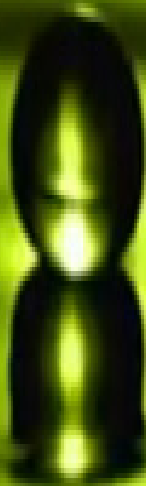




# al-badr

14<sup>th</sup> October 2011

## A Fresh Start



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Written and edited in its entirety by UCL students!

# O you who believe..

## **O you who believe**

The Prophet (SAW) declared,  
 "The World is beautiful and verdant, and verily God, be He exalted, has made you His stewards in it, and He sees how you acquit yourselves."  
 (Saheeh Muslim)

## **O you who believe**

Allah (SWT) has stated:-  
 "It is He who has appointed you as viceroys in the earth." {6:165}  
 Allah has described mankind as His Guardians on earth. It is therefore our responsibility to take care of other creatures and the earth itself. Yet how many of us take these duties seriously as an integral part of our way of life?

## **O you who believe**

The World is where we took our first breath. The World is where we will take our last breath. The World that Allah (SWT) created with great detail in both beauty & perfection -yet we treat this magnificent gift with no care or concern.

## **O you who believe**

As souls who have submitted whole-heartedly to the Most Supreme  
 – we should be foremost in eradicating the unlawful practises that are the root cause of the clear damage of life to other living creatures of Allah (SWT).

## **O you who believe**

This World has been given to us as an Amanah (trust)  
 – this should solidify our perspective to be more attentive towards fulfilling this duty.

## **O you who believe**

Be of benefit to yourself and others, even if the hour was to strike;  
 "If the hour is imminent and anyone of you has a palm shoot (to plant) in his hand and is able to plant it before the hour strikes, then he should do so and he will be rewarded for that action." ~  
 Prophet Muhammed (SAW)

## **O you who believe**

At time of complexity we have been told to still look after this world, so what can we say about our time today –the time of ease?

**Join the GREEN CAMPAIGN** and stamp your seal of contribution!  
 ULUISOC Green Campaign February  
 VISIT [www.uluisoc.com/forum](http://www.uluisoc.com/forum) for more info!

# Editor's Welcome

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful:

We start by greeting you all with the greetings of Firdous Al-Ala', the Peace of Allah, the Almighty upon you.

Blessed is He who sent down the criterion to His servant, that it may be an admonition to all creatures.

Blessed is He Who made constellations in the skies, and placed therein a Lamp and a Moon giving light.

Blessed be He in Whose hands is Dominion; and He over all things hath Power.

Let me take this opportunity to welcome you all not only to the forthcoming academic year but also to the first edition of the UCL Islamic Society Al-Badr newsletter. This year will certainly be different not least because of the departure of several of our dear and beloved brothers and sisters who were eminent ambassadors of the UCL ISoc; and contributed and dedicated so much of their time to create a community which would benefit and meet the needs of the next generation of UCL Muslims. We are here today and are able to enjoy all that the ISoc has to offer because of their struggles and commitment to the cause, which Allah blessed. We thank Allah and thank them for their tireless contribution and we pray that the new generation sheds forth a beacon of enlightened youths' that enhance the unity of the community and base it on justice, kindness and strict adherence to the Sunnah.

For the freshers' joining us I have two pieces of advice which I personally found to be very useful. No. 1 is to make friends with good people. Good people are those who will have your best interests at heart, encourage you to strive in the cause of Allah and all that is good and protect you from giving in to temptation and major sin. No. 2 is to hold tight to the

rope of Allah. You are entering a completely different arena from what you have previously experienced and you will be tested rigorously by Allah with all sorts of temptations coming your way, "Do men think that they will be left alone on saying, "We believe", and that they will not be tested? We did test those before them, and Allah will certainly know those who are true from those who are false." It is crucial that you protect yourself from falling into sin and the key is to establish and be steadfast in prayers and to continuously remember Allah wherever you are and the favour he has bestowed on you, "Men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (With the thought): "Our Lord! Not for naught Hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire."

Finally I mention what you can expect from us. God-willing we intend to deliver a newsletter full of interesting articles that cover a wide range of topics every fortnight. We encourage all Muslims to contribute quality articles on issues that they wish to highlight and share. In the past topics have been highly varied and ranged from Pilgrimage stories, spiritual enlightenment in the Grand Mosque, travel experiences all the way to poems and UCL football league scores. In return we reassure you on our commitment to publish your hard work in our award winning newsletter (UCL union publication of the year 2009 – 2010).

May Allah guide us to enjoin what is good and forbid what is evil.

May Allah guide us to the Straight Path. Ameen.

B.A. Mohidin, H. Javaid

Editors of Al-Badr

# Message 2 D young I's

Asalamualaikum wa rahmatullah wa barakatahu young ones,

Take it from someone who has been at university a long time, inshAllah they will be among the best years of your life. Whatever course you are here to study, you will have a lot of free time. This may mean there are a lot of distractions, but most importantly it means a lot of opportunities. This may range from bettering yourself academically, professionally or spiritually but ask yourself this... Why not all three? As muslims we should push ourselves and those around us to be the best we can, so as not to squander the blessings we have been showered with.

Many say the best times to be had are at university (especially if living away from home) when your optimism is highest and your responsibilities are fewest, but it is crucial that these be focussed into the proper channels. Freshers' Week can seem like a torrent of new faces and while not all of them may become more than acquaintances, always remember that you are part of the same community. Studying at UCL doesn't just mean that you are at one of the finest universities, but also one of the most diverse. I implore you to reach out and spread the civility and grace that Islam requires us to have to all the different people you meet. That doesn't however mean inter-departmental banter can't be creative, a feeling which runs deep in the veins of everyone in the ISoc.

MashAllah you have undoubtedly worked hard to get here, but trust me it gets much tougher (almost makes it worth the fees). We here at the ISoc however are ready to do what we can to help inshAllah. May Allah swt bless you, always.

Stay classy **San Diego.**

# Notes the Por

Crossing the pond doesn't feel like much of an accomplishment anymore. The journey takes six hours instead of six weeks. You go from one English-speaking nation to another. The comforts of H&M and Starbucks are available to you regardless of which coast of the Atlantic you call home.

But, coming from Chicago to London to study for a term, I was still eager to do a little cross-cultural comparison – the historian in me is keen on that sort of thing. I figured the perfect subject for my highly scientific study would be the institution known as the ISoc.

Back in the States, we call them MSAs, or Muslim Students

## “Im at UCL...”

Associations. To some, the MSA is mainly a food source for poor, but not really very poor college kids. Now I haven't been present for enough events at UCL to know quite how things are done here, but in the U.S. the size of the buffet line is directly proportional to an event's success!

# from Across

nd But enough about food; let's get back to bigger things - I mean, "I'm at UCL; all I have time for is studying and eating, not being in the service of others!"

However, in those overdone gags lie sentiments that remain the same regardless of the U.S. /U.K. divide. It is as if we are hard-wired to immediately sense the shortcomings of our student-led organizations, but often too uninspired to do anything about them. In short, we let the pressures of coursework and deadlines and perhaps a bit of our own insecurity prevent us from creating the change we wish to see in the institutions that serve us.

Now I've gone and gotten all serious. But one more thing that I feel never changes, regardless of where we step foot in the world, is the companionship that is possible with others who relate to your worldview.

As Muslim students, we have two things in common with each other at all times – commonalities that are too easy to forget. Studying at a university that touts its multinational student body, take advantage of those two common denominators because it is through them that someone like me can have a meal with a group of people I did not know a week prior in a country I did not know a month ago and laugh, enjoying the company.

When I started this rant out, I planned on unearthing some ground-breaking sociological differences in the structures and relationships of ISocs. The truth, however, is that we're not all that different.

Both the ISoc and MSA have at their heart the desire to provide, protect, and serve as positive public relations for Muslim students in a time when those efforts can be difficult.

Perhaps I'll give my study another try after visiting a country a bit further on the map, but the reality of the situation is that we let the trivial differences counter what should be honest efforts to understand and benefit from the company of our brothers and sisters in Islam. Let us all declare ourselves guilty of this, for I know that I am no exception and that excuses in this world are many.

Maybe if you have the chance to visit or study in a different country by your lonesome you'll come to see more vividly that you don't have to find your ideological twin to get along with people. Often, I find that the differences make relationships more meaningful, better to learn from. As diverse as we are in temperament, studies, and background, don't forget the two – and likely many more – things that we will always have in common as Muslim students.

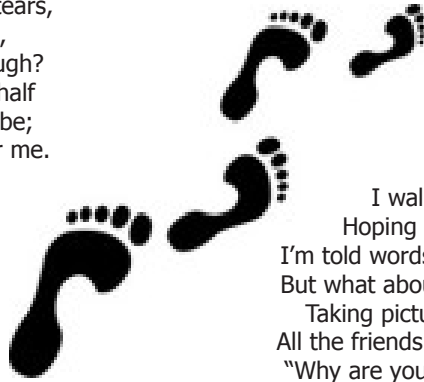
By Nasih Razvi



# Make Me Feel Welcome!

By Inayah Zaheen

I walk down the street,  
Shuffling my feet,  
My eyes streaming with tears,  
My mind full of fears,  
Who'll be the next to laugh?  
My self-esteem is now half  
Half of what it used to be;  
Low for you, but high for me.



I walk into the library  
Hoping they won't hurt me  
I'm told words aren't sticks and stones  
But what about those camera phones?  
Taking pictures, laughing, jeering,  
All the friends in a big crowd, cheering.  
"Why are you so ugly, why are you so  
weird?"  
The kids hate me, just as I feared.

I'm told they're bullies and I shouldn't  
care  
But what should I do when they stop  
and stare?  
When I was their age, they were but a  
cell,  
But that doesn't stop them from making  
my life hell

Why do they laugh at me?  
They don't even know me.  
Why do they judge me?  
They don't understand me.  
Don't tell me I'm welcome,  
Make me feel welcome.

One boy wolf-whistles as I walk past  
 I can't help it – I react fast.  
 I take my hand and reach into my bag  
 "It's because of people like you  
 That I spend every day feeling blue  
 It's because of you I'm prescribed these  
 So stop me from feeling so depressed  
 please!"

"It's not just them – it's everyone,  
 Laughing at me like it's lots of fun –  
 Is it my fault I'm not the same?  
 I may be different, but I'm not to blame.  
 Is it my fault they hate how I look?  
 Just because I'm not like a woman in a  
 book?  
 They say I'm welcome but it's clear I'm  
 not  
 They'd rather just leave me alone to rot.

I burst into tears and run outside  
 It's been so long since I last cried.  
 But now my emotions I no longer hide  
 As the library assistant comes to my  
 side.  
 She hands me a tissue, gives me a hug,  
 "They're just immature and stupid boys;  
 Trying to be stupid and make some  
 noise"

There are a few people who make me feel glad  
 But the majority of the world makes me sad,  
 Yes I'm not like you, you or you,  
 But inside we are exactly the same, it's true.  
 Even those who thought those boys were wrong  
 Still stood by and watched for too long  
 Don't stand by and tell me I'm welcome  
 Make me feel welcome,  
 Make me be welcome.  
 And if you don't think you can make me feel  
 welcome,

## Don't tell me I'm welcome.

# Once Upon A Time...

Starting as a fresher last year, there University College London's campus was the second one we visited; before this we had gone to see RHUL. The third university I had received an unconditional offer from was too far; hence according to my Dad, it was out of the question, so I had to choose between UCL and RHUL (an obvious decision? umm maybe not). As we entered through those notorious black iron gates and gazed upon the massive UCL Portico, my heart sank and I felt this sick nervous feeling in my stomach – not one mixed with excitement, but one more of fear and dread. I looked around to get a better sense of the main Quad and its occupants; the grass was a lovely green, cycles were lined-up near the Engineering Department building and there were students spread out in bright summer colours (the only time you will see so much colour at UCL) on the steps of the Portico, a handful of students were playing and others basked in the warm summer sun stretched out on the luxurious green grass (mind you, SOAS is not as blessed as us). I took in all of this, yet none of it brought a smile to my face. Grudgingly I walked to the main Student Office, and even before we had entered the doors, I had decided that UCL was not for me. By the time we had finished our tour of the campus I had even thought of a good argument to reject the University completely.

Aah, Allah (swt) however had other plans for me. So to cut this part of the story short, I will suffice to say that I prayed Istikhara on my Dad's request and following a series of events and talks with various different people, I found myself well and truly enrolled at UCL. I have to admit the Quran is spot on (not that that needs to be stated!) when it says 'Allah is the Best of planners' (Al-Imran: 54) – this statement could not ring truer – Wallahi UCL kept exceeding my expectations time and time again. I do not once, Alhamdulillah, ever regret studying here.

I felt home sick and 'depressed' for the first month, but thereafter things changed rapidly Alhamdulillah. I started sticking around the prayer

room after salah times and this is where I would bump into the most precious and amazing girls, who I later had the privilege of calling my 'sisters'. These girls were simply fabulous; I say this not because of their polite and friendly demeanour, oh no, I say this because of the beautiful manner in which they took me in as their own, treated me like their own blood sister – and each one of them opened up a whole new world for me. If I was home sick, I knew that the sister who lived right next to UCL would always let me sleep the night over – even if that meant me pushing her off the bed; if I had a deadline to meet, I always had a few around to take any kind of load off me and if I needed a friendly ear or a shoulder to cry on, then there were tons willing to offer theirs.

UCL had become my home within a span of only a year and by the end of my three years, it had irreversibly cemented its place in my heart and will always remain very dear to me. The Islamic Society had slowly but surely become my life and blood on and off campus; I enjoyed everything from the endless emails and meetings to the inspirational events and lectures. But what I loved most was that the ISoc was made up of young individuals just like you and me (subtract 'n' years), yet their concerns were not limited to the opposite sex (I say limited), the latest album, the next deadline, the newest movie or the best restaurants – no – they had far greater concerns: for orphans and other needy children (CW), for the Muslims on campus, for those treated unjustly around the world (Justice Week), for better prayer facilities (Prayer Hut Campaign), and most importantly to struggle and strive to gain the pleasure of Allah (swt). Now don't get me wrong, I'm not saying this was a perfect bunch – oh no! they came with all sorts of imperfections, issues and problems, however, when reminded of Allah (swt) they all tried in their own ways to improve themselves and that my dear reader, is a trait not easily found in many in today's time.

To say that my three years at UCL flew by would be an understatement: before I knew it I was leaving London with a degree in my hand and the memories of London, UCL and everything that came with it, forever etched into the canvas of my life.

Today when I look back, my three-year stint at UCL seems like a dream, like a blur, however, all the milestones that I reached and passed are much clearer and more transparent to me now, a lot more so than when I was actually at University. Today I can point out, to an extent, where I had gone wrong and when I had made the right decision. Why is it so, you ask? Well they say that when man zooms in he turns his attention to the intricate details, while when he zooms out, the details blur but the bigger picture becomes more obvious. The same can be said in my case, when - due to the distance, other experiences and reflection upon my University years - I began to look back at my time at UCL, I saw it in a different light to how I used to perceive it as a student.

Dear reader, taking from all that I have thought and reflected on, I have the following advice to give you: you MUST- and I stress upon this word - make the most of your time here at UCL. Let these 3, 4, 5, or 6 years be the most productive years you have spent so far in your lives. Excel in your academics, but then don't just limit yourselves to the classrooms; be active in the Islamic Society and other societies; meet people; keep good company; interact with staff; develop ideas; tutor; mentor; learn something new everyday and make the Quran your best friend, companion and guide so that at the end of your time at UCL you leave a footprint. A footprint that will ensure that even years later, when no one will know your name or who you are, they will take benefit from the work you have done and the legacy you left behind. Bear in mind, that no matter what you do from all of the above (and more) it should be done to attain the pleasure of Allah (swt) alone, so that, InshaAllah, when you meet your Lord on the Day of Judgment and He asks you 'How did you spend your youth?', you can say 'I spent it in Your worship, O Allah'.

I leave you with the following quote:

'Smooth roads never make good drivers; calm seas never make good sailors, clear skies never make good pilots, a problem free life never makes a strong person, be strong enough to accept the challenges in life. Don't ask life 'Why me?' Instead say: 'With Allah by my side, try me!'

An Ex-ISocer.

**Narrated Ibn 'Umar : Allah's Messenger (saw) said: "A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. So he should not oppress him nor should he hand him over to (his satan or to his self which is inclined to evil). Whoever fulfils the needs of his brother, Allah will fulfil his needs; whoever removes the troubles of his brother, Allah will remove one of his troubles on the Day of Resurrection; and whoever covers up the fault of a Muslim, Allah will cover up his fault on the Day of Resurrection." [Bukhari & Muslim]**

**"And those foremost [in faith] will be foremost [in the Hereafter]. These will be those nearest to Allah [al-Muqarraboon], in the Gardens of Bliss". (56:10-12)**

**Assalaamu Alaykum!**  
WaAlaikum Assalaam

**Welcome to UCL (ISoc)!**  
Thank You...

**How are you liking it here so far?**

Well that's assuming that I like it! No it's actually been surprisingly good. That's not to say it hasn't been daunting and not to mention hard but I was pretty much expecting it. The University's reputation precedes it so that itself brings added pressure. Although when you look at the bigger picture and imagine graduating from such a prestigious University, you come to somewhat accept its grandeur in a slightly vain way if that makes sense. It's been a significant change from my 6th form, more so than I expected.

**Was the transition from College to Uni difficult then?**

Not so much, only in the sense of moving away from home and adjusting to a completely new routine.

**Are you enjoying your course?**

At risk of sounding incredibly geeky, I am thoroughly enjoying my course. Of course, as with all courses I expect, there are some modules I like more than others, but as a whole I do not regret choosing it and so far it has lived up to my expectations, thankfully.

**Have you ever been part of an ISoc before?**

Yes I have, we called it the Muslim Forum at my 6th form. When I started College it wasn't an established society, so myself along with a small group of friends transformed it into THE society to join at College, smashing ALL relevant previous records, including the Charity Week one. By the end of my first year we had a committee, liaisons and the support of members of staff, allocated roles and an agenda for the following year where we did countless fundraising events, produced a bi-annual newsletter as well as bringing in sought after speakers and performers. Saying it was successful would be an understatement, purely judging by the before and after snapshots.

**MashaAllah so humble! ... No that's really wonderful to hear.**

**So your College Muslim Forum was pretty active; what motivated you to start it up/improve it?**

It was just the excitement of starting up something new from scratch. To be completely honest, it started off as needing something for my CV but then it quickly changed from being something we should do to being something we wanted to do and gradually we spent more and more time and effort and set our sights higher than the typical 6th form ISoc. Eventually, we became so well known

# The Fresh

around College for being the people that did the 'cool stuff' and it became an integral component to the College.

**How did you find out about UCLISoc?**

Again through the Muslim Forum at college, a previous student at my College became a member of FOSIS and we got much of the needed information through that avenue.

**Is that why you decided to join UCLISoc? And is there anything specific that you hope to get out of being a part of it?**

Partly. Regardless of the University I ended up at, I would have joined the ISoc due to the amount of fun and sense of achievement I gained from the Muslim Forum at College, however, I was also told that UCLISoc was one of the biggest and best in the UK, which further added to my willingness to join. I wouldn't say there is one specific thing I hope to get out of it, more of an accumulation of things, some of which inevitable, for example making friends and developing lifelong relationships. I just really enjoyed establishing the Muslim Forum -the happiness I feel as I saw it grow from almost nothing, to what we made it, to how is today, is indescribable! It benefited me in all possible ways and I know that being part of UCL ISoc would be the same, only amplified.

# er DIARIES!

**What were your first impressions of the Islamic Society here at UCL? Is it what you expected?**

Yes, it pretty much was what I expected in terms of how it was run and its structure, but the sisterhood/brotherhood was so obvious and I did not expect it to be to that extent, truly inspiring.

**Did you feel welcome?**

Very much so. This is going to sound cliché and I'm sure many have said the same but I truly did feel as if I had known everyone for some time, not for a couple of minutes. It's a bizarre feeling but very comforting at the same time.

**Alhamdulillah!**

**Did you have any misconceptions about the ISoc? Have any of them been proved correct?**

Nope. It's aims and objectives and the way it is run is what I had known and expected...

**What have you enjoyed the most so far about being at Uni and being part of ISoc?**

Contrary to what I had thought, I am actually enjoying the independence the most, I'm living in Halls and aside from the occasional burst of homesickness (this may sound strange) I like the pressure of knowing that everything is riding on my shoulders - ask me that in a few months and I'm sure I'll have a different answer! With regards to the ISoc, there is nothing I

have not enjoyed so far, to put it simply.

**Do you see yourself taking part in the events and activities that the Islamic Society offers?**

YES!!! most of them hopefully...

**Is there anything in particular that you are looking forward to, that you have heard about?**

CHARITY WEEK!! Mainly because of how awesome it was last year so the fact that it is on a much larger scale now is really exciting.

**So I'm guessing you've signed up for baking and manning the stalls etc?**

Definitely!

**Is there anything that you would want the ISoc to do for you as an individual?**

Keep doing what they are doing. The ISoc seems to have been and is incredibly successful and hopefully can only get better.

**InshaAllah**

**Finally...Have you joined any other societies?**

Ohh too many to count, but the main one I was serious about was the ISoc, and I'm not just saying that **because it's you** interviewing me. Before I came to UCL I had already known that I wanted to play as big a role I can in its ISoc.

**Oh! Before I forget, whose**

**gonna win CW this year (inshaAllah)?**

Ummm.....UCL? Come on, that doesn't really need an answer, now does it! We're definitely going to win iA!!!

**JazakiAllah Khair for taking time out for this,**

**Assalaamu Alaykum...**

WaAlaikum Assalaam!

# Just Go Wid

## *D Flow*

Starting as a fresher last year, there was an uncertainty in me regarding my expectations of university life. Different people had different opinions, from people assuring me it would be a relaxed year to others taking a slightly more pessimistic approach giving their farewells expecting

“This year can actually be FUN!”

to never see me again due to an overload of intense work. Having mixed feelings, I decided to go with the flow which led to me to one of the busiest events I have been to, the freshers’ fair. Walking around passing by the ISoc and many different societies made me think to myself, this year can actually be fun. That thought did not last for long though, as before I even knew it I had coursework to do and was behind on lectures. I hadn’t even tried any of the activities the societies had offered! Being part of my ISoc at college, one thing I had planned was to check out the UCL ISoc icebreaker event and I must say it surpassed my expectations. I was quickly introduced to many brothers from all around university and told of exciting events being held by the society. From paintballing to weekly football to talks and camping, I was always left looking forward to the next time I would meet the brothers. Also, filled with challenges, my course was not similar to what I was used to during previous education. However, with the ever going help and support I was given by ISoc brothers, I was never given any room to complain. As a whole, UCL ISoc helped ease my difficulties and make my good times even better!

## Prayer Times

Prayer Schedule October / 2011							
Date	Day	<a href="#">Fajr</a>	<a href="#">Sunrise</a>	<a href="#">Dhuhr</a>	<a href="#">Asr</a>	<a href="#">Maghrib</a>	<a href="#">Isha</a>
11	Tue	5:28	7:16	12:48	3:40	6:17	8:01
12	Wed	5:29	7:18	12:48	3:38	6:15	7:59
13	Thu	5:31	7:20	12:47	3:37	6:13	7:57
14	Fri	5:33	7:22	12:47	3:35	6:11	7:55
15	Sat	5:34	7:23	12:47	3:33	6:09	7:53
16	Sun	5:36	7:25	12:47	3:32	6:06	7:51
17	Mon	5:38	7:27	12:46	3:30	6:04	7:49