

Defra Competency Framework

Managing relationships

- Leading and influencing
- Developing high performance
- Collaboration

Taking decisions

- Thinking with vision
- Making effective decisions
- Delivering value for money

Driving delivery

- Making things happen
- Delivering in partnership
- Changing with pace

It's vital that the Department is lined up to deliver Our Strategy

Our strategy outlines clearly and concisely what we need to deliver



The Defra Competency Framework outlines how each of us needs to behave to achieve strategic objectives



Context

Staff from the People and Performance Directorate and the Renew team have refined the current frameworks within Defra (e.g. Big 5, Core Competence Framework) and replaced them with one overall framework, which incorporates the Professional Skills for Government framework. The key objective is to create a simple, pragmatic, user-friendly behavioural framework.

It was developed with consultation across the Department, across all grades and with a number of Executive Agencies.

Aligned to Strategy

Defra's mission is to enable everyone to live within our means, ensuring that the resources and environment that we need and enjoy are available for us all, now and in the future. The framework outlines the competencies that each of us needs to display for Defra to achieve its strategic objectives. Everyone can put these competencies into practice now – many people are already doing so.

What are competencies?

Competencies are the knowledge, skills and behaviours that lead to successful performance for all roles. The Defra Competency Framework outlines nine competencies, which are grouped into three clusters as outlined in the diagram opposite.

What does it mean for me?

This framework is a common language for you to describe the behaviours that deliver successful performance across Defra.

It clarifies the behaviours that will lead to successful performance. It will help to provide greater understanding and consistency for you and all staff across Defra.

What is different?

- A single framework for all staff, from Director General to AO
- Each competency includes behavioural examples that describe effective and ineffective behaviours for each grade/grouping of grades

How will I use it?

The behavioural examples have been provided for each grade/grouping of grades, to give you the most relevant examples for your role.

The Defra Competency Framework will be used in key people processes such as assessment and selection, learning and development and flexible staff resourcing. It will be used in SCS performance management for the second half of the performance reporting year 2007/8. A new performance management process will come into effect on 1 April 2008, and people below SCS will start to use the framework as part of this change. More details on this will follow.

Leading and influencing

People who influence effectively communicate with clarity and conviction. At senior levels they provide strong directional leadership, engaging staff, delivery partners and wider stakeholders in Defra's vision and goals. They improve the Department's reputation on a national and international stage. For all in Defra, it is the ability to communicate issues quickly with clarity, accuracy and enthusiasm, and to influence effectively when needed.

People who are effective in this area:

- inject energy and enthusiasm to inspire others
- demonstrate desirable behaviours – act as a role model
- translate vision into clear, meaningful messages
- are clear and fluent in both written and verbal communication
- relate easily to people from diverse backgrounds and cultures, and to people from all grades in Defra
- conduct persuasive and constructive negotiations
- represent Defra positively within Whitehall and beyond.

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistently delivers inspiring, engaging and meaningful messages about Defra's direction to staff, delivery partners and stakeholders • Actively develops and protects Defra's reputation – creates a sense of pride • Negotiates and influences successfully at the highest levels across Whitehall and beyond • Takes a strategic approach to identifying and building stakeholder relationships • Highly articulate and credible at the most senior levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives messages about Defra's direction that are unclear or unconvincing • Misses opportunities to champion Defra's achievements • Crumbles under the media spotlight • Fails to translate strategy or relate to the audience • Not always regarded as credible or impactful by senior contacts
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspires staff and delivery partners to engage fully with the long term vision and purpose of Defra • Actively promotes Defra's reputation externally and internally – publicises successes widely • Influences successfully across Whitehall and beyond • Communicates with conviction and clarity in the face of tough negotiation or challenge • Translates vision and Defra's strategic priorities into meaningful objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does little to create clarity about strategy or purpose • Crumbles under the media spotlight – appears unsupportive of Defra and its staff • Avoids building profile within or outside Defra – few people know or appreciate what they do • Backs down readily in the face of challenge or tough negotiations

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translates Defra's strategy into clear and meaningful objectives for self and staff • Inspires staff and stakeholders to engage fully with programme objectives • Communicates with conviction and clarity in the face of tough negotiation or challenge • Written and verbal communication is clear, structured and convincing for the relevant audience • Promotes Defra's reputation externally and internally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does little to engage staff with Defra's Strategic Objectives • Communication is confusing, unconvincing or uninspiring – little attention is paid to audience needs • Reinforces status and hierarchy – insists that communication is channelled through management layers • Appears overly defensive or reactive to challenge from key stakeholders
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspires the team to engage with project objectives and ensures effective two-way communication • Demonstrates enthusiasm, commitment and energy to projects and to Defra generally • Written and verbal communication is clear, structured and tailored for the relevant audience • Demonstrates confidence influencing upwards to senior managers • Demonstrates and instills pride in Defra and what it stands for 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates in a way that dispirits or does not enthuse others • Communication is confusing or unpolished – little attention is paid to detail • Keeps their head down – does little to inform or influence others • Relies on hierarchy to influence – passes issues upwards • Allows projects to run into difficulties through inadequate communications
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conveys enthusiasm and energy around project goals – encourages others to do the same • Written and verbal communication is clear and structured • Demonstrates pride in Defra and what it stands for • Speaks confidently when influencing colleagues and managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication is confusing or inaccurate • Is unfairly negative about Defra to colleagues or friends • Gives in very readily when challenged – allows conflict to jeopardise project success • Finds it difficult to express self confidently to colleagues or managers
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates pride in Defra and what it stands for • Ensures written communication is clear and accurate – in plain English • Speaks clearly and checks that they are understood • Asks questions to appreciate other's ideas and points of view 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is unfairly critical about Defra to colleagues or friends • Written communication is vague, inaccurate or full of errors – does not take steps to address • Is unclear or hesitant when speaking – struggles to persuade others • Complains they are not listened to – but contributes little that is constructive

Developing high performance

People who are focused on developing high performance see continuous learning and development as central to realising potential for individuals, teams and Defra as a whole. At senior levels this relates to consistently building capability through role modeling, coaching, development and performance management. For all in Defra, it is about building one's own capability, taking personal responsibility for development and passion for learning.

People who are effective in this area:

- manage performance effectively – coach, develop and empower
- address performance issues firmly, fairly and promptly
- think ahead about succession issues – spot and develop talent
- give colleagues support and advice for their development
- seek feedback proactively
- take on challenging tasks and assignments to stretch their own learning
- empower others to broaden thinking and experience – creates opportunities to develop.

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes a strategic, long term perspective to identify Defra's capability needs over the next 3-5 years • Champions people performance and development issues – gives them prominence in Board debates • Drives a performance culture across the Department – agrees clear plans and objectives to raise performance year on year • Renowned as an effective coach and sounding board for senior people – devotes dedicated time to support and mentoring • Regarded by others as an effective role model for continuous learning and self development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopts a short term, narrow perspective – focuses on technical gaps over leadership and people management skills • Continually looks to HR to lead on people issues – invests little personal time to develop Directors or future talent • Offers token support to Defra people initiatives – does little to champion them or ensure follow through • Tolerates poor performance – does little to hold Senior Civil Servants to account • Is resistant to or dismissive of personal feedback
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies capability requirements to deliver Defra strategies over the next 3-5 years • Champions development, succession and performance management activities and holds managers accountable for implementation • Sets clear objectives to drive year on year performance improvements • Devotes dedicated time to supporting and empowering direct reports • Regarded by others as an effective role model for continuous learning and self development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on technical gaps above leadership skills or development of future talent • Tolerates poor performance – does little to hold managers to account for their own or their teams' performance • Consistently allows performance management and development to take a low priority • Invests little time in developing mentoring or coaching • Seldom seeks feedback or challenges themselves to stretch their own learning

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively contributes to development and succession plans for their area • Delegates stretching responsibilities to broaden thinking and experience – creates opportunities for learning on the job • Manages performance against clear and stretching standards – rewards success – addresses poor performance honestly and promptly • Devotes dedicated time to supporting and coaching the team to deliver high performance through others • Effectively prioritises continuous learning and self development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places low priority on people management and development • Retains talented individuals at the expense of their development • Assumes responsibilities that could be delegated or over-delegates • Allows poor performance and standards to pervade across teams • Does little to address own learning or development needs
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considers team's capability to deliver current and future work – takes action to address any gaps • Identifies and develops talented team members to support succession planning • Monitors performance against clear objectives – addresses poor performance promptly • Devotes time to coaching and developing colleagues – provides ongoing feedback • Continually seeks opportunities to learn and develop – regularly seeks and acts on feedback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places low priority on coaching and development of others • Assumes responsibilities that could be delegated • Allows poor performance and standards to pervade – avoids difficult conversations • Relies on training courses as the only means to develop people • Dismisses or explains away problematic feedback
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes ownership for own development – consistently achieves development objectives • Proactively supports development of colleagues and staff reports • Personally seeks to improve the performance of direct staff and team members • Gives constructive and timely feedback to colleagues and regularly seeks it • Takes responsibility for quality of work – increases personal contribution through continuous learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers performance issues to more senior members of team • Totally reliant on their manager to identify or address any personal development needs • Acts quickly to find excuses or blame others for poor quality of their work • Resists involvement in training – does little to follow through on development objectives or action planning • Is unwilling to listen or learn during feedback
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifies own skills and knowledge gaps for their development plan • Is enthusiastic about learning and development – makes time to achieve development objectives • Regularly seeks feedback and makes changes as a result • Takes responsibility for quality of work – asks for training/guidance when unclear • Develops self beyond scope of current role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overreacts to constructive feedback or dismisses it completely • Is quick to find excuses for poor quality of their work • Regularly blames others for poor quality work • Does little to follow through on development feedback • Has poor attendance on training programmes

Collaboration

People who are effective here actively discourage a silo mentality and ‘us and them’ thinking. At senior levels this relates to driving collaboration across Defra and (when needed) other departments and areas. For all in Defra, it is about maintaining a positive team spirit for the good of Defra, which celebrates diversity in skills and perspectives.

People who are effective in this area:

- readily support colleagues and team members
- create and maintain a strong team spirit
- value diversity – draw on diverse skills and perspectives at all levels in the team
- build and maintain complementary teams
- work to break down silos across different teams, functions and departments
- think through issues corporately – not just for their own area
- challenge ‘us and them’ thinking
- learn from others and share their own knowledge freely.

Effective behaviour	Ineffective behaviour
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a full partner on the Board – contributes wholeheartedly to strategic debates beyond own area • Establishes network of collaborative relationships at the highest levels in Whitehall and beyond – focuses on common ground and outcomes • Drives a collaborative working culture across Defra – encourages transparency and open communication • Champions fairness, equality and respect across Defra – sets and visibly demonstrates clear standards for behaviour • Is visible and accessible – relates easily to people from diverse backgrounds • Takes a corporate approach to prioritising resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows a ‘them and us’ culture to pervade across the Department or Whitehall – reinforces singular perspectives, ignores diversity, identifies blockers to collaboration • Promotes a ‘knowledge is power’ culture • Perpetuates a hierarchy based on gradism or elitism • Shows a limited appreciation of diversity – allows unfairness and inequality to go unchallenged • Permits unacceptable or disrespectful behaviour to persist within (and across) areas
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages cross-Defra collaboration and establishes principles of working • Builds a broad network of relationships and senior contacts across Whitehall • Champions fairness and equality across Defra – sets clear standards for behaviour • Is visible and accessible – relates appropriately to people from diverse backgrounds and levels in organisation • Actively promotes knowledge sharing and ensures teams take account of lessons learned • Volunteers significant resources (people and finance) to programmes of greater priority to Defra 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protective of own area – resistant to involvement from external colleagues or experts • Consistently protects resources and interests of own department at the expense of Defra’s priorities • Reinforces singular perspectives and siloed way of working • Promotes a ‘knowledge is power’ culture – retains authority and withholds information • Struggles to assimilate diverse and multiple perspectives (political, cultural, international) – over-plays the significance of one view over others • Permits unacceptable or disrespectful behaviour to persist in own area and with other teams

Effective behaviour	Ineffective behaviour
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Swift to enlist support and input of a network of key stakeholders and experts from other areas • Is astute and skilled at managing the dynamics within complex teams (including external agencies, external departments) • Works with their managers to generate a common focus and genuine team spirit amongst diverse teams • Keeps up to date with progress in other areas – releases resources and support to projects with higher priority • Fosters a working environment that promotes equality, fairness and respect – holds staff accountable for unacceptable behaviour • Promotes knowledge sharing within the team – creates understanding of lessons learned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiercely protective of own area – resistant to involvement from external colleagues or experts • Views networking as a distraction • Struggles to manage the pulls and tensions when working across different teams • Resists joint working with other teams to overcome problems or progress ideas • Allows inequality, unfairness or inappropriate behaviour to go unchallenged • Consistently protects resources and interests at the expense of Defra’s core priorities
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiates cross-project working parties to address issues that impact across projects • Has a range of contacts within Defra and the delivery network that can be called upon as required • Invests time to generate a common focus and genuine team spirit – appreciates the diversity of team members • Readily gives resources and support to higher priority when requested • Relates to people from diverse backgrounds and geographies – appreciates their perspectives • Keeps knowledge base up to date and available to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates barriers or negative feeling between or within project teams • Invests little or no time in networking • Allows unhelpful communication to pervade – makes excessive use of meetings and emails • Makes decisions with little regard to impact on other projects or teams • Creates reasons why resources and support cannot be released • Allows a ‘them and us’ atmosphere within the team – fails to address inequalities or challenge false assumptions about individuals and groups
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributes to a positive team spirit – is consistently helpful, supportive and respectful • Develops a range of contacts outside of own project team • Anticipates what information needs to be shared and when – keeps others up to date • Readily spots opportunities to share learning and make progress by working with colleagues • Relates easily to people from diverse backgrounds and geographies – challenges examples of unfair treatment or inequality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on achieving own objectives over supporting team • Quick to make negative assumptions about people’s abilities or attitudes • Is overly critical about people who make mistakes or do things differently • Tolerates inequality, unfairness or disrespect without comment • Rarely shares information – or restricts it to immediate colleagues
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive about contributing to work of whole team, not just own work • Takes an interest in who they work with – builds an appreciation of their backgrounds, skills and preferences • Is consistently empathetic, supportive and respectful of colleagues • Welcomes requests for help from within and outside team – always meets commitments • Shares own knowledge openly and freely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused on achieving own objectives over supporting colleagues • Quick to make unfounded assumptions about people • Is overly critical of people who make mistakes • Does not consistently treat all colleagues fairly, equally or with respect • Keeps information to themselves

Thinking with vision

At the most senior levels, people who are effective in this area are able to see the bigger picture beyond Defra (including UK, EU and global issues), set agendas, drive strategic direction and create a clear vision. For all in Defra, people will have the vision to think differently, identify improvements and challenge the status quo where appropriate.

People who are effective in this area:

- can see the bigger picture beyond Defra and understand what is happening outside the Department
- scan the horizon to spot significant new trends and developments
- keep abreast of latest thinking – have intellectual curiosity
- set a clear, focused strategy
- can communicate where Defra is going and why
- make Defra's strategic vision relevant for people and engage them with it
- think broadly across the full set of Defra priorities
- think innovatively to identify improvements.

Effective behaviour	Ineffective behaviour
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retains a long-term focus – anticipates national and international developments on a timeframe of 3-5 years or more • Has exceptional levels of insight into evolving societal/global requirements and their strategic impact • Constantly scans and monitors the international environment to spot significant new trends and developments • Can envisage radical shifts in global priorities and forecasts the impact of emerging national and international developments • Creates a clear long-term vision for the Department that supports agenda setting and drives its strategic direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses predominantly on short term timeframes and current priorities • Sets strategy without reference to external developments or international trends • Retains a focus predominantly within the Department/ own area • Allows strategy or focus to become out of step with wider external developments • Generally assumes that business will continue as usual for the foreseeable future
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retains a long-term focus – anticipates wide developments on a timeframe of 3-5 years or more • Sees the total Departmental context – comments intelligently on wider processes – understands the views of external stakeholders • Knowledgeable of Defra vision, strategy and direction across all areas – relates it to own portfolio of activities • Ensures strategies and programmes are joined up and come together to achieve Defra's overall purpose and vision • Keeps abreast of external trends and developments (changes in other jurisdictions, other parts of government, customers, national consciousness) – aware of current, key research and in touch with relevant research councils 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates plans or priorities without reference to strategy or the bigger picture • Finds it difficult to project what might happen longer term • Strategises and intellectualises at the expense of taking action • Out of step with major trends, e.g. changes in the international priorities, other government departments, etc. • Fights own corner and demonstrates a narrow focus, instead of taking the whole Defra view

Effective behaviour	Ineffective behaviour
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitors external trends and developments (across government, EU and globally) – considers how changes will impact on Defra activities • Acts as an innovative thinker and focal point of expertise across the Department • Applies judgment and makes recommendations with the wider implications of their actions • Understands the implications of Defra's strategic direction for their area • Prepared to accept when their area is of lower priority in the overall Defra strategic vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses solely on the technical correctness of decisions – not on their implications for Defra priorities • Restricts thinking within Defra – is not abreast of latest external developments • Focuses exclusively on short-term, tactical tasks (days, weeks) • Gets lost in one of Defra's priorities at the expense of others • Does not consider how activities of different areas combine to achieve overall goals
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinks about how the work of their team fits into overall Defra picture • Brings in new ideas and offers best practice • Understands Defra priorities and what it is trying to achieve • Makes changes in work processes and programme outcomes that are clearly linked to Defra's strategic direction • Keeps abreast of changes in the external environment that have implications for Defra 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a limited understanding of Defra priorities or what they mean for activities within their area • Sceptical of ideas or developments from outside Defra – has a 'not invented here' mentality • Does not coordinate work of own team with others to achieve Defra priorities • Overly focused on local needs with limited exploration of what this means for Defra priorities • Retains processes that have outlived their usefulness
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands how their activities fit into achieving Defra priorities – explains decisions to others • Understands when to challenge existing practice or take action to establish a new precedent • Focuses on the overall goal and intent of what they are trying to achieve, not just the task • Proactively suggests improvements and alternatives • Shows an awareness of wider Defra priorities and what's happening outside of Defra 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is uninterested in the broader/ longer term priorities of Defra • Decisions have no clear link to the bigger picture • Sticks rigidly to precedent even when it is damaging to the goal • Follows the process to the letter instead of concentrating on the desired outcome • Has limited knowledge of the latest developments for their area or Defra generally
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands how their tasks fit into achieving Defra outcomes • Carries out own tasks in a way that makes it easier further on in the process • Asks questions to get clarity on what success looks like, takes steps to achieve this • Shows an interest in wider Defra priorities and vision and asks questions to find out more • Suggests new ideas to improve how their job is done 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates no interest in what Defra is trying to achieve overall • Deals with issues in isolation – does not think through to the end result • Waits to be told what needs to be done • Carries out tasks to the letter rather than the spirit

Making effective decisions

People who are effective in this area are able to make both hard and not so hard choices. They show clarity of thought to cut through complex evidence, identify the priority issues, weigh them up quickly, incorporate the right level of advice and reach clear definite and timely decisions. For all in Defra, it is about making confident, high quality decisions with an eye to their practical implications.

People who are effective in this area:

- analyse swiftly to get to the heart of issues
- have the clarity of thought to cut through complexity
- face up to hard decisions and tough choices – including doing nothing
- use all available evidence to make sound decisions
- take personal responsibility for decisions
- think through the practical impact of their decisions
- make clear, definite and timely decisions – even when details are not certain
- resist the temptation to chop and change, re-visit or revise decisions.

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively navigates the political and wider environmental pressures that impact or define Defra's overall purpose • Balances competing national and international agendas and the financial consequences to decide the right course of action • Steps up to make unpopular decisions and defends them at the highest level • Creates a culture that encourages an appropriate level of risk taking based on thorough analysis of the available evidence • Decisions are open to scrutiny and challenge from stakeholders and the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaves it too late to take action to secure long term goals • Limits their view to a narrow set of influences – oversimplifies the issues and takes precipitate action as a result • Lacks confidence in making decisions when the situation is unclear – constantly calls for more information • Constantly makes changes for change's sake in the face of new information • Allows people to get away with unsupported decisions or recommendations • Creates a punitive environment for decision making – discourages initiative
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes quick decisions – reshapes their function where opportunities arise to move things forward • Understands when their portfolio of activities' emphasis has changed – follows through with the necessary decisions to shift focus • Quick to see the issues – handles complexity and gets to the heart of problems to create clarity • Obtains the right information for making decisions in advance • Pushes decisions to the right level in their function, resists attempts to defer upwards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sticks to the overall strategy even when it is superseded by events • Omits to consider implementation issues when making policy decisions • Considers only a narrow range of information in shaping policies – and so limits their application • Constantly chops and changes decisions as new information arises • Decisions are often revisited due to lack of or poor quality analysis and evidence

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brave about making decisions that combine data, experience and intuition – can act or decide when the details are not certain • Knows when to refer problems to a more senior level and where to go for advice • Balances the need for pace with rigorous, evidence based analysis • Effectively combines a range of business information to identify key issues and risks – makes swift and well judged decisions • Copes well with complexity or uncertainty – knows how to act when there is not a black or white answer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers to others instead of making a timely decision themselves • Needs high levels of certainty to be confident enough to take decisions • Gets weighed down in possible options when details are not certain • Makes gut or value judgements not backed up by analysis and facts • Refuses to reconsider decisions, despite valid challenge
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducts thorough analysis – makes decisions based on well supported facts and input from relevant experts • Considers the longer term impact of decisions • Recommends difficult decisions between competing objectives and needs of the team • Makes decisions when they are needed • Empowers team members to make decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers most decisions to a more senior level • Misses opportunities or deadlines by delaying decisions • Makes decisions based on incomplete analysis – does not assess their practical impact • Contributes to lack of clarity on who and what decisions need to be made • Makes great decisions in hindsight and penalises people for things that could not be foreseen
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes decisions within the limits of their remit quickly and confidently • Conducts thorough analysis and makes decisions based on well supported facts • Fully considers the potential impact of their decisions • Acts with confidence in making decisions and prepared to explain them clearly • Asks questions and says when they are unsure of what they have to do 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refers decisions rather than taking responsibility for them • Is not open to being challenged on their decisions • Over-complicates and creates confusion which leads to decisions being put off • Encounters problems by failing to check issues or speak up when they are unsure
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes decisions within the limits of their role quickly and confidently • Will speak up and challenge decisions constructively • Understands the context and background to the tasks they are asked to undertake • Thinks through the implications of their decisions – considers their impact on the rest of the team • Asks questions to clarify important points 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes decisions without the information to back them up • Does not share their experience to help others make decisions • Puts off making decisions • Makes incorrect decisions through failure to check or clarify

Delivering value for money

People who are effective in this area ensure that Defra is maximising its strategic outcomes within the resources available. At senior levels it refers to the quality of finance and resourcing decisions – the ability to assemble and challenge robust business cases and the ability to actively manage the Department’s portfolio of activities to achieve return on investment. For all in Defra, it is about using Defra’s resources to add value and focusing on the good of Defra rather than just one’s own (or own area’s) fortunes.

People who are effective in this area:

- assemble robust and persuasive business cases
- clearly demonstrate how recommended actions deliver value for money
- identify innovative solutions that deliver optimal value for money
- use finances and resources creatively – consistently do more with less
- have their finger on the pulse – can account for finance and resource usage at any point
- anticipate the financial consequences of decisions and actions
- calculate return on investment over the longer term – e.g. future costs, exit.

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Champions a culture that emphasises efficiency and value for money • Ensures the Defra portfolio maximises strategic outcomes for the Department • Makes tough decisions on spend – allocates resource to the highest strategic priorities • Challenges budget submissions – insists they are supported by a robust business case • Holds Senior Civil Servants to account for budget management and delivering value for money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows non-core activities to divert funds • Signs off spending with insufficient challenge • Cannot provide evidence of how their area of Defra is using its allocated resources and budgets • Allows significant overspends to go unchallenged • Makes financial decisions that are not in the best interests of Defra
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates robust business cases – clearly illustrates return on investment • Makes strategic choices on spend – willingly foregoes non-priority expenditure • Sets targets for improved efficiencies across programmes • Sets up systems to monitor and track effective use of resources • Follows the finance process rigorously – accurately forecasts outcomes and spend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Makes financial decisions that benefit their own area at the expense of Defra overall • Over-simplifies analysis e.g. focuses on cost at the expense of value (immediate expenditure vs longer term return) • Seldom mentions costs or efficiencies – does not encourage their function to be frugal • Recommends levels of investment or cost not justified by the likely return • Monitors and tracks insufficiently, allows variances against budget to escalate

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with their manager to track spend and demonstrate value for money • Constructs robust business cases to justify planned expenditure • Achieve return on investment – delivers more for less on specific budgets • Prioritises spend effectively to balance funding pressures across projects within the programme • Challenges their team to maximise the use of resources and reduce wastage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bases budgets solely on what was done last year • Misses opportunities to share resources • Takes a siloed approach to the financials – concentrates on the wrong priorities for saving money • Unwilling to drop activities or make choices on spend • Does not monitor spend as it occurs – allows budget variances to escalate
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a robust case to justify requests for funding • Ensures all submissions contain appropriate financial information • Recommends actions to achieve value for money and efficiency • Plans and forecasts against budgets, reviews and monitors progress • Supports and challenges others to improve inefficiencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not look for or demonstrate best value for money options • Does not monitor or manage the services being provided – does not consider if Defra is getting what it is paying for • Ignores financial experts – does not ask for advice • Pursues technical perfection without considering value for money
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can justify expenditure and create well supported argument for extra expenditure e.g. overtime • Provides well supported cost/benefit arguments to support recommendations • Gets best value for money using relevant policies and processes • Challenges others appropriately where they see wastage • Takes on board and actively considers all ideas for improved efficiencies no matter where they come from in the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not link requests for funding to a clear business rationale • Tolerates wasteful practices without challenge • Favours easiest method even if not most cost effective • Makes little or no reference to the financial or resource implications of proposed ideas/activities
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works as efficiently as possible • Understands business data within own area • Treats tax-payers’ money with respect • Identifies and communicates opportunities to reduce waste/save money • Challenges others appropriately where they see wastage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misses opportunities to achieve their goals more cost effectively • Frequently chooses convenience over cost-effectiveness • Does not consider how to be less wasteful with Defra resources that they use • Has no or limited understanding of alternative ways of obtaining the services they need

Making things happen

People who deliver are outcome-focused. At the most senior levels they create an environment and culture that is highly performance focused. At all levels, they prioritise activities on the critical path, make objectives, responsibilities and outcomes clear, set out clear plans, then drive activities through to completion to deliver the right outcomes. They work in a paced yet organised way. They hold themselves and others fully accountable and consistently deliver on time, to standard and to budget.

People who are effective in this area:

- translate ideas and proposals into clear, meaningful objectives
- prioritise ruthlessly – and resist the temptation to be diverted or distracted
- constantly focus themselves and others on the priority outcomes
- achieve total clarity on responsibilities, objectives and outcomes
- make the best use of Programme and Project Management (PPM) techniques, including risk management and benefits realisation
- hold themselves and others fully accountable for delivering outcomes
- consistently deliver the right outcomes on time, to standard and to budget.

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sets and maintains a clear, visible and highly focused direction for Defra • Retains a strong focus on strategic priorities – gauges when to change direction and when to hold firm • Swift to re-focus the department on new priorities as changing situations dictate • Agrees clear structures and systems to promote efficient delivery • Drives a performance culture across the Department • Demonstrates visible leadership – holds self and the Department fully accountable for outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displays imprecision about direction and focus – creates confusion within Defra or lack of confidence outside • Allows the Department's focus to drift away from critical priorities over time • Regularly chops and changes between alternative priorities or initiatives – creates initiative overload • Readily allows problems or external challenges to distract Defra from its core priorities • Allows the Department to get away with poor results and inaction
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translates strategic priorities into clear, outcome-focused objectives • Drives through complex activities and large-scale programmes • Creates comprehensive plans that balance the full range of factors – compiles, monitors and mitigates risks (e.g. financial, resource and information) • Develops contingency plans to address unexpected developments – adjusts quickly when things change and takes prompt corrective action when things begin to go wrong • Demonstrates visible leadership – holds self and others fully accountable for delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constantly revisits and revises priorities – gives mixed messages about direction • Sets goals that are unrealistic, vague or narrow in scope • Plans suffer through inadequate contingency planning or risk management • Does not adapt or adjust priorities when circumstances alter • Allows problems within/outside own area to hamper progress

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focuses on results – establishes challenging and achievable objectives • Uses PPM effectively – identifies risks and escalates quickly • Plans activities with high levels of pragmatism • Focuses people on the most critical priorities – promotes collective ownership and holds people accountable • Consistently delivers on time and to standard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows programmes to lose momentum and focus – takes limited or no action to track progress or quality standards • Readily diverted from achieving critical goals by non-priority issues • Allows difficulties or obstacles to compromise results • Appears unrealistic about what can be achieved within given timeframes or resource constraints
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes accountability for delivery of own and team's work • Makes effective use of project management skills • Sets challenging yet realistic objectives and milestones • Ensures complete clarity of objectives and responsibilities at team and individual level • Tracks progress and consistently delivers high quality on time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on guesswork to calculate timescales or resource requirements • Imprecise in communicating goals, objectives or timescales • Allows self and others to be diverted by pet projects • Checks progress sporadically – allows work to lose momentum • Significantly under-estimates or over-estimates what can be achieved
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinks ahead – creates clear plans, prioritises, and manages own work • Ensures own objectives are understood and they are clear of what is expected of them • Works with energy and pace • Monitors progress – delivers priorities on time and to a high standard • Takes on extra work to support others when needed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on others to focus and plan their work • Remains unclear about their key priorities or what is expected of them • Spends disproportionate time on non-priority issues • Frequently misses deadlines or quality standards • Needs close management to deliver on time or to standard
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works in an organised manner to deliver on time and to a high standard • Accurately prioritises their work wherever possible • Reprioritises to support their team achieve its objectives • Deals with problems before they are a threat to delivery • Works with energy and pace to make things happen 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Struggles with timely delivery on a regular basis • Spends excessive time pursuing a perfect result • Sticks to own work – seldom volunteers to take on extra work even when need is clear • Leaves problems – relies on others to sort things out • Needs to be closely managed to deliver objectives

Delivering in partnership

People skilled in this area create, manage and deliver through excellent working partnerships. At the most senior levels they build, maintain and promote effective partnerships and identify the most appropriate external delivery partners for the job. They engage with and manage delivery partners effectively, holding them accountable and tracking their performance. They balance the needs of delivery partners against those of Defra.

People who are effective in this area:

- work jointly with delivery partners to achieve best outcomes
- secure mutual understanding and commitment with delivery partners
- develop robust business cases with relevant stakeholders
- balance the requirements of delivery partners with Defra's best interests
- agree outcomes, track progress, hold delivery partners accountable
- complete ongoing monitoring and share learning around delivery
- can have uncomfortable conversations with delivery partners
- maintain relationships in a way that delivers value for money.

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively builds networks and relationships with partner bodies, stakeholders and clients across UK, EU and globally • Creates a culture of working with and through delivery partners to achieve Defra outcomes • Ensures that all parts of the delivery chain fully understand the required outcomes • Involves delivery partners early in the development of policy and delivery options using the Defra Policy Cycle • Confronts issues with delivery partners, stakeholders and clients in an assertive yet constructive way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not set the tone for effective delivery partnership working • Loses sight of which partner is responsible for delivering what part of the policy • Unsympathetic to the differing needs or agendas of delivery partners • Fails to maintain relationships during difficult times – e.g. lashes out or burns bridges, avoids discomfort • Publicises differences between own Directorate and delivery partners – does not attempt to inform the delivery partners in advance
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively creates, maintains and promotes relationships with delivery partners • Involves delivery bodies and stakeholders early on in the development of policy and delivery options using the Defra Policy Cycle • Delegates the appropriate authorities that enable delivery partners to perform • Achieves full understanding of delivery partners (e.g. their needs, roles and responsibilities, governance, funding) • Sets clear expectations – encourages team to engage with delivery partners and stakeholders using the Defra Policy Cycle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates policy and processes without involving delivery partners • Approaches delivery partners only on a need-to-know basis • Communications only mention Defra, external awareness of delivery partner contribution and profile is low • Insensitive to the needs or circumstances of delivery partners • Allows delivery partners' needs and interests to take precedence over Defra's • Allows team to remain unclear about how to work with delivery partners – does not encourage early engagement

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactively creates, maintains and promotes relationships with delivery partners • Knows when to involve more senior Defra members in creating/managing delivery partnerships • Ensures the team use the Defra Policy Cycle in working with delivery partners • Involves delivery partners in designing and suggesting improvements to processes • Ensures their team understand how to engage effectively with delivery partners and stakeholders, understanding and anticipating their needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has limited understanding of delivery partners' knowledge and expertise, or specifics such as roles and responsibilities, governance, funding, etc. • Feels he/she has all the answers – rarely involves stakeholders or delivery partners nor gets their buy in • Imposes deadlines, service levels, standards etc. on delivery partners instead of taking a partnership approach • Team has no knowledge of how they are expected to deal with delivery partners
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive about building and maintaining networks with delivery partners • Ensures mutual understanding of priorities, perspectives and pressures • Consults and negotiates with delivery partners early in the Defra Policy Cycle • Ensures delivery partners are clear on what is expected of them and how they fit into the achievement of the shared goal • Acknowledges the contribution of delivery partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speaks with delivery partners only on a need-to-know basis • Prioritises delivery partner needs over those of Defra • Ignores the knowledge and expertise that delivery partners bring • Does not set out clear expectations about who needs to do what • Habitually shifts the blame to delivery partners
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexible in adapting to different working habits or expectations in partner organisations • Readily looks to delivery partners for their knowledge and expertise • Knows who to contact in partner organisations when they need help • Is consistently helpful, positive and collaborative with delivery partners • Readily shares information with delivery partners – ensures they are up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inflexible about changing things that could make delivery partners more effective • Quick to make assumptions about delivery partners' motives or commitment to deliver • Maintains unnecessary barriers with delivery partners • Is overly critical about delivery partners and sceptical about alternative approaches • Rarely shares information with delivery partners – or restricts it to particular delivery partners
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works and proactively seeks to build relationships with delivery partners in the same way as members of the Defra team • Takes an interest in who they work with – builds an appreciation of their backgrounds, skills and preferences • Effectively meets and anticipates delivery partners' needs when co-working • Open to the different perspectives, input or advice that delivery partners offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a 'them and us' attitude to delivery partners – treats them less favourably than Defra colleagues • Quick to make judgements and unfounded assumptions about delivery partners • Is openly disparaging of delivery partners • Has limited insight into delivery partners' needs or their requirements for an effective working relationship • Is resistant to the alternative views, advice or input of delivery partners

Changing with pace

Effective people handle change with responsiveness and adaptability. At senior levels they champion and drive through change strategically. At all levels, they are willing to be flexible and move swiftly without over-complicating things. Changing with flexibility and pace helps create an environment for challenge, change and renewal, and enables Defra to respond quickly to emergencies.

People who are effective in this area:

- are quick to change tack if the existing approach is not working
- are not overly attached to how things are usually done or have historically been done
- drive a culture that promotes challenge and change
- manage change through their area
- actively champion and support change
- engage others to adopt change by outlining the rationale
- deal promptly and effectively with emergencies
- work with swiftness and simplicity – they do not over-complicate or gold plate processes
- are flexible about which roles and activities they are prepared to undertake.

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Director General	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creates a culture of flexibility and responsiveness – ensures they and their managers act as role models • Demonstrates clear leadership – mobilises the Department to respond swiftly to emergencies and changing priorities • Challenges the status quo at the highest levels across Whitehall • Critically evaluates new approaches against broad, long term criteria (PSAs, Defra strategy, impact on EU, delivery partners etc.) • Adopts a comprehensive perspective when introducing change – considers impact on culture, government structures etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argues to retain the status quo – supports only incremental improvements within isolated areas • Permits programmes to become unnecessarily complex – does not challenge gold plating culture • Encourages unnecessary bureaucracy – restricts decision making to highest levels • Adopts a piecemeal approach to change management – focuses on task at the expense of culture and morale • Tolerates a culture of inertia across their department
Directors and Deputy Directors	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes effective systems to deal promptly with emergencies and create clear accountability throughout the process chain • Identifies step changes that quickly transform flexibility, responsiveness and quality of service across Defra • Sets clear objectives for improvement and holds managers accountable for making a demonstrable difference • Challenges the status quo in own and related areas – urges managers to consider issues from completely new perspectives • Considers a wide ranging impact when introducing change – on culture, government structures etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argues to retain the status quo and lacks a flexible approach • Permits programmes to become unnecessarily complex – does not challenge gold plating culture • Encourages unnecessary bureaucracy – restricts decision making to highest levels or grades • Focuses on task at the expense of culture and morale • Tolerates a culture of inertia across their portfolio of activities • Restricts changes to own portfolio of activities – does not challenge change in other Defra programmes

<i>Effective behaviour</i>	<i>Ineffective behaviour</i>
Grades 6 and 7	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts swiftly – mobilises teams to respond quickly to emergencies • Works with others to provide reassurance to overcome people's resistance to change • Involves the team in ideas to simplify processes and enhance flexibility and responsiveness • Publicly celebrates examples of responsiveness and flexibility within their teams – makes it real for people • Demonstrates purposefulness, pace and energy in their approach – sets the tone for others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argues to unnecessarily retain the status quo • Allows projects to become unnecessarily complex • Reduces flexibility by introducing multiple processes and sign off requirements • Automatically assumes that extra resources are the answer – does not think flexibly or resourcefully • Does not seek solutions when problems in other government departments, delivery partners or stakeholders affect progress • Does little to instill pace or focus amongst teams
SEO and HEO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures teams are fully up to speed with systems for handling emergencies • Regularly reviews approaches – works with teams to identify improvements, simplify and speed up processes • Maintains momentum and focus within their teams to implement changes • Supports their team and colleagues through changes – explains rationale for change and benefits • Proactively tests effectiveness of new processes – ensures feedback is addressed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepts current approaches as good enough – rarely questions or seeks improvements • Allows resistance and negativity to change to go unchallenged • Allows problems arising from change to block or slow progress • Does little to instill a sense of pace or focus within their team
EO	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourages colleagues to proactively respond to emergencies • Readily volunteers to assume new responsibilities – is happy and flexible to work where needed most • Supports their team and colleagues through changes • Identifies ways to simplify or speed up approaches to their job • Proactively adapts and supports changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dismisses colleagues' concerns about change – does not support them or discuss the rationale • Allows work to fill the time given – makes no effort to simplify or speed up approach • Expresses reluctance to assume new responsibilities • Has difficulty adapting to changes – holds on to old ways of working
AO and AA	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works quickly and efficiently – consistently delivers on time • Readily volunteers to assume new responsibilities – happy and flexible to work where needed most • Visibly steps up a gear to respond to emergencies • Is open minded and positive about changes • Quick to pick up on new procedures and approaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works at a slow pace – over-complicates tasks or procrastinates • Uncomfortable with new approaches – holds on to old ways of working • Easily upset by sudden changes to usual work routine • Encourages negative feeling and discussion about change • Expresses reluctance about moving roles

Please refer to Human Resources on Defra Online for guidance, or contact:

Shared Services Enquiry Centre

Telephone 0845 603 7262

E-mail ssd.enquiries@defra.gsi.gov.uk



defra
Department for Environment
Food and Rural Affairs