



Title	HR Priorities – 2013/14 to 2015/16	12/12/13/HR334
Sponsors	The Registry and the Pro Vice Chancellor for Institutional Affairs	

Summary

The HR Priorities paper is written to replace the existing paper covering the period 2009 to 2012. It provides a medium term steer on the priorities of the University delivered primarily through HR. It is also a document which is regularly referred to as part of the HR Division's audit programme.

The Division will continue to provide services which can best be categorised as 'business as usual'; these are not included in this paper. The period for the academical year 2013/14 to 2015/16 is covered and activity will be managed by annual work plans. The Priorities will be reconfirmed through approval of the annual work plan by the HR Committee and may be modified to reflect changing pressures and influences both from inside and outside the University.

This is an updated version of the Priorities Paper approved by the HR Committee in December 2009, initially covering a period ending 2012.

Decision / Action Required

For decision.

Timing

Immediate. Recent audits have highlighted the value of having a 'direction' paper over 2/3 years.

Resource Requirement

The HR Priorities have been selected with available resources in mind and the financial constraints that will be faced during the time period covered by this paper. The resource availability and budget is sufficient to meet the 2013/14 work plan.

Equality and Diversity Impact

Equality Assurance Assessments will be undertaken as necessary in the work of the Division in order to ensure legal compliance and the development of good practice.

Communications Required

A communications plan will ensure appropriate consultation and communication of HR activity and be in line with the actions taken by the UAS following the UAS Review in 2011 and the UAS Staff Survey in 2012.



UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Human Resources

Background / Content

Paper attached as Annex A.

Recommendation

To approve the HR Priorities paper 2013/14 to 2015/16.

Annex Annex A: HR Priorities

Date 20 November 2013

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HR Priorities – 2013/14 to 2015/16

i. Introduction

The Human Resources Division, in line with the UAS purpose, seeks to support the University's mission to "contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence"¹. The HR Priorities will continue to be primarily delivered by the HR Division and will represent its contribution towards the successful delivery of the mission. They take cognisance of the University's governance arrangements; the disparate needs of its different parts; the local, national and international context in which the University operates (including its responsibilities as an employer and the concerns of HE sector stakeholders such as HEFCE); and demonstrate an appreciation of the resources available to progress activity.

The Division will continue to provide services which can best be categorised as 'business as usual'; these are not included in this paper. The period for the academical year 2013/14 to 2015/16 is covered and activity will be managed by annual work plans. The Priorities will be reconfirmed through approval of the annual work plan by the HR Committee and may be modified to reflect changing pressures and influences both from inside and outside the University.

This is an updated version of the Priorities Paper approved by the HR Committee in December 2009, initially covering a period ending 2012.

The HR Priorities cover the full remit of the Division including: Pensions, Childcare, Occupational Health and Safety, Equality & Diversity, Staff Counselling.

The HR Priorities have been grouped under the following headings:

- Supporting Organisational Capability
- Operational Delivery
- Strengthening Employee Engagement and Motivation

This paper acknowledges that tailoring/adaptation may need to be undertaken as part of development phases of a number of the following initiatives to ensure that the specific needs of individual Institutions are met. Many of the initiatives are currently proposals and would be subject to consultation and agreement by the relevant decision making bodies before being offered to the wider University.

¹ University of Cambridge Mission Statement



ii. **Supporting Organisational Capability**

This section covers those priorities that focus on investing in the skills and capability to help the University perform better in the future. They largely relate to training, development, appraisal and change management.

Investing in Professional Development

For continued success, the University needs to invest in the personal, professional and vocational development of all staff groups. In-role development and Career Pathways helps individuals and their supervisors evaluate current skills, identify development areas and articulate career aspirations. Together with leadership development (see section below). These initiatives will also help with succession planning for key roles in all staff groups. In-role development will be a key feature of orientation and skill development. The Career Pathways project will continue to map the skills and experience required to undertake future roles and will be widened across the University with particular focus on two priority groups – IT staff and technicians. In addition, Career Pathways for staff who wish to manage and lead others will be developed and will closely link into the University's leadership attributes framework.

Supporting the Development of Academic Staff and Researchers

Academic staff and researchers (including research students) must have the skills to undertake teaching and research of the highest quality. Delivering the UK Concordat to support the Career Development of Researchers and engagement with European initiatives including the European Commission's 'HR Excellence in Research' recognition process aims to increase the attractiveness and sustainability of research careers in the UK and to improve the quantity, quality and impact of research. Following a successful application in December 2012 to retain the 'HR excellence in research' award, priority will be given to preparations for the first external review of this award (expected in 2014). This will be achieved through research staff having an increasing "voice" and improving their experience at the University in liaison with the Office for Postdoctoral Affairs (OPDA) and the University's Researcher Development Committee. The programme of research staff development activities will continue to strengthen its training offer, with a particular focus on self-leadership and mentoring. The University will also continue actively to shape the researcher careers agenda within the UK and internationally, advocating approaches which recognise the institutional autonomy of universities and which enhance standards and opportunities for researchers.

The University has in recent years invested in the leadership development of academic (and professorial) staff. In 2014 a new programme to support potential Heads of Department will be introduced alongside the menu of programmes currently available.

Supporting the development of teaching practice

Developing early-career teachers (including research students and early-career research staff), will be a priority over the coming years. Since 2010, the General Board's Education Committee and the Senior Tutors' Committee have required that all graduates who teach undergraduates should receive appropriate training. Such training includes 'local' training delivered by Departments, and short workshops facilitated by Personal and Professional Development (PPD) within Departments and Schools. After three years of widespread delivery (reaching 450-500



research students each year) and following an in-depth evaluation of impact on practice, the format, materials and delivery of the training will be enhanced to strengthen relevance to academic disciplines and practices. PPD will continue to co-ordinate the 'Teaching Associates Programme' ('TAP', for research students and early-career research staff who teach), a programme which is accredited by the Higher Education Academy and which provides those who complete it successfully with a nationally recognised qualification in teaching. With HEIs now required to publish information concerning the qualifications of those who teach, TAP provides a valuable opportunity for those who seek academic positions in other UK HEIs, as well as contributing to the enhancement of the quality of teaching provided by its participants within Cambridge. Preparations are underway for the re-accreditation of TAP in 2015.

Meeting anticipated needs for technicians/apprenticeships

The University sees the development of technicians as a priority need. To ensure technicians will have the skills required to support future University activity a small project during 2014 is planned to identify the technical skill shortage within the University taking into account recruitment difficulties, age profile of technicians, future anticipated risks. The project will propose training and other activities to address these shortage areas. It will also review whether the number, range and level of apprenticeships in the University are appropriate for our needs and if it is proposed that the number needs to increase, give consideration to the mechanism and resource for this. The final part of the review will cover how technicians undergoing training are being employed as a range of different models are currently used e.g. supernumerary, under filling a graded post, in a graded post, fixed term contract. Additional actions will include enhancing the website to increase access to information regarding technician training, sharing good practice regarding the different models for technician training between departments and developing the job family classification on the CHRIS system so that further useful information to support technical skills development can be produced.

Supporting Organisational Change

The HR School teams will continue to provide support to departments and institutions planning and implementing change in activity and structures, with closer working with the School Administration being evident over the future period. A written 'toolkit' was developed in 2011 to support the process and provide a framework for managing the stages of change activity. It identifies the key stages in planning and implementing a change programme and the role of the HR team in supporting the department or institution through such a process. The rate of organisational change across the University and the complexity and scale of some of the staffing re-structures has highlighted the need for a review of that guidance and further development of a project based approach to managing such change. The Division will undertake a review of this guidance in light of changing legislation and the experience of recent re-structure activity.

The IT Infrastructure Change Project

In 2010-11, the Council appointed a panel to undertake a review of IT infrastructure and support in the University. The recommendations were approved by the Regent House in July 2013 and included the need for the University, Schools and institutions to review the career structure and employment arrangements of its computing support staff with the aim of improving mobility of individuals and the flexibility of teams.



This is seen as a major piece of work to which the HR Division will contribute, ensuring a professional (and relevant) skills framework is available to support such career structures.

Supporting the development of the Postdoctoral Strategy

OPDA has been established as part of the HR Resources function. The HR Division will support the activity of the OPDA in raising the profile of post docs in Cambridge through operational support by the UAS HR team, engaging with joint initiatives (for example appraisal processes for post docs, mentoring, career development and by sharing relevant developments, data and financial resources). The HR Director will be a member of the OPDA Steering Committee and the Assistant HR Director a member of the Management Committee. This will allow for integration of their activity with core HR priorities where appropriate. As a member of the HR Committee the Director of OPDA will have the opportunity to influence policy and procedural developments in relation to the specific needs of post docs as appropriate.

Academic Titles

A review of academic titles will be carried out to ensure that academics external to the University are able to benchmark titles and understand the relative position of academic roles. This will include a survey of the current procedures of leading universities and any proposals for change will be progressed through the University machinery and Regent House.

iii. Operational Delivery

This section relates to improving operational and 'day-to-day' processes.

Improving processes and access to HR Information

The storage, handling, protection and manipulation of HR data can be used to pay staff, measure performance, assess the need for new initiatives, comply with equalities and Data Protection legislation and appropriately share information within the University and with external partners.

The HR information system, CHRIS, provides secure employment information, simplified HR/Payroll processes and improved Management Information. Within the limits of data protection legislation, CHRIS enables input, amendment and retrieval of information at a local level. CHRIS and associated HR systems also facilitate key aspects of manager and employee self-service (including recording of sickness absence and processing of leavers by managers/administrators and, for employees, the ability to update certain personal details and view payslips). HR systems will be developed over the two year period further to enable:

- Employees to book annual leave
- Recording of staff review and development information (including appraisals)
- Enhanced recording of absence data
- Electronic viewing of P60s
- Electronic sabbatical leave database (calculates entitlement and research objectives)



Modernising work practices in the Occupational Health and Safety Service (OHSS)

Following a review of the operation of the Safety Office and Occupational Health Service in 2009/2010, it was agreed to merge the two services to create the OHSS with the goal of improving legislative compliance, fulfilment of statutory obligations and enhanced service provision within the available budget. The merger took into consideration operational restructuring, accommodation requirements and budgetary constraints whilst supporting the overall HR strategy.

By developing close working relationships with individuals with specific health and safety expertise in Schools and departments, it has been possible to improve the knowledge base of the work of the Safety Office and apply this across the University without increasing the number of centrally funded OHSS staff.

A comprehensive schedule of auditing continues to ensure the resources of the OHSS are targeted proportionately and in a risk-focussed manner across the University.

The environmental monitoring service continues to be enhanced and will benefit significantly from the geographical relocation and merger of the two services so that monitoring can support the work of Occupational Health, now co-located with Health and Safety at Mill Lane.

OHSS services undertaken for the University continue to be offered to colleges at a fee, with money raised supporting the operation of the office whilst helping reduce the risk to the wider University community.

Modernising Recruitment Practices (including web recruitment and social media)

As the HE sector becomes increasingly competitive, the University's continued success is dependent on attracting and retaining an increasingly international, diverse workforce. In order to attract, recruit and retain the best applicants, the recruitment and induction processes must be effective, fair and efficient. Over recent years, the HR Division has delivered various improvements to recruitment systems.

Future work to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of recruitment will continue over the medium term, with the key deliverables being:

- The completion of the development and implementation of the Web Recruitment System, which enables applicants to apply online and introduces systems-driven efficiencies for departmental administration.
- The completion of the development of other recruitment-related systems which will streamline the grading, immigration and starter processes and collect employee data required by HESA more effectively.
- A new database, reporting capabilities and electronic timesheets for the Temporary Employment Service, enabling it to increase its capacity and continue to deliver a highly responsive and effective service to departments.



- A modernised approach to advertising, which will support the University's reputation as an employer of choice and increase its ability to attract the best. This will include developing an advertising presence on social media such as Linked In and Twitter.
- The launch of the updated Probation Policy and new supporting documents, which will help departments to support the performance of new employees more effectively.
- The delivery of new on-line recruitment training provision.
- Enhanced support on selection methods, including enhanced guidance and off-the-shelf tools, to help ensure that recruiters are using robust and reliable means of assessing candidates.
- A more comprehensive approach to pre-employment screening and safeguarding, through the implementation of a new Screening Policy and an updated Working with Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy.

Immigration Compliance

The University increasingly competes in an international labour market to attract the most talented academic and research staff. In Michaelmas 2012/13, the HR Division commissioned an internal immigration audit. In response to the findings of the audit, a programme of work was completed to improve compliance through developing improved immigration guidance, documents and processes. In 2013/14 and 2014/15, the HR Division will build upon the work completed to date by:

- Developing an online system for visa and immigration administration, which will deliver operational efficiencies for departments and HR and provide a structured framework for compliance
- Subscribing to Premium Customer Service from UK Visas and Immigration, which will provide a dedicated account manager and improved services such as expedited return of passports
- Operating an on-going quality assurance process within the HR Compliance Team to ensure that immigration documents are processed in accordance with immigration rules
- Continuing to highlight immigration considerations to departments through meetings, workshops and communications. Guidance and templates will be updated in line with legislative changes

Onboarding and Resourcing

The HR Division will continue to actively participate in the cross divisional work on improving the onboarding experience of new starters, particularly those from abroad. This will include a dedicated web site and enhanced joined up support ranging from childcare to housing. In addition it is envisaged that a key challenge in resourcing will be the relatively high housing costs in Cambridge. This is a potential barrier to attracting new staff and a range of new policies (e.g. widening access to the Shared Equity Scheme) will be reviewed and presented to the University.

Performance Management

The Staff Review and Development Scheme (SRD) provides the framework for undertaking appraisals and identifying development needs. Its aim is to enhance work effectiveness and



facilitate career development in addition to providing an opportunity for development discussions, future work will include:

- ensuring staff have the opportunity to discuss their performance and professional development with a clear understanding of what is required of them
- developing a more effective and meaningful appraisal system for all staff which is delivered annually and where outcomes (e.g. training needs) are identified and acted on
- proactively addressing areas of difficulty in the career progression of all staff, particularly in the context of widening the diversity of the workforce

Improving our Competitiveness in Pay and Reward

To continue to offer a competitive and comprehensive reward package to support academic excellence by attracting and retaining the best staff available internationally and rewarding high levels of performance and contribution.

The Division will support the quality and capacity of the HERA grading process by the development of a web-based grading system, further development of standard role profiles to facilitate grading decisions, and a review of the grading appeal procedure to ensure it is fit for purpose. In addition the job evaluation processes will be streamlined by providing a larger library of generic role profiles and job descriptions which will assist institutions in defining new roles clearly.

A crucial strategic priority will be to successfully implement changes to the pay and reward structure for senior academic and academic related staff in response to significant changes in the external employment market. The proposals were approved by the University on 31 May 2013 (Reporter, 6302, 2012–13, p.423) for implementation from 1 January 2014 and are summarised below:

- the scale of stipends for the University Senior Lectureship will be extended by two contribution points with an associated contribution reward scheme,
- the scale of stipends within each band of Grade 12 will be extended (bands 1-3 by 2 points, band 4 by 6 points)
- market supplements will be replaced with:
 - Advanced Contribution Supplements
 - Market Pay

In addition, a Special Joint Negotiating Committee (SJNC) was established by the University and Assistants Joint Board (UAJB) in Lent term 2013, with negotiations leading to the following changes, effective from 1 January 2015, subject to Regent House approval.

- Increasing the service points of grades 1, 5 and 6, by changing the lowest contribution point to a service point.
- Improvements to the Contribution Reward Scheme, including a) the ability to reward sustained contribution and to take into account where an employee has been on the same incremental point of their grade without an incremental point change, and b) increase funding of the Contribution Reward Scheme by £20,000 per annum.



The contribution based reward and progression schemes and promotion arrangements for all staff categories will be reviewed and updated over the following 3 years and new arrangements introduced as required. For example, the introduction of promotion arrangements for senior research staff are to be introduced in 2013/14. The above changes will help ensure that the University pay and reward structures continue to meet the need for flexibility, legal compliance and employee career development requirements.

The University will also continue to review research and consider new or emerging pay, reward and benefits initiatives and developments in the national and international marketplace, to ensure its reward package remains competitive. The HR Division will also aim to enhance policies and procedures on international remuneration to facilitate the attraction and retention of staff from outside the UK, and ensure that market pay data and benchmarking is better used to inform pay decisions and reward strategy in a meaningful way.

The University remains committed to national pay bargaining but will develop its capabilities so that the options to adopt a more hybrid or completely localised approach remain open should, at some stage in the future, this become the best solution for the University. It is envisaged that much consultation will be required to define and gain consensus on the University's position on national pay bargaining and other pay and reward matters.

Over the last three years changes have been made to the University pension schemes to ensure they remain affordable for the long term and the risk is manageable. Over the next three years the key challenge will be to build up awareness and knowledge among staff on the pension provisions and legislative changes (including taxation) to assist staff in managing their pension affairs.

To accompany the financial benefits provided to staff, the University will continue to support and expand its tax efficient benefits under CAMbens to provide a varied benefits package which reflects the variety of the University's staff. The Scheme includes cycle and low CO² car lease schemes, payroll charitable giving, childcare vouchers, a workplace nursery scheme, a workplace gym and an affinity benefits programme offering staff discounts at over 3,000 local and national retailers.

The Division will develop ways to better communicate to staff the value of their total reward package, though the use of a web based total reward calculator or total reward statements. Social media will also be used to promote the wide range of staff benefits on offer e.g. Facebook and Twitter.

Strengthening Employee Relations

The culture informing employee relations should be one in which employees, Trade Unions and the University recognise that their respective interests are best served by ensuring the University's success. The University holds regular Partnership Working Group meetings and termly UAJB meetings with the assistant staff trade unions and over the last 3 years has introduced a number of joint working initiatives to ensure productive collaboration on areas of common interest, and allow constructive dialogue where interests diverge, including:



- Bi-monthly Joint HR Project Meetings to ensure that union representatives are involved and informed at an early stage of new project development
- New joint working-group structure for developing significant new University policies e.g. capability and sickness absence
- Termly HR Network Group meetings to provide an opportunity for the Diversity networks to contribute to early HR Policy Development
- Greater use of Special Joint Negotiation Committees for large new projects affecting more than one bargaining unit e.g. CPS pension scheme changes, pay and reward.

The University will continue to improve communications and implement progressive employment practices.

The University will continue to review and develop modern employment policies which are both compliant with legislation, support the needs of the institution and are applicable to and understood by all.

A number of critical employment relations policies will be developed and introduced in 2013-14, including a Sickness Absence Policy and a revised Dignity at work Policy. It is anticipated that these policies and associated training and communications will equip managers and trade union representatives with the knowledge, skills and confidence to resolve employee relations issues at the earliest opportunity by informal or formal mechanisms.

Supporting retirements/flexible retirements and contribution thereafter

HR will continue to monitor the Retirement Policy and the rationale for an EJRA for University Officers. A new initiative developed during 2013-14 will be an annual information event for academic staff approaching retirement providing detailed guidance on the options available to staff as they approach the University retirement age. This will assist both staff in planning for retirement or for a continuation of work and will facilitate earlier discussion with Heads of Institutions and thus allow for better succession planning. The HR Business teams and the Pensions Office will continue to provide advice on an individual basis to ensure that early retirement and flexible retirement requests are dealt with in a timely way and that where staff wish to request an extension of employment, or a Voluntary Research Agreement, the terms on which such an agreement might be made are clear. They will also work with Heads of Institutions to support succession planning arising from retirements.

iv. Strengthening Employee Engagement and Motivation

This section relates to the initiatives undertaken to improve staff engagement and well being.

Focusing on Workplace Wellbeing

The scope of wellbeing is wide, taking in equality and diversity, health and safety, the mental and physical health of staff, childcare and the overall provision of a professional and high-quality working environment. A range of services are provided which include:



- Staff can access the University's own Counselling Service for help with work and personal issues. The service will be reviewed to ensure it remains the best approach to the availability of this provision.
- Occupational Health who assist Departments through the provision of specialist advice to managers and employees in the management of individuals on long-term sickness absence or with complex work-related ill-health problems, including conditions which are covered by the disability provision of the Equality Act. Occupational Health will continue to develop individual strategies enabling a return to work, as well as assistance with organizational strategies to reduce the cost of sickness absence. The different statutory health monitoring programmes provided by Occupational Health also support wellbeing.
- Informative self-help sessions on wellbeing will continue to be collaboratively run by Counselling, Occupational Health and Health and Safety focusing on the management of Workplace Stress.
- The Wellbeing Steering Group has produced an Annual Wellbeing Report, Action Plan and Wellbeing Strategy document that were approved by the HR Committee and Health & Safety Executive Committee, and are taking their work forward during 2013/14 through the sub-groups that have been set up, including reviewing the timing and sessions for People Matter week. The University staff support services will continue to collectively host events and activities for the annual People Matter Week (PMW), which is open to all staff and focuses on many different aspects of staff well-being. PMW is coordinated by the University's Stress and Well-Being Forum.
- A Staff Survey has been conducted in five institutions in the University to date (the UAS, University Library, ICE, and the Schools of Clinical Medicine and Biological Sciences) with over 4,800 staff in scope. The HR Division will continue to support its completion across other parts of the University and bring forward a strategy for regular "sample" surveys to be carried out. There are questions within the survey related to wellbeing, and work will be undertaken in response to the survey results.
- In 2014 the HR Committee will be asked to approve the development and introduction of an online leaver survey. This will enable the University to better understand why staff choose to leave and identify any issues of concern which may undermine the ability to retain key individuals. Data from the leaver survey can then be used to inform central and local HR priorities as appropriate to prevent healthy levels of staff turnover becoming a damaging retention problem.
- The Sports Review in 2013 proposes that sport could and should be a significant component of the University's wellbeing offer to staff. The proposed Sports Committee will have a member nominated by the HR Committee to represent staff interests/ The HR Division will support initiatives to make facilities available to staff.

HR Communications

It is essential that staff are informed of policies, procedures and developments in a timely and efficient manner. In 2013/14, HR will revise and update the HR intranet pages in order to ensure that those wishing to use the intranet to access HR policies and processes can do so with the assurance that the information is easily accessible, current and accurate. A monthly HR Bulletin will support communication with institutions and the success of this initiative will be monitored carefully in order that further development is undertaken. HR will actively contribute to the wider UAS communication strategy.



Embedding Equality and Diversity

The four overarching objectives for the University's Equality and Diversity approach remain:

- ensuring inclusive high level support for and participation in the progression and promotion of Equality and Diversity within the University
- raising the profile of Equality and Diversity as an integral part of the University's culture and purpose
- ensuring the Athena Swan Silver Award at University level is achieved during 2014 or 2015.
- ensuring that the University is compliant in terms of the public Equality Duties for Gender, Race and Disability and other equalities legislation and requirements under the Public Equality Duties (Equality Act 2010)

These aims will be progressed as follows:

The University will continue to ensure compliance with equalities law and the Public Sector Equality Duties, through the adoption of the Combined Equality Scheme which outlines the key functions that sustain compliance and Equality Objectives which highlight priority areas to progress. The Objectives have a 4-year lifespan and will need to be evaluated and reviewed by 2016.

In addition, the University will continue to undertake biennial Equal Pay Reviews with interim refreshed data reports. In 2013-14 the University intends to embark on an Equal Pay Review for ethnicity and nationality, extending this area of practice to help identify matters of race, religion and internationality within a global institution. This work will be supported by the InterConnect Working Group and related engagement activities, including high profile events, as part of the InterConnect initiative.

The online E&D training module will assist the University in increasing awareness of equality in the workplace. The target is for at least a 50% uptake across all staff by 2015 (and seek to ensure that the majority of staff have completed the module by the end of 2016) as well as targeted groups for higher levels of successful completion.

The establishment of the Senior Gender Equality Network (SGEN) that took place in 2012-13 will continue, with opportunities for SGEN members to meet and address key issues of interest and concern.

The Cambridge' book and web project will launch a book in March 2014 as part of the University's International Women's Day programme. The project aims to remain a mechanism to capture career insights from women at the University and promote these both internally and externally, so providing important role models for others over the coming years.



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Supporting STEM institutions to obtain Athena SWAN recognition (and the agenda equality charter mark for non-STEM institutions) are areas of considerable growth, with increasing numbers of Departments participating and the University aspiring to achieve a Silver Award. The University will aim to enhance its University level Bronze status to Silver status in 2014 or 2015.

Governance and Benchmarking

The HR Priorities will be delivered according to a project management methodology in order to track progress and delivery against timelines. The priorities will be monitored in accordance with the process set up for Key Performance Indicators in the UAS.