

Effective Behaviours

Our Effective Behaviours Framework sets out the behaviours that we have identified as ones that will make sure that the SU Bath is a sector leading organisation, that can achieve its ambitious goals and ensure we are best placed to create the best student life in the world.

They are the behaviours that we are committed to **developing** in our people, **promoting** through our structures, and **assessing** during recruitment.

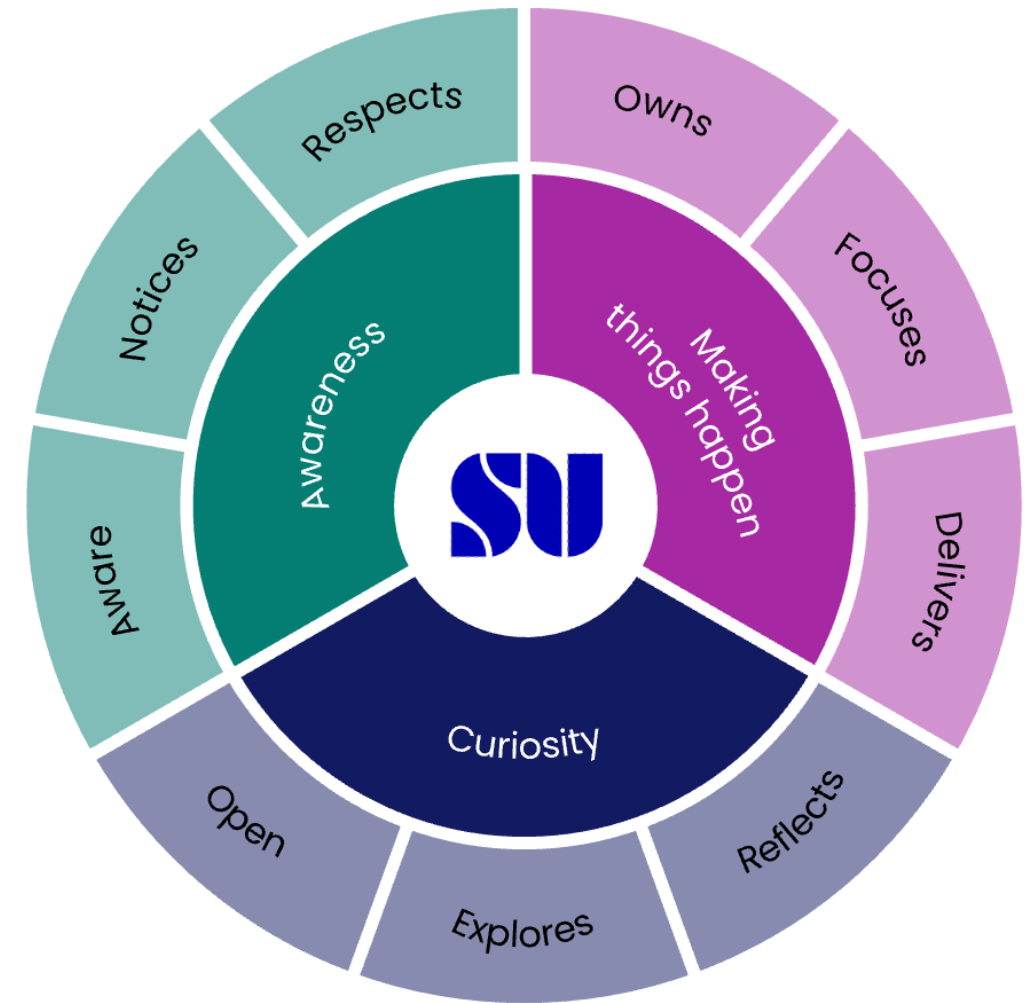
It's important to remember that we are all constantly learning and refining our behaviours and personal skills, and we don't expect that every colleague will have perfected all of them. We do expect that everyone will try their best to apply these behaviours when carrying out their work.

The examples in this framework are designed to give you some ideas of what these behaviours and skills might look like, however it is important to be open minded to unique approaches to demonstrating effective behaviours.

Within the framework, for each section you'll find:

- Specific examples of 'what good looks like' for each behaviour
- Examples of the behaviours that could prevent you from successfully developing this behaviour
- Ideas for practical activities and reflection questions can help you to improve and develop each behaviour.

Our behaviours apply to everyone that works or volunteers for the SU Bath, however, the way that you apply them will be different depending on your context, including the nature of your role and the outcomes you are responsible for.



Role modelling effective behaviours at every level

Every one of us is responsible for demonstrating effective behaviours and supporting a strong, positive working environment. From student staff to senior managers and trustees, we are all responsible for leading ourselves, through how we deliver our work, and in how we communicate and collaborate, respond to challenge and contribute to shared goals.

Some colleagues formally lead others as line managers. Others may lead projects, coordinate volunteers, or support student staff. Senior leaders and trustees may hold accountability for organisational strategy, but colleagues at different levels will also contribute to strategic thinking and decision-making at different times.

Each behaviour in the framework includes indicators at three levels. These levels set out what we should expect from ourselves and from one another, depending on the context and responsibility we are holding, rather than our job title or grade.

Leading Myself

These are the behaviours we expect everyone, in every role, to develop so that they can demonstrate them in their day-to-day work. This includes how we deliver services to our members, how we contribute to shared objectives, and how we communicate and collaborate with others.

Leading Others

These are the behaviours expected when you are responsible for guiding, supporting or coordinating the work of others. This may be as a line manager or supervisor, when leading a project, chairing a meeting or supporting volunteers. It includes setting clear expectations, enabling others to succeed, and creating an environment where people can be at their best.

Leading within the Students' Union

These are the behaviours expected when shaping direction, making strategic decisions or influencing long-term priorities. This often sits formally with senior leaders and trustees, but others may step into this level when leading strategic projects or contributing to decision making at an organisational level. It includes thinking strategically, considering wider impact, and making decisions that support the SU's long term success.

Awareness

Understanding ourselves and our impact, and valuing diversity.

Leading Myself

Aware

- Identifies their strengths, preference and blind spots, and understands how these influence their work.
- Asks for, listens to and acts on feedback from others to improve performance.

Notices

- Pays attention to how their ways of working and communicating affect others and their delivery.
- Pauses to assess a situation before responding, especially when under pressure or challenged.

Respects

- Engages openly with perspectives that differ from their own, even where there is disagreement.
- Makes an effort to identify differences in working styles and adapts their approach when needed.

Leading Others

Aware

- Understanding how their leadership style affects different people and adapting when needed.
- Is open about what they know and don't know, modelling learning and self-awareness.

Notices

- Noticing changes in energy, engagement or behaviour within individuals and teams.
- Noticing when people may be struggling with pace, priorities or change, and responding in a way that helps them move forward.

Respects

- Actively seeking and valuing input from people with different perspectives or experiences.
- Creating space for others to contribute in ways that work for them, not just the loudest voices.

Leading within the SU

Aware

- Understanding how decisions, communication and behaviours contribute to the organisation's culture and outcomes for students.
- Recognising how our roles shape priorities, ways of working and behaviours.

Notices

- Spotting patterns, themes and emerging issues across teams or services that others may miss.
- Noticing misalignment between stated values and day-to-day behaviours and raises this thoughtfully.

Respects

- Valuing diversity of thought and experience as a strength in shaping better outcomes.
- Engaging with complexity and difference with care, curiosity and responsibility.

What might hold you back?

Avoiding feedback, giving it with negative intention, or being defensive to feedback

Looking at issues from only one viewpoint

Listening to respond, explain or defend, rather than to understand

Relying too heavily on your own perspective or expertise

Dismissing different ways of working as inefficient or "wrong"

Becoming defensive or closed when receiving feedback

Acting quickly without pausing to observe context or impact

Interpreting challenge or hesitation as negativity

Not considering how actions affect others

Curiosity

Being open to new ideas, asking questions, and learning how to do things better.

Leading Myself

Open

- Is willing to consider ideas and approaches that challenge their existing thinking.
- Shows openness to change by testing new ways of working and evaluating the results.

Explores

- Asks focused questions to understand issues, risks and impact.
- Actively seeks out relevant information, data and perspectives to improve their understanding.

Reflects

- Takes time to reflect on what is working and what is not, and identifies practical adjustments.
- Uses feedback, mistakes and challenges to adjust their approach and improve outcomes.

Leading Others

Open

- Encourages others to ask questions, share ideas and challenge assumptions respectfully.
- Role-models a positive approach to change and helps others to overcome barriers to new ways of working.

Explores

- Creates space for questioning and exploration, asking “why” and “what else” before jumping to solutions.
- Supports others to test ideas and learn through trying things out.

Reflects

- Makes time for reflection with individuals and teams to learn from experiences and outcomes.
- Helps others turn insight and feedback into practical changes to how they work.

Leading within the SU

Open

- Champions a culture of constant learning, development and feedback.
- Listens carefully to understand responses to change and takes time to understand any barriers.

Explores

- Anticipates the need for change and stays open to new approaches, partnerships or ways of working that could improve outcomes.
- Looks beneath the surface of organisational issues to understand root causes, and uses data and lived experience to inform decisions.

Reflects

- Encourages learning from both success and failure across the organisation.
- Uses reflection and insight to adapt plans and priorities to better meet changing student needs.

What might hold you back?

Defaulting to familiar solutions without exploring alternatives

Staying attached to outdated processes or past successes

Dismissing new ideas quickly because they feel uncomfortable

Moving too quickly to action without pausing to reflect or test assumptions

Treating mistakes as failure instead of useful information for learning and improvement

Relying on formal training as the only way to learn and improve

Failing to follow through on ideas or opportunities

Setting goals that are unclear or that limit challenge and growth

Contributing to a culture where asking questions, learning and reflection are low priority.

Making things happen

Taking responsibility for getting things done in a simple, sustainable way.

Leading Myself

Owns

- Takes responsibility for their role in outcomes and change.
- Proactively asks for clarity, support or resources when they are needed to move work forward.

Focuses

- Prioritises what matters most and delivers meaningful impact for students.
- Keeps plans and actions clear, simple and manageable, avoiding unnecessary complexity.

Delivers

- Translates ideas and decisions into action, following through consistently.
- Manages their energy and workload in a way that supports sustainable delivery over time.

Leading Others

Owns

- Is clear about expectations, including their own role in enabling progress.
- Encourages others to take ownership while offering support, rather than stepping in to take over.

Focuses

- Helps individuals and teams prioritise effectively, particularly when everything feels important.
- Refocuses effort when circumstances change, without losing sight of agreed outcomes.

Delivers

- Supports others to move from planning to action, removing barriers where possible.
- Holds people to commitments in a fair, constructive and consistent way.

Leading within the SU

Owns

- Takes responsibility for progress at an organisational level, even when challenges sit across boundaries.
- Owns their place in change, recognising how their decisions and behaviours influence momentum.

Focuses

- Directs attention and resources towards work that delivers the greatest value and impact.
- Simplifies priorities and ways of working when complexity begins to slow progress.

Delivers

- Makes sure decisions lead to action and outcomes, not just discussion or agreement.
- Maintains momentum through change by balancing pace, quality and sustainability.

What might hold you back?

Relying on direction instead of working independently towards agreed goals

Avoiding ownership when outcomes are unclear or shared across teams

Not asking for support or direction when progress is blocked

Trying to do everything at once rather than prioritising what matters most

Holding onto plans or priorities that no longer fit changing student needs

Putting solutions in place without a clear or sustainable plan

Losing momentum after decisions are made

Focusing on activity rather than impact on students

Driving change or delivery at an unsustainable pace

Here are some practical examples of how our Effective Behaviours Framework can be applied in our day-to-day work. Remember that the framework is designed to be a shared reference tool that can support clearer conversations and more consistent ways of working, rather than a scoring checklist or 'set of rules'.

Recruitment

Design interview questions that give candidates the opportunity to demonstrate how they have shown particular behaviours in previous situations or how they might approach future challenges. Look for practical indicators from the framework in their examples.

1:1s

As part of your regular 1:1 conversations, you might refer to the behaviours framework when discussing how something was handled, reflecting on which behaviours contributed to success, and which might have led to an even better outcome. It can support balanced conversations about what we deliver and how we get there.

PDRs

Use it to help identify growth and development areas. You might talk about which behaviours feel most natural, and which need a bit more work, then agree practical actions that could help to strengthen specific behaviours. Use the framework to help focus development on 'how can I show up more effectively', rather than simply, 'what training do I need?'

Project Management

Use the framework when planning and reviewing projects. For example, by bringing awareness to different strengths and styles, regularly checking that we are making things happen, and demonstrating curiosity by reflecting on what we learned and could improve next time.

Team Meetings

You can use the framework to set expectations for how discussions will run, reflect on whether different perspectives are being considered and agree how the team wants to work together.

Asking for and sharing feedback

Use it to make feedback kind, clear and specific by focusing on observable actions, linking these to agreed behaviours, and describing the impact.