PEOPLE STRATEGY | 2023-26

Making life better for students at Bucks.

## **Introduction**

People drive Bucks Students’ Union whether they are members, staff or stakeholders. We continue to value student officers, volunteers and employees with ideas and personality and believe that dynamic, creative and vibrant people shape our organisation.

To achieve the goals of our Strategic Plan 2023-2026, we must be performing as an organisation which encourages diversity, innovation and tenacity. We will attract, engage, develop and retain a diverse team who will strive for high performance, demonstrating the skills, experience and values required to achieve our mission of making life better for students at Bucks.

Demonstrating our dynamism, whilst continuing to operate in line with best practice, we will work with an agility that is flexible to the needs of our team so we can deliver a service that meets the expectations of our members. Through implemented policies and procedures, employees, with full support from line managers, will contribute to the organisation’s ability to achieve the aims of this People Strategy which are to:

* Achieve our overall strategic aims
* Embed our values in everything we do
* Attract the best
* talent for our Retain our talent organisation
* Engage our employees
* Develop our people
* Perform to high standards and deliver great results

**ATTRACT THE BEST TALENT FOR OUR ORGANISATION**

## We will continue to be an employer of choice through sharing our success and the benefits

## of joining our team. Inclusive recruitment procedures will encourage applicants from a diverse talent pool and ensure our selection processes remain fair whilst considering fit to the organisations values and behaviours.

## **Continue to be an employer of choice**

## External media will demonstrate our positive engagement scores and showcase our extensive employee benefits appealing to high quality candidates.

## Our reputation will be enhanced by ensuring all applications are acknowledged and timely, constructive feedback is provided.

## Data from exit interviews will be used to develop and improve our structures, so they remain

## fit for purpose and attractive to prospective employees.

## Regular benchmarking of reward and recruitment data will ensure we remain competitive in the students’ union sector, wider third sector and within the local community.

## **Encourage applicants from a diverse talent pool**

Development of inclusive recruitment practices that result in our student leaders, staff and volunteers reflecting the demographic of the membership will be ongoing.

Guaranteed interview schemes, flexible working processes and our commitment to be an inclusive employer will remain attractive to candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds, ages, genders and circumstances.

Selection procedures will be fair and consistent with a focus on equity, values and behaviours and progression to the next stage of the Disability Confident scheme will be aspired to.

**Maintain an innovative approach to recruitment of team members**

Our managers will continue to receive support by way of training and any relevant data required for the creation and recruitment of their teams.

Robust recruitment procedures, including

role analysis, will be embedded in operational processes to provide confidence to recruit the right people into the right roles to achieve the organisations mission.

Fair pay will be ensured across all levels of the organisation, from student staff to the senior team, and internal financial processes will ensure budgetary control is maintained.

**Objectives/key targets**

* Identify, review and share annual benchmarking data, proactively addressing anomalies where possible.
* Monitor and review equal opportunities data at each stage of the recruitment process, implementing positive action where necessary.
* Ensure the total reward package is clearly advertised and applications from quality candidates are consistently received.

**ENGAGE OUR EMPLOYEES**

Through promoting a culture of inclusivity and positivity, we will empower staff and inspire innovation and dynamic approaches to our work. We will consistently review policy and best practice, encouraging and developing a customer service focus whilst maintaining robust on-boarding procedures.

**Maintain a culture of inclusivity and innovation**

Our organisation will strive to reduce bias by creating an environment that values individual differences and empowers employees to thrive and perform to their potential.

The vision and purpose of Bucks Students’ Union will be communicated through motivational leadership, role modelling positive behaviours and consistently proving our commitment to our stakeholders.

Evidenced as a kind organisation where they feel they belong, employees trust the Union to deliver on its mission and are proud to contribute to it’s overall strategic aims because they feel valued and well supported.

**Empower staff to deliver our promises**

Team members at every level feel well informed through open and honest communication structures that enable freedom and autonomy for them to make sound decisions about our service.

Positive and timely feedback will be regularly provided to our staff, along with clarity of roles, responsibilities and expectations to promote accountability and provide a clear purpose.

Employees will care about our members and the organisation will listen when new ideas or changes are suggested.

**Acknowledge and celebrate recognition**

Accreditations and awards for employee engagement, wellbeing, mental health and Disability Confident will be maintained, demonstrating our commitment to excellence in supporting our people.

Regularly sharing best practice with our sector peers and community partners will encourage us to keep evolving and be more extraordinary.

Commitment and passion for our sector leading brand will be instilled through robust induction procedures and continued through consistent performance monitoring.

**Objectives/key targets**

* Staff engagement levels remain at 85%+ and ahead of our comparative set.
* Engagement survey results demonstrate employees understand their contribution to the achievement of the organisation’s goals.
* Opportunities for two-way feedback are regularly provided.
* Our EDI approach is recognised externally as sector leading and best practice.

**DEVELOP OUR PEOPLE**

Champion continuous professional and personal development, exploring alternative methods of knowledge sharing and encouraging wider networking opportunities to absorb ‘best practice’ from throughout our sector and beyond.

**Promote a culture of coaching and mentoring**

Open and meaningful conversations will be encouraged and emphasis will be placed on the relevance and impact of 360 degree feedback to develop team members at all levels.

Mentoring opportunities will be sought both internally and externally ensuring employees feel supported and can seek advice from knowledgeable sources.

Staff will receive appropriate training empowering them to consistently collaborate and network both internally and externally maximising knowledge sharing opportunities

**Emphasise continuous professional and personal development**

A programme of sector and role specific developmental opportunities with be scheduled and promoted each year and delivered in line with organisation and individual objectives.

A focus of continuous learning will be promoted to improve personal effectiveness, emotional intelligence and build on individual and team resilience by investing in opportunities and encouraging employees to maintain CPD records.

Team members will be accountable for their decisions and actions due to their increased confidence in their ability following enhanced self-development opportunities.

**Identify and explore career development opportunities**

Employees will be encouraged to identify their own skills and talent and build their networks through open career conversations as part of the performance management process.

Relevant career opportunities will be promoted to team members as and when they arise and outplacement support will be provided as required.

High quality feedback, knowledge sharing and the promotion of cross departmental working practices will be used to ensure our staff are maximising their potential and achieving individual, departmental and organisation objectives.

**Objectives/key targets**

* Employees are satisfied with the learning and development support and opportunities available to them.
* Mentors are identified, trained and assigned to team members at all levels.
* Training needs are identified through performance management processes and delivered within the allocated budget.

**PERFORM TO HIGH STANDARDS AND DELIVER GREAT RESULTS**

Through a highly engaged, well supported and properly equipped team of staff and volunteers operating in a positive environment, underpinned by robust management systems and structure, we will encourage and maintain a culture of high performance.

**Deliver a first-class customer service**

Through strong leadership and quality induction procedures, employees understand the need to deliver our services with a determined customer focus.

Employees are clear on the expectation of them, the responsibilities of their role and are openly encouraged to contribute to the overall success of the organisation and achievement of its objectives.

A collaborative approach will be embedded into daily operations that allows for high satisfaction outputs through working in a positive environment.

**Manage resources for the best value**

Structures, processes and systems will be reviewed to identify efficiency savings and ensure the best value for money for the organisation and our members.

The line manager/employee ratio will be regularly monitored to ensure teams are able to deliver on their departmental objectives in the most resource effective way.

Through highly engaged, well supported and properly equipped teams, employees will be able to identify opportunities for innovation and change that will benefit the organisation.

**Achieve aspirational targets**

Each employee will be involved in the setting, delivering and achieving of their departmental targets, which will be aspirational and impactful.

Regular feedback and review of the work environment, operational structures and facilities will identify opportunities for organisational change consistently encouraging us to work in a flexible and progressive way.

A results driven focus will be communicated regularly at all levels and through open and honest communication ensuring we respond to changes as needed.

**Objectives/key targets**

* Leadership, service and colleagues achieve +75% in the employee engagement survey.
* 360 feedback processes are delivered and engaged with annually.
* Members are satisfied with our service as demonstrated through responses to the annual Membership Survey and National Student Survey.

**RETAIN OUR TALENT**

Succession planning will be recognised and communicated ensuring team members are aware of progression opportunities. We will effectively employ benchmarking to continuously review our reward package, whilst promoting a positive health and wellbeing culture. Regular feedback will be sought from employees promoting a culture of honest and open communication.

**Maintain fair reward and recognition systems**

Benchmarking of pay and benefits will be rigorously reviewed on an annual basis, ensuring fair and equal pay and supporting employee motivation and satisfaction.

Fair and competitive pay will continue to be offered to our student staff, encouraging the wider community to better understand the value of our members.

Through celebration and encouragement, employee achievements and milestones will be recognised, acknowledged and shared.

**Identify succession planning opportunities to retain skills**

Succession planning opportunities are identified early and development plans are reflective of proposed progression routes through the Union and beyond.

Team members are aware of internal progression opportunities through internal communication and open career conversations and aspire to progress their careers within the sector.

**Promote a positive health and wellbeing culture**

Employees are empowered to find flexible ways of working that maintain a suitable work- life balance allowing them to contribute more effectively.

Roles and responsibilities are regularly reviewed to ensure we are providing meaningful work that inspires and motivates our team members.

Wellbeing support is provided through a variety of internal and external services and feedback is gathered to ensure signposting and provision is relevant and helpful.

**Objectives/key targets**

* Average length of service remains over 3 years.
* Positive rates of staff retention are maintained below 15%.
* Absence levels remain below an average of 3 days per year per employee.

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