

# UNIVERSAL NEWSLETTER

OCTOBER 2024

## LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS OPEN DAY AT UCB

UCB held an open day in partnership with the London School of Economic (LSE) on 23rd September. The chief guest was Dr. James Abdey, Associate Professor in Statistics and Associate International Director at LSE. The event provided students with an in-depth overview of the prestigious University of London (UoL) degrees available at UCB, all of which teach the same world-class LSE curriculum that is studied by students in London.

Prof Hew Gill, President of UCB, opened the event with a speech explaining how international education gives Bangladeshi students the skills they need to succeed in their careers. Dr. James Abdey then made a presentation about how LSE designs its degree curriculums for students studying their degrees at UCB. He said, "The LSE crafts its degree curriculums to provide students with the essential skills and knowledge to thrive in the modern global economy. LSE is a top 10 university so students at UCB get the best possible international education in accounting, business, economics, finance, management, and all aspects of social sciences. It was a pleasure for me to



meet so many aspiring students and to share how the LSE designed programmes at UCB unlock numerous global study and career opportunities."

LSE is number 6 in the QS World Ranking of Universities, so is among the very best universities in the world. Many LSE degrees are accredited by professional bodies such as ICA, CIMA, and ACCA so students may receive exemptions from professional exams when studying to become accounting, finance and data analytics professionals. UCB offers four full degrees designed and assessed by the LSE. Students can complete all three years of their degree at UCB and when they finish they can graduate in Dhaka or they can choose to receive their degree at the Graduation Convocation ceremony in London. The next UCB intake for the LSE designed degrees is on 14th October 2024.



## LANKABANGLA FINANCE PLC. LAUNCHES CO-BRANDED TITANIUM CREDIT CARD FOR STS GROUP IN COLLABORATION WITH MASTERCARD



LankaBangla Finance PLC and STS Capital Ltd. (STS Group), in partnership with Mastercard, recently launched a co-branded credit card offering exclusive benefits for STS Group's employees, teachers, and parents of students under the STS education umbrella, including Universal College Bangladesh (UCB),

International School Dhaka (ISD), Glenrich International School and STS Group as well. The card unveiling and an agreement signing ceremony took place at the Universal College Bangladesh (UCB) Campus in Gulshan, Dhaka; one of the concerns of STS group.

The co-branded titanium credit card comes with exclusive financial benefits including a two-year annual fee waiver and from the third year onwards, a waiver will be granted upon making a minimum of 12 transactions. Cardholders can enjoy a flexible limit range up to BDT 10 lacs. The credit card also offers airport lounge access, unlimited Meet & Greet service; discount facilities are available at over 1,300 merchant points and more than 900 Ezypay merchant partners, offering 0% interest. Card members can avail up to 3 free supplementary cards. This card also offers exclusive travel benefits, reward Points, 24/7 call center support, and more financial benefits to employees, teachers and parents of institutions under STS Group.

Humaira Azam, Managing Director of LankaBangla Finance PLC, said, "We are delighted to collaborate with STS Group to introduce this unique credit card. It has been designed to provide valuable benefits to employees, teachers and parents of STS group to further streamlining their financial management plans related to education"

Regarding the partnership, Manas Singh, CEO of STS Capital Ltd., said, "Through this partnership with LankaBangla Finance PLC., we opt to enhance financial services available within our STS community. The co-branded credit card offers a range of benefits tailored specifically for the educational sector, which should duly support and empower our partners".

Syed Mohammad Kamal, Country Manager, Bangladesh, Mastercard, said, "Mastercard is delighted to collaborate with LankaBangla Finance PLC and STS Group to introduce this new card for the employees, teachers and parents. This association will ensure long-term partnership and financial benefits for the STS community. This launch is in line with Mastercard's commitment to promote digital payments adoption among communities in Bangladesh.

On behalf of STS Group, S M Rahmatul Mujeeb, FCA, Chief Financial Officer, STS Capital Ltd.; Kingshuk Gupta, Chief Operating Officer, Universal College Bangladesh; were present during the signing. Representing LankaBangla Finance PLC., the signing ceremony was also attended by Khurshed Alam, Head of Retail Business; A.K.M. Kamruzzaman, Head of Operations and Mr. Jubaer Hossain, Manager at Mastercard, along with other senior officials from the three organizations, were present.

## DR JAMES ABDEY VISITS LOCAL SCHOOLS

Dr James Abdey, Associate Professor of Statistics and Associate Academic Director of the EMFSS Programmes at the London School of Economics and Political Science, LSE took the opportunity to visit several schools while he was with UCB in Dhaka. Dr Abdey said, "One of the most exciting parts of my job is being able to meet students and explain to them the benefits of studying a curriculum designed and supervised by the LSE. An international qualification and a certificate with LSE written on it can be a great passport to further education or a great global career.". Dr Abdey gave talks to students and staff at the Scholastica-Mirpur Campus, The Aga Khan Academy, International School Dhaka, and the Glenrich-Uttara campus. Dr Abdey chose to speak on a subject in which he is an expert: Data and Storytelling and LSE opportunities with UCB. In his very insightful presentation Dr Abdey explained how data can be used to make important decisions in government and businesses, and how the degree programmes at UCB equip students with exactly the skills that are in most demand from top employers.



## MUFY HIGH ACHIEVERS AWARDS CEREMONY



The MUFY High Achievers Awards Ceremony was held on September 11th, 2024, at Universal College Bangladesh. The event celebrated the remarkable success of students from the Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) 1st Semester, 8th Batch

who achieved some amazing assessment results in the Summer 2024 assessment cycle. The Awards Ceremony took place in the UCB Library & Resource Centre, with students, academic faculty, and support team staff coming together to recognize the hard work and dedication of the top performers.

Prof Hew Gill, President of UCB, awarded Certificates of Merit to Fariha Karim for English, M. Farashuddin Mim for Mathematics and Science, Sheikh Shehreen Zyan for Business, and Nafiul Hassan for Information Technology. Fardin Hassan Shopnil received the award for the top scorer overall.

Merit Awards for the Monash Continuing Degree (MCD) students will be given after their assessment cycle in the Autumn. All MUFY 1, 2A, and 2B students will also be considered for the next round of awards, including the Most Improved Student award, after the November/December assessment cycle.

## UCB SCHOLAR AT LSE SUMMER SCHOOL BY RUBAYEET HASAN



Attending LSE Summer School as a UCB scholar for me was one of the best learning and "once in a lifetime" experiences. The welcoming students from all over the globe and the world class faculties made the student experience fantastic when you are studying in one of the top universities. The numerous hustling campus buildings in prime central London near the historic river Thames made the student experience incomparable and unbeatable.

My LSE Summer School course was AC110 Principles of Accounting, and I was delighted to achieve an A grade under the guidance of LSE's world-class lecturers and faculties. Staying in the LSE Passfield Hall student residence meant I was able to connect with other students at the LSE Summer School, and also experience the LSE hall life.

LSE being in central London, I was able to dive into one of the world's most historical and vast mega cities, with its vibrant blend of history and modernity, captivating iconic landmarks, and diverse neighborhoods. From the ancient Tower of London, close to Tower Bridge (often wrongly known to tourists as London Bridge), to the well-known Buckingham Palace, the city invited exploration at every turn. With world-class museums and a dynamic culinary scene, there was always something new for me to discover.

Outside London I was able to discover other amazing towns and cities of the UK like Bath, Cardiff, Bristol and more. My time as an UCB scholar at LSE will always remain in my heart as a great memory forever. Thanks to Universal College Bangladesh, my local University of London-LSE registered teaching centre, and to the senior management team for transforming my dream into a reality.



## UCB-BANGLADESH CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY SOCIETY WORKSHOP ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

UCB and Bangladesh Clinical Psychology Society (BCPS) jointly organised a workshop for mental health counselors from universities, colleges, and schools in Dhaka on 21st September 2024. This workshop was to address the mental health impacts of the recent protests and related events among students. Ms. Marzia, UCB Student Support Head, co-facilitated the workshop with Ms. Zohora Parveen, Clinical Supervisor, Mental Health Service Department, HEI, Malaysia.

More than 20 counsellors registered for the workshop and completed a survey about the impact of the demonstrations. The session opened with a short speech and panel session with Prof Hew Gill, President of UCB, and the participants exchanged many interesting perspectives on how the student protests may have impacted mental health. Ms. Marzia then presented some interim findings from the survey and urged participants to contact colleagues to take part in the next phases of the research. Ms. Zohora discussed some effective strategies that counsellors could use to help students process their emotions after the protests, then participants took part in a group activity to design a psychological intervention to benefit students.



The participants said further sessions on relevant mental health topics were needed. Ms. Marzia from UCB is working closely with her colleagues in the BCPS to arrange a workshop on Trauma Management soon as part of UCB's ongoing collaborations with professional and educational institutions across the country.

## BRIDGING HEARTS AT CHESHIRE HOMES UTTARA, DHAKA



On September 28, 2024, the sun shone brightly over Dhaka as UCB students, under the guidance of Mr. Dewan Md. Nur-A Yazdani, embarked on a meaningful mission to Cheshire Homes in Uttara. This sanctuary supports individuals with mental and physical disabilities, and the students were there to donate food and essential items.

The visit was organized by the "Chores and Cheers" club, which focuses on developing life skills and encourages students to contribute to their community. The club is open to all UCB programs, inviting new members to join their efforts.

Arriving with boxes filled with food, vegetables, fruits, and toiletries, the students were excited and ready to help. Upon arrival, they were greeted with warmth and joy from the residents, fostering an immediate sense of connection. As they distributed the items, the students were touched by the residents' stories of courage and perseverance, which inspired them to reflect on their own privileges.

The experience highlighted the joy of giving and the impact of kindness. After spending an hour at Cheshire Homes, the students bid farewell, their hearts filled with a profound sense of accomplishment and satisfaction. They had not only provided material support but also shared their time, compassion, and friendship. This experience left an indelible mark on their lives, reinforcing the values of empathy, kindness, and community service.

## UCB MARKS WORLD LITERACY DAY

UCB marked World Literacy Day on September 8th, 2024, with the theme "Promoting Multilingual Education: Literacy for Mutual Understanding and Peace." The event encouraged students to think about how different languages and stories can help people understand each other better and promote peace.

As part of the celebration, UCB students were invited to share reviews of their favorite movies, poems, or novels. These reviews were collected online by Ms Zeba, Student Services Head, through UCB Microsoft 365 under the title "Give Your Review on Your Favorite Movie/Novel/Poem.". Once all the reviews were gathered, they were made into colorful posters and presented on the Level 06 display wall, in the Student Lounge & Cafeteria. The display attracted attention from students across the College, who stopped to read the reviews, discuss the works, and share their thoughts with one another.

The highlight of the event was the opportunity for students to interact with Prof. Hew Gill, President of UCB, who joined them to discuss their reflections on the movie, poem, and novel reviews. Many students expressed how these literary works had influenced their perspectives, and in return, Prof. Hew shared insightful stories, offering wisdom and encouragement. His experiences resonated deeply with the students, making the celebration even more meaningful.



By the end of the day, the students felt inspired and connected, having celebrated literacy in a way that not only enhanced their understanding of multilingual education, but which also promoted peace and mutual respect. The event was a success, leaving everyone motivated to continue exploring literature and its power to bring people together.

## UCB STUDENT SUPPORT HEAD CONDUCTS STAFF WELLBEING SESSION FOR UNITED NATIONS



Ms. Marzia Al-Hakeem, UCB Head of Student Support and Lecturer in Psychology, conducted a wellbeing session for staff of the United Nation Population Fund (UNFPA) on 5th September 2024. The session was held in the UNFPA Dhaka office and was a hybrid session with participants from the Cox's Bazar UNFPA office

joining online. The topic of this session was "Coping with Crisis Response: Worry, Anxiety and Sleep." This session was specifically designed to address the state of mental health of people after the nationwide disturbances and floods.

Around 50 UNFPA staff attended the interactive session, taking part in discussions, group activities and mindfulness practices. Ms. Marzia explained how participants could use coping mechanisms, anxiety management strategies, and self-care to improve sleep and reduce stress. The participants' feedback showed the benefits of the session in helping the UN staff cope with work overload, insomnia, and stress.

Ms. Marzia has been appointed as External Mental Health Professional (EMHP) to the UN and she will be facilitating future training sessions and workshops for the UN as part of UCB's commitment to developing human capital and skills across Bangladesh.

## STUDENT AMBASSADORS GRADUATION CONVOCATION HELPER AWARDS CEREMONY

On Thursday, September 19th, 2024, UCB hosted the Student Ambassadors Graduation Convocation Helper Awards Ceremony to honour the outstanding contributions of its dedicated student volunteers to making this year's Monash Graduation such a great success.

The ceremony started with a warm welcome, acknowledging the efforts of the student volunteers who went beyond to ensure the smooth running of the Convocation. A special mention was made for the following volunteers: Tanzina Nabi, Samaida Khan, Ishmum Muhammed Sajeed Bhuiya, Md Adnan Abdullah, Mashrur Mahmud Khan, Afifah Faiza Hasan, Thevindu Thisal Kenvia Fernando Sayakkarage, Sheikh Shehreen Zyan, Fardin Hassan Shopnil, Mohammad Zaim Khan, and Shuprova Morshed Nora.

As each student was called to the stage, they were met with applause and appreciation from the audience. Prof Hew Gill, President of UCB, presented each Student Ambassador with a Certificate of Recognition symbolising not just their contribution to the Convocation, but also their dedication to the UCB community. Their efforts were crucial in ensuring the



smooth organization of the event, and Prof Hew expressed heartfelt gratitude on behalf of UCB for the students' commitment.

The ceremony ended with a sense of pride and accomplishment. The students left feeling appreciated and motivated to continue supporting future events. The successful awards ceremony, organised by Ms Zeba the UCB Student Services Head, highlighted the importance of student leadership and volunteerism in building a strong and supportive academic community at UCB.

## WORLD PEACE DAY

Universal College Bangladesh celebrated World Peace Day on Saturday, September 24th, 2024. The day was all about reflecting on peace and encouraging students to think about how they can bring peace into their lives and communities. It was a wonderful opportunity for everyone to come together and share their thoughts.

Before the event, students were invited to express their ideas about peace by either writing or drawing on postcards. These postcards were filled with messages, symbols, and creative artwork, all showing personal reflections on what peace means to them. The finished pieces were beautifully displayed in the UCB Library & Resource Centre where students could stop, admire, and engage with ideas.

During the celebration, students also had the chance to discuss their postcards with Prof. Hew Gill, President of UCB, when he visited the exhibition. Students shared what inspired their creations, and Prof. Hew, in return, shared his own insights and experiences, which made the conversations even more enriching. His words encouraged the students to think more deeply about peace and how small actions can lead to bigger positive changes.

As students viewed the display, many took the time to read the reflections and discuss them with their peers. The

variety of thoughts and artwork sparked conversations about the diverse ways we can promote peace in our communities. The display not only highlighted the creativity of the students but also encouraged a deeper understanding of the value of peace.

Students were proud of their contributions and inspired by the conversations they had. It was a day that reminded everyone of the importance of peace and how, through small actions, we can all contribute to making the world a more peaceful place.



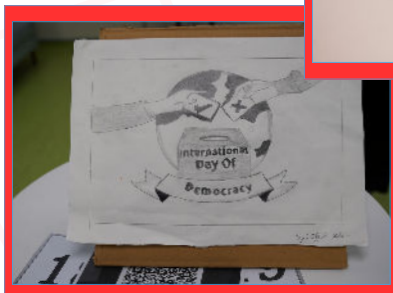
## A BRUSH WITH DEMOCRACY – UCB ART COMPETITION FOR DEMOCRACY DAY



The UCB campus was transformed into a vibrant art gallery on the 15th of September 2024 to celebrate the International Day of Democracy. This year, the celebration took on a unique twist: each student was encouraged to submit a piece of art that represented their understanding of democracy. Students arrived from all corners of the campus, to represent their own unique interpretation of democracy on paper, canvas and card.

The artwork by students showcased many diverse interpretations of democracy, though the importance of voting was central to many of the representations. All UCB students were able to vote for their favourite piece of art online.

The painting that won the first place highlighted the duality of democratic progress, by celebrating the origin of the United States of America, while also emphasizing the need for justice. The artwork placed second, featured a vibrant design with red and blue elements, underscoring the centrality of individual engagement in democratic processes by casting a personal vote. Third prize went to a picture incorporating decorative elements like plants to symbolize the growth of democracy through active participation in the voting process. The campus Library & Resource Centre was filled with laughter and conversation as students admired each other's work and discussed the meanings of the various pieces. The student-curated art exhibition celebrated the occasion and showcased the creativity and passion of the young minds who will shape the future of democracy in the Bangladesh of tomorrow.





## WORLD FIRST AID DAY TRAINING BY UCB SCIENCE CLUB



UCB Science Club (USC) organized a first aid awareness event on September 12th in recognition of World First Aid Day. The programme began with a presentation by Dr Sadia Afreen, Assistant Professor, and the founder and moderator of the USC, explaining the points of contact for first aid emergencies on campus and how students should deal with first aid emergencies on campus. Mr. Arifur Rahman, UCB Chief Lab Technician and a first aid certificate holder, demonstrated how to handle a physical injury with student volunteers.

Ms. Sushama Mahmuda Ananna, Lecturer in Psychology and Executive Coordinator to the President of UCB, delivered a presentation on psychological first aid to help students understand how to take care of their emotional health and their emotional intelligence under different circumstances in their student life and further.

Ms. Ambreen Zaman, Senior Lecturer in IT and an active member of USC, distributed tokens of appreciation to the students and acknowledged Prof Hew, President of UCB, Prof Muhammad Ismail Hossain, the Dean of Academic Affairs, and Mr. Md. Mahfuzur Rahman the AGM of HR for their active presence and participation in the event.

This event was another great contribution of USC to the UCB student and staff communities. Students enjoyed the active participation throughout the event, and the opportunity to share their experience and opinions with each other on first aid concepts and actions.

Ms. Marzia Al-Hakeem, Student Support Head and Lecturer in Psychology, was present as a trained counselor to support students with any queries.

The entire event was successfully executed by the USC members, with a significant contribution by Ms. Zebunnessa Zeba, Student Services Head, who made a wonderful poster for the event and prepared the appreciation token for the students.

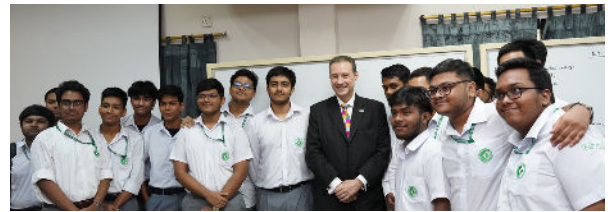


## PROF. HEW GILL VISITS LOCAL SCHOOLS



Prof. Hew Gill, President & Provost of UCB, visited three of the top independent schools throughout September. Prof. Hew met with students and staff at St. Joseph International School, Maple Leaf International School, and the Scholastica-Uttara Campus. As part of his visits, he conducted Student Workshop Sessions with the senior students under the title "A user guide to your memory—how can you use your memory more efficiently to remember important information."

The students were amazed by the things they learned about their brains and memories during Prof. Hew's entertaining and informative presentations. Prof. Hew also took the opportunity of his visits to meet with Br. Chandon Gomes, Principal of SJIS, Ms. Humaira Fatima Jalil, Career Guidance Counselor of MLIS, and Ms. Zareen Sabrina Chowdhury, Career Guidance Counsellor, Scholastica Uttara.



## MUFY STUDENT FEEDBACK SESSION



UCB regularly arranges feedback sessions and on 2nd September it was the turn of the Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) to hold its Student Feedback session at the UCB Library & Resource Centre.

Student Feedback sessions are essential to understand student experience and ways to improve course quality. Ms. Ambreen Zaman, Senior Lecturer in IT and MUFY Program Coordinator, presided over the event, joined by faculty colleagues who teach the MUFY program. To enrich the event further, Prof Hew Gill, President of UCB and Prof Ismail Hossain, Academic Dean, were present, along with Ms. Samia Islam, Parent Engagement Executive, Ms. Zebunessa Zeba, Student Service Executive, and Ms. Marzia Al-Hakeem, Student Support Executive and Lecturer in Psychology.

The MUFY students enthusiastically participated and expressed their opinions in a written format; however, anonymity was maintained. In addition, the students also verbally expressed their observations about the MUFY program and the environment at UCB. The Feedback session lasted for 2 hours, demonstrating that the opinions of the students are appreciated and respected.

## UCB STUDENTS ENJOY WORLD TOURISM DAY

On a bright afternoon on September 27th, 2024, the students at UCB gathered with excitement to celebrate World Tourism Day. The room buzzed with energy as students prepared to share stories of their travel adventures. Each one had something unique to offer—a place they had visited, a culture they had explored, or a journey they had embarked on that left an impression.

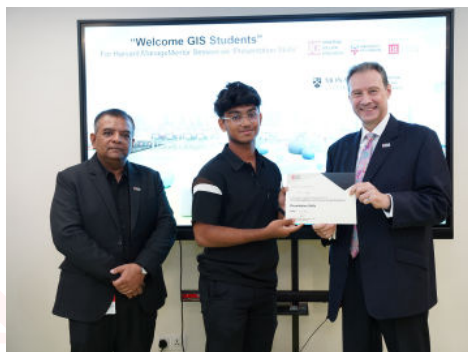
The event, organised by Ms. Zeba, Student Services Head, kicked off with students giving PowerPoint presentations of the cities and countries they had explored. Colorful photos filled the screen, showing breathtaking landscapes, iconic landmarks, and smiling faces from around the world. Students took turns narrating their experiences. It wasn't just about the places they visited—it was about the stories, the moments of awe, and the joy of discovery.

Professor Hew Gill joined the gathering to hear the students' stories and shared a few of his own travel tales, recalling memories of distant lands and the people he met along the way. His stories blended seamlessly with those of the students, creating an inspiring exchange of experiences. There was laughter, awe, and a deep sense of connection as everyone chatted about their shared love for travel.



By the end of the day, the room was filled not just with stories, but with a sense of adventure that extended beyond borders. The students left with hearts full of wanderlust, inspired to continue exploring the world. World Tourism Day at UCB was more than a celebration—it was a reminder of the beauty of exploration and the endless stories the world has to offer.

## HARVARD MANAGEMENTOR SESSION FOR GLENRICH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL-UTTARA.



Again in September, UCB offered school students the opportunity to take part in a certified course on Presentation Skills Development curated by Harvard Business Publishing Education. Students from Glenrich International School Uttara and Satarkul Branch attended an amazing session at UCB on 21 September 2024. The session was conducted by Mr. Dewan Muhammad Nur-A Yazdani, Senior Lecturer in Management & Marketing. After the exciting session,

all the students were very happy to receive their Certificates from Prof. Hew Gill, President & Provost of UCB. Photos were taken of all the students attending and of the teachers attending: Ms. Farhana Mofiz on behalf of Glenrich International School-Satarkul, and Masum Bellah Chowdhury on behalf of Glentich International School-Uttara.

## UCB BRING-A-BUDDY DAY

On September 29th, UCB launched its inaugural "Bring-a-Buddy" program to engage students with upcoming initiatives and recognize their efforts in promoting the UCB brand.

The event featured a presentation by Program Head Mr. Soureen Dutta Roy, outlining available programs, followed by Enrolment Counselor Mysha Sultana, who explained the referral process and its benefits.

Students received a Red Referral Card and a Certificate of Appreciation from President & Provost Prof. Hew Gill and COO Mr. Kingshuk Gupta.

Nearly 80 students attended, eager to learn about UCB's offerings, and successful referrers shared how they used their bonuses for academic support.

The event concluded with snacks, fostering a sense of community and collaboration among attendees, highlighting the importance of peer engagement in UCB's outreach.



## RAJUK UTTARA MODEL COLLEGE-BIZZFEST



UCB participated as Silver Sponsor at the Rajuk Uttara Model College event "Rajuk Itra Bizzfest 2024" organized by Rajuk College Business Club. The event took place on 14th September 2024 and attracted students from schools and colleges across Dhaka. The students competed for many different prizes in business-related competitions, including Business Cases and Accounting Olympiads. Prof. Hew Gill, President & Provost of UCB attended the closing ceremony as a special guest and was asked to make a speech to the assembled crowd. Prof Hew said how

much he had enjoyed meeting so many of the students and reminded them that, "UCB gives Bangladeshi students direct access to some of the absolute best business degrees in the world at our campus in Gulshan. If you would like to study locally and go global with the London School of Economics, Monash, and the University of Central Lancashire, come to see us soon.." Prof Hew was thanked for his address by the College Principal, Brigadier General A S M Bahauddin and was also presented with a crest for his contribution to the event.

## Events in October

As usual, the UCB Student Club and campus will be very busy with lots of events in October.

»» **Durga Puja Celebration**

»» **University of London – London School of Economics Degrees Start**

»» **Hallowe`en Event**

»» **World Teachers' Day**

»» **World Mental Health Day**

»» **World Food Day**

»» **United Nations Day**

