

UCL WAYS OF WORKING FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES STEPS TO DEVELOPMENT

The UCL Ways of Working for professional services supports colleagues to be successful and happy at UCL through sharing expectations around how we work.

The framework enables individuals, teams and leaders to set clear expectations, support development, have quality conversations and be their best in the workplace. The Descriptor table below is broken down into grade-relevant supporting indicators and steps to development in the rest of the document.



| PERSONAL EXCELLENCE | |
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| Commitment | We are persistent in our shared commitment to our goals, our overall mission, and to taking care of ourselves, our students and each other. |
| Outstanding Service | We take pride in delivering a positive and proactive service to our colleagues and communities, striving for high quality outcomes and smarter ways of working. |
| Integrity | We insist of honesty, inclusion and respect for each other in line with UCL's core values, recognising excellence in different forms. We take full accountability for our actions and leading by positive example. |

| WORKING TOGETHER | |
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| Communication | We communicate with intention and clarity, building strong relationships – listening and responding with fairness and compassion |
| Collaboration | We work creatively in empowered cross-functional teams and partnerships where we build trust and recognise each other's contributions. |
| Shared Learning | We create learning-focused working environments, where we ask challenging questions, encourage respectful inquiry, seek continuous improvement and development, and value constructive feedback. |

| ACHIEVING OUR MISSION | |
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| Vision | We know why our work is important, and we respond to the 'bigger picture', drawing out opportunities through being ambitious, united and forward -thinking. |
| Innovative Practice | We review our practices and innovate where necessary to use our resources effectively, to achieve our long-term aims and support our objectives. |
| Ownership | We understand our responsibilities for delivering timely and effective outcomes, which we achieve through decisive, clear strategies, and well-communicated, consultative plans. |

THE UCL WAYS OF WORKING STEPS TO DEVELOPMENT

GRADE 8

The **Ways of Working Steps to Development** gives examples of typical behaviours that *support* or *hinder* the central Ways of Working, and provides suggestions for development, through on the job learning, peer learning and formal training. These indicators can be used for activities such as appraisals and personal/ professional development. Although the indicators are listed as relevant to grades, the design assumes that staff will also model behaviours indicated below their current grade.

| PERSONAL EXCELLENCE | | GRADE 8 |
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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Responding proactively and appropriately to the needs of colleagues, staff, students and partners. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Responding automatically without properly considering viable alternatives, or making helpful suggestions. | Spending excessive time in responding to individual requests and becoming weighed down. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Find appropriate mechanisms to gain feedback in order to build your self-awareness of the way that you respond to individuals, groups and situations. Consider if you unconsciously prefer respond more positively to some individuals or groups and what, if this is the case, the implications are for excellent work outcomes.</p> <p>Consider this feedback and any implied change carefully, and plan any action.</p> <p>Review your time spent responding to particular individual requests. Consider how you might strategically change your approach to reduce this level of interaction where it doesn't add overall value.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Making inclusivity, diversity and (inter)cultural awareness core to actions and decision-making for self and team. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Supporting inclusivity in principle but not fully considering how it translates to actions. | Seeing inclusivity as 'nice to have' rather than being central to working life and decision-making. |
| Steps towards development | <p>UCL is London's Global University. Our colleagues, students and partners come from all over the globe. Building on our collective knowledge and expertise requires us all to treat each other with respect and fairness. This ensures we can all contribute our best ideas and excel at work. To achieve this, each of us needs to develop our awareness of and commitment to (inter)cultural sensitivity and agility.</p> <p>Think about how you and members of your team understand inclusion and (inter)cultural sensitivity at UCL. Can you identify any patterns that persist and lead to individuals or groups being excluded or disadvantaged? Raise any concerns and make suggestions where you feel your team can improve their response to issues relating to inclusion or well-being. Use and encourage colleagues to use UCL channels such as 'Report + Support' and 'Full Stop' if your concerns are not being addressed.</p> <p>What impact you could make by proactively addressing inclusion and diversity issues in your team? Discuss with your team and create a plan to help you get there.</p> | |

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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Being organised and keeping track of your work. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Being disorganised so colleagues find it hard to co-ordinate with you. | Spending too long organising at the expense of progress. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Review the systems that you use to get organised. Do you have too many or too few? How well are they supporting you?</p> <p>Devote some time to putting better systems in place. Talk to others about what works for them and how you might align.</p> <p>Try to pilot a new system or approach in one area of your work to test-drive and get right. Once you are happy you can adopt in other areas and share with your team.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Developing resilience strategies and supporting healthy resilience in the wider team | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Not being able to recognise and respond to signs of stress, despite feedback | Not listening to concerns relating to stress or providing support. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Responses to stress and change, and effective resilience techniques can differ widely between individuals. Raising self-awareness of your personal responses to stress and approaches to resilience will enable you to recognise and respond more effectively if it becomes necessary. Your team and colleagues will also differ in their triggers and responses. Encourage conversations about resilience techniques and encourage your team to reflect on what works for them.</p> <p>Part of personal resilience is to recognise early signs of stress and seek support. Discuss your strategies with your manager and familiarise yourself with the UCL policy on Managing Stress at work. Use LinkedIn learning or resilience training opportunities to understand how different techniques can boost your resilience.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Encouraging input from diverse voices to support making fair, fact-based decisions. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Focusing narrowly without gathering opinion for key decision making from representative groups. | Not fully communicating consultation processes or drivers for decision making, risking creating the impression that groups have not been listened to. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Consider the mechanisms that you use to consult others.</p> <p>Looking from an inclusion perspective, are you confident that you are taking in representative views?</p> <p>Communicate all your decision-making processes with clarity, being open and transparent about how you have consulted, and whether this has impacted your decision-making.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Taking pride in delivering an excellent service to colleagues, students, partners and the wider community. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Being satisfied with repeating what has gone before without reviewing, challenging or innovating practices and processes to provide improved services. | Being too focused on servicing one group of colleagues or stakeholders, and neglecting others. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Reflect on how you take pride in the work and how you convey this to the team and to stakeholders.</p> <p>Build on and celebrate successes, and share challenges and learning points positively. Be clear about how you define an excellent service, and how you measure its delivery.</p> <p>Set shared expectations and task-based goals that everyone understands.</p> | |

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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Modelling an ability to balance work and personal needs. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Setting an example of relentless hard work with no appreciation of self-care. | Putting own needs consistently ahead of the work and ahead of the needs of others. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Cultivate an appreciation for different work styles and approaches to work-life balance. What works for you may be hard for others to emulate without incurring personal difficulties. Discuss openly to reach a clear two-way understanding around working expectations.</p> <p>Familiarise yourself with best practice around work life balance – consulting HR as appropriate.</p> <p>Ensure that your practices are as respectful as possible of your team’s working needs and family or caring responsibilities.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Delivering on commitments to tasks and people. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Committing to things that you are asked to do which take up time and mean that other tasks are compromised. | Under-delivering on commitments to tasks and/ or people because you are over-stretched. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Consider your approach to taking on new work and how you decide to accept it. Do you have a good system to assess importance, timescales and need? Will this new work add value to the higher purpose of your role/department? Is there another more efficient/effective way of delivering this work? How empowered are you to refuse work that you do not see as priority? What else can you do to ensure you are not under-delivering?</p> <p>How will you know that you have delivered against your commitment? What conversations and agreement do you have up front to help you recognise when the commitment is complete?</p> <p>Consider how you might review this, perhaps in partnership with your team or manager.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Actively seeking solutions to any bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour in teams. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Personal Excellence | Downplaying potentially bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour. | Identifying bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour but not taking enough action to ensure that the situation is resolved. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Upskill yourself on understanding how to recognise both overt and covert signs of bullying, harassment or discrimination. Recognise patterns of behaviour that disadvantage specific groups of colleagues, staff, students and partners. How self-aware are you of how you might be perceived in this regard? How do you manage your boundaries when you are in a position of power over others?</p> <p>Discuss openly with your team and ensure that they are all aware of your stance in this matter.</p> <p>Discuss with your HR expert, or take formal training either before any issues arise in order to prepare yourself for responding appropriately in the moment.</p> <p>If any issues arise immediately consult your HR expert or go through UCL channels such as ‘Report + Support’ and ‘Full Stop’.</p> | |

WORKING TOGETHER

GRADE 8

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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Listening closely, and speaking with clarity to all colleagues, staff, students, and partners | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Working Together | Communicating in an over-complicated or 'jargon heavy' way. | Preferring speaking to listening, with the tendency to not seeking to fully understand the issues from those with perspectives different than yours, or from different cultures and backgrounds |
| Steps towards development | <p>Establishing rapport and credibility is crucial to build relationships with key groups. How well do you know the needs of your different stakeholders? How confident are you that you understand their needs? What evidence will they find credible? How will your work benefit them? What are their values?</p> <p>If you are still finding out, then spend time listening. While telling people things can establish expertise, if you are not sure of your ground this can end up backfiring. Asking open questions around their priorities, concerns and ambitions is the best place to start building a relationship.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Sharing relevant knowledge and experience | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Working Together | Not finding appropriate opportunities to share, or not enabling and influencing others to share experience and knowledge with each other. | Get bogged down with history, being reluctant to consider revisiting approaches that could be improved. |
| Steps towards development | <p>A 'Learning Organisation' relies on individual staff to share their approaches and experience. Think about how your insight and knowledge could support others, and find ways to share appropriately. This could include mentoring or collaboration with other institutions or external bodies as a networking and knowledge sharing opportunity.</p> <p>By modelling this behaviour you will encourage those around you to do the same for the benefit of all. Discuss with your team how you can raise self-awareness around knowledge-sharing and find new and innovative ways to learn, share and find better approaches.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Giving others freedom to act, and recognising their achievements. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Working Together | Ignoring signs that others are struggling and require support. | Taking contributions for granted with no appreciation or praise for achievements. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Giving your team responsibilities that they feel empowered to act on is crucial for their development and a great way to demonstrate your trust in them. How self-aware are you that you equally provide opportunity to individuals in your team?</p> <p>This empowerment can be undermined if you do not continue to monitor their work and offer support as required. Have an upfront conversation that establishes appropriate boundaries between supporting and interfering, and make your intentions clear.</p> <p>Work with clear governance, one to one check-in points and reviews, and ensure that you celebrate and appreciate key milestones. Make sure that they know how to approach you if they are unsure on how to proceed, and that you provide them with what they need to get the job done to their best ability.</p> | |

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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Seeking and giving constructive feedback, and reflecting on own practice. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Working Together | Being too busy to explore how you could be more effective. | Backing away from having difficult conversations. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Feedback is one of the most powerful management tools at your disposal and crucial in raising self-awareness. Giving positive feedback can motivate, develop, build understanding and make people feel highly valued. Think about how you can do this more, and model doing this well for your team.</p> <p>Giving constructive feedback where there are potential problems can be harder. Look for resources or training to support you to do this better – LinkedIn Learning is a good start.</p> <p>Do you give planned and timely feedback to your staff that focuses on what they do instead of who they are? Are you straightforward, using clear examples and rationale? Do you listen to their perspectives and seek collaborative solutions? Do you ask them for feedback on your performance?</p> <p>Reflect on what you currently do, and how you deal with receiving constructive feedback yourself. What helpful changes could you consider?</p> <p>UCL offers 360 feedback as part of some leadership programmes, this is often an effective way to gain varied feedback in an organised way.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Encouraging staff to develop and progress within the organisation. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Working Together | 'Hoarding' staff because they are useful to you personally. | Not letting staff take advantage of development opportunities because of immediate work pressures. |
| Steps towards development | <p>While having talented and high performing staff is great for team outcomes, as a manager you should be thinking about how the work your staff are doing progresses their own professional careers. What is in their best interest from a development perspective? How can you influence their progression? What development can you offer? Are there further responsibilities or projects at work that might benefit their longer-term career goals? How can you encourage them to think about their next steps in the organisation?</p> <p>Development at UCL is viewed around the 70:20:10 model where 70% of learning is 'on the job', 20% is through 'interactions with others' and 10% is in 'formal training'. Work with your staff on a development plan that covers all of these three areas and is linked to their future progression plans. Encourage them to look at the Career Pathways page on the UCL website for developing Career Frameworks, and at development opportunities through UCL Organisational Development, LinkedIn Learning, formal training, informal mentoring and coaching etc</p> | |

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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Handing over well-defined tasks to others. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Working Together | Hanging on to tasks for longer than necessary. | Giving others no room to show initiative or to learn by doing. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Delegation is one of the most important management skills and will support you to save you time while developing and motivating others. There are lots of resources online and in books that talk about effective delegation – start with this check-list. Are you confident you are taking all these steps when you hand over tasks?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Define the task – is this task suitable to be delegated? 2. Select the individual or team – why this person or team? What are they going to get out of it? 3. Assess ability and training needs – is the other person or team of people capable of doing the task? 4. Explain the reasons – what is its importance and relevance? Where does it fit in the overall scheme of things? 5. State required results – What must be achieved? How will the task be measured? 6. Consider resources required - discuss and agree what is required to get the job done. 7. Agree deadlines – when must the job be finished? Failing to agree this in advance will cause this monitoring to seem like interference or lack of trust. 8. Support and communicate - who else needs to know what's going on? How should they be informed? 9. Feedback on results – Let the person know how they are doing, and whether they have achieved their aims. Celebrate the achievements and give constructive feedback. | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Able to say 'no' when necessary. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Working Together | Being more concerned with harmony than in resolving issues. | Being unnecessarily negative and obstructive. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Responding positively to everyone and everything may feel helpful in the moment, but can be damaging for outcomes and for work-life balance. Think about how you respond generally. Do you say yes or no for the right reasons? Do you have strong rationales for responding one way or another? Are you able to influence the outcome?</p> <p>Consider what drives your positive or negative responses and think about whether they support you and the team in the long term.</p> <p>Discuss this with the team in relation to things you are typically asked to do. Do you all agree on rationales for saying yes and no? Does the rationale support your strategy?</p> | |

ACHIEVING OUR MISSION

GRADE 8

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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Making sense of complex issues even when information is incomplete. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Achieving our Mission | Finding it hard to understand complexity without all the details. | Being so concerned with complexity that processes become overcomplicated are missed. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Think about your responses to ambiguity. Do you tend to respond to incomplete information by stalling or by taking action without the full facts? What do you tend to default to?</p> <p>Reflecting on your responses and recognising patterns will be helpful in preparing you for developing confidence and best practice in the future.</p> <p>Think about concrete examples and consider your typical approach. Talk over with your manager, colleagues or a coach. What was your comfort level of operating in ambiguous circumstances? What information might you have been missing? How might you have got it? How did you set out to analyse the situation? How might you have acted sooner or delayed longer? What alternatives did you consider? How might you do things differently going forward?</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Making timely and data-led decisions. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Achieving our Mission | Being indecisive at the expense of the optimal outcome. | Making quick decisions and then having to back track. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Decision-making can often rely on the values, preferences and beliefs of the decision-maker. Are you in tune with your own values, preferences and beliefs and aware of how they lead your decision-making? What drives your decision making processes (eg consensus, innovation or tradition) and does it lead to optimal outcomes? How much information do you require before making a decision? Do you get stuck in an analysis paralysis loop, or do you take action so fast that it is unhelpful to the longer-term outcome?</p> <p>Review your approach and decision-making techniques. Seek out management or leadership training that can support this, or look on LinkedIn Learning.</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Demonstrating clarity about how your work supports UCL's mission and goals. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Achieving our Mission | Focussing exclusively on your own area, without considering other parts of the organisation. | Not being aware of UCL'S strategic goals and how to support them. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Understanding your work and the work of your team in the context of UCL's mission and goals is crucial. If this is unclear to you, review the mission statements on the UCL website and review your responsibilities in this area. Bring your team into the discussion, perhaps instigating an extended team meeting or workshop where this is discussed and pro-active steps are decided.</p> | |

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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Anticipating and avoiding potential strategic flaws and risks in plans | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Achieving our Mission | Being too accepting of plans and following by rote. | Getting bogged down with everything that could go wrong. |
| Steps towards development | <p>Think about how you assess plans and how you might raise concerns. Start with a SWOT analysis of the plan, potentially as a group exercise in order to pin-point any potential weaknesses or threats, and to be fully clear on strengths and opportunities. Often, spotting challenges involves ensuring we listen to dissenting voices. Check if you are able to or encouraging others to do the same?</p> <p>If you identify any issues, consider how to raise them and to whom. Do you need more evidence, or to discuss with members of the team prior to raising concerns?</p> | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Defining objectives and setting out clear and relevant future goals. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Achieving our Mission | Giving people sketchy or confusing goals. | Setting rigid goals which people find difficult to achieve or flex within. |
| Steps towards development | <p>What is your process for setting objectives for yourself, individuals or teams? Are they embedded into appraisal and review conversations? Consider the points below, and look at LinkedIn Learning for more direction.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Focus on what you need the individual to achieve 2. Keep it simple. Focus on objectives that you know you can achieve in the given time frame. 3. Be specific. 4. Have regular check-in points (one to ones) to ensure the team are clear on objectives and how to deliver them. 5. Avoid setting too difficult or too easy objectives, both can be demotivating. 6. Make it measurable. 7. Break your key results in small goals. 8. Celebrate and recognize. | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Managing multiple projects, leading regular reviews and making changes where necessary. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Achieving our Mission | Responding to needs intermittently or too late to contribute to fixing problems. | Monitoring and making change to such an extent that it interferes with work flow. |
| Steps towards development | <p>It's important to know how to manage multiple projects well so you can maintain quality across assignments. Part of managing projects is being able to respond quickly to issues and make appropriate changes. Set aside time each week to organize tasks around due dates and importance. This will help you prioritize and better understand what needs to be completed within specific timeframes – highlighting issues and flagging any need for change.</p> <p>If you are juggling multiple projects, you'll have to communicate regularly with those around you, asking what they think, feel and need.</p> <p>Use team-wide meetings, small group get-togethers, or one-on-one meetings to keep each other accountable and to communicate what's important. Project tracking software can be helpful, speak to colleagues to understand what might support the work.</p> <p>Make sure you are able to gather robust evidence to understand the effectiveness or impact of the work – this should be regularly reviewed in order to respond to any need for change in an agile way. Continue to evaluate against the scope of the project you started so that you remain on track.</p> | |

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| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Willing to volunteer time to support others across the UCL community. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Achieving our Mission | Continually not participating in activities when requested, and not acting as a member of the UCL community. | Being unable to push back when additional work interferes with primary commitments. |
| Steps towards development | As part of the UCL community we are expected to occasionally volunteer time to benefit wider projects. This could be volunteering at a student event, being part of a committee, speaking to other groups or people, or volunteering as a mentor or coach. These activities are part of our responsibility as UCL citizens, and often bring indirect benefits to us as individuals and colleagues. How much time do you feel you spend on such activities? Too little, too much? Consider what might be the right response for you and discuss options with your manager/ team. | |
| Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence | Accepting accountability for your own decisions and actions. | |
| Examples of behaviours that may hinder Achieving our Mission | Only accepting accountability when things go well. | Accepting accountability for issues that are outside of your control. |
| Steps towards development | The only way to expect accountability from others is to role model it yourself. How self-aware are you of how successfully you ensure that there is a culture for accepting accountability, regardless of controlling the outcomes. Discuss with your manager if you are not clear on what you are expected to be accountable for, and willing to take that ownership. When and how does your manager need to be contacted when things need escalating? What are your boundaries for making decisions, and when do you need to seek permission? How do you consider accountability when delegating work? Do you give room to a discussion on accepting accountability for the work, and enabling them take ownership? | |