

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

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

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

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 9

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 9
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Following through on commitments to people and tasks.		
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Starting off enthusiastically but getting diverted and not following through.	Putting the needs of tasks above the needs of people.	
Steps towards development	Reflect on how you manage to maintain your commitment and focus throughout project lifecycles. Are you sufficiently self-aware to recognise any tendency to get distracted and to ensure that you have a strategy to combat this? Think about how you make decisions around the needs of groups or individuals against the task-driven priorities. How well do you balance this? How do you know? How can you find out more?		
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Taking a reflective and flexible approach, seeking effective innovation		
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Having inflexible ideas about how and when things should be done, based on past successes that may be outdated.	Being so flexible that people are unclear about what you actually want.	
Steps towards development	Reflect on key tasks. Consider how things could be improved, or whether the current approach is still the most effective. Seek feedback on your approach from the team that are involved in day-to-day delivery. Ensure that you are seeking diverse opinions to ensure the most creative appropriate solutions. Build some regular time for task reviews, potentially within the agendas of existing meetings. Enable contribution from the team by supporting them to question and challenge the status quo.		

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Showing an active commitment to inclusion, diversity and (inter)cultural sensitivity.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Demonstrating insufficient awareness of, or interest in, the negative impact of a lack of diversity inclusion and (inter)cultural sensitivity.	Favouring one diversity identity over another, rather than being genuinely inclusive.
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>Upskill yourself on what UCL means by inclusion and (inter) cultural sensitivity. Consider key areas where these issues are directly relevant to your area of work and how they impact people-related issues from recruitment and progression to how you run your meetings and seek feedback.</p> <p>Think about how you and members of your team understand inclusion and (inter)cultural sensitivity. Consider whether you have created an environment where all colleagues and partners are treated fairly and with respect? How do you plan to assess the inclusivity of your leadership? Review your leadership strategies to find opportunities to be more inclusive. Consult your team on how to bring this to life in your day to day work.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Demonstrating a range of strategies to build and support resilience in self and team	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Lacking in self-awareness around the impact of stress on one's behaviour despite feedback.	Putting pressure on staff to practice resilience rather than dealing with issues that are causing stress
Steps towards development	<p>Consider how self-aware you are around your stress triggers and responses to change. Do you recognise when you are stressed and the impact of that behaviour on others? Are you able to identify appropriate resilience techniques that can support you when you are feeling challenged at work? If you are unsure, seek feedback and work to identify resilience strategies that are effective for you.</p> <p>How do you support your team in responding positively to stress and change? Different people handle stress and resilience in different ways, do not assume that their strategies will be the same as yours, and encourage them to identify and practice their own resilience techniques.</p> <p>Part of resilience is to recognise early signs of stress and seek support and to encourage your team to do the same. 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	Visibly demonstrating supportive and emotionally intelligent leadership.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Allowing your support to waiver when you find yourself under pressure, or distracted by other things.	Lacking in self-awareness or unwillingness to reflect on the impact of your behaviour
Steps towards development	<p>What are your strategies for building your self-awareness? How do you gain feedback? Look at emotional intelligence and consider how your self-awareness impacts your relationships with others and your success as a leader.</p> <p>Are you able to remain patient during times of high pressure? How well do you balance supportive leadership and micro-managing? Get feedback from those around you to see if they agree. Work with individuals and/or your whole team to pinpoint areas where more or less support may be required.</p> <p>Ensure that you communicate your leadership intention around how you want to support your team. How should they come to you when they need you? When are they empowered to make decisions and when should they consult?</p> <p>Encourage the team to discuss their career goals, seek development and to build their skills.</p> <p>Seek to attend a UCL mentoring training session via UCL Organisational Development or via your own faculty/department, so that you can guide others in their professional development and progression based on your own experiences.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Taking responsibility for making tough calls when necessary.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Backing away from, delegating or postponing the difficult decisions.	Making tough decisions, but not being considerate of how they might impact others to land effectively.
Steps towards development	<p>Make sure that there is a clear line of accountability around timely key decision-making and that is fully understood. Consider how you are role-modelling this accountability.</p> <p>Be really clear about who decisions are impacting, making sure that difficult decisions are consulted and communicated carefully. Seek training around Challenging Conversations or look at LinkedIn.com.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Having up to date knowledge of the sector and seeing useful trends.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Focusing too narrowly, and not fully identifying or learning from trends.	Over-interpreting signals from the sector and other institutions and letting them get in the way of direction.
Steps towards development	<p>What are the key issues that impact the sector, particularly relating to your professional area? How do you ensure that you are up to date with this? What else could you do to improve your insights?</p> <p>What trends might you be particularly looking out for, and how do you assess their relevance to your work? Having key knowledge of local and global international context knowledge is also helpful and essential in some roles. Local knowledge sources are available via Global Engagement Office.</p> <p>Consider what kinds of insight might lead you to change your current approach based on external information. Test this with your colleagues.</p>	

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Setting stretching targets for self and others, so everyone reaches their potential.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Failing to challenge others (or self) to achieve their potential - based on flawed assumption or hidden bias.	Setting others up to fail because targets are unrealistic.
Steps towards development	<p>Set out to have frequent productive performance and development conversations on a regular basis with staff – not limited to the annual appraisal cycle. Ensure that you are getting the same from your manager. How self-aware are you around the skills and experience that would benefit your progression and development, and what stretching objectives that requires? How can you encourage that same self-awareness in your staff?</p> <p>Make sure that your workload planning is effective, and that you listen to any issues experienced by staff. See information on UCL appraisal on the HR website. Explore goal-setting and management on LinkedIn learning to hone your skill, or seek to attend UCL appraisal or leadership and management training.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Role-modelling a vigorous response to any bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour in teams.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Personal Excellence	Failing to act in the face of potential bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour or being perceived to ignore behaviours when they are enacted by particular individuals or groups.	Not having a known position on bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour in teams, risking willingness to overlook under challenging circumstances
Steps towards development	<p>Ensure that you are clear on how you can recognise and respond to these issues prior to them arising in any team situation, calling on HR experts to support as necessary. Provide opportunities for colleagues to consider their own roles in responding to difficult behaviour. Use and refer your team to UCL channels such as 'Report + Support' and 'Full Stop'.</p> <p>Work to communicate your position on this to your team. This should not be left to an email, or a single item in a team meeting. Consider how you can communicate your position fully, consistently and effectively. Speak to an EDI or HR expert if in doubt.</p>	

WORKING TOGETHER

GRADE 9

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence

Encouraging others to pursue their development needs

Examples of behaviours that may *hinder* Working Together

Not interested in development and growth for staff, or not supporting staff in a fair and equitable way

Promoting development in general but rarely allowing the team time to take up opportunities.

Steps towards development

As a manager you should be thinking about how the work your staff are doing progresses their own personal professional careers.

What is in their best interest from a development perspective?

What development can you offer them in their current role? 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?

Think about this not only as part of the appraisal process, but as a key part of regular one to ones.

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, mentoring etc.

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence

Being willing to give, and receive timely and constructive feedback.

Examples of behaviours that may *hinder* Working Together

Passing the buck and leaving feedback to others.

Giving excessive feedback so making it difficult to action.

Steps towards development

■ Feedback is one of the most powerful management tools at your disposal and is vital for 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 role-model doing it well for your team.

■ Giving constructive feedback in response to potential issues can be harder. Look for resources or training to support you to do this better – LinkedIn Learning is a good start.

How do you currently give feedback? Is it planned and timely? 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?

How you deal with receiving constructive feedback yourself?

UCL offers 360 feedback as part of some leadership programmes, this is often an effective way to gain varied feedback in an organised way.

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence

Using appropriate influence and persuasion to ensure outcomes that are aligned to your values and goals

Examples of behaviours that may *hinder* Working Together

Manipulating others through power rather than genuinely influencing their reactions, thoughts or beliefs

Not being able to influence key stakeholders effectively, with the result that your outcomes are limited.

Steps towards development

■ What influencing approaches do you personally respond to well? Consider the individual key stakeholders that you need to influence successfully to achieve your goals. Do they respond in the same way as you? What might work better for them? How can you hone your influencing style to approach different audiences? How can you persuade others of the importance of your proposed outcomes?

■ Leaders need to understand why they are doing something—and be clear about their own values and goals when applying their influence skills. Do your goals align to your values? How can you demonstrate this in your influencing approaches?

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Proactively working with other people, teams, partners and functions for the benefit of the wider institution.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Working Together	Not being interested in finding alignment between teams or work.	Insisting on joint working that has little cross functional benefit.
Steps towards development	<p>In a large organisation like UCL working silos can easily develop, compounded by geographical distances, physical spaces and different leadership. Understanding collaborative working is a great enabler for successful and more ambitious outcomes for the institution.</p> <p>As a leader, seeing and sharing these opportunities is key. Consider your current practice. Are you aware of work going on in different parts of the organisation that might align with what you do?</p> <p>Do you engage in discussions around what that might look like, or what the benefits would be? Challenge yourself to pro-actively make links and contacts with relevant groups, and explore possibilities for positive collaboration both inside and outside of the UCL.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Sharing information with relevant parties.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Working Together	Pushing hard for progress but forgetting to keep others informed or consulted.	Spending so much time consulting and communicating that it hampers progress.
Steps towards development	<p>How do you communicate with relevant colleague, stakeholders and communities? What is your rationale for consulting as part of your decision making process? A useful exercise is to map your stakeholders relating to a particular project and assess your RACI – ie who is Responsible, who is Accountable, who should be Consulted and who should be Informed. This should help frame your communication strategy. Discuss with your team and find an approach that is coordinated and effective.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Flexing a range of leadership skills to support staff, students and partners.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Working Together	Being too directive, not listening and not enabling individuals to think for themselves.	Answering questions with questions, never giving clear direction.
Steps towards development	<p>Any leader will utilise a range of leadership skills depending on style and context. While good leadership is sometimes over-associated with a powerful, directive approach, a coaching style is often overlooked despite its proven value in the leadership toolkit.</p> <p>Effective leaders help others think more broadly for themselves. Telling people what is wrong is an inefficient way to change behaviour, while listening, reflecting on what you hear, and asking powerful questions can be much more impactful. This technique helps leaders to get people to see the blind spots and points of resistance that keep them from moving forward.</p> <p>Look at Daniel Goleman's 6 Leadership styles for more information on leadership styles. Seek out leadership development and coaching programmes at UCL, and look at LinkedIn Learning to find out more about leaders as coaches.</p>	

ACHIEVING OUR MISSION

GRADE 9

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Being able to evaluate information and quickly identify key issues.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Researching thoroughly, but getting bogged down in the small print.	Taking too long to identify the key issues.
Steps towards development	<p>What checks do you do on incoming information? How do you evaluate and consider the reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness and potential for bias of information sources? Think about where the information came from and whether you trust the source.</p> <p>Is the information based on a correct initial premise? What is the root cause of the issue? Can you validate that?</p> <p>Identifying the major issues and their causes is vital to proposing appropriate solutions later. Mistakes at evaluation stage may send you off in a wrong direction, but hesitating may delay efficiency.</p> <p>Think about your processes and discuss with colleagues.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Making evidence-based, timely decisions	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Making decisions which are not always fully considered or researched.	Being thorough making decisions too slowly to be effective.
Steps towards development	<p>These steps are a good guide to reviewing your decision making approaches:</p> <p>Identify the decision. The first step is recognizing the problem or opportunity and why this decision will make a difference</p> <p>Gather information. What do you need to know to make the right decision? Seek out anyone who needs to be involved.</p> <p>Identify alternatives. It's likely that you have many different options, so it is important to come up with a range of options. This helps you decide the best way to achieve your objective.</p> <p>Weigh the evidence. Managers need to be able to weigh pros and cons, then select the option that has the highest chances of success. Seek out a trusted second opinion to gain a different perspective.</p> <p>Choose among options. When it's time to make your decision, be sure that you understand the risks involved with your chosen route.</p> <p>Take action. Create a plan for implementation.</p> <p>Review your decision. Evaluate your decision for effectiveness. Ask yourself what you did well and what can be improved next time.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Providing strategic direction and resources to achieve desired outcomes.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Being mainly concerned with fire-fighting and short-term planning.	Concentrating on the big picture with less concern around detail around adequate resourcing.
Steps towards development	<p>How do you separate strategic planning from the everyday? What opportunities do you and the team have to reflect on the bigger picture and longer term aims? How do you influence others to follow your direction/</p> <p>If this feels inadequate, think of ways to develop these discussions. How can this be achieved through strategy review and team planning events?</p> <p>Does your team have everything they need to successfully deliver on the strategy? What is missing? What are your plans to deal with this? Open up the conversations and ensure everyone is on the same track.</p>	

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Working to simple and consistent solutions	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Not thoroughly considering how a single process, approach or solution in your area can be experienced by a user or stakeholder.	Not paying attention to consistency so that solutions feel haphazard.
Steps towards development	Consider key processes in your area. Is the user journey simple, transparent and consistent? How do you know? What data are you using to evidence this? How tolerant are you to over-complexity? Consider your process review approach and data strategy. If you are not confident that key processes in your area stand up to scrutiny then think about how to address this, potentially working collaboratively across other areas or divisions to ensure smooth cross-divisional handovers and greater transparency.	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Using existing data to anticipate and plan for problems in advance	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Underestimating the risk impact of problems which may arise, or failing to effectively monitor data that could have driven awareness.	Over-anticipating and making unnecessary contingency plans without relevant data being available.
Steps towards development	Review your past experience and assess whether you could have done better in predicting where problems might occur. If you did predict correctly, what preventative action did you take? Were your actions data-driven? The key tools in anticipating problems are through open communication and feedback systems. Testing new products or systems prior to launch, tracking progress through data and considering hypothetical outcomes are all good practices to enable adequate anticipation and planning. Consider the benefits of adapting your work to incorporate these and other techniques and how they might be achieved.	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Encouraging innovative approaches that benefit the organisation	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Upholding the ways things are traditionally done to the detriment of innovation.	Causing distraction by making changes which aren't needed.
Steps towards development	A key enabler of the UCL mission is to 'have agile processes that are simple to use and deliver the right results first time; that are efficient and effective; and that limit the burdens of administration on our staff'. We all play a part in innovating and finding solutions to work towards this goal. How do you contribute to this? Are you likely to come up with new ideas when you see a problem in current process? Consider how you and your team might realistically creatively tackle issues that would benefit the organisation in a big or small way.	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Willingness to be involved in supportive activities across the institution	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Unwilling to spend time supporting others with no direct incentive.	Spending excessive time doing additional activities that do not contribute to formal objectives.
Steps towards development	As part of the UCL community we are expected to occasionally volunteer time to benefit wider projects. This could mean 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 direct or indirect benefits to us as individuals and colleagues. How much time do you feel you spend on such activities? How do you respond to team members who come to you with requests to join into supportive activities – what tends to be the rationale for your decisions? Are they fair?	

Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Setting appropriate challenges and being clear around individual responsibilities.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Allotting tasks without clearly communicating objectives or matching to capabilities or development needs.	Rushing people into tasks without adequate support or direction.
Steps towards development	<p>Responsibilities are the specific tasks or duties that members are expected to complete according to their roles. These should be clearly allotted with associated objectives and regularly reviewed through appraisal and regular check-in conversations.</p> <p>Around 70% of learning at work is recognised to be delivered through on the job challenges. Giving appropriate challenge in line with individual development needs is a crucial element of a delegation/ work allocation strategy. How do you consider work allocation? Is it reviewed through the appraisal process and in line with development needs? How do you assess capability and whether the individual is ready for the challenge, or how much support they will need? Think about your strategies and how you know if they are successful.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Defining objectives and setting out clear and relevant future goals.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Providing objectives that do not specify clear milestones, expectations around quality and structure, or relation to future goals.	Failing to set and communicate consistent and regular objectives for team.
Steps towards development	<p>An effective leader is skilled at helping their employees set and achieve their objectives. How self-aware are you in how well you support your staff to set realistic and clear objectives? Objectives are generally set on a cyclical basis, and are agreed and reviewed in regular one to ones. If this is not happening consistently in your team you will need to take steps to make it happen. Use your strategic plan as a starting point, and review how your team and colleagues are contributing to its delivery. Are you clear on how individual objectives relate to the overall plan, and how to measure their impact? If you need to tighten this up ensure that you discuss with individual team members and everyone feels that their objectives are clear, appropriate and relevant.</p>	
Supporting Indicators for Personal Excellence	Letting others take ownership of their decisions.	
Examples of behaviours that may <i>hinder</i> Achieving our Mission	Stepping in and making unilateral decisions instead of encouraging others to step up.	Not challenging or effectively influencing when you see poor decisions being made.
Steps towards development	<p>If you are asking your staff to be accountable for their actions you will need to let them take ownership for their decisions, even if you are not necessarily in full agreement. Be a supportive coach if they need help, rather than stepping in and making decisions on their behalf.</p> <p>Encourage them to talk through their approaches and ask challenging questions. Set up review sessions to check in and see how people are doing. If you see something going wrong, make an early intervention to support without undermining them. Work with the individual to find out what support they would value from you. Seek out coaching for managers training if you have trouble in stepping back from being directive.</p>	