



Staff Survey Report – Update on QMUL’s Response to Issues of Bullying and Harassment

Outcome requested:	Council is asked to note the update on QMUL’s response to issues of bullying and harassment.
Executive Summary:	This paper outlines an action plan that has been developed in response to the staff survey results on stress and bullying/harassment.
QMUL Strategy:	Strategic Aim 1: to recruit students and staff of the highest intrinsic talent and potential, and to nurture their careers.
Internal/External regulatory/statutory reference points:	N/A
Strategic Risks:	The Strategic Risk Register notes the need to develop and retain high quality staff in the academic disciplines and professional services.
Equality Impact Assessment:	Assessments will be built into focus group planning. A demographics breakdown is available in section 3.
Subject to prior and onward consideration by:	QMSE 27 June 2017
Confidential paper under FOIA/DPA:	No
Timing:	Focus groups will run from July to October 2017. A pulse survey will be launched in Spring 2018 for focus group participants. The next staff survey will run in Spring 2019.
Author:	Gulshin Ijaz, Organisational Development Manager
Date:	13 June 2017
Senior Management/External Sponsor:	Laura Gibbs, Chief Operating Officer

1. Introduction

Staff concerns around stress and bullying/harassment have been raised in the previous two staff surveys and in the case of bullying/harassment, have increased by 4%. This paper provides a brief overview of planned actions, including focus groups, that are to be run by an external specialist (Affinity Health at Work) to understand better the issues and ensure actions are well-informed and effective.

2. Survey results

The 2016 staff survey results revealed that only 37% of staff feel there are effective policies and practices to support them if they experience stress or pressure at work. The percentage was lower for non-clinical academic staff at 28%.

In addition, 10% of staff who responded to the survey (equating to 255 people) stated that they have personally experienced bullying and/or harassment at work in the last 12 months, with an additional 7% of respondents (equating to another 196 people), preferring not to say. Locally, this is more prominent in some areas compared to others.

We can compare QMUL's institution-level results to other universities who undertake the same staff survey. This indicates a total sector average of 15% of staff reporting being subject to bullying and harassment.

3. Demographics breakdown

Appendix 1 outlines the demographics breakdown for responses in relation to bullying and harassment. The % positive figure indicates the percentage of staff that answered 'no' to the question 'Have you personally experienced bullying and/or harassment at work in the last 12 months'. There appear to be only significant differences by age, with staff aged between 25-34 years experiencing less bullying/harassment than staff from other age ranges. However, those staff that chose not to disclose their age reported experiencing more bullying/harassment than other staff. A similar pattern is evident with religion, whereby Jewish staff reported experiencing less bullying/harassment compared to the university average, and those staff that did not disclose their religion experiencing more bullying/harassment than other staff. There are no significant differences by gender, but again those staff that did not disclose their gender reported experiencing more bullying/harassment than other staff.

In relation to ethnicity, those from an 'Asian or Asian British – Pakistani' background (17 responses) scored lower (76%) compared to the sector average (83%), in addition to those staff that did not disclose their ethnicity. Staff that disclosed they had a long-standing physical or mental health condition, illness, impairment or disability (176 responses) also had lower scores (75%) compared to the sector average.

There is a need to understand better what is holding people back from disclosing their demographic information, despite reassurances regarding confidentiality, so that action planning can be appropriately targeted. The differences in the ethnicity and disability categories also need further investigating. This data will be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group to determine next steps.

4. Actions to date

A 'Stress and Work-life Balance' task and finish group was set up following the 2014 survey results. This made recommendations for action, one of which was to set up a well-being group that would take the recommendations forward.

The group achieved the following:

- The current Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) *Workplace Options* was reviewed and it was determined to be fit for purpose but will be subject to a retendering exercise this year so we can ensure we are receiving best value for money.
- The Group considered whether it might be appropriate to introduce "on-site" counselling for staff and we are looking at this as part of the EAP retendering exercise.

- A speaker from Imperial College came to speak to the Group about their experience with the *Mental Health First Aider Scheme* – this was positively received and we have started to rollout training to create a team of Mental Health First Aiders.
- A sub-group led by the Professional Development team in HR reviewed the training provision for managers and staff with regards to supporting staff experiencing mental health difficulties and new courses have been implemented.
- Email “heaven to hell” training was rolled out across QMUL to help reduce the stress that people find with managing their email.
- A sub-group organised a Staff Wellbeing Week in 2016. In 2017 we are running a series of events through the year.

‘Wellbeing Week’ ran across two weeks from 24 February to 3 March 2016. A ‘Wellbeing Fayre’ was offered at the beginning of the week to showcase the further ‘Wellbeing Week’ events and also the range of services available for staff throughout the year. It had 15 different stalls including services from the local community and representatives from academic schools. More than 400 staff attended the Fayre, although the majority were from Professional Services.

5. Affinity Health at Work Project

We have started a project to take a deeper look at the issue (particularly focusing on the experience of academic staff) and identifying realistic and appropriate solutions. QMUL have commissioned an organisation called [Affinity Health at Work](#) to identify the contributing factors to work-related stress, bullying and harassment in academic and professional services staff. Affinity Health at Work were recommended to us by Professor Rob Briner who joined SBM as Professor of Organisational Psychology in the autumn. Affinity Health at Work are a small organisation who specialise in research-based practice and we feel they will bring credibility to their interactions with academic staff who get involved in the project.

The review has started and there will be 5 stages of activity:

- Stage 1: Understanding the existing data held by QMUL
- Stage 2: Interviews with key stakeholders
- Stage 3: Interviews with managers
- Stage 4 Workshops with academic and professional services staff
- Stage 5: Consolidation of findings and develop recommendations for action

The review will produce the following outputs by the early autumn:

- Full report on the research findings from all stages, together with recommendations from the research.
- Presentations to the internal HR team at QMUL and to QMSE if required, providing an overview of the research findings and recommendations arising.

6. Bullying/Harassment Action Plan

In response to the recent 2016 survey results, QMSE have agreed the following action plan to specifically address the bullying/harassment results.

Action	Lead	Date
All schools/directorates are required to produce an update on progress on their staff survey action plans to their VP or COO by end of June 2017. HR Partners will then follow up with areas with high levels of reported bullying/harassment to ensure actions are on track.	HR Partners, in liaison with VP/COO	End of July 2017
A communications campaign will be launched to raise awareness on current support, plans to provide further support, and reinforce QMUL values.	Marketing and Comms, Trade Unions	End of September 2017
Encouragement of informal routes to tackle difficult behaviour, such as mediation. Incorporate this into the HR process for referral for mediation.	Nicola Peatfield and Eleri Kallarackal, HR Partners	End of July 2017
Systems and processes are to be set up to capture data on informal and formal bullying and harassment cases.	Melanie Medley, Employee Relations Manager	End of July 2017
Attendance at existing development courses will be encouraged to support difficult conversations and dealing with difficult relationships and to provide support around influencing, assertiveness, resilience, managing stress and providing feedback as well as unconscious bias training. Further provision will be reviewed according to outputs from action plans, such as tailored workshops on bullying/harassment in the workplace and bespoke events for teams on relationships and working styles.	HR Partners, in liaison with Ian Roberts, Head of Leadership and Personal Development	Ongoing
Demographics data will be reviewed by the Equality and Diversity Steering Group with an aim to develop targeted actions.	Sandra Brown	End of October 2017
An external provider specialising in this area, Affinity Health at Work, will run focus groups on stress and bullying/harassment to understand better the issues and provide recommendations on how to effectively support staff.	Margaret Ayers, HR Director & Gulshin Ijaz, Organisational Development Manager.	End of October 2017
A 'Dignity at QMUL' policy will be introduced, including networks/advisors for staff, in line with work carried out by ARCS and the Students' Union on provision for students.	Sandra Brown, Equality & Diversity Manager, Jane Pallant, Deputy Academic Registrar & Mike Wojcik QMSU CEO	By start of the next academic year
A mini pulse survey will be launched to measure the impact of interventions in the areas that participated in the focus groups.	Gulshin Ijaz	Spring 2018
QMUL will sign up to the Stonewall 'No Bystanders' pledge, to embed the Dignity at QMUL Policy: http://www.stonewall.org.uk/our-work/campaigns/nobystanders In addition the University will be making an application to the Stonewall Workplace Index in September 2017	Sandra Brown	Spring 2018

7. Next steps

It is proposed that Professor Steve Thornton, Vice-Principal (Health) is the senior sponsor for this work. Following the focus groups and implementation of actions, a pulse survey will be launched in spring 2018 for focus group participants. The next staff survey will run in spring 2019.

Gulshin Ijaz
Organisational Development Manager
June 2017

Question Text: Have you personally experienced bullying and/or harassment at work in the last 12 months?

UNIVERSITY-WIDE - ETHNICITY	% Positive university-wide	Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi % Positive Base : 53	Asian or Asian British - Indian % Positive Base : 106	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani % Positive Base : 17	Asian or Asian British - Other Asian backgrounds % Positive Base : 34	Mixed - White and Asian % Positive Base : 19	Mixed - White and Black African % Positive Base : 6	Mixed - White and Black Caribbean % Positive Base : 9	Mixed - Other Mixed backgrounds % Positive Base : 31	Black or Black British - African % Positive Base : 87	Black or Black British - Caribbean % Positive Base : 41	Black or Black British - Other Black backgrounds % Positive Base : 10	White - British % Positive Base : 1065	White - Irish % Positive Base : 41	White - Other White backgrounds % Positive Base : 495	White - Gypsy/ Traveller % Positive Base : 5	Chinese % Positive Base : 46	Other ethnic background % Positive Base : 54	Prefer not to say % Positive Base : 467
	83%	89%	83%	76%	85%	79%	[protected]	[protected]	97%	88%	83%	80%	86%	83%	89%	[protected]	82%	85%	71%

UNIVERSITY-WIDE - AGE RANGE	% Positive university-wide	16-19 % Positive Base : 3	20-24 % Positive Base : 84	25-29 % Positive Base : 285	30-34 % Positive Base : 421	35-39 % Positive Base : 414	40-44 % Positive Base : 303	45-49 % Positive Base : 311	50-54 % Positive Base : 234	55-59 % Positive Base : 197	60-64 % Positive Base : 96	65 or over % Positive Base : 29	Prefer not to say % Positive Base : 231
	83%	[protected]	87%	89%	90%	84%	85%	80%	84%	82%	80%	85%	68%

UNIVERSITY-WIDE - RELIGION	% Positive university-wide	Buddhist % Positive Base : 18	Christian % Positive Base : 738	Hindu % Positive Base : 63	Jewish % Positive Base : 27	Muslim % Positive Base : 131	Sikh % Positive Base : 14	Spiritual % Positive Base : 38	None % Positive Base : 975	Other % Positive Base : 57	Prefer not to say % Positive Base : 518
	83%	83%	87%	84%	96%	88%	79%	86%	87%	77%	71%

UNIVERSITY-WIDE - GENDER	% Positive university-wide	Male % Positive Base : 1033	Female % Positive Base : 1225	Prefer not to say % Positive Base : 326
	83%	87%	85%	65%

FOR STAFF ANSWERING 'DO YOU HAVE ANY LONG-STANDING PHYSICAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION, ILLNESS, IMPAIRMENT OR DISABILITY (176 staff)	% Positive university-wide	Staff with long-standing physical or mental health condition, illness, impairment or disability
	83%	75%

Key

Protected: the number of responses is less than 10

% positive: the percentage of staff that answered 'no' to the question 'Have you personally experienced bullying and/or harassment at work in the last 12 months'.