SOCIOLOGY AND POLITICS OF SCIENCE BSc / UCAS CODE: L391 2021 ENTRY

www.ucl.ac.uk/prospectus
Sociology and Politics of Science BSc

This degree explores science in its varied and complex forms, training you to study science and scientists as part of modern society. We combine science policy, ethics, and governance, science communication, and sociology of modern science and technology. UCL is unique in the UK in offering this BSc.

Key information

Programme starts
September 2021

Location
London, Bloomsbury

Degree benefits

// Modules in science policy and governance are local and global in scope. They engage with ethics, historical decision-making processes, governance of emerging technologies, science communication, and future directions in science, medicine, and technology.

// Modules in science communication focus on the complex interactions between scientists and the public. We consider the methods of science journalism, including radio and television and online environments.

// Practical modules in science communication build hands-on skills in public engagement with science. You will also develop the skills of evaluating the effectiveness of science communication: what works and what doesn't?

// Modules in sociology of modern science and technology engage with classic sociological theory and practical field methods to study science as a human activity, shaped by modern society.

Degree structure

In each year of your degree you will take a number of individual modules, normally valued at 15 or 30 credits, adding up to a total of 120 credits for the year. Modules are assessed in the academic year in which they are taken. The balance of compulsory and optional modules varies from programme to programme and year to year. A 30-credit module is considered equivalent to 15 credits in the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

This programme aims to produce graduates ready to talk about science and interpret its influences in modern society without committing to a life at the laboratory bench. Science involves many more people than scientists themselves, and this degree seeks to build policymakers, communicators, and other observers who can contribute informed views to ongoing debates about science’s direction and impact. This might involve contributing to debates on science funding or ethics; weighing the value of different social priorities; or consulting on the impact of new technologies and new discoveries.

Students have the option of study abroad in Year 3 of the degree. They will follow a programme of study developed in consultation with STS mentors, UCL study abroad staff, and academics at the partner institution. Students complete their degree in Year 4.

Upon successful completion of 360 credits, you will be awarded a BSc (Hons) in Sociology and Politics of Science.

Please note that the list of modules given here is indicative. This information is published a long time in advance of enrolment and module content and availability is subject to change.

YEAR ONE

Compulsory module(s)

- History of Modern Science
- History of Science: from Antiquity to the Enlightenment
- STS Perspectives on Big Problems
- Investigating Sociology and Politics of Science
- Philosophy of Science I
- Introduction to History, Philosophy and Social Studies of Science
- Science Policy
- Science Communication and Public Engagement

Optional modules

- There are no optional modules in year one.

YEAR TWO

Compulsory module(s)

- Research Methods in Science and Technology Studies
- Sociology of Science and Technology

Optional modules

- Students select modules from a wide range offered by the department. In year 2 students also have the option of taking up to two modules from other UCL departments. STS options may include the following, but applicants should note that this list is not comprehensive and not all modules are available each year.

- Engaging the Public with Science
- Evolution in Science and Culture
- Philosophy of Science II
- Policy Issues in the Life Sciences
- Science and Empire
- Science and Ethics
- Science and Religion
- Science in Popular Culture
- Sociology of Science and Technology
- Thinking about Technology
- Medicine and Society
- Science in Government
FINAL YEAR

Compulsory module(s)

// Dissertation

Optional modules

// Students select modules from a wide range offered by the department. In year 3 students also have the option of taking one module from another UCL department. STS options may include the following, but applicants should note that this is not a comprehensive list of available modules and not all modules are available each year:

// Philosophy of Medicine
Science Journalism
Disease in History
Governing Emerging Technologies
History of Astronomy and Cosmology

// Madness and Society

// Nature, Technology and the Environment
Philosophy of Information
Philosophy of Natural Sciences
Science and Film Production
Science in the Age of Newton
Science, Art and Philosophy
Science, Politics, and the State in Russia and the Soviet Union
Sleeping and Dreaming
Eugenics in Science and Culture

// The Social Sciences of Inequality

Your learning

The department has a reputation for excellence in the classroom. Tutors have won local and international teaching awards and we consistently rank highly in student evaluations, obtaining 100% student satisfaction for the STS degrees from the National Student Survey in 2016, 2014, and 2013. Our teaching methods adapt to specific needs of students. Many modules include small-group discussions and active participation. The student-to-tutor ratio is approximately 10:1.

Assessment

Coursework ranges from short position pieces to significant research papers. In addition to essays, we sometimes assess using posters, blogs, and multimedia projects. Practical work includes mock parliamentary reports, radio programmes, presentations, and web projects. Group work sometimes is used, as are unseen examinations.

Accessibility

Details of the accessibility of UCL buildings can be obtained from AccessAble. Further information can also be obtained from the UCL Student Support & Wellbeing team.

Your career

The programme is designed to enable you to gain understanding of the discipline, and to develop intellectual, practical and transferable skills, such as critical thinking; retrieving, researching and analysing material; problem solving; time and project management and working effectively both independently and as part of a team.

In this scientific and technological world, this programme provides an excellent foundation for many careers, especially those at the interface of professional science and the wider culture transnationally.

Your application

Application for admission should be made through UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service). Applicants currently at school or college will be provided with advice on the process; however, applicants who have left school or who are based outside the United Kingdom may obtain information directly from UCAS.

Your application will be assessed on your prior and predicted academic achievement, and we will be seeking evidence of your interest in historical and contemporary issues in science and technology. You should also be able to demonstrate your ability to construct a reasoned argument and to participate in debate.
Entry requirements

**A LEVELS**

**Standard Offer:** AAB. No specific subjects. At least two A level subjects should be taken from UCL’s list of preferred A level subjects.

**GCSE:** English Language and Mathematics at grade C or 5. For UK-based students, a grade C or 5 or equivalent in a foreign language (other than Ancient Greek, Biblical Hebrew or Latin) is required. UCL provides opportunities to meet the foreign language requirement following enrolment, further details at: [www.ucl.ac.uk/ug-reqs](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ug-reqs).

**Contextual Offer:** BBB. No specific subjects. At least two A level subjects should be taken from UCL’s list of preferred A level subjects.

**GCSE:** English Language and Mathematics at grade C or 5. For UK-based students, a grade C or 5 or equivalent in a foreign language (other than Ancient Greek, Biblical Hebrew or Latin) is required. UCL provides opportunities to meet the foreign language requirement following enrolment, further details at: [www.ucl.ac.uk/ug-reqs](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ug-reqs).

**IB DIPLOMA**

**Standard Offer:** 36 points. A score of 17 points in three higher level subjects, with no score lower than 5.

**Contextual Offer:** 32 points. A score of 15 points in three higher level subjects, with no score lower than 5.

**CONTEXTUAL OFFERS – ACCESS UCL SCHEME**

As part of our commitment to increasing participation from underrepresented groups, students may be eligible for a contextual offer as part of the Access UCL scheme. For more information see [www.ucl.ac.uk/prospectus](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospectus).

**OTHER QUALIFICATIONS**

UCL considers a wide range of UK and international qualifications for entry into its undergraduate programmes. Full details are given at: [www.ucl.ac.uk/otherquals](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/otherquals).

**UNDERGRADUATE PREPARATORY CERTIFICATES (International foundation courses)**

UCL Undergraduate Preparatory Certificates (UPCs) are intensive one-year foundation courses for international students of high academic potential who are aiming to gain access to undergraduate degree programmes at UCL and other top UK universities.

Typical UPC students will be high achievers in a 12-year school system which does not meet the standard required for direct entry to UCL.

For more information see: [www.ucl.ac.uk/upc](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/upc).

**TUITION FEES**

The fees indicated are for undergraduate entry in the 2021/22 academic year. The UK fees shown are for the first year of the programme at UCL only. Fees for future years may be subject to an inflationary increase. The Overseas fees shown are the fees that will be charged to 2021/22 entrants for each year of study on the programme, unless otherwise indicated below.

- **UK:** £9,250 (2021/22)
- **Overseas:** £28,500 (2021/22)

Full details of UCL’s tuition fees, tuition fee policy and potential increases to fees can be found on the [UCL Students website](http://www.ucl.ac.uk).

**ADDITIONAL COSTS**

A guide including rough estimates for these and other living expenses is included on the [UCL Fees and funding pages](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/funding). If you are concerned by potential additional costs for books, equipment, etc., please get in touch with the relevant departmental contact (details given on this page).

**FUNDING**

Various funding options are available, including student loans, scholarships and bursaries. UK students whose household income falls below a certain level may also be eligible for a non-repayable bursary or for certain scholarships. Please see the [Fees and funding pages](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/funding) for more details.

**CONTACT**

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**Telephone:**

**Department:** Science and Technology Studies

**UK withdrawal from the EU**

For up-to-date information relating to specific key questions following the UK’s withdrawal from the EU, please refer to: [www.ucl.ac.uk/brexit](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/brexit).

This information is for guidance only. It should not be construed as advice nor relied upon and does not form part of any contract. For more information on UCL’s degree programmes please see the UCL Undergraduate Prospectus at [www.ucl.ac.uk/prospectus](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/prospectus).