

Utility Regulator Competency Framework

What is a competency?

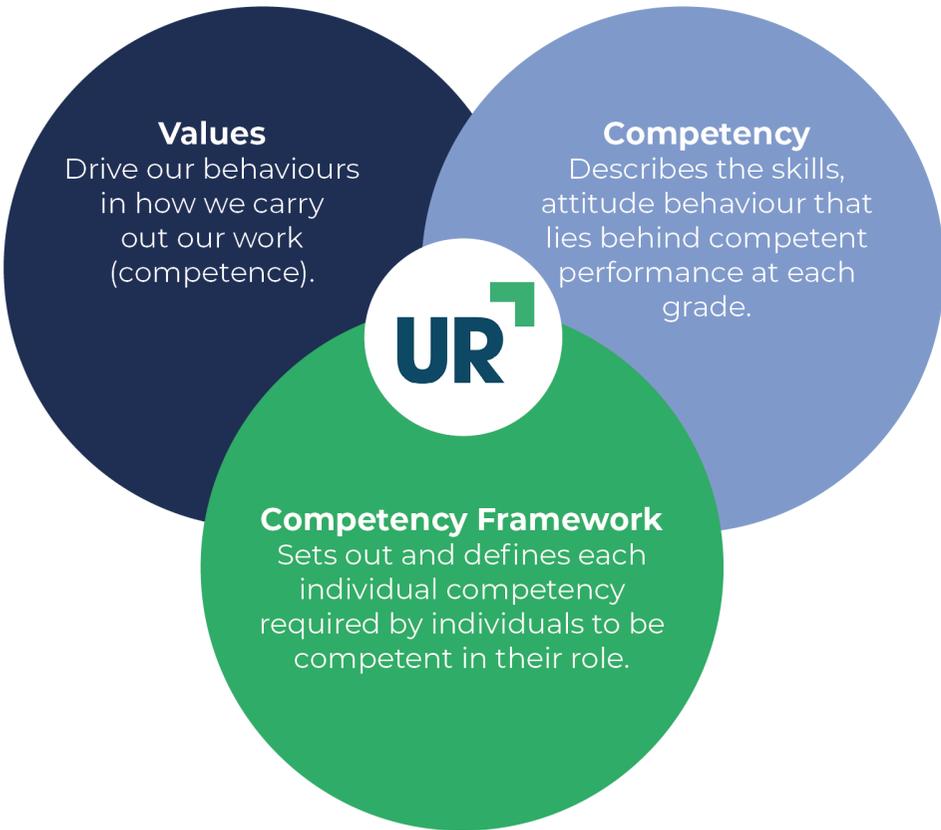
'Competency' (competencies) describes the behaviour that lies behind competent performance, such as critical thinking or analytical skills, and describes what people bring to the job. A competency describes the characteristics of a successful Utility Regulator (UR) employee i.e. knowledge, actions, attitudes and behaviours.

What is a competency framework?

A 'competency framework' is a structure that sets out and defines each individual competency (such as problem-solving or people management) required by individuals working in an organisation or part of an organisation.

How do our values link to competencies?

Our values reflect the way we behave and the standards and principles we apply in delivering our mission and vision. Competencies are areas of skills and personal behaviours that derive from our values. These behaviours (competencies) are required of every employee, regardless of their role and grade and drive overall organisational performance.



Utility Regulator

OUR MISSION
To protect the short and long-term interests of consumers of electricity, gas and water.

OUR VISION
To ensure value and sustainability in energy and water.

OUR VALUES

- ACCOUNTABLE:** We take ownership of our actions.
- TRANSPARENT:** Ensuring trust through openness and honesty.
- COLLABORATIVE:** Connecting and working with others for a shared purpose.
- DILIGENT:** Working with care and rigour.
- RESPECTFUL:** Treating everyone with dignity and fairness.

Competence	Descriptor
Professional knowledge/skills	You understand the appropriate regulation/legislation framework within your work area and its impact on UR's overall purpose.
Analytical rigour	You use analysis to find well founded and effective solutions within your area of work.
Governance	Your behaviour contributes and conforms to the highest standards of UR's internal policy and governance.
People	You contribute effectively and engage constructively with teams and individuals and share knowledge, in order to enhance performance and facilitate learning and development.
Relationship management	You build and maintain internal and external relationships to foster a climate of openness, respect, cooperation and constructive challenge.
Strategic thinking and delivery	You contribute to shaping individual, team and organisational goals in order to deliver the UR's Corporate Strategy and Forward Work Programme.
Managing resources	You efficiently monitor and manage resources in your area of work to ensure quality deliverables and value for money.

Professional knowledge and skills

Understands appropriate regulation/legislation framework within your work area and its impact on UR's overall purpose.

Everyone

Knows when to consult and seek advice and from whom.

Takes active responsibility for developing professional knowledge, skills and continuing professional development.

Is patient, approachable and courteous with all stakeholders.

Is professional in communications, listening, explaining and sharing knowledge.

Is open, honest and transparent in carrying out duties in area of work.

Admin

Understands the basics of UR's role and the issues affecting it within own area of work.

Is willing to develop knowledge of UR's regulatory role.

Is aware of the appropriate basic regulation or legislative policy within own directorate or area of work.

Officer

Understands UR's role and issues affecting it within own directorate and area of work.

Can describe UR's role to internal or external audiences as needed.

Applies appropriate regulation or legislative policy within own directorate or area of work.

Analyst

Knows, and has experience of, relevant legislation, and regulatory issues within own area of expertise (including regulatory licence conditions).

Understands how regulatory or legal issues apply to area of expertise.

Understands utility sectors and related issues such as pricing clearly.

Understands appropriate UK legislative or regulatory principles (e.g. financial, economic, legal, public policy, statutory, equality).

Keeps up to date with appropriate developments in area of expertise and builds awareness of NI, UK and international best practice.

Negotiates and influences where appropriate.

Manager

Comprehensive knowledge of relevant NI legislation in own area of expertise (including regulatory licences conditions).

Understands rationale and merits of national and international regulatory or statutory approaches including impact on UR's strategy and objectives.

Knows legal and political background to UK legislation or regulation in area of expertise.

Understands UK legislation or regulation in area of expertise and its application to NI.

Understands regulatory and statutory principles in area of expertise and application to UR.

Identifies and articulates public policy and wider external issues relevant to UR.

Balances professional expertise and mentoring team.

Negotiates and influences on issues in area of expertise.

Analytical rigour

Uses analysis to find well founded and effective solutions within your area of work.

Everyone

Communicates clearly and accurately both verbally and in writing within appropriate time frames.

Is prepared to stand over analysis and decisions in own area of work.

Bases decisions on sound evidence.

Admin

Collects and arranges information in a structured manner.

Understands importance of accurate and robust information.

Checks and validates information for accuracy.

Highlights potential problems with information.

Officer

Sifts information, determines what is relevant, checks for accuracy.

Spots trends, patterns and anomalies in information.

Recognises problems, identifies causes, evaluates options for problem solving and suggests workable solutions.

Refers issues and decisions to line management as necessary.

Analyst

Analyses and researches complex information from diverse sources.

Uses data selectively to identify and highlight areas of special focus.

Interprets outputs meaningfully, identifying trends, patterns and anomalies.

Makes sound judgements on relevant data, taking account of relevant best practice, technical, legal, statutory, financial and economic factors.

Makes evidence based recommendations including creative or innovative solutions.

Accepts and owns decisions made.

Manager

Creates a culture that promotes analytical rigour and objectivity.

Assesses policies, projects and risks as basis for informing decisions and making recommendations.

Focuses on critical issues and longer term implications.

Assimilates and makes sense of complex and/or conflicting information and perspectives.

Thinks creatively and builds innovative solutions to problems.

Communicates and structures outputs clearly, succinctly and in a manner appropriate to the circumstances.

Ensures team decision making based on sound evidence.

Stands over team's actions and results.

Governance

Behaviour contributes and conforms to the highest standards of UR's internal policy and governance.

Everyone

Recognises and applies appropriate UR processes and procedures.
Is aware and complies to standards of public sector governance and UR's Governance Manual.
Ensures own work complies to processes and procedures.
Recognises impact of non compliance on UR.
Works with integrity and high standard of personal conduct.
Responds constructively to information requests and queries from all stakeholders in a timely manner.
Understands and applies the principles of equality in relation to UR work and workplace.

Admin

Is aware of UR risk management processes.
Contributes to administration of risk register as appropriate.
Knows when to report a risk and to whom.

Officer

Is aware of UR risk management processes.
Maintains administration of risk register as appropriate.
Knows when to report a risk and to whom.

Analyst

Understands and ensures compliance with governance requirements in own work area and in wider public sector context.

Actively contributes towards delivery of the highest standards of public sector governance.

Implements, monitors and manages measures to mitigate identified risks.

Understands legal risks and issues relating to own work area.

Identifies risks for possible inclusion in risk registers and contributes to development of mitigating actions or controls.

Manager

Ensures governance and process requirements are met in own work area and in wider public sector context in order to minimise risk of challenge to UR decisions.

Has in depth knowledge of UR risk management procedures and develops risk register entries for own work area and wider directorate.

Sets a positive example in timely adherence to internal and external compliance responsibilities and identifies and manages relevant legal and political risks.

Ensures transparency in governance procedures and supports others in upholding professional ethics.

Ensures confidentiality and diplomacy in Board business.

Ensures all required approvals are obtained prior to committing to expenditure.

Ensures high standards of conduct for the team.

People

Contributes actively and engages with teams and individuals to collaborate and share knowledge in order to develop and enhance performance.

Everyone

Agrees objectives and development plan with line manager, reviewing at regular intervals.

Undertakes training and development activities to achieve agreed objectives.

Assess current level of competence and identifies development needs.

Seeks and accepts honest feedback.

Engaging in team work and recognising contribution of others in their team.

Shares knowledge and information with colleagues, is courteous and responsive.

Admin

Aligns own SMART objectives to UR objectives.

Gathers feedback and responds positively to it.

Contributes to wider team and provides appropriate proactive support.

Officer

Ensures objectives and deliverables are SMART and aligned to UR objectives.

Gathers feedback and compares with own perceptions of performance to improve future performance.

Aware of others' workloads, offers to help team members when required and ensures delivery of team objectives.

Actively contributes to wider team and provides appropriate proactive support.

Analyst

Takes personal responsibility for setting and achieving personal stretch objectives and contributing to team and UR objectives.
Where appropriate supports/coaches/manages junior members of staff to ensure objectives are met.
Actively receives and seeks feedback on comparing with own perceptions of performance to improve future outputs.
Promotes collaborative working to ensure delivery of team objectives.
Builds effective and collaborative relationships across wider teams to share knowledge and information and deliver effective outcomes.

Manager

Leads and energises UR staff to meet UR objectives and strategy.
Takes responsibility for own, team performance and career progression.
Sets positive example with timely feedback to teams and individuals on progress and performance.
Actively seeks feedback to strengthen effectiveness.
Coaches and mentors to create a supportive, challenging environment to yield high standards of performance.
Recognises performance and achievement, identifies issues and take remedial action.
Identifies, discusses and addresses poor performance with staff.
Participates in recruitment and promotion processes, supports assimilation of new staff.
Fosters and promotes collaborative team working and engagement.

Relationship management

Builds and maintains internal and external relationships to foster a climate of openness, respect, cooperation and positive challenge.

Everyone

Builds and develops effective relationships both internally and externally.

Actively seeks and listens to others' views and opinions values differences.

Communicates clearly, concisely and at a level understood by the audience.

Understands the importance of and takes time to answer queries and speak directly to consumers and stakeholders.

Acknowledges mistakes and works to put things right.

Discloses information appropriately to authorised people.

Treats others with respect and seeks to build trust and confidence.

Admin

Understands needs and expectations of internal/external stakeholders.

Knows key stakeholders.

Works collaboratively with wider teams.

Demonstrates good listening skills.

Tailors work to provide appropriate proactive support.

Speaks up when things wrong or to check understanding.

Officer

Understands needs and expectations of internal and external stakeholders.

Knows relevant players in own work area.

Works collaboratively within own team and across other directorates and key decision makers.

Builds rapport based on mutual trust and collaboration.

Connects with others by tailoring own work/behaviour to meet needs of others.

Contributes to open discussion on improvements to ways of working and speaks up to check understanding.

Analyst

Builds and develops network of internal and external relations to ensure effective delivery of UR objectives.

Demonstrates importance of collaborative approach by working closely with internal and external partners.

Generates culture of openness and trust by actively seeking and listening to others.

Speaks confidently, positively and with integrity in dialogue with stakeholders.

Maintains positive relationships with interested parties during consultations and negotiations.

Constructively challenges assumptions behind current ways of operating and prepares for counter arguments.

Influences others to gain sponsorship or acceptance of own ideas and initiatives.

Manager

Generates and sustains a wide network of relationships internally and externally.

Seizes opportunities to develop long term and strategic alliances.

Builds and maintains bridges in areas of conflict or sensitivity to sustain credible/viable relationships.

Promotes UR externally at senior level.

Demonstrates pro-active understanding of others' agendas and handles sensitively.

Critically evaluates counter arguments and challenges as appropriate.

Influences others to make decisions by presenting information persuasively.

Influences at senior level to further UR's interests.

Strategic thinking and delivery

Contributes to shaping individual, team and organisational goals in order to deliver UR's Corporate Strategy and Forward Work Programme.

Everyone

Demonstrates a positive commitment and understanding of UR mission, vision and values and corporate strategy.

Seeks to improve existing processes and procedures.

Where appropriate, demonstrate a willingness to work autonomously, make decisions and take responsibility for own area of work.

Admin

Understands how own work contributes and supports overall UR objectives and direction.

Demonstrates strong commitment to support delivery of objectives and work plans.

Develops understanding of current area of work.

Plans and prioritises own work.

Officer

Understands the link between area of work and UR's overall objectives and direction.

Demonstrates strong commitment to delivery of objectives/work plans.

Demonstrates sound understanding of own work area and objectives of team.

Is flexible to ensure both urgent priorities as well as planned activities are completed.

Analyst

Identifies factors and contributes to development of UR's policy and strategy.

Develops detailed plans to support delivery of UR's policies and strategy.

Considers alternatives in delivery of strategy/work plans.

Obtains senior management agreement to plans and offers suggestions to resolve difficult issues.

Ensures systems are in place to enable monitoring against plans.

Willingness and ability to delegate responsibility for appropriate areas of work.

Manager

Influences, reviews and analyses UR policy and strategy to determine required changes or development.

Considers and contributes to succession planning and development need/plans.

Takes corrective action where practices are not in line with policies.

Defines measurable and achievable strategic objectives.

Implements strategy and policies in own work and team's work and plans accordingly.

Contributes effectively to the delivery of cross directorate projects and re-prioritises team work plans accordingly.

Takes responsibility for the teams' delivery against objectives.

Supports staff working autonomously and encourages decision making within appropriate areas of work.

Managing resources

Efficiently monitors and manages resources in area of work to ensure quality and value for money.

Everyone

Effectively uses equipment and resources.

Understanding need to ensuring quality and value for money within own area of responsibility.

Ensures adequate resource is committed to the delivery of organisational priorities and cross directorate projects.

Adheres to accurate file and information management within in the team.

Ensures information held and shared securely and filed correctly.

Looks for innovative ways to improve quality and effective working.

Admin

Follows appropriate guidelines, procedures and legal requirements when managing/purchasing stock.

Supports accurate file and Information management within in the team.

Supports the team in budget monitoring and recording.

Officer

Adheres to appropriate guidelines and legal requirements and seeks to improve procedures and cost effective working.

Monitors quality and value for money.

Supports and promotes accurate file and information management within in the team.

Contributes to budget monitoring and recording.

Analyst

Supports and contributes to resource planning (people, finance, technology etc).
Makes recommendations taking into consideration long term benefits, costs and activities.
Produce and contribute to business cases, which anticipate future events and issues.
Ensure plans comply with appropriate guidelines, procedures and legal requirements.
Ensure appropriate resources are in place for unforeseen difficulties/issues.
Maintains secure, accurate and complete files, information and records of expenditure.
Keeps budget within agreed limits.

Manager

Uses own resources effectively (people, finance, technology etc).
Takes action to reduce costs, ensure value for money and development of branch business plan.
Makes recommendations for expenditure which are clearly linked to team/organisation objectives.
Promotes and enforces appropriate guidelines, procedures and legal requirements.
Identifies risks and manages resource implications.
Re-deploys resources where appropriate and prioritises the delivery of organisational priorities.
Deals with under and overspend promptly and effectively.
Manages budget and delivers within its constraints.