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 builds on those successes and expands its ambitions even further.

A report on 2011/12 accomplishments so far this year are outlined below according to the four themes of the HR Strategy:

### 1. Developing Leadership and Organisational Capabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity and Achievements since November 2011</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Two Deans have received sponsorship and are attending the external Leadership Foundation for Higher Education’s (LFHE) <strong>Top Management Programme (TMP)</strong>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The 2011/12 <strong>HLMP</strong> is underway with a cohort of 14. Although the sessions have been well received by those who attend, consistent participation by all members continues to be a challenge. Although all dates were communicated as far as possible in advance, other work commitments tend to draw staff away regularly.</td>
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<td>• The new pilot <strong>Leadership for Areas of Significant Responsibility (LASR)</strong> programme designed for senior managers in professional services and academic staff with leadership roles launches in March 2012 following a line manager briefing in February with a full cohort of 24 participants. It has been encouraging to see a high level of interest in the programme from Humanities. This has meant that some have not been able to attend the pilot. Heads have been encouraged to stay connected directly with participants throughout the programme and to continue to work with those who have not been chosen to encourage their development in other ways.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Another iteration of the well received <strong>Leadership Programme for Professional Services Managers (LPPSM)</strong> targeted primarily to G8 professional services staff will launch with a</td>
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second full cohort of 30 in March 2012, bringing total participation to nearly 100 since 2010.

- Keith Mander hosted an event for newly promoted senior lecturers and G9 professional services staff in February. The event was well received but participation was somewhat disappointing with only 13 of 40 invitees in attendance.

- The Social Sciences Change Academy project is being used as a way to shape and expand existing initiatives including a partnership with Creative Campus to exemplify the benefits of collaboration between academic staff, administrative staff and students.

- Change Academy is also testing new communication methods to share information and improve dialogue with a dedicated blog site and twitter feed; the Learning & Development team have developed web-based pathfinders to support individual development; and a feature article in an upcoming issue of KENT magazine will focus on the organisational and individual benefits of continuous learning.

- The redesigned Induction event that includes an information fair with over 22 participating departments has been extremely well received and professional services staff attendance is excellent. Academic staff still appear reluctant to attend despite efforts to ensure relevance through participation of UELT, Research Services and beneficial services that are useful for all staff to be aware of. The Fair will be opened to all staff in June with a communication push to encourage senior staff to stop by, see the benefit for new staff in attending, and encourage others to do so.

- Academic Division launched its Service Excellence initiative with an internally hosted conference attended by over 220 professional services staff and which will be supported by action plans and further events throughout the year. The launch was delivered in partnership with HR and drew on expertise from Commercial Services, IS, HR and others, including a keynote by the Kent Union President. The initiative has attracted great interest from other departments and elements will also be used to inform the upcoming Soc Sciences Learning &Teaching Forum whose primary focus is academic staff.

- Requests for more customised support to Departments such as assisting with the facilitation of away days and provision of individual external coaches is increasing and HR team members are working closely with senior leaders to provide the right interventions to the right audience at the right time.

- Cross-department collaborations include supporting the Erasmus staff exchange programme
and an upcoming Estates employability initiative in partnership with the Prince’s Trust.

## Plans for March 2012 to July 2012

- Six members of the 2010/11 Heads Leadership and Management Programme (HLMP) cohort have decided to continue to meet as a peer coaching action learning group following two facilitated sets in autumn 2011; the group’s first self facilitated session is planned for March 2012.
- A LPPSM Reunited event will provide an opportunity for last year's cohort to gather to discuss and refresh their learning since completing the programme late in 2011.
- Work on the 2012-15 L&D Strategy has begun and will be completed by year end.

## 2. Enhancing People Management, Resourcing and Communication

### Activity and Achievements since November 2011

- The pilot AUA CPD framework being used as part of the PDP/appraisal process is being broadened out into more Schools and Departments this year.
- David Nightingale has chaired a meeting with the Deans, the PVC for Research and members of HR to discuss some data that had been collated with regards to academic staff who had not been promoted for more than 5 years. The focus of the meeting was to discuss how we might improve career development for academic staff. Various actions were agreed from the meeting including sharing the information as part of the confidential part of each School’s planning meeting. It is recognised that staff will have a variety of reasons for not applying for promotion but more needs to be done to create opportunities and support staff to develop. A further meeting is being set up with the Vice-Chancellor to discuss this particularly with regards to issues of career management and appraisal.
- Three meetings 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) have now taken place. At the meeting in December a set of principles which will be incorporated across all the documents were agreed.
- Twelve members of staff took park in the six day training for mediators in February. We are on track to launch the Mediation Scheme before the end of the academic year.
- An internal project team has been created to review the current probation arrangements for staff in Grades 1-6.
- A consultation is currently taking place with affected staff with regards to the changes proposed to SAUL (this is the pension scheme offered to staff in grades 1-6). In addition to the
written consultation, two open briefings have been held to help ensure those staff who are
current members of SAUL understand the implications of the changes and also those who are
not currently members. The consultation period ends in early March. It is expected that the
proposals will be agreed and implemented with effect from 1 July 2012.

- A consultant from EEC who own the proprietary software which is used for job evaluation
  (HERA) has visited the university and given us some support and advice to help improve our
current use of the system. An internal project team has been set up and a project plan
developed.

**Plans for March – July 2012**

- The group conducting the review of probation will conduct an internal survey of staff and
  managers who have recently had experience of the process and from there determining how to
  refine and develop the procedures for all Professional Services and Administrative staff.

**3. Promoting Equality and Diversity**

**Activity and Achievements since November 2011**

- An external Review of Equality and Diversity has been completed. Focus groups took place
  with almost 100 staff as well as telephone interviews with key informants. The facilitators met in
  January with the University’s Equality Promotion Group and others who had participated in the
  Focus Groups so that the initial findings and recommendations could be shared.

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

- The results of the Stonewall Workplace Index questionnaire were shared with members of
  the LGBT network. The University has moved up 46 places overall and finished in the top 30
  of University employers. We are working with University of Christchurch to arrange a joint
  event for both LGBT Groups in Canterbury. The Group has also set up its own emailing list so
  that group members can communicate without using their Kent ID if they prefer.

- Equality and Diversity has started using twitter as a channel of communication particularly to
  raise awareness of specific events – this has started with Gay History Month in February.

- The second phase of the Athena Swan project is being implemented. Each School is being
  asked to develop an action plan which is being put into the School Plans to help ensure it
becomes a strategic priority.

- Equality and Diversity funded an **awareness-raising event** for students to recognise and promote **HE Mental Health and Well-Being Day** on 22 February. On the same day we invited Matt Macmillan from the *East Kent Early Intervention for Psychosis Service* to give a talk on their work and issues relevant to the University at the Staff Disability Network meeting.

### Plans for March – July 2012

- David Ruebain who is Chief Executive of the **Equality Challenge Unit** (the body which supports the sector in the promotion of equality and diversity) is coming to speak at the next Manager’s Forum on March 20. We will use the same event to launch the findings from the Equality and Diversity Review.

- **REF Equality and Diversity briefings/training sessions** are scheduled to take place for all the REF decision-makers as part of the launch of the Code of Conduct.

- The University has agreed to be part of a qualitative **research project that will examine issues of equality in academic research careers** across three - four UK universities. The project is being led by the Diversity Research Centre at Oxford Brookes (who led the Review of Equality and Diversity) and will include a briefing prior to individual confidential interviews with about 14 academic staff who volunteer to participate in the study. The project will conclude with a formal report and event to share the anonymised findings in January/February 2013. **Athena Swan** – A meeting is scheduled with Sean McWhinnie (one of the founders of the Athena Swan Charter) from Oxford Research and Policy in April to discuss how his organisation might support Schools in developing and taking forward their individual action plans.

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

#### Activity and Achievements since November 2011

- More comprehensive **staff profile reports and commentaries** have been created for the Academic School 2011/12 planning round with the goal of creating opportunities for HR staff to have ongoing discussions with University leaders about career management and development needs and the embedding of equality and diversity within Schools and Faculties.

- Work on the procurement of a **new HR/Payroll system** continues on schedule supported by a dedicated project manager with significant previous experience in this area. The Prequalification Questionnaire deadline is in early March and 14 expressions of interest by
suppliers have been received to date. The goal at the PQQ stage is to decide 5-8 suppliers to take to the Invitation to Tender (ITT) stage. A dedicated project website http://www.kent.ac.uk/is/projects/hrpayroll will be used to communicate developments as the project progresses.

### Plans for March 2012 – July 2012

- **The HR/Payroll System** project continues with detailed ITT development which will carry a deadline of 4 May. It is hoped that the contract will begin in July 2012 with implementation of the new system for parallel running with the current system from April 2013. Additional modules such as e-recruitment will be implemented following phase one.

- Additional work underway during 2012 includes a data cleanse of basic data, an **interfaces inventory**, **rules gathering**, and **process mapping** for key processes including starters, leavers, absence, and e-recruitment among others.

- Particular consideration is also being given to our **E-Recruitment system** which has been included within the PQQ/ITT for the HR/Payroll system as a desired element but is currently a stand-alone system. Our supplier has given notice to us that our current system will no longer be supported after 2014 and a decision will therefore need to be made whether to move to the new software provided by the current supplier, consider alternatives through the new HR/Payroll system supplier offerings, or create a separate tender process for a new e-recruitment system.

- **A REF** technical group has been created in partnership with other University departments and will support reporting decisions in relation to the REF as well as linkages to new **HESA requirements** in 2013.

- **HR is awaiting the results of its first time participation in the **DLA Piper Workforce Performance Measures Survey** and will report on initial findings before year-end.

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

Human Resources Management Team

February 2012