



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

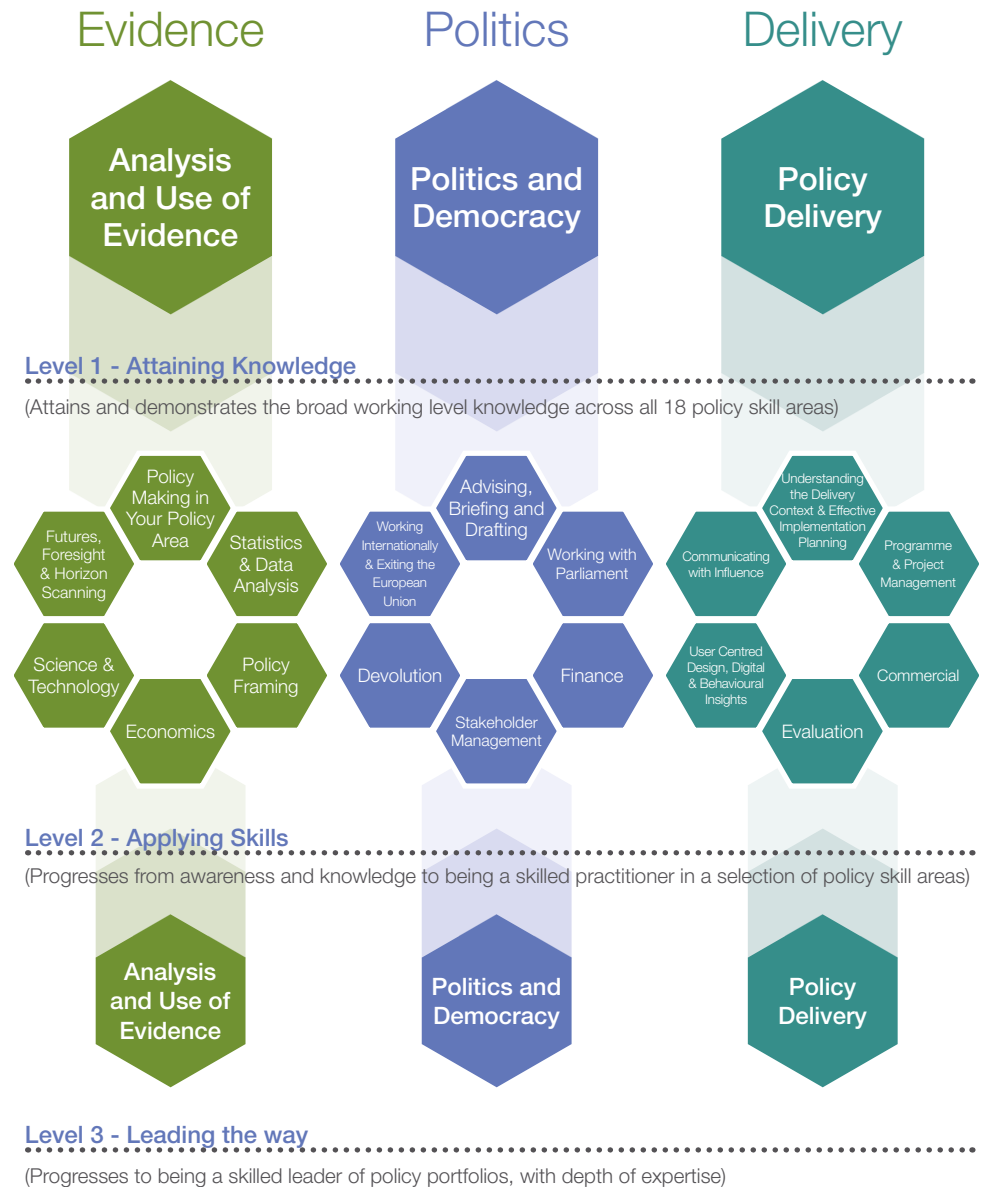


Policy Professional Development Framework

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

1. Evidence - Analysis and use of evidence

1.1 Analysis and use of evidence – Knowledge of Policy Making in your Policy Area

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands the context and background of their policy area and that building a strong knowledge base is crucial in all areas of policy; has awareness of the history of the policy area and builds on lessons learned from the past; has a clear understanding and working knowledge of what it means to be a civil servant and how to support Ministers and Government.

Level 1

- Understands that policy making takes place in a complex environment and many factors need to be taken into consideration; that there are legal implications of policy decisions and they can be challenged in court.
- Understands the respective roles of Government, associated legislative bodies, and the Crown; understands the role and duties of civil servants as set out in the Civil Service Code.
- Aware of the history of the policy area, including what has been tried before and understands the lessons learned from this.
- Knows the bigger picture for the policy area, such as: experts in the area; other organisations which have a role; the international aspects of the policy; connections with other areas of policy development, making links beyond obvious areas of overlap; how your department's policy position aligns with that of the Government.

Level 2

- Demonstrates ability to systematically and quickly build a knowledge base in a new role/policy area including why previous approaches succeeded or failed (lessons learned); adapts to new challenges and quickly collates information to support effective decision making or advice.
- Makes sound decisions and recommendations, to Ministers and senior officials, that demonstrate a thorough understanding of the policy problem; uses credible evidence and research to support these; draws upon suitable comparators (e.g. international).
- Works collaboratively with other disciplines to develop sound policy, calling upon relevant expertise/other professions when relevant (e.g. legal, finance, science, economics).
- Demonstrates sound knowledge of relevant legislation. Identifies risks (reputational, political, presentational and financial) and responds as appropriately to mitigate them.

Level 3

- Demonstrates courage and innovation when solving policy issues; positively challenges how things are done.
- Devises quickly a prioritised plan of action when faced with new areas/challenges; identifies and explains parallels between previous attempts to solve the policy problem, and their impact (successful or not).
- Uses a range of networks and experts to shortcut to the most relevant evidence, and provide historical, international or other comparative examples.
- Builds a collaborative and inclusive working environment of multi-disciplinary/multi-professional teams.
- Manages ministerial expectations and challenges appropriately.
- Provides support and advice to others seeking to understand the evidence base; builds understanding how past issues are relevant to ongoing policy development.
- Guides others to observe the Civil Service Code.

1. Evidence - Analysis and use of evidence

1.2 Analysis and use of evidence – Statistics and Data Analysis

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional commissions, understands and uses information from analysts, statisticians and social researchers to support policy design. Understands both the benefits and risks of using data; makes effective use of experts to develop a sound evidence base to support policy recommendations.

Level 1

- Understands the role of statistics and analysis in evidence gathering and problem solving.
- Knows the main sources of official statistics and the UK regulatory framework, particularly around the release of statistics.
- Knows the main headline statistics related to the policy area. Understands simple statistical concepts (e.g. sampling, summary measures, index numbers and data types); understands basic mathematical concepts such as orders of magnitude and percentages; interprets simple graphs and tables.
- Understands that data is subject to error and variability.
- Knows the relevant analysts and researchers in the business area and how to contact them.

Level 2

- Uses evidence provided by data analysis and spots pitfalls including caveats and limitations (e.g. statistical uncertainty); correctly interprets widely-used statistical tools (such as correlation and confidence intervals).
- Demonstrates use of analytical approaches and key statistical concepts when considering a policy problem, including straightforward data manipulation and clear presentation of data; uses data that is most helpful in the particular policy domain (e.g. market size in commercial; demographic or epidemiological data in health).
- Engages professional analysts at all stages in the policy development; works collaboratively with analysts to maximise the quality of the evidence base.
- Assesses the quality and relevance of analysis produced by others and acts accordingly. Assumes responsibility to check understanding of the process and outcomes of analysis.
- Demonstrates an understanding of the Code of Practice for Official Statistics and follows it.
- Identifies who needs to know and shares knowledge of useful data sources.

Level 3

- Demonstrates confident use and interpretation of a wide range of statistical and methodological tools; summarises evidence accurately and performs sound high-level evaluation, drawing attention to any gaps, uncertainties and risks.
- Builds teams where policy and analytical professionals work closely to plan, monitor and evaluate policy development; mentors others to do so.
- Develops networks across the analytical communities, inside and outside government, and engages with them to create cross-disciplinary communities of practice.
- Leads the way in using emerging developments in use of analysis in policy making.
- Challenges poor evidence.
- Guides other civil servants in the use of statistical techniques.

1. Evidence - Analysis and use of evidence

1.3 Analysis and use of evidence – Policy Framing

An knowledgeable and skilled policy professional looks beyond the initial policy question to understand and address the real issues behind it; considers a range of perspectives and tests key assumptions; focuses on the core desired objectives of a problem, while taking into consideration wider implications, impacts and risks of the potential interventions.

Level 1

- Understands department's policy tests or standards.
- Understands the policy outcomes and what successful delivery of the policy would look like.
- Identifies the significant political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental influences upon the policy area ("PESTLE").
- Recognises the importance of understanding the question that underpins the problem to be solved.
- Aware of basic problem-solving techniques (e.g. defining the problem, separating issues and hypothesis-based thinking).

Level 2

- Takes time to understand the core challenges of the problem using a wide range of evidence; identifies the fundamental questions in order to deliver the desired outcome; agrees the scope; defines the problem in clear and simple terms (e.g. using a mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive (MECE) set of questions); keeps a focus on the key issues.
- Considers views, perspectives and insight from across an appropriate range of stakeholders, and challenges assumptions, when preparing advice or developing options for successful outcomes.
- Provides quick, accurate and well thought through responses to requests for policy advice.
- Tests policy options against desired outcomes, agreed success criteria and risks.
- Recognises that issues do not exist in isolation; takes into account drivers and impacts; anticipates the "cause and effect" outcome a policy is likely to have.
- Stays focused on the most important aspects of the problem.
- Generates insights leading to applied solutions and positive impact.
- Identifies who else needs to know and shares their knowledge and insights.

Level 3

- Demonstrates extensive experience of analysing complex problems, dismissing irrelevant factors and recommending solutions that deliver successful outcomes.
- Asks insightful questions, accurately assesses options and supports others to recommend policy options which align with the underlying problem, especially when under intense time pressure.
- Uses evidence and knowledge, from a wide range of sources, to come to logical conclusions; challenges assumptions and current approaches, even of widely accepted or established policies.
- Develops and enhances problem solving approaches of all of your teams to make them more insightful and higher impact.
- Engages senior stakeholders throughout the problem-definition, and solution-generating, phases so that they fully understand and can act upon the recommendations.
- Understands what it takes to successfully deliver solutions and help others to do so.
- Frames problems in a way that allows others to solve them; leads, challenges and guides others to arrive at the best options, recommendations and decisions; leads others in using creative tools.

1. Evidence - Analysis and use of evidence

1.4 Analysis and use of evidence – Economics

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional recognises that economic considerations are a core aspect of any policy problem. Understands the basics and knows when to bring in the experts; works with economic advisers as an intelligent customer and commissioner of their expertise; can perform simple analysis and use the evidence supplied to develop high quality policy advice.

Level 1

- Understands the basics and importance of economic appraisal in policy analysis, including key principles set out in the Green Book and the rules around the use and release of economic analysis.
- Understands commonly used economic terminology and theory relevant to the policy area.
- Understands the Government Economic Service (GES) and its relationship to other analytical professions and to academia; their respective roles, and how to work with them best (both formally, e.g. commissioning, and informally, e.g. sounding out an idea).
- Understands the need to draw on expert opinions, especially in relation to appraising policy options.

Level 2

- Considers how economic data and analysis can help when starting to consider a policy problem; knows what economic data exist and identifies the right questions to ask.
- Applies the results of economic analysis to inform policy thinking and decision making; shows understanding of the limitations of analysis and economic thinking, reflects this in recommendations and conclusions; challenges key assumptions when using economic analysis produced by others.
- Carries out straightforward data manipulation or simple economic analysis and presents it clearly.
- Demonstrates working in partnership with professional economists from the outset of the work.
- Shares knowledge and skills with others and uses networks built with economists.
- Updates narratives in accordance with new economic theory as it develops.

Level 3

- Demonstrates an understanding of the main economic theories relevant to the policy area, and their implications.
- Makes informed decisions through identification, understanding and appropriate use of world leading economic thinking, research and analysis.
- Demonstrates the ability to deconstruct complex analyses, identifying principal assumptions and conclusions and challenges these where appropriate; identifies credible alternative assumptions and assesses their implications for economic conclusions.
- Leads the understanding and implementation of relevant guidance to produce and communicate credible and robust analyses of policy options; uses spreadsheet/database tools where appropriate; secures quality assurance by professional economists.
- Establishes and uses a network of economic experts to innovate and continuously improve.

1. Evidence - Analysis and use of evidence

1.5 Analysis and use of evidence – Science and Technology

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands the relevance of science and technology to their policy area to support development of well-informed, evidence-based policy recommendations. Engages and works in partnership with the relevant science, engineering and technology experts; can appropriately apply a range of evidence and techniques to address policy problems.

Level 1

- Understands that a range of science and engineering techniques, advice and analysis exist.
- Knows which specialists (science, engineering and other analytical professions; both networks and individuals) contribute to the policy area, and how to reach them for advice.
- Understands the value of consulting the Departmental Chief Scientific Adviser, how to engage with partner bodies and how these organisations link to the Government Chief Scientific Adviser.
- Understands the value of external science organisations, including the National Academies, and sees the value of academic advice.

Level 2

- Applies appropriately a wide range of evidence and techniques to address policy problems; seeks input and guidance from specialists for more sophisticated analysis.
- Works in partnership with the most appropriate technology, scientific and/or engineering experts to provide well-informed, evidence-based policy recommendations; uses advice.
- Demonstrates an appreciation of the limitations that individuals or networks may have.
- Understands the perspectives of their Chief Scientific Adviser, including the trade-offs that need to be considered, and other key experts in their policy area.

Level 3

- Demonstrates an understanding of a wide range of science and engineering advice, evidence and techniques, and uses them to develop sophisticated policy options.
- Engages with a network of scientific experts and brings in new contacts to increase existing knowledge (both internally and externally to Government); convenes groups which comprise of a wide spectrum of views to aid decision-making.
- Advocates the value of consulting Chief Scientific Advisers and the Government Chief Scientific Adviser alongside making full use of expert networks.
- Mentors others in achieving balanced expertise and sources when evidencing policy options.
- Demonstrates effective working relationships and understanding of the key science and engineering experts in their field (and related areas).

1. Evidence - Analysis and use of evidence

1.6 Analysis and use of evidence – Futures, Foresight and Horizon Scanning

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional considers the long-term impact and potential outcomes of policy recommendations. Understands the future prospects, opportunities and challenges in the policy area; communicates these effectively; is aware that there are a range of tools to develop futures-thinking and foresight; commissions the building of such evidence; engages with experts in the field of futures-thinking and foresight.

Level 1

- Understands the need to consider the future when developing policy and that it is important to consider multiple possible outcomes; distinguishes between possibility, probability and risk.
- Awareness that a strong vision for the future can support action in the present.
- Knows the key stakeholders in the policy area; appreciates the importance of involving them as a means to understand future opportunities, threats and possibilities.
- Knows of a number of networks, both within Department and across Government and how to approach them about major trends and drivers in the policy area.
- Understands that a range of futures tools exist to develop future-oriented insights that can be fed into policy making.
- Understands the difference between scenarios, which can prepare for the future, and predictions, which may be wrong.

Level 2

- Applies a range of futures tools to explore the various possible futures in policy making.
- Communicates the value and purpose of futures-thinking and foresight work to colleagues and teams in the Department.
- Uses the expertise of stakeholders to provide context, and underpin the development of insights into the future to inform policy making.
- Shows awareness of the groups inside Government (e.g. Office for Budget Responsibility, Office for National Statistics) who generate information that can inform your view of the future; makes intelligent use of their work.
- Draws on experts from multiple disciplines and professions to broaden perspectives and better inform policy making, and develop broader perspectives.
- Generates evidence to enhance the ability of futures thinking and foresight on policy development, through use of e.g. surveys, interviews and digital metrics.
- Scopes and commissions high-quality analysis focused on the future, such as scenarios from internal and external partners; draws on resources for supporting evidence-based policy making.
- Uses futures-thinking and foresight to challenge own assumptions and biases, as well as those of others.

- Communicates that uncertainty and ambiguity are necessary features of the complex systems policy makers are concerned with, and the value of anticipating possible futures to ensure resilient policy making.

Level 3

- Displays a deep knowledge of previous Government futures work and the value it has had; draws upon a range of formal and informal approaches to develop futures-thinking, foresight and horizon-scanning capability in team or policy area.
- Develops and maintains a network of stakeholders across industry and academia; uses these to keep up-to-date with best practice, and how changes in policy area may influence future directions.
- Plays a central role in developing tools and resources that support futures thinking, foresight and horizon-scanning capability across government; draws on wider networks and experience.
- Advocates and champions for futures-thinking and foresight, and how it strengthens policy making across Government; works with peers to ensure they can anticipate threats and opportunities.

2. Politics – Politics and democracy

2.1 Politics and democracy – Advising, Briefing and Drafting

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional presents accurate, brief, clear arguments and options; tailors communication according to its use and the intended audience; is confident in the briefing of Ministers and senior officials; contributes to the democratic process whereby Parliament holds Government to account.

Level 1

- Understands the pressures on Ministers and senior officials and why accurate, brief and clear communication is essential.
- Understands that information needs to be presented according to its audience and possible application; selects and presents it so that someone else can understand a particular subject quickly (“briefing”).
- Understands the different types of written work a civil servant is often requested to produce.
- Understands the role of answers to Parliamentary Questions, ministerial correspondence and Parliamentary scrutiny in holding the Government to account.
- Demonstrates the ability to write in a manner that is accurate, brief and clear and uses correct grammar and punctuation.

Level 2

- Drafts documents that are logically structured, contain carefully assimilated and selected information and evidence, presents a full and balanced picture with a persuasive conclusion.
- Writes in a manner that is clear, shows critical thinking and understanding of the subject, brings clarity to complexity or ambiguity, and is without jargon and technical terms (if complex language is essential explains the meaning with care and consistency).
- Uses the correct tone of writing for each type of briefing or advice, tailors the message for the audience and ensures that the correct impact is achieved on the reader; ensures any last minute changes do not change the tone or detract from the key message.
- Uses the Minister’s preferred style and engages with Private Office to ensure the Minister’s requirements are fully met.
- Seeks and responds intelligently to feedback, and proactively reviews own work.
- Provides effective and confident oral briefing to Ministers, Special Advisers and senior colleagues.
- Coaches, trains and mentors others in drafting.
- Demonstrates knowledge of the purpose of the communication, the outcome sought and the potential impacts.

- Ensures that information for Parliament (e.g. Explanatory Memoranda) are fit-for-purpose, clear and complete (making no assumptions of prior knowledge or over-use of acronyms).

Level 3

- Champions good writing and clear advice, coaches others and provides opportunities for less experienced staff to practice drafting advice.
- Challenges others to explain ambiguity and present a clear argument amid uncertainty; challenges and supports the development of those already doing well.
- Demonstrates that feedback to others leads to positive change.
- Responds to high profile exchanges such as Select Committees.
- Quality assures documents to ensure clarity of: the issues, objectives, implications and impacts (effectively considers the reader).

2. Politics – Politics and democracy

2.2 Politics and democracy – Working with Parliament

A knowledgeable and skilled policy maker appreciates the unique role undertaken by civil servants in working with Parliament; understands the role of, and responsibilities to, Parliament and acts accordingly; policy development reflects the political realities.

Level 1

- Understands that the UK does not have a codified constitution but an unwritten one contained in Acts of Parliament, court judgments and conventions.
- Knows the institutions and public figures associated with Parliament, including the Houses of Parliament and Select Committees.
- Understands the role of answers to Parliamentary Questions and ministerial correspondence in holding the Government to account.
- Understands departmental processes for handling legislation, judicial reviews and Freedom of Information requests.
- Understands the Cabinet Committee system, collective responsibility and the write-round process.
- Understands the roles of Ministers and their advisers.
- Understands the role and duties of civil servants as set out in the Civil Service Code.
- Knows who to approach for advice on Parliamentary matters and is aware of the timetable (e.g. recess) and how it affects legislation.
- Identifies the people who are influential in the legislative process (particularly MPs and peers); understands the importance of early engagement with them.
- Identifies to Parliament the impact of different policy options.

Level 2

- Demonstrates understanding of the powers and responsibilities of the Prime Minister, Cabinet, Ministers, Special Advisers and civil servants.
- Understands the basic mechanisms of law-making in the UK (including Bills, Secondary legislation, Parliamentary Questions, Select Committees, Scrutiny Committees and Debates); interacts with the people who support them.
- Identifies the risks and opportunities in the Parliamentary process, and manages expectations.
- Builds productive working relationships and trust with: Ministers, Private Office(s), Special Advisers and organisations or experts representing citizens, businesses or other stakeholders; speaks with confidence and clarity in their presence, even when delivering a difficult message.
- Uses a network of contacts and experts in the Parliamentary processes.
- Drafts effective Parliamentary correspondence and provides high quality briefing in line with the preference of the Minister; prepares Minister(s) in preparation for interacting with Parliament; can foresee less obvious questions.
- Engages with organisations or experts representing citizens, businesses or other stakeholders and considers their input; presents this for Parliamentary scrutiny.

- Takes account of the wider political landscape when considering policy options; judges correctly those topics which are politically sensitive and handles accordingly.

Level 3

- Gives unbiased advice to Ministers on difficult and complex policy based on robust analysis; understands the relevant political realities.
- Understands the guidance on giving evidence to Select Committees (Osmotherly Rules).
- Directly engages with Parliamentary process at senior level e.g. presenting to Select Committees, delivering a Bill through Parliament, or using the Parliamentary scrutiny process to improve policies.
- Identifies any potential conflicts of interest in policy development and handles them sensitively.
- Shows an in-depth understanding of how and when to react in unexpected situations, e.g. emergency legislation, lost votes.
- Coaches others and shares experiences to build Parliamentary skills of other policy makers; explains the role of answers to Parliamentary Questions and ministerial correspondence in democratic accountability.

2. Politics – Politics and democracy

2.3 Politics and democracy – Finance

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands the importance of using public money effectively and ensuring these considerations are taken during policy development; understands the financial challenges and complexities behind the funding for the policy area and makes appropriate recommendations and decisions; delivers value for money even if not directly accountable for a budget.

Level 1

- Demonstrates awareness of the main guidance documents relating to finance, such as the Government financial reporting manual, the Green Book and Managing Public Money; understands how the Civil Service Code relates to responsibility for public money.
- Understands role in ensuring public money is used effectively for the Exchequer as a whole, and how to raise any concerns (e.g. whistleblowing).
- Understands the importance of taking financial considerations into account throughout the policy making process.
- Knows the relevant financial advisers in the policy area and how to contact them.

Level 2

- Demonstrates familiarity with public sector financial guidance documents; confidently uses terms and concepts commonly referred to in public finance.
- Drafts considered and compelling business cases.
- Demonstrates working in partnership with financial specialists.
- Provides advice and recommendations that show a detailed understanding of the relevant financial situation, a value for money approach and a clear understanding of risks; plans for and responds appropriately to changes in financial circumstances or concerns.
- Handles numbers confidently and accurately; interprets a range of financial/performance/value for money data; tests financial assumptions and is able to identify appropriate monitor and review contribution towards expected outcomes.

Level 3

- Leads the way and provides advice, which demonstrates the complexities of the financial situation in the policy area including the implications of major change (e.g. a change in government or altered market forces).
- Undertakes regular audits of the policy area to ensure it is achieving best value for money; acts appropriately on the results.
- Implements best practice evaluation and risk management mechanisms including effective contingency plans.
- Leads and develops wide-ranging networks; shares expertise and best practice in making good use of public money; plays an active role in relevant communities of practice.
- Supports colleagues who seek to raise issues and concerns e.g. through whistleblowing.

2. Politics – Politics and democracy

2.4 Politics and democracy – Stakeholder Management

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional engages with a range of stakeholders at all stages in the policy making process; knows who the stakeholders are and how best to engage with each; uses collaborative approaches – including digital tools and techniques - to ensure that the policy is informed by a broad range of input and expertise, and meets user needs.

Level 1

- Understands the purpose behind, and the need to plan time for, stakeholder engagement.
- Knows where to access support and advice in effective working with stakeholders (such as stakeholder engagement teams, communications professionals, service designers).
- Knows which stakeholders are most influential, and their views of the policy options.
- Knows any legal requirements to formally consult others on proposals relating to the policy area.
- Has awareness of the Cabinet Office Consultation Principles.

Level 2

- Uses collaborative and direct approaches to engage with stakeholders from the earliest opportunity, throughout the development and implementation of the policy; plans when and how engagement will take place.
- Uses effective methods to identify stakeholders and keep them engaged in the development of the policy, prioritising where to focus resource.
- Adopts a broad range of appropriate and inclusive methods to engage and encourage collaboration in policy development, including the use of digital tools and techniques; works closely with communications professionals to find the best methods and ensure that the opportunity to engage is appropriately publicised.
- Uses evidence from complaints, feedback and correspondence as a means of informing policy development.
- Analyses input from stakeholders, calling upon the expertise of colleagues if necessary, and uses this to inform the evidence base when providing advice (e.g. to Ministers, senior officials or Parliament).
- Understands the legal principles of fair formal consultation the “Coughlan principles” and considers them in devising any consultation; adheres to the Cabinet Office Consultation Principles when conducting government consultations.

Level 3

- Builds and leads broad teams incorporating policy makers and specialists; draws upon best practice and leads innovative methods of stakeholder engagement including the use of digital tools and techniques; positions formal written consultation as part of a broader, richer process of public dialogue.
- Considers in advance how stakeholders and the public may respond to proposals and plan for a range of scenarios, using risk management and assurance processes effectively to ensure accurate and timely consideration of stakeholder input.
- Draws robust conclusions from a broad range of conflicting and/or ambiguous responses, and defend those conclusions against challenge - including learning from judicial reviews.
- Runs large scale engagement processes on contentious issues effectively and confidently, which may include formal public consultation; supports and trains others to do so.

2. Politics – Politics and democracy

2.5 Politics and democracy – Devolution

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands how their policy area relates to the Devolved Administrations. As devolution has an effect on the development of policy and the public services that we deliver, all policy professionals need to understand the devolved system of government in the UK, and the opportunities and impacts of inter-governmental working.

Level 1

- Understands the structure of the devolved settlements (assemblies and executives).
- Understands the difference between reserved and devolved powers.
- Understands the role of Territorial Offices and when to consult them.
- Understands the need to respect the independence of the different governments (e.g. in relation to information sharing).
- Understands the importance of identifying and engaging stakeholders in different parts of the UK, including fellow policy leads.
- Understands the implications of English Votes for English Laws on policy and legislation.
- Understands the implications of decentralisation on the policy area.

Level 2

- Shows an understanding of devolved issues, including the legal position and protocols, when developing policies to reach effective outcomes; involves specialist advisers when appropriate.
- Demonstrates knowledge of the devolved legal processes when making legislation.
- Demonstrates understanding of devolution of powers from the UK Government to the Scottish Parliament, National Assembly for Wales and Northern Ireland Assembly, compared with English devolution and the decentralisation of powers to cities and regions within England.
- Considers the implications of local devolution and decentralisation within England throughout development of the policy.
- Contributes to any Memorandum of Understanding, and explain its relevance in policy making on devolved issues.
- Manages the different interests of stakeholders across the UK.
- Prepares Impact Assessments, or equivalent, that take account of the different parts of the UK.
- Negotiates effectively in a devolved context, both nationally and within regional areas/cities in England.
- Knows policy counterpart in other administrations, their views and maintains effective dialogue.

Level 3

- Establishes effective leadership and governance for improving capability on devolved issues.
- Guides others to recognise the importance of understanding devolution when policy making, and how it contributes to effective policy outcomes.
- Demonstrates resolution of devolution issues, through use of appropriate processes and techniques.
- Maintains effective dialogue, demonstrates an understanding of administrations' views and perspectives, and effectively shares knowledge with others who need to know.

2. Politics – Politics and democracy

2.6 Politics and democracy – Working Internationally and Exiting the European Union

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands how the policy area and position of Government fits in the international or European Union context; understands and uses key concepts and terminology; is able to represent the UK; negotiates effectively with international and EU counterparts; recognises the implications of the UK leaving the European Union.

Level 1

- Understands the relevant international and EU frameworks in which the UK operates; shows knowledge of the history, structure, operation and financing of relevant organisations.
- Understands relevant international and EU concepts, principles, terminology and legislation affecting the policy area.
- Understands wider UK relationships with European and other major international organisations.
- Understands the nature of bilateral and multilateral relationships in the policy area.
- Understands which stakeholders outside of Government are important to the policy area in an international or EU context.
- Understands the basics of how trade policy relates to the policy area.
- Understands the relationship between the EU and third (non-EU) countries/international organisations, and how this impacts on the policy area.
- Understands the process for leaving the European Union under Article 50 of the Treaty on European Union, and the UK Government's approach to the future relationship with the EU.

Level 2

- Represents and advances the UK's interests internationally; uses the most effective policy tools and channels to do so; effectively supports and briefs Ministers/senior officials for international events or meetings.
- Negotiates effectively with representatives of international organisations, or EU institutions and Member States, or other governments.
- Builds and maintains relationships and works effectively with a wide range of internal and external stakeholders on international policy.
- Builds international evidence, perspectives and thinking into their policy development at an early stage.
- Recognises the impact and importance of understanding other cultures, and of developing/using other languages where appropriate.

Specific standards for EU exit policy professionals

- Understands the EU treaties, EU competence and how the EU negotiates different types of legal instruments including third country agreements.
- Understands the UK's approach to the exit negotiations, future relationship with the EU and the positions of the EU institutions and its 27 Member States.
- Contributes effective advice on the implications of the UK leaving the EU; or future negotiations in policy area.

- Displays an understanding of World Trade Organisation Agreements and their implications for policy area.

Level 3

- Shapes, leads and delivers against the UK's international policy objectives.
- Builds the wider international or EU exit perspective into all aspects of the policy area, making clear connections between international and domestic situations; takes account of global, regional and country context and local sensitivities; develops future scenarios to advise the UK position.
- Leads international negotiations at the highest levels, adapting to a changing and sensitive environment; leads international meetings and builds consensus.
- Builds and guides cross-disciplinary collaborative teams to optimise outcomes from negotiations, and to develop international knowledge and negotiation skills.
- Seeks to share learning with others; mentors others to influence international or EU business.
- Establishes and uses a wide-ranging network of contacts at country and international level.

Specific standards for EU exit policy professionals

- Demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the process for the UK leaving the EU, the UK's approach to the exit negotiations, future relationship with the EU, and the positions of the EU institutions and its 27 Member States.

3. Delivery – Policy delivery

3.1 Policy delivery – Understanding the Delivery Context and Effective Implementation Planning

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands the environment in which their policy will be delivered and uses a range of techniques to plan and prepare for possible outcomes when their policy is implemented.

Level 1

- Understands the intended outcomes of the policy and what successful delivery looks like, from the start.
- Understands the basic delivery systems available in the policy area, including which other organisations and/or arms length bodies are involved.
- Understands the importance of being able to measure the progress and success of your policy.
- Understands the need to learn from, and work with, delivery partners.
- Takes into account any political, economic, social, technological, legal and environmental developments (“PESTLE”).
- Understands how to use quantitative and qualitative data to create evidence based policy and evaluate in pilots, through implementation stages and on-going in delivery; knows how to present this evidence in tools, such as Impact Assessments.
- Awareness of the Cabinet Office Implementation Insights (Setting the Goal, Planning to Deliver, Achieving Impact).

Level 2

- Uses decision-making tools such as Impact Assessments to analyse the feasibility of options.
- Facilitates effectively the early involvement of the people who will deliver the policy, and those impacted by it.
- Engages effectively with internal functions and external experts on requirements for implementation.
- Identifies the risks and barriers that could affect implementation; proposes actions to manage risk; ensures that Ministers understand the trade-offs.
- Decides what outcomes are to be achieved and how success and progress will be measured throughout pilots, implementation phases and delivery.
- Demonstrates an understanding of delivery systems and the incentives within them.
- Delivers successful policy in a complex political, bureaucratic or budgetary context.

Level 3

- Develops detailed, targeted solutions for complex issues, at pace, that demonstrate an impact.
- Works with stakeholders to make the connection between policy and the real-world situation, and overcome barriers; mentors and supports others to do likewise.
- Understands quickly complex delivery systems and incentives within them, and guides understanding in others.
- Demonstrates evidence of anticipating and balancing a range of economic, social, political and technological developments in the design of solutions.
- Develops and encourages systematic approaches to knowledge-sharing from previous policy design and delivery.

3. Delivery – Policy delivery

3.2 Policy delivery – Programme and Project Management

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands the importance of planning and monitoring their policy development; uses various Programme and Project Management tools and methods to ensure successful delivery and track progress.

Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands the role and importance of effective project management in delivering both government policy and change within the Civil Service. • Understands the three components of project delivery success (on time, within budget, delivered to the desired quality) and the likely tensions between these during delivery; understands basic project concepts, language and principles of project delivery. • Understands the importance in ensuring that projects are set up for successful delivery from the outset. • Knows some basic project management tools (e.g. Gantt charts) and roles (e.g. project manager, sponsor). • Knows when and from whom to seek advice on project management expertise. • Understands the key principles and tools to the setup, management and reporting of a project. • Understands, and can identify, likely risks associated with policy options. • Captures and shares learning from project work with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses a range of project management techniques to deliver policies; applies the most appropriate principles and approaches. • Identifies the capabilities and resources that are required for a successful project; develops these in existing staff or brings them into the team when needed; can effectively identify all the component parts required for policy implementation. • Communicates clearly the needs of the client (Minister or sponsor) to the project team and the rest of the organisation. • Schedules, budgets and produces accurate and timely reports for the project. • Identifies and evaluates risks and opportunities; develops strategies to manage and mitigate them; responds effectively to set-backs by identifying the causes, reflecting and learning from these experiences. • Assesses the progress of the project and makes trade-off decisions in order to produce the best results possible for all parties; helps others understand these trade-offs. • Brings in appropriate external assurance to ensure delivery of high quality products, including Infrastructure and Projects Authority (IPA) processes. • Reviews and captures learning from all project work so that this can be shared with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leads higher risk (e.g. higher profile or media risks) and more complex (e.g. multi-million pound) projects or programmes, delivering agreed outcomes, on time and within budget. • Examines critically the evidence in support of business cases; anticipates risks and takes a strategic view in how they can be addressed or mitigated. • Engages with relevant communities of practice and professional bodies to identify best practice, learn from others and improve resilience of self, team and the project. • Defines own role and relationship to the outcomes of the project; takes accountability for making decisions; innovates to make improvements in delivery, and tests all assumptions. • Is an intelligent client of the delivery team. • Encourages and empowers others to use programme and project management tools and approaches effectively. • Develops a culture where systematic reviews, knowledge capture and sharing is valued; commissions IPA Gateway reviews appropriately.

3. Delivery – Policy delivery

3.3 Policy delivery – Commercial

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands the commercial context in which their policy will operate; engages with suppliers and commercial experts to achieve the best possible outcome; ensures that policies deliver value for money.

Level 1

- Understands the steps involved in making commercial decisions.
- Understands that all decisions should achieve value for money for the taxpayer.
- Knows how, and from whom, to get advice to achieve best value.
- Understands how to engage with suppliers and manage relationships with stakeholders.
- Knows the basic parameters of public spending processes and controls (e.g. OJEU) and departmental thresholds.

Level 2

- Considers commercial risks and their impact on policy implementation and the wider implications of the policy on the full range of affected parties; assesses the financial impact when considering options, including effective risk appraisal.
- Shows awareness of the companies and sectors that are affected by the policy area; reflects on experience of applying knowledge in one or two scenarios.
- Builds and uses networks of commercial colleagues and seeks their advice throughout the policy making process; communicates clearly and confidently with commercial experts.
- Demonstrates an understanding of key commercial concepts including how markets may react to policy announcements and (where appropriate) proactively engages with the market to assess the viability and implications of policies.
- Undertakes research into company performance, and understands basic financial investment terminology; uses this in policy development.
- Engages and negotiates with suppliers, knows the key commercial stakeholders in the policy area (including those outside of Government); manages contracts with third party suppliers, delivering value for money.
- Leads and improves sourcing and contract management processes and practices; ensures value for money is achieved.

Level 3

- Engages tactically and strategically with suppliers and stakeholders, with confidence and credibility, to maximise value for money for the taxpayer and to ensure that security standards are considered.
- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of the likely response from the market to a policy change or development, and factors this into decision making.
- Builds an extensive network of commercial expertise, regularly sharing with, and learning from, others.
- Maintains an understanding of the markets in their policy area, understands the relation between key market actors and those in related sectors and markets.

3. Delivery – Policy delivery

3.4 Policy delivery – Evaluation

A knowledgeable and skilled policy professional understands the importance of including how outcomes will be evaluated at an early stage of policy development; uses research and trials to inform policies; understands and uses a range of evaluation techniques.

Level 1

- Understands the importance of evaluating policy outcomes and plans, at an early stage, how the policy will be evaluated.
- Compares evaluations of previous policies to assess the likelihood of effectiveness.
- Understands the need to assess the validity of any claim, and the reliability of the method that gave rise to the claim.
- Knows the difference between quantitative and qualitative research.
- Understands simple graphs and tables.
- Understands simple descriptive statistics - averages, percentages, and the difference between a percentage and percentage point.
- Understands that there are protocols around releasing unpublished research.

Level 2

- Uses evidence, analysis, and evaluation when making policy recommendations.
- Uses the most common methods to evaluate impacts; suggests when certain evaluation methods should be used and interpret such results; identifies methodological flaws that could undermine a research study or policy conclusion.
- Integrates rapid evaluation techniques into policy design and implementation.
- Demonstrates use of key concepts (e.g. statistical significance, confidence intervals and random sampling).
- Commissions research; understands own role within this.
- Takes responsibility for role in the publication of research.
- Carries out simple trial design, survey design and analysis; draws upon expert quality assurance and guidance as appropriate.
- Engages professional researchers from the earliest stages, and throughout, policy development.
- Critiques research on its robustness; identifies the appropriate conclusions.

Level 3

- Sets the strategic direction for the research programme in the assigned area.
- Demonstrates practical experience of using a range of methods and evaluation approaches in a real world context; shows an understanding of when techniques and methods can break down or be pushed beyond the textbook assumptions.
- Commissions appropriate and proportionate evaluations and defends their use as part of the policy process.
- Mentors others to encourage the use of evaluation techniques.
- Leads teams to use initial evaluation to make suitable changes to policy in the piloting and implementation phases.
- Builds and uses a wide network of professional researchers and experts to shortcut to the most relevant evidence, and provide historical, international or other comparative examples.

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](#)