COUNCIL

15 JUNE 2015

HR STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

The draft HR Strategy Action Plan was considered by Council on 2 March 2015. Since then further feedback has been received from UCU and some comments incorporated. The wording has also been adjusted slightly to accommodate the likely outcomes of the Raising the Bar Steering Group. Target dates and the initials of those responsible (including PVCs/Registrar) for delivering actions are included.

I would expect that the plan would evolve and be refined as the Raising the Bar group firms up plans and also with the input of a new HR Director. It is helpful however to have a clear plan and target dates in the intervening period. KPIs will need to be reviewed.

The Action Plan is being circulated to Council for information.

Veryan Johnston
Executive Director of HR
27 May 2015

2015/16 – 2016/17 HR Strategy – Draft Action Plan (V13)

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
1. Strategic Objective 1: Be a great place to work with employees committed to the University objectives and valued for their contribution	**1.1 Review the Reward and Recognition strategy to ensure that staff value the existing package and that the employment offer is attractive in an increasingly competitive national and international market to;**	**Complete 2017**	**LEH/REB**
	• Ensure that the employment package is understood and valued by employees through the introduction of specialist benefits communications, such as total rewards statements and a high quality online integrated benefits package. New online voluntary benefits package by end Sep 2015.	**Dec 2016**	**LEH/REB**
	• Deliver the revised Reader role and grade and commence a more holistic review of academic promotions criteria, to further embed parity of esteem for teaching and streamline the process. New criteria by end June 2015. New grade operational from Aug 2015.	**Sept 2016**	**LEH/REB**
	• Review and re-launch the Sabbatical Leave policy in support of the research and innovation strategy and to maintain it in support of high-quality teaching and scholarship. Re- launch January 2016.	**Jan 2016**	**LEH/REB**
	• Review current service-based pay structures with a view to addressing inequalities and shifting emphasis to contributions. Commence review during 2015/16 and seek to implement initial changes from 2016/17.	**August 2017**	**LEH/REB**
	• Further consider options to ensure a sustainable solution for those on the lowest pay grade. Local deal agreed Apr 2015. Review in Apr 2016 and 2017.	**August 2015**	**GC/REB**
	• Review how job evaluation is implemented to consider the introduction of a light touch approach to make the recruitment process quicker and more responsive to business need. Review by end Dec 2015. Implement changes by Apr 2016.	**April 2016**	**LEH/REB**

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
	1.2 The introduction of employee/employer self-service to drive a cultural change • Implementation of an integrated staff portal that will enable staff to take responsibility for ensuring that all their personal data (e.g. teaching qualifications) is kept up to date. This will include data required for statutory reporting e.g. HESA, Home Office, HMRC. • Reporting functionality is refined to provide holistic data for managers e.g. in relation to employee attendance and all forms of employee absence. Commence implementation and rollout 2015-16 completion 2017	**Dec 2017**	**LEH/GC**
	1.3 Conduct a comprehensive Employee Opinion Survey to measure indicators of employee satisfaction and engagement • Provide an evidence base to underpin future University Strategy, policy and practice. • Enable internal and external benchmarking. Survey during May 2016. Roll-out of results by Oct 2016. • Review staff perceptions of their work-life balance and address areas of concern. • To work with the Line Managers and Trade Union representatives to ensure that the levels of satisfaction and engagement are high and to seek to rectify where this is not so by addressing areas of concern.	**Oct 2016**	**LEH/REB**
2. Strategic Objective 2: Improve the profile and performance of	**2.1 The development of post REF HR plans for Faculties and departments**		

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
the University by recruiting and developing high calibre employees with appropriate external recognition	• Improve the quality and impact of workforce planning to ensure that staffing models within Faculties and Professional Support Services identify and address potential risks e.g. in relation to the growth agenda and staff student ratios. Completed by 2016-2017 Faculty HR Plans.	**Sept 2016**	**LEH/GC**
	• Develop academic intelligence methodology to support HoAU in establishing talents pools and ensuring high quality and targeted academic appointments. Pilot 2015.	**Dec 2015**	**VSJ/LEH**
	• Review and implement revised pre-employment engagement of new staff and their families, where appropriate, in support of national and international staff relocation. Review complete by December 2015.	**Jan 2016**	**GC/LEH**
	• Further develop succession planning to ensure that we maximise the impact of existing academics for the next REF e.g. the use of fractional contracts. Review 2015-16.	**Sept 2016**	**GC/LEH**
	• Support Faculty Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Registrar to review organisational effectiveness and efficiency.	**Sept 2016**	**FPVCs/Registrar**
	• Support the implementation of the outcomes of the Raising the Bar Steering Group. Initial Action Plan expected by October 2015.	**July 2016**	**GC/LEH**
	• Ensure the integration of HR Faculty plans within the business planning cycle to ensure that talent management is embedded and recruitment takes place in a timely and effective manner. Review 2015-16.	**Sept 2016**	**LEH/GC/Directors of Faculty Operations**
	2.2 To review the strength of the employer brand in relation to increasing competition to attract the brightest and best;		
	• Increase organisational capability to ensure that every HoAU is enabled to be a head-hunter and all staff are talent spotters. Review 2015-2016.	**Sept 2016**	**VSJ/LEH**

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
	• Effective use of social media within the recruitment process to identify and target specific talent pools. Review 2015-16.	**Sept 2015**	**GC/JJ**
	• High calibre applicants for apprenticeship/graduate schemes to create a talent pipeline for future professional support staff recruitment.	**Sept 2016**	**LEH/LR**
	• Review career pathways and mobility for professional support services. Pilot in SAGE.	**July 2016**	**GC/CA/JG**
	2.3 To support growth and the internationalisation agenda by:		
	• Ensuring that the staffing models reflect the bespoke business need.	**July 2016**	**GC/Directors of Faculty Operations**
	• Recruiting and developing high calibre staff for ventures such as Xiamen and INTO London (July 2015).	**July 2017**	**GC/VSJ**
	• Aid retention by providing appropriate international HR policy framework and support.		**GC/AH**
	• Ongoing review of the international reward and recognition strategy.	**Sept 2017**	**GC/AH**
	2.4 HR Excellence in Research		
	• Delivery of the revised action plan to continue to maintain a sector leading approach to early career academics.	**Dec 2017**	**GC/PVC R&I/Research Deans**
	2.5 Improve the quality of professional practice in learning and teaching by:		
	• Embedding of UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) into HR policies and documentation e.g. recruitment and promotion.	**Jan 2016**	**RS**

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
	• Submission for re-accreditation of UKPSF CPD Scheme.	**March 2016**	**RS**
	• Increase the number of staff with a teaching qualification.	**July 2016**	**RS/RY/PVC L&T**
	• Raising the profile of learning and teaching at Newcastle through improving numbers of Academics holding recognised teaching qualifications.	**July 2017**	**RS/RY/PVC L&T**
	• Review of the staff development provision to increase focus on alternative technologies to address capacity, cost effectiveness and timeliness of service delivery. e.g. CASAP. Review 2015-16.	**Sept 2016**	**LEH/LR/PVC L&T**
	• Distance-learning pilot being carried out with staff in Singapore; to be evaluated March 2016.	**March 2016**	**RY**
	2.6 Implementation of a revised e-recruitment system in 2015 to ensure;	**Full implementation by August 2015**	**GC/JJ**
	• A continually improving candidate experience to ensure that the best possible candidature for posts is achieved. E.g. through the use of social media.		
	• Effective and efficient processes are introduced including automatic screening of ineligible candidates, online shortlisting and appointment processes.		
	• Increased capacity and capability to successfully deliver high volume and strategic recruitment initiatives.		
3. Strategic Objective 3: Develop a high performance culture in which delivery to agreed standards and objectives is the norm.	**3.1 Review the PDR process to ensure;**		
	• Effective use of the process to raise aspirations and improve performance in line with Raising the Bar. Review 2015.	**Sept 2016**	**LEH/JB**
	• Embedding the link with quality outcomes including progression, promotion, and improvements in capability and capacity.	**2017**	**LEH/LH**

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
	• Targeted development activity based upon shared learning needs analysis at unit, Faculty and organisational level.	**Sept 2016**	**LEH/HD**
	• Streamlining processes and e-enabling, including improved use of MyImpact and the Academic Profile summary to evidence PDR. Ongoing.	**Jan 2016**	**LEH/LR**
	3.2 Embed effective performance management through;		
	• The implementation and embedding of the high performance framework and manager toolkit. Implementation September 2015.	**Sept 2016**	**LEH/GC**
	• Leadership and management development to ensure that all leaders and managers have the knowledge and skills to enable high performance including, effective feedback and performance management.	**Sept 2017**	**LEH/LH**
	• Upskilling managers to identify and fast track the most talented staff. Improving succession planning evidenced by the quality and numbers of internal leadership appointments made year on year.	**Jan 2016**	**GC/LH**
	• Increased support for managers in addressing underperformance.	**Sept 2015**	**LEH/GC**
4. Strategic Objective 4: Promote diversity, flexibility and innovation by developing organisational capability and culture.	**4.1 Review and streamline provision in relation to female academic career progression**		
	• To further develop ownership within Faculties of female academic progression ensuring that women are encouraged to access development and leadership opportunities with a view to promotion and succession.	**July 2016**	**LH/FPVCs**
	• To develop a single portal to enable access to information and support structures available to those with caring responsibilities.	**Nov 2016**	**JH**
	• To ensure increased visibility of the composition of corporate governance structures.	**July 2016**	**Registrar**

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
	4.2 To review recruitment and selection strategy to ensure that the principles of equality and diversity are embedded within the process including:		
	• Mandatory equality and diversity training for all chairs of selection panels.	**July 2016**	**SDU**
	• Panels are representative.	**July 2016**	**JH**
	• Improvement in the numbers of staff appointed from under-represented groups.	**July 2017**	**JH**
	4.3 Review activity relating to broader diversity agenda		
	• Identify external schemes with the aim of increasing the percentage of disabled applicants/ staff and enhancing the experience of prospective and existing staff.	**Dec 2015**	**JH**
	• Take action to enhance engagement with LGBT staff and students with a view to working towards inclusion in the Stonewall workplace equality index.	**July 2017**	**JH**
	• ECU on the race/gender equality charter marks to improve race and gender representation within the workforce in general and specific work areas where there is currently under representation.	**July 2017**	**JH**
	• Equal Pay Review in 2015 and resultant action plan.	**Dec 2015**	**REB**
5. Strategic Objective 5: Promote a safe and healthy environment in which staff and students take a proactive approach to their own health, safety and wellbeing	**5.1 To implement the strategic OHSS action plan**		
	• Review and update the University control arrangements for:		
	o Travel and Work Abroad	**Dec 2015**	**AMcK**
	o Fieldwork.	**July 2016**	**RD**
	o Third Parties	**July 2016**	**KW**
	o SEQOHS accreditation	**July 2015**	**JC**
	o Control of Legionella	**July 2015**	**CW**
	o Out of hours work	**July 2015**	**CW**

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
	• Improve accessibility of incident data to managers to facilitate improvements in practice.	**July 2015**	**KW/BMcB**
	5.2 To review our existing internal OH provision in line with the introduction of the DWP (Department of work &Pensions) Fitness to work Service	**Dec 2015**	**BMcB/JC**
	• Ensure that the interface between the two services appears seamless for employees and managers.	**July 2015**	**BMcB/JC**
	• Consider what, if any activity, we can cease to undertake or on which we can improve.		
	5.3 Maintain the Better Health at Work programme. Aim to involve a greater proportion of the workforce in wellbeing activities		
	• Consider how we can enhance the existing offer to further promote health and wellbeing in the workplace and focus on hot spots highlighted by the staff survey including mental wellbeing.	**July 2016**	**LEH/BMcB**
	• Maintain organisational capacity through the reduction of long and short term sickness absence. Revised policy to be introduced by September 2015.	**July 2016**	**GC/CA**
	• To ensure the sustainability of the current offer through the implementation of alternative business models.	**July 2016**	**REB/LEH**
6. Strategic Objective 6: Develop an efficient, effective and sustainable employment environment.	**6.1 Implement scheme changes to USS and RBP ensuring the effective communication of the value of the employer contribution to all staff**	**April 2016**	**LEH/REB**
	• Implement scheme changes to USS and RBP ensuring the effective communication of the value of the employer contribution to all staff.		
	• Revise contract documentation and ensure understanding through communication and online support. Review by September 2015.		

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
	Revise and strengthen the support provided for staff to undertake financial planning for their retirement.		
	• Review RBP to reflect changes in pension's legislation from 2015. Review 2015-16.		**LEH/ED:Finance**
	6.2 Develop HR policy and practice to support international operations		
	• Establish a resourcing model for Xiamen that ensures organisational capability and capacity to deliver the contract.	**March 2016**	**GC/AH**
	• Provide expert support for the redesign of NUIS operations in line with future business developments.	**Dec 2015**	**GC/AH**
	• Provide expert support to enable to continued expansion of NUMed.	**Ongoing**	**GC/AH**
	6.3 Employee /manager self-service that will transform the way in which specific transactional work is undertaken including;	**Dec 2017**	**LEH/GC**
	• Pay slips, access to and revision of personal data.		
	• E-enablement of existing HR policies and processes including managing absence.		
	• Improvement in service delivery of high volume transactional work.		
	• Improvement in management information as reporting is in real time.		
	• 2 Year project subject to agreement.		
	6.4 Review our ability to consider more localised negotiations for specific staff groups		
	• To take into consideration pay and terms and conditions.		

Strategic Objective	Ideas for Actions	Target Date	Responsibility
	• To keep under review the University position in relation to fair pay. • Further development of partnership working with the recognised campus trade unions. **6.5 Consideration of a joint staff/ student mediation scheme to provide an alternative mechanism for dispute resolution to ensure that the service provided is;** • Cost effective and timely. • Focused on solutions based resolution rather than the apportionment of blame. Initial training to be complete Sept 2015.	**July 2016** **July 2017** **Implementation Sept 2015**	**GC/HC** **GC** **LEH/AO**

Veryan Johnston
Executive Director of HR

Louise Edwards-Holland
Deputy Director of HR

20 May 2015