University of Exeter

Our Colleague Experience Survey

How your feedback has made a difference

Your feedback is important to us and informs our Wellbeing, Inclusion and Culture Committee (WICC), and faculty and divisional priorities.

Key initiatives from your feedback last year are summarised below:

Career pathways

Colleagues wanted better career pathways and mentoring opportunities. In response, the Exeter Academic promotion criteria was refreshed following an extensive review, and promotion workshops were held in faculties to increase awareness of the changes. The Exeter Professional webpages were also re-launched with a new Career Development Hub, and the new Talent Innovation, Discovery and Engagement (TIDE) scheme was launched for professional services colleagues.

Mentoring

The results of survey in 2024 indicated significant demand from colleagues for mentoring. Given the acknowledged role of mentoring in supporting professional development and career aspirations, it was agreed that this would become a WICC priority for 2024/2025. Following cross-university engagement, a responsive and flexible university-wide mentoring scheme has been developed which enables mentors and mentees to connect across the university based on expertise and support needs, rather than role or department thus encouraging the breaking down of institutional silos.

A new mentoring programme has been launched, on a new platform PLD (Perform Learn Develop) which is intuitive, user-friendly, and flexible. It provides a structured and simple framework to help mentors and mentees establish and manage mentoring relationships and enhance professional development across the University. Since its university-wide launch of the platform to mentors in May 2025, over 300 colleagues have signed up to be mentors, with momentum and awareness of the platform continuing.

Enhancing representation across leadership:

Colleagues expressed a desire for better representation in leadership. As a result, the Future Leaders Programme was launched, we piloted the external Calibre Leadership programme for colleagues with disabilities, and continued our support for initiatives such as 100 Black Women Professors Now (100BWPN), Leadership Difference and ELEVATE.

Improving awareness about wellbeing provision

Feedback indicated a need for better awareness of wellbeing support. In response, a new communications plan which included faculty and PSLT roadshows, was launched by the Colleague Wellbeing team to enhance awareness about our support and services.

Addressing workload challenges:

Workload was identified as a significant challenge. To address this, new Academic Workload Allocation Models (WAMs) were piloted in faculties, and new Professional Services Workload Principles are under development. This is an area that will continue to be an ongoing focus for our University.

Improving reporting pathways and visible action on complaints:

Feedback highlighted the need for better reporting pathways and visible action on complaints. In response, the Speak Out reporting tool was reviewed and a new Early Resolution process is now in development.

These initiatives also supplement existing activity on our Race Equality Charter, Athena SWAN and work to address pay gaps, which cumulatively seek to improve the overall experience for all colleagues.

These are just a few of the many WICC priorities we're taking forward after listening to your feedback.

Find out more on our WICC website: www.exeter.ac.uk/departments/hr/wicc/