



Policy  
Profession

# Policy Profession Standards

## a framework for professional development

The Policy Profession Standards describe the skills and knowledge required by policy professionals at all stages of their career, and provide a framework for professional development

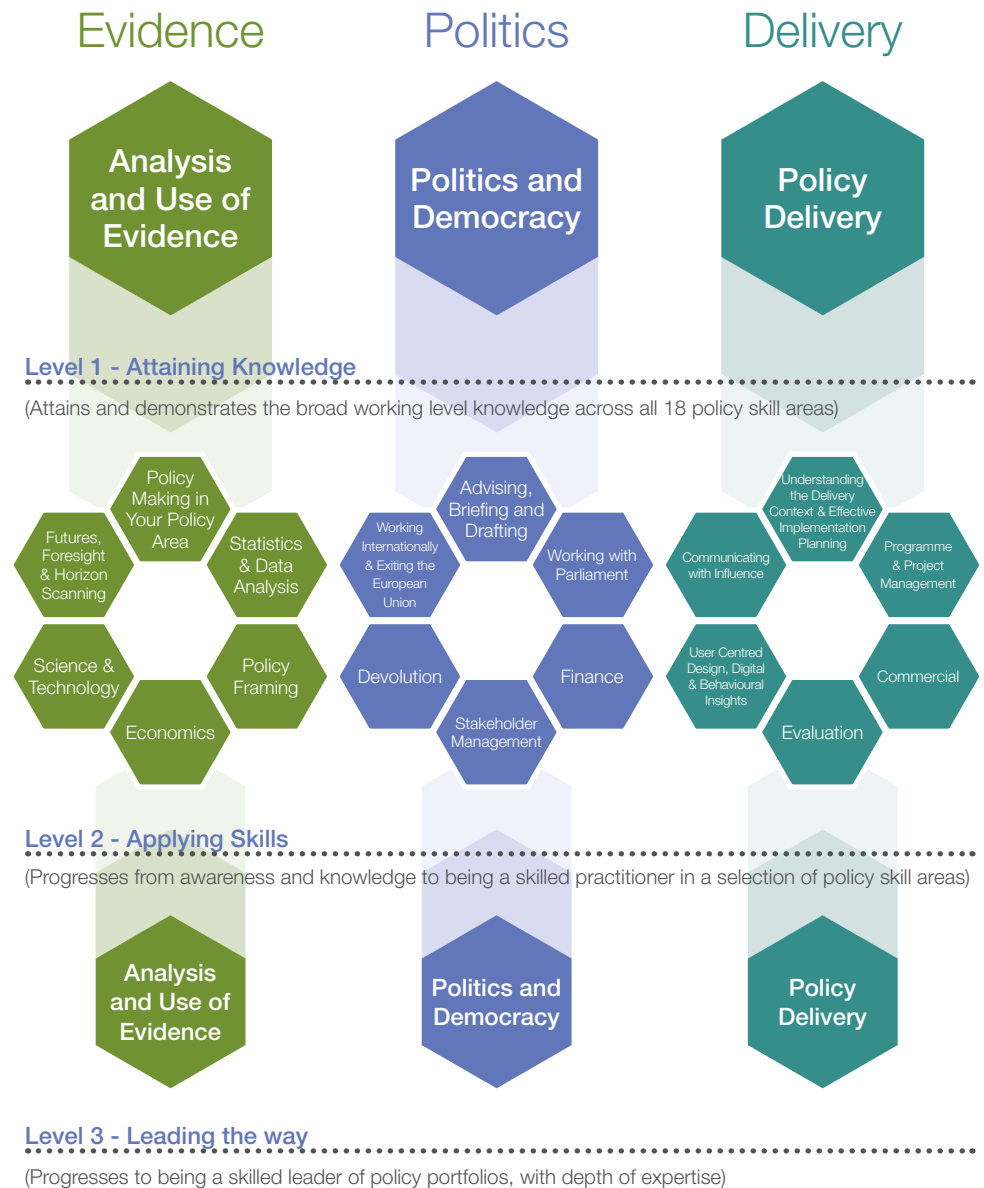


# Policy Professional Development Framework

The Professional Development Framework for policy professionals (in the Civil Service) sets out what skills a good policy maker needs to have and describes the journey from basic knowledge to skilled leader across 18 skill areas. It provides a guide for personal, professional and career development.

This document sets out the full requirements for each of those skill areas as a policy maker progresses from attaining the full breadth of knowledge across the range of skills (level 1) through to skilled practitioner (level 2) and onwards to effective policy leader (level 3). As the depth of expertise develops at levels 2 and 3 it is not expected that these will be in all 18 skill areas – at level 2 we would expect skilled practice in a minimum of three areas from each of the three elements of policy making: evidence, politics and delivery.

The requirements set out in the standards provide for a consistency of skill across departments towards a more collective and formalised profession. Departments may tailor these, focusing on those most relevant to them, to provide more detail and specificity. Policy Profession teams within departments can give advice on this, as well as L&D opportunities, which are linked to the Policy Professional Development Framework.



# Contents

---

## 1. Evidence - Analysis and use of evidence

- 1.1 Analysis and use of evidence - Knowledge of Policy Making in your Policy Area
- 1.2 Analysis and use of evidence - Statistics and Data Analysis
- 1.3 Analysis and use of evidence - Policy Framing
- 1.4 Analysis and use of evidence - Economics
- 1.5 Analysis and use of evidence - Science and Technology
- 1.6 Analysis and use of evidence - Futures, Foresight and Horizon Scanning

## 2. Politics - Politics and democracy

- 2.1 Politics and democracy - Advising, Briefing and Drafting
- 2.2 Politics and democracy - Working with Parliament
- 2.3 Politics and democracy - Finance
- 2.4 Politics and democracy - Stakeholder Management
- 2.5 Politics and democracy - Devolution
- 2.6 Politics and democracy - Working Internationally and Exiting the European Union

## 3. Delivery - Policy delivery

- 3.1 Policy delivery - Understanding the Delivery Context and Effective Implementation Planning
- 3.2 Policy delivery - Programme and Project Management
- 3.3 Policy delivery - Commercial
- 3.4 Policy delivery - Evaluation
- 3.5 Policy delivery - User Centred Design, Digital and Behavioural Insights
- 3.6 Policy delivery - Communicating with Influence





































## 3. Delivery – Policy delivery

### 3.5 Policy delivery – User Centred Design, Digital and Behavioural Insights

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional takes into account genuine user needs when developing their policy; understands the impact for end users; uses a range of tools and techniques to gather evidence and test policy solutions.

#### Level 1

- Understands the benefits of user-centred and experience-based design, including why and when it might be used.
- Understands that policy advice should be well informed, evidence based, and tested in the real world.
- Is aware of the relevance of “human” and behavioural factors in policy design and operational practice; knows of examples in UK policy.
- Understands the need to share your policy thinking at an early stage.
- Knows the latest tools and techniques available to engage with people, especially digital tools, and where to find information on how to use them effectively and securely.

#### Level 2

- Develops policy with the impact of end users at the forefront of thinking; engages with front line service providers to gain a real understanding of the issues from the start.
- Understands the kinds of methods that can be used to explore user behaviour and reactions, including trial design; uses basic checklists (e.g. EAST, MINDSPACE) when designing policy or operational function.

- Generates and explores a broad range of possible ideas in response to policy challenges; responds constructively to challenge.
- Applies the most common factors in policy and operational design (e.g. identifying and reducing “frictions” (“make it easy”), understanding and developing prototypes and trial-based policy designs); tests and prototypes ideas throughout the policy development.
- Demonstrates use of simple design techniques, and when to engage with experts; selects appropriate methods, tools and techniques and encourages others to do likewise; uses open policy making tools and techniques.
- Demonstrates confidence using digital engagement tools safely and with appropriate security in place; promotes the “digital first” approach to providing information and services.
- Shares ideas with experts and the public, building networks to help inform policy development and using co-design to generate ideas.

#### Level 3

- Plays a significant leadership role in promoting the use of behavioural approaches to policy development; gets the best from people; encourages others to take informed risks and experiment with ideas, solutions and designs.
- Designs, develops and manages projects that involve all aspects of user-centred and experience-based design processes in the context of government services and policy.
- Commissions suitable research including personas, user journeys and segmentation.
- Demonstrates strong working knowledge of the range of design methods that can be used, such as ethnography, prototyping, rapid RCTs, and step-wedge designs.
- Builds and maintains an extensive network of experts and stakeholders in your policy area; uses and shares these to facilitate wider connections for you, your team and the wider Civil Service.
- Advocates for civil servants working in an open and collaborative way, handling data appropriately and applying appropriate cyber security measures.
- Makes use of advanced digital tools; produces and delivers digital products and assets to support information and service design.

## 3. Delivery – Policy delivery

### 3.6 Policy delivery – Communicating with Influence

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands the importance of other viewpoints in policy development; engages with internal and external stakeholders of all levels; uses a range of methods to communicate persuasively.

#### Level 1

- Understands the importance of preparation for any interaction, including who the other parties are, and who or what influences them.
- Understands the importance of asking insightful questions and acting on feedback.
- Knows the relevant communications colleagues in the business area, how to contact them and the importance of keeping them involved throughout the development of the policy.
- Understands constraints and the limits of authority when it comes to agreement.

#### Level 2

- Identifies key issues; prepares, plans and sets objectives for negotiations based on these.
- Demonstrates active listening, openness to challenge and testing out ideas; reaches conclusions based on this.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the wider objectives or politics in the policy area.
- Tailors approach based on the perspectives, preferences and behavioural styles of the other party.
- Presents arguments well, orally and in writing; adapts tone and style appropriately.
- Reacts calmly to opposition; understands when to be proactive and when to listen, maintains relationships even where there is strong disagreement; stays positive and focused on finding a solution; makes any necessary trade-offs.
- Builds relationships outside of negotiating circumstances and understands the value of reciprocity.
- Effectively influences groups of people to help take forward objectives and achieve win-win outcomes.
- Recognises who is authorised to change constraints, and presents options to them, to secure the best possible outcome.

#### Level 3

- Understands how to use the whole negotiation chain and its levers.
- Understands the context of negotiations; makes links to external factors which influence how your messages are perceived.
- Communicates clearly, with passion and perseverance; responds quickly to changing circumstances.
- Explains how a strategic objective needs to take into account implementation challenges and can clarify the underlying problem to be solved.
- Probes the risks associated with different outcomes and takes informed risks where it is judged to be necessary.
- Mentors others to understand the context of negotiations and take different perspectives into account.



# Policy Profession



Twitter: [@PolicyProfUK](#) or [@PolProfHeadUK](#)



Webpage: [Civil Service Learning > Professions > Policy](#)