

Programme - Tuesday 12 May 2026

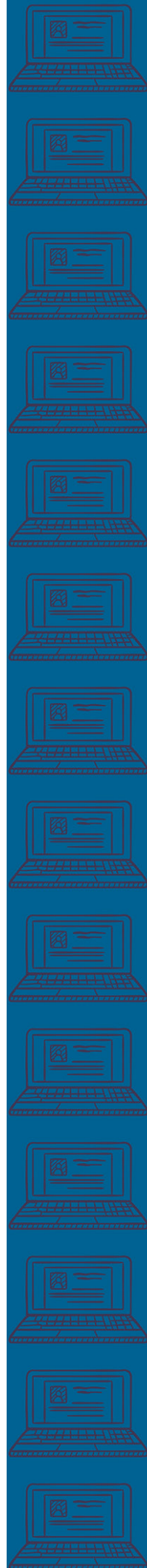
All sessions will be on the virtual platform RingCentral

For full session synopses please see the conference website - <https://www.uhr.ac.uk/events/annual-conference/programme-2026/>

Tuesday 12 May 2026

TIME	SESSION
09:00 - 09:30	Conference Crafting Set Yourself Up for Success <i>With Charlotte Axon Lead People Scientist; and Rob Baker Founder & CEO, both of Tailored Thinking</i>
09:30 - 09:35	Conference Welcome <i>With Kim Frost Former UHR Chair</i>
09:35 - 10:20	Plenary 1: Cultural Intelligence - Leading Through Change <i>With Ritika Wadhwa CEO & Founder, Prabhaav Global Board Member Trustee & Board Director Leadership Fellow, Windsor Castle</i>
10:20 - 10:30	Comfort Break
	WA1: Reshaping for the Future: Delivering Change and Transformation During a Time of Widespread Uncertainty Across the HE Sector. Turning Cost Pressures into Purposeful Change <i>With Rachel MacPhee Assistant Director Strategic Change; and Michelle Scott Head of HR Strategic Projects, both of University of Kent</i>
	WA2: Cultivating Collaboration for Strategic Change - Building Digital Confidence and Adaptability of Staff Using Jisc's Framework and Maturity Model for Digital Transformation <i>With Helen King Director of Learning Innovation, Development & Skills, Bath Spa University, Sarah Knight Director of Digital Transformation; and Becki Vickerstaff Higher Education Senior Consultant, both of Jisc</i>
10:30 - 11:15 Workshops Block A	WA3: Developing an Inclusive Self-Assessment Tool to Embed EDI Across our University <i>With Eleanor Broadbent EDI Lead; and Elisabeth Cleary EDI Coordinator, both of Leeds Beckett University</i>
	WA4: Building a Culture of Performance in Higher Education <i>With Zoë Goodwin HR Project Manager; and Joanne Workman Organisational Development Manager, both of University of Nottingham</i>
	WA5: Academic Change - An Unexpected Journey <i>With Alex Brierley Executive Director of People & Organisational Development; and Kevin Kerrigan Deputy Vice Chancellor, both of University of Hull</i>
	WA6: Global Growth, Local Impact: Managing People in International Campus Projects <i>With Sarah Flynn Head of HR Business Partnering; and Kate Philp HR Business Partner, both of University of Southampton</i>

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11:15 - 11:45

Break & Networking

BA1 - People Insight: From Listening to Leading: How The University of Manchester is Transforming Colleague Engagement for Manchester 2035

With **Suzanne Christopher** | HE Engagement Lead, **Jane Tidswell** | HEI Director, both of People Insight; and **Rachael McGraw** | Head of Colleague Experience, University of Manchester

BA2 - INTOO: In Uncertain Times, Career Paths Within Many Sectors Are Undergoing Significant Change

With **Matthew Collier** | Business Development Director; and **Owen Morgan** | Managing Director, both of INTOO

11:45 - 12:30

Business Sessions
Block A

BA3 - Isio: The Art of the Possible for Your Pensions Strategy

With **Ed Andrew** | Director, Reward & Benefits Specialist, **Sophie Ash** | Director and Higher Education Lead; and **Tim Domanski** | Senior Manager, all of Isio

BA4 - Oracle: Are You Future Ready for AI?

With **Leatham Green** | Senior Transformation Director, Oracle

Please note, this is a pre-recorded session with no live elements.

BA5 - Advance HE: Speaking Truth to Power

With **Sarah Hubbard** | Senior Consultant, Senior Leadership and Strategic Transformation, Advance HE

BA6 - Hays: Re-skill, Retain and Reinvent. A Smarter Approach to Workforce Challenges in the HE Sector

With **Will Bentinck** | Associate Director, **Matthew Lewis** | UK Public Services Director, both of Hays plc; and **Deborah Green** | CEO, UCISA

12:30 - 13:15

Lunch & Networking Carousel

LA1 - Shakespeare Martineau LLP: Leading Through the Storm: HR and Organisational Change

With **Alexandria Davis** | Associate; and **Esther Maxwell** | Partner, both of Shakespeare Martineau LLP

13:15 - 14:15

Legal Sessions
Block A

LA2 - Bevan Brittan LLP: International Recruitment: Protecting Your Sponsor Licence & UKVI Compliance for Universities

With **Tijen Ahmet** | Legal Director; and **Sheetal Gaur** | Senior Associate, both of Bevan Brittan LLP

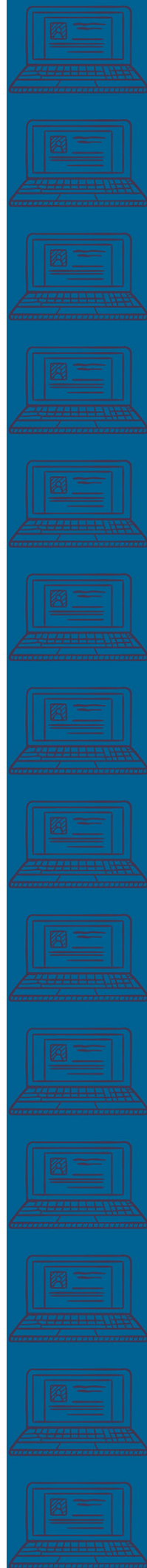
LA3 - VWV: Beliefs in Conflict: Managing Conflicting Protected Beliefs in the Workplace

With **Jane Byford** | Partner & Head of Higher Education, **Bob Fahy** | Partner, **Michael Halsey** | Partner; and **Katie Hurst** | Senior Associate, all of VWV

14:15 - 14:30

Comfort Break

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Plenary 2: Panel Session | How HE Can Be More Productive Through Its People

14:30 - 15:30

With **Andy Dodman** | Assistant CE - People, Digital and Change, Leeds City Council (former UHR NE Chair and CPO at Sheffield), **Freddie Fireman** | Senior Manager, Deloitte Government & Public Services Advisory, Deloitte, **Kirsty Scanlan** | Director of Strategic Planning, Performance and Projects, Heriot Watt University; and **Valerie Todd** | Non-Executive Director, Trustee & Committee Chair, Coach

Hosted by **Kim Frost** | Former UHR Chair

15:30 - 16:00

UHR Awards for Excellence in HR

With **Margaret Ayers** | UHR Chair; and **Kim Frost** | Former UHR Chair



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TIME	SESSION
09:30 - 09:35	Welcome Back <i>Hosted by Kim Frost Former UHR Chair</i>
09:35 - 10:05	Plenary 3: Mini Plenary Universities at a Crossroads: Leading People Through Unprecedented Change <i>With Malcolm Press CBE Vice-Chancellor, Manchester Metropolitan University President, Universities UK</i>
10:05 - 11:05 Legal Sessions Block B	LB1 - Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP: AI Meets Employment Law: What HR Needs to Know <i>With Robert Gray Partner; and Chris Mordue Partner, both of Eversheds Sutherland (International) LLP</i>
	LB2 - Mills & Reeve LLP: The Employment Rights Act 2025 - Cutting Through the Noise <i>With Natasha Brown Partner, Siân Jackson Partner; and Alex Russell Partner, all of Mills & Reeve LLP</i>
	LB3 - Pinsent Masons LLP: Bridging the Generational Divide: Inclusive HR Strategies for Higher Education <i>With Trish Embley Head of Client Training Employment; and Laura Starrett Senior Consultant, both of Pinsent Masons LLP</i>
	LB4 - Browne Jacobson: Rice v Wicked Vision; Dealing with Claims Against Individual Members of Staff <i>With Jack Mitchell Barrister, Nadia Motraghi Barrister, both of Old Square Chambers, Polly O'Malley Partner & Head of Employment Education; and Bettina Rigg Partner, Head of Higher Education, both of Browne Jacobson</i>
11:05 - 11:30	Break & Networking
11:30 - 12:15 Business Sessions Block B	BB1 - B3sixty: Why Can't Managers Do Informal Resolution? <i>With Clive Bane Director, B3sixty, Terry Duffy Strategic Growth Partnership Lead, Acas; and Bob Thomson Director, Bob Thomson Coaching and Mediation Limited</i>
	BB2 - Huron: Getting Change Programmes Back on Track: 10 Diagnostic Questions for HR Leaders to Guide Successful Change <i>With Helen Sdvizhkov Director; and Catherine Wolfgang Manager, both of Huron</i>
	BB3 - ECC: Building AI Responsibly: A Case Study from Job Evaluation <i>With Suzanne Daley Member Engagement and Reward Consultant; and Nicholas Johnston Chief Executive, both of ECC</i>
	BB4 - Reward Gateway Edenred: People First: Turning Engagement into Institutional Advantage <i>With David Eaton Reward Specialist, University of Manchester; and Colin Hodgson Director, Public Sector, Reward Gateway Edenred</i>

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Programme - Wednesday 13 May 2025

11:30 - 12:15

Business Sessions
Block B
cont.

BB5 - Caroline Dunne Consulting Ltd: From Control to Connection: Building Human-Centred Leadership in Higher Education

With **Caroline Dunne** | Leadership Coach and Change Mentor, Caroline Dunne Consulting Ltd; and **Jenny Jenkin** | Leadership Coach, Pareto Thinking

12:15 - 12:45

Break & Networking

SIG1 - Isio: What's Hot? Living Pension: Achieving Good Outcomes in Retirement

With **Ed Andrew** | Director, Reward & Benefits Specialist, **Sophie Ash** | Director & Higher Education Lead, both of Isio, **Paul Moffat** | Director, Isio & Chair of the Living Pension working group supporting the Living Wage Foundation; and **Shelley Morris** | Living Pension lead, Living Wage Foundation

SIG2 - Shakespeare Martineau LLP: Managing the Union Dynamic: Strategic Approaches to Industrial Relations

With **Paul Greatrix** | Director of Higher Education Consultancy; and **Tom Long** | Partner, both of Shakespeare Martineau LLP

12:45 - 13:30

Special Interest Topic Discussions
(Please note these sessions will not be recorded)

SIG3 - Strengthify: Leading Through Complexity & Constraint: The 'Squeezed Middle' Manager Challenge

With **Carley Brown** | Organisational Psychologist, Strengthify

SIG4 - Weightmans: CATASTROPHE!: Managing Emergencies and High-profile Challenges with a HR-centric Approach

With **Hannah Beddis** | Partner; **Susan Matthews** | Partner; **Natalie Puce** | Legal Director, all of Weightmans LLP and **Sally Ingram MBE** | Director of Colleague and Student Health and Wellbeing, Newcastle University

SIG5 - Wesleyan Financial Services: What a Pension Gap Really Costs: Understanding the Long-Term Impact

With **Faisal Choudhary** | Specialist Financial Advisor; and **Ahilan Shandrakopal** | Development Consultant, both of Wesleyan Financial Services

SIG6 - Jisc: HR at the Helm: Building Digital Confidence and Agility Across Professional Services

With **Mia Bellusova** | Digital Learning Manager in Learning and Development within HR, Nottingham University, **Elizabeth Micakovic** | Executive Director of Faculty Operations, Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health, University of Manchester, **Jess Pringle** | Assistant Director of HR, Manchester Metropolitan University; and **Becki Vickerstaff** | Higher Education Senior Consultant, Jisc

13:30 - 14:15

Lunch & Networking Carousel

WB1: Navigating Uncertainty: The New Norm for Higher Education Leaders

With **Dr. Joshua Mackey**, Vice President for Human Resources and Chief Human Resources Officer, Indiana University; and **Clarity White** | Director, Library Human Resources, University of California, Berkeley

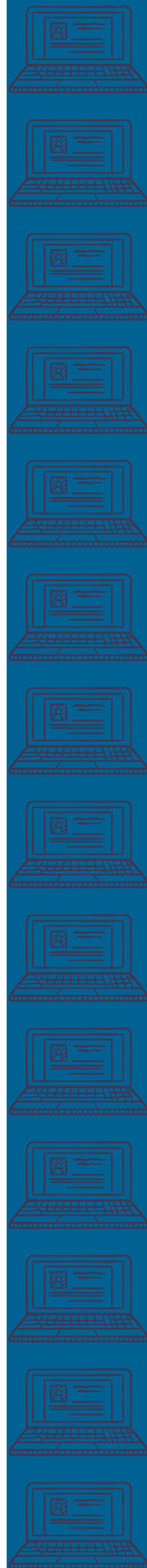
14:15 - 15:00

Workshops
Block B

WB2: Human and Machine: Making Efficiencies Through HR Process Automation

With **Michael Chadband** | Assistant HR Partner - HR Systems; and **Tom Everett** | HR Helpline & HR Systems Partner, both of University of Edinburgh

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WB3: Implementing A New Disability Leave Procedure at the University of Sussex

With **Sarah Jane Cox** | Head of Employee Relations and Policy, **Isobel Pearce** | Assistant Director: Culture, Equality and Inclusion; and **Colin Shipp** | Executive Director HR, all of University of Sussex

14:15 - 15:00
Workshops
Block B
cont.

WB4: Building Data Confidence - An Introduction to Being Data Driven

With **Sophie Crouchman** | Strategic Projects & Research, UHR; and **Laura Jackson** | Principal Consultant, Strive Higher

WB5: Learning Together: Turning Everyday Experience into Culture Change

With **Elisha Ward** | EDI Officer and Project Manager, University of Oxford

WB6: Communicating With Compassion Through Change

With **Ben Rogers** | Higher Education Consultant, AHEP and BRiCS; and **Emma Smith** | Strategic Communications Consultant, Emma Smith Communications | AHEP Lead

15:00 - 15:10

Comfort Break

15:10 - 16:00

Plenary 4: OPTIMISM: How To Stay Happy and Focused Through Challenge and Change

With **Stuart Baldwin** | Founder, Live BIG

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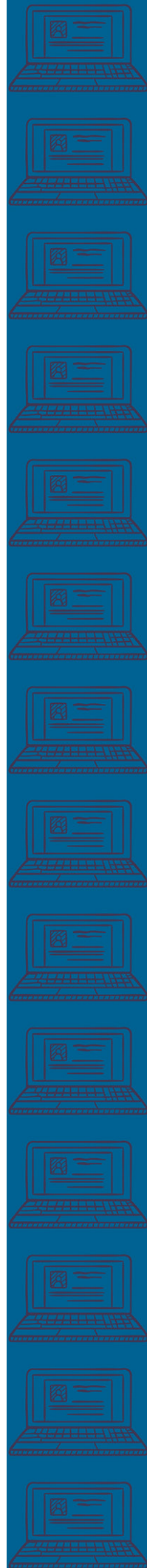


Programme - Thursday 14 May 2026

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TIME	SESSION
09:30 - 10:15 Workshops Block C	WC1: Embedding Equality Analysis in Everyday Decision-Making: Demonstrating a New Framework for Inclusive Practice <i>With Melanie Crofts Head of EDI, University of Hertfordshire; and Chantal Davies Professor of Law, Equality and Diversity, University of Chester</i>
	WC2: Reimagining Recruitment in a Challenging Labour Market <i>With Zahara Chowdhury EDI Business Partner; and Rachael Cornwall Chief People Officer, both of Buckinghamshire New University</i>
	WC3: Out with the Old, in with the New – Implementing a New ERP System & Experiences as a Pioneer <i>With Dana Field Associate Director - People Services & ERP Implementation; and Sarah Wilson Chief Operating Officer, both of University of Hull</i>
	WC4: Lead at ULaw: The Ripple Effect — How an 8-Month Leadership Journey Transforms Skills, Mindsets and Collaboration <i>With Kate Bowden Head of Organisational Development; and Kate Hunter L&D Partner, People & Organisational Development, both of The University of Law</i>
	WC5: Work Well: A Data-Driven Approach to Embedding Wellbeing in Higher Education <i>With Tailte Breffni Employee Wellbeing Section Lead; and Claire Kelly Employee Wellbeing Partner, both of Ulster University</i>
	WC6: Mind the Gap: Mapping Institutional Support for Research Returns After Maternity Leave <i>With Elizabeth Faulkner Lecturer in Law, Manchester Metropolitan University; and Cathal Rogers Research Culture and Assessment Manager, University of Manchester</i>
10:15 - 10:45	Break & Networking
10:45 - 11:30 Business Sessions Block C	BC1 - NTT DATA Business Solutions: Transforming HR Service Delivery in Higher Education with SAP SuccessFactors Enterprise Service Management <i>With Daniela Possin Solution Advisor, NTT DATA Business Solutions</i>
	BC2 - Strengthenify: Re-Energising Teams After Organisational Disruption: A Strengths-Based Pathway to Trust, Purpose & Performance <i>With Carley Brown Organisational Psychologist, Strengthenify</i>
	BC3 - Wesleyan Financial Services: Defined Benefit(DB) vs Defined Contribution(DC): Turning Complexity into Clarity for University Staff <i>With Faisal Choudhary Specialist Financial Advisor; and Ahilan Shandrakopal Development Consultant, both of Wesleyan Financial Services</i>
	BC4 - Veredus: Are We Recruiting the Right Leaders for the Universities We're Becoming? Rethinking Senior Recruitment in UK Higher Education <i>With Stephen Hoban Director of Public; and Nataliya Starik-Bludova Co-Head of Executive Search and Practice Lead, Education, both of Veredus</i>

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Programme - Thursday 14 May 2026

10:45 - 11:30

Business
Sessions
Block C
cont.

BC5 - Radcliffe and Newlands: How Mortgage Support and Financial Education Strengthen Staff Resilience in a Changing Sector

With **Jason Ransted** | Managing Director, Radcliffe & Newlands Mortgages Limited

BC6 - Unitemps: The Employment Rights Bill Impact on Temporary Recruitment

With **George Marshall** | Compliance Manager; and **James Mathers** | Franchise Relationship Manager, both of Unitemps

11:30 - 12:00

Break & Networking

LC1 - Shoosmiths: Is the Democratisation of AI Helping or Hindering HR Teams in the HE sector?

With **Kate Dodsworth** | Partner, **Jonathan Naylor** | Partner; and **Jo Tunnicliff** | Senior Associate, all of Shoosmiths

12:00 - 13:00

Legal Sessions
Block C

LC2 - Farrer & Co: A Masterclass On Handling Disability-related Issues In the Workplace, With a Spotlight On Neurodivergence

With **Rosanna Gregory** | Associate; and **Kathleen Heycock** | Partner, Farrer & Co

LC3 - Weightmans LLP: HR v PR: The Line Of Least Resistance?

With **Susan Matthews** | Partner; and **Melanie Steed** | Lead Employer Lawyer – Higher Education, both of Weightmans LLP

13:00 - 13:45

Lunch and Networking Carousel

13:45- 14:20

Plenary 5: Mini Plenary | The Next Decade of Equality in Higher Education and the Strategic Role of HR in Shaping It

With **Parveen Yaqoob OBE** | Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Reading

14:20 - 14:45

Break & Networking

14:45 - 15:50

Plenary 6: Nicolas Hamilton: Driven to Inspire

With **Nicolas Hamilton** | Athlete | British Racing Driver | Motivational Speaker

15:50 - 16:00

Conference Close

Hosted by **Kim Frost** | Former UHR Chair

16:00 - 16:30

Conference Crafting | Reflect, Recharge, and Realign

With **Charlotte Axon** | Lead People Scientist; and **Rob Baker** | Founder & CEO, both of Tailored Thinking

End of Conference Programme

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