

## STAFF SURVEY 2015

### MANAGERS' GUIDANCE FOR ACTION PLANNING

Staff Survey Steering Group

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## 1. SCOPE

This guidance is to be used when preparing action plans in support of the outcomes from The University of Manchester Staff Survey 2015.

Responding effectively to the feedback received from the survey, means that actions may emerge for certain groups of staff e.g. by occupational group or gender, race or disability; and at various layers of the University, e.g. some actions will need to be progressed at University level, some within a Faculty/PSS/Cultural Institution and some local actions at specific School/Directorate level.

The following action plans will take a high level overview and will be presented to SLT in September 2015. Additionally these plans will be tabled at the Annual Performance Review meetings this year:

- Faculty (one action plan for each Faculty) – led by the Vice-Presidents and Deans
- Professional Support Services – led by the Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer
- Library/Cultural Institutions – led by the members of the SLT

Local action plans will be developed at whichever level of organisational structure is appropriate for you to respond to your findings and this activity will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team, via the Staff Survey Steering Group in the first instance.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

In maintaining the University KPI that aimed for 50% completion rate of the Staff Survey 2015, the ambition was to consolidate the sound foundations we achieved with the 71% response rate to Staff Survey 2013, preparing for a strong platform from which to commence further action in 2015.

Once again, leaders and managers played a significant part in encouraging staff to take part in the survey and tell us their views. In achieving a 70% completion rate in 2015, we can see that staff across the board have maintained engagement with the survey and in doing so, have demonstrated that they see the value in telling us how they feel about working here, at our University.

Taking action in response to the feedback from 2013 has been shown to have been recognized by staff, and as we reciprocate by demonstrating our commitment as leaders and managers we build upon the contribution that staff have already made via their input in completing the survey. The role of leaders and managers in this process is vital – to confirm that we are listening and further, that we are prepared to respond to the staff voice by demonstrating this commitment and by taking appropriate action.

The survey, as an information gathering tool, is only the starting point and it is now the responsibility of leaders and managers to again take the results forward and build upon their demonstrated level of **employee engagement** (see Appendix A) by continuing to ask questions, listening to responses and monitoring the impact of actions.

### 3. USING YOUR STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

The way the Staff Survey results are utilised locally will impact directly upon the degree to which staff are motivated to engage with the process and trust that you are taking their ideas and feedback seriously.

This recommended step process for reflecting and acting upon your local results relies upon you taking action to involve all staff in being given access to the information and providing them with opportunities to discuss the findings and suggest possible solutions for wider consideration.

#### STEP 1: MAKING SENSE OF YOUR RESULTS

For you as a leader or manager, taking an overview of what members of staff have said about working in your area of the University is a key starting point. Look for the positives, as well as the negatives, and see if there are new elements of feedback as well as those that you may have anticipated or heard before. Your results will show how your team benchmarks against University averages via a RAG (Red, Amber, Green) system which may help you identify key areas for action planning as well as providing key topics for further discussion. Your results will also show how your results in 2015 differ from those in 2013 and this information may provide feedback as to the effectiveness of actions already put in place, or where more attention needs to be paid.

Consider whether there are any themes occurring and begin to form questions about things you would like to know more about. This may include consideration of feedback which suggests differences between occupational groups, gender issues or specific matters that have been raised by new staff, etc.

You may wish to offer the opportunity for someone on the team to work with you in 'championing' Staff Survey actions, including monitoring activity in the future -- someone who is an influencer who people will listen to locally. Equally, you may decide to run one or more small focus groups in your area to try and better understand a theme that has emerged from the results.

#### STEP 2: SHARE THE INFORMATION

Whilst you will gain your own insight from your initial overview of the results, it is essential that you share the Staff Survey results with all staff in your area at the earliest opportunity and ensure that all staff have a chance to contribute their thoughts and ideas to the findings and to the subsequent action planning.

You will already have an idea of the key themes you wish to discuss and investigate further, so you may wish to consider structuring some general questions for wider consultation, in addition to asking staff for their general feedback. Ensure that you circulate the results and questions for consultation in advance of any structured meetings and let staff know beforehand how you would like them to contribute to the process.

Input from staff may give rise to further questions that cannot be answered directly from the data you have been provided with. If this occurs, please record these questions as areas to follow up via your action plan as it may be possible to obtain further information through more detailed interrogation of the data set, or focus group activity, in due course.

It is important to keep listening to the views of staff during this stage. Whilst it may be tempting to dismiss negative feedback and attempt to justify shortcomings that staff have identified within your area, your staff will be more willing to engage if you keep an open mind and just listen to what they have to say.

You may wish to plan in advance the methodology you aim to deploy to collect ideas, thoughts and impressions that come from your staff during this consultation phase and how you intend to use this information for forward action planning.

Do not simply dwell on the areas that require further development. There will be many positives from the survey and you may also wish to give thought to how you communicate and recognise these locally.

### STEP 3: FORMULATE THE PLAN

A template has been provided at Appendix B to help you with action planning; it invites you to summarise the particular aspect of feedback, then record action points accordingly. Please be realistic in your action planning; it is better to aim for a maximum of three to five principal **achievable** actions chosen from across the whole of your feedback than to try and capture every single issue that has been flagged. Your own results will dictate the priority areas where you wish to direct your efforts to respond to the feedback. You can return to your feedback and revisit further actions at a later date.

Your local plan will feed in to the wider strategic action planning that will be conducted by the University Senior Leadership Team via the Staff Survey Steering Group so think about actions that are:

- Strategic, organisational actions that you wish to flag to the Staff Survey Steering Group (e.g. pay and reward)
- Locally manageable actions that are within your control to influence and take forward within your own team

The way in which you respond to the feedback from your staff will directly influence their levels of engagement. It is not the case that you as the manager should take personal responsibility to act upon every aspect of their feedback; in your action plan you may include actions that involve influencing others and escalating issues as well as identifying things that other members of the team will take forward.

Look for quick wins and small steps that will make a noticeable difference.

Other changes you wish to consider in response to feedback may require longer term planning. It is important that you do not lose momentum when considering longer term goals and that you put steps in place to monitor progress against plan on a regular basis. Keeping on track with stated aims will influence levels of engagement and build trust amongst staff members.

To increase the likelihood of success in this regard, consider, plan and communicate the following at the outset:

- **WHAT** you want to change
- **WHY** it is important and what benefits will the change bring
- **HOW** will the change be effected
- **WHO** is going to do what
- **WHEN** will it be done by and how will progress be monitored.

#### **STEP 4: TAKE ACTION!**

Deliver what you agree to take forward. Your 'champion' can be an additional resource in ensuring that progress on Staff Survey actions are discussed at appropriate meetings and events as well as helping to rally and organise staff efforts to contribute. You may need to adjust action plans to respond to new information as you progress. You may begin to see a process and mentality of 'continuous improvement' beginning to emerge as staff become more engaged and realise the benefit of contributing their effort to improving activities across the team.

#### **STEP 5: MONITOR, EVALUATE AND COMMUNICATE**

Keeping the activity live and engendering a positive working environment through feedback and action will encourage staff to trust that the 'Staff Survey' exercise is not an isolated event that sits outside effective leadership and management. As well as monitoring your action plan, you may wish to include periodic discussion about any differences that staff have noticed which have come about as a result of the actions taken. It is important to publicise what you are doing and help staff to see the connection between the feedback they gave and the actions that have been taken. You will by now be familiar with the: 'Your Voice, Our Manchester' strapline that was developed for this purpose.

#### **4. SUGGESTED TIMETABLE FOR ACTION PLANNING**

University-wide results were made available to the Senior Leadership Team in May 2015.

Local School and Directorate-level results were made available following the Heads and Directors meeting on 3 June 2015, at which a presentation of the University-level results was given by Capita and are now available at [www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/staff-survey](http://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/staff-survey).

Deans, the Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor will present their action plans to the Senior Leadership Team at the end of September 2015 and since these high-level action plans may include consideration of local activity, it is suggested that development of local action plans should be well in progress by August.

#### **5. FEEDBACK**

Should you have feedback or comment about any aspect of the Staff Survey 2015, or an enquiry about action planning, please contact [staffsurvey@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:staffsurvey@manchester.ac.uk) where a member of the Staff Survey Steering Group will respond to your enquiry.



## APPENDIX A

### WHAT IS EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT?

*Employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organisation's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organisational success and able at the same time to enhance their own sense of wellbeing.*

(Professor David Guest)

**Engaged organisations** have strong and authentic values with clear evidence of trust and fairness based on mutual respect, where two way promises and commitments – between managers and staff – are understood, and are fulfilled. Engagement is two way: organisations work to engage employees, who in turn have a choice about the level of engagement to offer the employer: each reinforces the other. An **engaged employee** experiences a blend of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement and feelings of empowerment. Employee engagement is a concept that is greater than the sum of its parts.

### SOME STATISTICS

"59% of engaged employees were willing to stay with their company despite other potential opportunities, compared with 24% of disengaged" Towers-Perrin ISR, 2006

"Employees with the highest commitment levels provide 57% more discretionary effort than employees with the lowest commitment levels" CLC, 2004

"70% of engaged employees indicate they have a good understanding of how to meet customer needs; only 17% of non-engaged employees say the same" Right Management, 2006

"Days missed from work per year: Engaged = 4.03, Disengaged = 7.79" Gallup, 2004

## APPENDIX B

### STAFF SURVEY 2015: ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

Name of: Faculty / School / Directorate / Organisational Unit:

Name of Author:

Date:

Notes:

- Your plan should record those actions which respond directly to local findings, it should list **no more than 3-5 achievable actions overall**
- You may wish to develop items from your Staff Survey 2013 outcomes which are relevant and still in progress
- Further advice on action planning is available in the supporting document: Staff Survey 2015: Manager's Guidance for Action Planning

Please record your principal actions points	Person Responsible	Timescale	Progress and Evaluation Include dates of meetings in progress, reports and details of how staff are engaged in the process	Action Completed	Notes
Summary feedback from survey:					
Action/description of planned activity:					
•					
•					

Summary feedback from survey:					
Action/description of planned activity:					
•					
•					
Summary feedback from survey:					
Action/description of planned activity:					
•					
•					
Summary feedback from survey:					
Action/description of planned activity:					
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