Board of Management

People & Culture Committee

Date of Meeting	**Wednesday 12 February 2025**
Paper No.	**PCC2-C**
Agenda Item	**5.1**
Subject of Paper	**Staff Wellbeing & Engagement Survey Progress Report**
FOISA Status	**Disclosable**
Primary Contact	**John Gribben**
Date of production	**24 January 2025**
Action	**For Discussion and Decision**

1. Recommendations

1.1 For the People & Culture Committee to discuss the feedback from the Robertson Cooper staff survey Action Plans, and suggestions for change **(Appendix 1 & 2)** and make any decisions for the organisational response.

1.2 For the People & Culture Committee to discuss the EIS- FELA survey **(Appendix 3);** inclusive of any comments made from the EIS-FELA representative who will be in attendance.

2. Background & Purpose

2.1 The College opened the Robertson Cooper Good Day at Work survey on 5th March 2024, and it closed on 26th March 2024. 66% of staff responded to the survey. Immediately upon completing the survey, each staff member then received an individual snapshot report that included signposting to immediate support and suggestions for improvements for any issues identified.

Robertson Cooper presented the survey findings to ELT on 25th April 2024 and to the all Managers on 28th June 2024. Managers received their team reports on 20th September 2024 and were tasked to meet with their teams to create wellbeing action plans by 29th November 2024. The college-wide Robertson Cooper survey report was shared with Charlie Montgomery, EIS-FELA Convenor, on 20th December 2024, then released via a Freedom of Information request on 23rd December 2024.

It is recognised that at the time of the survey, the College was in a very different place in comparison to now with significant uncertainty, industrial action and organisational change at the time of survey. Managers are working together positively with their current teams on actions moving forward that will improve staff wellbeing.

The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of feedback from the action plans, identify themes and make suggestions for organisational change.

3. Consultation

3.1 Consultation has taken place with Robertson Cooper, ELT, SMT, All Managers, Human Resources, Organisational Development and Trade Unions.

4. Key Insights

4.1 At the time of writing this paper, 72 managers have submitted action plans from across the College. Review of these action plans has identified several themes and suggestions which can be found in **Appendix 1**. These action plans focus on the key Health and Wellbeing Drivers of the Robertson Cooper report to best support all College staff with improvements in:

- **Resilience**: Adaptability, Confidence, Social support, Purposefulness.
- **6 Essentials**: Resources & Communications, Control, Balanced workload, Job security & change, Work relationships, Job conditions.
- **Health**: Physical health, Mental health.
- **Engagement**: Motivation, Organisational commitment, Employee commitment.
- **Subjective wellbeing**: Positive emotions, Sense of purpose.
- **Good Days at Work**: Intention to leave, Productivity, Advocacy, Absenteeism, Presenteeism.

16 submissions have been made with suggestions for organisational change. An overview of these themes and suggestions can be found in **Appendix 2**. A timeline and designated lead for each action is currently in discussion.

As can be seen from the action plans contained in the appendices, almost all of the actions relate to more than one of the Robertson Cooper Health and Wellbeing Drivers as listed.

There are some themes which are reiterated both in individual team action plans and the suggestions for change at an organisational level. These include:

Executive Summary of themes / suggestions
- Hold regular meetings at the same day/time to focus on CPD, disseminate information, discuss workloads, feedback, achievements and challenges.
- Review workspaces for potential issues with noise, ventilation, lighting, temperature and cleanliness.
- Ensure technology, equipment and systems are current and fit-for-purpose.
- Ensure policies are current, including the hybrid working policy.
- Provide support with long-term absence and sickness cover.
- Share and celebrate achievements, address parity of job roles/grades/tasks, offer teambuilding and the sharing of best practice.
- Offer diverse and flexible staff development opportunities at all levels and roles.
- Increase awareness of PAM Assist, offer more benefits within the College, promote better use of benefits and wellbeing support.
- Introduce a peer award recognition programme.

A programme of support from Robertson Cooper has been organised to support managers with implementing their action plans. This support will include:

- A training session for managers on holding Wellbeing conversations with staff and teams.
- One-to-one coaching sessions with managers to support them with implementing their action plans.
- Train the Trainer workshops to upskill City OF Glasgow College staff to deliver wider training on Wellbeing essentials.
- A one-year licence to resources and materials for delivery of further workshops.

The Project Management Office are offering support with the implementation and monitoring of team action plans.

The College has now appointed a new Wellbeing Officer that will work with Faculty and Directorate teams and managers to further support staff to improve their Wellbeing. In addition, the Wellbeing Officer will provide additional support for staff who are unable to attend work, either in the short or long term due to sickness, with the aim of helping people get back to work timeously.

The Performance team will be reviewing Faculty and Directorate plan to mitigate any duplication of activity and to collaborate in efficiently implementing actions.

5. Impact and Implications

It is incumbent upon the College to demonstrate action and improvements from the College-wide wellbeing survey results.

Improvements in the targeted actions could result in improved efficiency, wellbeing, communication, attendance, job satisfaction, morale and retention.

Further development of some actions will have associated expenditure required.

6. EIS FELA Report

EIS-FELA undertook a survey of their membership in 2024 **(Appendix 3).** The College acknowledges the output of the survey, however unfortunately, EIS-FELA has not provided any commentary or action plan as to what they would like to see as a result of their own survey. In addition, the EIS-FELA has declined to provide critical information in relation to the survey that would enable the college to act.

On 15/11/24, 26/11/24 and 07/01/25 EIS-FELA were asked to provide critical information on:
- methodological approach or approaches used to gather the data.
- questionnaire (ideally a blank copy).
- sample size, including the percentage return on the original sample.
- breakdown of the sample (in terms of promoted lecturing staff, lecturing staff).

A response was received 08/11, unfortunately none of the questions were answered, note responses below in bold.

- methodological approach or approaches used to gather the data - cross **sectional survey.**
- questionnaire (ideally a blank copy) – **unavailable.**
- sample size, including the percentage return on the original sample.- **all EIS FELA branch members including respondents.**
- breakdown of the sample (in terms of promoted lecturing staff, lecturing staff) - **confidential data.**

On the 13/01 the college reached out to EIS-FELA colleagues, explaining that the response did not answer the questions asked, therefore it did not enable the College to consider the findings of the EIS-FELA survey.

To help us move forward, it was explained to EIS-FELA the vital and critical nature of the questions, which would allow EIS-FELA to review the responses and enable constructive engagement.

The EIS-FELA were then advised that the College cannot comment on the outcomes of any research unless we can be confident that they are accurate,

representative and robust. In order to have this confidence and, therefore be able to comment, the College needs to know:

- The number of responses and the response rate (i.e. the number of responses versus the total number of those asked to participate in the survey, which would normally be included as part of a research report.)
- The research method used in the cross-sectional survey, which is a critical element to assess its appropriateness and validity and would normally be included as part of a research report.
- The actual survey questions which were asked (i.e. to determine how the questions have been framed, to consider the scope, purpose, and perspective of the research, which would normally be included as part of research report.)

As there has been no response to critical, it will be for the EIS-FELA to set out why they will not provide the information, and for the Board to draw its own conclusions.

Appendix 1: TeamTalk action plan themes

Robertson Cooper Drivers	Feedback
6 Essentials Health	• Improve cleanliness of workspaces.
6 Essentials Good Days at Work	• Explore using a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system for better team communication and task tracking. • Automate repetitive administrative tasks.
6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	• Improve communication of institutional changes. • Invest in industry-relevant tools and spaces to meet professional standards • Replace outdated equipment. • Ensure consistent Wifi access throughout the buildings. • Ensure technology in all learning spaces is working properly on a regular basis. • Create an anonymous suggestion box to capture staff ideas and concerns. • Keep College policies current.
6 Essentials Health Engagement	• Encourage staff to take regular breaks.

Robertson Cooper Drivers	Feedback
6 Essentials Health Engagement Good Days at Work	- Improve physical working space in terms of noise, airflow and lighting. - Provide targeted support for staff that are absent long-term.
Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	- Provide training on new systems and digital tools.
Resilience Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	- Hold more teambuilding and social events to foster camaraderie. - Celebrate staff milestones and achievements. - Cascade success stories.
Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	- Regular team and one-on-one meetings to discuss workloads, achievements, and challenges. - Provide clear feedback on performance and recognition of achievements

Robertson Cooper Drivers	Feedback
Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	• Train managers to foster resilient teams through open communication and problem-solving support. • Provide training on project management and data analysis. • Formalise hybrid working • Upskill multiple staff to complete tasks that are currently completed by one member of staff to prevent single points of failure. • Prioritise and deliver condensed training during non-contact weeks.
Resilience 6 Essentials Health Engagement	• Promote use of/participation in staff benefits and wellbeing resources and activities.
Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	• Provide training on managing challenging behaviours. • Continue to upskill staff to enhance job security and career opportunities.

Robertson Cooper Drivers	Feedback
Resilience 6 Essentials Health Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	• Provide training on mental health.

Appendix 2: Suggestions for organisational change

Robertson Cooper Drivers	Feedback
6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Teams to have team meetings at the same day/time to allow for CPD and attendance by other teams to disseminate information.

6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Senior management to visit teams throughout the College more regularly and informally to foster good relations.
Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	Constructive, measured feedback on specific pieces of work would allow the team to feel that their work is valued or be able to adjust to providing more valuable work.

6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Transparency of reporting, analysis and actions taken by ELT when the team provide data. The team produce a number of reports to provide to ELT and it would be helpful to know how this informs decision making.
6 Essentials Health Good Days at Work	Open plan workrooms can be noisy, lack ventilation and lighting is too strong. Improve physical working space in terms of temperature, airflow and lighting.
6 Essentials Health Good Days at Work	Workroom desks and carpets are not regularly cleaned.

Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Create a new Information Management System to replace Enquirer as it is outdated, expensive and there is too much room for error.
Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Availability of hybrid working policy to ensure fair and operationally possible guidelines for hybrid working. Formalise hybrid working.

6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Address issue of disparity in grades across various Faculties and Directorates. This should be resolved by ELT instead of waiting for the ongoing job evaluation.
6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Provision for sickness cover. The current arrangements are not sufficient particularly in teams with staff with fractional contracts.
Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	A revival of One City.
Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Tailored training for staff that may not be able to attend workshops/CPD, Ex: Accommodation, Reception

Resilience 6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	Organisational Development to continue to offer regularly training on how to deal with difficult customers.
Resilience 6 Essentials Health Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	Increase awareness of PAM Assist. Action: Information sessions for all staff scheduled in December 2024.
Resilience	PAM Assist open day. Action: PAM Assist can be invited to the One City event.

6 Essentials Health Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	

Resilience 6 Essentials Health Engagement Subjective Wellbeing Good Days at Work	Conduct another wellbeing survey post-Compulsory Redundancy.
6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	College staff should have complimentary or discounted rates for college leisure courses where the course is running under maximum capacity.
6 Essentials Engagement Good Days at Work	A reward and recognition scheme for staff to nominate peers and highlight best practice.

EIS-FELA

City of Glasgow College Workload Survey 2024 Report

Background

In 2022 City of Glasgow College management embarked on a programme of cost-cutting measures that reduced the numbers of permanent and temporary lecturers in post, cut the amount of class contact time across FE and HN courses and stripped back learning support provision.

The implementation of timetabled breaks and cuts to global hours manufactured so-called 'lecturer underutilisation' leading to more classes being placed on lecturers' timetables with less time to prepare and deliver teaching and assessment.

Furthermore, the cuts to learning support services, along with the decision to outsource specialist one-to-one learning support, placed additional pressure on subject lecturers and academic advisors to provide high-level learning support to a larger student population.

Curriculum Managers also face greater pressure from Faculty Management to deliver on KPIs whilst struggling to manage their curriculum teams with limited time, support and resources available to them.
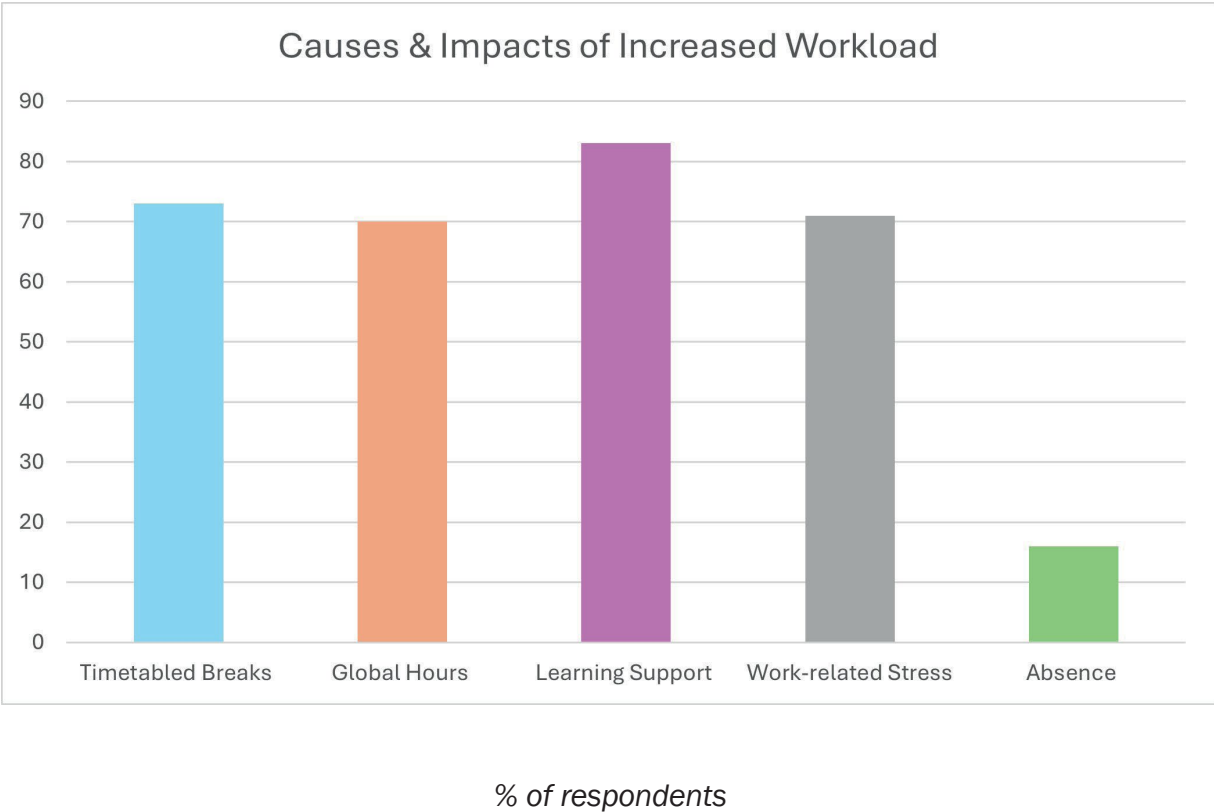
It is concerning that college management did not conduct staff Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) before implementing these policy changes. Additionally, there has been no monitoring of the effects of these changes on staff and students and on the provision of learning and teaching within the college.

Workload Survey

In September 2024, EIS FELA conducted a cross-sectional survey of City of Glasgow College branch members. The survey gathered quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive overview of the effects of reduced teaching time and learning support provision on promoted and unpromoted lecturers' workload, health, wellbeing, and on their ability to effectively educate and support students.

The survey findings show that lecturers and curriculum managers are under increased pressure to continue to provide the same quality of education, training and learning support with less staff, time and resources at their disposal. Some simply cannot cope with the added workload and stress and are nearing breaking point and those with disabilities and chronic health conditions have in some cases found their working conditions becoming intolerable.

Causes & Impacts of Increased Workload

Bar chart showing values for: Timetabled Breaks (73), Global Hours (70), Learning Support (83), Work-related Stress (71), Absence (16). Y-axis ranges from 0 to 90.

% of respondents

Findings

1. Impacts of Cuts to Learning Support

The survey revealed that 83% of lecturers experienced increased workload due to cuts to learning support provision with many reporting a sharp rise in the number of students with Personal Learning Support Plans (PLSPs) which now require the input of Curriculum Heads and subject lecturers to facilitate and provide reasonable adjustments:

> *"We are being expected to take on the work of learning support professionals. With increased levels of support being required and with even more students needing it there's no way we can keep up."*

> *"More and more students require additional support which takes the lecturer away from the rest of class. There's just not enough time to provide additional support. Plus, we now need to book AAA ourselves and these are not always available at the time required."*

> *"This is the big change this session with the increasing number of personal learning support plans for students with additional needs. Almost daily for the last 3 weeks I have been sent numerous PLSPs and the range of issues contained therein are very complex. They are now ranging from separate accommodation to scribes and readers but also the need for digital assessments, coloured paper, 100% extra time and laptops. Being in class 3 days a week for 6 hours means I simply have little time to answer all the questions on the electronic form and send the papers to learning support."*

Furthermore, lecturers reported a decline in the quality and availability of learning support within the college, along with more pressure being placed on subject lecturers and Curriculum Heads to fill this gap in provision:

> *"Students are not getting the help they used to from learner services, and I have increasingly had to help students with extra help as they are so stressed and not getting support."*

> *"Students are receiving woefully inadequate learning support, often for very complex needs and, the student is therefore relying on the lecturer to plug the gap. I have less time to teach units as it is but now find myself trying to fit in teaching/supporting students to develop learning skills, supporting them in the writing of work - although, often basic learning skills are time consuming to support. They require much one to one support. The time to go over work again and one-to-one support does not exist in the classroom anymore. Students are expected to be more independent but many and sometimes most in some of my classes are not able to work independently."*

> *"Staff are expected to be physical and mental health specialists because of the reduction of learning support. We don't have these skills or qualifications. I certainly don't."*

Under the Equality Act 2010 City of Glasgow College has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities. This includes anticipating the requirements of disabled students and adjustments that may be needed before they commence studies. The Learning Support Team is integral to compliance with this duty but the diminution and outsourcing in learning support provision coupled with high numbers of students with learning support needs means subject lecturers now face increased pressure to facilitate and implement reasonable adjustments.[i]

2.   Impacts of Timetabled Breaks

The survey showed that 73% of lecturers experienced increased workload due to timetabled breaks. The policy of timetabling 15-minute breaks was implemented in AY 2022-23 as a means of reducing class contact time to enable more classes to be added to lecturers' timetables:

> *"The timetable breaks reduced the contact time with the class. More had to be covered in less time. More time was wasted/reduced due to students coming back late from the 15-minute breaks. Breaks were taken according to the clock as opposed to when it met the needs of class/session. So, no opportunity to have the break aligned with delivery - break mid topic/activity. Therefore, needed to rework session plans. Overall contact time for the week was reduced therefore further classes could be added to your timetable. Breaks then become part of your prep time."*

> *"This meant it looked like I was an hour down on my weekly contact hours while still delivering the same amount of curriculum and the associated assessment."*

Some lecturers reported not being able to take a paid break, which they are contractually entitled to, because of the restrictions set by timetabling breaks:

> *"I ended up using those timetabled 'breaks' to get from one class to another, or speak to students who needed extra help, or catch a colleague for a work-related question. Then straight onto another class which ended up meaning no break at all. This allowed more classes to fit into my day/week."*

> *"Not even taking a tea break either in 15-minute break as often it takes that long to finish up one class and move on to the next in a different part of the building."*

In AY 2022-23 EIS FELA lodged a dispute on the addition of breaks to lecturers' timetables. The National Working Practices Agreement (05/19)[ii] ssets out the working hours and working arrangements for all lecturing staff who are entitled to paid morning and afternoon breaks to be determined locally. Historically these breaks were not timetabled and the decision to add breaks to lecturers' timetables was not subject to consultation with EIS FELA. The reason for timetabling breaks was to reduce the amount of contact time on lecturers' timetables to enable more classes to be added. EIS FELA argued at the time, and still maintain, that the inclusion of timetabled breaks reduces the amount of non-contact (prep) time as illustrated in Diagram 1 below.

Diagram 1 Timetabled Breaks

3. Impacts of the Reduction in Global Hours

The survey revealed that 70% of lecturers had increased workload due to the reduction in global hours for FE and HN courses. This meant a reduction in teaching time by 40 mins per week for FE courses and 1.25 hours per week for HN courses. This policy was introduced in AY 2022-23 as a means of further reducing class-contact time on lecturers' timetables thereby creating greater 'underutilisation' whereby even more classes could be added to lecturers' timetables. Lecturers have reported the impacts of this policy:

"Reduction from 37 hours to 30 hours but the same amount of teaching needs to be taught."

"Some units which were previously 3 hours are now 2-hours but the same amount of work is needed, Some double credits are now being taught over 1 semester when they should be 2 and some NC classes are now cut to 1,5 hours - this means you are teaching the same curriculum designed for a 3 hour class a few years ago in 1.5 hours now. More use is being made of class exercises and activities which have to be created and with assessments having to be done quicker - the workload is tremendous."

"Students do not get the time they need to process their learning and grow their critical thinking skills. Temptation is there for me just to teach to assessments. I feel professionally compromised at short-changing their opportunities for personal development through education."

"Contact time has been reduced to 30 hours. Also, guidance has been reduced to 50 minutes per week, with no account of class size, level of study or needs of the group. This has meant that more classes are added to your timetable and the same % reduction in contact time means the equivalent % reduction in prep time - without any guidance, support as to how this is to be managed/accommodated - there's no change to expectations of a reduction in quality of the learning experience or to the expected outcomes. Not only lecturers are expected to cope but students as well - irrespective of their individual barriers to learning."

In AY 2022-23 EIS FELA lodged a dispute on the reduction in global hours from 531 – 508 in FE and 581-486 in HE. This new policy reduced contact time to as little as 30hrs per credit and placed more emphasis on 'notional learning' or self-directed study. There was no clear educational rationale for the policy which was primarily financially motivated. On the face of it, the policy would not fulfill the Scottish Funding Council Outcome agreement which expects 40hrs of learning time per credit. However, the SFC guidelines do not stipulate the amount of contact / non-contact time contained within the 40 hours of learning. This provided a loophole to reduce teaching time on lecturers' timetables.

4. Reports of Work- Related Stress

The survey revealed that 71% of lecturers experienced work-related stress as a direct result of increased workload but only 16% reported absences which reveals that most keep working in a stressful environment. Stress can affect and damage someone's mental and physical health causing burnout (physical and emotional exhaustion), anxiety, depression and a range of physical ailments.[iii] When asked about experiencing stress at work lecturers reported:

"Difficulties in sleeping. Feeling ill, upset stomach in the mornings."

"Very stressful work life having to manage the increased workload. This results in poor sleep pattern and health issues headaches, nausea, eye strain."

"I have suffered stress last session where I have never felt so bad in this job. I was feeling constantly tired and run down and this session looks like a repeat. Already this session I have been feeling really unwell these last few days. I now dread coming in to work in the morning."

"I am incredibly stressed and experiencing physical and psychological symptoms of stress - feel physically drained, fatigued, having nightmares about work, insomnia, crying. We are 3 weeks into the semester and this is how I feel! I feel I do not know what my job is, I have no control over my job/responsibilities. I do not feel the environment is safe enough to voice concerns- when you do you are considered weak and/or a trouble maker."

"I suffer from anxiety and insomnia and increased workload has worsened my condition. Sustained stress over job (in)security and lack of Fair Work policies add to overall distress at work. High turnover of HR staff does not help."

Curriculum Managers also reported increased pressure because of cuts to staff and resources leading to some experiencing work-related stress, ill health and burnout:

"I am now having to try and find ways of dealing with the so called 'deficit' in contact hours for my staff, all of whom are part time. I am having to spend a lot of time devising shared module schedules which do not fit within the colleges usual rigid FE timetabling set up. I don't have time for this with extra teaching load myself and all the other duties CH's are expected to perform. The additional teaching also effects staff wellbeing whom you are then trying to give extra support to as their line manager."

"CH's in my department were off work with work related stress and nothing is done on their return to reduce this. VS of some CH's means workload is shared among remaining CH's which is an immense increase in workload. A lot of this is delegated to lecturers as it is impossible for us to do the job now."

"I am working a lot of unpaid overtime to try and plug the so-called gap in hours or devise ways of covering short-term staff absence with no staff availability due to the reduction in prep time, and no bank staff as all their contracts were terminated. There essentially is no cover anymore.

"After taking on increased duties I have been ill and working till 8:30/9 some nights. I have no time to do my own teaching prep on top of CH duties, the stress is high, and my GP thinks stress is/was affecting my immune system"

Work-related stress is one of the most significant hazards in the workplace and it can be caused by excessive workloads or pressure placed on employees.[iv] Employers are responsible for the health and safety of staff at work and by law must carry out risk assessments to protect employees from stress at work.

5. Impacts of Workload on Staff with Disabilities

Lecturers with disabilities report being under increased stress because of excessive workload:

"I suffer depression and anxiety anyway but I have felt myself starting to suffer from the return to work dreads a lot more severely than what I used to. I do also feel that my future in the college is bleak, I have another 30 years before retirement age and I just do not feel that anyone can work at this level for that long without suffering a mental breakdown. I have been looking at other occupations which I could retrain into, despite my love of teaching, the expectations placed upon us by management are excruciating."

"I am at my absolute breaking point. I am considering going part-time or leaving as I am so stressed and overwhelmed. I have also seen a considerable worsening of my disability symptoms due to stress and I am incredibly worried about my health (both physical and mental)."

"The number of classes I am teaching has increased from 7 to 9. I am working more than I ever have in my 13 year career and am still being told that I am under hours and under utilised. I have disabilities that mean it takes me longer to complete my admin and marking tasks. The increase in the number of classes that I am teaching and the extra paperwork and admin associated with this has become completely unmanageable. Last semester I worked every night and every weekend and I still couldn't complete everything required. Every admin task takes me about twice to three times as long as my colleagues due to the nature of my disabilities and when I tracked my hours I was working between 70 and 80 hour weeks. It sadly wouldn't be an overstatement to say that the increase in workload has ruined my life and has made me seriously reconsider my position at the college."

College management failed to conduct staff EQIAs before implementing new policies on teaching time and learning support. This does not comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty which requires public sector organisations to assess and review the impact of new or revised policies on people with protected characteristics. Public sector employers should also have due regard for the promotion of equality, and this includes disabled workers who may be more susceptible to stress at work.

6.   Other Reasons for Increased Workload

Lecturers were asked if their workload had increased for any other reasons. Some felt that the requirement to prepare for the delivery of NextGen and City Attributes places additional strain on their already limited prep time:

> *"Guidance has been highjacked by City Attributes which now shows as a unit on its own taught simultaneously with Guidance. Guidance lecturers are now expected to perform guidance duties and also teach and assess a new unit within the same hour."*

> *"Subject lecturers who are academic advisors (like me) are now required to deliver City Attributes in guidance classes where there is no clear need or benefit from doing so and the rationale for City Attributes is entirely unclear and it takes time to deliver during guidance classes where often multiple students need that time to discuss issues with their academic advisors."*

> *"In our faculty we have been effectively ordered to develop and deliver a new HN Next Gen course whilst delivering the existing HNC and HND."*

Lecturers also reported workload issues arising from the college IT systems and the use of Canvas and Enquirer:

> *"Canvas is far more time consuming than My City ever was. As a Mac user, IT gets more problematic every year - we experience problems on a daily basis that are never properly resolved. There's more small admin duties to complete. There's more repetitive cyber security training to do. Enquirer is not fit for purpose and makes more work for lecturers than a properly structured system would - this has always been the case though."*

> *"There has been an increase in workload due to a complicated timetable which changes on an alternating weekly pattern. Both learners and lecturers have to check their timetables every day in case there has been a change of room, it is chaotic and is causing frustration among many students who have expressed this directly."*

> *"Canvas VLN was imposed without consultation. They insisted that it was a more efficient system for marking and feedback yet it is far more laborious and time consuming. There is no consistency between the network/log-in across the college rooms. Some have PCs / others thin clients ... some a different login "Azurus" which is painfully slow...sometimes you can't access the personal desktop that was prepared for the class prior to arrival."*

Conclusions

The EIS FELA Workload Survey findings show that City of Glasgow College is not a place of Fair Work. Lecturers do not feel valued or respected or listened to. Instead, they are grossly overworked, pressured and stressed with less time to spend teaching students, less time to prepare for classes, less time to complete administrative duties, less time to facilitate and implement reasonable adjustments, but with more classes than ever before and more students with learning support needs.

In June 2022 EIS FELA produced a report from the Workplace Culture Survey of City of Glasgow College lecturing staff (Appendix 1). This report provided a stark account of a toxic workplace with deep structural issues of bullying, fear and intimidation stemming from an authoritarian management style and culture. It showed that 76% of lecturers were dissatisfied with the workplace culture which impacts on their health and wellbeing, leading to stress, health complaints and absences from work. In addition, less than 20% of staff believed the college is committed to Fair Work principles. College management and the Board of Management received copies of the report but failed to address or even acknowledge the findings.

The problems of the toxic workplace culture are compounded by the impacts of the financial mitigations that began in AY 2022-23 and the true cost of balancing the books is borne by college lecturers and students.

Recommendations

In The issues raised in this survey and in the Workplace Culture Survey need to be addressed and discussed with EIS FELA as a matter of urgency if the college serious about resetting industrial relations and implementing Fair Work.

As a public sector institution, the college is bound by the conditionality of Fair Work First and SFC funding regulations which require a Fair Work statement devised in agreement with the recognised trade union.

No such statement can be produced with agreement from EIS FELA until the issues contained in both reports are properly acknowledged, addressed and discussed meaningfully as part of the Fair Work review process and through the mechanisms of LNC.

College management must demonstrate a genuine commitment to supporting and enabling effective voice channels to positively improve employment conditions.

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[i]City of Glasgow College, Equality Act 2010 and Duties: https://www.cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk/about-us/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/equality-act-2010-and-duties

[ii]EIS FELA Circulars: https://www.eis.org.uk/national-bargaining/circularsnjnc

[iii]ACAS Managing Work-Related Stress: https://www.acas.org.uk/managing-work-related-stress

[iv]UNISON, Workplace Stress: https://www.unison.org.uk/get-help/knowledge/health-and-safety/stress/

APPENDIX

EIS-FELA

City of Glasgow College Report on Workplace Culture survey findings

June 2022

Headline Findings

44% of EIS-FELA members at City of Glasgow College responded to the survey which ran over four weeks in April-May.

The results are staggering

- **76% said they are unsatisfied with the culture in the workplace**

- **With 67% believing this affects their health and wellbeing leading to stress, health complaints or absences from work**

- **Over 76% believe there is an authoritarian leadership style**

- **Around 60% said they had experienced or are aware of bullying (or other unfair treatment) in the workplace**

- **62% say they do not feel respected or valued as a lecturer within the college**

- **60% do not feel adequately supported in their role as a lecturer**

- **Although just over 50% thought the college committed to equality, diversity and inclusiveness, around 50% also said they experienced or are aware of discrimination, intimidation or harassment in the workplace**

- **Less than 20% thought the college committed to Fair Work principles**

- **Nearly 60% said they had insufficient opportunity for further training or promotion within the current organisational structure**

- **Less than 30% said they would recommend CGC as a place of work**

- **Just over 10% of respondents were in promoted posts.**

Introduction

Workplace organisations can implement strategies to support employees in reducing stress and anxiety, however, if the root cause of that stress is workplace culture, then strategies are at best sticking plasters or at worst an insulting waste of employees' time.

The data captured by this EIS-FELA Health and Wellbeing Survey starkly shows that 76% of those surveyed are unsatisfied with the culture in the workplace, with 67% believing this culture has a direct effect on their health and wellbeing leading to stress, health complaints or absences from work, moreover 76% believe there is an authoritarian leadership style.

Authoritarian cultures stifle creativity and authentic communication and the survey data clearly shows this style of management is endemic within City of Glasgow College.

This survey was launched in April, during Stress Awareness Month when City of Glasgow College promoted mindfulness, cooking, exercise and meditation as mitigations for the ill-effects of workplace stress. These can be useful techniques for coping with stress. However, as an EIS-FELA branch, we believe it is the employer's duty to look at the root causes of stress and, particularly if that stress is work-related, seek to tackle the root cause.

Figures from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) reveal 68,000 Scots endured stress, depression and anxiety related to their job last year. The City of Glasgow College Metrics Report dated 25th January 2022 stated 'Mental Health continues to be our top absence reason.' Within the FE sector, the last two years of continuous working throughout the pandemic has been exceptionally difficult for lecturers and other staff. It has also brought into focus increasing concerns about the workplace culture that exists within City of Glasgow College. Many things can influence a workplace culture including leadership, management practices and policies, and the values, expectations and experiences of employees. The purpose of this survey was to gather more information from lecturers on their opinions and experiences of the workplace culture in the college in order to inform the work of the local EIS-FELA branch going forward.

EIS-FELA branch reps note that HR had stated in 2016, that they wanted to address the culture in the workplace. However, there has been little evidence of any serious attempt to do so in the intervening period. This survey reinforces the urgent need for serious measures to be taken now to combat the woeful workplace culture in CoGC.

Findings

Respondents of the EIS survey described an 'us and them' relationship between management and lecturing staff. EIS-FELA believe this dichotomy not only impedes industrial relations, but It impacts on lecturers' health and wellbeing and job satisfaction.

Survey respondents described a workplace culture where lecturers feel stressed, overworked and undervalued and some reported that the job grew ever more stressful each year. These experiences are corroborated by the data from the Robertson Cooper survey which showed that staff employed for less than 12 months scored higher for 'positive psychological wellbeing' but as tenure increased positivity decreased, thereby establishing a negative correlation between length of service and job satisfaction.

Those in post longer had lower levels of motivation and commitment, decreased physical and psychological health, and felt more pressured by their workplace environment. These findings suggest that increased exposure to the toxic workplace culture, not only erodes lecturers' physical and psychological health but it also robs them of a sense of purpose, motivation and commitment to their jobs.

Many findings in this EIS-FELA survey were qualified, for example of the 38% of people who said they did feel respected or valued (or declined to answer), many comments made suggested that they only felt respected or valued by colleagues or a direct line manager; not by the college overall or by senior management.

> "I feel respected by my curriculum team but not by senior management of the college."

> "I feel respected as part of my immediate team but not in the wider context."

> "I don't feel respected by management but do feel respected by other lecturers."

Although over 50% felt able and comfortable communicating ideas and suggestions on improving or changing aspects of curriculum area or area of expertise many comments stated that suggestions were not listened to and no feedback received.

> "Although I feel comfortable forwarding suggestions I feel that teacher agency is being eroded and that any ideas which do not correspond with management opinions will be ignored."

> "I'm happy to communicate my ideas, but they are not listened to or taken on board "

> "Although I have become hesitant to do this as you then get given the execution of the idea and it becomes more on your workload."

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Whilst over 61% feel confident and supported in making professional decisions relating to teaching and learning within their curriculum area and subject specialism, again there are a number of qualifications to this level of confidence.

"I feel confident making decisions but I know that these will be dismissed/over-ruled if they do not correspond with management decisions/opinions."

"I do - but as mentioned above, there is a lack of practical support for innovation and change. Professional decisions can also be undermined by the decontextualised focus on KPI's and the pressure to pass all students regardless of the level of their work and ability."

As well as a respectable return rate[2], EIS-FELA respondents engaged fully with the survey by providing high levels of qualitative data via elaboration and comment on each question, including 83 comments at the end of the survey.

There were 180 suggestions for positively influencing change in the culture at City of Glasgow College.

Some suggestions include:

"Reduce the number of management roles and perhaps introduce a role (Team Leader?) which really supports and encourages Lecturers."

"Change the leadership style from Top-down Authoritarian to almost any other style."

"Encourage teacher agency, discussion and participation; make time for this and really listen and act on ideas. Often, Lecturers are creative and innovative in spite of management, not because of any encouragement from them."

"Transformational change ie leaders exist to energise teams and sell a vision using a mix of empathy, enthusiasm, and praise, they encourage workers to explore new ideas and improve their outcomes)."

"Allow lecturers to teach their specialisms."

"The management structure has to change from the top down. The current management structure is very detrimental to the college's core values."

"Bring back senior lecturers."

"The layers of management keep increasing and this in turn pushes the lecturer role down the organisation's structure."

Despite less than 20% of lecturers saying they were satisfied with the workplace culture, the overall college satisfaction rate for City of Glasgow students in 2020-21 was 87%[1] This shows that, regardless of their own feelings and experiences, lecturers are going above and beyond to provide quality educational provision for students.

A redacted (to protect anonymity) copy of the survey data can be requested from EIS-FELA reps.

Conclusion

City of Glasgow College management have accepted that their employees are experiencing overwhelm from data captured in a previous wellbeing survey carried out by a third-party organisation - the Robertson Cooper Wellbeing Survey of October 2021 .

Management responded not by opening a dialogue with those employees as to what they thought could be changed for the better but by dictating that a whole department team should participate in mandatory wellbeing training. Nonetheless, this EIS-FELA survey, bears out the findings of the Robertson Cooper Wellbeing Survey in October 2021 showing that deep inequalities exist between college management and academic staff.

The Robertson Cooper survey clearly identified a systemic problem but, instead of addressing this, college management chose to circumnavigate it by shifting the responsibility for solving workplace problems on to individual lecturers through the provision of an online self-help portal where staff access free counselling sessions, watch videos about managing stress and read a booklet about developing resilience in the workplace.

The Wellbeing toolkit and PAM Assist counselling service act as little more than flimsy sticking plasters to try to stem the flow of workplace stress, ill health and what are described by management as the 'co-related themes' of absence, grievance, team conflict and dispute' (CoGC Board of Management Wellbeing Survey Analysis, August 2021).

From the Robertson Cooper survey it also became abundantly clear that City of Glasgow College management - the Executive Office and Corporate Development – enjoy far greater levels of job satisfaction and wellbeing than that of any other college faculty.

Management scored highest for having a balanced workload, good work relationships, positive psychological wellbeing, motivation, purpose, commitment and a 'good day at work'. In contrast, academic staff across all faculties reported poorer health and wellbeing, less sense of purpose, less commitment to the organisation and far fewer 'good days at work'.

This EIS-FELA survey suggests little has improved in the aftermath of Robertson Cooper for unpromoted lecturers, and in fact the gulf between management and staff has only widened with many respondents citing examples of authoritarian leadership and a toxic workplace culture.

It is vital CoGC now address the many issues highlighted in this and previous surveys. In particular, the often toxic workplace culture that many employed in CoGC feels permeates their working day causing difficulties for emotional and physical health and wellbeing. Previous failures to adequately address the problems highlighted by the Robertson Cooper survey, among others, cannot be repeated.

We urge CoGC to meet with EIS-FELA reps to discuss measures to be taken to address and deal with the many disturbing issues raised by CoGC employees/EIS-FELA members in this and previous surveys.

> "I started here in the college full of enthusiasm and excitement for helping young people to get on in life. While I still love teaching students the institution is toxic and doesn't support and encourage staff. It's actually very sad. The facade is super college but once you break through the inside is rotten."

[1] https://www.cityofglasgowcollege.ac.uk/sites/default/files/210209%20LTC3-G%20My%20Student%20Experience%20Survey.pdf

[2] 44% is higher response rate than SFC's Student Satisfaction Survey, November 2021