

BRAVE

Leadership Culture Development Framework

Bold - **R**esilient - **A**uthentic - **V**ersatile - **E**mpowering

BRAVE



Leadership culture at Ulster University

“Courage in action, to challenge and do what is right”

“Being brave enough to take giant leaps into the unknown”

- (Anonymous, Ulster University Vice Chancellor Leadership Forum, 2019)

At Ulster University collective growth and development are vital in **Achieving Excellence Together**. Embedding our values will enable a culture where staff feel appreciated and motivated to give their best. In addition, enhancing leadership potential and capability in supporting leaders who equip and inspire will help us achieve our ambitions together.

Leadership means many things to many people. The BRAVE Leadership Culture Framework at Ulster University encompasses a central ambition to nurture leaders to be **Bold, Resilient, Authentic, Versatile** and **Empowering**, across four levels of leadership. Articulating a series of attributes that are important for all current and prospective leaders in our organisation at all stages of their personal ‘leadership journey’.

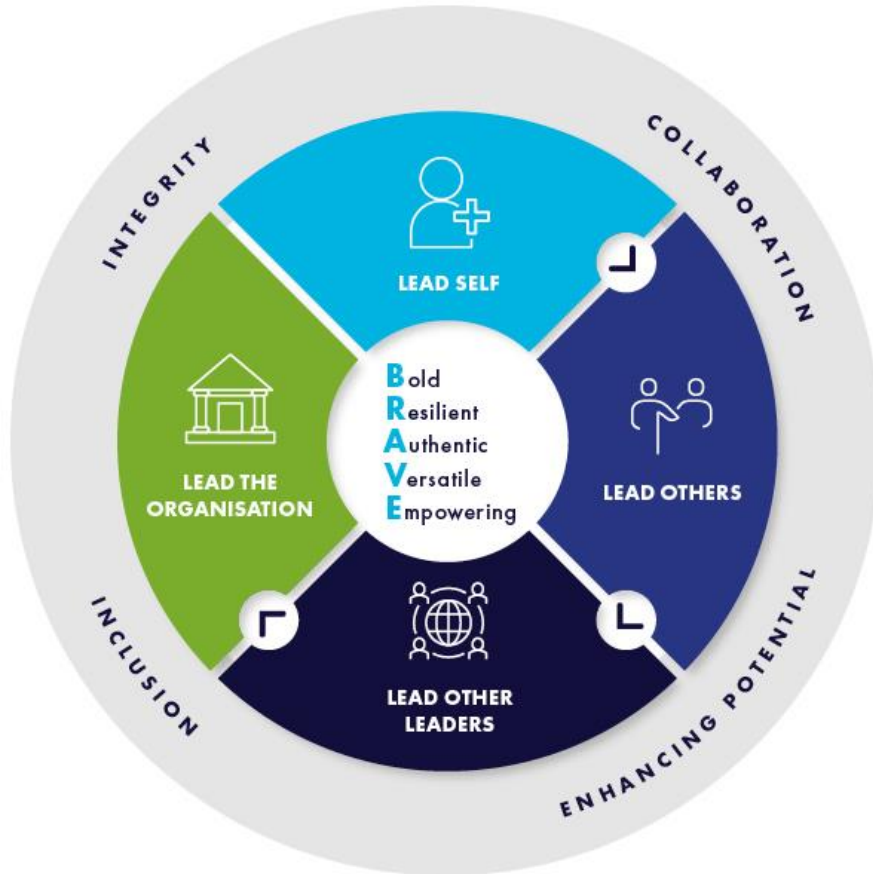
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About the framework

The BRAVE framework has been designed to support the embedding of five key attributes, **Bold, Resilient, Authentic, Versatile & Empowering** into the leadership culture across Ulster University. To support an understanding of what BRAVE leadership may look like in practice, examples of observable capabilities and reflective behaviours have been outlined for each attribute.

The framework demonstrates a cumulative journey of development across four levels of leadership. In contrast to using a strict hierarchical approach, the levels presented are flexible and centered around the employees impact in the organisation (based on increasing role, scope, complexity, and influence).

It reflects current beliefs about effective leadership and reinforces our organisational values and culture.





Lead Self

A foundation for all leaders promoting the importance of living the values and taking responsibility for leading self as a leader.

Leading at all levels enables a collective & systematic approach to enhancing leadership potential and culture across Ulster University. It recognises that leadership capabilities look different depending on the individual's role.



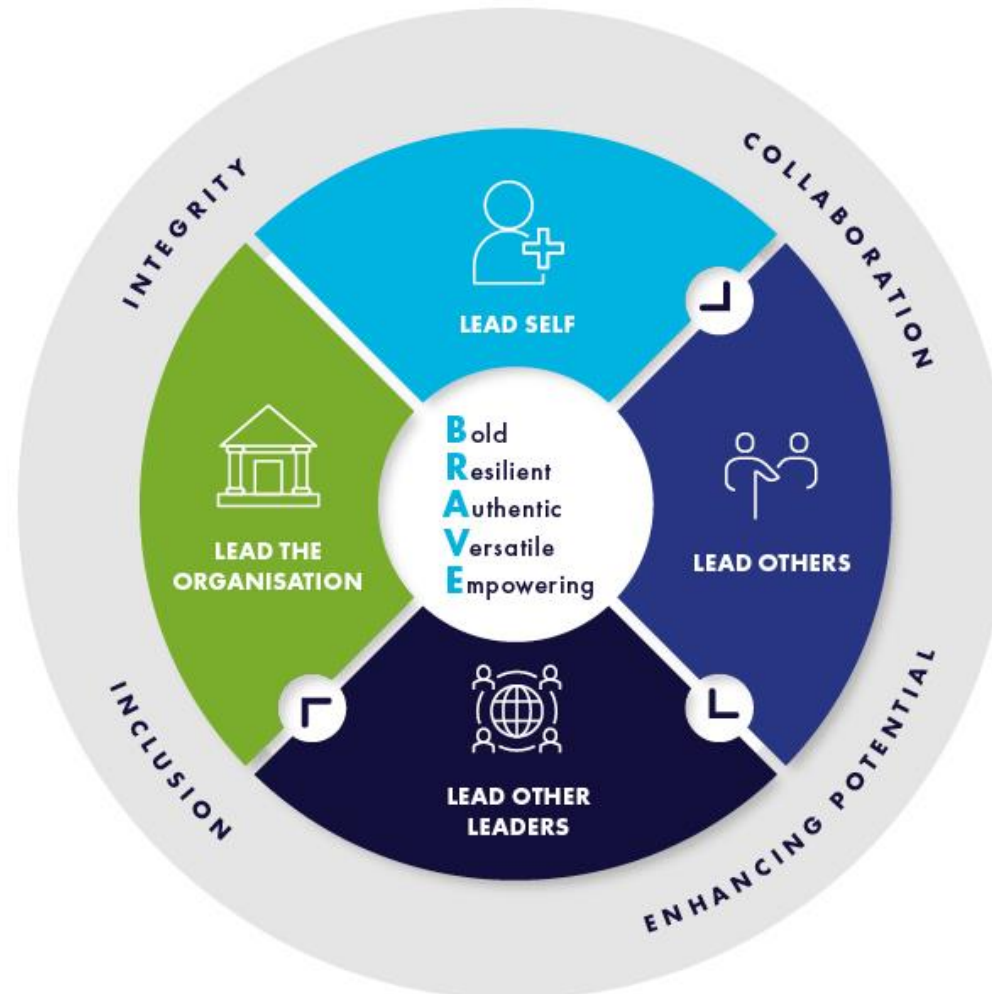
Lead Others

The leaders of individual employees. Often focused on the frontline of service provision, teaching delivery, or research endeavour. These leaders are pivotal in getting the work done through teams.



Lead the Organisation

Senior and executive leaders in the organisation responsible for setting the vision for the University and providing the resources to build toward the future.



Lead Other Leaders

Experienced employees who lead other managers or leaders. The focus to convert strategy to operational requirements, and manage outcomes through multiple layers of complexity.

BOLD How you lead?

You recognise that having the courage to challenge is fundamental to the role of leading yourself, our people, your teams and the organisation. You have the confidence to speak up; skilfully challenging others even when confronted with resistance or unfamiliar circumstances.

Capability

Courageous Leadership

The capability to respectfully have difficult conversations and maintain integrity, while influencing, accepting, and committing to change, taking measured risks, and leveraging diversity.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self	Lead Others	Lead Other Leaders	Lead the Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consistently behaves in alignment with the university values with high self awareness taking responsibility for own behaviours ✓ Constructively challenges peer behaviour that does not represent the university values or benefit collective purposes ✓ Has courage to bring forward new ideas, expressing own opinion in a way that supports colleagues and the university values 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Models the university values, and addresses behaviour that is inconsistent with these ✓ Displays confidence in own judgement and courage to deal with difficult situations in teams without procrastinating ✓ Enables a team culture of trying new ways of doing things, stepping out in risk and constructively challenging the status quo 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Is courageous, fair and consistent in delegation of responsibility to staff ✓ Promotes a no blame culture ✓ Challenges accepted norms and incorporates inclusion practices into how business is done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Acts with moral courage to make difficult decisions, and explains impact of decisions on staff and students ✓ Creates a climate which encourages and supports openness, persistence, and genuine debate around critical issues and difficult situations ✓ Models the ability to evaluate circumstances and step into measured risk

BOLD How you lead?

You recognise that having the courage to challenge is fundamental to the role of leading yourself, our people, your teams and the organisation. You have the confidence to speak up; skilfully challenging others even when confronted with resistance or unfamiliar circumstances.

Capability

Think Strategically & Set Direction

The capability to mindfully consider the long term objectives and goals of the university when making decisions, taking a holistic view of the environment and clearly communicating present state, future direction and ambitions.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self	Lead Others	Lead Other Leaders	Lead the Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Takes into account future aims and goals of the team and university when prioritising own work connecting how own role contributes to organisational success. ✓ Take ownership and responsibility for own decisions consistent with legislation, precedent and established policies and procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Promotes and enables individuals alignment with the team purpose and direction ✓ Collaboratively develops team plans that reflect the strategic direction of the university ✓ Creates momentum and enthusiasm about what needs to be done ✓ Autonomously manages competing priorities and acts to obtain desired outcomes ✓ Makes and implements decisions when faced with differing stakeholder perspectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Proactively translates how the strategic direction informs work priorities applying a systems thinking methodology ✓ Uses information available to assess the consequences and impact of proposed strategies and decisions ✓ Takes a holistic and long-term view by scanning the horizon and stimulating discussion about the future ✓ Providing timely guidance to move new ideas forward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Articulates strategic direction and vision clearly, anticipating the shifting environment, emerging challenges, and opportunities ✓ Takes into account the university's key internal and external stakeholders, and operating environment seeking opportunities for broad consultations and contributions in developing long-term strategy for the university. ✓ Considers whole system and recognises complex links ✓ Guides the university towards the accomplishment of strategic objectives

The logo for BRAVE, with the word in a bold, sans-serif font. The letters 'B' and 'R' are dark blue, while 'A', 'V', and 'E' are light blue. The letters are partially enclosed by a blue geometric frame.

RESILIENT **How you deliver?**

You demonstrate perseverance and tenacity directed towards the achievement of goals despite pressure or adversity. You can adapt your behaviour according to the circumstances, proactively coping with obstacles and recovering quickly after experiencing setbacks.

Capability

Drive for Results

The capability to take personal responsibility for making things happen. Does not let the approval or disapproval of others unduly influence them, and shows perseverance in overcoming and achieving results.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self

- ✓ Takes personal responsibility for making things happen and getting things done
- ✓ Re-groups quickly after a setback and shows perseverance in achieving results
- ✓ Plans, structures and prioritises own work to achieve optimum results in line with key objectives and development plans

Lead Others

- ✓ Remains resilient while working under adverse or conflicting demands
- ✓ Is tenacious and drives projects forward within, Incorporating flexibility into team plans
- ✓ Is knowledgeable about key stakeholders and influencers
- ✓ Remains focused on attaining results despite obstacles and interruptions

Lead Other Leaders

- ✓ Uses sound judgement to say no to activities that are less important or do not fit with university priorities
- ✓ Holds themselves and others accountable for achieving excellent results aligned to the strategic priorities
- ✓ Takes a systematic approach to delivery

Lead the Organisation

- ✓ Constantly displays a drive to deliver while striving to exceed results and works hard to instill this in others across the organisation
- ✓ Sees beyond the current business model to envisage new ways of strategic working for the university
- ✓ Creates a “can do” culture, where there are stretch targets, outputs are measured and there is delivery of excellence in the organisation

BRAVE

RESILIENT **How you deliver?**

You demonstrate perseverance and tenacity directed towards the achievement of goals despite pressure or adversity. You can adapt your behaviour according to the circumstances, proactively coping with obstacles and recovering quickly after experiencing setbacks.

Capability

Problem Solving

The capability for creative problem-solving skills, having the ability to stimulate, challenge and inspire others to continually pursue prominent problems and generate solutions.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self

- ✓ Supports a sense of collective ownership for problems and solutions adapting a can-do attitude
- ✓ Applies learning to problems and solutions to prevent reoccurrence
- ✓ Understands the importance of providing appropriate evidence to support effective solutions

Lead Others

- ✓ Creates a sense of collective ownership for problems and solutions
- ✓ Recognises problems quickly, gathers and analyses relevant information to get a good understanding of the situation and identifies root causes of a problem
- ✓ Empowers others to use initiative, insight and creativity to resolve issues and prevent their reoccurrence

Lead Other Leaders

- ✓ Looks beyond the obvious and immediate information when generating solutions
- ✓ Brings the right people together to encourage robust debate and solve complex problems
- ✓ Engages different perspectives in seeking out root causes and uses a range of techniques to break apart complex problems
- ✓ Creates systems that create a transparent audit trail of solutions

Lead the Organisation

- ✓ Is proactive in anticipating and solving strategic problems
- ✓ Exercises sound judgement in situations of unpredictable change and ambiguity
- ✓ Seeks critical information to articulate assumptions about problems that relate strategically to the wider organisation

AUTHENTIC How you engage?

You are values-driven, genuine, real and ethical. You demonstrate a sound awareness of your strengths and limitations, and your emotions. You focus on people development and recognise the value that diversity brings to the university.

Capability

Developing Self and Others

The capability to demonstrate commitment to own development for current and future performance, supporting and encouraging others to develop their knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable them to reach their full potential for the wider benefit of the organisation.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self	Lead Others	Lead Other Leaders	Lead the Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Recognises one's own areas of personal and professional strength as well as areas for development and is committed to continuous learning ✓ Actively seeks, reflects, and integrates feedback to enhance own performance, showing a strong capacity and willingness to modify own behaviours ✓ Has awareness of personal traits, beliefs or aspects of personality that may impact on the way one acts, behaves or reacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Appreciates that continuous learning is an inherent part of personal and professional development for individuals and teams ✓ Supports teams to review and learn from experiences through constructive feedback ✓ Monitors and supports the performance and development of team members ✓ Ensures development is meaningful and linked to increased personal satisfaction, team productivity and business need 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Actively engages people to nurture strengths and contribute to organisational sustainability ✓ Creates a learning environment that facilitates the identification and development of talent ✓ Support to drive leadership and management capacity for the university ✓ Promotes a culture of continuous learning and development for all staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Drives a continuous learning culture across the organisation for all staff ✓ Harnesses increased capability to meet strategic needs ✓ Promotes opportunities for self and others to broaden their business experience internally and externally

AUTHENTIC How you engage?

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Capability

Build Positive & Collaborative Relationships

The capability to proactively develop productive internal and external working relationships that are high in trust and influence positive outcomes.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self

- ✓ Demonstrates UU values in all interactions with individuals and groups
- ✓ Uses empathy and vulnerability to build trust and respect for positive work relationships
- ✓ Accept and value different perspectives working collectively and collaboratively with colleagues
- ✓ Delivers and models a sustained and consistent professional approach to customer experience

Lead Others

- ✓ Engenders trust and respect amongst team members
- ✓ Builds on common ground, faces conflict and looks to resolve to mutual benefit
- ✓ Creates inclusive high performing teams in which a diversity of people feel they are valued and respected
- ✓ Recognises the positive benefits of diversity and cultivates a culture of fairness

Lead Other Leaders

- ✓ Builds mutually constructive and respectful relationships internally and externally founded on trust
- ✓ Uses networks to identify opportunities and seek input with a view to sustaining excellence at UU
- ✓ Actively engages to seek co-operation and consensus from across the university
- ✓ Works with others, forging connections with key stakeholders, cultivating win-win relationships
- ✓ Works horizontally as well as vertically within and outside the university to further the university's objectives
- ✓ Links the value of effective team work to university success

Lead the Organisation

- ✓ Quickly establishes credibility, engagement, and partnerships with a broad range of people and industry
- ✓ Develops strategic alliances and partnership agreements both internally and externally
- ✓ Holds others accountable for working collaboratively to implement strategies that create operational efficiencies

VERSATILE How you meet future challenges?

You use your experience and expertise to shape the future of the university, ensuring that we continue to respond to challenges, innovate and add value to the delivery of our strategic objectives. You are focused on meeting the varying needs of our stakeholders.

Capability

Leading change

The capability to Identify the need for change and pro-actively promote it ensuring successful implementation.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self

- ✓ Viewing changing situations as opportunities for developing and improving work
- ✓ Is flexible, shows initiative, and responds quickly during periods of change to support the success of change initiatives
- ✓ Takes initiative to identify need for change and makes the case for change in line with business need

Lead Others

- ✓ Supports the implementation of change (own area & organisation) once the decision to change has been made
- ✓ Creates a climate within your team that is receptive to change, experimentation and new ways of working
- ✓ Supports staff through change providing ongoing support and encouragement through all the elements of change
- ✓ Positively sells the benefits of new initiatives to their team members
- ✓ Evaluates the results of change and captures learning for future change projects for the team
- ✓ Deals with the barriers to change effectively and in a timely manner

Lead Other Leaders

- ✓ Modifies team / departmental / organisational strategy to adapt to changes in the wider environment
- ✓ Benchmarks with others to see where there are opportunities to make positive change that will lead to improvements
- ✓ Evaluates the results of change and captures learning for future change projects for the organisation

Lead the Organisation

- ✓ Communicates change in a positive manner through influencing and persuasion across the organisation
- ✓ Scans the internal and external environment and recognises the need for change to enable the strategic delivery of the university objectives
- ✓ Considers the resource implications of change and is prepared to negotiate with others around budget to ensure that the change can be successful to enable the strategic objectives of the university

VERSATILE How you meet future challenges?

You use your experience and expertise to shape the future of the university, ensuring that we continue to respond to challenges, innovate and add value to the delivery of our strategic objectives. You are focused on meeting the varying needs of our stakeholders.

Capability

Personal Agility

The capability to create opportunities for innovation by creatively pursuing new ideas, demonstrates positive attitude and openness to changes in the university environment, processes and structure.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self	Lead Others	Lead Other Leaders	Lead the Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Constructively questions and challenges the way things have always been done to identify opportunities for innovation ✓ Is aware of own assumptions, and challenges self to step outside of usual ways of thinking ✓ Is open to and applies good practice, fresh ideas and thinking from inside and outside the university in order to move the university forward ✓ Responds quickly to new opportunities and learns new behaviours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Creates a safe environment for others to voice and try out new ideas by allowing space for people to think creatively ✓ Coaches and guides others in developing and implementing new initiatives ✓ Actively promotes and engages in continuous/quality improvement methodology ✓ Balances new ideas with tried and tested solutions ✓ Is able to identify and mitigate risks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Leverages multiple perspectives and a diverse voice to drive continuous improvement and innovation ✓ Identifies and pursues opportunities in order to generate and develop ideas that will have impact across the department or faculty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Capitalises on innovative alternatives to resolve complex problems that may not have been experienced previously at an organisational level ✓ Fosters a culture which encourages people to pursue innovative solutions to enable high performance across the university

EMPOWERING How you work with others?

You provide your team members with the space and authority to deliver well defined set objectives. You create clarity around your expectations and what success looks like in order to focus people's energy and give them freedom to self-manage within the demands of their job.

Capability

Communicating with Clarity, Impact & Influence

The capability to present and communicate messages with confidence, clarity and impact and effectively relate to and engage with others to build positive relationships.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self

- ✓ Listens to, understands and respects others views
- ✓ Uses sound communication skills of active listening, paraphrasing to check for understanding, and appropriate language depending on the audience
- ✓ Uses body language and tone of voice in a positive manner fitting with the context and intention of the interaction

Lead Others

- ✓ Delivers appropriate, motivating messages over sustained periods
- ✓ Strives for a win/win outcome in negotiations, proactively works to understand other perspectives and takes these on board to build common ground
- ✓ Facilitates open and honest dialogue and creates a safe environment to learn, give and receive feedback
- ✓ Compiles, organises and presents robust proposals

Lead Other Leaders

- ✓ Negotiates firmly, tactfully, and persuasively in contentious situations to resolve differences and achieve outcomes
- ✓ Uses robust proposals/presentations to influence/persuade senior stakeholders and leaders
- ✓ Delivers motivating messages and gains commitment throughout the university

Lead the Organisation

- ✓ Is an ambassador for Ulster University across a wide range of networks, proactively influencing key decision makers on the strategic direction of the business
- ✓ Delivers difficult messages with confidence, integrity, objectivity and empathy
- ✓ Effectively communicates highly complex issues to a wide range of internal and external audiences
- ✓ Presents motivating and engaging ideas and proposals throughout the university, nationally and internationally

EMPOWERING How you work with others?

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Capability

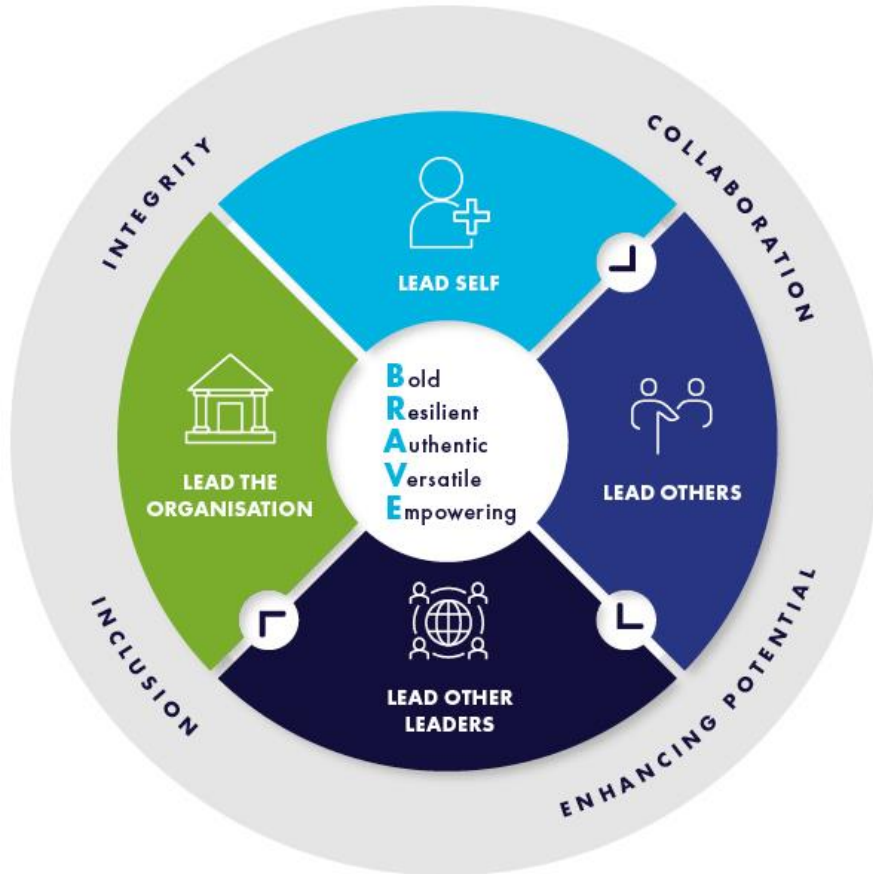
Drives Performance Excellence

The capability to strive for high performance whilst maximising resources to achieve results that are aligned with the goals of the University.

Examples of indicative behaviours across all levels of leadership.

Lead Self	Lead Others	Lead Other Leaders	Lead the Organisation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Strives to exceed performance expectations by identifying better ways of working ✓ Takes responsibility for own performance ✓ Seeks feedback from other staff members and line manager to help improve performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Draws on the expertise of others to improve results, uses all resources available to ensure success for individuals and teams ✓ Challenges self and the team to achieve high quality results aligned with goals of the University ✓ Delegates responsibility, clarifies expectations and gives staff autonomy in important areas of their work ✓ Recognises and values individuals' achievements, knowledge and capabilities in the team ✓ Holds self and others accountable in the team for achieving results related to their areas of responsibility and related targets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Collaboratively develops high level plans and strategies that clearly define required outcomes, then drives to deliver results ✓ Identifies and removes potential barriers or hurdles to ongoing and long term achievement of outcomes ✓ Optimises expertise within the organisation to improve overall performance and delivery of University outcomes ✓ Provides the required resources and motivational support to staff in achieving success within their own role or aspiring towards higher levels within the University 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Instils a mindset of achievement that fosters a quality focus in the University to ensure ideas and intended actions become reality ✓ Identifies and addresses significant risks to the achievement of University objectives ✓ Champions the identification, recognition, and celebration of successes at Ulster university ✓ Energises individuals to strive towards a compelling vision of the future by embracing and embodying Ulster's values in all aspects of their work

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How might the Framework be used?

The framework will underpin our key people processes and provide colleagues with a common language with which to articulate and develop the leadership culture at Ulster University.

The framework may be applied in several ways including:

- Informing the content of our university's leadership development provision;
- Encouraging colleagues to reflect on their contribution and development needs ahead of performance and development conversations;
- Enabling quality conversations between staff and their line managers;
- Informing our recruitment and selection processes;
- Helping colleagues to think about their leadership skills when applying for a new role or a promotion.

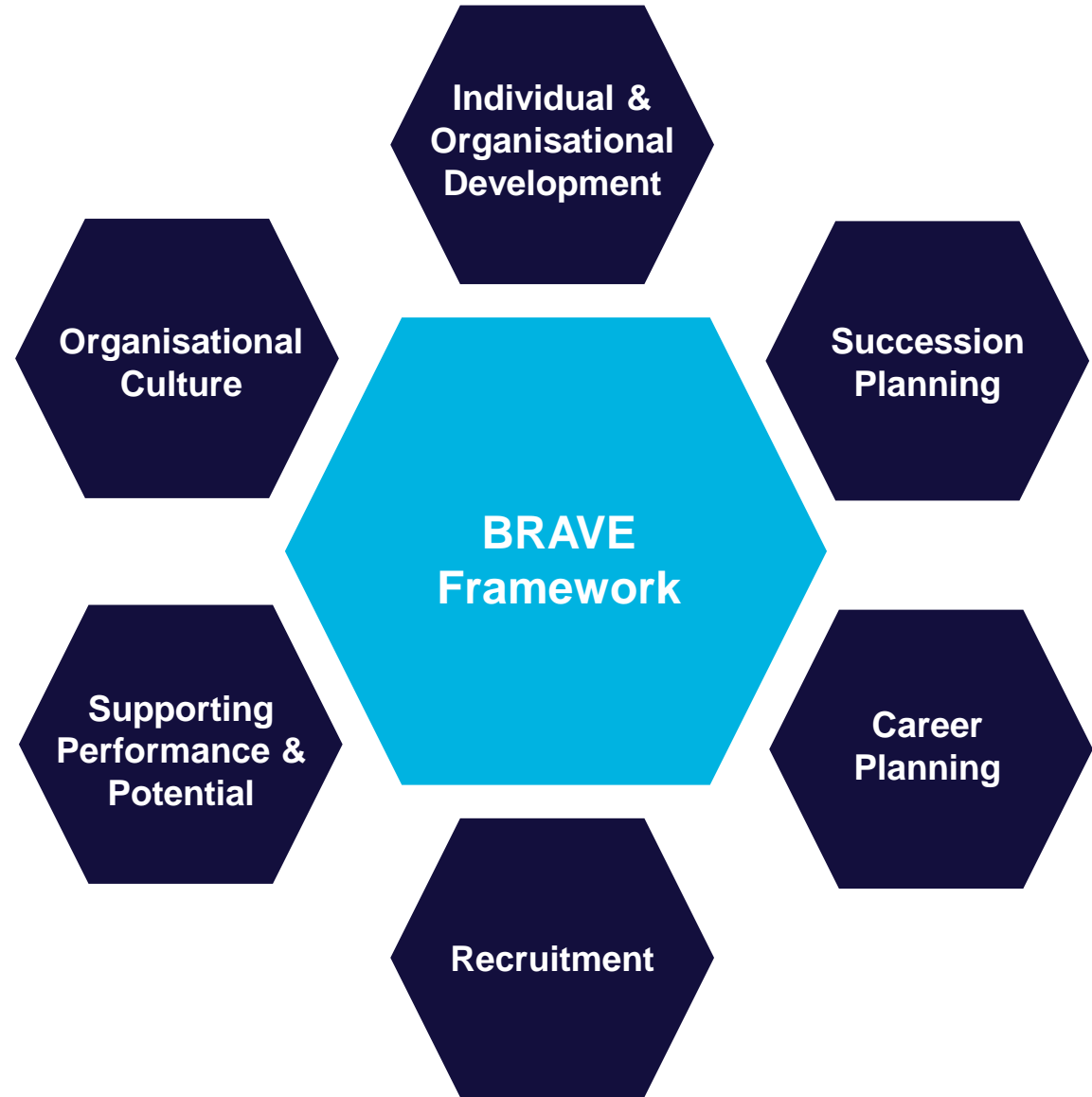
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Using the Framework to inform your development



BRAVE

Using the
Framework in
teams and
throughout the
organisation



BRAVE

Leadership & Management Development at Ulster

Learning that
will support
and enable
our people
to..



Manage People

Developing the key capabilities in people management. Enabling engaging managers to manage with authenticity and inspire for high performance to enhance potential



Lead Others

For those managing teams/ projects and research who want to extend their skills in leadership. Developing further capabilities to drive for continued quality improvement and innovation



Lead Other Leaders

The focus to convert strategic intent to operational requirements and manage the achievement of work outcomes through multiple layers of complexity



Lead the Organisation

Senior and executive leaders in the organisation responsible for setting the vision for the University and providing the resources to build toward the future



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Leadership Culture Development Framework

More information

www.ulster.ac.uk/leadership

Contact

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