

ssat

Student Leadership for



Student Leader Recognition Scheme

Introduction for Teachers

Introduction: What is the Student Leader Recognition Scheme?

“Most students admitted anxiety about leadership experiences as it required them to step outside their comfort zone. They discussed how confidence was crucial as it was associated with self-belief and willingness to put oneself forward in a group.”

Wright et al, 2023

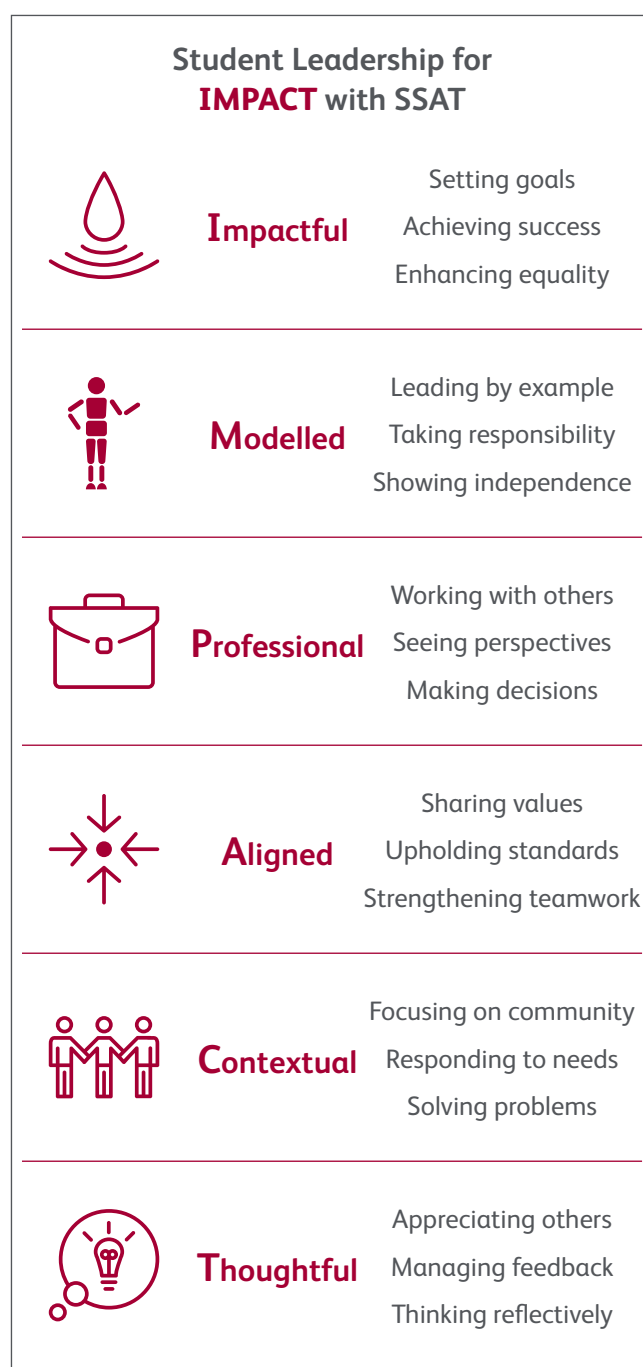
For leaders at every level, recognition matters

As the UK’s foremost provider of support for student leadership, SSAT have been recognising the work of student leaders for decades. Our recognition scheme for student leaders is based on a wealth of research in this vital field of student learning and growth.

The recognition scheme enables students to self- and peer-evaluate their student leadership contribution across 18 key skills and abilities within the six key domains of Student Leadership for IMPACT. These are shown in the infographic to the right.

Our recognition scheme reflects research by Coffey and Lavery (2017), amongst others, who say that “there is a need for schools to provide a ‘continuum of opportunities’...age-appropriate and scaffolded in order that students can continually build on their leadership schools.”

The scheme recognises how students build leadership skills over time through a range of activities.



Student leadership can be learned (and taught) over time

SSAT's newly improved recognition scheme for student leaders is rooted in the evidence that student leadership can be learned and therefore taught. Student leaders, if well supported by adults, can progressively build their abilities in the six key domains outlined above along a continuum that begins in the primary phase of education and concludes when they are at the cusp of adulthood in secondary or tertiary education.

Our recognition scheme has four levels of award to capture key milestones in this leadership journey for students: leadership of self, leadership with others, leadership within school, and leadership beyond school.



- ▶ **Bronze Award** shows that students can lead and manage themselves and their development. Students at this level are at the beginning of their leadership journey.
- ▶ **Silver Award** shows that students can play a leading role in groups with others that they know. Students at this level are developing their capabilities as leaders.
- ▶ **Gold Award** shows that students can take up leadership roles that benefit others at their school and even the school itself. Students at this level are embedding key leadership capabilities.
- ▶ **Platinum Award** shows that students have become future leaders who serve their communities, within and beyond the school, well. Students at this level are transforming into adult leaders.

Students can achieve bronze and silver award recognition based upon everyday classroom and social space interactions. Students seeking gold and platinum award recognition can draw upon formal student leadership roles and their wider contributions to the school and beyond.

Student leaders benefit from the recognition process in many ways

Recognition that does not feel earned has less impact than recognition that feels deserved. As part of a thorough process, SSAT's Student Leader Recognition Scheme offers student leaders multiple benefits from different layers of hard-won recognition, which includes:

- ▶ Developing criticality and self-reflection skills (self-recognition)
- ▶ Curating a robust and validated evidence base (recognition by others)
- ▶ Seeing their achievements through the views of others (peer recognition)
- ▶ Knowing that their work is seen and valued by their school (institutional recognition)
- ▶ Appreciating the next steps in their leadership journey (recognition of potential)
- ▶ Experiencing validation from a national organisation (expert recognition)

Schools also benefit from the process of recognising student leadership

Schools who take up the Student Leader Recognition Scheme will also see multiple benefits from engaging fully in the processes that underpin it.

- ▶ **Engaging students:** Recognition of student leadership at all levels, and of both informal and formal contributions to school life, serves as a spur to greater student engagement.
- ▶ **Engaging colleagues:** Recognition of student leadership in classroom settings and in the school's social spaces demonstrates how all adults can contribute to leader growth.
- ▶ **Strengthening culture:** Recognition of student leadership across all six domains helps to show the alignment of everyday practice with the stated values of the school.
- ▶ **Organisational reflection:** Recognition of student leadership enables schools to bring to light hidden successes and provide insights for future development of whole school practice.
- ▶ **Enhancing capacity:** Recognition of student leadership, for all the reasons above and more, helps build the capacity of students, those supporting them, and the school.

Alongside our long-standing work to recognise student leadership, SSAT has created a new School Recognition Scheme. This takes an organisational lens to the six domains of student leadership for impact, enabling schools to be recognised for their work in this area. The process, explained [here](#), can also help strategic planning to enhance student leadership.

Accredit the impact of your student leaders through SSAT's unrivalled recognition process.

If you've been thinking about how to build a stronger culture of student leadership, responsibility, and recognition in your school, now is the time to act.

The **SSAT Student Recognition Scheme** is the only national framework that recognises and accredits the leadership skills your students are already developing.

With the Student Recognition Scheme, you can:

- ▶ Provide a clear, structured pathway for student leadership at every stage.
- ▶ Recognise and celebrate the skills and contributions of your students.
- ▶ Strengthen student engagement, motivation, and sense of belonging.
- ▶ Build consistency across leadership roles, from prefects to peer mentors.
- ▶ Join a national network of schools committed to student voice and leadership.

SSAT are the UK's biggest and most experienced provider of student leadership training and support for education providers, with over 30 years of experience helping schools build the capacity and capabilities of their student leaders.

We can support your school with training your student leaders, student and school recognition schemes, professional learning for staff and much more.

Don't miss the opportunity to bring a proven, nationally recognised framework for student leadership into your school.

Start now and see the difference in your students.

Book a call

Book a call with Dr Keven Bartle, Senior Education Lead to discover more about the benefits of our Student Leadership Recognition Scheme.



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