The University of Kent is a successful organisation which has developed and thrived due to the efforts and talents of its staff. The University values its very good employee relations and its excellent record of encouraging staff to achieve their ambitions. The University of Kent’s HR Strategy was launched in June 2010 and was written with a view to supporting our staff to continue to develop and excel and to ensure their contribution to the success of the University's Institutional Plan. A great deal was accomplished in 2010/11 and 2011/12 will build on those successes and expand its ambitions even further.

A report on 2011/12 Accomplishments and Plans are outlined below according to the four themes of the HR Strategy (combined from six themes in 2010/11 for ease of reference).

1. Developing Leadership and Organisational Capabilities
2. Enhancing People Management, Resourcing and Communication
3. Promoting Equality and Diversity
4. Building Efficient & Effective HR Systems and Supporting Workforce Planning

### 1. Developing Leadership and Organisational Capabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity and Achievements since June 2011</th>
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<tr>
<td>- Many of the accomplishments and plans are outlined in the accompanying HR Strategy &amp; Operational Plan document which was most recently revised on 25 October 2011.</td>
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<td>- The 2010/11 Heads Leadership and Management Programme finished in May 2011 and seven of the eleven cohort members have continued on by participating in a new programme element being piloted for the first time – a peer action learning group; the first facilitated set occurred in October and a second is planned for December.</td>
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<td>- The 2011/12 Heads programme was launched in September at Hythe and a cohort of 14 Heads, Directors, and Medway Heads have indicated their interest in participating in the full Heads programme. The programme began with a session on internal Finance in October 2011 and will continue through the academic year.</td>
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A steering team comprised of the Dean of Graduate Studies and Deans/Heads from Academic and Professional Services have approved the design for a new programme (working title: Leadership for Areas of Significant Responsibility) designed for senior managers in professional services and academic staff with significant leadership roles. Detailed design is underway, initial conversations are being conducted to solicit volunteers for the pilot and the programme will launch early in 2012.

Julia Goodfellow is hosting a series of events for newly promoted Senior Lecturers, Readers and Professors. The first event for Readers was very well received and the others will follow in December.

Change – ‘Leading’ and ‘Navigating’ it are themes in a host of areas for 2011/12 – a facilitated session was held with EG members and Deans in October leading to an action plan that will unfold during the year; the Social Sciences Change Academy pilot project is off to a strong start in developing links between academic staff, administrative staff and students and a ground up vision for 2015, and new resources and a dedicated web page for Change are under construction.

Researcher development is high on the agenda for 2012; particularly in relation to the REF, the Researcher Development Framework, and the Concordat. Work is being done to develop a Code of Practice, E&D training and a web page for researcher development.

Induction was redesigned and relaunched in October 2011 with the largest number of new staff in attendance on record; the event retains EG sponsorship through Keith Mander’s overview presentation and is supplemented with sessions focusing on the critical areas of E&D and Health and Safety but then moves into an ‘information fair’ event where a host of booths featured services provided to staff across campus, including everything from UELT, to Research Services, to the Sports Centre, the Unions, and Kent Union. Feedback is being solicited but the event appears to have been a great success and may be worth repeating annually with a focus on ‘existing’ staff in addition to the termly new staff events.

**Plans for November 2011 – March 2012**

- The Academic Division’s pilot programme, Supporting Management, Developing Leadership (SMDL) for G7 administrative staff will culminate in a final learning event in November 2011. A collaborative review of the programme by the Academic Division and Learning and Development will determine lessons learned to better understand how to serve the needs of this large staff group within the University
• The Leadership Programme for Professional Services Managers (LPPSM) will culminate in November 2011 and, following consultation with Directors of Professional Services and line managers will be launched for a new cohort in 2012.

• The Heads Leadership & Management programme will contain coaching elements for the first time this year; discussions on the use of this opportunity for development will begin in December 2011.

2. Enhancing People Management, Resourcing and Communication

Activity and Achievements since June 2011

• A successful submission to the Association of University Administrators has resulted in a funded project to pilot the AUA CPD framework in three Faculty of Humanities Schools as part of the PDP/appraisal process. A post-project evaluation will be conducted to determine whether the AUA CPD framework would be of benefit more widely within the University of Kent.

• An internal performance management audit has been completed. Recommendations have been included 2011/12 plans.

• The new appraisal document was piloted in HR during the summer and focus groups have been held to garner feedback on the pilot documentation. This will feed into the ongoing consultation work on appraisal we plan to start in November/December.

• New induction checklists and good practice guides have been road-tested and communicated across the University.

• A revised Head of Academic School Role Profile is being piloted for the external recruitment of a new Head of the School of Physical Sciences. Further work on identifying what the University needs in terms of Heads of School and succession planning is in the early stages of planning following the recent facilitated session with the Deans, EG and the Directors of Finance and HR, where this was recognised as a key piece of work.

• Information regarding the new Mediation Service was attached to pay-slips at the end of October. We will use this as a starting point for soliciting interest from staff who would like to training to become mediators.

• A new Grievance Policy and Procedure for staff in Grades 1-6 has been written and consultation has taken place with the Trade Unions.

• The first meeting with the Trade Unions and Staff Representatives re Negotiation on the University’s proposals with regards to revision of Statute 7 and associated Ordinances and the abolition of Statute 8 (retirement) was held in September 2011. A second meeting is scheduled
to take place on 3 November.

- A Voluntary Redundancy and Early Retirement Scheme has been offered to staff as part of the University’s preparations for change in 2012 and to support the University’s entry into REF 2014. A meeting was held on 25 October to make decisions.

- Adjustments have been made to the promotions procedures for academic staff, a briefing has been held with Heads of School. Three briefings for prospective applicants are planned for October and November which are being led by the Vice-Chancellor and members of the University Promotions Committee to help “de-mystify” the process.

- Data in the Equality and Diversity report shows a huge increase in recruitment activity which will continue following the recent VR/ER Scheme.

### Plans for November 2011 – March 2012

- Training for mediators as part of a University mediation scheme will begin in February 2012.

- HR will continue to offer support to all staff through a general open enrolment programme, away days, CPD financial support and fee remission support, as well as individual coaching support on a case-by-case basis.

- A review of the current probation process and possible implementation of probation for all Professional Services and Administrative staff will be undertaken.

- We will be writing further guidance for HoS's and Probationary Supervisors to support the revised Academic Probation Scheme.

### 3. Promoting Equality and Diversity

#### Activity and Achievements since June 2011

- An external review of Equality and Diversity has started. A desk-based review of policies and procedures has been completed and the findings shared telephone interviews have been held with key stakeholders. The facilitators met with the university’s Equality Promotion Group on 19 October to share early findings and prepare for the Focus Groups in November.

- The REF Code of Conduct on Equality and Diversity is being written jointly between HR and Research Services.

- LGBT staff were invited to respond to the Stonewall Workplace Index questionnaire during the summer. The information gleaned from this process will help us in developing an action plan in this area.

At least 70 members of staff attended an “Athena Swan Awareness Raising Day” in
September. Speakers included Dame Julia Higgins and Sarah Hawkes from ECU. A further meeting of the working groups has been held.

### Plans for November 2011 – March 2012

- **Equality and Diversity Review** - Twelve Focus Groups will be held with both staff and students in November, to help prepare a report with recommendations. The draft report will be shared with the Equality Promotion Group on 12 January 2012.
- **Equality and Diversity briefings** will take place for all the REF decision-makers as part of the Code of Conduct.
- The results of the Stonewall Workplace Index questionnaire will be known and the information gleaned from this process will help us in developing an action plan in this area.
- The second phase of the Athena Swan project will be implemented. Each School is being asked to develop an action plan which will be put into the School Plans to help ensure it becomes a strategic priority.

### 4. Building Efficient & Effective HR Systems and Supporting Workforce Planning

#### Activity and Achievements since June 2011

- **Also see HR Strategy & Operational Plan document.**
- Additional staff are being trained to complete the HESA return in order to decrease potential risk to the University by having only one trained staff member.
- Staff profile reports were created for the Academic School 2011/12 planning round further adjustments will be made for the coming year. The ability to create useful management reports is limited due to technical limitations with the existing HR/Payroll system and highlights the need for a system that will better support users’ needs.
- Initial work on the HR/Payroll system has begun with the creation of a steering group chaired by Margaret Ayers. The three functional areas involved (HR/IS/Finance) are working together closely to begin required work to determine functionality for the new system as well as gathering current information on processes, reports, interfaces and rules governing HR and payroll decisions that can be built into the system to enable triggered actions and process work flows.

#### Plans for November 2011 – March 2012

- **HR and workforce performance measurement** and bi-annual benchmark reporting will take place based on information to be received from DLA Piper.
The project will continue with next steps including a detailed determination of desired functionality and preliminary conversations with high level stakeholders. The RFQ and ITT processes for the new system will begin in spring 2012. Formal procurement and tendering processes take six months to complete and deeper stakeholder engagement will be critical during this process.

Feedback on accomplishments to date and next steps is most welcome.

Human Resources Management Team
November 2011