



FORUM
TOGETHER

PEOPLE STRATEGY 2022–2027

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Leah Scott, Interim Chief Executive 3

WHO WE ARE 4

How we Operate 4

Our Mission 4

Our Vision 4

Supporting the Department of Education 6

Qualifications Regulator 7

Funding our Work 8

OUR PEOPLE 10

Our People Recognised in the Annual Report 2021 10

People – A Strategic Theme for CCEA's Draft Corporate Plan 11

ENGAGING OUR PEOPLE 12

CORPORATE VALUES 14

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS 15

PEOPLE STRATEGY AND THEMES 16

Aligning Human Resources and Skills with Organisational Strategy 17

Developing High-Quality Leadership and Management 18

Attracting, Recruiting and Retaining Talent 19

Engaging our People 20

Promoting a Culture of Inclusivity and Wellbeing 21

THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT 22

Employee Engagement 22

Employee Experience 23

People Partner 24

Resources Shared Services 25

INTRODUCTION

CCEA's vision is one where people are equipped functionally and emotionally to be able to embrace and face with confidence the opportunities and challenges of the modern workplace. The foundation for achieving CCEA's Vision outlined in its Draft Corporate Plan will be determined by the capability and capacity of its workforce.

To realise these ambitions, the People Strategy makes a strong commitment to developing staff in the knowledge and skills required for the future, to aligning human resources closely with the direction of the organisation and to engender a culture in which staff collaboration and engagement can prosper.

CCEA will endeavour to put the right staff in the right place in the organisation to maximise the benefit for all, ensuring that our people have a clear understanding of their role, responsibilities and performance.

The context in which CCEA operates is changing and the capacity profile of the organisation and the employees will continue to change. Therefore, the People Strategy supports the need to re-configure, reshape and reform how people work and our aim to inculcate agile working which is aligned with our Estates Strategy. The People Strategy is also closely aligned to and supported by CCEA's Information Systems/Services Strategy and plans for the digitisation of services.

The wellbeing of our staff is central to our People Strategy and we continuously strive to be responsive to their needs and find new ways to support them.

I am confident that in working together in the months and years ahead we can meet the new challenges in the education sector in the interests of all our children and young people, and the wider educational community that we serve.

Leah Scott

Interim Chief Executive



WHO WE ARE

HOW WE OPERATE

Governance

CCEA is the Council for the Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment comprising a Chairperson plus 13 non-executive board members appointed by the Department of Education. Council members provide a wide range of expertise with representatives from education, industry and commerce.

Executive

The Council is supported in its work by an Executive Team led by the Chief Executive and is currently organised into three broad areas:

- Finance and Corporate Services Directorate
- Education Directorate (including Curriculum, Assessment and Examinations)
- Regulation

Our work is expansive in supporting the curriculum, developing resources, setting assessments and examinations and in awarding qualifications. Delivering upon our mandate helps young people through their education and/or vocational journey from pre-school through to 19 years of age, Special Education Needs and Gaeloideachas (Irish medium).

OUR MISSION

CCEA's Mission is to enable the full potential of all learners to be achieved and recognised.

OUR VISION

CCEA is recognised as a leading authority on Curriculum, Assessment and Qualifications.

We deliver a modern curriculum supported by assessment that provides learners with qualifications and skills to embrace the opportunities and challenges of a changing world with confidence.



OVER
55,000
STUDENTS
YEARLY
FOR GCSE
AND A LEVEL



OVER 10,000 EXAM
AND SUPPORT
MATERIALS
FOR SCHOOLS
AND STUDENTS



“ CCEA Chairperson, Tommy O’Reilly, states in the Draft Corporate Plan:
‘CCEA places learners at the heart of everything we do ... I am proud of the commitment and innovation shown by CCEA staff as they adapted to supporting our teaching colleagues and young learners during COVID-19.’ ”

SUPPORTING THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Department of Education is CCEA’s sponsoring department, and it has a statutory duty to promote the education of the people of Northern Ireland and to ensure the effective implementation of education policy.

The draft Programme for Government sets out the priorities and commitments proposed by the Northern Ireland Executive for education in Northern Ireland. It acknowledges the importance of good education and the significant part it plays in helping tackle disadvantage, in growing the economy and in building a shared community for the future.

The primary outcome for the Department of Education in the Programme for Government is: ‘we give our children and young people the best start in life’, and it is leading on the development of Delivery Plans for the following four indicators in the Programme for Government:



INDICATOR 11

Improve Educational Outcomes

INDICATOR 12

Reduce Educational Inequality

INDICATOR 13

Improve the Quality of Education

INDICATOR 15

Improve Child Development

Note: DE is currently reviewing its Corporate Plan and, given that the key objectives of CCEA’s Corporate Plan relate to how we contribute to the Education Minister’s and DE’s strategic priorities, we will adapt our work to meet their needs, if required.

QUALIFICATIONS REGULATOR

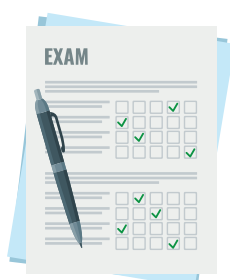
CCEA Regulation is responsible for recognising and monitoring awarding organisations, accrediting qualifications and policy development.

CCEA Regulation currently regulates 87 awarding organisations.

CCEA has responsibility for the regulation of qualifications – general and vocational – taken by learners in Northern Ireland (NI) as set out in the Education (Northern Ireland) Order 1998 and for the standard to which qualifications are awarded.

Additionally, CCEA Regulation is required to ensure that the standards of general and skills examinations available in Northern Ireland are equivalent and comparable to examinations conducted by bodies or authorities exercising similar functions elsewhere in the UK.

CCEA Regulation also provides advice, support and guidance to the Department of Education and, in relation to professional and technical qualifications, to the Department for the Economy.



OVER 540k EXAM PAPERS/ASSESSMENTS
MARKED AND MODERATED
BY 5000 EXAMINERS AND
MODERATORS

CCEA REGULATION
CURRENTLY REGULATES
87 AWARDING ORGANISATIONS

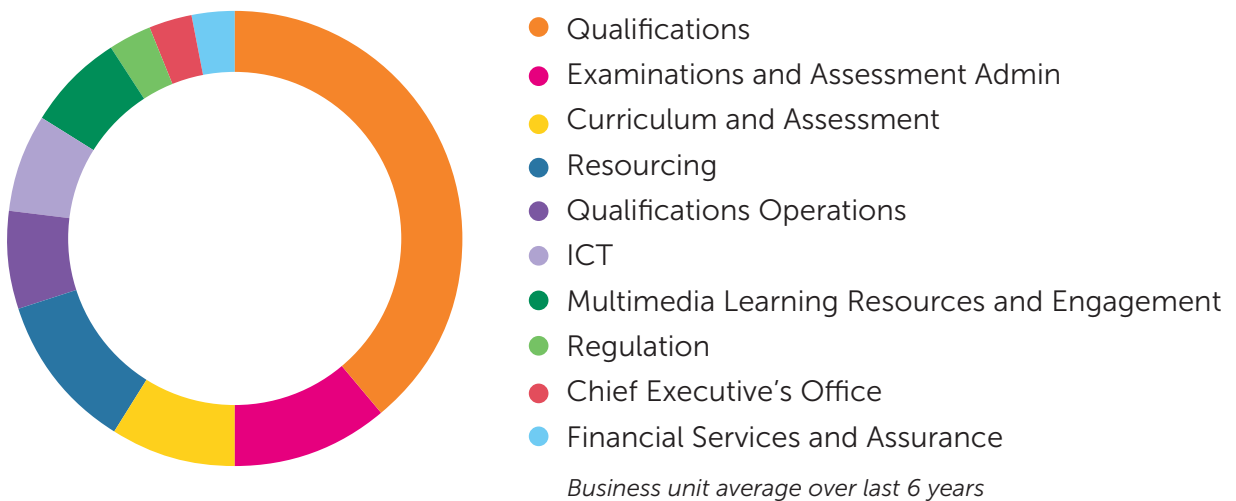


FUNDING OUR WORK

Our typical annual budget is approximately £30m/£31m. Some £10 million is income generated by qualification fees and additional commissioned work from DE, the Department for the Economy (DfE) and other government departments for projects mainly focused on qualifications, examinations and curriculum such as Relationships and Sexuality Education, Homelessness and the Period Dignity pilot project.

We receive core funding (grant-in-aid) from DE; this is supplemented by fees primarily generated from the provision of qualifications, which account for only about one-third of our total budget.

Funding from DE is circa £20m/£21m to pay for normal activities. We work in partnership with the Department to ensure that strategic priorities are identified early, so that funding for these can be considered.





OUR PEOPLE

CCEA has been in existence for 28 years and currently has 316 fulltime staff and 60 people on fixed term contracts. We also contract 5,000 practising teachers every year as examiners, moderators and markers for examinations and assessments. This includes some 1000 invigilators to ensure that examinations are conducted following a mandatory Code of Practice.



OUR PEOPLE RECOGNISED IN THE 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

“ Our people – our greatest resource was also recognised in our 2021 Annual report.

It states:

‘Council has also witnessed the hard work of our staff in improving how we deliver services, engage with the profession, parents and learners, whilst managing the significant risks associated with running large scale public examinations. Tested by the pandemic, we have seen teams come together like never before, collaborating to solve problems at pace. Undoubtedly, this work will help expedite our ambition to be a public sector exemplar for use of technology in our work and communications.’

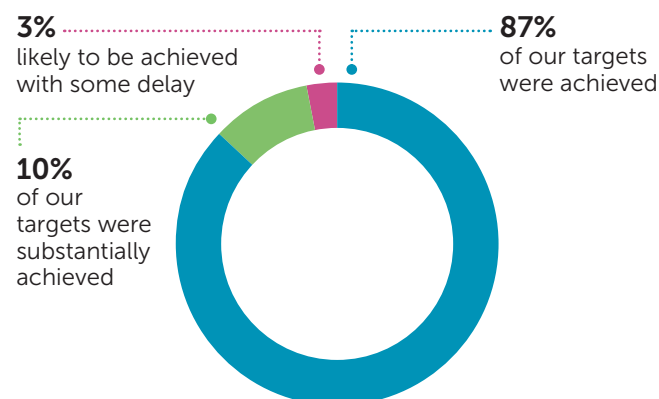
”

PEOPLE – A STRATEGIC THEME FOR CCEA'S DRAFT CORPORATE PLAN

Our stated ambition in our Draft Corporate Plan is that: CCEA is seen as a great place to work and its people are its strength.

CCEA's Draft Corporate Plan for the period 2020–2025 was updated in 2022 given the unprecedented disruption to teaching and learning due to the global pandemic. People and Partnerships has been added as one of five Strategic Themes to reflect the contribution of our staff during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic which enabled learners and students to progress and in recognition that nothing can be achieved without our people.

CCEA Performance Measures 2021–2022



AMBITION: CCEA is seen as a great place to work and its people are its strength.

ACTIONS

- Continue to review and update our People Strategy.
- Look after our people and attract talent in a new hybrid working landscape by providing modern facilities and opportunities for personal and professional development, with a focus on enhancing digital skills.
- Ensure the wellbeing of our staff, students and teachers is paramount, supporting them in a caring and collegiate environment.
- Do all we can to keep our staff safe and protected from cyber and online harm.
- Continue our commitment to improvement and retain our Investors in People silver status.
- Ensure CCEA operates efficiently and effectively to maximise impact and value for money.
- Secure funding of our plans to help learners and the economy.
- Foster channels for greater collaboration, research and evaluation.

ENGAGING OUR PEOPLE

HYBRID WORKING PILOT

CCEA launched a three-month Hybrid Working Pilot on 25 April 2022 to assess the feasibility of new ways of working and permanently moving from five days in the office to a hybrid model of working, depending on roles and responsibilities.

CCEA's Executive Team supports a modern, flexible work environment and believe that making the pilot a success in a year where we see a full return to public examinations would be a clear indication that CCEA can move to hybrid working permanently.

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE (IIP) SILVER LEVEL ACCREDITATION

In June 2022 CCEA retained Investors in People (IIP) Silver Level accreditation:

- number of indicators at Advanced Level up from eight to fifteen representing a 26% increase in our overall rating from 2019.

Assessed through a combination of:

- survey metrics completed by 69 per cent of staff;
- interview-based meetings conducted by external examiners with 37 randomly selected staff members; and
- comprehensive data/evidence collection.



IIP accreditation:
26% increase
in our overall rating
from 2019.

 INVESTORS
IN PEOPLE | Silver

“ ‘Achieving the IIP silver standard is something that any organisation should be truly proud of, especially now. It is the sign of a company which is very committed to good people management practices.’ ”

Paul Devoy, Head of Investors in People

CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESS TOGETHER

CCEA staff celebrating the retention of the liP Silver Level accreditation with a coffee and cake event.



CORPORATE VALUES

CCEA will engage all people across the organisation with dignity and respect. In everything we do our people will demonstrate positive behaviour in all positions and roles and ensure that we all 'live out' the corporate values as they undertake their daily work.



● HONESTY & INTEGRITY

- Respect
- Openness
- Transparency
- Clear Decision-Making

● COLLABORATE

- Joined-Up Working
- Utilising Talent
- Broad Perspective
- Best Outcomes

● RESPECT

- Respecting All
- Recognising and Valuing People
- Development Opportunities

● RESPONSIBILITY & OWNERSHIP

- Personal Responsibility
- Delivering CCEA's Objectives
- Personal Commitment

● INNOVATE

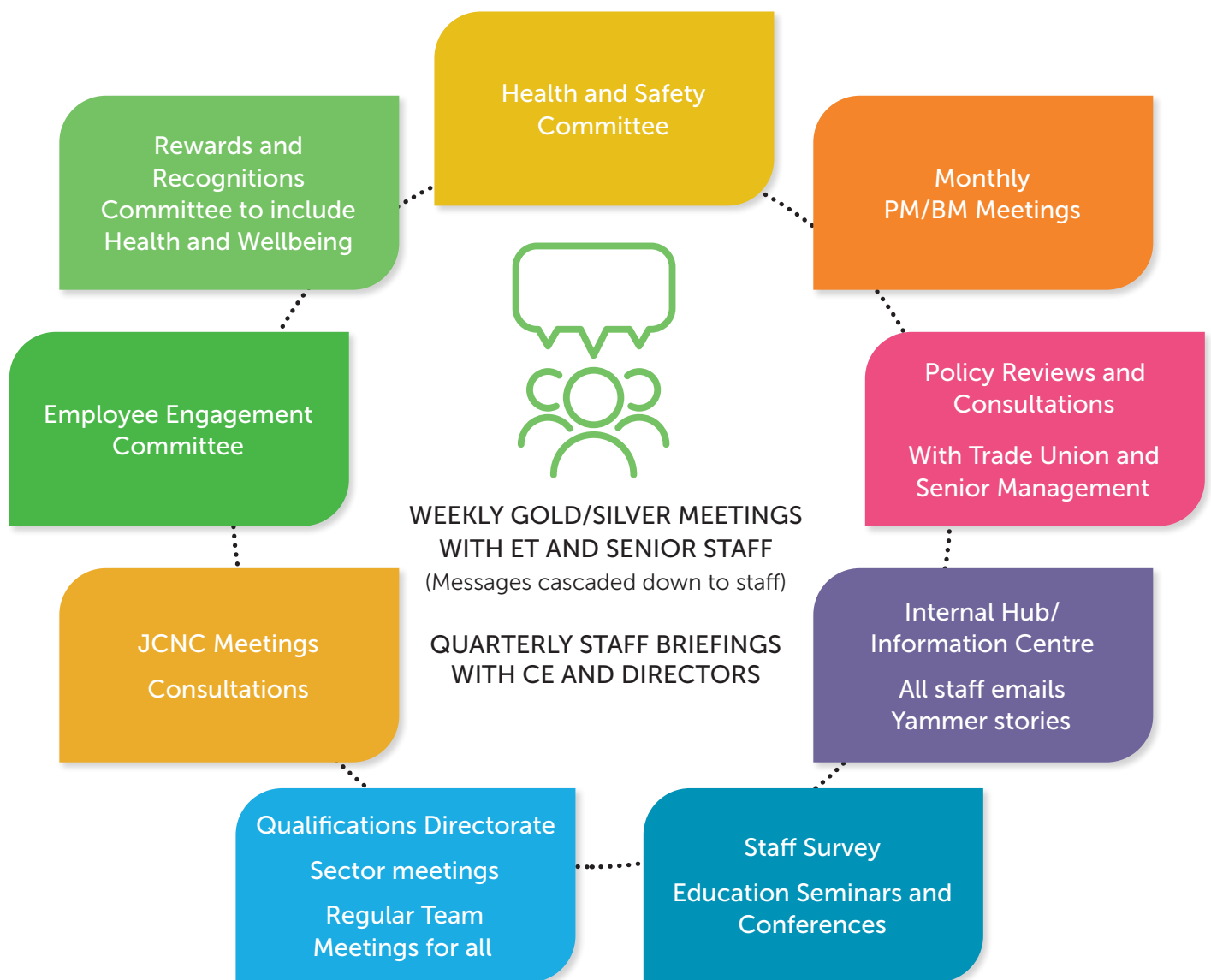
- New Solutions

● QUALITY

- Quality Education
- Services
- Efficiency
- Best Value

COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

CCEA will continue to engage staff through a wide variety of forums and consultations to ensure all people feel their voice is heard and they are informed of developments across the organisation which will help cement a one-team culture.

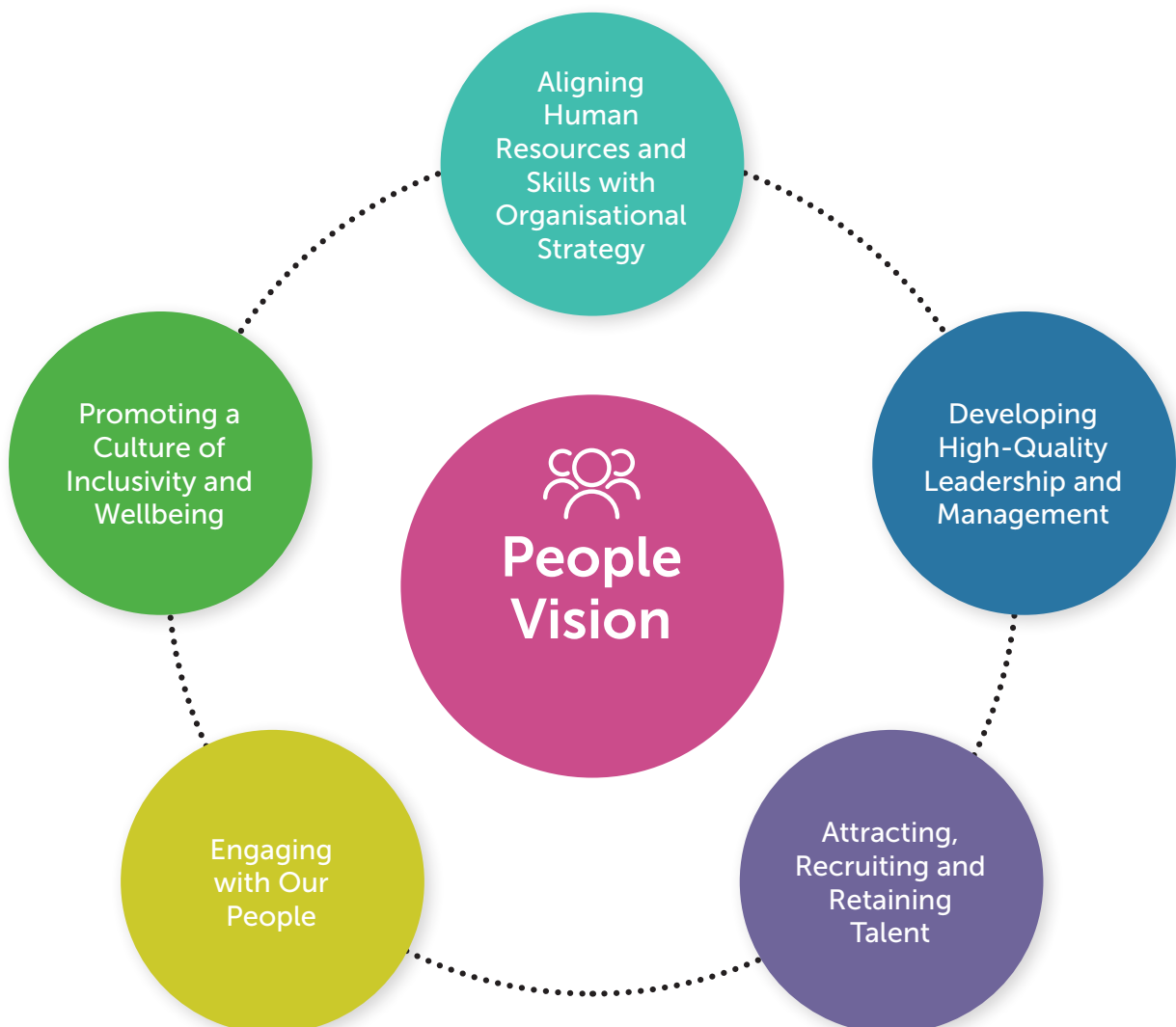


PEOPLE STRATEGY AND THEMES

This People Strategy sets out a detailed vision and plan for how we will meet the needs of the organisation going forward, by embracing diversity, equality and inclusion while recognising the need for change. It expands upon the ambitions and actions laid out in our Draft Corporate Plan 2020–2025.

OUR PEOPLE STRATEGY IS BASED ON FIVE KEY THEMES:

- Aligning Human Resources and Skills with Organisational Strategy
- Developing High-Quality Leadership and Management
- Attracting, Recruiting and Retaining Talent
- Engaging our People
- Promoting a culture of Inclusivity and Wellbeing



ALIGNING HUMAN RESOURCES AND SKILLS WITH ORGANISATIONAL STRATEGY

We will:

- Agree the workforce plan within the context of budgets to ensure year-on year continuous improvement with an emphasis on key deliverables.
- Develop a succession plan and review annually in line with organisational needs, identify critical roles and develop associated plans.
- Support the reconfiguration and design of departments in line with our organisational strategy.
- Offer agile ways of working in line with CCEA's values and organisational needs to ensure CCEA continues to be forward thinking and flexible.
- Give our people the opportunity to develop skills and knowledge needed to perform their job ensuring we have the right people with the right skills.
- Develop and implement a performance management system ensuring our people receive the skills needed to take the organisation forward whilst meeting our corporate objectives.
- Support the development of a bespoke digital skills training programme available for all our people.

Outcomes:

- Develop, procure and deliver projected development programmes that meet succession planning and organisational requirements.
- Develop a Human Resources team modernisation action plan highlighting targets for improving productivity.
- Develop and implement an agile working policy and toolkit.
- Develop, implement and evaluate a framework that promotes flexible, interdisciplinary teamworking, job rotation, secondments and opportunities for our people to broaden their skills, knowledge and experience.
- Deliver an annual learning and development plan with a minimum target of 80% employee participation.



DEVELOPING HIGH-QUALITY LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

We will:

- Invest in the development of key skills to ensure our senior team is equipped to provide strong, clear and inspirational leadership.
- Invest strategically in our people to equip them with future leadership skills.
- Encourage multidisciplinary thinking, ideas and proposals through our working practices and development programmes.
- Promote an ethical and moral culture within our organisation.
- Give managers confidence with managing performance, ensuring the organisation meets its goals and continues to be high performing.
- Ensure staff endorse CCEA values and incorporate them in everything they do.

Outcomes:

- Develop and implement a leadership framework which recognises CCEA's values and incorporates a robust competency framework.
- Retain our Investors in People Silver accreditation throughout the duration of the People Strategy.
- Analyse end-of-year performance reviews ensuring staff are assessed fairly and equitably across the organisation.
- Introduction of coaching and mentoring frameworks which are monitored frequently.



ATTRACTING, RECRUITING AND RETAINING TALENT

We will:

- Endeavour to attract high-quality candidates for each vacancy.
- Develop a recruitment and retention framework that reflects business requirements and considers agile working arrangements.
- Improve the candidate experience by reviewing online recruitment.
- Create a wider range of recruitment campaigns including an increase in use of social media as a recruitment strategy.
- Develop a reward and recognition strategy that includes a review of our current contract offerings to ensure pay and other terms and conditions are attractive through regular benchmarking in the marketplace.
- Provide a Mentoring Programme that ensures staff are supported with personal and professional development.

Outcomes:

- Evidence of an improved marketing campaign which has encouraged a skilled talent pool internally and externally through evaluating applicants' experiences gathered by seeking feedback from people who have gone through the process.
- A planned and scheduled recruitment programme at the start of each year following discussion and engagement with business managers which considers the possibility of agile working.
- Fill vacancies via the first recruitment campaign within 12 weeks of clearing its business case.
- Manage CCEA's knowledge and skills base through maintaining staff turnover rate in line with national averages.
- Implement a mentoring programme for staff to avail of opportunities to support their development. Evaluate the success of the programme on a yearly basis.
- Through the Reward and Recognition Committee, ensure we promote the benefits of working at CCEA.
- Review recruitment policy and procedures to ensure openness, transparency and appropriate selection procedures are used for recruiting staff.



ENGAGING OUR PEOPLE

We will:

- Develop and implement CCEA's Employee Engagement Action Plan to include an ongoing staff communications plan, get feedback annually.
- Nurture and develop our staff and seek to retain our Investors in People accreditation.
- Promote innovative teamworking and project work, providing opportunities for staff to broaden their experience, skills and knowledge.
- Develop and implement innovative programmes to support stakeholder engagement.

Outcomes:

- Provide a 'Culture for All' programme involving the reaffirmation of values for CCEA.
- Maintain our liP accreditation.
- Identification of key areas which require attention and set realistic targets for improvement each year (using feedback/results from annual staff survey).
- Staff survey response rate between 65–75 percent of employees.
- Recognised as an 'Employer of Choice.'
- Support the Chair of the employee engagement forum. Develop and implement action plans.
- Adopt best practice and work in collaboration with stakeholder forums.



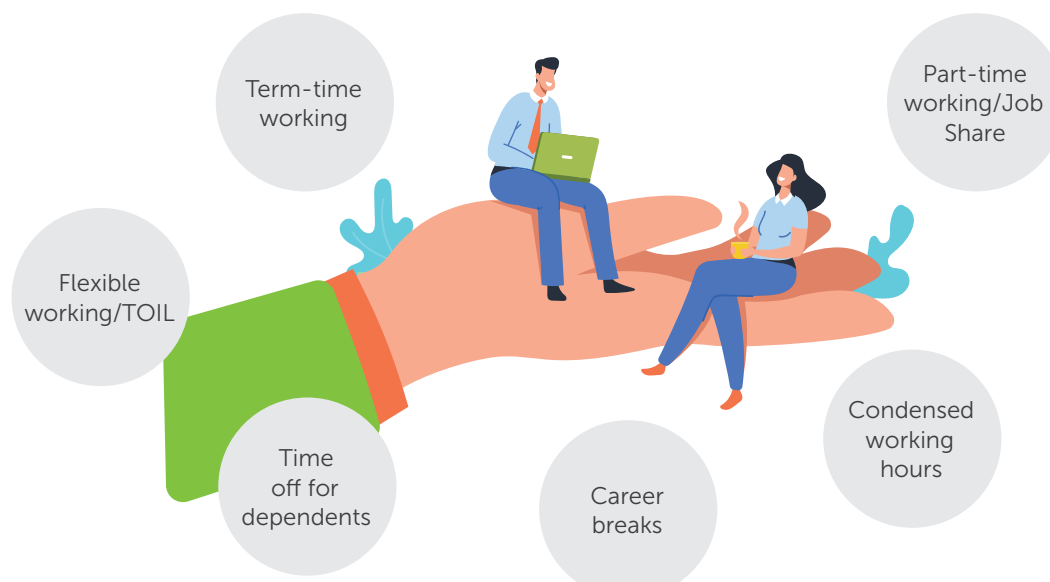
PROMOTING A CULTURE OF INCLUSIVITY AND WELLBEING

We will:

- Promote, implement and embed equality, inclusion and diversity as fundamental principles through our Disability and Equality action plans ensuring we meet our legal obligations.
- Support staff during sick leave through our Sickness Absence policy. Monitor absence levels, ensuring that it is at an acceptable level as outlined by the Department of Education.
- Ensure health and safety systems are in place that promote best practices that comply with legislation.
- Promote the importance of wellbeing and work-life balance through the wellbeing programme and flexible working arrangements.
- Promote cross-organisational events that actively encourage wellbeing and inclusion linked to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) outcomes.

Outcomes:

- Retain ISO 45001 accreditation throughout the duration of the plan.
- All organisational policies equality screened and equality impact assessments completed when required.
- Implementation of CCEA's Equality Scheme, which fully complies with CCEA's requirements under Section 75 as well as contributing to wider social objectives.
- Analysis of staff absence levels ensuring they are within the Department of Education directives.
- A wellbeing programme which addresses mental, emotional, financial and physical wellbeing.
- Attainment of an accredited award for diversity in the workplace by Year Two.
- Develop and implement a revised Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Strategy ensuring staff have opportunities to get involved with external community and charity events.
- The Equality and Disability Forums meet three times a year.



THE HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

The People Strategy applies to all employees across CCEA. The HR team will play a key role in facilitating the delivery of the People Strategy.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

This function exists to manage, develop and improve the relationship with staff, key stakeholders and the trade unions.

MISSION

Create a culture of genuine partnership between employees and employer, which demonstrate the values of the organisation and enhance the employee experience.

Further develop progressive Learning and Development initiatives which provide a framework to support staff to achieve career progression, which dovetails into the liP Standard.

To manage the formal industrial relations framework, this function is also responsible for initiatives to promote genuine partnerships and meaningful consultation.



EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Recognising employees are the biggest single asset to any organisation: this function exists to effectively recruit and maximise employee deliverables whilst supporting, retaining an engaged workforce.

MISSION

The employee experience journey looks at the employee lifecycle and thinks about the employee at each stage. The aim of considering the employee journey is to ensure employees are engaged all along the way, from candidacy through onboarding, performance, growth and eventually exit.



PEOPLE PARTNER

This function exists to develop and own the relationship with departments.

MISSION

The People Partner will be the key linchpin in the relationship between the HR Department and the departments. Success will be measured on the quality of this relationship and the delivery of people-related goals.



RESOURCES SHARED SERVICES

This function exists to provide admin and clerical support services to the HR Department and wider CCEA community.

MISSION

This section will carry general and specialist administrative tasks and services related to the HR Department. It will provide specialist admin support services for recruitment, workforce plan, absence, ISO compliance and proactive committee servicing.



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