

TRANSFORMING OUR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

Working in partnership to redesign
our professional services

Vision and case for change

May 2017

INTRODUCTION

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TOPS will deliver the professional services we will need for 2034 and beyond

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UCL President and Provost
Professor Michael Arthur

The Transforming Our Professional Service (TOPS) Programme provides colleagues from across UCL with a once in a generation opportunity to design effective, efficient and integrated professional services that enable us to achieve our vision of academic excellence and sustain our position as one of the top ten universities in the world.

UCL is a great institution with a proud history and ambitious strategy for the future.

We have been incredibly successful over the past decade. We were ranked first for research power in 2014 and are a global top ten institution across many measures. During this period we have also seen significant change and growth within UCL.

The scale, speed and complexity of the changes UCL has experienced has created strain on our professional services.

As custodians of UCL, we have a responsibility to ensure that it is the best institution it can be with the resources available to us: our predecessors and successors would expect nothing less.

This document sets out why we are undertaking TOPS and our vision. It provides the rationale for the programme and what this may mean for colleagues.

Work has commenced on the design of our professional services and we are aiming to develop a future professional services vision and design by summer 2017. It should be emphasised that this is a relatively high-level design and engagement and detailed design will continue beyond the summer into October 2017.

It is vitally important that we undertake this design activity in partnership with colleagues and stakeholders from across UCL. Over the next few months there will be plenty of opportunities for staff to input their views on what an effective, efficient and integrated professional services should look like.

This document should be considered alongside two others that are available on the TOPS programme website 1) What is an operating model? which describes the features of the future design and 2) What is in and out of scope for TOPS? which sets-out what is within and outside of the scope of this programme.

www.ucl.ac.uk/transforming-our-professional-services.

We have structured this document in five sections:

1

Why we need to transform our professional services

2

The TOPS vision

3

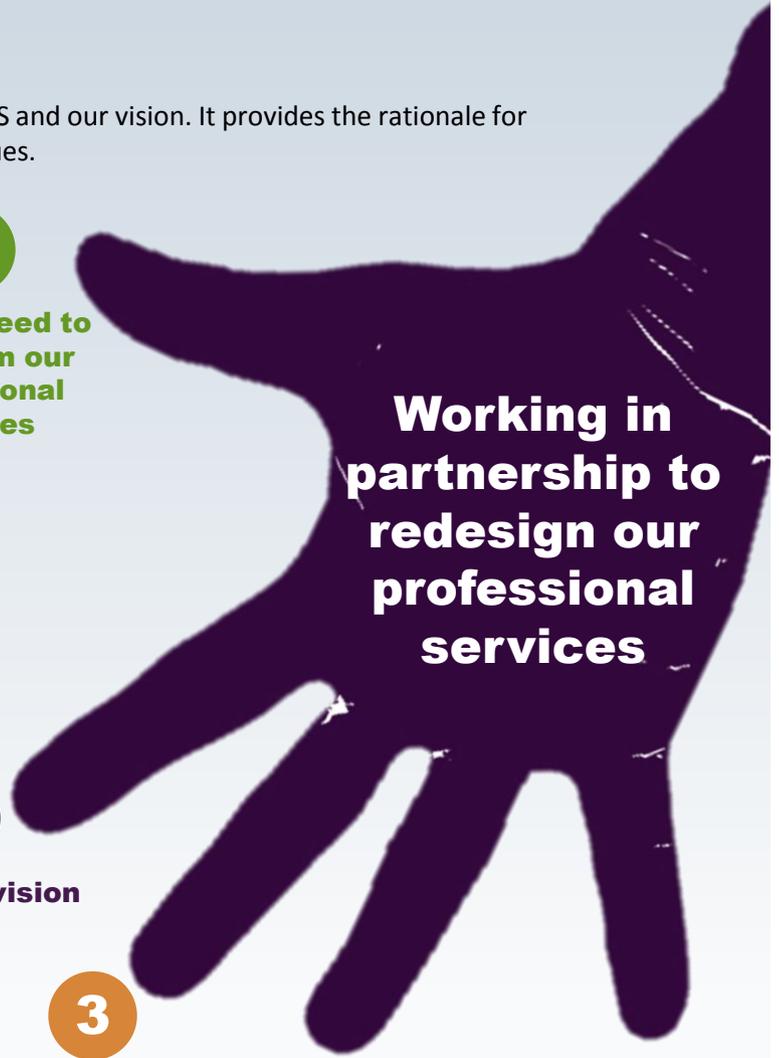
The TOPS objectives and what success looks like

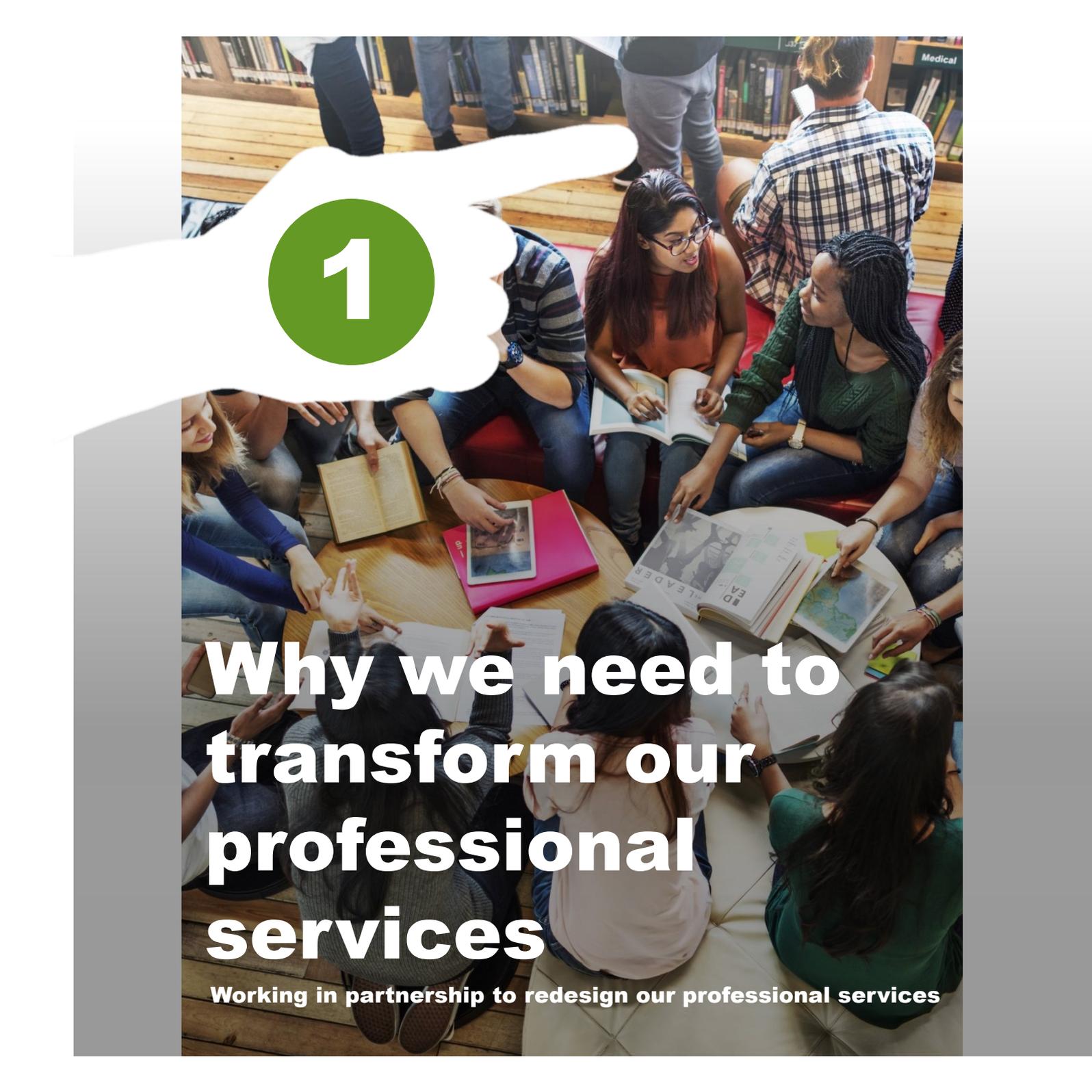
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What will be different for colleagues across UCL

5

How to get involved





1

Why we need to transform our professional services

Working in partnership to redesign our professional services

THERE ARE A FIVE REASONS WHY WE NEED A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF OUR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

1

Deliver our research, teaching, innovation and enterprise ambition

Delivery of our academic mission requires a decisive shift in the way we provide professional services. We need processes and systems that enable our academics, researchers, teachers and professional service colleagues to do what they do best – deliver outstanding research, education, student support, innovation and enterprise. Our professional services must be designed to facilitate UCL's academic mission.

2

Respond effectively to our competition and a rapidly changing external environment

UCL is operating in a highly competitive global market and we want to keep ahead of our competition. In order to facilitate this we need fit for purpose professional services. Furthermore, we are operating in a period of significant uncertainty. We need professional services that can respond flexibly to a wide range of expected and unexpected external changes over the years to come.

3

Retain, grow and develop our professional service colleagues

The opportunities for professional service colleagues to develop personally and professionally in UCL can be limited. The development of our professional service colleagues is critical as all staff have a stake in making UCL a success. We need a model of professional services that facilitate structured career paths and provide staff with the opportunities to personally develop and fulfil their potential.

4

Provide better value for money that can be re-invested in supporting delivery of our academic mission

Significant investments are required to deliver our academic mission. UCL needs a healthy surplus to support this. We must ensure that we get the best value for money from our spend in professional services. People are doing heroic work to get around complexity within our professional services and greater simplicity would reduce all the energy spent on frustrating processes.

5

Improve service satisfaction levels and respond flexibly to changing needs

The level of satisfaction with some of our processes and services is low when compared to our competitors. We want to change this. Needs of our students, academics and professional service colleagues are evolving and we need professional services that are able to meet these.



The TOPS vision

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Our vision is for Professional Service Excellence across UCL

This means...

...effective, efficient and integrated professional services that enables us to achieve our vision of academic excellence, sustains our position as one of the top ten universities in the world and creates an environment in which our staff can personally develop and fulfil their potential

Working in partnership to redesign our professional services

The TOPS objectives and what success looks like

3

The three TOPS objectives

Professional services which provide...

More effective services and a more satisfied UCL community

More fulfilling careers for staff

Enabling greater investment in UCL's academic mission by improving value for money and efficiency in UCL's professional services

- Improvement in satisfaction ratings of professional services functions
- Improvement in student satisfaction ratings for professional services
- Improvement in effectiveness of professional services

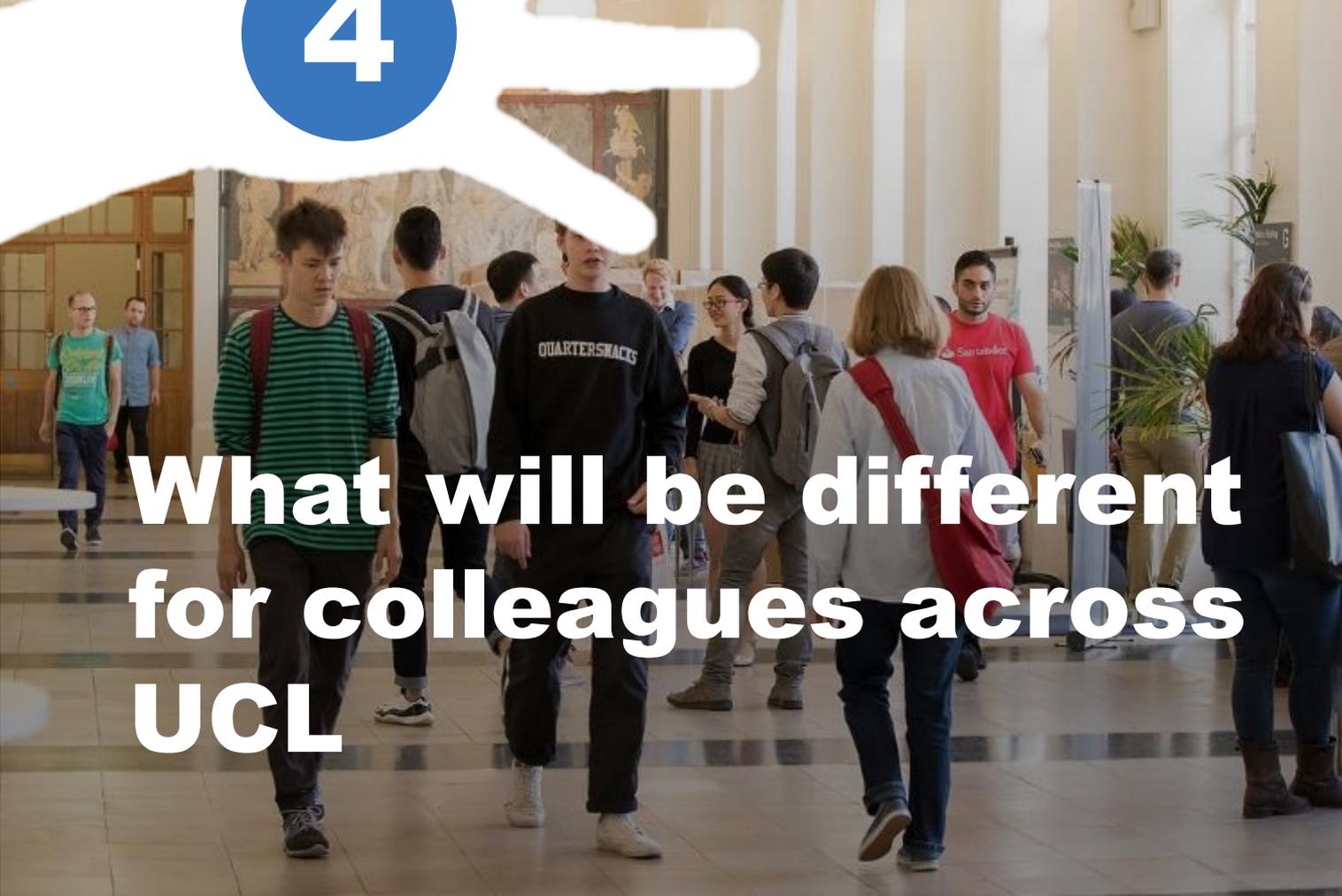
- Improvements in staff satisfaction
- Improvements in career opportunities for staff to help recruit, retain and develop staff
- Improvements in the overall capability of professional services staff to meet the organisational requirements (i.e. have staff with appropriate skill levels in all roles)

- Improvements in the efficiency of professional services
- Enable procurement savings across the organisation

What success looks like



4



**What will be different
for colleagues across
UCL**

Working in partnership to redesign our professional services

How the TOPS Programme will improve the effectiveness of professional services and create a more satisfied UCL community



I'd like to see professional services that support our academics in doing what they do best – delivering world class research and inspiring teaching. We would like to see some processes just work better – timely, easy to use, consistent, supported by the right technology...This would free up the time of colleagues to focus on those services which really need face to face advice and guidance.

Senior academic colleague



- Identify the processes that our academics, students and professional service colleagues want to see changed. TOPS will redesign processes so they eliminate wasted effort and just work
- Identify the new or improved systems / technology we need to support our future professional services and develop the investment case needed to implement them
- Redesign services to transform the student experience – our goal is to ensure every student experience is individualised
- Harmonise practices wherever possible but ensure there is local variation where required. TOPS will not be a 'one size fits all' design
- Central professional services and departmental staff working in an effective partnership – clearer roles and responsibilities, less duplicated effort
- Increase flexibility so faculty and professional service areas can cope with unexpected demand. If someone is ill for a period we want a model which enables cross cover through better collaboration and sharing

How the TOPS Programme will create more fulfilling careers for staff

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I have been in a Department for 12 years. It would have been great if I had the chance to work in different parts of UCL over the past decade – I'd have learned new ways of doing things but also been able to share my own experiences of good and not so good practice in other parts of the College.

Professional service colleague attending a TOPS workshop

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Too often, career progression amongst non-academic staff is seen as unimportant....I'd like to see new opportunities and enhanced line management to better support this.

Institute colleague attending a TOPS workshop

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- TOPS will establish clear and interesting career pathways that staff can follow across the full range of faculty and professional service roles. Across many sectors - e.g. the UK's civil service - there are structured career pathways people can follow and we want to develop similar schemes here
- People are currently doing heroic work to get around complexity within the system. We want greater simplicity so all that energy is redirected into work that provides staff with better job satisfaction and makes a positive difference to our students and academics
- A wider range of professional qualifications available to staff who want to develop professionally
- Opportunity to be part of a Community of Practice – developing networks with colleagues, share best practice and learn new skills
- Through TOPS we also want to define what sort of culture we want. Which parts of our current culture do we want to spread across UCL and what parts do we want to change? e.g. ensure staff are empowered to take the decisions they need to

How the TOPS programme will improve value for money and efficiency in service delivery



Professional services need to talk to each other. I re-enrolled after an interruption and it was the biggest nightmare. Every time there was another form that suddenly needed filling out, I would be sent to (for example) Student Services, who would then tell me I needed to talk to my department, who would then tell me it was definitely Student Services' job, who would tell me that it was actually Fees and Funding I needed. The whole thing was "this is not my job and I can't tell you whose job it is". Which is all very well for them, but kind of rubbish for the student whose education is at stake. Rather than all of these different services just picking up the phone and establishing what really needs to be done and whose job it is.

Student feedback to the TOPS survey



- The TOPS programme will identify the broken processes and redesign them so our professional services just work. Simple processes without multiple sign off
- Ensuring we have the right technology in place to reduce manual workarounds and duplicated effort. Particularly in fundamental areas such as Portico
- Reduce duplicated effort between staff within departments / faculties and the central teams
- Create more opportunities for self service – aligned to the sort of experience people expect in their personal lives (e.g. online banking)
- Right first time information and a 'single source' of the truth. Using management information to help ensure we are delivering our services efficiently
- Underpinned by a culture of continuous process improvement. Always seeking to improve the quality of our services and enhance value for money



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How to get involved

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HOW TO GET INVOLVED – WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR IDEAS

Through to the summer of 2017 the TOPS Programme team will be working with colleagues from across UCL to create a high-level vision and design for future services. You can contribute your ideas in a range of ways which are listed below.

Provide your ideas through a range of engagement events

- We will be hosting a range of workshops, drop-in sessions, Faculty and professional services presentations and world café events.

Provide your ideas through the service leadership teams

- Each service has their own service leadership team made up of the Professional Service Director, a Faculty Manager, representative from the VP office and other key colleagues – the details of which can also be found on the website.
- If you have ideas or want to contribute to the redesign of a particular service get in touch with the team!

Provide your ideas online

- In addition to the face-to-face opportunities, you can also submit your ideas and suggestions online. Please see the relevant service page on the TOPS website. Alternatively, please contact the team directly on tops@ucl.ac.uk

Provide your ideas through TOPS engagement co-ordinators

- We have identified TOPS engagement co-ordinators in each Faculty, Professional Service Department and VP office. The co-ordinator will be a key contact point for you and details of your engagement co-ordinator are also provided online.

Communities of Practice

- Communities of Practice (CoP) will encourage collaboration across professional services, bringing together colleagues who work in similar practice areas. To get involved, or even start a CoP! see the TOPS website.

This initial design phase will be followed by a period of wider engagement across UCL. More details of this will follow in July. For the latest, please visit the TOPS website www.ucl.ac.uk/transforming-our-professional-services.



The student experience World Café event on 9th March 2017



Students contributing their ideas for TOPS at the UCLU Education Conference 25th February 2017

