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HR Unconference November 22 – Collaboration in Action

Our HR Team step up and support our Faculty of Business as they deliver an innovative event for our students.



Our graphic artist Elliot captures the day

Our HRM professional service staff were invited by the Project Lead: Dr Myrtle Emmanuel, Senior Lecturer in HRM & EDI Race Business Partner to support a one-day Unconference event. This was held in partnership with HR industry leaders, CIPD members, and academic colleagues to support our students by providing them with an opportunity through a range of learning styles to:

- Increase their employability and engagement with industry professionals
- Extend their HR knowledge
- Discover and demonstrate the problem solving and presentational skills

What was the aim of the event?

To review the wicked problems and paradoxes that leaders and HR professionals face in today's world.

What made the Unconference different?

This unconference was unlike the traditional top-down, formal conference format. The high-energy event provided a rich learning and participant-driven environment. The event also explored and shared how HR professionals re-imagine HR across the various disciplines and become a force of creating value for organisations and their employees. We also had art and drama challenges where students communicated HR led solutions to the wicked problems.

What was discussed?

Peter Cheese, CEO of CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development), launched the event with his provocation **Is HR a force for evil or a force for good? Followed by** Dominic Hook from Unite the Union's on **the changing role of HR – a Union negotiator perspective**, delegates whilst still reflecting on Peter and Dominic's perspectives, heard from 4 speakers who each offered provocations on wicked problems they see through an HR lens.

Stonewall Success!!

Stonewall is recognised as one of the biggest charity organisations in Europe supporting LGBTQ+ inclusion and diversity and supports the 'lived experience' of individuals that identify as LGBTQ+ everywhere and within our own University community.

Inclusivity and culture are key strategic priorities of the University 'This is Our Time' Strategy 2022-2030. As a long-standing committed Stonewall Diversity Champion, we have recently heard the outcome of our Stonewall Accreditation Workplace Equality Index submission process. We are both excited and proud to announce the great news that our submission score was 120 out of 200, which means we are ranked 20th within the Stonewall's Top 100 Employers Index and have achieved a Gold Award! We are also ranked 2nd in the education sector.

We would like to take this opportunity to say 'a huge thank you' to all colleagues that have been involved in the Stonewall Steering Group as a university-wide collaboration to achieve this significant step. The core submission group will be meeting with our Stonewall Client Manager in spring to hear feedback regarding our submission and the related benchmarking exercise carried out by Stonewall. This will provide a clearer understanding of the priorities to include in our Stonewall Action Plan to consolidate, develop and build on this success, enabling us to further support the 'lived experiences' of our LGBTQ+ colleagues within our community and continue to reduce inequalities through this accreditation process.

Congratulations, well done to everyone involved in this considerable achievement!!

Our HR Director Gail Brindley stimulated discussion on **Recruitment in the Current Climate** and was joined by the following speakers **Wendy Cartwright** - HR Director and Chair of the Advisory Board of Global Diversity Practice on - **Is it unethical for HR leaders to act politically in their organisations?** **Ana Jordan** - Vice President for Total Reward at Travelport (a Greenwich [alumnus](#)) - **How do we design competitive pay plans in the current inflationary context and in economies recovering post-pandemic?** **Khi Rafe** - Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust (a Greenwich [alumnus](#)) - **Prioritising EDI from an intersectional lens. Who gets the first bite?**

How did the discussions continue?

Each speaker formed a "talking corner" and, delegates were invited to move between the four provocations, reviewing the wicked problems and offering solutions. Our HR team colleagues, and one MA HRM Student supported each speaker and facilitated each corner: Our facilitators were Ibiyemi Akinkuade (HR Reward and Resourcing Manager), Michael Imomoh (HR Information Systems Officer), Shirley Joseph (Race Equality Charter Project Manager) and Cristina Ciobanu (MA HRM Student).

Our facilitators not only captured the thoughts of observations of the delegates they also responded to direct questions regarding HR policy, practice, and their approaches to real life HR challenges.

We asked our HR colleagues about their experiences at the Unconference.

"I enjoyed interacting with students and HR movers and shakers. I gained valuable insights and future developments. I look forward to next year and being a part of it" - Ibiyemi Akinkuade

"I enjoyed speaking with students regarding my journey in HR and was humbled when some students thanked me for the information, I provided to them after the event" - Shirley Joseph

"The Unconference was a unique opportunity for us to co-create with the end-user of our service - students - and reimagine our role through their feedback and questions. I can't wait for the next one" - Michael Imomoh

Feedback from our participants

"Very engaging session, talk from guest speakers and the ice breakers"

"It was great learning from HR Professionals on their experiences"

"It was a great day where we all learned from each other"

What were the takeaways from the sessions?

- HR can be a lonely place at times, and we need to draw strength from our HR community.
- Inclusivity and fairness are important.
- HR need to be in the room with key decision makers before key people decisions are made.
- Human resources is a force of good.
- Taking the opportunity in unstable times to make impactful changes.
- Learn, re-learn, and unlearn HR business.

Updating Your Personal Data

A reminder to all employees; please check your personal data in Horizon regularly and keep this up to date. You can change your address, emergency contacts and qualifications. You can also amend data relating to protected characteristics.

Guidance on how to access the system and use the self service functionality can be found [here](#).



Professional Services Career Framework

Our new [Professional Services Career Framework](#) is designed to support career progression and continuous development for our professional services staff. We want all staff to feel they have a clear personal development plan with clarity on leadership skills and behaviours. We recognise that supporting and developing our staff is critical not only for delivering on the [University Strategy](#) (and Sub-Strategies) but also to deliver for our students, the wider community and for enhancing impactful and inclusive teams.

The framework is designed to support conversations around career development and is a useful tool for self-evaluation, planning and reflection. Aligned to the university, the framework outlines nine core competencies which fall across all grades for all professional services staff providing clarity of expectation at each level to become progression ready.

We are inviting all professional services staff to attend a briefing session to understand more around the principles and expectations of the framework. We have a variety of training date available which are bookable via [Horizon](#).

More information and additional resources about the framework can be found on the [website](#).

HR UKVI Compliance Team

The HR UKVI Compliance team is excited to announce that we have been working on a brand new UKVI Policy that is due to go live in the coming weeks. This document will be made available on the portal and the HR section of the University website.



This policy will set out the university's approach to ensuring compliance with UKVI immigration laws and the prevention of illegal working at the university and the legal parameters within which the university can employ applicants who are non-British and non-Irish nationals. This policy also reflects the university's commitment to the prevention of discrimination when carrying out right to work checks of all applicants and employees.

We would also like to bring your attention to some changes to the way in which we certify right to work checks. When certifying a right to work check, we previously used the following wording **"I certify that this is a true copy"**. However, according to the most recent Home Office guidance, please now use the following wording: **"The date on which this right to work check was made: insert date"**. Please continue to include your name, job title and signature to all copies of right to work checks that you undertake.

We are pleased to share that we will be holding further Right to Work training sessions on the following dates.

27 April 2023 - 11.30 - 13.00 27 July 2023 - 11.30 - 13.00

If you would like to enrol onto one of these sessions, then please do so via the Learning section on Horizon. For any enquiries, please contact us at HR-UKVI@greenwich.ac.uk and we will be happy to assist you.

Halfords Cycle2Work Scheme

The Cycle2Work Scheme is operated as a salary sacrifice, meaning you agree to give up some of your gross salary (before tax) in exchange for a benefit e.g. a new bike and accessories. By having a salary sacrifice, you are reducing the amount of income you pay tax and National Insurance on which is where the savings are made. The Scheme is administered by HR in conjunction with Simon Earp the Transport & Green Travel Manager.



We are pleased to let you know about a change to the Scheme that means the maximum amount you can apply for has been increased to **£3,000** enabling a wider range of cycles to be chosen including the 'gold standard' London made Brompton fold up bike.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Cycle2Work Scheme, this [guidance](#) will help with your queries.

Non-attendance on Courses — Please Note

In January 2023, we started charging Faculties/Directorates a proportion of the cost of a course organised by HR, if colleagues do not attend courses, they have enrolled on within Horizon. To ensure the course is transferred into an Outlook calendar after enrolling, Add to Calendar and the ical icon need to be clicked.

Many of our courses are extremely popular and have waiting lists, therefore non-attendance is preventing colleagues on the waiting list from attending.

Colleagues are reminded via an email a week before the course of their enrolment. If, for any reason, colleagues cannot attend, they should **withdraw** their place on the course by clicking on Current Learning>Course Name>Withdraw.

If the withdrawal is not completed, the Faculty/ Directorate will be charged for non-attendance on the course.

Farewell and Welcome in HR

We say good luck and good bye to Olaide Fasasi and John Fabiyi who leave us for pastures new.

We say Hello and Welcome to Nicci Garlick who joins our HR Recruitment Team, Michelle Appiah-Agyekum who joins our HR UKVI Team and Ayesha Wilson who joins our People Partner Team.

Staff Networks and Community

Are you interested in joining any of our staff networks or community? If you would like to find out more, please see the links below:

[BAME Staff Network](#)

[Disabled Staff Community](#)

[LGBT+ Staff Community](#)

[Women's Staff Network](#)

HR Webpages

Our [HR Webpages](#) provide a wide range of information and guidance that staff will find helpful.

Subject areas include Academic Promotion, Appraisal, EDI, Learning & Development, New Starters, Wellbeing, Pay and Pensions, Professional Services Career Framework, Recruitment, Staff Benefits and a search function for HR policies.

You can also find details on how to contact HR Staff and where to find us at Avery Hill.

Understanding our Diverse University Community

Information to help create an environment in which the sharing of diversity monitoring data is supported and trusted. In line with the Inclusivity and Culture priority of our [Strategy 2030](#), the university is committed to culture change for inclusion that extends to creating an environment in which the sharing of information is supported and trusted. This information includes diversity monitoring data.

Providing Support

We recognise that circumstances change and we ask you to keep your [Horizon](#) personal information up to date and to share information through our other systems and surveys. We collect diversity monitoring data on our staff and students and analyse this information at key stages of the higher education life cycle. Your information enables us to improve our support and to tailor services for staff and students. Understanding the diversity of our university community – in numbers and through lived experiences – is important in empowering and celebrating all that we are. Whilst some may not wish to share this information, the sharing of diversity monitoring data is instrumental in helping to:

- Provide a more accurate understanding of recruitment, retention and success generally and according to different equality areas.
- Make evidence-based and outcome-focused decisions and improvements that support our university community and specific parts of it, including evaluating their impact over time and as compared to others (as occurred during staff and student surveys throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, for example).
- Inform action plans for our work to overcome systemic barriers to equity that exist within our university community and society (including the [Greenwich Race Action Plan](#) and those forming part of the Athena Swan Charter for gender equality, Disability Confident, Race Equality Charter, Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, and University Mental Health Charter).

The more of us who share our diversity monitoring data, the more representative, detailed and useful the analysis will be, and the more powerful the insights and action.

Building Trust

The sharing of diversity monitoring data benefits everyone when there is a trusted two-way relationship. At the University of Greenwich, we appreciate the levels of staff and student data sharing, which is the passing of personal and sensitive information from one person to another. Details can range from sharing your name to deeply personal information such as your religion or belief or sexual orientation. We aim to ensure that staff and students can, as far as possible, describe themselves in ways that reflect how they identify whilst aligning with our reporting requirements.

At the University of Greenwich, we manage all information with care, in a confidential manner, and in a way that promotes the benefits of sharing information so you can make an informed choice. We do this by following our stipulated guidelines on data collection, storage, and use including compliance with [data protection legislation](#).

As a higher education institution, we are required to publish data as part of the public sector equality duty (PSED) of the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Show how we have complied with the PSED at least once a year.
- Prepare and publish equality objectives at least every four years.

In addition, your information held within Horizon is shared with the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) as part of the HESA staff record (e.g. your date of birth). If you prefer not to share your biographical information relating to disability, ethnicity, gender reassignment, religion or belief, sexual identification and/or sexual orientation, please email equality@gre.ac.uk.