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**Executive Summary**

**University of Huddersfield**

**Quality of Working Life survey (May, 2017)**

**What is Quality of Working Life?**

Quality of Working Life (QoWL) is ***a measure of how good your work is for you***.

Quality of Working Life is more than just job satisfaction or work happiness, but the widest context in which an employee would evaluate their job.

**The QoWL Survey and Data Set**

The QoWL survey tool encompasses three questionnaires:

1. The **WRQoL scale**, which looks at the six core factors associated with Quality of Working Life, such as job satisfaction, work-life balance, and working conditions.
2. The **QoWL Workplace Outcome** scale, which provides data related to a variety of specific outcomes related to Quality of Working Life such as intention to stay, organisational communication, and pride in the organisation.
3. The **HSE Work-related stress scale**, which provides feedback on the stressor categories included in HSE’s Management Standards, such as demands, management support, and relationships.

**The survey was distributed on line and by paper to University of Huddersfield employees in March and April 2017.** 1330 staff responded (32 on paper) out of 2038 employees giving an overall response rate of 65%. Some responses were discarded due to less than half the questions being answered, giving a valid response rate of approximately 59%.

In addition, in response to an open question, approximately 55% of respondents took the opportunity to suggest ways the University could improve Quality of Working Life for staff.

This executive summary provides an indicative synopsis and broad overview of the results found.

**Quality of Working Life summary**

The table below compares the Work-Related Quality of Life (WRQoL) summary scores for the current, 2017 survey (N = 1209) with the surveys from 2015 (N = 1210), 2013 (N = 833), 2011 (N = 890) and 2009 (N=972) and the QoWL University Benchmark sample which is derived from a sample of 5963 employees from across the UK University sector.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Descriptive Statistics for WRQoL Subscales and Overall question** | **2009**  **Survey**  **%Agree** | **2011**  **Survey**  **%Agree** | **2013**  **Survey**  **%Agree** | **2015**  **Survey**  **%Agree** | **2017**  **Survey**  **%Agree** | **QoWL BMARK**  **%Agree** |
| **General Well Being (GWB)**  How much you agree you feel generally content with life as a whole. | 61 | 58 | 57 | 59 | **51** | 55 |
| **Home-Work Interface (HWI)**  How far you agree the organisation understands and tries to help you with pressures outside of work. | 63 | 64 | 64 | 65 | **60** | 58 |
| **Job Career Satisfaction (JCS)**  How far you agree that you are happy with your ability to do your work. | 64 | 60 | 60 | 63 | **55** | 56 |
| **Control at Work (CAW)**  How far you agree you feel you are involved in decisions at work. | 57 | 57 | 58 | 59 | **49** | 54 |
| **Working Conditions (WCS)**  The extent you agree that you are happy with the conditions you work in | 72 | 75 | 74 | 74 | **66** | 66 |
| **Stress at Work (SAW)\***  How far you feel you agree you experience stress at work. | 41 | 40 | 42 | 39 | **46** | 45 |
| **Overall Quality of Working Life (Q65)** I am satisfied with the overall quality of my working life. | 69 | 65 | 66 | 65 | **57** | 60 |

Notes: %Agree: The percentage of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed to this factor. Green at least 5% higher satisfaction than the QoWL Benchmark value. Red at least 5% lower satisfaction than the QoWL Benchmark value.\*Saw is a negatively phrased factor, where higher agreement indicates less quality of working life.

## Benchmarks Used

Two benchmarks were used in the preparation of this report. A university-sector QoWL benchmark was used for both the QoWL Core and QoWL Workplace Outcome Scales and HSE’s working population benchmark was used for the HSE Stress Scale.

The QoWL Quality of Working Life survey was distributed to staff at the University of Huddersfield during March / April 2017. The survey incorporated the QoWL Work-Related Quality of Life and Workplace Well-being Outcome Scales and the Health and Safety Executive’s (HSE) Work-Related Stress scale. The key findings from the survey appear below.

**Summary Comments**

**WRQoL factors, all staff (see below for summary table):**

1. 57% of University of Huddersfield employees agree that they have a good quality of working life (QoWL).
2. Employees report similar levels of Stress at Work to benchmark sample data.
3. University of Huddersfield employees continue to report substantially greater levels of satisfaction with Working Conditions than the benchmark sample.
4. Overall, University of Huddersfield employees report a similar QoWL to the university benchmark sample with the exception of the Control at Work factor.

For the 2017 survey, further WRQoL analyses were carried out to look at: differences between general staff categories; gender differences within staff categories; differences between Non-Academic departments, and differences between Academic Schools (including staff categories). The main findings from these analyses can be found below.

**Staff Analysis: General staff categories**

1. Results for Academic Staff indicated lower QoWL than the university benchmark sample for all six factors.
2. The highest scores for Home-Work Interface and Working Conditions were again found among Support Staff, these being higher than the benchmark sample.
3. Support staff reported higher levels of QoWL on all WRQoL scale factors when compared with the averages for all staff in 2017.
4. Academic staff scores may warrant consideration given apparent lowering of satisfaction scores on all factors compared with 2015,

**Staff Analysis: Staff-gender categories**

This analysis looked at gender differences within staff categories. Academic and Research groups were combined for this analysis. Some interesting findings emerged:

1. With the exception of the Control at Work subscale, female staff reported higher QoWL than male staff. This appeared to reflect, in particular, differences between the reported experience of male and female Support Staff.
2. Male and female Academics and Researchers reported a similar experience of QoWL across the subscales.
3. The highest gender differences were to be found on the Home-Work Interface factor.

**Staff Analyses: Academic Schools and Professional Services**

In general, higher QoWL was found across Non-Academic departments, with high scores in several departments.

1. The picture across the Academic Schools was mixed, with some substantial variations between schools, as well as within schools in relation to QoWL subscales and staff groups.

**Workplace Well-being Outcome (WWO) Analysis**

1. WWO survey results tended to be lower for 2017 than for previous years at the University of Huddersfield.
2. The 2017 results are similar to the University benchmark sample of university staff.

**HSE Management Standards Analysis**

1. On the whole, survey results are lower for 2017 than for 2015
2. The 2017 results are similar to the University benchmark sample, with the exception of the control and relationships factors
3. Care should be taken with interpreting these results given the differences found between staff groups and within some of the Schools (see above).

**Open questions**

Approximately 53% of respondents (valid responses) took the opportunity to provide comments in response to the open question: “How could the quality of working life be improved in your University?”. The responses to the open question broadly reflected the results found in other parts of the survey.

**Conclusion**

The 2017 survey indicated that quality of working life scale scores for the University of Huddersfield staff have are lower than in 2015, and are now more similar to the university benchmark norms.

It was noted that support staff scores were generally above those of the benchmark sample, but that academic staff in some areas were below the benchmark.

It should be noted that survey scores can be affected by a range of factors and that further evidence gathered by the university at a local level may be of help in interpreting the outcomes of the survey.

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