



UNIVERSITY
of
OTAGO
Te Whare Wānanga o Ōtāgo
NEW ZEALAND

Academic Leadership Framework

University of Otago

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Academic Leadership Framework

Whaia te ihi kahurangi; me he tuohu koe,
he māunga teitei

Pursue that which you treasure most;
should you have to forfeit, let it be only
because of an insurmountable obstacle

Whaowhia te kete mātauranga
Fill the basket of knowledge

INTRODUCTION

The University of Otago regards leadership as essential to the success of the organisation. Leadership fosters an environment where the University can be agile, innovative and creative. Hence it is important that leadership skills are developed by staff at all levels from the most junior to most senior. In a collegial university environment there are opportunities for everyone to make a difference as a leader, whether in a formal leadership role or not.

The Academic Leadership Framework outlines 5 essential, generic attributes of leadership from the perspective of strengths and warning signals. There is no intention that each strength will have a matching warning signal¹. The extent to which these strengths are developed and manifest in an individual will depend upon role, seniority and experience.

The framework can be used as a means for individuals to consider their own strengths and warning signals as part of planning their career and leadership development.

Underpinning the framework is the University's commitment to the Treaty of Waitangi and biculturalism, and its guiding principles, values and strategy. Implicit within these is excellence in both research and teaching, commitment to achieving outstanding student experiences, acting as a local, national and global citizen, as well as strong external engagement.

¹ Acknowledgement to the University of Bristol Leadership Framework for this approach

PERSONAL QUALITIES AND LEADING BY EXAMPLE

INDICATORS

- Acts with integrity and professionalism
- Is committed to being a University leader; is accountable for the responsibilities of the role including its alignment with University values and priorities
- Has awareness of strengths and limitations of self and others; understands how to use strengths effectively
- Displays flexibility and ability to handle uncertainty and change
- Seeks constant improvement and is open to constructive feedback
- Effectively manages own energy, time and priorities; remains calm under pressure

WARNING SIGNALS

Puts own interests above those of department and University

Avoids responsibilities of leadership role

Gives insufficient time to the role

Unrealistic expectations of self and others

Closed mind-set

Takes constructive criticism personally

Unable to admit mistakes

SETTING A DIRECTION: INSPIRING A SHARED VISION AND ESTABLISHING STRATEGIC GOALS

INDICATORS

- Supports the achievement of University goals, including the implementation of the Māori Strategic Framework, Pacific Strategic Framework and other strategic documents
- Sees the big picture, identifies and focusses on key factors to set direction and achieve departmental goals that align with the priorities of division and University
- Inspires people to have a shared sense of purpose and contribute to developing priorities and direction
- Able to innovate and change direction in response to organisational and external practices and processes

WARNING SIGNALS

Has a very narrow view of the University context

Priorities are not clearly communicated

Resistant to change

Unrealistic expectations

PEOPLE AND CULTURE: DEVELOPING SHARED LEADERSHIP AND ENABLING PEOPLE TO SUCCEED

INDICATORS

- Develops and maintains relationships based on trust, respect and fairness
- Fosters a healthy, fair and inclusive work and learning environment
- Fosters development of teams, groups and future leaders
- Empathises and communicates well with staff and students
- Encourages openness, information-sharing and listening to the views of others
- Values and acknowledges the contributions of staff and students to achieving shared goals

WARNING SIGNALS

Self-interested

Unwilling to help others

Intolerant of others

Aggressive

Poor communication

Withholds information

MAKING SOUND AND TIMELY DECISIONS

INDICATORS

- Shows integrity, fairness and consistency in decision-making
- Identifies issues, opportunities and problems in a timely manner
- Seeks relevant facts and advice, consults appropriately, and thinks through the consequences of a decision
- Has confidence to make the final decision
- Takes responsibility to communicate and implement decisions

WARNING SIGNALS

Shows favouritism

Procrastinates

Unable to prioritise

Doesn't listen to others, even after seeking their opinions

Avoids unpopular or difficult decisions

Prone to changing decisions under pressure

ACTIONS: ACHIEVING GOALS

INDICATORS

- Fosters a culture of responsibility and accountability, leading to shared ownership of goals amongst individuals, groups and teams
- Uses and creates effective management structures to ensure responsibilities² for sound decisions are met
- Identifies and organises people, resources and processes necessary to achieve strategic goals
- Provides considered, effective and fair advocacy to senior management for the interests of staff and students
- Delegates equitably and effectively, leaving scope for creativity and personal style
- Commits to goals and communicates appropriately about plans, resources and progress

WARNING SIGNALS

Inaction

Hands-off; no follow-through

Excessive control

Risk averse

Excessive attention to detail

Ineffective planning

² E.g. about staff, students, Health and Safety, finances, space and risk



"Pathways" by Dr Paul Dibble.
Installed at University of Otago, Dunedin campus.



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