Guidance for General Grants

Minimum Requirement Ten: Training

Version: 2.6

Date Issued: April 2025

Important note

► This guidance applies <u>only</u> to general grants made by departments and their arm's length bodies (ALBs) using Exchequer funding. It <u>does not</u> apply to formula grants or grant in aid. [Managing Public Money](link) and local guidance within government grant making organisations is applicable to those categories, and minimum requirements may be developed in future.

► Organisations' <u>primary concern</u> when administering grants is to have due regard to the 'Grants Functional Standard' (GovS 015) and the key documents referred to within it including [Managing Public Money](link). Nothing in this guidance is intended to contradict or supersede these. Furthermore, this guidance is not intended to be an additional spending control - departments retain accountability for decisions on grant expenditure.

► This guidance should be read in conjunction with the wider set of minimum requirements guidance documents (including the introduction). Further information and tools supporting this guidance can be found online through the [grants Centre of Excellence (CoE)](link). Further references and resources are highlighted throughout. It should also be read alongside organisations' internal guidance, where available, which will provide the departmental policy context.

► This guidance should be approached on a '<u>comply or explain</u>' basis. It is important to consider <u>flexibility</u> and <u>proportionality</u> in adhering to the minimum requirements. As such there may be some specific instances where the requirements may not be met in full. In these instances, appropriate justification should be recorded within the business case or equivalent approval documents.

Cabinet Office

Contents

Minimum Requirement

All those involved in the development and administration of grant awards should **undertake core training in grant management** best practice.

Purpose

Minimum Requirement Ten: the training and guidance for general grants referenced in this document is aimed at ensuring that anyone involved in the design, development and administration of government general grants is competent and properly equipped to undertake their role effectively. The appropriate level of training and support should be made available to all staff, covering the fundamental principles of grant making, including optimising value for money and identifying and managing risk, including fraud risk.

Grants Functional Standard: Key References

Mandatory requirements are defined by the word **shall** in the grants functional standard. The **shall** statements related to this minimum requirement have been extracted from the standard and are set out below. **Please note**: in some cases, the information has been paraphrased for conciseness - refer to the standard itself for the full version.

Area	Requirement(s)	Context	Reference	Page
Supporting practices: Training	In performing their roles, and in meeting this standard, those undertaking grant management should have the appropriate level of support and **shall** have completed basic training to perform their role effectively.	Such training should include knowledge of applicable sources of further guidance and the identification of empowering legislation underpinning individual grant schemes. **Note**: An eLearning awareness package including: *Introduction to Managing Government General Grants* and related bite sized modules, designed to help grant managers comply with the above training requirement, is available on both Civil Service Learning and the Government Commercial College platform.	6.7 Training Also refer to: GovS003, Human resources.	21

Overview

1. Anyone involved in the design, development and administration of government grant funding should be competent and experienced and be given the appropriate level of training and support by their organisation to reach that position, in order that they are able to perform their role effectively. Grants practitioners should be familiar with the mandatory and non-mandatory aspects of the Grants Functional Standard and accompanying minimum requirements for general grants, and be aware of other relevant resources of information and guidance, including those referred to within the minimum requirement guidance documents. Grants practitioners are expected to be registered on and make regular use of the grants Centre of Excellence (CoE), in order to access the latest policy updates, training, guidance, templates and other resources.

2. The Senior Officer Responsible (SOR) for a grant scheme should ensure that their team has the required capability and access to training and support (for further information refer to Minimum Requirement One: Senior Officer Responsible for a Grant). This includes a responsibility to engage with the Government Grants Management Function's (GGMF) capability offer. Grant making organisations should decide on the training appropriate for the different roles within their organisation, based on their people's responsibilities and existing knowledge and experience. They should draw on existing training resources available through the Grants Capability page on the grants Centre of Excellence (CoE), and from other sources across government, such as the Commercial College and Finance Academy, in addition to guidance and training available within their organisation.[1]

3. To support practitioners to build their capability in grant making, the Government Grants Management Function (GGMF) has developed, in collaboration with grant making organisations, a central learning and development offer, designed to provide grant practitioners with essential training in the core competencies required for effective grants management. The GGMF's offer is underpinned by the grants competency framework (available to download via the Centre of Excellence). The GGMF's training offer is aligned to the levels set out within the framework.

Grants Awareness Programme

4. The GGMF's grants awareness programme is an eLearning package, made up of four foundational modules and an assessment, designed to help practitioners to achieve greater basic awareness of the key stages, processes and requirements involved in design, development and administration of government general grants, and to ensure that all grants practitioners are fully up to date with the latest policy developments. This programme is set at the awareness level, and as such is aimed at new or inexperienced grants practitioners, however, it is a requirement that anyone involved in grants administration, shall complete this programme and assessment or an equivalent training package. The table on page 5 contains the shall statement (mandatory requirement) from the functional standard, for grants practitioners to

---

[1] Guidance developed by grant making organisations should be fully consistent with, cross-referenced to and up to date with the policies, standards, guidance and training products developed by the GGMF and its Capability Team.

undertake basic training – completing the awareness programme will meet this requirement. Details of how to access the package can be found on the capability page on the grants Centre of Excellence and the package is accessible via the Government Commercial College.

5. After completing the GGMF's grants awareness programme, it is **strongly recommended** that all those involved in grant making should use the grants competency framework and capability self-assessment tool to assess and track their development and plan their learning journey, including considering completion of the Grants Licence to Practise (see paragraphs 10-15).

The Grants Competency Framework

6. The grants competency framework provides a common understanding of the knowledge, skills, behaviours and networks expected of grant practitioners, at all levels and underpins the GGMF's learning and development offer. It is designed around three core roles in grants management, as set out in the Grants Functional Standard:

   ● Grant Manager;
   ● Grants Champion; and
   ● Senior Officer Responsible.

7. The framework defines a set of nine core competencies specific to the design, development and administration of government general grants, together with 5-enabling competencies. There are four levels of ability described within the framework:

   ● awareness;
   ● working;
   ● skilled and
   ● expert.

8. The diagram below provides a high-level overview of the framework:
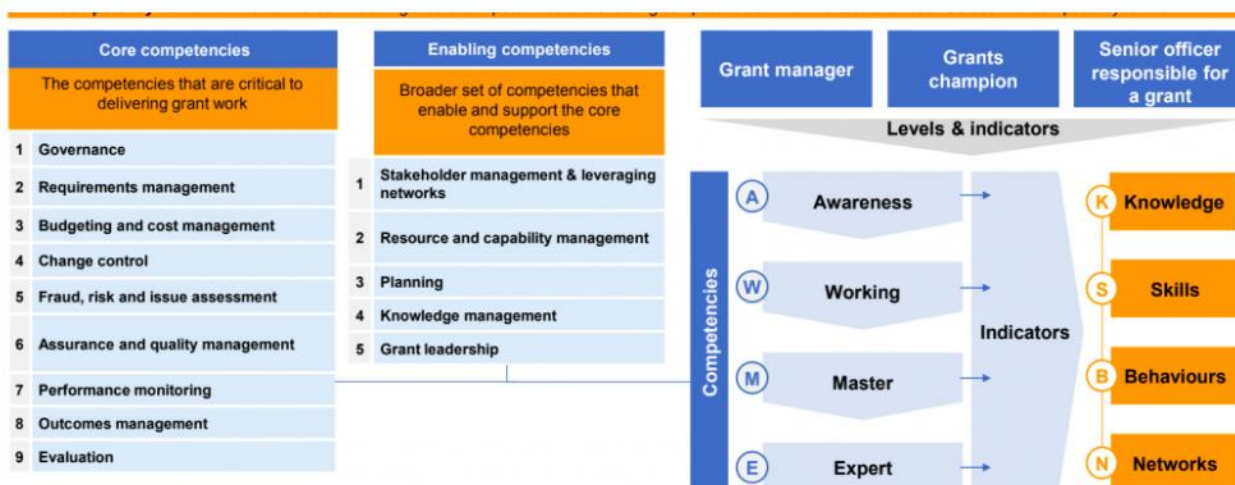
9. Once a grants practitioner has completed the grants awareness programme and used the framework and self-assessment tool to determine the level that they are at they should then consider enrolling to commence their journey towards accreditation, via the **grants Licence to Practise Programme.**

Grants Licence to Practise Programme and Accreditation

10. The grants Licence to Practise (LtP) programme builds on the knowledge gained from the grants awareness programme. The LtP provides comprehensive learning and accreditation in the design, development and administration of government general grants, including working-level understanding of the grants functional standard and minimum requirements and how they should be applied throughout the grants life cycle. Successful completion of the grants LtP and assessment, provides accreditation of the essential capability - knowledge, skills, and behaviours - required for effective grant management.

11. To meet varying learning needs and support practitioners to access and achieve accreditation, the LtP offers three alternative learner pathways:

   - **Grants Licence to Practise Blended** - a full and comprehensive learning course from newer, less experienced practitioners;
   - **Grants Licence to Practise Online** - a shorter, self-directed online course for experienced practitioners; and
   - **Grants Licence to Practise Direct** - a direct route to assessment, involving no learning, for assessment-ready practitioners.

These three pathways have been developed to improve the availability and accessibility of the LtP programme, by providing varied routes to accreditation, suitable for differing experience levels and circumstances, supporting practitioners and organisations ability to meet training and capability requirements. It is important practitioners and organisations consider learning needs and existing experience level when deciding the pathway most suited and likely to support achievement of accreditation. More information on the grants Licence to Practise can be found on the grants Centre of Excellence website.

12. Organisations are responsible for the collective capability of their grant practitioners. They should consider what further learning and development practices are required, alongside formal training, to support practitioners to apply, build-on and embed their learning and capability long-term. This could involve different methods and forms of learning, which may include, for example:

   - training courses;
   - coaching/ mentoring;
   - webinars; and
   - online learning.

13. Further learning might also include sharing best practice techniques, thoughts and ideas, focused on helping an individual to implement and embed their learning in their working environment. Individuals can join the grants Community of Practice, through the grants Centre of Excellence, to access further learning, such as networking and collaborative learning opportunities.

14. Where an individual is already qualified via a relevant profession, for example, finance, commercial or audit, there is still value to be gained from them undertaking grants-specific awareness training, for example, to help commercial specialists understand the key differences between contract procurement and grants administration. Basic grants training may also be advantageous for those in other professions who have not had prior, direct experience of grant making.

15. Grantmakers should engage with their departmental grants champion to discuss what assessment has been made of their training needs and available resources.

Gold, Silver, Bronze Framework

16. As specified in the Gold, Silver, Bronze general grant scheme categorisation framework, and required by this minimum requirement, all government grant practitioners working on a **general grant** scheme, regardless of the classification, are subject to a mandatory requirement to complete the Grants Awareness-level training programme and assessment under the GGMF's capability offer, as a minimum, or equivalent level training programme. The awareness programme is a fully funded, online product, that can be accessed on the Government Commercial College. Completion of the programme should be renewed annually. Further information can be found on the grants Centre of Excellence website.

17. In addition to the awareness-level training, all government grant practitioners working on a general grant scheme that is classified as Silver are **recommended** to hold, or be in the process of obtaining, the Grants' Licence to Practise assessment and accreditation.

18. All government grant practitioners working on a general grant that is classified as Gold **should** hold, or be in the process of obtaining, the Grants' Licence to Practise assessment and accreditation.

Capability	Mandated Grants Awareness-level training programme as a minimum	Mandated awareness-level training programme plus Grant's Licence to Practice assessment and accreditation recommendation	Grant's Licence to Practice assessment and accreditation **strongly** recommended

Training for the Senior Officer Responsible (SOR) for a Grant

19. A bespoke training package is available for SORs, available via the Government Commercial College. This training is focused on the role and responsibilities of an

SOR, linked to the SOR letter (see [Minimum Requirement One: Senior Officer Responsible for a Grant](#)). It is strongly recommended that all SOR's should complete this programme. For grants SORs, this programme could be completed in place of the grants awareness programme. For SORs that are new to grant making, it is recommended that the SOR module be included as part of an individual's broader learner journey, preferably as part of undertaking the GGMF's grants awareness programme and/or grants Licence to Practise Programme.

Government Grants Capability

20. The Government Grants Management Function is developing a curriculum of central training products designed to support learning and development in relation to grant management. Information on all the training and capability resources available can be found on the [grants Centre of Excellence (CoE) and is all available thought the Government Commercial College](#).

21. Training modules and programmes have been produced in collaboration with grant practitioners across government, from departments and their grant making arm's length bodies.

    Note: check the training page on the grants Centre of Excellence regularly for updates on training products currently in development.

Further Resources

22. In meeting this minimum requirement, and in addition to the references and resources highlighted earlier in this guidance, organisations may want to consider the following in particular:

   ● More general [eLearning modules available on CSL](#), which can help to develop skills and knowledge that is useful when managing government grants.
   ● The [grants Centre of Excellence (CoE)](#) contains products and toolkits that can be used to enhance grant knowledge and expertise.