are prevalent throughout the city’s communities. Integration, citizenship and a fair chance for all, whatever their circumstances, are core aspects of the London ethos. Leading the way as the first university to accept students regardless of race, religion or gender, UCL’s long history of championing inclusivity, gender equality and fair access to education helps us apply our expertise to address these issues in London today.

We strive to reduce inequality by influencing policymaking and collaborating with experienced partners. Our world-leading research is used by governments in the design and implementation of policy and practice. UCL’s widening participation programme promotes social mobility and education, tangibly supporting children of all backgrounds to level the playing field in terms of career aspirations and educational expectations. Cutting-edge UCL scholarships and funding opportunities specifically make higher education available to potential students of limited means, including asylum seekers. Our multifaceted approach to tackling inequality through policy, investment in people and partnerships is helping London rise up against the social challenges of our time.
To further social justice and equality in London, we will:

- continue to develop the Stratford-based Centre for Access to Justice, supporting more vulnerable communities and individuals
- establish new ways of working in partnership with London’s law firms, drawing on technology and the latest legal thinking, to better deliver legal advice
- support the leading-edge approach and insights of the UCL Institute for Innovation and Public Purpose (IIPP), looking at public policy driven by public purpose
- build on the success of the Global Disability Innovation Hub based in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, endorsed by the Mayor of London for its commitment to improving the lives of disabled people through technology, co-design and innovation
- develop our approaches to widening the participation of learners of all ages from our local neighbourhoods, improving fair access to education while sharing our expertise and knowledge
- use our world-leading research in understanding the relationship between health and social inequality to contribute to evidence-based policy in London, the UK and globally.

**Influencing and enhancing key sectors for London**

A world-leading university located in a global mega city makes a powerful and inspiring combination. Through our collaborations, partnerships and research, our work reaches sectors, industries and professionals across London and beyond.

**Health and wellbeing**

London is home to leading medical institutions, from UCLH and Great Ormond Street Hospital, to the Royal Free Hospital Trust and the Francis Crick Institute. UCL has partnerships with all these institutions, and more. Together, we are driving progress in advanced therapeutics, digital health, cancer and other areas, benefitting London, the UK and the wider world.

To enhance the impact of advances in health and wellbeing in London, we will:

- establish the headquarters of the UK Dementia Research Institute, a national collaboration to address dementia, one of the greatest societal challenges of our times
- build on our research excellence and strong relationships with London hospitals and universities, UCL Partners, MedCity and other London Academic Health Sciences Centres, to discover and develop novel solutions to pressing health challenges including mental health, dementia and cancer.

**Education and skills**

London’s nine million strong population deserves to have access to the world-leading institutions sharing their city and to the full spectrum of employment opportunities available. We work to ensure there are fair opportunities in education for all, by working closely with the UCL Academy, training and supporting teachers through the Institute of Education, collaborating with colleges and employers in meeting emerging skills demands and developing a broad spectrum of partnerships.

To further fair access to education and skills in London, we will:

- provide training and development for thousands of new teachers, school leaders and head teachers working in London’s schools and develop new projects and interventions aimed at understanding and addressing the needs of London’s most disadvantaged schools
- support access to education, training, apprenticeship and employment opportunities for adults and young people in London through collaborative research and development with FE colleges, local government, employers and other education and training providers.
The urban environment and placemaking

UCL explores and responds to the built environment from the rich context of London. We create solutions that protect our environment, restore it and respond to the pressing challenges of climate change, social inequalities and inclusive growth, influencing our own community as well as society at large.

To press forward with suitable responses and solutions to the urban environment, in London we will:

- work with the government and authorities in London, as well as the property sector and communities, bringing evidence and the latest modelling to influence farsighted urban design and placemaking
- contribute to GLA and local authority actions to address major London challenges including housing, transport, air quality, public space, building design and management
- use the convening power of the university to provide a forum for debate and deliberation on the future of our city and its communities.

Transformative technologies

As a global hub for technology, digital transformation and invention, the world looks to London for innovation and technological expertise. As a source of digital prowess, education and entrepreneurial talent in the city, UCL contributes to the transformative effect London has on the globe, and helps manage the pressures London and other mega cities face.

To get the very best from transformative technologies in London, we will:

- work with our partners in London and further afield to respond to the UK government Industrial Strategy white paper and its future developments
- develop the innovative new engineering and built environment research and education programmes planned for UCL East.

Arts and culture

A city of international renown in the world of art, as well as a creative and cultural centre, London makes an important contribution to the fields of art and culture. Drawing on our heritage and research reputation, UCL enriches the dialogue between creative and academic sectors, helping mobilise research to improve our communities in London and beyond.

To maximise the impact of arts and culture in London, we will:

- extend our programme of public art around our campuses and further afield, developing and sharing our forward-thinking approach to the arts and culture with our neighbours and local communities
- build on UCL’s museums and collections of international importance, as well as our significant role in the Knowledge Quarter, to develop and enhance UCL’s reputation as a cultural leader through an innovative and engaging programme of activity.

Law and the professions

Characterising society as we know it today, London’s tradition and contribution to the legal field is persuasive. Playing a compelling role in the city and the profession as a whole, the UCL Judicial Institute is often referred to as the ‘third arm’ of government, important in legal decision-making in London and the UK.

To further our impact and influence on law-making and the legal profession, we will:
• support London as a global centre for legal services, dispute resolution and the promotion of the rule of law, through our high impact legal research and activities
• build on our support of London’s core professions through appropriate programmes of bespoke and specialist education
• establish the UCL School of Economics and Public Policy, to enable our contribution to London and global economic and political challenges through teaching and research.

Achieving our London 2034 objectives

UCL 2034 London describes our ambitions and objectives for our relationship with London now and going forward. To achieve these, we have set out a high-level implementation plan that describes our major areas of action for the coming years. We will:

• define UCL’s strategy for our partnerships benefitting London, informed by the breadth of our research, our engagement with the city’s leading sectors and our contribution to evidence-based policy
• develop our approach to working with businesses in world-wide to maintain and grow investment in research in London and the UK, in particular recognising long-standing UCL links with Japan and the importance of the global pharmaceutical industry
• build on our commitment to London’s core professions by improving our support, resources, research and education to ensure our city has the skills and talent to thrive and contribute to national and global wellbeing and prosperity
• use our Green UCL strategy to develop new ways of working with partners in our neighbourhoods that address issues such as air quality, public space and our accessibility, demonstrating UCL’s leadership by example
• establish UCL East as a new UCL campus, complementing our presence in Bloomsbury, located on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and starting with our presence at Here East
• develop and deliver programmes to support entrepreneurship with our staff and students, leading to the creation of new companies and businesses in London
• deliver a series of inspiring and engaging internal and external programmes that bring together and communicate to a wide and diverse audience the breadth and depth of UCL’s contribution to London using our spaces and opportunities such as the re-opened Bloomsbury Theatre
• publish the UCL Innovation and Enterprise Strategy to guide our engagement with businesses, innovation partners and the leadership bodies of London
• extend our partnerships in the Knowledge Quarter through activities such as the Science and Innovation Audit to explore the greater collective potential of our neighbourhood in Bloomsbury.

We will measure our progress through a variety of metrics, such as:

• increased engagement with our neighbourhoods, local communities, local government and policymakers at a national level
• greater partnerships with other London universities in all aspects of the mission of universities, research, education and enterprise, touching our staff, students and alumni.
• extended reach of UCL health research and clinical impact into London’s hospitals and health partners, to the benefit of Londoners
• visible contribution to improvements of the lives of citizens in our neighbourhoods and London, ranging from recognised challenges around air quality, transport and infrastructure, through to cultural experience and access to education.