

Venue Details	Eversheds Sutherland, Water Ln, Holbeck, Leeds LS11 5DR Here's the Google Maps link for the venue, which is a short walk from Leeds City Station and you can find more details on how to get there and the building's accessibility on the Eversheds webpage .
Speaker Details	Speaker bios can be found at the end of the programme

09:45	<i>Registration and refreshments</i>	
10:00	Welcome and opening remarks (with UHR Update)	The UHR Team
10:05 (15 min)	Table Icebreaker Exercise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delegate introductions to table 	Emma Brookes and Sophie Crouchman , Strategic Projects and Research Managers, UHR
10:20 (50 min)	Keynote Address Rachel Brealey, Chief Operating Officer, University of Leeds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Title: Change in Higher Education Session format: 30 min address, 20 min Q&A 	Rachel Brealey , Chief Operating Officer, University of Leeds
11:10	<i>Refreshments and Networking (20 min)</i>	
11:30 (45 min)	Regional Case Study: Inclusion is the Business of the Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Colleagues from Northumbria University will share their project to improve protected characteristics disclosure to strengthen inclusion, people experience and progress towards eliminating pay gaps. The project earned them a place on the UHR Awards shortlist and has some clear learning for other HE providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading with purpose and transparency Fixing the pathways Aligning categories and cleaning legacy data Measuring what matters Focus on key learning points and takeaways 30 min presentation, 15 min Q&A 	Lianne Hurford , Director of People Experience, Northumbria University Rachel Brown , Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Northumbria University
12:15	AI in HR in HE: From Insight to Action	Emma Brookes and Sophie Crouchman ,

(45 min)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discover the key lessons emerging from UHR's AI Workshop series, hear how People teams across the sector are approaching AI adoption, and collaborate with peers to identify practical actions you can take back to your own institution. 15 min presentation, 5 min Q&A 35 min group brainstorming 	Strategic Projects and Research Managers, UHR
13:00	Lunch and Networking (60 min)	
14:00 (50 min)	<p>Legal Focus: Key changes to the harassment rules in the Equality Act – what do these mean for HE employers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In October 2026, the ERA will make significant changes to the rules on harassment under the Equality Act. Third party harassment rules will potentially make universities and colleges liable for harassment of their staff by students, visitors and members of the public. In addition, employers will be required to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of their staff. This session will explore these developments, including their interaction with duties in relation to free speech, their practical impact and the steps which HE employers should be taking. 20 min presentation, 10 min Q&A 20 min structured group discussion on implications for practice and brainstorming to mitigate impact 	<p>Chris Mordue, Partner, Eversheds Sutherland</p> <p>Rebecca Denvers, Principal Associate, Eversheds Sutherland</p>
14:50	Refreshments and Networking (15 min)	
15:05 (50 min)	<p>HRD Insight Panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A session featuring insights from HR directors, focusing on in-depth discussion on the current opportunities for HR in HE and practical takeaways for delegates 40 min discussion, 10 min Q&A 	<p>Katy Camidge, Chief People Officer, University of Law</p> <p>San Randhawa, HR Director, Leeds Beckett University</p> <p>Rachael Millhouse, HR Director University of York</p>
15:55	What next? Summary and have a safe journey home	The UHR team

Our UHR Connects North Speakers:

	<p>Rachel Brealey, Chief Operating Officer, University of Leeds</p> <p>As Chief Operating Officer (COO) at the University of Leeds, Rachel is a key member of the University Executive Group (UEG), supporting the Vice-Chancellor and President in the leadership, management and effective operation of the University. Rachel contributes significantly to the implementation of the University strategy and delivering the goals across the themes of community, culture and impact. She manages and leads strategic change, and ensures the efficient use of resources and the quality of service provision.</p> <p>Rachel is primarily responsible for University-wide operations and the direct service delivery of key corporate functions, including digital and information services, marketing and student recruitment, student education and experience, advancement, campus innovation and development and facilities management, strategic transformational change programmes and faculty operations.</p> <p>Rachel has over than 25 years' experience in the higher education sector, having started her career as President of the Students' Union at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST). Prior to her appointment as Chief Operating Officer at the University of Leeds, she was Director of Faculty Operations in Biology, Medicine and Health and joint Portfolio Director of a pan-University transformational change programme for Professional Services at Manchester. She has been involved in a wide range of large-scale change programmes, including the 2004 merger of UMIST and the University of Manchester, and the development of the Manchester Engineering Campus Development (MECD), a £400M capital build project.</p>
	<p>Lianne Hurford, Director of People Experience, Northumbria University</p> <p>Lianne is a People Experience and Organisational Development leader with over 20 years' experience helping organisations build capability and improve performance through people, culture and continuous improvement. Her career has spanned organisational development, employee experience, HR leadership, organisational design, strategic change and transformation.</p> <p>As Director of People Experience and Organisational Development at Northumbria University, Lianne leads activity focused on organisational capability, employee experience, leadership development, culture, continuous improvement and strategic projects. Lianne has led the development of people strategies, employee value propositions, organisational design initiatives and</p>

	<p>large-scale transformation programmes, helping organisations strengthen capability, enhance colleague experience and deliver strategic objectives.</p>
	<p>Rachel Brown, Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, Northumbria University</p> <p>Rachel is Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at Northumbria University, where she leads the institution's strategic approach to inclusion, working closely with the Chief People Officer and part of the People and Culture Senior Leadership Team and University wide Strategic Leadership Group.</p> <p>With over 30 years' experience across the public, private and third sectors, including over two decades specialising in EDI. Rachel holds an MA in Equality, Diversity and Human Rights, is a Chartered Fellow of the CIPD (FCIPD) and a Fellow of the Association of Higher Education Professionals (FAHEP). She serves as a Non-Executive Director and Strategic Safeguarding Lead at Newcastle Carers and mentors aspiring EDI and people leaders.</p>
	<p>Chris Mordue, Partner, Eversheds Sutherland</p> <p>Chris is a Partner in the Eversheds Sutherland Education team, specialising in employment advice to universities. Chris' work includes complex disputes and tribunal cases, industrial relations issues, redundancy and organisational change, senior-level terminations, internationalisation, equality and diversity matters and academic freedom issues. He has a "Hall of Fame" ranking in Legal 500 in Yorkshire in both the Employment and Education rankings and has specialised in the HE sector for over 28 years.</p>
	<p>Rebecca Denvers, Principal Associate, Eversheds Sutherland</p> <p>Rebecca is a Principal Associate in the Eversheds Sutherland Education team. She advises universities on a wide range of employment law issues, including investigations, whistleblowing concerns, equality and harassment complaints, complex employee relations matters and senior employee disputes. Rebecca regularly delivers legal updates and training to higher education institutions, helping them understand and respond to developments in employment law in a practical and pragmatic way.</p>

	<p>Katy Camidge, Chief People Officer, University of Law</p> <p>Katy joined the College of Law in 2012, initially supporting a number of our Northern campuses in an operational HR Business Partner role. Since then she has been promoted into increasingly strategic and senior positions, including Head of Talent & Employee Relations and HR Director; in 2022 she joined the Executive Board as Chief People Officer (CPO).</p> <p>As CPO, Katy has a team of over 30 people in the UK and a linked HR service in GUS Education India. Her focus within the Executive is to advise on and ensure the alignment of our people strategy with the University's over-arching strategic plan, including people services & engagement, reward, benefits, payroll, talent acquisition, OD and systems.</p> <p>Katy has previously held HR positions in legal practice and the Department for Education.</p>
	<p>San Randhawa, Interim HR Director, Leeds Beckett University</p> <p>San is the Interim HR Director at Leeds Beckett University, where she provides strategic leadership across people, organisational development, employee relations, equality, diversity and inclusion, and workforce transformation. With over 20 years' experience in senior HR leadership roles across higher education, the NHS, not-for-profit and financial services sectors, she has successfully led large-scale organisational change, cultural transformation, workforce planning and complex employee relations initiatives. San has a strong track record of building inclusive, high-performing organisations, developing leadership capability, and delivering people strategies that support organisational success.</p>
	<p>Rachael Millhouse, HR Director, University of York</p> <p>Rachael is the Director of Human Resources at the University of York. Having previously served as the Assistant HR Director (Operations) at the institution, she leads the university's central HR directorate. In this role, she oversees the development and implementation of workplace policies, reward and pension schemes, staff development, health, safety and staff wellbeing, and operational HR strategy to support staff across all academic and professional departments.</p> <p>Rachael's career has always been in HR and prior to working in the HE Sector she worked in both the Private and Charity sector. Rachael has a long standing commitment to working in partnership with Trade Unions and has worked with RMT, GMB, UNISON, UCU and Unite. She serves on a number of regional sector bodies, and currently Chairs the NE UHR Network.</p> <p>Rachael has four children and a new puppy (a Basset Hound named Sherlock Bones!). She is an intermittent runner with managing nothing one week to running a half marathon the next!</p>