

## MANAGEMENT BOARD

### Core competency framework: Analysis of take-up

*Paper by Tim Parkin, Head of Organisational Development*

#### Purpose

1. This paper provides an update on actions recorded at October's Board to:
  - (a) analyse take-up of the competency framework,
  - (b) analyse departmental readiness to participate in next steps including the pilot of Unlocking Potential, and
  - (c) agree how the Board should be kept informed on the progress of implementing the competency framework.

#### Action for the Board

2. To note progress and agree the recommendations

#### Summary of findings

##### a) Take-up of the competency framework

3. The aim of the analysis is to provide a clearer picture of who is using the competency framework, whether use of the framework is effective (i.e. realising its intended benefits) and the readiness of departments to move beyond core competencies.
4. As a framework for this analysis three tests were employed:

Test 1:	Most staff of the directorate or department have completed the assessment process with their manager
Test 2:	Most staff of the directorate or department report that they found the competency framework simple to understand and to use
Test 3:	Most staff of the directorate or department describe their experience of working with the competency framework in terms which demonstrate that interim benefits are being realised

5. As each business area approaches a completion rate of 50%, short structured interviews are being carried out with staff. The purpose of the 50% threshold is to make sure that samples are representative; not made up only of those who were most enthusiastic to start working with competencies.
6. At present, three directorates or departments have used the framework in sufficient numbers to enable us to analyse and learn from their experiences: Accommodation and Logistics, OCE and DHRC. The Department of Finance completed a different type of competency assessment as was not included at this stage.
7. Initial findings are:
  - House staff are finding the framework easy to understand and to use (83%)
  - 60% of responses indicate that use of the framework is effective and that benefits are being realised
  - In particular a high percentage fed back positively about their agreement meeting with their manager, with 71% agreeing that the framework had helped them to have a good quality discussion about performance and development
  - Only half of respondents felt that the personal plan at the end of the assessment process would be helpful to them. House staff need further guidance on this part of the process, for which feedback gathered during this exercise will be helpful
8. Variations can be seen between departments; for example OCE staff were less likely to agree that the framework helped them to understand the behaviours that are important to the work of the House. Feedback during the interviews indicates that this is because they felt well-informed about these behaviours already.
9. Further details are shown in the table in the Appendix.
10. Overall, these findings show that whilst only small numbers of House staff have completed the process, those who have done so find it valuable. There is evidence that interim benefits are being realised.

11. The intended benefits of using core competencies are as follows:

<b>Interim benefits</b>	<b>End benefits</b>
<p>(from individual use of the framework)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarity for staff of the behaviours expected of them in their job role</li> <li>• Transparency of the expected behaviours associated with different job roles and pay bands</li> <li>• Greater understanding of the behaviours valued by the organisation</li> <li>• A common language to help managers to discuss performance with their staff</li> <li>• More effective individual development plans</li> <li>• More effective targeting of learning and development interventions</li> </ul>	<p>(from use by the whole organisation and/or dependent on other factors)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved individual performance</li> <li>• Ability to view the capability and development needs of the whole organisation, or part of it</li> <li>• Enhanced value-for-money from learning and development interventions</li> <li>• Greater transparency in recruitment processes (e.g. clearer sight of transferable skills)</li> <li>• Capability to introduce a transparent and fair system of contribution pay</li> <li>• Improved career paths and career planning discussions (once competencies are embedded into HR processes)</li> </ul>

b) Readiness for next steps, including Unlocking Potential

12. Unlocking potential is an initiative which is dependent upon, and may follow from use of the core competency framework. Other such initiatives include the use of technical competencies (specific to job roles) and the use of competencies in recruitment.

13. Effective use of the framework is a foundation for these activities. It constitutes a significant behavioural change for managers and staff of the House and will take time to embed. We will be able to describe the core competency framework as 'embedded' once the three tests described above have been met in all areas of the business, as this will show that usage is both effective and widespread. At present use of the framework is effective but not widespread.

## Recommendations

14. The analysis will be repeated quarterly during 2014. The one-page overview in the Appendix will continue to be updated, so that the Board may be kept informed via its Quarterly Performance Review meeting.
15. This information will enable a view to be taken on when departments are ready to proceed beyond core competencies to the next steps, including piloting Unlocking Potential.
16. The Change Team will support Learning and Development during the continuing roll-out of the framework, making use of good news stories from those who have already completed the process.
17. Guidance on how to use the output from the competency assessment will be improved, whilst re-enforcing the message that it is for individuals and their line managers to create a suitable development plan.

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Appendix

Analysis of take-up of the Competency Framework by directorates updated 07 January 2014.

	DF: Accommodation and Logistics	DF: Catering	DF: Parliamentary Estates Directorate	DF: DGS Office	DCCS: Committee Office	DCCS: Official Report	DCCS: Chamber Business	DCCS: Serjeant at Arms	DIS: Research and Library	DIS: Management	DIS: Information	DIS: Public Information	DIS: Public Engagement	Office of the Chief Executive	Department of Finance	Department of HR and Change	Running total for the House Service
<b>Test 1: Most staff of the directorate have completed the assessment process</b>	✓ 54%	- 1%	- 5%	- 13%	- 3%	- 1%	- 0%	- 0%	- 0%	- 2%	- 0%	- 0%	✓ 62%	✓ 69%	✓ 36%	- 9%	
↓ interviews are undertaken once at least 50% of staff of the directorate have completed an assessment with their manager																	
<b>Test 2: Most staff of the directorate found the CF simple to understand and use</b>	✓ 100%													✓ 83%		✓ 73%	✓ 83%
↓																	
<b>Test 3: Responses indicate that interim benefits are being realised</b>	✓ 64%													✗ 42%		✓ 61%	✓ 60%
"The CF helped me to understand the behaviours that are important to the work of the House... "	✓ 64%													✗ 33%		✓ 59%	✓ 57%
"The CF helped me to understand what is expected of me in my job role... "	✓ 64%													✗✓ 50%		✓ 59%	✓ 60%
"The CF helped me to have a good quality discussion about performance and development... "	✓ 71%													✗✓ 50%		✓ 77%	✓ 71%
"The output from the process ('personal report') will be helpful to me... "	✓ 57%													✗ 33%		✗✓ 50%	✗✓ 50%
Number of staff interviewed	14													6		22	42