

UHR Plan

2020-2025

WHAT DO WE DO?

Enable, Energise, Equip, Empower, Engage, Explain

OUR OBJECTIVES

- High performance in HR teams
- The voice of HR in HE
- Working in partnership

STRATEGIC FOCUS

- Excellence for the future
- Experience and inclusion
- Energy and empowerment

OUR SERVICES

- Identifying and sharing good practice
- Professional development at every stage of a HR career
- Shaping the people agenda in HR
- Identifying efficiency gains

HOW DO WE WORK?

- Collaboration and co-operation
- Wide membership engagement
- Champions and experts within membership
- Small core staff team with volunteer support

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE

- Effective delivery of core activities
- Increased member engagement, both individual and HR teams
- The HR voice has impact within and beyond HE
- Financial sustainability and member attraction and retention

UHR is the membership organisation for human resource and people professionals in higher education in the UK and Ireland. We have developed this plan in consultation with our members.

Excellent people management is vital to the success and sustainability of higher education institutions. Thriving, engaged staff will deliver enhanced performance and ensure universities and their stakeholders achieve their objectives. UHR enables its members, and their HR professionals, to lead this.

We aim to:

- **Enable and energise** HR staff at all levels to celebrate achievements and to access and share information, learning and good practice.
- **Equip and empower** HR staff to develop the knowledge and skills to succeed and optimise their contribution throughout their career in higher education.
- **Engage and explain** so that we can advocate for HR in higher education and inform and influence decision makers on people issues.

Our objectives are to:

1. Foster credible, sustainable high performance in HR, OD and People Services teams, and others who have people management responsibility, building people capacity and enhancing culture and organisational effectiveness in higher education to embrace future changes, opportunities and challenges.
2. Be the voice of the HR profession within and beyond HE, promoting the people agenda as a priority for everyone.
3. Work in partnership with other related organisations to create synergies and efficiencies for our members.





Our strategic focus areas for 2020-2025 are:

1. **Excellence for the future** – organisational transformation and culture change, efficiency and effectiveness in an environment of uncertainty and international mobility challenges; embracing digital, technological and other developments; enabling HR to take a key role in anticipating and preparing for changes ahead affecting the entire employee lifecycle.
2. **Experience and inclusion** – building staff trust and contribution, reward and recognition, championing diversity and inclusion, combatting pay gaps, and preventing and dealing effectively with harassment.
3. **Energy and empowerment** – informing, supporting and developing HR staff at all levels and stages of their career, increasing the number and spread of HR staff we reach within our member organisations, and attracting high performing HR professionals to develop their career in higher education.



These focus areas will be embedded in the services we provide:

- **Identifying good practice, learning and benchmarking opportunities within and beyond our member organisations.** We will celebrate success and develop and challenge existing thinking and practice by identifying where higher education institutions and others have developed solutions and learnt from their experience to achieve success in the focus areas. We will do this through: the UHR awards; the UHR CUPA bursary; propagating self-sustaining communities of practice, special interest and 'task and finish' groups; and by UHR involvement in conferences and events organised by others.
- **Creating opportunities to share good practice, learning and information with and between our members.** We will provide networking opportunities through regional and national meetings and events and digital platforms. We will produce know-how guides, tool kits or other resources where others have not already done so; signpost resources produced by other organisations; and identify those which could be developed and tailored further to meet the needs of HR staff in higher education.
- **Facilitating targeted professional development for HR staff at all stages of their career in higher education.** We will continue to review our portfolio to ensure it meets the core and changing needs of our members and includes opportunities for people to engage face-to-face and virtually.



- **Highlighting, informing and shaping the people agenda within HE.** We will ensure that we use our voice to influence others by: representing HR professionals in sector-wide discussions, working groups and policy work relevant to people management; producing topical thought pieces; disseminating and selectively commissioning research; and commenting on people matters in HE. We will identify ‘champions’ and experts within the higher education HR community who can be the ‘go-to’ contact for others and offer robust and well-informed comment to debate in the media. We will designate Executive members or others to lead on themes or topics (supported by UHR staff).

- **Identifying potential efficiency gains from combined purchasing power.** We will do this by building partnerships with commercial or HE sector organisations that offer products and services at a more cost-effective rate to UHR members.

These are not discrete areas of activity. We will embrace the synergies between them, for example by using popular/lively threads on our discussion board to identify knowledge gaps to be met via communication, events, continuing professional development, research etc. We provide a combination of all of these services to bring people together to focus on our themes at our annual conference with speakers from inside and outside the sector, workshops, exhibits, awards and multiple networking opportunities.

We will deliver these services through:

Collaboration and co-operation

We are committed to working in partnership with organisations within and beyond HR and HE for the benefit of our members. Targeted collaboration brings mutual benefits and avoids duplication of effort and cost. It enables us to share resources, expertise and good practice, gain efficiencies, and increase the influence and effectiveness of HR, and enhance people management, within and beyond HE.

To support this, we:

- are party to a Memorandum of Understanding between the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development (CIPD), Healthcare People Management Association (HPMA) and Public Services People Managers Association (PPMA)
- share services with the British Universities Finance Directors’ Group (BUFDG), the HE Strategic Planners’ Association (HESPA), the Association of University Directors of Estates (AUDE) and the Council of Higher Education Internal Auditors (CHEIA) under the ‘umbrella’ of Professional HE Services (PHES).
- have established relationships with the Universities & Colleges Employers’ Association (UCEA), Advance HE, the Association of Heads of University Administration (AHUA), Universities UK (UUK), GuildHE, the Committee of University Chairs (CUC), and other professional associations.

Where work is already taking place, we seek to be involved if UHR can add value, but not to duplicate or compete with other organisations also supported by subscriptions from our members.

UHR staff

We have a small core team with expertise, some shared with other sector associations, who can research, communicate and provide appropriate leadership and support for UHR and its members. We bring in further expertise and support on strategic or temporary projects as required.

Champions and experts from within the membership

We identify, encourage and equip volunteers at all levels in the HR profession in our member organisations, to advocate and engage others on topics of concern and interest. This includes members of regional groups of HR and People Directors and our national executive.

Wider member engagement

We will engage with HR staff at all levels in member HEIs, to identify and meet their requirements, energise, empower, add value and build meaningful connections, including clearer UHR induction resources for HR staff, making it easier for individual HR staff to access these.

Sustainable income sources

We recognise the financial pressures on our member organisations. We have a core plus model so that all members have access to website resources, the discussion boards, regional meetings, some professional development and special interest activities, and have the flexibility to buy in to additional services such as our development events and annual conference.

Revising UHR subscription levels and generation of additional income from other appropriate sources will enable us to continue to provide excellent value to our members and deliver our objectives, whilst reaching a balanced operating budget by 2022.

A proportion of our existing reserves will be being used for strategic and specific projects to support the implementation of this strategy, including encouraging better use of technology and digital tools to enable virtual working and meetings and easy sign-up.



Our success measures are:

Sustaining the overall number of member organisations through the period of the strategy, and gaining new members where appropriate.

100% increase in individual HR staff registered to use the UHR website and services by 2025.

Balanced and sustainable budget by 2022.

Annual conference – attendance is sustained or increased, with at least 75% of member HEIs sending at least one delegate over the period to 2025.

Member engagement with services – all member HEIs have at least one HR staff member regularly participating in regional groups or other activity.

Continued influence on HE and sector and people profession policy – UHR is represented or inputs to relevant discussions, task groups and work with key stakeholders and members are asked to judge awards and similar sector and profession-leading activity.

Increased joint work with partners – where there is common interest, seeking to partner with key stakeholders, commercial partners, both within and beyond HE, e.g. in joint publications and statements.

Career progression measurement – where possible, monitor the career trajectories of participants in UHR professional development, to identify where UHR has strengthened HR capacity in HE, e.g. Emerging Leaders and Aspiring Business Partners' career progression.

HR staff in member HEIs can cite examples of UHR's enabling them better to deliver their own organisation's people strategy.



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