



PRINCIPAL APPLICATION PACK

'Learning to make a difference together'

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LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS



Dear Applicant,

On behalf of the Board of Governors at The UCL Academy, I would like to express our sincere thanks for considering the position of Principal at our school.

Founded in 2012 by University College London (UCL), The UCL Academy is a high-achieving, non-selective secondary school serving the vibrant and diverse community of the London Borough of Camden, with over 1,000 students aged 11 to 18. Our mission is to support students of all abilities in reaching high levels of academic attainment, while fostering a passion for further study.

Our recent Ofsted inspection rated the school as “Good” across all five key areas, with praise as an “inclusive and welcoming school, with high aspirations for pupils’ achievement”. This achievement is a testament to the ongoing hard work and dedication of our staff, students, parents, and governors, reflecting the significant progress we’ve made since our previous inspection.

At the time of foundation in 2012, The UCL Academy was the first school in England to be founded by a university sponsor. Looking ahead, this visionary approach is what we continue to strive for. We are committed to building on success and striving towards our strategic mission: to provide students with a world-class, inspirational education based on a culture of academic excellence, social responsibility, and a transformational curriculum. Our unique and special partnership with UCL plays a key role in driving this mission forward, providing our students with unparalleled opportunities and support.

Rooted in the heart of our community, The UCL Academy is proud to offer impactful education and exceptional facilities that foster a culture of aspiration and achievement. Guided by the values of excellence, collaboration, kindness, and diversity, we remain dedicated to providing an inclusive, well-rounded education that prepares students for success in the modern world.

I am honoured to have recently taken up the role of Chair of Governors, and in my capacity as Pro Provost for London at UCL, I am ideally positioned to strengthen the partnership between the university and the Academy. UCL’s commitment to our place – particularly in Camden – is upheld by the ethos of The UCL Academy and the type of leader we want to inspire our future generation. We are excited to work with a new Principal who shares our vision and ambition to further enhance this relationship, creating greater opportunities for both our students and the wider school community via a unique university partnership.

This is a special opportunity to lead a large, dynamic, and diverse school at the heart of its community. We are seeking a visionary, inspirational and driven leader with a clear vision and excitement for the future strategic direction of the Academy. The successful candidate will not only share our school’s values and goals but will inspire students, staff, parents/carers, and the broader community as we continue to move forward on our journey of success.

We welcome your interest in this exciting role and encourage you to visit the Academy before submitting your application. Thank you again for considering The UCL Academy.

Yours faithfully,

Professor Alan Thompson
Chair of Governors, The UCL Academy

WELCOME FROM TWO OF OUR STUDENT AMBASSADORS



Situated at the heart of our community, we love the diverse student and staff body at The UCL Academy where everyone feels welcome. As students we have a range of unique and exciting opportunities provided by our sponsor UCL. These include experiences such as lectures, mentoring and opportunities to learn about different careers. At the Academy we enjoy a connected curriculum which, through The UCL Grand Challenges, will prepare us to tackle 21st century global issues such as the Climate Crisis, Mental Health and Wellbeing. We are confident that the work we do as Student Ambassadors, working with staff at the Academy to drive positive change, is preparing us to be the leaders of the future. As students we value extracurricular activities such as Self-Directed Learning (SDL) where we learn a broad range of new skills - from Latin to Fencing! During our time at the Academy we will also be offered the opportunity to take part in overseas trips to countries such as China, Germany and Spain which allow us to learn about different cultures and languages. We are also very proud of the environment in which we learn, visitors to the Academy often comment on how great the building is. We particularly enjoy using the unique Engineering facilities and Superstudios. If your application is successful we very much look forward to welcoming you to our school.

Ni'Mah Rahman and Elliot Thompson (both Level 1P)
on behalf of the Student Ambassadors

ACADEMY MISSION



With the appointment of a new Principal, the Academy will move into the next phase of our development. The successful candidate, as Principal of a Single Academy Trust, will have significant leadership autonomy and the support of a world-class university giving them the opportunity to lead something really exciting.

Our mission is that students at The UCL Academy experience an inspirational world-class education built on a culture of academic excellence, social responsibility and a transformational curriculum. This work is underpinned and inspired by the unique partnership with our sponsor UCL. It is important to us because we want:

- *Our students to leave the Academy with the tools, experiences, values, knowledge and skills to fulfil their potential and play their part as global citizens in the 21st century.*
- *Our staff to be committed to exploring, testing and reviewing the most effective teaching and learning to ensure that our pedagogy is the most impactful, innovative, and transformational it can be.*
- *Our curriculum to offer breadth, depth and balance for all our learners so that they can go out into the world of work to make a difference.*
- *Our community to be inclusive, supportive, open-minded and engaged and for us to continue to make the most of the support of our sponsor UCL.*



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

The Academy has established itself as a forward looking, welcoming and ambitious school. Rooted in serving our diverse local community, we have provided hundreds of students with a transformational curriculum and exceptional facilities that have instilled a culture of aspiration and achievement. Supported and inspired by our sponsor UCL, the values of excellence, collaboration, kindness and diversity remain at the forefront of the work we do here.

We now wish to build on the exceptional work carried out to date by our sponsor, governors, staff, students and parent community in establishing our school. We have a five-year vision and framework that outlines how we will work with the community, our sponsor and other partners in achieving this vision.

Our 5 strategic priorities which will ensure that we further enrich the education and lives of the students we serve are:

- *Broad, Ambitious and Impactful Curriculum*
- *Outstanding Staff Body*
- *Education of the Whole Child*
- *Excellent Behaviour and Attitudes*
- *Financial Stability and Partnership*



WHAT PEOPLE SAY ABOUT THE ACADEMY



"I am very thankful to the staff team at UCL Academy for all the support and patience that you have given us."

Year 10 parent

"Supporting wellbeing and mental health is a key part of the Academy's approach. A range of online resources for students and parents are on the school website. Students were positive about the support offered by the Academy to support their wellbeing."

NSPCC

"Thank you so much for the invitation, I enjoyed it a lot myself. Your school is lovely, and the students were very well prepared and engaged, any speaker's dream."

UCL Professor and Guest Lecturer

"UCL Academy provides an inspiring environment for students to have a broad education. During their studies, the Academy does a great job in helping students to understand some of the exciting opportunities that could be open to them if they work hard and persevere. I'm delighted to be a part of that in a small way with the Critchley Scholarship programme."

UCL Alumna and Founder of the Critchley Scholars Programme

"Students and staff at the UCL Academy continue to inspire myself and my team every time we interact with them. There is a contagious desire for learning and excitement at being in and around our university campus. Students are always such fantastic ambassadors for their school when they visit us, demonstrated through good behaviour and positive interactions with our university community. We love having them on campus!"

UCL Director

"This is an important and exciting moment in the school's history as we appoint a Principal to lead the UCL Academy into its next chapter, bringing to life the ambitious vision of our sponsor, University College London (UCL), for every student and for every member of staff."

Appointed Co-opted Governor



ABOUT OUR SPONSOR



UCL is a world-leading university, an academic and intellectual powerhouse with an excellent reputation built over generations of staff, students and alumni. UCL is among the best globally, currently ranked 9th in the world and 4th in the UK*, it prides itself on academic excellence.

It has extensive, world-class facilities and employs some of the world's leading academics. Together its staff work across disciplines to solve the world's biggest problems. Deep rooted in its community for 200 years, UCL sits at the heart of one of the world's dynamic cities. Its place in London is important as UCL connects to its local people, place and partnerships across the city.

Sponsorship of an Academy allows UCL to make outstanding facilities and expertise available on a formal basis to secondary school students, extending the traditional curriculum, providing access to new ways of learning and promoting the principle of 'lifelong learning' from a young age. We believe that this supports students of all ability levels to higher levels of attainment and enthusiasm for further study.

UCL was founded in 1826 to provide equality of education for all, and The UCL Academy is a school which supports each and every child to succeed. To this end, UCL uses its extensive resources to support the Academy to raise students' aspirations and to invigorate the secondary curriculum. In particular, the Academy's science, engineering and mathematics focus allows us to draw on UCL's own scientific strengths to bridge the gap between secondary and higher education in these subjects.

Through a dedicated enrichment programme led by UCL, students at The UCL Academy benefit from a programme of masterclasses, seminars and summer schools, given by UCL staff and making use of UCL's laboratory, library and other teaching facilities. These are designed to build on the teaching undertaken in class and help to extend students' understanding of core topics. They also help to prepare older students for the transition between school and university teaching.

Additionally, UCL's students support the Academy: well-established networks of UCL student mentors and tutors provide practical and classroom support to Academy students, acting as role models, classroom assistants and sources of informal advice and guidance.

Finally, the Academy acts as a hub to support education across Camden more broadly. UCL has a long tradition of collaboration with schools in Camden, and the Academy is a base from which UCL can extend the support it currently provides to these schools. We are strongly committed to ensuring that the Academy makes a genuine contribution to the Camden family of schools, as well as providing our local communities and families an inspiring school with outstanding leadership and teaching.

***QS World University Rankings 2025**



KEY INFORMATION

Status	Single Academy Trust
Ofsted Judgement	May 2024
Planned Admission Number (PAN)	Good
Type of School	192
Number of Students on Roll	Mixed
Number of Students in Sixth form	1015
Percentage of SEND Students	241
Percentage of EAL Students	14.38%
Percentage of Pupil Premium	45.90%
Students	51.03%
School Website	www.uclacademy.co.uk



PRINCIPAL JOB DESCRIPTION

Salary: Competitive salary for the right candidate (based on experience)

Contract type: Full-time, permanent

Start date: Autumn Term 2026 (depending on notice period)

Reporting to: The UCL Academy Board of Governors

Based on the Headteachers' Standards and the requirements in the statutory safeguarding guidance Keeping Children Safe in Education.

Core purpose and responsibility

- *Provide vision, drive and exceptional inclusive leadership for The UCL Academy in order to provide all students with an inspirational world-class education*
- *Drive progress of the school's ethos and strategic direction together with the governing board and through consultation with the Academy community, ensuring that the Academy is ready for the next Ofsted inspection*
- *Ensure the Sponsor's vision for the education of the whole person, through programmes such as SDL, careers education and focus on learner attributes, is effectively carried out*
- *Establish and evaluate systems, processes and policies so the Academy can be highly effective, ensuring that all statutory policies are in place*
- *Build a collaborative learning culture, that utilises external expertise where beneficial, to ensure that every student reaches their full potential in all areas of their development*
- *Implement robust self evaluation to identify strengths and barriers to school effectiveness, and develop effective strategies for school improvement that are realistic, timely and understanding of the Academy's community context*
- *Make sure these school improvement strategies and plans are effectively implemented and that progress is shown through data and evaluation*
- *Allocate financial resources appropriately, efficiently, effectively and strategically in the support of all students*
- *Carry out the duties as may be required of a Headteacher as set out in the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document*
- *Oversee all key staff appointments and foster and develop in house talent*
- *Promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young persons for whom The UCL Academy is responsible and those with whom they come into contact*



Qualities

The Principal will:

- Uphold public trust in school leadership, and demonstrate and maintain high standards of ethics, behaviour and professional conduct
- Build positive and respectful relationships across the Academy community. Relationships that value the diversity, experiences and backgrounds of The UCL Academy's community
- Serve in the best interests of all of the Academy's pupils
- Operate in an open and transparent way and implement and demonstrate the value of evidence-based decision making and evaluation
- Create a strategic vision which is clearly articulated, shared, understood and acted on effectively by all members of Academy

School Qualities and Behaviour

The Principal will:

- Lead by example, providing inspiration and motivation
- Demonstrate and articulate high expectations and set challenging targets for the whole Academy community
- Create a culture in which pupils experience a positive and enriching school life that takes account of the diversity, values and experiences of the Academy community
- Uphold ambitious educational standards, ensuring strong examination outcomes, in order to prepare pupils from all backgrounds for the next phase of their education and life
- Ensure a culture of professionalism and integrity which celebrates success throughout the Academy
- Ensure high standards of behaviour from pupils, built on high expectations and routines that are understood by staff and pupils and that are clearly and consistently implemented by all adults
- Ensure consistent and fair approaches to managing behaviour, in line with the Academy's behaviour policy and procedures
- Support senior leaders to maintain and promote high standards of behaviour and attendance

Teaching, Curriculum and Assessment

The Principal will:

- Establish and sustain high-quality teaching across all subjects and stages, that benefits from the unique and innovative architecture of the Academy
- Ensure teaching is underpinned by subject expertise with subject leaders having relevant expertise and access to professional networks and communities
- Implement an effective assessment framework to measure impact on pupil outcomes and to inform strategic decision making
- Ensure the teaching of an innovative, broad, structured and coherent curriculum relevant to the Academy community's needs and that leads to impactful outcomes for all students
- Ensure that the curriculum fosters independence, collaboration and problem solving skills of our students

Additional and special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)

The Principal will:

- *Promote a culture and inclusive educational provision and practice that enables all pupils to access the curriculum*
- *Ensure ambitious expectations for all pupils with Special Educational Needs and disabilities*
Ensure the Academy works effectively with parents, carers and professionals to identify and meet additional needs and provide support and adaptation where appropriate
- *Ensure the school fulfils statutory duties regarding the SEND Code of Practice*

Managing the school

The Principal will:

- *Ensure the Academy promotes and safeguards the welfare of children and young persons for whom they are responsible and those with whom they come into contact through effective approaches to safeguarding, as part of a duty of care, ensuring that all safeguarding procedures are of the highest standard*
- *Ensure effective management of staff and actively monitor staff wellbeing and workload*
- *Empower, delegate, collaborate and hold to account senior leadership team members*
- *Ensure rigorous approaches are followed to identify, manage and mitigate risk*
- *Develop, and build on, systems that produce meaningful data that enhances the Academy's understanding of the views of all stakeholders*
- *Ensure a continuous and consistent focus on students' achievement, using data and benchmarks to monitor progress*
- *Manage financial and human resources effectively and efficiently to achieve educational goals and priorities, using targets and benchmarks to inform progress*
- *Fulfil the role and responsibilities of accounting officer, setting high standards of financial probity and financial management*
- *Ensure that the key improvement areas for Academy are acted on appropriately and swiftly*
- *Ensure all regulated school activities have appropriate health and safety, risk assessments and contingency plans in place*
- *Sustain a positive relationship with our PFI provider BAM FMI to ensure an outstanding learning environment and facility*

Developing self and working with other

The Principal will:

- *Treat people fairly, equitably and with dignity and respect to create and maintain a positive trusting culture*
- *Ensure a collaborative learning culture that effectively utilises external expertise and partnerships as well as drawing on expertise within the Academy and at UCL*
- *Ensure all staff members have access to appropriate, high standard professional development opportunities and that these development opportunities are effectively planned, delivered and evaluated (including through performance review)*
- *Ensure effective strategies and procedures are in place for staff recruitment and induction*
Ensure effective planning, allocation, support and evaluation of work undertaken by teams and individuals, ensuring clear delegation of tasks and devolution of responsibilities

- *Develop and build upon a culture of high expectations for self and others, and take appropriate action when performance is unsatisfactory*
- *Ensure that the Academy ethos enables everyone to work collaboratively, sharing knowledge and understanding, celebrating success and accepting responsibility for outcomes*
- *Ensure individual staff accountabilities are clearly defined, understood and agreed and are subject to rigorous review and evaluation, in keeping with performance management and appraisal procedures*
- *Work with the Academy's Governing Body, providing information, objective advice and support, to enable them to meet their statutory responsibilities*
- *Develop and build upon suitable quality assurance systems, including internal reviews, self-evaluation and performance management*
- *Regularly review your own practice, set personal targets and take responsibility for your own personal development by participating positively in arrangements made for the performance management of the Principal*

Governance, accountability and working in partnership

The Principal will:

- *Work effectively and collaboratively with the Academy's Governing Board and Trust, providing the necessary information to enable them to hold the Academy leaders to account and meet their statutory responsibilities*
- *Ensure that staff understand their professional responsibilities and are held to account*
- *Ensure the school effectively and efficiently operates within the required regulatory frameworks and meets all statutory duties*
- *Work successfully with other schools, organisations and agencies to bring positive benefits to*
- *The UCL Academy and keep our students safe, including other schools in the Camden family and professional partners such as Camden Learning*
- *Maintain working relationships with fellow professionals and colleagues to improve educational outcomes for all pupils*

Other areas of responsibility

The Principal will:

- *Be aware of, and adhere to, applicable rules, regulations, legislation, policies and procedures including safeguarding, health and safety, equal opportunities, equality and diversity and data protection*

Students at The UCL Academy benefit from an enrichment programme of masterclasses, seminars and bespoke university tours, led by UCL academics and staff, offering insight to UCL's laboratory and other teaching subjects and facilities. These sessions are designed to build on the teaching undertaken in class and help to extend students' understanding of core topics, inspiring students for study in higher education. They also help to prepare older students for the transition between school and university teaching. Staff also benefit from UCL library access and networking events.

Finally, the Academy acts as a hub to support education across Camden more broadly. UCL has a long tradition of collaboration with schools in Camden, and the Academy is a base from which UCL can extend the support it currently provides to these schools. We are strongly committed to ensuring that the Academy makes a genuine contribution to the Camden family of schools and we contribute via representation on the Camden STEAM Board.

This job description is subject to annual review.

PERSON SPECIFICATION

	CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E) DESIRABLE (D)		WHERE ASSESSED
		E	D	
A	EDUCATION/ QUALIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT			
1	Qualified Teacher Status (QTS)	●		A
2	Degree or equivalent	●		A
3	Substantial experience of senior leadership in an 11-18 school at Headteacher or Deputy Headteacher level	●		A
4	Evidence of further professional development	●		A
5	Relevant higher qualification and/or NPQH	●	●	A
6	Experience in more than one school	●	●	A
7	Substantial experience of successful teaching at KS4 and KS5	●	●	A
B	PROFESSIONAL QUALITIES, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE			
8	Knowledge of the characteristics of effective schools and strategies for maintaining high standards and achievement for all students	●		A, I ,R
9	Evidence of successful strategies for planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating school improvement	●		A, I ,R
10	Experience in data analysis, data interpretation, target setting and benchmarking as well as the use of appropriate models and principles of effective learning and assessment for learning	●		A, I ,R
11	Knowledge of issues in the school curriculum and learning, including of wider current educational developments and educational research	●		A, I ,R
12	Evidence of leading significant change to improve opportunities and outcomes for students	●		I, R
13	Knowledge and understanding of statutory requirements and experience of Child Protection, Safer Recruitment, Safeguarding and Prevent	●		I
14	Knowledge and understanding of the key legal issues and experience relating to equality, diversity, inclusion, disability, health and safety, human rights and employment	●		I

	CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E) DESIRABLE (D)		WHERE ASSESSED
		E	D	
15	Evidence of implementing strategies for raising progress, achievement and achieving excellence for students	●		I, R
16	Principles and practices of quality assurance systems, including school review (internal and external), self-evaluation, school development planning and performance management	●		A, I, R
17	Understanding of how schools collaborate with the wider community, including the local community, external partners, businesses and employers	●		I
18	Set high standards and act as a role model to students and staff	●		I, R
19	Sustain good relationships with the whole school community, including students, staff, parents and governors	●		I, R
C	STUDENTS AND STAFF			
20	Knowledge of the characteristics of effective schools and strategies for maintaining high standards and achievement for all students	●		A, I, R
21	Ability to inspire and motivate students and staff	●		A, I
22	Demand ambitious standards from all students, overcoming disadvantage and advancing equality	●		A, I
23	Provide inspirational and effective leadership which challenges, motivates and empowers staff and parents to carry the school's vision forward	●		I, R
24	Experience of positive behaviour management and developing a student focused, inclusive and effective learning environment	●		A, I
25	Appreciate the importance of a work-life balance for all staff and self-development through continuing professional development	●		A, I
26	Leadership of staff recruitment, retention and induction	●		A, I
27	Experience in promoting and developing extracurricular activities in order to educate the whole child	●		A, I
D	ACCOUNTABILITY			
28	Instilling a strong sense of accountability in staff for the impact of their work on student outcomes	●		A, I

	CRITERIA	ESSENTIAL (E) DESIRABLE (D)		WHERE ASSESSED
		E	D	
29	Evidence of highly-developed skills of robust appraisal and performance management of all staff, recognising high performance and tackling underperformance through to resolution	●		A, I
30	Experience of effective financial and resource management to achieve educational priorities, ensuring effective use of resources and value for money	●		A, I
31	Proven experience of systematic, rigorous school self-evaluation, to inform school improvement planning and raise educational standards	●		A, I
32	Ability to combine the outcomes of regular school self-review with external evaluations to develop the school further	●		I
33	Understanding of the strategic role of the Board of Trustees and the Governing Body	●		I, R
E	PERSONAL QUALITIES, SKILLS AND ATTRIBUTES			
34	Ability to embrace, promote and demonstrate the Vision, Values and Ethos of the school	●		I
35	Enthusiasm, resilience and an ability to work calmly and effectively under pressure	●		I
36	Energy and a vision with which to inspire others	●		I
37	Excellent time management, prioritisation and self-organisation skills	●		I, R
38	Ability to delegate effectively	●		I
39	Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills	●		I
40	Effective leadership skills	●		I, R
41	Ability to monitor, evaluate and review	●		I, R

Key: A = Application I = Interview and Assessment Tasks R = References

THE PROCESS AND HOW TO APPLY

VISITS TO THE SCHOOL	<p>There will be optional tours of the Academy available prior to the closing date during week beginning Monday 5 January 2026. Please contact Ms Lisa McManus (HR), hr@uclacademy.co.uk, to arrange an appointment if required.</p>
APPLICATION FORM	<p>Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to The UCL Academy on this appointment.</p> <p>Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code RBXUA.</p> <p>Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload an application form and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.</p> <p>The closing date for applications is noon on Wednesday 28 January 2026.</p> <p>Please use The UCL Academy Principal Application Form and ensure that all required information is provided. Your personal statement should detail how your knowledge, skills and experiences meet the criteria on the Person Specification.</p> <p>Please note that CVs are not accepted.</p> <p>* The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.</p> <p>GDPR personal data notice According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, sex life, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.</p> <p>Due diligence Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.</p>
REFERENCES	<p>Please make sure your referees are aware of your application and that they are able to provide a swift turnaround.</p>
APPLICATION CLOSING DATE	<p>Wednesday 28 January 2026</p>
SHORTLISTING DATES	<p>w/c 23 February</p>
FINAL STAGES	<p>w/c 2 - 16 March</p>