



# IT for SLMS Strategy 2017-2020



# Our Journey so far...

UCL's School of Life and Medical Sciences (SLMS) brings together the four UCL Faculties of Life, Brain, Medical and Population Health Sciences. The School aims to draw on its interdisciplinary strengths to become an unrivalled global centre of excellence in research, education and enterprise, particularly by working with local, national and international partners.

IT for SLMS, a part of UCL's Information Services Division (ISD), was conceived in 2013 from the SLMS strategic IT assessment and its formation brought together for the first time centralised IT support across all of the four faculties within SLMS. This new organisation amalgamated the previously merged IT support structure, the Advanced Information Services Centre (AISC) which provided IT support to 3 faculties, and a significant portion of Life Sciences.

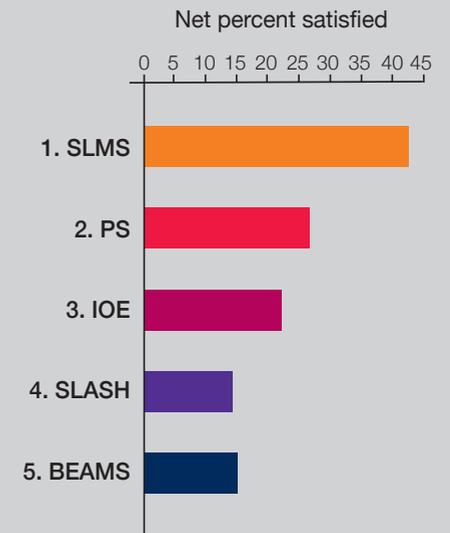
Across IT for SLMS, our IT provision is delivered through adoption of a 'Local but Central' support model. This model has been designed to deliver the best of two worlds by retaining locally responsive faculty-based IT teams coupled with centralised provision of standardised IT services (often referred to as commodity or utility IT) where appropriate.

Since our inception, much of the early work of IT for SLMS has been focused around 5 specific areas of consolidation and standardisation, specifically:

- Deduplication and retirement of redundant services and equipment.
- Development and adoption of new or improved commodity platforms e.g. common desktop and storage (Sync & Share), Data Safe Haven for confidential data storage, a common service desk platform and centralised email provision.
- Promotion, through research facilitation, of ISD's research IT services e.g. research data storage and high performance computing.
- Prioritised improvement to local infrastructure e.g. Audio-visual facilities within teaching spaces, network links and Wi-Fi provision.
- Alignment and standardisation of support, communication and training arrangements across IT teams.

All of these activities and investments over the past 3 years have paid dividends. The recent Cubane Uniform satisfaction survey demonstrated the value of both our support model and highly motivated, customer-focused staff, by demonstrating a significantly higher level of customer satisfaction across SLMS than other schools.

## Net satisfaction\* by school



\*net satisfaction' = (positive - negative)/total responses

## Mission & Vision:

The Mission of IT for SLMS remains to enable the goals of SLMS to be met through the provision of high quality, fit for purpose IT services provided in a flexible and collaborative manner.

Our vision is simple and concise: Delivering excellent IT services to all our customers at all times.

## Strategic Priority areas

Our 3-year strategy (2017-2020) is designed to support UCL2034, specifically the key enabler - Delivering excellent systems and processes in support of UCL's vision. It builds on the successful work already achieved whilst ensuring alignment to wider ISD strategies, ISD's digital masterplan and Professional Services initiatives such as TOPS. The strategy focuses on 7 key strategic priorities which will enable us to meet our mission and vision and in so doing facilitate the strategies of SLMS and its constituent faculties.

These strategic priorities are:

1. Build long-lasting, trusted and value-adding Customer relationships. Understanding their aims and being responsive to their specific research, teaching and operational requirements.
2. Ensure we provide simple, effective, visible and accessible commodity IT services for all our customers across the school.
3. Develop and maintain proficiency of local and central research IT services underpinning our customers' research activities and provide expertise in information governance.
4. Deliver high quality, responsively managed learning space technologies to facilitate excellence in teaching and learning.
5. Prudently manage our finances to ensure we deliver our services as effectively and efficiently as possible whilst maximising investment into continued infrastructure improvements across the school.
6. Continue to recognise our staff as our key strategic assets. Empower them and equip them with the skills and tools to remain at the leading edge of their professions.
7. Facilitate partnerships across and beyond SLMS and provide services to promote and enable these collaborations.



# 1 Effective Customer Relationships

Our customers present with a wide range of IT requirements which vary according to their administration, research and teaching needs. Our aim is to be our customers' IT partner of choice. We develop long-lasting, trusted relationships which enable us to fully understand and anticipate their requirements and facilitate in matching these to equivalent supporting IT services, whether centrally or locally provided.

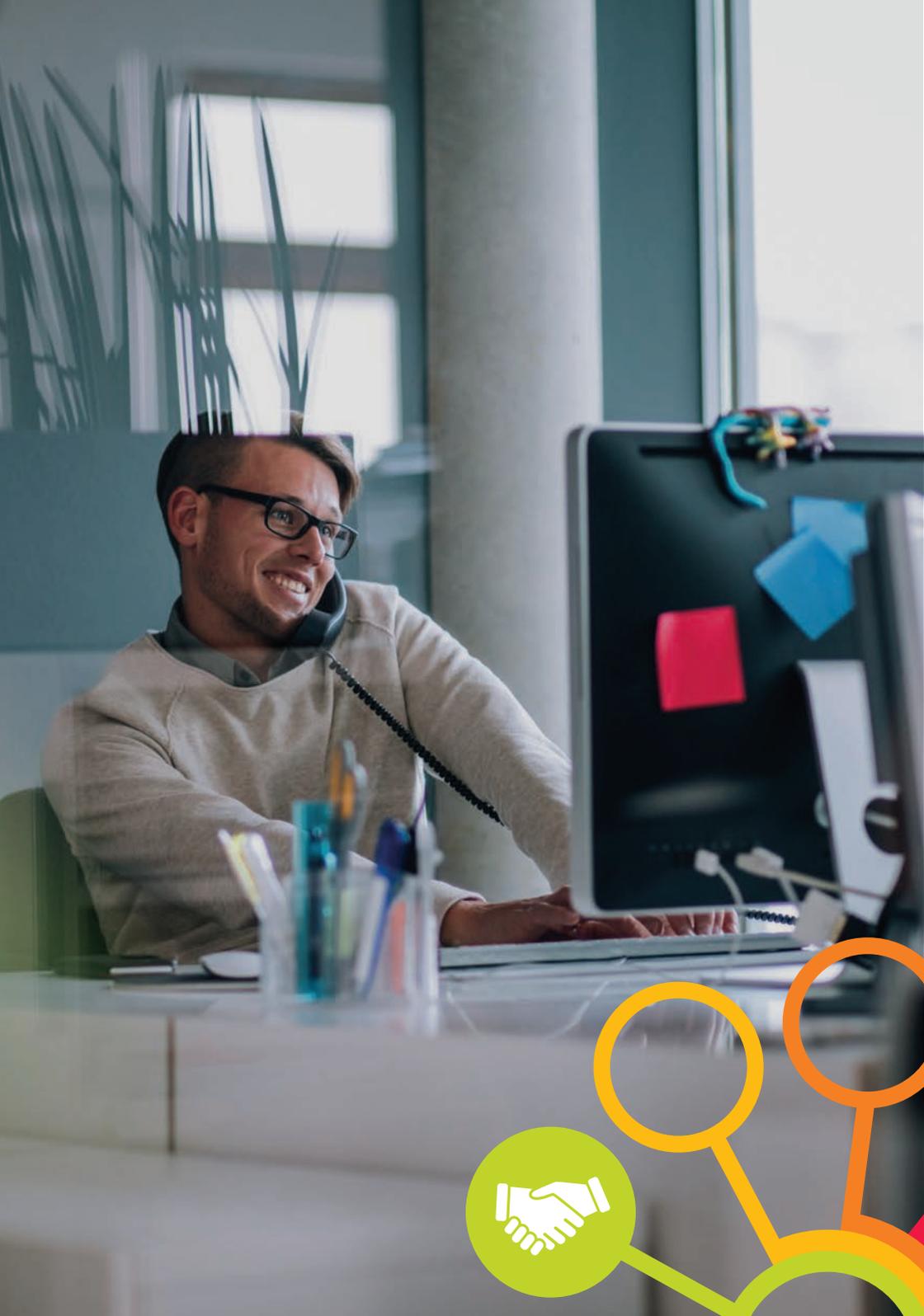
## Did you know...

Our engineers successfully resolved over 34,000 service desk requests in 2016, achieving 97% customer satisfaction.

We will ensure that all customers (including members of academic, research or professional services staff within SLMS faculties) receive the highest levels of responsive, personalised service from their local IT teams. We will facilitate and manage our customer's requests with colleagues across ISD and we will be accountable for the quality of service we deliver.

To facilitate this aim we will:

- Engage with customers to develop new services and to rationalise and improve existing service provision.
- Provide tools to document customer requirements and to facilitate their delivery.
- Communicate clearly with our customers on the "what, when, how and why" of our work.
- Agree service levels with customers that reflect what is important to them.
- Provide regular reporting and timely communication against our service levels, and offer mechanisms to listen to and respond to new requests.
- Maintain visibility of, and accessibility to, our staff.
- Provide customer services training that all our staff, monitor levels of customer feedback and satisfaction and use this to continuously improve our processes.
- Provide improved tools & services to simplify basic customer requests to free up staff time to focus on value-adding activities supporting the IT aspects of research and teaching and learning.
- Provide efficient local team structures which match demand, but which are agile and resilient enough to respond to changing patterns of demand across the school.



## 2 Outstanding Commodity IT Support

Many basic IT services are now perceived as ubiquitous and are expected to be reliable, always available, simple to deliver and easy to use. We will continue to work with our customers to deploy ISD's common shared IT services for desktop management, storage, printing, network provision and wireless service with particular emphasis on deployment to those faculties/groups who continue to rely on locally-based or non-standard services.

Activities within this priority will include:

- Continued capital investment in the upgrade of the network across the School and migration of switch management to the ISD networks team.
- Increase wireless coverage beyond cluster and communal spaces across the SLMS estate, increasing coverage within office areas.
- Ensuring that faculty data is appropriately stored and accessible from centralised systems.
- Continued deployment of Desktop@UCL and harmonising the existing IT for SLMS Sync and Share desktop with Desktop@UCL.
- Promoting future School-wide adoption of Print@UCL as the network copy, print and scan solution of choice.



## 3 Adding Value for Research and Information Governance

One of the key deliverables arising from the formation of IT for SLMS was to enable resources to be redistributed from commodity IT into support for the school's growing research activities. Since 2014 this has resulted in the formation of new posts supporting research facilitation, information governance, e-learning facilitation, information governance training and advisory and, in collaboration with ISD's Research IT support department, support for users of eMedlab.

We will continue to further improve support for research IT through:

- Promoting the continued uptake and use of centralised HPC services (e.g. Legion & Grace) and research data storage across the School.
- Define demand and promote wider adoption and utilisation of UCL's data safe haven service for storage and analysis of sensitive and identifiable research data.
- Ensuring demand for information governance services are understood and appropriately resourced including developing fast-track IG processes for on-boarding to safe haven services.
- Provision of self-help materials to support researchers handling sensitive data.
- Facilitating and supporting School researchers in their use of eMedlab.
- Resourcing a Linux service virtual team, which will provide agile Linux support across the whole School, irrespective of the current skills of local IT staff.
- Encouraging wider team and individual skills development in the support of Linux.
- Identification of further areas of significant research, IT demand and development of support for these within ISD.



## 4 Facilitating Excellence in Teaching and Learning

The President & Provost has recognised the equal importance of education within UCL 2034. To facilitate excellence in the delivery of student teaching, IT for SLMS are committed to providing the best possible IT resources in our teaching and cluster spaces. Over the past 3 years, we have implemented nearly £1M of investment in teaching space technology improvements, improving the experience for the 5,000 U/G students across SLMS. Further investment is still required to bring all faculty spaces up to the common standards being introduced across other centrally-managed teaching spaces and we will continue with an active programme of upgrades over the next 3 years. Additionally, we will introduce new systems which will enable proactive remote monitoring of our AV systems.

Activities will include:

- Improved support for the teaching requirements of the Medical School, especially around start of session.
- Upgrade of AV facilities across SLMS.
- Introduction of new systems to enable proactive monitoring, control and remote management.
- Introduce common standards, improving ease of use.
- Provision of staff training and development for local IT staff on the triage and resolution of AV issues.
- Additional Lecturecast deployment.

## 5 Prudent Financial Management

Within the current financial climate, it is essential that we utilise the budget allocated to IT for SLMS as efficiently and effectively as possible. Focusing investment on areas with the greatest need, developments which address deficiencies to enable faculty strategies to be met or where the return on investment will be the most significant.

We will:

- Involve local IT teams in adopting an annual zero-based budgeting approach to departmental IT operating costs.
- Ensure financial transparency around faculty budgets and strategic decision making for capital infrastructure purchases.
- Encourage the uptake of standard UCL commodity and research services for departments, ensuring departments avoid paying twice for duplicated services wherever possible.
- Influence development of commodity IT services to cater for faculty needs where there is a significant cost benefit.
- Continue decommissioning of remaining legacy systems and hardware.
- Adopt a more agile model of resource allocation against service demand.
- Re-balancing resources from commodity IT support to support more value-adding activities around research, information governance and teaching & learning IT support.



## 6 Valuing and Empowering our Staff

IT for SLMS benefits from a highly engaged and motivated workforce and our aim is to ensure that this ethos is maintained and reinforced. We will ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to develop within their roles, given suitable autonomy with federated access to services to carry out their role in the most effective way and given clear purpose and direction. Managers will appropriately recognise when their staff exceed expectations and encourage through leading by example.



To ensure we maintain our high performing culture and ethos we will:

- Create a working environment that embraces collaboration and knowledge sharing to offer a consistent service across SLMS.
- Provide staff training and development to maintain high levels of skills and customer service.
- Encourage our staff to maintain an active level of engagement with our customers.
- Communicate regularly with our staff and encourage similar behaviour within and across SLMS and ISD.
- Listen to our staff and use this knowledge to shape management decisions.
- Ensure funding for staff training and development remains ring-fenced and that staff development needs are explored via regular staff appraisals.
- Federate IT responsibilities for central services to local IT teams where possible.

## 7 Collaborating with our Partners

The School has explicitly identified the need for continued partnerships and collaborations, interdisciplinary working and closer working with key clinical partners as essential to the delivery of its faculty strategic priorities.

IT has a significant role to play in enabling and facilitating these interactions, so we will:

- Maintain and build on our collaborations with existing NHS trust IT partners including UCLH, GOSH, Royal Free Hospital, National Hospital for Neurology & Neurosurgery, Royal National Throat, Nose and Ear Hospital, Moorfields Eye Hospital and Eastman Dental Hospital.
- Develop and maintain relationships with key strategic external partners and funders e.g. MRC, NHS Digital and other key and emergent stakeholders.
- Develop distributed authentication systems and other collaborative technologies to facilitate an agile and customer responsive collaboration environment that enables researchers from within and without UCL to work together seamlessly.
- Explore collaborative technological opportunities for new shared facilities e.g. Zayad Centre for Research into Rare Disease in Children, National Institute for Health Informatics, Francis Crick Institute, Dementia Research Institute etc.
- Maintain engagement and collaborate with faculty IT teams and individuals outside of the IT for SLMS local but central structure and across UCL.
- Develop and maintain other external networks and outreach activities.



## Measuring our Performance

For each of our strategic priorities, we will work to develop a series of key performance indicators that will enable us to continually evaluate and improve the delivery of our services.

## Implementation and Review

The strategy will be annually reviewed to ensure its continued relevance to both the strategies of ISD and the School. It will be owned by, and its effectiveness monitored by, the IT for SLMS senior management team who will develop a series of implementation plans to ensure completion of all strategic activities identified.



## IT for SLMS Senior Management team



**Alan Harper**  
Director, IT for SLMS and Professional Services



**Denise Gordon**  
Head of Faculty IT, Life Sciences



**Andy Heap**  
Head of Faculty IT, Brain Sciences



**Doug Kimber**  
Head of Faculty IT, Medical Sciences



**Tim Machin**  
Head of Faculty IT, Population Health Sciences



**Trevor Peacock**  
Head of Information Governance & Research



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