

Housing Ombudsman

Competency Definitions

This competency framework is used to promote an explicit understanding of role relevant expectations and development needs, primarily focussed on supporting personal development.

The elements of competencies as taken from CIPD Toolkit 'Competencies' by S. Whiddett and S. Hollyforde (2007) are:

Aspirations – what the organisation is working towards i.e. the reasons why individuals are working in the organisation

Behaviours: what we see when individuals are working towards the organisation's aspirations i.e. evidence of competency

Characteristics: the skills, knowledge and attitudes that underpin the behaviours

It is also used for recruitment purposes to ensure candidates have the pre-requisite skills and behaviours to be effective in role.

It is not intended to be used to assess performance and gathering evidence as part of quarterly Performance and Development Reviews. However, where capability issues exist it can be used to support dialogue aimed at promoting an explicit understanding of role expectations and notable skill/behaviour gaps.

The competency narrative provided should be viewed as indicative and situational rather than an absolute list of behaviours to be displayed at all times.

Core competencies for all roles

Organised

What you are doing	What you're not doing
Planning and prioritising activities, managing a multiple task workload. Letting others know about progress and if there are any risks that may cause delay, seeking to exceed your delivery targets. Also being aware of, and help organise, the team case load, highlighting any resource issues and helping others manage their workload.	Focusing on one task at a time, not consistently tracking your own progress and inappropriately prioritising. Not keeping others informed of progress or any risks to progress on tasks, whether caused by others or yourself.

Using initiative and taking action

What you are doing	What you're not doing
Being pro-active in identifying and resolving problems, anticipating others' needs so they can be addressed before becoming a big issue. Working autonomously, progressing issues in a timely manner and making independent decisions; seeking to use your own initiative. Reacting appropriately to situations, appreciating the wider impact of decisions made by yourself and others.	Being reactive to problems and needs, waiting until they become a higher priority before addressing them. Inappropriately delaying taking action and decisions, not resolving issues. Seeking a high level of direction from others avoiding taking ownership and accountability for your work.

Working collaboratively

What you are doing	What you're not doing
Seeking to understand others' motivations and reactions. Encouraging others to share their views and listening to them. Looking to achieve a better outcome by working with others on issues, actively supporting collaborative working	. Focused on yourself and not on the motivations and reactions of others. Not asking others for their views or listening to them. Seeking to achieve a better outcome by working on your own.

Talking to others/ Conversing with others effectively

What you are doing	What you're not doing
Speaking confidently, clearly and fluently using professional, objective language, avoiding jargon or criticism. Actively listening to and probing others with questions to explore their needs. Adjusting your approach in conversation in response to other's reactions (e.g. tone of voice, volume, complex vs. simple level of language, empathic language). Being aware of your impact on others in conversation.	Being hesitant when you talk and difficult to understand. Using unprofessional and slang language. Conveying personal bias and subjectivity. Not listening to and exploring others' needs. Conveying information and decisions in a manner which doesn't account for the person you are talking to and how they might react or are reacting. Being unaware of your impact on others in conversation.

Seeks to learn

What you are doing	What you're not doing
Identifying and applying learning opportunities for self improvement. Pro-actively seeking to learn new techniques and technology. Able to make meaning of information and probe for additional information to reinforce your learning.	Lacking self-awareness around your own capabilities. Content with the status quo and not seeking change to bring about improvements in yourself and the organisation. Learning new techniques and technology only when it's asked of you. Not seeking additional information to reinforce your learning.

Role specific competencies

Seeking improvement

What you are doing as Enquiry and LR1/Corporate Services Officer	What you are doing as an LR2 and FR/ Management Accountant, Compliance and Finance Officer, Procurement and Project Officer	What you're not doing
<p>Knowing when to seek advice and assistance to achieve an outcome. Identifying and applying learning opportunities for organisational improvement. Sharing the knowledge gained for the benefit of organisational improvement. Seeking and giving feedback. Problem solving /error detection effective at enabling present procedures and objectives to be maintained or improved ('single loop learning').</p>	<p>Spotting what needs to change and looking to address these to bring about improvements both within the organisation and 'whole system'. Pro-actively scan for and consider the merits of use of new and emerging techniques and technologies to improve system and processes. Pro-actively helping others in their learning, for example sharing knowledge and skills, helping them improve their quality of work and helping others have more effective discussions around complicated cases and dispute resolution.</p> <p>Able to influence mindset and behaviour change in others.</p> <p>Is able, having attempted to achieve an objective or problem solve on different occasions, to modify the objective or underlying norms and polices in the light of experience or possibly even reject the objective and redefine it ('double loop learning') for example replacing current procedures with new ones</p> <p>Ensuring others' work is of a good quality, seeking and giving feedback.</p>	<p>Content with the status quo and not seeking change to bring about improvements in the organisation and 'whole system'. Remains unaware of new and emerging techniques and technology.</p> <p>Not seeking or giving feedback, and not monitoring the quality of work by others.</p> <p>Not offering support to others in their learning</p> <p>Repeated attempt at the same problem, with no variation of method and without ever questioning/re-evaluating the original intended objective.</p>

Objective analysis

What you are doing as Enquiry and LR1/Corporate Services Officer	What you are doing as an LR2 and FR/ Management Accountant, Compliance and Finance Officer, Procurement and Project Officer	What you're not doing
<p>Probing information and assumptions impartially and correctly to establish the facts, identifying the key information. Able to identify what is missing and gather this evidence. Logically weighing up the information and evidence. Responses to a situation addresses the issue.</p>	<p>Probing information and assumptions to separate opinion from fact, identifying and gathering the key information. Logically weighing up the information and evidence. Intervening early and reacting appropriately to situations as they arise. Drawing well-reasoned conclusions and solutions from the information, considering the consequences of your decisions. Analysing highly complicated situations, spotting the wider impact to resolve underlying issues.</p>	<p>Accepting information at face value without spotting what may be opinion rather than fact. Missing information and overemphasising elements of the evidence (e.g. introducing personal biases and views). Confusing the key and trivial issues, leading to ineffective and impractical solutions.</p>

Effective conversations with an outcome focus

What you are doing as Enquiry and LR1/Corporate Services Officer	What you are doing as an LR2 and FR/ Management Accountant, Compliance and Finance Officer, Procurement and Project Officer	What you're not doing
<p>Having effective conversations to achieve an appropriate outcome, adapting to the other person's responses. Articulating straightforward decisions and actions to help resolve issues. Gaining agreement to simple decisions to facilitate appropriate outcome/resolution. Identifying and articulating the options available to achieve an outcome. Managing expectations.</p>	<p>Speaking to others as a means to achieve a resolution, adjusting what you are saying according to their response. Facilitating effective conversations using a variety of techniques (e.g. role modelling, seed sowing, coaching) to bring people together to work towards a common goal. Articulating complex arguments, handling objections effectively and negotiating difficult decisions verbally.</p>	<p>Focusing on the immediate conversation rather than the overall outcome that needs to be achieved. Having ineffective conversations which slow down, block or escalate an issue. Failing to gain agreement to simple decisions and actions leaving issues unresolved.</p>

Effective writing

What you are doing as Enquiry and LR1/Corporate Services Officer	What you are doing as an LR2 and FR/ Management Accountant, Compliance and Finance Officer, Procurement and Project Officer	What you're not doing
<p>Good basic writing skills and documents are error free, logically structured and clear. Able to write a bespoke report, letter or email presenting an argument, decision or action. Adjusting style of writing for the audience to create the appropriate impact.</p>	<p>Excellent advanced writing skills, documents are error free, logically structured and clear. Writing demonstrates a reasoned balance of the information and the path of decisions and conclusions are easy to follow. Influencing others by articulating complex arguments and decisions well in writing. Adjusting style of writing appropriately for audience. Able to write complicated bespoke documents.</p>	<p>Poor writing skills and documents contain errors (e.g. spelling, grammar, punctuation). Writing is confused and illogical so the path of decisions and conclusions are difficult to follow and therefore lack influence. Don't adjust style to suit the end reader.</p>