



**Citation for Ms Nicola Brentnall MVO**

**Honorary Fellow**

**6 September 2022, 2.30pm**

Vice-Provost, it is a pleasure to present Nicola Brentnall for conferment of an Honorary Fellowship of UCL.

Ms Brentnall took a BA in History of Art at UCL and later an MA in Corporate Governance and Business Ethics. She is also a Chartered Secretary.

She worked as Strategy and Governance Consultant to The Prince of Wales Trust and Company Secretary to The Prince's Trust, and, in her words, felt that she "had found her tribe there". She was then invited to become Director of what had started as The Queen's Trust, set up in the Queen's Jubilee year, 1977, to advise and direct the disbursement of some £35 million for good causes across the country. The Queen's Trust had a "vision of a world where young people are equal partners in driving change".

In 2015 her services to the Queen were recognised with the award of Member of the Royal Victorian Order.

In 2016 she became the founding Chief Executive Officer of The Queen's Commonwealth Trust, a charitable organisation which works to support the projects of youth advocates throughout the Commonwealth. As founding CEO, Ms Brentnall created the brand and led the fundraising effort to get the work under way, and under her leadership the Trust disbursed some £100 million throughout fifty-four countries. She has said, "It's very easy to give money away, it's not easy to give money away well."

After five years in the post at The Queen's Trust Ms Brentnall now leads a grant making and consulting service which draws on her extensive experience in areas such as governance, stakeholder relationships, philanthropy, communications and fundraising. She is an Advisor for Greenwood Place, a philanthropy accelerator; a Storyteller for TLC Lions, an organisation which partners with other organisations to transform workplaces and support inclusion, mental health and talent development agendas. She is also a Trustee of DFN Project Search, a venture that supports young people with learning disabilities and autism into work.

As a long-time advocate for UCL, Ms Brentnall has been generously volunteering her time since 2017 in support of UCL students and recent graduates. In spite of her

extremely busy schedule, she has twice volunteered as an alumna speaker for the UCL Connect professional development programme, aimed at the student and recent graduate audience. She spoke as a panellist for an event on the topic of 'Disruptive Leadership', and chaired a panel on 'Careers in the Third Sector'. In 2019 she delivered an inspiring address at a Faculty of Social and Historical Sciences graduation ceremony, and in July 2020, she recorded a positive and motivational video message of congratulations for UCL's graduating class of that year.

Her enthusiasm, candour and willingness to share personal insights have been a hallmark of her UCL volunteering efforts and this been extremely well received by students and graduates across the board.

Throughout her career as an outstanding and recognised leader in the voluntary sector. Ms Brentnall has been a passionate champion of young people, and this commitment has been evident in her continued willingness to support and engage with UCL's students and recent graduates.

"Chief Executive Officers", Ms Brentnall says, "set the values and tone and are responsible to safeguard the vulnerable in all settings . . . We need to lift any weight from the shoulders of those we support". Nicola Brentnall has spent her whole career doing precisely that, and in recognition of her remarkable achievements, Vice-Provost, it is a pleasure to present her for conferment of Honorary Fellowship of UCL.