



People Strategy 2015-20

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Context

"At its heart our University consists of its staff and students; staff formation is therefore central to its mission, not least because staff formation serves to support the formation of students. It is the staff of our University that will deliver its strategic aims and objectives." (Strategic Plan: 2014-2020, p.15).

Fundamental to the University's Strategic Plan is its commitment to the formation of our staff and students. This is a manifestation of our mission and belief in the transformational impact of being a values-driven University which makes a positive difference to individuals and communities through the contribution of its staff, students and graduates.

The People Strategy is a key element of the institutional strategy which focusses on a number of strategic themes:

- Formation for Students
- Formation for Staff
- Research, Enterprise and Scholarship
- Collaborative partnerships
- Institutional sustainable development

Overlaying these themes is the University's aim for institutional growth in terms of student numbers, third stream income and the student profile. This growth will require investment in staff and other resources to ensure success. The University is committed to the funding of this growth through a variety of mechanisms and innovations in working practices to achieve sustainable infrastructures and effective operating systems.

Purpose

The purpose of the People Strategy is principally to "support our staff to develop and flourish in alignment with our strategic aims; to continually be and become the best they can be" so the University has the right people, at the right time, motivated and empowered to deliver its mission (Strategic Plan: 2014-2020, p.15). The People Strategy will support the University in its endeavour to develop a progressive, coherent and integrated approach to the formation of staff. Central to this is the development of an appropriate framework and infrastructure for staff-work and development, at all levels within the organisation, which addresses and exceeds appropriate professional standards and seeks to inform and enhance good practice across all aspects of University life.

To achieve this goal, the University will provide development opportunities for all staff, to improve skills, enrich pedagogic practices, and improve the quality of provision for students and partners of the University.

The People Strategy will support the promotion of respectful, interdisciplinary and collaborative working across the whole University community and will highlight the important contributions of all staff. This continual process of modernisation and renewal will ensure the sustainability and development of the University, maximising the contribution of individuals and teams by consolidating existing good practice and promoting innovative ways of working.

Principles

The principles outlined in the People Strategy emerge from the University's vision, mission and values which underpin the strategic themes set out in the Strategic Plan. The People Strategy sits alongside other institutional strategies whose collective objectives are to

support the achievement of the strategic aims of the University over the next five years. These principles are a manifestation of the commitment to work towards continuously enhancing our values-driven learning community which recognises, understands and promotes the heritage and mission of service following the Catholic ethos as stated in the Strategic Plan through:

- Open and respectful dialogue amongst staff, students and partners working together to provide successful outcomes for learners which is aligned to the University's values and ethos;
- Active engagement and participation in developing and transforming the learning community through meaningful discourse and positive collaboration with staff and other stakeholders, including employer associations and recognised trade unions;
- Reflective and inclusive practices which engender fairness, integrity and a positive employment relationship where staff are empowered to fulfil their potential;
- Embracing change and innovation to promote a culture of continuous personal, professional and organisational development and improvement;
- Seeking effective and efficient modes of operation through shared services, bench-marking practices and resources to inform the business planning processes.

Equality and Diversity

The University is committed to advancing equality of opportunity and eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, to foster good relations between people from different groups which embraces and celebrates diversity in line with our values and principles (1). This involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups when:

- (i) designing, delivering and evaluating services
- (ii) developing, evaluating and reviewing University policies and procedures
- (iii) commissioning and procuring services from others

Culture and Organisational Development

Staff formation rests on the working partnership between the University and its employees. It will enable individuals and teams to realise their potential and participate fully in an inclusive learning culture. The People Strategy will work towards creating this environment in collaboration with the Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy and the Research, Scholarship and Enterprise Strategy.

Strategic Aims

The central focus of this People Strategy is to support the delivery of key University strategic themes, focussing on the following key strategic aims:

- 1. To continue to promote a culture of organisational development which is aligned with the University's values and mission**
- 2. To develop corporate strategic workforce and change management planning**
- 3. To develop high quality, flexible and sustainable learning and development opportunities and interventions**
- 4. To develop robust reward and recognition and promotion processes**
- 5. To promote effective and consistent Human Resources Management practice across the University**

(1) The public sector equality duty: specific duties for England -implications for higher education institutions, Equality Challenge Unit, 2011.

The People Strategy is a living document, in that it will be updated as other institutional strategies develop. It may also be reviewed in the light of changes to employment law,

political and socio-economic factors, evidence based and sector best practice, and the University's corporate operating conditions.

The implementation of these strategic aims is a shared responsibility with corporate and functional line management in conjunction with the University's Human Resources service, as outlined below:

1. To continue to promote a culture of organisational development which is aligned with the University's values and mission

- 1.1 Nurture a learning community, with shared values and goals that promote a sense of mutual ownership, belonging and fulfilment.
- 1.2 Foster a learning culture promoting continual learning, scholarship and development, building personal confidence and competency to support devolution of responsibility with accountability, thus enhancing the student experience.
- 1.3 Enhance Health & Safety provision and create a well-being agenda for the University which engages and builds strong, loyal and resilient employees who remain healthy and safe in their roles, enabling them to cope with the demands of change and able to perform to the best of their abilities.
- 1.4 Foster a supportive and facilitative culture which embraces equality of opportunity for all and celebrates diversity. This will include accredited and innovative HE sector equality and diversity practice in employment.
- 1.5 Enhance the biennial Staff Survey and action planning process to empower and engage the workforce in further organisational improvement and development.

2. To develop corporate strategic workforce and change management planning

- 2.1 Continue to develop and manage fair, consistent and transparent recruitment and selection practices through a centralised recruitment service for the University.
- 2.2 Develop, retain and attract highly capable and motivated staff through a fair, transparent and inclusive Talent Management framework which recognises professionalism, career development and succession planning.
- 2.3 Devise and implement a planned and systemic approach to resource identification, skills matching and succession planning which enhances the capability within the University to support personal growth and professional development aligned to the institutions objectives.
- 2.4 Enabling line managers to development of new role descriptors and practices (ways of working) to create a responsive and agile workforce.
- 2.5 Build effective and integrated change management processes to improve organisational development and realise transformational change, building capacity and capability, enhancing management practises and business planning.
- 2.6 Work with managers to implement and embed agile systems and ways of working to improve organisational effectiveness and enhance the student experience.

3. To develop high quality, flexible and sustainable learning and development opportunities and interventions

- 3.1 Review the Staff Appraisal Scheme. Proactively support the collation of appraisal development needs and activity to promote managerial and professional practice

and advanced scholarship.

- 3.2 Introduce and enhance the iTrent 'Self-Serve' People Development Modules to enable greater integrated learning and development planning with Corporate Training and across other functions with responsibility for staff development.
- 3.3 Develop and implement an e-appraisal (iTrent 'Self-Serve' tool) to support individuals and line managers in their continuous personal and professional development planning (PDP's).
- 3.4 Develop a range of corporate and bespoke training and development interventions, including on-line and e-learning programmes and collaborative provision with external providers, to improve skills, knowledge and practices and advance organisational development to meet local and institutional priorities in accordance with the University Training & Development Resource Plan.
- 3.5 Devise appropriate leadership and management development for the Senior Management Team, Newman Management Group, School and Departmental managers and future aspiring managers, and to promote and embed effective management capacity, competence and capability.
- 3.6 Develop and implement mentoring programmes, coaching and peer support with Academic Practice; to enhance practice and succession planning at all levels within the University.
- 3.7 Develop initial and continuing professional development frameworks which encourage reflective practice underpinning and complementing accredited professional and learning routes for staff to address appropriate professional and working standards, such as the Association of University Administrators (AUA) CPD framework. To collaborate with Academic Practice on academic related developments, such as the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF).
- 3.8 Collaborate with Academic Practice to enhance and deliver scholarly activity and research to maintain up-to-date subject knowledge and experience of professional and specialist areas.
- 3.9 Encourage colleagues in the expansion of partnerships, external engagements and knowledge exchange in order to build experience of research and advanced scholarship activity towards securing a research culture that can support an application for RDAP.
- 3.9 Build a platform towards achieving Investors in People accreditation and develop a skills/training needs analysis process linked to the aims of the University's Strategic Plan.

4. To develop robust reward and recognition and promotion processes

- 4.1 Recognise the importance of individual and team performance to the University's continued success in a competitive regional and global higher education sector in the design and implementation of performance management processes which will recognise both individual and group development activities, personal career aspirations and the University's corporate objectives (1).
- 4.2 Develop a strategic approach to rewarding and incentivising employees, especially those demonstrating and promoting enterprise that meets the University's objectives and recognises the contribution of individuals.

- 4.3 Develop robust promotion processes that encourage positive engagement with successful delivery of the University's mission and institutional strategy.
- 4.4 Modernise the pay and grading framework (Framework Agreement: Modernisation of Pay and Grading (2005) to retain high performing staff and enhance the University's offering of staff benefits.

5. To promote effective and consistent Human Resources Management practice across the University

- 5.1 Promote and develop transformational practices which support the University's reputation as a good employer (Employer of Choice). This includes the provision of a sound policy and procedural framework to enable effective and accountable people management practices across the University.
- 5.2 Proactive response to the legislative environment and statutory frameworks which impact upon the employment relationship and practices. To ensure the development of sustainable policy frameworks which are responsive to the needs of staff and the business of the University.
- 5.3 Enhance institutional management information and KPI's through the on-going development of iTrent management information and the provision of other HR related management information systems.
- 5.4 Collaborate with other internal and where appropriate external services to foster the sharing and dissemination of management practices across all University provision, including the effective use of new technologies.
- 5.5 Build on the professionalism and effectiveness of the Human Resources advisory and support service to broaden its scope to enhance management capacity.

The Human Resources Service will provide an annual plan of agreed University priorities in relation to the implementation of the People Strategy.

- (1) Performance Management: An Overview, CIPD, 2015, p1. At its best, performance management is a holistic process that ensures employees' performance contributes to business objectives. It brings together many of the elements of good people management practice, including learning and development, measurement of performance, and organisational development. For this very reason, it's complex and often misunderstood. It has typically been characterised as 'a process which contributes to the effective management of individuals and teams in order to achieve high levels of organisational performance. As such, it establishes shared understanding about what is to be achieved and an approach to leading and developing people which will ensure that it is achieved.' It stresses that performance management is 'a strategy which relates to every activity of the organisation set in the context of its human resource policies, culture, style and communications systems.

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