

With All Good Wishes for Christmas and the New Year

ReConnect makes a huge difference to people's lives. It enables refugees with often unrecognised talent and competence to find a way forward in higher education and teaching. Everyone benefits: the individuals, society, and the education system itself." Professor Tom Schuller, former Dean, Birkbeck, University of London"

UPDATE

ReConnect Preparation for Higher Education Programme at UCL

Our partner University College London (UCL) Institute of Education has continued to deliver ReConnect's Preparation for Higher Education programme since 2018. To date a total of 390 refugees and asylum seekers, 211 females and 179 males, from 39 countries, have been supported on the programme.

Educational Counselling & Credit Transfer Information Services (ECCTIS) / UK ENIC

Since the initiative started, in June 2021, we have supported 316 (143 females and 173 males) refugees and asylum seekers from 28 countries to secure authoritative Statements of Comparability of their overseas qualifications from UK ENIC/ ECCTIS (formerly NARIC), working under the Department of Education. The statement gives refugees and asylum seekers guidance about how their prior learning fits in the UK, enabling them to make an informed decision on their preferred options in higher education.

Pathways into Teaching for Refugees Programme at IOE

Since 2005, In partnership with Birkbeck and UCL the Institute of Education, ReConnect has enabled 59 (33 males, 26 females) unemployed and underemployed refugees, from 20 countries to gain teaching qualifications. We are currently actively seeking to raise the required funds to restore the programme.

Our thanks and appreciation to UCL Institute of Education, for providing four fully funded awards (fees only) Part-time PGCE programme places for those who completed the UCL IOE ReConnect - Preparation for Higher Education Programme for refugees.

An Impact Survey Report of the 59 refugees supported by ReConnect, undertaken by Zhen Yang, a PhD student at University of Warwick can be accessed at:

<https://reconnectonline.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Impact-Report-The-ReConnect-PGCE-Programme-2005-2021-March-2023.pdf>

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SUPPORTING REFUGEES INTO HIGHER EDUCATION



Picture taken at UCL/ ReConnect Refugee Week Event, 16 June 2025

APPEAL for Support by Sarah Buxton Chair of Trustees of ReConnect

2025 has been a year in which the social and political climate has caused anxiety and fear for those seeking safety in our country. ReConnect ends the year with the satisfaction of providing programmes which give new opportunities to people who are reorienting themselves to contribute to a new country. During 2025, ReConnect has enabled 64 refugees and asylum seekers to participate in our 10-week /30-hour Preparation for Higher Education course, developed in 2018 by our partners at UCL Institute of Education. See the comments from two participants and other newsletters on the website.

To continue and hopefully expand what we offer, ReConnect needs the support of both individuals and organisations, in monetary and other ways. We want to extend the educational and employment casework for completers of PHE. (See Newsletter 12). We need funds to continue to provide the service enabling any refugee in the UK to have a Statement of Comparability of their educational documents. We have helped 316 people so far. Overleaf you will find details of how you can contribute as an individual. We are also seeking new Trustees and Volunteers. Do contact me if you have ideas to contribute to strengthening ReConnect. sarahbuxton@reconnectonline.org.uk

A SUCCESS STORY

ReConnect creates opportunities for refugees to realise their potential
Reflection by students who completed the UCL IOE ReConnect - Preparation for Higher Education Programme for refugees:

"I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for all the support, encouragement, and guidance you have given me during the ReConnect Preparation for Higher Education Programme. Your invaluable advice, care, and recommendation letters have made an incredible difference in my academic journey."

"I am delighted to share with you some wonderful news: I was awarded three Sanctuary Scholarships - at Chester University (MSc in FinTech Technology and Business Analytics), Birmingham University (MSc in Business Analytics), and St Andrews University (MSc in Banking and Finance). After careful consideration, I have chosen to pursue my studies at the University of Birmingham, where I will begin my MSc in Business Analytics in September."

"This achievement would not have been possible without your dedicated support and belief in my potential. I feel very fortunate to have been part of the ReConnect programme, and I will always carry with me the lessons and encouragement you provided."

A male refugee from Egypt

Continued to page 2...

SUPPORTING REFUGEES INTO HIGHER EDUCATION/ TEACHING

Established in 2003 **RECONNECT** is a Charity that works with unemployed and underemployed refugees to reconnect them to their professions, especially teaching. We provide guidance and support; liaise with education providers to deliver relevant training including work experience; support transfer of skills to developing countries; and draw attention to forced displacement and education needs.

MAKE DIFFERENCE/ DONATE

- **It costs £ 1,200 to enable a refugee/ asylum Seeker to undertake the ReConnect Preparation for Higher Education Programme. This includes guidance, course fees, and cost of travel.**
- **It costs £ 11,000 to enable a refugee to undertake a teacher training course (PGCE Post Compulsory Education Programme), at UCL Institute of Education. This includes guidance, tuition fees, Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS), and Occupational Health Checks fees, and cost of travel.**

HOW TO SUPPORT US

Choose one of the following:

1. Donate via Just Giving

through the following link:

<https://reconnectonline.org.uk/donate>

2. Write to us

Send us a cheque or CAF voucher (payable to ReConnect)

Charity No. 1105016

to: ReConnect, SPACES Camden, 142 Camden Street
London NW1 9PF, United Kingdom

3. Donate using Gift Aid

Gift Aid is a straightforward way to increase the value of your gift to ReConnect – at no extra cost to you. If you pay tax in the UK, ReConnect can claim an extra 25p for every £1 you donate. For example, if you donate £50, it is worth £62.50 to us.

To donate using Gift Aid we must receive the completed form, which you can find via the following link:

<https://reconnectonline.org.uk/gift-aid> or by emailing/ telephoning: theodros@reconnectonline.org.uk Tel. 020 3038 2648

Continued from page 1

A SUCCESS STORY

"Since completing the PHEP course, I've made great progress in my educational journey. With your support, I was able to understand the UK education system more clearly, and I learned about the university options available to me. The programme gave me the confidence to apply for GCSE courses, and I have now successfully progressed to an Access to Higher Education Diploma in Law, which I'll be starting very soon.

Regarding the challenges I've faced, being an asylum seeker in the UK was initially very isolating and overwhelming. I felt lost and alone. However, the PHEP programme was a turning point for me. It not only supported my travel expenses so I could attend the course, but it also gave me the chance to walk around the UCL campus, which opened my eyes to the academic and social life here in the UK. You also helped me get my educational documents translated for free, which was a massive step in allowing me to move forward with my goals.

Thanks to your support, I was able to identify my level of study, build my confidence, and take practical steps toward university. This programme has truly been a foundational part of my journey, and I'm deeply grateful for everything ReConnect has done for me."

A female refugee from Afghanistan

OUR THANKS

- To all those who have supported us with grants and donations during the year - The Equator Fund, Network for Social Change Charitable Trust (NSCCT), J H Levy Charitable Trust, Margaret Hayman Trust, The Cotton Tree Trust, Inchrye Trust and our many individual donors. With this financial support the Charity has been able to implement its programme.
- To our volunteers, for their dedication in assisting the Charity with their skills and experience.
- To UCL Institute of Education team for their dedicated teaching and pastoral support including for the 'buddying' (mentoring) initiative.
- To Ms. Aine McAllister (Associate Professor) for securing four fully funded awards (fees only) part-time Masters taught programme places from the Department of Culture, Communication and Media (CCM), and another four places from UCL Institute of Education, for participants of ReConnect's Preparation for Higher Education Programme.
- To Mike Butler/ Resource for London, for his continuous committed support to the Charity's fundraising initiatives.

LINKS TO OUR WORK

A promotional film on Reconnect, funded by the Department of Culture, Communication and Media, and Produced by UCL Educational Media, June 2024

<https://mediacentral.ucl.ac.uk/Play/99481>

A Guardian article on refugee teachers

<https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2017/jul/14/the-refugees-rebuilding-their-lives-as-teachers-in-british-schools>

UCL video on preparation for Higher Education Programme

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDi7-kdIuic>

UCL publicity video

<https://youtu.be/6DNZWezOXUU>