University of Reading

Values for Working Together and Professional Behaviours

A message from the Vice-Chancellor

The new Human Resources Strategy, *Working Together: A Strategy for Success*, in tandem with the Promoting Excellence Project, set the tone for the University's relationship with its staff. First and foremost, we are a community and our collective strength allows us to achieve more than each of us can do individually. Together, we want to maximise our achievements and enable everyone to operate to the best of their abilities.

It is important to provide clarity for colleagues about the link between the University and individual roles. To this end Values for Working Together has been developed. They form the bedrock of our work and I hope they capture what it is that makes working for the University of Reading so special. A series of **Professional Behaviours** have also been developed to help each of us understand better how best we can contribute to the continuing success of the University.

The information contained in this document is not intended to be prescriptive. Rather, I hope that you will find it helpful in planning and organising your work objectives and, where appropriate, those for staff for whom you are responsible. In addition, you may find it helpful in a variety of circumstances such as recruiting and inducting new staff and making cases for reward.

Finally, may I express my gratitude to all those who have contributed to this work. In doing so, they have demonstrated their commitment to our Values and have shown how much can be achieved when colleagues across the University come together for the common good.

Sir David Bell, KCB
Vice-Chancellor

Introduction

Through the Staff Survey 2011 colleagues expressed a strong desire to better understand the vision for the University and the University priorities, and see how their individual role and objectives contributed to the achievement of the University's strategic objectives.

The University's overall objectives are articulated via the **University Strategy**. The **Values for Working Together** and the **Professional Behaviours** outlined in this document complement this, and together help to provide clarity about common objectives and purpose, and the ways in which we can most productively work together.

The **Values for Working Together** aim to provide a framework within which the University community can work together effectively toward the achievement of excellence. The University will provide a working environment and experience that reflects these values and expects all colleagues to conduct themselves in a way that is consistent with them.

The **Professional Behaviours** illustrate the types of activity that the University believes will promote excellence. They are intended to be applicable to all staff at the University and can be adapted to reflect the particular needs and circumstances of different roles. They are intended to act as a guide, rather than a prescriptive check list, of the behaviours the University will recognise, reward and endorse.

Please use these as the basis upon which you, with your manager and wider team can consider how best you can contribute to the wider University.

We aim for excellence and appreciate that this takes many forms and must, in any case, be achievable. As a leading University we want to be recognised as excellent in comparison to our peers, for example, 1994 Group institutions. As individuals we want to be considered as excellent by colleagues and those we engage with.

We hope that this document will help you think about what excellence means to you and how it can be achieved.

Values for
Working Together

The University is a place of learning and endeavour, a community of staff and students. Some of us contribute to that community by engaging directly with teaching, learning and research; others support and enable those core activities.

Our collective commitment is to excellence, in all our activities, and this is underpinned by certain essential values that both employees and the University should encourage and develop.

- **Freedom** within the law to question, put forward new ideas and challenge one another intellectually to contribute to the advancement of knowledge.

- **Respect** for the rights, differences and dignity of all those who study, work and lead within our community.

- Members of our community **work together** to demonstrate ethical professional behaviours at all times.

- **Communication** is honest and open, ideas and opinions are sought and given due consideration, and resulting decisions are acted upon.

- The need for **responsible stewardship** of our environment, facilities and resources is understood and respected.

- We are all **accountable** for our actions and act with professionalism so that our positive contributions are recognised and valued.

- We strive to continuously improve our work and to be **aspirational** for our own and the University's future.

These values are essential to the success and well-being of our University, and will inform and guide all our practice, policy and activity.

University of Reading
Professional Behaviours

The University of Reading Professional Behaviours provide a guide about what the University expects from its staff, in accordance with the University Strategy and Values for Working Together. They are not to be used as a check list, but should provide helpful indications of the types of behaviour that the University values and encourages in the promotion of excellence.

Achieving results page 6
Consistently meeting objectives and success criteria within agreed deadlines. Planning, prioritising, and organising workloads to ensure that deadlines are met within resource constraints.

Demonstrating excellence page 8
Working at a consistently high standard and providing the best quality service to students, staff, and other members of our community. Building genuine and long-term relationships to enable success.

Finding innovative solutions page 10
Working innovatively to analyse problems and develop workable solutions.

Embracing and enabling change page 12
Creating and contributing to a climate that encourages innovation. Seeing change as an opportunity to challenge the way things are done and being receptive to new ideas.

Developing self and others page 14
Showing a commitment to personal development. Supporting and encouraging others to develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

Working together page 16
Working cooperatively with others to achieve objectives. Applying a wide range of interpersonal skills. Respecting and valuing the diversity of contribution amongst the University community.

Achieving results

Examples of doing this well include:

- Prioritising and organising your workload to consistently meet objectives and success criteria on time, to an agreed specification, and within budgets;

- Distinguishing between important and urgent tasks and prioritising effectively;

- Accepting and demonstrating personal responsibility for getting things done;

- Working cooperatively with others, across and outside of the University, to achieve objectives;

- Listening to different points of view and incorporating them where appropriate;

- Making effective use of available resources, especially people;

- Making decisions and taking responsibility for them; and

- Communicating clearly and respectfully with each other, students and customers.

Barriers to achieving results could include:

- Delaying action unnecessarily;

- Over-committing, running the risk of not delivering and failing to communicate delays;

- Not being able to say no, even when a job can't reasonably be done;

- Always going for the highest quality solution regardless of cost implications;

- Focusing almost exclusively on own job or work area;

- Being insufficiently aware of the reasonable expectations of others and the overall goals of the University; and

- Failing to communicate in a timely manner with others.

Accountable, working together, communication, responsible stewardship.

Consistently meeting objectives and success criteria within agreed deadlines. Planning, prioritising, and organising workloads to ensure that deadlines are met within resource constraints.

You can develop your personal competence by:

- Talking regularly with your line manager about progress made against objectives;
- Engaging with the University Strategy and corporate priorities to inform your own deadlines and priorities;
- Taking appropriate opportunities to develop your personal skills and competencies, including by participating in training and development activities;
- Engaging in the performance review process; and
- Engaging in mentoring.

When leading and managing others consider:

- Articulating strategic direction and vision and how they can be achieved;
- Communicating team and University priorities and key University messages, creating momentum and enthusiasm about what needs to be done;
- Setting performance standards and establishing appropriate monitoring procedures, providing feedback to teams and individuals on their performance regularly.
- Identifying the ways in which resources (including people, information, networks and budgets) can be used flexibly and to best effect for the benefit of the whole University;
- Being mindful of, and communicating the financial and commercial constraints of the University.
- Identifying key risks that impact organisational performance;
- Taking time to recognise effort and achievement, celebrate successes and giving credit to the contribution others make; and
- Addressing underperformance issues and demonstrating a commitment to resolving them.

Demonstrating excellence

Examples of doing this well include:

- Promoting a positive staff and student experience, understanding the needs of different groups;

- Framing the work you do in the context of the bigger picture of your team and beyond;

- Evaluating the success of projects and good practice, sharing lessons that can be learned across your team, and beyond;

- Seeking feedback on your work and using it to improve your delivery of excellence;

- Building productive and long term relationships across the University and more broadly;

- Helping to shape the external agenda within your discipline or professional field, and Higher Education; and

- Defining ambitious and achievable goals, using benchmarks as appropriate.

Barriers to delivering excellence could include:

- Focusing on cost without regard to value;

- Failing to take responsibility for work;

- Being too internally focused and not keeping up to date with current practices and trends in your professional field of work;

- Failing to consult about alternative approaches and solutions;

- Failing to set sufficiently high standards and benchmarks; and

- Being unwilling to consider changes to practices and approaches.

Aspirational, working together, communication.

Working at a consistently high standard and providing the best quality service to students, staff, and other members of our community. Building genuine and long-term relationships to enable success.

You can develop your personal competence by:

- Taking more time to think about what others expect from you;
- Engaging in learning and networking related to your field of work;
- Working with your line manager to be clear about the benchmarks for excellence in your activities; and
- Actively seeking feedback on your work to identify areas for improvement.

When leading and managing others consider:

- Communicating vision clearly and enthusiastically to inspire and motivate others, whilst being mindful of the day-to-day pressures;
- Setting standards within your team and fostering a commitment to continuous improvement;
- Ensuring that your team know how their work relates to the University, making links between the individual and wider objectives clear and motivating colleagues towards the achievement of the University goals;
- Encouraging and trusting others to take responsibility; and
- Sharing good practice the team has identified with other areas of the University.

Finding innovative solutions

Examples of doing this well include:

- Actively seeking new ideas and approaches and sharing them with colleagues;

- Being open to, and applying, good practice and fresh ideas from inside and outside the University;

- Identifying and pursuing opportunities to work in partnership with external organisations;

- Working proactively and taking initiative; and

- Resolving problems quickly and seeking support when you can't find the solution.

Barriers to finding innovative solutions could include:

- Doing things the way they always have been done uncritically;

- Putting obstacles in the way of innovation;

- Being overly rigid and rule driven;

- Generating ideas but not following any of them through; and

- Allowing the fear of failure to inhibit innovation.

Freedom, aspirational.

Working innovatively to analyse problems and develop workable solutions.

You can develop your personal competence by:

- Taking time to think about the way things are done and whether they can be improved;
- Sharing ideas with others to ensure that they are practicable;
- Working with a mentor to identify different ways of working across the University; and
- Engaging with good practice from elsewhere.

When leading and managing others consider:

- Supporting others to find their own solutions rather than imposing all the answers;
- Coaching and guiding others in developing and implementing innovative solutions;
- Encouraging and developing creativity by recruiting people with a range of talents;
- Celebrating and rewarding innovation; and
- Fostering a culture that encourages people to take acceptable risks in pursuing innovation.

Enabling and embracing change

Examples of doing this well include:

- Viewing and promoting change as an opportunity for improving and developing work;

- Leading by example in supporting the University to break with traditional methods by challenging the way things are done in a constructive way;

- Displaying an open mind to new ideas and proposals;

- Embracing new technologies, techniques and working methods; and

- Remaining positive but being realistic about the challenges of change.

Barriers to enabling and embracing change could include:

- Being unable to personally move beyond negative reaction to uncertainty;

- Complaining instead of doing something;

- Presenting only the problem with no consideration or discussion about potential solutions;

- Consistently blocking change and failing to engage with others' ideas for change; and

- Failing to provide timetables and plans for change to engender certainty in others.

Responsible stewardship, freedom, aspirational, communication.

Creating and contributing to a climate that encourages innovation. Seeing change as an opportunity to challenge the way things are done and being receptive to new ideas.

You can develop your personal competence by:

- Taking appropriate opportunities to develop your personal skills and competencies, including by participating in training and development activities.

- Attending and contributing to wider University sessions on changes that are taking place; and

- Talking to others when you are finding change difficult to manage – including utilising the University's Employee Assistance Programme, HARC advisors or Trade Union representatives.

When leading and managing others consider:

- Communicating what change is happening and why;

- Scanning the wider environment to seek opportunities to develop the organisation;

- Modifying local strategies to adapt to changes in the wider environment;

- Helping others to move from negative reaction to change; and

- Giving colleagues advice, support and feedback when they need it.

Developing self and others

Examples of doing this well include:

- Engaging in formal and informal learning and development activities;

- Being willing to assess, apply and develop your skills, abilities and experience and to seek opportunities for feedback;

- Taking an active interest in what is happening more widely in the University, participating in team and wider meetings;

- Participating in discussions about setting objectives and striving towards team goals.

- Supporting and encouraging others to develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours; and

- Providing regular constructive feedback to others.

Barriers to developing self and others could include:

- Reacting defensively to constructive criticism;

- Blocking the progress of colleagues and failing to provide equal access to developmental opportunities for all;

- Being unduly intolerant of mistakes and apportioning blame;

- Failing to reflect on own performance and how this can be developed;

- Focusing on others' weaknesses rather than their strengths; and

- Withholding information that could help colleagues.

Respect, aspirational, accountable.

Showing a commitment to personal development. Supporting and encouraging others to develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours.

You can develop your personal competence by:

- Undertaking coaching or mentoring;
- Actively participating in team and wider meetings across the University;
- Taking appropriate opportunities to develop your personal skills and competencies, including by participating in training and development activities; and
- Undertaking volunteering, including volunteering to become a Harassment Advisor, HARC advisor, or pensions member nominated trustee.

When leading and managing others consider:

- Identifying the changing needs of the University and incorporating these into own and others' development plans;
- Ensuring a supportive environment where team members can accept responsibility for failure and success;
- Providing creative work and training opportunities to stretch and develop staff;
- Helping the team to identify their own strengths, weaknesses, and development needs;
- Giving praise for work well done and providing constructive feedback to colleagues at all levels;
- Coaching and mentoring others; and
- Encouraging others to contribute to University level activity.

Working together

Examples of doing this well include:

- Co-operating to support the achievements of team and University goals;

- Working across boundaries to develop relationships, sharing information and keeping others informed;

- Being clear about where your responsibility ends and that of others begins;

- Being aware of your own behaviour and how it impacts on others, challenging inappropriate behaviour;

- Demonstrating that you value diversity of contribution, reflecting the Values for Working Together;

- Listening to the views of others so that the best way forward can be found; and

- Using your understanding of the perspective of others to help reach agreement.

Barriers to working together could include:

- Interrupting when others are speaking;

- Withholding or 'drip feeding' information that others need;

- Discouraging debate or critical discourse;

- Acting competitively when it is inappropriate to do so;

- Undervaluing the contributions of colleagues in other areas of the University;

- Sending ill considered communications without considering the potential impact on the recipients;

- Giving priority to personal goals; and

- Presenting other people's ideas as your own.

Communicating, working together, respect, responsible stewardship.

Working cooperatively with others to achieve objectives. Applying a wide range of interpersonal skills. Respecting and valuing the diversity of contribution amongst the University community.

You can develop your personal competence by:

- Undertake training on Equality and Diversity so that you understand the University's Equality Policy and Objectives;

- Participate in University wide events and consultations;

- Make efforts to connect with others across the University to share information and ideas; and

- Becoming an environmental champion.

When leading and managing others consider:

- Encouraging an University-wide perspective, ensuring that communications promote a 'team' rather than 'us and them' culture;

- Providing clarity about responsibilities and accountabilities, ensuring that working arrangements, resources and processes respond to different needs, abilities, values and ways of working;

- Sharing information and keeping others informed; and

- Addressing conflicts early and challenging inappropriate behaviour.
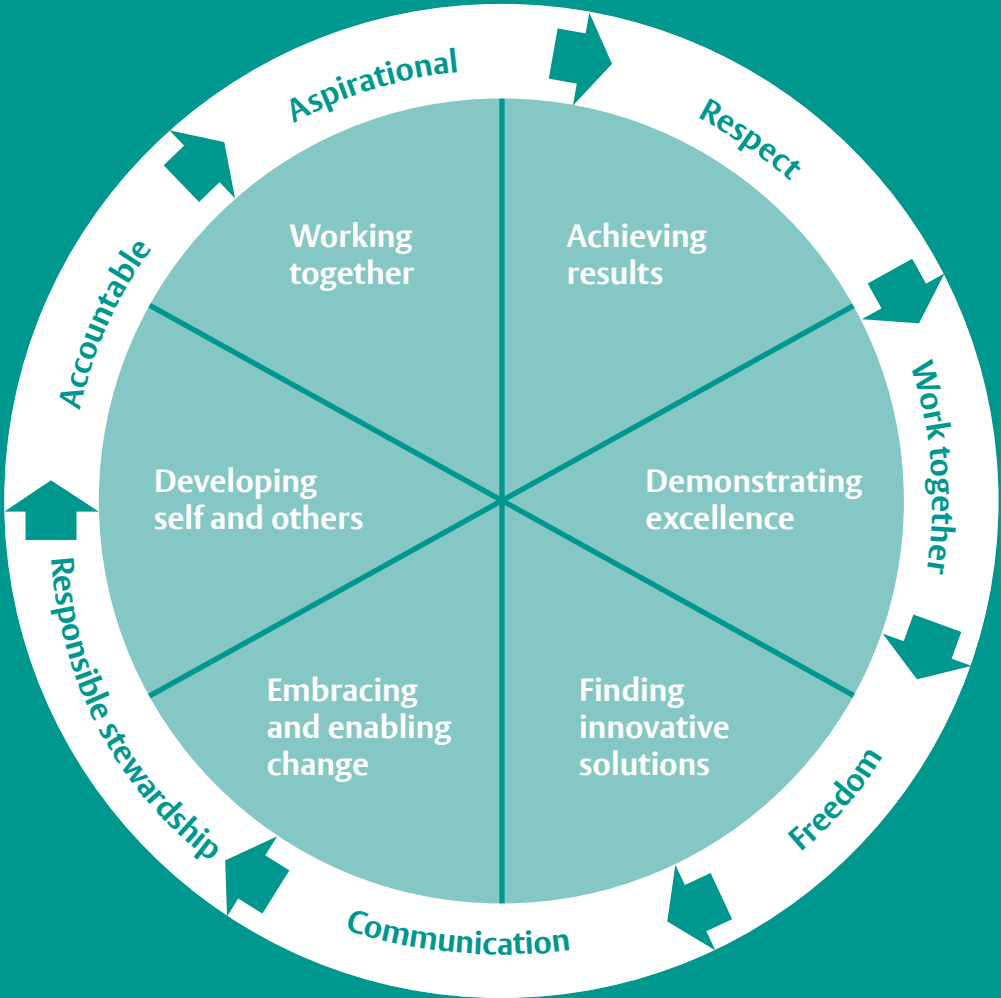
Using the Values and Professional Behaviours

As the values and behaviours are a new development for the University you may want to think about the following questions, or where appropriate use these questions as the basis for a discussion with your team members.

Values for Working Together

- What do the values for working together mean for me/us?
- Are any of the values particularly challenging for me/us?
- How might we apply the values in our day-to-day work?
- How will we ensure that new team members understand and apply the values?
- What will we do if colleagues act inconsistently with the values?

Professional Behaviours

- Am I clear about what is expected of me to help achieve results?
- Do I work with others to achieve my objectives?
- Am I communicating what I am doing to others within the team and beyond? If not, why not?
- How focused am I on demonstrating excellence?
- Am I promoting a positive staff and/or student? What can I do to improve?
- How am I using feedback to develop my work?
- Am I applying good practice from elsewhere in the University and beyond to the work that I am doing?
- How can I improve the way I do things?
- Do I discuss change and how I feel about it?
- What learning and development am I engaged in?
- Do I know what is happening across the wider University? Am I attending University wide events?
- Am I aware of the University's Equality and Diversity policy and objectives?
- Do I recognise in myself any of the 'barriers' and if so, what can I do about it?
- What further development should I be undertaking?

Aspirational

Respect

Work together

Freedom

Communication

Responsible stewardship

Accountable

Working together

Achieving results

Developing self and others

Demonstrating excellence

Embracing and enabling change

Finding innovative solutions

Values for Working Together and Professional Behaviours

ⓘ For more information,
please contact:

John Brady or **Ruth Busby**

Human Resources
University of Reading
Whiteknights, PO Box 217
Reading RG6 6AH

workingtogether@reading.ac.uk
Tel (0118) 378 8754
www.reading.ac.uk/hr

CARBON
TRUST
STANDARD

REDUCING CO2
YEAR ON YEAR

THE QUEEN'S
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES

2009 & 2011

BRONZE

Athena SWAN
Charter for Women in Science