Cover image: Birds of a Feather. Mr Chris Falla, Bartlett School of Architecture

UCL is an extraordinary place, lled with people with a hunger for excellence and strong creative drive. Over the last decade, these qualities have accelerated our rise into the ranks of the very best universities in the world. We consistently demonstrate research power and impact at the highest level and are fortunate to educate students of impressive talent and ambition from around the world. The university's long-term strategy, , has given us a framework for these achievements, and its objectives still resonate for our work. We are enjoying the rewards of our creativity and commitment, and we have the capability to push still further.
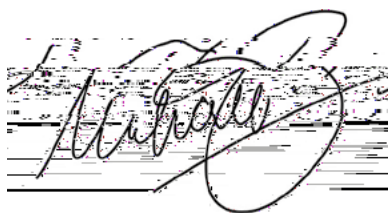
While this is therefore not the time for a signi cant change in direction, after a ten-year period of growth we need to evolve how we work so that we can meet immediate nancial and other challenges and sustain success for the long-term. UCL has been propelled forward by individual and small-group endeavour. Where this has been directed at new academic activity, it has mostly been very fruitful but it has also resulted in new administrative services, systems and processes, and our university has become a maze of complex, fragmented, and often overlapping administration. The consultation has demonstrated how much potential and enthusiasm there is for new academic initiatives at the local level – witness the many projects put forward for consideration for investment – but it has also shown how frustrating and time-consuming many nd it to navigate the complexity of UCL, as well as dissatisfaction with the quality of the physical working environment in some parts of the university.

In this strategic plan, we set out a programme of consolidation. Rather than attempting to de ne or direct the academic life of the university, this plan for institutional-level activity focuses on reworking the structures on which our academic success depends, and which will help staff and students to thrive at UCL. The Strategic Plan sets out plans for investment in our programme of Grand Challenges to enhance our institutional impact, both externally and internally; to ensure transparency in our decision-making, including investment for the future; to drive change in education, simplifying where possible in the interests of staff and students; and to prioritise a comprehensive programme of service improvements to create a high-quality environment for our world-class research and education.

Rethinking our ways of working seemed necessary when we began the consultation process at the start of the 2021-22 academic year. Against a backdrop of rising in ation, nancial uncertainty and geopolitical instability, it is now urgent. Like other organisations facing a period of deep, externally

reforms in a transparent and consultative manner
and establish clear lines of accountability across the
university. In all that we do, we will be seeking to
build connection, bringing people together in shared
endeavour, mutual regard and trust. The outcome
of this strategic plan must be a better working and
learning environment for all.

The discussion, debate and feedback through
this consultation process has been inspiring, and
re ects the views of internal and external members
of the UCL community. The profusion of ideas
coming forward – not only in terms of academic
priorities, but also in what we can and should be in
the future as a globally-leading university rooted in
London, one of the world's great cities – speak not
just to the next ve years but long into the future.
I look forward to continuing the conversation that
we have begun through this consultation process
and drawing on our university's collective creativity
and capability for problem-solving to deliver on the
commitments set out in this plan.

Dr Michael Spence

President & Provost

Our vision and mission were developed as part of   – a 20-year strategy for the university.

This Strategic Plan aims to build on the trajectory established by that process and the framework to which it gave rise. Its development has taken place

Introduction

In   , published in 2014 as a 20-year strategy for the university, we described ourselves as 'London's Global University', with a clear mission to act for the long-term bene t of humanity.

That description is an evolution of our foundational narrative. Since 1826, we have challenged orthodoxy and applied ourselves to making the world better, seeking to serve society through the generation and application of 'useful' knowledge, with a particular focus on leading interdisciplinary discussion and debate. UCL is now one of the world's top universities, with broad disciplinary excellence in research, innovation, education and impact. We operate on a large scale and nevertheless deliver exceptional academic performance: an achievement that has few parallels internationally. We are also a signi cant contributor to London and to the UK, generating close to £10bn of economic impact each year. In all this, we strive to exemplify the strong entrepreneurial spirit and desire for equity and justice that inspired our founding.

We have spent this last year in consultation, considering how to maximise our strengths and address those areas where we need to improve. We are already contributing at the highest level to the resolution of questions of real international signi cance, and the consultation feedback makes clear a collective desire to build this capability further, focusing on areas such as the climate crisis, inequity and mental health. There is strong support for looking again at our education provision, particularly with a view to addressing the pressures of workload reported by staff and students alike; and for a clear and transparent programme of long-term investment in our academic priorities for the future. There is agreement that we need to target improvements in services, systems and processes in key areas such as research services and HR, and to think about how we can leverage these improvements to free up time for research, education and high-level support for the academic mission. There is also agreement that we continue to develop and sustain a culture of transparency and inclusion so that all our staff, students and partners feel respected, supported and enabled to do their best work.

Achieving such aims is never straightforward, but is particularly challenging in this period, with escalating geopolitical and nancial instability and real urgency around actions for sustainability and equity. The UK is experiencing considerable economic shocks in the form of double-digit in ation, energy price increases and supply chain constraints. Our major regulated income streams for both education and research are declining in real terms and our overseas student fee income faces growing risks. We are a large and complex organisation with signi cant operating costs, and we live in a time of increasing global competition. Our strategic plan must therefore deliver on our priorities in a manner that controls our costs effectively now so that we can invest for the future, and that ensures we are spending our money where it can have the most impact, including by ensuring that we can afford to reward our staff competitively.

Over the next ve years, and by 2027, we plan to have:

- ampli ed our ability to coordinate and build upon our research and education strengths, and our own operations, in ve areas of signi cant societal challenge

- streamlined our education offering for the bene t of staff and students, with a new programme architecture and a new structure for the teaching year and reduced the impact of structural complexity on the workloads of our staff

- better coordinated our support for all involved in education

- invested in those administrative functions that make the greatest difference to our institutional success, with demonstrable improvements in the time staff and students spend on administrative and transactional work

- demonstrated clear progress towards an institutional culture of openness and inclusion, including by creating the conditions that enable dif cult, sensitive and important questions to be discussed and navigated collectively

- delivered long-term nancial resilience, with transparent planning for investment in academic areas of promise.

This strategic plan has been developed following extensive consultation, discussion and engagement. Consultation began in October 2021, and we have published seven discussion papers plus the draft Strategic Plan over the past year. These discussion papers have been viewed more than 20,500 times on the consultation SharePoint site and discussed in a series of Town Halls that have been attended, on average, by more than 500 people each time. 538 students actively participated in a series of student-facing consultation events.

More than 470 feedback submissions were received from individuals, departments, faculties, special interest groups, professional staff groups and research domains, representing more than 6,600 people[1].

The success of the strategic plan will be determined by the UCL community. To acknowledge the considerable time and thought invested by UCL colleagues in their responses and to summarise how their feedback has shaped the plan, it has been collated in the Consultation Report.

Feedback submissions and thematic summaries have been shared with the authors of the discussion papers and those involved in drafting the strategic plan itself. Summaries of feedback received on speci c academic proposals, and suggested iterations to the proposals, have been shared with relevant committees to help shape recommendations for inclusion in the Strategic Plan and will inform those projects that are to be fully developed in the course of the delivery period. Suggestions for change or new activity have been

categorised according to whether they related speci cally to the initiatives included in the draft Strategic Plan or to wider continuous improvement activities as part of business-as-usual, so that the appropriate channel for action or response is identi ed.

The year-long period of consultation has unleashed a huge amount of creative energy throughout the university. We will keep the conversation going so this plan remains responsive to a rapidly changing environment, and will pilot new approaches to strategy implementation.

Our Strategic Plan is organised around three key sections, each broadly aligned with the sequence of the papers published throughout the consultation process. First, we set out several academic initiatives, together with plans to focus our resources and time on activities that directly facilitate our future academic excellence in research

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1   Some groups and individuals submitted multiple responses and therefore this number is greater than the number of unique individuals involved.

Third, we have a section on living our values, which sets out actions and aspirations in relation to our culture, values, and behaviours.

Aims are described for each delivery area, and initiatives set out towards achieving those aims over the next ve years. Given the timeframe for the strategy, these initiatives are at various stages of development, with some now ready for immediate action and others planned for launch within the ve-year period. The status of each initiative has been indicated throughout the plan.

A nal section sets out how the plan will be delivered and how progress will be monitored. Ensuring that everyone can track progress and hold delivery teams to account will be important throughout the period covered by the plan.

These centres of excellence are not only crucial partners in our globally leading work in health itself, but will also, like many other external organisations, be crucial to the development of our Grand Challenges agenda.

Following extensive consultation and discussion in our community, ve areas have been selected. They are areas in which we have distinctive academic strengths and in which there is enthusiasm in our academic community for the better coordination of our work. Investing further in working across disciplinary boundaries will augment our academic excellence, empower joint working of academic and professional services colleagues and create a positive impact on the world. The ve areas are:

- Climate crisis

- Mental health and well-being

- Data-empowered societies

- Inequalities

- Intercultural communication

The extended scope of each Grand Challenge will empower networking across not just research but all that we do:

- **Research and knowledge exchange:** Grand Challenges will allow us to channel investment for collaboration, debate and experimentation in departments and faculties into these key interdisciplinary areas of enquiry. A proportion of funds will be set aside, as now, for seed funding, distributed competitively to stimulate emerging areas of research and knowledge exchange.

- **Education:** we will explore the feasibility of an online learning programme relating to the Grand Challenges, including whether this can be provided in non-traditional formats (e.g. modular credits), can be offered in interesting combinations and made available to audiences beyond those already at UCL. We will ensure any new teaching material assets are available to existing students as well as to those enrolling on fully distance learning programmes. We will also seek to create space for some new study opportunities in the Grand Challenges themes throughout our curriculum as part of our review of both our programme architecture and the structure of our academic teaching year.

- **Operations:** each Grand Challenge theme will inform how we operate as an institution and a community, allowing us to draw on our research expertise as we determine how best to respond to questions of equity and sustainability. This

Delivery Area sponsors: Vice-Provost (Research, Innovation, and Global Engagement) and Vice-Provost (Health)

	Year 1	Years 2-5
Ready for implementation	• Recruit academic leads into relevant faculties/departments for the Grand Challenge of Climate crisis and the Grand Challenge of Mental health in 2023	• Recruit academic leads into relevant faculties/departments for Grand Challenges of Data empowered societies, Inequalities, Intercultural communication. • Implement and review Grand Challenge governance structure • Deliver Climate crisis and Mental health projects • Deliver Grand Challenges projects for Data empowered societies, Inequalities, Intercultural communication
Developmental initiatives	• Scope Grand Challenge of Climate crisis and Grand Challenge of Mental health with plan through to 2027 • Design Grand Challenges support and governance structure	• Scope Grand Challenges of Data empowered societies, Inequalities, Intercultural communication and any further Grand Challenges for sequential launch

ii) Planning for the future: education and student experience

The second delivery area focuses on the education that we offer our students and their broader experience. The consultation recognised that we have undoubted strengths and excellent practice across the university, but also that we are not yet consistently meeting the needs and expectations of our students, whether they be undergraduate and postgraduate taught, postgraduate research, exible

by spacing the undergraduate year out more consistently and creating opportunities for our UG and PGT students to engage in for-credit projects outside their departments. The principle of a new structure received support in the consultation

Consequently, our strategic plan for education is

iii) Targeting investment in our academic endeavours

Our third academic priority delivery area targets our resources at those academic and infrastructure projects that deliver the greatest benefits, measured against criteria that have been agreed through consultation and consistently applied. This is vital in an institution which values transparency in decision-making and in ensuring that we have real and genuine accountability at all levels.

It is also important that we have a way of channelling and prioritising investment in a community that has no shortage of ideas and enthusiasm. During the consultation process, the community was asked to put forward their most significant proposals for investment for the next 5–10 years. These proposals were for projects that were beyond the scale of any one faculty, department or service to deliver; by definition, cross-university projects. The scale, breadth and significance of these projects was an impressive reminder of the scale of ambition across the university. At the end of the consultation period, there were 139 projects on the longlist, more than half of which emerged through the consultation process.

The initial candidate list of projects was published in the consultation paper [3]. It included proposals for investment in areas of academic strength with transformational potential, such as:

- detailed planning for the further expansion of our campus at UCL East

- opportunities for interdisciplinary innovation in a number of disciplinary areas, including Mathematics in collaboration with Statistical Science; the continued evolution and transformation of the Slade; and a UCL Computer Science collaboration with the Kings' Cross Knowledge Quarter

- the established of shared, flexible and high-quality general teaching facilities on a central Bloomsbury site in Gower Place

- new facilities for departments including Economics, Anthropology and Archaeology and a new site for Chemistry.

It will not be possible to deliver all of these within our capital programme and our financial context means that large-scale new-build estates and infrastructure projects will not be feasible until at least 2027. This is partly a consequence of financial constraints, but it also reflects a deliberate choice to focus for a period on investment in the infrastructure and working environment of all members of UCL, with a comprehensive strategic maintenance plan (see below), rather than in new buildings for specific disciplines.

However, it is important to begin the process of determining where we will invest for the future, and so, during the 2022–23 academic year, all proposals received through the consultation will be assessed within a new, transparent governance structure and against agreed criteria. This will allow us to decide our main investment priorities and allocation of resources. The new criteria will ensure that student views are represented more clearly in decision-making and that there is appropriate cross-disciplinary input into decisions before they are confirmed. Decisions about targeted investment over the next ten years will therefore start to be clearer from 2023-24. In our planning work, which will be directly aligned with our Estates Strategy, we will learn from the new ways of working that are being implemented at our new UCL East campus.

To support this process of prioritisation, a new Investment Committee (with associated underpinning governance) will be established. In addition, the Vice-President (Strategy) will lead the development of an institution-wide portfolio view of all eligible major projects. The Major Strategic Projects Portfolio (MSPP) will ensure that every major investment has a clear rationale aligned to strategic priorities and business needs, is affordable and achievable, has a clear owner and accountability chain, and will lead to the realisation of benefits.

An overall summary of the initiatives we will take forward in relation to our Targeted Academic Investments is therefore as follows:

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3   https://www.ucl.ac.uk/strategic-plan-2022-27/sites/strategic_plan_2022_27/files/academic_opportunities_for_targeted_investment.pdf

Delivery Area sponsor:
Vice-President (Strategy)

	Year 1	Years 2-5
Ready for implementation	• Set up the Investment Committee of UMC, to meet termly • Set up a new Major Projects Portfolio structure and related processes • Carry out initial assessment of the Targeted Academic Investment proposals to take forward, and provide support for proposals that need further development	• Take forward the rst set of prioritised academic investment projects
Developmental initiatives		• Evolve and regularly review the pipeline of Targeted Academic Investment initiatives • Monitor the delivery of strategic projects, to mitigate and manage risk • Reprioritise projects as appropriate to respond to changin d0 -1cmev deliverl(to r)18Spann

One of the strongest themes in the consultation feedback was the need to invest in improving services and the physical and digital infrastructure. To make this happen, we need to find ways to free up the resource we spend on complexity and duplication and redirect this into simpler, more effective ways of working. Our enabling priorities set out how we plan to approach this task.

They are grouped into three delivery areas:

• a robust financial strategy

• a review of our size and shape

• service improvement.

i) A robust financial strategy

The first of these is the Financial Strategy, which will be set out more fully in a companion document to this plan.

Like many organisations, we are experiencing significant financial headwinds which, without action, will erode our ability to invest our academic aspirations. Our new Financial Strategy articulates how we will meet our financial needs against this

- **Evolution of the financial model:** the existing contribution model will be rebuilt so that there is maximum transparency about how we finance our priorities and so that we can be accountable across the institution for the deployment of resources. This will include the agreement of funding elements for institutional priorities and a planning model that can support decision-making about future affordability and levels of investment over time. As a result, incentives for efficiency and the effective use of resources will be built into the model from the ground up and costs will be apportioned more closely in line with service usage and demand, using activity data as the main driver of allocation. In the long term, these changes will also create a more responsive relationship between central service users and suppliers, by linking activity to cost allocation via robust data; will facilitate greater transparency in our internal financial management; and will support more effective overall cost control by creating incentives for suppliers to bear down on their overall costs.

ii) Size and shape

The university has grown signi cantly in recent years through merger and expansion. However, there is a clear view that we are now reaching the limits of what we can accommodate in our current con guration, not least because investment in critical areas such as the physical teaching estate, our digital infrastructure, student support services and systems and processes that support the student experience has fallen behind the expansion of student numbers. This combination of growth and underinvestment has also impacted on workload, putting additional pressure on staff. The impacts of this have been clearly described in feedback to the consultation.

Tuition fees provide the largest single source of our income, and student numbers are therefore central to our nancial sustainability in the absence of substantial endowments and other signi cant income streams enjoyed by many of our global peers. We need a plan for student numbers that balances academic excellence and nancial sustainability with the demands on academic workload, the quality of the student experience, and our physical and digital resources. We will work closely with the academic community in Faculties and Departments as well as Professional Services across the university to determine the medium-term framework, and will carry out an impact assessment of proposals regarding student numbers for consultation and discussion prior to approval and implementation.

As part of this, a standing Student Number Planning Group will be established, reporting to the relevant university committees and bodies. The membership of this group will be drawn from the senior leadership team, relevant professional services, and the wider academic community. Its remit will be the development, delivery, and ongoing monitoring of policy on student numbers, operating within the framework set by this plan. Detailed proposals on membership and terms of reference will be developed as a priority. As one of the underlying principles of this work, as much student data as possible will be made available as open data, so that all parties have access to common baseline and ongoing monitoring information, drawing on the same trusted source.

In parallel, our student number planning model will continue to evolve and develop, to enable greater sophistication in our forecasting. Feedback received through the consultation process noted that, while the current model represented an advance on how this process has been managed up to now, it could bene t from further re nement: more speci cally, the links to the nancial model could be improved, and the analysis of the resource impact of continued student number growth (for example, on estates, staff workloads, and digital infrastructure) could be further developed. This is work we will take forward.

For the purposes of this Strategic Plan, our discussions have been limited to questions of 'size'. However, consultation has highlighted a very strong desire for us to open a broader conversation about institutional 'shape' and to consider questions such as disciplinary mix and the breadth of our academic teaching portfolio, structures for supporting interdisciplinary working, and our future areas of priority growth. This discussion will be initiated in year one of the plan and work with the community will de ne the parameters for the conversation and its intended outcomes as a rst step.

pedagogy, technology, demand, partnerships, potential audiences (including, for example, lifelong-learners) and business models to scope an online education offering that be ts our position as top ten global university. In the rst instance, we will explore linking our online education provision to our Grand Challenge themes. This work will be undertaken in a partnership between the relevant Education and Research Committees and in full consultation with the community, recognising that we need to move carefully if we

are to expand our presence in the online education market. Longer-term decisions about our place in this emerging market will be informed by our experiences over the next ve years.

A summary of the initiatives we will take forward in relation to the size and shape of our student population is as follows:

Delivery Area sponsor:
Vice-President (Strategy) and Vice-Provost (Faculties)

	Year 1	Years 2-5
Ready for implementation	• Work with the community to develop a medium-term student number plan, including carrying out a detailed impact assessment • Establish a standing Student Number Planning Group, reporting into the relevant university committees and bodies • Re ne and evolve the student number planning model to increase its coverage and sophistication	• Implement an expanded online education offer (depending on outcome of the review in Y1)
Developmental initiatives	• Initiate a review of our academic portfolio and structure ('shape') • Analyse the carbon impact of international student recruitment and develop policies to mitigate	

iii) Service improvement

The third delivery area under this heading brings together enabling activities that will improve the services, processes, systems and infrastructure that support our research, innovation and education activities.

As a highly devolved university, we have become used to nding local workarounds where we consider institutional services have fallen short, rather than working with service leaders on change. Although this approach has been unsatisfactory for some time, it has worked, after a fashion; but it is no longer sustainable at scale, and we cannot afford to replicate workarounds at many different levels across the whole organisation when we need to be careful with resources for a number of years. Additionally, the duplication and perceived lack of ownership for much of what we need to do our jobs well has led to some tensions and a perception that professional services staff do not enjoy the same respect that they might at other universities. This is, in part, because there has not been investment

This approach of creating shared physical spaces will align with our estates masterplan for densifying the Bloomsbury estate and with the UCL East strategy of creating shared spaces, and will require investment in maintenance and updating of the estate condition surrounding these shared platforms. We will pursue relevant commercial partnerships for these platforms to access advanced technology while ensuring that institutional investment in space, people and equipment is ef cient, effective and cost-recovered. Initially the priority will be to increase the quality of our biological services, advanced research computing and genetic sequencing facilities, and during the Strategic Plan 2022-2027 other key science and technology platforms will be introduced to form a 'family' of such supporting and enabling services by the end of the period.

- **Student Experience:** a signi cant programme of administrative rationalisation is planned, to include:

  o substantial changes in our approach to admissions, including the introduction of automated process where possible, to free up admissions staff to work on complex questions and support candidate selection. The proposals will improve the speed with which candidates receive offers and will support improved welcome and induction activities;

  o a new process for module selection that is

Living our values

Finally, we come to an area of focus that is clearly of great signi cance to many at UCL. Community, relationships and dialogue between disparate groups are all vital for the success of a university and for fostering a culture of trust and mutual accountability, which was a strong theme through feedback to the consultation. The contributions we received on this issue make clear that we need to build on our stated commitment to inclusion, belonging and equity with sustained action, and that, if we aspire to inclusion and openness, then we need to ensure that all voices are heard. In addition, feedback from our staff survey urged more open, listening, accountable leadership. A fourth enabler for our strategy, then, is a leadership commitment to a people-led culture and to a renewed focus on equity, inclusion and diversity, as well as steps to amplify the community voice in institutional decisions and a clearer, values-led approach to regulation and policy.

Leadership and support

The right leadership in this area is vital. We will therefore develop the role of the Chief People Of cer so that, in addition to responsibility for making HR work effectively for all staff, they lead on ensuring that people considerations are at the heart of everything we do. We will explore ways of bringing HR and EDI together to work more closely, in order to support our ambitions in this area. We will also review the leadership programmes we run for staff in all roles to provide opportunities for detailed and regular re ection on the implications of our values for their work. Recognising that those dealing with sensitive interpersonal and cultural issues can require impartial support, we will also appoint an independent Staff Mediator to ful l that function. This has been a community priority for several years and this individual will have an important role to play in building our capacity to resolve issues openly and with respect for all involved.

In addition to strengthening leadership capacity, we also want to take steps to amplify staff voice in institutional decision-making, so that we make

effective use of our internal expertise – individually, or through key groups such as Academic Board. To seed that culture, we are committing to more frequent consultation on major institutional decisions, and to providing the frameworks for staff to build networks and connections across the university, whether informally or through participation in working groups and committees. The precedents we have set through the consultation process will inform this drive to continue to talk openly as a community about areas of concern, about strengths and challenges and about our progress on the areas that we have agreed really matter.

A new approach to policy and process alignment

Living up to our values of transparency and openness also means that we need to take steps to make UCL easier to navigate. A new Policy Team in the Of ce of General Counsel will work closely and in partnership with the many specialist policy teams across UCL. The new service will be responsible for managing and maintaining UCL's extensive policy portfolio across the breadth of UCL's activities, implementing a policy lifecycle management plan, developing clear consultation, endorsement and approval processes and supporting consistent development of policy across UCL. They will develop a central policy register to make it easier for staff and students to access the information that they need. Oversight of policy across UCL will help us ensure that our policies are effective, consistent, and aligned with our values and our commitments on equity and inclusion.

Additionally, and in that same spirit, we will initiate a programme of work to ensure consistency and alignment across our disciplinary processes. Evidence from those processes indicates that they are not all currently con gured in line with our institutional values. Some of our most contentious cases can become highly adversarial and intimidating for those raising their concerns; resolution can be slow in others where processes are unnecessarily burdensome. This can take

a heavy toll on those involved and can prevent
us from tackling areas of real concern because
individuals are reluctant to speak out. This will be
a joint project between HR and the Of ce of the
General Counsel.

Freedom of debate on campus

Finally, and crucially, we also want to create space
for constructive debate on controversial questions.
This is vital because UCL is and must remain
a place where principles of academic freedom
are steadfastly upheld. Throughout the strategic
plan period, we will explicitly facilitate collective
consideration of what academic freedom means
in a range of contexts, and how, as a community,
we can respond when academic exploration

Delivery and performance

i) Governance

Clear governance structures will be put in place to ensure effective oversight and delivery of the priorities in this Strategic Plan, and so that we operate in line with our principles of transparency and accountability.

A Strategic Plan Review Group will be established to oversee and coordinate delivery of the initiatives set out in this plan. The Review Group will meet regularly to receive progress reports on the major areas of activity and will set direction in terms of delivery. It will report into UMC and Council. Regular reports on progress against delivery of the Strategic Plan priorities will also be provided to the whole university community.

Effective links will be established between the Strategic Plan Review Group and other components of our strategic delivery framework. These include the Vice-Provost/Vice-President portfolio annual plans, the annual faculty plans, UCL's Major Strategic Projects Portfolio, our Change and Improvement function, and the Estates Portfolio. Collectively, these comprise our overall delivery architecture, allowing us to keep track of our most significant activities and priorities, monitor and report on our progress, and take corrective action where necessary. The framework will be managed efficiently, with maximum co-ordination of resources and systems, and underpinned by consistent and comparable data.

Colleagues are currently experiencing high levels of workload. The pace of change will be managed to ensure it is not placing undue burden on staff, with continuous review of the sequencing, prioritisation, and interdependency of the Strategic Plan initiatives as they are rolled out. This will help improve our delivery confidence as well as ensuring that change is manageable.

ii) Key Performance Indicators

This draft Strategic Plan sets out 59 initiatives to be taken forward over the next five years. The full set of initiatives is set out in the table in Annex 1. The KPIs that will be used to monitor progress against delivery of the plan overall will be developed as the plan progresses, and reported to the relevant groups and bodies as appropriate.

iii) Future engagement

We want to keep this conversation going. We will seek to mobilise this energy in the development of future plans as well as in engagement with delivery of the current plan.

We will also seek to build on the extensive participation and engagement that has underpinned the current strategy development process. If we continue to harness the full range of ideas, energy and innovation that characterises our community, our partners and our stakeholders, we will be in the strongest possible position to succeed, now and in the future.

In some ways, this strategic plan is relatively modest in ambition. That is because UCL is, at its core, an extraordinarily strong institution, with a deep commitment to excellence and a track record of remarkable success.

Ours could, for example, easily be described as one of the   nest universities in health across the world (given the sheer size and quality of our activity in that   eld), were it not also one of the   nest universities in   elds as diverse as education, architecture, and so many others. We are doing well, and it would be a bold strategy that disrupted too fundamentally our core activities in education and research.

The initiatives outlined in this strategy are nevertheless both crucial and urgent; initiatives to invest in our programme of Grand Challenges, to ensure transparency in our decision-making, to develop our educational offerings, and to prioritise a comprehensive programme of service improvements. This is because we face sustained   nancial and organisational challenges that must be met in order to support the extraordinary creativity and academic excellence of our community of students and staff. In that this strategic plan proposes change, it is change to sustain the very best of what we do in our core historic mission.

We remain a place of learning that is committed to excellence in research and teaching, to the discovery of new and useful knowledge, working with our partners around the world. We hold close to our values in all we do, using them as a basis for critiquing eacpwOhisuingpr actnce and any

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Annex 1: Summary of Strategic Plan initiatives

Delivery area	Aim	Initiatives	
Grand Challenges	• Increase our cross-disciplinary research excellence and enhance real-world impact on the major societal challenges selected by our community, through the creation and application of new knowledge.	**Y1**	• Recruit academic leads for the Grand Challenge of Climate crisis and the Grand Challenge of Mental health in 2023 • Scope Grand Challenges of Climate crisis and Grand Challenge of Mental health with plan through to 2027 • Design Grand Challenges governance structure
		Y2	• Recruit academic leads for the Grand Challenge of Intercultural communication and any additional Grand Challenges (to be determined in 2023–24) • Implement and review Grand Challenge governance structure • Deliver Climate crisis and Mental health projects • Deliver Grand Challenges projects for Data empowered societies, Inequalities, Intercultural communication • Scope additional Grand Challenges for sequential launch

Delivery area	Aim	Initiatives	
Planning for the future: education and student experience	• Equip our graduates as leaders and change-makers in an uncertain future; make access to our education easier, more student–centred, easier to navigate, and less bureaucratic for all parties.	**Y1**	• Create a new Institute for HE Development and Support • Deliver the Admissions Transformation Programme • Initiate the Timetabling and medium-term estates projects • Implement the rst year of the new Student Life Strategy jointly with the Students' Union • Design a new Teaching and Assessment Framework • Design a new Programme Architecture • Revisit the structure of the academic year • Prepare a business case for a new Students' Union building and sports facilities for consideration as part of the new investment framework
		Y2 -5	• Implement the new Teaching and Assessment Framework • Implement the new Programme Architecture • Implement changes to the structure of the academic year • Implement the prioritised projects arising from the Student Life strategy

Delivery area	Aim	Initiatives	
Targeting investment in our academic endeavours	• Support our innovative culture in a period of economic challenge by targeting our resources to the academic projects with greatest potential, aligned with our overall strategic priorities.	**Y1**	• Set up the Investment Committee of UMC, to meet termly • Set up a new Major Projects Portfolio structure and related processes • Carry out initial assessment of Targeted Academic Investment proposals to take forward, and provide support for proposals that need further development
		Y2 -5	• Take forward the first set of prioritised academic investment projects • Evolve and regularly review the pipeline of Targeted Academic Investment initiatives • Monitor the delivery of strategic projects, to mitigate and manage risk • Reprioritise projects as appropriate to respond to changing economic circumstances
A robust financial strategy	• Increase our income and manage our costs to strengthen our financial resilience and generate resources to invest in our people, buildings, and priorities	**Y1**	• Agree UCL Financial Strategy to enable delivery of the Strategic Plan • Develop the medium–term Financial Sustainability Plan
		Y2 -5	• Implement the medium-term Financial Sustainability Plan

Delivery area	Aim	Initiatives	
Size and shape	• Manage growth in student numbers to ensure high-quality experience and facilities for all students and manageable workloads for staff, while generating suf cient margin for investment	**Y1**	• Work with the community to develop a medium-term student number plan, including carrying out a detailed impact assessment • Establish a standing Student Number Planning Group, reporting into the relevant university committees and bodies • Re ne and evolve the student number planning model to increase its coverage and sophistication • Initiate a review of our academic portfolio and structure ('shape') • Analyse the carbon impact of international student recruitment, and develop policies to mitigate this in the long term, working jointly with the HE sector • Explore options for maximising investment capacity by: a) increasing space ef ciency; b) increasing unregulated fee levels • Develop the business and operational case for expanding online education
		Y2 -5	• Implement expanded online education offer (depending on outcome of the review in Y1)

Delivery area	Aim	Initiatives	
Service improvement	• •		

Delivery area	Aim	Initiatives	
Living our values	• Build on our commitment to inclusion, belonging and equity with sustained action, to create the space for constructive debate on controversial questions, and to afford greater priority for our community voice in institutional decisions	**Y1**	• Consideration of leadership structures • Develop new Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality Strategy • Update and align existing disciplinary processes • Create a Staff Mediator function • Programme of work on academic freedom
		Y2 -5	• Implement new Inclusion, Diversity, and Equality Strategy • Create new policy team • Comprehensive review of our policies