



Procurement competency framework in the United Kingdom and Scotland



Public Procurement Principle: **Integrity**



Procurement Stage: **All phases**



Audience: **Procuring entity, Policy maker,**

Description

United Kingdom

Commercial skills and behaviours are identified as one of the four priority areas within the Civil Service Capabilities Plan 2014. These cover the pre-procurement phase (when the ability to build markets, engage with suppliers and manage financial and investment risk is key) and effective contract and supplier management after the contract is agreed. The Commercial Skills and Competency Framework for Developing and Practitioner Levels (hereinafter referred to as the “Framework”) sets out the current skills, behaviours and competencies that civil servants undertaking public procurement should demonstrate in delivering highly efficient, dynamic and professional procurement roles that lead to value for money. The Framework covers the three key components of the commercial cycle – pre market, sourcing, and contract and supplier management.

- Pre-Market: the process and skills to understand the market place in the development and delivery of a commercial strategy.
- Sourcing: the commercial process, agreements and skills required to acquire goods, works and services that will deliver business outcomes, specifically legality and value for money maximisation from existing commercial agreements.
- Contract and supplier management (Post-contract award): the process and skills used to manage the successful delivery of business outcomes and seek to maximise value through the duration of the contract. It also incorporates two levels of integrated commercial skills and competencies – developing and practitioner.
- Developing – It demonstrates that somebody is able to understand key issues and their implications, and to ask relevant and constructive questions on the subject. They may be at the start of their career or a practitioner of another profession with some involvement in commercial activities beyond awareness. The developing level individual demonstrates behaviours and outcomes above an awareness level, but has not had sufficient opportunity or experience to put the skill into practice to merit Practitioner level.
- Practitioner – They display detailed knowledge of the subject and are capable of providing guidance and advice to others as well as undertaking commercial activity, based on significant commercial experience and qualifications. The

Government Commercial Profession Skill Levels cover those specialists who have developed their commercial expertise and experience beyond Practitioner level to reach Government Commercial Profession status. This status is sub-divided into four levels: Commercial Lead, Associate Commercial Specialist, Commercial Specialist and Senior Commercial Specialist. The levels within this grouping correspond to the “Expert” level included in the previous version of the Commercial Skills and Competency Framework. It can be used to identify skill and knowledge requirements for different roles, plan career development and as a consistent reference for learning and development. All departments are expected to adopt this procurement skills framework in order to ensure a common approach to public procurement.

Scotland

The procurement competency framework in Scotland identifies the skills and competency levels required by all staff involved in the procurement process. It helps procurement practitioners take ownership of their personal development through a skills assessment, identifying training and development needs and supporting career planning. Each competency has a number of skills listed with the description that identifies the level of competency:

- Level 1 (Foundation/Awareness)
- Level 2 (Developing/Working knowledge)
- Level 3 (Practitioner)
- Level 4 (Expert)
- Level 5 (Master/Leader)

The framework was updated in 2016 to reflect the changing Scottish procurement context and be aligned with CIPS (Chartered Institute of Procurement & Supply) Global Standards.

Procurement Competency Framework (aligned to Government Purpose & CIPS Global Standards)

Infrastructure Foundations (Why) Corporate Strategy Procurement Strategy and Policy Legislation Governance and Compliance Technology Standards & Conduct	Process (How)			Performance (What) Performance Management & Measurement <small>(including Benefits Tracking & KPI's)</small> Continuous improvement <small>(including change Methodologies)</small>	People (Who) Self-development Managing High Performing Teams Leading & Influencing Stakeholder Relationships Communications
	Planning	Implementation	Delivery		
	Pre-market engagement	Tender	Post contract		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commodity, Supplier & SC Profiling Spend Analysis Market & SC Analysis Specification development Building tender documents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract Law & T's & C's EU and Regulated Tender Process Tender Evaluation Award & Debrief Negotiation Alternative routes to market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contract management Supplier management Supply chain management Inventory Management Distribution fleet and logistics 		
Early Engagement & role of intelligent client (drives better outcomes)	Commercial and Financial Awareness Commercial competence and business acumen; Commercial models; Business case development; Financial Management; Budgeting				
	Planning and Risk Management Project and Programme Management (PPM); Risk Management				
	Sustainability and Innovation Sustainable Procurement				

Source: (Government Commercial Function, 2015) and (Scottish Government, 2016)

OECD (2021), Public Procurement in the State of Mexico: Enhancing Efficiency and Competition, OECD Public Governance Reviews, OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/cc1da607-en>

