

ASU London calling: Students ready for 'once-in-a-lifetime opportunity'

New independent institution offers hands-on learning, global connections and the opportunity to earn bachelor's and master's degrees in 4 years

By Scott Bordow, ASU News
September 10, 2026

Story highlights

ASU London will open this month with 320 students in one of the world's great cities.

Hands-on, project-based learning is a staple, with a focus on engineering and business.

Students can complete a three-year bachelor's degree in London and then pursue an accelerated one-year master's degree at ASU.

As her Scottsdale Chaparral High School classmates slept on the bus, exhausted from the long flight, Shelby Connell stared in awe at the sights of London.

It was mid-June, and Connell was on her senior trip. But as the bus carrying the students lurched through London's streets, Connell's thoughts were not on the high school experience she was leaving behind but on her future — as one of the first students to attend ASU London.

“I was looking out the window, and I was just like, ‘Oh my gosh. This is where I’m going to live,’” Connell said. “It was crazy.”

Connell is one of 320 students who will be studying this fall at [ASU London](#), an independent, U.K.-degree-awarding higher education provider founded by Arizona State University. Students complete a three-year bachelor's degree in London and then pursue an accelerated one-year master's degree at ASU.

It all kicks off with a week of events bringing together students, university leaders, government officials and football fans — from a ribbon cutting to a multi-day hackathon to student design showcases. The week will be capped with the inaugural Union Jack Classic, when ASU Football will face the University of Kansas at iconic Wembley Stadium.

ASU London is located in the heart of the city, at the Clerkenwell campus of City St. George's, University of London.

“What we’re doing with ASU London is we’re launching an experiment in academic innovation,” ASU President [Michael Crow](#) said. “We’re launching an initiative where we can partner with more people in the U.K., an English-speaking country that’s deeply connected with people all over the world.

“We’re also trying to build in more agility for ourselves. You can’t come to the United States? Well, maybe you can go to England.”

ASU London offers six undergraduate degree programs: business management; computer science; electrical and electronic engineering; engineering with artificial intelligence; engineering with mechatronics systems; and global design engineering.

The ability to earn two degrees in as little as four years saves students’ time, reduces tuition costs and provides an international experience across the world’s two leading higher education systems.

“For both American students and international students, the opportunities are similar in the sense that you can get your degrees in a compressed time period if you wish, and you get the opportunity to be in two great different countries and get two great different experiences,” said [Mark Searle](#), ASU University Professor and provost emeritus who has been involved since the initial discussions about ASU London.

Being able to earn both a bachelor's and a master's degree in four years, Crow said, exemplifies ASU's desire to “find that pathway that works best for kids.”

The value of global engagement

ASU London students will be guided by U.K.-based faculty in collaboration with faculty from ASU's top-ranked [Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering](#) and [W. P. Carey School of Business](#). Crow said ASU London fulfills one of the university's [design aspirations](#): engage globally.

“(Students) are going to meet people from literally everywhere in a global financial center and a global business center,” Crow said. “Phoenix is a great city, but it’s a regional capital. It’s not a global capital. London is a global capital.”

“President Crow is always looking to build a bigger platform for the university,” added [Patrick Kenney](#), ASU’s executive vice provost. “And London is a place to do that.”

For Gustavo Alves, a first-year student from Brazil who will major in business management, the decision to enroll at ASU London was easy. It has everything he could want, both personally and professionally.

“The teenager life and the university life are great,” said Alves, 19. “And the professional side, with the job market, with the connections you can make with companies in London, I think it’s a great city to be in.”

[Michael Goodwin](#), managing director of ASU London, said students also will have access to more than 250 of City St. George’s clubs and societies.

“So, effectively, we’re giving them this very small, friendly and supportive community as part of ASU London,” Goodwin said. “But they have access to a much wider, bigger university experience should they choose to take it up.”

Goodwin said the advent of ASU London also comes at a fortuitous time, as immigration policies in the U.S. are changing.

“We need to think collectively about how we help students have flexibility when we’re asking them to make a decision three or four years in advance,” Goodwin said. “I think we’re seeing that the (ASU London) message is landing, that people are definitely excited by the proposition.”

'Professionals in training'

One feature of ASU London will be its hands-on, project-based learning experience. ASU London Executive Dean [Lisa Brodie](#) said students will not sit in a lecture hall listening to “academic speak.” Instead, they will work on projects and work with industry partners such as [Iris Solar Technology](#), which produces off-grid solar power; [Tesco](#), a British multinational grocery and merchandise retailer; and [Grow Dynamics](#), a vertical farming and commercial greenhouse.

“Everything they’re doing is getting them ready for the world of work,” Brodie said. “We think of them as professionals in training.”

One example of ASU London’s project-based learning is the [Living Lab](#). Students identify something in the community that isn’t working and try to develop a solution. For example, students at ASU London’s predecessor, The Engineering & Design Institute London, created interactive software for students with special educational needs.

In addition, ASU London students will work with students from ASU’s Fulton Schools of Engineering on [EPICS: Engineering Projects in Community Service](#).

“They’ll do a project in some way that’s going to improve life, whether that’s for a group of people or the planet,” Brodie said.

Connell, who will pursue a business management degree, was intrigued by the idea of ASU London when she first heard about it from her mom, Mindy, who is an ASU alum.

Mindy said her daughter, 19, wanted to move away from home to go to school because she was “looking for something different.” When Shelby learned about the hands-on learning experience at ASU London, her mind was made up.

“You’re doing what you’re actually going to be doing when you’re in the workforce,” Shelby said. “That checked every box and made me super excited.”

Not long after Shelby enrolled, Mindy started hearing from fellow parents who wanted to know all about ASU London, “because they have kids who are really interested in doing it, too.”

Shelby has no doubt about how it will go. She’ll be living in one of the world’s great cities, doing the kind of learning she loves and working toward two degrees in four years.

“It’s just so amazing,” Shelby said. “It’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.”

Grand opening week

What do chocolate designs, American football and a hackathon have in common? They’re all part of the packed opening week for ASU London.

The Sept. 16 ASU London official grand opening event will bring together university leaders, government officials, industry representatives, faculty, students and partners from the U.K. and U.S. The program will include a ribbon cutting and remarks from ASU President Michael Crow, Sir Malcolm Grant, ASU London students and other special guests.

During opening week, other experiences will include a multiday student hackathon, a student design showcase with Cadbury/Mondelez International, and a window display of ASU FIDM alumni fashion designs at London’s Wolf & Badger. There will be no shortage of ASU sightings in London that week, with units ranging from the Pat Tillman Veterans Center to ASU Health to ASU Gammage hosting events and forming new connections.

And travelers passing through Barbican Station, a London Underground station located near ASU London, will be treated to more than 40 [Changing Futures](#) installations through Sept. 20, highlighting ASU's commitment to creating a world of thriving opportunity for all.

The Sept. 19 [Union Jack Classic](#) brings football fever — the American kind — to London, with tailgate festivities and marching band pep rallies, not to mention the action on the field as the Sun Devils take on the University of Kansas Jayhawks.

Learn more at london.asu.edu, and follow along on ASU News all week as our news team reports in from across the pond.

ASU London coverage

Behind-the-scenes blog: [ASU News reporter Scott Bordow shares some tips and locations he discovers while covering this week's events from London](#)

Wednesday: [Ribbon cutting, panel discussions mark the grand opening](#)

Thursday: [Student designs in chocolate, fashion take center stage](#)

Friday: [ASU London students jump in with a multi-day hackathon](#)

Also Friday: [Event management students visit revered sports venues on study abroad trip](#)

Saturday: [Super fans and festivities at the Union Jack Classic](#)

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



Incoming ASU London first-year business management student Shelby Connell (center) hangs out in the family game room with mom Mindy and dad Matt at their Scottsdale, Arizona, home Aug. 21. Connell is part of the inaugural cohort of ASU London students beginning their studies this month. “It’s a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” she said. Photo by Samantha Chow/Arizona State University

Text image(s)



A Sparky statue in ASU London first-year student Shelby Connell's home in Scottsdale, Arizona.
Photo by Samantha Chow/Arizona State University



The ASU school spirit is strong in the Connell house. Mom Mindy and dad Matt, who earned ASU degrees in journalism in 1997 and economics in 1998, respectively, are self-proclaimed ASU super fans and have been longtime season ticket holders. Shelby was "looking for something different," Mindy said, and when they learned about ASU London, it was a perfect fit. Photo by Samantha Chow/Arizona State University