

Quality Assurance and Accreditation Project Leadership Workshop

Notes for participants Leadership

Leadership is universally recognised as one of the critical factors in high-performing organisations. In the first transitional period the developmental engagements have clearly shown the important part played by strong academic leadership in those universities and faculties that have made measurable improvements.

Leadership takes many forms and is exercised in many different ways and in different locations; the most senior in the organisation do not hold a monopoly in leadership. In higher education reviews, it is the quality of academic leadership which is most often reported; however, the leadership shown by others, including representatives of stakeholder groups and administrative staff, has often made the difference between success and disappointment.

This workshop addresses leadership in two distinct but related areas: taking a lead with faculty members to embrace new quality assurance systems and introduce improvement plans; and the sustained leadership which maintains and develops the value of the educational programmes and related activities such as investments in buildings, new technology, new educational programmes and research.

The workshop will explore alternative approaches to leadership and its development, including the challenges faced in implementing strategic plans, the characteristics of effective leadership and approaches to action planning that can be adopted after the workshop.

Individual Preparation

Before attending the workshop, you are invited to spend a little time reading the documentation and reflecting on the part you play in leading developments. This advance preparation is designed to help you to place the workshop in the context of your own roles in the University/Faculty and the contributions you feel you can make to the implementation of the strategic objectives, the quality assurance system and the improvement plan(s). In particular it is intended to encourage you to gain insight into leadership exercised by you and colleagues to develop leadership skills and styles and to “make a difference”. The following framework for preparation is offered as a self-assessment (not a test). Please complete as well as you are able using the materials provided and your own experiences, and bring it with you to the workshop.

University:

Faculty:

Position/role/responsibilities:

Academic field (where applicable):

Name:

Date completed:

1. How confident are you about the University being able to implement the mission and vision of the University?

Do not know	Very sure	Cautiously hopeful	Sceptical	Little or no prospect
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2. How confident are you about your Faculty being able to implement its mission, vision and strategic plan?

Do not know	Very sure	Cautiously hopeful	Sceptical	Little or no prospect
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3. How confident are you that you have a role or position that allows you to play your full part?

Do not know	Very sure	Cautiously hopeful	Sceptical	Little or no influence
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4. Do you bring to the workshop examples of effective leadership within your role/academic field?

Do not know	No	Yes	If yes, please give at least one example here
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5. Who looks to you for direction?

Do not know	None	In general, the following:
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6. Which six of the characteristics of leadership listed in appendix 1 do you believe to be the most important?

7. What (a) help and (b) obstacles do you experience to exercising leadership as part of a sustained approach to the development and delivery of educational programmes?

(a)

(b)

8. What (a) help and (b) obstacles do you experience to exercising leadership as part of a sustained approach to the development and delivery of research programmes?

(a)

(b)

9. What (a) help and (b) obstacles do you experience to exercising leadership as part of a sustained approach to the development and delivery of community service?

(a)

(b)

10. What (a) help and (b) obstacles do you experience to exercising leadership in implementing the new quality assurance system?

(a)

(b)

11. What (a) help and (b) obstacles do you experience to exercising leadership as part of the identification of emerging needs/priorities and implementing an improvement plan?

(a)

(b)

12. Using the list of general characteristics in appendix 1 and the virtues of leaders listed in appendix 3, which leadership skills do you believe you exercise in your present role(s) and responsibilities?

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>Virtues</i>

13. Using the list of general characteristics in appendix 1 and the virtues of leaders listed in appendix 2, which leadership skills do you wish to develop as part of your personal professional improvement plan?

14. Using the list in appendix 4, which locations do you regard as most important to achieve overall success in gaining accreditation for the programmes? – please place in order of importance:

15. Using the lists in appendices 1 and 2, and the suggested approaches in appendix 3, which leadership skills do you wish to see developed in others?

16. Which six of the suggested approaches in appendix 3 are most relevant to your University/Faculty?

17. What benefits would you like to see come out of this workshop –

17.1 For the University?

17.2 For the Faculty?

17.3 For your own professional interest?

17.4 For others?

18. What further action would you like to see to develop leaders in the University/Faculty?

19. To summarise, in your experience, what are the most important qualities of leaders?

20. Are there any questions or points about leadership you wish to raise in the workshop? (If so, please copy this part and hand to an organiser to pass to the Chairman).

Appendix 1

Characteristics of effective leadership

1. All persons are committed to the mission and vision, and pursuing the strategic objectives
2. Leaders show focus and drive
3. Leaders provide role models for other colleagues, students and other stakeholders
4. Leaders are self-learners who respond to changing circumstances and new challenges, showing initiative
5. Leaders coach and encourage others to raise their game
6. Leaders inculcate high standards in others
7. Leaders deserve a supportive environment
8. Leaders recognise errors and lessons to learn, and continue to improve
9. Leadership skills and styles vary according to the context, environment, person and challenge

Appendix 2

Virtues of strong leaders may include:

10. Clarity of direction and priorities
11. Showing the way by example
12. Speed of action
13. Engaging with and listening to others
14. Decisiveness
15. Innovation
16. Close association with needs of students and other external stakeholders
17. Appropriate application of available technology and proven methods
18. Creativity in problem solving and solutions
19. Taking risks
20. Delegation of authority and responsibility and support results
21. Responsiveness to others and to changing situations
22. Unmoved by arguments to alter course
23. Adding value
24. Demonstrating productivity
25. Quality of work and high standards of execution
26. Teamwork
27. Self-reliance
28. Self-motivating and reflective of performance

Appendix 3

Suggested approaches to developing effective leadership

1. Focus on enhancement and delivering the plan
2. Consider the concept “All members of the University are leaders”
3. Grow the Culture
4. Develop sustainable processes for consultation and engagement
5. Develop a learning organisation
6. Unleash potential
7. Train, train, train
8. Assign members to special assignments and task groups to raise skills and ensure involvement

9. Look outside the University
10. Measure leadership in staff objectively with widely publicised criteria
11. Measure staff subjectively through exchange and feedback
12. Develop collegial approaches
13. Tune rewards and sanctions to fit the new tasks
14. Underpin by quality assurance system and processes
15. Evaluate and if necessary change the plan/move the goal posts

Appendix 4

The possible locations for exercising effective leadership within higher education

Whole university
University Council
Faculty
Faculty Council
Department
Department Council
Educational programme
Research and other scholarly activity
Community service
Professor
Assistant Teacher
Tutor
Student
Examiner
Open learning course author
Administrative department
Employees
Student Union
Class rooms
Libraries
Laboratories and workshops
Technicians
Graduates
Alumni