UCL Undergraduate Preparatory Certificates

Foundation courses for international students
ucl.ac.uk/upc
2020 Entry
Welcome to UCL: London’s Global University

UCL (University College London) is a world-leading multidisciplinary university with an international reputation for high-quality research and teaching, being ranked in the top 10 universities worldwide.*

Based in Bloomsbury, central London, UCL's main campus is within walking distance of outstanding academic, social and cultural resources, as well as exceptional sporting facilities and entertainment, giving easy access to the world’s number one student city.**

* QS World University Rankings 2020
** QS Best Student Cities 2019

60 academic departments in 11 faculties

Number 1 in the UK for research strength in the latest (2014) Research Excellence Framework

Staff-to-student ratio is 1:10

The Students’ Union UCL (SU UCL) has more than 250 clubs and societies

18 specialist libraries with more than two million books

41,000 students from more than 150 different countries

29 Nobel prize winners

Around 41% of the student population is from overseas
Student View

“I really like how the subjects are taught on the UPC. The teachers want you to fully understand the material, and not just so you can pass an exam. They are really passionate about their subject.”

Name: Arkadiy Serezhkin
Nationality: Russian
Studied: UPCSE (2017)
Progressed to: Engineering (Mechanical with Business Finance), MEng at UCL.
UCL Undergraduate Preparatory Certificates (UPC)

Student View

"The UPC really helped me to tackle how to do research. It gave me a clear path of what to do and a step-by-step guide into how to be a great researcher in the future."

Name: Subah Alkhaldi
Nationality: Saudi
Studied: UPCSE (2018)
Progressed to: Mechanical Engineering BEng at UCL

Hear more student views: ucl.ac.uk/upc/student-views

Course details

You will study four modules:
- two compulsory modules
- two optional modules of your choice.

These highly intensive modules rapidly advance your subject knowledge in a range of topics. You will develop critical and analytical skills that are transferable between many disciplines and are vital for successful study at undergraduate degree level.

UPC modules are delivered through lectures, seminars and tutorials, providing an average of 23 UCL class hours* per week, covering:
- practical academic skills
- critical thinking skills
- academic English
- research skills and research projects
- laboratory and practical science skills (UPCSE only)
- LNAT (Law) and STEP (Mathematics) examination preparation (as required)
- design portfolio (UPC for Architecture)
- field trips and personal development opportunities.

You will be continually assessed through regular homework, research projects and exercises, and sit end-of-term exams.

*The UCL class hour is 50 minutes.

Compulsory modules

You will study two compulsory modules:
- Research and Academic Skills
- Academic English

If you have a near native competence in English you can study a Modern Foreign Language instead of Academic English (see below).

Research and Academic Skills
This module develops your critical thinking and research skills.

Individual Research – you will undertake an individual research project in an area which interests and inspires you. This builds your confidence and independence in researching and presenting ideas.

UPCSE students take Science & Society, which examines the ethical, social, environmental and technological implications of various scientific issues.

UPCH students take Academic Research: Approaches & Methods, which explores fundamental approaches to knowledge in different disciplines. You will be challenged to reflect critically on how different subject areas and methodologies may relate to and inform one another, and how they apply to your own research.

Academic English
The focus is on improving English for academic study. Components include:
- essay writing
- lecture comprehension and effective note-taking
- academic reading
- speaking skills (seminars and presentations).

Or

A Modern Foreign Language
If appropriate, you can study Arabic, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Mandarin, Portuguese or Spanish instead of Academic English. The minimum level of English required for this is an IELTS for UKVI (Academic) score of 7.5 or equivalent.
Optional modules

In addition to the compulsory modules, you will select two optional modules. The optional modules are selected according to the requirements of the undergraduate programme you are aiming for. Please see our guide to selecting optional modules.

ucl.ac.uk/upc/modules

UPC applicants wishing to combine UPCH and UPCSE modules should contact the course administrators for advice.

UPCSE

Biology: Biochemistry, cell biology, genetics, DNA technology, physiology, microbiology and evolution are covered, as is an awareness of scientific methods, developed with practical laboratory sessions.

Chemistry: Inorganic, organic and physical aspects are all covered, in a way that gives strong emphasis to practical work and is designed to provide a firm foundation for undergraduate study.

Mathematics: Provides a rigorous quantitative analytical basis for degree programmes in numerate disciplines, particularly engineering and the physical sciences.

Physics: This calculus-based course covers both classical and modern physics with a rigorous mathematical approach and an emphasis on experimental and scientific writing skills.

Student View

"The UPC is one of the best foundation year courses in the UK, so I thought there would be a high probability to progress to a top UK university. This was important for me, as I wanted to apply to Oxford or Cambridge.

The UPC also introduced me to the application process and helped me a lot to prepare my university application."

Name: Yijie Yin
Nationality: Chinese
Studied: UPCSE (2017)
Progressed to: Psychological and Behaviour Sciences BSc at the University of Cambridge

UPCH

Classical Civilisation: Literature, Philosophy and Politics: Involves the study of some of the most significant and influential drama, philosophy, poetry and historical events of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds, and explores the dialogue between the ancient past and the modern day.

Economics: Examines modern economic activity using conventional principles of micro- and macroeconomics.

Geography and the Built Environment: Considers how social, cultural and economic changes affect people and places around the world, through processes such as globalisation, migration and urbanisation.

Mathematics: Provides a rigorous quantitative analytical basis for degree programmes in numerate disciplines including economics and statistical sciences.

Modern European Culture: Involves the close analysis of important works of art, film and literature of the modern period to increase the understanding of European culture in its historical, social and political dimensions.

Modern European History and Politics: Focuses on the history of Western democracy, politics, government and international relations, exploring the concepts of nationalism, globalisation and state sovereignty.

UPC for Architecture

UPC students aiming for the Architecture BSc degree at UCL will study the UPC for Architecture course. In addition to two optional modules and the compulsory academic English module, all UPC for Architecture students will study the compulsory Visual Studies for Architecture and Academic Research: Approaches and Methods (VSAARAM) module.

The Visual Studies for Architecture (VSA) component of this module is delivered at the UCL Bartlett School of Architecture, providing a unique opportunity to experience first-hand what it means to study Architecture at UCL.

Bartlett tutors will support you in developing and refining your portfolios to support your undergraduate degree applications to the UCL Bartlett School of Architecture and other top UK architecture schools.

ucl.ac.uk/upc/architecture
Entry requirements and application

Am I eligible?
You will:
• be over 16 years old at the start of the course
• typically be a high achiever in a 12-year school system which does not meet the standard required for direct entry to a UCL undergraduate degree.

If you are under the age of 18 at the point of enrolment, you should familiarise yourself with UCL’s essential information for under 18s before applying.

ucl.ac.uk/upc/under-18

What are the entry requirements?
Academic requirements – you will need to present excellent grades on school transcripts.
Please see our website for a list of suitable country qualifications for entry onto the UPC and minimum grades required.

ucl.ac.uk/upc/applications

English language requirements – you must hold an IELTS for UKVI (Academic)

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>IELTS overall minimum</th>
<th>IELTS subtest minimum</th>
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<tr>
<td>UPC for Science &amp; Engineering (UPCSE)</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPC for the Humanities (UPCH)</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>UPC with Modern Foreign Languages (UPCMFL)</td>
<td>7.5</td>
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What documents do I need?
• Fully completed application form - including the personal statement section
• A teacher’s reference
• Copies of school transcripts
• An IELTS for UKVI (Academic) – see English language minimum requirements
• Application fee
• A portfolio (for Architecture applicants only) – this should include at least six observational drawings as well as work in other media, such as paintings, collages, 3D and photographs.

Following receipt of a completed application and the application fee, suitable candidates will be contacted regarding UPC entrance tests.

What are the entrance tests?
Suitable applicants will be required to take entrance tests, and, if successful, will be interviewed for the course.

UPCSE: Select two subjects from Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics or Physics. The choice depends on which optional modules you intend to study.

UPCH: Critical Thinking (and Mathematics for applicants selecting Mathematics as an option).

You should be familiar with the relevant sample test(s) prior to application. Sample tests can be taken online at:

ucl.ac.uk/upc/tests

Tuition fees

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Details of other costs associated with the course (e.g. living expenses, field trips and excursions) can be found online.

ucl.ac.uk/upc

Accommodation

Accommodation is guaranteed for applicants who have accepted an offer and meet the accommodation application deadline of 31 May 2020.

The fees you pay for your accommodation will vary depending on your needs, the location and facilities. The majority of UCL accommodation is within 10–30 minutes’ walk of the main campus.

The following tables show you the range of fees for 2019/20 per week. Fees for 2020/21 will be set in the Spring of 2020.

ucl.ac.uk/accommodation

When can I apply?
Entry onto UCL UPC courses is competitive. Applications for 2020 entry open in November 2019 and should be made as early as possible. Please check the website for relevant application deadlines.

How do I apply?
Applications are made directly to the UCL Centre for Languages & International Education. Applications are made online at:

ucl.ac.uk/upc

What documents do I need?
• Fully completed application form - including the personal statement section
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• Copies of school transcripts
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Self-catered: UCL Student Houses

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<td>Single</td>
<td>£211.75 – £249.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twin</td>
<td>£97.79 – £125.44</td>
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Catered: UCL Halls of Residence

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<th>Room Type</th>
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<td>Single (not en-suite)</td>
<td>£221.69 – £243.32</td>
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<td>Twin (not en-suite)</td>
<td>£167.09</td>
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