

THE UNIVERSITY OF READING

STAFFING COMMITTEE

21/18 A meeting of the Staffing Committee was held on Thursday 7 October 2021 at 2.00 pm via Microsoft Teams

Present:

Dr R J Messer (Chair)
Mr J J Brady
Professor C Harty
Dr K Henderson
Mr S Hunt
Professor F Hwang
Mr B Knowles
Mrs C Rolstone
Mrs S Thornton

Mr A J Twyford (Secretary)

Apologies were received from Dr Laville, Professor Parish, and Mrs Rowe.

The University Secretary welcomed Professor Hwang and Mr Knowles to the Committee.

21/19 Membership, Terms of Reference and Disclosure of Interests

The Committee received a copy of its membership and Terms of Reference and a copy of a memorandum from the University Secretary in respect of Disclosure of Interests and the Committee's obligations in respect of the University's Risk Register.

The Committee agreed that the Terms of Reference needed to be refreshed and the Director of Human Resources would bring a paper to a future meeting.

Action: The Director of Human Resources to bring a paper to a future meeting to discuss updating the terms of reference

21/20 The minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2021 were approved

Arising from the minutes:

Minute 21/04 (20/13): Staff Wellbeing

current arrangements allow for the proper consideration of personal circumstances.

It was acknowledged that both probationary processes were intended to be supportive and to enable new staff to successfully complete their probation period. Only in very rare instances would someone's employment be ended, and where probation may be extended (for contractual probation) it is often due to other factors such as periods of ill-health and unrelated to the probationer's capability.

The Committee agreed that it was important to clearly communicate to probationary staff that the Academic Probation Review Sub-Committee had recognised the potential impacts that

collective approach to raising awareness of an important subject. Further discussions will continue with the Parent & Family Network.

21/23 Grade 9 Annual Review process

The Director of Human Resources outlined the current process for reviewing the activities and achievements for senior colleagues (i.e. those at Grade 9 or equivalent), and confirmed that an analogous process exists for senior staff within the Leadership Group.

He stated that even though the process is well established certain elements of the process were not always fully understood. As a result the paperwork has been refreshed to better capture the key elements of the process, to make clear expectations and likely outcomes, and to make the process more transparent.

The Committee welcomed the revised documents and asked that relevant colleagues have sight of the relevant paperwork in advance of the start of the process.

21/24 Implementation of Leavers' Questionnaires

The Assistant Director of Human Resources (People and Talent) informed the Committee that a leavers' questionnaire was introduced in January 2021.

She informed the Committee that 86 leavers' questionnaires had been completed out of a total of 605 leavers in this period and provided the Committee with a summary of the response themes as at the start of October 2021, including:

- Colleagues leaving the University who completed the online questionnaire gave both positive and negative feedback about their experience working at the University;
- Some specific issues were raised which were already known about

- There was no significant evidence to suggest that other Business Schools (competitors) were using the title of Professor or Professor of Practice for similar (non-academic) roles in their Institutions;

The Committee unanimously agreed that the proposal to create the title of “Professor of Practice” as a specialist role within the Business School should not be supported.

21/26 Pay and pensions update

The Director of Human Resources provided the Committee with an update on matters relating to pay, and summarised the current position in respect of the USS scheme. Highlights included:

- The University’s position vis-à-vis the national pay bargaining process via the Joint Negotiating Committee for Higher Education Staff (JNCHES) remains unchanged.
- Formal notification of the pay-a Hiri-3 (m mi)-2.anged.

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issues and a range of additional disputes. To note, the ballot at Reading is restricted to the USS issues only.

- The University of Reading Employees' Pension Fund (UREPF) has concluded its latest valuation cycle. The scheme showed a small surplus and Trustees have agreed ongoing support from the University in discussion with UEB.
- Mr Keith Hodgson (former University Secretary) has completed his second term of office (covering six years) as Chair of Trustees for both

Purchased leave is added to the online system and booked and taken in the usual way. The salary adjustment is equivalent to 1/260th from gross salary. Employer and employee pension deductions are maintained on normal salary.

feedback from Managers, including in respect of the rejected applications.

- For the scheme to go ahead next year, we would need to invest in developments in iTrent to allow the scheme to operate without the manual interventions.
- Subject to the outcomes of survey, and any views from Staffing Committee, it is our current intention to continue to offer the scheme, it is a positive benefit that has been welcomed by colleagues.

The Committee thanked the Assistant Director of Human Resources (Advisory Services) for the comprehensive update. She agreed to provide the Committee with a breakdown of applications by Grade and by job family (academics v non-academics).

It was further agreed that the Annual Leave Purchase (ALP) Scheme should continue to be offered as it was viewed by staff as a positive benefit, and noted that for the scheme to proceed, the University would need to invest in developments in iTrent.

Action: The Assistant Director of Human Resources (Advisory Services) to provide the Committee with a breakdown of applications by Grade and by job family (academics v non-academics)

21/28 Remaining dates of meetings for the 2021/22 Academic Session:

Tuesday 23 November 2021	10.00 am to 12.00 pm (reserve)
Tuesday 8 February 2022	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm
Wednesday 27 April 2022	11.00 am to 1.00 pm (reserve)
Wednesday 15 June 2022	2.00 pm to 4.00 pm