

Report

Investors in People Development Visit Summary for University of Bolton

Undertaken by
Sue Holt
on behalf of Investors in People North of England

Project Number: 15/4016

Date: 7th October 2015

Commercial in Confidence

Introduction

This is the 18 month Development Visit for the University of Bolton. The University has seen a lot of change and turbulence in the last 18 months and has worked on the development points highlighted at its last Investors in People review to make continuous improvements. The University is aware that the current practitioner will no longer be carrying out Investors in People work after 2015 and is keen to be allocated a practitioner with higher education experience and knowledge.

Summary Notes:

What Has Happened in the last 18 months

For the first time, the University has had face to face group meetings with all staff to outline the 5 year strategy and help them align local operational plans to the big picture (indicator 1 – people involved and engaged in planning))

Strategic priorities are well defined so that people can clearly see how they contribute to them and the University is encouraging ideas from people about how they can improve and change things (indicator 1 – engagement in planning)

The vision is clear: to be a teaching intensive, research informed (TIRI) University with a student centric focus (indicator 1 – clear purpose and vision)

The University has re-organised its structure and re-defined the roles and responsibilities of managers (indicators 4 and 5 – effective leadership and management – next steps are to make sure performance management looks at management effectiveness)

It has added external expertise to strengthen the senior team and invested in strategic coaching and an Executive development programme, including 360 degree feedback for all members (indicators 4 and 5 – as above)

There is a new Director of Human Resources, bringing new ideas and approaches (indicators 4 and 5 – effective leadership and management)

Quarterly manager's forums are enabling managers to share common issues and learn from each other's experiences (indicators 4,5, 2 & 8 – management effectiveness and learning and development)

Investment in premises has created exciting learning spaces, including the building of a University Technical college that works closely with the University, sited on the same campus (indicator 10 – continuous improvement)

Acting on staff feedback, the University has created a Staff Lounge so that cross team communication improves and information is more easily shared (indicators 3 and 7 – listening to ideas, empowering staff)

Commitment and investment in staff development remains strong. The University supports all its academic staff to achieve Ph D or similar qualifications (indicators 2 and 8 – learning and development)

High student satisfaction scores result in staff rewards, which motivates and helps people strive for high performance (indicator 6 – recognition)

The University is developing its approach to performance management and has introduced a grading structure for Heads of School (indicators 4 and 5 – leadership and management effectiveness)

Customer Service Excellence is being used as a tool to drive high performance and some departments have achieved the accreditation (indicators 9 and 10 – evaluation and continuous improvement)

The University measures its performance through internal and external benchmarking. Students numbers are strong, finances are healthy and some departments have seen significant growth (indicators 9 and 10 – evaluation and continuous improvement)

What Next?

There is lots of work in progress and the University sees its next key steps as:

- Continuing strong communication channels
- Rolling out a University wide engagement survey facilitated by an external partner
- Engaging managers in a University wide development programme
- Developing a more robust performance management culture, including the use of peer observation
- Rolling out a consistent approach to appraisal and making sure managers focus more on the quality of discussion, rather than the paperwork
- Developing a talent management programme so career progression opportunities are clear and the University retains its best talents
- Analysing why people leave Bolton so that it can take steps to address any common themes
- Continuing to develop incentives and measures so that people are clear about expectations and rewards

6th GENERATION INVESTORS in PEOPLE FRAMEWORK

The consultative and in depth review of the Investors in People Framework was launched nationally in September, 2015. It moves from ten key evidence themes to nine and is based on three key principles of: leading, improving and supporting. It will allow the University to be assessed against developed, established, advanced and high performing practices. The silver, gold and platinum levels will remain. Your Investors in People Practitioner will be in touch before your next review to discuss this in more detail. Broadly the new framework will focus on:



Contact Details:

Sue Holt

Investors in People Practitioner

Mobile: 078854 083957

E mail: Susan.Holt@talktalk.net