Preparing the ground
Culture
When considering ‘how’ the Developing Performance Framework can be integrated, firstly you need to reflect on the culture that exists in your school or work unit. There are a number of tools on the website and in this toolkit to help you.

On reflection of your workplace culture, you will begin to identify people’s behaviours and organisational processes which already exist that support and demonstrate the intent and underlying values of the framework. In tandem, you will identify the people’s behaviours and organisational processes that are counter to the intent and underlying values.

Only on reflection of your culture will you be in a position to determine ‘how’ you can work together with others to integrate the framework, either to enhance existing practices or as a means of bringing about cultural change.

The case studies that follow demonstrate some of the reflections and resulting key actions team leaders in pilot schools and work units undertook, to effectively begin the process of integrating the Developing Performance Framework.

**Case study: Preparing for workplace cultural change together**

After 12 months of working with the Developing Performance Framework, the Office of Higher Education has taken significant steps towards its preferred future. Working through a series of activities has helped team members to foster cohesion, clarify roles and increase interaction and communication between and within teams. It has also encouraged team members to better understand one another.

All team members participated in an initial information session, which proved a valuable opportunity for them to reflect on the values of the branch and consider a vision for the future with the Developing Performance process as part of their workplace culture.

After this session, each team met to talk about team objectives for the coming work period and how the Office of Higher Education would undertake the four phases of the Developing Performance process.

A suggestion box was set up to encourage people to provide anonymous feedback and raise any concerns relating to the Developing Performance process.

At a second round of meetings, team leaders used various culture tools from the Developing Performance website to focus discussion on people’s perceptions of the existing workplace culture, and the steps needed to reach their ‘preferred future’.

One of these activities invited team members to submit three photographs reflecting the things they saw as important to the workplace, and provide a caption for each. The photographs were displayed in a common area and people discussed what the images said about the culture of the work unit.

Further activities included group exercises to explore the communication and behavioural styles of team members, and to reflect on the ways in which the existing culture supports or hinders innovation in the workplace.

Thanks to the participation of team members in these activities, everyone now has a shared vision of how the Developing Performance process will benefit individuals and the branch as a whole.
Case study: A culture built through coaching

The Developing Performance Framework prompted Dale Wolfenden, Principal of Boulia State School, to reflect on the current culture of the school and consider how he would lead his team into the future.

Dale recognised that both the coaching he had from his Executive Director (Schools) and the way in which he coached the teachers at his school provided a strong grounding for integrating the Developing Performance Framework.

Dale continued his coaching with teachers, making sure that his focus during discussions was not only on the ‘here and now’ of key work tasks, but also on the aspirations of his team and how he could support them.

He wanted to build on this success and began to have similar conversations with each of the other members of the school team. By replicating this coaching approach with the teacher aides and administrative officer, Dale was able to reinforce that each person makes a valuable contribution to the learning outcomes of students at Boulia State School.

Twelve months on, Dale reflects, ‘The framework has become a part of what we do’.

Case study: Building on strong collegial relationships

According to the team members of the Performance Monitoring and Reporting Branch, ‘What makes a workplace is the people you are working with’.

In light of this, team leaders decided to adopt an ‘all-in’ approach to the Developing Performance process, involving all team members from the beginning, and building on the existing strong collegial relationships within the current function-based team structures.

As part of the process, a Developing Performance ‘champion’ was nominated by team leaders. This team member was highly effective in relaying to others a clear vision for the framework’s integration and ensured that the Developing Performance process was well organised.

This champion also played a key role in supporting team leaders to build the capabilities needed to lead the Developing Performance process. The progress of teams in integrating the Developing Performance process was a regular agenda item at team leader meetings. This enabled them to offer collegial support to each other as required and maintain the momentum of making Developing Performance conversations a part of day-to-day practice.
Case study: A culture supporting multiple worksite employees

For Mount Isa’s team of Speech Language Pathologists, the Developing Performance process is enriched by the opportunities provided through working across multiple worksites.

Mount Isa District has a strong cultural focus on people, data and outcomes, and the team’s pre-existing set of values, beliefs and ways of working made discussing options and issues in relation to integrating the framework possible.

In clarifying ‘how’ the Developing Performance process would work for this travelling team, existing professional reporting relationships with their Speech Language Pathologist in Charge and line management relationships with each principal were taken into consideration.

Team members believe that the discussions they have with the principals and teachers in each school enable them to plan a service specially tailored to support the needs of the students. They also believe they need to discuss their work plans with the Speech Language Pathologist in Charge in order to continue to provide the best possible service. The sharing and building of knowledge and skills that this professional reporting relationship offers enables them to continue to grow as professionals in a specialised field.

As a result, the speech language pathology team collaboratively decided that each team member would clarify expectations and key work tasks with each principal during their first school visit each year. This would be followed by a discussion with their Speech Language Pathologist in Charge, during which they would also share their career aspirations, and support and professional development needs.

While this transparent and planned process appears straightforward, it relies on trusting relationships and open lines of communication to be effective. As one team member says, ‘Feeling comfortable speaking about our performance to our team and the teachers and principals at the schools we visit is important. Having the Speech Language Pathologist in Charge to give professional support is the other key to success. We travel a lot. Having this network of people means we can find the support we need wherever we are’.