



THE UNIVERSITY  
*of* EDINBURGH

# Annual People Report 2025

Human Resources

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## Foreword

I have pleasure in introducing the 2024/25 Annual People Report.

In it you will find some compelling examples of colleagues' work to advance the aims of our People Strategy. Whether it is in the review of our policies, the development of career pathways, supporting our international colleagues to work with us, or the enhancement of our staff benefits portal, we are focused on remaining an excellent and progressive employer. Much of our thinking has focused on community cohesion, in the context of significant challenge from national and international events, and we look forward to our forthcoming EDI strategy to support our work in this area.

Last year, our People Report acknowledged the pressure the Higher Education sector, including our University, was under and noted the need for resolve in making change while maintaining our commitment to our academic mission and ambition. The pressure has not lessened and neither has our resolve weakened. Our University Initiatives Portfolio Board will govern workstream activity in the coming year to support our financial sustainability. There is no doubt that this coming year will bring challenges, but, guided by the principles of our People Strategy, we are committed to emerging stronger from them.

### **Catherine Martin**

Vice Principal Corporate Services,  
and Convenor of Staff Experience Committee

# Introduction

This year, colleagues have contributed significantly to advancing our strategic goals, despite the University facing intense challenges due to global and sector-wide issues, often manifesting themselves as financial pressures.

Central to this progress has been our diverse staff community. Guided by our People Strategy, our Values and the Behaviours Charter, we continue to focus on being a place where people want to work and study. Staff feedback, garnered through formal surveys, everyday conversations, and the commitment shown in long careers here, continues to highlight the University of Edinburgh as a rewarding and supportive place to work.

This year we delivered our biennial all-staff engagement survey. 7,432 colleagues (42%) participated, representing a 6% increase on the 2023 survey. Results show that people enjoy their roles, are satisfied with their work environment, and are treated with fairness and respect. Our work on the grade scale has had significant impact, with more than 90% of staff receiving a pay increment this year. The survey highlighted leadership, employee engagement, and performance recognition as three key focus areas for improvement.

Our Staff Experience Committee (SEC) is overseeing plans to action responses to the feedback, to ensure a cohesive approach to addressing current challenges and upcoming transformations. The results will also inform the work of five strategic workstreams that are leading changes to the University structure and operations, helping ensure that steps taken are informed by staff feedback and aligned with broader University goals.

The current higher education context continues to demand decisive responses to difficult questions. Recruitment constraint measures were introduced, and 346 colleagues took advantage of a Voluntary Severance (VS) scheme that ran in the first half of 2025. We also removed contribution rewards and paused 2025/26 academic promotions. Our Court-approved budget requires us to reduce staff costs, and we have taken these actions with the aim of mitigating the need for compulsory redundancies.

We have been engaging with our three partner trade unions to discuss our financial challenges. Industrial action due to concerns about potential compulsory redundancies understandably creates uncertainty for staff and students. We are committed to keeping our discussions with trade unions respectful, providing updates to staff, and working towards solutions that prevent further action.

This report outlines some of the activities that colleagues have undertaken over the past academic year to strengthen our community, develop potential, and enhance our working environment.

[strategy-2030.ed.ac.uk/our-vision-purpose-and-values](https://strategy-2030.ed.ac.uk/our-vision-purpose-and-values)  
[human-resources.ed.ac.uk/learning-development/the-behaviours-charter](https://human-resources.ed.ac.uk/learning-development/the-behaviours-charter)

## Our People Strategy

### We work together to benefit our communities, within and beyond the University

- The University Values and Behaviours are visible in all of our work.
- We are all citizens of the University and we feel part of and care about what happens here.
- We are all included, informed and involved in what goes on at the University.
- We feel safe and well at work.

### We each have the opportunity for personal and professional development, to support individual and organisational achievement

- We have regular conversations so everyone knows what and how they are doing.
- We are responsible for accessing the development we need to be the best we can be.
- Managers have the behaviours, skills and resources to do their jobs well.
- The way we recruit means we attract and retain a talented, diverse workforce.



### We work in an environment that supports and motivates us to do our best work and to achieve the University's goals

- We design our estate to enable us to do our best work.
- Workloads are reasonable and achievable.
- People processes and systems make our lives easier.
- Equitable pay, benefits and working conditions improve our working lives.

# Strengthen our community

We work together to benefit our communities, within and beyond the University.

The University has a powerful reputation for excellence, built on long-established values and principles, which serve to remind us that we belong here and are valued as scholars, as professionals, and as people. Colleagues who work here come from different countries, cultures and backgrounds and we seek to create a community where we fully value and nurture that diversity. The cohesion of our community has been challenged by national and world events, such as the ongoing Israel-Palestinian conflict, and the recent Supreme Court ruling on the definition of sex in equality legislation. We aim to approach these challenges in a thoughtful and compassionate way, to ensure our university remains a welcoming and supportive environment for everyone.

Timely and effective communications to leaders, line managers and staff, through a variety of channels, played a big part in letting colleagues know about new and updated policies, aimed at ensuring staff feel safe and well at work. One important example of this was the work done with our international staff.

As the Home Office works towards a digital immigration system, we supported international staff through the replacement of physical documents with eVisas. In some cases, where staff members have been settled in the UK for a number of years and hold non-digital evidence of their indefinite leave to remain, this has involved our international staff engaging with the Home Office for the first time in many years and the personal support provided to these staff members has been invaluable to them.

Our approach to incremental pay mitigated the impact of recent changes to Skilled Worker sponsorship, however, there will be a detrimental impact for recruiting to roles which the Home Office deem to be lower skilled in future.

An **HR-led University-wide project team** developed a toolkit of messages, advert templates, and materials for recruitment, based on staff insights and sector research. These resources help us to talk about what makes us unique as an employer and to talk with people in a way that is clearly aligned with our purpose and our values. They invite potential candidates to join the University and be part of something bigger, and to enjoy ‘unlocking’ Edinburgh as they take the next step in their career.



**The College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine’s (CMVM) Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee** led a priority-setting exercise to establish the foundations for a new College Community Strategy. It addressed two key challenges: making sure everyone in the College can contribute to the strategic vision; and providing a foundation for focusing resources and attention on the key priorities for the College community. By making connections with marginalised and minoritised groups, including relationship building with the wider College, a long-list of 33 elements was identified.

Staff and students from CMVM who are engaged in EDI, Research Culture and citizenship activities, attended a Priority Setting workshop to generate a ‘Top 10’. These were triangulated with other sources, such as the College Athena Swan award process and Research Culture plans; the Race Review outcomes; and results of the Staff Engagement Survey in order to develop a five-year Community Strategy.

The exercise used methods from healthcare research, designed to capture diverse expert stakeholder opinion and drive positive change. It involved large numbers of staff and students in a meaningful and transparent process. Crucially, the focus on prioritisation supports effective use of resources and reduces risk of staff burnout. The resulting strategy will have visible roots in what the College community wants, promoting an ethos of solidarity, and delivering a clear vision for the College’s future.

**The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Sciences** hosted their annual ‘Celebration of Culture’ event, showcasing the rich diversity of the School’s community. They also hosted their annual Burns Supper event, in which more than 350 students and staff participated.



The Dick Vet Pipers perform at the annual Burns Supper event

**The School of GeoSciences** launched a menopause support group.

**The Bayes Centre** created a bespoke website for staff to access resources for wellbeing and staff socials.

On the **BioQuarter campus**, the Institute for Regeneration and Repair Kitchen Garden is a notable example of just one of many wellbeing initiatives. Staff and students maintain the garden and grow and share produce with staff. This improves wellbeing, promotes teamwork and improves our local environment.

[regeneration-repair.ed.ac.uk/news-and-stories/stories/gardening-in-the-workplace](https://regeneration-repair.ed.ac.uk/news-and-stories/stories/gardening-in-the-workplace)

The School of Physics & Astronomy ran a Therapets session to promote wellbeing and help reduce stress. One staff member said:



**These visits provide intangible but very real benefits to staff morale, and so to the University. The dogs were lovely, and I left feeling happy and relaxed.**



Staff in the School of Physics & Astronomy at the Therapets session

**Corporate Services Group (CSG)** is a large, diverse group comprising 12 departments and around 3,000 colleagues, so building a sense of community is challenging. This year, informal monthly lunches with the Vice-Principal Corporate Services brought together small groups – often junior colleagues or those who may not typically have the opportunity to engage with senior leadership – to ask questions, share the valuable work they do and hear and share views about University priorities.

CSG newsletters include a new ‘Behind the Scenes’ feature, spotlighting colleagues from across the group, offering insight into their day-to-day roles, and celebrating the impact of their work, which builds understanding of the group and reinforces a sense of shared purpose.

**Staff awards** play an important part in celebrating and acknowledging exceptional performance and exemplary behaviour in our University communities.

- **The College of Science and Engineering:** 183 nominations, and 43 colleague volunteers across six categories of awards;
- **The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences:** more than 1,000 nominations, and more than 1,000 submissions to their ‘Thank You’ scheme since its launch;
- **The College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine:** more than 260 nominations, including six colleagues who were given the Excellent Newcomer Award for demonstrating integrity, empathy and respect for others;
- **The University Secretary’s Group:** more than 200 nominations for its inaugural Recognition Awards;
- **The Information Services Group:** a record number of nominations, with 206 submitted across nine award categories;
- **The Changemaker Awards 2024/25:** recognised colleagues and students who have embodied the University’s commitment to Social and Civic Responsibility. 23 colleagues and staff groups, representing every College and Professional Services Group, were celebrated. [sustainability.ed.ac.uk/2024-25-changemaker-awards](https://sustainability.ed.ac.uk/2024-25-changemaker-awards)



Winners of the inaugural USG Staff Recognition Awards

We welcomed 35 students from 20 secondary schools in the Edinburgh and Lothians region on to our **Career Ready Programme**; an 18-month mentorship programme, supported by 36 mentors from across 28 University Schools and Departments.

Career Ready is a national social mobility charity at the heart of a network of employers and educators, who all believe that every young person, regardless of background, deserves the opportunity to kickstart a rewarding future.



**I wish people understood the impact that the Career Ready Programme has on young people. Some young people just don’t have enough people around them to help them achieve, and Career Ready really helped me in that way.**

**Career Ready Mentee**

Another mentee, Eva Watters, a current 6<sup>th</sup> year student at James Gillespie’s High School, joined **Estates** for her four-week paid internship. As this was Eva’s first job colleagues made sure that she got involved in a wide range of tasks, tours, meetings and shadowing opportunities.

From visits to current construction sites, to tours of University teaching spaces, Eva received an eye-opening ‘behind-the-scenes’ perspective of the diverse work of Estates colleagues.



**My time with Estates has been so varied which I think is what made my experience so great. A personal highlight was visiting the psychology building in George Square. It was fascinating to see the lecture halls and study areas, especially since psychology is something I might want to pursue after I finish school.**

**Eva**



Eva Watters, Career Ready mentee, visits the historic site of the former Tynecastle High School, being transformed into student accommodation

In September 2017, the University became a signatory to the **Technician Commitment**, and with it came a promise to improve the visibility, recognition, sustainability and career development for our technical staff.

Core to the commitment is the recognition that clear, accessible technical career pathways are needed in the university sector to ensure staff have opportunities to build a career here.

A short-life working group established a vision for technical career pathways at the University and oversees its implementation and adoption. The group has representation from a range of grades and technician types (research, teaching, and core facilities) across all three Colleges, CSG, and ISG. Its remit covers career development and mobility. The Technician Commitment is a high-profile, sector-wide initiative with more than 120 signatory and supporter organisations. To date, career pathways have only been adopted by a few universities and within the Scottish Technical Network, Edinburgh appears to be leading the way.

# Develop our potential

We each have the opportunity for personal and professional development, to support individual and organisational achievement.

In an environment of change, complexity and uncertainty, we remain committed to helping our people thrive individually and collectively. From training programmes to mentoring initiatives, support networks and work-based learning, diverse opportunities have helped colleagues to pursue their goals and develop their careers.

**Here are some of the ways staff have been developing their potential this year.**

71 colleagues completed the **Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PgCAP)**, giving them a teaching qualification and recognition as a Fellow of the Higher Education Academy.

**New Interview Shadowing Principles** provide a template to help staff seeking promotion or wanting to improve their interview skills. They enable colleagues to shadow interview panels for more senior roles, helping them develop their leadership potential and extend professional networks. They also help in fostering inclusivity and transparency in recruitment practices, and mainstreaming EDI by supporting our commitment to increase the diversity of staff at senior grades.

More than 420 people took part in an Institute for Academic Development programme to enhance Principal Investigators' leadership skills and improve research cultures. The programme offers flexible support to help research leaders develop skills in managing themselves and their careers; leading people and teams; leading collaborations; and their role in building positive research environments.

[institute-academic-development.ed.ac.uk/research-roles/principal-investigators](https://institute-academic-development.ed.ac.uk/research-roles/principal-investigators)

More than 2,300 colleagues have undertaken sustainability training this year. The training introduces key concepts around environmental sustainability, as well as the University's commitments to climate action, and ways that people can take action.

Colleagues who complete all three sustainability training courses on offer achieve a Climate Literacy Badge.



One aim of our People Strategy is ensuring managers have the behaviours, skills, and resources to do their jobs well. The **Business School** has invested in coaching as a core development approach, including:

- Supporting existing coaches with internal professional development opportunities and supervision, ensuring continued alignment with ethical and professional standards;
- Enabling more staff from both academic and professional services backgrounds to access accredited coach training;
- Piloting a coaching skills programme, equipping staff with practical tools to embed coaching style conversations in their day-to-day roles.

They leveraged the strengths and expertise in the existing coaching network and extended participation to coaches from across the University, forming a community of 34 coaches.

The Business School also launched its Coaching Connect CPD Series to help develop its distinctive coaching culture and to support its expansion in the University.



Reflections at the Main Library

The **Library Research Support team** led work to compile Fair Authorship Guidance that aims to support the fair attribution of authorship credit to academics, research staff, postgraduate research students, technicians, data managers, trial managers and others that may contribute to research outputs.

Authorship credit on research papers and other outputs are important markers that demonstrate contribution to research, and a variety of people engaged in research use these to record and evidence their achievements. Historically, many people have not been included as authors on papers, not because they have not contributed appropriately, but because of the perception of their position in a team or their job role. The new guidance also provides suggestions and routes for support when there is a disagreement about authorship.

[library.ed.ac.uk/research-support/publishing-your-research/fair-authorship-guidance](https://library.ed.ac.uk/research-support/publishing-your-research/fair-authorship-guidance)

Leadership and management development underpins the ability of colleagues to direct, guide, support and coach others to do their best work and thrive in their careers. Programmes and events have been well attended this year and have received positive feedback.

Programme	Participants in 2024 – 2025
Aspiring Manager	256
Edinburgh Manager	126
Edinburgh Leader	109
Aurora	47

Seven key themes that underpin our People Strategy and Behaviours Charter run through all our leadership development offerings:

- Building trust;
- Supporting change;
- Inclusive leadership practices;
- Collaborating with others;
- Influencing beyond authority;
- Acting on feedback received;
- Meaningful conversations.

Evaluation data reflects the value that participants get from the programmes.

	Before Programme	After Programme
Likely/highly likely to use a coaching approach in conversations with colleagues	73% of leaders	100% of leaders
Effectively support their team and/or colleagues through change	76%	94%
Incorporate the University Behaviours Charter into their approach to management/leadership	33%	63%

**Quotes from participants on the programmes:**

“  
**Initially sceptical, I have shifted to fully embrace continuous personal and professional growth. I now focus on adaptive leadership, using tools like the Strengths Profile to better understand and leverage both my strengths and areas for improvement. I’ve enhanced our team dynamics by implementing clearer communication tactics and more effective conflict resolution strategies, which have notably increased our collaboration working as a team.**

“  
**My management style has gone from a directive, instruction-led approach to one grounded in coaching, trust and collaboration. Through the Edinburgh Manager Programme I gained deeper self-awareness and developed a more inclusive, supportive leadership philosophy aligned with the University’s culture.**

The **CSE Research Culture team** ran a series of events for early- and mid-career researchers, including a workshop offering insights into successfully directing career trajectories and navigating challenges, and another which addressed strategies for building a professional profile, enhancing reputation, and showcasing skills through networks and conferences.

Colleagues in **Edinburgh Innovations, Edinburgh Research Office, and HR** worked with academics across the Colleges to develop a range of resources to help staff who would like to focus on innovation, to establish a clear, recognised and rewarded academic career path. It includes a new competency framework, unique to the sector, that sets out the skills, knowledge and behaviours required to advance innovation careers. The Innovation Careers Hub helps staff plan their pathways, learn about inspirational translational academics, and access 20 development opportunities, including training, leadership programmes and career tools.

[uoesharepoint.com/sites/InnovationPathway](https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/InnovationPathway)

The 2025-2028 institutional **Concordat Action Plan** was published on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025. The Researcher Development Concordat is a national framework to support the career development of research staff and is structured around three core principles: Environment and Culture, Employment and Professional, and Career Development. Our commitment to the Concordat is a fundamental strand of our activity to improve our research cultures.

[support-for-researchers.ed.ac.uk/concordat/concordat-reporting](https://support-for-researchers.ed.ac.uk/concordat/concordat-reporting)

[uoesharepoint.com/sites/ResearcherDevelopmentConcordatHub](https://uoesharepoint.com/sites/ResearcherDevelopmentConcordatHub)

18 Volunteers from the University’s **Communications and Marketing** community embarked on an eight-week pilot project to explore what sustainable marketing and communications are, and how to embed this at the University. They examined the environmental impacts of marketing materials, whether digital or physical, as well as the impact marketing has on people’s perceptions of sustainability, and identified ways to communicate climate and sustainability efforts effectively to key audiences.

The project has been shortlisted for a Green Gown Award 2025, run by the Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges (EAUC), under the category Tomorrow’s Employees: which is testament to its originality and innovative approach in the sector.



Staff who took part in the Sustainable MarComms pilot

# Enhance our working environment

We work in an environment that supports and motivates us to do our best work and to achieve the University's goals.

This part of our People Strategy focuses on the policies and processes that enable and support our work; the terms and conditions of our employment with the University; and our physical workspace. There has been considerable progress over the past year: from policy updates and uplifts in salary, pension and benefits, to improved spaces. Wherever they work, staff are benefitting from policies, processes and rewards that have been improved in the 2024/25 academic year. This is reflected in the staff survey, where employee perceptions are generally more positive than in 2023, particularly relating to pay, benefits and annual reviews.

In other aspects of our working environment there is more variation. We are fortunate to have some new estate and some refurbished estate that staff can enjoy. We also have some old and fragile estate in need of care and attention ranging from inaccessible spaces and leaking roofs to ageing plant. RAAC affected a small number (8) of our large estate but had challenging consequences, especially for researchers. The programme of work is nearing completion and opportunities have been taken for betterment where it was possible to do so. Our reviews of facilities and strategic planning for capital investment seek to maximise our ability to collaborate, share, build communities of experts and develop careers across the University.

Examples of progress made in this part of our People Strategy include the following.

## Several University people policies have been updated, including:

- Response to new legislation that requires employers to take proactive steps to prevent employee sexual harassment;

- Dignity and Respect (due for full review in 2025/26);
- Procedure on Handling Student Complaints about Staff Conduct;
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (PVG);
- Relocation;
- Conflict of Interest;
- Reasonable Adjustments;
- Trans Policy for Staff;
- Menopause;
- Neonatal Leave.

With an ongoing focus on Enhanced Customer Service, a new feedback process was launched in the HR Helpline service. The data and insights are being used to make the service more visible and ensure it meets customer needs. Progress has also been made in the six processes identified for improvement: Recruitment; Onboarding; Training; Service Requests; Alerts & Notifications; and Personal Data & Document Storage.

The upgraded "Mylifestyle" portal gives access to an expanded range of staff benefits and discounts, enhancing staff experience by making these readily available to all staff from the first day of their employment here. More than 40% of staff accessed the new portal in the first two weeks, reflecting how important this benefit is in supporting our staff's financial well-being and strengthening the University as an employer of choice.

[uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/human-resources/pay-and-reward/SitePages/Mylifestyle.aspx](https://uoe.sharepoint.com/sites/human-resources/pay-and-reward/SitePages/Mylifestyle.aspx)

The Drum is a new space that has recently opened on the **BioQuarter Campus**, as part of the refurbishment work at the Queen's Medical Research Institute, and it includes a new catering provision in the form of 'The Larder'. This space is the main informal meeting and catering place in the building and will be a key space for the whole community coming together. Staff and students were given a number of opportunities to participate:

- Initial consultation on the designs for the space;
- A survey on the catering provision to help determine preferences;
- A small group tasting of the potential catering offer;
- A call out for items to display in the space that would give it a sense of relevance to what we do as well as a sense of shared ownership. This resulted in a display of artworks created by colleagues, led by the art-science group Fusion.

The space is now well used and hosts informal gatherings of colleagues. It is an exemplar of consulting with staff and students to create an engaging and useful space for all.



The Larder on the BioQuarter campus

Workload continues to be an important factor in staff perception of their working environment, especially in light of ongoing workforce reduction measures. The University and our trade union partners have given a commitment to a joint review of this issue.

In **CMVM**, staff were consulted in diverse ways to inform the creation of a new, more equitable workload model, applicable for multiple job types and that follows the University guidelines for good practice. The model will be completed by staff in all roles. For example, technicians and professional services staff make pivotal contributions to teaching and research. Capturing their work in addition to academic work ensures all staff contributions are recognised and supports effective future planning.

**USG** has established a Staff Experience Group to review staff feedback and recommend improvements to the Management Team; sharing best practices and supporting initiatives that enhance working life for its circa 1,000 staff.

In **CSE**, there are more spaces for meetings and quiet working, and Schools have invested in pods for better flexible working. In addition the catering options across the King's Buildings campus are proving extremely popular.

The new **Usher Building** on the BioQuarter campus brings together more than 900 staff and students, health and care providers, industry leaders and others, to harness data in addressing urgent challenges in health and social care. The building offers some space that is open to the public, and with a variety of flexible meeting, events and teaching spaces, it welcomes a wider community to engage with and shape innovative solutions to pressing health and care challenges.



# Looking ahead

Much of the work to achieve our People Strategy aims will unfold over several academic years. Our plans align with our commitments to recognising and rewarding excellence, to looking after our people and to responding to the staff survey feedback.

We plan to deliver a model for managing staff numbers effectively in the future and ensuring consistency of job roles and remits. Priorities will include responding to the new Employment Rights legislation and our review of the Dignity and Respect Policy. We will also explore ways to improve our annual review, promotion and reward processes to help us better recognise excellence and proactively tackle under-performance.

The staff workstream (one of the five strategic workstreams) will help the University find ways to reduce staff costs through consistent and sustainable changes. This will involve working with the three Colleges and three Professional Service Groups to enable them to make changes both locally and across the whole University. The University will be paying keen attention to any EDI implications of actions to pursue financial sustainability through staff measures.

The workstream will coordinate all engagement with trade unions and ensure that staff are informed at the earliest opportunity about changes that will affect their roles. Open and meaningful discussions on all changes will be a priority, as the University aims to reduce costs while maintaining excellence and fulfilling our promises to staff, students, funders, alumni and partners.

Within the sector, academic freedom and freedom of expression continue to feature prominently – locally, nationally and internationally. The University’s Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression Working Group will continue its work to develop the core values, principles, commitments and illustrations of good practice that will ensure academic freedom and freedom of expression are upheld in a way that supports a respectful, collegiate community, in which everyone should feel that they belong and can succeed.

A new University Lead for EDI joined the University in February 2025 and is working now to develop an EDI Strategy, supported by an effective governance framework to oversee and ensure impactful delivery. The year ahead will see a full revision of central EDI governance to enable greater direction, consolidation and prioritisation of work.

The introduction of a centralised HR Advisory Service will deliver a significant enhancement to the service. By streamlining support through a unified team, there will be less reliance on individual staff members, which will improve response times and consistency of advice and guidance. It will also help to capture the volume and types of support requests and trends, common issues and resourcing requirements, making us better equipped to find solutions to common issues efficiently, and to distribute resources according to where they are needed most, leading to better staff experience. This work will also enable our HR Partnering teams to focus more on key initiatives such as change programmes, succession planning, performance management and specific local priorities.

Improving staff experience involves communicating in a way that is clear, relevant and consistent. This year, the CAM Internal Communications team conducted an audit of central staff communications, including an all-staff survey and focus groups. Future improvements planned include a single Staff News SharePoint with need-to-know information, news, and features clearly categorised, and a new email format to make them look clearer and easier to scan. These changes will help colleagues to get the news and updates they need quickly and easily.

Preparation for Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2029 has begun and is driven by a shared commitment from teams and individuals across the University, reflecting the strength of our collaborative culture. A successful REF submission not only brings vital funding but also recognises the excellent – often world-leading – research and impact that have been delivered to the benefit of society. Focus so far has been on data quality improvement and policy engagement, to build a research assessment that properly represents individuals and the institution.

These coordinated efforts will continue next year, laying the groundwork for a high-quality, evidence-based submission that will showcase the University’s research excellence and secure the resources needed to continue to invest in our people and ideas.

In the year ahead, we will continue to focus on our strategic priorities while working to further improve staff experience. At the same time, we recognise that the environment remains difficult, and that some colleagues will face real challenges. Progress will not always be straightforward, but by remaining clear on our direction and supporting each other, we will navigate the uncertainties ahead with resilience and purpose.



90%

of staff received a pay increment this year



7,432

colleagues (42%) participated in the Staff Survey, a 6% increase on the 2023 survey



2,300+

colleagues undertook sustainability training this year



40%+

of staff accessed the upgraded 'Mylifestyle' portal in the first two weeks



35 students from 20 secondary schools

welcomed on to our Career Ready Programme



1,000+

nominations and submissions for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences 'Thank You' scheme since it's launch



420+

people took part in an Institute for Academic Development programme to enhance leadership skills and improve research cultures

Increase from 33% to 63%

of leaders who incorporate Behaviours Charter into their leadership approach after participating in one of our development programmes



32

colleagues & staff groups were recognised as Changemakers

Leadership and management development programmes and events

256

Aspiring Manager participants

126

Edinburgh Manager participants

109

Edinburgh Leader participants

47

Aurora participants





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