

STAFF CONSULTATION PAPER
OVERALL CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

November 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The University of Bedfordshire is a vibrant, ambitious academic community celebrating diversity and the transformative power of education. We believe in nurturing our students to become educated, employable, entrepreneurial global citizens.
- 1.2 During 2024/25 academic year, the University, like many universities went through a significant period of change. As detailed in this document, despite its critical role in the delivering economic growth and skills development, the sector remains volatile, financially challenged and highly competitive. Despite the changes delivered through the recently completed consultation process, student recruitment has not recovered in many areas, and as such, a further period of change is required to ensure financial sustainability of the institution
- 1.3 This document sets out proposed changes to structures and posts within academic teaching staff which seeks to reduce costs by a further £5m. The document first provides an overview of progress against our Transforming Bedfordshire Strategy 2021-2026. It then outlines the challenging HE environment and actions we have taken to date to reduce costs, plus opportunities for growth. The document then summarises our financial position to show why change is essential. The change proposals are then outlined, (including standardised job descriptions for academic staff and a proposed reduction in staffing levels) with further detail provided in individual Faculty consultation documents. Finally, details of the consultation process are provided, including timelines and links to supporting documentation.
- 1.4 It is important to emphasise these are proposals, rather than decisions, and the Vice Chancellors Executive Group (VCEG) welcomes comments, suggestions, alternative proposals and feedback on all aspects of the proposals and they will be considered genuinely and transparently. It is however important to be clear that we cannot continue to operate at the size we currently are and without significant change.
- 1.5 Change is of course difficult for all of those involved, and this document sets out how we will continue to support you, and our wider community throughout this process.

2. University Strategy and progress to date

- 2.1. Our Transforming Bedfordshire Strategy focuses on a number of key priorities. We are committed to a future where employability, social mobility, and financial sustainability guide us toward long-term success. As we adapt to an evolving higher education landscape, we will remain an inclusive, forward-thinking institution that prepares students for the world of work and future success.
- 2.2. We have made significant progress on most of our key targets. We ranked 41st out of 146 HEIs in the Times Higher Education NSS positivity index for 2025, and 29th out of 102 HEIs in the 2025 Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES), including 7th for skills development and 12th for assessment. In the 2025 Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES), we achieved national top-three rankings for Progression, Research Skills and Professional Development.

- 2.3. Our latest Continuation rate for full-time Undergraduate students has increased to 72%, up from 64.3% two years ago. We have narrowed our ethnicity awarding gap by 10.1 percentage points over the past two years, and we are now in line with the sector. We have risen 19 places in the Guardian 2026 league table to 103rd out of 123 HEIs and have risen 11 places in the Times/Sunday Times league table to 118th out of 130. We are ranked 106th in the Daily Mail University Guide, up from 124th two years ago. We have also recently been awarded both the Mental Health Charter Award and the Race Equality Charter Bronze Award.
- 2.4. These achievements reflect the dedication of our staff and students in building a supportive, inclusive, and ambitious university community. Our Transforming Bedfordshire strategy is clearly delivering results, and this gives us a strong platform to build from as we review and update our strategy in 2026.
- 2.5. Our guiding principles through this change process are driven by our Super KPIs, ensuring growth, student success, and institutional excellence:
- **Continuation** – Enhancing student progression and increasing the number of students successfully completing their degrees.
 - **Student Satisfaction** – Delivering an exceptional student experience that fosters engagement, support, and success.
 - **Graduate Outcomes** – Prioritising career readiness by aligning our curriculum with employer needs, equipping graduates for high-quality employment.
 - **Awarding Gap** – Reducing or eliminating disparities in student achievement as outlined in our Access & Participation Plan (APP).
 - **Recruitment** – Expanding our home and international student community through targeted growth initiatives.
- 2.6. Beyond these core KPIs, we remain focused on two key areas that underpin our long-term sustainability and impact:
- **Financial Sustainability** – Careful financial management will continue to be a priority, focusing on income generation, cost management and ensuring our structures reflect our current size.
 - **Civic Role** – Our research and innovation will enhance our reputation, enrich teaching, and drive meaningful economic and social impact
- 2.7. It is essential that through this coming period, and preparing for the next phase of our development, we remain focused on these outcomes and regularly review our structures, to ensure they align with priorities, are fit for the future, and sustainable.

3. Strategic Intent and Growth Opportunities

- 3.1. As we near the end of our current Transforming Bedfordshire Strategy 2021-2026, we will build on our progress to date while planning for the future with a clear focus on stability and targeted growth. This includes:

- A refreshment of the course portfolio designed around emerging skill needs and employment opportunities, to ensure our offer remains distinctive and competitive.
 - Targeted action to improve student recruitment through our *Career Powered Education* approach which ensures students gain the skills and experience employers value most.
 - Investment, such as developing our capacity as a regional hub for Artificial Intelligence and investing in research and knowledge exchange to secure new sources of income for the future.
 - Building strategic working collaborations with local and regional education partners.
 - Continuing our progress on improving our league table positions.
 - Developing new transnational education (TNE) partnerships.
- 3.2. We are also continuing to evolve our strategic partnerships with local businesses, public and civic partners to further strengthen the University's position as an anchor institution within our communities. Examples include building on our Civic Agreements with both Luton and Bedford Borough Councils, the partnership with Luton Town Football Club and their impending arrival at Power Court, the recent MOU with the Bedfordshire Hospital Foundation Trust and the exciting opportunities presented by the expansion of London Luton Airport and the proposed Universal Studios site.

4. Background and actions taken to date

- 4.1. Like many universities, we face significant challenges in a rapidly changing higher education landscape, including a significant decline in student numbers, financial cost pressures, and shifts in government policy. We must, therefore, make strategic decisions to ensure our University's long-term success and sustainability.
- 4.2. The challenges faced by the higher education sector are well documented. The financial and student recruitment landscape has shifted dramatically. Declining home and international student recruitment, the historic and lengthy freeze on undergraduate tuition fees, inflationary driven rises in operational costs, and increases in both employer pension and national insurance contributions have all contributed to the challenging financial position for us, and the wider sector.
- 4.3. The Office for Students (OfS) predicts three out of four universities will be operating at a loss this financial year and has called for bold and transformative changes to address an anticipated £3.4 billion drop in income across the sector. Like many other universities, we must respond proactively to these circumstances to meet our conditions of registration.

- 4.4. The challenges we are facing are not new. We have been working for some time now to mitigate the impact of these sectoral issues. Examples of actions that we have taken to reduce costs to date include:
- A focused review on non-pay expenditure: lowering utility consumption; exiting leased buildings; reducing property maintenance costs; and review of facility-related services like catering and hospitality.
 - A voluntary severance scheme open to all staff during 2024.
 - Tighter controls over recruiting to staff post vacancies.
 - A staff consultation earlier in 2025 with the focus on reducing levels of professional service staff, alongside faculty leadership, administrative and technical staff.
- 4.5. Since 2022/23 our on-campus student population has fallen by 44%. Whilst huge efforts have been made by colleagues to improve recruitment, as well as develop new courses, the latest forecast shows our 2025/26 student numbers will reduce further. We must adapt and align our operations to the number of students, ensuring our organisational structure is right for the institution's size, and continue to maintain our commitment to delivering high-quality education, supporting employability, and driving social mobility.
- 4.6. A reduction in our student population will require fewer academic teaching staff. We have proactively taken action to minimise the level of reductions:
- Approving voluntary redundancy for several academic teaching staff in the Summer of 2024/25;
 - Not recruiting to vacant posts.
 - Reducing our use of Hourly Paid Lecturers (HPLs).
- 4.7. A further reduction of 45 to 50 academic teaching staff is still required to rebalance academic teaching staffing levels and ensure our teaching remains financially sustainable.

5. Financial Summary

- 5.1. The last three years have seen significant change in the financial position of the University.
- 5.2. Student recruitment has fallen sharply since 2022/23. Table 1 (below) provides a summary of on-campus student numbers, falling from circa 10,500, to a forecast of just under 6,000, in 2025/26 - a 44% decline in the total student population.

Table 1

FTEs	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Forecast
Home PG	579	508	411	420
Home UG	5,112	4,635	4,001	3,816
International PG	3,985	4,342	1,666	898
International UG	857	944	847	807
Total	10,533	10,428	6,926	5,941

- 5.3. Total Income is forecast to fall £62m (40%) - from £153m to £91m, and staff costs forecast to have fallen by £3.7m (5%) - rising to 75% of the total income, over the same period. Table 2 (below) provides a summary of the university's financial position.

Table 2

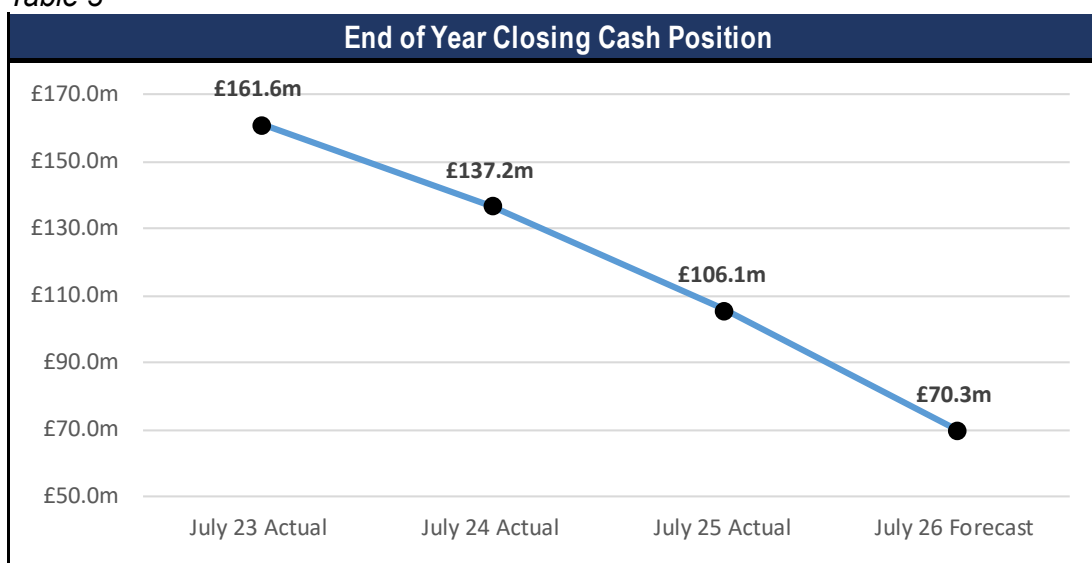
	2022/23 Actual	2023/24 Actual	2024/25 Actual*	2025/26 Forecast*	% Change
Total income	£153.1m	£150.4m	£105.7m	£91.2m	Down 40%
Pay spend**	£72.0m	£76.0m	£71.5m	£68.3m	Down 5%
as % of income	48%	50%	68%	75%	
Operating surplus/(deficit)	£22.2m	£22.1m	(£8.0m)	(£11.5m)	
as % of income	15.3%	15.3%	(7.6%)	(12.6%)	
Financial surplus/(deficit)	£8.4m	£16.6m	(£17m)	(£19.4m)	

* 2024/25 is subject to an external audit. 2025/26 reflects budget

** Excludes pension adjustments and one-off restructuring costs

- 5.4. As a condition of OfS registration, universities must be able to demonstrate long-term financial sustainability. Without further changes to the cost base the University will make an operating deficit of £11.5m in the current financial year (2025/26), with further deficits forecast going forward. This is not a financially sustainable position.
- 5.5. The University has been able to utilise its cash reserves to support this challenging period. However, we cannot continue to do this. From July 2023 to July 2025 the University cash position reduced by £55m (to £106m) and is forecast to fall a further £36m to £70m by July 2026 (see Table 3). Whilst the current level of cash is still relatively healthy, the scale of reduction seen over the last three years is not sustainable in the short to medium term.

Table 3



- 5.6. The proposed changes to academic staffing levels reduce costs by £5m.

- 5.7. The University is budgeting for a financial deficit this year – even with the proposed staff reductions – and while we are seeking to improve student recruitment and proactively developing future growth opportunities, we must acknowledge the need to operate within our means. Following the proposed staff reductions, we still need to take further actions to ensure long term financial sustainability
- 5.8. The University must preserve cash and will continue to look at adaptations to our operating model. The income of the University must return to being greater than our costs, so we can continue to fund both ongoing operations and future strategic investment needed for growth. Alongside growth opportunities, further cost reductions will be necessary.
- 5.9. Going forward we will be a smaller organisation, but ultimately a stronger one.

6. Overview of change proposals

- 6.1. The proposed change in this consultation consists of two parts:

- Proposal to standardise job descriptions across academic grades.
- Proposal to reduce academic staffing levels in the faculties.

These are considered in more detail in sections 7 and 8 below.

- 6.2. The proposals in this consultation document cover academic staff in the faculties whose posts are in-scope, however staff on research-only contracts are not in scope unless they are a professor or associate professor. A proposal to reduce the number of schools in the Faculty for Health, Community and Life Sciences from three to two results in a Head of School post and Faculty Executive Administrator post also being included in the scope. All other Faculty leadership positions in the Faculty Executive Group, and all other professional services staff in the faculties, are out of scope.
- 6.3. Staff in the London School of Commerce (LSC) study centres are also out of scope, as they are being considered as part of a separate process resulting from the end of the partnership with the LSC.
- 6.4. In addition to this overarching consultation document, individual documents have been prepared to provide the detail of the changes in each Faculty. These documents can be found here [\[Faculty Consultation\]](#).
- 6.5. Each document sets out the context for the changes, aligned to the overview given above, the reasons for specific changes, and the impact on individual posts within structures. It is important to emphasise again that these are proposals, rather than decisions, and the VCEG welcomes comments, suggestions, alternative proposals and feedback on all aspects of these proposals and these will be considered genuinely and transparently.

7. Proposal to standardise job descriptions across academic grades

- 7.1. Across the University, we are proposing to standardise job descriptions for academic staff. This builds on the standardisation of job descriptions for Grade 9 Principal Lecturers in the previous consultation in 2024/25. The proposal applies to the following posts:
- Professor
 - Grade 9 Associate Professor
 - Grade 8 Senior Lecturer
 - Grade 8 Senior Tutor
 - Grade 7 Lecturer
 - Grade 7 Tutor
- 7.2. Some staff have job descriptions that have not been recently updated to reflect their current roles and responsibilities. New job descriptions are required to ensure staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and to allow line managers to undertake PDRs and workload allocation in alignment with a job description. Given that the context, principal accountabilities and person specification within each set of job descriptions are broadly the same, it is proposed to introduce standardised job descriptions to ensure consistency across posts.
- 7.3. The proposed standardised job descriptions for the Grade 7 and Grade 8 posts are differentiated by the subject specialism in the job title (for example, “Lecturer in XXX”) plus any qualifications, contextualised knowledge and experience or PSRB requirements as relevant within the person specification.
- 7.4. The proposed standardised job descriptions can be found [here](#).
- 7.5. The VCEG welcomes feedback on the proposed changes to the academic job descriptions.

8. Proposal to reduce academic staffing levels in the faculties

- 8.1. As outlined above, the University needs to make reductions of approximately 45-50 academic teaching staff. This is in addition to the savings made to Professional Services and Faculty leadership during 2024/25 and reflects the decline in student numbers over the past few years.
- 8.2. The proposed reductions in staffing levels have been identified based on a number of factors, including:
- Staffing requirements for teaching, where reductions in student numbers have resulted in an imbalance between staff and student numbers
 - Known staff changes (such as leavers and upcoming retirements)
 - Teaching requirements, including subject specialisms and an appropriate grade mix of academic teaching staff
 - PSRB (Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies) requirements for staffing

- Requirements for Hourly Paid Lecturers (HPLs) – for example, to provide specific subject specialisms
- Affordability

8.3. In headline terms, the main proposals include:

In the [Faculty of Technologies, Education and Social Sciences:](#)

- Social Sciences ceases as a portfolio, with Childhood and Youth courses and staff moving into the School of Education and English, and Criminology moving into the Psychology portfolio.
- A reduction in the number of teaching staff required for Sport, Criminology and Social Studies courses.

In the [Faculty of Health, Community and Life Sciences:](#)

- The School of Life Sciences is restructured and transferred as a Life Sciences portfolio to the School of Society, Community and Health.
- The Postgraduate Education and CPD portfolio ceases as a portfolio.

In the [Business School:](#)

- Reduction in the number of Undergraduate Portfolios to four (excluding the Partnerships portfolio which remains in place until September 2026).
- Reduction in staffing levels across all three Schools to reflect the fall in student numbers over the past few years.

- 8.4. Not all posts or colleagues are affected by the proposed changes in this consultation. We have categorised the impact of the proposed changes as follows:

Table 4

Category	Proposed impact on post	Initial status*	Proposed impact on colleague
1	No changes to job descriptions.	In scope, but not at risk as no changes.	No impact.
2	Job descriptions are subject to minor changes but still considered suitable.	In scope, but not at risk as minor changes.	Colleagues are assimilated into post.
3	No changes to job descriptions, but there are more people than posts. Job descriptions are subject to minor changes but still considered suitable, but there are more people than posts.	At risk.	Colleagues are 'pooled' with other at risk colleagues performing the same/similar role. Post is ring fenced for at risk colleagues. Colleagues are selected through a written submission/ interview process.
4	Post is deleted and does not exist in the new structure.	At risk.	Colleagues are added to the redeployment register.

**Initial status reflects a person's position based on the proposals. The initial status may change if the proposals are changed as a result of consultation.*

- 8.5. More details of these categories, and the impact can be found in section 10 and [\[Overview of the Impact of change on posts\]](#).
- 8.6. Each individual consultation document details the numbers of colleagues who fall into each of these categories, and the impact on individual posts. All colleagues in change categories 1-4 will receive an individual letter setting out their personal position, as well as the opportunity for an individual consultation meeting with an appropriate manager.
- 8.7. At a University level the breakdown of colleagues in each category is as follows:

Table 5 - Change Category (Headcount)

	1	2	3	4	Total
Grade 5	0	2	0	0	2
Grade 7	0	64	21	2	87
Grade 8	0	177	65	6	248
Grade 9	25	8	6	3	42
Spot	0	14	0	1	15
Grand Total	25	265	92	12	394

- 8.8. In addition, it is planned to reduce the use of Hourly Paid Lecturers (HPLs) by over half in 2025/26 compared to 2024/25.
- 8.9. Each Faculty will retain a small budget for Hourly Paid Lecturers (HPLs), who will be deployed to provide flexible teaching support in response to specific academic needs. This may include covering staff absences, supporting TNE provision, or delivering specialist modules that require external expertise. HPLs may also be appointed to support evening or weekend teaching, or in cases where the volume or timing of work does not justify a permanent appointment. This approach enables the Faculty to respond efficiently to fluctuating demands while maintaining high-quality teaching provision.
- 8.10. Colleagues in category 3 will be part of 'ringfenced pools' for identified post/posts, as identified below. It is therefore expected that up to 57 colleagues will be appointed to posts through this initial pooling. Remaining colleagues who are unsuccessful (38) will be added to the redeployment register.

Table 6

	Category 3	Number of posts
Grade 7	21	13
Grade 8	65	40
Grade 9	6	4
Spot	0	0
Total	92	57

- 8.11 When adding colleagues in category 4 to those who are not appointed in the ringfenced pools, a total of 47 colleagues will be at risk of redundancy.
- 8.12 We know that these are unsettling times for everyone at the University, whether your post is in-scope or not. Section 13 identifies the support that is in place throughout this process.

9. Consultation timescales

- 9.1. This period of change is significant, and due to the number of potential redundancies, a consultation period of at least 30 days is required. The consultation period will start on Thursday 6 November 2025 and will run to Tuesday 9 December 2025.
- 9.2. During and at the conclusion of the consultation period, responses will be issued to all questions, comments and feedback received by 5pm on Tuesday 9 December. Where possible, we will respond to questions during the consultation period, and all feedback will be posted here [\[Feedback\]](#). In addition, a number of frequently asked questions (FAQs) have been developed and can be found here [\[FAQ\]](#). This will be a 'live' document and will be updated throughout the consultation period.
- 9.3. Where selection processes are required for colleagues in ringfenced pools, these will be held in February.

- 9.4. Subject to the outcome of the consultation period, any redundancies (voluntary or compulsory) will be expected to take effect from 28th February 2026, although there may be some that are effective from a later date, subject to operational needs.
- 9.5. Any feedback on the proposals in this consultation should be submitted to ConsultationResponse@Beds.ac.uk.
- 9.6. After the launch meetings, all colleagues impacted by the proposals will be sent a letter explaining what this potentially means for them. Colleagues at risk of redundancy will be invited to a one-to-one consultation meeting with the Executive Dean or their nominated representative. Any confidential questions about your personal position should be discussed with your Executive Dean or nominated manager or emailed to the People and Culture Team on ChangeTeam@Beds.ac.uk.
- 9.7. A voluntary redundancy process will be open during the consultation period for all faculty staff within scope of this consultation¹, whether or not they are at risk of redundancy. This will open on 6 November 2025 and close on 9 December 2025. Further details can be found in section 14.
- 9.8. An overview of the timescales is set out below:

Table 7

Date	Action
6 / 7 November 2025	Launch consultation and voluntary redundancy scheme with colleagues
9 December 2025	Consultation closes Voluntary redundancy scheme closes
16 January 2026	VR decisions communicated
23 January 2026	Consultation outcomes published
30 January 2026	Deadline for VR acceptance decisions
2 February 2026	Interviews and selection commence
Late February 2026	Interviews and selection finishes
From 1 st March 2026	Transition towards new structure

Impact on Posts

- 9.9. The consultation process identifies a significant number of proposed changes to faculty and departmental structures across the University. These proposed changes impact posts in different ways as identified in paragraph 8.4.

¹ Academic staff in the faculties are in scope, however staff on research-only contracts are not in scope unless they are a professor or associate professor. One Head of School and one Faculty Executive Administrator post in the Faculty for Health, Community and Life Sciences are included in the scope. All other Faculty leadership positions in the Faculty Executive Group are out of scope, as are staff in the London School of Commerce (LSC) study centres.

- 9.10. The “Overview of the Impact of change on posts” document identifies what the different proposed categories mean for each colleague. If you feel that a post has been put into the wrong category, this should be discussed with your line manager in the first instance and provided as feedback in the consultation process.
- 9.11. Full details of the categories are found here [[Overview of the Impact of change on posts](#)].
- 9.12. The document also identifies the protection relating to pregnancy and family leave.

10. Redundancy Selection

- 10.1. For colleagues in ringfenced pools, or in the redeployment pool, it is appreciated that this can be a stressful period. The proposed selection process has been designed to be as transparent and open as possible, ensuring that selection decisions can be made based on clear criteria.
- 10.2. Colleagues will primarily be selected based on:
- **Qualifications, Knowledge, Experience, and Skills**
Assessed against the essential criteria in the person specification for the role.
 - **Live Disciplinary or Capability Warnings**
Considered only where candidates score equally on the above criteria.
 - **Equality Impact Assessment**
Considered where scores are equal and no live warnings exist, to ensure fair and equitable outcomes.
- 10.3. Every effort will be made to support colleagues through this process. The guidance document, Selection Criteria, provides full details of the process and scoring criteria.
- 10.4. It is appreciated that some colleagues have not been through selection processes for some time, and as such support guides have been produced and are available in the document.
- 10.5. The Selection Criteria document can be found here [[Selection Criteria](#)].

11. Redeployment

- 11.1. Supporting colleagues who are at risk of redundancy will be a key priority as we seek to avoid compulsory redundancies as far as possible.
- 11.2. All colleagues at risk of redundancy will be placed on a redeployment register and will have the opportunity to apply for vacant posts. Colleagues in category 4 will be placed on the register at the end of the consultation period. Colleagues in categories 3, who do not secure a post in their initial ring-fenced pool, will be placed on the redeployment register as soon as they are informed of the outcomes from this process.

- 11.3. Colleagues who are offered an alternative post will have the opportunity for a trial period of 4 weeks. This may be extended to up to 12 weeks if, for example, training is required.
- 11.4. Full details of the redeployment process can be found here [[Redeployment document](#)].

12. Staff Support and wellbeing

- 12.1. We know that the uncertainty and change this process brings may be upsetting for some colleagues. The wellbeing of our staff is of utmost importance, and we want to do what we can to look after our people throughout this process.
- 12.2. Our leaders and line managers play an important role in supporting colleague wellbeing, and this responsibility is emphasized in our [Leadership Framework](#). For example, one of our Leadership Qualities is: “We care about our people, listening with empathy to really understand, and always considering wellbeing”.
- 12.3. We understand it is equally important to support our line managers and we have a number of initiatives in place to do this – find more information here. [[Support and Wellbeing](#)]
- 12.4. The University of Bedfordshire has a Stress Management Policy and has conducted a university-wide stress risk assessment and considered actions we can take to minimise the impact of any potential stress. You can find this [here](#).
- 12.5. Each VCEG lead has also ensured a similar stress risk assessment has taken place within their faculty or directorate.
- 12.6. In addition to this Stress Risk Assessment, there are a number of ways in which we are able to offer support for colleagues during this process – you can find more information on how we are supporting staff wellbeing and wider staff support can be found here [[Staff Support](#)]

13. Voluntary Redundancy

- 13.1. During this change process, we will be offering a voluntary redundancy scheme to support our aim of avoiding compulsory redundancies wherever possible.
- 13.2. To be eligible to apply for voluntary redundancy, the following will apply:
- You must be academic staff in the faculties, but staff on research-only contracts are not in scope unless they are a Professor or an Associate Professor.
 - You can apply if you are on extended leave, such as sick leave, maternity, adoption or shared parental leave, paternity leave, garden leave or a career break.
 - You can apply irrespective of the hours you work.
 - You can apply if your post is externally funded provided there is over a year left to run.

13.3. Applications for voluntary redundancy will not be agreed for:

- colleagues identified as business-critical to delivering the University's strategic and/or operational needs
- where a colleague is already serving notice to leave for whatever reason
- where the number or combination of applicants will adversely affect the school/department or wider University functions, and
- Casual workers engaged for limited cover, which may include visiting staff
- People who are not employed by the University (e.g. work on site for a different employer)
- When the payback period for the voluntary redundancy does not meet cost reductions within a reasonable timeframe

13.4. The scheme is open to colleagues who meet the criteria in 13.2 if their post is 'in scope' of the proposals, whether or not their post is at risk.

13.5. This voluntary redundancy scheme will open on 6 November and close on 9 December.

13.6. Details of the voluntary redundancy scheme can be found here [\[Voluntary Redundancy\]](#).

14. Living our values and embedding inclusion throughout this process

14.1. We understand colleagues have diverse backgrounds and experiences and recognise this as a strength.

14.2. We understand with diversity comes differing participation and support needs and we are committed to providing an inclusive approach throughout this process.

14.3. If you require any additional support to participate fully in the consultation process, please do let us know. You can do this by talking to your manager, your Head of School, your VCEG lead or by contacting the People and Culture directorate.

14.4. We are committed to making reasonable adjustments for all colleagues where possible.

14.5. There are many reasons colleagues might request a reasonable adjustment, such as a disability, health condition, caring responsibility or something else.

14.6. Examples of steps we have taken to ensure inclusion is embedded throughout this process:

- Providing hybrid meeting options: we know for some colleagues, e.g. those who may have hearing impairments, it might be important to sit close to the speaker to ensure they are able to lip read or have a sign language interpreter in-person with them as well. For others, it may be easier for them to access a

meeting remotely, for example for those with mobility issues. As much as possible we have tried to accommodate this.

- Recording sessions: where possible and appropriate, we will record sessions to ensure those unable to attend can catch up later (or to just give colleagues a chance to hear information again if needed).
- Accessible communication: as much as possible, we strive to use clear, jargon-free language to ease understanding.
- For those colleagues who may need to participate in an interview, we have committed to sharing the topics the interview questions will be based on in advance. We know for example, some people need a little more time to process information, and we want to set colleagues up for success.

14.7. Examples of reasonable adjustments colleagues may need include:

- Flexible meeting formats/ times, such as virtual meeting options for those who struggle to attend in person due to mobility constraints.
- Documents provided in different formats, such as large print, or audio, e.g. for colleagues with visual impairments.
- Asking for follow-up, one-to-one meetings, for example for colleagues who may find it difficult to participate in group settings, especially in difficult circumstances
- Extra breaks: we know this process may be upsetting for some people, and it may be that one or two extra breaks throughout the day will help colleagues with their wellbeing.
- Those who are fasting during this period for Ramadan may also need to build in extra breaks throughout the day, or to flex start and finish times, e.g. to make it home for Iftar.

14.8. These are just some examples and colleagues are encouraged to ask where they would like support at all stages of this consultation period.

15. Equality Impact Assessment

15.1. The University will ensure equity and fairness in the implementation of the proposed change through this consultation and will complete an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).

15.2. An EIA is a risk assessment and improvement tool that uses an equality and inclusion lens to identify, predict and evaluate the likely impact of a proposed change (such as a staffing restructure) on staff from a particular equality group who share a “protected characteristic” such as sex, race, disability, sexual orientation, age, gender re-assignment, religion or belief.

15.3. As we start work on the delivery of this consultation, we will take the following actions to complete an EIA:

- **Identify affected groups:** Analyse which staff equality groups might be disproportionately impacted.

- **Consult with stakeholders:** Engage with staff, unions, and staff equality network representatives to gather feedback and concerns so that these are considered and addressed.
- **Analyse potential impact:** Assess any likely disproportionate impact of the consultation on different equality groups, considering factors like accessibility, flexibility, and opportunities for employment etc.
- **Develop mitigation strategies:** Identify actions to address potential negative impacts and promote inclusivity.
- **Monitor and review:** Regularly monitor the implementation of the changes to identify any emerging equality and inclusion issues and make reasonable adjustments as needed.

15.4. For the first stage of the EIA, the People and Culture Team will undertake an initial analysis of the “As Is” current structure, along with the proposed “To-Be” structures, at university-wide level, as well as at faculty level. Our People and Culture Business Partners will help those leading the consultation to understand the data and think through potential impact and mitigating actions that might be undertaken.

15.5. As we move through the change process, and at the end of the process, as the potential impact upon individuals becomes clear, those leading the consultation will be responsible for conducting an EIA again.

15.6. At the end of the change process, the findings of EIA will be collated, analysed and shared to ensure that the equality implications of the change and appropriate mitigating actions have been considered.

15.7. Full details of the Equality Impact Assessment can be found here [\[EIA\]](#).

16. Frequently Asked Questions

16.1. This is a complex process and unsettling period for colleagues across the University. It is appreciated that there will be a lot of questions, and as such a number of FAQs have been developed, and this will be updated on a regular basis throughout the consultation period.

16.2. The FAQs can be found here [\[FAQ\]](#).