

BANGOR UNIVERSITY

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY 2016 - 2020

1. Introduction

The Human Resources Strategy at Bangor University is designed to underpin the Strategic plan “Building on Success” 2016-2020. This Strategy supports the continued successes of the University to “be the best we can”, providing:

- An excellent education and student experience in which research-informed, student focussed teaching and learning is supported by innovative methods of delivery and assessment, a caring ethos, a strong sense of community and a wealth of extracurricular activities.
- An environment where the research community has the best opportunity to thrive at all levels, supporting the “pinnacles of excellence” and nurturing new areas of research.
- Development of our international reputation and giving students the intercultural expertise demanded in the global economy.
- Continued contribution to the Welsh culture, economy and fostering of the Welsh language.

2. Background

2.1 Universities face challenges on an economic front, international recruitment, a continued search for efficiencies; and divergent policies on Higher Education due to devolved administrations and funding regimes.

2.2 The challenges facing Universities within the HR context:

- recruiting, and retaining, the best staff
- ensuring a motivated and sustainable workforce to meet the complex challenges
- increased costs of pension provision
- reduction in public spending impacting on staff rewards
- the changing demography of the current and future workforce.
- encouragement to investigate the shared services agenda and merging back office functions.
- managing ongoing change.

2.3 The University continues to operate in a diverse, competitive and challenging environment. It is one of the largest employers in North West Wales (2,400 employees as at x) and is diverse in its choice of occupations and its staff and student origins (x nationalities). The increasing profile of the University through its high NSS 2015

position, increase in the 2014 REF, its achievement to reach 14th in the UK for student experience (Times Higher Education Student Experience Survey, 2015) and being the best in the UK for our student clubs and societies according to the WhatUni awards will provide the opportunity to continue to recruit and retain the best staff for the University.

- 2.4 In addition to acting as a strategic enabler to professionally support the University's new Strategic Plan, the Human Resources strategy takes into account the context in which we are operating, the requirement for leadership development and the provision of a high quality staff experience.

3. The Human Resources Strategy and Vision

- 3.1 In order to enable the University to deliver on its objectives, the Human Resources strategy underpins the strategic direction and values of the University and contributes to the delivery of an efficient and effective organisation that will meet its aims and ambitions. The University will have a number of strategic objectives with associated strategies, aims and action plans. As the University's greatest resource are its employees, human resources management will support the University in developing its leaders who in turn will develop a sustainable, fit for purpose and high quality staff base.
- 3.2 The values of Human Resources embrace those of the University, including a safe, welcoming environment, pride and self-confidence, embracing the diversity of our staff and students, valuing our position in the local community. We aim to ensure that HR, as a support service, establishes, maintains and develops business relationships based on confidence, trust and respect
- 3.3 The vision of Human Resources is to add value as a strategic partner and enabler to the University and its community, providing a professional, up to date and insightful service whilst promoting appropriate people management and development practices to influence and enable the achievement of business objectives.
- 3.4 HR will utilise the results of staff surveys to enhance, update and develop this strategy

4. Strategic Objectives

A detailed action plan and key performance indicators underpinning the strategy is at appendix 1.

4.1 Improvement of Leadership and Management Development

- 4.1.1 In order to face the challenges within higher education, Universities need leaders who will aim to deliver effective transformational change. An effective leadership strategy will develop sustainable leadership capacity throughout the University and address leadership development opportunities

at all levels, including the development of competencies and succession planning.

- 4.1.2 The University also needs to ensure that managers at all levels should be developed to help the University to achieve its objectives but also to ensure that staff can contribute within a positive environment in which staff are treated fairly and consistently whilst being stretched academically and professionally.

Aims:

- Develop and implement an effective leadership strategy to ensure that change is envisaged, planned and delivered, that leaders act with a shared sense of purpose and that knowledge is shared and ideas transferred across organisational boundaries.
- Continue with a management development approach to improve the ability of all managers and ensure that managers at all levels have the tools to enable them to successfully manage and motivate their staff.
- Develop research leadership and development programmes to ensure leadership across all areas of the University.

4.2 Ensure Strategic Recruitment and Selection

4.2.1 In order to remain an employer of choice, locally, nationally and internationally, the University has to raise awareness that recruitment is a critical activity, not just for the HR team but also for line managers. All those involved in recruitment activities should be equipped with the appropriate knowledge and skills and be aware of the importance of diversity throughout the recruitment process.

4.2.2 The University needs its academic schools and its central service Departments to work together to share knowledge so that each recruitment campaign portrays the message that the University is giving.

Aims

- Develop and implement an effective recruitment strategy that not only indicates why we are recruiting but also how and link this in with areas such as Planning and Marketing, and the Welsh language strategy.
- Consider new and innovative recruitment methods to attract the best applications whilst remaining cost effective.
- Ensure that all managers who engage in recruitment and selection are adequately trained on all aspects of recruitment and selection.

4.3 Managing change

4.3.1 Many external and internal factors lead to the necessity for organisational change. These include challenges of growth, economic downturns, changes in strategy, customer pressure, particularly shifting markets, student expectations and government legislation/initiatives.

4.3.2 Change can be disruptive, multifaceted and difficult; it is easy and natural to resist change. To deal with it we need to anticipate, evaluate, plan for and implement change as effectively as we can.

Aims:

- Support the development of a more holistic Management of Change policy and process in conjunction with Strategic Change managers.
- Ensure all managers should be aware of the basic change concepts and skills required to deliver change.

4.4 Establish a sustainable organisation and workforce

4.4.1 Human Resources will support the University to create a long term viable future by embracing opportunities and managing risks deriving from economic, social and environmental developments.

4.4.2 Human Resources will work with stakeholders to produce a long term work force plan.

Aims

- HR will work with managers to identify various jobs and roles needed within the organisation to meet current and future aims related to delivery and growth.
- HR will work with managers to plan ahead for the loss of essential employee's skills to retirement.
- HR will investigate the use of Modern Apprenticeships and Graduate/Management Trainee schemes.
- Develop a succession planning model for future leadership.
- Address the Welsh language requirements of the University and the Welsh Language Policy through effective recruitment and training.

4.5 Develop the Reward Agenda

4.5.1 In order to attract and retain excellent staff in the current economic climate, the University will need to improve understanding of the employment package so that it is valued and aids recruitment and retention.

4.5.2 HR has to understand its organisation's demographic make up to assess the value of different rewards on different groupings of staff.

Aims

- Develop a Reward Strategy that designs and implements long-term reward policies and practices to closely support and advance the organisational objectives as well as employee aspirations.

- The Reward agenda should be aligned with career development initiatives and future academic career progression to support and incentivise its staff.

4.6 Supporting staff well being

- 4.6.1 The economic climate has put UK organisations and their employees under strain. Many people have seen multiple rounds of efficiency savings, experienced a high degree of uncertainty over their job and the nature of their role, along with an increased workload and a reduction in real pay increases and benefits.
- 4.6.2 Research has consistently highlighted the importance of focusing on employee health and well-being for sustainable performance.
- 4.6.3 The well-being agenda should provide a service committed to promoting physical, mental and social well-being for the University's employees.

Aims

- Work with Health & Safety Services and managers to identify staff needing support at work, reasons for absence and target these for early intervention.
- To work jointly with Health and Safety Services to provide a holistic well-being agenda to include counselling services, dignity at work support and promotion of health interventions.
- Develop an Academic Workload Policy and Guidelines to address issues regarding academic workloads in the University.
- Ensure policies are fit for purpose and provide support for all parties.
- Review external providers to support staff such as Employee Assistance programmes

4.7 Enhancing Organisational Performance

- 4.7.1 Successful organisations sustain their performance in the face of both internal and external challenges over time, rather than simply achieving high performance levels over the short-term or during good economic periods. Bangor University has over recent years achieved recognition for its excellent performance in a number of external measurements and has to retain this level of performance in order to be successful.
- 4.7.2 The University continues to strive to develop a high performance culture in which achievement of the organisational objectives are achieved at both an individual and School/Departmental level.
- 4.7.3 Improvement in external performance measures such as NSS and REF suggest that individual and organisation performance is improving.
- 4.7.4 Effective Performance Development Review schemes are essential in achieving this objective. Recent evidence

indicates that the uptake of PDRs is improving; however this needs to be introduced more consistently across the University, and the benefits tangible for the University, and the member of staff.

Aims

- Introduce an electronic PDR system to enable a smarter process for establishing a culture in which individuals and groups take responsibility for the continuous improvement of their own skills, behaviours and contributions as well as giving individuals the opportunity to better communicate their expectations of what support and resources they need to do their jobs.
- Ensure effective personal and professional development provision that address the development needs of staff.
- Ensure that the University addresses the principles of the Research Concordat to support the career development of researchers.
- Provide effective support and development for research staff and through that achieve the HR Research Excellence Award.
- Develop a coaching and mentoring framework to support staff through change and to support their career development.
- Develop a career development guide for academic staff and review the potential for similar guides for other staff.
- Ensure that new staff become familiar with their role and the University's strategies, policies, and systems so that they can quickly become effective in their roles, ensuring they understand the context in which they work and feel motivated and enabled to achieve stretching objectives.
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- Ensure that there are well-designed HR policies and strategies which result in higher levels of organisational performance through developing able and motivated individuals and giving them the opportunity to perform to high levels.

4.8 Valuing a diverse workforce

4.8.1 Bangor University aims to provide an environment which respects and values the positive contribution of all its members so enabling them to achieve their full potential and to gain benefit and enjoyment from their involvement in the life of the University.

4.8.2 Addressing the aims of the University's Strategic Equality Plan

Aims

- Implement the aims of the University's Strategic Equality Plan (developed in consultation with staff).
- Review the gender balance of Task Groups, Committees and Council.
- Undertake actions to address the principles of the Athena SWAN Charger and achieve University and departmental Athena SWAN awards.

- Develop a Professional Behaviours Framework that outlines the behaviours that demonstrate the values and expectations of its staff.
- Demonstrate the values and ethics identified by the University through our management practices and communication with staff
- Embed equality in all our activities and not consider it as a separate “add on”.

5.0 Human Resource Information, Systems and Statistics

5.1 HR currently collects basic information on staffing for a variety of statutory returns. This data can identify any action that might be needed as a result of these measures – for example, measuring regulatory compliance, to improve the diversity profile of the workforce or to reduce absence.

5.2 HR should be looking to gather information that will enable better-informed decision-making both internally on the management of people and externally on the progress with regard to strategy. The data can then be used to provide managers with indicators on a range of measures designed to inform them on performance and progress in their department. This could then be accompanied with specific actions to be taken informed by the resulting human metrics.

5.3 HR will review its data collection to produce more of a co-ordinated approach to the collection of statistical information within Human Resources. This will then allow for more detailed analysis and exploration of correlations between types of data to draw human capital insights which in turn will provide information to help design the HR model most likely to contribute to performance; and communicate to managers not just on how to implement processes, but with accompanying information on why they are important and what they can achieve.

5.4 One of our priorities will be to work with IT Services to enhance our systems and work flows in order to streamline and automate processes, reduce duplication and improve the quality of data held on staff.

5.5 HR will continue to use staff surveys to measure the effectiveness of initiatives in certain areas and be aware of staff opinion about working in the University and learning about what we do well and where we can improve.

5.6 Ensure effective monitoring systems to ensure engagement with University systems such as performance development review and areas of mandatory training.

6.0 Governance

6.1 Under the Charter and Statutes, the Council is the governing body of the University and has ultimate responsibility to ensure that an appropriate HR strategy is in place to support the above and is implemented by the Executive.

- 6.1 At Executive, the Director of HR takes the lead for the development of the HR Strategy. The Director ensures HR is efficient and effective with available resources
- 6.2 The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Welsh Medium and Civic Engagement) chairs the Human Resources Task Group which has responsibility to advise on, recommend and oversee the implementation of the University's Human Resources strategy; also to review and make recommendations on HR policies and procedures.
- 6.3 Deans of College, Heads of Schools and Heads of Service Departments line manage all staff and as such have responsibility for implementing HR strategy, policy and practice.
- 6.4 The HR professional staff will support managers at all levels to contribute to an excellent human resource management throughout the University.
- 6.5 Through the University and Departmental Risk Register, risks and controls relating to the University's staffing is reviewed on a quarterly basis and acted upon if required.

7 Reviewing the Strategy, Action Plan and KPI's

- 7.1 This strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it continues to underpin the University's strategic direction.
- 7.2 Performance against the targets will be monitored on a quarterly basis by the HR Senior Management Team and HR staff meetings and annually through the Human Resources Task Group to the Executive. Achievement will be measured against a set of objectives set out within the Action Plan.