



Beacon Schools Programme 2024-2025

GUIDANCE INFORMATION

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UCL Centre for Holocaust Education Beacon Schools Programme 2024-5

Guidance information

Thank you for your interest in the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education's Beacon Schools Programme. We are delighted that you are taking the time to consider applying for this programme, and we very much look forward to receiving your application.

This document contains key details about the programme and will support you in completing your application. Everything you need to know about the Beacon Schools Programme is contained within this document, but should you have any questions or queries please do get in touch – we would be only too pleased to help.

In the pages that follow, you will find further information on:

- The value of the Beacon School Programme for you and your school
- The programme's aims and objectives
- How you will be supported
- The core content of the programme and what is expected of you, including the 2 residential programmes
- How long the programme lasts
- How much the programme costs
- Eligibility criteria
- The structure of the programme

We hope that you find this guidance useful, and we look forward to receiving your application. Should you have any queries after reading this guidance, please contact us at holocaust@ucl.ac.uk

What is the value of the Beacon School Programme?

The Beacon School Programme is the flagship initiative of the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education. Now in its twelfth year, the programme provides a cohort of schools with sustained research-informed professional development in Holocaust education. Through this process, schools become dynamic hubs and local leaders in teaching and learning about the Holocaust.

The key figure in bringing about these changes is a designated **Lead Teacher**. Supported by an identified SLT link, the Lead Teacher participates in a programme of professional development provided by UCL and is guided throughout by an allocated member of staff from the Centre. In undertaking this journey, the Lead Teacher is expected to produce a number of key outputs – including a new or refined Scheme of Learning on the Holocaust within their specialist subject area.

The Beacon School programme provides Lead Teachers with a unique opportunity to deepen their subject knowledge and understanding; become more confident in their teaching of this challenging subject; learn new ways to teach the Holocaust which directly respond to students' needs; and to implement curriculum development in how the Holocaust is taught in their schools.

In this way, Beacon School Lead Teachers acquire not only expertise in teaching and learning about the Holocaust; they also develop as reflexive practitioners who are able to raise standards in their schools and lead curriculum development. Many Beacon School alumni have used their experience on the programme to enhance their **leadership skills** and credentials, and in turn drawn on the programme for promotion purposes and in the day-to-day exercise of school leadership. You can find out more about the career paths of alumni [here](#).

The programme helps schools to **improve teaching standards** in Holocaust education and to **raise pupil achievement** – crucial steps towards achieving excellence in teaching and learning about the Holocaust. But the benefits for schools of Lead Teachers embarking on this professional development journey, goes beyond improvements in a school's delivery of Holocaust education. Across the years we have also seen Beacon Schools pursue research-informed approaches to other aspects of the curriculum and employ teaching strategies that **encourage student's independent thinking** and criticality across their teaching practice.

Through the programme, schools have enhanced their SMSC provision and created opportunities for young people to engage with contemporary issues and challenges in informed ways.

What are the aims and objectives of the programme?

The Beacon School programme aims to help teachers in the following ways:

- a) Deepen their historical knowledge and understanding
- b) Develop Holocaust education within their discipline or subject specialism
- c) Increase their confidence in teaching about the Holocaust
- d) Provide opportunities to actively engage with pioneering educational research into Holocaust education
- e) Refine their pedagogical approaches to ensure they are responsive to the needs of students and challenges of the classroom
- f) Shape and effect curriculum change in their schools

The programme also has the following objectives in terms of school improvement:

- a) Improve the quality of teaching and learning about the Holocaust through the refinement or creation of a research-informed Scheme of Learning
- b) Ensure that teaching approaches to the Holocaust are informed by empirical research
- c) Calibrate teaching about the Holocaust to address students' misunderstandings and misconceptions
- d) Make certain that where the Holocaust appears in more than one subject in the school curriculum, it does so in a coherent and cohesive way
- e) Guarantee that all teachers involved in teaching about the Holocaust have had CPD opportunities to improve their practice

Schools who successfully complete the requirements of the programme will be awarded Beacon School Status at the end of the third term.

How will I be supported?

A centrepiece of the Beacon School Programme is the relationship between Lead Teachers and designated mentors. **Mentors** are expert members of staff from the Centre who work closely with Lead Teachers throughout the programme. This takes a variety of forms – from individual online meetings and phone-calls, mentor visits to your school, and through mentor group meetings which will serve as a forum for group-discussion.

In addition to your mentor the Lead Teacher will also be supported by an identified **SLT link** within your school. This senior member of staff will provide you with day-to-day support, acting both as a sounding board and as a critical friend in your Beacon School journey. The SLT link will be expected to meet with you periodically each term, and to provide you with practical guidance and support as you need it.

In addition, the Centre will provide four bespoke online sessions to support the named SLT link across the programme in understanding the potential for Holocaust T&L and the Beacon School programme to address whole school priorities and contribute to improvement.

The aim of these sessions is to ensure the programme is as impactful to the **whole school community** as possible, and helps secure key messaging, build institutional memory and capacity within school. SLT links will also connect the impact of the programme to the School Improvement Programme, tying this to existing objectives.

What does the programme consist of and what will I be expected to do?

The Beacon School Programme is a sustained and immersive CPD experience. As such, it is in line with key aspects of the Department for Education's Standards for Professional Development. To ensure the programme is rigorous and robust, there are a number of key expectations and associated outputs. In overview, Lead Teachers will be required to:

- Attend two in-person **residential**s
- Attend a programme of online mentor meetings
- Conduct a curriculum mapping exercise to identify what teaching related to the Holocaust is currently taking place in your school
- Produce a Scheme of Learning informed by the programme
- Initiate moves to embed excellent practice in your school
- Stage an online or in-person CPD event to be delivered by UCL staff
- Develop working links with other schools

SLT links will be required to:

- Attend four online CPD sessions across the year
- Acknowledge the programme aims in the School Improvement Plan
- Support the Lead Teacher in implementing **whole school change**

Further detail on each of these expectations can be found below. In addition to the above requirements, we will expect that you are a highly motivated, committed and organised individual who has a passion for teaching and learning about the Holocaust and developing as a practitioner.

Residentials

The Lead Teacher will attend two in-person residential. One of these will be held in **London** during the first part of the **October half term (2024)**. The other will be held in early **July (2025)** outside of London. The purpose of these residential will be to provide the Lead Teacher with an opportunity to experience high-quality professional development that works towards the four aims stated above. This will be achieved through hands-on workshops, lectures delivered by guest speakers, and interactive sessions delivered by Centre staff. The residential will also be an opportunity for Lead Teachers to network with teachers from across the country, to collaborate and share best practice. The Centre will cover costs associated with these residential.

Welcome event and mentor meetings

The Beacon School programme 2024-25 will formally launch with an online Welcome Event on **19 June 2024 (4:00-4:45 PM)** and an invitation to our online **Beacon School**

conference on 22 June 2024. These will be the first times that the cohort comes together. In addition to this event, there will be calendarized meetings throughout each of the four terms. These meetings will be conducted within small mentor groups. At these meetings, the group will discuss key issues in Holocaust education and also share experiences. In this way the mentor groups will provide you with **mutual support and a forum for exchanging ideas.**

Curriculum mapping

Transforming teaching and learning about the Holocaust in your school requires both enhancing teaching provision and effecting curriculum change. But before embarking on curriculum development, it is prudent to establish what is currently taking place in your school. To this end, you will be expected to undertake a curriculum mapping exercise at the start of the Beacon School Programme. In our experience, Lead Teachers often find this an illuminating exercise which can surface instances of teaching related to the Holocaust that were hitherto unknown or shed light on potential opportunities for cross-curricular collaboration.

Schemes of Learning

A key goal of the Beacon School programme is for our Centre to work in **collaborative partnership** with schools to improve teaching and learning about the Holocaust. Many schools find that one of the most effective ways of doing this is through developing research-informed Schemes of Learning within the main subject area(s) that the Holocaust is taught. By doing so, Lead Teachers are able to implement enduring curriculum change within their schools.

It is for these reasons that a key expectation of the Beacon School programme is that Lead Teachers will work in partnership with UCL staff to either develop and refine their existing Scheme of Learning or to create a new one. Critically, it will also be expected that you will have the opportunity to implement this new Scheme by the end of your time on the Beacon School Programme.

Embedding practice

Schemes of Learning are key vehicles for curriculum development. However, embedding excellence in Holocaust education within a school also involves developing connections and links where appropriate, in order to ensure coherence in student's learning.

To this end, Lead Teachers will be encouraged to develop their relationships with other colleagues in their school - both those directly involved in teaching about the Holocaust, as well as others who may be able to contribute to it - pastorally or by other means.

The curriculum mapping exercise will serve as a positive first step but Lead Teachers will also be expected to organise, with the help of their SLT link and mentor, a **school visit** in the Autumn term (2024). This will include a bespoke CPD session delivered by a member of UCL staff to colleagues within the school. The Lead Teacher should look to recruit colleagues to this event who are both directly involved in teaching about the Holocaust, and who may be curriculum leaders or have appropriate responsibilities such as safeguarding.

Research-informed practice

The Centre's research-informed approach is an important element of the Beacon School Programme. The sessions you will participate in are informed by the Centre's ongoing research with teachers and students. This ensures the programme and associated teaching materials continue to be responsive to the shifting contexts and challenges that teachers and students can encounter when teaching and learning about the Holocaust. There will be opportunities for you to meet with the Centre's research team and participate in discussions about our **latest research findings** (this may include research not yet publicly available). Beacon Schools are among the first to hear about our new studies, with many exciting opportunities for lead teachers, their colleagues and students to contribute to the research if interested. You will also be supported to draw on research evidence to inform your scheme of learning and lesson content. It is hoped that the support we provide to enable you to access, interpret and incorporate research in your teaching will not only benefit your work in Holocaust education, but equip you with knowledge and skills you can apply to other topics you teach.

Working with other schools

A fundamental principle of the Beacon Schools Programme is that participating schools become 'Beacon' institutions to teachers in other schools. This helps to build networks between schools and establish a community of practice in local areas. Equally, this undertaking has multiple benefits for Beacon Schools themselves, including enhancing their local reputation, burnishing their leadership credentials, and furthering the extent to which they are regarded as collegiate and collaborative institutions.

We appreciate that teachers are very busy, and that this is not always easy to achieve. However, every Beacon School - with our support - will be expected to reach out to teachers in other schools and networks. Working with other schools can, of course, take multiple forms. It could include setting-up an online discussion forum, staging termly meetings, or inviting colleagues into your school to showcase your work. Historically many

Beacon Schools have benefited from inviting colleagues from their local area and existing networks to attend CPD events.

How long does the programme last?

The programme lasts for four consecutive academic terms, starting in June 2024 and running through to the end of December 2025.

How much does the programme cost?

We are funded by the Pears Foundation and the Department for Education to deliver this transformative programme. As a result, the programme is provided to schools completely **free of charge**, including the consultancy of our world-leading experts and places on our residential CPD programmes, including hotel stays and meals. UCL do not normally cover travel costs for teachers travelling to and from the residential venue. However, please contact us directly if your school is having difficulties in covering your travel costs, as we may be able to support you - particularly those coming from further afield.

Who can apply?

You do not have to already have an exemplary standard of Holocaust education in your school in order to apply. The Beacon School Programme is very much a process rather than an end point, and as such we do not expect you already be 'beacons' in Holocaust education.

To be eligible to apply for the Beacon School Programme, you do need to:

- Have responsibility for teaching the Holocaust in your department
- Be based in a secondary school in England including SEND, specialist and alternative provision institutions (colleagues in independent schools are welcome to apply, but the terms of our funding mean priority will be given to teachers in state-maintained schools)
- Be committed to the principle of research-informed teaching and learning
- Have the opportunity to either: a) develop the department's existing Scheme of Learning; or b) create a new Scheme of Learning for the department that will be adopted during the course of the Beacon School programme
- Have completed the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education's [6 Things](#) short **online** course
- Have completed the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education's short **online** [Textbook CPD course](#)
- Have secured the support of the Senior Leadership Team who recognise the opportunities of the Beacon School Programme to support key priorities and agendas

How is an application judged?

There is no one set of formal criteria used to assess Beacon School applications, but there are factors that inform our decision-making process: these include, but are not exclusive to:

- Geographical location.

- Type of secondary school: 11-16, 11-18, post-16 college, faith school, academy, local authority, grammar, specialist or alternative provision (Independent Schools are considered, but owing to funding, priority is given to state secondaries).
- Lead Teacher/subject area of focus (History, RE, English or Citizenship).
- Characteristics and context of the school - including PP, SEND, EAL.
- Latest Ofsted, SIAMs or equivalent external verifier/current status.
- Variety of Lead Teacher experience and profile (for example, years of experience, role in school, subject, personal biography).
- Being part of an existing network of schools to share best practice, such as a multi-academy trust or faith school organisation.
- Past/current engagement with the Centre and its CPD programme.
- Schools with a bespoke or unique characteristic (for example, mainstream provision with a focused provision unit, perhaps a school in a local community or personal connection to the Holocaust).

We seek to consider carefully each application for its individual merits, whilst working to ensure we secure as diverse a Beacon School cohort as possible, that can speak to a range of funders and stakeholders' priorities.

Due to high demand for places, not all schools will be successful in their application to become a Beacon School. In these cases, we will look to build our relationship with schools to support successful future applications.

Using the free-text boxes, Schools should explain the following in their applications:

- How a partnership with the Centre would benefit the school
- How your school can work to improve Holocaust education in your local region or network
- Any specific or unique features, community or characteristics of your school
- How the programme will support areas of development for the school

What is the structure of the Beacon School Programme?

Final dates for the Beacon School year will be finalised in advance of June 2024, and announced and circulated at the Welcome event. However, the following structure is designed to provide you with a sense of the overall rhythm of the programme:

Dates	Programme for Lead Teachers
19 June 2024	Online Welcome Event (4:00 – 4:45 PM)
22 June 2024	Online Beacon School conference (PM) A conference featuring a range of speakers and alumni of the Beacon School programme which explores contemporary issues in Holocaust education.
July 2024	Introductory phone calls from Mentors Your UCL Centre for Holocaust Education mentor will get in touch and introduce themselves. During this call, we will discuss your school context and your goals for your Beacon School journey.
Autumn Term 2024	Schools on the programme host CPD event for their staff with UCL mentors (online or face-to-face) As part of your school's CPD calendar or INSET programme, you will host a bespoke CPD event introducing the programme to colleagues in your school.
September 2024-July 2025	Regular monthly mentor meetings (online). Once a month, you will meet with your mentor and mentor group to discuss critical themes in Holocaust education, and to collaborate with your fellow Lead Teachers.
Friday 24- Monday 27 October 2024	First Residential (Face-to-face, London) In this fully funded residential course, you will explore the Imperial War Museum exhibition on the Holocaust and attend workshops with UCL Centre for Holocaust Education experts.
29 March 2025	Deadline for first draft of scheme of learning
27-29 June 2025	Second Residential (Face-to-face, location TBD) On our second residential, the focus will be on collaboration and development of your schemes of learning, with UCL colleagues facilitating.
Autumn 2025	Deadline for 'final' scheme of learning Mentors keep up light touch feedback and support during the Autumn term as schools embed the scheme and the work of the previous year, offering advice and support where necessary.

Dates	Programme for SLT Links
19 June 2024	Welcome Event (Online)
24 September 2024 6 November 2024 13 February 2025 2 July 2025	SLT CPD sessions (Online, 4:00-5:15) In these sessions with Nic Wetherall MBE, SLT links will explore how the Beacon School programme can respond to whole school agendas, develop SMSC or other values education and how to mark Holocaust Memorial Day.



Centre for Holocaust Education
IOE, UCL's Faculty of
Education and Society
University College London
20 Bedford Way
London WC1H 0AL

T: +44 (2)20 7612 6437
E: holocaust@ucl.ac.uk

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