

WORLD CLASS COMMISSIONERS

a development programme
from Dearden



Commissioners or commissioning?

The choice of name for this programme is deliberate. It differentiates between Commissioning which is a process, and Commissioners, the people whose core function is to deliver improvements in health and health care through the application of critical processes.

Our focus is deliberately on developing the people who do this challenging work. This is not because the processes of commissioning are unimportant. But we do believe that it will be the attitudes, behaviours and skills of the people engaged in commissioning which will most influence the outcomes achieved through commissioning.

To quote the first page of the Department of Health's publication 'World Class Commissioning':

"World class commissioners are central to a self-improving NHS."



D E A R D E N



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Growing your people – is there an alternative?

The simple answer is no! There are some short-cuts available to commissioning organisations as they grow their critical processes, and technical capacity can be bought in or contracted out. The FESC programme is an obvious example of doing this within a national framework.

The same options do not apply when commissioning organisations are thinking about their own people. World Class organisations do not 'sub-contract' their core functions around leadership, culture building, engagement, strategy, and investment. They do invest in ensuring that they have the right people, with the right attitudes, knowledge and skills, at the heart of their organisation delivering their core responsibilities.

The challenge to commissioning organisations is therefore to ensure that they are developing their key people in a systematic way, and constantly enhancing their capacity to make an impact on outcomes.

What will this mean in practice?

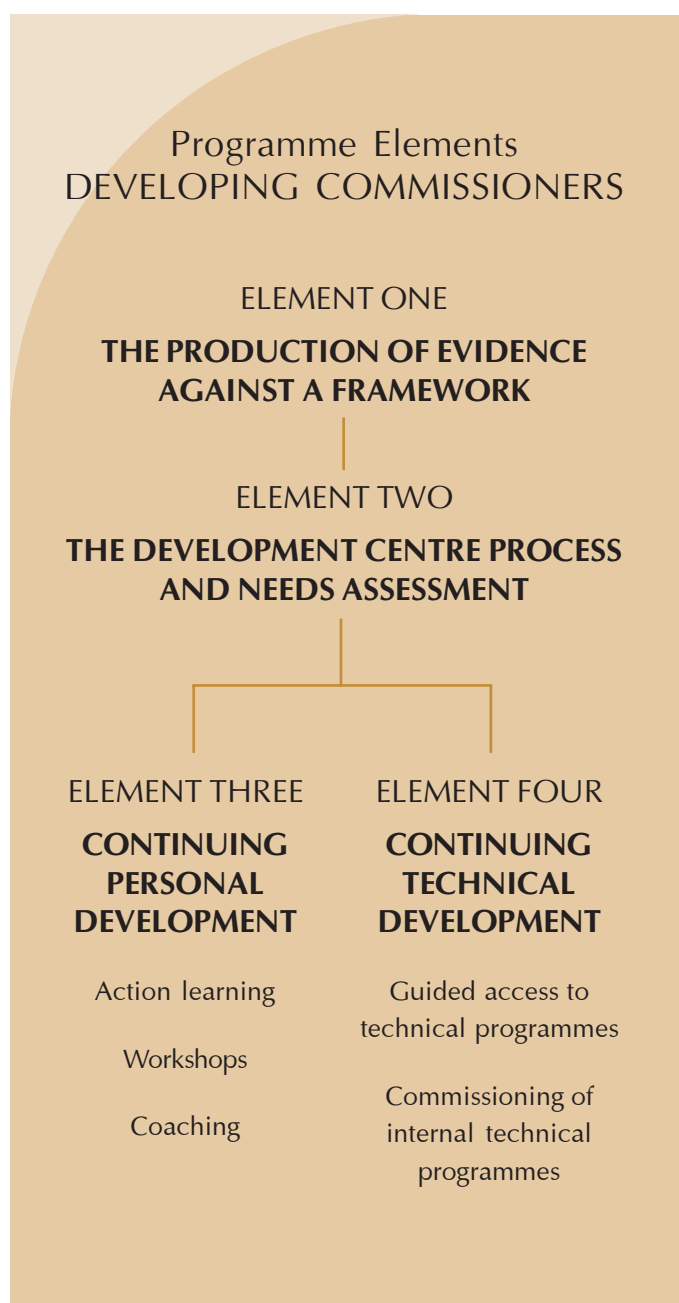
We think the challenge to commissioning organisations is to put in place and sustain a systematic approach to supporting the development of their commissioners. To address this challenge we have designed a Development Programme which:

- Draws on national guidance and particularly the eleven areas of commissioning competence described in 'World Class Commissioning'.
- Allows for local tailoring and prioritising of competencies.
- Gives individual commissioners the opportunity to identify their own development needs against a competence framework.
- Provides a range of locally delivered development activities to support individual development.
- Helps to build, embed and sustain the culture of commissioning.

- Can be used as a continuing process as personnel change within a commissioning organisation.

What does our World Class Commissioners programme look like?

Our programme has four main elements which are summarised in the diagram below. Each element is then described in more detail opposite.





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ELEMENT ONE

THE PRODUCTION OF EVIDENCE AGAINST A FRAMEWORK

For this first step in the development programme, individual commissioners would assemble personal evidence against a previously prepared competence framework. This framework is derived from the eleven National Commissioning Competencies, the National Leadership Qualities Framework, and our own field work with commissioners and commissioning organisations. The framework is reviewed and amended with you to reflect local priorities and issues before use.

The Framework is web-based and participating commissioners would assemble and submit evidence of their knowledge, skills and experience across all of the elements of the Framework in confidence.

As part of this initial stage, we also encourage all programme participants to make use of the LQF 360 degree feedback tool available to all NHS managers, so that their evidence is not entirely self-assessed. We also envisage the 360 degree feedback being updated towards the end of the programme as a means of assessing progress.

ELEMENT TWO

THE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE PROCESS AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

At the heart of our approach is a Development Centre process for all of your participating commissioners.

The Development Centre runs over one and a half days and is facilitated by a team of Dearden consultants who would continue to be involved in the programme throughout subsequent elements. The main activities of the Development Centre are:

- An introduction to the programme, the framework and the Dearden team.

- One to one feedback on the evidence produced by participants with a Dearden Consultant.
- An introduction to Action Learning and to Coaching and the provisional formation of learning sets.
- Building a learning community.

The Development Centre is designed to accommodate 15 participants, or multiples of 15. For the individual commissioner, the main output from the Development Centre is a Development Plan which captures their main development needs and proposed action to meet those needs.

Following from the Development Centre, we then carry out a Needs Assessment across the group of participating commissioners to identify areas of common need. This assessment informs the detailed content of Elements 3 and 4 which follow.

ELEMENT THREE

CONTINUING PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Many of the competencies in the Framework against which commissioners will be assessing themselves describe attitudes, behaviours and skills which are generic rather than technical.

World Class Commissioners:

- Will be highly self-aware and aware of others.
- They will use high order influencing skills.
- They will manage their own emotional well-being and their own continuing development.
- They will learn from their own experiences and from the experiences of others.
- They will be challenging and open to challenge.
- They will be creating exciting visions of the future.
- They will be passionate advocates for improvement.
- They will understand how change happens.
- They will know how to build effective partnerships.
- They will know how to engage stakeholders.

continued overleaf



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- They will understand the culture of clinical practice.
- They will know how to negotiate successfully.
- They will know how to build strategies which have an impact.

These competencies are best developed in an environment which emphasises learning from experience within a learning community, and reflective learning. For these reasons, this element of the programme would provide:

- Facilitated Action Learning Sets.
- Access to one-to-one coaching.
- Access to workshops and master classes on specialised themes.

The precise detail of what we would provide for your commissioners in Element 3 would be agreed with you after the Development Centre and Needs Assessment, when a more detailed picture of what was required would be available.

ELEMENT FOUR

CONTINUING TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENT

In addition to these generic competences, the Framework reflects the technical aspects of commissioning where commissioners will need to display high levels of understanding and more technical skills. This will be particularly true in relation to ensuring that commissioned services are evidence based, effective, represent a sound investment, meet population needs, and are safe. In these areas World Class Commissioners may need to develop new skills in areas such as:

- Social marketing
- Survey management
- Information analysis
- Predictive modelling
- Needs analysis
- Statistical analysis
- Variance analysis
- Prioritising
- Process mapping
- Programme budgeting

If you would like to know more and to talk to us about our **World Class Commissioning Programme**, please contact Peter Key (email: peter.key@dearden.co.uk) or Cathy Waters (email: cathy.waters@dearden.co.uk) on 01275 331 320.

Our approach to helping commissioners meet their identified development needs in these areas has two components:

A) GUIDED ACCESS TO TECHNICAL PROGRAMMES

All of the commissioners participating in our Development Programme will receive individual advice as from a Dearden consultant on how best to meet their technical development needs by accessing external learning sources. This will include the use of a simple guide which will ensure they are able to answer 'how' questions when completing their individual Development Plan.

B) COMMISSIONING OF INTERNAL TECHNICAL PROGRAMMES

Where the Needs Assessment indicates that there are significant common areas of shared technical development need across the group of commissioners, we will work with you to commission the provision of internal development activity from external sources. Our contribution will be to:

- Specify the learning outcomes required for the group
- Seek proposals from external suppliers
- Evaluate the proposals received
- Recommend a preferred provider
- Manage the programme delivery and ensure its integration with our overall approach to development for commissioners

As you would expect from any Dearden product we will tailor the programme and its contents to meet all of the specific needs of individual commissioning organisations.