



Imperial College Union Appointments and Remuneration Committee

23 May 2018

AGENDA ITEM NO.	
TITLE	Staff Survey Discussion Paper
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	<p>The Union traditionally runs an annual Staff Survey as well as taking part in the biennial College Staff Survey. There have also been recent staff surveys run by IIP in February 2016 and February 2018 as part of their assessment process.</p> <p>The report highlights the main feedback from the 2017 Union Staff survey after which there were not specific action plans created though actions were built in to the work on <i>Our Commitments</i> which was developed in the following months.</p>
PURPOSE	To propose that going forward the Union fully embraces the College process including biennial survey and action plan development supplemented by Termly check-point surveys.
DECISION/ACTION REQUIRED	To agree the schedule and format for future staff surveys.

Staff Survey Results 2017

Introduction and Background

In February 2017 Imperial College Union ran its fifth annual all staff survey. The survey is run in-house and provides Union staff members the opportunity to provide feedback on a range of themes, including training and development, strategic input, communication, line management and the working environment.

Staff members are encouraged to complete the survey anonymously online, with results processed by the Administration Support Manager and provided to SMG on an organisational and divisional basis.

53 staff members completed the survey, representing a 90% return rate (excluding Officer Trustees).

Positively, there was a high volume of comments in the survey responses. The vast majority of these comments were positive, with some useful suggestions for improvements and how the Union might meet some of its challenges - this paper includes a cross section of positive and negative comments from across different divisions and only includes those which do not risk breaching anonymity.

This initial report seeks to outline the organisational results from the staff survey, explore some key learning points and trends, and outline organisational action points in response to these results.

More detailed analysis will continue including: a look at responses on a directorate-by-directorate basis; inclusion of exit interview feedback; and commitment to an action plan to address the issues highlighted as part of our work towards Investors In People accreditation.

Views on the organisation

- Responses this year are largely split between clear positives of staff enjoying working in the Union environment and their colleagues and struggling with the connected challenge of a high and changing workload, which is perceived to be high.
- 98% of staff viewing the Union as a good organisation to work for is an extremely positive outcome, highlighting the things that are already being done well throughout the organisation. Indeed, this score represents a 3% increase on last year.
- 66% (down 27% on the year) of staff feeling that they are not being consulted on changes is a real concern, and it is important that the Union focuses on improving this score. Union-wide communication, cross-team and top-down is also reported in open comments as an area for improvement, and a key recommendation of this report will be to improve this.
- Perhaps the most concerning year on year change is the 25% increase in staff actively looking for another job. There has been a period of change in a number of departments, and, drilling further down into the data, staff are reporting a perception of strong training opportunities but a lack of opportunity for progression given the size of the organisation. Clearly these factors will all influence the decision to look elsewhere.

Views on the department

- Although there has been a slight drop this year, staff generally report feeling comfortable to speak their minds and air concerns within their teams (91%). There seems to be more of an issue in terms of the mechanisms for collecting these views and feeding into the broader work of the Union as a whole. 16% less staff than last year feel that they are given opportunities to make suggestions.
- This is born out in open comment feedback, with staff highlighting that, whilst they feel comfortable putting new ideas forward, there is a slight perception that these do sometimes get lost before they make it up the chain. One reason posited is that the speed at which changes take place sometimes makes staff feel as though they are not afforded the opportunity to feed into planning and development before they are then involved in the roll-out of new initiatives.
- Importantly, this trend has not negatively impacted staff perception of equity within the organisation, born out by a 100% score for the question: "I am treated fairly by others in my department".

Views on jobs

- Whilst a strong proportion of staff feel that they have no problem meeting the requirements of their roll (96%, up 4% on the year), there is clearly an issue in terms of the definition of roles within teams, and guidance on duties (down 15% and 19% on the year respectively), which is concerning.
- This could be due to the small nature of the Union as a whole, which naturally necessitates a large amount of overlap in duties but would also seem to marry up with wider comments relating to lack of effective cross-team working.
- Comments indicate that regular one to one meetings are taking place however, which would seem to indicate that organisational priorities are the driving factor for these responses here.
- Improving how we define roles and responsibilities within the organisation clearly needs to be a priority following this feedback.

Views on line management and supervision

- Whilst, overall, scores for line managers have dropped slightly on the year, scores and indeed comments remain very positive. 94% of staff feel that their manager is both approachable and listens to what they have to say and, again, managers score highly in terms of perceived equity.
- This is reflected in open comments across the organisation in terms of staff reporting that they have positive relationships with their line manager.
- Perhaps of slight concern are the scores for "my manager lets me know how I'm getting on" and "my manager keeps me and my colleagues informed about matters that affect us". Again, the 8% reduction on the year in this area is indicative of the need to look at how the Union can improve its feedback mechanisms to staff.

Views of Training, Induction and Customer Service

- Response scores within this area have dropped by a marked degree since last year, and there could be several reasons for this. Staff report that they are unclear as to what training opportunities are available to them, although it is important to note that anecdotal feedback on the quality of training and access to it remains positive in open comments.
- There is a clear opportunity to more clearly communicate the Union's training offer amongst staff, and to improve the mechanism for gaining access to this. The re-launch of the new staff pages on the website should start to help with the comms around this.
- Our score for customer service training provision was one of the lowest responses at 69%, and highlights a key opportunity for the organisation.
- The induction process is another area where the organisation could improve, and the new induction process being rolled-out by the Admin Support team, including improved manager guidance and more clearly defined roles throughout the process aims to address this.

Views on the working Environment

- Again, in-line with this year's responses, scores are lower than last year. Whilst generally staff report that they find the working environment and overall conditions good (91%), staff report that less feel that workloads within their department is spread fairly (down 14% on the year to 81%). This again links back to issues around lack of clarity/definition on roles within teams.
- Whilst a high proportion of staff (92%) feel the Union shows a commitment to ethical and environmental issues, open comments make suggestions such as a waste reduction policy and initiatives to reduce paper within the organisation.

Overall Experience

- The average score (1 being poor and 10 being good) for the Union overall was 7.3, which is on par with previous years.
- The average score has remained essential stable which is positive considering there has been some turn-over over the past few months across teams.