Our People

Introduction

Our People replaces the Personnel Support and Development Strategy and builds on the significant advancements the University has made since 2008. **Our People** outlines the next step changes required, acknowledging the transformations made since the previous strategy that had focussed heavily on creating effective compliance and performance frameworks and structures, creating

initial staff development programmes and defining academic standards linked to recruitment and promotion activities. In essence **Our People** reflects the current strength and maturity of the University since 2008 and is fully aligned to the Corporate Plan.

The strategy acknowledges and builds on the ten **'Our Commitments'** the University seeks to uphold, which underpins what our approach to higher education is. Fundamental to this is the commitment that *"all our staff, irrespective of their role are committed to and engaged in advancing the high ambitions of our University to be a top quality academic institution that is a distinctive and tangible alternative choice within the sector".*

Our People continues to recognise that all staff have an important role in achieving the objectives of the University's Corporate Plan and are valued as members of its community. Staff are not just a 'resource' to achieve institutional ends, but rather are encouraged to create a real community in which they are fully engaged.

This strategy sets out the critical staffing priorities for the University in the forthcoming two years. Fully engaged staff, with the appropriate skills, attitude, behaviours and professionalism that is required in the increasingly challenging world of higher education is key to ensuring we provide the excellence required over the period of this strategy.

Our People continues to encourage distributed leadership throughout the University and is not simply about the work of the Personnel department. It is aligned to the new devolved School and Departmental structures and seeks to address both local and corporate issues and places ownership of the priorities to those best placed to ensure they are achieved.

Andy Catterall
Director of Personnel

The following commitments of the Personnel department underpin the strategy:

- We will treat all with courtesy and respect and ensure every situation is handled with integrity in a fair, impartial manner;
- We will present credible and innovative options to deal with the variety of challenges that arise;
- We will lead by example within the University by looking outwards and ensuring a collegial approach, underpinned by a student, staff and community focus

Put simply, Personnel is committed to developing and supporting a workplace environment that attracts, develops and retains top quality staff who are fully committed to the aims of our unique and vibrant University.

Our People supports the delivery of our strategic objectives. It is set within the context of the University's academic vision, our distinctiveness, the student experience, the need for fiscal accountability and the rapidly changing internal/external environment we face including the impact that the pandemic has had.

This strategy incorporates the need for all staff to embrace the University's vision and ambitions.

Our People sees a workplace community in which there is:

- A culture of collegiality and respect for each other;
- A positive living and learning environment for our students;
- An ability for required organisational change to be fast, agile, adaptive and responsive, enabling the University to be ready for new opportunities that arise;
- Clear leadership and management at every level;
- A diverse and inclusive environment;
- Co-operative structures that exist to reduce bureaucracy and improve performance;
- More multi-disciplinary teams to take responsibility to ensure things happen;
- A staff base that is supported and enabled to perform their role to the highest standard

All staff should display the following attributes:

- Be fully able to contribute to the achievement of the University's aims;

- Be willing to take on responsibility and leadership at their appropriate levels to help the University achieve its objectives;
- Be student focused;
- Be performance orientated;
- Be fully engaged;
- Be flexible in their approach;
- Act as problem solvers;
- Aim for quality and professionalism in all that they do;
- Take personal responsibility for their learning, development and work performance;
- Act as an ambassador for the University.

There are a number of key strategic aims that cut across the priorities in **Our People** and which impact on the three key strategic themes. These are:

- **Equality and Diversity**
  Equality and Diversity principles are not separately identified in the strategy but are integrated throughout in line with the University's equality frameworks.

- **Culture**
  The University seeks a culture that is collaborative, innovative, inclusive and creative and is underpinned by its organisational values and required staff behaviours and attitudes. We continue to strive for new and better ways of doing things, respecting what has gone before but not being constrained by it. We want a culture in which the entire community is proud of what we do. A culture that understands and underpins the devolved approach and direction that the University is taking.

- **Dealing with Change**
  The management of change will be viewed as a core competence for all leaders and managers. The University needs to consolidate and enhance the quality of previous change initiatives whilst ensuring it has a flexible, agile and adaptive staffing base that allows it to transform quickly and effectively.

- **Promoting Wellbeing**
  Liverpool Hope University is a real community with "a collegiate heart" and over a thousand staff committed to providing a well-rounded education for our all our students. To support this commitment, we need to foster an

environment where every one of us is enabled to feel physically and mentally well. We will continue to develop our "Six Ways to Wellbeing" framework to increase engagement activities that support the wellbeing of our staff and put in place mechanisms to measure their impact.

The Three Strategic Themes

After consultation and careful consideration, the following are the key strategic themes covered under this Plan:

1. Organisational and Staff Planning

2. Developing Staff

3. Professionalism and Excellence

Strategic Theme 1: Organisational and Staff Planning

What the University aspires to achieve

The University recognises the need to meet increasing demands against a backdrop of tighter financial restrictions. A flexible, collaborative and lean organisational structure with limited bureaucracy is required to meet these challenges. This also requires us to ensure we have the right staffing profiles in place to achieve excellence in service. In achieving this aim we hope to support the development of a professional workforce that has the capacity to produce high performing teams, breaks down silos and enhances the student experience whilst growing individual's own employability and job security.

What we need to do

- Support schools and large departments in the creation, ownership and delivery of appropriate staffing initiatives and plans that accurately identify current and future staffing requirements, encourage the professional development of all staff and provide flexible staff and structures to enhance and improve the services provided;
- Ensure we have sustainable roles and structures to support the University's strategic objectives;
- Review recruitment and selection processes to ensure the highest quality applicants apply and are recruited in the most efficient way possible;
- Ensure job descriptions provide the appropriate levels of flexibility required and help support changes and improvements in the services we offer;
- Continue to build an international high quality academic staffing profile with levels of excellence and expertise that have a national and international reputation in the sector;
- Ensure the staff attributes that have been defined, are interwoven into what we do, are communicated clearly and are enabled by structures and policy;
- Review and simplify all personnel policies and procedures to ensure any unrequired bureaucratic elements are removed whilst being clear they add value to the University's activities;
- Improve management information to enable quicker and more effective decision making;
- Fully utilise different technological solutions to reduce bureaucracy and improve communication;
- Continue to work effectively in partnership with the recognised trade unions;
- Ensure staff are positively engaged with the need to change when required to ensure the University meets its strategic and operational aims;
- Anticipate and plan for future workforce requirements both corporately and locally;
- Incorporate the management of equality and diversity into day-to-day activities ensuring its promotion in policies and actions;
- Seek high quality value for money service provision options in conjunction with internal and external partners.

Strategic Theme 2: Developing Staff

What the University aspires to achieve

The University recognises that it is vital to develop its staff to ensure a professional and excellent service. This involves development and training that supports other critical strategies in the University such as the Learning and Teaching and Research Strategies. It also involves developing individual skills to meet local needs and personal development objectives. Development interventions for leaders and managers will be vitally important, whilst the development of enhanced   service and commercial skills will remain a priority and ensure we offer a distinctive offering within the sector. This will require a continued shift in culture and an ability to deal positively with a diverse range of stakeholders.

What we need to do

- Ensure that we have detailed Training Needs Analyses that identify corporate, departmental and individual development requirements that support the strategic objectives of the University;
- Fully support the desired outcomes of the Learning and Teaching strategy at both the corporate and local level;
- Fully support the University's post REF 2020 overall Research Strategy including post graduate supervision;
- Provide a programme of on-going skills training and other development opportunities that underpin the University's commitment to equality and diversity, GDPR, health and safety, IT Training, student satisfaction, management and leadership, dealing with change, commercial awareness and other key corporate development aims;
- To ensure all staff complete required compulsory training relevant to their role.
- To support discrete training for the likes of Ofsted and QAE to ensure external reviews of the University are of a high standard;
- Ensure new staff enrol on a HEA accredited PG Cert Learning and Teaching in HE and become members of the Higher Education Academy and encourage all permanent academic staff to become members as this will be regarded as initial evidence of professional competence in learning;
- Develop a culture of staff taking joint responsibility for their continuous professional development and their individual career plan;
- Develop approaches aimed at encouraging and rewarding excellent/exceptional performance and;
- Developing skills in managing through outcomes, and giving and receiving feedback on performance.

Strategic Theme 3: Professionalism, Engagement and Excellence

What the University aspires to achieve

Professionalism is not an end in itself. It delivers key outcomes including improved services and better value for money. Professional organisations create confidence and trust in their students, staff and other stakeholders, which results in an enhanced reputation for the University as a whole.

The University believes that high levels of professionalism from its staff enables us to be an excellent university. Excellence is built not only on technically skilled staff but also via the structures, culture and engagement of staff coming together as a powerful force.

Professionalism and fully engaged staff resulting in excellence as an outcome has to be built at all levels of the University.

What we need to do

- Identify key behaviours and standards required by our managers and leaders so they can provide clear direction and vision to their teams and effectively cope with change and transition;
- Ensure we have appropriate performance review processes in place that are implemented effectively identifying key corporate and local objectives that ensure excellence;
- Clearly articulate the expectations required of staff and their need to be accountable for the performance of their roles, and take appropriate steps to improve performance and deal with under-performance if it occurs;
- Create professional and corporate services working in partnership with academic staff to provide excellence in all that we offer;
- Create, support and facilitate collaborative cross functional work and groups that can improve service delivery;
- To embody quality service and excellence into all staff activity;
- Develop a variety of staff feedback avenues to provide an employee voice;
- Develop a culture that encourages innovative ideas and approaches to face the challenges that exist;
- Implement initiatives that encourage staff well-being;
- Recognise and respect difference and the value it brings to the University and the service it provides.

Headline Measures

The following key headline measures will be used to assess the overall impact of the strategy. These and further detailed operational measures will be included in the Our People 2020 Staffing Implementation Plan.

- The quality of the staff we attract and retain;
- Staff Development Evaluations;
- HEA Membership;
- Manageable staff cost bases;

- Positive performance assessments of management and leadership effectiveness;
- The extent to which Personnel information is used and trusted throughout the University to enable planning;
- How well equality and diversity is mainstreamed in all University activity;
- The readiness of staff, structures and processes to adapt to change;
- Student and other stakeholder satisfaction improvements;
- Improved staff well-being indicators