LEADERSHIP EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Criteria Attainment Guide

Guidance for organisations preparing an award submission

Review Areas 1 to 3 · Criteria 1 to 15 · Bronze, Silver and Gold

National Leadership Framework®

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About this Guide

Purpose and scope

This guide helps you prepare your organisation's submission for an NLF Leadership Excellence Award. For each of the 15 criteria it explains what is reviewed, why it matters, what each tier needs, and how to meet and evidence it. No specialist knowledge of the NLF is needed. You submit through the evidence submission tool in My Award Portal at www.nlf.org.uk.

Awards are earned, not bought. They recognise organisations that can show, with evidence confirmed by the NLF, that leadership is set out in policy, developed through what is provided for people, and experienced positively. The three review areas follow that path from intent to experience.

Review area	Central question	Criteria	What is reviewed
1 Policy Coherence	Do the organisation's policies reflect a shared understanding of leadership?	1 to 5	Leadership, values and conduct, people, governance, and learning and development policies, and their alignment with the NLF.
2 Leader Development	Are people given the means to develop as leaders, and is that provision of consistent quality?	6 to 10	Access to self-assessment, feedback, coaching and leadership training, and the training's alignment with the NLF.
3 Practice and Outcomes	Do people use what is provided, and is leadership experienced positively?	11 to 15	Engagement with development, climate and culture data, and satisfaction with leadership.

My Award Portal and My Leadership Portal

The NLF provides two online environments. They are separate, and work together.

Portal	How it is provided	Who it is for	What it includes
My Award Portal	Included with Award registration	The organisation's Award pathway, for its account holder and admin users	Evidence submission and assessment report; the interactive criteria guide and this guide; review checklists and the mapping template; the Framework Analysis tool; implementation guides and question sets; annual health checks; resources; admin accounts; and the Climate Assessment for Criteria 13 to 15, with its action plan, tracker and board report (included in membership).
My Leadership Portal	Optional, through staff user licence packages	Leader development for the organisation's staff, each with their own login	Self-assessment against all 323 behaviours, 180°/360° feedback, the AI Coach and a development plan, the Interpersonal Style questionnaire and learning content, with anonymised organisational dashboards shown in My Award Portal.

You can meet every criterion without My Leadership Portal

The NLF's tools give a fully integrated route: what they measure goes straight onto your dashboard and award record. That is a convenience, never a condition: wherever this guide says an NLF tool does something for you, any equivalent provision counts where evidenced. The NLF's question sets, guides and templates help you do it yourself (Criteria 6, 7, 10, 11 and 13 to 15), and coaching and leadership training (Criteria 8, 9 and 12) can be your own provision, internal or external.

As staff use My Leadership Portal, the access and engagement figures for Criteria 6 to 9 and 11 build up in My Award Portal as evidence. The Climate Assessment does the same for Criteria 13 to 15.

The NLF principles

Policy reviews and the guidance in each criterion draw on the eight NLF principles below. Each criterion lists the most relevant ones.

1. **Separate functions.** Leadership, management and executive authority are separate functions. The NLF is principally concerned with leadership, while recognising its mutually supporting relationship with the other functions.

2. **Leadership is shared.** Leadership is shared; leading is individual. Leadership is a function of the whole organisation, uniting people around a common purpose. Leading is the part each individual plays, applying interpersonal skills to inspire and influence others towards that purpose.

3. **Everyone can contribute.** Everyone can contribute to leadership, at every level, irrespective of formal authority.

4. **Lifelong development.** Leader development is lifelong. It grows through experience, relationships, reflection and learning from success and failure.

5. **Beyond training.** Development extends beyond training. Courses contribute, but development also needs practice, feedback and a culture that supports learning.

6. **Evidence-informed.** Leadership practice should be informed by evidence. Research, evaluation and proportionate assurance support quality and improvement.

7. **Grounded in values.** Effective leadership is grounded in values. Values guide judgement, behaviour and relationships.

8. **Character, knowledge and action.** Leadership involves character, knowledge and action, expressed through observable behaviours.

Award tiers

Each criterion sets a threshold for Bronze, Silver and Gold, all summarised in Appendix A.

Award	What it recognises
Bronze	The entry point to the NLF Leadership Excellence Awards, open to organisations of any size at an early or developing stage of their leadership journey. It recognises an organisation-wide commitment to shaping leadership policy, development and practice around the NLF philosophy and a credible national framework.
Silver	Organisations that have moved beyond intent and are actively embedding the NLF approach across policy, leader development and leadership practice. It evidences measurable progress, consistency of application and early cultural impact.

Award	What it recognises
Gold	The flagship level of attainment in leadership excellence. It recognises organisations that have fully embedded the NLF philosophy and principles and can evidence sustained leadership cultures through policy, leader development and day-to-day practice, with clear impact over time.

To achieve an award tier, you must meet that tier on every criterion, unless an exemption is accepted. Criteria 1 to 5 are judged together, as set out in Review Area 1. You do not need to pass through the lower tiers first: NLF validation confirms the tier you meet. Awards last until the third anniversary of registration, subject to the annual licence fee, with annual health checks in between and reassessment at the third anniversary.

Evidence, transparency and honesty

An NLF assessor confirms every submission, so describe your position as it is today, not as you intend it to be.

- Every criterion needs evidence or a detailed written explanation.
- Evidence should be verifiable: documents, data and records you hold, signposted to the relevant page or section.
- Evidence should be current and dated. For annual measures, use the most recent annual cycle.
- Be candid about partial progress, or a threshold only just reached.
- Submit workforce data in aggregate, and keep individual responses, results and feedback confidential.
- If a document is sensitive and cannot be released, say so, so that alternative review arrangements can be made.
- Submit the essential evidence listed for each criterion, and add the helpful items where they make your position clearer. The assessor may ask for more.

When a criterion is not relevant or cannot be met

Most organisations can evidence every criterion, at least at Bronze. If a criterion, or a typical policy or provision within it, genuinely does not apply or cannot reasonably be met, submit a justification for exemption covering the points below. Each is reviewed case by case and the threshold adjusted.

Element	What to explain
Organisational context	Size, sector and structure (for example volunteer, seasonal or dispersed), and any legal or regulatory factors.
Why it does not apply or cannot be met	Why it cannot reasonably apply or be met, not why it has not been done yet.
Alternative arrangements	Any other practice that achieves the same intent, with evidence, or your plan and timescale to meet it.
Approval	Who agreed the justification, and when.
Review	What would change the position (such as growth or restructuring), and when you will next consider it.

Likely to be accepted

- A criterion that genuinely cannot apply because of your size, structure or legal context, clearly explained.
- An alternative practice that achieves the same intent, evidenced.
- A justification agreed by a named person, dated, with a date for its next review.

Unlikely to be accepted

- Reasons of effort, cost or preference, or why something has not yet been done.
- Having no internal tool where the NLF provides one (Criteria 6 to 9, 13 and 14).
- For Criteria 1 to 5, having no written policy: every employer should be able to show at least a policy statement in each area.

How to use this guide

1. Read the introduction to each review area, then check your current position against each criterion's thresholds.
2. Gather the essential evidence listed for each criterion. Where there is a gap, use the implementation guidance and the worked examples in the submission tool.
3. For Criteria 1 to 5, complete the NLF review checklist for each policy area (and for Criterion 1, the framework mapping template, or use the Framework Analysis tool). Approved and dated, these are your review records.
4. Note any criterion that needs an exemption, work through the Pre-Submission Checklist (Appendix B), then submit. The Award Readiness Check at nlf.org.uk/readiness-check shows where you stand before you start.

Related NLF documents

All are also in the Resources tab of My Award Portal.

Document	What it is for	Where to find it
The Framework (V1.1)	The Framework itself, with all 323 observable behaviours. Criterion 1 maps against it.	www.nlf.org.uk/framework/National-Leadership-Framework.pdf
NLF review checklists	Criteria 1 to 5: one page per policy area, your review record.	the evidence submission tool
NLF framework mapping template	Criterion 1: mapping at dimension level (Silver) or competency level (Gold).	www.nlf.org.uk/downloads/review/NLF-Framework-Mapping-Template.pdf
NLF Self-Assessment and 180°/360° Feedback guide	Criteria 6, 7 and 11: question sets and how to run them yourself.	www.nlf.org.uk/downloads/assessment/NLF-Self-Assessment-and-360-Feedback-Guide.pdf
NLF leadership training alignment guide	Criterion 10: the training register and course review form.	www.nlf.org.uk/downloads/training/NLF-Leadership-Training-Alignment-Guide.pdf
NLF Climate Assessment guide and templates	Criteria 13 to 15: question set, scoring, action plan and tracker.	www.nlf.org.uk/downloads/climate/NLF-Climate-Assessment-Guide.pdf
Brand and Style Guidelines (V1.1)	How to display the NLF logo once your award is confirmed.	www.nlf.org.uk/framework/NLF-Brand-and-Style-Guidelines.pdf

Review Area 1: Policy Coherence

Do the organisation's policies reflect a shared understanding of leadership?

Introduction to Review Area 1

Criteria 1 to 5 look at five policy areas. Each area is not in place, in place, or reviewed against the NLF, and your award depends on how many areas are reviewed (for Criterion 1, also on the depth of the framework mapping). What counts is the quality of the review, not the length of the policy.

Award	What you need to show
Bronze	a policy or policy provision in each of the five areas, whatever their alignment to the NLF, and a dated commitment to review them.
Silver	at least 3 of the 5 policy areas (3/5) reviewed against the NLF; Criterion 1 must be one of them, with the leadership behavioural framework mapped at dimension level.
Gold	all 5 policy areas (5/5) reviewed against the NLF, with the Criterion 1 framework mapped at competency level, taking account of the NLF's observable behaviours.

- A dated commitment to review means an approved plan, such as a review schedule with target dates and a named owner.
- You may not need new policies: provisions in other documents can count.

What "reviewed" means

A policy area is reviewed when its policies have been read against your leadership policy and the relevant parts of the NLF, the findings recorded, and the wording adjusted where needed, with depth proportionate to the policy. Finding a policy already well aligned is a valid outcome if the record shows how you reached that view. NLF principles need not appear word for word: putting them in your own language is encouraged. The NLF review checklist for each area gives you a ready-made record.

REVIEW AREA 1 · POLICY COHERENCE

1 Leadership Policy

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation have a published leadership policy or equivalent provision, and has it been reviewed against the philosophical principles of the NLF?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES A leadership policy or policy statement, and a leadership behavioural framework that complements it.

NLF PRINCIPLES 1 Separate functions · 2 Leadership is shared · 3 Everyone can contribute · 7 Grounded in values · 8 Character, knowledge and action

Why is this important?

A clear policy gives everyone a shared understanding of leadership and a reference point for every other policy area. Distinguishing leadership from management and executive authority stops 'leader' becoming a synonym for 'manager', so people without formal authority can see that leadership is for them too.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	Not in place. No published leadership policy or equivalent provision exists.
Bronze	A published policy or equivalent provision exists, irrespective of NLF alignment. It includes a theoretically credible definition of leadership, explains how leadership enables the organisation's purpose, and sets out the values expected of leaders. It should make a coherent, complementary link between those expectations and the organisation's purpose and values.
Silver	The policy has been reviewed and adjusted to reflect the NLF's philosophical principles, with contextual translation encouraged. Leadership is also expressed through a behavioural framework mapped to the NLF at dimension level: it covers all nine dimensions of the Character, Knowledge and Action domains and is applied across the four levels (Self, Team, Organisation, Strategic), with any gaps identified and addressed. Where no framework exists, the NLF's universal framework may be adopted in whole or translated into the organisation's own language. Criterion 1 must be reviewed for an organisation to attain Silver or Gold.
Gold	As for Silver, and the behavioural framework is mapped at competency level: each of the NLF's competencies is mapped to the organisation's behaviours at the four levels, taking account of the NLF's observable behaviours, with gaps recorded and addressed. Adopting the NLF's universal framework in whole, or translating it competency by competency, also meets this threshold.

Recommended: the NLF Framework Analysis tool (Framework Analysis tab of My Award Portal) checks your policy and framework against the NLF principles, dimensions and competencies. Where it confirms a threshold, that is recorded for you and no separate review record or mapping is needed. One analysis is included each membership year, so submit your best, most complete documents; a further analysis in the same year may cost a small fee (typically less than £10).

Practical implementation guidance

- Define leadership as a shared function, distinct from management and executive authority, and set out the values expected of leaders.
- Review the policy against the eight NLF principles and record what you found and changed (the NLF review checklist does this).
- Map your behavioural framework to the nine NLF dimensions at the four levels (Silver), then to each competency and its observable behaviours (Gold), using the NLF framework mapping template. No framework yet? Adopt or translate the NLF universal framework.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- The approved, dated leadership policy (or the section of a wider document that serves as one).
- For Silver and Gold: the review against the eight NLF principles and the framework mapping, from a Framework Analysis that confirms the tier, or your own (the NLF review checklist and mapping template will do).
- Anything amended since a Framework Analysis, with a note of what changed.

Helpful, if you have it

- How the policy is published to staff, and how the framework is used, for example in recruitment or appraisal.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF review checklist: Leadership Policy (Word); NLF framework mapping template: guide, blank forms for dimension and competency level, and worked examples (PDF, or Word).

If not relevant or not met: If a typical element genuinely does not apply, give a detailed justification for exemption.

Likely to be acceptable

- A Framework Analysis confirming the tier applied for, with the approved, dated policy.
- A review record against the eight principles, and a mapping with your behaviours written in at each level.
- The NLF framework adopted whole, or translated into your own language.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- A draft or unapproved policy, or one staff cannot access.
- Claiming alignment or a review with no record of what was checked, found and changed.
- A mapping that lists headings only, covers only senior roles or one level, or leaves out dimensions without explanation.

REVIEW AREA 1 · POLICY COHERENCE

2 Values, Culture and Conduct

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation have policies covering values, conduct, inclusion and respect, and are these aligned with your leadership policy?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES A values statement, code of conduct, and dignity, inclusion and respect policy.

NLF PRINCIPLES 3 Everyone can contribute | 7 Grounded in values | 8 Character, knowledge and action

Why is this important?

Values and conduct policies show that leadership is expressed through everyday example, at every level.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	Not in place. No published values or conduct provisions exist.
Bronze	Published policies or equivalent provisions establish organisational values and expectations for respectful, ethical and inclusive behaviour. These must be accessible to those they apply to, irrespective of NLF alignment.
Silver and Gold	The policies have been reviewed against your organisation's leadership policy and the relevant areas of the NLF and adjusted where needed. They reinforce everyone's capacity to contribute positively to leadership, connect organisational values to the leadership behaviours in Criterion 1, and set consistent expectations for personal example, inclusive participation, constructive challenge, and respectful relationships.

Practical implementation guidance

- Values: make the link between your values and the Character domain behaviours explicit.
- Conduct: expect personal example, respectful challenge and ethical influence. The NLF's destructive leadership behaviours (The Framework, 4.4) help define misconduct.
- Inclusion: describe how people encourage participation, and avoid using 'leader' to mean manager.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- The values, conduct and inclusion provisions, with approval dates.
- For Silver and Gold: the review record (the NLF review checklist will do).

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF review checklist: Values, Culture and Conduct (Word).

If not relevant or not met: If a typical element genuinely does not apply, give a detailed justification for exemption.

Likely to be acceptable

- Approved, accessible values, conduct and inclusion provisions (Bronze).
- A review record linking values to the Character domain behaviours.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- A draft or unapproved policy, or one staff cannot access.
- Claiming alignment or a review with no record of what was checked, found and changed.

REVIEW AREA 1 · POLICY COHERENCE

3 People and Employment

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation have people policies (for example recruitment and selection, performance and development review, career progression, reward and recognition), and are these aligned with your leadership policy?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES Recruitment, selection and promotion; performance and development review; talent and career progression; and reward and recognition.

NLF PRINCIPLES 3 Everyone can contribute | 7 Grounded in values | 8 Character, knowledge and action

Why is this important?

Staff learn what an organisation values from who it selects, promotes and rewards. Giving weight to character, values and the capacity to influence, alongside technical ability, reinforces the leadership policy and shows that contribution does not depend on rank.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	Not in place. No published policies or provisions cover how people join, progress, are reviewed or are recognised.
Bronze	Published policies or equivalent provisions cover how people join, progress, are reviewed and are recognised. These must be accessible to those they apply to, irrespective of NLF alignment.
Silver and Gold	The policies have been assessed against the leadership policy and the respective areas of the NLF and adjusted where needed. Selection and promotion criteria give weight to character and values as demonstrated in dealing with others, and to the capacity to influence and exemplify them, balanced with technical competence, which is itself part of the NLF's Knowledge domain. Policies recognise leadership contribution without equating it with seniority.

Practical implementation guidance

- Recruitment and promotion: draw criteria from the leadership behaviours, especially the Character domain, and gather evidence of how candidates deal with others.
- Performance review: look at how results were achieved, not only what. Encourage use of development tools rather than setting behaviours as targets.
- Progression and recognition: offer responsibility that does not depend on position, recognise collaborative leadership, and show the amended provisions in use.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- Extracts covering recruitment, review, progression and recognition, with dates.
- For Silver and Gold: the review record (the NLF review checklist will do).

Helpful, if you have it

- One amended provision in use, such as an interview framework, review template or promotion guidance.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF review checklist: People and Employment (Word).

If not relevant or not met: If a typical element (such as a talent or reward policy) genuinely does not apply, give a detailed justification for exemption.

Likely to be acceptable

- Approved, accessible policies on how people join, progress, are reviewed and are recognised (Bronze).
- A review record, with an example of the leadership behaviours in selection, review or promotion.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- A draft or unapproved policy, or one staff cannot access.
- Claiming alignment or a review with no record of what was checked, found and changed.
- Leadership behaviours set as performance targets, or wording changes never used in practice.

REVIEW AREA 1 · POLICY COHERENCE

4 Governance and Assurance

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation have governance policies (for example decision-making, speaking up, improvement, change, partnership working and communication), and are these aligned with your leadership policy?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES Decisions and delegation, speaking up and whistleblowing, improvement, change, and partnership working and communication.

NLF PRINCIPLES 1 Separate functions | 3 Everyone can contribute | 6 Evidence-informed | 7 Grounded in values | 8 Character, knowledge and action

Why is this important?

These policies show whether leadership is open to influence from anyone, not only the most senior. Where concerns can be raised safely and decisions are explained, organisations learn faster, find problems earlier and keep trust.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	Not in place. No published governance provisions cover decisions, concerns, improvement, change or partnership working.
Bronze	Published policies or equivalent provisions cover how decisions are made and delegated, how empowerment, ownership and accountability are fostered, how concerns are raised, how the organisation improves and changes, and how it works with partners, irrespective of NLF alignment.
Silver and Gold	The policies have been assessed against the leadership policy and the respective areas of the NLF and adjusted where needed. Policies include challenge and whistleblowing provisions, how feedback is captured and used to improve outcomes for people, how leadership climate and culture are measured and adapted, and the approach to communication voice and tone to ensure individuals safeguard organisational values and reputation.

Practical implementation guidance

- Decisions: separate executive authority (by appointment) from leadership (open to anyone); seek input before decisions and explain them afterwards.
- Speaking up: say how concerns are received and answered, protect those who raise them, and consider a stated response time.
- Improvement, change and partnership: let people at every level influence improvement, use feedback on climate and culture (Criteria 13 and 14), and set expectations for voice and tone.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- Extracts covering decisions and delegation, speaking up, improvement and change, and partnership working, with dates.
- For Silver and Gold: the review record (the NLF review checklist will do).

Helpful, if you have it

- The statement on communication voice and tone.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF review checklist: Governance and Assurance (Word).

If not relevant or not met: If a typical element (such as a partnership working policy) genuinely does not apply, give a detailed justification for exemption.

Likely to be acceptable

- Approved, accessible provisions covering all five governance topics (Bronze).
- A review record showing alignment with the leadership policy and the relevant NLF competencies, with the changes made.
- Whistleblowing provisions with clear protections and a response process.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- A draft or unapproved policy, or one staff cannot access.
- Claiming alignment or a review with no record of what was checked, found and changed.
- A speaking-up policy with no protection for those who raise concerns.

REVIEW AREA 1 · POLICY COHERENCE

5 Learning and Development

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation have learning and development policies, and are these aligned with your leadership policy?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES A learning and development policy, leader development pathways, coaching and mentoring, and how training is arranged.

NLF PRINCIPLES 3 Everyone can contribute | 4 Lifelong development | 5 Beyond training | 6 Evidence-informed | 8 Character, knowledge and action

Why is this important?

Leader development is lifelong and goes beyond training. Policies that set out how people develop, and a standard for the training they receive, give everyone the chance to practise leadership.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	Not in place. No published learning and development provision exists, or it makes no provision for leadership development.
Bronze	Published learning and development policies or equivalent provisions cover leadership development and are accessible to the people they apply to, irrespective of NLF alignment.
Silver and Gold	The policies have been assessed against the leadership policy and the respective areas of the NLF and adjusted where needed. Policies make leadership development opportunities accessible at every level, extending beyond training interventions alone to include tools, learning and education resources. External accreditation of programmes and learner outcomes strengthens assurance of the quality of learning undertaken.

Practical implementation guidance

- Describe development as continuous, combining training with practice such as stretch assignments, shadowing and project roles.
- Build pathways around the NLF levels (Self, Team, Organisation, Strategic) and all three domains, with self-assessment, feedback, coaching and mentoring.
- When commissioning external training, prefer NLF-Approved or IoL-Accredited providers, or review the content first.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- The learning and development policy or extracts, with dates.
- For Silver and Gold: the review record (the NLF review checklist will do).

Helpful, if you have it

- The leader development pathway or offer given to staff.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF review checklist: Learning and Development (Word).

If not relevant or not met: If a typical element (such as a coaching and mentoring policy) genuinely does not apply, give a detailed justification for exemption.

Likely to be acceptable

- An approved, accessible policy that provides for leadership development (Bronze).
- A review record showing pathways by NLF level, development beyond training and a commissioning check.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- A draft or unapproved policy, or one staff cannot access.
- Claiming alignment or a review with no record of what was checked, found and changed.
- Leadership development offered only to managers or senior roles.

Review Area 2: Leader Development

Are people given the means to develop as leaders, and is that provision equitable and of consistent quality?

Introduction to Review Area 2

Criteria 6 to 10 look at the provision you make for leader development: the tools, coaching and training open to your people, and the quality of that training.

Criteria 6 to 9 measure accessibility, not uptake.

Award	What you need to show
Bronze	provision is in place and accessible to some, but fewer than 50%, of the workforce.
Silver	accessible to at least 50% and up to 75%.
Gold	accessible to more than 75%. Workforce means all staff within the scope of the award application. Accessible means a member of the workforce can ask for or use the provision directly, regardless of role, seniority or location, and has been told it exists. Where places are limited, fair and published rules decide priority (for example by need, or in order of request). A route that depends on a manager's or a panel's discretion does not count as access. A short qualifying period (for example six months' service, so that 360 raters know the person) is acceptable if it is stated and the figure counts only those who qualify.

- Bronze recognises that provision exists, even where access is limited. Silver and Gold reward wider access.
- Criterion 9 is about access to leadership training, Criterion 10 its quality and Criterion 12 participation in it. Each tier needs all three.
- No provision yet? The NLF's implementation guides and question sets show how to set it up with your own systems, or My Leadership Portal provides it ready-made. Equivalent provision from any source counts if evidenced.
- Where tools process personal data, such as feedback or AI coaching, follow your data protection arrangements, tell people how their data is used, and keep individual results confidential.

REVIEW AREA 2 · LEADER DEVELOPMENT

6 Self-Assessment

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation use leadership self-assessment tools, and what proportion of the workforce has access to them?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES Structured questionnaires that let people reflect on their own leadership against the NLF Framework and find their development priorities.

NLF PRINCIPLES 4 Lifelong development | 8 Character, knowledge and action

Why is this important?

Self-awareness is the foundation of leader development (the Framework's "Knows Themself" dimension). Self-assessment can be offered widely at modest cost, so it is one of the most scalable ways to extend development.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	No self-assessment tools are in place.
Bronze	Self-assessment tools are in place and accessible to some, but fewer than 50%, of the workforce.
Silver	Self-assessment tools are accessible to at least 50% of the workforce, and up to 75%.
Gold	Self-assessment tools are accessible to more than 75% of the workforce.

Practical implementation guidance

- Ask at least one question for each of the 35 competencies (the minimum); any question can be marked not applicable. For much deeper self-awareness, ask about all 323 behaviours, as the NLF's own tool does.
- Both question sets, and how to run them yourself (for example in Microsoft Forms), are in the NLF Self-Assessment and 180°/360° Feedback guide.
- Pair it with 180°/360° feedback (Criterion 7): the comparison reveals blind spots and hidden strengths.
- Open it to everyone and tell them. Leadership 360 in My Leadership Portal does this for you, but you can use any equivalent.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- A description of the tool and who can use it.
- The number with access and the workforce total.

Helpful, if you have it

- How the questions align to the NLF.
- The communication that tells staff about it.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF Self-Assessment and 180°/360° Feedback: question sets and guide to running your own (PDF, or Word).

If not relevant or not met: Equivalent provision from any source counts, and the NLF provides a question set and a ready-made tool, so having no internal tool is not a justification. If some people cannot reasonably have access, say who, why and what they have instead.

Likely to be acceptable

- A described tool covering each of the 35 competencies, with access arrangements and the proportion stated.
- Access figures from Leadership 360 in My Leadership Portal, which the NLF can see directly.
- An equivalent provision from another source, evidenced.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Counting participation rather than access (participation is Criterion 11).
- A tool for managers or senior grades only, presented as organisation-wide.
- A question set that leaves out some of the 35 competencies without a justification.

REVIEW AREA 2 · LEADER DEVELOPMENT

7 180° and 360° Feedback

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation use leadership 180 or 360 feedback tools, and what proportion of the workforce has access to them?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES Tools that gather structured feedback on a person's leadership behaviours from colleagues, in one direction (180°) or several (360°).

NLF PRINCIPLES 4 Lifelong development · 5 Beyond training · 8 Character, knowledge and action

Why is this important?

How leadership is experienced cannot be judged from your own view alone. Feedback framed around observable behaviours, in a psychologically safe setting, shows people their impact and their blind spots.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	No 180°/360° feedback tools are in place.
Bronze	180 or 360 feedback tools are in place and accessible to some, but fewer than 50%, of the workforce.
Silver	180 or 360 feedback tools are accessible to at least 50% of the workforce, and up to 75%.
Gold	180 or 360 feedback tools are accessible to more than 75% of the workforce.

Practical implementation guidance

- Ask at least one question for each of the 35 competencies, mirroring the self-assessment so the two can be compared; any question can be marked not applicable.
- The NLF rater set keeps to 35 questions, one per competency with an example, because raters often answer for several colleagues. It is in the NLF Self-Assessment and 180°/360° Feedback guide.
- Show results only in aggregate, once enough people have answered, and offer each person a debrief, such as a coaching conversation.
- Leadership 360 in My Leadership Portal does this for you, but you can use any equivalent.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- A description of the tool, who can use it, and how confidentiality and debriefs are handled.
- The number with access and the workforce total.

Helpful, if you have it

- How the questions map to NLF observable behaviours.
- The communication that tells staff about it.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF Self-Assessment and 180°/360° Feedback: question sets and guide to running your own (PDF, or Word).

If not relevant or not met: Equivalent provision from any source counts, and the NLF provides a question set and a ready-made tool, so having no internal tool is not a justification. If some people cannot reasonably have access, say who, why and how they receive feedback.

Likely to be acceptable

- A described tool covering each of the 35 competencies, with confidentiality safeguards and a debrief process.
- Access figures from Leadership 360 in My Leadership Portal, which the NLF can see directly.
- An equivalent provision from another source, evidenced.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Individual feedback results or named respondents (submit in aggregate only).
- Counting participation rather than access.
- Asking for an exemption because there is no internal tool.

REVIEW AREA 2 · LEADER DEVELOPMENT

8 Coaching

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation offer a form of coaching provision (internal, external, peer, group or AI-assisted), and what proportion of the workforce has access to it?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES Coaching by your own staff (qualified or trained), external coaches, peers, groups or AI tools.

NLF PRINCIPLES 3 Everyone can contribute | 4 Lifelong development | 5 Beyond training

Why is this important?

Coaching helps people reflect and turn insight into goals. It need not be costly: the quality of the conversation matters more than qualifications.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	No coaching provision is in place.
Bronze	A form of coaching provision (external, internal, peer, group or AI-assisted) is in place and accessible to some, but fewer than 50%, of the workforce.
Silver	A form of coaching provision is accessible to at least 50% of the workforce, and up to 75%.
Gold	A form of coaching provision is accessible to more than 75% of the workforce. The method is the organisation's choice.

Practical implementation guidance

- Choose any method or mix: internal, external, peer, group or AI-assisted.
- The AI Coach in My Leadership Portal meets this criterion: everyone with an account has coaching, so accounts covering over 75% of your workforce meet Gold. Other coaching counts the same way.
- Publish open eligibility, and link coaching to self-assessment and feedback (Criteria 6 and 7).

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- The coaching offer and eligibility rules, including how priority is decided if places are limited.
- The number with access and the workforce total.

Helpful, if you have it

- How coaches are qualified and supervised, and how staff are told.

If not relevant or not met: Coaching from any source counts and the AI Coach is available, so having no internal coaching is not a justification. If some people cannot have access, say who and why.

Likely to be acceptable

- A described offer with open, published eligibility.
- Access to the AI Coach through My Leadership Portal, which the NLF can see directly.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Coaching for senior leaders only, presented as organisation-wide.
- Asking for an exemption because there is no internal coaching.

REVIEW AREA 2 · LEADER DEVELOPMENT

9 Access to Leadership Training

THE QUESTION

What proportion of the workforce has access to leadership training?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES Internal or external courses, workshops and programmes that develop the leadership skills in the NLF Framework.

NLF PRINCIPLES 3 Everyone can contribute | 4 Lifelong development | 5 Beyond training

Why is this important?

Open training lets people develop throughout their careers. This criterion moves you towards access, working with Criteria 10 (quality) and 12 (participation): each tier needs all three.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	Leadership training is not provided to the workforce.
Bronze	Leadership training (internal or external) is available to some, but fewer than 50%, of the workforce.
Silver	Leadership training is available to at least 50% of the workforce, and up to 75%.
Gold	Leadership training is available to more than 75% of the workforce.

Practical implementation guidance

- Count leadership training from any source. Management procedure, technical, compliance or role training does not count.
- Alignment is not assessed here: unmapped training still counts (that is Criterion 10).
- Give everyone a route at each NLF level, whatever their role or grade.
- NLF leadership courses in My Leadership Portal will count once open. Institute of Leadership course discounts: 10% at Bronze, 15% at Silver and 20% at Gold.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- The leadership training available and who can apply.
- The number with access and the workforce total.

Helpful, if you have it

- How the training maps to the NLF levels, and how staff are told about it.

If not relevant or not met: Leadership training from any source counts, so having no in-house training is not a justification. If some people cannot reasonably have access, say who and why.

Likely to be acceptable

- A catalogue of training, open to every role and grade, and how staff are told.
- The proportion with access, with the workforce total stated.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Management procedure, technical, compliance or role training counted as leadership training.
- Counting attendance rather than access (attendance is Criterion 12).

REVIEW AREA 2 · LEADER DEVELOPMENT

10 Alignment of Leadership Training

THE QUESTION

What proportion of leadership training interventions (internal or external) align with the components of the NLF Framework, or are delivered by NLF-Approved or Institute of Leadership-Accredited Service Providers?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES A register of all your leadership training, with each intervention mapped to the NLF competencies or delivered by an NLF-Approved or IoL-Accredited provider.

NLF PRINCIPLES 1 Separate functions · 6 Evidence-informed

Why is this important?

Leadership training varies widely in quality, and alignment with a research-informed framework protects your investment. This criterion moves you towards quality, working with Criterion 9 (access) and Criterion 12 (participation): each tier needs all three, so access, quality and participation improve together.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	No leadership training exists, either internally or externally.
Bronze	A register lists the organisation's leadership training, and fewer than 50% of the interventions on it are yet aligned with the NLF Framework or delivered by an NLF-Approved or IoL-Accredited provider. This includes a register on which nothing is aligned yet: Bronze is the foundation to build from.
Silver	At least 50% of the interventions on the register align or are delivered by an approved or accredited provider, and up to 75%.
Gold	More than 75% of the interventions on the register align or are delivered by an approved or accredited provider.

Practical implementation guidance

- Register all leadership training, and training with a leadership element. It must be complete: leaving something off does not improve the result.
- An intervention is aligned when it is mapped to the NLF competencies with its coverage recorded, or delivered by an NLF-Approved or IoL-Accredited provider. One that develops none of the competencies comes off the register; for mixed courses, review only the leadership part.
- Work through one intervention at a time. Filling the gaps you find is your decision, and is recommended.
- The NLF leadership training alignment guide has a blank register, a course review form and worked examples.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- The register of leadership training interventions, with provider and how alignment was confirmed for each.
- The number aligned or accredited and the total.

Helpful, if you have it

- A sample mapping or accreditation certificate.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF leadership training alignment: guide, blank register and review forms, and worked examples (PDF, or Word).

If not relevant or not met: With no leadership training at all, you are below Bronze and Criterion 9 is the starting point. Where an intervention cannot reasonably be reviewed, explain why and describe the quality assurance in place instead.

Likely to be acceptable

- A complete register showing each intervention, its provider and how alignment was confirmed.
- Mappings of learning outcomes to the NLF competencies for internal or non-accredited training.
- Approval or accreditation evidence for providers.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Asserting alignment without a register or mapping.
- A register that leaves out leadership training you offer.
- Technical or role training counted as leadership training.

Review Area 3: Practice and Outcomes

Do people use what is provided, and is leadership experienced positively?

Introduction to Review Area 3

Criteria 11 to 15 move from provision to practice: whether people use what is offered, and whether they experience leadership positively.

Criteria 11 and 12 measure annual engagement (at least one provision counts, each person counted once). Criterion 13 assesses how annual climate findings are turned into immediate improvements, and Criterion 14 how culture data informs longer-term strategic decisions. Criterion 15 assesses the outcome: more than half of the workforce feeling positive about leadership is the minimum viable rating.

- The denominator (Criteria 11 and 12) is the workforce in scope of the award, as either headcount at the end of the annual cycle (people still employed, so leavers are left out of both figures) or average headcount over the cycle. Say which you used. Groups outside the award, such as trustees or board members, volunteers, agency or casual staff and contractors, are left out of both figures: say which and why.
- Survey response rates: with 10 or more people, at least 40% should respond. A lower rate is a weaker basis but not automatically a fail where the result is clear and supported by other information. Below 35% is not valid. With fewer than 10 people, at least 60% should respond, rounded up to a whole person.
- The NLF climate question set, guide and templates, or the Climate Assessment in My Award Portal, cover Criteria 13 to 15. Equivalent surveys from other sources count where evidenced.
- Report survey results only in aggregate, or for groups large enough that no one can be identified, and tell people how their responses are used.

REVIEW AREA 3 · PRACTICE AND OUTCOMES

11 Engagement with Leader Development Tools and Resources

THE QUESTION

What proportion of the workforce engages with your organisation's leader development tools and resources annually (not including training)?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES Self-assessment, feedback, coaching and learning resources (training is Criterion 12).

NLF PRINCIPLES 4 Lifelong development · 5 Beyond training

Why is this important?

Provision alone does not develop leaders: people have to use it.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	No workforce engagement with leader development tools or resources.
Bronze	Some, but fewer than 50%, of the workforce engages with leader development tools or resources annually.
Silver	At least 50% of the workforce engages annually, and up to 75%.
Gold	More than 75% of the workforce engages annually.

Practical implementation guidance

- Count each person once if they used at least one tool or resource in the cycle (people, not sessions).
- A completed self-assessment counts on its own; pairing it with 180°/360° feedback is strongly advised.
- Build the tools into development and performance conversations (Criterion 3).
- My Leadership Portal counts engagement for you, including Interpersonal Style once three colleagues have answered. Any equivalent counts too.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- The number engaged in the annual cycle (each person once) and the denominator, with its basis (see Review Area 3).

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF Self-Assessment and 180°/360° Feedback: question sets and guide to running your own (PDF, or Word).

If not relevant or not met: Engagement can only be assessed where provision exists (Criteria 6 to 9).

Likely to be acceptable

- Aggregated figures for the latest cycle, with the counting method and denominator.
- Figures from My Leadership Portal, which the NLF sees directly.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Individual-level data or names.
- Counting sessions rather than people, or using an older cycle.

REVIEW AREA 3 · PRACTICE AND OUTCOMES

12 Engagement with Leadership Training

THE QUESTION

What proportion of the workforce engages with your organisation's leadership training (internal or external) annually?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES Attendance at, or completion of, leadership training, internal or external.

NLF PRINCIPLES 4 Lifelong development | 5 Beyond training

Why is this important?

Engagement shows whether the access in Criterion 9 turns into development. This criterion moves you towards participation, working with Criterion 9 (access) and Criterion 10 (quality): each tier needs all three.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	There is no workforce engagement with leadership training.
Bronze	Some, but fewer than 50%, of the workforce engages with leadership training annually.
Silver	At least 50% of the workforce engages annually, and up to 75%.
Gold	More than 75% of the workforce engages with leadership training annually.

Only leadership training counts: not management procedure (such as absence, budgets or rotas), technical, role or compliance training, even where managers attend.

Practical implementation guidance

- Count participation only: training not yet mapped to the Framework still counts (Criterion 10 drives its quality). NLF courses in My Leadership Portal will count once open.
- Track attendance or completion so each person is counted once a year.
- Release time so attendance is realistic at every level, and consider leadership training in induction.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- Aggregated figures for the annual cycle: the number engaged in leadership training (each person once) and the denominator, with its basis (see Review Area 3).

Helpful, if you have it

- A breakdown by intervention, and how the count was made.

If not relevant or not met: Engagement can only be assessed where leadership training is provided (Criterion 9). Say which groups cannot reasonably take part.

Likely to be acceptable

- Aggregated attendance or completion figures for the most recent cycle, with the counting method and denominator.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Individual attendance records or names.
- Counting places or sessions rather than people.

REVIEW AREA 3 · PRACTICE AND OUTCOMES

13 Staff Satisfaction and Workplace Climate

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation conduct staff satisfaction or workplace climate surveys, and what happens to the findings?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES An annual staff satisfaction or climate survey whose findings become an action plan of immediate improvements (longer-term change is Criterion 14).

NLF PRINCIPLES 6 Evidence-informed | 7 Grounded in values

Why is this important?

Climate is the immediate workplace temperament, which leadership can change in the short term. It shows quickly what is holding back trust, wellbeing and retention.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	No staff satisfaction or workplace climate data is collected.
Bronze	Staff satisfaction or workplace climate data is collected annually.
Silver	The findings are turned into an action plan of immediate improvement measures, with owners and dates.
Gold	The improvement measures are implemented and tracked, and their effectiveness is measured: at least one completed cycle of plan, action and re-measurement against the baseline (for example a follow-up pulse survey or the next annual survey). Measuring the effect is what counts, whatever it shows. In an organisation's first year, see the first-year provision.

Practical implementation guidance

- Use the NLF climate question set, or map yours to it, with the NLF Climate Assessment guide. The Climate Assessment in My Award Portal does this for you, but you can use any equivalent.
- Never report a group small enough to identify people. Turn findings into an action plan with owners, dates and measures of effect (the NLF climate action plan and measures tracker), then re-measure.
- First-year provision: with one year of data, Gold may be awarded provisionally if all else for Gold is met, on a committed plan with an owner, date and measure of effect for every measure, the tracker in use, the next assessment scheduled and a recorded commitment to the board or executive. It is confirmed at the Year Two and Year Three health checks, or reverts to Silver.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- A summary of the most recent survey results, with the date, response rate and workforce total.
- For Silver and Gold: the action plan, with owners and dates.
- For Gold: an update showing what was implemented and a follow-up measure compared with the baseline.

Helpful, if you have it

- The survey questions or their mapping to the NLF climate question set.
- How results and actions were shared with staff.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF Climate Assessment: question set and guide to running your own (PDF, or Word); NLF climate action plan and measures tracker: blank form and worked example (PDF, or Word).

If not relevant or not met: The NLF provides a question set, guide, templates and a tool, so being unable to host a survey is not a justification. If a survey is unsuitable, for example because the workforce is too small for anonymity, explain how you gather the same information.

Likely to be acceptable

- Aggregated results, a dated action plan with owners and (for Gold) evidence of implementation and re-measurement (or the first-year provision).
- Results, plan and tracker from the NLF Climate Assessment in My Award Portal, which the NLF can see directly.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Individual responses or comments that could identify people.
- A response rate below 35% (not valid).
- An action plan with no evidence it was implemented, presented as Gold.

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REVIEW AREA 3 · PRACTICE AND OUTCOMES

Workplace Culture Data

THE QUESTION

Does your organisation collect workplace culture data, and how is that data used?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES An annual culture assessment with an unchanged question set, so trends inform longer-term decisions by the executive or board.

NLF PRINCIPLES 6 Evidence-informed

Why is this important?

Culture changes more slowly than climate. Trends show the level and direction of sentiment, so leaders can base Organisational and Strategic decisions on evidence.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	Workplace culture data is not regularly collected.
Bronze	Workplace culture data is collected annually, using a consistent question set.
Silver	Trends in culture data, over at least two years, inform executive or board-level decisions about strategic changes needed to address the culture in the longer term, recorded in a strategy or strategic plan. In an organisation's first year, see the first-year provision.
Gold	Those strategic changes are implemented and their effect on the culture is measured against the trend, with the results reviewed by the executive or board. Measuring the effect is what counts: finding that a change has not had the intended effect is useful evidence too. In an organisation's first year, see the first-year provision.

Practical implementation guidance

- Use the NLF climate question set unchanged each year, or map yours to it. The Climate Assessment in My Award Portal does this for you, but you can use any equivalent.
- Present the action plan and tracker, with the trends, to the executive or board (not the raw data), record their decisions, and monitor how later results respond.
- First-year provision: with one year of data, Silver and Gold may be awarded provisionally if all else for the tier is met, on a credible plan: future assessments scheduled with the same questions, longer-term measures identified (for Gold, with a measure of effect and tracking begun) and a recorded commitment to present the trends and plan to the board or executive. It is confirmed at the Year Two and Year Three health checks, or reverts to Bronze.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- Culture results for each year held, from a consistent question set, with response rates.
- For Silver and Gold: the strategy, plan or board or executive decision that uses the trends, or the first-year evidence.
- For Gold: a dated summary of what was implemented and how its effect is measured, with the board or executive review.

Helpful, if you have it

- The question set.
- Any evaluation papers presented to the board or executive.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF Climate Assessment: question set and guide to running your own (PDF, or Word); NLF climate action plan and measures tracker: blank form and worked example (PDF, or Word).

If not relevant or not met: The NLF provides a question set, guide, templates and a tool, so being unable to host an assessment is not a justification. If annual assessment is unsuitable, explain how you monitor culture over time.

Likely to be acceptable

- Several years of aggregated data from a consistent question set, with strategic plans that cite the trends (or the first-year provision).
- Trend data and measures from the NLF Climate Assessment in My Award Portal, which the NLF can see directly.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- A single year's data presented as a trend (use the first-year provision instead).
- Individual-level results.
- A response rate below 35%.

REVIEW AREA 3 · PRACTICE AND OUTCOMES

15 Workforce Satisfaction with Leadership

THE QUESTION

What proportion of the workforce reports that it is satisfied with leadership?

TYPICALLY INCLUDES The proportion of the workforce positive about organisational leadership (in the NLF Climate Assessment, the leadership positivity score).

NLF PRINCIPLES 6 Evidence-informed | 7 Grounded in values

Why is this important?

Leadership is ultimately judged by how others experience it. More than half of the workforce feeling positive about leadership is the minimum viable rating.

To meet this criterion

Tier	Threshold
Below threshold	Workforce leadership satisfaction is not measured or is 50% or below.
Bronze	More than 50% of the workforce reports positive leadership satisfaction.
Silver	More than 60% of the workforce reports positive leadership satisfaction.
Gold	More than 70% of the workforce reports positive leadership satisfaction.

Positive means the top two points of a five-point scale, such as “agree” or “strongly agree”. The rating is the number positive divided by all responses to the question: neutral answers count in the total but not as positive. For example, 130 positive answers out of 200 is 65%.

Practical implementation guidance

- With the NLF Climate Assessment, or its question set run yourself, the measure is the leadership positivity score: the average of the scores for the ten core leadership topics, each the proportion answering Agree or Strongly agree. Other topics and optional sections never count.
- With another survey, ask a clear question about organisational leadership, or questions mapped to the NLF core topics, and report the proportion positive.
- Report the response rate with the score, and use breakdowns by team or level (groups large enough to stay anonymous) in your action plans.

Evidence and justification

Essential evidence

- The question wording and scale, the number of responses and the number positive, and the response rate.

Helpful, if you have it

- A breakdown by team or level, for groups large enough to stay anonymous.

Download (also in My Award Portal): NLF Climate Assessment: question set and guide to running your own (PDF, or Word); NLF climate action plan and measures tracker: blank form and worked example (PDF, or Word).

If not relevant or not met: Satisfaction with leadership must be measured to attain an award. If a survey is unsuitable, explain why, describe the method you used instead and give the results.

Likely to be acceptable

- The leadership positivity score from the NLF Climate Assessment, or the NLF question set scored as its guide sets out, with the response rate.
- Another survey: the question, scale, number of responses, number positive and response rate, from the latest cycle.
- A different scale converted to the nearest five-point equivalent, with the conversion explained.

Unlikely to be acceptable

- Counting neutral responses as positive.
- A response rate below 35%.
- A question that does not ask about organisational leadership.

Appendix A: Thresholds Summary

Criterion	Bronze	Silver	Gold
1 Leadership Policy	In place	Reviewed; framework mapped at dimension level	Reviewed; framework mapped at competency level
2 Values, Culture and Conduct	In place	Reviewed (counts towards the policy group rule)	Reviewed (counts towards the policy group rule)
3 People and Employment	In place	Reviewed (counts towards the policy group rule)	Reviewed (counts towards the policy group rule)
4 Governance and Assurance	In place	Reviewed (counts towards the policy group rule)	Reviewed (counts towards the policy group rule)
5 Learning and Development	In place	Reviewed (counts towards the policy group rule)	Reviewed (counts towards the policy group rule)
6 Self-Assessment	Accessible to some, but fewer than 50% of the workforce	Accessible to at least 50% and up to 75%	Accessible to more than 75%
7 180° and 360° Feedback	Accessible to some, but fewer than 50% of the workforce	Accessible to at least 50% and up to 75%	Accessible to more than 75%
8 Coaching	Accessible to some, but fewer than 50% of the workforce	Accessible to at least 50% and up to 75%	Accessible to more than 75%
9 Access to Leadership Training	Accessible to some, but fewer than 50% of the workforce	Accessible to at least 50% and up to 75%	Accessible to more than 75%
10 Alignment of Leadership Training	A register of leadership training; fewer than 50% aligned or approved/accredited so far	At least 50% and up to 75% aligned or approved/accredited	More than 75% aligned or approved/accredited
11 Engagement with Leader Development Tools and Resources	Some, but fewer than 50%, engage annually	At least 50% and up to 75% engage annually	More than 75% engage annually
12 Engagement with Leadership Training	Some, but fewer than 50%, engage annually	At least 50% and up to 75% engage annually	More than 75% engage annually
13 Staff Satisfaction and Workplace Climate	Data collected annually	Findings turned into an action plan	Actions implemented, tracked and re-measured
14 Workplace Culture Data	Collected annually	Trends inform strategic decisions	Strategic changes implemented and effect measured
15 Workforce Satisfaction with Leadership	More than 50% positive	More than 60% positive	More than 70% positive

Appendix B: Pre-Submission Checklist

Before you submit through the evidence submission tool, check each of the following.

- [ ] Every criterion has evidence or a detailed written explanation, describing your position today.
- [ ] Evidence is current, dated and signposted to the right page or section.
- [ ] Each reviewed policy area has a review record (the NLF review checklist will do).
- [ ] Workforce figures are in aggregate, from the most recent annual cycle, with the denominator and how it was calculated.
- [ ] Each survey states its response rate, which meets the Review Area 3 requirement.
- [ ] Any exemption has a justification approved by a named person and dated.
- [ ] Sensitive documents are flagged in the submission tool, and individual data stays confidential.
- [ ] The people who can verify each item are available for assessor queries, and the submission lead has read the whole submission and confirms it is accurate and complete.

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