University College School (Hampstead)

University College School was founded in 1830 to promote principles of liberal scholarship. That remains our first and over-riding aim. Intellectual curiosity, breadth of study and independence of mind combine to achieve academic excellence; they are not subordinate to it.

Initially located in Gower Street, as part of University College London, the School was revolutionary in its approach to education, having as a fundamental principle that religion, in any form, should neither be an entry requirement nor a taught subject, believing rather that faith is a matter for the family and the individual - a tradition that continues today. The UCS Foundation, now independent of the University, comprises three schools: the Senior School (850 pupils: 11-18), the Junior Branch (250 pupils: 7-11) and The Phoenix School (130 pupils: 3-7).

All three schools are set in attractive locations. In 1891 the Junior Branch was established at Holly Hill, Hampstead, followed in 1907 by the School's separation from UCL, and the acquisition of the Senior School's current purpose-built accommodation in Frognal, opened by King Edward VII. The pre-preparatory branch, The Phoenix (acquired in 2002) is based nearby. All three Schools have full use of the extensive playing fields (including a large all-weather pitch and two pavilions) in West Hampstead.

The Foundation has just completed an ambitious programme of redevelopment. The Sir Roger Bannister Sports Centre was opened in December 2006. It comprises a Sports Hall, Swimming Pool, Dance Studio and Fitness Centre. The *UCS Active* commercial Health Club (with over 1,000 members) uses the facilities outside school hours. In late 2007, construction was completed of new Centres for the teaching of Art and Technology and of Modern Languages. In September 2008, girls were admitted to the UCS Sixth Form for the first time. The coeducational Sixth Form now numbers about 300 students (of which roughly 70 are girls). Alongside all of these developments, we have run a fund-raising Appeal which has succeeded in raising over £2 million, enabling us to reach our target of doubling the availability of fee assistance for pupils from less wealthy families.

The school has always been forward-thinking. Our most recent Development Programme follows in an impressive tradition. A Sixth Form Centre and Theatre were opened in l974. In 1993 extensive new facilities were added: a Library, Music School, Lecture Theatre and ICT Centre. A similar programme of continuous investment at the Junior Branch and at the Phoenix School has created excellent educational facilities on those two sites. We established a new Visitors' Reception Office and created an Art Gallery with additional teaching spaces at the Senior School in 2011and are already planning future improvements at all three of the Foundation schools.

UCS remains true to the liberal traditions of its founders and continues to work hard to foster independence of mind among its students and to value their individuality. Academic results are excellent: 93% A*/A/B pass at A-level in 2011, with 76% at A*/A and over 30% at A*alone; roughly 80% A*/A at GCSE. Approximately 20% of the Sixth Form progress to Oxford or Cambridge each year.

Music and drama are very strong at UCS and the school offers an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. The school has a fine record in team games, with shared endeavour and good sportsmanship being held in higher regard than eventual match results.

The Organisation of UCS

Whilst the Headmaster of UCS is in overall control of all three schools in the Foundation, day-to-day management and planning at the Junior Branch is in the hands of the JB's own Headmaster and his deputies. Similarly, The Phoenix has its own Head who reports to the Headmaster of the JB.

Sixty boys each year transfer from the JB to the Senior School and are joined by twenty-eight boys from outside feeder schools who win places through competitive examination. In Years 7 and 8 (Entry and Shell), these boys are supervised by a team of pastoral Year Wardens and form-teachers. In Year 9 (Lower Remove), they are joined by a further twenty-seven entrants from Preparatory Schools and are allocated to the five Demes (or houses) which form the basis of the pastoral structure of the school until students leave at the end of the Sixth Form. Each Deme is managed by a Deme Warden and a team of form-teachers. In September 2008 a sixth Deme was created to accommodate the female students who join the UCS Sixth Form. Boys and girls in the Sixth Form are supported not only by their Deme Warden and form-tutor but also by the Head of Sixth Form, supported by a Deputy and a team of Assistant Heads who, between them, manage the Sixth Form Centre, university application and other matters specific to students of this age.

Pupils from The Phoenix School who wish to gain entry to the JB must sit the standard 7+ Entrance Examination. Transfer from the JB to the Senior School is not dependent upon a further examination hurdle. Similarly, there is no formal GCSE condition placed upon promotion from the Middle to the Upper School.

Admission at all entry points is heavily over-subscribed. Whilst UCS operates within a highly competitive market-place, our reputation as a happy, well-balanced environment that respects the individuality of each pupil allows us to retain the advantages of a highly selective school. We are particularly proud of our reputation for pastoral care and for extra-curricular activities, as well as our high academic standards.

The Senior School Curriculum

In Years 7 and 8, boys follow a full core curriculum with time devoted to Drama, Art, Technology, ICT, PSHE, PE and sport as well as to the more traditional academic curriculum. All boys study Latin and French. There is no setting or streaming. This approach continues into Year 9, where the options of a second modern language and of further classical study are added. Maths and French are set by ability in Years 9, 10 and 11. There is no further setting or streaming. All boys currently study ten subjects to GCSE (IGCSE in the case of an increasing number of subjects), including English, English Literature, Mathematics, at least one science subject and at least one modern language. All students study four subjects to AS-level. They may choose to drop one of these in the second Sixth Form year. A number of students choose to take an Extended Project qualification in addition to other AS and A-levels.

Sports and Extra-Curricular Activities at the Senior School

The school's principal sports are Rugby (Autumn Term), Football and Hockey (Spring Term) and Cricket (Summer Term). In addition, facilities and opportunities exist for Tennis, Athletics, Badminton, Cross-Country, Basketball, Swimming, Fives, Table-Tennis, Fencing, Aerobics, Dance, Netball, Karate and Squash. All students are required to play games as part of their normal curriculum.

There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities and school societies. Music is particularly strong, with Choir, Orchestra, Wind Band, Chamber Choir, Chamber Orchestra, Concert Band, jazz and rock groups. The school has a fully equipped theatre that is heavily used for our own productions as well as by visiting professional actors and musicians. A large number of plays and musicals are staged each year, with opportunities for students to direct as well as to act and provide technical support. The Debating Society, Chamberlain Society (politics & current events), Comedy Club, Gunn Club (literature & creative writing), Film Club, Maths Puzzle Club, Fantasy Football League, Jewish Society, Chess Club, Voluntary Service Unit are all currently popular. School trips are arranged on a regular basis and UCS has close links with schools in France, Germany, Spain, Africa and India. UCS has a partnership with Westminster Academy and works closely with the London Borough of Camden on a number of projects. Students currently raise roughly £20,000 per year for a range of charities that they select themselves. There are regular overseas sport and music tours. Enrichment Week, Science Week and Activities Week annually broaden and embellish the UCS educational experience.

The Geography Department

At UCS we believe that the primary function of geography is to allow students to understand and respond effectively to the local, national and global contexts of the 21st century. The course which we have written for our Year 7 to 9 students reflects this, as does our choice of GCSE and A Level specifications. Collectively these draw on, yet challenge the students' experiences and preconceptions; ideas about the way in which the world is changing are discussed and ample opportunities for students to pursue the areas that particularly interest them are built in to our teaching and learning programme. Providing opportunity to stretch and challenge all students, including the very brightest, is a routine part of our teaching and is embedded in our schemes of work.

In the lower school (Years 7 and 8) we select topics for study which can be used to emphasise the synopticity of the subject. For example in Year 7 we study Variations in Standards of Living in London and in Year 8 The Geography of Disease. In Year 7, students undertake independent fieldwork to investigate a part of their local area with which they are unfamiliar as a means of establishing the different ways in which they learn about places. In Year 9, global issues are addressed. For example, our detailed study of International Development and Sustainability includes an opportunity for students to research development in a country of their own choice, and a similar pattern of study for the same year group is applied to our Disappearing Cultures topic.

The success of our Lower School course has seen numbers opting for GCSE leap from approximately 55/ 125 into the mid-eighties over a three year period. We have chosen the AQA 'A' specification since it offers the greatest flexibility in terms of teaching topics and allows the opportunity to teach beyond the specification content. The fieldwork undertaken to fulfil the requirements of Controlled Assessment takes the form of a day visit to an appropriate part of London. Our results at GCSE are strong, with around 75% of each cohort securing A* or A grades each year.

At A level, around 25-40 students per year opt for AS; most continue to A2. The department teaches the excellent Edexcel Specification, which reverts to the strong issues-based focus from Years 7 to 9. Results are superb; we are consistently amongst the best performing departments in the school, having had just one student fail to attain at least a B grade since 2005. Since 2008, between 82% and 86% of each cohort has attained an A (or A*) grade. We are very proud to have so many of our A level geographers go on to read the subject at university- in some years, more than half of the A Level Geography cohort- and for the last 5 years at least one student each year has secured a place at Oxford or Cambridge. AS Level fieldwork takes place in Cornwall, whilst at A2 all students travel to Sicily to conduct research into volcanic processes and cultural change. Oxbridge applicants are offered separate tutoring during the term preceding their interviews. Students run a Geography Society; recent speakers have included Hugh Pym, the BBC's Chief Economics Editor, speaking on the BRIC nations, Anna Minton who spoke on the subject of the privatisation of space and government in British cities and Michael Palin, the President of the RGS/ IBG.

The department has its own suite of rooms in the basement of the main building; there are five classrooms, each of which has projection facilities from the staff computer and four of the five rooms have Interactive Whiteboards. Adjacent to the office is the heart of the department; our superbly equipped resource room to which A Level Geography students have open access from early morning until late in the day, thus facilitating independent study and tutorial styles of teaching for students in the 6th Form. In practice, students in lower and middle years are also keen to use it and they can do so when space permits. The placement and access policy of our resource room helps to encourage good working habits, and encourages students to think that support is available to them outside normal lesson times. The department prides itself on excellent relationships with students.

The Geography Department currently comprises five staff, all of whom are full-time. Each member of the department has additional responsibilities within the school, some of them senior, and each contributes to a wider programme of school Games and Activities. The considerable success of Geography at UCS and the growth in student numbers has led to the emergence of this vacancy. There is ample scope for contribution to the full life of the Department.

The Present Vacancy

The current vacancy arises from the growing popularity of the subject at GCSE and at A-level. The successful applicant will join an experienced, successful and supportive department at a time of interesting developments within the school. He/she will be capable of teaching throughout the age range, and will be equally enthusiastic about every element of their teaching. The precise balance of teaching for the successful candidate will depend upon his/her interests and experience. It is sure to involve teaching throughout the age range with some work at GCSE level and above. We expect to appoint a teacher who combines a strong intellectual interest in Geography with an imaginative and flexible approach to classroom teaching, wise and sensitive in their planning of lessons, rigorous and friendly in their delivery. The successful candidate will be personally committed to developing a genuine and lasting enthusiasm for geography and for geographical method in his/her students, as well as in preparing them for exam success.

This is a really good opportunity to teach Geography to a high level in a congenial and stimulating setting. It should, therefore, be attractive to an NQT (UCS offers full statutory induction), but could equally be of interest to a serving teacher seeking wider experience.

A willingness to contribute to the extra-curricular life of the school, and to be involved in pastoral care will be an additional and important recommendation.

Child Protection

University College School is fully committed to all steps that are necessary for the support and safeguard of the welfare and safety of children. The school is a Registered Body with the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) for the purposes of obtaining access to criminal record checks for employment and voluntary appointments. All positions involve regular contact with children aged under 18 years in education and therefore any successful applicant for this position will be required to apply for Enhanced Disclosure from the CRB in respect of this position before the School can make a formal offer of appointment. Appropriate steps will be taken, through contact with previous employers, referees, and others, to confirm candidates' identities and their professional records.

Salary and Benefits

UCS has its own competitive salary scale. The payment for this post will be dependent upon qualifications and experience, but is likely to be above the National Scale.

While the school does not offer accommodation, schemes are in place to assist members of staff with loans for house purchase or to purchase property jointly with them. The school is similarly prepared to offer loans to help with daily travel expenses. In all cases, eligibility for financial assistance is carefully and independently scrutinised and every effort is made to assess the needs of individual applicants.

If admitted to the school, the sons and daughters of UCS staff may be educated at reduced fees.

All members of staff are entitled to membership of *UCS Active* (the private Health & Fitness Club based in the Sir Roger Bannister Sports Centre) at a heavily reduced rate.

The school also offers a relocation package.

Arrangements for the Appointment

In addition to completing the accompanying form, applicants should provide a full Curriculum Vitae and a supporting letter. The closing date for applications is Friday 9th March 2012. It is hoped that interviews will take place in the following week.