

Staff survey: January 2021

Progress and actions

1 Health & Wellbeing

Planning objectives and having regular conversations about your performance is not easy in a remote working environment, but it's important that colleagues have clarity in their role and understand the priorities for them personally, as part of a team and within the wider University context – for many this can contribute positively to your health & wellbeing.

Through [My Contribution](#) therefore, we can demonstrate the University's commitment to ensure that colleagues have meaningful and frequent one to one conversations with their line managers around performance objectives, and agree personal development objectives.

It is encouraging to see that more than 90% of the respondents in the survey have this in place.

3 Leadership & Recognition

It is recognised that managing teams virtually takes a lot more effort and can be extremely challenging. It is reassuring to see from the survey that the majority of our line managers are managing to stay in touch with their teams.

As further support for our line management community, our Learning & Development Team in HR launched the Management Essentials programme last year. Whilst not all managers have been through this yet, feedback so far is very positive.

Leadership plays a key role in creating a good staff experience, and so leadership development will be put at the heart of our People Plan for next year. We'll be announcing details of a new leadership programme in the summer.

Community & Belonging

The experience of working from home is different for everyone. Whilst many have adapted well and feel that the community/team spirit is still strong as ever, we can't ignore the fact that for some isolation is still a challenge, with many citing that they miss the impromptu chats in the corridor or at the water cooler.

There are several ways to stay connected with colleagues, albeit virtually for the time being. We will hopefully be able to meet with colleagues, friends and family outside the confines of our homes in the near future.

In the meantime, we would encourage you to reach out to one another and continue to stay connected by using whatever virtual platforms and activities are most suitable.

5 Communication

University level communications seem to be well-received, but that's not to say we won't continue to seek your feedback on ways in which we can improve.

Locally, your feedback shows that there's work to do to ensure that staff have the opportunity to discuss all staff communications and what they mean for their team - we will review this and look to find solutions to support local management in communicating core university messages.

Ways of Working

While current ways of working have been forced upon us, many of you have told us how this has helped you manage the competing demands of home and working life. Once campus life returns, it's likely that for many staff a combination of campus and remote working will work best but, in the meantime, make sure you make full use of the support that is available.

Home working

To help you work from home comfortably and safe, the staff allowance of £250 is still available to all colleagues – if you've not take advantage of this yet, then you can find out how you can do that through this earlier [communication](#).

Our IS department has been doing everything possible to keep us all up and running by providing the necessary IT equipment and systems support for all colleagues.

There are currently some IT supply constraints, but our IS colleagues will fulfil any IT requests where possible as we have stocks of some items.

You can make your request through our [staff intranet](#).

We are pleased to say however, that the IS department is working hard to ensure that you have the appropriate IT equipment to enable an effective homeworking solution. The supply of University IT equipment has been under review and we will, therefore, be able to share more about this very soon.

Flexible working

In response to the feedback from the December survey, we structured our January survey to focus on the theme of flexible working.

As we start to look ahead to life back on campus, whenever that might be, your input through the latest survey and subsequent focus groups on flexible working will help us shape our approach to flexible working.

With the help of your feedback, the HR Team is now working on options that will review how, when and where we can work in the future. We'll share more about this in the coming months.

Workload

While many of you say you have benefiting from an improved work/life balance as a result of working from home, the lines between home and work can get blurred, which can mean longer working days.

Although this is as a result from the current situation we find ourselves in, workload is a recurring theme in staff surveys. It's a complex issue as it manifests itself differently depending on where you work and the role you have in the University.

The HR Team is taking this forward and, working with SLT, will propose a range of measures to address workload. These will mean changing our working practices in many areas and is likely to require both cultural change and improvements to our key business processes.