
Head of Geography
UCS Senior School
Full Time
Required for September 2025



University College School was founded in 1830 to promote principles of liberal scholarship. That remains our first and overriding 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. 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 Pre-Prep (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 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.

UCS remains true to the liberal traditions of its founders and continues to work hard to foster independence of mind among its pupils, to value their individuality and to create a diverse and inclusive community.. Academic results are excellent. Music and drama are very strong at UCS and the school offers an outstanding range of co-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities.

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 Pre-Prep has its own Head who reports to the Headmaster of the JB.

Sixty pupils each year transfer from the JB to the Senior School and are joined by sixty pupils from outside feeder schools who win places through competitive examination. In Years 7 and 8 (Entry and Shell), these children are supervised by a team of pastoral Year Wardens, Form Tutors and Head of Lower School. In Year 9 (Lower Remove), pupils join the Middle School and are allocated to the six Demes (or houses) which form the basis of the pastoral structure of the school until pupils leave at the end of the Sixth Form. Each Deme is managed by a Deme Warden, a team of Form Tutors and the Head of Middle School/Head of Sixth Form.

Admission at all entry points is heavily oversubscribed. 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 co-curricular activities, as well as our high academic standards.

The Senior School Curriculum

In Years 7 and 8, pupils follow a full core curriculum with time devoted to Drama, Art, Design & Technology, PSHE, PE and sport as well as to the more traditional academic curriculum. Pupils study General Science in Year 7, and the three separate sciences from Year 8 onwards. Mathematics is set by ability from the Spring Term in Year 7. All pupils currently study ten subjects to GCSE (IGCSE in the case of a number of subjects), including English Language, English Literature, Mathematics, and at least one science subject. All pupils begin Year 12 studying four subjects. A number of pupils will drop to three subjects before the end of Year 13. Many also choose to take an Extended Project Qualification

Sports and Co-Curricular Activities at the Senior School

The school offers outstanding facilities and opportunities exist for a number of different sports and activities, including Rugby, Netball, Football, Hockey, Cricket, Tennis, Athletics, Badminton, Cross-Country, Basketball, Swimming, Fives, Table Tennis, Fencing, Aerobics, Dance, Yoga, Cycling, Bouldering, Karate, Rowing, Judo and Squash. All pupils are required to play games as part of their normal curriculum and a large number represent the school.

There is a wide range of co-curricular activities and school societies. Music is particularly strong, with multiple choirs, Orchestra, Wind Band, Chamber Choir, Chamber Orchestra, Concert Band, jazz and rock groups, as well as many smaller ensembles. 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 pupils to direct as well as to act and provide technical support, and an annual production is performed at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Over 80 clubs and societies meet on a weekly basis, often run by pupils. Gender Politics Society, Queer Society, Cultural Awareness Society and Green Impact Society, the environmental action group, are all currently popular. Debating and Model United Nations, Young Enterprise and Chess regularly send teams to competitions with great success. Pupil journalism thrives at UCS, with pupils editing and producing the school magazine, *The Tortoise*, as well as *Bocca*, a Classics and Art History journal, *Interlingua*, the modern languages journal, and others. School trips are arranged on a regular basis. UCS has partnerships with Westminster Academy, UCL Academy, Michaela Community School and the London Academy of Excellence Stratford, as well as a number of primary schools. Pupils currently raise roughly £30,000 per year for a range of charities that they select themselves as part of a Community Action initiative. Academic Enrichment Weeks, Women in Sport Week, the annual Heart January wellbeing initiative and the non-curricular Activities Week annually broaden and embellish the UCS educational experience. Inclusion is at the heart of what we do; through pastoral work, subject curriculums and by engaging pupils and staff in the work of the Inclusion & Representation Committee, we aim to foster a community in which every member feels safe, valued and that their voice is heard.

The Geography Department

The Geography Department at UCS comprises eight teachers, including the Head of Department. Geography is part of the core curriculum for all pupils in years 7 to 9. A significant number then choose to continue with the subject for GCSE and A Level. By way of example, there are currently over 70 pupils in both Year 12 and in Year 13.

The Geography Department aims to empower pupils to understand and address critical 21st-century challenges, promoting a deep understanding of the changing world and its implications, whilst also equipping pupils to explore their own interests. The department prioritises opportunities to stretch and challenge all pupils through carefully designed schemes of work.

Years 7-9 explore diverse, contemporary topics such as superpower geographies, climate change, liveable cities, and underdevelopment. This foundation leads to strong GCSE enrollment, where the Edexcel IGCSE specification is followed with residential and local fieldwork opportunities. The Cambridge International A-Level complements this issues-based approach, featuring annual fieldwork in the UK and optional super-curricular trips abroad.

The department is proud of its high university placement rate in Geography and related fields, including consistent Oxbridge success. Weekly enrichment sessions, visiting speakers, and external talks foster academic excellence. Well-equipped facilities feature a suite of Geography classrooms and a dedicated seminar room with open access for A-Level pupils, encouraging independent study and close teacher-pupil collaboration.

The Present Vacancy

The current vacancy is a permanent full-time post and is an outstanding opportunity to take on the leadership and management of the Geography Department within the context of an academically ambitious school. As the Head of Geography, the successful candidate will be responsible for leading teaching and learning within the subject, as well as for the management of the department's operations, including resources, budget, assessments, curriculum delivery and co-curricular activities.

The successful applicant will be a strong graduate from a relevant degree course, with a deep passion for their subject, and possess the ability to convey this effectively to pupils across all age groups. They should have the subject knowledge, confidence and ability to stretch and inspire pupils beyond the curriculum both in lessons and in enrichment settings. They will be personally committed to developing a genuine and lasting enthusiasm for Geography in pupils, as well as in preparing them for exam success.

This is an outstanding opportunity to lead and teach Geography in a stimulating setting. We welcome equally applications from teachers in the maintained and the independent sectors.

A willingness to contribute to the co-curricular life of the school will be an additional and important recommendation. We expect all of our teachers to be Form Tutors.

Child Protection

University College School is fully committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The successful applicant will be required to undertake an Enhanced check for Regulated Activity from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) before a formal offer of employment is made. This is a requirement as the position is within a school working with children aged under 18. UCS will also undertake its own recruitment checks through contact with previous employers, referees, and others, to confirm applicants' 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 will 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. 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 children 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.

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 Thursday 20 March, 12 pm.** However, please note that we reserve the right to interview and appoint at any stage during this process; early applications are therefore very welcome.