



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

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## Corporate Plan Our Vision for 2026

Inspiring Leaders – Enriching Lives



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# Chief executive's introduction

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**I am pleased to present the National Academy for Educational Leadership's Corporate Plan, which sets out our vision and strategy for the next four years (2022-2026).**

This plan has been updated after giving consideration to the priorities set out in the new remit letter issued by the Welsh Government (March 2022), an annual review of the National Academy for Educational Leadership's strategic priorities and is built on the effective work achieved in the start-up phase of the organisation.

The Corporate Plan includes our purpose, vision and value statements and sets out under twelve workstreams, how we aim to deliver our priorities and meet the vision for 2026. We believe that this plan will enable us to continue supporting educational leaders from all sectors across Wales and provide the opportunities for developing and building leadership capacity.

We are confident that this Corporate Plan will enable us to meet the demands of and respond to the strategic priorities, the remit priorities and any emerging ministerial priorities or published reports. We will be creative and innovative in our approach to meeting these priorities. The Corporate Plan will be supported by an annual operational plan.

As we go forward, our small team of core staff supported by its board members, stakeholders and a strong cadre of Associates will 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. Our ambition can only be achieved through strong partnership working within and across all of the tiers within Wales, including our middle tier partners, through our Tri-Nations collaborative and other international partners.

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. We want Wales to be seen as the country that invests in its educational leadership workforce through prioritising and systematically supporting the well-being of its leaders.

We look forward to working with you over the next four years and thank for your support in developing the organisation through its set up stage.

**Tegwen Ellis**  
Chief Executive  
June 2022

**'the importance of securing, nurturing and inspiring leaders now and for the future across the entire education system, in both Welsh-medium and English medium settings, has been brought into sharp focus and remains a key commitment for the Welsh Government' (Remit)**

Jeremy Miles MS,  
March 2022

## Our Purpose

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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

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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
- be underpinned by **robust governance** arrangements and an **effective, agile executive** function
- **promote leadership** through **collaboration** with **stakeholders** and **partners**, embedding **leadership** as a **long-term priority** area which **spans political cycles**

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 Vision

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## Quality Assurance

A comprehensive range of high quality, equitable and innovative professional learning and development opportunities are accessed by all leaders



## Innovation

Educational leaders create and sustain a true innovation culture, pioneering new approaches to leadership



## System Leadership

Effective system leadership drives self-improvement



## Leadership Development

Leaders are empowered, inspired and motivated



## Resources

High-quality, Wales-specific leadership resources, informed by the best evidence from Wales and internationally, support professionals to continually challenge and refine their approaches to leadership



## Insight

Leadership policy and practice is grounded in and directly informed by research and evidence from Wales and internationally



## Well-being

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



## Strategic Workforce Development

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



# Our Values

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

## A LEARNING ORGANISATION

We will review our work using a Results and Evidence Framework and will adapt our strategic approach, ways of working and allocation of resources to reflect new challenges and opportunities

## COLLABORATIVE

As a small organisation, we will achieve nothing working alone. Instead, close partnerships with the profession and with our peer organisations in the middle tier will be our default mode of working

## EQUITY

We will work with and on behalf of all educational leaders, regardless of setting, sector, career stage, geographical background and whether they have a formal or informal leadership role

## SERIOUS ABOUT WELL-BEING

Effective leadership thrives when well-being is supported. We will prioritise the well-being of all professionals, including our own staff and Associates

## A LISTENING ORGANISATION

Hearing and articulating the voice of educational leadership is at the heart of our work

## EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

We are committed to promoting fairness, equality and diversity both in our own work and in the way we seek to influence the work of others. We will work to ensure that educational leadership in Wales reflects our diverse communities

## ARM'S LENGTH

As an organisation that is strategically aligned to Welsh Government and part of the important reforms in Welsh education, we will be a positive contributor that is capable of challenging as well as facilitating, the nature and trajectory of leadership policy

## NATIONAL

We will work with and for the whole of Wales to help achieve a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language



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

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

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

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

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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 be 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 Tri-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

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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
- Stakeholders
- Partners

**Funding**

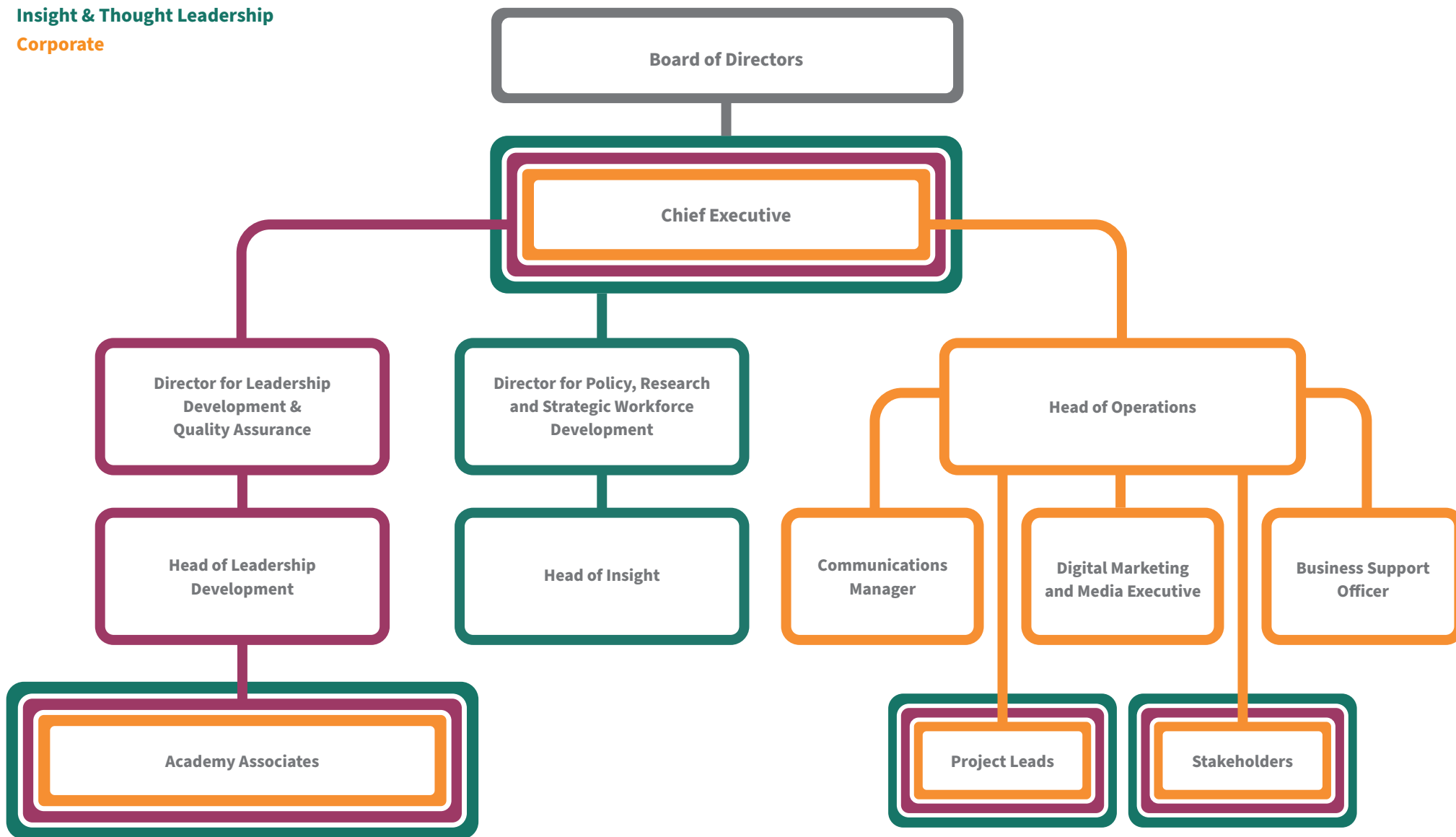
- Welsh Government grant

**Values**

- Collaborative
- Equity
- National
- Arm’s Length
- Equality & Diversity
- A Listening Organisation
- Serious About Well-Being
- A Learning Organisation

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	Endorsed provision for educational leaders is well understood and broadly accessed	A comprehensive range of high quality, equitable and innovative professional learning and development opportunities are accessed by all leaders
	1.2 Innovation	New and innovative approaches to leadership development are stimulated	Innovative thinking and action is being supported and developed	Educational leaders create and sustain a true innovation culture, pioneering new approaches to leadership
	1.3 System Leadership	Multiple cohorts of Associates are moving through a developing system leadership model and having a measurable impact on the education system beyond their own settings	There is a wider understanding and growing evidence of system leadership practice	Effective system leadership drives self-improvement
	1.4 Leadership Development	A variety of leadership development opportunities are provided	Leaders engage with a range of opportunities that contribute to professional capabilities	Leaders are empowered, inspired and motivated
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	High-quality, Wales-specific leadership resources, informed by the best evidence from Wales and internationally, support 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 research and evidence from Wales and internationally
	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	A robust programme of training and development is in place for all directors ensuring continuity of practice and a high performing governance structure	The National Academy for Educational Leadership is a well-established and respected organisation working alongside other partners in the middle tier
	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, widely understood and valued role within the Welsh education system
	3.4 Stakeholders and Partnerships	Delivery of effective stakeholder strategy	Stakeholders and partners shape the organisation through effective scrutiny and advocacy	Collaboration with stakeholders and partners promotes leadership and supports a self-improving system, embedding leadership as a long term priority area which spans political cycles

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





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