

## 2011 Staff Survey Results: *Message from the Vice Chancellor*

Dear Colleagues,

I have received the results of UniSA's 2011 triennial staff attitude survey. This was the fifth survey of its kind conducted since 1999 and the level of participation has, once again, been excellent.

2293 staff completed the survey, an increase of 217 on the previous survey (2008). There were:

- 1988 continuing and fixed term staff (a response rate of 73%)
- 269 casuals
- 36 in other categories.

I thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey.

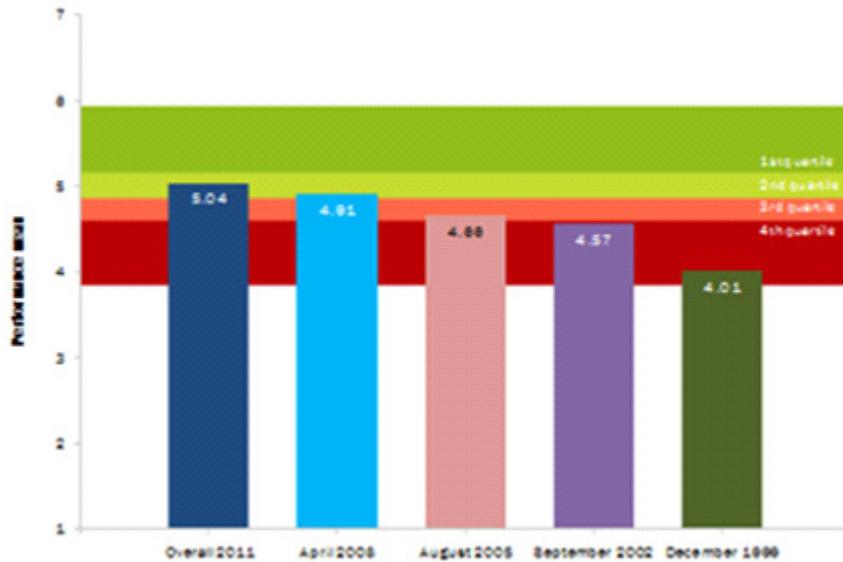
As a reminder, the 2011 survey:

- was carried out over three weeks from 28 March to 18 April 2011 by an independent agency, *Insync Surveys*
- captured staff responses to 70 quantitative and four qualitative statements
- asked respondents to rate most statements twice, using a scale of one (strongly disagree) to seven (strongly agree). Respondents first assessed the importance of a statement and then their impression of the organisation's performance.

In preparing the results, *Insync* analyses the perceived difference, or "gap", between the mean importance and performance scores for each statement. Large gaps indicate areas of concern for staff. These results are then reported for the university as a whole, for divisions and portfolios, and for local work areas (schools and units).

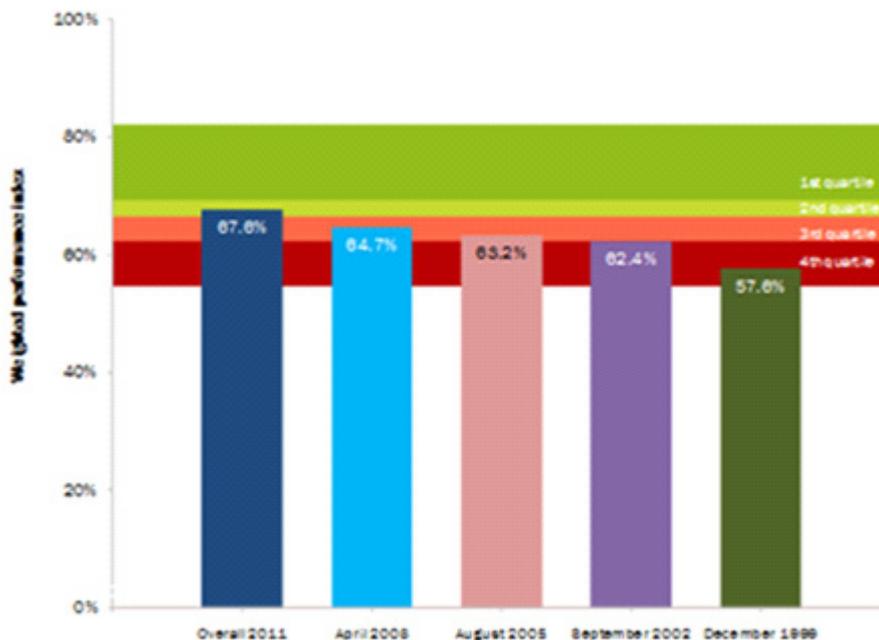
Brief analysis of the 2011 results reveals:

- *Staff Satisfaction*  
There was continued growth in overall staff satisfaction. The overall satisfaction mean was 5.04 (out of 7) in 2011 compared with 4.91 in 2008, 4.66 in 2005, 4.57 in 2002 and 4.01 in 1999. The scale of this improvement over time is illustrated below. The diagram also shows satisfaction against *Insync's* best practice benchmark, which is based on comparisons with survey results from over 100 organisations in its database<sup>i</sup>.



- *Overall performance*

There was continued improvement in staff perceptions of institutional performance. UniSA's overall performance has risen from 57.6% in 1999 to 67.6% in 2011, taking the university to the middle of the second quartile on *Insync's* best practice database. UniSA's continued improvement is demonstrated in the table below:



- *Top-performing issues*

Staff continue to see the university as performing well in providing a safe working environment free from harassment, valuing research, producing quality outcomes and quality services and providing equity for students. Four of the top five issues identified by staff were similar to 2008, but the mean scores had risen significantly for each, indicating improved performance.

- Comments indicate that staff see, among the university's best features, its flexible work environment, staff and culture, research, mission and values, training and professional development, IT and resources, and future orientation.

- *Areas for improvement*  
Staff feel that UniSA needs to improve in retaining skilled employees, in providing appropriate incentives and rewards, in consulting with staff, in the level of trust among people at UniSA and in valuing employees. The gap between importance and performance scores had closed on 4 of the 5 top issues. This indicates that staff see some degree of improvement on areas of concern identified in the 2008 survey. Comments identify issues associated with resources, pay, communication, workload and full-time employment.
- *Work areas*  
The survey provides insights into perceptions of the university's performance and that of its individual work areas. While there are clear improvements in perceptions of overall institutional performance, there will be variation across the university and some work areas will run against this trend. This will require both further analysis and the development of appropriate plans to address concerns and to guide improvement.

#### *Next steps*

I have asked Human Resources for a detailed analysis of the comprehensive data set. When this is to hand, I will ask each work area manager - senior manager, research institute director, head of school, and unit and divisional director - to examine the relevant data carefully, discuss the outcomes with staff in their work area and carefully consider how best to address any issues of concern. I will write to staff later in the year outlining the action taken based on analysis of local work areas, university-wide responses and in-depth discussion with the Director: Human Resources and with the Senior Management Group.

#### *In summary*

The general results of the 2011 survey are pleasing and provide us with a strong foundation to move forward in the directions set out by *Horizon 2020* and as defined by our values and our vision for the future. The survey has also identified a number of areas or issues which are a focus of staff frustration or concern. This information also needs to be analysed closely so the reasons can be properly identified and meaningful plans for action can be developed and initiated.

Sincerely,

Peter

Professor Peter Høj  
Vice Chancellor and President  
University of South Australia

Telephone: +61 8 8302 0500  
Facsimile: +61 8 8302 0501  
[peter.hoj@unisa.edu.au](mailto:peter.hoj@unisa.edu.au)  
[www.unisa.edu.au](http://www.unisa.edu.au)

---

<sup>i</sup> *The Insync Surveys database has been operating for 15 years. The database contains over 800 organisations from all sectors and industries both nationally and internationally. It is updated every 6 months. Comparisons are only against data from the last 2 years (approximately 100 organisations).*