



Report on the impact of the SEP
programme on Professional Support
staff across the University of
Manchester

FINAL DRAFT

June 2023

Table of Contents

Introduction and background	3
Survey Details.....	3
Responses to Question 1 - What PS staff grade are you on (2-9).....	4
Responses to Question 2 - Do you feel you understand what the aims of the SEP are?	4
Responses to Question 3 - Do you think the SEP has been a success?.....	4
Responses to Question 4 - Do you know how the SLT will measure the success of SEP?	4
Responses to Question 5 - Would you like to know how the SLT will measure the SEP success? That is, what metrics they will use?.....	5
Responses to Question 6 - Do you feel the SEP has helped you become more efficient at your job?	5
Question 7 - Any other comments? (In order to make things easier in terms of categorising replies, please keep your comments brief).	5
Key findings	6
Some illustrative comments made under each of these headings are given below.	6
Workload.....	6
Timescales.....	6
Process and systems	6
Roles and Responsibilities.....	6
De-skilling, Training/Staffing.....	6
Management.....	7
Well Being and Health and Safety.....	7
General Comments	7
Conclusion and Recommendations	8
Recommendations:	8
Appendix 1 - Complete breakdown of results in bar chart format.....	10
Appendix 2 – General Comments (categorised under headings shown on previous page).....	14

Introduction and background

This report has been written to disseminate the findings of a survey undertaken by the UCU and carried out over several weeks during the Spring of 2023. The survey includes responses from PS Staff members across all three UoM (University of Manchester) Faculties.

The survey came about as the author (a member of the UCU's Executive Team) and others felt that there was a stark disconnect between what the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) (and local management teams), were saying about the 'successes' of the Student Experience Programme (SEP), together with its implementation, and what was happening at the local level. After speaking to a number of union and non-union colleagues across the University and hearing their experiences first hand, it became clear that many staff (including many academics), felt that the SEP was being pushed through with seeming complete disregard for the negative impact it was having on staff. That is, in terms of staff cuts, redundancies, increasing workloads, ambiguity in relation to roles and responsibilities, outdated systems and a lack of training, all of which have had a significant and detrimental effect on staff wellbeing and mental health.

What is particularly concerning is that despite numerous PS staff raising issues at the local level, most management representatives have responded by either ignoring or dismissing the serious concerns being made. As a result, many of these staff now feel completely demoralised, or even ostracised for speaking out, whilst managers continue to ply a positive spin on SEP at the expense of staff wellbeing. This is why we wanted to offer PS staff a platform, so that they may speak freely about their justified and continuing grievances.

Survey Details

The survey conducted included 6 multiple choice questions. (Answers available: 'Yes', 'No' and 'Unsure' from a dropdown menu). The last question, (No.7 below), was an open question allowing PS staff to comment fully on their individual experiences of SEP so far.

The survey was completely anonymous to ensure that participating staff felt that they could speak candidly without fear of any negative repercussions.

Questions:

1. What PS staff grade are you on (2-9) (Dropdown option ranging from Grades 2 – 9). (More Grade options were added very soon after survey went live).
2. Do you feel you understand what the aims of the SEP are?
3. Do you think the SEP has been a success?
4. Do you know how the SLT will measure the success of the SEP?
5. Would you like to know how the SLT will measure the SEP success? That is, what metrics they will use?
6. Do you feel the SEP has helped you become more efficient at your job?
7. Any other comments? (In order to make things easier in terms of categorising replies, please keep your comments brief).

Total number of respondents **181** including staff ranging from Grades 2 – 9. Please see **Appendix 1** for a complete breakdown of results in bar chart format.

Responses to Question 1 - What PS staff grade are you on (2-9)

We found that most respondents were those from Grades 4, 5 and 6, who are those most impacted by SEP, but very often without direct management responsibility for its implementation. The breakdown is as follows:

Number of Grade 4 responses **37** (20.44% of total surveyed)

Number of Grade 5 responses **38** (20.99% of total).

Number of Grade 6 responses **52** (28.73% of total).

A further **54** responses were received from Grade 2,3,7,8 and 9.

Responses to Question 2 - Do you feel you understand what the aims of the SEP are?

We found that just under half of all respondents did not know or were unsure as to what the aims of the SEP are. The breakdown is as follows:

96 respondents answered 'Yes' (53.04%)

63 respondents answered 'No' (34.81%)

22 respondents answered 'Unsure' (12.15%)

Responses to Question 3 - Do you think the SEP has been a success?

We found that a vast majority of respondents, just under 99%, believe that the SEP has either not been successful or remain unsure as to what its benefits are.

2 respondents answered 'Yes' (1.1%)

129 respondents answered 'No' (71.27%)

50 respondents answered 'Unsure' (27.62%)

Responses to Question 4 - Do you know how the SLT will measure the success of SEP?

Many documents have been prepared and communicated to staff surrounding SEP and its implementation, but there remains a distinct absence (certainly in the communications that PS staff have received) as to how the SLT will measure the project's success. Communicating this to staff has been a complete failure as the following figures show:

3 respondents answered 'Yes' (1.67%)

164 respondents answered 'No' (91.11%)

13 respondents answered 'Unsure' (7.22%)

Responses to Question 5 - Would you like to know how the SLT will measure the SEP success? That is, what metrics they will use?

Following on from Question 4 above, SLT have neglected to address one of the most fundamental principles of project management, that is, to clearly set out exactly how they plan to measure the success of this multi-million-pound initiative that has affected all staff across all faculties and services at the University. It may however, be the case that a statement on metrics has been formulated? If so, then there is a clear and categorical need for this to be shared with all staff as the following responses demonstrate.

161 respondents answered 'Yes' (89.94%)

18 respondents answered 'No' (10.06%)

Responses to Question 6 - Do you feel the SEP has helped you become more efficient at your job?

The following figures clearly demonstrate just how disruptive the implementation of SEP has been for many University staff in that rather than making things easier, it has actively disrupted systems and structures without giving many staff the greater efficiencies promised.

2 respondents answered 'Yes' (1.1%)

148 respondents answered 'No' (81.77%)

31 respondents answered 'Unsure' (17.13%)

Question 7 - Any other comments? (In order to make things easier in terms of categorising replies, please keep your comments brief).

UCU received 128 comments from PS staff members commenting on their individual experiences of SEP to date. Accounts given range from shocking to saddening as a picture emerges of staff battling against increasing workloads, a lack of direction and planning, under-resourced support services, a destruction of community working, lack of training and poor management.

(Please note: Details that may identify a particular person(s) or department(s) have been redacted to protect the anonymity of individuals).

We have categorised Comments under 8 tentative headings given below, though many do straddle more than one category. Please see **Appendix 2** for a comprehensive listing of every Comment submitted by staff.

- **Workload**
- **Timescales**
- **Process and systems**
- **Roles and Responsibilities**
- **De-skilling, Training/Staffing**
- **Management**
- **Well Being and Health and Safety**
- **General comments on SEP**

Key findings

1. The incredibly high level of work-related stress and anxiety that currently exists across the University.
2. What is also particularly worrying and in need of immediate attention, is the multiple reports of bullying that have been reported to us. We have identified (through comments made) one particular area of the University where staff are reporting a longstanding culture of bullying, which, despite being reported on numerous occasions has not been addressed by managers, who themselves have sometimes been the instigators of this bullying.

Some illustrative comments made under each of these headings are given below.

Workload

My workload has at least trebled and I feel the calculations of staff to work ratio are completely wrong.

Timescales

Transition for Humanities has, in no way, been well-defined, well-planned for or well-rolled out. Rather, it has been an instant baptism of fire with sudden massive and unrealistic workloads and expectations, a physically fragmented team, and much too late

Process and systems

(Staffing) algorithm which doesn't account for the complexities - Admissions tech and process was released with many defects, despite a 2-year delay.

Roles and Responsibilities

Nobody is setting direction, leading. managers trying to change people's remit (and totally ignoring their job description), unclear reporting lines, too many grade 2 staff doing work way beyond their pay grade and needing huge amounts of support and supervision, inconsistent structures in schools, the wrong grades in teams.

De-skilling, Training/Staffing

We were told that SEP would make it easier for PS staff to progress their career, in fact, I can see the opposite happening. Moving us into functional roles has pigeon holed us into functions and no longer allows us the breadth of experience and knowledge we used to gain

and we will now only be able to progress within a function rather than to different teams using the transferrable skills we would have gained in the original structure.

(SEP) has created a layer of staff who need training to deliver on this element of their work, and I assume that training from the central staff development unit would not have capacity for all of those who need this in a timely manner

We've lost specialist roles for PG students, International students, Disabled students and WP students, at a time when the needs of these students have never been greater and when the University is recruiting more PG and International students. We presented our concerns to Simon Merrywest but weren't listened to.

Management

SEP is forcing some managers to act way above their level of competence, and people under pressure, who can't make decisions are taking out their anger and frustration out on the staff. SEP has exacerbated this very poor management as the managers are trying to paper over the cracks of SEP and are forced to make lots of decisions they just don't want to make. SEP failures included, staff not having a clear remit, specialisms removed so no one is taking ownership.

Well Being and Health and Safety

Overall, I think SEP has been incredibly demoralising on staff involved and lots of brilliant colleagues have left or are now shadows of their former selves.

General Comments

I honestly don't know one member of PS staff that is happy with the changes or feels the changes happened well or smoothly.

(Coming from another university) I have been shocked by the disastrous impact this has had on the student experience, the likes of which I have never seen before - my impression of this university is incredibly poor. I am already seeking new work after having been here for less than 2 months.

All SEP appears to have achieved is to reduce the quality of support for students, while making it harder for staff to contact people who know how to help with problems.

not sure that student experience has been at the heart of SEP and it feels like it has been about saving money. With less staff, (student facing services) they are also potentially offering services for less hours face to face when students seem to be keen to engage with activity on campus in higher numbers. I don't think that students are receiving a good experience as a result of staff being stretched and things being harder to do than previous

Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of this survey are exceptionally depressing and show the overwhelmingly negative impact that SEP has had on all areas of staff working and wellbeing. Some of the issues raised are much more urgent than others: A culture of bullying which, despite being reported to a Senior SEP Representative some time ago, is a clear case in point.

Staff mental health and wellbeing is another urgent concern that has been raised by many of our respondents, which brings into question the effectiveness of the wellbeing measures currently in place. Given that many PS staff are facing an increase in their workloads, is it enough to offer wellbeing tips and services if staff are already too busy to take breaks and lunches as per their contracts of employment?

With all that is clearly wrong with current administrative processes which are themselves currently operating within misaligned and unaccommodating structures, a review of both is clearly needed, preferably to be undertaken by those working at the local level as it is they who understand the systems, processes, and student needs most.

This survey also reveals an on-going issue with communication on the part of the SLT. Plainly something has gone very wrong here and an acknowledgement of this by the SLT Team needs to take place. Can the SLT clearly state (without the usual slick marketing speak) what the aim of SEP actually is? And what metrics are they using to measure its success? This is, after all, 'Project Management 101'. Unfortunately, given what we have discovered, it appears that 'efficiency in systems' and 'adequate staffing' and 'wellbeing' do not figure highly in the SEP Project so far.

We therefore ask that the SLT acknowledge the shortcomings of the SEP project, its disastrous impact on staff, processes, structures, and students not to mention its cost and the reputational damage to the University itself both locally and further afield.

Recommendations:

- 1) That Management acknowledge the hugely negative impact that the SEP has had on University staff brought about in many ways, *unnecessarily* through i) an overall lack of planning, ii) an insistence on pushing through changes despite the onset of Covid, iii) the introduction of VS/redundancies without there being a full appreciation of the impact this would have iv) implementing staff restructures without adequate systems and processes being in place, to name but a few of its many failings.
- 2) As a priority, Management conducts an immediate review of existing UoM channels currently being used to report stress and work-related illnesses as this survey clearly demonstrates that they are not fit for purpose. Due to the lack of a transparent and straight forward process, figures currently shared amongst the HSW Committee for example, are clearly inaccurate and need to be replaced by an up-to-date system that should be widely publicised through all formal UoM channels.

(NB: UCU has been raising these same issues for over 3 years at senior committees and at TUNG (Trade Union Negotiating Group) meetings, with no progress being made. Given the effects of Covid, VS and all the restructures that have taken place, a clear reporting system is therefore critical. To delay this further, especially in the light of this survey's results, could only be interpreted as a complete disregard for staff wellbeing and mental health by UoM Management).

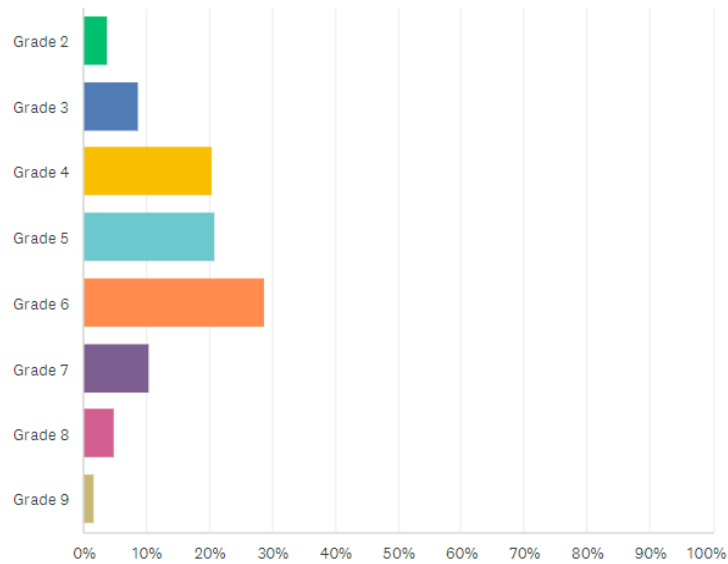
- 3) That Management provide answers to all the questions posed in this survey as staff are clearly (and rightfully), interested in knowing what these are.
- 4) UCU recommends that management carry out its own UoM-wide, anonymised survey of all staff relating to the impact SEP has had on working conditions and wellbeing.
- 5) That Management adheres to its own Mental Health & Wellbeing Advisory Group's guidance that is outlined in, '**Building on our approach to work related stress**' that is:
 - a) Sharing a summary of work-related stress training and development for managers and
 - b) Reviewing 'Large scale change projects – assessment of impact on work environment (pre and/ or post change project).
- 6) Immediate introduction of a mandatory 'Exit Interview' for all staff so that stress/work related reasons for their departure may be logged.
- 7) To demonstrate fully UoM Management's commitment to resolving the multiple and profoundly serious issues that emerge from this survey, we would suggest that they follow the same process as used in relation to the postgraduate survey that was undertaken previously. That is, that each issue we have identified be assigned to a specific (and appropriate) senior person, who then takes on personal responsibility for resolving that issue, reporting back regularly to the UCU and other relevant committees on progress.

Appendix 1 - Complete breakdown of results in bar chart format.

All Grades of PS Staff - We want to hear your (anonymised) thoughts on the University's SEP Project!

Q1 What PS staff grade are you on? (2-9)

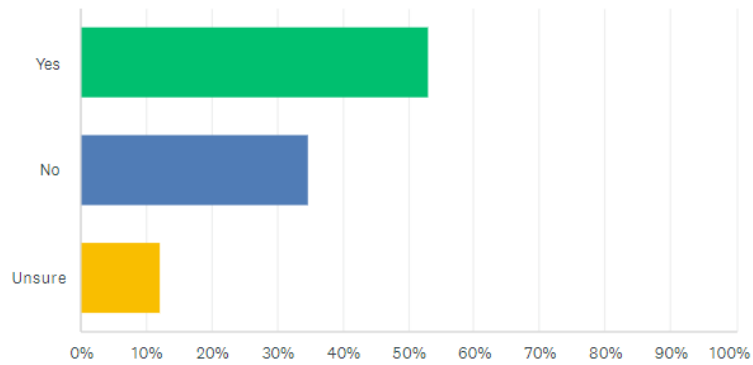
Answered: 181 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Grade 2	3.87% 7
Grade 3	8.84% 16
Grade 4	20.44% 37
Grade 5	20.99% 38
Grade 6	28.73% 52
Grade 7	10.50% 19
Grade 8	4.97% 9
Grade 9	1.66% 3
TOTAL	181

Q2 Do you feel you understand what the aims of the SEP are?

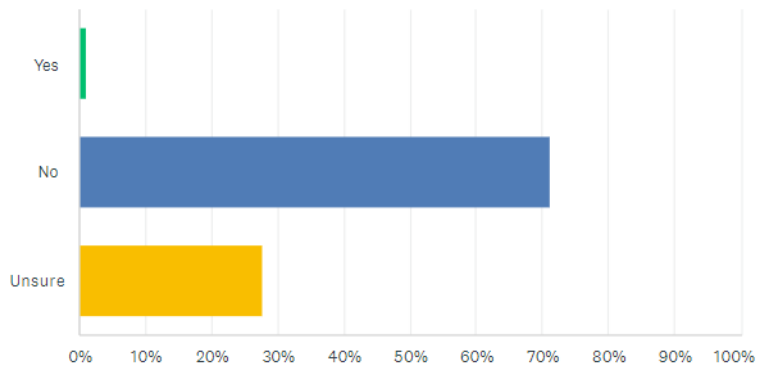
Answered: 181 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	53.04%	96
No	34.81%	63
Unsure	12.15%	22
TOTAL		181

Q3 Do you think the SEP has been a success?

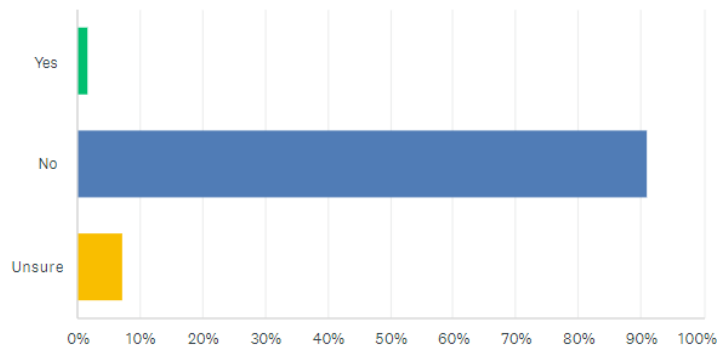
Answered: 181 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	1.10%	2
No	71.27%	129
Unsure	27.62%	50
TOTAL		181

Q4 Do you know how the SLT will measure the success of the SEP?

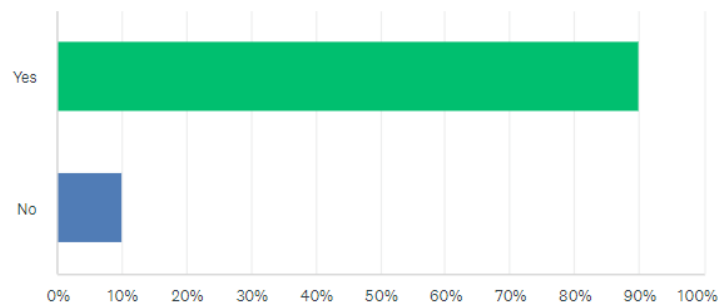
Answered: 180 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	1.67%	3
No	91.11%	164
Unsure	7.22%	13
TOTAL		180

Q5 Would you like to know how the SLT will measure the SEP success? That is, what metrics they will use?

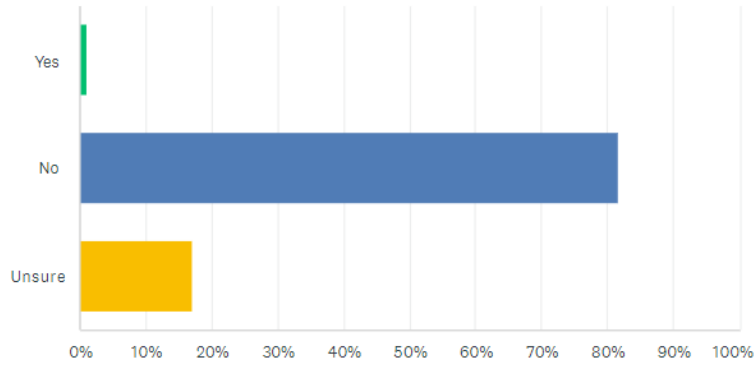
Answered: 179 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	89.94%	161
No	10.06%	18
TOTAL		179

Q6 Do you feel the SEP has helped you become more efficient at your job?

Answered: 181 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	1.10%	2
No	81.77%	148
Unsure	17.13%	31
TOTAL		181

Appendix 2 – General Comments (categorised under headings shown on previous page).

Any other comments? (In order to make things easier in terms of categorising replies, please keep your comments brief).

Serious staffing issues during SEP and post-SEP because of loss of experienced staff members and difficulties in recruitment. Many processes become more burdensome (although they may benefit some stake holders). Severe pressure on experienced and/or hard-working staff members. Everywhere seems to be stretched with resource. Restructure may have improved cross-department/school and cross-faculty cooperation, however.

i feel the stress this has caused PS staff in my area has been huge and i know a number of staff are feeling extremely overwhelmed. I feel we have just been placed in a new role and been expected to just be able to do the job and get on with it. My workload has at least trebled and i feel the calculations of staff to work ratio are completely wrong. I honestly don't know one member of PS staff that is happy with the changes or feels the changes happened well or smoothly

The project has been in process since 2011 when the first SLP paper was publicised and I believe the main objective was to save approx £7m per year. I know the initial Accenture fee was £22m, there was a 2nd fee as the first round of consultancy did not deliver what was needed (I'm unsure if UoM fully understood what was needed). Redundancies were then followed by reams of new roles. I'd like to know how much SEP has cost since it's inception. I imagine this is far more than £7m per year. Staff have been put under a huge amount of stress and anxiety over the past 3 years because of SEP and the disruption to the level of service we deliver, and reputational damage from errors, delays, and faulty systems is widespread. I cannot see how the changes over the past 3 years have benefitted prospective or current students, if anything it has made their experience worse. I think the best thing to do would be to draw a line under SEP and let people get back to working on quality service for our students and stakeholders.

SEP has meant that our 4 grade 7 managers are fighting like the proverbial rats in a sack, all pulling in different directions. Nobody is setting direction, leading. SEP is forcing some managers to act way above their level of competence, and people under pressure, who can't make decisions are taking out their anger and frustration out on the staff. All the signs of poor management are their - absence of empathy, micromanagement, gossip, favoritism, poor communication, insults, blame. SEP has exacerbated this very poor management as the managers are trying to paper over the cracks of SEP and are forced to make lots of decisions they just don't want to make. SEP failures included, staff not having a clear remit, specialisms removed so no one is taking ownership, staff doing the job they would like to do, as they hate the one they have, stepping on other staff toes, duplicating work, important roles being removed from the structure and there is nobody picking up the work which still exists, managers trying to change peoples remit (and totally ignoring their job description), unclear reporting lines, too many grade 2 staff doing work way beyond their pay grade and needing huge amounts of support and supervision, inconsistent structures in schools, the wrong grades in teams. Many highly competent grade 6s time is now spent just being a manager, and there is huge resentment about this. SEP has set no strategy, direction, vision and is highly inefficient. I now absolutely hate my job and my service is a total shambles.

Whilst I have no experience of working pre-SEP, my experience as (status of role readacted) at this time has been incredibly chaotic and stressful. I was given little to no training because of how much strain my team has been under, and have been given responsibilities that my colleagues have informed me have never been placed on Grade 2s before and would have previously/usually been Grade 3/4 level work simply because the team is so overwhelmed that there has been no other choice. As someone who attended a different university and has never been a part of UoM before (as either student or staff), I have been shocked by the disastrous impact this has had on the student experience, the likes of which I have never seen before - my impression of this

university is incredibly poor. I am already seeking new work after having been here for less than 2 months.

SEP has been a disaster for staff and processing. (Department redacted) made posts redundant. The restructure and systems are so poor we now have more staff than pre-SEP. A large number of these posts are now lower graded and there is a constant churn of posts due to the university not offering competitive pay conditions. All teams are constantly recruiting. Ask them how many new posts and replacement posts in (redacted) they have had over the past 2 years!

All SEP appears to have achieved is to reduce the quality of support for students, while making it harder for staff to contact people who know how to help with problems. Student Support Offices in departments have closed and moved to 'hubs', destroying community feeling and local support for students. Staff have been moved behind extremely generic and opaque email addresses, and often finding who can help you with a problem requires a lot of detective work - and when you do, they're overloaded. Many new processes are overcomplicated or overly bureaucratic and inflexible.

An obscure programme with a Marketing globalish wording. Not at all appropriate for higher education. What a loss of time and money.

Team resource is based on an algorithm which doesn't account for the complexities of some programmes and doesn't reflect accurate application numbers. (department redacted) Tech and process was released with many defects, despite a 2-year delay. Staff morale within (readacted) is the lowest it has ever been; staff turnover the highest. Cannot see that the full cost of SEP is reflected in the systems we have been given. It is frightening how much this has cost, if you take into account the end product.

(Department redacted): We have a totally dysfunctional service (again). The biggest issue for me is that (person redacted) appears totally out of their depth. (said person's experience at Manchester redacted) No (University Grouping redacted) experience. There is no strategic direction coming from (pronoun redacted) and (pronoun redacted) is being pulled in all directions by grade (grade number redacted) staff, who are just lying and blaming all the problems of SEP on their junior staff. Bullying is rife again and (SEP management Representative redacted) is totally indifferent about the (department redacted) as (pronoun redacted) always has been. We have a vague draft framework document. Where are the operational plans etc? In conclusion there is just very, very poor leadership. It is the bullying and excessive workloads I can't cope with. My manager is trying to work me into the ground just so (pronoun redacted) has some new projects to brag about. I think UCU should question what metrics these managers have and get them to put something in writing. (SEP Mgt Rep redacted) also needs to be challenged on bullying - an issue (pronoun redacted) has been ignoring at (department redacted) for years. (Past measure to stop bullying redacted) though they are said to remain.

Communication has been a nightmare from start to end (not that it's ended!). As usual the poor change management / communication led to the haemorrhage of people throughout and the overburden to those remaining. The arbitrary spilt between grades 6 and above and 5 and below has prolonged the whole thing and led to teams lacking clear direction and function for huge lengths of time (talking YEARS).

Get the SLT OUT. Thanks for creating this :)

Hi, i feel SEP is a cost cutting exercise. We have less PS staff doing more work.

Huge waste of money. Would have been better to form groups of existing staff to redesign processes relevant to their area. In general, they understand it better than an external contractor.

I could give clear real life examples of SEP leading to a massive negative impact on the student experience so far. Staff unhappiness, uncertainty and confusion leading to delays and uncertainty for students. This continues. It was shambolic to go ahead with SEP alongside the lockdown VS scheme.

I feel that the SEP process has generated a huge amount of confusion about operational responsibilities between faculty and central teams.

i feel the student experience will drop as we have lost staff with local knowledge and oversight of all areas. i am concerned that local departmental examples of best practice are being lost to standardise everything.

I think SEP has made many things more complicated and confusing. It's hard to know the right person in a school/division to contact now, with many not being in post anymore, so things are taking a lot longer than they would have done before. There have not really been clear hubs set up and it's not clear how they will work, so I think some colleagues are working in very challenging circumstances. In working through SEP on a grade basis, there have been large periods where those at a higher grade were in post and those underneath were working 'as usual' as their new structure had not been decided on or populated. I know of colleagues who are working in 'new' posts and having to do some of their old work as well, as there are not people in post to do those roles. I am worried about the experience of some colleagues in terms of having to work much more than their stipulated hours to try to deliver multiple elements of work, which they should not be responsible for any more. I think SEP has created a confusion in management too. Many grade 5s and 4s now have to manage staff, and in other areas of the university staff are surprised by this. It has created a layer of staff who need training to deliver on this element of their work, and I assume that training from the central staff development unit would not have capacity for all of those who need this in a timely manner. The SEP process has resulted in issues on MyView with staff being allocated as a manager to people who they are not responsible for. I've found that trying to get this amended by someone in the SEP is incredibly difficult. They do not reply promptly, if at all, so you are left wondering if the changes will ever be made. I have pointed out issues a number of times and found that there has been very little support. If this is replicated in lots of areas which have undergone SEP I can see that there will be lots of issues in terms of PDRs/leave booking etc while colleagues are assigned to the wrong managers. I'm not sure that student experience has been at the heart of SEP and it feels like it has been about saving money. Some student facing services now have less permanent staff allocated to them and more student interns, which will cause a churn each year as the interns leave and new intakes need trained. With less staff, they are also potentially offering services for less hours face to face when students seem to be keen to engage with activity on campus in higher numbers. I am not sure that remote support is available on a good enough quality basis to cover the gaps in provision of a face to face element. Overall, I think SEP has been incredibly demoralising on staff involved and lots of brilliant colleagues have left or are now shadows of their former selves. I don't think that students are receiving a good experience as a result of staff being stretched and things being harder to do than previously, as you don't know who is able to help with x or if there is someone to be able to do x. T30+T30

Impersonal, difficult to chase queries, anonymised, divisive.

The algorithm that was used to calculate resource needed is not fit for purpose. I appreciate we are early on in the SEP implementation but as things stand today, nothing has improved, everything is worse, staff are overworked, overwhelmed, demoralised and feel gaslighted by SEP senior managers. The student experience will be adversely affected by this wide scale change. Its been handled very badly and staff are fed up and just choosing to leave the university. It is an

utter shambles and the SEP owners should be ashamed and stop trying to suggest this has been a success.

It's caused huge issues as a knock-on effect for our team. The amount and knowledge, skills, and talent that have been lost due staff leaving has been devastating and damaging across the institution.

My experience of SEP was very negative. It adversely affected the work of our department with substantial losses of expertise (**Department redacted**) lost specialisms in (**x 4 specialisms redacted**). We gave extensive feedback to SEP management in the consultation process on our concerns re the potential impact on students none of which was thoroughly responded to or addressed. We are now seeing what we predicted which is a dilution of what we previously offered in terms of specialist support to the students in those groupings. I can't see how any of this has improved the student experience. It was also brutal for staff, and while we have reconfigured and made some effective and positive staffing changes by professionally working through the process, it was a bruising experience.

At the (**department redacted**) we have a desperate management team who want to develop 'new initiatives,' so they have something to tell (**Senior SEP Representative redacted**) about and are mercilessly bullying select staff to see that this happens. There are several problems. 1. There is no SEP related direction, strategic vision, no metrics. The SMT are pressurising and bullying staff to 'come-up with something.' But they don't want to say what they want. No leadership, whatsoever. 2. The SEP jobs and structure was written be a (**local senior staff role redacted**) (some staff have seen the plan), (**outcome of plan author redacted**) We now have a new management team, who don't agree with the structure and the jobs in it and want to do what they want to do, so many people are not doing the job they were employed to do, only a short while ago through SEP. Lots of major work is being forced onto staff when its not in their role and they don't have the resources, training and capacity to do the work. SEP has broken down as senior staff are not implementing it, working against it, with one commenting SEP 'was ages ago.' We have management by committee, with 5 people all pulling in different directions with one manager issuing instructions, only for another manager to cancel them, ordering the staff, ' don't do this, I will speak to (**name redacted**). Total indecision and chaos. We also have a new (**role redacted**) that is siding with (**pronoun redacted**) senior management team against other staff, so we have regressed to the status quo of the past with bullying and a toxic culture. You had a strong leader (**name redacted**), so strong that (**pronoun redacted**) had worked out the behaviour of senior managers, was onto them, and they all tried (and failed) to move to (**institution redacted**). You don't have that strong leadership now, and SEP has just created more problems on top of other problems. Lots of temporary jobs, too much time spent on recruitment and induction, managers encouraging conflict between people and teams etc. A very different outcome to (**SEP Senior Representative redacted**) SEP (workload) assurance 'you can only do, what you can do.' I am very happy in my personal life, but my work life is now a nightmare. I hate coming to work, there is bullying, conflict, pressure, a thoroughly miserable workforce, unclear instructions, reporting lines, no job satisfaction. I feel really miserable, and my health has been effected.

Poor for staff morale Took too long to introduce Many things not thought through Makes PS staff feel undervalued

seems like a massive waste of time and money, I have no idea what productive change has actually come out of it

SEP = misnomer! Restructuring to try and get more for less.

My G7 manager has been absolutely useless through SEP, and has been, and is rude, aggressive and bullying to me, and is clearly trying to play staff off against each other. The manager has not set any strategic direction, has no grip on workloads and is incapable of making a decision, and is instead hiding behind other managers. Leading is not organising meetings and letting staff fight it out amongst themselves, or letting other managers make decisions for teams they do not manage, whilst you spend your time on utter trivial tasks which can be carried out by a grade 2 colleague. SEP is described in my service as 'the shit show, that keeps on giving' A structure set by managers the organisation forced out, and by managers who were exiting, sniggering about what they were leaving behind as they headed for a promotion with a redundancy payment in their pocket. The structure is clearly not fit for purpose, is now being questioned by the new managers who clearly don't agree with it, was forced on the staff without a strategic plan, no SEP implementation plan, no metrics. Our very senior leader is well meaning, but very inexperienced and is clearly being manipulated and pulled in different directions by (pronoun redacted) senior team, who all have their own agendas. Our leadership are pressuring the staff to come up with 'anything new,' in a desperate attempt to look competent. This is an awful situation and the moral of the staff is really low.

SEP had no strategy, metrics, plans and we have a totally dysfunctional management system. My new member of staff has only been with us for 3-months, but said they hate it here and they are now attending job interviews. Two people are now retiring early as they hate it. You have a system, which everyone I know says they hate. So SEP has given lots of temporary, cheap labour to the university, but it's an unstable staffing model with people coming in and leaving too frequently and much time is wasted on this. It is an inefficient system and it takes ages to get anything done, with a confusing, non-uniform structure. People have been forced to take on jobs and tasks they don't want to do, and so they just don't do the work and start doing other things. Chaos reigns. Through SEP we have a new senior leadership and I think the inactivity of the last 6 years is there for all to see. As a consequence, I think my grade 7 manager feels that (pronoun redacted) job is under threat and (pronoun redacted) is constantly lashing out at people, and (pronoun redacted) behaviour is generally irrational and out of control. (Pronoun redacted) has been bullying me, shouting at me (loudly), shaking with rage in meetings, trying to encourage other staff to have a go at me in meetings and deriding me to other managers, gossiping about me and spreading rumours. What really hurts is the excessive and unjust criticism. I can only conclude (pronoun redacted) is attempting to defend (pronoun redacted) by trying to create a false narrative against some staff and shouting and bullying is (pronoun redacted) way of coping. These are not new behaviours, and bullying was reported at the (department redacted) on many occasions and nothing is done about it. You don't enforce the zero tolerance to bullying policy.

SEP has added to the workload of, and pressure on, many middle managers. Its success will depend on these members of staff, many of whom are at the top of their pay scales and have therefore seen a substantial real terms cut in salary over the last few years.

SEP has been a complete mess. We had systems that worked before with enthusiastic and capable staff. The new systems are broken and unreliable eg no reliable data from PowerBi, CRM system still doesn't work. Good, experienced staff have left the university and not been replaced. Workloads have trebled. Morale is at an all time low. Hot desking is a joke and doesn't take disability or special physical needs into account. The new Jobtrain system to get posts replaced and advertised doesn't work and People & OD seem unable/unwilling to fix it. Or maybe they are understaffed too. Struggling to see any positives.

SEP has been poorly managed from the beginning. The amount of money wasted on the project is disgraceful. Staffing structures have been implemented without tech and process being ready. Systems have been released that are simply not fit for purpose (admissions) resulting in staff stress and sickness and huge losses to the university in terms of admissions. The project simply hasn't worked and either nobody is willing to be honest with SLT and admit the failings or SLT are just too far along to admit that it's failed or SLT are complicit in enforcing unsatisfactory processes and systems on staff so they can claim the project to be a success / complete. I am aware of areas of the tech and process project that are no further towards a solution than 5 years ago. It is a shambles.

SEP has been rushed through, little thought for staff. Staff moves chaotic and offices not ready or cleaned. Managers indifferent. Lack of training and guidance for those that have moved to new posts

SEP has created a greater disjoint between PS and academic staff. SEP has reduced cooperation between PS staff located in different silos. SEP has standardisation processes to the lowest common denomination preventing initiative. SEP has imposed software which is not an improvement. SEP has increased workload. Prior to SEP publication of exam results were not delayed.

SEP has put PS staff under even more pressure than they were previously and isn't nearly as efficient and was never going to be, it was about reducing bodies and having fewer people do more work. It seems to have gone ahead without a clear plan of who is doing what and lots of cross over and duplicate work being created.

There are far too many 1 year contracts. This has put massive strain on the grade 6s and 5s, who are having to take the slack as the newer staff just can't contribute at the level that's needed. A huge amount of time is being wasted on recruitment and bureaucracy. I didn't apply to be a paper pusher and manager - SEP has put me into this crappy job. At the (department redacted), the Senior Managers clearly don't like the structure that SEP imposed (and they clearly helped create or stayed silent about), so they are ignoring the structure, and doing as they please which includes setting up conflicting structures. There is a culture - who cares what SEP said, we can just get the staff to do whatever we tell them. There are large areas of work unaccounted for in the structure, so the managers are trying to bully the staff into doing it. And this is bullying in its purest form - shouting at people, threatening to discipline them, isolating and singling them out in meetings, trying to turn other staff against them. The managers are clearly under stress to 'come-up with new ideas,' and 'have some quick wins.' and impress their new leaders at all levels. Unfortunately for the staff being asked to come-up with these ideas, there is no vision, strategic aims, operational plan, training, agreements, policies. There is just lots of managers, not challenging each other when they are out of order, all with conflicting agendas, pulling in different directions. Two highly performing staff are retiring as they have had enough of the omnishambles. There is absolutely no leadership. SEP has not provided uniform structures in departments, everyone I know says they have no idea who is doing what job, it takes twice as long as pre-sep to do everyday tasks because of extra stages of communication, complicated structures, blurred lines of accountability, staff doing the job they wish they had and not the actual job they do have. SEP has resulted in an inefficient, chaotic administration for the institution. On a personal level, the result for me is a huge amount of stress, sleepless nights, depression and upset. I feel constantly under huge strain at work.

SEP has treated PS roles purely as items on a spreadsheet, with the aim of streamlining across the university, and doesn't take into account the negative impact of change on the student experience. The (department redacted) lost specialist roles (roles redacted) at a time when the needs of these students have never been greater and when the University is recruiting more PG and International students. We presented our concerns to (Senior SEP Representative) but weren't listened to. Furthermore, job descriptions for some roles are now so generic as to be meaningless, which makes it harder to recruit the right people. To introduce such major change when we were in the midst of a pandemic demonstrates how little the University values PS staff. Some people have experienced immense stress and for what? Any positive changes could, I believe, have been introduced without a wholesale restructuring process that must have cost the University a vast amount of money. In the interests of transparency, I believe the cost of SEP should be made public.

9 weeks in, SEP is massive chaotic mess. People who have been at the University for years are resigning. People are going off sick with stress. It's a mess. This didn't need to happen. It has made our School worse, academics are getting impatient, staff can't cope. Just pull the plug and put it down as a failed experiment.

It is absolutely important that UoM strives to improve at every level, there is no argument to that. SEP promised to improve efficiency and student/applicant experience and while it has done that in some measure, I can say from a (department redacted) perspective it has made our job harder, and each task now takes longer. It was not built with future proofing in mind, nor with volume. Some of the tasks may be okay with smaller departments but when processing many thousands of applications every step in process matters and it ultimately affects the student/applicant. Beyond this it was absolutely insane to offer voluntary severance and go through staff/team changes before SEP was fully implemented. At a time of panic and uncertainty, team members had to make rash decisions about their futures, under the guise that the structure would be slimmer and more agile. What happened in the end is that many teams now have MORE staff than before because the processes now take longer. It seems entirely backwards, and experienced team members were lost at a time when they were most needed. SEP should have been put in place while experienced team members were still in place, as they were best positioned to understand and navigate the changes. Instead we had an influx of entirely new staff and/or team members moving to entirely new departments, and the stress of having to re-learn everything was too much for a lot of staff. It was bad, and it was irresponsible, and it made a lot of us angry. We have now come to grips with how we do our work, but as someone who looks for efficiencies, we have certainly not found it within SEP. It could have been implemented far better, and it is still not up to the required standards after all this time.

SEP seems to be an ongoing disaster with no end in site. Current planning is showing it will go on at least to the end of 2025

Comment: Leadership. (SEP Senior Representative redacted) appreciates a bit of politics discussion judging by (pronoun redacted) newsletters - SEP was as much to do with improving the student experience as the Iraq war was to do with weapons of mass destruction. They found no weapons, and we haven't found any improvements to the student experience (or our jobs, or workplace). Rather like Iraq, it has only got worse. My manager (Grade 7) dumps all (pronoun redacted) work onto me. (Pronoun redacted) day is taken up with forwarding emails and booking meetings. (Pronoun redacted) will do anything to avoid setting any strategy. (Pronoun redacted) has stopped managing (pronoun redacted) area, and is instead a general manager, as there are a group of (gender redacted) running the service, and they can't make a decision unless all 5 of them are in on it - heaven forbid one person should be accountable. SEP was a cynical move to give staff more work, for no more pay. You have priced in a higher staff turnover and given people miserable, single focused jobs, so that the organisation is not disrupted as people come and go. There are no efficiencies - people just ignore work they don't want to do and try and shove it on someone else. You have increased the hierarchy, ramped up dumping downwards, and the

bullying and blame culture. It would be good if someone could show some leadership, and engage with all of these problems, taking a break from student mental health and halls of residence.

stressful, overwhelming, poor communication

Support staff are now remote from Academics staff leading to poor team coordination and knowledge. A real 'people' disaster that leave us with little or no support.

I received no training for my new role & have much more workload now. The communication between higher management and both us (PS staff) and students was terrible. The whole point of SEP was to not have one person responsible for X but that is exactly what's happening now, and when they are on AL or sick, there is no one else to pick up their work - before SEP, we at least had more than one person in one programme team. There are serious staff shortages and many colleagues are leaving due to this.

The effects of SEP have been generally negative. My job has been made harder by these restructures.

I started a new role in a new school (under SEP) in Jan '23 (previously in a different faculty). While I am fully supportive of the need for change, and understand the challenges and scale involved with such change, I feel that what is happening 'on the ground' has been vastly underestimated. The impact on workloads, and the level of planning on a day-to-day operational level, has been overlooked. There is consistent feedback from colleagues who are undergoing similar change, that workloads are obscenely high, and this is not being acknowledged (it seems to be endemic across UoM, and often just an accepted part of our working life). For example, a remit to bring all student support from programme to school level, in a matter of weeks, while trying to maintain business as usual activities, is not taking into account the time and resources needed for this. It impacts on the staff, and ultimately the support provision to students and academics. There are many micro projects that are needed to bring the macro-level ideas to fruition, but these projects are not being properly planned because they are being dumped on staff as a BAU activity. I feel that project managers should have been allocated to schools/teams to assist in planning and implementing these changes. I understand the benefits to operating teams at school-level, and how standardising processes and systems can increase efficiency and service, but the reality of delivering this is that we are often faced with confusion, unanswered questions and unrealistic deadlines. The feeling is that UoM is trying to get more productivity from fewer members of staff, or staff at lower grades to take on more responsibility (there is a huge disparity across the uni, and from times gone by, e.g. grade 3's expected to do what a grade 4 once did). Our days are filled with fire-fighting, with no time to focus, plan or strategise. Senior managers are so overloaded with work, they cannot give any time to staff wellbeing and their direct reports. An organisation that puts people and wellbeing first, will always succeed - if our cups are full, we are motivated, purposeful, and will take pride in offering excellent support to our students. At the moment, a lot of cups are only half full...

The purpose of SEP has always been unclear to me and it's shoddy implementation makes it even less clear than before

the reaction to the changes has been overwhelmingly negative from all staff I've spoken to. my team are now heavily understaffed and overworked, 2 people have handed in notice this week and 1 has gone on sick leave (out of a team of 8 people). PS staff have taken a real terms pay cut while being burdened with a hugely increased workload for a half-baked restructure that's exacerbated the issues it was meant to tackle.

The restructure of administrative support that is part of SEP has been a disaster. It has made everything very inefficient, has demoralised staff (PS as well as academic), has led to student dissatisfaction and more work all round as everything needs to be chased up.

The SEP has been so disruptive, and poorly executed. From the length of time that it has taken, the uncertainty, and the anxiety that this has caused staff. Not to mention the bad decision to accept some voluntary redundancies that left enormous holes in knowledge/skill/understanding/management etc. Which was horrendous to experience, personally and professionally. To the restructure which makes no sense, no one knows what they are doing, or how they will operate. Staff don't know who to contact about what, and there are massive holes. Staff have resigned because it's just all too much emotionally, and it makes no sense professionally. And we can all see that in a few years time, it will be changed again because we will need to be flexible enough to support individual programmes. Centrallisation does not work. It may seem to 'save money' but it's impossible to maintain.

The SEP is an absolute waste of time.

The SEP rollout was disastrous . The mental health of myself and my team was severely negatively impacted last year as we dealt with the implementation. The level of pressure on myself and my team has increased since the SEP rollout and it still does not feel like it has gone back to pre-SEP levels. I feel the University should do more to acknowledge the detrimental effect that the rollout of SEP had on staff as I have yet to see all SEP-related announcements I have seen on Staffnet have been very positive, about how well the rollout and additional tech updates have gone, with no mention of all the negative aspects. The lack of acknowledgement about the challenges of SEP has been especially demoralising to me as it makes me feel the University/SLT do not genuinely care about what impact it had on staff.

The only positive out of the staffing restructure is all PS in the School being based in one building. Other than that it has been badly organised and managed, no new procedures have been put in place for the new teams to follow and the tech has been delayed. Communication since January has been poor, with very little information being sent to academic staff resulting in a lack of understanding of the pressure now on the PS staff. Wellbeing of all staff is at an all time low with many looking for new jobs as a result of the new structure. The student experience will not be improved as everything is taking longer to process.

The effect on staff wellbeing and mental health has been catastrophic. Senior management seem to have a total lack of understanding of what they have caused and the reality of it and there appears to have been no benefit. This feels like a parallel to Brexit whereby nobody really knew what or why they were imposing this and the advertised benefits were fanciful at best. There is a total disconnect between the messages of SEP success presented by senior management and the reality of what has happened / is happening on the ground. Staff feel constantly patronised when receiving messages about the University caring about wellbeing, when the actions of senior management prove the exact opposite.

They need to improve communications across the lower graded PS staff. We exist in silos and never know what is happening in different areas.

The impacts of SEP made me unwell and deeply unhappy. For 2 years, teams in my department were under resourced due to long term vacancies caused by SEP. Due to an unpleasant and unsupportive working environment and unmanageable workloads, 40% of staff in our department left between Sept and Dec 2022. We have recently been told that the SEP process/technology work for PGR is to be scrapped after 6 years of work, disruptive secondments and millions of pounds spent. What a waste.

We now seem to be one step removed from the students. I have a worry that we are now churning numbers rather than supporting students.

We've had several years of chaos and uncertainty as well as dealing with the pandemic. The result is that we are now under resourced with a new Campus Solutions which doesn't work as well as the old one.

Whoever thinks this has been a success must be very far removed from what is actually going on. Every team is under extreme pressure and I personally have never seen so many staff members to the edge of breaking point. I'm hearing feedback of a great success but what this is measured against, I would like to know as that is certainly not the feeling locally.

SEP could have worked well but the lack of involvement of the PS staff who actually do the daily tasks that come with delivering programmes and projects was an error. As an institution our hierarchical structure means that we do not seek views from those people involved in delivery. As people get higher up (the pay grades) they get more involved in strategy hence becoming less aware of what tasks are completed by staff more involved in immediate delivery. With SEP it felt those involved in immediate delivery were not given (or pushed to) give their opinions. I think this was a missed opportunity.

'In decaying organisations led by incompetent managers or scheming mini-mafias, indispensable employees never get promoted because those above owe their continued employment to those subordinates who actually deliver. In such organisations those who suck-Up and kick-Down, flourish. ' This quote sums up my service. SEP has done nothing to deal with incompetent managers or scheming mini-mafias, and has reintroduced the 5 person, all white, (gender redacted), totally not diverse management structure. A group who fight with themselves and everybody else. A structure that everyone hates and clearly wasn't working (unless the university now defines staff doing a survey where they talked about bullying, blame culture, toxic working, suffocating environment is classed as good). In addition, the lack of direction - goals, aims, strategy, metrics, is a real problem with SEP. It is a cheaper staffing model (lowering senior grades, multiplying junior grades, especially interns), so there are more staff in certain teams. This has put pressure on managers to produce results, but they don't know what they are supposed to be doing. The stress on my manager has heightened (pronoun redacted) worst character traits. (Pronoun redacted) won't make any decisions but is multiplying all the admin tasks, burying (pronoun redacted) head in process. I now report the same information via 4 different ways and everyday (pronoun redacted) comes up with another pointless admin process. (Pronoun redacted - PR) spends (PR) time colour coding spreadsheets, the other manager spent an inordinate amount of time organising a christmas do, and one manager is organising a clear out of pens from the stockroom. These are grade 7 managers. An awful lot of drift and time wasting tactics. Drifting might be acceptable if staff weren't being bullied and harassed to sort out all the problems for the managers. This includes being emailed around the clock with very rude emails, from my manager who wrote the team charter, telling staff not to email people around the clock but use auto delay. I work in the (department redacted) and am happy for you to pass on these comments to anyone involved in the SEP review.

SEP has been terrible. I feel badly managed and now having to do more roles with little support is disgusting. I feel like a 2nd class Uni employee. I enjoyed my role and working with my designated leads gave me satisfaction and worth.

To change the PS structure halfway through the year is ludicrous. The restructure took ages but once finally confirmed, everything was implemented too quickly without proper handovers for staff taking on new work/programmes. The changes should have taken place over the summer, so staff had a chance to learn new programmes. It feels like a lot of processed are being winged, as they haven't been formalised and its confusing for staff, so who knows what it's like for students! I feel very overwhelmed and stressed. Since the restructure I have dreaded coming into work, which I have never felt before. PS staff feel like we are unworthy and can be replaced at a drop of a hat, regardless of the knowledge and skills we possess.

I wasn't personally affected but it's been demoralising to see colleagues moved out of roles they were really invested in to ones where they don't know what their job is any more - it's made me feel like as PS staff we're just seen as interchangeable and our individual skills, experience and interests don't matter to the university.

I am not directly affected but several colleagues have been. I've noticed a big drop in morale from them.

Overly managerial and top down decisions being cascaded. More like a business model instead of collegiate. It is said all views welcome etc but not convinced decisions not already taken in principle. Accommodation apart from for grades 7+ is poor with (department redacted) putting most staff in crowded hot desking germ spreading noisy open plan. I would be scared during a covid or flu outbreak. Apart from meeting rooms there is not a choice of ways of booking rooms that suit strengths of the individual or type of work, in the same way as say students would get options in Gilbert Commons. Senior leaders should set the example and not have rules for staff and not themselves. 2 days minimum on campus is an ideology as opposed to what works best for different staff. Some could work most of the week from home as successfully done during lockdowns, in say non student facing roles, but forced to come in anyway. PS are an after thought, as low cost as the law allows, whilst expectations still rightly high. World class accommodation and working conditions are reserved for academic staff and researchers.

As a result of the detrimental effects of SEP I will sadly be leaving the university after 10 years of service. The calculations of staff required for functions has been incorrect, leading to an increased and unmanageable workload. This was fed into SEP but staff views were not listened to prior to confirming the new structure. The move to the new structure has gone ahead despite a significant number of vacancies leading to even more work having to be given to current staff to cover this. This has affected staff morale leading to work related stress and burn out. No training has been provided to staff taking on new responsibilities. Existing staff are expected to informally train new staff despite having no time to do so and the risk of not sharing best practice. Little or no handovers have taken place. One of the main drivers for SEP was a consistent and equitable experience for all students however tech and processes that were due to be implemented by SEP are not in place to enable staff to carry out their roles effectively, leading to inconsistency and staff have been left having to look at how ways of working can be standardised, when this should come from the Centre/SEP as to how processes should be carried out, which academics are responsible for which roles etc. We were informed that student hubs would be the main point of contact for students and reduce emails etc for other areas however students are still required to contact specific functions. This is also an example of where staff have been informed of something that has then changed. This makes it difficult for staff to be confident that other aspects that we have been told will be beneficial for students and staff, will not change. It has been very time consuming to request and gain access to the relevant shared areas. Appropriate work spaces have not been set up in advance of staff relocating to new areas. There has been none to little acknowledgement by University SLT of the serious issues to staff having to work in this extremely challenging situation.

I think the whole process has been badly mishandled. Communication has been terrible, and rushed. Managers do not understand our roles and so we are being asked to do things that we haven't done before and which are not within our grade. There is also a lack of staff, with no promise of extra staff being employed, so we are now being asked to do double the amount of work which had done previously. Considering work has been done on this for 5 years before, this last stage has been rushed into action without any training and without the new system in place. Everyone feels under stress and I worry about the effect this is having on my health and my colleagues' health

Workload has doubled with no warning. Feeling stressed and upset daily. No idea what we are doing. Complete waste of resources. Working all hours to try and get job done.

I feel - and I'm not alone on this - that the 'Assessment Centres' of a half day of assessments for members of staff who were already essentially performing grade 4 work at grade 3 pay levels (and had been for some time) were quite insulting.

I have never worked in such a chaotic, high pressured and stressful role. I'm feeling very disappointed.

I have seen colleagues in significant distress and feeling very overwhelmed at the extent of their new workload, with very little preparation or training and no 'transition period' as was promised before the New Year. Having multiple teams involved in one decision, and having teams take on such a big workload, has also led to significant delays for students e.g., in processing interruptions, extensions, mitigating circumstances. Students have been waiting weeks for a decision that they previously would have received within 24 hours. There has been no wellbeing support offered alongside the transition to new roles.

I think there definitely needs to be more staff in each team within SEP, especially in (department redacted) during the assessment period, and (additional period redacted) in my experience we have gone from 2-7 people dealing with one programme down to 1, and a lot of staff are suffering with extreme symptoms of stress as a result (short term memory problems, stammers, headaches, migraines etc)

SEP has been very poorly managed. A staff restructure should be completed within a predetermined period of time. This restructure took far too long and the planned completion date was pushed back several times. This meant that myself and other colleagues were kept on fixed term contracts longer than necessary (3 years of back to back fixed term contracts for me personally). My job would previously have been a permanent role (it had been permanent for many years before) and I was appointed as the substantive post holder. I was told that the only reason it was a FTC was due to SEP being in progress. The FTC had a significantly negative impact on my life. It impeded my plans to start a family because I could not take the risk of my FTC ending during (type of leave redacted) leave. I was also supporting my (relationship redacted) who had (illness redacted) and was unable to work, therefore financial stability was particularly important to me. The stress of having to delay our life plans due to my FTC had a negative impact on my mental health. It caused me a great deal of anxiety as I was told that anyone on a FTC would not be matched to a role in the new structure and that we would have to apply for any roles left over after the matching process. I felt extremely undervalued. Then in early 2022 the decision was eventually made to convert my FTC to a permanent one. Sadly my (relationship and outcome redacted) around a month before my contract was made permanent so we could no longer proceed with (persons plans redacted). All the areas of work I was responsible for during my FTC still exist within the new structure - this would always have been the case as they are fundamental aspects of the student experience. Therefore I feel that there was no good reason why my contract could not have been made permanent two years earlier. I feel that I was hugely let down by the people responsible for decisions around SEP timescales and fixed term contracts. I do not feel that the new staff structure is an improvement on the previous structure and certainly does not justify the way that PS staff have been treated along the way. In fact, gaps have already been identified in the new structure which are now being filled by 'bridging roles'. I feel that these gaps should have been spotted sooner so that the correct number of roles would have been available in each team during the matching process.

SEP has been a massive failure and has brought to light the lack of knowledge from SLT with regard the programmes running across the University. It has been a money saving scheme with little regard to the actual day-to-day running of the programmes nor the impact on the mental health of staff or the 'experience' of students. Anxiety, depression and general sickness has been the reality of the impact on staff as well as the loss of seriously well-regarded, knowledgeable and loyal staff. They've been trying to standardise everything and are only now realising the reality of their ignorance. But they plough ahead anyway, regardless.

Its been absolutely horrific and has ruined many staffs mental health, and in some situations worsened their physical health. There's been no dialogue whatsoever and as a result I have sought a position elsewhere.

It has not been dealt with properly at all. All the merging of teams, tasks and job roles should have been arranged and put into place before we were moved into our new teams. Having us to keep our old role and looking after all the areas we did before and now trying to learning all the new areas is terrible. Its been terrible how no one has been listening to the (group name redacted) staff with our thoughts and issues on how things will run after SEP and we have just been left to pick up the pieces and left out to dry. It is not working and the stress levels are through the roof.

The high level aims are fine, the implementation is a bin fire. The practicalities of how we do things and with whom are not set. There is no project management; you pick up your own pc, move to a room with no working data point and you do your best to put out fires. It's not sustainable and in most cases is downright cruel. Even the most upbeat and positive members of staff are seriously struggling.

any issues raised were dismissed anyone that spoke out about issues that could arise or did arise because of the restructure were silenced and ostracized, we have sub optimum systems, many have left due to lack of voice, many demoralised staff remain, sickness and absence has increased and there is a huge sense of loss of community. assurances are being made which are not accurate and not addressing the many issues.

When we were first told about SEP, we were told that it would also include a range of new technologies and procesess to enable us to work more efficiently. These have not been delivered on and the algorithm used to work out how many PS staff in each functional team has not been amended to take this into consideration. We are now vastly under resourced across TLSE teams and still do not have direction from SLT about processes meaning we are scrabbling around making local decisions which goes against what we were told was the point of SEP, to standardise and simplify across the insitution. Job descriptions are incredibly vague and trying to do a mahor restructure in the middle of an academic year, moving roles and physical locations whilst learning our new roles whilst still trying to continue with business as usual and providing an excellent student experience has been a completely impossible task. Morale within TLSE staff across all grades is rock bottom and we are losing staff to different HEI and sickness absence has increased. In all honestly, it hs been and continues to be a shambles and many people are no longer happy working for UoM, I know I'm not. We were told that SEP would make it easier for PS staff to progress their career, in fact, I can see the opposite happening. Moving us into functional roles has pigeon holed us into functions and no longer allows us the breadth of experience and knowledge we used to gain and we will now only be able to progress within a function rather than to different teams using the transferrable skills we would have gained in the original structure. There have been P&OD errors with staff being underpaid, not receiving cost of living payments. We feel that we have been treated as no more than ID numbers, not as people and human beings and I have been very disappointed in the whole process.

Negative impact on staff wellbeing, overworked, structures not in place at start of semester.

Since SEP has been implemented existing vacancies within our team have not been filled, leading to excessive and unmanageable workload. This has led to poor staff morale and is having a clear impact on peoples wellbeing.

From my experience SEP implementation is creating high levels of stress in the staff, lacking appropriate resources and knowledge of the workload involved. Already I can see seriously affected the wellbeing of the staff and the university standards.

SEP has left staff depressed and upset but we have been told to say that everything is fine if anyone asks - its not. Staff are crying, leaving and going off sick and where are senior management? Its like 'Fight Club' - we don't talk about SEP.

SEP is making PS staff ill.

Severe under-resourcing over the last 3 years whilst waiting for SEP to be implemented. This has resulted in staff sickness, burnout, low morale - vacancies unfilled - working long hours, staff not taking holidays.

In my experience: - SEP has contributed to increasing the number of fixed term contracts; and reduced the length of existing FTCs - Admin staff have become increasingly generalised (therefore losing the depth of knowledge and experience) - Staff turnover seems to be increasing - consequently we're losing fabulous, experienced, knowledgeable, hardworking colleagues. - Staff morale is decreasing - The new staff structure diagrams hide the true extent of the staff shortages we have

Staff morale is through the floor and lots of staff members mental health has massively been affected by this

Staff morale feels low since changes made. Felt rushed and unprepared when changes were implemented. Unrealistic workload increases for lower grade staff.

The Cohort 1 communications were a disaster. The "at risk" email and letters came out of the blue. FTC colleagues received an email to say it was highly unlikely their contracts would be renewed. It was an inhumane way to treat hardworking, dedicated staff.

The stress caused by ongoing uncertainty, shifting goalposts and poor communication took its toll on my colleagues and I. Eventually I was lucky enough to move to another business area out of scope of SEP. I only hear negatives from former colleagues in relation to implementation and current working conditions in T&L.

the uncertainty of people's jobs that could be on the line was very unsettling seeing what we and our colleagues gone through was not healthy for our mental health.

A major staff reorganisation with no service strategy, no implementation plan, vague aims, vague job descriptions. No information about how many people I would manage or my new workload, in advance of the VS programme closing. Very devious behaviour from our leaders.

The idea behind SEP was good, however the implementation has been poor. Processes are still not standardised across UoM and now teams are having to 'make do' with unsatisfactory solutions due to lack of budget and time. It feels that SLT are too far into the process to admit that it hasn't worked and are now enforcing processes/programmes that don't work or make sense just so they can say that it has been fixed and SEP has been completed

Management of change process has been awful for all staff involved.

The new structure is great, and I can see how it will work in the future and how it's going to make things more efficient. However, it is shocking that there has been no formal training and the lack of any process documents relating to key processes within the team is a major failure.

SLT has diminished my role. I am now a facilitator, instead of a skilled worker. What this means is that faculty no longer has a good way of measuring my impact, since I no longer get acknowledged in (Exact 'Output channels' redacted for anonymity).

Very little communication now between functional teams and a severe lack of formal training.

A great deal of short term confusion has been caused by the break up of well established teams as part of the SEP and at present it feels like few people know who is responsible for what. Most of 2023 is likely to be very chaotic. It remains to be seen whether in the long run the University emerges more efficient as a result of this; it may well do, but it is going to take time, probably a couple of years, before the new structures properly bed down.

A lot of PS don't know the areas they have been put into, whether it be a change in UG/PGT or specifics in the area. This is causing delays in major areas.

As part of the SEP cohort I have been given a generic job title that does not reflect what I actually do in my role. If was to leave it would not be possible to employ anyone new into my role with the current job description

Communication has been appalling as it was not cascaded to managers appropriately and most of the times I will know about announcements from my team members as we were not given the heads up. I think that the decision of making permanent, fixed term contract was really poor as we ended up with colleagues that would not have been strong candidates if I was going to interview for permanent position.

Communication has been incredibly poor. We still have no idea who to send things to within the team, even generic numbers/email addresses. It's concerning.

Now administering one and a half (organising unit redacted) students - workload increased massively; new technological system for special permissions has been scrapped; grade 5 tasks added to our massive workload. Communication to (student programme redacted) students and academic staff poor, don't know which new generic email to contact!

I have taken on a new role created during SEP. Much of the work in this role was undefined and responsibilities are unclear. I have found myself having to come up with processes and training documents for my team.

I believe it is vastly more costly than was originally thought

In my area of work (function redacted) SEP has not yet delivered ANY new technology or process improvements. In fact, we are in exactly the same position as we were back in 2015, when IT Services began a project ("eProg2") to replace the University's (student programme and functions redacted) system. All time/effort/work done by academic and PS colleagues on this project (which was halted when the Student Lifecycle Project began), and in SLP/SEP, appears to have been a complete waste of time. We've waited 8 years and we have no new system or process improvements.

In Cohort 1 / Admissions the reporting was 'out of scope' which has meant years of cobbling together reports we do have to try and do the job. It has limited strategic analysis and thinking. It limits our ability to work towards diversity targets as it is difficult to pull clear data to draw evidence from. Staff turnover is greatly increased as the G3 role is un-varied and solely focusses on output.

Process and technology side of SEP has been a disaster.

There have been some benefits to applicants eg uploading documents themselves, referees being contacted automatically but a lot of processes take more time. Reporting has been very poor.

The algorithm used to figure out the number of staff required at each grade has not seemed to work. Various additional posts have been added with no official comment, and the time spent on applications has not been taken into consideration making teams feel understaffed.

The lack of support for eProg continues to be a problem.

The whole process needed better communication, and for it to be communicated in lay terms, too much jargon and acronyms made it confusing and difficult to fully understand the process or where people stood. after 2 years of SEP I'm unsure why the role out had to happen so abruptly. In January everyone was thrown into new roles and I think it would have been better to take some more time to integrate people to their new roles and new teams a little slower with more time to hand over and begin sharing knowledge. The unnecessary jolt has left teams lacking knowledge and building in stress and anxiety. I thought one aim of SEP was to standardise roles across schools and faculties but its still unclear what teams are doing and who is picking up tasks. the functional role means people feel less responsibility for their work and less job satisfaction.

Transition for (faculty redacted) has, in no way, been well-defined, well-planned for or well-rolled out. Rather, it has been an instant baptism of fire with sudden massive and unrealistic workloads and expectations, a physically fragmented team, and much too late communication to those it is intended to serve (ie the PGRs).

The transition to my new role was atrocious. I was doing my old job and the remit of my entire new team (of 7) for almost a year. I had over 20 days annual leave that I was unable to take that I lost because there was way too much for one person to do. Working through weekends/evenings etc. No support from management.

I left the role I had held for 10 years (department redacted) because of how significantly the new processes had impacted on the workload, making it effectively impossible.

Idea of moving staff around make staff feel less ownership of their roles. Voluntary severance has been given to staff and then their roles have been filled under a slightly different name. I think that SEP requires staff to work harder and there are fewer opportunities at grade 7, 8 and 9

I do not have a full understanding of the aims of the SEP initiative but I believe moving such a large number of staff to new posts at the same time (late Dec/early Jan) has had a negative impact on the work of my department. I work in assessment and progression and staff levels is the main issue we have been struggling with at such a busy time of the year (January exam period and the following exam boards). My understanding is that the number of staff members allocated to my department has been determined by an algorithm, however it has become evident that we are severely understaffed and we are struggling to manage our workload.

so far, the whole process has made me feel so stressed and anxious and feel completely overloaded with work and unrealistic timescales have been asked which add to this.

A lot of the technology brought in by SEP is being replaced already and the promises of SEP from an IT perspective have not been delivered

For SEP to be a success, working conditions including physical environment and meeting the needs of ALL staff must be integrated

I'm not technical ps staff

The SEP has made me less efficient at my job by forcing me to take on a role I did not apply for and am not qualified for (role redacted).

not seen any specific changes t my role or workload. Not sure if this is a marker of the success of SEP or if its just that SEP will not impact my role specifically. Not entirely sure what the SEP is or what is specific aims are for staff

Loss of ability to report on Admissions data has caused problems. The data is not used solely by colleagues processing Applications for Study.

We are now hearing that further cuts will need to be made.

Know very little about the SEP and what it entails or how/ if it has impacted me.

Fixed term contracts - I was kept on a ftc for an extended period to allow a restructure that ultimately never happened at my grade/division. It made it difficult to get a mortgage.

Heard little about it!

Is SEP prioritising improving the most important or frequent activities (or is it tackling the easiest first)?

Think this will just end up reversed in a decade

Not relevant to my role in research

Campus Solutions urgently needs replacing with a totally different software. An upgrade or further improvements would not be sufficient. An alternative more efficient, better-designed, more user-friendly, more modern, and more reliable admissions software is needed.

I do think there will be benefits of working in functional areas but it will take time for new processes (and Tec) to be rolled out

A shambles, resources have been cut, workload has increased, no-one has an idea of who is doing, what department is doing what in the new structure, staff have left as a result of the sheer volume of extra workload they have had to now take on, this has lead to anxiety, staff in tears and others on the edge of a nervous breakdown and actively looking for another job elsewhere.

No other comments at this time.

I hope everything can be more clear and organized.

It is a "work in progress" and will need good leadership and staff/student engagement as things progress further. We do need to work in a more common way and some people will want to do their own thing/their own way. That is not to say that things cannot change but that we all need to work and change together and, at times, go with the majority view.