

5 November 2019

Dear Deputy Ward,

The Education and Home Affairs Scrutiny Panel -Teacher Recruitment and Retention Review 2019

Thank you for your letter of the 19 September 2019 inviting Highlands College to submit views and comments relating to the above.

I have detailed below a response to your terms of reference and key questions which summarises feedback from my Senior Leadership Team and includes data supplied by our HR Business Partner.

The main successes

- We have been able to attract on island and off-island talent to the College, but it is becoming increasingly challenging in shortage subjects
- Salaries are higher for lecturers here than in the U.K. and their leave is longer, however the cost of living and housing costs have led lecturers to withdraw applications
- The teaching hours for lecturers are less than the U.K. average and annual leave is longer, this initially attracts interest
- The process in which education licences can be obtained for shortage areas has served the College well, although this can vary depending on the subject area and the tenacity of the recruiting manager
- Off Island advertising is actioned quickly and accurately by internal staff then reimbursed by CYPES

The motivations that keep lecturers working

- More individualised learning programmes, higher levels of tutorial hours
- Tailored programmes – we use international and customised qualification which promote achievement and progression into further study and employment, without the limitations which are set by the DFE in the UK. We have reduced assessment burdens, not standards, so more time is invested into learning than would be the case if we mirrored the UK
- Relationships with students – lecturers have left one career to join another and share their industry/professional knowledge. They do not join the profession for money, rather to have the opportunity to transform lives
- Having a direct impact upon the local economy and witnessing their students to go onto making Jersey a better place to live

The main challenges that affect recruitment and retention

- One of the main challenges for lecturers that affects recruitment and retention in the island relates to attracting UK based candidates and relocating them for shortage, specialist, subject areas. For example, we have had a vacancy for a middle/ senior manager in a critical and specialist area. The role was advertised on-island and not one

wholly suitable candidate applied. It was then advertised off-island. The process of recruiting is extremely slow and bureaucratic, and the onus is now on managers to complete much of the recruitment paperwork even though we don't have access to all systems and information. This puts additional stress on the organisation.

- We sometimes receive multiple expressions of interest and some strong applications from the UK. However, between expression of interest and interview, several candidates either contact us to say they will not be applying or withdraw after being shortlisted. This has been because of the limited support given to an overseas candidate to arrange travel. In all the other cases, candidates explicitly stated that they had compared their existing pay and outgoings and had realised they could not afford to relocate to the island.
- We have had to appoint 'on potential' with significant support plans (paid external mentor, reduced duties). This wastes time and resources which may be better invested in a relocation offer.
- Candidates have commented upon the poor experience they had in terms of gaining information about arranging flights, late notification of key information, lack of support with claiming money back and an inadequate relocation package. A senior member of our team was in post for 3 months before pay was correctly set up in 2018.
- As managers, the process is very time-consuming and paperwork heavy. There is some duplication of information required, and some information that can be hard to track down.

What is required to deal better with these challenges?

1. A Service Level Agreement that also includes what we can expect from Peoplehub (we have a guide to our responsibilities, but not an SLA which determines timelines and minimum service expectations)
2. A comprehensive, welcoming and detailed information pack for relocating staff about the island, registration cards and taxation. A step by step guide – perhaps an electronic platform with all links and information in one place, like Locate Jersey
3. An accommodation list and support regarding finding temporary accommodation – discounted would be ideal, as many candidates stay in hotels for at least a month
4. One person allocated per recruitment round – rather than the 'conveyer belt' approach currently taken, where various staff are involved with the same post and person as they complete different steps
5. A named relocation officer in Peoplehub to see through all relocation packages so that prospective staff know who to get in touch with
6. A full-time, dedicated HR person for our organisation with knowledge and understanding of our needs, to advise and oversee our side of the process. Also, to support with career and succession planning, as well as learning and development planning. At a similarly sized college in the UK, the management team had the benefit of 4 dedicated HR staff. The lack of onsite support and understanding of how a modern College operates often leads to gaps being filled by the recruiting manager to the best of their ability. From November 2019 to 2020, Highlands will have a HR partner based at the College for a fixed period to support its 389 staff.
7. Bursaries to attract talent back to the island. The UK is now offering bursaries for the first time to Business and Art and Design related graduates between £9000 and £15,000. There are severe shortages in Physics, Mathematics and Modern Foreign Languages (<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/oct/05/science-and-language-teachers-to-get-9000-staying-on-bonus>). As we recruit mainly from the UK, we can anticipate the challenges increasing.

What is the impact of poor recruitment and retention of staff on students in the island?

- Our second largest department has been recruiting every year for the last 3 years. Staff have left due to workload, better pay in the finance sector and to retire. This has required lots of resourcing to recruit and to re-train and/or qualify new staff. This has had an impact upon student behaviours.
- Research demonstrates that it takes 5 years for a lecturer/teacher to become fluent in their practice and be fully, professionally formed. Staff who are new to the profession bring many positives into the classroom/workshop such as up-to-date industrial knowledge. However, even the most talented will require weekly input on planning and assessment, as well as a mentorship and observations. Even experienced staff from the UK, require extra support to learn the College's tracking and support systems. This puts pressure on staff already in post and reduces time spent on innovation in their practice.

Is there a wide field of vacancies or small pool to recruit?

- As an example, one Assistant Principal who line manages 5 departments, has recruited 10 staff in two years. 50% were recruited off-island. The field of applicants was often small, even from the UK.
- Technical areas offer the greatest challenge – an electrician or plumber can earn more than a beginner lecturer. Even though the annual leave and working environment are better, if the applicants have a mortgage and a family they may not move into lecturing because they cannot afford to. Further Education requires dual professionalism, qualified in your field and as a lecturer. During the banking crisis we recruited easily into Computing and Business; attracting consultants and experienced finance professionals. Recently, this has not been the case.

Recruitment and Retention Data for Highlands College Lecturing staff

Please see below the data supporting Lecturer Recruitment and Retention as per your request over the last 5-year period.

It is important to note that all data is excluding zero-hour staff, and the leaver data is only based on staff leaving the Government of Jersey entirely:

The number of staff that have left the profession;

Staff Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 (August 2019)	Total
Heads & Deputies	6		2		1	9
Highlands College Lecturers	6	7	4	8	6	31
Teaching Assistants	1		4	2	3	10
Total	13	7	8	10	9	41

The number of staff that have retired and are due to retire in the next 5 years;

Staff Group	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 (August 2019)	Total
Heads & Deputies	1				1	2
Highlands College Lecturers	1	1	1	2	1	6
Teaching Assistants				2	1	3
Total	2	1	1	4	2	9

Staff due to reach normal retirement age (65) in the next 5 years (as at the end of September 2019):

Staff Group	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Total
Heads & Deputies				1		1
Highlands College Lecturers	2	1	2		2	7
Teaching Assistants					1	1
Total	2	1	2	1	3	9

Last month we posted your invitations to focus groups on our staff intranet. The staff are fully aware that this review is taking place.

I hope this brief commentary is useful to the Panel.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if there is any vital information you feel has been omitted.

Yours sincerely,

Jo Terry-Marchant
Principal