

People Strategy

2024–2027

Unlocking potential,
enabling excellence.

[cam.ac.uk](https://www.cam.ac.uk)



Introduction

This strategy sets out our commitment to our people over the next three years. It aims to make the University of Cambridge a great place to work, for our existing colleagues and those we are yet to welcome. It has been developed following extensive engagement with colleagues across the University, as well as a thorough analysis of people-related data. It will help us focus our efforts on the activities that will have the most impact on our employee experience and on the University as a whole.

The last few years have also brought changes in employee expectations. Colleagues have different views about how they want to work, where they want to work and what support they would like to progress their careers. This strategy and its supporting action plan propose ways to meet these different needs, but we will need to be responsive as expectations continue to evolve in the coming years.



A workplace that is grounded in the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion will enable us to foster a thriving community in which people can do their best work and reach their potential. It will also enable us to develop wider policies and strategies that actively support our ambitious sustainability agenda. Equality, diversity and inclusion is therefore not listed as a separate theme but forms a 'golden thread' that runs through everything we do.

Our workforce consists of academic, research and professional services colleagues. This strategy seeks to enable our people to maximise their potential in support of the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.



We are proud of what we have achieved over the last three years and committed to further advancing our people agenda in support of the University's mission. We have overhauled our Dignity at Work Policy to drive positive culture change and launched a new Hybrid Working Policy to enable colleagues to work more flexibly.

We have introduced new career pathways and titles for our academic colleagues. We have opened a fourth nursery to increase our childcare provision. We have voluntarily recognised the University and College Union and extended the scope of our existing recognition agreements with Unite and UNISON to strengthen local industrial relations. We have improved our support measures for colleagues facing financial hardship and made additional payments to mitigate the rising cost of living. However, we know there is still much more to be done.



Mission & values

Our mission

The mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.



Freedom
of thought and
expression

Freedom
from
discrimination

Our core values

Our values underpin the way we work together towards common goals. They inform the behaviours that we expect to see from our colleagues on a day-to-day basis.



The Strategy

Strategies are, at their heart, about adapting to changes in our environment. As an institution and a community, we have experienced an unprecedented level of change over the last few years. Brexit, a global pandemic, industrial action, a ferocious war for talent and the cost-of-living crisis have all had a big impact on our people and the way we work. The outside world continues to change at a rapid pace, and we must strengthen our ability to adapt and respond.

While this strategy applies to all staff, specific approaches will be taken to address the needs, aspirations, and challenges of different groups.

Our strategy revolves around the following five themes:

- 1 **Talent attraction**
- 2 **Reward & recognition**
- 3 **Talent management**
- 4 **Culture & community**
- 5 **Organisational effectiveness**

Talent attraction

We will attract and recruit a diverse range of great talent.

How?

Pay

We will work to make our pay offer more competitive and agile.

Recruitment

We will further improve the way we attract, select, and appoint to provide a fair, inclusive and an excellent candidate experience.

Employer Value Proposition (EVP)

We will define our unique employer value proposition recognising the needs of different staff groups, to articulate more clearly what the University has to offer, our values, organisational culture, and the specific benefits of working at Cambridge*.

*e.g. our unique policy on intellectual property and pursuits and our Shared Equity Scheme for residential property purchases.

Workforce planning

We will introduce effective workforce planning to help us to understand the evolving profile and needs of our organisation. This will enable us to predict resource requirements, address skills shortages and better understand our recruitment challenges.

Induction

We will develop an impactful welcome, making sure that all new colleagues receive the information, resources and support they need on joining. This will include an overview of how the University is structured and governed, together with opportunities to engage in university life.



Reward & recognition

We will reward and recognise our people for the contribution they make to the University.

How?

Pay review

We will complete our review of our current pay structure and pay policies.

Total reward

We will introduce a 'total reward' approach to better articulate the pay and benefits that make up our overall remuneration package.

Pay gaps

We will take proactive action to further reduce our pay gaps.

Contracts

We will review our contractual arrangements to ensure they are appropriate, fair and inclusive.

Recognition

We will encourage the use of non-financial rewards to make sure that employees feel recognised and valued for their work.

2



Talent management

We will enable our people to achieve their potential and develop their skills inline with the changing needs of the organisation.

3



How?

Professional Services Career Development Framework

We will introduce a career development framework for professional services staff to help colleagues plan their career journey.

Leaders and managers

We will seek to provide high quality development opportunities to prepare current and future leaders and managers to perform effectively in their roles, with a specific focus on academic leaders.

Technician Commitment

We will support and develop technical staff through the delivery of the Technician Commitment Action Plan.

Learning and development

We will review our approach to learning and development across the University and implement well-designed opportunities that enable all colleagues to reach their potential and develop their skills in line with the changing needs of the organisation, taking into account the needs of different staff groups.

High quality, impactful continual conversations

We will set clear expectations and manage workloads through continual conversations and regular appraisals.

Apprenticeships

We will further promote the use of apprenticeships to recruit and develop staff to develop their professional skills, achieve nationally recognised qualifications, whilst growing the University's workforce talent.

Culture & community

We will develop a culture that enables our community to work together and thrive.

How?

Equality, diversity, and inclusion

We will implement our plans, commit to best practice and utilise relevant charters to be more representative of the diverse communities we serve, ensuring an inclusive approach to decision-making.

Workload

We will review approaches to workload management for all staff groups by encouraging collaborative conversations to inform prioritisation, ensuring workloads are prioritised allowing time for personal development.

Research culture

We will cement our position as sector leaders in the professional and career development of our research community, promoting the highest levels of research excellence while working purposefully to foster positive research cultures.

Employee voice

We will nurture a culture where our people feel valued, heard, and informed and can give and receive feedback through meaningful dialogue.

Health & Wellbeing

We will make health and wellbeing an integral part of our working environment by offering a more coordinated and accessible range of health and wellbeing services.



4



5

Organisational effectiveness

We will improve our systems, processes, and practices to enable us to work more efficiently and effectively.

How?

HR Transformation Programme

We will improve our people processes and systems to enable better performance, engagement, data reporting, compliance, connectivity and enhance self-service to improve the employment experience for colleagues across the University. This will release capacity to support the academic mission of the University more directly.

Reimagining our professional services

We will reimagine our professional services to optimise our organisational design, build a stronger sense of community amongst staff and make sure they have the skills, support, systems and structure they need to do great work. This will improve the support provided to academic colleagues, enabling them to focus their efforts on research and teaching.

Collaboration

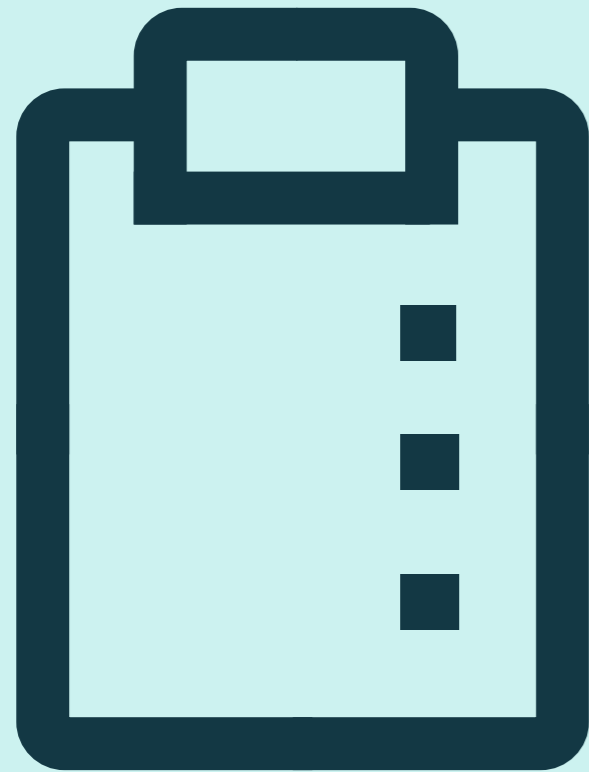
We will support collaboration between staff groups to enhance performance, improve workload management and cultivate positive working relationships through communities of practice and other groups.

Ways of working

We will continue to embed new ways of working across the University enabled by improved spaces and better use of technology.

Measuring our success

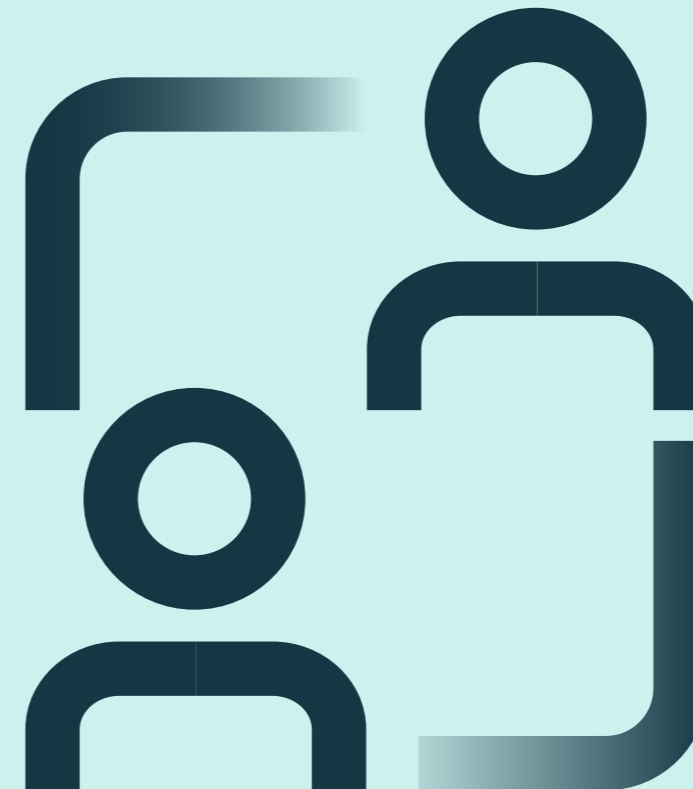
We will evidence outcomes with metrics and qualitative surveys. Accordingly, we will regularly assess our progress in delivering the outcomes of the People Strategy via:



- **Internal community metrics**
an overall internal ‘satisfaction’ measure via regular pulse surveys.
- **Process metrics**
measures of the efficiency and effectiveness of systems and processes.
- **Talent metrics**
assessment of the effectiveness of our talent and progression.
- **Financial metrics**
quantifying the cost of processes and programmes.
- **Programme and project metrics**
assessment of delivery against key strategic initiatives e.g. delivery to time, cost, and quality measures.

Enabling the strategy to happen

For this strategy to be successfully delivered, we will ensure effective collaboration and engagement by:



- **Listening, understanding and responding** to the needs of our leaders, managers and colleagues.
- **Engaging with colleagues and representative bodies** and involving them in planning and delivery of our action plans
- **Continually reviewing and improving our service delivery** in providing proactive, pragmatic, and strategic advice and guidance to empower and develop our people to deliver.

