

DOBCEL Leadership competency framework

What good looks like at DOBCEL

The church is like a great orchestra; it is “the orchestra of God”. In God’s orchestra, each member...has a vital role to play in giving life to a harmonious symphony whose conductor is the Holy Spirit. Pope Francis, October 2013

Why do we need a Leadership Competency Framework?

The DOBCEL Leadership competency framework establishes a shared language of ‘what good looks like.’ It translates ‘what we do’ into observable behaviours and actions expected of us in our work at DOBCEL.

The behaviours and actions described in the framework consider and support the DOBCEL 2035 strategic pillars and practical principles.

I do not have ‘leader’ in my title so does the framework apply to me?

Regardless of our titles, we are all leaders—of ourselves, teams, or schools. Clearly defining leadership behaviours for individuals, teams, and schools will help create a high-performing system of Catholic schools, fostering the flourishing of every student, staff member, and community.

The DOBCEL Leadership Competency Framework is designed to be relevant and beneficial for everyone in all our schools and offices and it applies to everyone across the Diocese, regardless of a position held.

Definitions

Competency – Refers to the observable behaviours or actions required to do something effectively.

Domain – The framework has three domains, leading self, leading others and leading school. The three domains are designed to show different leadership levels across DOBCEL.

Core competency – Refers to required behaviours or actions that form the foundation for how we lead at DOBCEL and apply to everyone regardless of the domain your role is in.

Domain-specific competency – Refers to the behaviours or actions that are specific to the domain of your role.

The Framework

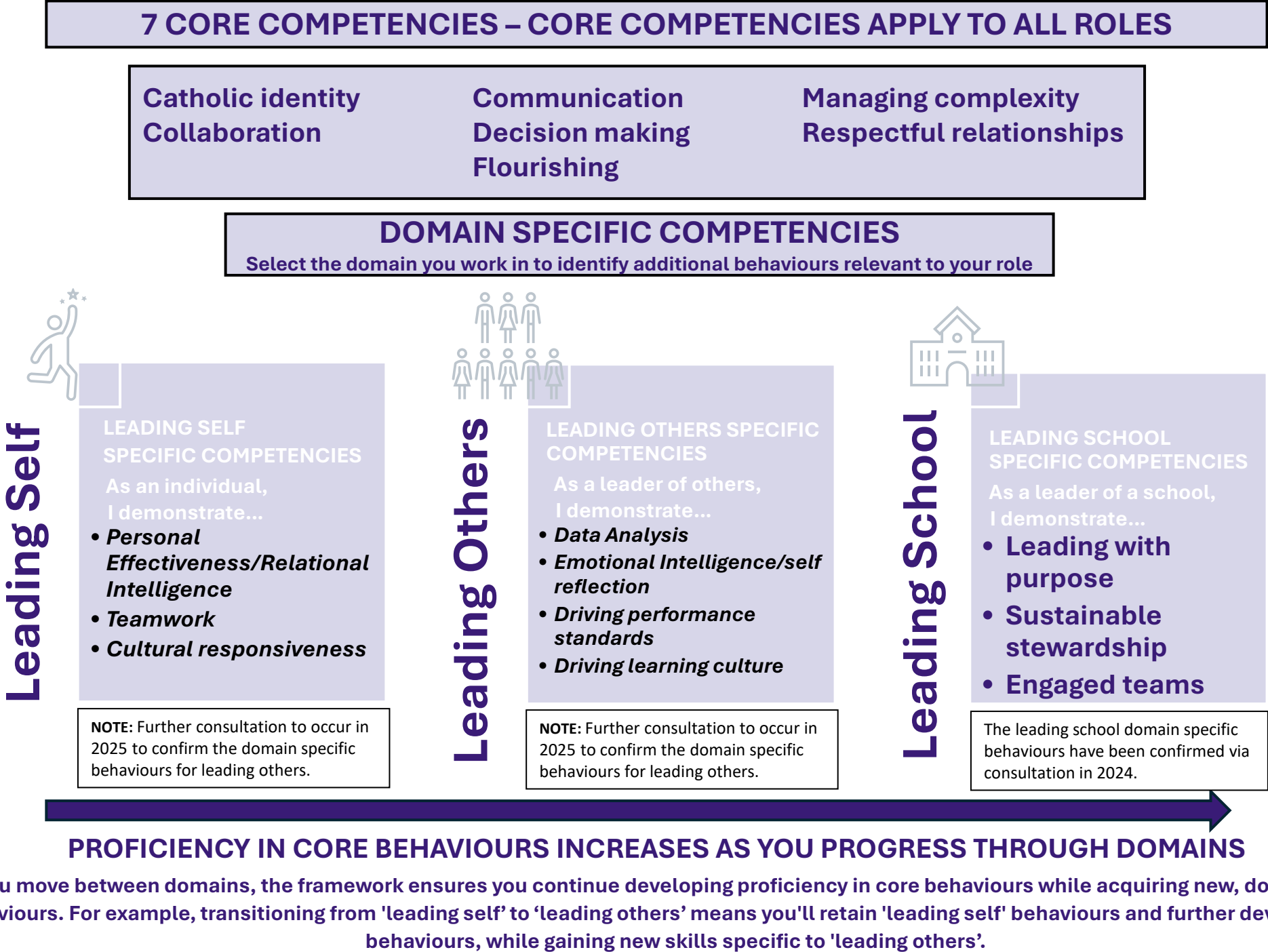
The framework depicts the seven core competencies applicable to all roles at DOBCEL. The behaviours form the foundation for how we listen to, respect and work alongside each other at DOBCEL. The framework also includes three domains – Leading Self, Leading Others and Leading School. The three domains are designed to show different leadership levels across DOBCEL.

As you progress through domains, the framework ensures you continue developing proficiency in core behaviours while acquiring new, domain-specific behaviours. For example, transitioning from 'leading self' to 'leading others' means you'll retain 'leading self' specific competencies, further develop core behaviours, and develop new behaviours specific to 'leading others'.

The framework includes behaviour examples for the core competencies for each domain and for domain specific competencies.

*The pictorial model on page 4 provides a visual representation of The Framework.

*See pages 6–10 for behaviour examples



core competency descriptions

As an individual/leader of others/
leader of school I demonstrate...

I demonstrate this by ...

Catholic identity

Working with others in the Catholic community to establish, strengthen, and actively promote the Catholic Vision and Mission of the school.

collaboration

Building partnerships to co-design and innovate with others to achieve common goals.

communication

Skillfully exchanging and expressing ideas, opinions, knowledge, and data to ensure messages are received and understood with clarity and purpose.

decision making

Making considered and timely decisions by understanding and applying relevant information to the current context.

flourishing

Creating an environment where people feel supported, valued, and motivated to thrive, appreciating the diversity each person brings.

managing complexity

Making sense of complex information to effectively solve problems.

respectful relationships

Quickly building relationships to establish connections through professional and considerate interactions, promoting a positive and inclusive work environment that enables successful outcomes.

Catholic identity

Demonstrates authentic witness to all in the school community through dialogue and living out the Catholic faith in a way that is genuine and reflective of contemporary Catholic teachings.
Enables and welcomes all members of the school community to understand and experience Catholic faith, liturgy, culture and traditions in meaningful and authentic ways.
Provides an environment where each person's spirituality and/or relationship with God and search for meaning is nurtured.
Leads and enhances the Catholic Identity of the school through consistent engagement with Catholic beliefs and practices.
Has deep knowledge of the Catholic tradition and openly shares this and enters into dialogue with others.
Is the leader of the faith community working with the Religious Education Leader.

collaboration

Champions the importance of partnership through co-creation and innovation with other schools, diocesan office, and the parish to bring people together to leverage resources, talents and knowledge to achieve a common purpose or goal.
Has the ability to draw on expertise from others and apply it to their context and builds partnerships with others to foster this.
Openly shares ideas and uses different techniques to build trust and engage with others to co-design, innovate and achieve common goals.
Removes systemic barriers and implements strategies to build strong alliances for joint delivery of outcomes.
Works with others to introduce new ways of looking at problems to encourage collaborative solutions.
Exercises judgment in deciding which ideas are likely to work and manages the risk associated with implementation.

communication

Expresses complex ideas and points of view and uses multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding of the unique needs of different audiences.
Identifies barriers that limit communication and creates opportunities for discussion.
Knows when to lead and facilitate discussion, debate and feedback.
Consistently communicates meaningfully and attentively listens to what is being said through words and actions.
Anticipates likely reactions and maintains the ability to stay in constructive dialogue even when feeling under pressure.
Skillfully negotiates, using compelling arguments and evidence to persuade stakeholders towards mutually beneficial outcomes.

decision making

Role models courage in decision making and does not shy away from making decisions, even in ambiguous situations, or when it may not be a popular decision.
Provides clarity by clearly defining decisions that need to be made.
Identifies (and helps others to identify) any underlying causes of systematic and organisational issues through analysing data and insights enabling better outcomes.
Ensures the right delegative structures are in place to empower decision-making at the appropriate level.
Provides calm to others in high-stakes situations, considering the needs of all stakeholders, and quickly discerns key information.
Can take a new idea and put it into practice.

flourishing

Ensures the school values underpin and support inclusive practices, supporting the creation of safe, and inclusive environments.
Fosters an environment where all individuals share a personal responsibility for promoting the physical and psychological health, wellbeing, and safety of others.
Builds confidence and trust as a leader who respects and prioritises people's wellbeing
Visibly sponsors initiatives that build awareness and motivate the workforce to improve safety and inclusive practice.
Provides collaborative, team-based professional development, including culturally safe and responsive educational services.
Anticipates and addresses the diverse needs of the people in their school (both staff and students).

managing complexity

Balances the needs of the student, families and staff in complex situations. Uses evidence and data to help guide progress in these situations.
Actively seeks different opinions and diverse thinking to consider solutions from all perspectives, to aid own understanding of situations and nurture innovation.
Identifies the underlying cause of issues through considered analysis of data, patterns and insights.
Maintains optimism and encourages the same in others, focusing on strategy and objectives through periods of uncertainty.
Leads change agendas, generates readiness through timely communications and support mechanisms that allow people to thrive.
Remains composed during high-stakes situations, supporting the team with additional advice or assistance.

respectful relationships

Displays high levels of emotional intelligence by being aware of their impact on situations and anticipating others' reactions to respond appropriately.
Nurtures and respects professional autonomy by providing the appropriate amount of guidance on such things as decision-making, workload management and support.
Reads contentious and sensitive situations and responds flexibly to manage relationships.
Contributes to the development of inclusive systems and practices that allow all individuals to participate to their fullest ability.
Acts as a role model in difficult situations by maintaining composure, demonstrating empathy, and fostering open communication to address conflict with a calm and fair approach.

Catholic identity

Confidently leads prayer and liturgy and encourages all to become involved in ways they are comfortable to participate.
Demonstrates an understanding of contemporary Catholic education and theology and consistently applies this to their leadership.
Visibly models faith in action, for example – involving themselves as leaders and participating in prayer and liturgy within their communities.
Ensures faith formation opportunities exist for their communities (students, families, staff and self).
Can share with others how their relationship with God informs their leadership.
Demonstrates and promotes reflective practices to encourage continuous personal and professional growth.
Is embedding a Catholic School Culture by using dialogue to identify and promote post-critical belief and recontextualization.

collaboration

Creates opportunities inside and outside of area of responsibility (eg: organising cross functional workshops) to encourage partnership and connections between teams to more deeply share and innovate and enable co-design solutions, rather than solving in isolation.
Actively listens to others' ideas to encourage diverse thinking and shows vulnerability in asking questions to understand perspectives.
Uses feedback and other people's perspectives to inform decisions.
Provides an inclusive environment that generates enthusiasm where team members are openly sharing to innovate and improve practices.
Provides time, support, and resources to the team so they can seek out, test and refine new ways of doing things.

communication

Articulates ideas, by sharing compelling arguments and rationale to all levels and types of audiences.
Encourages discussion among others and encourages the open expression of diverse ideas and opinions.
Communicates facts and explains implications clearly for key stakeholders.
Provides culturally sensitive messages and considers the dignity of the human being in all messaging, and ensures messages suit the age, culture and cognitive ability of the audience.

decision making

Makes sound decisions even in the absence of complete information.
Empowers collaborative and evidence-informed decision-making by working with others to co-design and role models using appropriate data to make decisions.
Considers how decisions will impact both short-term and longer-term future.
Identifies potential for bias in decision making and coaches others through the decision-making process.
Remains composed in high-stakes situations and supports the team to recognize information gaps, and is an escalation point when needed.
Embraces individual differences and actively encourages unique contributions and viewpoints in planning and decision making.
Can take a new idea and put it into practice (within their circle of control.)

flourishing

Builds the confidence and trust of others by engaging in open dialogue to identify initiatives to promote wellbeing and safe, respectful, and inclusive practices.
Creates a culture that supports and respects the individuality of others and recognises the benefits of diverse ideas and approaches.
Promotes personal responsibility and team responsibility in the realisation of a healthy workplace through regular communication, feedback, and sharing of observations and outcomes.
Encourages others to proactively identify, remedy and enhance wellbeing and safe and inclusive practices
Is flexible and open to the diversity in the team, supporting different perspectives and approaches that enable all individuals to participate to their fullest ability

managing complexity

Continues to work productively and manage uncertainty by articulating the unknown, providing individual support where needed and remaining accessible.
Does not have a default response or position. Asks the right questions to understand and analyses information/situations before responding.
Identifies situations where formal intervention by more experienced colleagues or the expertise of others may be needed.
Shows consistent, constructive and adaptable application of professional capabilities even when faced with uncertainty.
Demonstrates flexibility in response to change and supports teams to embrace new expectations through clarity of the intended outcomes.

respectful relationships

Is seen as someone who acts fairly when facing conflicting demands by listening to understand and tailoring messages appropriately.
Achieves mutually beneficial outcomes by listening intently and asking questions to understand the perspectives of others.
Builds the confidence and trust of others, by connecting with them personally to understand their needs.
Acknowledges the contributions of all team members and communicates at appropriate intervals with the team to ensure they feel updated and informed.
Celebrates success with individuals and teams.

Catholic identity

Operates in a way that recognises all people are created with the same nature and origin and enjoy equal dignity.
Understands and acts in a way that supports the common good for all.
Fosters understanding with Indigenous and vulnerable cultures.
Shows acceptance and supports the Catholic ethos and understands what is meant by “fullness of life for everyone”.

collaboration

Proactively partners and builds working relationships with others both internally and externally to get work done.
Identifies when to share with others to maintain an effective flow of information.
Recognises others’ skills, experiences, and contributions and welcomes the sharing of these to encourage better outcomes and innovative thinking.
Address any differences in opinion constructively and in a timely manner. Is sensitive to others’ emotions, intentions, and preferences when engaging to maintain relationships.
Generates and shares creative ideas for improvement and is open to new ways of working.

communication

Shares ideas and suggestions by communicating clearly with written and verbal messages.
Participates in discussion and actively listens to others, without judgment bias and shows consideration for other viewpoints.
Provides timely, tailored and helpful information to others across the organisation.
Communicates in a range of ways that are clear, inclusive and respectful and checks for audience understanding.

decision making

Relies on a mixture of information (eg: data, analysis, research, experience, different points of view) to make informed decisions.
Gains insight into issues by considering all relevant factors and uses appropriate criteria when making decisions.
Understands when a decision is required and can use the available evidence and information to support, inform, and communicate decisions.
Understands and accepts decision-making responsibility and demonstrates judgment about when to escalate concerns.
Can take a new idea and put it into practice (within their circle of control.)

flourishing

Takes personal responsibility for the health, safety and wellbeing of self and others.
Respects others by taking the time to connect and show an interest in their needs and wellbeing.
Actively engages in safety, inclusion, and wellbeing in the team by sharing ideas and participating in initiatives.
Considers the physical environment and carefully undertakes tasks with the safety and wellbeing of others in mind.
Demonstrates openness to diversity and supports practices that enable all individuals to participate to their fullest ability

managing complexity

Identifies pros and cons of different solutions to progress work.
Breaks complex situations or tasks down into more manageable steps to make progress.
Maintains effective communication with stakeholders and provides them with regular updates.
Gathers appropriate information and asks the right questions to continue making progress.
Responds constructively and positively to periods of uncertainty.
Demonstrates flexibility to changing expectations by proactively adapting approaches to reflect new situations.

respectful relationships

Demonstrates awareness of others by actively listening, showing empathy, and valuing different opinions to build relationships based on mutual respect and trust.
Understands the impact of their emotions on situations and can modify their behaviour when required to enable successful outcomes.
Recognises the value and contribution of diverse viewpoints and listens openly to other opinions to encourage sharing and connection.
Gains the trust of others through acting with honesty, integrity and authenticity – with actions such as providing timely information, keeping commitments, listening, telling the truth, keeping confidences and shows consistency between words and actions.

Leading school domain specific behavioural examples – As a leader of a school I demonstrate...

leading with purpose

I demonstrate this by ...

Inspiring and motivating by clearly communicating the school's mission and values. I enable people to deliver outcomes through clear direction, continuous improvement and modelling behavioural standards.

Examples of this looks like

Considers the future skills, opportunities and diverse needs of the students, staff, school and community, to set the direction for school objectives.

Integrates system and organisational priorities, and the voice of the school community to develop an articulate a compelling vision providing clear direction for the future.

Establishes clear priorities to deliver objectives and works collaboratively as a school leader to co-design and develop with staff a robust strategy.

Aligns team efforts with strategic goals and ensures goals, expectations, and roles are clearly communicated to all team members.

Fosters a culture of continuous improvement and empowerment by understanding and managing emotions, showing empathy, providing feedback and building trusting relationships.

sound stewardship

I demonstrate this by ...

Implementing and supporting structures and processes that contribute to the safe and effective management of the school, system resources and policies.

Examples of this looks like

Uses a range of data management methods and technologies to ensure the schools resources and staff are efficiently organised and managed to provide value for money and a safe learning environment and workplace.

Role models impartiality and ensures legislative and regulatory frameworks and DOBCEL policies are applied effectively.

Understands and implements all child-safe legislation and collaborates with teams to turn this into understandable and meaningful practice for staff.

Acts in the interests of the community and organisation through the cost-effective commissioning of goods and services, using best practice procurement processes and appropriate supplier relationships

Collaborates with partners to analyse trends and forecast long-term risks to develop contingency plans.

Overseeing the resource planning for the short, medium and long-term financial viability of the school, including budgets, maintenance planning, master planning.

engaged teams

I demonstrate this by ...

Building strong teams with diverse skills and perspectives who are highly committed, and actively involved in their work and desire to achieve common goals.

Examples of this looks like

Builds a strong commitment towards continued individual personal development by dedicating time to understand the goals and capabilities of others, empowering them to own and participate in professional development opportunities across the system, and encouraging them to take on challenges.

Spends time getting to know individual team members, to understand things such as strengths and opportunities, motivations, and career goals.

Offers timely and constructive feedback to team members, helping them grow and improve while maintaining a positive and supportive atmosphere.

Provides guidance, resources, and support to help team members succeed and feel valued.

Delegates tasks appropriately, trusting team members to take ownership.

Acknowledges conflict by addressing and working to resolve it constructively and in a timely manner.

Generic examples of ineffective behaviours

Leading self

Does not demonstrate that the principles of Catholic social teachings apply to their work.

Does not demonstrate engaging respectfully in dialogue; does not react or escalate situations where inappropriate behaviours are observed in others.

Does not see the benefit of a dialogical approach to encountering each other.

Withholds information; delays impact and; does not ask for support.

Does not build productive relationships; is observed dismissing others; generally, prefers to work solo rather than collaborating with a team of people.

Misses chances to develop their own skills and learn from people with different backgrounds.

Focuses only on own work and success without thinking of broader team or goal.

Appears uncertain where to focus efforts to have the greatest impact and does not pre-empt risks or challenges.

Gives limited effort to meet goals; makes limited efforts to assist others; acts without thinking about consequences on others or objectives.

Focuses on problems rather than solutions; allows obstacles to persist without trying to resolve them.

Relies only on conventional ideas; does not take initiative to collaborate and try new ideas.

Does not seek feedback or engage in reflective practice.

Leading others

Does not demonstrate modelling faith in action or actively participate in leading prayer (and does not access resources to assist – eg: does not use 10 characteristics of prayer, or pedagogy of Jesus to assist with prayer preparation).

Considers own areas of work when setting priorities; does not consider long term opportunities; does not demonstrate a connection between the work to the overall objective or strategy.

Works mostly in isolation; quickly dismisses the views of others; struggles to handle objections tactfully; does not facilitate open communication; rarely celebrates successes of others.

Finds it difficult to make informed decisions, or clearly articulate next steps, particularly in complex situations.

Does not acknowledge or effectively address conflict within teams which encourages an atmosphere where controversial topics are not openly addressed and discourages constructive criticism.

Accepts poor outcomes or unproductive behaviours; allows others to give up easily;

Does not embrace or demonstrate understanding the value of diversity; does not challenge offensive comments

Does not prioritise continuous improvement; Shows limited adaptability; struggles to model flexible behaviours; misses opportunities to encourage others to co-design or challenge existing approaches and learn from mistakes; misses opportunities to push others to take actions and share ideas or initiatives.

Is not seen as a role model displaying effective behaviours.

Does not seek feedback or engage in reflective practice.

Leading school

Does not promote dialogue, post-critical belief or recontextualization.

Does not shape the future of the school through the lens of Contemporary Catholic faith and tradition eg: Catholic Social Teachings

Rarely revises plans or strategy to capture emerging opportunities; fails to consider the perspectives of other influences that can have an impact on strategy.

Does not assume responsibility and avoids taking tough decisions that support long-term strategy.

Makes insufficient effort to foster a learning environment; does not create a sense of purpose or positive environment to stimulate collaboration; does not encourage others to act to remove barriers proactively.

Does not promote and demonstrate understanding the value of ethical and professional standards; ignores or fails to effectively address situations of inappropriate behaviour.

Does not demonstrate championing cross-team initiatives, promote collaboration or co-design.

Places limited emphasis on achieving results; is too theoretical or fails to communicate goals or expectations; seldom challenges others to identify inefficiencies and eliminate poor use of resources; provides limited or insufficient resources and support to meet current or evolving needs.

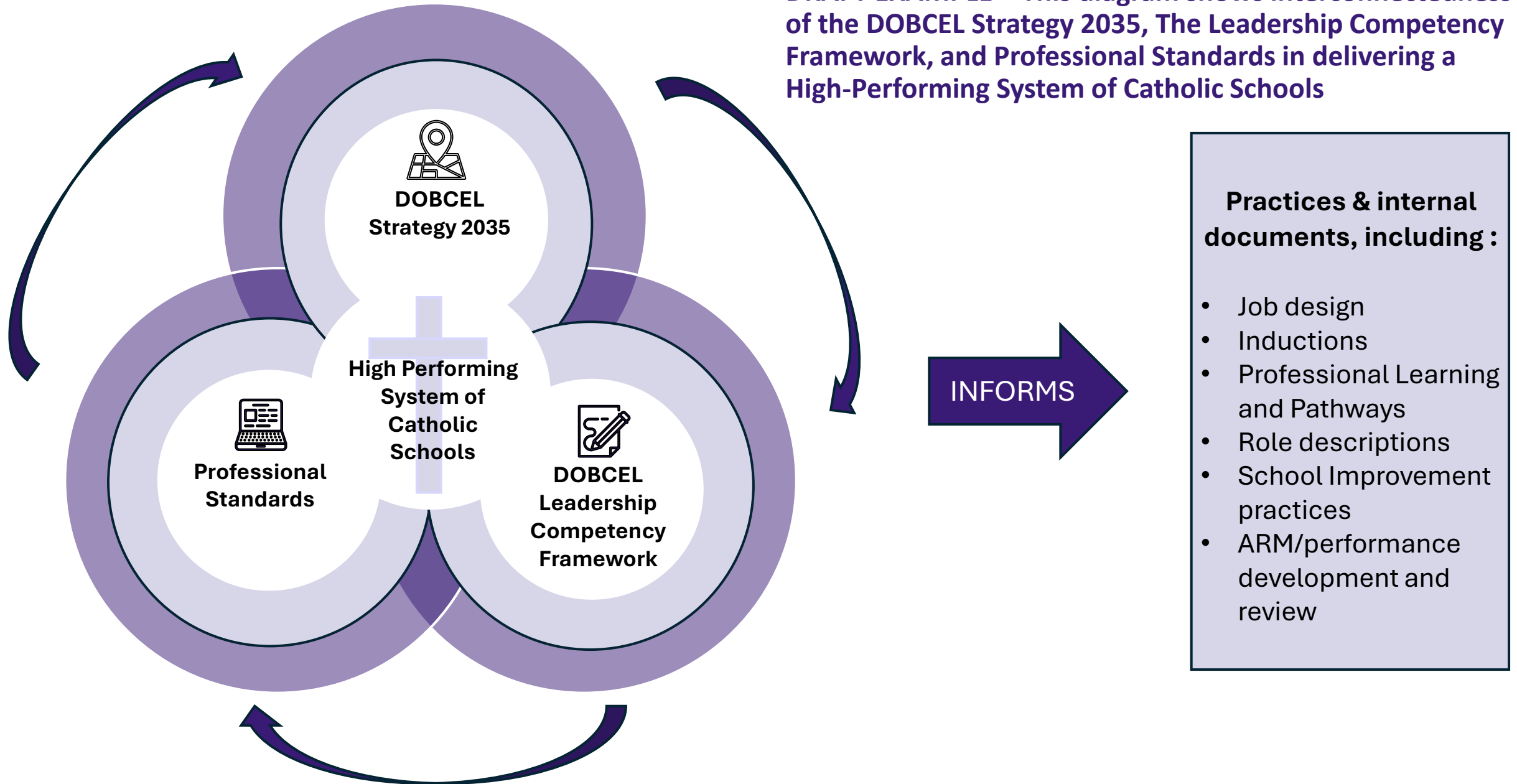
Does not lead or help coach others stay composed in stressful situations; fails to address challenges and misses opportunities to encourage others to see positive outcomes of doing things differently; resists taking on challenges;

Is not seen as a role model displaying effective behaviours.

Does not induct staff appropriately into a Catholic School environment.

Does not seek feedback or engage in reflective practice.

DRAFT EXAMPLE – This diagram shows interconnectedness of the DOBCEL Strategy 2035, The Leadership Competency Framework, and Professional Standards in delivering a High-Performing System of Catholic Schools



Successful delivery in these areas requires mastery of core competencies

Next –

Further resources are being developed to assist in using the framework. In the first instance resources will be developed for using the framework to support career development and professional development conversations and recruitment and selection. Resources supporting other elements of the employee lifecycle will continue to be developed in the future.

While these resources are being developed, you are encouraged to start using the framework where appropriate. Some suggestions on using the framework could look like –

- Socialise the framework– share the framework with your team, have a conversation with them about how it can assist in their own career development.
- Use the framework to help have a career conversation – what progression does someone aspire to and what behaviours would be useful to focus on to aid that development?
- Consider what sections of the framework you will share – sharing the relevant core competency behaviour examples may be sufficient to begin.
- Think about your own development – is there anything that you would like to focus on?
- Please share any feedback you have on using the framework with [Fiona Murphy](#).

If you have a specific need or scenario where the framework will assist, please feel free to contact [Fiona Murphy](#) for support.