

# Celebrating 7 years of partnership

**UCL & UCL Academy**





UCL and UCL Academy work in partnership to support the educational **visions and values** of our two institutions.

This report showcases much of the **exceptional work** already completed, and also sets out a clear pathway for what more can be achieved as **we continue our journey together.**



# Welcome from Anthony Smith, Vice-Provost (Education and Student Affairs), UCL, Robin Street and Simon McBride, Co-Principals, UCL Academy



**Anthony Smith,**  
Vice-Provost (Education  
and Student Affairs), UCL



**Robin Street,**  
Co-Principal,  
UCL Academy



**Simon McBride,**  
Co-Principal,  
UCL Academy

In 2012 UCL was the first university in England to become the sole sponsor of an academy school: UCL Academy.

This year we celebrate 7 years of partnership and the achievements of staff and students so far. This report presents a number of successful initiatives that have emerged from the partnership. The continuing success of the partnership is evidenced not only through the range of projects and activities which take place, but also the increasing number of UCL Academy students receiving offers to study at UCL. This year 40 UCL Academy students received offers for undergraduate study at UCL, a record number since the partnership began. This evening we invite you to join us in reflecting on the excellent work which has taken place to date, as well as on the opportunities to develop and enhance the partnership for the future.

Anthony Smith

Since UCL Academy opened in September 2012, UCL has provided a range of unique opportunities to support its development. Serving a diverse, comprehensive student population in Camden, UCL Academy's curriculum has been inspired by the vision of its sponsor, UCL.

We are delighted to bring together in this report examples of the activities, programmes and projects that have provided, and will continue to provide, thousands of students and hundreds of staff with the chance to learn from and be inspired by one of the world's leading universities.

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Robin Street & Simon McBride

# Past, present and future of the partnership

From day one, our two institutions have collaborated to support the education of all of our students.

At the heart of this partnership was the visionary work of Geraldine Davies, UCL Academy's founding principal, alongside the leadership, commitment and inspiration of the then Provost Professor Malcolm Grant, Vice-Provost Professor Michael Worton, Dr Clare Goudy and our founding Chair of Governors Vice-Provost Professor David Price.

Seven years on, the Partnership Board is now fully established to oversee the strategic collaborative work of UCL and UCL Academy. Staff from both organisations continue this work, thanks to the exceptional stewardship and commitment of UCL Vice-Provost Professor Anthony Smith, Chair of Governors Professor Lucie Green and Professor Becky Francis, Director of the UCL Institute of Education.

UCL Alumni, such as Elizabeth Critchley, also offer unique support to the Academy. The flagship Critchley Scholarship programme, inspiring our female students, has now been established.

Going forward, we will build on our successes to date and continue to grow networks across both institutions to ensure we offer the best opportunities for our students and staff.



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# Brightside

UCL students mentor UCL Academy students at key transition points in their secondary school journey

## What is Brightside?

Brightside recruit and train UCL student mentors to deliver a mentoring programme for pupils at UCL Academy. Mentors use their own knowledge and experience to work with groups of Level 1 (Year 8) and Level 3 (Year 12) students, supporting them at key transition points in their journey through education. Mentoring is delivered over four in-school sessions for each year group, and through extended one-to-one online mentoring for Level 3 (Year 12) students. Brightside supports UCL student mentors to be inspiring role models, enabling young people to develop skills, grow in knowledge and awareness of their future options, and supporting them to make confident and informed decisions about their futures.

## How do both institutions benefit from this initiative?

Brightside's UCL Academy mentoring project works to support and maintain strong links between UCL and UCL Academy. Brightside gives UCL students an exciting and challenging volunteering opportunity; engaging with students in UCL's sponsored school, and developing their skills and experience.

Supporting the Academy's curriculum ethos and 17 x 17 programme, Brightside matches Academy students with mentors from a world leading university. UCL mentors are role models and sources of advice and support for Academy students. Mentoring gives them an insight into post-16 and post-18 options, increases their human and social capital, and supports them to make confident and informed decisions about their future options.

## Engagement:

1068

Total number of UCL Academy Level 1 (Year 8) students involved from 2013-14 to 2018-19

633

Total number of UCL Academy Level 3 (Year 12) students involved from 2013-14 to 2018-19

238

Total number of UCL student mentors involved from 2013-14 to 2018-19



"[Brightside mentoring is] a wonderful opportunity for both mentees and mentors to learn valuable knowledge and gain important skills for our academic and personal goals."

UCL Student Mentor, April 2019

# Grand Challenges

UCL Academy students engage with UCL's six Grand Challenges

## How do UCL Academy students engage with UCL's Grand Challenges?

Students in Level 2 (Year 10) and Level 2+ (Year 11) are asked to complete several Grand Challenge 'projects' across their two year GCSE course. The Grand Challenges allow students to make interdisciplinary connections between their GCSE knowledge and big problems facing our world. Students complete a range of creative products and are awarded Grand Challenge certificates dependent on the quality of product. For example, students produce academic posters based on the challenges of urbanisation that are then presented at UCL.

## How do both institutions benefit from this initiative?

UCL Academy has used the Grand Challenges to design a curriculum that aims for academic mastery, personal interest and creativity. Students are more engaged when they can relate academic content to real world issues. Grand Challenges allow UCL Academy to develop a clear internal framework of 'big questions' built around themes associated with each Grand Challenge. Through the projects, students create and present work to real audiences at UCL and beyond and engage with excellence e.g. through interactions with UCL academics and students.

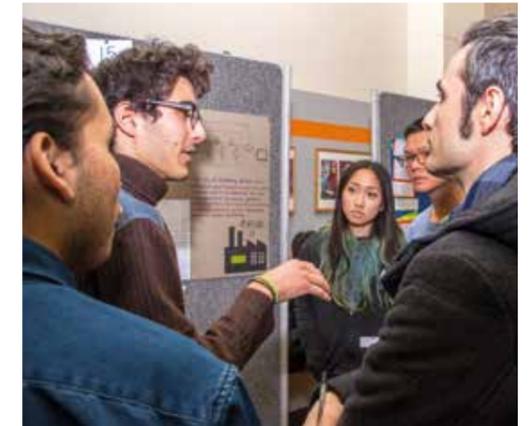
## Engagement:

1440

1440 UCL Academy Students have engaged with Grand Challenges issues and themes since 2015

360

Total number of students involved across Level 2 (Year 10) and Level 2+ (Year 11) each year



"Feedback from UCL's senior leadership team and Grand Challenges team on the quality of work students produced was excellent. Several students were able to articulate the importance of applying their learning to real world problems. They highly value the importance of speaking in front of real audiences."

Richard Donnelly, Director of Connecting the Curriculum and Grand Challenges, UCL Academy

# UCL Volunteering Services Unit

UCL students lead volunteering projects at UCL Academy

## How do the VSU and UCL Academy work together?

UCL students have led projects and activities at UCL Academy over the course of the partnership. Historic projects include an Environmental Justice Project, Shakespeare and a Model United Nations Project.

In 2018-19, examples of projects and activities included:

- Royal Free, University College and Middlesex Medical Schools (RUMS) FC providing football coaching open to all students at UCL Academy
- UCL students teaching basic sign language to UCL Academy students
- UCL students supporting UCL Academy Cheerleading group
- Natural and Free Running/Parkour Club delivering parkour sessions at the Academy
- Amnesty International workshop with UCL's Amnesty International Society

## How do both institutions benefit from this initiative?

UCL students develop a range of skills, including leadership and communication skills, through organising and delivering their own projects at UCL Academy. UCL Academy students gain project-specific skills and knowledge and interact with role models from UCL.

### Engagement:

100+

100+ UCL students involved in student-led volunteering projects at the Academy since the start of the partnership



“I’ve really enjoyed my time volunteering at UCL Academy. It’s been a great way for me to develop my leadership skills and also enhance the knowledge and skills of students at the Academy”

UCL student volunteer, 2019

# Guest Lecture Series

UCL academic staff give lectures at UCL Academy to raise student aspirations

## What is the Guest Lecture Series?

In 2015, UCL Academy began a very successful Guest Lecture Series for Sixth Form and KS4 students. Guest lectures are delivered by UCL academics, including Anthony Smith (Professor of Pharmacy) David Price (Professor of Mineral Physics), Lucie Green (Professor of Physics), Subhadra Das (Curator, UCL Culture Science Collections), Mark Ford (Professor of English), Stephen Fossey (UCL Physics and Astronomy) and many more. Students are exposed to a wide range of academic topics through the series, with lectures traditionally taking place late on Thursday afternoons at UCL Academy Lecture Theatre.

## How do both institutions benefit from this initiative?

The overarching objective of the lecture series is to raise aspirations and offer UCL Academy students the opportunity to engage with UCL. The series also promotes academic excellence and innovative curriculum links with UCL. UCL Academy students and staff benefit from the knowledge and expertise of UCL academic staff, and make explicit connections between the subject matters taught across both institutions.



“The UCL lecture series has offered scope for us to experience frontier level research and considered the wider possibilities and applications of the subjects we are studying.”

Level 3 student, UCL Academy

“Our students are thankful for the opportunity to hear from the very best academics at UCL. This is also in line with the Gatsby benchmark 7 in good career guidance: ‘Encounters with further and higher education.’”

Eranda Aliu, Coordinator of Careers and UCL Links, UCL Academy

### Engagement:

1700+

Over 1700 UCL Academy students have attended guest lectures since 2015

# Staff Masterclasses

UCL academics share subject expertise with UCL Academy staff wishing to enhance their own pedagogical practice

## What are Staff Masterclasses?

The masterclasses are delivered by UCL academics to subject specialists at UCL Academy as part of the Academy's planning day schedules. For example, Maths problem solving with Dr Luciano Rila and an English masterclass on the book 'The Beloved'. The masterclasses are delivered to whole departments or parts of departments specialising in a particular area of knowledge.

## How do both institutions benefit from this initiative?

Maths masterclasses have had an impact on Maths subject pedagogy at UCL Academy. There has been a direct impact in the classroom for teachers involved in the Maths problem solving masterclass. Pre and post assessments are used alongside the implementation of innovative practice learned in the masterclass.

The 'Beloved' masterclass was highly engaging and had a motivational effect on staff and students alike. The masterclasses provide UCL academics with the opportunity to share their subject expertise with colleagues at UCL Academy, who in turn are able to utilise this learning to invigorate students' passion for their subject area.



“Teachers highly value the Maths masterclass and in particular they developed their metacognitive teaching skills. Teachers enjoyed the masterclass because they were put in the position of their students and learned through “the problem starts with the answer” mantra.”

**Richard Donnelly,**  
Director of Connecting  
the Curriculum and Grand  
Challenges, UCL Academy

## Engagement:

# 20

In 2018-19 two staff masterclasses were delivered to 20 staff

# UCL Academy Middle Leaders Development Programme

IOE staff support the development of middle leaders at UCL Academy, and gain knowledge of school leadership

## What is the Middle Leaders Development Programme?

UCL Academy supports middle leaders to develop through an evidence-led and theoretical approach to leading change and innovation. The one-year programme is bespoke to the needs of the group and includes leadership theory workshops, practical leadership workshops and a cycle of reflection and evaluation. The course is supported by members of the Institute of Education (IOE) and London Centre for Leadership in Learning (LCLL), drawing on their expertise in the field.

## How do both institutions benefit from this initiative?

Eight middle leaders successfully applied for senior leadership positions following the programme. Six of these vacancies were then filled internally due to leadership development training opportunities provided.

Two members have registered for a Master's in Education following the programme

Through working with the Academy the IOE have been able to contribute to the wider education system, remain up to date in their knowledge of the needs of leaders in schools and design new workshops based on this information.



“The MLD programme was instrumental in giving me the confidence to apply for a senior leadership position.”

**MLD participant, 2019**

## Engagement:

# 19

19 participants on the Middle Leaders Development Programme this year (2019)

# 8

Eight middle leaders applied for senior leadership positions, six vacancies filled internally due to leadership development training opportunities provided

# Maths Project

An academic intervention designed to raise Maths attainment at UCL Academy

## What is the Maths Project?

The Maths Project is a collaboration between UCL Academy Maths department, UCL Access and Widening Participation Office, academics from UCL Institute of Education (IOE) and UCL students. UCL students are trained to deliver weekly Maths support sessions with half of the Level 2 (Year 10) cohort. The session plans were developed by Dr Suman Ghosh (UCL Mathematics Education lecturer) with guidance from Dom Adamson (Assistant Curriculum Leader Maths, UCL Academy). The aim of the project is to raise pupils' attainment in Maths, and the UCL Access and Widening Participation Office is conducting a research project to test the impact on pupils' results.

## How do both institutions benefit from this initiative?

UCL Academy benefits from the academic expertise of UCL academics from the IOE Department of Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment, and from the enthusiasm of the UCL undergraduates who run the sessions. For UCL, it has been very beneficial to work closely with Dom and colleagues at UCL Academy. The UCL Access and Widening Participation Office has run a project with a control group for the first time and hopes to be able to evaluate robustly how this school-level intervention has impacted pupils' attainment, a key objective for universities.



“This project has been a wonderful example of how our two institutions can collaborate effectively when staff on both sides are invested in a project. Seeing the interactions between the Year 10 pupils and UCL undergraduate students gave a real sense of the positive benefits that university-led projects in schools can bring to both groups”

**Jennifer Whitney**, Access Manager (Pre-16), UCL Access and Widening Participation Office

## Engagement:

# 84

84 students (half of Level 2/ Year 10) have participated in the Maths support sessions in 2018-19. We will be providing support for the other half of the year group in 2019-20

# 24

24 UCL students worked as Maths tutors on the project

# Research

The research project ‘Ideas of the future in young people’s educational decision-making’ by Professor Richard Sandford is an example of how UCL and UCL Academy have worked together to deliver a mutually beneficial research project

## What does the research project involve?

A diverse group of UCL Academy students, at a similar point in their educational careers, are participating in interviews to explore their choices, goals and stances towards the future. The project aims to better understand the work done by ideas of the future in the educational decision-making of young people. Findings from the research will help educators to better support young people in making educational decisions.

## How do both institutions benefit from this initiative?

For UCL Academy, the project has expanded the ways in which students are supported to consider their futures, developing and complementing themes addressed within their Reflect and Connect sessions. Students have been introduced to a critical and reflexive perspective on their futures, ahead of making their GCSE choices. For UCL, working with students has provided new insight into the ways in which students consider the future, which will be hugely valuable to educators supporting students to aspire and aim high, and to education researchers exploring how futures are imagined by young people.



“I have found working with the Academy a real pleasure. The staff have really done their utmost to enable this research, going above and beyond to help make it happen.”

**Professor Richard Sandford**, UCL Faculty of the Built Environment

## Engagement:

# 19

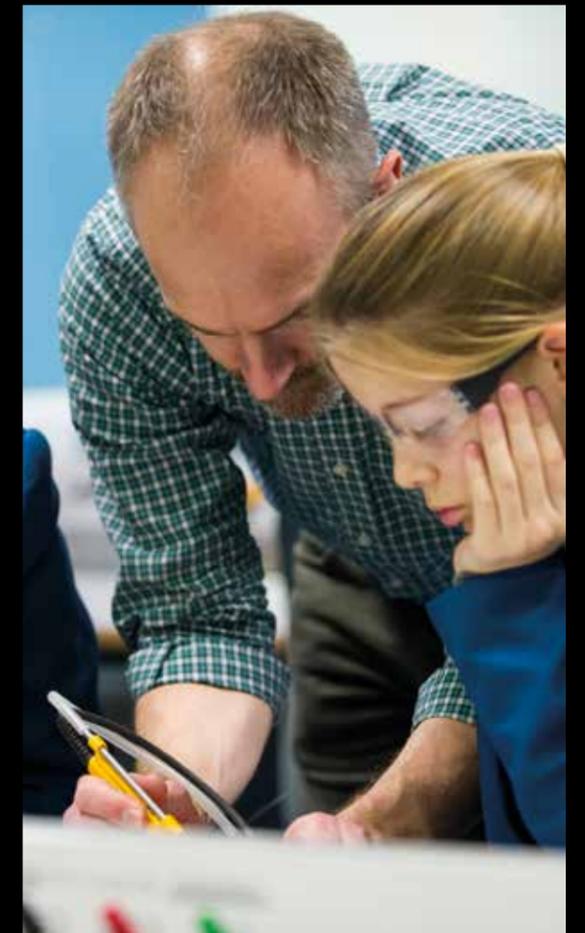
For this project, 19 Level 1 (Year 8) students have been involved over the summer term of 2019



Professor  
Lucie Green,  
UCL Chair of Governors

“ When UCL became the first university in the country to take on sole sponsorship of an academy, the aim was to provide **an education for all**, irrespective of race, faith or background, and with a broad and balanced curriculum that **encourages problem-solving and critical thinking**. We aim that our students are engaged and active global citizens and this necessarily requires partnerships - both national and international. I look forward to supporting UCL Academy as we **build on the success of previous initiatives and further grow our networks** to ensure that we offer **the very best opportunities** for our staff and our students. ”

Professor Lucie Green



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