



OUR 2017 ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE SURVEY: FAQs

Responses to some frequently asked questions:

- The culture survey will be open from 22 May until 2 June 2017.
- All UniSA staff, including sessional and casual staff, will be invited to contribute. The 2014 survey did not include sessional and casual staff, but we are keen this time around to gain a better understanding of how all staff perceive and contribute to the formation of our culture. This survey change will not impact on our capacity to compare results with the 2014 survey.
- We will once more be using the [Denison Organisational Culture Survey](#) which will allow us to compare 2017 with our 2014 results. The Denison survey is well established internationally and has been used by more than 5000 organisations over the past 20 years.
- Analysis of survey responses will be undertaken by *Denison* to protect the anonymity of respondents to ensure independent analysis and to benchmark our data.
- An initial e-mail containing the survey hyperlink will be sent to staff from *Denison Consulting*. If staff indicate they have not received a copy of this message it may have been directed to their junk mail or they may have joined the University in the last few weeks which means that their e-mail address had not been supplied to Denison. HR has worked with ISTS to ensure the e-mail message will not be blocked by the University's firewall. Any enquiries on this should be directed to Greg Giles.
- The survey itself will contain 80 questions, including 4 free text options, and take around 20 minutes to complete. 70 of these are core questions designed to measure specific aspects of the University's culture in each of 4 traits and 12 management practices identified as critical factors that shape an organisation's performance. There are two additional sets of 5 questions each on trust and innovation drawn from Denison's question bank. 5 new questions have also been added to this survey to collect information for our major *Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE)* project.
- Denison have made slight revisions to 4 questions to clarify meaning (remove idioms) without changing intent. They are all still valid against the same question-level benchmark and no impact on results is anticipated, for example reference to a "strong culture" is changed to "a clearly defined culture" and "Ignoring core values will get you in trouble" has been replaced by "when people ignore core values, they are held accountable".
- Following discussion with Denison the term 'customer' will be replaced with a more neutral word as this appeared to be an un-necessary distraction for some in the first survey.

- Survey responses will eventually be analysed to create a graphic profile that will compare our culture, and that of individual campuses and work areas to a database of over 1,000 other organisations. An example of this graphic profile is available on our culture survey [website](#).
- The results from the survey will be shared initially with senior staff and then with the University community in coming months. At that point, we will then start to develop specific and targeted action plans to address the key issues for development or improvement identified through the survey process.

How did we respond to the 2014 Survey?

The 2014 survey showed us where our culture was robust, for example in our shared understanding of our mission and vision and where we needed to grow and improve; such as working as ‘one team’, in our accountability for acting on our shared values and in how well we understood and responded to the needs and interests of our principal stakeholders.

The University responded to the results at a number of levels including:

- establishing a suite of core staff attributes to strengthen our understanding of the values and qualities of a positive workplace and enterprising workforce,
- integrating key services to enhance co-operation and break down siloed behaviours,
- developing a leadership development program with a three year mandate to deepen leadership capability through the University,
- fostering the development of greater team-work and one team thinking,
- and we’ve placed the creation of robust and positive workplace cultures at the centre of our strategic plans and our external reviews of individual work areas

Many individual work areas also developed local responses to the survey’s findings.

Is the purpose of the culture survey to assess the University as a whole or are staff expected to assess culture in the context of their local area?

The survey asks staff to think of the University as a whole and the way things are usually done when responding to the survey. This allows staff to provide their perceptions of UniSA's culture beyond just their local area.

However obviously staff don't have 'line-of-sight' across the whole organisation and so inevitably their perceptions of UniSA will be shaped by their day-to-day experience within the organisation. As a result, the overall organisational results will comprise a ‘mosaic’ of all these locally shaded views of the whole.

A key part of the analysis and debrief process that will follow the survey, will be to explore this mosaic and build a greater understanding about the degree to which the perceptions of UniSA's culture have been shaped by issues at the local, divisional or organisational level (or a combination therefore). Our aim is to use the data to engage staff in honest conversations about our culture and use those conversations as a catalyst for thoughtful action in those areas (whether local, divisional or organisational) where it is most needed.

Experience tells us that participants zoom in and out depending on the question. For example, the index of Team Orientation is one that most will bring to mind their local team when responding to those items, while in relation to the Vision questions they tend to think of the organisation as a whole.

Additional tool to help explore the meaning of results

The University has purchased a licence to [Waggl](#), a technology platform specialising in capturing real-time employee feedback about aspects related to the Denison Organisational Culture Survey.

Waggl is more than a survey process or feedback form; it's a communication platform that allows organisations to crowdsource staff feedback and have them participate in reviewing and prioritising that feedback in real-time. It delivers the power and insights of a focus group at an organisational scale. *Waggl* should provide a quick and effective way to test or get feedback where leaders are uncertain about what the results are telling them and wish to explore them further with their staff.

Advice and support

If you have any questions about the Denison Organisational Culture Survey, see further information on our website or feel free to contact Greg Giles in HR at greg.giles@unisa.edu.au or on 8302 1633.