**HUMAN RESOURCES**

**INDUCTION REPORT**

**Reporting period June 2012 to January 2013**

**INDUCTION INTERVIEW REPORT**

The report includes new staff members who started their employment with Rhodes University between 1 June 2012 and 31 January 2013.

New members are asked to complete a questionnaire that was sent to them by HR, three months after joining Rhodes University as part of the induction programme. During this period, 27 staff members were took part. Appendix 1 indicates the nature of the questions asked.

**General conclusions from the questionnaires submitted:**

1. The induction process ensures a more structured way of introducing staff to the University and their specific work area. The programme is viewed as informative and helpful to those coming from outside of Grahamstown.
2. The friendliness and professional approach of the HR Generalists were highly praised in many of the questionnaire responses with regard to a new staff member’s introduction to Rhodes and the recruitment processes.
3. A few of the experiences that were raised around the recruitment processes indicated some frustration included delays around work permit confirmations and delayed responses from HR staff.
4. Relocation experiences have been expressed as positive in terms of friendly socialisation and assistance, but a common concern was the expense related to accommodation.
5. Information communicated on medical aid, pension and provident benefits were expressed as lacking in some cases in terms of clarity and in-depth explanation around the differences and benefits between choices.
6. The job requirements were in most cases explained to the staff member by the relevant line manager/supervisor/Head of Department.
7. A few comments were raised by some of the new members in indicating their experience around settling in at Rhodes and /or Grahamstown. These include:

* A sense of departmental independence and isolation where staff members socialise with immediate staff members only and there is limited interdepartmental socialisation, making it difficult to settle in. One staff member comment that at the new staff party, no-one from his/her department was there. This obviously would have been an opportunity for him/her to be introduced at Rhodes.
* Difficulties with finding one’s voice in the department and at Rhodes. One academic expressed this sentiment “I really looked forward to sharing my knowledge and experience with the other staff members without being ‘pushy’, but the impression that I now have is that I must just do my job.” Another academic expressed the difficulty of being heard and listened to in the department.
* The diverse nature and working conditions are enjoyable.
* Close proximity of facilities within Grahamstown.

**Adjustments recommended to the Induction programme based on questionnaire comments**

1. A copy of the departmental management and mentor responsibilities were added to the induction pack to assist the member in understanding what induction tasks are the responsibility of the department.
2. Communication around retirement fund options and medical aid conditions need to be communicated in more detail. There is a need for clear explanations around the pension and provident fund retirement fund plans. Although this is explained on the website, there is a need for the options to be further explained by the HR Generalist. Steps to have detailed information available have already been taken.
3. A follow up email will be sent to the departmental head to provide feedback on the settling in of the new member. This will include both the negative or positive feedback.

**Matters raised by new members that require a longer-term exploration and possible solutions.**

1. Transit housing for a single member, which will be cheaper than family orientated accommodation, if even for a short period of time. The Director: HR has already explored this with the Executive Director and this will be considered in infrastructure deliberations.
2. A suggestion was that transit housing is provided free of charge during an initial period to offset any accommodation hassles.
3. Unstable infrastructure support offered by the municipality to residents, e.g. unsatisfactory quality of water provided, unstable electricity supply.
4. The possibility of a relocation grant for international staff members. This could take the form of a loan repayable over the first 6 months of employment.

Appendix 1:

A summary of the interview questions:

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| **QUESTIONS** |
| Did you receive sufficient general information before arrival? |
| Please describe your experience of the recruitment process. |
| Describe your experience of relocating to Grahamstown (If applicable) |
| What could the HR Division do to ease this transition? |
| Were you welcomed upon arrival at Rhodes University? |
| Were you adequately welcomed in your Department? |
| Were your job profile and responsibilities explained to you? |
| Was your workspace/area prepared for you (desk, stationery etc.) |
| Were the Standard Operating procedures explained to you? |
| Did you obtain your staff card within the first week? |
| Were you given a campus tour? |
| Any comments regarding your medical aid and pension/provident fund enrolment? |
| Is your payslip (remuneration) a true reflection of what was discussed during the recruitment process? |
| Do you consider yourself incorporated into Rhodes University? What are you enjoying about Rhodes? What are you finding difficult? |
| What were the most informative and the least useful parts of your induction program? |
| Are there any areas where you feel that the induction process disappointed you in any way? How could it be improved? |
| Are there any general comments or suggestions you would like to make? |

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