

## UCL Communities of practice criteria guidelines

Communities of Practice aim to unite professional staff, as practitioners, to be **aligned, engaged and empowered**, contributing to an environment in which staff can achieve more fulfilling careers and which supports the delivery of high quality professional services.

A community of practice (CoP) is a group of people who share a **concern** or a **passion** for something they do and learn how to do it better as **they interact regularly**. CoPs bring together groups of staff across UCL who perform **similar functions** and need to build similar capabilities – regardless of their line management structures. Communities work together with colleagues and share resources to create and **share knowledge about their practice**, support **professional development** and **career pathways**.

### Criteria for identifying staff for a high impact Community of Practice

<p><b>1. Where staff come from</b></p> <p>Different parts of UCL including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Central functions</li><li>• Academic areas including faculties, schools, departments, centers and units</li><li>• Vice-provost offices</li></ul> <p>Staff, working in any part of UCL are invited to participate</p>	<p><b>2. Who staff report to</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff do not report to the same person</li><li>• Different types of line managers from across UCL</li></ul>
<p><b>3. What staff have in common</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff may have many different roles, but they use similar professional skills to perform their role</li><li>• They work with the same group of stakeholders</li><li>• They are reliant on the same services</li><li>• They provide a service to the same type of customers</li></ul>	<p><b>4. Staff members career trajectory</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff may seek to develop similar capabilities</li><li>• Staff may share similar career aspirations</li><li>• Staff share similar transferable skills that they may be seeking to maximise</li></ul>

### There are three defining characteristics of a Community of Practice:

- **Professional identity:** staff share a commitment to the practice area therefore a shared competence that distinguishes them.
- **Learning and development:** In pursuing their interest in their practice area, staff engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build relationships that enable them to learn from each other and build a collective vision of excellence.
- **Shared resources:** staff develop a shared repertoire of resources: (experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems) - a shared practice.