

The University of Buckingham

A Brief History

The University of Buckingham was opened in February 1976 as the University College at Buckingham by Thatcher M.P., now Baroness Thatcher of Kesteven, the University's Chancellor Emeritus. A Royal Charter was granted in March, 1983, under which the University College became the University of Buckingham. The University's Chancellor is Sir Martin Jacomb who succeeded Baroness Thatcher in 1998. The University's first chancellor was Lord Hailsham of St.Marylebone, a former Lord High Chancellor of England

The University of Buckingham is unique among British Universities in that it receives no direct financial assistance from the State. Buckingham's founders believed that if universities relied primarily on the State for their funding the quality of their teaching and research would ultimately suffer as direct interference by the State with the processes of administration, recruitment and teaching increased. They also believed that too many graduates left universities after receiving a too narrowly specialised training on the one hand or a training that was insufficiently rigorous on the other. By contrast, Buckingham's emphasis on exposing its students to a broad range of subjects helps to produce graduates whose specialised knowledge of their chosen field of study is complemented by an acquaintance with other areas of scholarship. Another special feature is the four-term year which enables the University to provide as many weeks teaching in two years as other universities provide in three.

Buckingham was a pioneer in widening access to university education. It operates with generous staff-student ratios in an attractive location with a high proportion of students accommodated on campus and on a scale which provides an intimate learning environment offering greater teacher support than is available in most institutions. Whilst students from the British Isles represent the largest single group, the University attracts students from all over the globe, with up to eighty nationalities being represented at any one time.

The University aims to meet the individual needs of students by placing strong emphasis on both educational quality and research achievements.

Buckingham Law School

The Buckingham Law School offers programmes of study leading to the degrees of LLB and LLM, as well as providing support for postgraduate degrees by research. Law may be studied at an undergraduate level either as a single honours degree, or may be studied with languages or politics or as a joint honours degree with business finance and other subjects. These degrees all qualify students for direct admission to the vocational stage of training for practice as a solicitor or barrister in England & Wales, subject to the current regulations of the professional bodies concerned.

Students are admitted to the LLB programmes in January and July each year, and will normally complete their studies in two calendar years. There is also a part-time evening degree programme which admits students in September and various distance learning courses.

The School has a well-balanced mixture of nationalities and age groups which contributes to the Buckingham Law School's enriching environment. Law graduates from the University are to be found throughout the United Kingdom, as well as in the top city firms in London, Brussels and Paris; in Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong. Many have gone on to postgraduate study both at Buckingham and at other universities. As part of the University's policy of maintaining the high quality of the education which it offers, the Buckingham Law School is committed to small group tuition. Tutorial groups normally consist of four to five students, and in the foundation subjects are held weekly. The programme seeks to develop students' intellectual powers by exposure to legal reasoning and at the same time to provide a broad education in the methodology and content of the common law.

Students are admitted to the LLM programme in International and Commercial Law in September and January each year. The programme offers a broad range of optional courses to students who already hold a good first degree in law. Like the LLB, the programme attracts students from a wide range of ages and nationalities, including a number whose first degree is not from a common law jurisdiction. The School also admits students to the degrees of LLM and DPhil by research.

Those wishing to receive further information about Buckingham Law School including the programmes of study which it offers, are invited to contact the Dean, Alistair Alcock, MA (Cantab), MSI (Dip), Barrister.