



# People Plan 2019-2022

*Our University, Our People*

**This people plan builds on and develops the original 'Our Staff and Ways of Working' section of the University Strategy. The results of the 2018 all staff survey highlighted some really positive aspects of our work environment and some areas that need improvement. This plan describes what initiatives we are putting in place to resolve concerns raised and improve overall satisfaction.**

The world of work is changing as are the expectations of the workforce available to deliver our core aims. We intend to future proof our ways of working including embracing digital advances that will help us deliver operational excellence and be fit for the future. We are a world-class organisation with a staff base to match. To maintain that during the lifetime of this plan, we will need to evolve our working practices and embrace innovation.

## Our People Commitments

The six commitments in this plan describe what we will do to support the core strength of our University, our People. Our ambition is to make the University of Bristol the choice for staff from all over the world as well as make it the employer of choice for local people in the City of Bristol.



# Our Six Commitments

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## 1. Attract, Recruit and Retain the most Capable Staff

We know that our people are our most valuable asset and there is significant competition for skilled academic and professional services staff. Therefore, we must provide a workplace that has modern employment practices, recognises achievement and acknowledges everything that staff do for our students and each other.

We will:

- Attract and engage the best people from across the world through our strong employer brand and competitive reward and recognition packages.
- Support potential and new employees before and during their recruitment to give an excellent candidate experience, including proactive onboarding before new staff join us and regular support and communication for new starters to help them settle.
- Provide an excellent working environment to enable staff to thrive using modern ways of working that delivers benefits for the individual, the team and the University and is truly inclusive.
- Be clear and proactive in our mission to improve the diversity and gender balance of our workforce and challenge ourselves with clear and measurable actions and targets that are regularly monitored and refreshed as needed.

## 2. Improve Staff Engagement and Experience

We know that engaged staff have a better experience at work and we want to hear the ideas and thoughts of our people and understand what enables them to achieve their potential and the University's ambitions. Coupled with this is the need to keep staff updated on progress of the University Strategy and new developments.

We will:

- Create a staff engagement and communication model that is truly two way and reaches all parts of the University, using a variety of media that allows staff to contribute their ideas and expertise.
- Enable staff to have the opportunity to discuss every day and strategic issues with the senior team through regular and varied encounters, including all staff forums, faculty and divisional meetings and informal events.
- Have regular written and verbal updates on issues that matter in every school and department.
- Work closely with our Trade Union partners, involving them in decision making and supporting them to help improve staff experience.
- Listen to concerns about the working environment and do our best to eliminate those concerns.
- Communicate the research we do in the University to help inform each other of the excellent work that takes place and learn from each other.



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### 3. Health and Wellbeing

We want all staff to feel physically and mentally well and it is of such importance that we have developed a separate staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy to complement the student Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

We will:

- Listen to staff and understand what the work related triggers are that cause physical or mental ill health and commit to try and overcome those where we can, including looking at workload, the working environment and contract status.
- We will ensure that all staff have an appropriate and accessible line management arrangement so they are clear about who to go to if they have issues or concerns about any aspect of their work or their health.
- Support the physical wellbeing of our staff by encouraging an active lifestyle and healthy eating choices, by supporting our staff to take a break. We will encourage our staff to use our sport and leisure facilities on site.
- We will have regular physical health campaigns in conjunction with Public Health and Occupational Health colleagues to help keep staff well and help spot the signs of ill health.
- Support our staff suffering with mental health issues, through our Occupational Health and Staff Counselling service and provide mental health training to support staff dealing with students and colleagues suffering from mental health issues.
- We will build on the Time to Change Pledge and work in partnership with employers in the City of Bristol and nationally to support best practice and challenge our thinking and action.
- We will strengthen our in-house Staff Counselling service and complement that with a 24/7 Employee Assistance Programme. We will regularly review our service and base our offer on what staff tell us they need.

**Link to staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and action plan:**

[bristols/university/media/strategies/staff-mental-health-wellbeing-strategy.pdf](https://bristols.university/media/strategies/staff-mental-health-wellbeing-strategy.pdf)

### 4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will build a diverse and inclusive University community that actively seeks to recruit, support and promote talented individuals from many and varied backgrounds and heritages.

We will:

- Engage with Bristol communities to build confidence and trust in the University as a diverse and respectful employer as well as welcoming people from all over the world regardless of background, gender or ethnicity.
- Demonstrate that equality diversity and inclusion is part of our core purpose and enable our staff and students to thrive through a commitment to widening participation and positively supporting individuals from under represented groups to succeed.

- Remain committed to the principles of Athena SWAN and aim for silver accreditation at University level in the lifetime of this plan.
- Seek to reduce and if possible eliminate the gender pay gap in the Professoriate in the lifetime of the University Strategy.
- Deal swiftly and effectively with any form of harassment or bullying and encourage staff to speak up if they witness or experience any form of discrimination.
- Support staff with a disability to thrive.

### 5. Reward and Recognition

We want to be competitive, equitable and flexible in our reward offer and we want to recognise excellence that contributes to the success of the organisation.

We will:

- Develop a reward strategy that is fit for purpose and enables devolved accountability and decision making to a local level where appropriate.
- Recognise in our reward package that the staff from the different generations employed at the University may seek choice and flexibility in their reward offer and endeavour to achieve that.
- Recognise individual and team contribution in line with agreed University and individual objectives.
- Celebrate success through awards and thank staff appropriately for doing their job and going above and beyond.
- Recognise staff that live our agreed values and behaviours and support those who don't to improve.

### 6. Leading Change and Managing Performance

We want leaders at all levels to be engaged, empowered and have confidence in their ability to lead and support others to succeed and achieve personal and University goals. We will need to embrace change and new technology to remain future fit and develop new skills to harness digital advances.

We will:

- Encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own development by providing opportunities for new and challenging experiences.
  - Create an environment where staff can continuously improve their performance in teaching, research and student experience, and where staff that need support to deliver get the appropriate support and development.
  - Develop our leaders to have meaningful conversations about performance expectations and give them the skills to deal with poor performance.
  - Provide Leadership Development programmes that are appropriate for the stage of individual careers.
  - Introduce formal mentoring that matches experienced colleagues with more junior staff so that we learn from and respect all generations and experiences.
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# To support our People Commitments

The following enabling activities will be undertaken in 2019/2020 to enhance staff experience.

## Commitments 1 & 2

- We will improve staff's ability to meet with and discuss topical issues with the senior team, as well as allowing the senior team to listen to and understand the pressures staff are feeling under.
- We will develop new, inclusive channels for internal communications, which improve understanding without overloading staff.

## Commitment 3

- We will implement a set of agreed principles across the University for the allocation of workload to help ensure workloads are more transparent, equitable and manageable.
- We commit to review the structure of the Academic Year and the length of the teaching term, to support wellbeing for staff and students alike, reducing points of stress and anxiety for staff.
- We will transform assessment practices to support both learning and mental health gain and reduce stress and anxiety.

## Commitment 4

- We will identify the values that our staff believe in and want to sign up to, we will expect and support our staff to adopt University Professional Behaviours.
- We will agree actions, including setting targets where appropriate to significantly reduce the gender pay gap.
- We will seek to reduce the use of casual contracts at the institution and introduce greater security to existing casual contracts where appropriate.

## Commitments 5 & 6

- We will reduce the burden of the University committee structure and increase the transparency of decision making.
- We will offer targeted mentoring schemes focussed on career development for under represented groups of staff and we will introduce a new academic promotions framework that rewards the full range of activities endorsed in the University Strategy.

