

Academy Leadership Excellence Framework

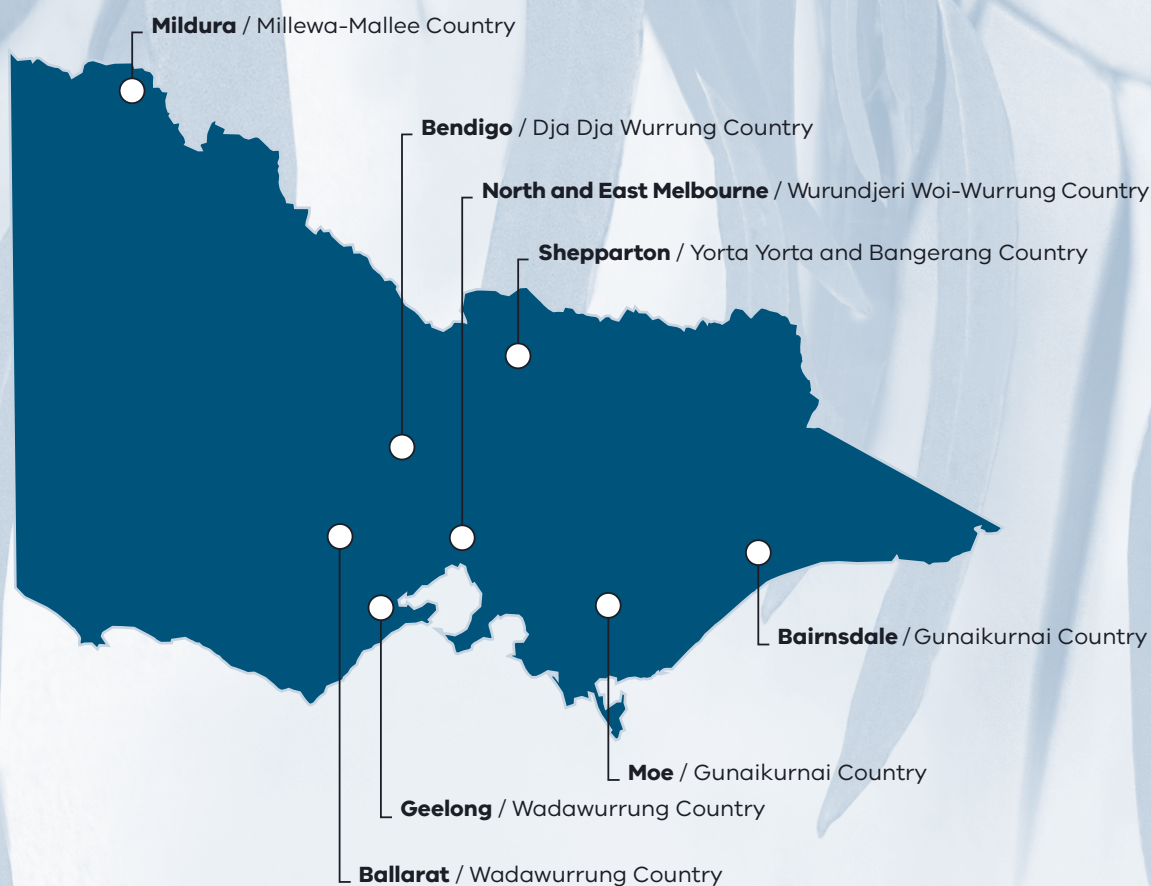
Professional Learning Playbook



Acknowledgement of Country

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The Academy operates across the many lands of Victoria:



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Welcome

Welcome to the Victorian Academy of Teaching and Leadership’s Academy Leadership Excellence Framework (ALEF) Resources Playbook - where the pursuit of leadership excellence begins. This guide provides a comprehensive resource designed to foster continuous growth and development in the area of leadership excellence.

There is compelling evidence that the quality of school leadership matters and has a critical impact on student learning, wellbeing and achievement. Excellence across the profession is crucial to an environment where every child in every school gets the best start to enable them to reach their full potential. When school leaders demonstrate excellence in leadership, they lift the quality of teaching and learning through their collaborative and thoughtful leadership of improvement.

That’s why investing in leaders matters.

Excellent educational leadership requires the integration of a small number of key capabilities across multiple domains of practice, motivated by the right dispositions. The Academy’s Leadership Excellence Framework ALEF sets out the practices, capabilities and dispositions required for excellence at all levels of leadership.

Within these pages, you will find a wealth of ideas to enable you to use the ALEF resources to support your journey toward leadership excellence.

We invite you to dive in, explore, and embark on a self-guided learning experience, for you individually or for use as a team to further develop leadership excellence across your school or network. The session length, activities and number are a guide only, you can choose to work your way through the resources in a time and order that suits you.

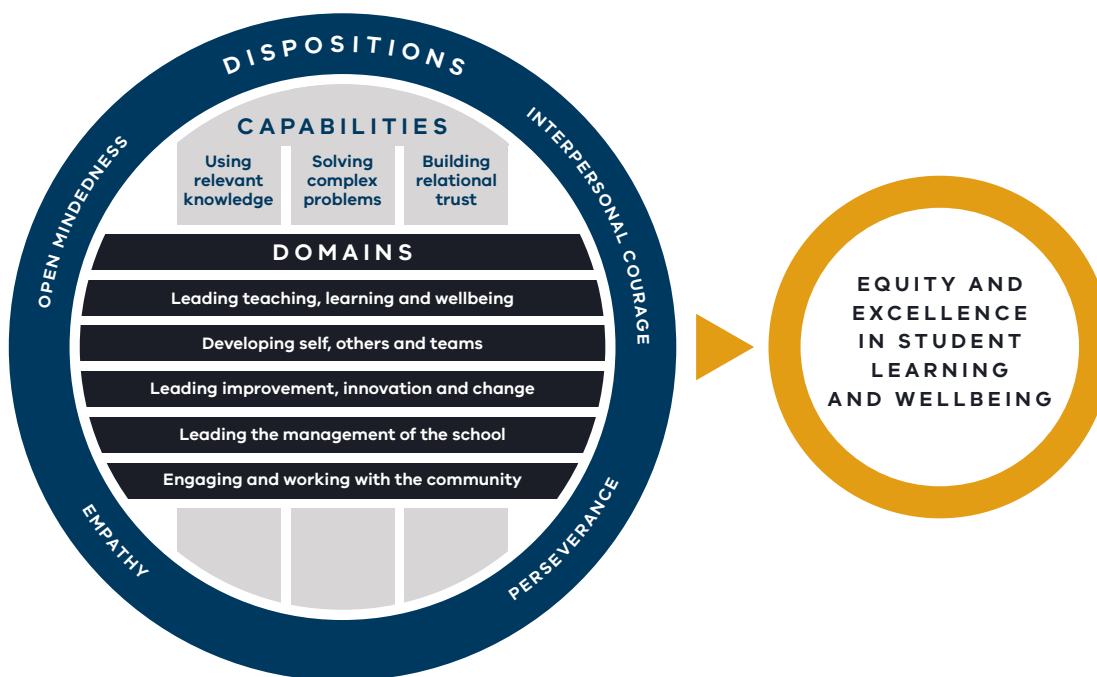
Together, the Academy and school leaders are on a journey to develop and sustain excellence in Victorian schools.

If using the Playbook as a resource for leadership development across your team, suggested structure:

Recommended session length:	45-60 minutes (for teams)
Recommended no of sessions:	5 or 6
Intended audience:	Principal class team, wider leadership team, middle leaders, potential or aspiring leaders



The Academy Leadership Excellence Framework



The Academy Leadership Excellence Framework (ALEF) aims to inspire current and future school leaders to pursue leadership excellence, so that every child has the opportunity for a great education and the best possible start in life.


The ALEF sets out the practices, capabilities and dispositions required for excellence at all levels of leadership. It equips teachers and school leaders with the skills and mindset to navigate student-centred decision making and drive positive change.

The five domains of practice included in the ALEF are leading teaching, learning and wellbeing, developing self, others and teams, leading improvement, innovation and change, leading the management of the school, and engaging and working with the community.

Three leadership capabilities are included in the ALEF. Leading with excellence requires leaders to use relevant knowledge to solve complex problems while building trust with those involved.

Dispositions are the motivations, thoughts and emotions that drive behaviour. The research underpinning the ALEF identifies four key dispositions as critical to the excellence of educational leadership: open-mindedness; interpersonal courage; empathy; and perseverance. These character qualities enable leaders to embrace vulnerability, demonstrate openness to feedback and support others to grow. It is worth noting that these were also selected to specifically fit in with the Victorian context, focusing on the Education State policy.

The ALEF is reflective of the work of Distinguished Professor Emeritus Viviane Robinson of the University of Auckland. Professor Robinson has published extensively on school improvement and leadership over many years and has worked tirelessly to reduce the gap between research and practice in education.

 All resources and information on the ALEF can be found on the website:

1. [ALEF information](#)
2. [ALEF resources](#)

Learning Intentions:

1. Develop an understanding of excellence in educational leadership.
2. Build awareness of own and others' capabilities and dispositions applicable to educational leadership.
3. Engage in the three capabilities of leadership excellence for continuous school improvement:
 - a. Using relevant knowledge; to
 - b. Solve complex problems; whilst
 - c. Building relational trust.
4. Recognise and engage the relevant dispositions required in a range of situations.
5. Understand the domains in which leadership excellence is required, including understanding the importance of having sufficient knowledge of each domain.
6. Develop self-awareness of individual learning needs to be an excellent educational leader.

Professional Learning Activities


Getting to know the Academy Leadership Excellence Framework

Session	Resources
<p>Pework: Introduction to the ALEF Approx 45 minutes</p> <p>> Option to choose to do this activity as a group learning session rather than as a prework.</p>	
<p>Context</p> <p>The Academy Leadership Excellence Framework (ALEF) aims to inspire current and future school leaders to pursue leadership excellence, so that every child has the opportunity for a great education and the best possible start in life.</p> <p>The ALEF sets out the practices, capabilities and dispositions required for excellence at all levels of leadership. It equips teachers and school leaders with the skills and mindset to navigate student-centred decision making and drive positive change.</p> <p>Leadership excellence matters to ensure that every child gets a great education and the best possible start in life.</p>	
<p>Preparation</p> <p>Become familiar with the resources yourself and locate them on the website ready to share.</p>	
<p>Activity</p> <p>Introduce your team members to the Academy Leadership Excellence Framework through reading the academic paper, watching Viviane Robinson's introduction video, and having a look through the Academy ALEF website.</p> <p>Following the above, individuals complete the "Connect, extend, challenge" protocol listed in the resources list.</p>	
<p>Session 1: Developing an understanding of the ALEF Approx 45 - 60 minutes</p> <p>> You may start the session with a reflection on the Connect – Extend – Challenge protocol through paired sharing.</p>	
<p>Explore the ALEF further using a paired/team reading protocol from the resources list. This will support your team to develop common understanding.</p>	<p>ALEF reading activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 4As
<p>At the end of the session, consider:</p> <p><i>"Why is a leadership excellence framework important to us as a leadership team?"</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Word, phrase, sentence



Understanding the Domains

Session	Resources
Session 2: The Domains	
Approx 45 - 60 minutes	
> Option to choose to do this activity as a group learning session rather than as a prework.	
Context	
There are five domains of practice that excellent leaders work in to contribute to excellence and equity for every Victorian student.	
Preparation	
<p>Access the website to download the PowerPoint presentation and use the Domains slides from the ALEF Slide Deck (slides 1-9) to introduce and talk through the Domains. Note the key differences highlighted in bold below between the ALEF Domains and the AITSL Professional Standard for Principals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AITSL – <i>Leading teaching and Learning</i> • ALEF – <i>Leading teaching, learning and wellbeing</i> <p>Rationale for the addition of 'and wellbeing': The ALEF considers the Victorian FISO 2.0 emphasis on wellbeing, with reference to the correlations between student wellbeing and learning outcomes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AITSL – <i>Developing self and others</i> • ALEF – <i>Developing self, others and teams</i> <p>Rationale for the addition of 'and teams': The AITSL principal standards are, as stated, for principals. The ALEF is for leaders at all levels. The inclusion of 'teams' broadens this domain to include emerging and middle leaders, recognising their role in developing teams to work cohesively towards common outcomes and to develop leadership practices through effective leadership of teams.</p>	 <p><u>ALEF PowerPoint presentation</u></p>
Activity	
<p>Explore the Domains further as a team through the AITSL page '<u>Resources to build leadership in Australian schools</u>', using the Global Café protocol.</p> <p>Materials: poster / butcher's paper, markers:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Write the title of each domain on a blank poster / butcher's paper 2. Team members respond to the prompt 'Where do you see your work in this?' against each Domain. <p>Conduct a Gallery walk, whereby team members move around the space and read each other's responses.</p> <p>Practice Reflection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What connections do you make to the Domains and the work that you do? 2. Where do you do most of your work? 3. Is this the right balance? <p>As an individual/team, what do you need to dive in to deepen your understanding of leadership of all domains?</p>	 <p><u>Resources to build leadership in Australian schools</u></p>


Using the Capabilities

Session	Resources
Session 3: The Capabilities	
60 minutes (1 session) - or 3 sessions of 45 minutes if looking more deeply at each capability.	
<i>> Preparation – contextualise the practice reflection activities and how you would like to use them in your team</i>	
Context	
The ALEF capabilities describe the knowledge and skills that empower leaders to act and make decisions relevant to their role.	
Preparation	
<p>Locate the ALEF capabilities video presented by Viviane Robinson to introduce the team to the capabilities.</p> <p>Use ALEF powerpoint slides 10-16 to explain further.</p> <p>Locate the capability fact sheets and have ready to work through with your team.</p>	 <p>ALEF Capabilities video</p> <p><u>Capabilities fact sheets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Using knowledge - Solving complex problems - Relational trust.
Activity	
<p>Share the video and ALEF slides</p> <p>Work through the Practice Reflections and use the questions to unpack thinking on each of the capabilities.</p> <p>Decide whether the team does a session on each based on team needs:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using relevant knowledge 2. Solving Complex Problems 3. Building Relational Trust <p>Team Reflection</p>	

Developing the Dispositions

Session	Resources
Session 4: The Dispositions	
45 – 60 minutes	
Context	
<p>The ALEF dispositions highlight the four key dispositions that research shows have the greatest impact on excellent educational leadership. They are not exclusive, but most impactful.</p>	
Preparation	
<p>Locate and have ready to share the ALEF dispositions video presented by Viviane Robinson to introduce the team to the dispositions, followed by slides 17-21 from the ALEF slide deck.</p>	 ALEF Dispositions video.
Activity	
<p>Use the Dispositions Fact Sheets to complete the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Exploring together activities: As a whole group look at the scenarios and observations listed and discuss. 2. Practice Reflection: Individually or in a Think – Pair – Share 3. Skill Building: As individuals or as part of a team look at the application ideas listed in the fact sheet. 	 <p><u>Dispositions fact sheets:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interpersonal courage - Perseverance - Empathy - Open-mindedness.

Reflecting and planning next steps

Session	Resources
Prework: ALEF Self-reflection Tool	
Approx 45 minutes	
Context	
<p>The self reflection activity is a tool to support both individual and team reflection. This can support the identification of focus areas for professional growth and coaching and mentoring sessions.</p>	
Preparation	
<p>Print self reflection activity for each team member.</p>	 <p>ALEF self-reflection activity</p>
Activity	
<p>Complete the self-reflection activity.</p> <p>Individually, follow these instructions in the activity workbook:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For each of the statements related to the ALEF capabilities and dispositions in the following tables, reflect on how true/ untrue it is for you right now and then consider where you would like it to be. 2. Take 15 minutes to review your responses. Consider the following prompts: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What do you notice? b. What are you wondering? c. What might be your next steps? 	

Session 5: Reflect and plan

45 - 60 minutes

Context

This is a continuation of session four.

Preparation

Remind each team member to bring their completed self-reflection and review notes to the session.

Activity

In pairs, complete the next 2 steps in the instructions in the self-reflection activity workbook:

1. Share your thoughts about your self-reflection with a colleague.
2. Consider where you would like to develop your leadership practices and make a commitment to further learning and development. You can use the table in the workbook to support your thinking.

Reflecting on what your partner shared, are there any additional strengths that you would add, which they may not have been identified?

Collectively, come together and consider the next steps for your team. Knowing the context and make up of your team, consider how this information can support your development as a cohesive and successful team.

Ideas could include:

- > Brainstorm 'next steps' with your staff, such as formal professional learning or, shared professional reading
- > Work together as a team to share observations
- > Consider themes, strengths, areas for development
- > What? So What? Now What?
- > How can you leverage strengths in the team?

How can you support development of others?

As you and your team embark on this journey toward leadership excellence, remember that our collective efforts shape the future of education. By embracing the practices, capabilities, and dispositions outlined in the ALEF, we empower ourselves and our colleagues to create meaningful impact in Victorian schools. Together, we can foster an environment where every student thrives, every teacher grows, and every leader inspires.



To support continual learning please don't forget to access the evidence-informed [professional learning and resources](#) available on the Academy website, and keep up to date with new resources and insights by following @AcademyVic on [LinkedIn](#), [X](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Youtube](#).





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