Huddersfield Leader Framework

HR People and Organisational Development

Welcome from our Vice-Chancellor

At the University of Huddersfield, we strongly believe that management and leadership excellence is integral to our continued success. This is reflected in our 2025 University Strategy Map's 'People First' agenda, challenging us to grow an inclusive community of people manager and leaders to develop people to achieve excellence. We are creating a culture in which great management and leadership is embedded at all levels and across our Schools and Services. The Huddersfield Leader Framework is central to our continued commitment to develop the best managers, leaders, and leadership teams in the Higher Education sector.

People First

Attract a talented global academic workforce to deliver and support our growth, vision and values

Recognise contribution and provide a fair and motivational framework to ensure colleagues' engagement for continuous improvement

Grow an inclusive community of leaders and managers to develop people to achieve excellence

The nature of today's Higher Education sector means it is more important than ever that our managers draw upon their personal qualities to be successful and achieve the aims of our University Strategy Map. The Huddersfield Leader sets out the key knowledge, skills, and behaviours we want to develop in our managers and leaders to build a positive, healthy, and productive working environment for everyone. Please familiarise yourself with the Huddersfield Leader, and consider how you can make the most of it.

Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive: Professor Bob Cryan CBE DL CMgr CCMI FREng

Our Vision

"To help grow and develop the best managers, leaders and leadership teams in the higher education sector."

What is the Huddersfield Leader Framework?

The Huddersfield Leader identifies what best practice in management and leadership at our University looks like, feels like, and sounds like. It outlines the core competencies and behaviours for all managers, current and future. Each competency includes a brief description that every manager can use to guide them; and clearly outlines what staff can expect from their managers and leaders. The Huddersfield Leader is broken down into three key categories:

Managing Self

Managing
Strategy

Managing
Others

Each category includes the competencies required to be successful in that area, along with descriptions of the behaviours we would expect to see, and those that should be avoided. These behavioural indicators will help you recognise how the competency can be demonstrated and help articulate a shared understanding of great management and leadership at our University.

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The aim of the Huddersfield Leader

These core competencies and behaviours will provide a shared vocabulary which staff can use to describe, discuss, and review the way they manage and lead. It is designed to help …

❖ Create a consistent and best practice approach to management and leadership.

❖ Ensure all staff are supported through high-quality people managers and leader.

❖ Identify and support our future generation of leaders.

How has the Huddersfield Leader been developed?

The Huddersfield Leader has been developed by a wide range of people, for a wide range of managers and leaders. We consulted with a significant cross-section of University staff to establish clear definitions and expectations about our core management and leadership competencies and associated behaviours. Our approach to developing the Huddersfield Leader means the framework is grounded in our personal values, experiences and formed by consensus.

How can it help you?

There are five principal applications of the framework. They are:

❖ **Self-Assessment & Reflection**: A framework to regularly re-visit and reflect upon, to help identify, prioritise, and plan your personal and professional development.

❖ **Personal Development and Performance Review (PDPR)**: As a reference document for you and your reviewer to use during your PDPR conversations.

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❖ **Succession Planning**: To help identify the next generation of leaders at our University, and to inform the development journey of our aspiring leaders.

❖ **Recruitment & Selection**: For use in assessment centres, interviews and other selection activity when recruiting new managers and leaders to our University.

❖ **Development Centres and 360s**: Methods of assessing people's management and leadership strengths and development needs.

As a manager, what do I need to do?

It is expected that people managers and those with leadership responsibilities familiarises themselves with the framework and considers how they can make the most of it. For any staff member at the University, the framework provides a clear and transparent understanding of what they can expect from their managers and leaders, at all levels. The framework will provide confidence that staff are being led and supported by the most competent of managers, who are striving to be the very best leaders they can be.

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Appendix A: The Huddersfield Leader Framework

Managing Self …
You are a positive role-model, with a high degree of integrity and self-awareness. You recognise your strengths and development needs and use failure or misjudgment to inform opportunities for learning and improvements.

Competency Description	Positive Competency Indicators	Negative Competency Indicators
Self-Awareness … is about the ability to consider your own actions and beliefs carefully.	❖ Being aware of how your emotions and behaviours can impact on others. ❖ Seeking out and acting on feedback. ❖ Knowing your strengths and areas for development. ❖ Reflecting on your performance and taking steps to improve. ❖ Lead by example when looking after your personal wellbeing, acknowledging, and reaching out when you may need support.	❖ Not considering the impact you have on your team members and colleagues. ❖ Reacting negatively to constructive feedback. ❖ Ignoring aspect of your role you may need to improve. ❖ Being openly negative or critical of others. ❖ Not considering your own wellbeing and work-life balance.
Self-Discipline … is about being organised, reliable and decisive.	❖ Effectively managing your workload, associated pressures, and adapting to changing situations. ❖ Being relied upon to complete tasks. ❖ Making informed decisions and taking ownership of your choices.	❖ Being forgetful, dis-organised, and disorderly. ❖ Failing to complete tasks to agreed deadlines, putting pressure on others. ❖ Procrastinating over decisions and failing to take responsibility when things go wrong. ❖ Having a consistent poor work-life-balance that impacts your wellbeing.
Self-Motivated … is about approaching your work with passion & enthusiasm.	❖ Leading with passion and enthusiasm. ❖ Embracing new experiences and recognising that change is continual. ❖ Being resilient in a range of situations and recognising when you need to seek support.	❖ Having a negative and unhelpful attitude and approach. ❖ Not effectively managing your own response to change. ❖ Giving up easily, especially when faced with new experiences or challenges.

Managing Others …
You take an inclusive and collaborative approach with your team(s) and colleagues to build excellent relationships, improve performance, communicate effectively, and encourage personal development and growth.

Competency Description	Positive Competency Indicators	Negative Competency Indicators
Interpersonal Excellence … is about building and maintaining effective and productive relationships at work.	❖ Forming positive relationships with your team members and colleagues. ❖ Recognising situations that are likely to lead to conflict and acting to resolve them. ❖ Championing equality, diversity, and inclusion. ❖ Working with team members to find appropriate ways to support their wellbeing.	❖ Not adapting your approach to suit the situation, or the needs of the individuals you are working with. ❖ Not taking the time to engage, build rapport with, and understand your team members and colleagues. ❖ Not addressing and supporting present wellbeing issues that are impacting team members' work. ❖ Allowing conflict to escalate and failing to address it when it arises. ❖ Interfering unnecessarily with the work of your team members or colleagues.
Managing Performance … is having the ability to clearly articulate what success looks, sounds, and feels like. You support colleagues to achieve outcomes and set clear and measurable objectives.	❖ Balancing strategic, operational, and individual objectives. ❖ Setting SMART objectives and encouraging ownership of tasks and responsibilities. ❖ Holding regular review meetings to discuss team members performance. ❖ Managing resources to make sure your team members have what they need to work successfully. ❖ Dealing with underperformance if it arises, and in a timely manner. ❖ Offering praise, celebrating successes, and encouraging the people you lead to be the very best they can be.	❖ Not balancing the needs of team members with those of the University. ❖ Allowing team members to 'plod along' without clear direction and feedback. ❖ Assuming tasks will be completed once they are allocated, without following up. ❖ Not addressing the barriers and challenges your team or individual colleagues are facing. ❖ Avoiding performance issues or disregarding inappropriate behaviour as e.g., 'that's just the way they are'. ❖ Not taking time to say how much you value and appreciate the work of your team members.

Developing People … is supporting the development and career aspirations of team members and helping people to be the best they can be.	❖ Supporting your team members to develop their skills and knowledge, for both today and the future. ❖ Using your coaching or mentoring skills with others. ❖ Identifying and taking advantage of informal, on-the-job opportunities for learning. ❖ Encouraging team members to develop skills to support their physical and mental wellbeing in the workplace	❖ Not supporting team members with their personal and professional development, and wider career aspirations. ❖ Not providing struggling team members with the support they need to improve. ❖ Avoiding collaborative working or not looking for opportunities for improvement. ❖ Not sharing your own knowledge and experience with others.
Communication Skills … is the ability to communicate effectively & appropriately.	❖ Using straightforward language avoiding jargon. ❖ Ensuring your communication is transparent, clear, specific, and accurate. ❖ Actively listening to your team members and colleagues. ❖ Considering a range of options/methods when communicating i.e., email, face to face, reports.	❖ Communicating using unnecessary jargon. ❖ Being ambiguous, and not giving your team members and colleagues the detail, they need. ❖ Behaviours that can be interpreted as dismissive or uninterested in the way you communicate. ❖ Communicating in a way that suits only you.

Managing Strategy …
You can articulate the strategic direction of your School, Service, and the University, and put effective plans in place to manage your team(s) short-medium & long-term priorities. You look to innovate and empower individuals to achieve outcomes without micro-managing.

Competency Description	Positive Competency Indicators	Negative Competency Indicators
Providing Direction … is about understanding your School/Service priorities and how these align to our University Strategy Map. You can articulate your team(s) direction in a compelling & inspiring way.	❖ Developing strategies aligned to the achievement of our School/Service/University priorities. ❖ Helping your team(s) to make connections between our School/Service/University priorities and their role. ❖ Understanding our external environment and trends that may affect your team(s), School/Service or wider University. ❖ Seeking the opinions of those you lead when developing new ideas and strategies.	❖ Not focusing on objectives and priorities that contribute to our School/Service/University aims. ❖ Not being able to express how you or your team(s) contribute to the University Strategy Map. ❖ Lacking awareness about external developments that may have an impact on your team(s). ❖ Making independent decisions without consulting with others.
Driving Change and Innovation … is the ability to respond proactively to change and inspire others to do the same.	❖ Creating an environment where ideas and innovation are encouraged. ❖ Pro-actively and collaboratively leading your team(s) through major or minor changes. ❖ Supporting team members reactions to change. ❖ Embedding a principle of continuous improvement within your team(s).	❖ Reacting defensively or being dismissive of new ideas or the contributions of others. ❖ Failing to recognise when there is a need for change. ❖ Always working in the here and now and forgetting to take a strategic view. ❖ Having an 'been there, done that, it didn't work' attitude.
Being Outcome Focused … is meeting and exceeding your team(s) aims and objectives and contributing to continued growth and success of the School/Service/University.	❖ Taking responsibility for yourself and your teams' outputs. ❖ Measuring success against defined metrics. ❖ Mitigating risk in your area of responsibility. ❖ Monitoring and reporting on budgets against financial forecasts, adjusting to ensure efficiencies are met. ❖ Taking ownership of issues, seeking a resolution, and keeping others informed.	❖ Not being accountable or accepting that you are at fault. ❖ Not using a relevant data sources or metrics to review your team(s) performance levels. ❖ Not taking the time to analyse potential pitfalls and develop contingencies to address them. ❖ Failing to keep track of or balance your budget. ❖ Not being accountable for your team(s) outcomes or keeping others informed.