

**Professional Skills for Government
Leadership and Core Skills for NICS Permanent Secretaries**

Leadership		
Leadership	<p>The three roles the service expects leaders to play are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide/Set Direction – Inspire, seize opportunities, take tough decisions • Deliver results – Work with Stakeholders, Focus on impact, Challenge and Improve • Develop our people – Innovate, grow from experience, get the best from everyone 	<p>A leader is at the heart of the organisation, emphasising ‘live our values’ by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self Awareness – knowing and being true to yourself • Self Confidence – being open to learning; using that learning to improve your own performance and that of your organisation • Team Working – using your ability to build relationships – with your teams, peers, partners, and stakeholders – to fulfil your role • Your recognition that collective, collaborative and corporate leadership across functional and organisational boundaries will be necessary to successfully deliver outcomes <p>Individuals in the civil service will have different leadership styles but the outcomes the service is aiming to achieve and the roles leaders are expected to play should be in common.</p>

Core Skills		
Analysis and Use of Evidence	<p>Ensure that the collection, analysis and use of evidence in the organisation complements that of wider government</p>	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the potential for synergy and/or cost-effectiveness from working across departmental boundaries and from being informed of, and anticipating, the wider needs of government <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • past achievement • credible evaluation of the potential for this
	<p>Ensures the evidence base for the strategy and work of the organisation is open to critical challenge and inspires the confidence of stakeholders including the public</p>	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the importance of evaluating all assumptions, perceptions and arguments using analysis and evidence • how you make your organisation’s formation and use of analysis and evidence transparent to stakeholders • how you encourage and respond to critical feedback • the provisional nature of all knowledge <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work appropriately guided and informed by analysis and evidence • effective communication with stakeholders, including the caveats that they should observe in assessing the analysis and evidence provided • feedback from and appropriate response to stakeholders • having implemented risk management approaches related to the fragility of evidence

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reconsidering decisions in the light of more recent or more robust evidence
	Sets demanding standards for the use of evidence in line with government requirements and proprieties, and ensures they are met	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how wider standards and proprieties pertain to my organisation how you ensure that all work in your organisation meets the relevant standards and proprieties <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> clear guidelines on this an audit trail of adherence throughout the organisation
	Champions the role of analysis/evidence in the organisation and maintain an effective relationship with relevant experts	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how you communicate and promote, including by personal example, the need and requirement for evidence based working <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> past achievement a convincing account of how you would do this
Financial Management	Has an intimate understanding of, and guides the long-term development of, the organisation's business model. Is a compelling communicator of strategies, trends and risks	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the financial strategy of the organisation within the broader government arena, including risks, constraints and policy implications the recent financial performance of the organisation, why key trends have occurred, and what strategies are in place to improve future performance the main economic and financial strategies of government <p>And provide evidence that you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> made confident appearances at Select Committees and similar fora, explaining complex financial issues with clarity aligned to audience needs led compelling internal staff briefings to set business direction, ensuring an understanding of key financial plans, goals, issues and risks influenced Board decisions on key financial matters
	With Board colleagues, can set and monitor challenging business plan goals, targeting continuous improvement in the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation's resources. Uses long-term innovative thinking and networking to stimulate new opportunities or solutions and early identification of corporate risks	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> why the particular targets/goals have been set for the organisational/business plan the relative costs and benefits of pursuing different delivery options the key features of the Operating and Financial Review and Statement of Internal Control general/specific comparisons between public and private operations how political and business issues/drivers impact on the business effective corporate governance and risk management <p>And provide evidence that you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> been instrumental in agreeing/influencing the targets included in the business/organisational plan identified systematic issues/problems which would impact on ability to deliver the plan and developed solutions to deal with these identified and promoted opportunities to instil rigor into the organisation's systems and procedures researched commercial practice, challenging and taking up best examples

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • made effective representation in the commercial and public service arenas
	Is fluent at interpreting a wide range of financial information, including market analyses, and can use this to determine policy and strategy	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what financial data you need to support your decision making and forecasting • how management information needs to be developed to improve Board decisions and what organisational risks exist in the meantime • the key financial variables you look for when assessing or reviewing policy and investment decisions <p>And provide evidence that you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • challenged plans and budgets at board level • undertaken routine reviews of financial performance and held staff to account for their decisions • demonstrated a bias for action and decision making
Financial Management (continued)	Fosters an organisational culture that encourages best practice public sector governance, and consistently monitors business performance against these standards	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • institutional structures and organisational behaviours • comparative practice in public and private sector bodies <p>And provide evidence that you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewed and set governance and internal control framework for your area • advocated high standards of ethical behaviour to colleagues and subordinates • advised Ministers/Board on issues of regularity and propriety
	Champions the role of finance within the organisation, and maintain an effective relationship with the Finance Director	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the strategic role of finance and financial management • structure of professional development for finance professionals and finance management skills for other staff in your organisation • sources and significance of strategic level financial information <p>And provide evidence that you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • worked with senior finance professionals to integrate finance issues into corporate strategy • collaborated to specify meaningful strategic level financial information requirements • ensure effective collaboration between finance and other staff in your command
People Management	Able to create a culture of high performance and people management that is intolerant of poor performance	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how your actions impact on the culture of the organisation • the responsibility you have in setting the tone for the organisation • the importance of demonstrating your commitment and responsibility in everything you do • the specific responsibilities you have as a leader of the organisation • that you must continue to learn • how to create a positive impression through effective communication and presentation <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved organisational capacity, resilience, reputation, and impact through better people management • how you apply organisational values to decision making • cases tackling poor performance • improved 360 degree feedback results

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improved staff survey results showing increased levels of engagement/performance
People Management (continued)	Aligns functions and resources, and deploys people skills optimally to achieve strategic priorities	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to align decision making with the culture and strategy of the organisation • your responsibility for the legacy of the organisation, through resource and succession planning • how to plan and develop organisational resilience • how to develop the organisation in the long term <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase of 'on the job' development • greater migration of skills across the department • long term plans for the future of the organisation
	Able to act as a passionate and inspiring advocate for change	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your role in advocating change and making it happen • how to communicate a compelling vision for change effectively • how you are perceived by the organisation <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular self awareness reviews and remedial action • demonstrating your commitment to change
	Able to foster an organisational culture that is positive about change and committed to delivery of the strategic vision	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your role in shaping the organisation's beliefs and values • how to achieve buy-in on an organisational scale <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • high level of engagement from staff within the change process • effective two way communication and how it has led to a greater understanding of the change • less resistance to change • how you have overcome resistance through tackling obstacles and barriers effectively
	Champions the role of HR in the organisation and maintains an effective relationship with the HR Director	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • your role in ensuring the integration of HR throughout the organisation • your legal responsibilities to the organisation and for the people within it <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regular dialogue between your department and HR • HR input into key business decisions • internal communications advocating the HR function and its work • effective partnership between your department and HR

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Programme and Project Management	Operates PPM techniques effectively in an environment of ambiguity and uncertainty	You need to provide evidence that you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensured that appropriate PPM governance structure and techniques are in place, taking account of market factors and stakeholder expectations established a sound benefits management regime to monitor and deliver a programme's benefits taken decisions on whether to proceed, realign, or abandon the programme or project, based on risks, business case and plans
	Works collaboratively across departments to ensure PPM techniques are applied effectively, with appropriate trade-offs between programmes	You need to provide evidence that you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contributed to departmental decisions on programme and portfolio management to ensure alignment with organisation's goals identified and managed programme and project interdependencies worked with PPM Centre of Excellence to ensure that corporate PPM recommended practice is applied
	Takes delivery of OGC Gateway reports as SRO and takes appropriate action	You need to provide evidence that you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> received Gateway Reports as SRO, and taken appropriate action in response to recommendations
	Champions the role of PPM in the organisation and maintain an effective relationship with relevant experts and senior stakeholders	You need to provide evidence that you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> approved a stakeholder management strategy and executed external communication plans worked collaboratively with relevant experts ensured that expertise from appropriate professional disciplines is employed effectively
Communications and Marketing	Creates and drives forward a culture that demands active, two-way engagement with all stakeholders, including people within the organisation	To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how departmental values support the culture of engagement how you use effective internal communications to engage your staff to help deliver the business And provide evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how you have ensured that departmental values support and develop a culture of active engagement how you have engaged your staff by taking responsibility for internal communication with them, resulting in effective delivery how you have engaged the wider department and stakeholders in your policy/service
	Creates and drives forward a culture that ensures close working between communications, policy and delivery	To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> why early engagement across departments and directorates leads to effective and efficient delivery the role of communications and marketing in developing and delivering strategic solutions to meet departmental objectives And provide evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how you have facilitated and increased joined up communications practice taking responsibility for identifying risk and reputation management issues

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Communications and Marketing (continued)	Aligns communications objectives with clear cross department and cross-government objectives	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to share information at an early stage across government to support better, more efficient working • how effective communication between departments can be used to engage staff to help deliver government business <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how you use communication and marketing to achieve strategic goals and lead the organisation • how you have ensured that the customer receives joined-up, targeted information which gives them the full picture • taking responsibility for working co-operatively across government to engage citizens/customers in a trusted, relevant and timely way • sharing research across government
	Champions the role of communications and marketing in the organisation and maintain an effective relationship with the Director of Communications	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the value which communications and marketing adds • the role of the Director of Communications and the benefits of a close working relationship <p>And provide evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and services throughout the department which put the citizen/customer at their heart • the specific differences that communications and marketing have made in delivering consumer-focused policies and services • how you have championed communications and marketing including any mechanisms you have set up • using communication to achieve strategic goals and lead the organisation • staff throughout the department engaging with and understanding key communications activity • close working between you and the Director of Communications
Strategic Thinking	Able to shape and set the long-term vision and direction for the department, taking into account both wider government priorities and delivery systems	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the long term vision and direction for the department, including how it responds to future trends • what the government's wider priorities are and how they have informed the development of the long term vision and direction for the department <p>And provide evidence that you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considered the trends that are relevant to the development of the long term vision and direction of the department • elicited the views of colleagues within the department in setting the long term vision and direction (for example: via focus groups, formal survey etc)
	Knows how to identify tensions, set priorities and make trade-offs between different policy areas and over different timescales (short, medium and long term)	<p>To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the tensions, priorities and trade-offs that exist between the relevant policy areas • the tensions, priorities and trade-offs that exist over different timescales <p>And provide evidence that you have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considered the range of evidence that might inform the set priorities for the department (for example: wider government priorities, effectiveness of intervention, 'big' strategic issues etc)

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Strategic Thinking (continued)	Able to present Ministers and colleagues with key choices based on robust evidence and facilitate the strategic development process	To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the possible strategic choices and the evidence that underpins these choices • the likely implications from pursuing the various strategic choices And can provide evidence that you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presented Ministers and colleagues with key strategic choices • surveyed the relevant evidence that informs your strategic choices (for example: trends, scenarios, effectiveness of interventions etc)
	Knows how to take a corporate perspective across government, pro-actively working as a team with Whitehall peers, influencing and shaping their strategic agendas and understanding key strategy and decision processes	To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the strategic agendas of Whitehall peers in other government departments • the key strategy and decision processes in other government departments, including timing and influence points And can provide evidence that you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identified key Whitehall peers that work in related strategy areas • influenced the strategic agenda of at least one other government department
	Champions the role of strategic thinking in the organisation, working effectively with relevant internal and external experts	To meet this requirement you need to be able to understand and explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what strategic thinking is, and what benefits it can yield to the department itself, and across Whitehall And can provide evidence that you have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people internal to the department valuing and understanding the role that strategic thinking can play • carved out the space for internal strategy experts to undertake strategic thinking