



Academi Genedlaethol ar gyfer
Arweinyddiaeth Addysgol Cymru
National Academy for
Educational Leadership Wales

Corporate Plan Our Vision for 2026

Inspiring Leaders – Enriching Lives



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Chief executive's introduction



I am delighted to introduce the National Academy for Educational Leadership's revised Corporate Plan, which sets out our vision and strategy for the next five years (2021-2026).

This plan has been written following an annual review, which was carried out in July 2021. We have used our Results and Evidence Framework to inform our strategy.

The last academic year has been one of the most challenging times in our history, but credit must be given to all leaders across Wales who have demonstrated resilience, perseverance, passion and courageous leadership during these unprecedented times.

Despite the global pandemic, this remains an exciting time for education in Wales as it progresses through a period of genuine transformation. Now, more than ever, educational leadership needs to be dynamic, innovative, aspirational and highly ambitious if we are to overcome the immediate crisis and realise the promise of our ambitious educational reforms.

Our small team of core staff supported by three secondees and a strong cadre of Associates continue to support the delivery of our vision and values and through this corporate plan they will help convert intentions into effective and efficient action.

We want Wales to be a country where leaders thrive and sustainable leadership strategies drive self-improvement. We want Wales to be a country which is highly respected internationally for the way in which effective leadership is at the heart of an excellent education system.

Our ambition can only be achieved through strong partnership working within and across all of the tiers within Wales, including our middle tier partners and through our Tri-Nations collaborative and other international partners.

We thank you for your support and encouragement so far and we look forward to working with you to help bring our corporate plan to life.

Tegwen Ellis
Chief Executive
August 2021

Our Purpose

The National Academy for Educational Leadership was established in 2018, under the Companies Act 2006. As an arm's length body, its primary role is to fulfil its responsibilities set within the context of the Welsh Government's strategic aims.

Its main purpose is to:

- Contribute to the development of the professional capabilities of current and aspiring leaders across the education system by providing coherence and quality assurance for the range of educational leadership development opportunities available in Wales
- Act as a thought leader; developing, articulating and implementing a vision and strategy for educational leadership in Wales
- To be a respected and active member of the education middle tier, the first point of contact for the educational workforce in regard to leadership matters.

The National Academy for Educational Leadership is a central feature of the education reform journey set out in [Education in Wales: Our national mission](#), where it is identified by Welsh Government as a key driver of *Enabling Objective 2: Leadership working collaboratively to raise standards*.

Our Vision for 2026

The National Academy for Educational Leadership will work in partnership with practitioners and policymakers from across the Welsh education system to create the conditions in which educational leadership will thrive.

The National Academy for Educational Leadership will be:

- a **visible and respected** organisation
- with a **distinctive, clearly articulated and widely understood role** within Welsh education
- underpinned by **robust governance** arrangements and an **effective, agile executive** function.

From this platform, by 2026, the organisation will make a key contribution to a Welsh education system.

By creating the conditions needed to **inspire leaders**, the National Academy for Educational Leadership will **enrich the lives** of children and young people across Wales, helping them develop as ambitious, capable learners; as healthy, confident individuals; as enterprising, creative contributors; and as ethical, informed citizens.



Our Values

The work of the National Academy for Educational Leadership is informed by our commitment to being:



All staff of the National Academy for Educational Leadership, its Board members, secondees and Associates, are committed to working in ways that are consistent with the seven principles of public life, namely:

- Selflessness
- Integrity
- Objectivity
- Accountability
- Openness
- Honesty
- Leadership

Our Strategy

To deliver Our Vision for 2026, the National Academy for Educational Leadership has developed a strategic approach that identifies workstreams and activities in three priority areas.

Leadership Development and Quality Assurance

We aim to:

Improve the quality, range and accessibility of leadership development provision in Wales, while ensuring that effective system leadership is developed and deployed

To achieve this, we are undertaking a range of activity within four workstreams:

Workstream	Activity (examples)
1.1 Quality Assurance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-stage endorsement process for leadership development provision • Quality Assurance framework for endorsed provision
1.2 Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovation fund to support new approaches to leadership development • Innovation workshops to stimulate innovative thinking and action among educational leaders
1.3 System leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building capacity within the system through the recruitment, development and deployment of Associates
1.4 Leadership Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Unlocked professional learning webinars • Conferences to meet, discuss issues, ideas and work that focus on a topic of mutual concern

Detailed activity plans and key performance indicators (KPIs) for each workstream are set out in the Operational Plan for this priority area.



Insight and Thought Leadership

We aim to:

Inform leadership policy and practice through access to (and interpretation of) the best evidence and thinking from Wales and internationally, while ensuring educational leadership is sustained as a long-term policy focus in Wales

To achieve this, we are undertaking a range of activity within four workstreams:

Workstream	Activity (examples)
2.1 Evidence-based Resource for Educational Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Leading Professional Learning resource</i> • <i>Leading Enquiry resource</i>, based on evidence generated by enquiry projects funded through the National Academy for Educational Leadership's <i>Enquire, innovate, explore! initiative</i>
2.2 Insight for educational Leaders and Policymakers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New research commissions and critical reviews of international academic and policy literatures • Recruitment and retention data collection and analysis
2.3 Well-being of Educational Leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National survey and report • All Wales Strategy for the Well-being of Educational Leaders
2.4 Strategic Workforce Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic proposals for change • Recruitment and retention data collection and analysis

Detailed activity plans and KPIs for each workstream are set out in the Operational Plan for this priority area.



Corporate

We aim to:

Establish the National Academy for Educational Leadership as an organisation with robust governance arrangements and an effective executive function, with a visible, distinctive, clearly articulated and widely understood role within the Welsh education system

To achieve this, we are undertaking a range of activities within four workstreams:

Workstream	Activity (examples)
3.1 Effective Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk management • Financial scrutiny • Internal and external audit
3.2 Executive Function	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic and operational planning • Professional development • Operational management and internal controls
3.3 Communications and Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced visibility through direct communication • Social listening • Digital engagement
3.4 Stakeholder & Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership agreements • Focus groups and consultation exercises • Conferences and webinars

Detailed activity plans and KPIs for each workstream are set out in the Operational Plan for this priority area.

The relationship between these priority areas, workstreams, activities and the short, medium and long-term outcomes of our work, are summarised in the **National Academy for Educational Leadership Logic Model**, which is included as APPENDIX A.

Our Resources

The main resource that the National Academy for Educational Leadership can call upon in the pursuit of Our Vision for 2026 is professional capital. It is people, both those formally involved with the National Academy for Educational Leadership's work as staff and Associates and those who support us less formally, as friends, partners and stakeholders, who drive us forward.

The National Academy for Educational Leadership Board oversees the strategic direction of the organisation and is comprised of individuals with extensive and diverse experience from both within and outside education. Full details of current board membership can be found [here](#).

Led by the Chief Executive, the National Academy for Educational Leadership has a small executive team whose responsibilities map to the three priority areas outlined above. From September 2020, the team were joined by three secondees, all senior educational leaders, working in our priority areas of Leadership Development and Quality Assurance and Insight and Thought Leadership. Occasional executive capacity is also provided by our Associates. The current staff organogram is included as APPENDIX B. Full staff profiles can be found [here](#).

The National Academy for Educational Leadership appoints an annual cohort of Associates, all currently practising senior educational leaders, who each work with the us on a formal basis for a two-year period. Associates progress through a series of development stages designed to equip them with the skills, behaviours and networking opportunities to act as effective system leaders. Our Associates also provide the National Academy for Educational Leadership with opportunities to access their expertise and knowledge as current educational leaders, an invaluable resource that ensures the voice of the profession is heard in all of our planning, activity and reflection. Full details of current Associates are available [here](#).

The National Academy for Educational Leadership is able to access ideas, support and dialogue from the education system as a whole through its stakeholder group. Members of the group help the organisation to:

- Influence thinking at regional and national level
- Support and challenge the work of the National Academy for Educational Leadership – improving endorsement processes, making suggestions for research and commissioning
- Ensure that leaders from across the education sectors feel that it is 'their' National Academy for Educational Leadership and that they are represented

The National Academy for Educational Leadership has a separate Union stakeholder group and conducts regular stakeholder meetings with middle tier organisations including Estyn, EWC and the four regional education consortia.

The National Academy for Educational Leadership is a founder member of the Three Nations Educational Leadership Consortium, with the Scottish College of Educational Leadership (now part of Scottish Government) and Ireland's Centre for School Leadership. This network allows our work to be informed and challenged by international practice in educational leadership development.

Our Performance

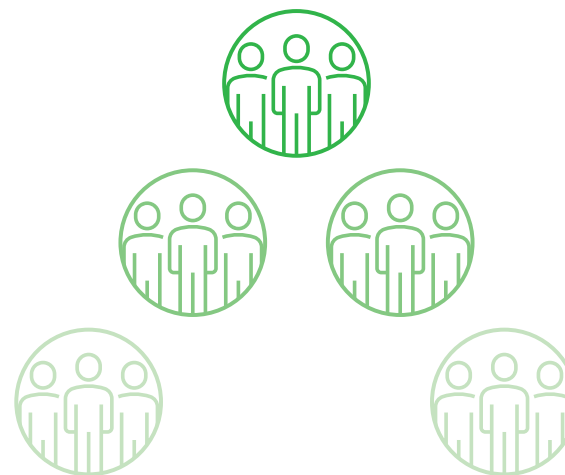
As a Learning Organisation, the National Academy for Educational Leadership constantly collects information on the impact of its work in order to reflect and modify its approach at a strategic and operational level.

Alongside external evaluation of the impact of our work, principally by Welsh Government, we use a **Results and Evidence Framework** to identify and learn the lessons from our activity so that we can improve over time, ensuring we are generating impact that contributes to realising Our Vision for 2026.

The Results and Evidence Framework comprises:

- Surveys of participants in all National Academy for Educational Leadership activities
- Data collection on engagement, including digitally
- Periodic internal reviews of our activity, including formal and informal stakeholder interviews
- Independent evaluations of key activities commissioned by the National Academy for Educational Leadership, including of the Endorsement process and Associate model
- Research carried out by independent academic researchers, including through our collaborative Economic and Social Research Council / Welsh Government doctoral studentship based at Cardiff University
- Annual reviews of the Corporate Plan and associated strategic and operational documents

A report on the data collected through the Results and Evidence Framework and how it is helping us modify our work will be presented to the Board as part of the next annual review of this Corporate Plan.



INPUTS

OUTPUTS

OUTCOMES

People

- Board
- Executive
- Secondees
- Associates and Alumni
- Stakeholders
- Partners

Funding

- Welsh Government grant

Values

- Collaborative
- Inclusive
- Arm's length
- National
- A Listening organisation
- A Learning organisation
- Serious about well-being
- Equality & Diversity

Priority areas

Workstreams

Short-term

Medium-term

Long-term (Our Vision for 2026)

Leadership Development and Quality Assurance

1.1 Quality Assurance

A wide range of provision is endorsed and gaps and areas of under service have been identified. A quality assurance framework for endorsed provision is being implemented

The endorsed 'offer' for educational leaders is comprehensive, well understood and broadly accessed. Innovative new provision is being developed, tested and endorsed

A range of high quality, equitable and innovative professional learning and development opportunities, which can adapt to meet the changing needs of educational leaders in Wales, are accessed by all leaders, regardless of setting, sector, career stage and whether they have a formal or informal leadership role

1.2 Innovation

New and innovative approaches to leadership development are supported by an Innovation fund
Innovation workshops stimulate innovative thinking and action among educational leaders

Innovative new provision is being developed, tested and endorsed
Innovative thinking and action among educational leaders is clearly evident

Educational leaders foster and maintain a true innovation culture. One in which the traditional top-down structure is replaced with a culture of collaboration, where risk and failure are embraced rather than avoided, where all staff are given the opportunity to learn, contribute, grow and are active contributors to success

1.3 System Leadership

Multiple cohorts of Associates are progressing through a mature system leadership model and having measurable impacts on the education system beyond their own organisations

There is a wide understanding and an emerging culture of system leadership. Opportunities to access professional learning to support system leadership (beyond the Associate model) are available to all leaders

Effective **system leadership drives self-improvement**, with professionals collaborating and leading beyond organisational structures, between tiers and across sectors

1.4 Leadership Development

A variety of leadership development opportunities are provided which allow all educational leaders in Wales to meet, reflect, discuss issues, ideas and actions

Opportunities contribute to the development of the professional capabilities of current and aspiring leaders across the Welsh education system

Leadership development opportunities provided are an integral part of a National leadership offer accessed by all leaders, regardless of setting, sector, career stage and whether they have a formal or informal leadership role

Insight and Thought Leadership

2.1 Evidence-based Resources for Leaders

High-quality, evidence-based leadership resources are published and promoted

Educational leaders are aware of the resources and are using them to inform their practice

A suite of high-quality, **Wales-specific leadership resources**, informed by the best evidence from Wales and internationally, supports professionals to continually challenge and refine their approaches to leadership

2.2 Insight for Leaders and Policymakers

New research work and critical reviews of existing literature on key aspects of policy and practice are commissioned and published

Insight material is stimulating new debate and informing thinking and action among policymakers and practitioners

Leadership policy and practice is grounded in and **directly informed by the best international research and evidence**

2.3 Well-being of Educational Leaders

Strategic proposals to address leaders' well-being are co-created by the system, including representatives of Welsh Government, the middle tier and current practitioners

A well-being strategy, adopted by Welsh Government, is published and implemented

The **well-being of leaders is prioritised and systematically supported**, creating a sustainable and resilient leadership workforce capable of being a key driver of lasting, systemic change

2.4 Strategic Workforce Development

Up-to-date and useful data on recruitment and retention of educational leaders is collected, analysed and published

Strategic proposals to address recruitment and retention challenges are developed and adopted by the system

Leadership roles are attractive and leaders are motivated to remain and develop within the profession

Corporate

3.1 Effective Governance

The Board of Directors is refreshed and a planned cycle in place for further rounds of recruitment

The National Academy for Educational Leadership is a well-established, respected and visible organisation working alongside other partners in the middle tier

Leadership is embedded as a **long-term priority area for education policy makers** that spans political cycles

3.2 Executive Function

Robust strategic and operational planning is supported and challenged by rigorous audit and risk action

Develop the organisational capacity ensuring that the strategic priorities are well supported with effective resources

A robust, effective and agile executive function

3.3 Communications and Marketing

Digital strategy further developed which includes media engagement

Continue to develop the corporate profile and messaging to ensure that the role of the National Academy for Educational Leadership is visible and widely understood by the education system

The National Academy for Educational Leadership has a **distinctive, clearly articulated and widely understood role** within the Welsh education system

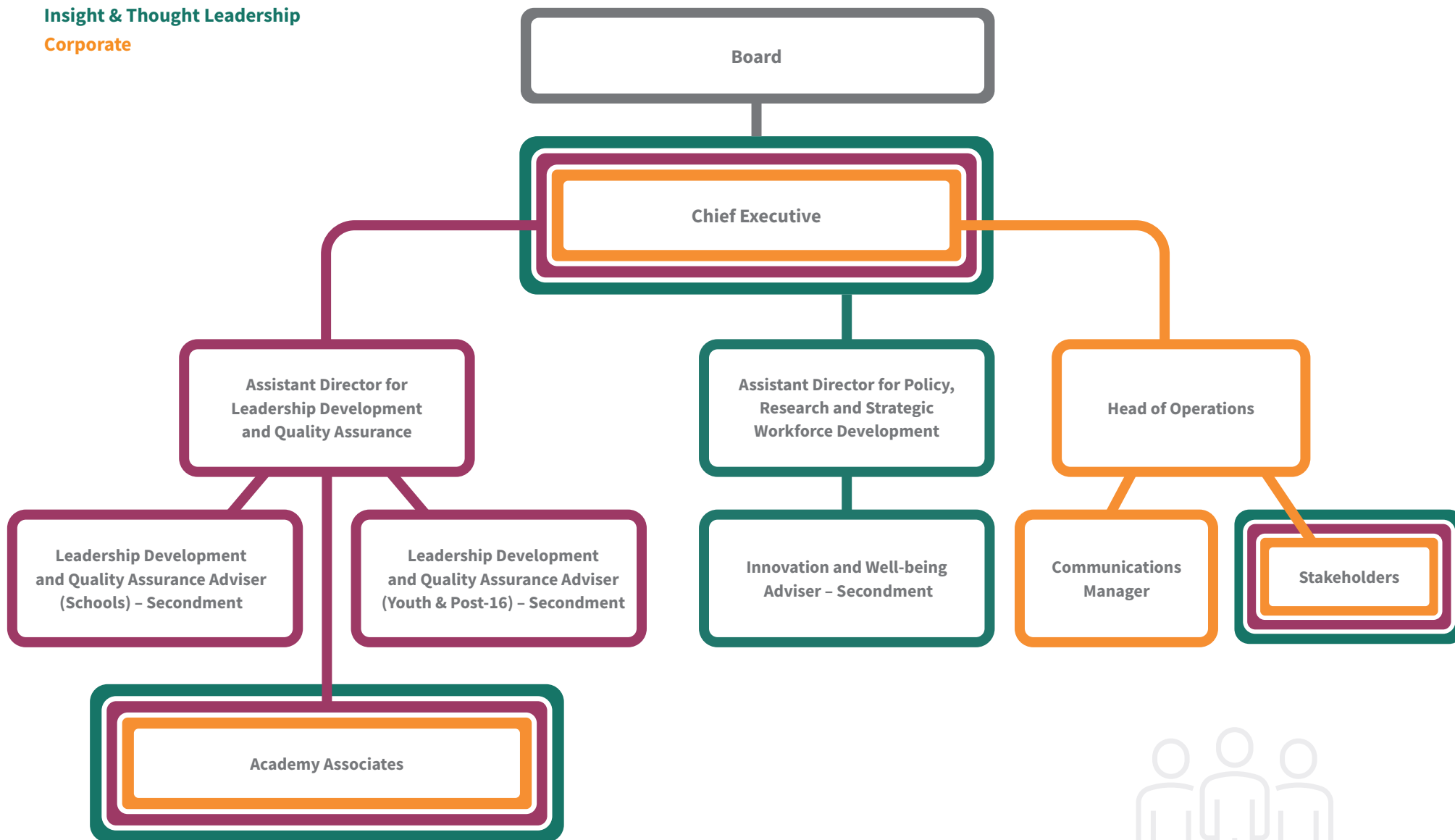
3.4 Stakeholders and Partnerships

Effective stakeholder strategy in place

Engagement with stakeholders and partners demonstrating impact on the role of the organisation

Working in collaboration with partners to **promote leadership and support a self-improving system**

Key:
**Leadership Development
& Quality Assurance**
Insight & Thought Leadership
Corporate





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