

UHR Engagement Group - 22 Nov 2023

This padlet is created to collect the thoughts and insights from discussions at the UHR Engagement Group meeting for sharing with wider UHR membership

Topic 1: How to maintain engagement against the backdrop of industrial action/ strikes/ MAB

Discussion Points

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PHES 11/22/23 10:11AM

One HEI reported they have been tracking mood through monthly polling, through a period of Voluntary Severance and other challenges. Using this data to work together with leadership. Noted a focus on visible leadership through the turbulence with a Town Hall series every few months (with pre-submitted questions). Also started leadership coffee conversations - VC with much smaller groups and run online (20 people). Have seen that people get a better sense of being listened to and getting an understanding of what the VC is thinking.

PHES 11/22/23 10:14AM

Another HEI reported they recently had a change in Operating Model (Faculties to School). Focus on Leadership and hosting Listening Events. Open Invite for people to talk - not a forum for deciding action. Now need to decide how they are creating actions from this and communicating what is being done.

PHES 11/22/23 10:17AM

Another HEI reported a new VC is also focussing on visible leadership. Helping Leaders to own the Engagement Agenda. Looking to align development for manager to ensure consistency across org. Also looking at how they use their staff forum. Trying to tackle

PHES 11/22/23 10:18AM

One HEI reported: My experience of IR and strike action is from a different sector but what I found there made a difference was the level of existing trust, we did a lot of work around leadership capability and visibility with a regular programme visits to team meetings with a set agenda key messages, feedback, all the exec joining inductions to meet all new starters etc and that gave us a buffer initially. it was noticeable after the pandemic where there was less visibility anyway but also a change the exec where there was less interest/effort in this work that the union influence became so much stronger and their comms much more difficult to refute

PHES 11/22/23 10:20AM

Discussion around the trade unions and the underlying factor that we all want happy colleagues. One HEI noted that the polling data can be used by TU colleagues to hold mgmt to account.

PHES 11/22/23 10:22AM

One HEI reported having just run their 2 year survey and only got 30% completion rates. People seem to be happy with leadership locally but then complain about leadership as a "central" entity.

Topic 2: How the Cost of Living and Competitive Labour Market continue to impact Engagement.

Discussion Point

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PHES 11/22/23 10:32AM

Factors include - how to stabilise colleague groups. Post-Covid Recruitment challenges. Push-pull effects. Trying to recruit people in areas of practice i.e. health, policing, etc. Challenges around competitive pay offers.

PHES 11/22/23 10:33AM

One HEI reported they are closely looking at EVP and branding to ensure they promote this to candidates but also to current employees. How you articulate the benefits in flexibility.

Topic 3: Climate Anxiety and International Conflict - do we have a role in supporting employees affected?

Discussion Points

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PHES 11/22/23 10:36AM

One HEI reported they had put out an intranet article and signposted to support. They then received some criticism even though the comms had been down the middle and links to EAP etc. Point that perhaps what we present doesn't always have the impact we plan.

Sustainability

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PHES 11/22/23 10:42AM

One HEI reported that there is Sustainability Agenda and groups that colleagues can join

PHES 11/22/23 10:47AM

Another colleague reported that at a previous institution it was much higher on the agenda and the VC was very passionate about the subject - it was one of the core pillars. It was considered in terms of how it fed into EDI, outreach and working with partners. Staff were engaged in regular discussions. It did result in lots of positive engagement. Part of employer brand and students were very engaged in projects and curriculum.

