



# ***CONSULTANCY SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEE AND STUDENT SURVEYS IN HIGHER EDUCATION***

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## Schneider~Ross in Higher Education

Schneider~Ross is one of the leading consultancies working with Higher Education. It is a field in which we have been operating for over a decade and the wide variety of projects undertaken have regularly included quantitative and qualitative research, auditing, surveys and benchmarking.

We have many clients in both the public and private sectors – amongst these we are proud to include:

- The University of Cambridge,
- SOAS
- Nottingham Trent University
- Institute of Education
- Birmingham City University
- Imperial College
- The University of Birmingham
- Cranfield University
- The University of Southampton

Other clients include Whitehall Departments (The Cabinet Office, HMRC and the MoD) and the BBC as well as leaders in equality and diversity such as National Grid, Lloyds Banking Group, BP, Shell, Barclays, Unilever and Vodafone.

## Why carry out a staff survey?

Staff surveys are about understanding how people perceive their working environment. They usually cover all aspects of the employment life-cycle post recruitment (e.g. development, reward and retention) and key relationships (eg with colleagues and managers).

Each Institution needs to be clear about why it is conducting a staff survey – because that in turn needs to drive the questions that are asked and how the results are analysed.

The following are often important drivers for carrying out a staff survey:

- Understanding what motivates staff and therefore how to increase staff satisfaction and commitment;
- Identifying which groups of staff may feel less motivated and what can be done to help them feel properly included and engaged;
- Checking on the effectiveness and implementation of key policies and change programmes – not least those associated with ensuring that the Institution meets its legal obligations regarding equality and diversity;
- Getting staff input and ideas for improvements to key policies and change programmes;
- Establishing a baseline and setting credible goals for improvement, which are benchmarked against best practice;
- Holding leaders to account for their implementation of key policies and change programmes.

All of this can then help Institutions create a positive working environment which enables them to attract and retain their staff and increase motivation and commitment to change.

## Student surveys

In the changing world of Higher Education, with students paying fees and being real 'customers', it is obviously vital to understand how they perceive their education. Indeed, with students connected on a global basis, the damaging effects of discrimination, perceptions of poor quality teaching or learning environment should never be underestimated.

Engaging with your student population and identifying how well you are meeting their diverse needs is obviously a critical ingredient in staying ahead. It is also vital in ensuring that you are meeting the needs of your overseas students (a lucrative market but a very diverse population often with high expectations) and it will help you meet the public sector Equality Duties on race, disability and gender.

## Our work with the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU)

We are currently working with the ECU and the University of Essex looking at ways of using focus groups and staff surveys to generate more meaningful qualitative data in relation to both staff and students. The outcome of this work will ultimately be a guidance document for HEIs about the benefits and delivery of equality surveys. (Contact [alexis.w@schneider-ross.com](mailto:alexis.w@schneider-ross.com) if you would like to be kept up to-date with developments.)

Diagnostic work to capture the culture of an organisation lies at the heart of much of our work with our HEI clients. It provides a vital tool for Institutions to establish priorities, develop strategies and track progress.

With the changes in legislation since 2000, Higher Education Institutions are now required to take action to promote and improve equality for both staff and students. The responsibilities enshrined in the Equality Duties are legal requirements and compliance with this legislation is aimed at ensuring improvement in outcomes for all staff and students – therefore engendering a society that is inclusive where all individuals can thrive is a vital.

## Our approach

We are not an organisation that comes in and dictates what needs to be done. We work in partnership with you and use our wide experience to help you develop the right approach for your particular situation.

We pride ourselves on being able to build open, trusting relationships and, as part of this, we are happy to share our expertise and intellectual property.

You may be looking for a short, sharp "pulse" survey to check out a specific aspect of your organisation or you may want a more in-depth detailed diagnostic exercise backed up with qualitative activities to further illustrate the experiences and perceptions of your staff and/or students. We help you do what you want and need to do.

One aspect we would always advise is – please don't do a survey if you don't want to do anything with the results. If you ask questions, you need to communicate the results, respond to the issues raised and take some meaningful action.

If you don't, you will undermine any future surveys and feed staff cynicism.

On the other hand, if you do translate survey results into an effective action plan, then you can (and probably should) use a future survey to test out impact and further refine your plans.

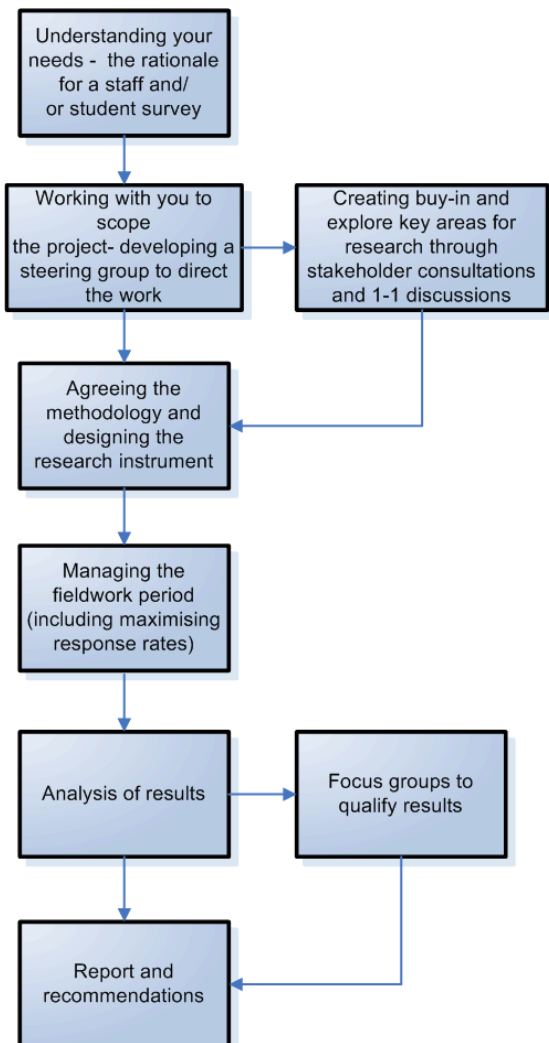
## What we can offer you

With a flexible team of experienced consultants we are delighted to be able to offer members of ECC a 10% discount on our standard fees. Day rates vary dependent upon the consultant and/or number of consultants involved as well as the scope and scale of the project.

Our services include:

- Staff and student surveys – using on-line tools for instant updates on responses and response rates.
- One to ones and focus groups which to provide qualitative evidence to support or challenge the numeric data a survey creates.
- A detailed report which will include benchmarking data and recommendations
- Future support with follow-on surveys to measure progress.

**A typical staff survey might look something like this:**



## Our Team:

**Robin Schneider**  
Managing Director



**Anjana Nathwani**  
Director, Knowledge & Practice



**Freddie Alves**  
Director, Global Diversity & Inclusion



To discuss your requirements, please contact our Research Consultant, Alexis Walmsley (who has led on our survey work for HEIs) on 01264 882400.



To find out more about Schneider ~ Ross visit our website [www.schneider-ross.com](http://www.schneider-ross.com)