

**Rhondda Cynon Taf**

# **Technical, Specialist and Professional Competency Framework**



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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 (1<sup>st</sup> 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:

<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2.5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
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 Technical, Specialist and Professional Competency Framework**



## RCTCBC Technical, Specialist and Professional Competency Framework (Overview)

### People

#### Working in Partnerships and Teams (1)

*Works positively and effectively with members of their own team as well as partners within the Council and from external organisations as appropriate for their role.*

- Respect, trust, constructive relationships
- Contributes, shares
- Interested, motivates, team-focused

#### Communicating Effectively (2)

*Communicates clearly and comprehensively using a wide range of communication tools; adapts communication style to suit different audiences*

- Informs, explains, openly shares
- Listens, receptive
- Clear and effective
- Accurate, shares

### Tasks

#### Professional Expertise and Development (3)

*Keeps technical knowledge and expertise up to date, shares it willingly, and provides a great technical service.*

- Good understanding, knowledge
- Up-to-date, personal development
- Analysing, evaluating
- Supports others

#### Managing Resources (4)

*Aims to provide best value and quality services by utilising available resources efficiently and effectively*

- Best solutions
- Anticipates, plans, evaluates

#### Achieving Results (5)

*Manages own projects and tasks effectively to achieve organisational targets; is aware of own targets, prioritises tasks well and meets deadlines*

- Planned, organised, prioritises
- Flexible
- Decisive

### Culture and Values – The RCTCBC Context

#### Focusing on Service Users (6)

*Uses their technical and professional knowledge to provide the best possible solutions for both internal and external customers*

- Approachable, non-judgemental
- Confidentiality
- Responds to needs

#### Creating and responding to change (7)

*Is open to new ways of working; uses technical expertise to introduce and review changes*

- Responsive, engaged
- Innovative, creative, receptive
- Continuous improvements, focus

#### Being accountable (8)

*Taking personal accountability for their role in the effectiveness of RCTBCCBC*

- Positive
- Open, honest, transparent
- Takes responsibility



## Working in Partnerships and Teams

Works positively and effectively with members of their own team, as well as partners within the Council and from external organisations as appropriate for their role.

An excellent RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

An ineffective RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

Builds lasting, positive & supportive relationships with a wide variety of people	Has some good relationships with team members, but others that are more formal or distant	Prefers to remain detached from others. Is unapproachable
Draws upon the best ideas of the team to provide the best service	Prefers to use their own ideas in preference to others'	Is openly dismissive of others' ideas and opinions
Is proactive and positive about giving support, advice, guidance and sharing best practice with colleagues	Helps and supports others at times but places own needs ahead of others when under pressure	Always puts their own needs first; sets people up to fail by not supporting them
Prevents or overcomes conflict	Can allow conflict to continue more than it should	Exacerbates or produces conflict
Demonstrates respect for colleagues at all levels	Can be inappropriately informal or unguarded at times	Is overbearing and doesn't treat people with respect
Knows when it will be most effective to work as a team and when to work alone; works well in both	Is willing to work alone or as part of a team but lets others make the decisions	Only works effectively alone
Praises other team members and helps to motivate people and maintain morale	Will give some praise to others, does not particularly focus on motivating others	Is negative about other people's successes; lowers morale
Will go 'over and above' what's normal to contribute to the team's effectiveness	Adequately pulls their weight in the team	Does the minimum of work





## Communicating Effectively

Communicates clearly and comprehensively using a range of communication tools; adapts communication style to suit different audiences.

An excellent RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

An ineffective RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

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
Has a pleasant and friendly communication style	Is polite but may be a bit distant at times	Has an inappropriate (e.g. aggressive or patronising) communication style
Communicates clearly and concisely	Uses communication that is not always clear to others	Is unfocused and unclear and leaves others unsure of what was said or meant
Adapts their style of communication to suit their audience including 'translating' technical language	Adapts style and language to suit some but not all groups	Expects everyone to understand their own preferred style and language; uses technical jargon
Listens to others, is receptive and actively checks they've understood the message	Sometimes listens and/or checks understanding and sometimes assumes others have understood	Doesn't listen to others or check their own understanding of what's been said
Produces excellent and accessible written information	Produces written documents that are sometimes inaccurate or unclear	Produces poorly structured, inaccessible written information with weak spelling and grammar
Cascades and shares information appropriately – on time and to the right people	Does not always fully share information; may withhold information unintentionally	Does not share information appropriately e.g. keeps information and resources to themselves or shares confidential information
Has excellent presentation skills	Has moderately good presentation skills	Has weak or poor presentation skills



## Professional Expertise and Development

Keeps technical knowledge and expertise up to date, shares it willingly, and provides a great technical service.

An excellent RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

An ineffective RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

Demonstrates excellent practice and an extensive knowledge base in their own professional area	Has adequate level of professional knowledge	Demonstrates inadequate skills and knowledge to function properly and meet expectations
Proactively keeps up-to-date with changes to legislation, policy, procedure and best practice within RCTCBC and in other organisations	Keeps up-to-date with a narrow range of information	Relies on existing knowledge without checking current relevance
Understands and complies with external requirements, standards and benchmarks	Meets limited technical or professional standards	Does not understand or meet external quality standards and benchmarks
Analyses and evaluates information and data accurately	Analyses and evaluates information reasonably well, but makes some important errors	Makes errors or misunderstands information and data
Is always up-to-date with new IT and technology, promotes use of IT to support their work	Updates IT and technology knowledge when prompted by others	Refuses to, or avoids progress with new IT / technology
Is positive about continuous professional development (CPD) and seeks opportunities to improve own knowledge	Attends continuous professional development (CPD) activities to 'tick the boxes'	Is negative about continuous professional development (CPD) or thinks they 'know it all'
Coaches and mentors less experienced staff, passing knowledge on willingly	Passes on some knowledge to other staff	Does not support other staff
Takes feedback positively and uses it to develop; learns from mistakes	Is sometimes receptive to feedback	Is defensive about feedback



## Managing Resources

Provides best value and quality services by utilising available resources efficiently and effectively.

An excellent RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

An ineffective RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

Anticipates problems and takes action to reduce the risk of things going wrong	Reacts to problems when they occur	Allows problems to build up and risks failure
Plans well in advance to meet deadlines	Can leave things to the last minute; risks missing deadlines	Leaves things to the last minute; misses deadlines
Prioritises workloads according to needs and risk; uses the business plan as reference point	Prioritises according to sometimes informed, sometimes inaccurate, feelings about what seems to be important	Cannot rank importance of tasks. Gives priority to non-core work and can be influenced by pressures from interested parties
Reviews resources regularly to meet changing demands. Looks at the bigger picture in terms of resources	Only looks at the immediate impact of resources on their own work	Doesn't review resources. Sticks to original plans regardless of changes
Seeks out alternative solutions to achieve outcomes within available budgets	Makes efficiency savings but allows them to impact on quality of outcomes	Disregards budgetary constraints
Demonstrates a good understanding of financial issues and procedures	Demonstrates an adequate understanding of financial issues and procedures, but can make some important errors	Demonstrates a poor financial understanding and/or doesn't follow correct financial procedures
Ensures that resources are managed with consideration to the environment and strives to reduce wastage	Shows some consideration to reducing wastage and damage to the environment	Does not manage resources with sufficient consideration to the environment or wastage



## Achieving Results

Manages own projects and tasks effectively to achieve organisational targets; is aware of own targets, prioritises tasks well and meets deadlines

An excellent RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

An ineffective RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

Takes pride in delivering high quality work for the benefit of Service Users. Meets or exceeds targets	Delivers work of an adequate standard	Cuts corners and delivers poor quality work. Does not meet targets or standards
Sets objectives and targets based on team, division and Council's strategy and business plans	Sets objectives and targets based on own sense of what needs to be achieved	Doesn't have clear aims and objectives
Makes the best possible use of time	Makes adequate use of time	Doesn't make the best use of time e.g. by prioritising poorly or wasting time
Is proactive and flexible to changing demands and knows when to compromise	Responds reactively rather than proactively to changing demands	Works to a plan or process and ignores changing demands
Creates effective action plans identifying the relevant stages required to complete a project	Creates basic action plans	Does not develop action plans. Completes one task at a time rather than looking at the project as a whole
Consistently meets deadlines	Usually meets deadlines but may compromise the quality of delivery	Consistently misses deadlines
Anticipates potential problems and resolves them early	Tackles problems as soon as they arise	Avoids issues until they reach crisis stage
Makes decisions based on a wide range of information	Makes decisions based on information that they already have or is easily available	Avoids making decisions or uses incorrect information



## Focusing on Service Users

Uses technical and professional knowledge to provide the best possible solutions for both internal and external customers.

An excellent RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

An ineffective RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

Acts in order to understand the needs of internal customers and Service Users	Makes some attempt to understand Service User needs	Makes poor assumptions about the needs of internal customers and Service Users
Identifies and responds to all needs, not just those presented to them	Only solves immediate problems without looking at broader issues	Doesn't identify or respond to customer needs. Works to their own agenda
Uses professional knowledge and expertise to raise standards of service for customers	Provides competent service, but does not use skills to improve performance	Provides inaccurate advice or guidance to customers
Understands and actively addresses diversity issues and treats all customers according to individual needs	Tries to be fair in their allocation of time or resources	Does not treat customers equally or fairly or take diversity needs into consideration
Treats customers in a non-judgemental, polite and respectful way	Is reasonably polite and considerate, but can let this slip on occasion	Treats customers disrespectfully and with a lack of tolerance and understanding
Is very approachable and encouraging to customers, whilst remaining professional and unbiased	Is reasonably accessible and approachable, but can be overly 'professional' or distant with some customers	Is unapproachable and dismissive of customers
Maintains appropriate customer confidentiality	Is generally discreet	Doesn't keep customer information confidential
Sets clear and realistic expectations for customers	Tries to moderate unrealistic customer expectations	Sets expectations for customers that will not be met



## Creating and Responding to Change

Is open to new ways of working; uses technical expertise to introduce and review changes.

An excellent RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

An ineffective RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

Engages with new ideas and looks for ways to make them work	Is willing to consider new ideas that are introduced by others	Keeps to old working practices
Responds quickly and effectively to both internal and external changes	May take time to respond positively to internal and external changes	Responds poorly and negatively to changing work environment
Contributes ideas to better manage systems, processes or practices	Occasionally contributes ideas to improve systems, processes and practices	Never contributes ways to improve current systems, processes or practices
Revisits changes to see what is working and makes appropriate changes	Accepts feedback on changes and sometimes makes appropriate changes	Doesn't review or adjust changes
Uses own creative and innovative skills to achieve best results	Uses best practice to achieve results	Applies 'off the shelf' ideas that do not achieve the best results
Finds ways to use new learning	Sometimes uses new learning	Does not use new learning, always reverts to type



## Being Accountable

Taking personal accountability for their role in the effectiveness of RCTCBC.

An excellent RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

An ineffective RCTCBC technician, specialist or professional

Demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of how their role fits in to the bigger RCTCBC picture	Understands how their role fits into their team or department	Only looks at their role from a narrow or individual perspective
Takes a positive attitude towards delivering work	Is usually positive and enthusiastic about delivering work, but can show reluctance about certain tasks	Is continually negative regarding work and practice; offers excuses and sees barriers for not delivering
Makes decisions that align positively with delivering for RCTCBC e.g. public sector ethos, political implications, Council structure and hierarchy	Understands the impact of the issues related to delivering for RCTCBC but doesn't always act on them	Demonstrates lack of understanding of the context of delivery of RCTCBC
Takes full responsibility for delivery of tasks	Prefers to share responsibility for the delivery of important tasks	Avoids taking responsibility. Relies on others to take primary responsibility
Is always open, honest and transparent	Usually honest but occasionally hides the complete truth	Says one thing but really means another
Understands the Council's approach to the environment and demonstrates consideration of social and environmental concerns in their day to day role	Demonstrates some understanding of social and environmental factors relevant to their role	Disregards social and environmental concerns in the execution of their role