Leading at UWA

An integrated leadership system for leaders at all levels

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Why lead at UWA?

The UWA Leadership Framework recognises that leaders at all levels of UWA require a mixture of leadership, technical and management expertise in order to be effective. The precise balance will depend on the level of seniority of the individual. This framework has been developed to give purpose and focus to the development of leadership capability across UWA, and to assist our staff to identify their leadership strengths and learning opportunities.

Achieving our Goals

Three broad goals have been identified as the key to UWA achieving its vision of national and international excellence. With a focus on achieving excellence in each of these areas, staff at UWA will contribute to creating an educationally rich and successful research university of international quality.

Focusing our Leadership

Often our life and professional experiences give us the opportunity to develop leadership capacity in specific focus areas. Leadership capacity must be developed in a wider range of focus areas to support successful leadership of our university into the future. This has never been as imperative as it is now, given the changing face of education, learning and development. While functioning in a fast changing and complex world, UWA staff need to become more flexible, innovative, integrative and holistic in their perspectives and behaviours.

Defining UWA Leadership Capabilities and Behaviours

The inner core of this framework provides staff at all levels of our university with a clear understanding of the leadership capabilities and behaviours expected of them. These capabilities and behaviours form the foundation of successful leadership performance that will assist our university to excel in research, teaching, service and engagement. To develop a strong and successful leadership culture at UWA, the five capabilities highlighted provided staff with specific behavioural descriptions. These behaviours are relevant for various positions and levels across our university.

Additionally, this framework is designed to underpin our selection and recruitment processes, promotions, Professional Development Reviews (PDR), and Performance Appraisal Reviews (PAR).
Achieving Our Goals

The mission of The University of Western Australia is to advance, transmit and sustain knowledge and understanding through the conduct of teaching, research and scholarship at the highest international standards, for the benefit of the Western Australian, Australian and international communities.

With this in mind, three leadership goals have been identified to provide staff at all levels with the vision to guide their leadership:

- Advancement of intellectual and social capital
- Advancement of vision, capacity, quality, and responsiveness to change
- Achievement beyond boundaries into global arenas

Achievement beyond boundaries into global arenas

UWA is focused on achieving an international reputation for excellence and innovation in teaching and research and our quest for innovation and ongoing achievement is a hallmark of our leadership and practice. A strong base for collaboration and benchmarking underpins our university’s emphasis on the consolidation of its standing as a world-class research-intensive university. As we are operating in a global arena, our university’s comparators and collaborators are located around the world.

Advancement of intellectual and social capital

As a leading comprehensive university, the promotion of ongoing scholarship and learning across the entire community is a priority. UWA staff are encouraged to achieve high standards of performance and to continuously further their knowledge base. They have access to resources and support to continue their development of skills, professional knowledge and leadership capabilities to equip them for their current and future roles. The development and sharing of intellectual capital is a cornerstone of the institutional culture. The University also places high importance on its reputation as a culturally diverse and inclusive community. Each individual plays an important role in establishing and achieving strong social relationships that are productive, constructive and supportive. This communal contribution to social capital is a responsibility that each individual should reflect in their actions and behaviours.

Advancement of vision, capacity, quality and responsiveness to change

Our university seeks to optimise its efficiency and effectiveness to ensure it can achieve its vision and mission within its existing resources. A focus on quality enhancement underpins all activities and helps identify areas that are working to capacity and those that would benefit from further improvement. Change is a natural part of this community, and is seen by UWA as a healthy and beneficial avenue for further growth and refinement of the services, activities and priorities that are supported. Performance review, development and improvement is an important tool in achieving this goal.

“The future you see ... is the future you get.”

~ Denis Waitley ~
Focusing your leadership energy for excellence

Every person makes an important contribution to leadership through their own actions and through their support of the effective leadership actions of others. This can be enacted in many different ways depending on the role an individual fulfils.

Professional and Academic Excellence
The standard to which all UWA staff members conduct their work is paramount to the success of this university as being internationally recognised and respected. With an attitude of continuous improvement, dedication and commitment, UWA staff will contribute to the ongoing and increasing success of this university. Staff members are expected to pursue life-long learning and excellent outcomes.

Engagement and Impact
An important role of UWA staff members is to connect with their local, national and international communities and stakeholders. The translation and promotion of both applied and theoretical knowledge is a valued contribution, along with the building of productive connections between our university and other communities.

Innovation and Entrepreneurialism
Our university aims to improve and enhance its performance and outcomes on an ongoing basis. Innovation and entrepreneurialism provide an important channel for identifying new ways of operating, opportunities to build new relationships and partnerships with external stakeholders, and approaches to improve services, products and delivery. UWA staff can contribute to ongoing innovation through their professional, educational and research activities.

Social and Cultural Competence
UWA values a rich and diverse society and as such promotes the understanding and respect of such factors as culture, gender, age, ethnicity, nationality, sexual orientation, education, physical characteristics, religious and spiritual beliefs, socioeconomic status, family values, individual beliefs and values, to name a few. A strong leadership focus in this area encourages an environment where individuals, groups and community can learn and work from each other and with each other in a positive, inclusive and constructive setting.

Strategic Change and Transition
Our university operates within a highly complex and competitive international setting. Adaptation and responsiveness to new trends and emerging issues is a necessary part of effective organisations. UWA leaders need to identify the key priority areas for change and implement strategies to achieve the identified shifts in practice, culture and outcomes. Their understanding and anticipation of change and its opportunities, provides a positive direction forward.

Knowledge Management and Collaboration
As a research intensive university that encourages a strong lifelong learning philosophy, UWA recognises the importance of the acquisition, generation, dissemination and exchange of knowledge. UWA staff are strongly encouraged to develop their own knowledge, share their expertise with other colleagues and institutions, and promote ongoing learning within our university and beyond. Collaboration is a strong priority both within UWA communities and with other professional and academic colleagues. Peer exchange and cross-disciplinary interactions are strongly encouraged.
Enhancing your leadership capabilities and behaviours

The following capabilities and behaviours set a clear expectation for staff at all levels of our university to act in an appropriate and effective manner. With this in mind UWA staff will build a strong culture of distributed leadership, in which all staff members are actively engaged in assisting our university to achieve its vision.

Each of these five capabilities has a comprehensive set of descriptors for all positional levels across our university, which allow individual staff to identify the required leadership performance expected of them. The leadership behavioural indicators in each descriptor become more complex with higher positions as the leadership responsibility and breadth increases.

Achieves results
As a high performing institution, our university anticipates that all staff will seek to perform to a very high standard and achieve outstanding results. They will set high performance goals and aim for results that reflect high quality and efficiency.

Shapes strategic thinking
(U supports strategic direction)
UWA staff contribute to the strategic direction of our university in all elements of their work. They need to be conversant with UWA’s strategic and operational priorities and to support them in their actions, the roles they play and the promotion of our university priorities to their colleagues and staff. Senior leaders will also play a major role in guiding the directions of their own communities to ensure good alignment with UWA’s direction and goals.

Communicates with influence & respect
Communication is a critical aspect of all roles, operating as a means of conveying work-related information and outcomes, and to guide the common understanding of groups and individuals. UWA leaders communicate across the community and more widely with the goal of encouraging effective understanding, stronger collaboration, exchange of knowledge, and ongoing learning. This is undertaken in a culture of respect and inclusivity.

Exemplifies personal drive and integrity
(Displays personal drive and integrity)
All staff need to contribute productively to our university outcomes and operate from an ethical base that demonstrates high integrity. Transparency, accountability and honesty are anticipated in the actions of each individual.

Cultivates productive working relationships
(Supports productive working relationships)
Our university’s Code of Conduct highlights the importance of each staff member contributing to a positive, constructive and supportive work environment. Each individual contributes to this outcome through their behaviours, their acknowledgement and addressing of issues, and the values that they demonstrate through their actions.
Core values and behaviours of leaders at UWA

The UWA Values underpinning our behaviours and activities are a commitment to:

- A high performance culture designed to achieve international excellence
- Academic freedom to encourage staff and students to engage in open exchange of ideas and thought
- Continuous improvement through self-evaluation and external review
- Fostering the values of respect, openness, honesty, tolerance, fairness, trust and responsibility in social, moral and academic matters
- Transparency in decision-making and accountability
- Equity and merit as the fundamental principles for the achievement of the full potential of all staff and students

The Code of Conduct is based on principles, values and behaviours outlined in the Code of Ethics. This Code applies to all staff and students of the University. Contractors, their employees and representatives, and visitors engaging in any University-related activity are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with this Code.

The Code of Conduct underlines:

- The rights of employees to be treated fairly and equitably in the workplace;
- Avenues for resolving complaints or breaches of policies and Codes; and
- The legal and ethical obligations and expectations of all students and staff to act in accordance with the expressed standards of conduct, integrity and accountability contained in relevant legislation, University policies and Agreements.

The objectives of the Code are to:

- Provide direction to staff and students around expected conduct whilst affiliated with the University;
- Assist staff and students in dealing with ethical issues in ways that reflect the University's values and standards;
- Promote professionalism and excellence;
- Express shared assumptions and organisational values;
- Provide staff and students with direction in ethically ambiguous situations;
- Detail the University's social responsibilities; and
- Provide a statement on public accountability and corporate governance.