2021 Staff Satisfaction Survey

The Staff Satisfaction Survey was conducted from February 12th to March 12st 2021 in an effort to gauge satisfaction with employment at the University concerning the physical environment, interpersonal relations, corporate outlook, leadership, and staff engagement. This information is useful for evaluating progress under the University Strategic Plan and informing quality assurance and accreditation reviews of departments and programmes of the University.

The platform, SurveyMonkey®, was used to administer the online survey. For this year's cycle, staff received an anonymous link to the survey via their official UWI email address. This method of reaching staff was less effective than contacting them through a unique link sent to their UWI email address as was done in 2019.

Of the 3,050 employees at the Mona Campus in January 2021, 337 members participated for a response rate of 11%. This compares to response rates of 10% in the 2020 cycle and 20% in the 2019 cycle.

The 2021 survey sample shows uneven distribution with the actual population by category of worker. A higher proportion of senior administrative and professional staff responded to the survey than persons in the academic, and the administrative and technical and service groups, respectively.

Table 1. Staff Population and Sample by Category of Worker

Staff Category	Population		Sample	
	N	%	N	%
Academic	1,237	40.6	116	34.4
Senior Administrative and Professional	328	10.8	91	27.0
Administrative and Technical and Service	1,485	48.7	122	36.2
Unreported	0	0.0	8	2.4
Total	3,050	100.0	337	100.0

In presenting the findings to the survey, comparisons are provided for the previous years to gauge progress. Given the lower response rates in last two cycles, it is prudent to not generalize the results to the entire staff population.

Summarizing Results

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

1. Strongly disagree
2. Disagree
3. Somewhat disagree
4. Neither disagree nor agree
5. Somewhat agree
6. Agree
7. Strongly agree
8. Not applicable in this instance

For simplicity, items 1, 2 and 3 are combined to reflect *Disagreement or Dissatisfaction* while items 5, 6 and 7 are combined to reflect *Agreement or Satisfaction*. Items 4 and 8 are not presented but are considered in the calculation of percentages (see outputs at end of document).

Findings from the Sample

Physical Environment

As seen in Graph 1, respondents were more likely to agree *with working in a safe and secure environment* than *having the necessary resources to perform their job well*. For both statements, agreement improved over the previous year. In 2021, two questions were added concerning remote work. The baseline responses showed that 59.9% of respondents agreed that *remote work was equally or more productive than on-site work* (Q3) while 51.6% of respondents agreed that *they had access to the tools and technology required for remote work* (Q4).
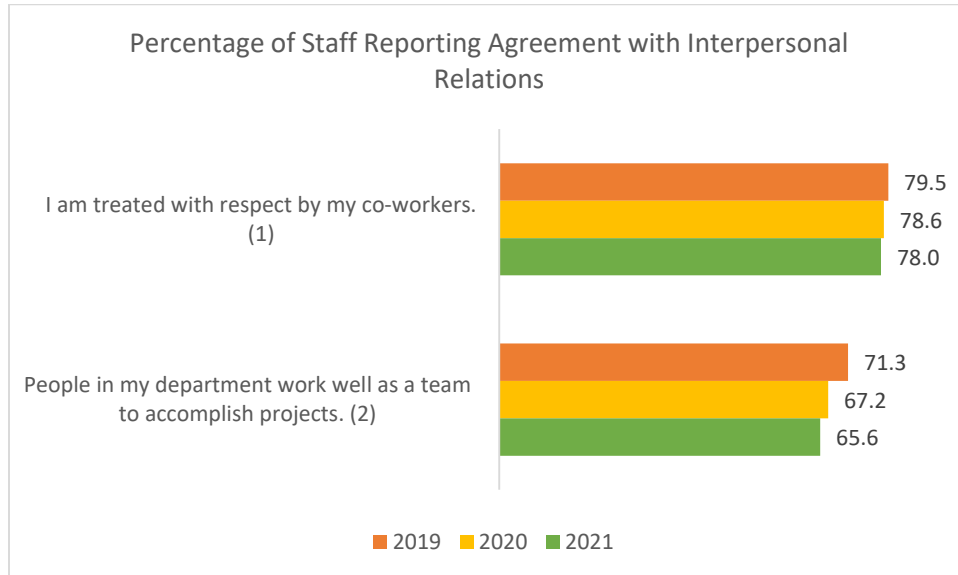
Graph 1

Percentage of Staff Reporting Agreement with Physical Environment
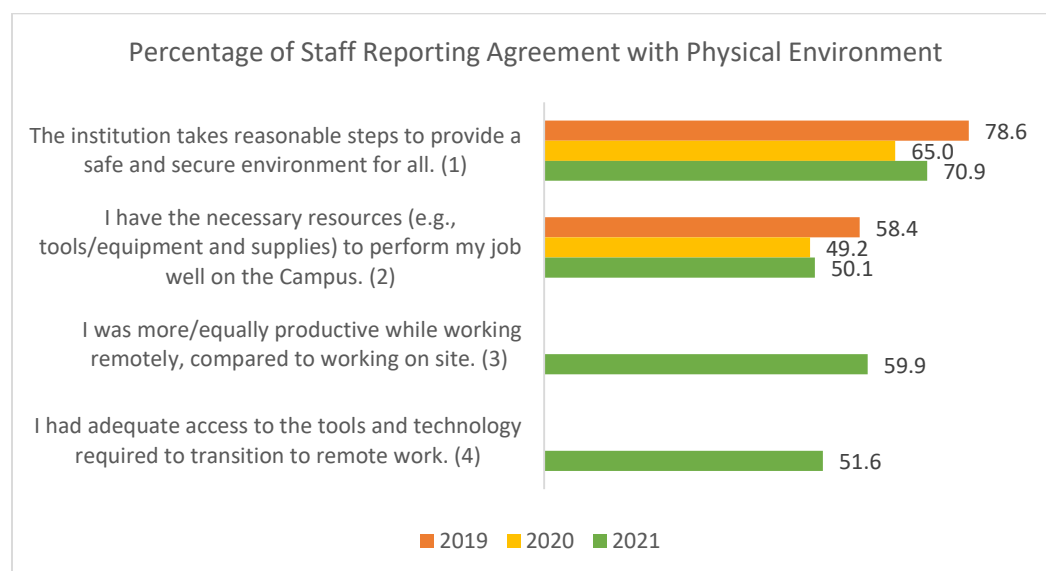
Interpersonal Relations

Agreement was generally high for interpersonal relations. Respondents were more likely to report *being treated with respect by their colleagues* than *working well as a team*. Satisfaction with interpersonal relations declined slightly in 2021.
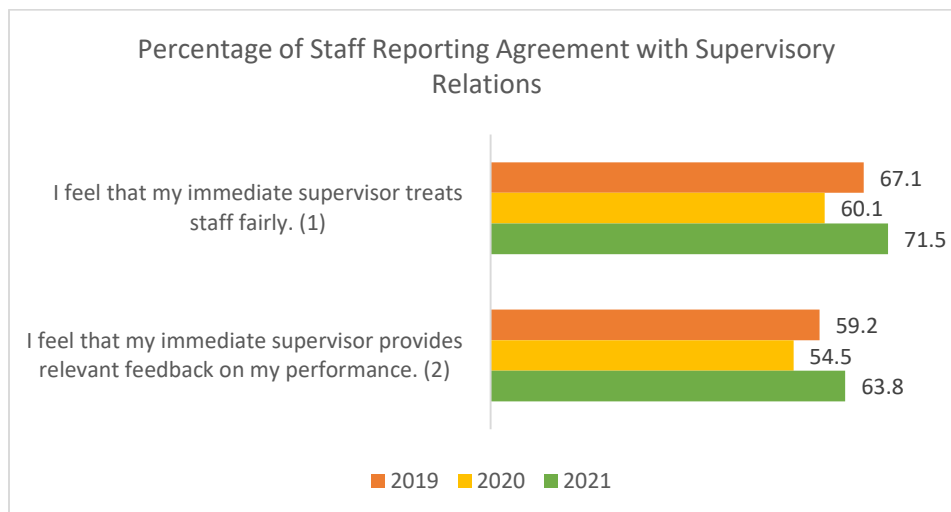
Graph 2

Percentage of Staff Reporting Agreement with Interpersonal Relations

I am treated with respect by my co-workers. (1)
- 2019: 79.5
- 2020: 78.6
- 2021: 78.0

People in my department work well as a team to accomplish projects. (2)
- 2019: 71.3
- 2020: 67.2
- 2021: 65.6

■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021

Supervisory Relations

Staff were moderately satisfied with supervisory relations. A higher percentage of respondents reported *being treated fairly by their supervisor* than *receiving feedback from their supervisor on their performance*. For both items, satisfaction increased in 2021 over the previous years.

Graph 3

Percentage of Staff Reporting Agreement with Supervisory Relations

I feel that my immediate supervisor treats staff fairly. (1)
- 2019: 67.1
- 2020: 60.1
- 2021: 71.5

I feel that my immediate supervisor provides relevant feedback on my performance. (2)
- 2019: 59.2
- 2020: 54.5
- 2021: 63.8

■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021
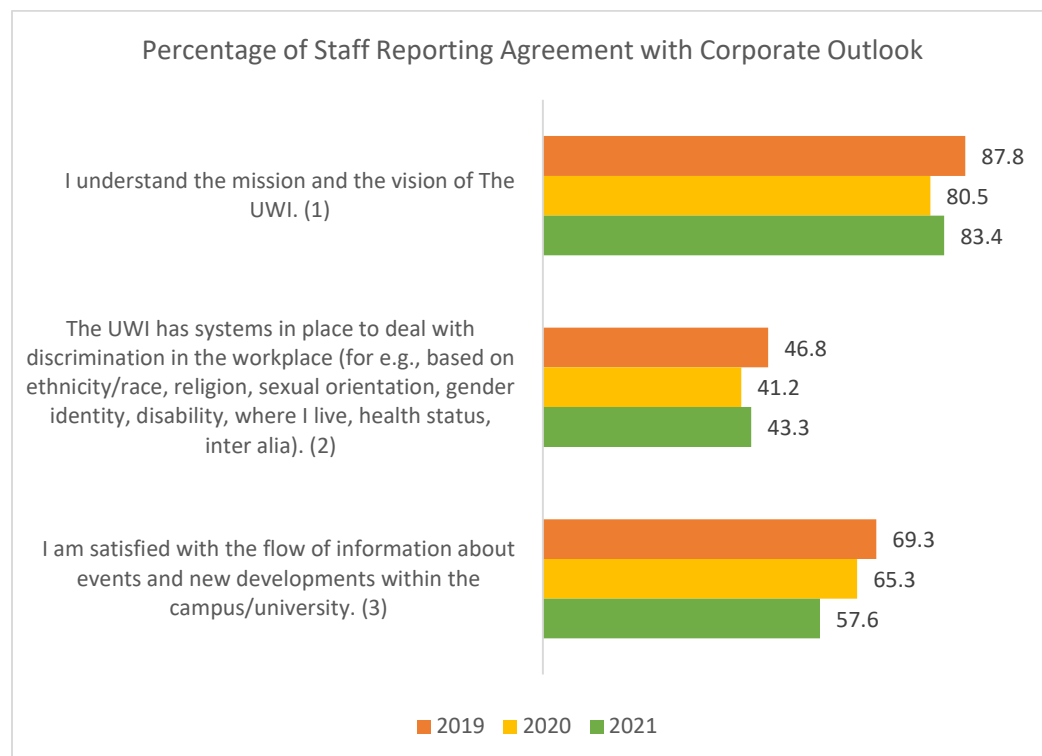
When asked about corporate aspects of the University, respondents gave high ratings to *understanding the mission and vision of the University*, followed by moderate ratings to *information flow* and low ratings to *processes for dealing with discrimination in the workplace*. Whereas small gains in satisfaction occurred over the previous year for *understanding the mission and vision* and the *UWI has systems in place to deal with discrimination*, there was an eight percentage point drop in satisfaction with the *flow of information*. This question was reworded in 2021 from the previous statement *I am satisfied with the flow of information which informs me about what is going on within the campus/university*.
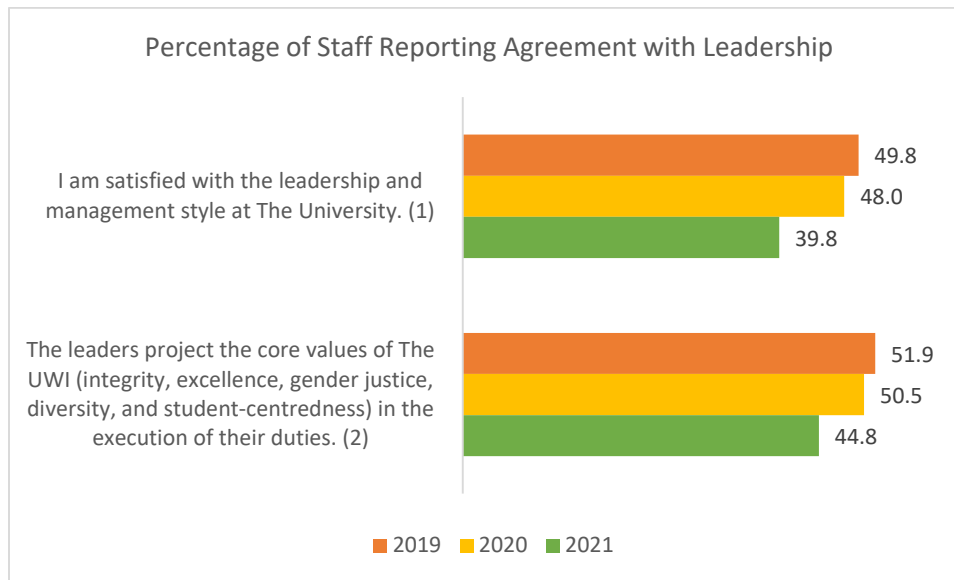
Graph 4

Percentage of Staff Reporting Agreement with Corporate Outlook

I understand the mission and the vision of The UWI. (1)
- 87.8
- 80.5
- 83.4

The UWI has systems in place to deal with discrimination in the workplace (for e.g., based on ethnicity/race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, where I live, health status, inter alia). (2)
- 46.8
- 41.2
- 43.3

I am satisfied with the flow of information about events and new developments within the campus/university. (3)
- 69.3
- 65.3
- 57.6

■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021

Leadership

Less than 50% of respondents reported satisfaction with leadership in 2021. Respondents reported higher satisfaction with *the embodiment of core values* than the *leadership and management style at The University*. For both items, satisfaction declined in 2021 over the previous years.
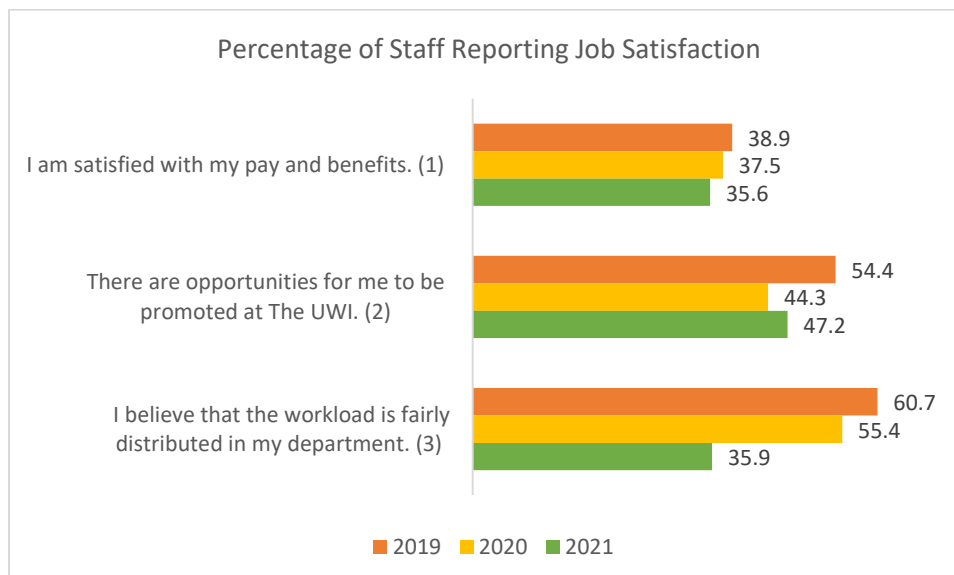
Graph 5

Percentage of Staff Reporting Agreement with Leadership

I am satisfied with the leadership and management style at The University. (1)
- 2019: 49.8
- 2020: 48.0
- 2021: 39.8

The leaders project the core values of The UWI (integrity, excellence, gender justice, diversity, and student-centredness) in the execution of their duties. (2)
- 2019: 51.9
- 2020: 50.5
- 2021: 44.8

■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021

Job Satisfaction

When it came to aspects of their job, respondents were more satisfied with *opportunities for promotion* than *pay and benefits*. In addition, only 35.9% of respondents believed that the *workload is fairly distributed* in their department. The question on workload was reworded in 2021 from the statement *I can accomplish my assigned workload within the expected time frame.* The rewording of this question changed the context from *ability to complete job tasks* to *equity in workload assignment*.
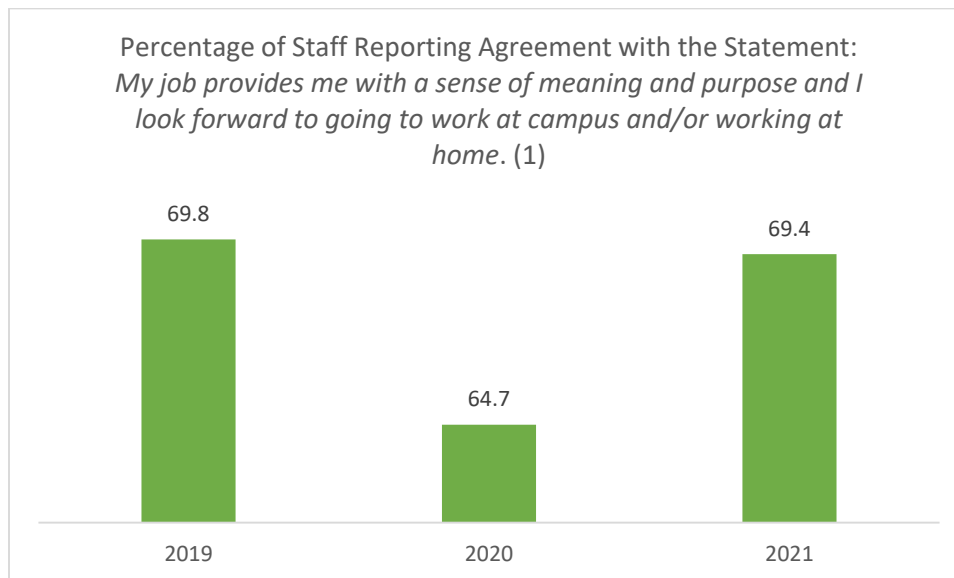
Graph 6

Percentage of Staff Reporting Job Satisfaction

I am satisfied with my pay and benefits. (1)
- 2019: 38.9
- 2020: 37.5
- 2021: 35.6

There are opportunities for me to be promoted at The UWI. (2)
- 2019: 54.4
- 2020: 44.3
- 2021: 47.2

I believe that the workload is fairly distributed in my department. (3)
- 2019: 60.7
- 2020: 55.4
- 2021: 35.9

■ 2019 ■ 2020 ■ 2021

Staff Engagement

Despite generally low satisfaction with *pay and benefits* and *equitable workload distribution*, approximately two-thirds of respondents reported feelings of engagement by agreeing that their job provides them with a sense of meaning and purpose and they look forward to going to work. In 2021, there was an increase in satisfaction on this item over the previous year. Additionally, the question was revised to include *working at home* in 2021.

Graph 7

Percentage of Staff Reporting Agreement with the Statement:
My job provides me with a sense of meaning and purpose and I look forward to going to work at campus and/or working at home. (1)

	2019	2020	2021
	69.8	64.7	69.4

Shared Staff Experiences

To better tap into the perceptions of staff, an open question was included in 2021 which asked about staff experiences and/or suggestions for improvement. One hundred and sixteen persons responded and each response was categorized into a single theme (Graph 8).

Responses were coded under 11 major themes. The *Other* category includes *not applicable* responses (*n* = 3), *positive experiences with department* (*n* = 3), *suggestions not elsewhere classified* (*n* = 4), and *comments on the survey itself* (*n* = 1).

As seen in Graph 8, most comments concerned aspects of *governance* or *leadership*. Persons expressed concerns with the University's financial model, poor supervisory relations, nepotism and lack of transparency and accountability, and criteria for promotions, among others.

A next area of concern was *access to resources*. With the advent of COVID-19, employees raised concerns about having access to the necessary equipment to work from home or to access enterprise systems from home. A number of respondents requested that the UWI Bookshop be better equipped with office furniture and computer hardware. Other respondents lamented the state of physical space on Campus for day-to-day operations and research.

Graph 8

Suggested Improvements

Category	Value
Better governance / leadership	19
Access to resources	17
Equality in benefits, pay, promotion, training	16
Improved health and safety	12
Other	11
Equitable workload	10
Better communication / customer service	8
Efficient systems / operations	7
More flexible work arrangements	7
Caring attitude to staff / students	5
Improved supervisory / staff relations	4

N = 116

A next thematic area of interest concerned *equality of benefits, pay, promotion, and training*. Members of ATS staff felt they were overlooked by Management and had little opportunity for upward mobility. Other staff questioned the criteria for research as grounds for promotion when they were trying to hold things together during the pandemic and worked longer hours. A number of respondents highlighted little to no training opportunities, while others pointed to persons on fixed-term contracts not transitioning to more permanent positions.

Health and Safety was a priority for a number of persons. Concerns ranged from certain departments not adhering to health protocols, to insufficient office supplies and cleaning of work spaces, to discrimination against persons with or recovering from COVID-19 infection.

Closely related to *health and safety* were appeals for *equitable workloads.* A number of persons declared an increase in work largely attributable to COVID-19. Some academic respondents claimed that they were doing more administrative work while other staff members reported to work only two days a week. The increased workload had health implications such as fatigue and burnout.

Better communication and customer service have long been areas in need of improvement. Calls going unanswered in some departments or calls incapable of being transferred were among the complaints. In other cases, calls from prospective students were not able to reach the intended destinations. Some respondents also shared that there was slow response to requests from the office team, while others stressed the importance of communicating incidents and happenings Campus-wide.

Of the remaining themes identified, the need for *efficient systems/operations* is deserving of elaboration. The Human Resources department was singled out as an entity in need of an overhaul. With the switch to online instruction, the processing of contracts of teaching staff is essential for the smooth functioning of online instruction by persons with valid credentials. Departments such as MITS

and RIS were being overwhelmed with requests for access to systems from persons whose contracts should have been processed by HR but apparently were not. A second area that was cited for improvement was the Bursary.

The last two themes dealing with *attitude to staff/students* and *supervisory/staff relations* included perceptions of risk to staff and students due to insufficient health protocols on Campus, to the poor quality of instruction being delivered to students by the transition to emergency remote teaching. There were also some concerns about colleagues and supervisors not being held accountable for their actions when such actions were considered harmful to employee morale.

Discussion

The Staff Satisfaction Surveys have shown consistent patterns in responses for the current and previous cycles despite varying response rates. Staff satisfaction is important for the reputation of the University since a motivated and loyal workforce can add value through efficiencies in operational processes and cost savings to the organization.

In 2021, overall staff satisfaction increased slightly over the previous year, but remained below the 2019 level (Graph 9).

Graph 9
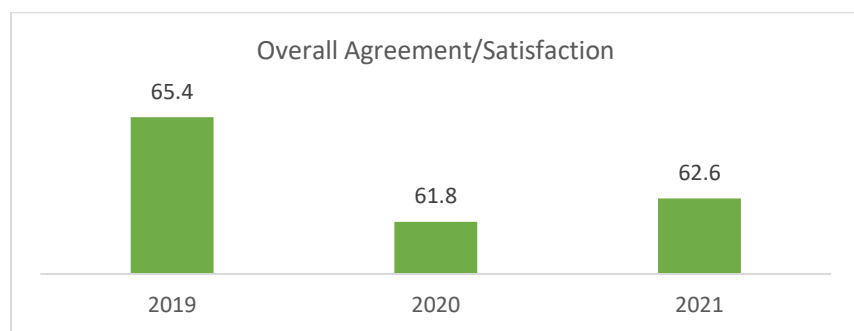
Note: Satisfaction scores were calculated by summing all questions inclusive of missing responses and dividing by the denominator (number of questions multiplied by average scale value).

The small gain in satisfaction can be attributed to a number of questions which saw increases in 2021. One of these is the question on *safety and security* (Graph 1, Q1) which witnessed a 5.9 percentage point increase over the previous year. In the past, women were less likely than men to feel safe and secure on Campus, but in 2021, more women (72.4%) felt safe and secure than men (67.6%).

Two aspects of supervisory relations (Graph 3) experienced big increases in 2021: *treatment by supervisor* (+11.4 percentage points) and *feedback from supervisor* (+9.3 percentage points). The 2021 scores on these items were the highest over the three-year period.

Other items that experienced increases in 2021 were, in Graph 4, *understanding the mission and vision* (+2.9 percentage points) and *systems to deal with discrimination* (+2.1 percentage points). Similarly, increases occurred in Graph 6, *opportunities for promotion* (+2.9 percentage points) and in Graph 7, *looking forward to going to work* (+4.7 percentage points).

On the downside, there are aspects of the organization that are weak based on low or declining satisfaction. In Graph 1, although nearly 60% of respondents agreed *that working remotely was equally or more productive compared to on-site work*, no more than 52% of respondents agreed to *having the tools and technology to transition to remote work* or *having the tools to perform their job well*. In 2021, academics were the least likely to report *having the tools to perform their job well* (38.7%) compared to Senior Administrative and Professional (SAP) staff (57.8%) and Administrative and Technical and Services (ATS) staff (57.4%).

Staff satisfaction with aspects of leadership declined in 2021 (Graph 5). Females and ATS staff were the least likely to report satisfaction with *leadership style* and *core values* compared to males and other categories of staff [not shown].

Compared to 2019, satisfaction with *pay and benefits* declined for the second consecutive year (Graph 6). In 2021, satisfaction with pay and benefits was lower among younger age groups than older age groups, was lower among females than males, and was lower among ATS staff compared to academic and SAP staff [not shown]. In the open question soliciting feedback, a number of ATS staff commented on the lack of promotional opportunities for their group.

Lastly, there was a significant decline in agreement with the statement *the workload is fairly distributed in my department* (Graph 6, reworded in 2021). In 2021, academics (33.9%) and ATS staff (36.1%) were less likely to report satisfaction with workload distribution than SAP staff (42.9%).

Comments to the feedback question (Graph 8) resulted in rich information which was organized into 11 themes. Verbatim responses will be shared with the relevant units for review and action.

In conclusion, the third cycle of the Staff Satisfaction Survey has highlighted strengths and weaknesses of the academy. While staff satisfaction did not surpass the 2019 level, the loyalty of staff is undeniable as just over two-thirds of staff reported feeling engaged and looked forward to working on campus or at home. The derived metrics from this survey will be useful for gauging progress under the University Strategic Plan and pointing to areas in need of intervention to achieve desired targets by 2022.

Outputs

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2021, Mona Campus

Q1. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 337)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
The institution takes reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure environment for all. (1)	23.4	5.3	70.9	0.0	0.3
I have the necessary resources (e.g., tools/equipment and supplies) to perform my job well on the Campus. (2)	43.3	4.7	50.1	1.5	0.3
more/equally productive while working remotely, compared to working on site. (3)	22.3	10.4	59.9	6.8	0.6
I had adequate access to the tools and technology required to transition to remote work. (4)	33.5	6.8	51.6	6.8	1.2

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2021, Mona Campus

Q2. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

% Distribution (N = 337)

	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I am treated with respect by my co-workers. (1)	14.2	6.2	78.0	0.0	1.5
People in my department work well as a team to accomplish projects. (2)	24.3	8.3	65.6	0.6	1.2

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2021, Mona Campus

Q3. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 337)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I feel that my immediate supervisor treats staff fairly. (1)	21.1	4.7	71.5	1.5	1.2
I feel that my immediate supervisor provides relevant feedback on my performance. (2)	25.2	8.3	63.8	2.1	0.6

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2021, Mona Campus

Q4. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 337)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I understand the mission and the vision of The UWI. (1)	8.0	7.4	83.4	0.0	1.2
The UWI has systems in place to deal with discrimination in the workplace (for e.g., based on ethnicity/race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, where I live, health status, inter alia). (2)	23.7	27.6	43.3	3.0	2.4
I am satisfied with the flow of information about events and new developments within the campus/university. (3)	31.2	10.1	57.6	0.3	0.9

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2021, Mona Campus

Q5. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 337)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I am satisfied with the leadership and management style at The University. (1)	41.8	17.5	39.8	0.0	0.9
The leaders project the core values of The UWI (integrity, excellence, gender justice, diversity, and student-centredness) in the execution of their duties. (2)	32.3	21.4	44.8	0.9	0.6

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2021, Mona Campus

Q6. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 337)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
I am satisfied with my pay and benefits. (1)	58.8	5.0	35.6	0.0	0.6
There are opportunities for me to be promoted at The UWI. (2)	42.1	8.3	47.2	1.5	0.9
I believe that the workload is fairly distributed in my department. (3)	51.0	11.0	35.9	1.2	0.9

Staff Satisfaction Survey 2021, Mona Campus

Q7. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements:

	% Distribution (N = 337)				
	Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Agree	Not applicable	No Answer
My job provides me with a sense of meaning and purpose and I look forward to going to work at campus and/or working at home. (1)	20.2	9.8	69.4	0.0	0.6