

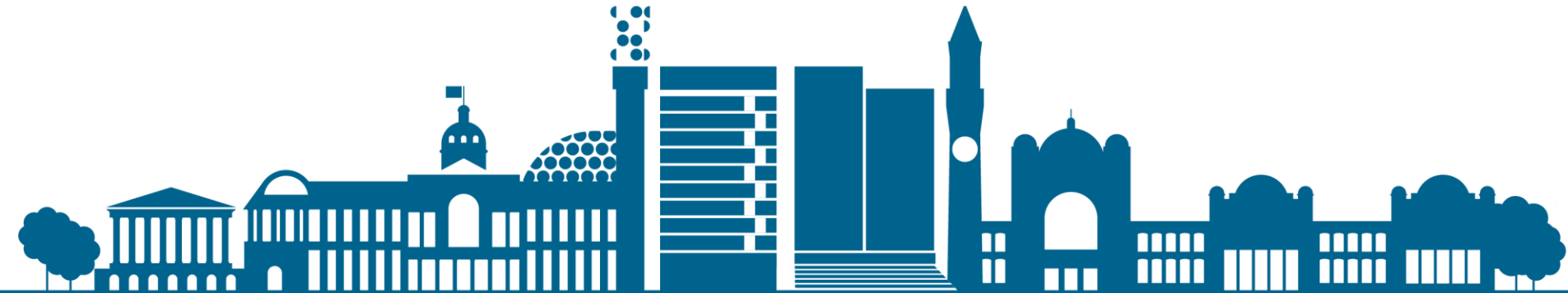


UNIVERSITY OF
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BASW
The professional association for
social work and social workers

Leadership and Social Work in the UK: Valuing its Potential

October 2022



Leadership & Culture

“The most important determinant of the development and maintenance of an organisation’s culture is current and future leadership. Every interaction by every leader at every level shapes the emerging culture of an organisation.”

[West et al 2014](#)

“Leadership will be needed throughout organisations to implement the review’s recommendations successfully, especially to help move from a command-and-control culture encouraging compliance, to a learning and adapting culture.”

[Munro Review 2011](#)

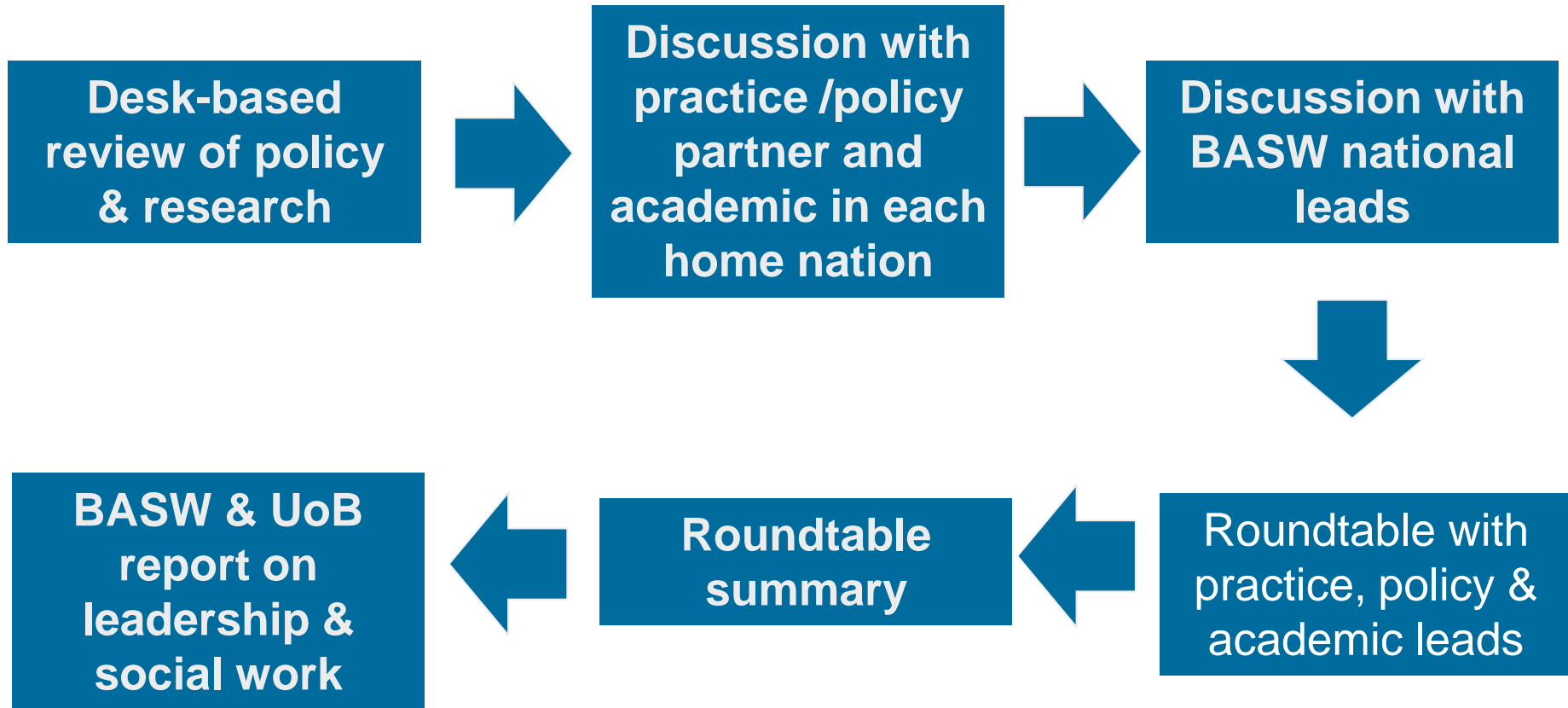


Leadership in Social Work

- ❑ Leadership in social work is often poorly defined (Haworth, Miller & Schaub, 2018).
- ❑ The context of contemporary social work in UK can be understood as inhibiting the development of confident and effective leadership (Turnell et al, 2013).
- ❑ There has been limited attention to leadership in social work education (Lawler & Bilson, 2013; Holosko, 2009).
- ❑ Social workers are seen as having less status and thereby influence than other professionals (Lymbery 2005)
- ❑ Business models do not always reflect values and ethics of social work (Peters 2017)



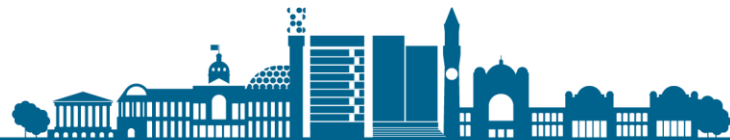
Review of Leadership in Social Work

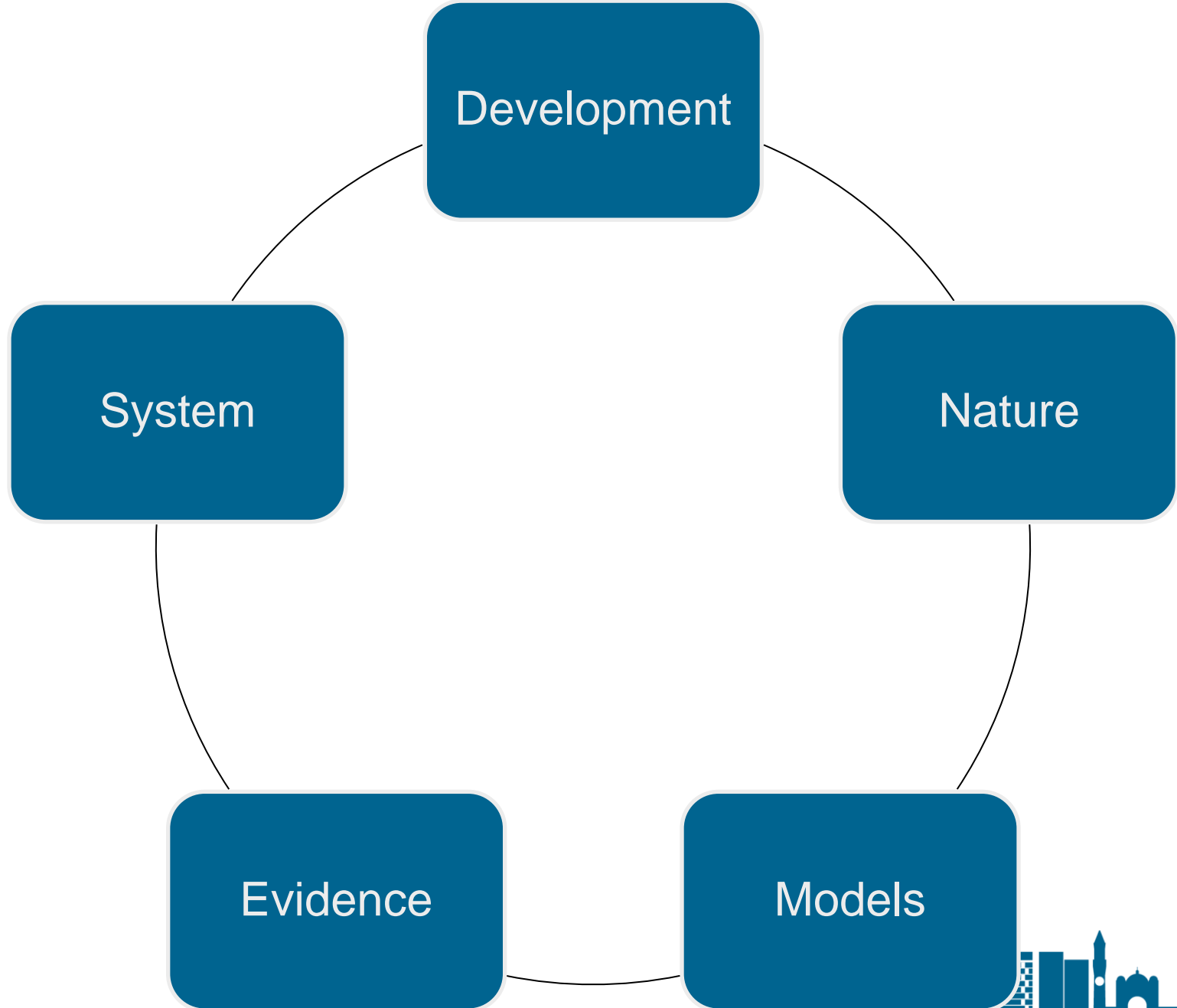


Virtual Roundtable



- different approaches to social work leadership within each of the home nations
- main opportunities to further strengthen leadership within the social work profession
- contribution of social work to leadership of integrated health and social care





Leadership and Social Work in the UK: Valuing its Potential

A roundtable discussion



“All the nations of the UK have recognised the importance of positive leadership..... There are good examples of leadership being encouraged in policy and practice guidance, embedded in professional competences, and supported through education and development. However, there is still much more that can be done individually and collectively by the home nations to ensure social work leadership fully builds on its diverse strengths and grows throughout a professional career.”



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Strengths-based practice leadership programme

A new opportunity for social care practitioners to develop their leadership skills

Social care now has a greater emphasis on building on the strengths of individuals and families, and the assets within communities. This reflects a recognition that whilst professional expertise and support can play an important role, wellbeing for children and adults is built on our personal skills, capabilities and interests, informal networks and personal resilience.



Strengths-based practice requires professionals to move from traditional models which emphasised what people could not do and how such deficits could be met by professionals, to instead work with children, adults and families to understand their aspirations and how to support them to achieve these.

"A strengths-based approach requires a new kind of leadership, which draws strength from many more sources: the whole team, voluntary sector and other partners, and most importantly, from citizens themselves ... the key measure of success is not their own strength, but the combined strength and capacity of the whole system."

Alex Fox OBE, Chief Executive, Shared Lives Plus

This new programme from the Social Care Institute for Excellence and the University of Birmingham will support practice leaders to demonstrate leadership through engaging with academic insights, critically reflecting on their own leadership, and developing a community of practice with their peers.

This programme builds in the learning from an initial pilot programme and our considerable experience of supporting education and research on strengths-based practice, as well as being co-produced with people who draw on care and support.



"We do not often get the time and space to specifically work on leadership skills during our day job. The Programme was a real opportunity to reflect on and explore in-depth what leadership not only means to you, but also what it looks like for you in practice."

- Senior Social Worker

[More info](#)



SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL CARE LEADERSHIP

APPRENTICESHIP

JOIN THE SOCIAL WORK AND SOCIAL CARE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME THROUGH OUR APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

Our aim at the University of Birmingham is to support participants with practical knowledge and understanding required for leading across a range of social care systems. Our Social Work and Social Care Leadership Level 7 Apprenticeship, aligned to the Senior Leader Apprenticeship Standard, allows learners to gain a Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work and Social Care Leadership funded by the Apprenticeship Levy.

As a Russell Group University our levy-funded Apprenticeship programmes are developed with research-informed teaching at their heart, bringing together world-class research and cutting-edge facilities to produce exceptional learning outcomes.



[More info](#)



UK Community of Practice



To provide a safe forum in which senior social work leaders can engage with peers from across the UK

To critically reflect on key issues facing social work leaders in different sectors across the UK and critically debate potential responses

To connect with current academic & practice thinking regarding social work leadership and its development in UK and internationally

To facilitate peer challenge and support in relation to current challenges & opportunities

To develop peer leadership networks across the UK and social work sectors



Keep in touch



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