

Leadership Scenarios User Guide

Approaches to common challenges faced by new principals

School leaders play a pivotal role in creating and sustaining high-performing schools. For new school leaders, the transition into the role can uncover a range of challenges.

Through research and consultation, AITSL has identified four difficult situations these professionals regularly encounter:

- professional isolation
- working with the community
- managing staff
- time management.

AITSL has developed six Leadership Scenarios to help new school leaders understand and tackle these challenges. Each scenario includes a video, framework, guide and resource list for developing your practice.

The Leadership Scenarios align to the Australian Professional Standard for Principals (the Standard) and the Leadership Profiles.

This User Guide explains who should use the Leadership Scenarios, and when and how to do so.



Challenges for new principals

“ My new school’s vision is outdated. How can I quickly understand the unique context of the school and involve members of the school community to update our vision?”

**New role,
new vision**

“ I want to connect with my new colleagues and make sure we’re all on the same page about the school’s direction and priorities.”

**New role, new
relationships**

“ School is stressful. The more work I do, the less progress I seem to make. I often wonder if I am the right one to take this school forward and who I can draw on for support.”

**New role,
new demands**

“ At my last school I built good relationships with families and the community, but it wasn’t easy. I’m worried about my ability to shape the culture at my new school.”

**New role, new
partnerships**

“ Some of the staff I struggle to connect with are also underperforming. I’m not sure how to approach them about a way forward.”

**New role, new
conversations**

“ I want to embed a professional learning culture in my school. Performance and development is a key priority and I want to understand the best way to approach it.”

**New role,
new learning
culture**

Making the most of the Leadership Scenarios

Who?

The Leadership Scenarios are designed for new school leaders, but they are useful to a range of leaders across the education system. This includes new and aspiring leaders within schools, new and experienced principals, group and system leaders, policy leaders and professional learning providers.

When?

All school leaders and other individuals should review the Leadership Scenarios to understand when the resources will be relevant to their practice. Some scenarios naturally fit at the early stages of a new school leader's journey, others depend more on the person's individual context.

For example, the guides can be used to:

- teach school leaders new strategies
- help existing school leaders refresh their thinking
- guide development of other leaders and teaching staff within the school
- support professional learning events.

How?

The Leadership Scenarios provide simple guides, tools and frameworks to help school leaders deal with or avoid/prevent common challenges. They can be used individually or in group settings such as with school leadership teams or professional learning groups, or as part of a larger learning event.

Steps:

1. Access the scenarios online: aitsl.edu.au/leadership-scenarios
2. Select relevant scenario.
3. Watch the video.
4. Read the guide then access the tools and resources.
5. Consider key learnings and application individually or for others, using the reflection questions.

It is important to pick and choose what is relevant. The scenarios are comprehensive, but are designed to be used flexibly. Some leaders will use all elements of the frameworks, practical guides and tools, while others may select specific elements to complement their own experience and approach.



INDIVIDUAL

Reflection questions to consider:

- What challenges am I facing now or anticipate that I might encounter in the future?
- What knowledge or experience do I bring to this challenge?
- What can I start doing now that will help me to resolve or prevent this challenge?
- What aspects of the framework, guide or resources do I find most useful?
- How will I be able to understand whether my actions have made a difference?



GROUP LEVEL

Reflection activities:

- Understand what challenges the group is having now in relation to each scenario.
- Ask individuals to share an example or story about a personal challenge.
- Consider what strengths, knowledge and experiences that the group brings to address the challenge.
- Provide advice to others to help them to address the challenge, using the framework, guide and resources.
- Commit to personal and group level actions to address or prevent challenges.