

# THE UNSEEN UNIVERSITY

*Ankh-Morpork's Premier Institution of Higher (and Arcanum) Learning*

## **A word from the Archchancellor**

A university is not a place you are sent. It is a place you turn up at, and then keep turning up at, until the turning up has changed you. Anyone promising otherwise is selling a certificate. We do not sell certificates. We award degrees, which is different, takes considerably longer, and cannot be done by post.

Luncheon is at one.

## **Why the Unseen University**

It is the oldest school of wizardry on the Disc, founded in 1282 AM (1 UC) by Alberto Malich the Wise, and it is the largest. It has never once burned down permanently.

The buildings hold more corridors and small rooms than the grounds allow, which means there is always somewhere to work and nobody has ever produced a reliable floor plan. The Library connects to every library that has ever existed, and to a number that have not yet been written. The University's own power station keeps Ankh-Morpork lit, which is more than most universities can say about their own campus.

The official motto is *Nunc Id Vides, Nunc Ne Vides*: now you see it, now you don't. The unofficial motto is  $\eta \beta \pi$ , Eta Beta Pi, which is to say Eat A Better Pie. Both are accurate.

## **Faculties and curriculum**

### ***Advanced Thaumaturgy***

The core discipline. Magic is a force with mass, direction and consequence, and it leaves residue. Students learn to recognise it, measure it, and in the

overwhelming majority of cases leave it exactly where it is. The first year is largely spent unlearning the expectation that wizardry is about making things happen.

### ***Theoretical Hex-Engineering***

The University operates a thinking engine. It is called Hex, it works, and the number of people who can say precisely why is smaller than the Faculty would like published. The course covers what Hex does, what it is thought to do, and the gap between those two, which is where the interesting work is.

### ***Applied Metaphysics***

Concerned with the wall between the Disc and the Dungeon Dimensions, and with the Things on the far side of it, which have no particular interest in the Disc except that it is warm and they are not. The practical syllabus is largely about not thinning the wall. Attendance is compulsory.

### ***History of Dubious Magic***

Every technique the University no longer teaches, and the specific afternoon on which it stopped teaching it. Widely regarded by students as the least useful course on offer and by the Faculty as the only one that reliably prevents repetition.

### ***Distinguished Faculty (Mostly Alive)***

The University retains a number of eminent scholars whose contribution continues after a fashion that the Bursar records under Estates rather than

Salaries. Students may consult them. Students are advised to be specific about which century they are asking about.

### ***Librarian-Approved Bibliography***

A reading list maintained by the Librarian, who is an orangutan and would prefer not to be reminded of it. The list is not negotiable. Books removed from the Library without his approval have a documented tendency to return on their own, and to bring company.

### **Degrees**

The usual baccalaureates are Bachelor of Thaumatology (B.Thau), Bachelor of Magic (B.Mgc), Bachelor of Sortilege (B.S.), Bachelor of Magianism (B.Mn.), Bachelor of Divination (B.D.) and Bachelor of Civil Lore (B.C.L.).

The easiest to obtain is the Bachelor of Fluencing (B.F.), which is also the only degree to have reached the Roundworlds. The Faculty considers these facts related.

Bachelor of Amulets and Talismans (B.Am.Ta.), Bachelor of Cabalistic Rites (B.C.R.) and Bachelor of Impractical Necromancy (B.Im.N.) do not lead to a master's degree.

Master's degrees are offered in Thaumatology, Magic, Sortilege, Magianism, Divination and Civil Lore, and give access to the doctorate of the same name. Beyond the usual doctorates the University additionally awards Doctor of Magical Philosophy (D.M.Phil.), Doctor of Morbid Spellbinding (D.M.S.), Doctor of Condensed Metaphysics (D.C.M.) and Doctor of Gramarye (D.G.).

### **Entry requirements**

An aptitude, demonstrated rather than

described. A recommendation from someone the Faculty has heard of. The traditional qualification of being an eighth son of an eighth son remains sufficient and has never been necessary.

Candidates are interviewed. The interview is not difficult and is not the test.

### **Where you will study**

Lectures are held in Room 3b. Room 3b does not exist, under an arrangement mutually understood and respected by Faculty and students alike, and attendance is recorded.

The reading happens in the Library, where nobody will teach you and everything is available.

The practical work happens across the estates, which include a working power company supplying electricity, hot water and the occasional mysterious glow to several hundred thousand people who did not consent to being a teaching aid.

### **Student life**

#### ***The Common Room***

Open to all members of the University. Seating is by seniority, and seniority here is not a matter of age. The fire is kept in.

#### ***Student housing***

Some rooms have windows. Allocation is by seniority, see above. Requests to change rooms are considered annually and granted geologically.

#### ***The Dining Hall***

Four meals a day, plus supper, plus whatever is found in the kitchens after midnight by those who know the route. Second helpings are encouraged. Third helpings are traditional. The Dining Hall

is the only part of the University where the Faculty is reliably present and punctual.

## ***Dormitories***

Shared. Quiet after the second bell. The cat is not University property and may not be removed.

## **The orders**

There are eight orders. Not every student belongs to one and there is no requirement to, which the prospectus mentions because the question is asked at every open day.

Membership of the socially prestigious orders, and of the ones merely considered cool, is by invitation. The onus is on the potential member to demonstrate what they would bring, which is a difficult thing to do without knowing who is watching, and that difficulty is the point.

This follows the organising principle of secret societies everywhere. You do not contact them. They approach you.

## **Fees, board and lodging**

Fees are payable in advance, in coin, and have not risen since 1712. Board and lodging are included, which is what makes the fee arrangement viable and the Bursar anxious.

## **Scholarships**

A limited number are available. Enquire at the Beggars' Guild, who administer the fund, take a percentage, and are entirely straightforward about both.

## **The Bursar's Worry List**

Admissions are handled by the Bursar, who maintains a list. The list is long, the Bursar is thorough, and applications are

processed in the order in which they stop worrying him. Applicants are asked to be patient and not to write twice.

## **Term dates**

Terms begin when the Archchancellor says they have begun. The Ankh-Morpork calendar makes precision here unreasonable, and in any case the Library keeps its own hours and the stacks keep their own centuries.

## **What the University does not offer**

It does not always work with your device. Instruments made for the practice are expensive, and the affordable ones are the ones everybody already knows how to defeat. There is no size that fits all.

There is no instant transportation. There is no shortage of training elsewhere that promises it, built around completing the session rather than being able to do the thing afterwards, and it does not produce knowledge, skill or judgement, which are what resilience is made of.

It is never up to date. Nobody here assumes they know it all, or that what was valid yesterday is valid today. The research carries on all the time, and what gets transferred is whatever makes sense for the context in front of it.

It is offered with love. Paranoia is essential to the work and it has a price: more false alarms, and a physical toll on the people holding it. Humour is the counterweight, because laughing brings oxygen to the brain, and an oxygenated mind is both calmer and far better at learning.

## **After graduation**

The robes issued on matriculation are

complimentary and washable, after a fashion.

Graduates are expected to wear pointy hats, boots with curled points, and velvet robes carrying a quantity of mystic sigil embroidery, sequins and ankhstone, the last being like rhinestone but taken from the river Ankh and therefore a great deal easier to mine.

You are also expected to grow a beard.

## How to apply

Present yourself at the gate. The gate is usually open. If it is not, the wall is lower at the back, which the Faculty knows and has decided not to mention.

Unseen University, Endless Street, Ankh-Morpork.

*The University is not responsible for spontaneous combustion, transmutation, or temporal displacement. Apply within, if you dare.*