AUA

Connecting and developing HE professionals

AUA Professional Behaviours wheel:
- Managing self and personal skills
- Delivering excellent service
- Finding solutions
- Embracing change
- Using resources effectively
- Engaging with the wider context
- Developing self and others
- Working together
- Achieving results

Centre: AUA Professional Behaviours

This model of professional behaviours highlights behaviour patterns that distinguish effective performance in HE professional services roles. The professional behaviours were developed through desk research, consultation questionnaires, workshops and focus groups which first took place in 2008. A total of 96 professional services staff representing 48 HEIs were involved in generating the behaviours. The model forms part of the AUA CPD Framework originally published in 2009, and was revised and refreshed in 2016.

There are nine key behavioural categories:

Managing self and personal skills:

Being aware of own behaviour and mindful of how it impacts on others, enhancing personal skills to adapt professional practice accordingly.

Delivering excellent service

Providing the best quality service to external and internal clients. Building genuine and open long-term relationships in order to drive up service standards.

Finding solutions

Taking a holistic view and working enthusiastically to analyse problems and to develop workable solutions. Identifying opportunities for innovation.

Embracing change

Being open to and engaging with new ideas and ways of working. Adjusting to unfamiliar situations, shifting demands and changing roles.

Using resources effectively

Identifying and making the most productive use of resources including people, time, information, networks and budgets.

Engaging with the wider context

Enhancing your contribution to the organisation through an understanding of the bigger picture and showing commitment to organisational values.

Developing self and others

Showing commitment to own ongoing professional development. Supporting and encouraging others to develop their professional knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable them to reach their full potential.

Working together

Working collaboratively with others in order to achieve objectives. Recognising and valuing the different contributions people bring to this process.

Achieving results

Consistently meeting agreed objectives and success criteria. Taking personal responsibility for getting things done.

Each behavioural category has been considered at three levels.

Self: behaviours that may be observed whatever the working situation

Others: behaviours that may be observed when interacting with and influencing others, or when managing colleagues

Organisation: behaviours that may be observed when influencing at organisational level or representing the organisation

The framework also identifies behaviours that may indicate a need for further development for each of the behavioural groups. These are offered as a positive tool for self-assessment and reflection.

The behaviours are not the tasks associated with a particular job. They identify *how* an individual does the job. The behaviours are universal across all roles, though some are very much more important in some jobs than others. The behavioural framework has been designed to clarify what individuals can do to develop in their jobs and beyond - and ultimately to deliver their organisation's strategic plan. This framework provides a clear steer on key and valued behaviours. It does not assume that these are the only effective behaviours. No attempt has been made to define the behaviours required at different levels due to the diverse nature of the HE sector and of the needs of individual institutions within it. Institutions may wish to develop the framework in this way for local use, thereby tailoring the levels and requirements to their own specific organisational structure, culture, environment and objectives.

How the professional behaviours can be used

Perhaps the most powerful aspect of the behavioural-based approach is the control that it gives individuals over their own development. The behaviours are easily understood because they have been developed within the HE sector and they are accessible to everyone. Although the framework encompasses roles that include line management responsibilities and/or strategic responsibilities, most of the behaviours shown under 'others' and 'organisation' are also relevant to roles that do not include management or leadership responsibilities.

The framework will help individuals to:
- identify the behaviours that are relevant to their job
- identify their personal CPD needs
- develop those behaviours and improve performance
- identify ways to build upon and maximise existing strengths
- seek structured feedback from others
- provide structured feedback to colleagues

Some other ways in which the behaviours can be used are:
- for self-assessment of potential and in career planning
- as a basis for the design of specific learning and development activities - to improve individual and organisational performance
- for recruiting and selecting - to focus on the behavioural requirements of the job in an objective and specific way
- for succession planning – to develop staff within the sector to prepare them to compete for more senior roles

Further suggestions for ways to use the behavioural framework are included in the guidance notes available on the AUA website.

	Self	Others	Organisation
Managing Self and Personal Skills Being aware of own behaviour and mindful of how it impacts on others, enhancing personal skills to adapt professional practice accordingly.	• Being well prepared for meetings and presentations • Demonstrating an awareness of own values, motivations and emotions • Keeping up to date with what is happening in professional area • Having an enthusiastic and positive 'can-do' approach • Maintaining a healthy life balance • Speaking and writing by using clear succinct language • Showing consistency between words and actions • Being self-motivated • Accepting and demonstrating personal responsibility for health and safety, data protection and other compliance areas	• Giving and receiving constructive feedback as part of normal day-to-day work activity • Developing and maintaining personal networks of contacts • Ensuring own behaviour, words and actions support a commitment to equality of opportunity and diversity • Chairing meetings effectively, ensuring everyone has an opportunity to contribute • Getting the best from others through effective communication • Managing own response when faced with challenging situations • Ensuring that own behaviours consistently provide a positive role model	• Applying personal skills appropriately to represent the organisation positively • Recognising personal accountability to the organisation through your work and interactions
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in managing self and personal skills.	• Talking or writing at inappropriate length • Focusing almost exclusively on own job or own department • Being consistently late for meetings • Missing deadlines • Reacting defensively to constructive feedback • Ignoring the views and suggestions of others		

	Self	Others	Organisation
Delivering Excellent Service Providing the best quality service to external and internal clients. Building genuine and open long-term relationships in order to drive up service standards.	• Resolving problems quickly in a courteous and purposeful manner • Ensuring systems and processes are kept up to date • Delivering what you promise • Setting appropriate boundaries and managing expectations • Being clear about where you can be flexible and where you cannot and why • Being up to date with best client service practice in the sector • Engaging positively with quality assessment processes	• Seeing things from your clients' viewpoint • Listening, questioning and clarifying in order to understand your clients' needs • Using client feedback to drive improvements • Tailoring communication to meet clients' needs • Fostering a continuous improvement philosophy • Delivering consistent service standards	• Defining excellent service • Interpreting rules and regulations flexibly to balance client and organisational needs • Consistently giving positive messages about the organisation
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in delivering excellent service	• Overuse of organisational jargon • Adopting a 'one size fits all' approach • Hiding behind rules and regulations • Providing anonymous service by withholding name or contact details • Ignoring client feedback		

	Self	Others	Organisation
Finding Solutions Taking a holistic view and working enthusiastically to analyse problems and develop workable solutions. Identifying opportunities for innovation.	● Taking time to understand and diagnose problems by considering the whole picture ● Not always seeking perfection at the expense of a timely solution ● Spotting an opportunity and taking action to do something about it ● Working proactively and taking initiatives ● Suggesting and trying out new approaches ● Identifying risks and considering consequences of failure in advance ● Balancing new ideas with tried and tested solutions ● Making decisions and taking responsibility for them	● Supporting others to find their own solutions rather than giving all the answers ● Fostering a culture which encourages people to take acceptable risks in pursuing innovation ● Coaching and guiding others in developing and implementing innovative solutions ● Sharing learning and experience to facilitate others' decision making ● Seeking input from others to develop team solutions ● Championing business cases and plans for ideas submitted by members of the team ● Encouraging and developing the creativity of others and recruiting and selecting creative people ● Giving people the space and freedom to be creative	● Being open to and applying good practice and fresh ideas from inside and outside the organisation ● Exercising judgement in line with organisational strategy and priorities ● Actively seeking new ideas and approaches from outside the organisation ● Identifying and pursuing opportunities to work in partnership with external organisations to generate and develop ideas
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in finding solutions	● Abdicating responsibility for resolving issues ● Doing things the way they have always been done without reviewing them ● Going for the 'easy' solution ● Overlooking the potential repercussions of setting precedents ● Putting obstacles in the way of innovation ● Failing to acknowledge or consider solutions proposed by others		

	Self	Others	Organisation
Embracing Change Being open to and engaging with new ideas and ways of working. Adjusting to unfamiliar situations, shifting demands and changing roles.	● Accepting that change is an integral part of life ● Demonstrating a willingness to do things differently ● Making suggestions for improvement ● Taking a creative approach to change which challenges assumptions and is not based purely on enhancing existing practice ● Viewing change situations as opportunities for improving and developing work ● Remaining positive about moving forward despite being realistic about the challenges presented by change ● Demonstrating that 'the way things are done here' does not restrict you ● Challenging the status quo in a constructive way	● Seeking a diversity of perceptions ● Encouraging others to initiate and embrace change ● Encouraging experimentation and new ways of working ● Providing ongoing support and encouragement to others who are developing and testing solutions ● Articulating the purpose of change and the context within which change is happening ● Adapting approach to respond to changes outside of the organisation ● Communicating change in a positive manner through influencing and persuasion ● Recognising, respecting and acknowledging others' responses to change ● Inspiring and motivating others to engage as a team member in identifying and implementing change	● Creating a climate that encourages innovation and receptivity to change ● Leading by example in supporting the organisation to break with traditional methods ● Communicating upwards to influence policy formulation ● Embracing new technologies, techniques and working methods ● Scanning the wider environment to seek opportunities to develop the organisation ● Modifying departmental/ organisational strategy to adapt to changes in the wider environment
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in embracing change	● Unable to move beyond negative reaction to uncertainty ● Complaining instead of doing something about it ● Consistently blocking change and failing to build on others' ideas for change ● Generating numerous ideas but not following any of them through		

	Self	Others	Organisation
Using Resources Effectively Identifying and making the most productive use of resources including people, time, information, networks and budgets.	• Using resources in ways that are efficient and minimise any adverse impact on the environment • Being aware of the financial and commercial aspects of the organisation • Integrating ethical considerations into decision making about use of resources • Using informal systems and channels of communication to inform and support objectives • Influencing outcomes when bidding or negotiating for resources • Aggregating, utilising and interpreting management information • Considering cost benefit analysis implications of decisions • Making use of information and resources gained through personal networks • Recognising that time is cost and adjusting behaviour accordingly	• Recognising and appreciating the breadth and depth of resources available • Liaising with external bodies, suppliers and other HE bodies • Identifying the information and knowledge people need and why they need it • Drawing on others' knowledge, skills and experience • Liaising outside of immediate work area to maximise use of resources within the organisation • Deploying human resources efficiently, at the right levels and in appropriate ways • Delegating appropriately • Considering costs as part of the equation when planning a development	• Sharing good practice with other parts of the organisation • Being mindful of responsibility to organisation and funders in using resources effectively and efficiently • Developing cross-service collaboration and being willing to share resources • Identifying ways in which resources can be used flexibly and imaginatively for the benefit of the whole organisation
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in using resources effectively	• Always going for the highest quality solution regardless of cost implications • Re-inventing the wheel • Assuming staff time is free • Failing to fully utilise available resources • Wasting resources		

	Self	Others	Organisation
Engaging with the wider context Enhancing your contribution to the organisation through an understanding of the bigger picture and showing commitment to organisational values.	• Making connections and recognising how your work may impact at all levels across the organisation • Being aware and keeping abreast of sector wide and organisational developments • Being clear about how own role fits in • Demonstrating organisational values through the ways that you work • Creating and articulating a purpose for own area of responsibility • Taking an active interest in the way the organisation works to inform your professional practice	• Making clear for others the links between individual, team, department and organisational objectives • Providing clarity about responsibilities and accountabilities of others in relation to the wider context • Creating momentum and enthusiasm about the role of the team within the wider organisation • Consistently promoting and role modelling the organisational values	• Ensuring plans are consistent with the values and objectives of the organisation • Keeping sight of the vision in dealing with day-to-day pressures • Encouraging an organisation wide perspective through joined-up thinking and creating a sense of common purpose
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in engaging with the wider context	• Getting bogged down in detail – unable to see the wood for the trees • Being too internally focused • Focusing on short-term issues at the expense of long term goals • Working in isolation		

	Self	Others	Organisation
Developing Self and Others Showing commitment to own ongoing professional development. Supporting and encouraging others to develop their professional knowledge, skills and behaviours to enable them to reach their full potential.	• Using all situations as potential learning opportunities • Devoting time to own development • Making time to reflect upon own performance and learning on an ongoing basis • Consciously applying learning to enhance everyday professional practice • Setting yourself ambitious and stretching development goals to continuously improve and maintain high performance • Engaging in formal and informal learning and development activities • Engaging positively with appraisal processes • Seeking, accepting and learning from feedback • Providing constructive feedback to colleagues at all levels	• Giving praise for work well done • Making time to think about the development of colleagues • Encouraging and supporting others to capture their learning and identify how it can be applied to improve individual and team performance • Ensuring equal access to development opportunities for all • Using delegation as an opportunity to develop others • Empowering others by locating decision making at the lowest possible appropriate level • Providing creative work opportunities to stretch and develop colleagues • Encouraging others to learn from mistakes without blame • Encouraging colleagues to take calculated risks • Coaching and mentoring others	• Supporting succession planning by identifying and developing colleagues with high potential • Supporting others to undertake alternative duties, short-term secondments etc. • Encouraging others to contribute to institutional-level activity • Identifying the changing needs of the organisation and incorporating these into own and others' development plans
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in developing self and others	• Failing to invest in own and others' development • Blocking the progress of high potential colleagues • Believing that 'development' equals 'training' and not engaging with informal development opportunities • Being intolerant of mistakes and apportioning blame • Focusing on others' weaknesses rather than their strengths		

	Self	Others	Organisation
Working together Working collaboratively with others in order to achieve objectives. Recognising and valuing the different contributions people bring to this process.	• Proactively developing productive working relationships • Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of working relationships • Interacting with others in ways that add value • Demonstrating that you value differences in people • Having a good grasp of where your responsibility ends and that of others begins • Presenting own opinions and the interests of those you are representing at meetings in a convincing way • Establishing rapport to improve working relationships • Seeking out opportunities for collaborative working	• Co-operating willingly to support the achievement of team goals • Using understanding of other people's perspectives to help reach agreement • Sharing information and keeping others informed • Recognising and respecting the roles, responsibilities, interests and concerns of colleagues and stakeholders • Proposing and negotiating win-win solutions • Giving constructive feedback • Enabling and encouraging people to express their views and ask questions • Surfacing conflicts early so that they may be addressed • Ensuring that working arrangements, resources and processes respond to different needs, abilities, values and ways of working	• Working across boundaries to develop relationships with other teams • Challenging inappropriate or exclusive practices/ behaviour • Reflecting organisational values in dealing with people and conducting business • Building and sustaining collaborative relationships with other organisations
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in working together	• Interrupting when others are speaking • 'Guarding' information • Discouraging debate • Giving priority to own personal goals • Presenting other people's ideas as your own		

	Self	Others	Organisation
Achieving Results Consistently meeting agreed objectives and success criteria. Taking personal responsibility for getting things done.	• Being clear about your role and responsibilities • Planning and organising workloads to ensure that deadlines are met within resource constraints • Maintaining a high standard of work even when under pressure • Being resilient in the face of setbacks • Incorporating flexibility into plans and adjusting them in light of developments • Keeping track of a number of projects running simultaneously • Distinguishing between important and urgent tasks and prioritising effectively • Being knowledgeable about key players who will influence the work you do	• Taking time to celebrate successes • Winning support of key colleagues and other stakeholders • Being effective in gaining buy-in without having any direct authority • Monitoring progress and providing regular updates • Recognising others' contribution to the achievement of objectives and giving credit to others • Taking personal responsibility for delivering on commitments made to others	• Ensuring that your actions are aligned with the organisation's strategic objectives • Saying 'no' to activities that are less important or do not fit with organisational priorities • Evaluating the success of projects and disseminating lessons that can be learned
Examples of behaviours that may indicate a need for further development in achieving results	• Believing that talking about things is the same as action • Being disorganised • Failing to see things through • Over-committing and not delivering		