

A guide to creating your own competence framework

Creating your own competences

If you have decided to create your own competence statements, a good way to start is to identify the tasks you have to carry out and the performance standards you are expected to meet in your role.

Your job description should broadly detail the tasks of your job. Performance standards will be influenced by customer and management expectations or benchmarked good practice. They may include quality, safety and environmental aspects.

Next, consider the combination of knowledge, skill and attitude that is needed to perform your work competently. Think about technical, business, managerial and personal skills.

This should give you a set of competence statements (usually written as 'able to...') which also describe performance standards in terms of responsibility taken or level of supervision needed, or the complexity of tasks that can be undertaken. It is also useful to describe the 'context' under which you work, as this provides insight to others on how your skills are applied. For example, your context might include the size of organisation, describe the breadth of your role, staff responsibility, technology and equipment used, etc.

An example of a competence statement:

Applies a methodical approach to assignments, incorporating analytical and systematic techniques.		
Supervised Practitioner	Practitioner	Expert
For specific tasks undertaken, can explain the method followed in performing the tasks and can indicate the resulting structure in the work.	Has chosen appropriate methods for safety-related projects, and can explain how and why these methods were chosen to perform the different tasks required for the project.	Can explain how the work performed on different projects undertaken within the organisation is monitored and controlled to ensure a methodical approach, backing up the explanation with documentary evidence from previous projects.

Assessing your level of competence

Established competence frameworks usually have a formal scale of grading system and guidance on how to approach assessment. Assessment against your own competence statements will be difficult without some indicators to help you, so it is advisable to set your own.

When considering a scale to use for assessment, we suggest keeping it simple. It may help to think of the possible extremes for a competence statement – with little or no understanding at one end and complete mastery at the other – then set some milestones along the way.

Some examples of common scales are provided below:

Category A: Fully competent in area.

Category B: Can demonstrate competence in most elements associated with area.

Category C: Can demonstrate competence in some elements associated with area.

Category D: Unable to offer any evidence in competence area.

Trainee: You are learning how to do a task.

Supervised practitioner: You can perform the task, but require some supervision.

Practitioner: You can take full responsibility for, and are completely competent in, performing the task. You can supervise and train others.

Expert: You have superior and in-depth understanding of the task, and the function in general, to take overall responsibility. You will keep abreast of developments and be able to work in diverse situations. You are the person all others turn to for advice.

Level 1:

- Performs the activity with significant supervision and guidance.
- Performs basic routines and predictable tasks.
- Little or no responsibility or autonomy.

Level 2:

- Performs the activity in a range of contexts.
- Supervision is only required in more complex circumstances.
- Some individual responsibility or autonomy.

Level 3:

- Performs the activity in some complex and non-routine contexts.
- Significant responsibility or autonomy.
- Can oversee the work of others.

Level 4:

- Performs the activity in a wide range of complex and non-routine contexts.
- Substantial personal autonomy.
- Can develop others in the activity.

Level 5:

- Can take a strategic view.
- Applies a significant range of fundamental principles and complex techniques across a wide and often unpredictable variety of contexts.
- Wide scope of personal autonomy.

For more information about using competence frameworks for CPD including recording and verifying your competence assessment, please visit our website www.theiet.org/cpd