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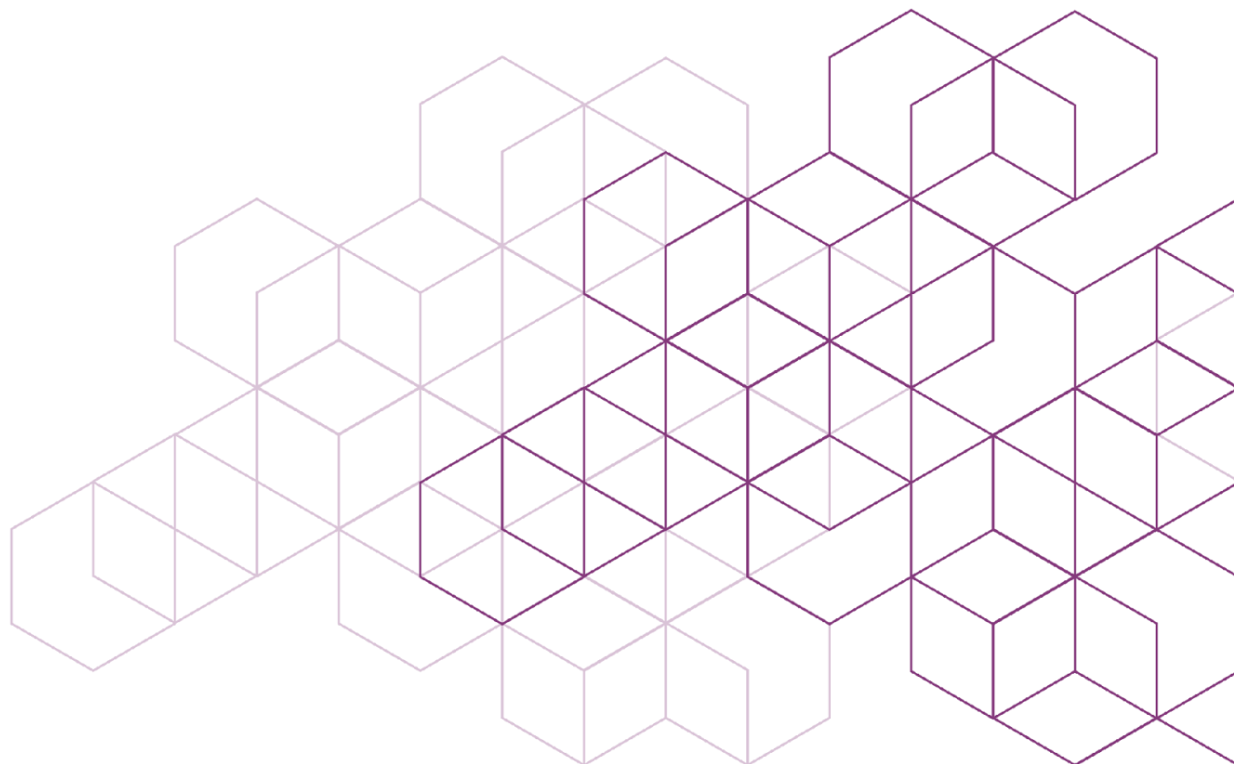
Directors Leadership Programme Overarching Technical Report

Qualitative Process Evaluation, Cohorts 1-3

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July 2026





Introduction

The Directors Leadership Programme (DLP) is a flagship initiative in leadership development, designed for Directors across the UK Civil Service and administered by the Leadership College for Government (LCG), a component of Government Skills. The programme seeks to equip participants with the conceptual tools, practical skills, and relational capacities required to operate effectively within complex policy, organisational, and service delivery systems ([Civil Service Accelerated Development Schemes, 2024](#)).

This report documents the data generation, organisation, and analysis procedures used in the evaluation of Cohorts 1–3 of the Directors Leadership Programme (DLP). It is intended as a technical guide to support transparency, replicability, and methodological continuity for future evaluations. Reports have been written by a consultant managed by the Blavatnik School of Government, the main delivery partner.

The report is structured as follows:

- **Theory of Change and Evaluation Framework**
Outlines the programme’s underlying Theory of Change and the realist and theory-based evaluation approaches used to examine how and why outcomes were achieved.
- **Methodological Approach Across Cohorts**
Describes the overall analytical strategy, including shared realist and mechanism-focused orientations, as well as key methodological differences between Cohorts 1–2 and Cohort 3.
- **Summary of Methodological Differences**
Provides a concise comparison of Cohorts 1–2 and Cohort 3 to support interpretation of findings and limitations.
- **Evaluation Aims and Research Questions**
Sets out the core evaluation objectives and the key research questions guiding the analysis across cohorts.
- **Data Collection**
Summarises all data sources used across the evaluation (e.g., questionnaires, diaries, interviews, facilitator feedback), including timing, purpose, and variation in response rates.



- **Data Analysis: Cohorts 1–2**

Provides a detailed account of the qualitative and mixed-methods analytical procedures used to address each research question, including coding frameworks, operationalisation of outcomes, and cross-data comparisons.

- **Data Analysis: Cohort 3 (Case-Led Approach)**

Explains the shift to a longitudinal, case-based methodology, including participant-level analysis, trajectory mapping, and configurational logic.

- **Comparative and Cross-Cohort Analysis**

Highlights key differences in analytical approaches, units of analysis, and data structure across cohorts, and explains how findings are interpreted in light of these differences.

Across all three cohorts, the evaluation is grounded in realist and theory-based evaluation traditions. The evaluation aims to test the programme's underlying Theory of Change and Context-Mechanism-Outcome (CMO) assumptions, focusing on how, why, and under what conditions the programme generates learning outcomes, particularly in systems leadership.

The full evaluation can be accessed here [\[add link to GOV.UK page\]](#).



Theory of Change overview

The evaluation uses realist and theory-based approaches to understand how the DLP worked across cohorts. Realist evaluations seek to understand how a policy or programme generates particular desired outcomes, with the purpose being “as much to test and refine the theory behind the policy intervention as it is to determine the policy’s outcomes in a particular set of circumstances” (Magenta Book 2020, March 2020 Supplementary Guide: Realist Evaluation). Theory-based approaches involve “rigorous testing of whether the causal chains thought to bring about change are supported by sufficiently strong evidence and that alternative explanations can be ruled out” ([Magenta Book 2020](#)).

Our evaluation approach is primarily based on programme theory, as detailed in two programme documents. A Theory of Change developed by the DLP delivery team (see Annex A) outlines how the programme is expected to work, moving from programme inputs, activities, and outputs to the expected outcomes for individuals and their teams. A Context-Mechanism-Outcome framework (see Annex B) provides complementary detail on how the systems leadership, Action Learning Set, and Visit elements are hypothesised to work.

Key mechanisms

Several mechanisms were central to the programme’s Theory of Change and formed a particular focus of the evaluation, including:

- peer learning and social comparison, enabling participants to normalise challenges, broaden perspectives, and learn alternative approaches
- reflective practice, supporting deeper sense-making, identity work, and integration of learning with prior experience
- facilitated discussion, creating conditions for challenge, support, and exploration of uncertainty

The Theory of Change recognised that engagement with these mechanisms would vary across individuals and over time. Leadership learning was not assumed to be linear or uniform; rather, participants were expected to selectively engage with elements most relevant to their context, with outcomes emerging gradually and sometimes retrospectively.

A full articulation of the programme’s Theory of Change, including inputs, activities, outputs, and anticipated outcomes, is provided in Annex A.



The evaluation of the DLP has been designed to move beyond narrow outcome measurement and instead adopt a mechanism-oriented, learning-focused approach, examining not only what outcomes occur, but how and why they occur within different contexts. This includes attention to programme design, facilitation quality, participant experience, learning processes, and contextual conditions that shape translation into practice. While the core aims of the DLP remained consistent across cohorts, the programme evolved iteratively in response to participant feedback, facilitator reflection, and emerging organisational priorities. Amendments across cohorts included refinements to curriculum emphasis, adjustments to session sequencing, and adaptations to facilitation approaches.

Shared evaluation aims

- Identify evidence of learning outcomes at individual, team, and organisational levels.
- Understand the mechanisms through which programme elements (modules, Action Learning Sets [ALS], and Visits) contribute to learning.
- Explore contextual factors shaping outcomes.
- Identify early indicators of learning and potential areas for programme improvement.

Key methodological shift in Cohort 3

Cohorts 1 and 2 primarily used cohort-wide analysis, coding data across all participants to identify patterns and mechanisms.

Cohort 3 adopted a case-led, longitudinal approach, focusing on five detailed case studies to examine individual learning trajectories over time. This shift was not part of the original evaluation design but was necessitated by insufficient data across the full cohort, which limited the feasibility of robust cohort-wide coding. While this approach enabled more in-depth, temporally sensitive analysis, it also reduced the breadth and comparability of findings across participants.

Cohort 3 analysis therefore emphasises explanatory understanding, exploring why certain mechanisms were effective for some leaders but not others, and under what contextual conditions outcomes were achieved.

This approach maintains continuity in overall evaluation logic while offering a more granular, though less generalisable, account of individual learning processes in Cohort 3.



The difference in approach is summarised in the following table:

Table 1. Summary of Methodological Differences

Aspect	Cohorts 1–2	Cohort 3	Shared Across Cohorts
Approach	Cohort-wide mixed methods analysis	Case-led, longitudinal analysis	Realist & theory-based evaluation
Unit of analysis	Aggregate participant data	Individual participant cases	Learning mechanisms & outcomes
Focus	Patterns across participants	Individual learning trajectories	Mechanisms, contexts, and outcomes
Data density	Relatively uniform	Variable, per case	Diaries, interviews, surveys, facilitator/observer feedback
Analytic logic	Frequency and co-occurrence queries	Configurational, explanatory	Identification of mechanisms and early indicators

Evaluation Questions (C1-3)

Implementation and evolution

1. To what extent was the DLP implemented as designed across cohorts?
2. How and why did adaptations (e.g., to module content, facilitation, or cohort composition) influence delivery and outcomes?
3. Which programme elements remained consistently strong or weak across cohorts?

Mechanisms and learning processes

4. What mechanisms (e.g., peer learning, reflection, practical application) most effectively supported systems leadership learning?
5. How have these mechanisms evolved across cohorts as the programme matured?
6. How do participants describe the translation of learning into practice, and what conditions support sustained application?

Outcomes and impact

7. What individual, team, and organisational outcomes are evident?
8. What emergent or unintended outcomes (positive or negative) are observed?
9. What evidence exists of sustained behavioural or cultural change linked to the DLP?



General Data Analysis Approach

Quantitative data analyses centered on learning outcome data from pre- and post-questionnaires, module feedback surveys, diaries, and other data sources. These analyses were conducted by members of Leadership College for Government evaluation teams; therefore, the specific steps for these analyses are not included in this report.

Qualitative data analyses primarily focused on understanding *participants' learning processes* and *how these processes may have contributed to learning outcomes* (i.e., mechanisms). By employing realist- and theory-based approaches to qualitative analysis, the evaluation moved beyond simple descriptions of participants' likes and dislikes. Rather, this approach enables the testing of the programme's underlying theory. The qualitative findings provide process-oriented explanations about how, why, and under what conditions the programme succeeded or fell short of meeting its target outcomes. These theoretically generalisable insights have the potential to inform future development and implementation of programme theory in the DLP as well as in other civil service leadership programmes in the UK.

Qualitative analyses also helped to identify early indicators of learning outcomes. While these indicators are not objective measures of new skills or outcomes, they highlight how participants felt they experienced learning and suggest areas for further exploration. These early indicators were identified within the qualitative data through line-by-line coding in NVivo (see the step-by-step data analysis section, Research Question 1, for operationalisations and detailed procedures).

To ensure participant confidentiality and anonymity, all identifiable information was removed from transcripts and diary entries prior to analysis. Participants were assigned unique identifiers using a structured coding system, comprising the letter 'P' (for participant), followed by the cohort number and an individual participant ID (e.g., P030 to denote the 30th participant in Cohort 1). These identifiers were used consistently across all datasets, including questionnaires, interviews, and diary entries, to enable longitudinal analysis while preserving anonymity. Any potentially identifying details within qualitative data (such as references to specific organisations, roles, or individuals) were anonymised or generalised during transcription and data preparation.

Cohorts 1-2:

- focused on aggregated patterns in learning, mechanisms, and outcomes.
- used quantitative pre/post survey data for triangulation and early indicators of learning.



Cohort 2:

- introduced cohort-wide mixed-methods analysis using NVivo 12, with line-by-line coding across participants.

Cohort 3:

- employed case-led, longitudinal analysis tracing individual learning trajectories.
- analysis focused on mechanisms of change, engagement processes, and translation into practice.
- used configurational logic to derive findings from patterns across cases rather than frequency counts.
- used NVivo 12 for coding mechanisms, engagement patterns, and learning outcomes per participant.

Analytic orientations shared across cohorts:

- realist evaluation: focus on contexts, mechanisms, and outcomes.
- theory-based evaluation: test causal assumptions within the programme's theory of change.
- mechanism-focused: identify how, why, and under what conditions programme elements produce outcomes.

Data collection

All data collection tools outlined below were administered at key points across the programme lifecycle, as indicated, and were voluntary but strongly encouraged as part of participant engagement. As a result, completion rates varied across data types and cohorts, with some tools, particularly reflective diaries and post-programme surveys, showing uneven participation and declining engagement over time (see Annex C). This was most pronounced in Cohort 3, where lower overall data sufficiency limited the feasibility of cohort-wide analysis and informed the shift toward a more case-led analytical approach.

Data collection was conducted by multiple members of the research team across cohorts, with different researchers leading case study interviews in each cohort. While a shared protocol and semi-structured format were used to support consistency, some variation in interviewing style and depth is acknowledged.

Ethical procedures were followed throughout. Informed consent was obtained from participants at the outset of Cohorts 1 and 2, covering all planned data collection activities. In Cohort 3, a more iterative approach to consent was adopted, with participants providing consent on an ongoing basis for different elements of data collection.



Table 2. Data sources and functions

Data Type	Data Source	Timing	Data Captured	Analytical Function	Cohorts Collected
Pre-programme questionnaires	Participants	1 month before the start of the programme	Baseline orientations, expectations, confidence, development goals	Context mapping; baseline case profiling	1,2,3
Reflective diaries / online diaries	Participants	1 month before each module and one month after the final module	Learning reflections, engagement patterns, application attempts	Longitudinal trajectory analysis; mechanism identification	1,2,3
Case study interviews	Participants	Within 1-2 months of completing the programme	Retrospective learning narratives, mechanism identification, outcome interpretation	Core case construction	1,2,3
Post-programme questionnaires / module surveys	Participants	Immediately after programme finishes (available for 1-1.5 months)	Perceived learning, confidence, relevance	Outcome triangulation	1,2,3
Module facilitator feedback	Facilitators	Within 1 week of module	Observations of module effectiveness and improvements	Mechanism and process analysis	1,2,3
ALS reflections (LeDALS)	ALS facilitators	Within 1 week of each ALS	Observations on engagement, dialogue, and evidence use	Mechanism identification	1,2
Visits (TELIF)	Participants	Within 1 week of conducting an independent visit	Reflections on frontline engagement and impact	Mechanism and outcome analysis	1,2

Note: While the data types are broadly consistent across cohorts, Cohort 3 analysis focuses on individual cases, mapping data longitudinally per participant rather than aggregating across the cohort. Additionally, TELIF and LeDALS were not used for Cohort 3. Data source response rates can be found in Annex C.



Data Analysis Steps by Question and Data Type (C1-2)

This section describes the qualitative and mixed-methods analytical approaches used to address each research question. The analysis was structured according to the type of data used and the evaluation questions guiding the study.

Across the evaluation, qualitative analysis was used to identify evidence of programme outcomes and to explore the mechanisms through which programme components contributed to those outcomes. Where appropriate, qualitative findings were complemented by quantitative indicators (e.g., frequency of coded themes) to support systematic comparison across participants and programme components.

Operational definitions of systems leadership learning outcomes were developed using a review of relevant government and programme documents (see Annexes E and F). Broader leadership outcomes (such as reflective practice and collaboration) were defined using the programme's Context–Mechanism–Outcome framework (see Annex B).

RQ1: To what extent is there evidence that programme outcomes were achieved, particularly systems leadership learning outcomes?

The evaluation incorporated quantitative indicators to assess participants' learning more systematically. Qualitative data remained central to the analysis, providing insight into how participants experienced leadership development and how learning manifested in practice.

Data sources

- online participant diaries
- post-programme interviews
- Visit documentation tools (TELIF)

Analytical frameworks

- operationalised general leadership learning outcomes based on the programme Context–Mechanism–Outcome framework (Annex B)
- operationalised systems leadership learning outcomes (Annex C)

Analytical process

1. Data organisation and extraction

Diary entries and Visit documentation were compiled into structured datasets for analysis. Instances of participant reflections indicating evidence of one or more learning outcomes were extracted and organised to allow comparison across participants and data sources. Multiple



examples of a learning outcome from the same participant were retained to capture the breadth of evidence across programme experiences.

2. Interview transcription and coding

Post-programme interviews were transcribed and analysed using NVivo. A case structure was used to organise data by participant, allowing the analysis to track patterns across individuals. Line-by-line coding was undertaken to identify emerging themes related to leadership learning outcomes. Codes were developed inductively and then mapped onto the predefined operationalisations of learning outcomes.

3. Cross-data comparison

Extracted data relating to each learning outcome were reviewed across all sources (diaries, interviews, and Visit documentation). This step ensured that coded excerpts met the criteria defined in the operationalisation framework and represented consistent interpretations of the learning outcomes.

Where excerpts were ambiguous or borderline, interpretations were discussed within the evaluation team to ensure consistency and analytical rigor.

4. Pattern identification

NVivo was used to track the frequency and distribution of coded themes across the dataset. While frequency counts were not treated as quantitative measures of impact, they provided an indication of how widely particular learning outcomes were reported across participants. Additional analytical tools supported exploration of relationships between themes, including:

- co-occurrence analysis, which identified patterns in how learning outcomes appeared together in the data
- text search queries, which helped identify recurring concepts or language associated with leadership learning

5. Interpretation of learning outcome patterns

The aggregated evidence was then reviewed to identify patterns in:

- which learning outcomes appeared most strongly across participants
- which outcomes appeared less frequently or weakly
- whether particular outcomes tended to co-occur within individuals or subgroups of participants



RQ2a: How and to what extent did programme modules produce or contribute to programme outcomes, particularly systems leadership?

Addressing this research question involved a two-phase analytical approach. First, the analysis identified evidence in the data indicating the extent to which participants attributed specific learning outcomes to their experiences in the programme modules. Second, the analysis examined the learning processes, experiences, and contextual factors within the modules (i.e., mechanisms) that appeared to facilitate or impede these outcomes.

Sub-question: Which learning experiences and outcomes did participants attribute to programme modules?

This stage of the analysis focused on identifying links between programme modules and specific learning outcomes. Participants often described how particular activities or discussions contributed to changes in their understanding, leadership practices, or perspectives on systems working. For example, participants expressed how module activities helped them reflect on their role within complex systems or introduced practical tools for engaging teams and stakeholders.

Data sources

- online participant diaries
- post-programme interviews

Analytical process

Diary entries and interview transcripts were reviewed to identify instances in which participants explicitly connected learning outcomes to programme modules or module activities.

Relevant excerpts were coded using NVivo and subsequently mapped to the predefined operationalisations of leadership learning outcomes (see Annexes C and D). Each coded excerpt was then reviewed to ensure consistency with the operationalisation criteria.

The coded data were examined to identify which learning outcomes were most frequently associated with programme modules and which appeared less frequently. Frequency indicators provided a descriptive overview of the distribution of learning outcomes across participants.

Sub-question: How and why did programme modules help achieve, or not achieve, early indicators of learning outcomes?

The second phase of analysis focused on identifying the mechanisms through which programme modules contributed to (or failed to contribute to) learning outcomes.

The analysis was guided by the following questions:



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- What explanations do participants provide for how programme modules supported particular learning outcomes?
- What observations from facilitators or programme observers might explain why modules were more or less effective?
- What aspects of module design or delivery (e.g., structure, facilitation style, content, or learning environment) may have influenced participants' learning experiences?

Data sources

- online participant diaries
- post-programme interviews
- standardised survey responses
- facilitator feedback
- observer feedback

Analytical process

Qualitative data were reviewed to identify explanations for why particular module experiences generated specific learning outcomes. Relevant excerpts were coded and grouped into thematic categories representing potential mechanisms (e.g., experiential learning activities, peer discussion, facilitated reflection).

Open-ended survey responses, facilitator reflections, and observer feedback were also reviewed to identify recurring themes regarding the implementation and delivery of programme modules. These sources were used to triangulate participant perspectives and identify additional contextual factors that may have influenced learning.

Once themes were identified, their relative prominence in the dataset was examined through coding frequencies and cross-data comparisons. This allowed the evaluation to identify which mechanisms appeared most consistently associated with reported learning outcomes.

RQ2b: How and to what extent did Action Learning Sets contribute to programme outcomes, particularly systems leadership?

As with the analysis of programme modules, this research question was addressed using a two-phase analytical approach. The first phase identified instances in which participants attributed learning outcomes to their experiences in Action Learning Sets (ALS). The second phase examined the mechanisms within ALS that may have facilitated or constrained these outcomes.

Sub-question: Which learning experiences and outcomes did participants attribute to Action Learning Sets?



This stage of the analysis focused on identifying connections between Action Learning Sets and leadership learning outcomes.

Participants frequently described Action Learning Sets as spaces for peer reflection, collaborative problem-solving, and testing leadership tools or approaches in practice. These experiences were examined to determine how they aligned with the operationalised systems leadership learning outcomes.

Data sources

- online participant diaries
- post-programme interviews

Analytical process

Diary entries and interview transcripts were reviewed to identify instances where participants explicitly linked their learning or professional development to Action Learning Sets.

Relevant excerpts were coded and mapped to the operationalised learning outcomes (Annex D). The coded data were then reviewed to identify patterns in which learning outcomes were most frequently associated with participation in Action Learning Sets.

Sub-question: How and why did Action Learning Sets help achieve, or not achieve, early indicators of learning outcomes?

The second stage of analysis examined the mechanisms through which Action Learning Sets contributed to participant learning. The analysis considered the following questions:

- What explanations do participants provide regarding how Action Learning Sets supported their learning?
- What observations from facilitators suggest how the sets were conducted and how this may have influenced learning?
- What aspects of group dynamics, facilitation, or inquiry processes may have shaped participants' experiences?

Data sources

- online participant diaries
- post-programme interviews
- ALS observation and reflection tools (LeDALs)

Analytical process

Participant accounts were analysed to identify explanations for how ALS supported particular learning outcomes. These explanations were coded as potential mechanisms.



Facilitator observation and reflection data (LeDALS) were also analysed to examine how the Action Learning Sets were facilitated. Coding focused on aspects such as:

- participants' articulation of inquiry questions
- the use of evidence or data in discussions
- facilitation approaches and group processes

These observations were compared across facilitators and over time to identify recurring patterns in how the sets were implemented. Mechanisms identified across data sources were then reviewed to determine which factors appeared most frequently and which were most clearly associated with learning outcomes.

RQ2c: How and to what extent did Visits contribute to programme outcomes, particularly systems leadership?

The analysis of Visits also followed a two-phase approach. First, the evaluation identified instances in which participants attributed learning outcomes to their experiences during Visits with frontline stakeholders. Second, the analysis examined the mechanisms through which these experiences influenced learning.

Sub-question: Which learning experiences and outcomes did participants attribute to Visits?

This stage of analysis focused on identifying links between Visits and leadership learning outcomes, particularly those related to engagement with frontline perspectives and system-level understanding.

Participants often described how Visits provided opportunities to encounter unfamiliar contexts, engage directly with practitioners, and reflect on the practical implications of policy and leadership decisions.

Data sources

- online participant diaries
- post-programme interviews
- Visit documentation tools (TELIF)

Analytical process

Diary entries, interview transcripts, and Visit documentation were reviewed to identify instances where participants connected their learning to Visit experiences. These excerpts were coded and mapped to the operationalised learning outcomes (Annex D). The coded data were then examined to determine which learning outcomes were most frequently associated with Visit experiences.



In addition, participants' accounts were analysed to assess the perceived impact of Visits on their leadership practice. Visits were categorised according to whether participants described them as:

- transformational: the Visit generated new insights that influenced leadership practice or decision-making
- potentially transformative: the Visit generated new insights but had not yet influenced practice
- useful but not transformative: the Visit reinforced existing knowledge but did not significantly alter perspectives or practice

This categorisation provided insight into the extent to which Visits offered learning opportunities beyond participants' routine professional experiences.

Sub-question: How and why did Visits help achieve, or not achieve, early indicators of learning outcomes?

The second stage of analysis examined the mechanisms through which Visits supported or constrained learning outcomes. The analysis explored the following questions:

- What explanations do participants provide for how Visits supported learning?
- What contextual factors (e.g., prior experience with site visits, location, or type of stakeholder engagement) may have influenced the learning experience?

Data sources

- online participant diaries
- post-programme interviews
- Visit documentation tools (TELIF)

Analytical process

Participant accounts were analysed to identify explanations for how Visits influenced learning outcomes. Relevant excerpts were coded and grouped into themes representing potential mechanisms. Mechanisms were then reviewed to identify which factors appeared most frequently and which were most clearly linked to reported learning outcomes.

RQ3: Which additional mechanisms within the programme supported (or did not support) programme outcomes, particularly systems leadership?

The final stage of analysis examined broader programme features beyond the core components of modules, ALS, and Visits. The aim was to identify additional mechanisms that may have supported or constrained leadership learning outcomes.



Analytical questions

- What other aspects of the programme did participants identify as influential in their learning?
- What elements of the programme did participants describe as particularly valuable, helpful, or significant?
- Are there recurring themes across participant, facilitator, or observer feedback suggesting additional programme mechanisms?

Data sources

- online participant diaries
- post-programme interviews
- standardised survey responses
- facilitator feedback
- observer feedback

Analytical process

Qualitative data across all sources were reviewed to identify references to influential programme elements beyond the three primary components analysed previously. Relevant excerpts were coded and grouped into thematic categories representing potential mechanisms. Data were triangulated across participant, facilitator, and observer sources to identify recurring themes and assess their prominence within the dataset. Mechanisms were then reviewed to determine:

- which were most frequently mentioned
- whether they were directly linked to specific learning outcomes
- whether they appeared influential despite not being explicitly connected to a particular outcome

Data Analysis Steps by Data Type (C3)

The evaluation of Cohort 3 followed a qualitative case study approach designed to examine participants' leadership development across the duration of the programme. The research questions mirrored those used in the Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 evaluations. As noted in the key methodological shifts section, the analytical approach placed greater emphasis on constructing a longitudinal account of participants' learning and identifying the mechanisms through which leadership development occurred.

Multiple data sources collected before, during, and after the programme were integrated to capture participants' experiences and reflections over time (see Annex F). Quantitative questionnaire data were used to assess changes in participants' self-reported leadership



capabilities, while qualitative data from interviews and diaries provided deeper insight into the processes through which learning developed and programme mechanisms operated.

Cohort 3 consisted of 42 participants. Of these, 16 completed both pre- and post-programme questionnaires, 12 participated in post-programme interviews, and 16 submitted diary entries. All participants were invited to take part in each data collection component.

Data sources

- pre-programme questionnaire
- post-programme questionnaire
- post-programme interviews (approximately 30 minutes)
- online diary entries (where available)

Analytical process

Questionnaire data analysis

Questionnaire data collected before and after the programme were compiled into participant-level datasets to enable comparison of responses over time. Responses were organised so that each participant's pre-programme and post-programme responses could be compared directly.

The pre- and post-programme questionnaires included items measured on a five-point Likert scale assessing domains such as leadership knowledge, skills, and behaviours (see Annex H and I for Cohort 3 questionnaires, with previous versions available on request).

Descriptive comparisons were conducted between pre- and post-programme responses to identify changes in participants' self-reported leadership knowledge, skills, and behaviours. These comparisons were conducted at the individual participant level and used to identify directional changes in self-reported leadership capability.

Preparation of qualitative data

Post-programme interviews were conducted with participants approximately one month after programme completion. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes and explored participants' reflections on their leadership development, programme experiences, and perceived changes in their leadership practice. Interviews were transcribed verbatim and uploaded into qualitative analysis software for coding. Interviews followed a semi-structured protocol (Annex G). Interviewers received verbal consent from participants at the start of each recording.

Diary entries submitted by participants during the programme were also compiled and uploaded into the qualitative dataset. These entries provided contemporaneous reflections on participants' experiences and learning processes during the programme, allowing the evaluation to capture insights that occurred during programme participation rather than retrospectively.



Qualitative coding and thematic analysis

Qualitative analysis was conducted using line-by-line coding in NVivo. Nodes (codes) were created iteratively during analysis to capture emerging themes relating to leadership development, learning processes, and programme mechanisms.

A hybrid coding approach was used, combining predefined codes based on the operationalised leadership learning outcomes with inductively generated codes capturing emergent themes (see Annex E). A coding framework was developed to define each code and ensure consistency in application. Coding was conducted by a single researcher for each cohort (although not all cohorts were analysed by the same researcher) and iteratively refined throughout the analysis.

Cases were created for each participant to allow coded data to be linked to individual participants. This structure enabled the analysis to track patterns across participants and to compare themes across interviews and diary entries.

Diary entries and interview transcripts were coded using a shared analytical framework based on the operationalised leadership learning outcomes used across the programme evaluations. Coding focused on identifying:

- evidence of leadership learning processes
- mechanisms through which programme activities supported learning, and
- indicators of systems leadership development.

Evidence of learning was defined as explicit participant descriptions of changes in understanding, behaviour, or practice, including both anticipated and unanticipated outcomes.

Cross-data comparison and consistency checks

After coding was completed, coded extracts associated with each operationalised learning outcome were reviewed across participants and data sources to ensure consistency in interpretation. This process involved reviewing excerpts coded under each theme to confirm that they met the criteria defined within the operationalised learning outcomes framework. Where necessary, excerpts were reclassified or refined to ensure that the coding accurately reflected the meaning of the data. Analysis was conducted first at the individual participant level before identifying cross-case patterns.

Longitudinal analysis

Where diary data were available, diary entries and interview transcripts were examined longitudinally to explore how participants' reflections and leadership practices evolved over time. For each participant, diary entries and interview data were compared to construct



individual trajectories of learning over time, which were then analysed across cases to identify common patterns.

Comparing diary reflections recorded during the programme with retrospective reflections provided in post-programme interviews also allowed the evaluation to examine whether participants' interpretations of their learning changed over time.

Pattern identification

Qualitative analysis software (NVivo) was used to examine the distribution and frequency of coded themes across the dataset. Node summaries provided the number of references associated with each theme across interviews and diary entries, indicating how widely particular learning processes or mechanisms appeared across participants.

Although the software does not provide a direct statistical measure of thematic strength, patterns of coding frequency and co-occurrence were used to identify recurring mechanisms of leadership development and relationships between themes across the dataset. These outputs were used as heuristic tools to support interpretation rather than as standalone measures of importance.

Additional queries were used to explore patterns within the coded data. These included:

- co-occurrence queries, which examined how often particular themes appeared together within the same sections of text, indicating potential relationships between leadership learning processes and programme mechanisms.
- text search queries, which examined the use of specific terms or phrases associated with leadership learning to identify additional relevant excerpts or patterns in the data.

Triangulation of findings

Finally, qualitative findings from interviews and diary entries were compared with questionnaire results to assess the extent to which reported changes in leadership capability were reflected in participants' narratives and reflections over time.

This triangulation allowed the evaluation to integrate quantitative indicators of change with qualitative evidence about how and why those changes occurred ([Carter et al., 2014](#)). Combining these data sources provided a more comprehensive assessment of participants' leadership development and the extent to which programme outcomes were achieved.



Comparisons (Cohort 1-2 v.3)

Diaries / Reflective Journals:

- Cohorts 1–2: Data compiled in master Excel spreadsheets (following initial NVivo coding where required), tracking participant responses over time.
- Cohort 3: Data compiled longitudinally per case to construct individual learning trajectories.

Interviews:

- All cohorts: Transcribed verbatim, double-checked for accuracy
- Cohorts 2 & 3: Uploaded to NVivo 12 for qualitative coding
- Cohort 3: Cases created per participant; nodes capture emerging mechanisms, learning processes, and outcomes.

Module and ALS Data:

- Cohort 1 & 2: Extracted into Excel to link to individual cases (following initial NVivo coding where required).
- Cohort 2: Module facilitator and observer feedback, ALS reflections, and TELIF tools uploaded to NVivo for coding.
- Cohort 3: no ALS data.

Data Analysis Steps by Research Question

Research Question 1: Evidence of learning and engagement

Cohorts 1–2:

- Identify instances of learning outcomes across all participants.
- Code early indicators of learning using operationalisations of systems leadership and general leadership outcomes.
- Analyse co-occurrence of mechanisms and outcomes using NVivo queries.

Cohort 3:

- Construct longitudinal case narratives per participant.
- Identify engagement phases: early, mid, late programme.
- Map learning patterns and trajectories, highlighting reflective, relational, experimental, selective, or integrated learning.
- Cross-check with diaries, interviews, and questionnaires to validate trajectories.

Research Question 2: Programme mechanisms

Cohorts 1–2:

- Examine modules, ALS, and Visits to identify mechanisms facilitating or impeding learning.
- Extract reasons participants, facilitators, and observers gave for success or barriers.
- Summarise frequency and co-occurrence of mechanisms across cohorts.



Cohort 3:

- Examine mechanisms per case, including: facilitation, peer learning, reflection, experimentation, content relevance, programme structure.
- Identify enabling and constraining mechanisms for each participant.
- Map interaction between mechanisms and context for explanatory insights.

Research Question 3: Translation into practice

Cohorts 1–2:

- Assess evidence of application of learning in post-programme interviews and follow-up diaries.
- Classify outcomes as reflective, partial behavioural, or sustained behavioural.

Cohort 3:

- Trace reported behavioural changes longitudinally per participant.
- Identify mechanisms supporting or hindering translation into practice.
- Examine contextual moderators (e.g., team support, organisational culture).

Additional analysis opportunities

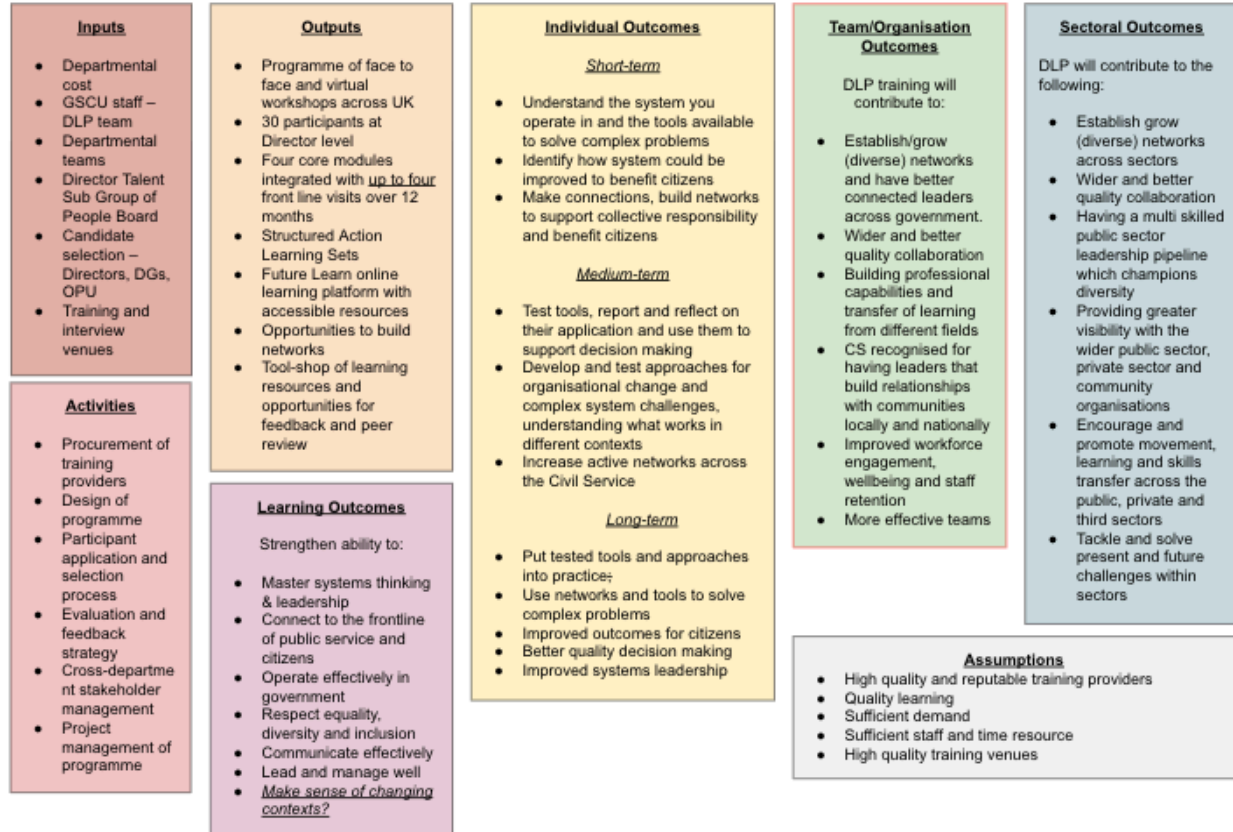
- **Implementation analysis:** Map intended vs actual programme delivery, highlight strengths/weaknesses, and link to early indicators of learning.
- **Expanded case study analysis:** Construct richer longitudinal profiles to explore learning trajectories across more participants, integrating personal and workplace context.



Appendix

Annex A. Theory of Change

DRAFT THEORY OF CHANGE: DIRECTOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME





Annex B. Context Mechanism Outcome Table

CMO #	Context	Resource	Reasoning	Outcome	Main source
1: ALS	Lack of regular peer support and reflective learning	- Time to move through group development stages - Initial facilitator support - Dialogue across group	- Empowered and motivated to support others - Sharing learning - Accountability across group - Right balance of support/challenge	- Meta-learning - Reflective learning and practice - Improved practice/outcomes	Mayvin discussion 1
2: SL	Need to leaders to understand their role in working across systems	- Identify and work on a specific challenge - Systems leadership tools and practices and mindsets shared with delegates - Cascade tools and practices and mindsets to teams	- Empowered and motivated to support others - Confidence in using and sharing tools and practices and minds	- Tools and practices and mindsets used in relevant situations by leaders and teams - Better understanding of systems around a problem - More comfortable dealing with ambiguity around a problem - Wider view of systems and collaborators/collaboration - Empowered team members	Mayvin discussion 1 Mayvin discussion 2 Brochure
3: Visits (general)	Lack of connection to frontline services	- Facilitated Group Visits x2 - Individual Visits x2 (with pre-Visit individual discussion) - Support for individual Visits - Reflect on Visits - Cascade Visits approach to teams	- Group Visits transformational - Individual Visits teach how to implement in practice	- Increased engagement with frontline (individuals and teams) - Consider local consequences of policy and implementation issues - Policy and implementation more responsible to those at	Eden meeting 1 Brochure Frontline experiences - outcomes for evaluation



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				frontline	
4. Visits (M1, day 2)	Lack of connection to frontline services	Take part in one of four group Visits to nearby sector/business	- Listen/reflect on those at frontline, and challenges in certain area - Think differently about how they/team relate to system - Understand a new sector and impact of Gvnt. policy on it - Reflect on relevance to their system and voices they hear	- Team discussion re listening to voices - CS shift in approach in how they are heard	Frontline experiences - outcomes for evaluation
4. Visits (M1, day 3)	Lack of connection to frontline services	Listen in groups to voices of individuals re. their experience of public service provision	- Listen/reflect on those at frontline, and see importance of this rather than 'trouble shooting' - Understand approach to take in frontline Visits	- Empower teams to take listening approaching - Participants in Visits feel listened to	Frontline experiences - outcomes for evaluation
5. Visits (M2)	Lack of connection to frontline services	- Two frontline Visits to people within their system - Visits to challenge by linking to new people	Broaden understanding of people in sector	- Encourage individuals to seek out new perspectives in their systems - Consider how challenges could be deepened by further Visits - Foster culture where Visits valued and transformational within CS - Encourage and ensure greater diversity of views/experiences brought to policy and implementation process	Frontline experiences - outcomes for evaluation



Annex C. Data Collection Response Rates

Standardised surveys

Module	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3 (42)
1	94%	100%	48%
2.1	44% (not embedded as planned)	71%	57%
2.2	79%	71%	-
2.3	15%	56%	-
3	35%	71%	60%
4	-	-	40%
5	-	-	50%

Action Learning Set observation tool (LeDALS)

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
ALS 1	100% (5/5 facilitators)	83% (5/6 facilitators)	-
ALS 2	100% (5/5)	83% (5/6)	-
ALS 3	100% (5/5)	83% (5/6)	-
ALS 4	N/A - participant led	100% (6/6)	-
ALS 5	20% (1/5) *	N/A - participant led	-

**Note: facilitators did not receive LeDALS form in time due to data generation oversight; the one facilitator who submitted the form independently completed it.*

Visit reflection tool (TELIF)

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Submitted at least 1 tool	53% (18/26)	47% (16/34)	-
Submitted at least 2 tools	24% (8/26)	15% (5/34)	-

Note: It is difficult to assess whether the TELIF tool is being completed to reasonable levels as we do not know how many FLVs have been completed.



Online diaries

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
Completed at least one diary	88% (30/34)	38% (13/34)	55% (23/42)
Completed at least 3 diaries	44% (15/34)	15% (5/34)	5% (2/42)
Completed at least 5 diaries	15% (5/34)	0%	0%
Completed all six online diaries	0%	0%	0%

Individual diary completion

Diary	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3 (42)
1	53% (18/34)	24% (8/34)	12% (5/42)
2	62% (21/34)	18% (6/34)	33% (14/42)
3	56% (19/34)	21% (7/34)	31% (13/42)
4	27% (8/34)	15% (5/34)	5% (2/42)
5	38% (12/34)	3% (1/34)	-
6	9% (3/34)	0%	-

Pre / post surveys

	Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3 (42)
Pre-Survey	22	31	27
Post-Survey	11	6	17



Annex D. Systems leadership framework and operationalisation

Systems Leadership Components and Outcomes	Source
i) Knowing your system	
Understanding one's system(s) itself (e.g., structures, interconnections, complexities)	Government systems leadership guide, DLP Theory of Change
Understanding diversity within the system (e.g., different people's perspectives and expertise) / Make connections, build networks to support collective responsibility and benefit citizens	Standardised Survey, DLP Theory of Change
Understanding one's role working within and across systems to achieve particular goals	BSG design narrative, CMO framework
Understand the SL tools available to solve complex problems	DLP Theory of Change
Generating ideas to improve one's system(s) / Identify how system could be improved to benefit citizens	Government systems leadership guide, DLP Theory of Change
ii) Applying systems leadership in practice	
Using SL principles and tools / Test tools, report and reflect on their application and use them to support decision making	CMO framework, DLP Theory of Change
Collaborating	Government systems leadership guide
Networking: Increase active networks across the civil service	Government systems leadership guide, DLP Theory of Change
Developing evidence	Government systems leadership guide
Applying ideas to improve one's system(s) / Develop and test approaches for organisational change and complex systems challenges, understanding what works in different contexts	Government systems leadership guide, DLP Theory of Change
Leading organisational change	Government systems leadership guide
iii) Supporting others to understand and apply SL In practice	
Supporting others to use SL principles and tools	Government systems leadership guide



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Supporting others to lead organisational change	Government systems leadership guide
Long Term Outcomes	
Put tested tools and approaches into practice / Increase the visibility of, and support for, systems thinking, behaviours, and approaches	DLP Theory of Change; Government systems leadership guide
Use networks and tools to solve complex problems	DLP Theory of Change; Government systems leadership guide
Improved outcomes for citizens	DLP Theory of Change; Government systems leadership guide
Better quality decision making	DLP Theory of Change; Government systems leadership guide
Improved systems leadership	DLP Theory of Change; Government systems leadership guide



Annex E. Context, Mechanism, Outcomes and Operationalisations for Qualitative Analysis in Cohorts 1 & 2

This table is used to look for evidence of the original (and sometimes mildly adapted) CMO assumptions, featured in bullet points at the top of each box below. Evidence of additional mechanisms (resource / reasoning), contexts (individual, organisational, cultural, and structural) will be noted in analysis.

CMO #	Context	Resource	Reasoning	Outcome
1: ALS	- Lack of regular peer support among civil servants occupying positions of high leadership - Lack of structured opportunities for reflective learning Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>delegates' typical professional environment and opportunities for peer support and learning</i> in pre-programme 1-1 notes, interviews, and/or online diaries Data extract example: “The programme was really about a community of leaders that I wouldn’t have had access to otherwise; I’m not a career civil servant so I met a lot people who I would have never met.” – <i>post-programme interview</i> “She also wants to think about her own development as she feels	- Time to move through group development stages - Initial facilitator support - Dialogue across group Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how ALS were facilitated</i> (e.g., time allocated, how facilitator ran session, opportunity for dialogue, and evidence of ‘dialogue’ – e.g., engaging with more than one similar-yet-different idea) in post-programme interviews, online diaries and LeDALS tool Data extract example: “Very encouraging forum, well spaced meetings to enable us all to make progress - and to be able to recognise that as a group” – <i>online diary 4</i> “We had a very skilled facilitator – very light touch but provided great structure, enough structure to let us be free.” – <i>post-programme</i>	- Empowered and motivated to support others - Sharing learning - Accountability across group - Right balance of support/challenge Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>the nature of the ALS conversation</i> in post-programme interviews, online diaries (Q7 in diary 2, 4 and 6), and LeDALS tool Data extract example: “Everyone is open and honest about their personal challenges, I find them supportive and helpful.” – <i>online diary 4</i> “A terrific group of people who are so open to sharing and challenge and offered some influential thoughts and ideals for my development.” – <i>online diary 4</i>	- Reflective learning and practice - Improved practice/outcomes Operationalisation in data: Statements in which delegates <i>directly link participation in ALS to new or improved professional practice or insights about themselves, how they learn, and/or their practice</i> in online diaries (Qs1&2) and post-programme interviews Data extract example: “Small group discussions with peers [in the ALS] has helped me understand the challenges faced by leaders in the civil service.” – <i>online diary 4</i> (professional insight) “I’ve experimented more, because I’ve been able to sort of hear other people talk about their own



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	focusing on (others') leadership in her day job means she does not often think about her own leadership role." – 1-1 pre-programme call notes	<i>interview</i> "It's a great way of looking at a problem or an issue through several different eyes in a safe space" – <i>online diary 4</i> "There were limited differences of views, and where these happened they were acknowledged and explored by the participants. In one instance someone articulated a view that circumstances could enable another person more freedom and less scrutiny, whereas another person felt that the wider dynamics meant that this may not happen. Participants explored these two positions and what impact they might have on the individual concerned." – <i>LeDALS tool, ALS 3</i>	"We were good at holding each other accountable and checking 'wait is that really the question you should be asking? Last time you said x, but you haven't done that now'" – <i>post-programme interview</i>	anecdotes, what they've done through their own sort of, you know, the system maps and the small groups that we've had, and to a degree through the action learning set as well. Very, very interesting to sort of take that away and say, "well, I could do more of that couldn't I, but I don't, why not?" And play with that a little bit. That's the - that's the big impact, I think it's really had. I've definitely taken more risks. And I definitely feel much more comfortable thinking about kind of which type of leader do I want to be today." – <i>post-programme interview</i>
2: SL	Limited perspective/understanding of how to work effectively within wider system beyond own department, organisation or area of jurisdiction (in green below) Operationalisation in data: Statements about delegates' <i>initial ideas / understanding about their role and work within their systems</i>	- Identify and work on a specific challenge - Systems leadership tools and practices and mindsets shared with delegates - Cascade tools and practices and mindsets to teams Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants engaged in systems leadership module sessions</i> in facilitator feedback, standardised and pulse	- Empowered and motivated to support other (in green below) - Confidence in using and sharing tools and practices and mindsets (in orange below) Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants made sense of systems leadership sessions, and their understanding of and perceptions of leadership</i>	- Tools and practices and mindsets used in relevant situations by leaders and teams - Better understanding of systems around a problem (in orange below) - More comfortable dealing with ambiguity around a problem (in green below) - Co-operative decision-making - Wider view of systems and collaborators/collaboration (in



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	Data extract example: “He likes the idea of spending time on systems leadership. He really enjoys team leadership (and missed it when he had a very small team in a previous post) but the job required an attempt to influence across the whole system that he found challenging. In his new role, he wants to help people across government work better together: too often “they are speaking past each other”.”	surveys, online diaries (Qs 3-6), post-programme interviews	tools/in standardised and pulse surveys, online diaries (Qs 3-6) and post-programme interviews Counter example: “If you want us to take seriously managing, leading, being excellent at what we do, you've got to intellectualise it to a degree. And I felt like that was really largely missing, that it was a lot of it was about behaviours. [...] Some of these frameworks, some of the evidence that that should inform our thinking felt missing. And it can't just all be driven by experiential learning and the exchange of experiential learning. I think it also has to be rooted in in literature.” – <i>post-programme interview</i>	blue below) Empowered team members (in purple below) Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants have concretely tried, drawn upon or shared systems leadership concepts and tools in their professional practice and decision-making</i> in online diaries (Qs 3-6), post-programme interviews and Systems leadership learning outcomes from standardised surveys Data extract example: “I have considered more carefully if we can approach problems from differing ways and also how we build creativity and delivery into teams.” – <i>online diary 3</i> “I already spent quite a lot of time thinking about [my] system and the motivation of different actors in it. It has, however, prompted me to try and do more to instil that way of thinking in my team - eg.holding a big team awayday with speakers setting out perspectives from different stakeholders in the system. It helped me to feel less like I have to grapple with the system as a whole and more like it's ok to focus on manageable
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				challenges within it.”– <i>online diary 3</i> Counter example: “I really like the ladder of inference and have been thinking about that a lot. I've also been thinking about the area I'm working on as part of my learning group. To be honest I need to spend more time reflecting on the learning and putting it into practice. I feel like I've had no headspace to do this.” – <i>online diary 3</i>
3: Visits (general)	Lack of connection to frontline services Operationalisation in data: Statements about delegates' <i>experiences engaging at the frontline (i.e., with frontline delivery staff or customers) prior to the DLP</i>	- Facilitated Group visits x2 - Individual visits x2 (with pre-visit individual discussion) - Support for individual visits - Reflect on visits - Cascade VIsits approach to teams Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>whether participants engaged in Frontline Visits and module sessions</i> in facilitator feedback, TELIF tools, standardised and pulse surveys, module session artefacts (e.g., photos) Data extract example: “Participants had a decent amount of time in small groups (3s and 4s) to think through how their visits	- Group visits transformational - Individual visits teach how to implement in practice Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants experienced and made sense of frontline visits</i> in online diaries (Q7 in diary 3 and 5), post-programme interviews, TELIF tools and module standardised surveys (M1, M2.2 and M3) Data extract example: see below	- Increased engagement with frontline (individuals and teams) - Consider local consequences of policy and implementation issues - Policy and implementation more responsible to those at frontline Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants have concretely tried, drawn upon or shared Visits practices in their professional practice and decision-making</i> in online diaries (Q7 in diary 3 and 5), post-programme interviews, and Visits learning outcomes from standardised survey Data extract example:



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		had impacted them, and most importantly the longer term impact on their thinking, personal and team practice.” – <i>Facilitator feedback, M3</i>		“In my organisation, we’ve got a lot of people who really love numbers, and are very pure about that [...]. And the way in which the information is collected is critical to us being able to use the data responsibly. And so I went [on a Visits that helped] understand some of the issues associated with counting [specific] types of immigration [...] My team then went down and talked and saw it and are thinking about it in a completely different way.” – <i>post-programme interview</i>
4. Group Visits (M1)	As above	Take part in one of four group visits to nearby sector/business Operationalisation in data: see above Data extract example: see above	- Listen/reflect on those at frontline, and challenges in certain area - Think differently about how they/team relate to system (in blue below) - Understand a new sector and impact of Gvnt. policy on it - Reflect on relevance to their system and voices they hear Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants participated in, experienced and made sense of frontline visits</i> in online diary (diary 1), post-programme interviews, and module standardised survey (M1) Data extract example: “I think	- Team discussion re listening to voices - CS shift in approach in how they are heard Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants have concretely tried, drawn upon or shared Visits practices in their professional practice and decision-making</i> in online diary (diary 1) and post-programme interviews



			being challenged to look at what we mean by frontline, I think in my organization, people mean by frontline as the frontline of our organization, that actually the frontline of the people who are affected by our services is kind of going beyond it sort of stretched the horizon that you're using for determining what is frontline and getting beyond that" – <i>post-programme interview</i>	
5. Group reflection on Visits (during modules)	As above	Listen in groups to voices of individuals re. their experience of public service provision Operationalisation in data: see above Data extract example: see above	- Listen/reflect on those at frontline, and see importance of this rather than 'trouble shooting' - Understand approach to take in frontline visits Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants shared, discussed and made sense of frontline visits with peers during modules</i> in online diary (Q7 in diary 3 and 5), post-programme interviews, and module standardised surveys (M2.2 and M3) Data extract example: "Everybody sort of inherently knows that they should do [Visits] and that they are valuable things to do. So it was good to have the prompt to do it and then to get ideas and thoughts	- Empower teams to take listening approaching - Participants in visits feel listened to Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants are focused on, listening to and prioritising frontline perspectives</i> in online diary (Q7 in diary 3 and 5), post-programme interviews, and module standardised surveys (M2.2 and M3)



			from other people about how they've made it work and how they built it into their practice in their working life." – <i>post-programme interview</i>	
6. Independently-led Visits	As above	- Two frontline visits to people within their system - Visits to challenge by linking to new people Operationalisation in data: see above Data extract example: see above	Broaden understanding of people in sector Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants participated in, experienced and made sense of frontline visits</i> in online diary (Q7 in diary 3 and 5), post-programme interviews, and TELIF tools Data extract example: "Prison visit has made me think more about those for whom education doesn't work as well as those who succeed." – <i>online diary 3</i>	- Encourage individuals to seek out new perspectives in their systems - Consider how challenges could be deepened by further Visits - Foster culture where Visits valued and transformational within CS - Encourage and ensure greater diversity of views/experiences brought to policy and implementation process Operationalisation in data: Statements about <i>how participants have concretely tried, drawn upon or shared Visit practices in their professional practice and decision-making</i> in online diary (Q7 in diary 3 and 5), post-programme interviews, and TELIF tools Data extract example: "I think it has reinforced my commitment to getting my team out beyond our boundaries. But because I've just moved one step back into the organisation, that's



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				probably my focus for the moment is getting my teams further out in the organisation. And then once I've done that, I will probably try and go back to and now getting them out into our customers rather than just into our services.” – <i>post-programme interview</i>
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Annex F. Longitudinal data sources and analytic focus across five case studies in Cohort 3

Case	Data sources	Questionnaires	Diary Entries	Interview	Trajectories
1	1Q, 2D, I	(1) <i>"I think it was useful to an extent, but I had assumed [systems leadership] was part of thinking and working politically, that leaders across the civil service are doing all the time?"</i> (2) <i>"I found it was not pitched at the right level for directors. I do not need a whole day's role play on how to brief a minister; I do that every week."</i>	<i>"It has helped me - alongside my day job - think about how I keep connected to people and demonstrate the 'caring' part of me as a leader. I find this easy to do at a human level, but much harder at scale."</i>	<i>"Last night, you know the story slam part of it, I was making a speech and I started with a personal story. So things that...I think I learned. maybe it wasn't groundbreaking, but actually the chance to think about and then bring it into my practice has been helpful, yeah."</i>	High-confidence entry with limited developmental need led to uneven early engagement due to perceived lack of relevance, followed by later selective meaning-making and retrospective reflection that reinforced existing leadership perspectives without producing substantive behavioural change.
2	2D, I	No questionnaire data available.	<i>"The 1-day module was the most helpful and gave me usable tools – e.g., how to use a personal office, and comms around regulation. The first week didn't really give me any tools."</i>	(1) <i>"Some of it felt really good and challenging. Some of it felt pitched at the wrong level, if I'm honest. It was really, really varied in terms of the overall kind of facilitation of the whole thing."</i>	Goal-oriented entry and strong peer engagement drove consistent participation despite uneven relevance of some components, culminating in enhanced reflective thinking and perspective-taking without clear translation into sustained behavioural change in practice.



				(2) <i>"The networking is the biggest benefit of the course."</i> (3) <i>"[The ALS] are very therapeutic but I'm not sure it has much impact on my day to day. The visits were the least useful part of the course."</i>	
3	2Q, 2D, I	(1) <i>"I think I have a good level of understanding leadership at scale but hope the course opens other avenues for taking forward."</i> (2) <i>"I also wonder whether we should focus even more on agile/productive Civil Service in an era of reducing numbers and deepening debt. How do we make ourselves even more effective?"</i>	(1) <i>"I've definitely brought back language around identifying how we work in the system and leading at scale, and it did generate some interesting thoughts."</i> (2) <i>"Some of the external partners were a bit too theoretical and then the practical components involved walking around the room or things that didn't translate very practically at all."</i>	"[During the programme], I thought a lot about whether there's a way to weave thinking about... how do we deliver things in a complex world with other partners, not just government."	Strong initial capability and clear development goals led to selective, concept-driven engagement and adaptive learning, resulting in early individual-level behavioural changes through self-directed experimentation but limited wider organisational impact.
4	2Q, 3D, I	(1) <i>"We work quite collaboratively already and I am comfortable in my role."</i>	(1) <i>"Understanding the challenges of others in the room has been hugely</i>	(1) <i>"[The networking] is probably more valuable than the content."</i>	Experienced entry and strong relational focus drove consistent engagement



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		<i>(2) "I think it was a bit of a missed opportunity that [some of the content] was not really applicable. It's an easy fix but some external partners felt a bit weak."</i>	<i>valuable even if not directly in my system." (2) "I've had an increased realisation and confidence on what transferable skills I have to offer."</i>	<i>(2) "They want a whole lot of cross-cutting stuff done for civil service reform and haven't got enough resources and it feels like there's a willing group here but it was a missed opportunity utilising time to focus on not very practical stuff instead."</i>	through peer learning, leading to increased confidence and broadened perspective but primarily reflective outcomes with little evidence of behavioural or organisational change.
5	2Q, 2D, I	<i>(1) "I would like to go on more frontline visits. I think I can be more proactive." (2) "I am definitely going to use storytelling as a means to improve my communications and engagement with my large disparate workforce...and stakeholders and partners in my current and future roles."</i>	<i>"The DLP has helped me to think about longer term relations, shaping government policy and strategy as well as just ministerial trust and confidence in a crisis. The session with ministers was crucial for me."</i>	<i>"I got the most value out of building relationships, hearing about the complex things they do, realising that they are facing similar challenges...it kind of gives you a bit of a support group and it is quite important."</i>	Clear development goals and strong readiness to apply learning drove sustained engagement and active experimentation, resulting in ongoing behavioural change and continued application in practice with emerging wider influence.

(Q = questionnaire, D = diary, I = interview)



Annex G. Interview Topic Guide

Introduction

Hi! My name is X and I am a member of the Development Leadership Programme Evaluation Team. I really appreciate your willingness to share your experiences of the programme with me today.

The interview will last up to 30 mins. You're welcome to take a break at any time or let me know if you'd like to stop for any reason. Everything you share today will be kept strictly confidential. Your name or any identifying details won't be linked to your responses in any reports or publications that come from this study.

*There are no right or wrong answers—what's most important is your perspective and experience with the **pilot** programme. I will be asking questions regarding the programme's impact, front line visits, action learning sets, systems leadership, and online learning. The conversation is entirely voluntary. You're free to skip any question or stop the interview at any time for any reason, without any consequences.*

With your permission, I'd like to record this session to make sure I capture everything accurately. The recording will only be used for transcription and analysis. Is that okay?

(Start recording) Just to check, are you happy to be recorded and for the interview to begin?

Introductory questions

- Now that you've been through the programme and all the elements, modules, ALS, FLVs - **How do you think the DLP worked as an overall programme?**
 - What elements do you feel fit together well/less well? In your opinion, did the elements (modules, ALS, FLVs) complement one another?
- **What difference, if any, do you think DLP has made to you?**
 - **Probe on:** perceived outcomes at individual, team, sector level
 - Can you think of a specific moment, session, interaction or experience from the DLP that was especially impactful? What happened and why was impactful?
 - **Have you drawn on the DLP network for support since the programme ended (e.g. career advice, learning opportunities, collective work)?**
 - Any reflection on the DLP cohort or aspects of the peer community?
- What would you change if you oversaw the running of DLP?
 - **Probe: Level of challenge in the content (and how you account for different levels of prior knowledge/experience)**



- **Probe: What helped in delivery / made it easy for you to engage in sessions, modules, ALS, etc?**
 - **(Why didn't you engage?)**
 - **Were certain facilitators more effective than others? If so, what made the difference (approaches they adopted, style, experience?)**
- What would you be sure to keep?

Action Learning Sets

- Did you find the ALS valuable and, if so, why?
- Did your self-directed ALS's differ from the facilitated ones? If so, how?
- Did the ALS have the right balance of support/challenge?
 - Is there anything that you would change about the ALS?
- To what extent did the programme help you become a reflective learner, or learn about how you learn? Were there any specific parts of the programme that played a role?
 - **Probe:** Probe on any specific non-ALS elements to understand what/how?

CMO #	Context	Resource	Reasoning	Outcome
1: ALS	Lack of regular peer support and reflective learning	● Time to move through group development stages ● Initial facilitator support ● Dialogue across group	● Empowered and motivated to support others ● Sharing learning ● Accountability across group ● Right balance of support/ challenge	● Meta-learning ● Reflective learning and practice ● Improved practice/ outcomes

Front Line Visits

Now I'd like to shift to focus on front line visits.

- Had you undertaken any FLVs before DLP?
 - If yes: did they differ from the DLP FLVs? How so?



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- During the programme, how many FLVs did you do and what was your overall opinion of the experience?
 - What were your main takeaways? What did you learn from these visits?
 - If not going on FLVs, why not?
 - **Probe:** to understand the outcomes from each approach - what are the perceived advantages of the potentially more detailed DLP approach?
- Have you taken any steps to encourage others in your team to conduct FLVs?
 - Why/why not?
- What are the enablers and barriers for you conducting FLVs?
 - How has DLP helped you, if at all, in conducting them more regularly or differently?
- Did taking part in the FLVs change your views on their value?
 - **Probe:** to understand whether the initial group visit was transformational and, if so, how?
- What could be changed, if anything, about how the FLVs were used in DLP?
- **Realistically, will you** do further FLVs? Why are you considering doing more FLVs/not doing more FLVs?

CMO #	Context	Resource	Reasoning	Outcome
3: FLV (general)	Lack of connection to frontline services	• Facilitated Group visits x2 • Optional Individual visits x2 (and support meeting) • Support for individual visits • Reflect on visits • Cascade FLV approach to teams	• Group visits transformational • Individual visits teach how to implement in practice	• Increased engagement with frontline (individuals and teams) • Consider local consequences of policy and implementation issues • Policy and implementation more responsible to those at frontline



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4. FLV (M1, day 2)	Lack of connection to frontline services	Take part in one of four group visits to nearby sector/business	• Listen/reflect on those at frontline, and challenges in certain area • Think differently about how they/team relate to system • Understand a new sector and impact of Gvnt. policy on it • Reflect on relevance to their system and voices they hear	• Team discussion re listening to voices • CS shift in approach in how they are heard
4. FLV (M1, day 3)	Lack of connection to frontline services	Listen in groups to voices of individuals re. their experience of public service provision	• Listen/reflect on those at frontline, and see importance of this rather than 'trouble shooting' • Understand approach to take in frontline visits	• Empower teams to take listening approaching • Participants in visits feel listened to
5. FLV (M2)	Lack of connection to frontline services	• Two frontline visits to people within their system • Visits to challenge by linking to new people	Broaden understanding of people in sector	• Encourage individuals to seek out new perspectives in their systems • Consider how challenges could be deepened by further FLVs • Foster culture where FLVs valued and



				transformational within CS • Encourage and ensure greater diversity of views/experiences brought to policy and implementation process
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Systems leadership

- What are your thoughts on the systems leadership elements? Were they helpful to you? How?
 - **Probe:** Focus on specific outcomes, e.g. whether helped them understand their system better, deal with ambiguity, use specific tools etc
- What were the strengths/weaknesses of the systems leadership elements?
 - **Probe:** Focus in on relevant details so we get a depth of understanding on what worked or didn't work
 - Did you feel that the material was new or were you already familiar with concepts being taught?
 - Was there repetition? How did you feel about the facilitation of these elements?
 - Was there a difference between materials earlier in the programme vs later? Examples? Were there additional topics that you would have liked to see covered? What were you hoping to gain/learn?
- Have you used any specific elements of the systems leadership module after the programme?



CMO #	Context	Resource	Reasoning	Outcome
2: SL	Need to leaders to understand their role in working across systems	- Identify and work on a specific challenge - Systems leadership tools shared with delegates - Cascade tools to teams	- Empowered and motivated to support others - Confidence in using and sharing tools	- Tools used in relevant situations by leaders and teams - Better understanding of systems around a problem - More comfortable dealing with ambiguity around a problem - Co-operative decision-making - Wider view of systems and collaborators/collaboration - Empowered team members

On the relevance of sessions

- What sessions, modules, or approaches do you think were particularly relevant or not particularly relevant and why?
 - Probe:** Assess relative role of content, facilitator, specific tools (including formal delivery and informal, e.g. small group discussions)

Online Delivery & Relevance

We're also interested in understanding more about the online versus in person modules.

- How were the online modules for you?
- Is there any content or session that you think worked really well online – or that you would recommend be facilitated online (instead of in-person)?

Close

- Are there any elements of your experience in the programme which I haven't touched on that you would like to share?
- Thank you so much for your time and willingness to share your reflections about the DLP.



Annex H. Cohort 3 pre-programme questionnaire

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the DLP pre-questionnaire. The pre-questionnaire is not part of the application process. Any responses you give will be used to evaluate the DLP programme and will not be used as part of your DLP application. You will be able to submit your application once you have completed the pre-questionnaire section, but you will not be obliged to answer any (or all) questions.

This questionnaire will help us evaluate the programme robustly and learn how it can be developed. It will take about 15 minutes for you to complete. Please note this survey is for everyone who has applied for the scheme and does not indicate success in the application process.

This questionnaire covers questions about leadership behaviours and approaches which are relevant to the aims of the DLP and to leadership in general. We will also conduct a similar questionnaire at the end of the programme to see how these measures change. By getting data from all applicants at both time points, we can compare the results over time from those who eventually take part in the programme to those who don't. This will help us rigorously measure the impact of DLP.

The survey and overall programme evaluation are being conducted by the Leadership College for Government.

The data collected through this survey will be treated in confidence and used only for the purposes of this evaluation. Results will be aggregated and will not include any information that could be used to identify you or your responses. More detail on how we will use your data is provided before you start answering the questionnaire.

If you have any questions, or need further information, please contact our evaluation lead Diarmid.CampbellJack@CabinetOffice.gov.uk

Thank you in advance for your participation.

You are asked to take part in this evaluation to meet Legal Obligations in reporting on programme participation and outcomes relating to reporting on diversity characteristics.

Before you take part in the survey, we would like you to read the [privacy notice](#) which covers the programme as a whole, including this survey. You will then be given any additional information prior to taking part in the evaluation.



Please use

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-hr-talent-privacy-notice/accelerated-development-schemes-privacy-notice> if the link does not work automatically.

Please read this information carefully. It explains our plans to evaluate the Directors Leadership Programme.

What you need to do:

- Read all the information provided.
- If you have any questions, or wish to discuss the evaluation, please email our evaluation lead, Diarmid Campbell-Jack at diarmid.campbelljack@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

You may ask further questions at any stage.

Project: Evaluation of the Directors Leadership Scheme

You are being asked to participate in this evaluation because you have applied to take part in the Directors Leadership Scheme. The evaluation will collect quantitative and qualitative data to assess whether the programme is effective as a leadership development activity, and to understand more about how and why it is (or is not) effective. This information will be used to help us improve the programme and to make decisions about leadership development in the civil service. This is vital to ensure we are making best use of public money.

The evaluation does not aim to assess the progress of particular individuals. Rather, the evaluation will assess how effectively the programme meets the commitments it made to you as a participant and to our wider system.

As a participant in this evaluation, we ask you to do the following activities to support the evaluation:

- Fill out a leadership questionnaire before, and at the end, of the programme. This questionnaire will take around 15 minutes to complete.
- Select a small number of your team members to complete a leadership questionnaire at the beginning and end of the programme. Speaking to team members will help us understand the effects of leaders' participation in the programme on wider teams. This questionnaire will take around 8 minutes for each team member to complete. This questionnaire asks team members' to comment on their own work, not to rate you as a Director. We will provide you with information on this element separately.

In addition to these specific evaluation activities, we intend to use the following data:

- Use information you provided when you applied for the programme, to avoid asking you for this data twice. This will help us make sure our survey data is as representative as



Government Skills

possible, and potentially help us assess whether the programme works better for certain types of people than others.

- Use your diversity data (where provided) to understand and analyse the effectiveness of the programme and how inclusive it is by linking it to survey responses.

If you are successful in your application for DLP, we will contact you at that point to explain about additional evaluation activities related to your participation in the programme. These will be explained in full at that point.

Anonymity

You and your business unit will never be named in any reporting of the process or results of the study. The programme itself will be named in the reporting. We ask for your email as part of the pre-questionnaire so we can send you out the post-questionnaire and long-term follow-up questionnaire.

How will data be stored and used?

Cabinet Office is the owner of this survey data, and will process and secure the data according to organisational policy and legal requirements. Selected individuals in our evaluation team (either within Government, a delivery partner, or an external agency) will have access to this data for the purposes of analysis; it will not be accessible more widely. In addition, individuals involved in programme delivery will support the collection of the data and a member of the evaluation team (either within Government, a delivery partner, or an external agency) will process and analyse the data, in a way which is consistent with Cabinet Office policy and GDPR legislation. Data will be stored for ten years so we can amalgamate data across multiple years of the programme.

The data will be stored and used by the evaluation team solely for the purposes of the research outlined above, and publications and other research dissemination materials that originate from that project. Anonymised quotations will be used in such publications.

Benefits and risks of harm

By participating in this evaluation you will be supporting the Government to make effective and efficient use of public money.

We have not identified any significant risks of harm associated with participating. We recommend you do not include material classified 'official sensitive' or higher, or other sensitive or potentially compromising information in your responses in any interviews or focus groups



Government Skills

Right to withdraw and refuse

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without giving a reason.

You have the right to refuse to participate in any evaluation activities and you do not need to provide a reason for your refusal.

You are able to ask further questions about the evaluation at any stage.

Evaluation Contact

Diarmid Campbell-Jack

Leadership and Management Research & Evaluation Lead

diarmid.campbelljack@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Leadership College for Government Contact

Jo Hollis

Deputy Director

jo.hollis@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

You will now be taken to the questionnaire. If you do not wish to answer any (or all) questions you will be asked to check if you want to answer the questions, but you can proceed through the questionnaire without answering any questions you do not wish to answer.

Thank you for being willing to complete this questionnaire.

We expect the questionnaire to take around 15 minutes to complete.

Please answer questions carefully. You can use the back button at any time if you want to revise any of your answers.



Government Skills

QA

Please enter your work email address in the space below

Q1

Please indicate the extent that you agree or disagree with each of the following statements (please select one option in each row).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am good at building relationships with influential people at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work who I can call on for support when I really need to get things done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am good at using connections and my network to make things happen at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
At work, I know a lot of important people and am well connected.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I spend a lot of time and effort at work developing connections with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



Government Skills

Q2

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I consider how my work impacts upon the public in the course of carrying out my duties
(please select one option only)

Often or always	1
Some of the time	2
Occasionally	3
Hardly ever	4
Never	5

Q3

Please indicate the extent that you agree or disagree with each of the following statements
(please select one option in each row):

When we refer to 'service provision' we mean the activities carried out by your business unit which address the needs of its end users. By 'organisation', we mean the primary department or profession which employs you.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree as much as disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I discuss our service provision with colleagues from my business unit.	1	2	3	4	5
I think of what could be changed in our overall service provision in my business unit.	1	2	3	4	5
If I notice problems in our service, I express them.	1	2	3	4	5
I have taken concrete steps to enable a collaborative culture in my team.	1	2	3	4	5
I discuss my team's performance with colleagues from other teams.	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident to voice ideas in my organisation beyond my immediate team.	1	2	3	4	5



Government Skills

I have conversations with managers in other professions to my own.	1	2	3	4	5
I actively support colleagues to undertake service improvement.	1	2	3	4	5
In my current organisation, I feel I am on the same side as other managers.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a clear understanding of the quality of the overall service in my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
I have colleagues in different business units to call on if I have a question.	1	2	3	4	5
I successfully conduct difficult conversations in my team	1	2	3	4	5

Q4

Please tell us how frequently you observed others (superiors, subordinates, or peers) in your immediate work group engaging in these behaviours over the last three months (please select one option in each row):

	Never (0)	Rarely (1-10 times)	Occasi onally (11-20 times)	Som etim es (21-3 0 time s)	Frequ ently (31-40 times)	Usually (41-50 times)	Every time(>5 0 times)
Driving accountability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Supporting differences of opinion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Providing resources and time to try new things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Setting objective metrics of success or failure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Quieting voices that distract from purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Encouraging learning visits to other organisations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Asking people to invest more time and energy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



Government Skills

Establishing specific targets and deliverables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Encouraging new approaches	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Forgiving failure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q5

Please answer based on your experience over the past year. The following questions are about your relationships with contemporaries outside your organisation. By contemporaries, we mean people in a similar role and/or at a similar level of seniority to you. Again, by organisation, we mean the primary department or profession which employs you.

Please select one option in each row.

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am effective at working beyond the boundaries of my own organisation	1	2	3	4
I have the necessary skills to lead beyond my own organisation, across the public sector	1	2	3	4
I have a comprehensive understanding of other public services in my policy area	1	2	3	4
I understand the challenges facing the majority of public services in my policy area	1	2	3	4
I feel adequately prepared to meet the changes to public services expected in the next ten years	1	2	3	4
I feel able to input into or influence central government decision-making	1	2	3	4

Q6

How often do you collaborate with civil servants in other government departments and agencies to achieve common goals? Please select one option only.

Often or always	1
Some of the time	2



Government Skills

Occasionally	3
Hardly ever	4
Never	5

Q7

Please select one option in each column. In each statement, by contemporaries, we mean people in a similar role and/or at a similar level of seniority to you.

How often do you personally...

	Meet with contemporaries outside the civil service	Take decisions with contemporaries outside the civil service
At least weekly	1	1
Fortnightly	2	2
Monthly	3	3
Quarterly	4	4
Every six months	5	5
Annually	6	6
Less often	7	7

Q8

You are now going to be asked some questions about frontline visits. By frontline visits, we mean any physical visits you have made in person to meet with frontline delivery staff and/or customers, for any reason.



Government Skills

Q8a. How often do you go on frontline visits (please select one option only):

At least weekly	1
Fortnightly	2
Monthly	3
Quarterly	4
Every six months	5
Annually	6
Less often	7
Never	8

Q8bi. Do you ever speak to your team or other staff about going on frontline visits?

Yes	1	PN: CONTINUE TO Q8Bii
No	2	PN: SKIP TO Q8c
Don't know	3	PN: SKIP TO Q8c

Q8bii. When speaking to your team or other staff about frontline visits, how often do you suggest that they go on frontline visits? Please select one option only

I suggest that my team/other staff go on frontline visits...

At least weekly	1
Fortnightly	2
Monthly	3
Quarterly	4
Every six months	5
Annually	6



Government Skills

Less often	7
Never (i.e. I tell them not to go on frontline visits)	8

Q8c. Regardless of whether you or your team have been on any frontline visits, how relevant do you think frontline visits are? Please select one option only

Very relevant	1
Quite relevant	2
Not very relevant	3
Not at all relevant	4
Don't know	5



Q9

You may recognise the following questions from the civil service 360 degree feedback tool. If you have already completed that tool, please answer these questions anyway, as this questionnaire is for a different purpose and the data will be processed and analysed separately.

Please rate how effective you are at (please select one option in each row):

	Not effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Very effective	Extremely effective
Building credibility and influence to strengthen relationships with Ministers and external stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrating receptiveness to being challenged, however uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
Taking responsibility for delivery of the Government's programme and Ministers' priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
Developing strategies that focus on delivering results that have a long term impact.	1	2	3	4	5
Showing resilience in making tough strategic decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
Prioritising a consistently high quality customer outcome.	1	2	3	4	5
Maintaining real focus on delivering efficiency and value for money.	1	2	3	4	5



Government Skills

Q10

Please indicate the extent that you agree or disagree with each of the following statements (please select one option in each row):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree as much as disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I try to understand why certain leadership methods work.	1	2	3	4	5
I exchange ideas about new ways of leadership with colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to understand new ideas about leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
I often reflect on my leadership practices.	1	2	3	4	5
I like to experiment with new ways of leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
I analyse why my team members/colleagues don't understand my proposals.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel disappointed because most of my team members don't want change.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't know how I can improve my leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
I only want to learn things that I can use immediately in my practice.	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge that I cannot apply quickly is useless to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a growing feeling of discontent with my work.	1	2	3	4	5
New ideas about leadership are naïve most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5



Government
Skills

[CLOSE](#)

Thank you for your time. Your responses have been logged and will be securely processed. If you have provided consent, we will contact you at several points to update you on the evaluation and remind you of anything you need to do.

If you have any questions or comments about the evaluation or any tasks we ask you to complete please contact Diarmid.CampbellJack@CabinetOffice.gov.uk.

You can find more information and other contact details on the information and consent form provided elsewhere.

[PN: CLOSE](#)



Annex I. Cohort 3 post-programme questionnaire

Welcome to the DLP post-questionnaire.

This questionnaire will help us evaluate the programme robustly and learn how it can be developed. It will take about 15 minutes for you to complete.

This questionnaire covers questions about leadership behaviours and approaches which are relevant to the aims of the DLP and to leadership in general. We also conducted a similar questionnaire at the start of the programme, which, with this questionnaire at the end of the programme, lets us see how these measures change. By getting data from all applicants at both time points, we can compare the results over time from those who eventually take part in the programme to those who don't. This will help us rigorously measure the impact of DLP.

The survey and overall programme evaluation are being conducted by the Evidence and Impact Team, Government Skills.

The data collected through this survey will be treated in confidence and used only for the purposes of this evaluation. Results will be aggregated and will not include any information that could be used to identify you or your responses. More detail on how we will use your data is provided before you start answering the questionnaire.

If you have any questions, or need further information, please contact our evaluation lead Diarmid.CampbellJack@CabinetOffice.gov.uk.

Thank you in advance for your participation.



Government Skills

You are asked to take part in this evaluation to meet Legal Obligations in reporting on programme participation and outcomes relating to reporting on diversity characteristics.

Before you take part in the survey, we would like you to read the [privacy notice](#) which covers the programme as a whole, including this survey. You will then be given any additional information prior to taking part in the evaluation.

Please use

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-hr-talent-privacy-notice/accelerated-development-schemes-privacy-notice> if the link does not work automatically.

Please read this information carefully. It explains our plans to evaluate the Directors Leadership Programme.

What you need to do:

- Read all the information provided.
- If you have any questions, or wish to discuss the evaluation, please email our evaluation lead, Diarmid Campbell-Jack at diarmid.campbelljack@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

You may ask further questions at any stage.

Project: Evaluation of the Directors Leadership Scheme

You are being asked to participate in this evaluation because you have applied to take part in the Directors Leadership Scheme. The evaluation will collect quantitative and qualitative data to assess whether the programme is effective as a leadership development activity, and to understand more about how and why it is (or is not) effective. This information will be used to help us improve the programme and to make decisions about leadership development in the civil service. This is vital to ensure we are making best use of public money.

The evaluation does not aim to assess the progress of particular individuals. Rather, the evaluation will assess how effectively the programme meets the commitments it made to you as a participant and to our wider system.

Anonymity

You and your business unit will never be named in any reporting of the process or results of the study. The programme itself will be named in the reporting. We are asking for your email as part of the post-programme questionnaire so we can link your responses to the pre-programme questionnaire.



Government Skills

How will data be stored and used?

Cabinet Office is the owner of this survey data, and will process and secure the data according to organisational policy and legal requirements. Selected individuals in our evaluation team (either within Government, a delivery partner, or an external agency) will have access to this data for the purposes of analysis; it will not be accessible more widely. In addition, individuals involved in programme delivery will support the collection of the data and a member of the evaluation team (either within Government, a delivery partner, or an external agency) will process and analyse the data, in a way which is consistent with Cabinet Office policy and GDPR legislation. Data will be stored for ten years so we can amalgamate data across multiple years of the programme.

The data will be stored and used by the evaluation team solely for the purposes of the research outlined above, and publications and other research dissemination materials that originate from that project. Anonymised quotations will be used in such publications.

Benefits and risks of harm

By participating in this evaluation you will be supporting the Government to make effective and efficient use of public money.

We have not identified any significant risks of harm associated with participating. We recommend you do not include material classified 'official sensitive' or higher, or other sensitive or potentially compromising information in your responses in any interviews or focus groups.

Right to withdraw and refuse

You have the right to withdraw from the study at any point without giving a reason.

You have the right to refuse to participate in any evaluation activities and you do not need to provide a reason for your refusal.

You are able to ask further questions about the evaluation at any stage.

Evaluation Contact
Diarmid Campbell-Jack
Leadership and Management Research & Evaluation Lead
diarmid.campbelljack@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Design and Delivery Contact
Jo Hollis



Government
Skills

Deputy Director

jo.hollis@cabinetoffice.gov.uk



Government Skills

Thank you for being willing to complete this questionnaire.

You will now be taken to the questionnaire. If you do not wish to answer any (or all) questions, you will be asked to check if you want to answer the questions, but you can proceed through the questionnaire without answering any questions you do not wish to answer.

We expect the questionnaire to take around 15 minutes to complete. Please answer questions carefully. You can use the back button at any time if you want to revise any of your answers.

QA

Please enter your work email address in the space below

Q1. Please indicate the extent that you agree or disagree with each of the following statements (please select one option in each row).

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am good at building relationships with influential people at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work who I can call on for support when I really need to get things done.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am good at using connections and my network to make things happen at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



Government Skills

At work, I know a lot of important people and am well connected.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I spend a lot of time and effort at work developing connections with others.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



Government Skills

Q2

How far do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

I consider how my work impacts upon the public in the course of carrying out my duties
(please select one option only)

Often or always	1
Some of the time	2
Occasionally	3
Hardly ever	4
Never	5

Q3

Please indicate the extent that you agree or disagree with each of the following statements
(please select one option in each row):

When we refer to 'service provision' we mean the activities carried out by your business unit which address the needs of its end users. By 'organisation', we mean the primary department or profession which employs you.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree as much as disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I discuss our service provision with colleagues from my business unit.	1	2	3	4	5
I think of what could be changed in our overall service provision in my business unit.	1	2	3	4	5
If I notice problems in our service, I express them.	1	2	3	4	5
I have taken concrete steps to enable a collaborative culture in my team.	1	2	3	4	5
I discuss my team's performance with colleagues from other teams.	1	2	3	4	5
I am confident to voice ideas in my organisation beyond my immediate team.	1	2	3	4	5



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I have conversations with managers in other professions to my own.	1	2	3	4	5
I actively support colleagues to undertake service improvement.	1	2	3	4	5
In my current organisation, I feel I am on the same side as other managers.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a clear understanding of the quality of the overall service in my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
I have colleagues in different business units to call on if I have a question.	1	2	3	4	5
I successfully conduct difficult conversations in my team	1	2	3	4	5

Q4

Please tell us how frequently you observed others (superiors, subordinates, or peers) in your immediate work group engaging in these behaviours over the last three months (please select one option in each row):

	Never (0)	Rarely (1-10 times)	Occasi onally (11-20 times)	Someti mes (21-30 times)	Freque ntly (31-40 times)	Usuall y (41-50 times)	Every time(> 50 times)
Driving accountability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Supporting differences of opinion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Providing resources and time to try new things	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Setting objective metrics of success or failure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Quieting voices that distract from purpose	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Encouraging learning visits to other organisations	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Asking people to invest more time and energy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Establishing specific targets and deliverables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7



Government Skills

Encouraging new approaches	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Forgiving failure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Q5

Please answer based on your experience over the past year. The following questions are about your relationships with contemporaries outside your organisation. By contemporaries, we mean people in a similar role and/or at a similar level of seniority to you. Again, by organisation, we mean the primary department or profession which employs you.

Please select one option in each row.

To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am effective at working beyond the boundaries of my own organisation	1	2	3	4
I have the necessary skills to lead beyond my own organisation, across the public sector	1	2	3	4
I have a comprehensive understanding of other public services in my policy area	1	2	3	4
I understand the challenges facing the majority of public services in my policy area	1	2	3	4
I feel adequately prepared to meet the changes to public services expected in the next ten years	1	2	3	4
I feel able to input into or influence central government decision-making	1	2	3	4



Government Skills

Q6

How often do you collaborate with civil servants in other government departments and agencies to achieve common goals? Please select one option only.

Often or always	1
Some of the time	2
Occasionally	3
Hardly ever	4
Never	5

Q7

Please select one option in each row. In each statement, by contemporaries, we mean people in a similar role and/or at a similar level of seniority to you.

How often do you personally...

	Meet with contemporaries outside the civil service	Take decisions with contemporaries outside the civil service
At least weekly	1	1
Fortnightly	2	2
Monthly	3	3
Quarterly	4	4
Every six months	5	5
Annually	6	6
Less often	7	7



Q8

You are now going to be asked some questions about frontline visits. By frontline visits, we mean any physical visits you have made in person to meet with frontline delivery staff and/or customers, for any reason.

Q8a. How often do you go on frontline visits (please select one option only):

At least weekly	1
Fortnightly	2
Monthly	3
Quarterly	4
Every six months	5
Annually	6
Less often	7
Never	8

Q8bi. Do you ever speak to your team or other staff about going on frontline visits?

Yes	1	PN: CONTINUE TO Q8Bii
No	2	PN: SKIP TO Q8c
Don't know	3	PN: SKIP TO Q8c

Q8bii. When speaking to your team or other staff about frontline visits, how often do you suggest that they go on frontline visits? Please select one option only

I suggest that my team/other staff go on frontline visits...

At least weekly	1
-----------------	---



Government Skills

Fortnightly	2
Monthly	3
Quarterly	4
Every six months	5
Annually	6
Less often	7
Never (i.e. I tell them not to go on frontline visits)	8

Q8c. Regardless of whether you or your team have been on any frontline visits, how relevant do you think frontline visits are? Please select one option only

Very relevant	1
Quite relevant	2
Not very relevant	3
Not at all relevant	4
Don't know	5

Q9

You may recognise the following questions from the civil service 360 degree feedback tool. If you have already completed that tool, please answer these questions anyway, as this questionnaire is for a different purpose and the data will be processed and analysed separately.

Please rate how effective you are at (please select one option in each row):

	Not effective	Somewhat effective	Effective	Very effective	Extremely effective
Building credibility and influence to strengthen relationships with Ministers and external stakeholders.	1	2	3	4	5
Demonstrating receptiveness to being challenged, however uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5



Government Skills

Taking responsibility for delivery of the Government's programme and Ministers' priorities.	1	2	3	4	5
Developing strategies that focus on delivering results that have a long term impact.	1	2	3	4	5
Showing resilience in making tough strategic decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
Prioritising a consistently high quality customer outcome.	1	2	3	4	5
Maintaining real focus on delivering efficiency and value for money.	1	2	3	4	5



Government Skills

Q10

Please indicate the extent that you agree or disagree with each of the following statements (please select one option in each row):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree as much as disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I try to understand why certain leadership methods work.	1	2	3	4	5
I exchange ideas about new ways of leadership with colleagues.	1	2	3	4	5
I try to understand new ideas about leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
I often reflect on my leadership practices.	1	2	3	4	5
I like to experiment with new ways of leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
I analyse why my team members/colleagues don't understand my proposals.	1	2	3	4	5
I feel disappointed because most of my team members don't want change.	1	2	3	4	5
I don't know how I can improve my leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
I only want to learn things that I can use immediately in my practice.	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge that I cannot apply quickly is useless to me.	1	2	3	4	5
I have a growing feeling of discontent with my work.	1	2	3	4	5
New ideas about leadership are naïve most of the time.	1	2	3	4	5



Q11

The DLP offered a variety of tools, techniques and practices for strengthening relationships with ministers. The following questions list and focus on these tools, techniques, and practices. We're interested in approaches used in the DLP, so for example, we're interested in 'Building trust' as explained in DLP, not any different approaches you may be aware of.

Please tell us which of the following tools, techniques and practices you had heard of before starting DLP? (Please select all that apply).

Strengthening relationships with ministers	1
Building trust	2
A focus on how to work together (not what to work on)	3
Establishing role boundaries	4
Agreeing on authority and accountability for action	5
None of the above	6



Q12

And how frequently do you currently use each of the following tools, techniques and practices for strengthening relationships with ministers (excluding using them specifically during DLP modules, if you took part in the DLP)? (Please select one answer for each row)

	Never	Very infrequently	Fairly infrequently	Fairly frequently	Very frequently
Building trust	1	2	3	4	5
A focus on how to work together (not what to work on)	1	2	3	4	5
Establishing role boundaries	1	2	3	4	5
Agreeing on authority and accountability for action	1	2	3	4	5

Q13

Regardless of whether you have used them or not, which of the following tools, techniques and practices for strengthening relationships with ministers, do you think would be/are particularly useful in your work? (Please select all that apply)

Building trust	1
A focus on how to work together (not what to work on)	2
Establishing role boundaries	3
Agreeing on authority and accountability for action	4
None of the above	5



Q14

And which of the following tools, techniques and practices for strengthening relationships with ministers have you shared with colleagues since starting DLP? (Please select all that apply)

Building trust	1
A focus on how to work together (not what to work on)	2
Establishing role boundaries	3
Agreeing on authority and accountability for action	4
None of the above	5



Q15

Please list any leadership professional development (do not include DLP if you took part in the programme) in which you have participated in since February 2025. Please include any development opportunities - this should include anything you took part in to improve your leadership, so could range from formal programmes to short events or workshops, or your own informal learning (e.g. wider reading, discussions).

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Q16

How many days do you estimate you spent on leadership professional development since February 2025? Please do not include days spent on the DLP, if you participated in the DLP. (Please select one option only)

None	1
1-2 working days	2
3-5 working days	3
6-10 working days	4
11-15 working days	5
16+ working days	6

[CLOSE](#)

Thank you for your time. Your responses have been logged and will be securely processed. If you have provided consent, we will contact you at several points to update you on the evaluation and remind you of anything you need to do.

If you have any questions or comments about the evaluation or any tasks we ask you to complete please contact Diarmid.CampbellJack@CabinetOffice.gov.uk.



Government Skills

You can find more information and other contact details on the information and consent form provided elsewhere.



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