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# Our Culture Conversations

# Actions following our first conversation – May 2023

**Colleague health and wellbeing**

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| **Positive feedback** | **Areas to improve** |
| Colleagues mostly agreed that they have mutually supportive relationships at work, reflected in the overall score of 7.8. | The overall scores for workload are low as a result of colleagues working long hours – this is reflected across professional services and academic job families, but especially for part-time colleagues |
| **Actions being taken**  Discussions at Faculty Wellbeing, Inclusion & Culture Committees (FWICCs), Professional Services Wellbeing, Inclusion & Culture Committee (PS WICC) and Head of Department Engage focused on looking at how to support workload prioritisation.  Following progress made by The Workload Allocation and Equity Group in 2022/2023, a new policy of University Academic Workload Principles and Processes has been developed, approved by UEB and rolled out across all faculties for this academic year. Faculties are now in the process of completing their new Workload Allocation Models (WAMs) based on the new principles and processes, ready for their launch and full implementation in early 2024 to support workload allocation for the 2024/2025 academic year.  Professional services workload principles are being considered at PS WICC. | |
| **Positive feedback** | **Areas to improve** |
| Colleagues felt able to discuss their wellbeing with their managers and seek support as needed. | Colleagues cited the need for department/team level communication about wellbeing support provision. |
| **Actions being taken**  Our colleague wellbeing team have developed a robust communication plan for 2023/2024 to systematically promote the wellbeing support provision through our [colleague wellbeing web pages](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/). The team have been attending regular FWICC & PSWICC meetings, to provide information on interventions to support with positive mental health & wellbeing, alongside collating feedback on current wellbeing issues for staff.  We are also on our journey to achieve the [University Mental Health Charter](https://hub.studentminds.org.uk/university-mental-health-charter/) (UMHC). The UMHC is a set of principles that universities commit to working towards to improve the mental health and wellbeing of their communities. | |
| **Positive feedback** | **Areas to improve** |
| Improved work-life balance through hybrid working. | Stigma and fear around mental health disclosure. |
| **Actions being taken**  Comprehensive evaluation has taken place of our [Mental Health Champions](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/mentalhealth/mhchampions/), a resource that encourages open conversations around mental health & wellbeing, challenging stigma and role modelling positive health behaviours through activities to help promote mental health & wellbeing. Recruitment is underway for an additional number of Mental Health Champions to expand this valuable role.  We are continuing to promote ‘[This is Me](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/wellbeing/mentalhealth/thisisme/)’, which encourages storytelling as a way to raise awareness about mental health and wellbeing and create a culture of compassion. We also share our stories and experiences through national campaigns such as ‘Time to Talk Day’. | |

**Equality, Diversity and inclusion:**

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| **Positive feedback** | **Areas to improve** |
| Colleagues understood why diversity is, and should be, a priority and believe that the University is making efforts. | Enhance representation across the leadership of the University. |
| **Actions being taken**  Develop diverse pipelines into leadership. This has begun through programmes like [100 Black Women Professors Now Programme (100BWPN)](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/inclusion/support/training/100bwpn/) and will be continued through a new flagship VC-sponsored Academic Leadership Development Programme which will be developed this year. | |
| **Positive feedback** | **Areas to improve** |
| Colleagues rated our colleague networks as making a big contribution to our sense of belonging e.g., LGBTQ+, Trans cafe and Disability network. (see [webpage](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/inclusion/groups/networks/)). | Colleague feedback calls for a greater focus on socio-economic background in addition to current areas of focus. |
| **Actions being taken**  Actions to improve progression and reduce pay disparity are also included in our [Athena SWAN](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/inclusion/accreditations/athenaswan/) action plan, which forms part of our Silver Award submission.  There is also work underway to include socio-economic background as a consideration within the Equality Impact Assessment process. | |
| **Positive feedback** | **Areas to improve** |
| Trust in the University to take appropriate action against problems. | Visible actions / outcomes when incidents occur. |
| **Actions being taken**  We will be taking steps to improve transparency of and trust within reporting mechanisms and processes including a review of [Exeter Speaks Out](https://www.exeter.ac.uk/about/speakout/) and Exeter and Falmouth Speak Out. | |