⛪ **UCL**

Transforming our Professional Services: Fortnightly Leadership Briefing

What are we trying to achieve?

UCL's commitment to academic excellence means that our professional services - whether in departments, institutes, faculties or central services - must be empowered to support and enable excellence. The TOPS programme aims to improve professional services and deliver: more effective services and a more satisfied UCL community; more fulfilling careers for staff and; enabling greater investment in UCL's academic mission by improving value for money and efficiency in UCL's professional services. TOPS is a two year programme to kick start the delivery of our stated aims.

Priority updates

Thank you to everyone that has contributed to the Design stage so far…
- To date we have run around 50 design events and over 1,100 colleagues have attended these.

Please read the upcoming VP View in The Week@UCL
- The article includes a short video of Professor Anthony Smith explaining the background to TOPS and why UCL must change and improve Professional Services.

We're making great progress with setting up the Communities of Practice pilot areas
- Communities of Practice will encourage greater collaboration across professional services, bringing together colleagues who work in similar practice areas to: share and learn good practice; improve existing processes; develop new ways of doing things and expand opportunities for career development.
- The Student Recruitment community is formally launching on 14th June. If you would like to become a member of the community you can register here.
- For the Internal Communications, Digital and Events Management communities the pilot steering groups have been set-up and workshops are underway.
- A HR community of practice is also now in the pipeline and design discussions with the community sponsor and HR Director Fiona Ryland have begun.
- Ideas for new pilot areas are regularly emerging and Alice Chilver (Head of Communities of Practice) is exploring these. If you have any suggestions, please let Alice know.

Please share your thoughts on the wave 2 service design workstreams
- We have now started design work on a 2nd wave of services and would welcome any early thoughts and suggestions on the following:
  - Information and Technology services
  - Library services
  - Planning, Policy and Management Insight services
  - Legal services
  - Culture services
  - Communications and Marketing services.

Key messages

In previous editions of the Fortnightly Leadership Briefing we have outlined what TOPS *isn't about* in an attempt to help explain what TOPS *is about.* We believe it is important to reinforce this message to help provide clarity on the aims of the TOPS programme.

What TOPS is about…	What TOPS isn't about…
Efficiency - improving our processes and systems so we can deliver our services in different, simpler and more efficient ways	Crude cost cutting
Being clear when and why things need to be done differently and consistently	Uniformity or one size fits all - everything being the same
Process simplification, improvement and clearer accountability	Centralising or decentralising everything
Greater collaboration across colleagues working in similar professional services areas	Encouraging duplication of effort
Recognising, celebrating and replicating where things are done really well	Stating that everything is broken and needs improving
Developing a vision and plan for the future, followed by a phased implementation of changes	Tipping everything upside down and changing everything at once

We are continuing our engagement with each of the staff unions. Going forward, we plan to meet monthly with each of the staff unions.

Feel free to email any suggestions, comments or questions regarding the Fortnightly Leadership Briefings to
tops@ucl.ac.uk

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Fortnightly progress

In the past fortnight, we have…	In the next fortnight, we plan to…
Design phase • Over the past two weeks we have held a number of service design workshops and engagements: ○ UCL Culture (16/05) ○ Finance (17/05) ○ Planning, Data and MI Services (18/05) ○ Student workshop (23/05) ○ Student drop in session (23/05) ○ Information and technology (25/5). • We have also held 2 world café events: ○ Marketing and Communications, covering student recruitment, CRM, digital, events, staff and student communications (23/5) ○ Research Support for academics (24/5). • We ran a question and answer session at the Departmental Administrators forum and facilitated roundtable discussions on career pathways and partnership working (17/05). **Communities of practice** • Ran two half day workshops with 20 staff from across UCL to establish the focus and vision for the Internal Communications Community. • Held the first workshop to start the process of establishing the Digital Community. • Held initial discussions with a group of staff to explore the idea of a community of practice for technicians from across UCL.	**Design phase** • Service leadership teams will be reviewing the ideas submitted to date over the next few weeks and we will aim to provide summaries of the findings on our website. • A further student drop-in session will be held on Wednesday 7th June (15.30 – 17.00 South Cloisters). Please encourage your students to pop in and provide feedback on the emerging proposals. Further can be found details here. • Design sessions will be held for: ○ Communication (31/05) ○ Information technology (1/6). • Online surveys for cluster 2 services are still available on the TOPS website. If you have any further ideas for change please submit here. **Communities of practice** • The final community formation workshops for both the Internal Communications and Digital communities will be conducted and the leaders for these two communities will be appointed. • The student recruitment community is formally launching on 14th June, more details to follow in the week@UCL. • Workshop preparation will continue for the events management community.

Engagement

There is a new section on the website highlighting 'What's new on the web this week?' If you would like us to come talk to you or your team about the TOPS programme please contact us at tops@ucl.ac.uk.

Upcoming engagement events
- In the next fortnight, we are scheduled to attend: Professional Services Leadership Team and Faculty Managers meeting (31/05), UCU meeting (1/06) and Senior Management Team meeting (7/06).
- We are also meeting with each of the Deans of Faculty on a monthly basis.
- John Hogg from the University of Strathclyde will be exploring Transformation Teams and Lean Thinking in Higher Education at the next Lunch and Learn session on 26th June.

Recent engagement events
- We held our third Engagement Group meeting on Monday 22nd May.
- On 23rd May Marc Gray from Imperial College presented at our fourth event in the Lunch & Learn series, giving a very informative talk about transforming professional services at Imperial and their Operational Excellence Programme.
- In the past fortnight, we have also attended; Faculty Managers monthly meeting (17/05), Chemical Engineering team meeting (17/05), Departmental Administrators Forum (17/05), Professional Services Leadership Team and Faculty Managers meeting (23/05), UCL Culture staff meeting (23/05), Social & Historic Sciences Heads of Department meeting (24/05) and Unison meeting (26/5).
- For further detail on the meetings we have attended please see our engagement calendar on our website.

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