

Strategy 2035

Creating Opportunity, Transforming Futures



People and Culture - Strategy



Introduction



The success of the University of Wolverhampton depends crucially upon the contribution of our people at all levels of our institution. Our collective talents, efforts and commitment will deliver the University's vision 2035 and this People and Culture Strategy sets the strategic direction for our ongoing focus on people and on developing a culture which is underpinned by our agreed values and behaviours.

This Strategy is one of four complementary strategies which are enablers of the University's Strategy 2035.

This Strategy draws on a range of data and feedback, including staff survey responses, views gathered from colleagues and students as part of the

comprehensive consultation on the University Strategy 2035, and ongoing dialogue with our trade union partners and other stakeholders. It sets out four inter-related goals which support delivery of the University's strategic priorities and will enable our staff to fulfil their potential and achieve their career ambitions in a progressive and healthy working and learning environment.

The Strategy seeks to promote a high-performance culture where all colleagues live by our values of inclusivity, ambition, accountability and resilience. This culture will be crucial in strengthening our role as a place of opportunity and transformation.

The principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) underpin each of the strategic goals. We are proud to be a diverse and international community at Wolverhampton, the wide range of backgrounds and experiences that our staff and students bring to the University add to the vibrancy and creativity of our community.

I hope that all members of the institution can feel ownership of this People and Culture Strategy as we work together to achieve a strong and successful future for the University of Wolverhampton, our students, our staff and the wider community.

Rachel Adams

Chief People Officer (to April 2025)



Our Goals

Goal 1: Embedding a culture of inclusion, high performance, engagement and wellbeing

We want to provide a high-quality staff experience and work environment that enable all colleagues to thrive and perform at their best. Adhering to University policies and embedding effective people management practices will be important to achieve this, including ongoing feedback to encourage and support high performance, to identify areas for improvement and to put in place support as required.

We will ensure that:

- Through a refreshed, positive approach to performance management, performance expectations are clear, and each individual understands how their role and work contributes to the success of the team and the wider University.
- University values and behaviours are visible in all our work and are embedded in at all points of the employee lifecycle. All members of the University community treat each other with dignity and respect.
- Where a member of staff raises a concern, we seek to resolve matters informally and in a timely manner. When this is not possible, formal procedures are clear, accessible and as streamlined as possible.
- A refreshed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy is in place to support our commitment to be an inclusive workplace and EDI principles are mainstreamed across all policies and processes, operations and decision making.
- A comprehensive suite of health and wellbeing support is in place, line managers are equipped with skills to help support the wellbeing of their staff and a rolling programme of health promotion harnesses wider University and community resources to connect people to high quality services and support.

Goal 2: Being a great place to work

We want to provide a high-quality staff experience. Our aspiration is to be an employer of choice – we want the University to have a strong reputation as a good employer and this will be reflected in the way that we project ourselves externally and, importantly, how existing staff experience working at Wolverhampton.

We will ensure that:

- Leaders and managers are equipped with the skills and knowledge to work effectively with people, policies and processes and to bring the best out of their teams by embedding our desired culture and behaviours.
- Workloads are reasonable, fair and achievable for all staff groups.
- Processes and systems are streamlined, standardised and enabled by digital solutions that are integrated and connected, to make our working lives easier.
- Pay, benefits and working conditions are attractive when compared to sector benchmarks.
- People are involved in the decisions that affect them through mechanisms to support ongoing engagement and feedback.
- We recognise and reward the achievements of staff in a variety of ways including celebrating success through our internal and external communications and with staff awards linked to the University's values and strategic priorities.

Goal 3: Attracting and retaining talented people

We want the University to be considered by academics, researchers, professional and operational staff as a place that will enable them to succeed and thrive. Our future success will depend on our ability to attract, engage, develop, promote and retain a talented and motivated workforce.

Recruitment offers an opportunity to attract talented staff, to enhance diversity and broaden

our skills base. In a highly competitive and buoyant labour market, we need to ensure that working at the University is an attractive proposition and importantly that talented staff want to stay and be part of our collective success.

We will:

- Streamline and strengthen our recruitment processes to deliver an excellent candidate experience and to support our recruiting managers to secure the best talent for their teams.
- Enhance our recruitment materials, ensure the employee value proposition is accessible, clear and compelling.
- Strengthen our reputation as a high quality, inclusive employer, taking positive action to enhance the diversity of our workforce as appropriate.
- Review and clearly articulate our offer to staff, taking into account changing employee preferences and expectations in relation to work and a need to be competitive with other modern universities.
- Monitor voluntary staff turnover data, and gather feedback through exit interviews to understand and, as appropriate, to address reasons why staff leave the University of Wolverhampton.

Goal 4: Developing, supporting and valuing our staff

At all stages of our careers, we can benefit from appropriate learning and development to enhance our effectiveness in our current roles and to prepare us for future opportunities. We will provide innovative development opportunities that enable all colleagues to develop and perform at their best. A whole University, inclusive approach will mean that all staff groups are catered for and that access to opportunities is fair and equitable.

We will:

- Undertake a review of academic progression and conferment criteria, processes, outcomes and feedback mechanisms to ensure transparency and to support the development of a diverse cohort of future academic leaders.
- Continue to develop all our academic colleagues to deliver high-quality, innovative education practice, which meets the needs of our students, in line with the Student Success Strategy.
- Develop our research community, using the HR Excellence in Research framework to focus our actions on supporting impactful research at Wolverhampton, ensuring our researchers are equipped to deliver upon our research priorities and to develop successful research careers.
- Promote excellence in professional services delivery, providing career paths and development support for Professional Services colleagues, enhancing links with the Association of Higher Education Professionals and other professional bodies.
- Work with the Technicians' Commitment framework to offer learning and development opportunities and to develop a professional community of technicians.
- Encourage apprenticeship opportunities for new and existing staff combining work and study.
- Strengthen induction, onboarding and mentoring practices to help new staff integrate quickly into the University and to support those promoted into new positions to take on new responsibilities effectively.
- Ensure mandatory training is relevant, accessible and meets the needs of staff and of the University in managing key risks.
- Support staff to enhance digital literacy and to make the best use of technology.

Delivering the Strategy

Delivery of the People and Culture Strategy will be led by HR, working closely with leaders and managers across the University and with ongoing engagement and consultations with staff, trade unions and other key stakeholders.

In parallel, a multifaceted programme of improvement activity for the HR Directorate aims to deliver an enhanced service to managers and employees.

We will introduce streamlined, standardised and automated HR processes and will provide line managers with easier access to, and analysis of core, management data. Delivery of the Strategy will be overseen by the University's Strategy Delivery Board and the Workforce Remuneration and Culture Committee, a committee of the University's Board.





