

## Distributed Leadership Matrix to Build Institutional Leadership Capacity in Learning and Teaching

### Background

The strategy of the project team to develop a Distributed Leadership Matrix (DLM) was to first produce a scoping document that would arise from an exploration of the synergies between the four previous projects of the partner Institutes for this project. The next stage was to evaluate the scoping document through Communities of Practices (CoPs) within each of the participating universities. The CoPs would consist of representatives from participants in the first DL projects. This would not only provide a validation for the scoping document but also an opportunity to further develop the DL capabilities of the participants and thus add to Institutional DL leadership capacity. The evaluative feedback obtained from this process was to provide the base data for the contextual conditions and leadership skills to enable the design of a DLM.

The Project Team drew on the literature on DL and identified a number of dimensions through which DL in HE can be viewed outlined in Table 1<sup>1</sup> below.

**Table 1 Dimensions and Characteristics of DL**

<b>The dimensions</b>	<b>Characteristics</b>
Context Social (external and internal)	a more collaborative approach compared with hierarchical leadership and underpinned by trust rather than by regulation
Culture	encouragement, valuing and recognition of individual initiative rather than control
Change and development	support of more bottom-up and middle-out rather than traditional top-down sources of change and development
Conflict resolution	encouragement of collaboration (conjoint agency) and fluidity rather than formal structures, recognising the potential challenges of involving more people and the potential for conflict
Activity	recognition of the relationship between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• structure (formal organisational features that affect power and resource distribution, existing systems and patterns of knowledge, ideas and values and formal patterns of relationships and interactions) AND</li> <li>• agency (action of people and their ability to act reflexively).</li> </ul>

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<sup>1</sup> Woods, Bennet, Harvey and Wise (2004) and HE L&T.

## Scoping document

### 1. Identification of synergies between initial dl projects

The project team undertook an analysis using the five dimensions identified above of the four contributing projects and identified the following synergies<sup>2</sup>:

- Context
  - External - government regulation on quality of learning and teaching affecting university funding.
  - Internal - university recognition of the need to build institutional leadership capacity in learning and teaching.
- Culture
  - Culture of academic autonomy but lack of self-recognition of leadership role by academics not in formal leadership roles, (NOTE: the lack of a shared definition was evidenced.).
- Change and development
  - Recognition of the role of senior formal leaders, particularly DVC.
  - Policy was top-down, strategy and support was middle-out and implementation was bottom-up.
- Conflict Resolution
  - More emphasis on relationship building than on conflict resolution.
  - Recognition of potential conflict between informal and formal leaders.
  - Development of positive communication strategies to avert conflict through leadership development programs.
- Activity
  - Action research approach enables cycles of change.
  - The need for continual opportunities to network (a combination of virtual and face-to face with the conclusion that the virtual was useful for administrative purposes but the face-to-face more efficacious for in-depth discussion).
  - Longer timeframe needed for change.
  - Need resources to support activity.
  - Expert advice/facilitation was effective.
  - Support for collaboration, facilitation, workshops and formal leadership was important.

### 2. Feedback from ALTC project leaders

The findings from the initial scoping document were presented during a workshop at the ALTC annual Leadership Project meeting<sup>3</sup>, and based on the feedback (see Appendix 1) the following changes were made to the scoping document:

- Context:
  - Recognition that DL does not exist as a replacement for, but rather as addition to, formal leadership, particularly in the interplay between leadership and authority.
- Culture:
  - Need to acknowledge culture as it relates to concepts of collaboration and autonomy and to the specific nature of deployment of DL.

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<sup>2</sup> Jones, Applebee, Harvey and Lefoe 2010

<sup>3</sup> Leaders present at the ALTC Leaders meeting February 2010

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- Activity  
A central factor in establishing shared purpose and outcome and linking to context
- Change and development  
Need to recognise the difference, but interplay between, change and development
- Conflict resolution  
Recognised as intrinsic to the process of DL but requiring a relationship management process to prevent rather than simply relying on resolution process once it occurs.

Addition variables identified by the participants:

- Need to recognise the identity of individuals in groups
- The importance of factors such as openness, trust, and respect between people
- The impact of geography, complexity and size of change on the process.
- The degree of formality of leadership.

### **Action on feedback**

Changes to the Scoping document were made to incorporate this feedback before it was presented for discussion to the Reference Group.

### **3. Feedback from reference group**

The project Reference Group in March and April 2010 considered the draft version of the scoping document and based on the feedback (see appendix B) further changes were made to it.

- Context:  
Recognition that DL does not exist as a replacement for, but rather as addition to, formal leadership, particularly the exercise of power as compared to influence.
- Culture:  
The importance of recognising the central role of shared influence of many people in DL rather than the traditional reliance on individual leaders was reiterated. However, there is need to also recognise the capabilities and capacities required to contribute within a DL approach.  
The need to focus on sustainable leadership was emphasised.
- Activity  
The question of how academics currently become leaders in teaching and learning was considered to be of related interest to this project.
- Change and development  
It was noted that although many academics see themselves as teachers and researchers, many do not see themselves as leaders or potential leaders.
- Conflict resolution  
It was felt that the variable of conflict resolution was too narrow and negative and that relationship management was a better way of expressing this aspect of DL.

The need to further unpack and develop the variables was emphasised, particularly as they do not uniquely identify DL. There was also a question of whether the variables were those which leaders acted upon or were characteristics of DL.

### **Underpinning issues**

There was a strong feeling that the project should develop a definition of DL for its own use and that any theory used in the project needed to be developed for the Australian higher education context. It was suggested that further empirical work might take the form of case studies and that

this may be achieved as a follow-on project from this to explore the experience of other projects that are using DL theory, even if this is not explicitly articulated by the project team leaders. The issue of how this project impacts on student performance was raised. It was acknowledged that this is difficult given that the project is aimed at increasing the leadership capacity of academics in learning and teaching rather than directly acting on student issues. The reference group recommended that if the project team did decide to attempt to measure its impact on student outcomes, it uses a wide a set of measures as possible.

### **Action on feedback**

This feedback was used to develop the questions for the Communities of Practice in each of the partner Institutions, The questions were designed to further unpack the variables identified in the Scoping document (Appendix C),

## **4. Summary of responses from institutional communities of practice**

Focus Group questions framed the discussion for the institutional Communities of Practice (COPs) The COPs were made up of a representative group of participants from each of the original DL projects in the partner Institutions and participated in this project as Focus Groups, The responses plus reflections from the Project leaders who had attended all the meetings were compared (see summary appendix D) by the Project Team and used as the basis of the draft Distributed Leadership Matrix presented in this document. The common factors that emerged from the Focus Groups were as follows.

- Context:
  - The context for learning and teaching is changing with greater emphasis on the need to improve the quality of learning and teaching (including assessment), in both face-to-face and distance (virtual) environments This requires all congruent and integrated actions across the university between all levels of formal leadership as well as academic and student service and infrastructure providers.
  - However, within this, the importance of DL ‘champions’ both in the initial establishment and in an ongoing capacity was recognised.
  - The contribution DL could play in contributing to a context for succession planning within universities was recognised.
- Culture
  - The importance of volunteering to engage in DL projects was emphasised in each case.
  - A commitment to, passion for and prior experience in, attempting to improve learning and teaching through long term strategic changes was emphasised.
  - Some participants mentioned a degree of frustration with blockages inherent in formal university structures and processes. This led to a need for a collegial rather than managerial approach to leadership to improve learning and teaching.
  - It was felt that DL enables academics to influence decision making rather than actually share power in decision making.
- Change and Development
  - The contribution made by universities’ new policy emphasis on learning and teaching coupled with new formal leaders in learning and teaching was emphasised by all Focus Groups.
  - The central importance of obvious and consistent senior leadership support was a common theme from all Focus Groups
  - The need for collaboration across all academic and student, infrastructure and IT service providers was recognised.

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- Activity
  - Action to develop, encourage, nurture and support collaboration was a consistent theme from all Focus Groups.
  - Underpinning suggestions for action was an assumption of an Action Research Process that enables flexible adjustment as contexts, cultures and change requirements emerge. As part of this, encouragement of and time for reflection, was seen as crucial to the activity process.
  - Activity should be focussed on encouraging rather than criticising; so that a resistance to knowledge sharing and scepticism about the genuine nature of the process is reduced.
  - Suggestions for such action included:
    - Initial and ongoing professional development, networking workshops and other activities including mentoring.
    - The value of ‘retreats’ of offsite workshops was mentioned, particularly when bringing disparate groups (disciplines, functions and Institutions) together.
    - Regular opportunities for collective (small group) meetings to share emerging ideas were also emphasised, through a combination of F2F and virtual opportunities.
  - Relationship Management
    - The importance of recognising and building into any DL process the complex culture of, and pressures upon academics, was emphasised if trust, motivation and commitment to change are to be built. This includes an emphasis on recognising them as experts in their discipline field, their emphasis on research (often at the expense of learning and teaching) and their culture of autonomy.
    - The importance of developing effective communication for a successful process was identified.
    - The importance of developing a collaborative culture within a culture of competition was seen as an important challenge.

The responses of the Focus Groups to the questions of the skills required to participate actively in a DL process supported the project findings to date that practices of leadership rather than skills and traits of individual leaders are important for DL. Participants identified a diverse array of often conflicting abilities required to operate in a DL process. This included a diverse combination of the ability to work independently but at the same time be able to give and accept shared goals. Individual credibility and the ability to be proactive are required to operate in a DL process, but at the same time being able to work as a team member and not allowing ego to predominate was identified. Being prepared to accept responsibility but at the same time be willing to encourage and support others was recognised. Being resilient, adaptable, open to ambiguity, reflective, and being able to represent issues rather than positions were all recognised as important traits of participants in a DL process.

The responses of the Focus Groups have been incorporated in the following Discussion and then used to develop the draft Distributed Leadership Matrix presented in this paper.

## Discussion

The experience from the four distributed leadership projects of the institutions involved in this project confirms the relevance of the five dimensions identified in the scoping document. Based on the confluence of feedback that Conflict Resolution should be expanded to focus 'Relationship Management' aimed at establishing process to reduce conflict occurring, this dimension was broadened to relationship management. Specific examples of such strategies included the agreed guidelines and agreements on who would contribute to publications.

It is clear that the **Context** for DL to occur requires less focus than structural, hierarchical and directive leadership, in which regulation is the main determinant of activity. However, this does not preclude all regulation, as external government regulations were seen as effective in influencing senior (formal) university leadership to move from an almost sole focus on research to one where recognising the importance of developing leaders in learning and teaching (who can lead quality improvement) is increasing. It also does not preclude the need for different styles of leadership to be utilised across the university, depending on the issue. Most importantly, it was recognised that a DL approach can exist alongside, rather than as a replacement for formal leadership. Adopting a DL approach appears to be effective in developing an internal context in which teaching academics, with no formal leadership or managerial authority (power), can influence institutional action in learning and teaching. In this regard, DL was seen as a means to build individual leadership capability in learning and teaching as part of an overall plan to increase institutional leadership capacity.

There is evidence that a **Culture** of academic autonomy was encouraged, valued and recognised for its ability to produce innovations to improve the quality of learning and teaching. It was recognised that this accords with the traditional university structure of academic boards and committees that has accompanied the research culture in which individual discipline expertise is recognised. This had the effect of increasing academic's awareness of their contribution, not only to teaching but to leadership in learning and teaching, across the university. It also contributed to longer term motivation of participants to continue to explore quality improvements in learning and teaching through pedagogy and adoption of a more sustainable approach towards influencing the learning and teaching of their colleagues.

The contribution of a bottom-up approach to **Change and Development** was evident in each of the four original projects. That this need for change was embraced, rather than rejected, is important given evidence across the higher education sector of resistance to change. Some caution needs to be taken in that the focus and design of the projects was on change. However, the fact that the participants were able to encourage the adoption of change suggests that a participative approach can be more effective than a directive approach. . It was also clear that support from senior formal leaders, particularly the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Provost) responsible for learning and teaching and experts within the learning and teaching units, were both necessary and pivotal in enabling bottom up changes. Rather than a power exchange, what was emphasised was the ability of a DL approach to introduce a participative approach to change in which individuals felt safe and facilitated.

Interestingly, the dimension of **Conflict Resolution** was regarded as much broader than the originating literature on the dimensions of DL had suggested. This indicates a more positive acceptance of the opportunities created by DL for developing improvements in learning and teaching, in place of more rigid structural solutions to change. Conflict management was seen as a concern not so much between participants in the DL process, but between participants emerging as potential leaders through this informal process and those in existing structures of traditional leadership. Given the recognised importance of the support of formal leaders, this led to a focus on

the need for formal leaders to be linked into the DL processes. This was seen as a two-way process to ensure that agreement was reached between the need by formal leaders for 'quick fix' solutions and for participants in the informal DL for sustainable quality improvements and solutions informed by the latest scholarship in pedagogy. Thus, the dimension of conflict resolution was replaced by the broader conception of relationship management.

The important role of **Relationship Management** in the development of a collaborative culture was recognised in each of the projects. A collective identity was created, rather than the individual identity that can often accompany autonomy. Indeed, as mentioned above, community of practice participants in each institution placed a much greater emphasis on the importance of relationship management to build a collaborative culture than any of the other dimensions.

The contribution provided by professional development opportunities as part of a DL approach was emphasised in each project. This was described as strategic mentoring and facilitation that assisted participants to, on the one hand, understand the broader context in which they were operating, whilst on the other hand, to recognise the different strengths they each brought to the process and to develop personal confidence in the leadership contribution they could make. It also developed a sense of group identity and a community of practice, which are important to ensure that change continues over time.

The need to recognise a mix of staff responses to DL approaches was mentioned in most projects. Particularly the recognition of the existence of longer serving staff, who had experienced past university change processes that had professed to engage staff but failed to deliver positive outcomes for them. This was often described by such community of practice participants as 'here we go again'. The opportunity created by DL to positively engage newer, less sceptical staff in a process that promised to deliver real empowerment was recognised, as was the need for participants to accept the accountability that accompanies such empowerment.

It was further recognised that there is a need to adopt a flexible approach when implementing change and seeking to manage relationships aimed at collaboration. This was particularly the case given the multiple disciplines that exist within universities each with associated different approaches to leadership and to other issues,.

Finally, the importance of engaging in **Activity** in a reflective process was emphasised by the communities of practices. It was emphasised that this was achieved between actions taken by people within a university's formal organisational structure, systems, patterns of knowledge and values, in a reflective process. Indeed, the importance of action, rather than just talk, was the most highly rated dimension in these projects. This action was described as 'authentic' as it focussed on real learning and teaching issues at the faculty and school (department) levels that required innovative solutions.

Actions included allocating time and resources to support participants in activity that was both informed by knowledge and that was flexible enough to enable reflection and cycles of change. It was recognised that these cycles of change require facilitation from outside those participating in the group and support to facilitate group activity. In some cases, this related to the provision of physical space, in others the need for ICT support to connect people undertaking activities in geographically separated locations. The need to ensure that formal leaders were prepared to act, rather than be hesitant, was emphasised.

In summary, the experience of the four institutions involved in this project confirms the five dimensions of context, culture, change, relationship management and activity, as contributing to a

distributed leadership process. The DL process implemented in each case resulted in three major outcomes, first an increase in leadership capabilities of individuals that built institutional leadership capacity in learning and teaching, both informally and formally. Second, the resultant leadership capabilities are sustainable with participants continuing to lead change in learning and teaching either informally or in formal learning and teaching leadership roles. Third, learning and teaching improvements developed during the projects have been embedded into either institutional policy or institute-wide, faculty or school (department) processes.

### Development of a Distributed Leadership Matrix

Based on the above findings, a Distributed Leadership Matrix (DLM) is presented below in two parts. The matrices are designed to assist organisations in the adoption of a DL approach with a focus on increasing institutional leadership capacity building in learning and teaching by strengthening individual leadership capability.

#### Distributed Leadership Matrix 'A'- Dimensions and Inputs

The purpose of DLM matrix 'A' (Figure 1) is to provide a map of the five **inputs**, required by institutions to move from a centralised to a distributed concept of leadership, onto the five **dimensions** of the characteristics of DL. The inputs to move towards a DL approach were identified from the communities of practice and are: encouragement to involvement; creation of processes; development of shared leadership; provision of resources to aid collaborative opportunities and support for engagement.

Each column of DLM matrix 'A' identifies the **elements** that make up a particular dimension, for example the elements for the dimension of Context will be found in the range from power to influence. The DLM presents institutions, considering the use of a DL process to build leadership capacity, with the opportunity to map what inputs are needed to achieve the dimensions needed for DL. It supports the institutions' ability to identify the elements required to achieve each dimensions by combining them vertically. It also provides the ability to identify how the elements are a factor of each input by combining them horizontally.

The DLM uses the five dimensions as follows:

- **Context** - where leadership moves from a reliance on power to that of influence. This requires encouraging involvement based on trust rather than regulation through creating a process by which positional leaders support staff with expertise. This requires formal leadership training in shared leadership concepts, including distributed leadership. It requires resources in the form of finance and time for staff to engage in collaborative activities. It further requires support for the engagement of staff by positional leaders (at all levels) to ensure that work-plans identify participant's contribution to collaborative activities.
- **Culture** - where leadership moves from a reliance on control to one of autonomy. This requires the encouragement of the involvement by the identification within a university's visions and strategy and through the establishment of decision-making processes of the need to respect staffs' expertise. This requires the encouragement of staff engagement and representation in shared, decentralised decision-making committees. It requires the establishment of resources to recognise personal and group contribution to collaborative activities and, finally, support for participants through rewards/recognition that builds upon the leadership expertise they have gained.

- **Change** – where leadership is from the bottom-up and encourages greater participation by more staff. This requires encouraging interdependent multi-level involvement by creating processes that provide opportunity for practitioners to influence policy rather than policy being simply developed from the top and devolved down for implementation. In order to develop this shared leadership approach, there is a need for senior executives to demonstrate support for all stakeholders to be engaged. This requires resources in the form of mentoring and facilitation of collaboration as well as systems and infrastructure to support engagement of all stakeholders.
- **Relationship Management** – where leadership requires the adoption of a collective rather than individual identity. Participants are encouraged to self-identify as leaders as well as teachers and scholars, with processes created to encourage collaboration through means such as communities of practice and action research teams. Shared leadership should be facilitated by professional development activities as the philosophical and conceptual base for DL, as well as opportunities for dialogue and networking. Resources are provided that encourage regular meetings (both face-to-face and online) across the universities. Collective engagement is supported by the development of diagnostic tools through which outputs from the collaborative activity can be demonstrated.
- **Activity** – where leadership assumes a shared purpose through cycles of change. It is essential that participants in DL are encouraged to become involved by planning activities following a process that facilitates participants' engagement in action research through cycles of planning, acting, observing and reflecting. Shared leadership is developed by encouraging reflection on previous action aimed to identify critical success factors and lessons learnt from previous action. This requires resources in the form of time (particularly for the reflective stage as this is often forgotten) costed as part of the project activity, coupled with support in the form of a skilled facilitator assisting participants through the action research process.

### Distributed Leadership Matrix 'B' - Values and Practices

The purpose of DLM Matrix 'B' (Figure 2) is to provide a map of the four **practices** required to broaden leadership from a positional to a relational DL concept onto the **values** that underpin the five dimensions of DL. This change in emphasis from personal capabilities (skills, traits, behaviours) to practices recognises the fundamental change from an emphasis on leaders to leadership. It requires a focus on a relational perspective<sup>4</sup> of leadership that draws from the relational literature. These practices for leadership have been identified as:

- Self-in-Relation - emphasis on interdependence.
- Social Interaction - ability to create conditions for collective learning by exercising certain strengths, abilities and relational skills.
- Collective learning - through learning conversations progressing through a four stage dialogue of 'talking nice', 'talking tough', 'reflective dialogue' and 'generative dialogue'.
- Growth-in-connection - focus on mutuality where the boundary between self and others is more fluid and multi-directional. Movement occurs from mutual authenticity (bringing self into the interaction) to mutual empathy (hold onto self but also experience other's reality) to mutual empowerment (each is in some way influenced or affected by the other, so that something new is created).

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<sup>4</sup> Fletcher & Kaufer 2003.

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Distributed Leadership Matrix 'B' – Values and Practices presents institutions, considering the use of a DL process to build leadership capacity, with the opportunity to map what practices need to be encouraged to achieve each of the values identified by combining the practices vertically. It also provides the ability to identify how each practice can contribute to each value (by combining the practices horizontally).

DLM 'B' uses the five values thus:

- Moving from a context of power to influence requires acceptance of **Trust** rather than relying on regulation as a basis for leadership. This requires participants to see their 'self' in relation to others and recognise their interdependence rather than being ego-centric. It requires a proactive and resilient approach to developing and sustaining social interactions. It requires issues rather than positions to be presented and it requires growth to be achieved by participants working independently but also accepting responsibility for the collective.
- Moving from a culture of control to autonomy requires **Respect** of the expertise of those involved . This requires participants to be adaptable to new ideas, ambiguity, change and to recognise their peers. At the same time the expertise of each of the participants is recognised and valued. It requires participants who can work outside their comfort zones in order to grow.
- Moving from a top-down to bottom-up leadership style requires **Recognition** of leadership capabilities of many more persons engaged in the institution than those in designated leadership positions. This requires participants to mentor and encourage colleagues at the same time as be willing to share different philosophies. In order to grow, participants need to balance being forthright with being flexible.
- Moving from individual activities to **Collaboration** requires recognition of the value of an amalgamation of individual's value of collective identity (conjoint agency) rather than simply as a sum of individual activity. This requires participants to be forthright in bringing forward their views as an individual but to be prepared to be flexible in adapting these views to accommodate others so that they proceed beyond self-interest. This requires participants to be willing to both listen and communicate. For growth, participants need to accept shared goals and not be authoritarian.
- Adopting a shared purpose through cycles of change requires **Reflective Practice** by both the individual and the group in which participants adopt a critique rather than critical approach in order to achieve shared goals. The growth occurs through a focus on fostering mutual outcomes.

**The Distributed Leadership Matrix ‘A’ - Dimensions and Inputs**

<b>Inputs (required to move towards DL)</b>	<b>Dimensions (and elements) of Distributed Leadership</b>				
	<b>Context</b>  <b>From power to influence</b>	<b>Culture</b>  <b>From control to autonomy</b>	<b>Change</b>  <b>From top-down to interdependent, multi-level and bottom-up</b>	<b>Relationships</b>  <b>From individual to collective identity</b>	<b>Activity</b>  <b>Shared purpose through cycles of change</b>
<b>Encourage Involvement</b>	Move from regulation to trust	Value staff expertise identified in university vision and strategy	Policy influenced by practice at multi-levels and multi-functions	Create opportunities for self-identification of participants as leaders as well as teachers/scholars	Establish action research cycle with identified plan, role, activity timetable and responsibilities
<b>Create Process</b>	Formal leaders to support informal leaders	Develop culture of respect for expertise	Introduce opportunities for practice to influence policy	Encourage collaborative groups e.g. CoPs action research teams	Development of action research cycles and reflective practice techniques and tools
<b>Develop Shared Leadership</b>	Formal leadership training to include DL	Encourage representation on decentralised committees	Senior Exec. support involve all stakeholders	PD workshop on of DL opportunities for dialogue and networking	Encourage reflective practice as methodology
<b>Resource Collaborative opportunities</b>	Time and finance for collaborative activities	Leadership contribution recognised	Mentor and facilitate collaboration	Encourage regular meetings (Face-to-Face and online) & cross university networking	Fund time for reflective activities
<b>Support engagement</b>	Work-plans identify contribution	Leadership contribution rewarded	Systems and infrastructure support	Diagnostic tool to demonstrate outputs	Skilled facilitators for PAR process

**The Distributed Leadership Matrix ‘B’ - Values and Practices**

<b>Practices of leadership</b>	<b>Values for Distributed Leadership</b>				
	<b>Trust</b> not regulation	<b>Respect</b> for expertise	<b>Recognition</b> of leadership capabilities	<b>Collaboration</b> as ‘conjoint agents’	<b>Reflective Practice</b> for continuous change
<b>Self-in-relation</b>	Not ego centric	Adaptable -open to new idea, ambiguity & change authentic credible	Mentor encourage	Forthright but flexible	Reflective as individual and group
<b>Social interactions</b>	Proactive resilient	Recognise peers	Willing to share philosophies	Beyond self interest	Critique not critical
<b>Dialogue through learning conversations</b>	Represent issues not positions	L&T expert	Accept free ranging discussion	Willing to listen, good communicator	Share goals
<b>Growth –in-connection</b>	Accept responsibility, work independently	Work outside comfort zone	Forthright but flexible	Accept shared goals, not authoritarian	Focus on growth-fostering outcomes

**Appendix A Summary of feedback ALTC LP meeting Feb 2010**

- Context
  - 42% rated this as important or very important.
  - Less emphasis on external regulation and more on internal formal leadership.
  - A difference was identified between approaches adopted centrally and at dispersed (faculty, department/school) levels with the latter being less regulatory (less formal and power oriented).
  - Focus is on L&T Leadership not HE leadership per se.
  - Concerns about the influence of different disciplinary approaches.
  - Need to encourage openness.
  - DL may not be not appropriate leadership model in all circumstance and at all levels in universities.
- Culture
  - 42% rated this as important or very important.
  - Universities operate structurally according to DL principles (committees, boards etc).
  - Not about power exchange, more about influence and responsibility.
  - Need to develop culture of respect.
  - Need to develop trust.
- Change and development
  - 60% rated this as important or very important.
  - Need support of formal leaders if DL is to be effective.
  - Need to recognise potential differences between change and development.
  - Need to recognise that size of change adds complexity.
- Conflict resolution
  - 23% rated this as important or very important.
  - More about focus on how to build collaboration than how to handle conflict.
  - Need to recognise both individual and group identity.
- Activity
  - 68% rated this as important or very important.
  - Need for shared purpose for activity to be effective.
  - Need to recognise the effects of geographical spread.

**Appendix B Summary of feedback reference group**

- Context
  - It is possible to use DL to build individual L&T leadership and thus contribute to building institutional leadership capacity and sustainability for the sector.
  - DL uses influence rather than power.
  - There is a need to recognise difference between management and leadership.
- Culture
  - Shared influence.
  - Need to recognise difference in formality between structural leadership and distributed leadership.
- Change and development
  - The capabilities and capacities individuals needed to participate in DL rather than skills of leaders per se need to be identified.
  - It should be recognised that priorities can change over time and career stages.
  - The focus of the scoping document is on learning & teaching but the principles can be applied elsewhere eg leading research group, head of school.
  - Lecturers lead at many levels e.g. as a subject coordinator, leading teaching teams. Are lecturers leaders?
- Conflict resolution
  - Should be more about relationship management than just conflict resolution.
  - Development of skills and strategies can occur through peer learning or just in time support.

## Appendix C Focus group questions

### Introduction:

You have been asked to come together as a community of practice to explore your views arising from your initial engagement in the ALTC funded leadership Project that used a Distributed Leadership approach to address a specific learning and teaching issue identified by your university. The aim of this is to explore the contextual conditions needed to achieve an effective distributed leadership process.

The outcome of these meetings will be discussed by the Project team of the current ALTC project to produce a Distributed Leadership Matrix applicable across the University sector.

### Question for the CoP members:

What was the focus of your project? What main external and internal factors encouraged you to implement this?

1. How was your project influenced by university policy and university leadership?
2. What motivated you to become involved in the project? What previous engagement had you had with learning and teaching issues?
3. What challenges were there in developing a collaborative process?
4. What processes, factors and resources were most effective (least effective or negative) in encouraging collaboration? How was conflict resolved within the group?
5. What skills, personal traits, personal behaviours were most effective in encouraging collaboration to progress the project? What support would most assist new academics taking on a similar role to that you undertook?
6. What effect has your involvement in the project had on you as a leader in learning and teaching in your institution? What new relationships have you formed?
7. How has your involvement in the project affected your view of the leadership role of academics?
8. Do you have any further comments you want to make?

**Appendix D Summary of feedback from communities of practice acting as focus groups**

- Context
  - All issues addressed by CoPs required L&T improvements.
  - The projects offered opportunity to influence change, and for participants to be innovators.
  - Interest in collegial rather than managerialist approach.
  - Recognition that academics combine mix of autonomy and integrity.
- Culture
  - Motivation – interest in improving quality L&T from non-formal structural perspective.
  - Opportunity to have influence on direction.
  - Need long-term perspective, not quick fix.
  - Some-served on university committees.
  - Participants had a passion for L&T and associated pedagogical issues rather than actual leadership capability building.
- Change and development
  - Value of senior leadership support was critical.
  - Important role for L&T unit especially for facilitation and encouragement of project activities.
  - Need to feel safe and facilitated.
- Relationships
  - Need to balance the needs of formal leaders for ‘quick fix’ and the longer term nature of most L&T projects.
  - Recognition that all participants brought different strengths.
  - Belief that as part of group –‘I’ can do it.
  - Dual concepts of empowerment and accountability.
  - Mix new enthusiastic staff and ‘tired’ more sceptical staff –‘here we go again’.
  - There was a need to develop sense of group ownership through facilitated practices and thus over time a collaborative approach will improve.
  - Some individuals found collective approach challenging and some of these became dissidents.
  - Time consuming but positive experience.
  - Benefit of initial professional development including workshops and training sessions.
  - Need support and recognition from formal leadership.
  - Need to recognise different approaches across disciplines.
  - The group needs to have power to implement decisions.
- Activity
  - Action Research approach using several cycles.
  - Challenges because of different motivations and commitments.
  - Senior staff could not always see the benefit and therefore needed to be kept informed in order to reduce their hesitancy to change.
  - Increased sharing occurred over time.
  - Initial workshop/training important.
  - Need regular facilitated meetings either face-to-face or using technology.