Principles of effective course leadership

Here we present the 10 principles of course leadership along with examples and prompts for good practice.

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# Principle 1: Departments should have a plan for the development of course leadership competences within their academic workforce, utilising the course leader role outlines and capabilities

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* Is this considered as part of the Departmental annual planning process?
* Is the effectiveness of course leadership discussed at college leadership team meetings?
* Do discussions about course leadership take place routinely as part of Academic Performance and Development reviews in the context of the Academic Career Framework?

# Principle 2: Course leaders should be identified at the earliest opportunity with respect to new courses and timely succession planning should be in place for established courses.

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* Does the identification of a course leader feature early in the planning for new provision?
* Does the course leader routinely contribute to the development and approval of new courses?
* Does succession planning take place through the establishment of roles such as deputy course leader, level leads or members of the course team taking responsibility for specific course leadership activities?
* Are shadowing opportunities made available to aspiring course leaders?

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# Principle 3: Academics undertaking a course leader role should be substantive members of staff and normally be at grade 8 or above.

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

Associate Lecturers and Lecturers should not be given a course leadership role; however, it would be appropriate for them to undertake course leadership activities in support of a course leader, as part of their continuing professional development.

# Principle 4: Recruitment to course leader roles should be open and transparent and for a fixed period normally 3 years, with the College to extend should circumstances dictate

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* This could be achieved through expressions of interest for vacant course leader roles.
* It does not preclude existing course leaders from reapply for the role.
* There may be circumstances where it is appropriate to extend the term for an existing course leader for a further year.

# Principle 5: All new course leaders will have a comprehensive induction and be allocated a mentor before taking up the role.

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* It should be an expectation that all new course leaders will engage with the University induction programme, ideally before taking up the role or soon after.
* Mentorship for new course leaders could be sourced from within or outside of the College.
* Ideally the mentor should have experience of a similar size and type of course.
* All course leaders (new and experienced) taking over a course should have a formal and comprehensive hand over from their predecessor.

# Principle 6: Effective course leadership will be embedded in all relevant training and development opportunities within Hallam

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* The University will provide development opportunities for new and experienced course leaders.
* Colleges and Departments will supplement this through local development events.
* Course leadership principles will be embedded in the PG Cert HE and the Academic Apprenticeship.

# Principle 7: Mechanisms for supporting and empowering course leaders should be in place at Departmental, College and University levels

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* How do members of the College Leadership Team engage with course leaders?
* Does the College have a 'champion' for course leaders within the leadership team?
* What forums exist within the College and Department for course leaders to share good practice and seek support in improving their course?
* Are course leaders clear about where to raise concerns with regarding the development and delivery of their course?

# Principle 8: Where appropriate, it is an expectation that all course leaders contribute to the teaching on their course.

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* The amount of teaching a course leader undertakes may vary according to the type of course.
* This may not be appropriate in cases of collaborative course leadership or leadership of apprenticeship courses.

# Principle 9: Course leaders should be enabled to inform, key management and operational matters relating to their course, such as the academic membership of the course team, recruitment numbers, academic work planning and marketing material

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* How are course leaders routinely involved in decisions relating to?
  + course team composition.
  + academic work planning.
  + timetabling.
  + recruitment targets for their course.
  + content of marketing material and online prospectus.

# Principle 10: Regular meetings of the course team should take place, at least once per semester, to review the success of the course and plan for future developments. These should be led by the course leader and include academic and professional services colleagues.

**Examples and prompts for good practice**

* Course leaders should convene regular meetings of their team, involving academic and professional services colleagues.
* The focus of the meeting will depend upon the timing within the academic cycle, it may include:
  + review of key performance data.
  + recruitment and retention.
  + curriculum design and development.
  + course assessment strategy.
  + moderation and verification.
  + student engagement including communication, evaluation, representation.