

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY

HR Mission Statement

- To provide a fair and secure working environment
- To offer best practice advice and professional HR solutions which enables the College to meet its operational and strategic objectives
- To encourage individual growth which benefits both employee and employer
- To enhance the reputation of the College both internally and externally as a good employer

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Strategy will address the following matters:

- a) SMART targets
- b) Equal opportunity targets
- c) Staff development (inc management development)
- d) Annual performance reviews

1.2 The College is committed to appointing and retaining staff of the highest quality, both academic and support. The institution enjoys relatively little turnover (c 2% per annum), which ensures continuity of provision. However, this does require staff (especially those with long service) to receive appropriate and targeted staff development throughout the course of their careers.

2. SMART TARGETS *(Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-based)*

2.1 The College has established SMART targets related to human resource management, as included in the institution's Strategic Plan, which is subject to annual review. Currently, these targets include:

- Implementation of a new College-wide staff review and development scheme
- The training of appraisers and appraisees
- The continuous professional development of the HR team to facilitate a responsive and supportive service for staff
- Benchmarking with other HEIs in order to share good employment policy and practice
- Phased transfer of the majority of academic staff to new conditions of service (HE2000 contract) by 2006
- Development of HR intranet to provide information and advice to staff of HR policies and procedures, to complement Staff Handbook
- Implementation of the new national Pay Framework and related job evaluation.

3. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY TARGETS

3.1 The College is committed to providing equality of opportunity in relation to the recruitment and continuous development of all of its staff. Job application forms conform to best practice in that gender, age, ethnicity and any disability details remain confidential to HR until after the selection process has been completed. The College is aware that it has only 22% of female staff occupying senior management or senior academic posts and has established an Academic Promotions Committee partly to address this issue. Equal opportunity targets include:

- Monitoring of job applicants according to gender, age, ethnicity and disability
- Providing EO staff development and training sessions in relation to recruitment
- Heightening awareness of all staff to EO priorities for the College

3.2 The College will undertake a comprehensive job evaluation exercise on all posts over the course of the next two years, in response to the new national Pay Framework that has been introduced. Specialist software and advice will be obtained using earmarked Funding Council grants. As a consequence of the job evaluation process, it is hoped that any issues of gender-related inequity will be addressed.

4. STAFF DEVELOPMENT

4.1 It is recognised that Staff Development of all kinds is one of the best levers for organisational change. There is a recurrent need to develop leadership and management skills both at an individual level and at institutional level, enabling effective succession planning and encouraging effective team working in meeting strategic goals.

The College conducts regular needs assessment surveys amongst staff to establish individual or group staff development priorities set against institutional priorities. The College has appointed a staff development co-ordinator who has produced a staff development strategy and introduced a successful College-wide staff development week held in September each year, designed to respond to specific themes and needs. The College encourages all new academic staff who do not have formal Teaching qualifications to undertake such training through the University

of

Edinburgh. Currently, some 25% of staff are members of The Higher Education Academy, which incorporates the Institute for Learning & Teaching (ILT). Examples of recent and recurrent staff development activities have included training focusing on:

Enhancement-led Institutional Review (ELIR)
QAA Enhancement Themes
IRAP (Internal Review Assessment Process)
CRD (Career Review and Development)
 Activity Plan/Review (HE2000 contracts)
 Corporate Induction
 Managing Diversity
 Stress Awareness
 Health and Safety
 IT Systems Awareness

4.2 The College works closely with both Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt Universities In providing a range of staff development and training opportunities for staff and it is proposed that these collaborative links will be strengthened further in the light of the College's new Accreditation Agreement with the University of Edinburgh (signed in September 2004).

4.3 The average age of all College staff is 44; 48 for academic staff. Whilst this is lower than the national average, the College is aware of the need to carry out succession planning, particularly in relation to those departments which have a high age profile.

5. ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW

5.1 The College has had a staff development and review system in place for many years covering all categories of staff. It is proposed in the next 12-18 months to introduce a new appraisal system, largely related to new academic contracts which require detailed 'activity planning' on an annual basis. The new system will improve performance review by ensuring it is:

- Robust in its sensitivity to both exceptional and poor performance
- Relatively straightforward and simple to use
- Supportive of the continuous professional development of all staff, including those in management and leadership roles

6. COMMUNICATION

6.1 The need to improve the effectiveness of internal communications has been recognised as integral in the implementation of a successful Human Resources Strategy.

Staff fora are held termly in small groups to allow staff to interact more freely with senior management. In addition, School Administrators meet as a group once a term and the Central Services Managers' Group meets monthly, any issues being routed directly to the Management Group for consideration.

Management 'away-days', involving both academic and administrative managers are held twice per annum at which key aspects of the College's strategy are discussed in depth, thereby ensuring that all departments are encouraging their staff in meeting institutional goals and objectives.

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