# The People & Change Approach explained

This document provides an explanation of the People & Change Approach, the model we have developed to shape how we lead and manage change at the University.

There are five phases to the People & Change Approach, each building upon the previous phase and feeding forward into the next. The phases compliment the different stages of the change process regardless of its size or scale. They are phased to acknowledge the iterative, dynamic and cyclical nature of change.

These five phases are: awareness, willingness, readiness, achieving and learning and they are underpinned by two key elements that run across the whole change process:

1. Two-way communication and engagement
2. Managing the impact of change.

The approach promotes continual dialogue between those affected by, delivering and leading change. By working collaboratively and proactively engaging with their stakeholders, leaders of change throughout the organisation can gain a level of assurance that they understand different stakeholder perspectives and ideas and that the stakeholders understand what is required from the proposed change and why it is being proposed.

It also recommends a period of reflection and learning throughout the change process to understand the nature of the impact of any change on people. It promotes monitoring and evaluation being built into the process of change from the outset, focused on the outcomes for individuals and people collectively, as well as for the University’s performance and/or the community more broadly.

The following sections provide more detail about the recommended activity in each of the five phases of the People & Change Approach.

## Phase 1 – Awareness

The Awareness phase focusses on discussing the need for change and the consequences of not changing. The aim in this phase is to create awareness and build trust with those people who will be impacted by the potential change.

The key question to answer is, “why do we need to change?”

The People & Change Approach promotes a number of activities in this phase:

* Establish the case for change, using evidence to make an informed decision.
* Gain support from an appropriate sponsor.
* Identify the implications of the change/not changing.

In order to manage the impact of the change, the following activities are important:

* Benchmark 'status quo' from which to demonstrate the impact of change.
* Identify relevant performance data to evidence the need for change.

## Phase 2 - Willingness

The Willingness phase focusses on establishing the scope of change and the range of considerations required. The aim in this phase is to develop a shared understanding of the nature and impact of the change and to surface a range of different perspectives and ideas.

The key question to answer is, “what are we changing?”

The People & Change Approach promotes a number of activities in this phase:

* Clarify the scope of who and/or what will be impacted by the change.
* Identify the range of possible approaches that could be taken.
* Establish the resources and support needed to make the change happen.

In order to manage the impact of the change, the following activity is important:

* Define the anticipated outcomes [for individuals and the University] of the change process.

## Phase 3 - Readiness

The Readiness phase focusses on planning and preparing to make change happen. The aim in this phase is to collaborate with all stakeholder groups and build momentum. This phase is about preparing to change.

The People & Change Approach promotes a number of activities in this phase:

* Plan the range of activities required to deliver the change.
* Mobilise a team to drive the change and agree responsibilities.
* Enable and empower those involved in making change happen.

In order to manage the impact of the change, the following activity is important:

* Co-develop a range of measures to demonstrate the achievement of outcomes [for individuals/the University].

## Phase 4 - Achieving

The Achieving phase focusses on adopting and embedding change. The aim in this phase is to increase momentum and support the change implementation. This phase is about making the change happen.

The People & Change Approach promotes a number of activities in this phase:

* Work with stakeholders to implement the plan.
* Continually review and adapt the plan to ensure it is effective.
* Mark milestones and celebrate progress.

In order to manage the impact of the change, the following activities are important:

* Continually reflect on and monitor the effectiveness of activity and progress made.
* Undertake data collection with stakeholders.

## Phase 5 - Learning

The Learning phase focusses on evaluating the impact of change and how it was achieved. The aim in this phase is to maintain accountability for continuing the change and to promote the benefits. This phase is about sustaining the change.

The People & Change Approach promotes a number of activities in this phase:

* Embed the change as ‘business as usual’.
* Agree and promote continued ownership, responsibility and commitment to the change.
* Identify opportunities for further enhancements and/or change required.

In order to manage the impact of the change, the following activities are important:

* Review the effectiveness of the change process.
* Share any outcomes/benefits of the process.

## Further Opportunities?

When the change has been introduced it is important to continue to review the impact of the change. This can be done by:

* Capturing any ongoing impact of change on stakeholders.
* Conducting reviews periodically with stakeholders [smaller scale].
* Conducting more formal review of impact [larger scale].

The information gathered informs on-going discussions about potential future opportunities for change. The People & Change Approach shows how the change cycle might loop back around to Phase 1 - Awareness, and so the process of change starts again.