Reflecting on leadership development

Background

Leading for impact: Australian guidelines for school leadership development (Leading for impact), sets out evidence–based guidance to support a nationally coherent and standards-based approach to leadership development in all jurisdictions and schools.

To assist schools and systems/sectors to reflect on their approach to leadership development, AITSL has developed two reflection tools, one for use by systems/sectors and the other by schools.

The reflection tools bring the recommendations within Leading for impact to life by articulating what schools and jurisdictions can do at increasing levels to develop leadership capacity. By demonstrating progression across the rubric for each action, the school or jurisdiction can see what it looks like to improve their approach to leadership development and contribute to developing a pool of aspiring leaders across the education system.

The tools will support users to reflect on their organisation's leadership development approaches against the recommendations provided in Leading for impact.

Where to begin

When using the reflection tools, users should first determine which tool is appropriate for their context. The schools' tool will be used to reflect on a school's approach to leadership development. The system/sector tool will be used to reflect on a jurisdiction's approach to leadership development.

Using the tool

The reflection tools each contain quality statements describing what each leadership development component looks like at increasing levels of effectiveness.

Users should look at each action and then work from Step 1 to 4 (left to right) to situate their current practice. Practice can only be situated at a particular step, if each of the previous steps are currently in place/achieved. It's important to note that practice can progress beyond Step 4 of the continuum.

Once current practice is situated on the rubric, the tool then provides an opportunity to develop a strategy and plan to identify the next steps to progress practice along the continuum.

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Section 1: Leadership development

Identifying future leaders

Recommendation	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Establish a leadership development strategy and communicate its priorities to all members of the jurisdiction, network or school.	Identify need for a leadership development strategy and communicate the purpose.	Design a leadership development strategy linked to the school's educational objectives and communicate strategy to interested parties.	Develop, implement and commit to a strategy to respond to school demands including recruitment, retention, and development of a diverse range of future leaders.	Review and refine leadership strategy using stakeholder feedback and evidence-based approaches. Examine communications to school community to ensure reinforcement of strategy.
Implement purposeful strategies and use multiple and objective methods to find future leaders.	Identify staff who demonstrate leadership capabilities.	Use formal and informal processes to discover and encourage future leaders.	Implement transparent/ evidence-based measures and methods that discover a diverse range of future leaders. Prioritise potential for high-impact leadership.	Review effectiveness of methods and refine processes in identifying future leaders using evidence and research.
Create a culture that encourages every individual to develop a leadership identity.	Identify individuals across the school who take up formal and informal leadership roles. Recognise key cultural indicators, and promote key cultural messages related to leadership.	Communicate diverse leadership identities and capabilities required for formal leadership positions.	Use evidence to connect leadership culture to education goals, equity targets, and community cultures whilst providing regular opportunities for participation in leadership experiences.	Invest in long term and sustainable school leadership development and recruitment processes. Provide early career support for leadership aspirants with targeted development goals.

Capabilities for leadership in schools

Recommendation	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Use the Teacher Standards at the Highly Accomplished and Lead career stages and the Principal Standard to establish the leadership capabilities required at all levels of school leadership.	Communicate Highly Accomplished, Lead Teacher and Principal Standards to staff.	Align Highly Accomplished, Lead Teacher and Principal Standards to staff growth and development goals.	Structure leadership development experiences with reference to Highly Accomplished, Lead Teacher and Principal Standards.	Review and implement strategies aligned to Highly Accomplished, Lead Teacher and Principal Standards that improve leadership capability development.
Prioritise leading teaching and learning, personal qualities and interpersonal skills, alongside management skills, in the leadership capabilities required.	Communicate professional and personal qualities and skills required of school leaders.	Structure leadership development experiences with reference to required professional and personal qualities and skills.	Prioritise the development of high-impact leadership capacity required of school leaders.	Assess and modify the professional and personal qualities required of school leaders using school priorities and strategic plan when developing and/or appointing staff.

Developing future leaders

Recommendation	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Implement the *Australian Charter for the Professional Learning of Teachers and School Leaders* and *the Australian Teacher Performance and Development Framework.*	Communicate the potential of professional learning in developing individual and collective leadership performance.	Implement performance and development cycle matched to leadership elements of Highly Accomplished, Lead Teacher and Principal Standards and school priorities.	Provide opportunities for staff to develop individual and collective leadership capacity through a learning culture of reflective action focused on improving student outcomes.	Monitor, evaluate and sustain an effective performance and development culture aligned to Charter and Framework.
Provide extended experiences that involve learning within the context of work and the provision of ongoing feedback.	Identify and make available leadership experiences to staff.	Provide regular feedback on leadership growth and development of staff.	Link leadership experiences to school context and provide relevant information and real time feedback to staff.	Implement approach to leadership development that focuses on strengths. Use cycles of reflection and feedback to support leadership experiences.
Establish networks to support leadership development.	Encourage links between current and future leaders through informal leadership networks.	Engage current leaders to participate in formal leadership networks as mentors and coaches and engage future leaders to participate in leadership networks.	Support and resource participation in leadership development experiences and build and maintain internal networks through formalised structures.	Link and leverage internal leadership networks with networks external to the school.

Measuring the success of leadership development activities

Recommendation	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4
Articulate the leadership development strategy's objectives and identify appropriate metrics and measurement methods.	Identify the leadership development strategy's objectives.	Identify evidence and qualitative and quantitative data to be collected and measured.	Generate evaluation metrics matched to leadership development objectives and strategies.	Future proof the metrics and measurements by interrogating them through ongoing review and refinement.
Track progress over time, assess success and continually improve provision in response to findings.	Use informal evidence and personal judgment to evaluate leadership development activities.	Generate and analyse metrics matched to leadership development objectives.	Evaluate the culture and practice of leadership development using robust methods that are linked to improved student outcomes.	Design and implement improvements to leadership development provision in response to evaluations.