

CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE CURRENT REWARD PACKAGE AT BRIDGEND COLLEGE

Bridgend College is an educational institution in the Further Education (FE) sector in Wales. With around 600 employees, Bridgend College supports more than 7,500 students across two campuses. Its aim is to create an environment to enable all staff and students to “be all that they can be” (Bridgend College, 2020). The organisation does not currently have a reward strategy. This poster summarises the critical evaluation of the current reward package at Bridgend College by exploring employee perceptions and identifying areas of improvement.

LITERATURE REVIEW



A literature review identified two key themes; motivation and employee benefits in relation to reward management.

The feeling of making a difference was identified to be an intrinsic motivator for employees in the education sector (Arthur and Bradley, 2023). Total reward strategies were found to have a positive link to employee motivation (Elrayah and Semlali, 2023), including recognising employee contribution and achievement (Barends et al, 2022). This emphasised the need to analyse what motivates all employees, including those not directly working with students, to understand their perception of the total rewards approach.



Employers are now offering a wider range of employee benefits, including those related to health and wellbeing (CIPD, 2025a) However, low uptake of employee benefits, which may be due to the lack of promotion, were found to be an issue for organisations (Mayne, 2024). The lowest earners were found to be the least likely to know what is on offer in a reward management survey by the CIPD (Cotton, Marriott, and Perkins, 2022). This identifies the need for a flexible and transparent approach to reward (CIPD, 2025) and an evaluation of whether the existing offering meets the organisation’s needs.

METHODOLOGY

The research utilised a positivist approach of using predominantly quantitative data to achieve its aims and objectives. This was supported by its use in recent literature on total reward strategies (Kwarteng et al, 2024) and allows for an objective analysis of results (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2023). A deductive approach was chosen to build on existing theory on employee motivation and evaluate the reward elements within Bridgend College (Anderson and Fontinha, 2024).

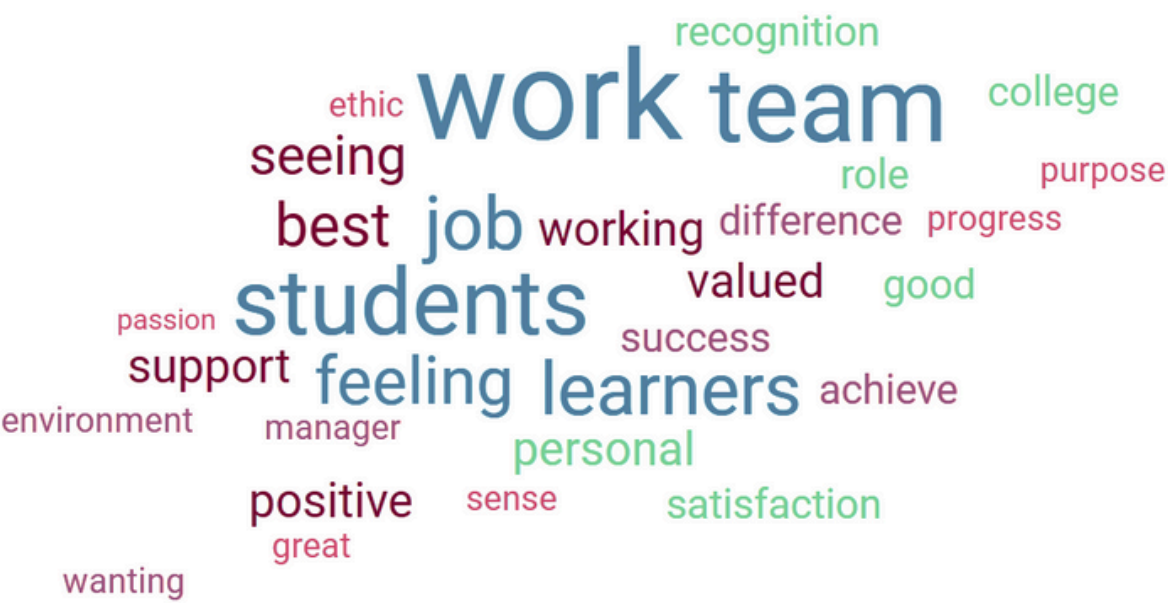
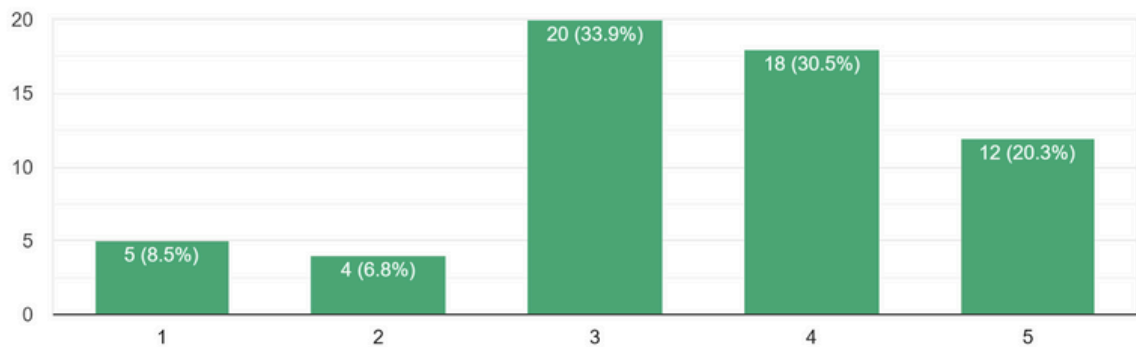
A time-efficient method of an anonymous online survey (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2023) was conducted. This included the use of quantitative and qualitative questions to evaluate employee perception of the reward package. The research data was compared with the literature review and secondary data to draw conclusions.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The majority of the 60 respondents, (76.3%) reported high to very high (4-5) satisfaction with the total reward package at Bridgend College. Despite this, the research found that the current reward package is not being utilised and that improvements need to be made.

Each element of total reward, compensation, benefits, wellbeing support, recognition and development, was found to be of similar importance to respondents.

To what extent does your total reward package motivate you to perform at your best?
59 responses



Key themes including the feeling of making a difference by “changing student lives”, along with recognition and feeling valued were seen as drivers of performance.

This provides further evidence of intrinsic motivators in the education sector (Arthur and Bradley, 2023) and supports existing research on the importance of positive reinforcement for work performance (Anjum et al, 2021).

CONCLUSION

This research provides an understanding of total reward strategies in the FE sector where there is a gap in literature. The key finding was that intrinsic motivators drive performance in the education sector.

The interesting find was that wellbeing support was of slightly lower importance to respondents, which somewhat contradicts the findings in the literature review (Elrayah and Semlali, 2023). Bridgend College has understandably focused on staff wellbeing as stress levels are high in the education sector (Education Support, 2023) which could lead employees to see wellbeing support as a presumed benefit.

It is recommended that further research is conducted in relation to employee needs at different points in their lives.

This research emphasises the need for a total reward approach (CIPD, 2025) including elements such as recognition, and for organisations to better promote their reward package to meet employee needs.