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# Findings from the 2023 Staff Engagement Survey

The University of the West  
Indies, Monna Campus

Prepared by the Office of Planning and  
Institutional Research  
<https://www.mona.uwi.edu/opair/>

## 2023 Staff Engagement Survey

In an effort to monitor staff development objectives of the new University Strategic Plan, 2022-2027, a staff engagement survey was undertaken. The survey was launched on February 13, 2023 and ended on March 31, 2023. The questionnaire solicited feedback on institutional culture and management, peer and coworker relations, supervisory management, working environment and conditions, and work satisfaction. The information gathered will be useful for evaluating outcomes related to the CAMP strategic objective of developing a **Creative, Caring, Accountable, Motivated, Professional Team**.

SurveyMonkey® was used to administer the online survey. Employees received an anonymous link and a QR code via their official UWI email address. The link was also accessible via University enterprise systems in an effort to boost response rates. Additionally, a gift voucher valued at USD\$100 was eligible to one participant through a draw.<sup>1</sup> Despite these efforts, staff participation remained at an all-time low in 2023.

Of the 2,730 full-time staff at the Mona Campus in January 2023, 124 members participated for a response rate of 4.5%. This compares to response rates of 11.5% in 2022, 11% in 2021, 10% in 2020, and 20% in 2019.

As seen in Table 1, there is variation in the staff population and sample by category of worker. The Senior Administrative and Professional group is over-represented in the sample while the Administrative, Technical, and Services group, is under-represented in the sample.

Table 1. Staff Population and Sample by Category of Worker

Staff Category	Population		Sample	
	N	%	N	%
Academic	725	26.6	32	25.8
Academic related	32	1.2	6	4.8
Sr. Administrative and Professional	402	14.7	35	28.2
Administrative, Technical, and Service	1,571	57.5	51	41.1
Total	2,730	100.0	124	100.0

In presenting the findings to the survey, data are displayed for *valid responses* only. This means that *non-response* items and *not relevant/not applicable* responses were excluded from the base population when calculating engagement scores. Despite a low response rate (4.5%), the findings are generalizable to the entire staff population based on a chi square test of independence which resulted in no statistically significant difference among *early* and *late* respondents by age, sex, length of employment, and category of worker.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The lucky winner requested anonymity.

<sup>2</sup> See Lindner, J. R., Murphy, T. H., & Briers, G. E. (2001). Handling nonresponse in social science research. *Journal of Agricultural Education* 42(4), 43-53.

## Summarizing Results

The Staff Engagement Survey used a Likert-type scale whereby respondents could register their agreement as follows:

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Neither disagree nor agree
4. Agree
5. Strongly agree
6. Not relevant or applicable

For simplicity, items 1 and 2 are combined to reflect “Disagreement or Dissatisfaction” while items 4 and 5 are combined to reflect “Agreement or Satisfaction.” Items 3 and 6 remain as is, and all items are considered in the calculation of percentages in the Appendix (see outputs at end of document).

To assist in the interpretation of data, the following thresholds were devised to reflect performance: 0%-44% (poor), 45%-54% (warrants attention), 55%-64% (fair to mediocre), 65%-74% (good), and 75% and over (excellent).

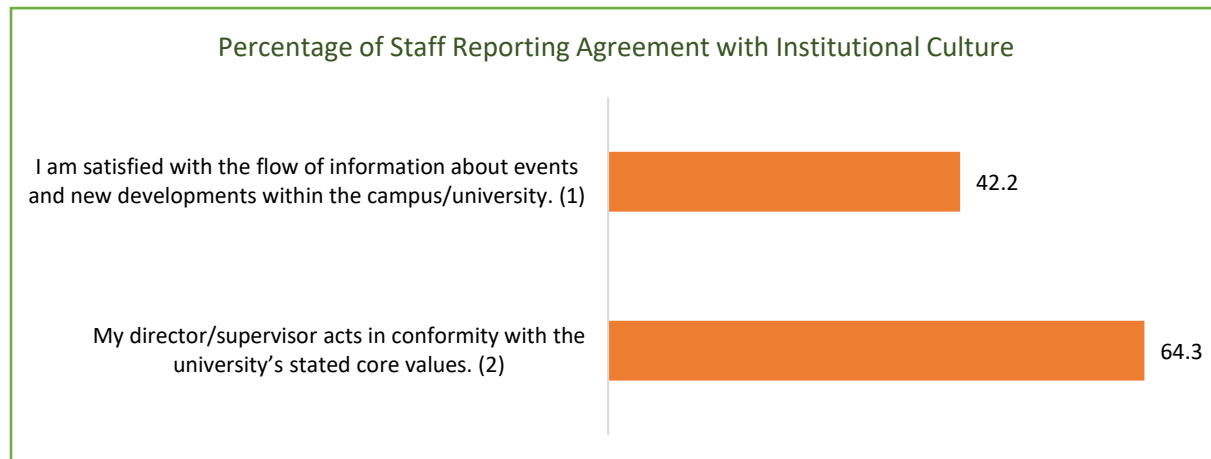
## Findings from the Sample

Data are presented only for the 2023 engagement survey as the questionnaire was modified which greatly reduced comparability to previous survey questions.

### *Institutional Culture and Management*

Employees were asked two questions related to *institutional culture and management*. As seen in Graph 1, staff gave higher ratings to the *conduct of their supervisor* (64.3%) than to the *flow of information* (42.2%) concerning Campus developments. The University Strategic Plan has a target of 60% employee engagement and only one item, *supervisor’s conduct*, surpasses this target. It is therefore imperative that sufficient attention be placed on *communication* in an effort to raise engagement scores.

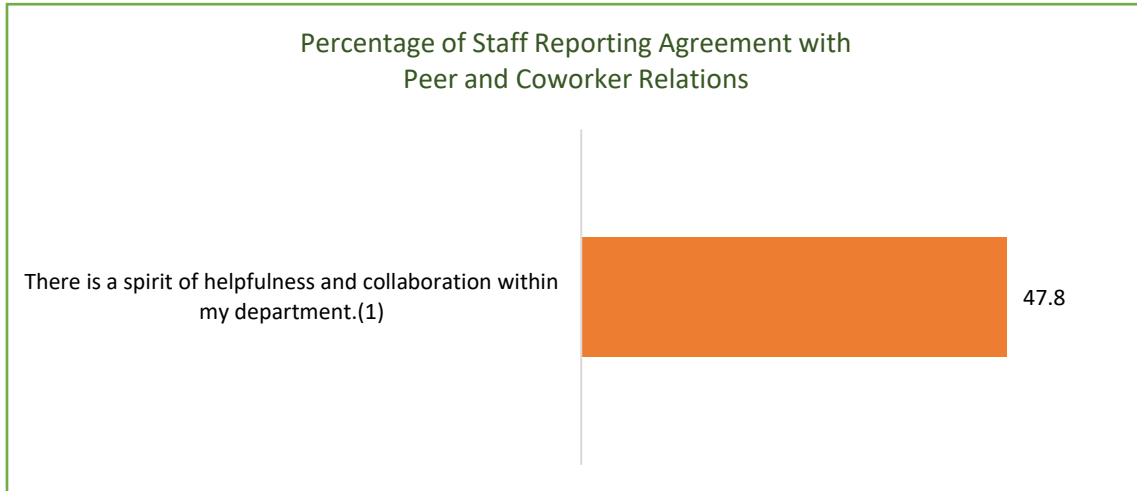
Graph 1



### Peer and Coworker Relations

When it came to *peer and coworker relations*, less than 50% of staff reported a *spirit of helpfulness and collaboration* within their department. This speaks to the need for more leadership at the departmental level.

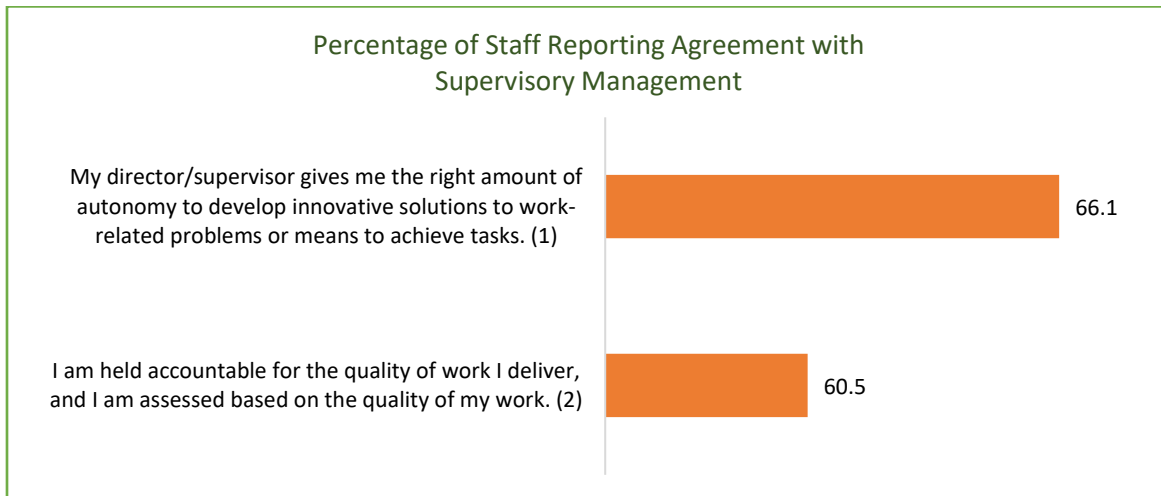
Graph 2



### Supervisory Management

Staff were asked two questions related to *supervisory management*. Higher ratings were accorded to *autonomy* (66.1%) than *accountability* (60.5%) when carrying out their work activities. Nonetheless, these engagement scores meet or surpass the 60% target in the strategic plan.

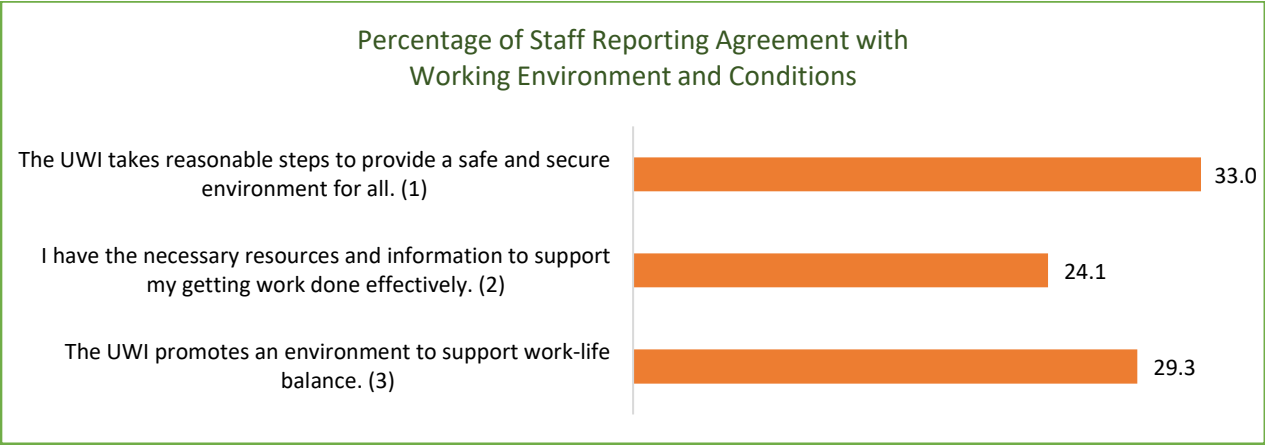
Graph 3



*Working Environment and Conditions*

When asked about aspects of their *work environment*, staff gave the lowest ratings to this area. Approximately one-third of staff agreed that *The UWI provides a safe and secure environment* while less than one-third agreed *they have the necessary resources to get their work done* and that *The UWI promotes work-life balance*. For all three questions, dissatisfaction was highest among academics, followed by senior administrative and professional staff, and then administrative, technical, and services staff. *Safety and security* were more of a concern among women and persons aged 45 and over than their counterparts. Dissatisfaction with *work-life balance* was higher among women and persons 44 and under than their counterparts.

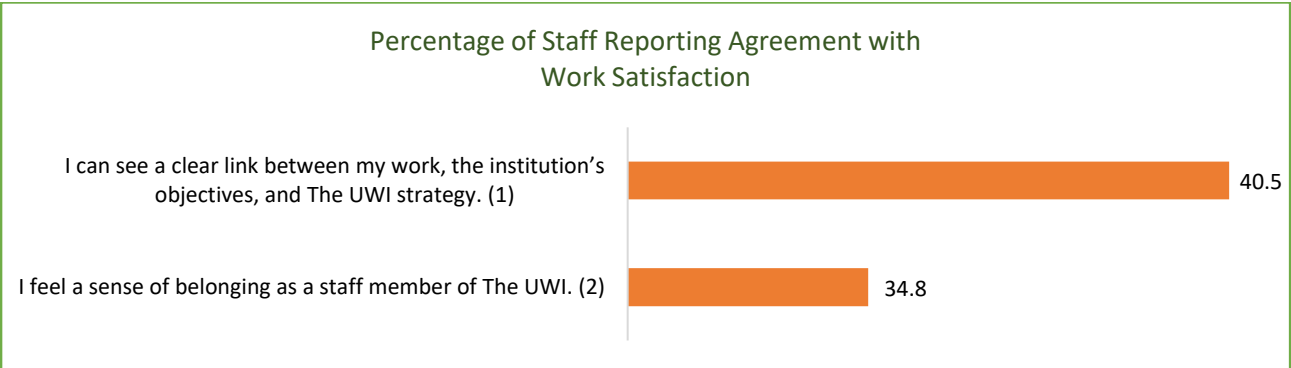
Graph 4



*Work Satisfaction*

The general dissatisfaction of staff was evident in questions related to *work satisfaction*. Barely 35% of staff felt *a sense of belonging* while 40.5% saw *a clear link between their work, the institution's objectives, and The UWI Strategic Plan*. Those who were less likely to feel *a sense of belonging* were women, senior administrative and professional staff, and persons aged 44 and under. Likewise, those who were less likely to see a clear link between their work and the institution's objectives were women, persons aged 44 and under, and administrative, technical, and services staff.

Graph 5



## Shared Staff Experiences

The last section of the survey invited feedback from staff on anything that was important to them. Approximately 30% of staff responded. These 37 comments were organized by theme (Table 2).

Table 2

Thematic Concerns	N	%
Governance	14	37.8
Communication and customer service	7	18.9
Lack of resources	5	13.5
Professional development	3	8.1
Agility	2	5.4
Interpersonal relations	2	5.4
Engagement	1	2.7
Infrastructure	1	2.7
Safety and well being	1	2.7
Workload	1	2.7
Total	37	100.0

As seen in Table 2, most comments were organized under *governance*. Quite a few members articulated the effects of the financial crisis on staff morale, as well as the lack of action directed at employees who do not pull their weight or who cast a negative shadow on team spirit. Some persons also felt that administrative and support staff do not matter and that staff surveys are unimportant since nothing ever changes.

The next area of importance was *communication and customer service*. Employees asked for improved communication between academics and administrative staff, timely replies to emails, improved communication between Mona Kingston and Mona Bahamas Campuses, and earlier announcements of events taking place on Campus. Other members complained about the HR Department's tardiness in preparing employment contracts while another advocated for aftercare services for children given the high percentage of women employed to the University.

The third area of importance concerned *lack of resources*. Staff complained that their office or department lacked the tools and resources to carry out job functions effectively. Another referenced the futility of responding to surveys when nothing changes or the fact that the focus of the survey was on the role of the supervisor instead of the role of The UWI in providing resources to staff and students to get their work done effectively.

The fourth area of concern was *professional development*. One member reported not being assessed in the last academic year, while another questioned the job application process in terms of advancement and progression at the University. Another member pointed to the ineffectiveness of the appraisal

system since inefficient employees are not sanctioned, while another questioned whether flexi-work was being considered at The UWI.

The next two areas of concern were *agility* and *interpersonal relations*. With all the rapid changes taking place globally and with technology, concerns were raised about the University's ability to adapt and change accordingly. Additionally, expressions of discontent vis-à-vis interpersonal relations points to the need for interventions to resolve these matters.

The remaining feedback concerned areas of *engagement, infrastructure, safety and well-being, and workload*, respectively.

### **Conclusion**

The 2023 Staff Engagement Survey has provided important baselines for monitoring the UWI Strategic Plan, 2022-2027. The survey was conducted to assess the strategic objective of developing a **Creative, Caring, Accountable, Motivated, Professional (CAMP)** Team with an annual target of 60% staff engagement. Currently, the Mona Campus has a 46.2% engagement score.

For transparency and accountability, the survey findings will be shared via Mona Messaging and posted on the website of the Office of Planning and Institutional Research. Senior managers will be provided with comments from staff for consideration and action.

In conclusion, the 2023 Staff Engagement Survey has provided insights into the perceptions of staff with regard to institutional culture and management, peer and coworker relations, supervisory management, working environment and conditions, and work satisfaction. The derived metrics will help to inform progress under the University Strategic Plan and the interventions necessary for reaching certain targets by 2027.

# Outputs



# 2023 Staff Engagement Survey, Mona Campus

Q1. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements on institutional culture.

	% Distribution (N = 124)			
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable / No answer
I am satisfied with the flow of information about events and new developments within the campus/university. (1)	34.7	19.4	39.5	6.5
My director/supervisor acts in conformity with the university's stated core values. (2)	17.7	15.3	59.7	7.3

# 2023 Staff Engagement Survey, Mona Campus

Q2. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statement on peer and coworker relations.

	% Distribution (N = 124)			
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable / No answer
There is a spirit of helpfulness and collaboration within my department.(1)	26.6	21.8	44.4	7.3

# 2023 Staff Engagement Survey, Mona Campus

Q3. Please indicate your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements on supervisory management.

	% Distribution (N = 124)			
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable / No answer
My director/supervisor gives me the right amount of autonomy to develop innovative solutions to work-related problems or means to achieve tasks. (1)	12.1	19.4	61.3	7.3
I am held accountable for the quality of work I deliver, and I am assessed based on the quality of my work. (2)	16.1	20.2	55.6	8.1

# 2023 Staff Engagement Survey, Mona Campus

Q4. Please indicate the extent of your disagreement or agreement with the following statements on working environment and conditions.

	% Distribution (N = 124)			
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable / No answer
The UWI takes reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure environment for all. (1)	44.4	17.7	30.6	7.3
I have the necessary resources and information to support my getting work done effectively. (2)	53.2	17.7	22.6	6.5
The UWI promotes an environment to supports work-life balance. (3)	48.4	17.7	27.4	6.5

# 2023 Staff Engagement Survey, Mona Campus

Q5. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements on work satisfaction.

	% Distribution (N = 124)			
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable / No answer
I can see a clear link between my work, the institution's objectives, and The UWI strategy. (1)	26.6	29.0	37.9	6.5
I feel a sense of belonging as a staff member of The UWI. (2)	35.5	23.4	31.5	9.7



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