

GULL Professional Master and/or Doctor cascade leadership pathway

Overview

By getting started with a Professional Master and/or Doctor cascade leadership pathway, community or workplace leaders can sustain their own personal and professional development and at the same time, cascade the GULL system to others via the creation and implementation of a Professional Bachelor pathway outcomes map. The Professional Master and Doctor cascade leadership pathways use exactly the same GULL narrative format elements so that participants can integrate the process of reflection, action learning and collaborative working with existing roles, responsibilities and the opportunity to cascade GULL and action learning to others. Entry to the appropriate pathway is determined by the profile of the participants, as follows:

Professional Master – 26-35 years of age holding senior work or community roles. Additionally, participants must have the authority to create and implement at least one Professional Bachelor pathway outcomes map on behalf of their organization.

Professional Doctor – At least 30 years of age but normally in the 40 to mid-50s age range. Participants must hold community or workplace leadership roles and additionally, they must have the authority to create and implement at least one Professional Bachelor pathway outcomes map on behalf of their organization.

The cascade leadership pathway is self-directed and facilitated* and participants are expected to organize their own resourcing (learning coaches, specialist advisers, external reviewer (level 5 only)) and support each other by peer review and by providing feedback for each other. A cascade leadership group consists of at least 3 members and ideally 5-10 members with either a mix of Master and Doctor level candidates (in one group) or if there are sufficient participants, working as two separate but inter-dependent small groups (e.g. one Master and one Doctor pathway group). Additionally, participants must lead, guide and coach their Professional Bachelor pathway outcomes map participants and if the outcomes map is multi-level, ensure that Professional Bachelor Level 5 participants support Level 4 participants and so on down to Bachelor Level 1: Entry. For an overview of the cascade leadership activities and levels, please see Appendix 1.

*Optionally, a cascade leadership group can invite a senior colleague who is not participating to facilitate the process, but it is perfectly possible to share the facilitation role within the cascade leadership group(s) on a rotating basis. As cascade leaders, the expectation is that participants can organize themselves in this way and initially facilitate for Professional Bachelor participants so that they gain in confidence and can in turn, facilitate for new Professional Bachelor pathway participants.

Review and certification

All GULL awards based on narrative format reporting (the approach used here) are ungraded and certified at 'Pass' level. This is because the narrative format is broader-based than GULL's differentiated awards (with Pass, Credit and Distinction categories) as defined by GULL's comprehensive marking and grading criteria.

GULL's approach encourages self-directed action learning so as to build self-confidence and independent lifelong learning skills - right across the age and life stage spectrum. GULL's awards are outcomes-based and it is only possible to issue certificates when sufficient evidence of attainment has been assembled by the learner and verified by peer review. This is because GULL's primary role is to certify evidence of learning and application and it is the responsibility of each and every GULL participant to capture their own evidence in an appropriate and/or specified format. If the evidence assembled by the learner is incomplete, he/she does not 'fail' but must continue the process until there is sufficient evidence of attainment to merit the award of a certificate at any given level. On completion of levels 1-4, participants can either pause or progress immediately to the next level. At level 5 (the professional degree) for both pathways (Master/Doctor), the participant's portfolio of work and evidence of learning and application must be verified by an experienced independent professional (termed an 'external reviewer'). The verifier should discuss the candidate's output work with the participant so as to ensure that the candidate is the author of the work and that the criteria for 'sufficiency' have been met. If not, the candidate must continue until any gaps have been addressed.

Getting started with GULL: Foundation levels 1 & 2

Professional Master (M) and Doctor (D) pathways

Levels:	Narrative format elements:
M & D level 1 Duration: 7 weeks	Personal learning statement (PLS) in week 1; One diary format reflection cycle (linked to routine activities) with four weekly summaries (750 words each) in weeks 2, 3, 4 and 5, one monthly summary (750 words) in week 6 and a return on outcomes (RO) form (750 words) in week 7.
M & D level 2 Duration: 7 weeks	PLS update; One diary format reflection cycle (linked to a work or community-based challenge) with four weekly summaries (750 words each), one monthly summary (750 words) and a RO form (750 words). Timings as for level 1.

Level 1 involves the completion of a personal learning statement (in week 1), the use of a diary reflection cycle format (in weeks 2-6) and a return on outputs form (in week 7). The aim is to enable participants to identify their own personal learning needs, to begin to use and understand the process of action learning and to learn how to work with a web of support (including a personal learning coach of their own choice) as they create their own personal plan for learning. As participants continue at level 2 with a second diary format reflection cycle, they typically gain in confidence and proficiency by using action learning to help themselves and other stakeholders in the process.

Narrative format feedback is not based on individual marks or grades but each participant (via peer review) will provide oral and written comments on each output element for one or more of their colleagues in the cascade leadership group. The objective is that each participant should attain 'sufficiency' of breadth and depth in their reflections and written output work. Beyond this, the role of peer reviewing and collaborative working is to encourage, guide and clarify (but not to direct) so that new participants develop self-directed, independent learning habits. Although GULL's materials are released in English, participants are encouraged to use their own language, providing that others can read /understand the work for the purposes of peer review, facilitation and verification.

Using the personal learning statement

Individually completed by GULL participants at professional Master and Doctor level 1 and updated at level 2.

The personal learning statement (PLS) enables every participant to reflect on their own unique agenda for learning and to determine what they would like to accomplish for themselves and for others over a time period of 12 months. The form consists of nine questions and in order to answer each of them in sufficient detail, the required response is 750 words (in total). The PLS questions are as follows:

Consider your current job:

(1) What is going well? (2) What could I do better?

Consider the current activity you are undertaking:

(3) What would I like to accomplish for myself? (4) For my team? (5) For my department or unit?

Consider future possibilities:

(6) What new/different types of work would I like to experience? (7) Where do I see myself in 12 months' time?

(8) What new skills will I need to achieve my 12 month goal? (9) In summary: What do I need to learn (drawing from questions 1-8 inclusive)

The process of thinking about personal learning needs and aspirations should enable the learner to identify who they know who they could ask to journey with them in a supportive coaching role. The personal learning coach (who is assisting the learner in a voluntary capacity) is *the* key support person. Ideally, all participants will enlist one or more individuals to coach them - perhaps someone at work and someone from their wider network of contacts. Furthermore, the learner should consider the potential support roles of their network of family, friends and colleagues in the creation of a personal web of support. This is especially important if the learner is seeking to make adjustments to ways of working (e.g. improving time management skills) and/or to developing new skills (e.g. developing personal coaching skills so as to encourage and help others).

The key questions for every participant are: Who do I know and respect and feel I could learn from? Can I persuade this individual or individuals to support me as my personal learning coach for part or all of my GULL learning journey?

Using the daily, weekly and monthly summary forms (Diary format reflection cycle)

Individually completed by GULL participants at professional Master and Doctor levels 1 and 2.

The diary format reflection cycle provides an opportunity to learn from activities and inputs over a 5 week period, using a diary format to record experiences. The objective is to enable participants to learn by reflecting on activities at work or in the community - as they occur. The diary format draws on four weekly summaries and one monthly summary with learning coach and reviewer support (organized by the learner) so as to enable the participant to fully utilize their work or community role as a vehicle for personal and professional development.

The diary format questions are as follows:

Daily summary (optional)

(1) List of today's activities (2) What went well and why? (3) What didn't go well and why? (4) What could I have done differently and how?

Weekly summary (750 words per weekly summary)

(1) List of the main activities this week (2) What went well and why? (3) What didn't go well and why? (4) What could I have done differently and how? (5) What have I learnt this week? (6) Discussion points for my learning coach (7) Discussion outcomes.

Monthly summary (750 words per monthly summary)

(1) List of the main activities this month (2) What went well and why? (3) What didn't go well and why? (4) What could I have done differently and how? (5) What have I learnt this month and what do I need to learn next? (7) Written comment from the learning coach (8) Feedback from the internal reviewer (the facilitator).

In order to utilize the diary format as effectively as possible, it is important to establish a routine. Here are two suggestions to assist with this task:

- Build and sustain your own web of support and agree a pattern of sharing your insights and experiences with your learning coach, web of support members and your fellow action learners.
- Help other members of your action learning group by offering feedback comments on their diary work (and vice versa). Self-facilitation and peer review encourage independence and inter-dependence – this is a core value of action learning.

The main objective of levels 1 and 2 is to encourage participants to establish a self-directed learning culture within their action learning group and, more widely as group members cascade the GULL process to others. As the process becomes embedded, it should reflect local characteristics so that all participants take ownership for themselves, their workplace and community. Reg Revans, an action learning pioneer, saw the importance of building self-belief – he always told groups that you don't need outsiders to do this for you – you can do it yourself.

As you start your diary work, select a few activities (they do not need to be the same ones each day) and use the diary format questions to practice your reflection, review and writing skills. To establish a habit, try using the same time slot each day – early or late perhaps? Just write – don't stop and then find 10 minutes to edit your work (never write and edit at the same time). So, 10 minutes a day to write and then try editing (10 minutes) every other day. Aim to draft, edit and then share your work with your learning coach and with fellow group members. Ask others to read, comment and point out any grammatical glitches and ambiguities so that you can then sharpen and strengthen your diary narrative.

After completing the diary format reflection cycle, a return on outputs form is provided so that you can summarize your learning outcomes to-date.

Using the return on outputs form

Individually completed by GULL participants at professional Master and Doctor levels 1 and 2.

The return on outputs (RO) form is primarily designed to enable participants to gather and summarize the learning outcomes arising from a diary format reflection cycle. The form enables participants to document personal and organizational learning outcomes, to explain the value of the outcomes by reference to improvements and other examples and to outline recommendations for implementing outcomes and any further action(s) required. The guide length is 750 words and the RO form sub-headings are:

- (1) Provide a summary of the action learning or other development activity undertaken.
- (2) What were the key learning outcomes?
- (3) Describe the personal learning arising from this activity.
- (4) Describe the organizational learning arising from this activity.
- (5) Explain the value of the outcomes from this activity (e.g. improvements made).
- (6) List your recommendations for implementing these outcomes and outline any further action required.

As noted earlier, the purpose of foundation levels 1 and 2 is to enable GULL participants to explore and find natural ways of integrating personal and professional development with work and community roles and to develop 'learning to learn' skills using an active learning approach. The key skills here are: Learning to ask questions, learning to reflect, learning to work with your personal learning coach, with other members of your action learning group and wider web of support, your colleagues and with your workplace or community team – using a collaborative, active learning approach.

To enable participants to further develop these skills, level 2 features a second diary format reflection cycle. Start by updating your personal learning statement and talking with your learning coach and web of support. Consider: What will you do differently during level 2? Next, repeat the diary format reflection cycle and to add variety, link this cycle to a work or community-based task or challenge. Continue to select a few daily activities to reflect on and write about and in addition, reflect on progress as it relates to your on-going task over the 5 week period. Ideally the task might be shared with other members of your action learning group so that it becomes a small group project. Finally, complete a second return on outputs form.

Advancing with GULL: Progression levels 3, 4 & 5

Professional Master (M) and Doctor (D) pathways

Levels:	Narrative format elements:
M & D level 3 Duration 10 weeks	PLS update (week 1); One diary format reflection cycle (linked to a small group improvement project (BL3) or an organizational challenge (ML3, DL3) with four weekly summaries (750 words each) and one monthly summary (750 words) (weeks 2-6) and a project review form (750 words) in week 10.
M & D level 4 Duration 12 weeks	Typically four project review forms (750 words each) linked to four different stages of a single project or alternatively, to document four different project activities. Timings: submit in weeks 3, 6, 9 and 12.
M & D level 5 Duration 14 weeks	Four project review forms (750 words each) - application and timings as for level 4; One learning summary form (1500-2000 words) in week 13; One outcomes review form (750-1000 words) in week 14.

Using the project review form

Individually completed by GULL participants undertaking group or individual project work at professional Master and Doctor levels 3, 4 and 5.

The project review form provides an opportunity to reflect on one or more strands of project work, the process and approach deployed, its relative effectiveness, alternative courses of action and the steps required to sustain the project. The project review form uses familiar diary format style questions to assist participants with their narrative reporting. There are many situations in which a narrative format project review can be used to document project work undertaken individually or in small groups. For example, if an individual project has multiple strands or facets or if the GULL participant opts to reflect on a recently completed project.

Options for using the project review form:

(1) Combining project reports with the project review form - If the project review form is used in conjunction with either group or individual written reporting and formal presentation work, one project review form (750 words) should be individually completed.

(2) Individual narrative reporting - If the project review form is used as an alternative to group or individual reporting, the participant can either complete:

- Four project review forms (each being 750 words) to document four different stages of a project (e.g. the proposal, the plan, progress and the outcomes) or to document four different project activities OR
- Two project review forms (each of 1500 words) to document different stages of a project or to document two different project activities OR
- One project review form (3000 words) to document the outcomes of a single project - either in progress or recently completed.

Guide notes on the project review questions:What did you do?

Start by stating the purpose of your project - what was the problem or challenge? What were your objectives? In overview, what action did you take? How long did you spend on the project activity and what resources did you use? What were the outcomes? Have you addressed the problem or challenge? What happens next?

What went well and why?

Please comment on all aspects of the project activity as appropriate (e.g. purpose, plan, progress, outcomes).

What didn't go well and why?

Please comment on all aspects of the project activity as appropriate (e.g. purpose, plan, progress, outcomes).

What could I have done differently and how?

Please comment on all aspects of the project activity as appropriate (e.g. purpose, plan, progress, outcomes).

What did I learn, how will my learning help others and what are the next steps?

Please comment on the personal learning outcomes from your project.

Please comment on the benefits for others (your colleagues and own organizational setting).

Learning coach written comments

Please ask your learning coach to add a written comment about the relative effectiveness of the project as a vehicle for your personal and professional development and on the outcomes and benefits for all stakeholders.

Internal reviewer/verifier written comments

A written comment should be included on satisfactory completion of the project activity. Ideally the written comment should be related to a face to face discussion about the outcomes.

Using the learning summary form

Individually completed by GULL participants using the narrative format. The learning summary form should be completed prior to the review meeting at professional Master and Doctor level 5 (as appropriate).

The learning summary form provides an opportunity to review the learning journey from the outset (at level 1) to the conclusion (at level 5). The form uses a question-based format to enable participants to reflect on the 'highs' and 'lows' of their learning journey and the many sources of learning (e.g. about self, from others and from work or community related outputs).

Guide notes on the learning summary questions:

As a guide, aim to write between 1500 words (minimum) and 2000 words (maximum).

What have you learnt about yourself?

Reflect on the starting point (e.g. a personal learning statement) and the stages of your learning journey:

- What have you learnt about yourself? (e.g. strengths, gaps, potential)
- What new or improved skills have you acquired or developed?
- What changes do you see in yourself (e.g. changes in habits, attitudes and specific behaviours)?
- How has your own professionalism been enhanced by your GULL experience?

What have you learnt from others?

Thinking about your web of personal and professional support, what have you learnt from:

- Your learning coach(es), facilitator(s) and specialist advisers?
- Fellow GULL participants?
- Project sponsors, clients and significant others?

What have you learnt from your project work and other outputs?

Projects and other outputs should provide a vehicle for your own learning and a way in which you can work with others to find implementable solutions that yield lasting benefits for the workplace and/or the community. Aim to identify the way(s) in which you have developed as a result of leading and/or participating in project work.

What have you accomplished in terms of your own personal and professional development?

Experienced action learners know how to advance and sustain their own personal and professional development. What have you achieved so far? Aim to identify all the areas of learning and development that are helping you to be a more effective person and professional.

Thinking ahead, what do you need to learn next? How will you accomplish your goals?

What is your plan for learning for the next 12 months?

How will you use your expertise in action learning to sustain your own personal and professional development?

How will you use your expertise in action learning to help others in your workplace and the wider community?

Learning coach written comments

Please ask your learning coach to add a written comment about your overall personal and professional development attainments and on the outcomes and benefits for all stakeholders.

Internal reviewer/verifier written comments

A written comment should be included on completion of the learning summary form. Ideally the written comment should be related to a face to face discussion about the outcomes.

Using the outcomes review form

Individually completed by GULL participants prior to the review meeting at professional Master level 5 and Doctor level 5 (as appropriate).

The outcomes review form enables participants to summarize and to quantify the outcomes, impact and benefits of their action learning journey. There are four sections:

- (1) Personal profile (your name, job or community role, your email address and other contact information (as appropriate) and the date when the level 5 award was completed;
- (2) Summary of the workplace or community challenge and project;
- (3) Summary of the workplace or community outcomes and benefits and
- (4) Summary of the personal benefits.

Guide notes for completing the outcomes review form:

As a guide, aim to write between 750 words (minimum) and 1000 words (maximum).

Personal profile

In order that others might build on your outcomes, it is important that colleagues in your workplace or community can contact you. Please specify:

- Your name
- Job or community role and location
- Your email address and other contact details (as appropriate)
- Pathway (e.g. Bachelor, Master, Doctor) and the date when you completed your level 5 award.

Summary of the workplace or community challenge and project

State the title or the focus of the main project that you undertook (aim to do this in about 50 words)

Outline the nature of the problem or challenge that you undertook, the reason(s) for your investigation and the purpose and key objectives of your work (about 150 words).

Summary of the workplace or community outcomes and benefits

Specify clearly and concisely the major outcomes and benefits of your work, using sentence format and bullet points (as appropriate). Wherever possible, please provide concise details of the evidence of return on investment (time, resources) and any measures and financial data that support the outcomes of your work (about 600 words).

Summary of the personal and professional benefits

Outline the personal and professional benefits that you have derived from your action learning journey. Give examples as to how you have grown and developed during the process (both character and competence) and indicate how you plan to utilize your new skills and abilities to assist/support others (about 200 words).

Resources for GULL participants and their web of support

Forms

Personal learning statement (PLS) form [Levels 1, 2 & 3]	Use the PLS to frame a personal agenda for learning (level 1) and to review progress and update as appropriate (levels 2 & 3).
Daily summary form [Levels 1, 2 & 3]	Use for daily notes and to assist with the weekly summary form.
Weekly summary form [Levels 1, 2 & 3]	Use to summarize daily summary form entries and key points for discussion with a personal learning coach. Plan for a 10 minute face-to-face discussion with a coach each week and then add discussion outcomes to the weekly form prior to peer review (with colleagues) and sign-off by a facilitator.
Monthly summary form [Levels 1, 2 & 3]	Use in week 5 to review and summarize progress over the full cycle. Complete by obtaining a written comment from a personal learning coach and submit for written comments, feedback and sign-off by a facilitator.
Project review form [Levels 3, 4 & 5]	Use to reflect on one or more strands of project work, the process and approach deployed, its relative effectiveness, alternative courses of action and the steps required to sustain the project.
Learning summary form [Level 5]	Use to review the learning journey from the outset (at level 1) to the conclusion (at level 5).
Outcomes review form [Level 5]	Use to summarize and to quantify the outcomes, impact and benefits of your action learning journey.

Briefing resources

Introducing action learning	Provides an overview on the GULL learning process.
A profile of Reg Revans	Insights from an action learning pioneer.
Introducing the learning log	Use in conjunction with levels 4 and 5 in particular to assist with gathering evidence for inclusion in the learning summary form (level 5).
Briefing for facilitators	Guide notes on how to facilitate/self-facilitate small groups.
Briefing for learning coaches	Pass a copy of this resource to your learning coach.
Planning and writing guide	Use as a guide for project work at levels 3, 4 and 5.

Appendix 1:

GULL Professional Master and/or Doctor cascade leadership pathway

Professional Master pathway

Typical entry profile: 26-35 years of age holding senior work or community roles. Additionally, participants must have the authority to create and implement at least one Professional Bachelor pathway outcomes map on behalf of their organization.

Level (L) progression →				
L1: Entry	L2: Certificate	L3: Diploma	L4: Adv. Diploma	L5: Master degree
Foundation	Foundation	Progression	Progression	Progression
PLS, DF, RO	PLS, DF, RO	DFMS, PRF	PRF	PRF, LSF, ORF
Focus: Routine activity	Focus: Routine and task	Options: SGP/FP/LP or combination	Options: SGP/FP/LP or combination	Options: SGP/FP/LP or combination
Time: 7 weeks	Time: 7 weeks	Time: 10 weeks	Time: 12 weeks	Time: 14 weeks

Professional Doctor pathway

Typical entry profile: At least 30 years of age but normally in the 40 to mid-50s age range. Participants must hold community or workplace leadership roles and additionally, they must have the authority to create and implement at least one Professional Bachelor pathway outcomes map on behalf of their organization.

Level (L) progression →				
L1: Entry	L2: Certificate	L3: Diploma	L4: Adv. Diploma	L5: Doctor degree
Foundation	Foundation	Progression	Progression	Progression
PLS, DF, RO	PLS, DF, RO	DFMS, PRF	PRF	PRF, LSF, ORF
Focus: Routine activity	Focus: Routine and task	Options: SGP/FP/LP or combination	Options: SGP/FP/LP or combination	Options: SGP/FP/LP or combination
Time: 7 weeks	Time: 7 weeks	Time: 10 weeks	Time: 12 weeks	Time: 14 weeks

Abbreviations:

Foundation levels 1 & 2:

PLS - Personal learning statement
DF - Diary format reflection cycle
RO - Return on outputs form

Project options: Bachelor levels 3,4 & 5:

SGP - Small group project
FP - Facilitation project (guide new entrants)

Progression levels 3, 4 & 5:

DFMS - Diary format monthly summary form
PRF - Project review form
LSF - Learning summary form
ORF - Outcomes review form

Project options: Master and Doctor levels 3, 4 & 5:

SGP - Small group project
FP - Facilitation project (guide new entrants)
LP - Leadership project (individual or shared)