

Programme - Tuesday 12th May 2026

All sessions will be on the virtual platform RingCentral

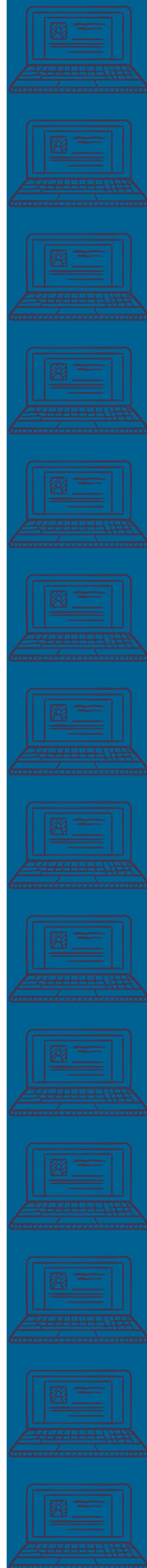
For full session synopses please see the conference website -

<https://www.uhr.ac.uk/events/annual-conference/programme-2026/>

Tuesday 12th May 2026

TIME	SESSION
09:00 - 09:30	Conference Crafting Set Yourself Up For Success With Charlotte Axon Lead People Scientist; and Rob Baker Founder & CEO, both of Tailored Thinking
09:30 - 09:35	Conference Welcome With Kim Frost Former UHR Chair
09:35 - 10:20	Plenary 1: Cultural Intelligence - Leading Through Change With Ritika Wadhwa CEO & Founder, Prabhaav Global Board Member Trustee & Board Director Leadership Fellow, Windsor Castle
10:20 - 10:30	Comfort Break
	WA1: Reshaping For the Future: Delivering Change and Transformation During a Time of Widespread Uncertainty Across the HE Sector. Turning Cost Pressures Into Purposeful Change With Rachel MacPhee Assistant Director Strategic Change; and Michelle Scott Head of HR Strategic Projects, both of University of Kent
	WA2: Cultivating Collaboration For Strategic Change - Building Digital Confidence and Adaptability of Staff Using Jisc's Framework and Maturity Model For Digital Transformation With Helen King Director of Learning Innovation, Development & Skills, Bath University Spa, Sarah Knight Director of Digital Transformation; and Becki Vickerstaff Higher Education Senior Consultant, both of Jisc
10:30 - 11:15 Workshops Block A	WA3: Developing An Inclusive Self-Assessment Tool to Embed EDI Across Our University With Eleanor Broadbent EDI Lead; and Elisabeth Cleary EDI Coordinator, both of Leeds Beckett University
	WA4: Building A Culture of Performance in Higher Education With Zoë Goodwin HR Project Manager; and Joanne Workman Organisational Development Manager, both of University of Nottingham
	WA5: Academic Change - An Unexpected Journey With Alex Brierley Executive Director of People & Organisational Development; and Kevin Kerrigan Deputy Vice Chancellor, both of University of Hull
	WA6: Global Growth, Local Impact: Managing People in International Campus Projects With Sarah Flynn Head of HR Business Partnering; and Kate Philp HR Business Partner, both of University of Southampton

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11:15 - 11:45

Break & Networking

BA1 - People Insight: From Listening to Leading: How The University of Manchester Is Transforming Colleague Engagement for Manchester 2035

With **Suzanne Christopher** | HE Engagement Lead, **Jane Tidswell** | HEI Director, both of People Insight; and **Rachael McGraw** | Head of Colleague Experience, University of Manchester

BA2 - INTOO: In Uncertain Times, Career Paths Within Many Sectors Are Undergoing Significant Change

With **Matthew Collier** | Business Development Director; and **Owen Morgan** | Managing Director, both of INTOO

11:45 - 12:30

Business Sessions Block A

BA3 - Isio Group Limited: The Art of the Possible For Your Pensions Strategy

With **Edward Andrew** | Employee Benefits Senior Manager, **Sophie Ash** | Director and Higher Education Lead; and **Tim Domanski** | Senior Manager, all of Isio

BA4 - Oracle: Are You Future Ready for AI?

With **Leatham Green** | Senior Transformation Director, Oracle

BA5 - Advance HE: Speaking Truth To Power

With **Sarah Hubbard** | Senior Consultant, Senior Leadership and Strategic Transformation, Advance HE

BA6 - Hays: Re-skill, Retain and Reinvent. A Smarter Approach to Workforce Challenges in the HE Sector

With **Will Bentinck** | Associate Director, **Matthew Lewis** | UK Public Services Director, both of Hays plc; and **Deborah Green** | CEO, UCISA

12:30 - 13:15

Lunch & Networking Carousel

LA1 - Shakespeare Martineau LLP: Leading Through the Storm: HR and Organisational Change

With **Alexandria Davis** | Associate; and **Esther Maxwell** | Partner, both of Shakespeare Martineau LLP

13:15 - 14:15

Legal Sessions Block A

LA2 - Bevan Brittan LLP: International Recruitment: Protecting Your Sponsor Licence & UKVI Compliance For Universities

With **Tijen Ahmet** | Legal Director; and **Sheetal Gaur** | Senior Associate, both of Bevan Brittan LLP

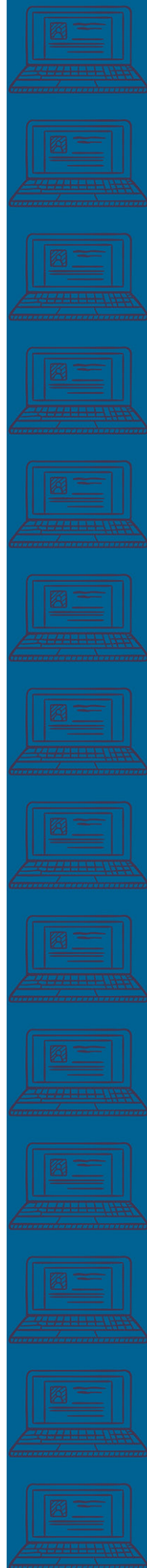
LA3 - VWV: Beliefs in Conflict: Managing Conflicting Protected Beliefs In the Workplace

With **Jane Byford** | Partner & Head of Higher Education, **Bob Fahy** | Partner, **Michael Halsey** | Partner; and **Katie Hurst** | Senior Associate, all of VWV

14:15 - 14:30

Comfort Break

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Plenary 2: Panel Session | How HE Can Be More Productive Through Its People

14:30-15:30

With **Andy Dodman** | Assistant CE - People, Digital and Change, Leeds City Council (former UHR NE Chair and CPO at Sheffield), **Freddie Fireman** | Transformation Consultant, Deloitte, **Kirsty Scanlan** | Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Projects, Heriot Watt University; and **Valerie Todd** | Non-Executive Director, Trustee & Committee Chair, Coach

Hosted by **Kim Frost**, Former UHR Chair

15:30 - 16:00

UHR Awards for Excellence in HR

With **Margaret Ayers** | UHR Chair; and **Kim Frost** | Former UHR Chair



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Programme - Wednesday 13th May 2026

Wednesday 13th May 2026

TIME

SESSION

09:30 - 09:35

Welcome Back

With **Kim Frost**, Former UHR Chair

09:35 - 10:05

Plenary 3: Mini Plenary | Universities at a Crossroads: Leading People Through Unprecedented Change

With **Malcolm Press CBE** | Vice-Chancellor, Manchester Metropolitan University | President, Universities UK

Hosted by **Kim Frost**, Former UHR Chair

10:05 - 11:05

Legal Sessions
Block B

LB1 - Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP: AI Meets Employment Law: What HR Needs To Know

With **Robert Gray** | Partner; and **Chris Mordue** | Partner, both of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP

LB2 - Mills & Reeve LLP: The Employment Rights Act 2025 - Cutting Through the Noise

With **Natasha Hall** | Principal Associate, **Sian Jackson** | Partner; and **Alex Russell** | Partner, all of Mills & Reeve LLP

LB3 - Pinsent Masons LLP: Bridging the Generational Divide: Inclusive HR Strategies for Higher Education

With **Trish Embley** | Head of Client Training Employment; and **Laura Starrett** | Senior Consultant, both of Pinsent Masons LLP

LB4 - Browne Jacobson: Rice v Wicked Vision; Dealing With Claims Against Individual Members Of Staff

With **Nadia Motraghi** | Barrister, Old Square Chambers, **Polly O'Malley** | Partner & Head of Employment Education; and **Bettina Rigg** | Partner, Head of Higher Education, both of Browne Jacobson LLP

11:05 - 11:30

Break & Networking

11:30 - 12:15

Business
Sessions
Block B

BB1 - B3sixty: Why Can't Managers Do Informal Resolution?

With **Clive Bane** | Director, B3sixty, **Terry Duffy** | Strategic Growth Partnership Lead, Acas; and **Bob Thomson** | Director, Bob Thomson Coaching and Mediation Limited

BB2 - Huron: Getting Change Programmes Back on Track: 10 Diagnostic Questions for HR Leaders to Guide Successful Change

With **Helen Sdvizhkov** | Director; and **Catherine Wolfgang** | Manager, both of Huron

BB3 - ECC: Building AI responsibly: A Case Study From Job Evaluation

With **Suzanne Daley** | Member Engagement and Reward Consultant; and **Nicholas Johnston** | Chief Executive, both of ECC

BB4 - Reward Gateway Edenred: People First: Turning Engagement Into Institutional Advantage

With **David Eaton** | Reward Specialist, University of Manchester; and **Colin Hodgson** | Director, Public Sector, Reward Gateway Edenred

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Programme - Wednesday 14th May 2025

11:30 - 12:15

Business Sessions
Block B
cont.

BB5 - Caroline Dunne Consulting Ltd: From Control to Connection: Building Human-Centred Leadership in Higher Education

With **Caroline Dunne** | Leadership Coach and Change Mentor, Caroline Dunne Consulting Ltd; and **Jenny Jenkin** | Leadership Coach, Pareto Thinking

12:15 - 12:45

Break & Networking

SIG1 - Isio: What's Hot? Living Pension: Achieving good outcomes in retirement

With **Ed Andrew** | Reward & Benefits Specialist, **Sophie Ash** | Director & Higher Education Lead, both of Isio, **Paul Moffat** | Director, Isio & Chair of the Living Pension working group supporting the Living Wage Foundation; and **Shelley Morris** | Living Pension lead, Living Wage Foundation

SIG2 - Shakespeare Martineau LLP: Managing the Union Dynamic: Strategic Approaches to Industrial Relations

With **Paul Greatrix** | Director of Higher Education Consultancy; and **Tom Long** | Partner, both of Shakespeare Martineau LLP

12:45 - 13:30

Special Interest Topic Discussions

(Please note these sessions will not be recorded)

SIG3 - Strengthify: Leading Through Complexity & Constraint: The 'Squeezed Middle' Manager Challenge

With **Carley Brown** | Organisational Psychologist, Strengthify

SIG4 - Weightmans: CATASTROPHE!: Managing Emergencies and High-profile Challenges with a HR-centric Approach

With **Susan Matthews** | Partner, Weightmans LLP

SIG5 - Wesleyan Financial Services: What a Pension Gap Really Costs: Understanding the Long-Term Impact

With **Ahilan Shandrakopal** | Development Consultant, Wesleyan

SIG6 - Jisc: HR at the Helm: Building Digital Confidence and Agility Across Professional Services

With **Mia Bellusova** | Digital Learning Manager in Learning and Development within HR, Nottingham University, **Elizabeth Micakovic** | University of Manchester, **Jess Pringle** | Manchester Metropolitan University; and **Becki Vickerstaff** | Higher Education Senior Consultant, Jisc

13:30 - 14:15

Lunch & Networking Carousel

WB1: Navigating Uncertainty: The New Norm for Higher Education Leaders

With **Dr. Joshua Mackey**, Vice President for Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer, Indiana University; and **Clarity White** | Director, Library Human Resources, University of California, Berkeley

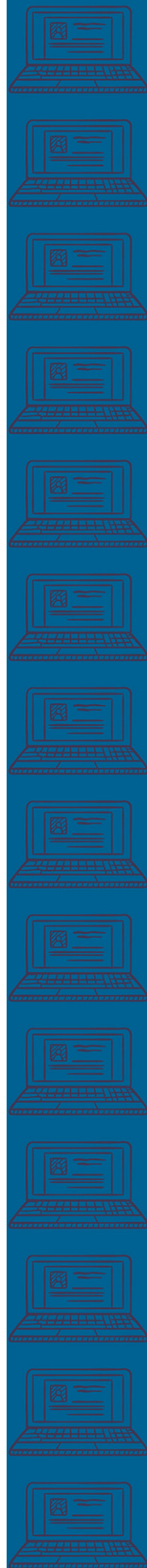
14:15 - 15:00

Workshops
Block B

WB2: Human and Machine: Making Efficiencies Through HR Process Automation

With **Michael Chadband** | Assistant HR Partner - HR Systems; and **Tom Everett** | HR Helpline & HR Systems Partner, both of University of Edinburgh

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WB3: Implementing A New Disability Leave Procedure at the University of Sussex

With **Sarah Jane Cox** | Head of Employee Relations and Policy, **Isobel Pearce** | Assistant Director: Culture, Equality and Inclusion; and **Colin Shipp** | Executive Director HR, all of University of Sussex

14:15 - 15:00
Workshops
Block B
cont.

WB4: Building Data Confidence - An Introduction to Being Data Driven

With **Sophie Crouchman** | Strategic Projects & Research, UHR; and **Laura Jackson** | Principal Consultant, Strive Higher

WB5: Learning Together: Turning Everyday Experience Into Culture Change

With **Elisha Ward** | EDI Officer and Project Manager, University of Oxford

WB6: Communicating With Compassion Through Change

With **Ben Rogers** | Higher Education Consultant, AHEP and BRiCS; and **Emma Smith** | Strategic Communications Consultant, Emma Smith Communications and AHEP Lead Consultant

15:00 - 15:10

Comfort Break

15:10-16:00

Plenary 4: OPTIMISM: How To Stay Happy and Focused Through Challenge and Change

With **Stuart Baldwin** | Founder, Live BIG

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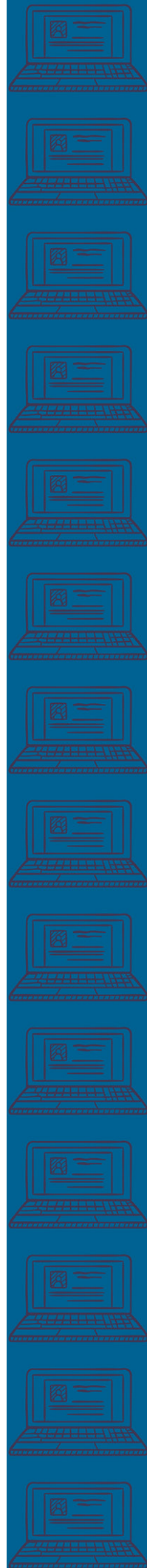


Programme - Thursday 14th May 2026

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TIME	SESSION
09:30 - 10:15 Workshops Block C	<p>WC1: Embedding Equality Analysis in Everyday Decision-Making: Demonstrating a New Framework for Inclusive Practice With Melanie Crofts Head of EDI, University of Hertfordshire; and Chantal Davies Professor of Law, Equality and Diversity, University of Chester</p>
	<p>WC2: Reimagining Recruitment In A Challenging Labour Market With Zahara Chowdhury EDI Business Partner; and Rachael Cornwall Chief People Officer, both of Buckinghamshire New University</p>
	<p>WC3: Out With The Old, In With The New – Implementing A New ERP System & Experiences As A Pioneer With Dana Field Associate Director - People Services & ERP Implementation; and Sarah Wilson Chief Operating Officer, both of University of Hull</p>
	<p>WC4: Lead at ULaw: The Ripple Effect — How an 8-Month Leadership Journey Transforms Skills, Mindsets and Collaboration With Kate Bowden Head of Organisational Development; and Kate Hunter L&D Partner, People & Organisational Development, both of The University of Law</p>
	<p>WC5: Work Well: A Data-Driven Approach to Embedding Wellbeing in Higher Education With Tailte Breffni Employee Wellbeing Section Lead; and Claire Kelly Employee Wellbeing Partner, both of Ulster University</p>
	<p>WC6: Mind the Gap: Mapping Institutional Support for Research Returns After Maternity Leave With Elizabeth Faulkner Lecturer in Law, Manchester Metropolitan University; and Cathal Rogers Research Culture and Assessment Manager, University of Manchester</p>
10:15 - 10:45	Break & Networking
10:45 - 11:30 Business Sessions Block C	<p>BC1 - NTT DATA Business Solutions: Transforming HR Service Delivery in Higher Education with SAP SuccessFactors Enterprise Service Management With Daniela Possin, Solution Architect, NTT DATA Business Solutions</p>
	<p>BC2 - Strengthenify: Re-Energising Teams After Organisational Disruption: A Strengths-Based Pathway to Trust, Purpose & Performance With Carley Brown Organisational Psychologist, Strengthenify</p>
	<p>BC3 - Wesleyan Financial Services: Defined Benefit(DB) vs Defined Contribution(DC): Turning Complexity into Clarity for University Staff With Ahilara Shandrakopal Development Consultant, Wesleyan</p>
	<p>BC4 - Veredus: Are We Recruiting the Right Leaders for the Universities We're Becoming? Rethinking Senior Recruitment in UK Higher Education With Stephen Hoban Director of Public; and Nataliya Starik-Bludova Co-Head of Executive Search and Practice Lead, Education, both of Veredus</p>

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Programme - Thursday 14th May 2026

10:45 - 11:30

Business
Sessions
Block C
cont.

BC5 - Radcliffe and Newlands

BC6 - Unitemps: The Employment Rights Bill Impact on Temporary Recruitment

11:30 - 12:00

Break & Networking

LC1 - Shoosmiths: Is the Democratisation of AI Helping or Hindering HR Teams in the HE sector?

With **Kate Dodsworth** | Partner, **Jonathan Naylor** | Partner; and **Jo Tunnicliffe** | Senior Associate, all of Shoosmiths

12:00 - 13:00

Legal Sessions
Block C

LC2 - Farrer & Co: A Masterclass On Handling Disability-related Issues In the Workplace, With a Spotlight On Neurodivergence

With **Rosanna Gregory** | Associate; and **Kathleen Heycock** | Partner, Farrer & Co

LC3 - Weightmans LLP: HR v PR: The Line Of Least Resistance?

With **Melanie Steed**, Lead Employer Lawyer – Higher Education , Weightmans LLP

13:00 - 13:45

Lunch and Networking Carousel

13:45-14:20

Plenary 5: Mini Plenary | The Next Decade of Equality in Higher Education and the Strategic Role of HR in Shaping It

With **Parveen Yaqoob OBE** | Deputy Vice Chancellor at University of Reading
Hosted by **Kim Frost**, Former UHR Chair

14:20 - 14:45

Break & Networking

14:45-15:50

Plenary 6: Nicolas Hamilton | Driven to Inspire

With **Nicolas Hamilton** | Athlete

15:50 - 16:00

Conference Close

16:00 - 16:30

Conference Crafting | Reflect, Recharge, and Realign

With **Charlotte Axon** | Lead People Scientist; and **Rob Baker**, both of Tailored Thinking

End of Conference Programme

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