

Year 7

Autumn 2025 SDL Options Booklet

The UCL Academy vision is that students will experience an inspirational world-class education built on a culture of academic excellence, social responsibility and a transformational curriculum. Self-Directed Learning (SDL) supports this vision by offering all students the opportunity to experience learning and skill development outside of the academic curriculum.

SDL activities run on Wednesdays and Thursdays during the last lesson of the day. There are lots of different activities on offer and you are able to give your preferences on which one you do. This is a fantastic opportunity for you to try something you have never done before or to spend more time doing something you already enjoy. A mix of these is best!

This SDL Cycle runs from 17 September to 4 December 2025

SDL runs in Lesson 7 on Wednesdays and Thursdays

Please read the descriptions and key information carefully so you understand when and how often each SDL will run, and also if there are any additional application/auditioning processes required.

Once you have done this, complete the online survey using the link at the end of this booklet. All students will attend an SDL on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Information about any SDLs added throughout the year will be sent home as they arise. Parents who are interested in running an SDL, know of someone who may be interested in running an SDL or would like further support can email SDL@uclacademy.co.uk.

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Important information about making your choices:

- Students need to think carefully before making their **top 5 choices** for each day. Students will be assigned SDL activities from their selected top 5 options.
- Be wise! If you have applied late to a popular SDL it will not be possible to allocate it to you. If you apply to a girls-only SDL and you are a boy, you will not be able to attend and will have wasted a choice.
- Students and parents should work together to choose SDLs.
- Students will be able to apply for their SDL via a Google form. This will be sent directly to your Academy email address. You will need to be logged into your Academy account for the form to work.
- Apply by the deadline - it will make a difference to which SDL you are allocated!
- If you don't apply, then you will receive any SDL that has space in it.

Overview of Spring SDL Options for Year 7


Title of SDL	Assigned Day	Invite Only?	Continues into next term(s)?
5D Diamond Painting	Wednesday	No	No
Anti Bullying Champions	Wednesday	No	No
Art & Craft	Wednesday	No	No
<i>Art Scholars</i>	Wednesday	Yes	Yes
Basketball	Wednesday	No	No
Chess Club	Wednesday	No	No
Coding for Computer Games	Wednesday	No	No
Creative Writing	Wednesday	No	No
Debate Club	Wednesday	No	No
Discover Islam	Wednesday	No	No
Marvel Club	Wednesday	No	Yes
Mindfulness	Wednesday	No	No
Paint by numbers	Wednesday	No	No
Performing with UCL	Wednesday	No	No
Private Study Group	Wednesday	Yes and No	No
Reading Cafe	Wednesday	No	Yes
Scrabble	Wednesday	No	No
Singing the Blues	Wednesday	No	No
STEM Club	Wednesday	No	No
5D Diamond Painting	Thursday	No	No
Basketball	Thursday	No	No
Bead Craft	Thursday	No	No
Board Games	Thursday	No	No
CBBC Club	Thursday	No	No
Choir	Thursday	No	Yes
Fitness Club	Thursday	No	Yes
<i>Mathematical Minds</i>	Thursday	Yes	No
Mindful Colouring	Thursday	No	No

Title of SDL	Assigned Day	Invite Only?	Continues into next term(s)?
Origins of Rituals	Thursday	No	No
Premier League Football	Thursday	No	No
Private Study Group	Thursday	Yes and No	No
Student Leadership	Thursday	Yes and No	Yes
Table Tennis	Thursday	No	No
Volleyball	Thursday	Yes	No

SDLs Open to All Students - WEDNESDAYS

5D Diamond Painting Day: Wednesday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Mr Iyoke	Description: You will create stunning, sparkly artwork by placing tiny resin “diamonds” onto a sticky, pre-printed canvas. It’s easy to learn, calming to do, and the results are beautiful. No artistic experience is needed.
Anti Bullying Champions Day: Wednesday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Ms Sef	Description: You will discuss what bullying is, look at different types of bullying, why it happens, and how it makes people feel. You will learn how to help people who are bullied and consider immediate and long-term solutions to stop it from happening.
Arts & Crafts Day: Wednesday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Ms Noukhas	Description: We will have different arts and crafts sessions each week. Painting. Crafting with recycled material. Origami. Using chenille needles to sew through different kinds of material. Rock painting. Drying flowers.
Basketball Day: Wednesday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Mr Adem	Description: Students will learn basketball skills, like shooting, dribbling and scrimmage, to develop their game.

<p>Chess Club</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Mr Castano</p>	<p>Description: The Chess SDL is a space to learn and practise chess at all levels with students, as well as compete in matches. There is an opportunity for advice and coaching within our sessions and for students to test themselves against their peers. We will look to participate in Camden/Brent Chess Tournaments in the year.</p>
<p>Coding for Computer Games</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Year 7 only</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Mr Faki</p>	<p>Description: Learn about the history of retro computer games and design and build your own.</p>
<p>Creative Writing</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Byass</p>	<p>Description: Students will be introduced to various writing techniques in order to create their own pieces. Students will learn to write with a variety of emotions and perspectives.</p>
<p>Debate Club</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of staff: Ms Black</p>	<p>Description: Want to boost your confidence, sharpen your speaking skills, and learn how to win any argument? Join the Debate Club. It's fun, powerful, and helps you think fast, speak clearly, and lead with confidence. Whether you're loud or shy, everyone has a voice – come and use yours!</p>

<p>Discover Islam</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of staff:</p> <p>Mr Muse</p>	<p>Description:</p> <p>Learn about the fastest growing religion in the world through fun stories, exciting quizzes and much more. Regular prizes to be won.</p>
<p>Marvel Club</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff:</p> <p>Ms Khan</p>	<p>Description:</p> <p>Explore the universe of Marvel through film. Experience its stories and characters.</p> <p><i>"With great power comes great responsibility."</i></p> <p><i>"I am Iron Man."</i></p> <p><i>"I am Groot!"</i></p>
<p>Mindfulness</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff:</p> <p>Ms Al-Hakim</p>	<p>Description:</p> <p>These sessions will include a range of mindfulness activities, including meditation and mindful colouring. They aim to help you live in the moment, relax and deal with the stresses of modern teenage life.</p>
<p>Painting By Numbers</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff:</p> <p>Ms El-Rimali</p>	<p>Description:</p> <p> Looking for a relaxing, creative way to express yourself? Painting by Numbers is the perfect blend of art and focus—no experience needed! Easy to follow; watch your masterpiece come to life. It's calming and fun!</p>
<p>Performing with UCL</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: Yes, into Spring 2026</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff:</p> <p>Ms Verity</p>	<p>Description:</p> <p>You will work with an expert to create a piece of performance work that will be performed at UCL's Bloomsbury Theatre in March 2026! It is an opportunity to be creative, collaborate with people who work in the Arts industry and create a unique piece of theatre.</p>

<p>Private Study Group</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: Yes and No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Jahangir</p>	<p>Description: Quiet time of study to catch up with Home Learning.</p>
<p>Reading Cafe</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: Yes and No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Canolli</p>	<p>Description: Love books or want to read more? Join us as we explore a different genre each half-term — from fantasy to real-life stories. You'll choose your own books, take part in fun activities, and share recommendations in a relaxed, friendly setting. All reading levels welcome!</p>
<p>Scrabble</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Rahman</p>	<p>Description: Scrabble is the classic board game for 2 to 4 players that always spells F-U-N! Consisting of interlocking words onto a playing board, Scrabble challenges players to spell out words using letter tiles with various score values. The object of the game is to get the highest score. More than just a game, Scrabble actually improves your vocabulary as you're introduced to new words each time you play!</p>
<p>Singing the Blues</p> <p>Day: Wednesday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Anekwe</p>	<p>Description: Make like the stars and sing your heart out! Are you a Tyla who unties your vocal chords? Or is your voice worth £5000k like 50 Cent? Then come along, let off some steam and sing away your troubles.</p>

Stem Club Day: Wednesday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed year groups (L1 and L1P)	Name of Staff: Mr Halim	Description: Explore the wonders of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) in a fun, inclusive, and safe environment. You will dive into exciting projects, practical experiments and discussions.
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SDLs Open to All Students - THURSDAYS

5D Diamond Painting Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Ms Ossman	Description: You will create stunning, sparkly artwork by placing tiny resin “diamonds” onto a sticky, pre-printed canvas. It’s easy to learn, calming to do, and the results are beautiful. No artistic experience is needed.
Basketball Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Mr Stiven	Description: Students will learn basketball skills, like shooting, dribbling and scrimmage, to develop their game.
Bead Craft Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Ms Oyelade	Description: Every week students will make different designs of bracelets, necklaces, earrings, phone or bag chains. Be creative and combine different types of beads to make something beautiful.
Board Games Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Mr Abbas	Description: Roll the dice! Come along to the Board Games SDL where you can meet and mix with new people whilst playing a range of different games.

CBBC Club Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Ms Abdulahi	Description: We will be going through classic CBBC shows that every child will love. From Tracey Beaker to the 4 O'Clock Club and so much more, it's time we put streaming to an end and swim in a sea of nostalgia.
Choir Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: Yes, into Spring and Summer 2026 Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Mr Baxter	Description: Stretch your vocal chords and be an integral part of the Academy's performance team. The Choir contributes to concerts both in and out of the Academy. Last year we performed at the Royal Albert Hall! It will also play a large role in the Academy's theatre production.
Fitness Club Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Mr Cherif	Description: Students will have access to the fitness suite and take part in a variety of sessions, including HIIT training, Zumba, Just dance and Boxercise. Great exercise to develop health and fitness.
Mindful Colouring Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Ms Abdulkarim	Description: A chance to unwind and colour in interesting outlines. Be creative, relax, practise attention to details and leave with your own piece of art.
Music Technology Day: Thursday Invite Only: No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Mr Winston and Mr Hedemann	Description: This is an opportunity for students to learn how to use the app, Logic Pro, used widely in the music industry. Create and edit awesome beats, riffs and rhymes using our Mac technology. It will be co-delivered by our expert drum instructor, Brian Hedemann.

<p>Origins of Rituals</p> <p>Day: Thursday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Thakore</p>	<p>Description: "The Neurobiology of the Divine" – Explore the brain's response to rituals, gods, spiritual connection, and why it might feel transcendent in different cultures.</p>
<p>Premier League Football</p> <p>Day: Thursday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Mr Pirbhai</p>	<p>Description: "Each week, we'll watch highlights from the latest Premier League matches, analyse key moments, debate controversial decisions, and track our favourite teams and players. This SDL is all about fun, football, and friendship. Whether you're a die-hard supporter or just getting into the game, come and be part of the conversation. Bring your football passion—no boots required!"</p>
<p>Private Study Group</p> <p>Day: Thursday</p> <p>Invite Only: Yes and No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Mr Rago</p>	<p>Description: Quiet time of study to catch up with Home Learning.</p>
<p>Student Leadership</p> <p>Day: Thursday</p> <p>Invite Only: Yes and No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: Yes - if you are elected as a Student Ambassador in the Autumn Term you will continue for the remainder of the year.</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Prodromou</p>	<p>Description: Student ambassador meetings to discuss the issues facing the students and work to make improvements to the student experience. Ambassadors will also receive leadership training and work with senior leaders on a regular basis.</p>

<p>Table Tennis</p> <p>Day: Thursday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Uddin</p>	<p>Description: With every spin, bounce, and slam, players engage in a lightning-fast mental and physical duel, where precision and reflexes are tested to the limit. It's a game of strategy and agility, teaching you how to think on your feet, improve focus, and master quick decision-making, all while building your hand-eye coordination and reflexes.</p>
<p>Volleyball</p> <p>Day: Thursday</p> <p>Invite Only: No</p> <p>Continuing SDL: No</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Friend</p>	<p>Description: Volleyball is an exciting team sport where two groups of six players face off on a court, separated by a net. The goal? Hit the ball over the net and try to land it on the other side—or work together to outplay the other team and cause a mistake. It's fast, fun, and all about quick moves, smart plays, and great teamwork. Whether you're passing, setting, or going for the perfect spike, volleyball keeps you moving and makes every point count.</p>

Invite Only SDLs

Invite only SDLs

Some invite-only SDLs will appear on the Google form and you should select these if you have been told you will have been invited by a teacher. If you are not told, but selected by a teacher, then you will be placed on this SDL. Invited students are expected to attend the SDL. Any additional choice you make for the same day will not be considered.

Art Scholars Day: Wednesday Invite Only: Yes Continuing SDL: Yes, into Spring and Summer 2026 Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Ms Hirson, Mr Williams and Ms Incedal	Description: Varying specialised art workshops and projects to push and inform our Art Scholars in different styles and techniques.
Mathematical Minds Day: Thursday Invite only: Yes Continuing SDL: No Assigned year Groups: Mixed year groups	Name of staff: Mr Campbell	Description: Students will investigate mathematical concepts they won't find in the classroom. They will learn to spot patterns and connections, to generalise algebraically, to solve problems and to see maths in different contexts.
Private Study Group Day: Wednesday or Thursday Invite Only: Yes and No Continuing SDL: No Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups	Name of Staff: Ms Jahangir (Wednesday) and Mr Rago (Thursday)	Description: Quiet time of study to catch up with Home Learning.

<p>Student Leadership</p> <p>Day: Thursday</p> <p>Invite Only: Yes (following election to the Council) and No (if you are just interested)</p> <p>Continuing SDL: Yes - if you are elected in the Autumn Term you will continue for the remainder of the year.</p> <p>Assigned Year Groups: Mixed Year Groups</p>	<p>Name of Staff: Ms Prodromou</p>	<p>Description: Student ambassador meetings to discuss the issues facing the students and work to make improvements to the student experience. Ambassadors will also receive leadership training and work with senior leaders on a regular basis.</p>
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