

	PAPER NO: HR.10(12)
Board/Committee:	Human Resources
Date:	15 May 2012
Paper title:	Employee Engagement Survey: Strategy and Actions
Author:	Katie Boyce, Director of Human Resources
Executive sponsor:	Martin Earwicker, Vice Chancellor
Recommendation by the Executive:	To note the actions to be taken
Aspect of the Corporate Plan to which this will help deliver?	6.8 Understanding how our staff feel about developments is essential to building a common understanding of priorities

Executive summary

- At its meeting on 31 January 2012 the Committee was presented with the findings of the Employee Engagement survey conducted in 2011
- The Committee asked that a strategy and associated range of actions was put in place to address the issues highlighted in this report. The attached strategy summaries the actions the University will now be taking to address the issues which were identified as reducing staff engagement
- The University Executive will monitor progress and manage actions at Faculty and Department level and use annual pulse surveys to track employee feedback. We are aiming for a 15% improvement in engagement by 2014
- The Committee is asked to note this strategy and recommend to the Board on 24 May 2012 for noting.

Matter previously considered by:	N/A	On: N/A
Further approval required?	The Board to note	On: 24 May 2012
Communications – who should be made aware of the decision?	Trades Unions and Staff	

Employee Engagement Strategy

1. Introduction

LSBU needs, more than ever before, to focus on creating an engaging performance environment for our employees. We recognise that in order to improve the student experience we must help staff to feel more engaged and this means creating conditions where all managers will strive to create a workplace that supports staff through open communication, recognition, career opportunities, performance management and development.

Employee Engagement is a significant challenge for LSBU, especially during our current period of change, and this strategy focuses on the barriers to engagement identified in our 2011 Employee Engagement Survey.

Line managers have the strongest impact on engagement and good people management and development is key to our drive for an engaged workforce.

2. Employee Engagement and the Corporate Plan

Alongside our focus on improving people management, employee engagement will also contribute to successful delivery of the Corporate Plan. The University Plan for 2011–14 identifies the need to:

- **be competitive, innovative and increase revenue from research and enterprise**
Government research into employee engagement ¹ finds that a 15% improvement in engagement levels leads to a 2% improvement in operating margin. Workforce engagement is also a powerful factor in catalysing innovation.²
- **meet student expectations**

¹ Macleod D and Clarke N (2009) Engaging for Success: Enhancing Performance through Employee Engagement. Department for Business, Innovation and Skills.

² The Four Drivers of Innovation (2007) Gallup Management Journal

Engaged employees are more productive and create stronger customer relationships than less engaged employees ².

- **achieve academic quality and financial robustness**

Staff who are engaged deliver higher productivity and organisational performance, have lower absenteeism and higher retention³. Highly committed employees try 57% harder and perform 80% better⁴

3. Overview of 2011 Survey Methodology and Results

All staff were sent an online questionnaire during November 2011 comprising externally validated questions on employee engagement. 62% of staff took part and the results were shared with senior managers in February 2012, those managers have shared their results with staff and invited staff feedback on the most useful and urgent actions.

The results are summarised as:

Our five highest satisfaction scores were:

- physical infrastructure (76% satisfaction)
- diversity and inclusion (74% satisfaction)
- immediate manager (66% satisfaction)
- teamwork (65% satisfaction)
- communication (65% satisfaction)

Our five lowest satisfaction scores were:

- payment and reward (31% satisfaction)
- organisational effectiveness (33% satisfaction)
- employment security (38% satisfaction)
- leadership (41% satisfaction)
- workload and pressure (45% satisfaction)

4. Actions Following the 2011 Survey

The survey produced data that tells us there are a number of opportunities for LSBU to build on existing levels of engagement. Comparing the results to our 2009 scores, an analysis of the free text comments provided by staff, and to public, private and HE sector benchmarks, the following ten categories are our main areas of opportunity ⁵. The actions reflect linkage to the delivery of the Corporate Plan, the degree of influence

³ Macleod D and Clarke N (2009)

⁴ Corporate Leadership Council, Road Map to Engagement, 2007

⁵ A fuller summary of the results is available for all staff to view at (insert link)

and control the University can exert, and the anticipated impact of the improvement. We are aiming for a 15% improvement level in engagement scores by 2014.

1. **Organisational Effectiveness:** Staff think decision making could be speeded up to reduce bureaucracy.
Action: we need to communicate the outcomes from our project work more clearly, focussing on how project improvements have made us more efficient. We also need to develop greater dialogue between senior managers and staff to elicit staff views on reducing bureaucracy.
2. **Communication:** Staff would like more relevant information directly linked to them and their roles and act on these.
Action: senior managers need to develop better systems for regular team briefings on relevant news and developments. Our new process for annual and mid year reviews will also be an opportunity for improved two way communication.
3. **Teamwork:** Teamwork within and among departments offers room for improvement; staff expect LSBU to promote more cooperation within the University.
Action: Deans and Executive members are leading on the active involvement of staff in the prioritisation of employee engagement actions at local levels, this includes exploring more opportunities for team work.
4. **Career Development/Training:** There is a feeling that there are less career and training opportunities with LSBU than there were in 2009.
Action: As part of our Succession Strategy we will outline career paths for staff, showing vertical and horizontal career development opportunities. We will also publish equality data on participation in learning and development opportunities.
5. **Performance Evaluation:** Although the overall score has improved since 2009, more than 50% of staff responding to the survey do not see the usefulness of performance evaluation.
Action: We now have the support of all of our Unions for our appraisal systems and this will improve participation rates. The introduction of a mid year review process will also ensure staff receive increased feedback and development.
6. **Pay & Rewards:** Academic staff are dissatisfied with their current salary and benefits.

Action: Information on how we review pay packages and how these compare to the UK market will be shared with all staff along with the results of our 2012 Gender Pay Audit.

7. **Diversity & Inclusion:** Employees of Black and Chinese background do not believe there are equal opportunities for all.

Action: Focus groups to explore the more negative feedback from Black, Asian and front line staff have been run and we will update the Equality and Diversity Plan for 2012/13 with actions which reflect staff concerns.

8. **Leadership:** Academic staff in particular do not believe strongly in LSBU's Corporate Plan and more could be done to inspire confidence and trust at Faculty and Departmental level.

Action: The Vice Chancellor has begun a series of informal get togethers with academic staff in Faculties to explore views of the Corporate Plan and to lead the development of an improved culture of speaking up. This will lead to more issue based discussion sessions with Academics over the next year.

We are also developing a new offer on performance management training for all managers which will be linked to the launch of our new Staff Review and Development Policy.

9. **Employment Security:** Perceptions of job security amongst Academic staff are lower than those of employees in the public and private sector.

Action: A Workforce Diversity Report will be shared with all staff which provides data on the actual number of staff redundancies over the previous year.

Improvements to the management of change will be a focus for HR to ensure the impact on staff engagement is minimised.

10. **Organisational Values:** LSBU's values are not sufficiently visible to staff

Action: Staff consultation is underway to develop to develop a framework for staff behaviours.

5. Monitoring

The Executive will monitor progress and manage actions at Faculty and Department level and we will use annual pulse surveys to track employee feedback, aiming for a 15% improvement in engagement by 2014.

A communication plan to keep staff informed of the programme of actions and progress will be developed and Senior Managers will be set individual performance objectives in their appraisals based on their individual department results and agreed actions.