



Rhondda Cynon Taf

Community and Social Care Competency Framework

(Including Social Care Professionals)



(January 2009)



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Competencies – Explanatory Notes

What are ‘Competencies?’

The competencies in this document describe how really ‘excellent’ staff would work in Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council (RCTCBC). They don’t describe specific tasks that people do as part of their job, (job descriptions do this). Instead they describe *how* someone who is really effective would do those things, and *what else* they would do in addition to those things. Working in a way that is described by the competencies doesn’t necessarily mean doing ‘more’ in terms of work, but it can mean working differently.

All positions within RCTCBC are included in this framework. There are 9 main job families:

- Strategic Management (Heads of Service and above)
- Middle Management
- Supervisors / Team Leaders (1st line managers)
- Administrators
- Ancillary workers
- Care and Community
- Frontline and Customer Care staff
- Skilled Manual Workers
- Technical, Specialist and Professional staff

The decision tree on page 5 will help you to identify which job family your job is most likely to be in. If you have any questions regarding which competency framework is most suitable for your role, please discuss this with Human Resources (HR) or your line manager.

By using competencies to define what ‘excellent’ performance looks like for everyone, and encouraging people to work in these ways, RCTCBC is more able to deliver levels of service that will really make a difference to our Community.

Understanding Your Competencies

The overview shows a summary of all the competency framework headings on 1 page. There are a number of competency areas that have been identified as being key for all workers in RCTCBC and although the actual demonstration of these may vary for different jobs, these competencies are important for everyone. The key competencies are:

- **Working with other people** (this also includes in a team or in a partnership)
- **Communicating Effectively**
- **Focusing on Service Users** (this also includes looking after their interests, earning their trust, working with service users and meeting service user needs)



Each of the competencies is broken down into a list of specific behaviours which has three columns. On the left column of each list are the things that other people would be able to see you doing if you were ‘excellent’ at your job. On the right, are the negative versions of those behaviours which give examples of ineffective behaviour. Between the two extremes, an adequate, basic, level of performance is described.

The three descriptions for each type of behaviour **illustrate points 1, 2, 2.5, 3, 4 and 5 sliding scale**. You might feel that you don’t sit in any particular ‘box’, all the time. However, because there is a **range of behaviour** between the positive and negative behaviours, it is possible for someone to sit between the points. Or, you may show both positive and negative sides of the same behaviour at different times, for example depending on who you are working with.

This is shown in the example below:

Here is an extract from the *Communicating Effectively* competency, with the in-between behaviours added in grey to show the full scale:

An excellent RCTCBC Worker:

An ineffective RCT CBC Worker:

4	3	2.5	2	1
Communicates clearly and concisely	<i>Generally communicates well (good standard rather than excellent)</i>	Uses communication that requires some checking by others	<i>Communication can be vague or unclear-would benefit from some development</i>	Is unfocused and unclear and leaves others unsure of what was said or meant

If you need help understanding what the scales and behaviours mean in relation to your job, please discuss them with your line manager.

The health and safety of our staff and service users and valuing diversity are core to all our values in RCTCBC and are either expressed as specific competencies or are integrated into individual frameworks.

How the Competencies Will Be Used

This set of competencies will be used within RCT’s Performance Plus! system to help everyone in the Council to see where they are in relation to ‘excellent’ performance.

This set will also be used to measure candidates’ suitability when they are applying for jobs like yours at RCT, to make sure the best people are selected. They can also be used to define training and development content.

Although these sets of competencies describe qualities of ‘excellent’ workers, it is accepted that it would not be realistic to expect anyone to show all the positive behaviours, across all of the competencies, all of the time. However, there is an



expectation that people strive towards this ideal. The competencies should therefore be seen as something to aim towards, and to help you to clearly understand where your strengths lie and where you may need further development.



RCTCBC Community & Social Care Competency Framework



RCTCBC Community & Social Care - Competency Framework (Overview)

People

Working with Partners (1)

Forming strong relationships with partners to enable effective joined-up provision of services.

- Clear about objectives
- Respectful
- Open

Working with Team Members (2)

Works effectively with others, building strong relationships in order to maintain a positive working atmosphere.

- Respect, trust, constructive relationships
- Supportive
- Collaborative

Communicating Effectively (3)

Communicates key issues clearly and effectively with wide range of people, adapts own communication style and approach as necessary.

- Sensitive,
- Questioning
- Adaptive
- Clear, effective, timely

Looking After the Service Users' Best Interests (4)

Is alert to issues that might impact on the service received by Service Users, and maintains a duty and standard of care in line with professional standards.

- Open-minded, empowering
- Focused on needs
- Risk awareness

Earning Service Users' Trust (5)

Creates a rapport that encourages service users to be as open as they need to be in order for their needs to be best met.

- Keeps promises
- Confidentiality
- Empathy
- Clear boundaries

Tasks

Working with Change (6)

Contributing to a culture of openness and responsiveness to changes, whether coming from inside or outside the team.

- Receptive, open
- Flexible
- Creative

Achieving Results (7)

Delivers high-quality outcomes on time by setting clear targets and focusing closely on what's important.

- Professionally competent
- Motivated
- Clear aims
- Balanced with well-being

Culture and Values – The RCTCBC Context

Encouraging Professional Development (8)

Seeks to continually improve own professional development and supports others to do the same.

- Willing to learn
- Participates
- Up to date

Complying with Health and Safety (9)

Ensures personal and team health, safety and well-being through understanding and correctly applying the appropriate RCTCBC H&S policies

- Vigilant
- Careful
- Considerate



Working with Partners

Forming strong relationships with partners to enable effective joined-up provision of services.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Works to overcome conflicting viewpoints for the best interest of the Service User	Can take a passive role when involved in difficult discussions	Puts their own agenda first, is likely to fuel divisions
Recognises the value and expertise of others within the wider environment	Recognises the value of some, but is less appreciative of the value of others	Tries to present themselves as the expert (above others)
Actively identifies partners and community networks that can be used for the benefit of the service user	Has enough knowledge of partners to identify the ones most likely to assist, but may be missing some key information	Has little knowledge of partners' capabilities or how they can be of benefit to the service user
Keeps partners informed and up-to-date with what's happening with Service Users	Can neglect to tell partners about key Service User issues	Does not appreciate partners' needs to be well-informed about developments
Learns from partners	May not give partners full credit for what they might know about an issue	Sees partners as having little to contribute in terms of professional knowledge
Sees other partners as professionals, and is respectful towards them	Can be overly careful or not careful enough with members of other organisations	Behaves disrespectfully to other partners
Is respectful of boundaries but tries to break down barriers to co-operation	Can allow professional boundaries to get in the way of connecting service provision together	Takes an 'us and them' approach
Ensures that everyone has a clear idea of what their roles are and what they are trying to achieve	Can assume everyone else knows what needs to happen	Is not clear about roles and responsibilities



Working with Team Members

Works effectively with others, building strong supportive relationships in order to maintain a positive working atmosphere.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Builds lasting, positive & supportive relationships based on trust	Has some good working relationships with team members, but others that are more formal or distant	Prefers to remain detached from others; has to be approached by others
Recognises that all members of the team have different skills and experiences that can be drawn on	Recognises others' different skills, but does not always fully appreciate their value	Can look down on some members of the team as having less professional standing or ability
Contributes to a strong team spirit of shared responsibility and co-operation	Co-operates with team members, but only when necessary	Prefers to work independently of other team members
Is supportive and empathic	Will take time to listen to some people sometimes	Shows little or no empathy with colleagues' issues or problems
Is flexible and considerate in helping colleagues to achieve their goals	Helps with demanding situations, after completing own priorities	Is reluctant to give assistance, even when colleagues are struggling
Asks for support when needed	Can continue for too long working under pressure without requesting support	Keeps control over all work, risking quality of decisions and outputs
Has a strong positive influence on joint decisions	Has more impact in some situations than others	Struggles to successfully influence joint decisions
Promotes and demonstrates an ethos of equality and diversity	Complies with, but doesn't fully embrace, equality and diversity issues	Tolerates or shows discriminatory behaviour



Communicating Effectively

Communicates key issues clearly and effectively with wide range of people, adapts own communication style and approach as necessary.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Communicates clearly and concisely	Communication requires some checking by others	Is unfocused and unclear
Is able to deliver difficult messages sensitively	Shows some awareness of the emotional impact of messages, but can prefer to focus on what needs to be said rather than how it should be said	Is blunt or overly forthright
Genuinely listens to others' views, openly considering what they are saying	Gives people attention, although can be impatient or inattentive	Tends to ignore what people are saying
Keeps a flow of information going to allow quick resolution of issues or queries	Relies on a natural communication flow for sharing information	Is a barrier to good communication
Produces clear, accurate and up-to-date reports and records	Important written information sometimes lacks clarity	Reports and record often have to be queried as to their accuracy and meaning
Uses style of language that others (e.g. children, young people, community representatives, managers, professionals), can clearly understand	Adapts style and language to suit some but not all groups	Expects everyone to understand their own style and language



Consistently uses the form of communication that is best for the situation (e.g. verbal, email, writing)	Uses the quickest, or their own preferred method of communication, rather than the best one	Does not use the most appropriate forms of communication or overly relies on one format e.g. email
Actively checks their own understanding of what others have said	Sometimes makes assumptions about what was meant without checking this further	Takes what is said at face value
Asks open and reflective questions	Generally uses a mixture of questioning styles	Uses forced choice or closed questions to validate their own thinking



Looking After the Service Users' Best Interests

Is alert to issues that might impact on the service received by Service Users, and maintains a duty and standard of care in line with professional standards.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Understands the Councils approach to the 'environment' and demonstrates consideration of social and environmental concerns in day to day role	Shows some awareness of the Councils approach to the 'environment', but does not show consistent evidence of this underpinning their work and interventions	Has a limited awareness of the Councils approach to the 'environment', and struggles to see the relevance through their work
Listens to the views of the service user, and includes those involved with the service users, to define the best ways forward	Listens to service user views, but does not consistently include those involved with the service user	The views of the service user are not evident in the work being presented or there is a bias to the views of others
Is able to look broadly at the options possible and works alongside the service users to seek out possibilities	Is able to work alongside the service user, but needs direction in order to seek out the full range of possibilities	Requires step by step guidance in order to seek out options and work alongside the service user
Supports and enables service users to make decisions (5 principles of MCA 2005 & Children Acts – Gilleck competence)	Supports service users decision making with support, not confident to challenge other professionals	Is inconsistent of limited skills in relation to enabling service users to make decisions
Works with individuals to assess their needs and preferences within the organisational constraints	Work with individuals to assess their needs and preferences at times stepping outside the organisational constraints	Shows consideration of individual needs, but consistently defers to an organisational perspective
Is able to analyse, summarise and record the situation for / with the service user effectively taking into account potential barriers	Is able to summarise but not always able to reach effective analysis of the situation (poor research and knowledge evidence base)	Written account is not reflective of the work and rationale of intervention.



Explores and identifies the range of risks within the situation to service users, others and self	Explores and identifies a range of risks to service users and others, but needs reminding to ensure all perspectives are considered	Needs to be reminded to look at the range of risk factors to service user self and others
Has ascertained that the service user is aware of the risks involved (capacity)	Has ascertained the service user is aware of the risks involved, but has not made the adherence to the principles governing capacity explicit	Has not demonstrated that the service user is aware of the risks involved
Sets up / supports care packages that genuinely meet identified needs as much as possible	Sets up / supports care packages that try to meet identified needs as much as possible	Sets up / supports care packages that go some way in meeting the needs, needing frequent direction to meet identified needs
Understands, adheres to, promotes and explains the Code of Practice (CCfW) to service users and carers	Understands and adheres to the Code of Practice	Understands and works towards adhering to the Code of Practice, but does not always fully integrate in practice e.g. dis-empowering, doing to rather than with
Plans for and resolves difficulties	Can be surprised when difficulties arise, but is mainly able to deal with them	Difficulties are unexpected and difficult to resolve



Earning Service Users' Trust

Creates a rapport that encourages Service Users to be as open as they need to be in order for their needs to be best met.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Respects Service Users' individuality, feelings and beliefs, their rights to privacy and to make choices	Unconfidently Respects Service Users' individuality, feelings and beliefs, their rights to privacy and to make choices	Needs frequent guidance and in-put to respect Service Users' individuality, feelings and beliefs, their rights to privacy and to make choices
Is person centred and empathic in responding to individuals' emotional and psychological wellbeing	Is person centred and empathic in responding to individuals' emotional and psychological wellbeing – needs support and refocusing at times	Has a tendency to be process driven – at times occludes the person at the centre of the work – needs re-directing to maintain PCP focus
Is honest and open with Service Users	Is honest and open with service users at times of agreement and consensus. Needs support with conflict situations	Needs consistent direction to achieve honesty and openness with service users
Establishing two way communication that respects the rights and beliefs of the individual e.g. rapport	Establishing two way communication that respects the rights and beliefs of the individual e.g. rapport needs support and refocusing at times	Frequently struggles in establishing two way communication that respects the rights and beliefs of the individual e.g. rapport
Actions agreed with Service Users are always acted upon	Actions agreed with Service Users are always acted upon- needs support and refocusing at times	Needs frequent guidance and in-put for actions agreed with Service Users are always acted upon



Informs Service Users about any changes from what has been agreed and offers information regarding comments, complaints and compliments	Inconsistently informs service users of changes and information regarding complaints / compliments	Needs frequent guidance and in-put to ensure service users are kept informed and know of the procedures to follow if unhappy
Prepares well for contact with Service Users to ensure productive interactions	Prepares well for contact with Service Users to ensure productive interactions – can need occasional support with complex scenarios	Needs consistent reminders to prepare well for contact with Service Users to ensure productive interactions
Clearly explains the boundaries in relation to the information obtained and information sharing, in relation to the confidentiality policy	Strives to explain the boundaries in relation to the information obtained and information sharing, in relation to the confidentiality policy	Is not able to clearly articulate or explain the boundaries in relation to the information obtained and information sharing, in relation to the confidentiality policy
Maintains clear professional boundaries whilst demonstrating a clear understanding of the Service Users' issues	Understands the need for professional boundaries and strives to maintain these through feels challenged at times with service user perspective	Understands the need for professional boundaries can feel overwhelmed by the issues presented by service users



Working with Change

Contributing to a culture of openness and responsiveness to changes, whether coming from inside or outside the team.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Is willing to try new ways of working and is flexible to them	Is willing to consider why changes might be useful, but needs to be fully convinced	Doesn't see the need to move forward; sees old ways as the best
Is willing to improve on proposed changes to ensure that they will work in practice	Takes proposals at face value	Assumes proposed changes are of little value
Has creative and different ideas about how to move things forward in service areas	Implements rather than initiates changes	Does not volunteer suggestions for improvements
Encourages and supports others when they put forward their suggestions and new ideas	Accepts others' suggestions, without explicitly being encouraging	Is a barrier to others' innovative ideas, focusing on potential issues or being negative
Is able to 'sell' positive aspects of change to others	Assumes that others will appreciate value of changes	Points out to others why changes won't work
Makes changes and ideas a reality, and helps to make them work	Agrees in principle of need to change, but is slow to put measures into place	Makes little genuine attempt to alter current ways of doing things, even when changes are agreed



Achieving Results

Delivers high-quality outcomes on time by setting clear targets and focusing closely on what's important.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Has clear aims and objectives, and understands how these link to wider Council objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Is aware of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) but focuses more on their own goals	Unsure of what to do, and is unaware of importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) or how they contribute to the organisation
Is willing to go 'above and beyond' to exceed expectations	Can be content doing 'just enough'	Rigid about job roles and unwilling to step outside of these to get things done
Is positive and creative about what can be achieved with existing resources/budgets	Usually attempts to resolve resource issues in a positive way	Sees lack of resources/budgets as an excuse not to try
Takes responsibility	Likes to check with others, drawing some comfort from shared responsibility	Distances self from difficult outcomes, preferring to blame others
Is able to work effectively when under pressure	Can temporarily lose focus when under pressure	Can lose control when under pressure
Meets all key deadlines	Can allow lower priority deadlines to slip	Often misses deadlines and allows things to drift
Demonstrates professional competence and consistently delivers high-quality outcomes	Overall, standard of competence is acceptable, but some gaps clearly exist	Performance is below standard
Uses all resources efficiently with consideration to the environment	Could be more efficient about certain resources to reduce the impact on the environment	Wastes energy, does not pay attention to environmental damage
Is flexible, can switch tasks / roles / priorities to deal with new demands, changes or new information	Concentrates on task at hand before being able to move onto the next (struggles with conflicting priorities)	Completes tasks in the order in which they have been received



Encouraging Professional Development

Seeks to continually improve own professional development and supports others to do the same.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Recognises that there is always room for self-improvement	Is content to carry on as always, but takes part in training opportunities when they arise	Has a 'know it all' attitude. Tends to revert to old habits after attending training
Continually actively reviews their own development, identifying opportunities to progress	Can have a passive approach to developing themselves, can rely on line manager or HR to drive progress	Sees themselves as having more important priorities than focusing attention on development
Is open to alternative methods of development, e.g. training, coaching, reading, mentoring, experiential learning	Overly relies on one method, e.g. attending training courses	Doesn't see the need or participate in development initiatives
Keeps professional development (CPD) up-to-date	Intentions to keep up-to-date are not always kept	Has little or no intention to undertake CPD
Participates in regular reviews and supervisions to identify goals and areas for development	Has general intention to participate in supervisions or performance reviews, but postpones some	Avoids supervisions and reviews, citing other factors as being more important



Complying with Health and Safety (H&S)

Ensures personal and team health, safety and well being through understanding and correctly applying the appropriate RCTCBC H&S policies.

An excellent RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

An ineffective RCTCBC C&SC Worker:

Is aware of all relevant H&S procedures	Is aware of what seem to be the most important H&S guidelines	Has little or no working knowledge of relevant H&S policies
Is aware of current and potential risks and hazards within the context of their duties	Is aware of key hazards	Assumes their working environment is basically safe and free of any risk
Ensures that others are aware of H&S issues that might affect them	Considers health and safety in respect of own role and responsibilities	Encourages risky behaviour or disregard for H&S guidelines
Puts measures in place that minimise risk of incidents	Puts measures in place that reduce likelihood of incidents, although these could be more stringent	Assumes that incidents will not occur and takes little or no preventative action
Always reports any risks or incidents to the correct people	Only reports obvious risks to the correct people	Relies on others to report incidents or risks
Balances achieving results with care for their own health and well-being	Becomes stressed occasionally in the pursuit of achieving results but is usually able to manage	Becomes stressed and overworked in order to achieve results