



A SUMMARY OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED ABOUT THE PROCUREMENT AND PURCHASING SERVICE DESIGN DURING THE TOPS ENGAGEMENT PERIOD (SEPTEMBER-DECEMBER 2017)

THE ENGAGEMENT PERIOD- WHO, WHEN AND WHY?

During the autumn term (2017), we published the [TOPS Emerging Ideas](#) and ran a series of engagement activities to discuss and receive honest and open feedback on these. During this time, the TOPS Programme team carried out **95 engagement sessions** and acquired feedback from other channels, such as online surveys and feedback to the TOPS mailbox. We have now collated **1712 pieces of specific feedback** from across these channels. This feedback relates to the emerging ideas and service designs for the various Professional Service areas, the wider TOPS programme and specific department or faculty implications. All of the feedback received has been systematically recorded.

The engagement of UCL staff and their contributions throughout this feedback process have been invaluable and provided the TOPS Programme Team, Professional Services Leadership Team and Senior Management Team with important insights from the people who engage with our professional services on a daily basis. This has helped us to:

- understand views and perceptions on the TOPS design emerging ideas
- understand the impact these ideas may have on roles, departments or faculties
- improve these designs and develop the wider TOPS implementation plan.

WHAT HAVE WE HEARD ABOUT PROCUREMENT AND PURCHASING SERVICES PROPOSED SERVICE DESIGN?

In addition to the original direct input to the workshop and world café sessions, feedback relating specifically to Procurement and Purchasing Services across the various engagement channels represents **7%** of all feedback received in the autumn term. We have collated and analysed these responses to identify themes that we have heard repeatedly. In the case of Procurement and Purchasing Services these can be categorised into three key themes.

1) There were questions regarding the value of reducing the number of suppliers

UCL colleagues had questions about the potential savings that can be delivered by reducing the number of suppliers. While it is widely acknowledged that UCL have an extraordinarily large pool of suppliers, some feedback outlined that this was perceived as positive as competition drives lower prices.

2) Reducing the list of approved suppliers should be done in consultation with end users

Many UCL colleagues have supported the idea to reduce the list of approved suppliers. However, there are two key considerations they have repeatedly identified in ensuring a smaller pool of suppliers can still deliver the necessary products and services. Firstly, the process of reducing the supplier pool should be done in conjunction with end users to ensure their knowledge is utilised to maintain essential, value for money suppliers and often specialist suppliers. Similarly, academics have made it extremely clear that any reduction in supplier pool should still allow the flexibility to use new suppliers where they are the best or only source of a specialist piece of equipment. One

academic stated 'the role of research is to be ground breaking and often this requires new, specialist equipment that our existing suppliers cannot provide.'

3) Purchasing cards are predominantly well received but the proposed spending limit fluctuates significantly

In the TOPS Programme published service design summaries we asked the UCL community for their views on the reintroduction of purchasing cards and what the potential spending limits could be. There was a variety of feedback regarding the impact of introducing purchasing cards but this was predominantly positive in supporting the idea based on speeding up the process for low cost, ad hoc purchases. In terms of feedback relating to the potential spending limits, this fluctuated significantly with no discernible preference identifiable.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The process of collecting the feedback has been invaluable and contributed significantly to the work of the TOPS Programme team. The feedback has been shared with the Service Leadership Teams for each professional services area. Any decisions for if, how or when the service designs may change will be made by a representative group of colleagues from across the university.

While the formal feedback collection process has now been completed we still welcome any comments you may have about the TOPS Programme and these can be emailed to the TOPS inbox at tops@ucl.ac.uk