



Civil Service

Leadership Academy

CSLA Prospectus

Providing a virtual, dynamic and supportive environment for senior leadership development

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Leadership in the 21st century

Being a leader in the Civil Service in the 21st century comes with its unique challenges and opportunities of today's world whilst also bringing great reward when you consider the difference we make to the lives of people and society.

When the Civil Service Leadership Academy (CSLA) was launched in 2017, a mere three years ago, we could never have predicted how important the learning available through this organisation would be in ensuring leaders have access to learning that enables them to lead through uncertain times such as those brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

As with any experience, the pandemic itself has created opportunities for us to learn, and continues to create a turning point in making the Civil Service a place renowned for the quality of its leaders and their ability to lead inclusive, safe and high performing workplaces.

So, in terms of leadership and leaders at all levels...it is crucial that our leaders continue to develop an understanding and practice of leadership. One which can respond to today's highly interdependent world, full of complexity, accelerating change, and unforeseen and unprecedented events.

It is important to be clear on our focus as a leaders and be conscious about how we are deciding on the work that needs to be done - culturally, strategically and tactically.

We know from research that by paying attention to how we lead, and to question the assumptions held about leadership (our own and those of others), we can reset and reshape our leadership intent, approach and impact to meet the opportunities and challenges of the context faced. The CSLA interventions help leaders to build self-awareness through both challenging and psychologically safe development activities.

We all need to (and be encouraged to) take time to pay attention to how we are responding to these challenging times. The leadership development approach developed by the CSLA enables leaders to bring awareness to their leadership responses, the assumptions we are making and what we are noticing in those around us.



Foreword

“The Civil Service is always evolving, and in the Civil Service Leadership Academy (CSLA) we focus on what Civil Service leaders need right now and in the future. Over the past year we constructed and refined our design principles to ensure that leaders working with us are provided stretching and quality spaces to come together, share their experiences of what works and doesn’t work in the reality of leading within the Civil Service. This ensures that we are constantly learning together how to lead at our best within the 21st century context.

In coming years, the UK Civil Service will be focused on strengthening the economy, recovering from the pandemic and healing our divided societies. We need to be building capability within our systems to ensure we are ready to respond and adapt to complex and unpredictable challenges of the future. CSLA’s aim is to develop leaders who look for systemic leadership insights and who are committed to foster transformative change, through their teams in service of better public service outcomes.

CSLA’s operating and delivery model pivoted to virtual at the end of March 2020, and we expect to be in this space until mid 2021. We are using this time to understand how leaders are experiencing leading through the challenges and opportunities presented through COVID-19 and quickly share insights within and across the leadership networks of the Civil Service.

We work with leaders to reflect and explore for themselves the lessons learned from present and past decision making. We draw together insights from the lessons learnt from situations such as Windrush, Chilcott, Ebola, Brexit and currently COVID-19.

We draw upon and integrate insights with a wide range of disciplines, such as systems thinking, psychology and



organisational development to exchange practical knowledge. Some of our learning interventions use the specifics as case studies, others group the lessons learned into leadership inquiry themes such as; how does the Civil Service work within significant disruption?, how can we in 2020 onwards create conditions to allow different voices to be heard?, how can senior leaders embed antiracism within the Civil Service?

As we move from leading through the crisis of the first peak of COVID-19 to sustained pressure, the shaping of a new normal and the reform of the Civil Service, CSLA is ensuring that the leaders that we work with think about how they build inclusive cultures and where our great people feel that they belong, can be authentic and have a voice, in order to deliver results and innovation. We are working with departments and internal and external subject matter experts to help us understand context and support leaders to be the best that they can be.

We are really proud that the CSLA offer is helping leaders to design and embody what 21st century modern leadership looks like for them in the context that we are in and develop for the future.”

Louise Wheeler, Head of Leadership Programmes, CSLA



About CSLA

The Civil Service Leadership Academy (CSLA) is part of the Government Skills and Curriculum Unit. CSLA was established to provide tailored leadership development to all senior Civil Service leaders and to facilitate networking and collaborative opportunities.

In this time, we have engaged over 5,500 Senior Civil Servants (SCS) delegates in CSLA learning and evolved to provide leaders at all levels with leadership development opportunities, events and programmes. We now have over 200 deputy directors, 80 directors and 40 director generals involved in a CSLA programme which is designed and delivered by highly skilled individuals from within the CSLA team, experienced senior Civil Service leaders and experts from our learning consortium.

Our learning designs use real life experiences and new and existing leadership research and models, each providing a base for developing leaders to lead in complex times, to build effective team performance and ensure positive wellbeing and inclusion are at the heart of all leadership.

Our current offer is split between one year cohort based leadership programmes and standalone workshops. Our leadership development programmes for new to grade deputy directors, directors and director

generals and support SCS to transition to their new leadership role and build their network of relationships across the Civil Service.

CSLA's approach to learning focuses on bringing leaders together from across the Civil Service to share experiences and expertise as a core part of its learning offer. We equip leaders using a 'leaders teach leaders' model of learning for the complex and unique environment the Civil Service operates in. CSLA's principle of 'leaders teaching leaders' is effective because it:

- reflects the unique environment in which civil servants work, and develops leaders to adapt to change
- recognises the importance of leadership at every level, supporting all leaders across professions, grades and roles
- develops people for the leadership they need now as well as for the future.



CSLA Design Principles

The Civil Service Leadership Academy provides a dynamic and supportive environment through which senior leaders develop their personal relationships, capability and behaviours to have a positive impact within the unique context of government, including understanding what it means to model Civil Service values.

We achieve this by designing and delivering leadership development that:

- Hears honest accounts of the human experience of leading,
- Uses Leaders teaching leaders approach,
- Provides learning from real life experiences of the Civil Service,
- Builds relationships and trusted peer networks
- Interconnects leadership, wellbeing, inclusion and performance
- Supports senior leaders, both as participants and faculty, reflect and sense-make on their leadership experiences,
- Ensures there is psychological safety and scaffolding to work at a level and pace and approach helpful to everyone,
- Provides insights to share more broadly for wider CS initiatives
- Demonstrates we truly care about people's personal leadership development experience with us.

All of this is delivered across traditional Departmental boundaries.



Civil Service Leadership Academy Curriculum

Leadership development open to all SCS across the Civil Service, designed to build SCS knowledge, skills and networks.

Leading through career transitions

SCS Induction

- Civil Service Orientation
- Finance spending journey

Cohort based leadership programmes

- Director General Leadership Programme
- Director Leadership Programme
- Deputy Director Leadership Programme

Accounting Officer training

Workshops and seminars

Leading through challenging times series

- Leading with disruption
- Brain hacks for leaders
- Leading at your best in challenging times

Leading in complexity series

- Complexity and sensemaking
- Psychology of leadership
- Disrupting Groupthink

Delivered by GSCU partners

- Leading and Parliament
- Select committees

Delivered via Civil Service Learning

- High impact communication
- Storytelling
- Being an inclusive leader
- Leading within systems

Civil Service Teaming -

delivered by Bailey and French, CSL partners

Team building

- Civil Service Teaming
- Team strengths discovery
- Facing challenges positively

Management development

- Managing your virtual leadership impact
- Great virtual teaming conversations
- Creating inclusive virtual teams

Large group events

- Wellbeing check-in
- PERMA Webinars



Leading through career transition

Leadership programmes

CSLA offers three core one year leadership programmes for the Senior Civil Service (SCS) and open events to support the career transition of leaders new to the Civil Service. Leaders joining one of these programmes join a cohort alongside whom you develop and grow with. These are currently being delivered virtually.

CSLA aims to curate the space, conditions and process for senior leaders to transition into their new role, while also contributing to the development and support of a community of peers, who are in similar career stages.

[> Deputy Director and Director Leadership Programmes](#)

[> Deputy Director and Director cohort data](#)

[> Director General Leadership Programme](#)



“ It is time to reflect on my impact- it brought home to me the importance of taking time to do that even though it is really challenging. ”

“ It was a great oasis of reflection in the usual whirlwind. ”



Leading through career transition:

Deputy Director and Director Leadership Programmes

Offer for SCS leaders

We understand that the move up to SCS and then onto director requires leaders to step back and consider how they will transition and lead at this senior level. We know from senior leaders across the Civil Service that investing time to think about what leadership impact they personally want to have, proactively plan for that and develop the self-awareness needed to understand how they are resonating in the moment, are all valuable contributions to their leadership journey. Each cohort is sponsored by a director general.

Over 12 months the Deputy Director and Director Leadership Programme include:

- A launch event
- three workshops with supporting action learning sets
- a webinar series exploring inclusive leadership through the lens of positive psychology
- co-coaching / skype - sessions with a peer
- a programme close event.

“ *This programme has been fantastic. I hadn't realised how small my world is till I have been able to talk to people across the Civil Service...The course has helped me take a massive step up in my experience, the content is just fantastic, so relevant.* ”

“ *Belonging to a cohort has helped provide some focus which would be lost without the shared experience.* ”

Joining the programmes

To join this programme, deputy directors and directors can select an available date on the CSLA website in the [‘Programmes and learning events calendar’](#).

Leading through career transition:

Deputy Director and Director Leadership Programmes

Data for past five cohorts

Cohort	Deputy Director sponsors and numbers	Cohort	Director sponsors and numbers
5	Jun 2020 – Jun 2021 Angela MacDonald, HMRC, Second Permanent Secretary 49 participants	1	Sept 2019 – Sept 2020 Mark Fisher, DG and Secretary to the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry 21 participants
6	Sept 2020 – Sept 2021 Emran Mian, Director General, Decentralisation and Growth. 41 participants	2	Dec 2019 – Dec 2020 Louis Taylor, Chief Executive, UK Export Finance (UKEF) and DG, Department for International Trade 19 participants
7	Oct 2020 – Oct 2021 Charu Gorasia, Director General, Capabilities and Resources 43 participants	3	Mar 2020 – Mar 2021 Lisa Osofsky, Director of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) 16 participants
8	Nov 2020 – Nov 2021 Mark Fisher, DG and Secretary to the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry 39 participants	4	Sept 2020 – Sept 2021 Juliet Chua, Director General, Finance and Corporate at the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office 18 participants
9	Dec 2020 – Dec 2021 Jae Samant, Director General, Market Frameworks 33 participants		



Leading through career transition:

Director General Leadership Programme

Offer for SCS leaders

The Director General Leadership Programme is a bespoke programme, designed with DGs based on each individual's background and experience. DGs and Permanent Secretaries from across government have supported the overall design, and sessions are tailored to meet the cohort's needs. Each cohort is sponsored by a Permanent Secretary.

This programme is an opportunity for DGs to develop and influence through building a strong peer cohort network for the future challenges ahead.

The programme includes:

- a half-day corporate induction event
- development conversations with the CSLA
- cohort learning sessions such as :the experience of stepping into the DG role, the role of the DG in terms of systems leadership, board dynamics
- joining another DG cohort to take part in an immersive learning event
- cohort and action learning sets sessions. These create opportunities for more informal networking and provide a space to learn from and support each other in terms of work-related issues.

“ The DG programme has helped me in this current phase of being a new DG, transition in and given me a safe space to explore things I possibly wouldn't with internal peers. ”

“ It's helpful to be learning from other DGs: how colleagues are executing their entry strategy into the CS and how it works i.e how stuff gets done ... power and authority. ”

Joining the programme

As DGs are confirmed into their new role, they are be grouped with other DGs starting into their roles, to form a cohort.

Cohorts form every six months.



Workshops and seminars

Offer for SCS leaders

SCS also has access to a selection of curated workshops and seminars designed with our consortium to compliment your leadership journey. All will be virtually delivered until further notice.

- **Leading within systems**
- **High impact communication**
- **Storytelling**
- **Being an inclusive leader**

If you are also new to the Civil Service as a senior civil servant, we recommend you join the Civil Service Orientation which supports leaders to settle within the Civil Service if they are recruited from the private or public sector.

Leading in complexity series

This three part series aims to help leaders think about how they make decisions under pressure in complexity. It is delivered by the Civil Service Leadership Academy and internal faculty. The format of the sessions is intended to be informal and interactive, allowing participants to gain a grasp of more advanced leadership practices and consider these against their own experiences. The cynefin model is used as a framework to help us to understand how we can best respond in our environments.

Leading in complexity series includes: **Complexity and sensemaking, Psychology of leadership within challenging times, Disrupting Group Think**

How to book

[Dates, times, further information and bookable links can be found here.](#)



Leading through challenging times series

Offer for SCS leaders

To support leaders across the Civil Service to keep their teams safe, cohesive and productive, during challenging times such as the COVID-19 pandemic, CSLA offers a series of three 90 minute virtual workshops which can be booked as a set, or as individual sessions. These include:

- **Leading at your best in challenging times:** This workshop will give participants significant insights into how they can continue to lead at their best.
- **Brain-hacks for Leaders:** This workshop provides an opportunity to take time out to reflect on our thoughts, feelings, behaviours and strengths at this challenging time. Leaders will explore natural human responses to stress and pressure, and the implications for themselves and their role as a leader.
- **Leading with Disruption:** Participants will explore behavioural patterns they are noticing in themselves and the wider system within this time of COVID-19. The aim to develop systemic sense making to respond consciously within the context of disruption.

How to book

[Dates, times, further information and bookable links can be found here.](#)

“ *It surpassed my expectations because it was possible to engage in break out groups - really good to do. This was well organised, relevant, right pace and length - really enjoyed it and the new way of doing these.* ”

“ *It was a good opportunity to reflect and be reminded about patterns of thought and ways of mitigating these. The connection time was fun and it was great to hear from people round the world as well as the wider Civil Service.* ”

Civil Service Teaming

Offer for teams

Civil Service Teaming is a team solution which uses positive psychology as a way of creating a great performance culture. Designed by Civil Service Leadership Academy, in partnership with Bailey and French,

The Civil Service Teaming approach is specifically created for the Civil Service.

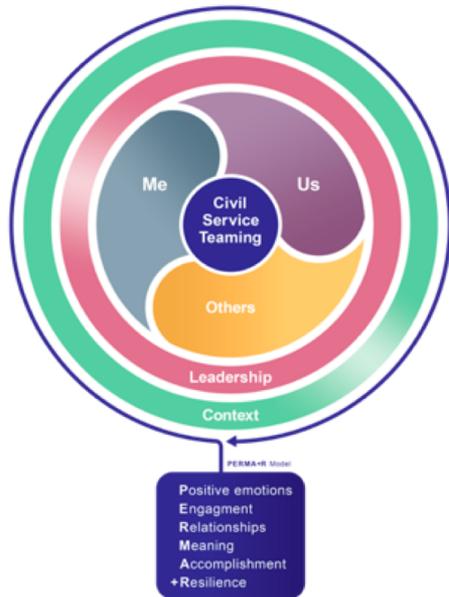
It helps create an effective teaming culture which strengthens relationships and supports our performance and wellbeing, allowing us to build confidence and resilience to be able to meet those challenges.

It brings together the concepts of how we can be our best as individuals, leaders and teams within the contexts in which we find ourselves at any point.

>Civil Service Teaming offer

“ Really inclusive and insightful ”

Teaming activities build the following high performance behaviours that form the basis of the Civil Service Teaming model: Me, Us, Others, Leadership and Context.



- ▲ **Me:** I am at my best in this team
- **Us:** We are a team
- ◆ **Others:** We work well with others
- ★ **Leadership:** We all role model leadership
- **Context:** We can respond well to the context we are in



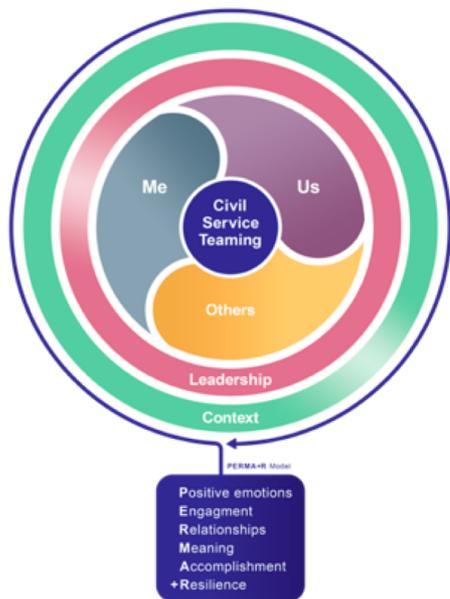
Civil Service Teaming

Offer for teams

Virtual offer

To support teams through the COVID-19 crisis, we have created a virtual version of Civil Service Teaming. The virtual teaming offer includes:

- **Virtual Strengths Discovery:** This engaging and uplifting workshop introduces the strengths approach to personal and team development.
- **Civil Service Virtual Teaming Introduction:** This workshop introduces the CS Teaming model and focuses on ways the team can thrive in this challenging context.
- A follow up session called **Virtual Facing Challenges Positively** can also be delivered, the design and process empowers each team to work positively together on a current challenge, building hope, efficacy and optimism.



“ Really useful. Enjoyed the virtual meeting room discussions and hearing different perspectives. ”

“ I have found the sessions really energetic and a great way to learn virtually - thank you ”

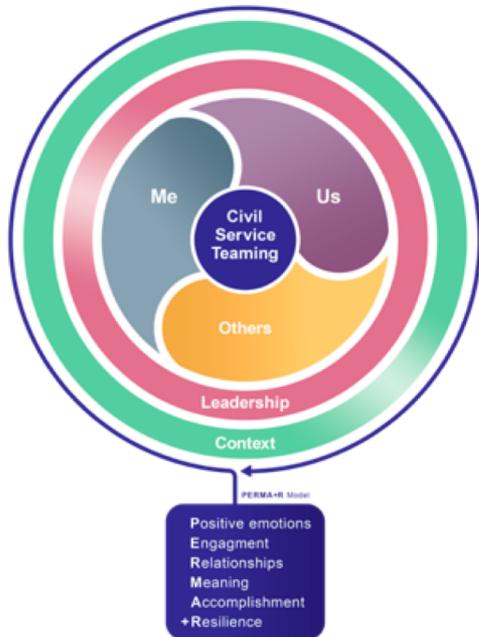
How to book

A package of two 90 minute virtual team based workshops is available via [the learning platform](#). Workshops are open to intact teams (up to 16) of Civil Servants. The package is priced at £2,500 (ex. VAT).



Leading teams virtually

Offer for managers and leaders



These workshops can be purchased and run by departments and teams as stand alone, but we recommend they are run in the sequence here for optimum learning impact.

- **Great Virtual Teaming Conversations:** This workshop introduces the Civil Service Teaming model as a clear framework for inclusive and impactful team leadership.
- **Creating Inclusive Virtual Teams:** This workshop will help managers and leaders to support their teams to be well and feel included in the current context of COVID-19.
- **Maximising your Virtual Leadership Impact:** This workshop creates a safe space for people managers and leaders to identify how they and their team can be high performing and make a positive impact with others, even in the current environment.

“ During chaotic times such as these, it’s good to re-shift and direct work as much as we can towards our strengths as a team. This has been a really good session. ”

How to book

[Dates, times, further information and bookable links can be found here.](#)

PERMA workshops

Offer for individuals or large groups

“ I think this has been a very positive and also fun thing to do ”

Research tells us that in challenging circumstances cultivating optimism and drawing on social support is particularly linked to positive levels of personal resilience.

This series of six 60 minute virtual workshops have been designed to explore how we can, even through tough times, build our **positive emotions, engagement, relationships, sense of meaning, accomplishment and resilience** (PERMA+R).

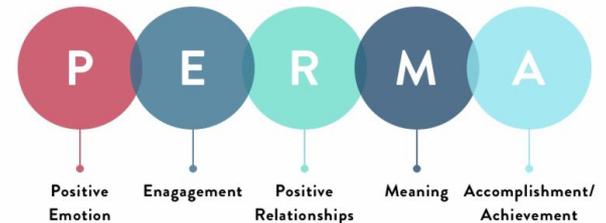
Reflecting and action planning using elements of the PERMA+R model will help you build your personal resources and resilience in challenging times.

“ It’s really time for us to do something like this as a team. Everything from a PERMA perspective is being amplified both from a positive and negative perception. That piece around meaning but also how we manage our relationships with each other. It’s great the functionality that zoom has enabled - it almost works better than if it was in person ”

How to book

Each workshop is priced at £1,275 (excl.VAT) and can be attended by up to 500 participants. In addition to the Departmental booking closed sessions. CSLA is also funding sessions, open to everyone, at any grade to participate in, to encourage cross Civil Service conversations.

[Dates, times, further information and bookable links can be found here.](#)



Wellbeing check-In

Offer for individuals or large groups

The wellbeing check-in is an hour of meaningful human connection with peers all facing the same challenging context of COVID-19. The workshop uses PERMA for participants' to share their perspectives and current experience of wellbeing to help diffuse feelings of stress through collective conversation.

Trials demonstrate (within the hour in itself) a significant uplift of participants' sense of optimism (which is fundamentally linked to mental and physical wellbeing).

Up to 500 people can participate and will be facilitated by our partners Bailey & French. This offer is especially suitable for frontline Civil Servants.

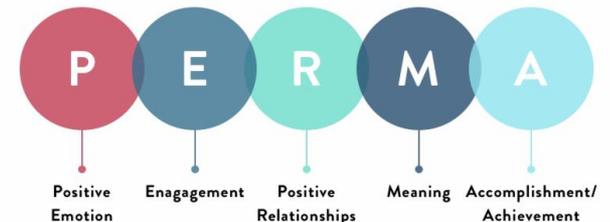
“ *Best 60 minutes ever!* ”

“ *Lots of useful and thought-provoking ground covered in such a short session - thank you.* ”

“ *Thank you, really great session to reflect on elements of working life that sometimes don't get the chance to!* ”

How to book

[Dates, times, further information and bookable links can be found here.](#)





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Contact us



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