

Leadership and Management Training/Development

Final Internal Audit Report

2025/26

Cardiff and Vale University Health Board



Reasonable Assurance

Contents

Executive Summary	1
Findings & Agreed Action Plan	3
Appendix A	10

Review Reference

CVU-2526-19

Fieldwork

February - April 2026

Executive Sign Off

May 2026

Audit Committee

September 2026

Executive Lead

Rachel Gidman, Executive Director of People and Culture

Audit Team

Ian Virgil, Head of Internal Audit

Lucy Jugessur, Deputy Head of Internal Audit



Partneriaeth
Cydwasaethau
Gwasanaethau Archwilio a Sicrwydd
Shared Services
Partnership
Audit and Assurance Services



Executive Summary

Purpose

Our audit of Leadership and Management Training / Development was completed as part of our 2025/26 Internal Audit workplan for Cardiff and Vale University Health Board (the 'Health Board'). The purpose of the audit was to review the ongoing work to deliver leadership and management training within the Health Board.

In 2023 we undertook an advisory audit of Leadership Management Training and Development (CVU-2324-10) and a number of opportunities for improvement and development were identified.

The People and Culture Plan 2022-2025 Theme 6 is 'Leadership and Succession' which details the Health Board's commitment to developing leaders and managers. The Health Board leadership approach requires a focus on inclusion, collaboration and authenticity.

The Health Board's Education, Culture and Organisational Development Department have developed a Sharepoint page which includes the leadership and management development programmes that are available, which are:

- First Steps to Leadership and Management – This is aimed at those who are developing a leadership and management role.
- Essential Leadership and Management Skills – This programme is for managers who are responsible for managing a team and deputy managers (band 6 upwards).
- Elev8 – (Clinical Managers Programme) – This is for Band 7 Clinical Managers.
- Initi8 – Deputy clinical managers programme. Band 6 aspiring clinical Managers.
- Coordin8 – Shift management programme for registered nurses taking charge of clinical area which includes Band 5/6s.
- Compassionate Leadership 1 x day course – All career employment groups at all levels.
- Optimising Operations (Operational Manager Programme) – This is for Operational Managers (8c) and is currently under development.

Overview

A 2026/27 Leadership and Management Framework is nearing completion, with approval expected in Summer 2026. Its finalisation depends on HEIW completing their own Competency Framework, which will be integrated into the Health Board (HB) training portfolio. The Framework aligns strategically with national leadership plans, the 2025/26 HB Annual Plan, the Board Assurance Framework (March 2026), and the HB's 'Brilliant Basics' principles.

Our audit confirmed that resourcing of clinical and non-clinical training related to Leadership and Management Programmes is appropriately staffed to deliver the current provision, via the Education Team and Leadership and Management Team both of which sit within the Education Culture & Organisational Development (ECOD) team.

Health Board wide awareness of all Leadership and Management training offers is supported by a HB Leadership and Management Sharepoint site, a Viva site and via Communications Team emails.

All non-clinical and clinical Leadership and Management training Programmes have processes in place that provide monitoring and oversight of student attendance, course progress and completion and flexibility to change/retake course modules and transfer onto another course.

We also confirm that all Leadership and Management Programmes in place capture course participants feedback which is then reviewed and evaluated to amend and improve course content, quality and delivery where deemed appropriate.

We acknowledge that plans are in place to initiate reporting to the People and Culture Committee in the near future, but the Executive Director of People & Culture is appraised accordingly in this regard.

We have concluded **reasonable** assurance on this area.

The following matters requiring management attention:

- Ensure ongoing engagement with the Clinical Boards to inform the development and finalisation of the Leadership and Management Framework.
- There is a need to continue to engage with Clinical Board Senior Management to promote awareness of Programmes.
- There was no reporting of training Programme progress delivery and outcomes to the People and Culture Committee.

Full details of matters arising are detailed within the Findings & Agreed Action Plan. The following opportunity for enhancement has been identified that does not impact the overall opinion and are highlighted for management information:

- The draft Leadership and Management Framework needs to be updated to reflect the updated Health Board People and Culture Plan when its launched.

Scope & Assurance Summary

Objectives	The objectives and associated assurance ratings are not necessarily given equal weighting when formulating the overall audit opinion.	Related Findings	Assurance
1	The Health Board has developed a Leadership Framework following engagement with staff and management identifying leadership and management training programmes that are available locally, nationally and UK wide	1	Reasonable
2	Suitable resources are in place to ensure adequate delivery of the Leadership and Management training programmes	-	Substantial
3	Staff and Managers are made aware of the Management and Leadership Programmes that are available	2	Reasonable
4	There are appropriate completion rates of the programmes and attendees are requested to provide user feedback	-	Substantial
5	The Leadership and Management Programmes are appropriately evaluated to ensure their aims and objectives are achieved	-	Substantial
6	There is adequate monitoring and progress reporting on the leadership and management training activity to the People and Culture Committee and Board	3	Reasonable

Management Actions

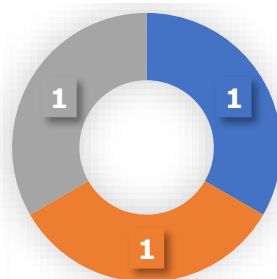


High Priority



Medium Priority

Themes



- Communication & Engagement
- Policies & Procedures
- Reporting

Risk Types

Legal & Regulatory Non-Compliance

Findings & Agreed Action Plan

Objective 1: The Health Board has developed a Leadership Framework following engagement with staff and management identifying leadership and management training programmes that are available locally, nationally and UK wide.

Reasonable

Overview / Summary of Observations

A draft 2026/27 Leadership and Management Framework (The 'Framework') is in place and in the final stages of development. Its completion is dependent on HEIW confirming the finalisation of their Leadership and Management Competency Framework, to enable alignment and incorporation of the agreed competencies into the training offers available to Health Board (HB) staff.

Our review of the Framework confirms that its content cites, and is in strategic alignment with, national leadership training plans as well as the 2025/26 HB Annual Plan, the Board Assurance Framework dated March 2026, and the HB Strategic Framework 'Brilliant Basics' principles.

We acknowledge that preliminary work on the Framework has been ongoing since our previous advisory audit review in 2023/24. Following the appointment of a senior manager in October 2025 to lead the newly formed Leadership and Management Team, there is clear and demonstrable evidence of sound and detailed progress made in its composition and content at the time of this audit. Profession specific engagement at Clinical Board Level was also seen in the Elev8 project plan, and the General Manager Programme Engagement Summary. Evidence of profession specific sharing of information across Clinical Boards was also seen.

A survey for Clinical Boards and corporate functions asking for SWOT analysis for Leadership and Management Framework content has also been live since November 2025.

There is currently no HB People and Culture Plan in place for 2026/27, as its development has been paused pending the establishment of the 2026/27 Health Board Annual Plan. Consequently, the Framework will need to be reflective of the content of the People and Culture Plan once finalised.

We further note that given its final draft status, the Framework has not been shared outside of the Leadership and Management Team, and only informally via progress updates with the Executive Director of People and Culture and the Assistant Director of OD, Wellbeing and Culture.

Key Findings

Risk & Impact

Agreed Management Action

1 <u>Development of the Leadership and Management Framework including Clinical Board Engagement / Contribution</u> There is evidence of ongoing engagement across the clinical boards in relation to the development of leadership and management offerings to enable the framework development. However, no bespoke framework engagement has been undertaken with Clinical Boards in relation to their input into the Leadership and Management Framework, as a decision was made not to do so until the HEIW Leadership and Management Competency Framework is received. However, we note that Leadership and Management Team members met with Clinical Board General Managers in October 2024 to discuss a future General Manager Development Programme for inclusion into the Framework, and there has been extensive engagement to support development of the Clinical Managers' programmes and this is evidenced in the audit file. As a result, there is an opportunity to engage with Clinical Boards to identify their current strategic training requirements, which can then be incorporated into the Framework in alignment with the content of the HEIW Leadership and Management Competency Framework. Theme: Policies & Procedures	The Health Board fails to deliver leadership and management training to develop staff within the Health Board.	Agreed Action: The draft Framework will be finalised and published as soon as possible once the HEIW Leadership and Management Competency Framework is received. Leadership and Management Programme Leads will continue to engage with Clinical Board and corporate function senior management teams to scope training requirements, helping to further prepare the Framework for completion.
	Medium Priority Control Operation	Expected Evidence of Implementation: • HEIW Framework received • Framework implementation plan, which will include circulation for comment to senior management teams • Approval of finalised framework at exec level • Publication of framework Officer: K McGuffie, Head of Leadership and Management Target Implementation Date: 29 May 2027

Objective 2: Suitable resources are in place to ensure adequate delivery of the Leadership and Management training programmes.

Substantial

Overview / Summary of Observations

All current leadership and management training Programmes are appropriately staffed within the respective teams within ECOD; the Education team, and Leadership and Management team. This enables them to deliver their training commitments, and both teams also have flexibility to provide cross-cover training provision support in the event of absence.

Non-pay budgetary expenditure lines are also in place for use by the Head of Leadership and Management in respect of the non-clinical training Leadership and Management Programmes in respect of the Leadership and Management programmes for travel expenses, subsistence, staff training, supplies, room hire to allow delivery of training events. The Head of Education holds a non-pay budget which covers the AV equipment contract for training rooms where courses are held, photocopier provision for training resources and digital licences to support the development of e-learning.

Overview / Summary of Observations

The Health Board Leadership and Management Sharepoint site has been continually updated, however, a refreshed site was launched in early April 2026 and was advertised to all HB staff via a Communications Team email and via the HB Viva site.

In addition, the Leadership & Management Team maintains a Viva Page on the HB Sharepoint site, which promotes and outlines its Leadership and Management Programmes, and provides enrolment access. A quarterly Leadership and Management newsletter was also launched and circulated to all HB staff in February 2026.

However, further work is required to engage with Clinical Boards and corporate functions further awareness of the training Programmes available to all Health Board staff.

Key Findings		Risk & Impact	Agreed Management Action
2	<u>Engagement with Clinical Board Senior Management to promote awareness of Programmes</u> Engagement to Clinical Boards and corporate functions in 2025/26 is ongoing with a view to sharing current training courses available. However, this ongoing plan is work in progress and should be complete by June 2026.	Engagement with Clinical Board Senior Management to promote awareness of Programme	Agreed Action: The Education Team and Leadership and Management will liaise with Clinical Board Triumvirates, Corporate Function and appropriate leadership teams to discuss and promote their respective educational Programmes to ensure maximisation of awareness of the courses on offer to all staff groups.
			Expected Evidence of Implementation: - Engagement schedule - Completion recorded over time - Regular advertising on multiple platforms i.e viva engage, Ask Suzanne, relevant professional meetings
		Medium Priority	Officer: K McGuffie, Head of Leadership and Management Target Implementation Date: 31 July 2026
Theme: Communication & Engagement		Control Operation	

Objective 4: There are appropriate completion rates of the programmes and attendees are requested to provide user feedback

Substantial

Overview / Summary of Observations

All staff non-clinical and clinical Programmes run by the respective Leadership and Management and Education teams have formal tracking processes and supporting spreadsheets in place to monitor ongoing achievement of Programme objectives, course participation progress and completion. Our review of the supporting spreadsheets identified a high level of course completion among staff.

Where staff are not able to fully undertake a Programme, they are able to change courses and/or resume their studies subject to agreement with the Programme Lead and their line manager.

We also evidenced that both the Leadership and Management and ECOD training Programmes have processes in place, supported by electronic documentation and the use of QR Code, to encourage and systematically capture student feedback at the end of each course module, and upon the completion of their studies.

Objective 5: The Leadership and Management Programmes are appropriately evaluated to ensure their aims and objectives are achieved

Substantial

Overview / Summary of Observations

Processes are in place to review and evaluate student feedback for both the non-clinical Leadership and Management Programmes and the Clinical Management ELEV8 Programme. Feedback is collated to identify key themes and trends relating to potential course improvements. We also evidenced that the outcomes of these are used to directly inform course amendments or feed into the Training Needs Analysis process.

We further note that these processes will also be replicated upon completion of the first Cohorts of the INITI8 and COORDIN8 Programmes later in 2026.

Both the ELEV8 Clinical Leadership and Management Programme and the non-clinical Leadership and Management Programmes have processes in place that allow for and encourage course participants to provide feedback on the content, delivery and satisfaction of the course Modules so as to inform quality assurance and recommendations for future Programme improvements.

Objective 6: There is adequate monitoring and progress reporting on the leadership and management training activity to the People and Culture Committee and Board

Reasonable

Overview / Summary of Observations

Inaugural reporting on performance activity, delivery progress and course feedback evaluation for the two non-clinical Learning and Management Programmes (First Steps to Leadership & Management and Essential Leadership & Management Skills) was presented to the People and Culture Committee in December 2025.

We acknowledge that performance reporting for the Education Team's Clinical Management Programmes cannot yet be undertaken, as two of the three Programmes are not due to commence until April 2026, and the ELEV8 Programme did not conclude until early April 2026. Consequently, no outcome analysis has been completed in respect of this Programme to date.

However, we note that that plans are in place for future reporting of all clinical and non-clinical Programme activity on a quarterly basis to the Executive Director of People & Culture, and with a view to onward activity and Programme delivery outcome reporting being made to the People and Culture Committee.

We also acknowledge that informal Programme delivery and progress are routinely provided to the Executive Director of People & Culture by the Head of Education, and the Head of Leadership and Management, respectively.

Key Findings	Risk & Impact	Agreed Management Action
3 <u>Reporting of training Programme progress delivery and outcomes</u> Currently there has been no routine reporting of activity, progress delivery and course feedback evaluation in respect of the two non-clinical Learning and Management Programmes (First Steps to Leadership & Management and Essential Leadership & Management Skills) since November 2025. Performance reporting of the Education Team's Clinical Leadership and Management Programmes cannot currently be undertaken, as two of the three Programmes do not commence until April 2026. In addition, the ELEV8 Programme concluded in early April 2026, and therefore no outcome analysis has been undertaken in respect of this Programme. However, we note that plans are in place for future reporting of all clinical and non-clinical Programme activity on a quarterly basis to the Executive Director of People & Culture, with the	The Health Board fails to deliver leadership and management training to develop staff within the Health Board	Agreed Action: Regular and formal progress reporting in relation to their respective programmes will be provided by the Head of ECOD and Head of Leadership and Management to the Executive Director of People & Culture. In addition, bi-annual reporting on programme progress and course completion outcomes will be submitted to the People and Culture Committee.

	intention that Programme activity and delivery outcomes will be subsequently reported to the People and Culture Committee.		Expected Evidence of Implementation: • Diary records of quarterly mtgs with exec and senior leaders • BAF contributions articulate Risk and Quarterly mtgs capture data and course outcomes and programme progress • Minutes of relevant meetings • Regular Value and impact data for L&M • Progress reports
		Medium Priority	Officer: K McGuffie, Head of Leadership and Management Target Implementation Date: 31 October 2026
	Theme: Reporting	Control Operation	

Appendix A

Assurance Opinion

	Substantial	Few matters require attention and are compliance or advisory in nature. Low impact on residual risk exposure.
	Reasonable	Some matters require management attention in control design or compliance. Low to moderate impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	Limited	More significant matters require management attention. Moderate impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	Unsatisfactory	Action is required to address the whole control framework in this area. High impact on residual risk exposure until resolved.
	Advisory	Given to reviews and support provided to management which form part of the internal audit plan, to which the assurance definitions are not appropriate. These reviews are still relevant to the evidence base upon which the overall opinion is formed.

Prioritisation of Findings

Priority	Explanation
High	Significant risk to achievement of a system objective OR evidence present of material loss, error, or misstatement. Poor system design OR widespread non-compliance.
Medium	Some risk to achievement of a system objective. Minor weakness in system design OR limited non-compliance.

Website: [Audit & Assurance Services - NHS Wales Shared Services Partnership](#)

Disclaimer

This audit report has been prepared for internal use only. Audit and Assurance Services reports are prepared, in accordance with the agreed audit brief, and the Audit Charter as approved by the Audit Committee.

Audit reports are prepared by the staff of the NHS Wales Audit and Assurance Services and addressed to Independent Members or officers including those designated as Accountable Officer. They are prepared for the sole use of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board, and no responsibility is taken by the Audit and Assurance Services Internal Auditors to any director or officer in their individual capacity, or to any third party.

The report is based on the review work undertaken and is not necessarily a complete statement of all weaknesses that exist or potential improvements. Whilst every care has been taken to ensure that the information provided in this report is as accurate as possible, no complete guarantee or warranty can be given with regard to the advice and information contained.

Our work does not provide absolute assurance that material errors, loss or fraud do not exist. Responsibility for a sound system of internal controls and the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities rests with management of Cardiff and Vale University Health Board. Work performed by internal audit should not be relied upon to identify all strengths and weaknesses in internal controls, or all circumstances of fraud or irregularity. Effective and timely implementation of recommendations is important for the development and maintenance of a reliable internal control system.

Public Sector Internal Audit Standards

Audit work undertaken by NHS Wales Audit and Assurance Services conforms with the International Standards for the Professional Practice of Internal Auditing and associated Public Sector Internal Audit Standards as validated through the external quality assessment undertaken by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy in April 2023.

