

# Workforce Planning Policy

## Section 1 - Overview

(1) Workforce Planning is an integral part of the strategic management process. It is an ongoing, proactive approach to human resource planning which supports the accomplishment of University goals and objectives, while facilitating the enhancement of job satisfaction, overall workplace stability, and staff development opportunities.

(2) An effective planning process is a successful tool for identifying potential workforce issues (eg. staff shortages and surpluses, skill requirements) in advance. This ensures that the University will have the skill base to meet its objectives.

## Section 2 - Policy

(3) The planning process involves determining the workforce requirements needed to implement the UNE-wide strategic plans and the Core Activity and Capability plans, at the level of individual Faculties and Directorates.

(4) Workforce planning involves:

- a. identifying future workforce needs and capabilities (including skills, knowledge and expertise) as derived from the Strategic Plans;
- b. developing priorities and cross-linkages between the Strategic Plans and the Operational Plans;
- c. an analysis of current staff numbers and capabilities;
- d. an analysis of available and projected funding levels;
- e. identifying the gap between current and future workforce needs;
- f. developing Workforce Plans, outlining the strategies that will be implemented in order to progress from the current situation to the future forecasted situation; and
- g. monitoring and updating workforce plans on a yearly basis as part of the area's operational planning.

(5) The Workforce Plan which is developed out of the Workforce Planning process should:

- a. identify the skills and desired workforce profile required to achieve the Faculty/School or Division/Group strategic goals;
- b. provide an objective basis for planning training and development;
- c. assist in achieving an appropriate staffing mix;
- d. provide the justification for ongoing decision-making with regard to such issues as the annual budget process, organisational structure, work unit or position design/redesign, transfer arrangements, internal secondments, flexible working arrangements, succession and recruitment needs; and
- e. be reviewed and updated at least on an annual basis.

(6) Pro Vice-Chancellor and Deans and Directors, in consultation with, Heads of Schools, managers and other staff as appropriate, are responsible for:

- a. initiating workforce planning in their areas;
- b. developing/revising their Workforce Plan/s;
- c. implementing the actions/strategies within those Plans (or ensuring their implementation); and
- d. monitoring the ongoing effectiveness/relevance of the Plan/s.

(7) Human Resource Services supports workforce planning through the provision of:

- a. management reports on workforce data;
- b. information and advice on the planning process;
- c. advice on such processes as skills audits;
- d. relevant HR policy development and review; and
- e. advice and guidance relating to EEO and industrial requirements that need to be considered with regard to any proposed changes.

## **Analysis of Strategic Plans**

(8) The strategic goals and objectives identified in the Core Activity and Capability plans provide the starting point for identifying future staffing needs and capabilities. Consideration needs to be given to the workforce implications of changes to:

- a. course/program offerings and/or research direction and focus;
- b. student/staff ratios;
- c. workload and/or type of work;
- d. technology;
- e. existing structures and systems;
- f. professional association and/or qualification requirements;
- g. revenue generation ventures (e.g. offshore program development, commercial activities);
- h. the location of where people work (e.g. supervisors may need to have skills to supervise at a distance, staff may need to work without supervision); and
- i. the cost of recruiting, remunerating and developing staff.

## **Current Staff Profile**

(9) In order to plan for future workforce needs Faculties/Schools and Divisions/Groups need to consider the existing staff profile in terms of the:

- a. skills, knowledge and expertise of existing staff (eg. functional/operational skills, scholarships and professional practice, leadership and management, generic workplace skills);
- b. current workload allocation and job design;
- c. critical positions/functions/skills/knowledge/expertise;
- d. possible staff movements (including retirement and pre-retirement, secondment, transfers); and
- e. staff numbers, classification mix, age, gender, diversity, permanent/fixed term/casual staff ratios.

## **Desired Staff Profile**

(10) Consideration should then be given to future issues such as:

- a. growth, decline or maintenance of staff numbers;
- b. an aging workforce;

- c. current skills/knowledge/expertise likely to become less relevant;
- d. need for new skills/knowledge/expertise (eg. technical skills, expertise in new methodologies or discipline developments);
- e. possible shift in the academic qualifications of staff required (e.g. more PhDs);
- f. possible shift in the combination of particular skills/knowledge/expertise that will be required (eg. teaching and research);
- g. need for a more diversified workforce and greater representation from EEO target groups; and
- h. need for staff with commerce and industry contacts.

## **Projected Funding/Budget Implications**

(11) Workforce projections for the planning period need to take into account available and projected funding for the broader University and the Faculty/School/Division/Group plus realistic expected increases in costs as well as the cost of implementing changes.

(12) The formal Workforce Plan, and consequent staff establishment, should provide the basis on which the annual staff budgeting process is determined.

## **Strategies to Achieve Desired Workforce Profile**

(13) Initiatives which may be considered to bridge the gap between the current and desired workforce profiles are:

- a. training/retraining and development;
- b. job redesign;
- c. succession planning;
- d. transfers;
- e. recruitment strategies; and
- f. flexible working arrangements.

(14) Training or retraining should be considered in the first instance as a means of achieving the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise.

(15) Succession planning involves identifying critical positions, functions, skills, knowledge and expertise and ensuring that a pool of staff with the ability and interest are provided with the opportunity to develop the required skills and knowledge through a planned development strategy. It does not replace the merit-based selection process.

(16) Where it is identified that the necessary skills, knowledge and expertise are not available or achievable through such means as training or retraining, any future vacant positions should be looked at with a view to filling the gaps in skills or knowledge.

(17) A reduction in staff will generally involve more complex industrial issues and effective change management procedures and advice should be sought from appropriate Human Resource Services staff. Where significant staffing changes are identified, the formal process for Managing Change (Section 6.03) must be followed.

## **Section 3 - Procedures**

(18) Following the review of the University's strategic planning process, the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean or Director needs to look at the relevant human resource implications arising out of those plans and complete a formal Workforce Plan (Form 6.02a) which will include:

- a. Summary of Key Strategic Elements
- b. Current and desired staff profiles
- c. Proposed changes
- d. Impact
- e. Implementation plan

(19) The completed Plan should be signed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor and Dean or Director and a copy forwarded to Organisational Development.

(20) Organisational Development is responsible for making the Workforce Plans available to the Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive Officer's Executive Group for all major planning exercises, such as the annual budgeting, any formal change process and the annual operational plans.

(21) The Plan should be reviewed at least annually (or at any other time of major change) to ensure that the content is still in line with the Operational Plans and any other identified goals and objectives of the area.

## **Section 4 -**

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Historic
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