

Imperial College Union  
Board of Trustees / 13 July 2022

**Staff Survey Results 2022**

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Purpose: To consider the 2022 results of the Staff Engagement Survey.

**1. Background Information**

This year (2022-23) is the second time we have taken part in the NUS Staff Engagement Survey. It was available to all full-time and casual staff employed in a role with the Union, plus our Officer Trustees. Responses were collected between 14 February - 07 March 2022.

There were 42 full-time staff and Officer Trustees included in the survey. The response rate of permanent staff was 86%. This is an 8% increase on the response rate of last year's permanent staff.

Staff numbers were notably higher than last year due to our recent back-to-basics recruitment drive. Response rate among casual staff was extremely low at 11% with only 15 responses and has been deemed too low to draw meaningful results from the quantitative data. However, we have looked at the open comments and drawn some broad conclusions that echo last year's results. More work will be done on this in September and October.

It should be noted that the College staff survey results are broadly reflective of ours, excepting 'Senior leadership & vision' – which refers to the College's senior staff and vision not ours - over which College staff offered low levels of positive response relative to ours.

**2. Results Summary**

This year's results can now be measured against last year's baseline data set, providing an indicator of how effective our planned actions over the last year have been, and how we have progressed toward our '*great people and culture*' enabler in the strategic plan.

The results are broadly positive. 74% of permanent staff answered positively when asked if they would recommend our organisation as a good place to work. This is an increase of 9 points on last year.

Some other headline results include:

- i. Our biggest area of improvement among staff relative to last year is Service, with a significant increase of 24 points. '*People in other departments are skilled and competent to do their jobs*' is up 30 points.
- ii. Other notable areas of improvement are Learning and Development up 10 points, Values and Management both up by 9 points, Role up by 7 points, and Leadership and Colleagues both up by 6 points.
- iii. The three highest scoring areas for our permanent staff team are: Colleagues (84%), Management (83%) and Role (73%).
- iv. The three lowest scoring areas for our permanent staff team continue to be: Learning & Development (57%), Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (58%), and Service (59%). All three areas have seen improvement since last year.

The open comments reflect some following specific themes:

- v. Permanent staff clearly value working with one another in the context of the Union, with multiple references to a positive, welcoming culture, good strategic direction and fun environment.
- vi. Ideas for change among permanent staff are more varied, referencing communication, career progression and flexibility and induction. Many staff notably referenced 'nothing' in ideas for change.
- vii. Casual staff are notably happier about levels of pay and enjoy the flexibility the job provides.
- viii. Casual staff are notably unhappy about the management of Union venues.

Highlights and Lowlights:

The below represents the 5 highest scoring questions in the survey, followed by the 5 lowest scoring questions:

Highest:

- This organisation offers a good benefits package (holiday, sick pay, pension etc.): 91%
- I trust and respect my manager: 91%
- This organisation would forgive an honest mistake on my part: 89%
- I receive support and encouragement from colleagues at work: 86%
- Colleagues trust and respect each other: 86%

Lowest:

- It is common practice for experienced colleagues to coach and mentor new starters: 49%
- My manager takes prompt action if people's performance falls below acceptable standards: 46%
- My workload is excessive and prevents me doing a good job: 46%
- I am rewarded fairly in comparison with others in the organisation doing similar work: 40%
- This organisation has a culture that nurtures and encourages those from an under-represented group to pursue their chosen career: 40%

**3. Next Steps**

- i. Following last year's results, specific KPIs measured within the survey have been integrated into our Annual Planning Rounds. It is now the responsibility of line managers to demonstrate how relevant work streams will positively impact our results.
- ii. A broad comment / narrative is provided in the table below, which also sets out the full results broken down by theme.
- iii. The People & Culture Development Plan was developed in 2021 and has made some progress toward implementing recommendations. Levels of resource to implement recommendations has been a challenge as we have rebuilt the Union through the phased back-to-basics recruitment plan and there is still much work to do.
- iv. The People Team is now in place and has begun work to integrate further strands of the People & Culture Development Plan into our upcoming Annual Planning Round.

#### 4. Results & Actions

The overall results from the survey are provided below, broken down between our permanent and casual staff teams.

Theme	Descriptor of Theme	Overall Positive	% Change on last year	Narrative / Comments
Overall	The overall marker of satisfaction is to what extent a staff member would recommend the organisation as a good place to work.	74%	+9	This measure is included as a KPI in our strategic plan. All the other themes below feed into this. We have had gains among our permanent staff relative to last year.
Colleagues	This theme considers perceptions over how well staff work together, and the respect and trust they have for each other.	84%	+6	We have made gains among permanent staff in an area with an already high baseline result. This reflects that the Union is developing a positive staff culture. Work around social activities, more focussed induction measures as set out in the People and Culture Development plan has made an impact. This work will continue.
Communication	This theme considers perceptions over how well the organisation communicates with staff as to what it is doing and how well it provides opportunities for staff to ask questions and to find out more. It includes perceptions over how transparent and honest the organisation is and how we act on information we receive.	69%	+3	Communications have improved since last year as a result of return to the office, regular all-staff meetings and the use of our existing internal communications channels. There is still work to be done. Our recently appointed Internal Communications Manager has made a structured proposal to develop further communications channels and generally improve internal communications throughout the organisation in the coming months.
Wellbeing	This theme considers perceptions over how the organisation supports the wellbeing of staff across numerous themes, including workload, work/life balance and the support it provides when things aren't going well.	64%	+5	We have made some gains in staff wellbeing, related to recent staff social activities, and our retention of a hybrid working model. Further wellbeing measures are to be incorporated into our Annual Planning Round for the People and Culture team.
Engagement	This theme considers perceptions over how engaged staff are with the organisation and to what extent it forms part of the identities of our staff. It considers whether staff are proud to work here and how much effort they are willing to put into their roles.	69%	-2	This is one of only two areas that we have not improved since last year's results. We have a marginal decrease in engagement among staff. This could be attributable to a need to develop clearer reward and recognition measures in the organisation and is an area of the People and Culture plan that we have been unable to adequately develop due to resource. This will be incorporated into the coming year's Annual Planning Round.
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	This theme considers perceptions over how well the organisation treats staff across a spectrum of diverse backgrounds. It considers the efforts made by the organisation to maintain a diverse demographic and encourages those from under-represented groups to follow their chosen careers.	58%	+5	While we have made gains in this area, we know we still have a significant amount of work to do. Incorporation into our values has demonstrated our commitment, and our work with BAME Recruitment over the course of our phased recruitment has improved the diversity of our staff team, but further measures are needed to embed EDI into our organisation. We are progressing with the development of our EDI Strategy with Koreo and there are further measures set out in the People and Culture Development plan to be progressed.
Leadership	This theme considers perceptions of the organisation's vision, leadership and direction. It considers the ability of the leadership group to lead by example and make the organisation successful and how in touch they are with popular opinion.	65%	+6	We have made strong gains in the perception of the Union's Leadership. The phrase 'I believe that the leadership group are taking us in the right direction' has 79% positive response, up by 21 points on last year. This can be attributable to a clear strategy, and the work of the Senior Management Team and Officer Trustees over the last year. Work to deliver our strategy will continue as we begin to develop our next 3-year plan.
Learning & Development	This theme considers perceptions of the opportunities provided by the organisation for staff to learn and develop in their career or personal lives and how staff can learn from one another.	57%	+10	This is an area that has seen significant improvement on last year, but still has much room for improvement. Our gains can be attributable to significant resource and investment committed to providing structured training for the staff team, as set out in the People and Culture Development Plan. We still have work to do to better understand and make use of staff development the College provides, plus a structured process for identifying training needs and access. This will be integrated into the internal communications element of our upcoming Annual Planning Round.
Management	This theme considers perceptions of how much trust and respect exists between staff and their managers, and how well managers offer support and foster collaboration within their teams.	83%	+9	Despite starting from a strong baseline in this area, we have made significant gains. The phrase 'I trust and respect my manager' has 91% positive response, up by 7 points on last year. The phased recruitment over the past year has formed a strong management team and prior work to build a clear staff structure has increased identification of both the Senior Management Team and Line Manager's Group with clear lines of consultation, decision-making and communication.

Performance Management	This theme considers perceptions of mechanisms that exist for staff to gain feedback on their performance, and the standards that are expected within teams. It considers how performance is measured and how improvement is fostered.	63%	+2	We have seen a minor gain in this area. This can be attributable to rolling out a revised Personal Development Review Process (PDRP) over the past year that is directly linked to the strategic plan, annual planning round, and our values. Further work is planned in our Annual Planning Rounds around reward and recognition and staff development.
Reward	This theme considers perceptions of how well rewarded staff feel for their work, in relation to pay and benefits. It considers whether staff feel that the rewards they receive for their work are fair.	61%	-3	This is one of only two areas in which we see a decrease since last year's results. Due to our employment relationship with the College, the Union's pay scale for permanent staff is already significantly above the sector average, including a generous pension. We have work yet to do to properly communicate the non-financial rewards that the Union offers / can offer on top of this and provide a more structured reward and recognition program in line with our values.
Role	This theme considers perceptions of how staff feel their roles fit into the organisation, how well defined they are and how fulfilling they find the work. It is a measure of how well-defined staff feel their roles are in the context of the organisation's policies and procedures.	73%	+7	We have seen a significant gain in this area. Staff feel more secure in their roles and clear about what is expected of them. This is attributable to a review of all JDs as part of our back-to-basics recruitment, and strong performance of the management team. We will continue work around our PRDP process and the building the staff team to make further gains in this area.
Service	This theme considers perceptions of how high a standard of service staff feel that the organisation delivers to our members. It is a measure of how staff feel about the organisation's competency, both from their immediate colleagues and those in other teams.	59%	+24	This area has seen the highest gains of any area in the organisation. Staff feel far more positive than last year about the service they and their colleagues provide to our members. This can be attributed to the clarity and strength of the new strategic plan, KPIs, financial model, and annual planning round have all been designed to reshape the services that we provide for students. Continued work to deliver the above will help cement further gains via our strong staff team and will be integrated into the coming Annual Planning Round.
Values	This theme considers perceptions surrounding our organisational values, and to what extent we have a well-defined sense of shared purpose. It is a measure of how cohesive we are as an organisation and how ethical we are in our practices.	64%	+9	Our values have shown a significant gain in response compared to last year. The new strategic plan included five new organisational values which were developed via significant consultation, and this has been well-communicated. Further work remains as part of the People and Culture Plan surrounding a competency matrix in line with our values. The delivery of this matrix will be incorporated into our Annual Planning Round.