MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP FRAMEWORK

Middlesex University

STRATEGY 2031

Knowledge into Action

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Leadership Framework sets out the behavioural competencies for staff that show what effective leadership looks like at Middlesex University at different levels - from self-leadership and peer leadership, group leadership through to strategic leadership.

At the heart of the Leadership Framework are our community principles and strategic objectives. It enables us to embed and achieve them by defining the expectations and behaviours needed for all roles. It also describes some of the behaviours that get in the way of our success so we can do something about them.
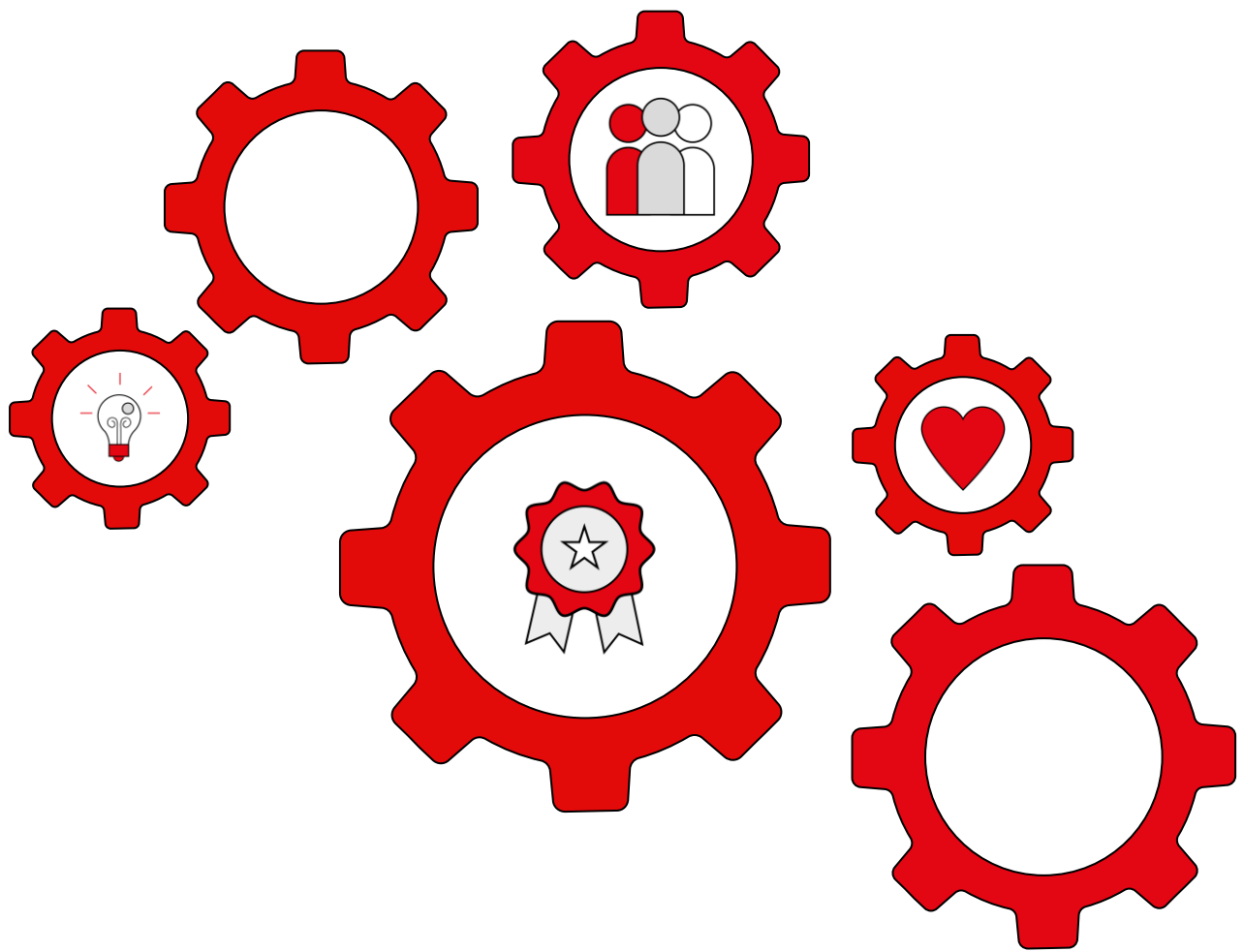
Action Oriented

We focus on excellence to create solutions, outcomes and impact.

Radically Creative

In what we produce, and inclusive and innovative in how we work and learn. We value calculated risk-taking and believe in learning from projects that go as planned as well as those that don't.

Radically Simple

We deal with great complexity in education and research and so we emphasise streamlined systems and simple solutions in our ways of working. We are agile and reduce silos and hierarchy. We prioritise action that contributes to our purpose and are bold about stopping things that don't.

Leading in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We strive to create a fairer world and embed diversity, inclusion and equality in all we do.

Collaborative

We operate as a collaborative community, co-leading with students and the Students' Union and co-creating across disciplines, professional services, sectors and cultures to create solutions to complex problems.

Acting with Care and Integrity

We respect, learn from, and support each other, being transparent and open and behaving responsibly towards people, cultures and the environment.

The behaviours provide a basis for:
- Gaining personal insight into behavioural strengths and development areas
- Conversations, plans and actions relating to performance, development and progression
- Guiding everyday interactions including giving and receiving feedback to each other

The Leadership Framework is also used as a core part of recruitment, during induction and probation and as a career development tool, particularly during performance development conversations via Clear Review.

Performance Development and Professional Competency

The Leadership Framework outlines a series of behavioural competencies for staff from all levels at Middlesex to self-assess against.

Recruitment and Selection

The Leadership Framework behaviours will be integrated into the person specification. This provides an opportunity to assess a candidate's suitability against Middlesex University's community principles as well as other criteria. Recruiting managers will be able to use a bank of potential questions to assess candidates against the community principles.

Induction and Probation

The Leadership Framework enables managers to recognise and value the strengths of staff and identify areas for performance development in an objective and structured way that is consistent across the University. The process for doing this begins in induction and continues throughout their career.

Development opportunities

Development opportunities provided by the University are aligned with our strategic objectives, and community principles. These might include structured programmes but could also include coaching, mentoring, action learning, self-directed learning and on the job projects.

Promotion and Progression opportunities

The leadership framework provides a structure around which to build a bank of evidence and feedback to support potential promotion application and progression opportunities. This can be captured within Clear Review.

HOW DOES THE FRAMEWORK APPLY TO ME?

What the six community principles mean in practice vary between posts and grades as they naturally have different expectations and levels of complexity associated with them. The Leadership Framework therefore has three different levels for each behavioural competency. The three levels are aligned with groups of our posts and grades and typically are as follows:

Self and Peer Leaders: Up to grade 6.

Group Leader: Grades 7,8 and 9.

Strategic leaders:Senior Managers, Professors, Heads of Department/Service, UET.
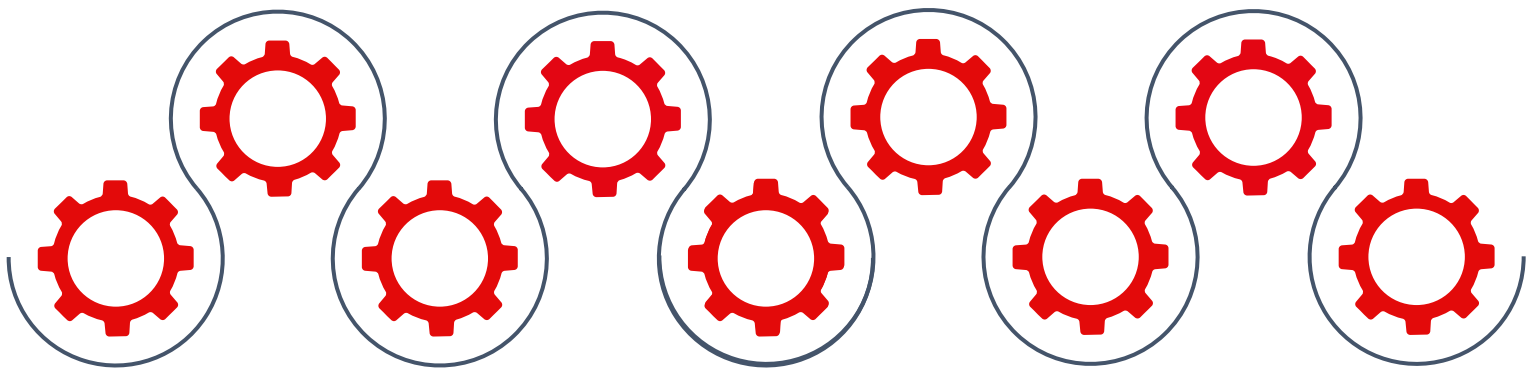
Guidelines for using the Leadership Framework during objective setting and review catch ups

During performance development conversations, objective setting and reviews, the Framework will be used to consider how employees have been demonstrating our community principles. This provides the opportunity for:

- The team members to:
  - Identify strengths and areas for development
  - Support career aspirations through understanding expectations required of more senior roles
  - Prepare a personal development plan

- The manager to:
  - Provide feedback on strengths and areas for development and discuss any gaps in perception between themselves and the member of staff
  - Support the preparation of a personal development plan which stretches them.

Key steps for completing a review using the Leadership Framework

For the team member:

Access the Leadership assessment for your level (Self and Peer Leaders/Group Leader/Strategic leaders)

Read the descriptions for each, together with the 'What this doesn't look like' descriptions to inform your assessment.

Consider examples and evidence to support your self-assessment of both strengths and areas for development.

Discuss this self - assessment with your manager to complete your Leadership assessment

Identify the priorities from your assessment. Turn them into development actions in Clear Review with the input and agreement of your manager. Examples:

How you can build on strengths or use them in a different way to overcome weaknesses in other areas. For example, using a collaborative strength to explore radically creative solutions.

How you can address weaker areas through specific actions or making commitments to new behavioural habits'.

The role of the line manager

Your role is to follow the same process as above using *your perspective about the team member*. Identify examples where they have demonstrated strengths and areas for development against each core behaviour. Be prepared to discuss any gaps in perception between you and the team member and provide input into development and action planning.

THE MIDDLESEX LEADSHIP FRAMEWORK

ACTION ORIENTED

This looks like	Self and peer leaders *Typically, up to grade 6*	Group Leader *Typically grades, 7, 8 and 9*	Strategic Leader *Typically, senior managers, HoD/Service, UET*
Sets the direction, focusses on outcomes, Turns ideas into practice.	• Is clear about purpose; sets goals that stretch. • Tracks outcomes and not just tasks; adjusts quickly to keep on track. • Gets to root causes of issues. Uses this insight to produce solutions. • Is aware of how individual and team objectives contribute to the success of the business and continually demonstrates commitment to achieving these. • Perseveres towards goals despite challenges, setbacks and changing circumstances. • Proactively changes or adjusts plans when needed.	• Sets the vision and goals for the team; is bold about choosing what to prioritise and/or stop. • Has insight into all the elements that drive or block successful solutions. Incorporates them in plans and ways of working. • Engages the team in turning strategies into workable plans. Ensures joined up thinking across disciplines. • Uses own and others' expertise to achieve outcomes and take responsibility for delivering intended outcomes. • Uses business data to evaluate outcomes and inform continuous improvement. • Identifies priorities that need to change and ensure the allocation of resources meets new business needs.	• Strategic mindset. Develops vision and strategies and communicates them in a meaningful way for different audiences. • Understands how issues of culture and process drive or block impact across the University. Ensures they are addressed. • Manages ideas so they become practice. Ensures strategies are aligned across the University. • Able to inspire others to deliver plans with enthusiasm, persistence, and determination. • Uses own professional knowledge and the expertise of others to drive forward University objectives.
This does not look like	• Low standards, lacks focus or does the minimum to get by. • Is task, rather than results-orientated. • Does not dig deep enough to generate solutions that work in practice. • Does not see connection between individual and team objectives and the success of the business. • Is reactive and waits for things to happen or be done for them. • Does not partake in additional training or learning opportunities.	• Strategies and plans are not there or are not clear. • Lacks insight into the people and process elements of achieving outcomes or avoids addressing them. • Finds it difficult to get ideas to fruition or tends to operate in isolation. • Unable to plan and flex resources creatively. • Does things to 'tick the box,' rather than seeking to achieve results • Tends to see problems rather than solutions.	• Lacks a vision or has difficulty in expressing it in a meaningful way. • Lacks insight into 'the whole system' and how the different elements combine to affect impact or avoids addressing blockages. • Finds it difficult to get ideas to fruition, tends to operate in isolation, or fails to ensure alignment of action across the University. • Fails to paint and communicate big picture and instead manages from an operational and tactical perspective. • Fails to articulate a compelling vision and easily understood direction/roadmap. • Blames others for failures.

RADICALLY CREATIVE			
This looks like	**Self and peer leaders** *Typically, up to grade 6*	**Group Leader** *Typically grades, 7, 8 and 9*	**Strategic Leader** *Typically, senior managers, HoD/Service, UET*
Scans the horizon, Manages innovation, learns from success and failure.	• Seeks deeper insights into what students and stakeholders need, and why they need it. • Good questioner of self and others; tries new ways of achieving excellence. • Learns from failures; keeps perspective. • Accepts and values other people supplying novel approaches or innovative proposals. • Turns to creative people in seeking advice when it comes to making valuable proposals to the University. • Generates new ideas to meet challenges.	• Seeks out a range of data, people, and perspectives from inside/outside Middlesex to support innovation and new thinking. • Challenges the status quo and generates ideas. Builds innovation and improvement into team culture. • Takes the heat of change, learns lessons, creates an environment of psychological safety, and doesn't let failures de-rail self or team members. • Creates novel solutions based on experience in his/her area of expertise. • Questions conventional working methodology, proposes new ways to work. • Applies creative thinking techniques to generate innovative ideas and options to address issues and improve user experience. • Pursues new methods and solutions, thinks outside the box, connects disparate issues and is unafraid to try new things.	• Broad thinker; anticipates trends and innovations across the sector; seeks out new people and perspectives. • Looks beyond conventional wisdom; takes new or complex ideas and moves them to implementation across the University. Champions innovation. • Takes the blame of change, learns lessons, supports others through change and does not let setbacks or failures become a personal or University deterrent to progress. • Creates innovative ideas/solutions that are not obvious to others, in order to negotiate difficult situations. • Applies creative ideas and original solutions that entail innovation.
This does not look like	• Does not explore changing needs or loses sight of wider context. • Sticks to the tried and tested inappropriately or finds implementing new ideas difficult. • Finds change difficult, takes things overly-personally or tends to be de-railed by mistakes or failures. • Is slow to produce new ideas. • Thinks traditionally. • Accepts the status quo.	• Has limited points of reference, or tendency to be inward-looking. • Dislikes risk or ambiguity or holds innovations up to impossible standards too soon. Overly perfectionist. • Cannot take the blame of change; does not understand what different team members need during change or is de-railed by mistakes and failures. • Problem solving approach lacks creativity. • Is cautious with new approaches. • Stifles creative potential by valuing routine over user experience.	• Has limited points of reference or lacks wide external networks. • Dislikes risk or ambiguity or holds innovations up to impossible standards too soon. Overly perfectionist. • Cannot take the heat of change; does not understand what groups need during change, is derailed by mistakes and failures. • Does not encourage or facilitate brainstorming and new ways of working. • Instils a fear of failure rather than providing a safety net for experimentation and thinking outside the box. • Fails to inspire or acknowledge potential.

| RADICALLY SIMPLE			
This looks like	**Self and peer leaders** *Typically, up to grade 6*	**Group Leader** *Typically grades, 7, 8 and 9*	**Strategic Leader** *Typically, senior managers, HoD/Service, UET*
Creates simple systems, Has role flexibility, Uses judgement	• Develops ways of working that support the effectiveness of others as well as self; challenges processes and streamlines. • Plays different roles (e.g., lead, coach, expert, team member) in response to the needs of different situations. • Makes conscious choices about priorities based on team purpose. • Asks questions to explore and understand issues and problems. • Researches and analyses information to make recommendations based on relevant evidence. • Is willing to seek input from others and share own ideas to achieve best outcomes.	• Develops ways of working that enable teams to thrive. Identifies over-complexity, silos and barriers and does something about them. • Plays different roles situationally; empowers, delegates, and ensures decisions are not inappropriately going up the hierarchy. • Shows courage and judgement in enabling others to make conscious choices about priorities based on our purpose. • Able to make rational judgments based on available data / information and analysis. • Anticipates, identifies, and addresses issues and potential problems that may have an impact on University objectives and the user experience. • Seeks contributions and ideas from people with diverse backgrounds and experience.	• Develops the organisational structures, systems and behaviours that support inclusion, collaboration, and simplicity. Actively breaks down barriers. • Plays different roles situationally; builds empowerment and agility into structures and culture; delegates. • Shows courage and judgement in driving prioritisation choices across the University, based on our purpose. • Undertakes objective, critical analysis to draw accurate conclusions that recognise and manage contextual issues. • Establishes and promotes a culture that encourages innovation and initiative and emphasises continuous improvement. • Identifies and evaluates University wide implications when considering proposed solutions to issues.
This does not look like	• Over-complicates or prefers the predictability of what has been done in the past. • Is overly narrow in approach to role. • Gets caught up in current action or finds differentiating between the value of different activities difficult. • Only analyses data and information at face value • Is unable to see correlation between process and data • Tends to only see the symptoms, not the root causes.	• Over-complicates, is overly risk averse or prefers the predictability of what has been done in the past. • Over-relies on one leadership style, is uncomfortable about letting go of control or is overly hierarchical. • Lacks insight into the impact of decisions, goes it alone, or does not easily see the essence of what matters. • Makes assumptions without taking all available data / information in account. • Makes rash, ill-informed decisions or puts unnecessary delays into decision-making. • Is unwilling to make tough choices.	• Over-complicates, finds systems thinking challenging or prefers the predictability of what has been done in the past. • Over-relies on one leadership style, is uncomfortable about letting go of control or is overly hierarchical. • Lacks insight into how organisational decisions should be made, lacks influence at a senior level or does not hold peers to account for collective decisions. • Takes short-term view when making decisions. • Plans lack focus on advantage and does not take account of current realities. • Does not consider internal and external factors when making decisions.

LEADING IN EQUALITY DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION			
This looks like	**Self and peer leaders** *Typically, up to grade 6*	**Group Leader** *Typically grades, 7, 8 and 9*	**Strategic Leader** *Typically, senior managers, HoD/Service, UET*
Openness, Drives equality, diversity, and inclusion. Supports positive behaviours and addresses discriminatory behaviours	• Is curious and open to different perspectives. Can change own mind. • Works well with a diversity of people and perspectives. • Contributes to a supportive and safe working environment. • Is responsive to diverse cultures, backgrounds, experiences, perspectives, values, and beliefs. • Seeks participation from others who may have diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and needs. • Adapts well in diverse environments • Responds constructively to feedback regarding observations of bias in language or behaviour.	• Is curious and open to different perspectives. Fosters openness across teams resulting in new thinking and collaborations. Can change own mind. • Stimulates diversity of thought and perspectives; is comfortable with leading diverse teams and role-models inclusion. • Identifies and addresses barriers for different groups. Develops a working culture free from harassment and discrimination. • Creates the conditions for team to recognise and report discriminatory behaviour. • Demonstrates cultural sensitivity and engage with and integrate the views of others. • Recognises and adapts to individual abilities, differences and working styles. • Supports initiatives that create a safe and equitable workplace and culture in which differences are valued.	• Is curious and open to different perspectives. Fosters a culture of openness to new ideas, people, and perspectives. Can change own mind. • Drives diversity of thought and perspectives across the University. Role-models inclusion. Knows what the barriers are and addresses these. Leads a working culture free from harassment and discrimination. • Encourages and includes diverse perspectives in the development of policies and strategies. • Builds and monitors a workplace culture that enables diversity and fair and inclusive practices. • Champions the business benefits generated by workforce diversity and inclusive practices. • Creates and drives a culture where all staff practice inclusion and value the diversity of people, experiences, and backgrounds. • Takes advantage of a diverse and inclusive workplace to foster innovation, drive change across the University and deliver business outcomes. • Drives the design of equitable workplace systems, policies and practices that enable individuals to contribute to their fullest ability.
This does not look like	• Lacks openness to different perspectives. • Shows bias or seeks out people like self. • Is reluctant to report discriminatory behaviour. • Adopts a 'one size fits all' approach to interacting with others regardless of environment. • Makes judgements about people based	• Lacks curiosity or openness, is overly competitive, or overly wedded to own experience. • Shows bias, seeks out people most like self or does not understand barriers to inclusion. • Is reluctant to develop inclusive practices. • Adopts a 'one size fits all' approach to interacting with others regardless of	• Shows bias, seeks out people most like self or does not understand barriers to inclusion. • Is reluctant to develop inclusive practices. • Adopts a 'one size fits all' approach to interacting with others regardless of environment. • Spends time collaborating with people with very similar work approaches to self

on appearance/culture etc. • Fails to empathise and understand the perspective of others. • Demonstrates favouritism.	environment. • Spends time collaborating with people with very similar work approaches to self – • Demonstrates a lack of tolerance when dealing with people who are very different. • Makes judgements about people based on appearance/culture etc. • Fails to empathise and understand the perspective of others. • Demonstrates favouritism.	• Demonstrates a lack of tolerance when dealing with people who are very different. • Makes judgements about people based on appearance/culture etc. • Fails to empathise and understand the perspective of others. • Demonstrates favouritism.

COLLABORATIVE			
This looks like	**Self and peer leaders** *Typically, up to grade 6*	**Group Leader** *Typically grades, 7, 8 and 9*	**Strategic Leader** *Typically, senior managers, HoD/Service, UET*
Builds connections and collaborations, Influences and engages, handles conflict	• Builds connections across disciplines and different stakeholder groups; works collaboratively. • Gains insight into people. Uses this insight to communicate effectively in a range of situations. • Handles conflict and difference constructively, ensures differences of opinion do not become blockages. • Works as a supportive cooperative team member, sharing information and acknowledging others' efforts. • Steps in to help others when workloads are high. Thinks about how what you do could help other people and share this with them.	• Casts a wide net; builds connections and collaborations with student groups and other disciplines. Is active in helping team members to make connections. • Gains insight into people. Uses this insight to listen and to enable participation, collaboration, and action. • Handles conflict and difference constructively, ensures differences of opinion do not become blockages across different groups. • Shares information and learning across teams. • Engages other teams and units to share information and jointly solve issues and problems. • Shares lessons learned across teams and units.	• Casts a wide net; builds extensive relationships across a range of student, academic, commercial, and other bodies. Stimulates collaborations to create opportunities and solutions to complex problems. • Gains insight into people. Uses a range of influencing styles flexibly to listen and to make complex issues meaningful for a wide range of audiences. • Handles inter-group or sector conflicts; brings parties together to achieve the vision. • Facilitates opportunities to engage and collaborate with stakeholders to develop joint solutions. • Networks extensively across university and beyond to increase collaboration. • Seeks out and facilitates opportunities to engage and collaborate with stakeholders to develop solutions across the University.
This does not look like	• Tends not look outside own group. • Does not listen, lacks empathy, or over-relies on one style of communication. • Finds conflict uncomfortable and avoids it or goes in too hard and damages others. • Promotes own view at expense of others. • Works to own agenda. • Has a silo mentality.	• Has a limited range of networks and connections. • Does not listen, lacks empathy, or does not adapt influencing style situationally. • Finds conflict uncomfortable and avoids it or goes in too hard and damages others. Uncomfortable with mediating between people • Ignores input pf others. • Stifles debate • Reacts negatively to constructive criticism.	• Has a limited external network or tends to stick with people and institutions that are familiar. • Does not listen, lacks empathy, or does not adapt influencing style situationally. • Finds conflict uncomfortable and avoids it or goes in too hard and damages others. • Is uncomfortable with mediating between different interest groups. • Fails to include relevant people in work discussions and debate. • Fails to challenge inappropriate behaviour and can be seen to condone inappropriate and exclusive practice.

ACTING WITH CARE AND INTEGRITY

This looks like	Self and peer leaders *Typically, up to grade 6*	Group Leader *Typically grades, 7, 8 and 9*	Strategic Leader *Typically, senior managers, HoD/Service, UET*
Is self-aware and learns. Acts with integrity. Empowers others.	• Knows self, impact on others and adjusts. Is proactive about seeking feedback and developing new capabilities. Goes outside comfort zone to learn. • Operates with integrity, takes responsibility, and maintains high personal standards. • Offers constructive feedback, is generous in helping others to learn. • Behaves in an honest, ethical, and professional way. • Speaks out against misconduct and illegal and inappropriate behaviour Report apparent conflicts of interest. • Asks for feedback – both positive and negative – and respond in a positive and professional manner.	• Knows self, impact on others and adjusts. Is proactive about seeking feedback and developing new capabilities. Goes outside comfort zone to learn. • Operates with integrity, takes responsibility for standards. Ensures ethical behaviour is recognised as well as results. • Gives feedback, coaches, and helps others to succeed. Believes in the potential of people. Mentors, and allocates opportunities fairly. • Represents the University in an honest, ethical, and professional way. • Identifies and explains ethical issues and set an example for others to follow. Sets clear standards and stick to them when the going gets tough. • Delivers tough messages with clarity, empathy, and diplomacy.	• Knows self, impact on others and adjusts. Is proactive about seeking feedback and developing new capabilities. Goes outside comfort zone to learn. • Models integrity and takes responsibility. Embeds ethics and standards in strategies and practices. Builds trust through own actions. • Gives feedback, coaches, and helps others to succeed. Believes in the potential of people. Drives mentoring and career development. • Models the highest standards of ethical and professional behaviour and reinforce their use. • Creates and promotes a culture in which staff feel able to report apparent breaches of legislation, policies or guidelines. Act promptly and visibly in response. • Acts promptly and visibly to prevent and respond to unethical behaviour.
This does not look like	• Lacks self-awareness or unreceptive to feedback and learning. • Is too willing to sacrifice ethical standards for short term gain. • Excessive self-sufficiency or lack of concern for others • Speaks about employees behind their backs. • Makes promises, then does not deliver. • Makes personal issues public.	• Lacks openness to feedback, uncomfortable with disclosing weaknesses or not aware of impact on others. • Shifts blame, words and actions are disconnected or does not champion standards of integrity. • Excessive self-sufficiency or limited care for others. Little focus on the development of others beyond the need for immediate results. Shows favouritism. • Criticises people in front of colleagues. • Is overly strict and micromanages. • Uses harsh tone of voice when asking for things.	• Lacks openness to feedback, uncomfortable with disclosing weaknesses, unaware of impact on others. • Shifts blame, words and actions are disconnected or does not champion standards of integrity across the University. • Excessive self-sufficiency or limited care for others. Little focus on developing the systems that enable development. Shows favouritism. • Does not trust or empower people-holds on to information. • Operates a closed-door approach.

LEADING AND MANAGING OTHERS			
This looks like	**Self and peer leaders** *Typically, up to grade 6*	**Group Leader** *Typically grades, 7, 8 and 9*	**Strategic Leader** *Typically, senior managers, HoD/Service, UET*
Empowering individuals and teams to develop their full potential, using personal motivation to generate enthusiasm, engagement, and achievement.	• Uses appropriate interpersonal styles and methods to inspire, motivate and guide others to achieve team objectives and business goals / plans. • Imparts knowledge and experience to others. • Effectively carries out management responsibilities across the employment experience (i.e., recruitment, induction, performance management, development, and reward). • Is able to lift self out of day-to-day operations and delegate appropriately. • Plans by providing support, encouragement, and clear direction to others.	• Paints and communicates a compelling vision of the business and University strategy. • Inspires a variety of staff at a range of levels across the business and function to support and achieve the strategy. • Is able to build a strong team around him/herself. • Concentrates efforts of self and team on value-add activities aligned with strategic goals. • Aligns people behind difficult decisions by convincing them of the benefits. • Continually seeks to enhance own management skills and finds opportunities to test these out.	• Effectively leads and shapes the organisation at all levels. • Anticipates future impacts of internal and external factors. • Takes courageous decisions in order to achieve the strategy. • Begins to invigorate under-performing areas of the University - provides a fresh positive impetus to achieve goals. • Champions initiatives regardless of obstacles- does not shrink from personal responsibility. • Creatively challenges University strategy - helps find better organisational opportunities.
This doesn't look like	• Only has one style or does not adapt style. • Hoards information and does not share with others. • Exhibits poor people management skills • Resorts to completing day-to-day tasks at expense of appropriately delegating to others.	• Fails to paint and communicate a compelling vision. • Is unable to generate support and enthusiasm from a variety of staff at a range of levels across the business and function. • Disengages team and fails to support development. • Panics in difficult situations • Manages on an operational, tactical basis with little alignment to strategic goals.	• Has a restricted view of future possibilities or thinking limited to own area. • Focuses on short-term. • Lacks courage to change status quo and takes conservative, operational view of strategy. • Shows too much subjectivity-personal preferences and bias impair judgement. • Lacks gravitas and respect at higher levels within the University.
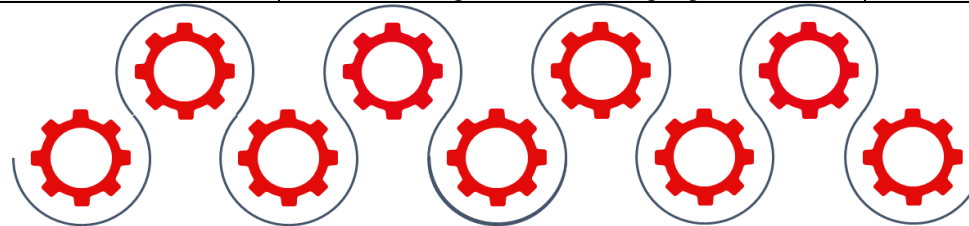
Tools and support

The following tools are also available on the intranet to help you complete your self-assessment of the leadership framework. They can also help provide insights for objective setting, catch-ups and identifying development needs.

- Self and manager assessment tool

- Personal SWOT analysis

- Self-Assessment (Self & Peer)
- Self-Assessment (Group Leadership)
- Self-Assessment (Strategic Leadership)

Support and further information

If you have any questions or need further information about the Leadership Framework, please contact the Staff Development Team.

Email: Staffdev@mdx.ac.uk