

Implementing culture change in a complex environment

The situation

The institute operates in a complex environment, balancing the need to align with the university and faculty policies and procedures, as well as those of the Scottish Government and their key partners. The culture within the institute did not encourage innovative thought, constructive challenge or debate. There were rigid barriers in roles, responsibilities, professional specialisms and processes.

What happened?

SUMS consultants carried out a culture review through a number of activities. We analysed staff survey results as a baseline and then facilitated engagement events to bring to life the institute's vision, mission and values. We also ran team building activities to support improved trust, commitment, relationships and team dynamics. The full report and action plan provided clarity on the rationale for culture change, alongside the activities, outputs, outcomes and measurable long-term impact needed.

What happened?

The review provided the institute with a firm basis for making positive change. The team combined all their change actions into one tracker and used it to monitor their cultural shift on a regular basis.

A recent staff survey showed:

- there have been **no formal complaints** since the review
- **workload scores are better** and 100% of staff reported having an annual review
- **the working relationship with NHS partners has improved**, including working together to resolve funding challenges
- **comments indicate an enhanced level of collegiality**, with staff finding their colleagues supportive.

The institute is still on a journey, but where there are issues, such as staff absence or turnover, they are now resolved without the ripple effects previously experienced.



“We benefited from the team’s significant experience and expertise from within and outside the education and healthcare sectors. This expertise informed their constructive advice and recommendations in the final report.”



PROFESSOR KARL LEYDECKER

Senior Vice-Principal (Assignment Sponsor)



“SUMS’ co-created approach helped facilitate a culture where staff could engage in the process with openness and honesty - meaning that we had an excellent basis for moving forward to embed a culture where all staff feel empowered, and where there is trust, a focus on team-work, and a drive for service excellence”



PROFESSOR KHALED KHALAF

Director of the Institute of Dentistry