

**GRADE 7, GRADE 6
& ANALOGOUS GRADES**

1. Strategy/Policy

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

1.1 Develop and influence policy.

OVERVIEW

Policy can be defined as the framework of rules or principles which govern the way organisations deal with key issues or objectives. This unit is about the ability to develop and influence policy and policy changes taking into account all relevant (internal and external) factors and the effect of these changes on the work of the organisation and its customers. This will often involve analytical and judgemental skills in a complex, social, economic and political environment.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Develops and influences policy within the organisation taking into account all relevant factors.
- (b) Challenges existing policy and outcomes and produces innovative proposals for change.
- (c) Analyses and presents data on legal, financial, practical and possible political implications of various options to improve policy effectiveness or deliver new policies.
- (d) Identifies linkages between existing policies and positions new policies to ensure best fit.
- (e) Develops, maintains and uses appropriate networks and methods of communication to gain information to influence policy decisions.
- (f) Regularly reviews policies in order to determine required changes and takes corrective action where practices are not in line with policies.
- (g) Implements organisational policy by ensuring that their own work and the work of their teams is carried out in accordance with current policy.

(NOTE: Organisation can be defined at Departmental, Divisional, Branch or Project level. Customer can be defined as anyone affected by or having an interest in the policy.)

1. Strategy/Policy

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

1.2 Formulate strategy to guide the work of the organisation.

OVERVIEW

Strategy can be defined as long-term plans which guide the organisation in achieving its aims and objectives. This unit is about the ability to formulate strategy, taking all relevant policy and environmental factors into account.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Identifies key strategic issues and guides the development of strategy having considered current and future environmental factors which may affect the desired policy aims.
- (b) Establishes expected outcomes and presents these as strategic objectives.
- (c) Defines strategic objectives that are measurable and achievable within budget restraints.
- (d) Maintains the commitment of staff to the organisational strategy by appropriate communication and involvement of others.

(NOTE: Organisation can be defined at Departmental, Divisional, Branch or Project level.)

1. Strategy/Policy

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

1.3 Develop plans to implement the organisation's strategy.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about the ability to develop detailed operational plans (typically one-year duration) resulting in the structured and progressive implementation of the organisation's longer-term strategy.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Comprehensively identifies key implementation steps and sequences them correctly.
- (b) Develops implementation plans having regard to relative priorities, activities, timescales, responsibilities, available resources and realistic targets.
- (c) Obtains senior management agreement to plans, prior to action.
- (d) Communicates plans, checks understanding and gains the commitment of others to take appropriate action.

(NOTE: Organisation can be defined at Departmental, Divisional, Branch or Project level.)

1. Strategy/Policy

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

1.4 Analyse and evaluate the organisation's performance.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about the ability to analyse and evaluate the performance of the organisation against agreed plans. It also covers proposing/making necessary adjustments to plans in order to achieve strategic or operational aims and objectives.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Identifies appropriate relevant indicators to measure performance.
- (b) Analyses and measures performance data against key indicators.
- (c) Evaluates performance against agreed plan. Revises objectives and performance measures, where this is justified.
- (d) Where performance fails to meet agreed objectives, identifies possible reasons and discusses these with Managers and staff. Ensures action is taken to address shortcomings, where appropriate.

(NOTE: Organisation can be defined at Departmental, Divisional, Branch or Project level.)

2. Services

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

2.1 Plan for and manage service delivery to meet customer requirements.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about the ability to oversee the management of operations and ensure a focus on customer requirements and the need for continuous improvement.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Manages resources, which are available to deliver a quality service to meet customer needs.
- (b) Monitors service delivery against branch objectives and performance measures and identifies improvement opportunities.
- (c) Accurately evaluates and promptly addresses disruptive factors and obstacles to service delivery.
- (d) Utilises Departmental computer system to aid service delivery.

2. Services

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

2.2 Manage changes and improvements in operational activities and services.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about the ability to manage necessary change, improve Branch/ Divisional Performance and meet customer service requirements. It covers identifying areas for improvement, considering the feasibility of proposed changes and planning for the implementation of change.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Evaluates proposed changes for benefits and disadvantages to service delivery.
- (b) Produces plans for the implementation of change, which are detailed, comprehensive and agreed with all relevant parties prior to implementation.
- (c) Achieves results anticipated from the changes within the agreed timescale.
- (d) Evaluates outcomes of change/improvement in service against expectations and previous service records.

3. Resources

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

3.1 Bid for resources needed to deliver the Branch Plans.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about the ability to identify resources, both financial and physical, required to deliver the Branch Plans, and the ability to bid to secure these resources.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Supports estimates of costs and benefits with valid and relevant information in an aim to secure effective resource allocation for activities detailed in the Branch Plan.
- (b) Devises effective systems to monitor, measure and control costs and resource utilisation.
- (c) Makes recommendations which clearly indicate long-term benefits likely to be achieved from expenditure. When evaluating recommendations for expenditure, selects evaluation criteria which are relevant, fair and clear.
- (d) Ensures all agreements, communications and other activities to obtain resources are consistent with the mission, values and policies of the organisation and are handled in a manner likely to maintain good relationships.

3. Resources

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

3.2 Determine and control the effective use of resources.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about the efficient and effective management and use of resources. It covers managing and controlling the way in which resources are used, assessing what is being achieved and making recommendations on how scarce resources can be best utilised to achieve objectives.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Looks critically at the use of resources and what they are achieving, challenging existing outcomes and identifying value for money improvements.
- (b) Makes recommendations for expenditure which are justifiable and clearly link to achieving branch objectives and which take account of trends, developments and other factors likely to effect future resource needs.
- (c) Controls expenditure in line with budget limits and the requirements of the Branch.
- (d) Fully assesses and correctly interprets information on use of physical resources and costs and takes effective action to reduce costs and improve value for money. Redeploys resources where appropriate.
- (e) Deals with budget under or overspend promptly and effectively.

4. People

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

- 4.1 Develop teams and individuals to enhance performance and meet business objectives.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about developing the team's skills and knowledge to ensure the best possible results at work. It covers identifying the development needs of the team and its members, planning development and using a variety of activities to improve team performance.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Gives opportunities to team members to identify their own development needs and those of the team as a whole, in line with Branch and Departmental requirements.
- (b) Ensures a training plan is drawn up for the Branch which includes relevant and realistic development objectives. Ensures fairness of access to development for all staff.
- (c) Agrees development activities, which support the team and Branch objectives.
- (d) Reviews progress and performance at regular intervals throughout the appraisal year and uses results to plan future development.
- (e) Provides all staff with equality of opportunity to develop themselves to improve performance to meet business objectives.

4. People

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

4.2 Monitor and manage the performance of the team, its individuals and self.

OVERVIEW

This covers making the best use of the team and its members so that they can achieve work objectives. It covers allocating work, agreeing objectives, setting out plans and methods of working. It also involves monitoring and evaluating the work of the team and providing feedback to team members on their performance.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Allocates and delegates work to optimise use of available resources and existing competence of staff to ensure that Departmental objectives and priorities are achieved.
- (b) Agrees objectives and work plans with teams and individuals, which are realistic and achievable within organisation constraints. Clearly defines, communicates and assesses team and individual objectives and standards of performance.
- (c) Provides timely feedback to teams and individuals on progress and work performance in a form and manner most likely to maintain and improve their performance. Recognises performance and achievement.
- (d) Identifies poor performance and brings it to the attention of the member of staff concerned and agrees an appropriate course of action.

4. People

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

4.3 Create, maintain and enhance effective working relationships.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about developing, maintaining and enhancing effective working relationships with managers, team members and other colleagues. It also involves minimising the potential for conflict and dealing with conflicts as they arise.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Takes time to develop and maintain honest and constructive working relationships with staff, colleagues and managers. Shows sensitivity towards others, makes and honours promises and undertakings to others.
- (b) Provides opportunities for staff to discuss problems, which affect their work. Encourages staff to offer their views and ideas.
- (c) Deals with any difference of opinion in ways which avoid offence and maintain respect. Promptly identifies conflict in the team and takes action to resolve it.
- (d) Actions and records disciplinary and grievance procedures in compliance with organisational and legal requirements.

4. People

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

- 4.4 Assess own development needs and develop self to improve job performance and fulfil future potential.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about continuously developing knowledge and skills to meet objectives and improve performance. This involves assessing current performance, identifying and prioritising development needs and taking action to meet them.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Establishes current level of competence and identifies development needs linked to business requirements.
- (b) Sets personal development objectives which are realistic, achievable and challenging in terms of anticipated competence and updates these at regular intervals.
- (c) Undertakes appropriate training and development activities which are consistent with the objectives for personal development.
- (d) Regularly reviews progress and performance and uses results to inform future development.

4. People

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

4.5 Select personnel.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about making a significant contribution to selecting the people needed to carry out the work of the organisation. It applies to both the external and internal selection of people for permanent and temporary work.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (f) Estimates personnel needs and supports with appropriate research along with the required competence for the posts. Considers organisational constraints.
- (g) Ensures that job specifications identify job title, responsibilities, key objectives, relevant competences and any other details specific to the Branch. Ensures legal requirements are also met.
- (h) Assesses and selects candidates in compliance with the organisation's procedures and legal requirements.
- (i) Judges information obtained from each candidate against specific selection criteria and communicates selection recommendations to authorised personnel.

5. Information and Communication

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

- 5.1 Develop management information and communication systems in order to meet customer needs.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about the setting up of effective communication and information management systems for your Branch. This involves identifying the information and communication needs, selecting and setting up a system and monitoring and changing the system to ensure its efficiency and effectiveness.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Identifies information/communication requirements in specific situations and ensures subsequent information specifications meet customer needs and are consistent with organisational objectives and policies.
- (b) Evaluates potential systems and makes proposals as to which most closely meet communication needs, branch requirements and organisational objectives and policies within resource constraints.
- (c) Ensures proposals include an implementation plan that is agreed with others involved or affected.
- (d) Presents communication systems to staff in such a way that they understand their purpose and are able to operate them.
- (e) Monitors the implementation of the communication system at appropriate times to ensure effectiveness against agreed plans and ensure sufficient detail can be retrieved promptly when required. Modifies systems to overcome any problems.
- (f) Regularly reviews a variety of sources of information for usefulness, reliability and value for money, and takes opportunities to establish and maintain contacts with providers.
- (g) Identifies inadequacies in information and takes appropriate remedial action.
- (h) Identifies opportunities for improving the efficiency and effectiveness of information and communication systems through the use of IT systems and software packages.

5. Information and Communication

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

5.2 Analyse information, make critical decisions, influence and gain the commitment of others.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about analysing information in order to make critical decisions whilst keeping others informed. It is also about involving others and gaining their commitment and decisions.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Obtains necessary information and ensures it is accurate, relevant and sufficient to allow you to take decisions. Openly exchanges current, relevant and accurate information.
- (b) Uses persuasive, compelling and well-founded arguments to influence others to accept a different point of view.
- (c) Demonstrates flexibility in using diverse techniques to effectively influence others so that the communication objective is achieved.
- (d) Demonstrates the capacity to actively listen and take on board others' ideas and gain their support towards achieving objectives.
- (e) Uses appropriate methods of analysis to reach informed and timely decisions and supports these by reasoned argument and appropriate evidence.
- (f) Informs senior officers promptly about critical decisions taken within their agreed area of responsibility and seeks approval when appropriate.

5. Information and Communication

UNIT OF COMPETENCE

5.3 Identify customer/audience needs and communicate required information.

OVERVIEW

This unit is about communicating information in a way that is easily understood, is timely and has identified the audience needs in the communication process. It is also about ensuring that the content of personal interactions is accurate persuasive and covers also necessary points to achieve desired results.

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- (a) Matches influencing strategies and communication content to the needs, interest and stance of the audience.
- (b) Communicates clearly and concisely. Tailors communication to the needs of the customer/audience.
- (c) Actively listens and shows awareness, sensitivity in face-to-face communication.
- (d) Perceptively identifies appropriate timing, language and method of communication to suit the needs of customer/audience.
- (e) Ensures that staff and customers are kept informed of matters of concern to them.
- (f) Confirms audience understanding of the advice or information communicated.
- (g) Uses audience feedback to improve communication.
- (h) Uses IT systems to improve the communication process.