



MANAGING COMPETENCE IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

An industry guide to meeting
the ICC principles

May 2026

ITFG:01/26

Managing Competence in the Built Environment: An industry guide on how to meet the ICC principles

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1. Foreword

The safety and quality of the built environment, and the safety and wellbeing of those who live and work within it, depend on the competence of the people and organisations operating within it. Repeated failures and public inquiries have highlighted the devastating consequences when competence is not properly managed, reinforcing the need for robust arrangements that place safety, quality and standards at the forefront.

Managing competence of individuals at an organisational level requires more than individual capability alone. It requires sufficient people with the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours (SKEB), supported by effective systems, supervision and leadership oversight. Having sufficient competent capacity enables organisations to discharge their responsibilities safely, consistently and in line with legal and professional expectations. The post-Grenfell building safety regime, strengthening the building regime after the Grenfell tragedy which saw the lives lost of 72 people, represents a fundamental shift in how building safety is regulated in the UK. It places clear duties on dutyholders and organisations to demonstrate that they have the capability and competence to meet Building Regulations and manage safety and compliance risks effectively. Central to this is the need for arrangements that ensure individuals and supply chains are competent to perform their roles safely and in compliance with the law and wider obligations.

This guidance reflects the expectations for competence management set out by the Industry Competence Committee (ICC) in April 2026 and explains how these can be applied in practice. It is intended to support proportionate, practical and sustainable arrangements, not add unreasonable bureaucracy. It provides a framework for planning, managing, supporting and evidencing competence, drawing together regulatory context, industry good practice and a clear methodology for application across the built environment. The methodology is applicable across the built environment, but its use should reflect the size, complexity and risk profile of the organisation. Competence management is closely linked to leadership, ethical behaviour and organisational culture, and depends on openness, accountability and continual improvement. The ultimate focus is the outcome: safe, well-performing and compliant buildings that are designed, constructed and managed by people who are competent for the tasks assigned to them, with organisations able to demonstrate that their arrangements achieve this.

For smaller organisations, this can mean clearly defining the scope of services provided, identifying relevant competence standards such as BS 8670-1:2024 Competence frameworks for building safety Part 1: Core Criteria – Code of practice (BS 8670-1) and discipline-specific frameworks, establishing role profiles, assessing individuals against them, and providing suitable supervision where competence is still being developed. For larger organisations, it can involve more formal arrangements such as integrated management systems, digital platforms and structured competence records.

This guidance encourages leaders across the design, construction, management, ownership and maintenance of buildings to use it as a tool for improvement. Applied effectively, it can strengthen compliance, build confidence among residents, clients and stakeholders, and support the development of competent people and organisations capable of delivering a safer and more resilient built environment.

2. Contractual and legal considerations

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Use of the guidance provided in this document cannot confer immunity from legal or contract obligations.

3. Acknowledgements

The following are thanked for their time and expertise in developing this guidance:

Special thanks are given to Dr Shaun Lundy as technical author, and Sofie Hooper as Chair of the group and to members of BSR, HSE, BSI and the ICC who supported the development of the document.

Special thanks too, to all supporting organisations and to all contributors annotated with an * who served on the steering group

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- Total Flow
- TPI: Mark Snelling*
- UCEM
- UKAS

4. Introduction

Residents and those using the built environment need to be able to trust that the building system delivers safe and high-quality structures. Organisations of every size, including project teams, are expected to show that they have the capability and competence to deliver their goods and services safely in line with that outcome and legal and contractual duties. Clients, regulators, insurers and others increasingly require clear evidence that the people and organisations involved in building design, construction and management are competent.

General health, safety and fire laws and building-specific legislation make competence a clear legal duty. Taken together, these laws mean that organisations must be able to evidence the competence of everyone under their control, including employees, contractors and others engaged to perform work.

This guidance supports organisations in meeting these expectations. It explains how to plan, manage, support and evidence individual competence in a way that is proportionate and practical, using the ICC Principles as the core framework.

The purpose of managing competence is not to ensure that all people meet the standards set out in industry competence frameworks but to ensure that organisations have, collectively, access to enough individuals with the necessary combination of skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours to deliver the required outcomes to the appropriate standard.

Success in managing competence should therefore be measured on achieving the required outcomes to the appropriate standard. If a structure that is being constructed or managed is not safe to use, maintain etc. and does not meet the relevant construction, environmental and other quality standards, it is likely that competence is not being managed effectively by the organisations involved.

5. Purpose of this guidance

The purpose of this document is to assist in delivering a clear outcome – competent individuals with organisations managing competence throughout, including their supply chain, leading to compliant design and construction and well-managed occupied premises. This is critical to providing safe and better performing buildings and homes, and any man-made structure. It is designed to deliver commonality of approach to the management of competence across the built environment.

This guidance:

- Provides practical support to organisations seeking to strengthen their competence arrangements;
- Promotes clarity and consistency across the built environment including what managing competence involves;
- Supports organisations in demonstrating how they manage competence as required; and
- Encourages a culture of continual improvement.

It outlines how to practically apply the ICC Principles and integrate the management of competence into organisations.

Organisations should use this guidance to:

- Benchmark existing arrangements;
- Identify gaps or areas for improvement;
- Strengthen documentation where appropriate; and
- Clarify leadership and governance responsibilities.

6. Scope

This guidance is intended for all organisations operating within the built environment, delivering buildings and other man-made structures.

The ICC defines organisation as meaning “any entity or coordinated group of people, that performs, influences, or contributes to design work, building work, or the management of building safety risks. This includes project teams, suppliers, individual workers, and third-party organisations under the control of the organisation.”

Examples of organisations include:

- Large and complex organisations, including Tier 1 contractors;
- SMEs, micro-businesses, and sole practitioners;
- Consultants, designers, installers, and project managers;
- Property and facilities managers;
- Building owners and landlords, both social and private, including local authorities, housing associations, and private freeholders, regardless of the size or nature of their property portfolio;
- Project teams delivering building work on both large and small projects, including maintenance, refurbishment and retrofit. (The construction control plan under The Building (Higher-Risk Buildings Procedures) (England) Regulations 2023 requires for example that the client sets out the strategies, policies and procedures they have adopted to identify, assess and keep under review the competence of the persons carrying out HRB work, or involved in the design of the higher-risk building or design of the building work to the higher-risk building); and
- Organisations within the wider supply chain.

Where organisations use sub-contractors or external agencies to deliver work, the organisation should satisfy itself that those third-party organisations have and exercise the capacity, resources, and competence to undertake the work they are engaged to deliver.

As the size, structure, and complexity of organisations can vary considerably, the means of demonstrating and evidencing competence should be both relevant and proportionate to the nature of the work, goods, or services being delivered by that organisation, and must include due consideration of the potential risks and complexity of the work being undertaken. Many organisations provide a range of services that require distinct areas of competence, and where the standard can be delivered by an organisation as a whole, it is recognised that few individuals will possess all these competences in themselves.

The scope of this guidance supports organisations to:

- Define the scope of their activities and the statutory, contractual, or professional obligations that apply;
- Identify the risk profile of the organisation, including where compliance and safety-critical activities (please see section 9.2.7 for considering safety-critical work) are undertaken;
- Identify the collective and individual competences needed to deliver those activities safely and effectively;
- Understand where those competences reside, whether within their own workforce or through carefully selected external support; and
- Demonstrate organisational competence to those who might require assurance, such as regulators, clients, residents, or insurers.

Organisations should recognise that competence is both an individual and an organisational responsibility. Managing competence of individuals effectively requires clear policies, procedures, and resources to develop and sustain capability over time. It also depends on a strong organisational culture, underpinned by positive behaviours, that promotes integrity, openness, and accountability ensuring individuals are supported and empowered to exercise their professional judgement safely and ethically.

7. Why competence and managing competence in organisations matters – key building blocks

7.0 Why Competence Matters

Competence underpins the safety, performance and reliability of buildings throughout their lifecycle. Competence management is a core risk control within the built environment. Where competence is unclear, insufficient or unsupported, the likelihood and consequence of failure increase.

When competence is defined and actively managed, quality improves and risk reduces. BS 8670 – 1, defines competence as the application of skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour (SKEB) to achieve a defined outcome.

Managing competence effectively ensures that individuals:

- Have the necessary SKEB for their roles;
- Work within clearly defined limits of competence;
- Receive appropriate supervision where required; and
- Are supported to maintain and/or develop their competence.

At organisational level, competence management contributes to regulatory compliance, life safety, professional credibility and resilience. Importantly, organisations must ensure not only that individuals are competent, but that there are sufficient numbers of competent people available to meet legal and contractual duties.

7.1 Culture, Leadership and Governance

Competence does not exist independently of organisational culture. Even technically capable individuals require an environment that supports good judgement, appropriate supervision and constructive challenge. Leadership plays a central role in creating that environment- leadership shapes culture; organisational systems and individuals' behaviour reinforces it; and culture emerges from consistent behaviours and expectations.

In organisations where leadership behaviour and governance arrangements reinforce good practice, a culture tends to emerge that supports:

- Integrity and ethical behaviour;
- Openness and trust;
- Transparency in decision-making;
- Accountability at all levels;
- Respect and inclusion; and
- Continual improvement.

Individuals should feel able to:

- Acknowledge the limits of their competence;
- Seek support when required;
- Decline work beyond their competence; and
- Raise concerns without fear of reprisal.

Ethical behaviour and cultural leadership are essential to effective competence management. Even well-designed systems and processes can become ineffective if leadership behaviour, supervision and organisational expectations do not consistently reinforce them.

In addition to processes, competence management is ultimately a governance responsibility, with associated accountability.

In larger or organisations that have determined the risk profile to be higher, this may involve structured reporting to executive or board-level forums.

In smaller organisations, it may involve documented periodic review led by the owner or senior manager. The scale of governance can differ, but accountability does not.

7.2 Individual Competence & Organisational Management of Competence

This guidance distinguishes between two related but distinct concepts.

Individual competence refers to the application of skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour [SKEB] to achieve a defined outcome.

Organisational management of competence of individuals working under its control, is one element of the more established concept of organisational capability. The successful management of competence depends not only on competent individuals, but also on governance, supervision, and decision-making structures within organisations.

It depends on:

- Access to sufficient competent resource;
- Clear allocation of responsibilities;
- Effective systems and processes;
- Supervision and oversight; and
- Leadership accountability.

Competence management must consider not only whether individuals are competent, but whether sufficient competent individuals are available to discharge the organisation's obligations effectively. This means that an organisation needs to have access to suitable and sufficient competence for all work activities being undertaken at any given time. Where workload exceeds internal and/or externally available resource, if specialist expertise is inaccessible, or if supervision is stretched, then competence capacity is deemed insufficient. Competence and capacity are therefore interdependent.

Effective competence management also depends on creating the organisational management structure and conditions that allows individuals and organisations to perform competently. Even the most capable people can be constrained if the organisation does not enable them to do the right thing. This can occur where workloads are excessive, resources are limited, individuals are asked to act beyond their competence, or ethical standards are compromised.

Resource allocation considerations should include:

- The number of competent individuals available for defined roles;
- The complexity and volume of work undertaken;
- Access to specialist or external expertise;
- Succession planning and resilience; and
- The impact of absence, turnover or growth.

Where work is delivered through a supply chain, accountability remains with the commissioning individual or organisation. Competence management therefore extends to individuals and third-party organisations under its control.

7.3 Proportionality

A relevant and proportionate approach recognises that the level of assurance required should correspond to the potential foreseeable risks and complexity of the work being undertaken.

Risk in this context constitutes the potential for a failure that can result in significant injury, fatality, damage or other regulatory non-compliance.

Where an organisation determines the safety or compliance risk to be low, competence management can be less formal, but organisations should always understand what competences are required to deliver their undertaking and ensure that the organisation has the structure and competences to deliver appropriate outcomes. For larger, more complex, or higher-risk undertakings, organisations should implement more structured arrangements including defined competency frameworks, formal assessment processes, and documented evidence of continuing professional development.

The objective of competence management is to ensure that competence is demonstrated in a manner that is appropriate to the risk, scale and significance of the organisation's activities, without creating an unreasonable administrative burden.

Organisations in the built environment vary significantly in size and complexity. The risks associated with an organisations' activities will also be different, with some small organisations undertaking safety-critical roles and other larger organisations undertaking activities that do not present a significant risk exposure.

The principles of competence management apply universally, but the level of management structure and documentation required will differ.

Larger, complex organisations, organisations with a higher-risk profile and organisations delivering safety-critical roles, functions or safety-critical work are likely to require:

- Formal competence frameworks
- Documented assessment processes
- Digital competence management systems
- Structured internal audit and review

Smaller organisations undertaking work where the risk profile is deemed to be low, or where no safety-critical work and/or roles are identified, could potentially rely on:

- Clearly defined scopes of work
- Less formal processes to identify and assess competencies;
- Less formal review of competence both periodically and ahead of undertaking new work or projects; and
- Simple records of competence and reviews.

Proportionality means applying the same principles in a way that reflects the risk profile, complexity and organisational scale. The emphasis should remain on effectiveness rather than unreasonable bureaucracy.

8. The ICC Competence Principles

The ICC is a statutory committee established under the Building Safety Act 2022 to advise the Building Safety Regulator (BSR) and industry on competence across the built environment workforce.

In support of this role, the ICC has developed 15 principles that set out its expectations of what good looks like in relation to both individual competence and the management of competence within organisations, as part of demonstrating organisational capability. Figure 1 provides an illustration of these 15 principles.

The ICC's document, *Setting Expectations on Competence Management*, was first published in April 2026. This guidance complements that publication by setting out practical advice on how organisations can establish, implement and maintain proportionate arrangements for managing competence within their own operations and across their supply chains.

Organisations should also take account of the competence frameworks developed and published by the Industry Competence Steering Group (ICSG), a sub-committee of the ICC.

The ICC's publication might be revised over time. It is also anticipated that this industry guidance can, in due course, inform the development of a formal British Standard.

The BSR, Building Control bodies, and client or employing organisations are likely to have regard to the ICC's expectations document, together with this complementary guidance, when considering how competence is managed and demonstrated by both individuals and organisations.

An extract of the ICC's principles is included in Appendix 1.

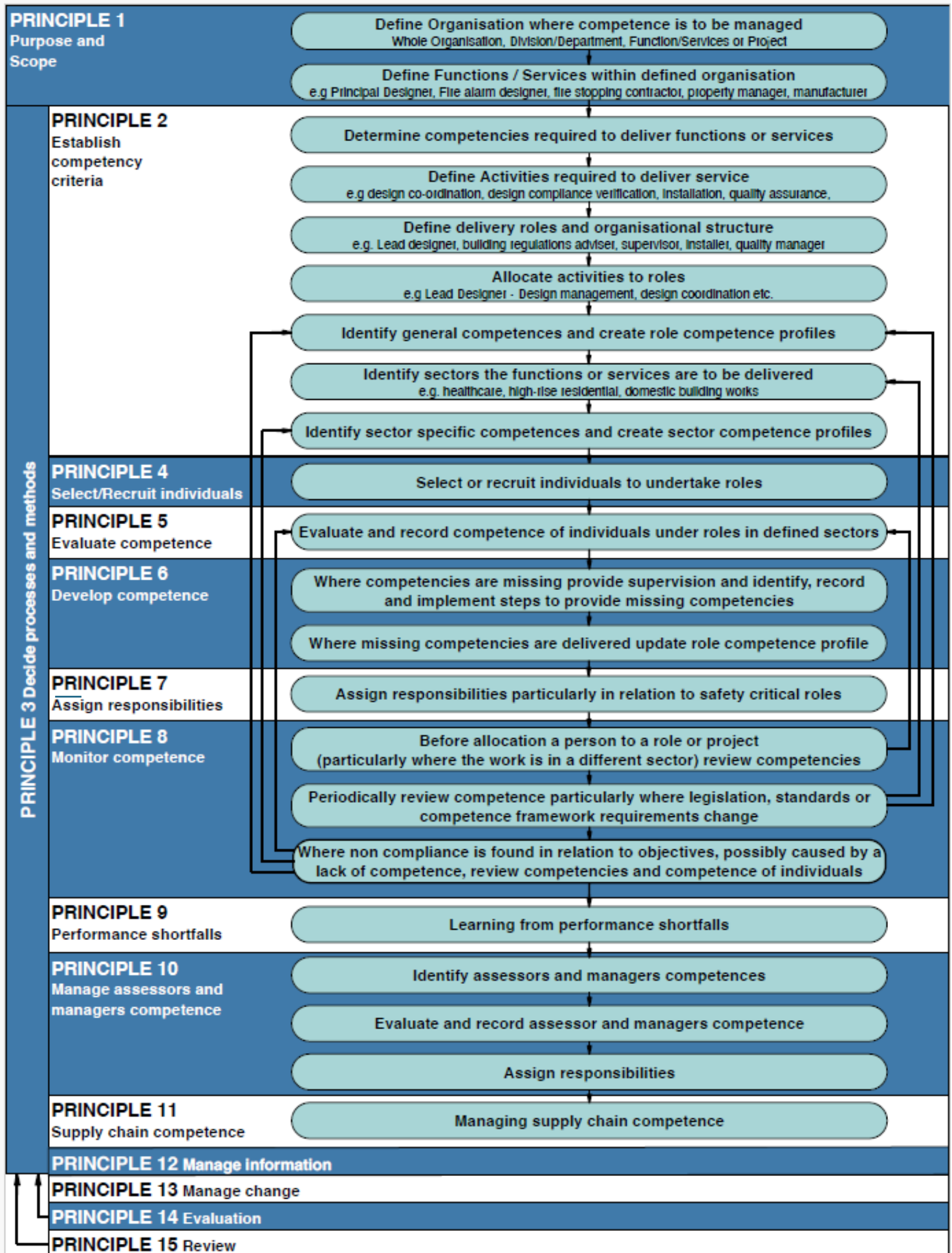


Figure 1 provides an illustrative flow diagram of the principles for ease of reference.

9. How to Implement the ICC Competence Principles

9.0 Introduction

This section of the guidance is intended to explain how to translate the ICC Principles into practical operational arrangements.

While the ICC principles outline *what* is expected, this section explains *how* you can meet the expectations.

To support practical application, each section includes reflective questions. These are intended to prompt structured consideration rather than act as a compliance checklist or specification. Organisations should use them to assess whether their arrangements are clear, proportionate and effective within their specific context.

Without clear planning, competence management is likely to be ineffective, reactive or inconsistent.

9.1 Principle 1 Purpose and Scope

9.1.1 Defining Purpose and Scope

A first step in the management of competence, is that an organisation needs a clear understanding of what it seeks to be competent to deliver. This involves defining the functions, services, and products it provides, the obligations that apply, and the competences required to deliver them safely and effectively.

Defining purpose and scope involves defining the:

- organisation;
- organisation's purpose; and
- functions, services, or products the organisation delivers.

The approach does not need to be complex, but it should be deliberate and proportionate.

It is important to clearly define the organisation where competence is to be managed.

An organisation can be: an entire organisation; a division or department within an organisation; a function or services delivered by the organisation; or a project.

Establishing a clear purpose is the foundation for defining competence requirements. It ensures that an organisation understands what it is responsible for, the boundaries of its scope, and the legal and contractual requirements (including the specific jurisdictional requirements wherever it is active) associated with its activities.

9.1.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations define and maintain a clear and appropriate scope of activities, ensuring that all work undertaken aligns with their competence, legal duties, and available resources.

- Define the (extent of the) organisation within which competence is to be managed and any exclusions or limitations.
- Define clearly what functions, services, or products the organisation provides, and consider these are within its technical capability and competence.
- Identify the legal, regulatory, contractual, and best-practice obligations that apply to those functions or services. (including consideration of all relevant legal jurisdictions).
- Ensure all contracts, instructions, and project briefs are clear in scope, aligned with the organisation's capacity, agreed by all relevant parties, and compliant with legal duties.
- Demonstrate visible leadership and commitment to maintaining and improving the competence of all employees and supply chain partners working under the organisation's control.
- Review contractual and procurement arrangements to ensure consistent inclusion of competence requirements and clarity of responsibilities.
- Establish a process for reviewing and updating the defined scope of activities when services, risks, or legislative/best practice requirements change.

9.1.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- A description of the organisation within which competence is to be managed
- A written description of the functions or services to be delivered, and what governs their delivery
- Clear statements regarding exclusions or limitations

In smaller organisations, this can be captured within service agreements or internal documentation. In more complex settings, it might form part of a structured management system.

9.1.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations test whether their approach to defining purpose and scope is robust, comprehensive, and aligned with legal and operational expectations.

- Have we clearly identified the (extent of the) organisation in which we wish to manage competence?
- Have we clearly documented what the organisation delivers and where?
- Can we demonstrate understanding of the legal, regulatory, and industry standards that apply to our work?
- Can we demonstrate understanding of the contractual requirements that apply to our work?
- Are competence requirements integrated into contracts, procurement documents, and work instructions?
- What is the process for reviewing and updating the requirements of competence management activities when circumstances change?
- Do we understand where our work is higher-risk/safety-critical, and how do we get to that conclusion?
- Do we recognise where specialist or external expertise is required?
- Are roles and responsibilities clearly allocated?

9.2 Principle 2 Establish Competence Criteria

9.2.1 Define roles and organisational structure

Where a function, service, or product is to be delivered by a team, the organisation needs to develop an organisational structure with an appropriate combination of roles to deliver the required outcomes.

The purpose and scope defined in Principle 1 should be used to provide the framework for identifying the roles and the organisational structure required to deliver the required outcomes.

To do this you should:

- Identify the roles and organisational structure required to deliver the required outcomes;
- Ensure the organisational structure includes appropriate management and supervision, particularly where the scope includes safety-critical activities;
- Record the organisational structure;
- Describe the roles and the interaction between the roles; and
- Describe activities are to be undertaken by the roles.

9.2.2 Creating a role competence profile

A role competence profile is a structured description of what someone is capable of doing in a specific role, field, or context. It outlines the skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours required to perform a role to the required standards.

Describing the role and role activities is the first stage in the creation of role competence profiles.

9.2.3 Identify the Competence Criteria

Once the organisational structure is defined, organisations shall determine what competences are required to deliver their services safely and effectively.

Competence criteria should reflect:

- Applicable legal requirements, statutory guidance and professional standards;
- The requirements of any relevant industry competence framework;
- Company standards;
- Role complexity;
- Role responsibility and authority;
- The level of risk associated with failure to perform (see section 9.2.7 for when considering safety-critical work);

ROLE COMPETENCE PROFILE	
Name	
Role	
Description of Role	
Role Activities	
Competences	
Work Sector	
Sector Specific Competencies	
Evidence of Competence	
Competence Development Plan	

- Contractual requirements;
- Insurance requirements; and
- The structure for managing competence throughout the organisation.

Establishing clear and consistent competence criteria is essential to ensure that individuals and teams have the right mix of skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours to carry out their roles safely and effectively. Well-defined criteria create the foundation for assessing competence, identifying development needs, and maintaining standards across the organisation and its supply chain.

9.2.4 Evaluating and setting levels of competence

When establishing the appropriate competences for a role, due consideration must be given to any applicable legal requirements, statutory guidance and professional standards.

One of the best ways to ensure that competences for a role are set at an appropriate level is to use a recognised industry competence framework.

Organisations should take note of the competence frameworks published on the [**Built Environment Competence Hub**](#).

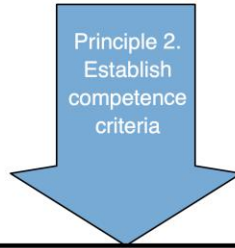
The hub is managed by BSI, developed in collaboration with [**ICSG**](#) and BSR to bring industry together to engage on competence and share best practice.

Competence frameworks are also used by most professional bodies when assessing people when they first join a professional body or move up a membership grade. For many standard roles the starting point for a specific role in an organisation might therefore be the competence criteria used by a specific professional body.

Figure 2 below illustrates the BSI Built Environment Competence Hub and example frameworks.

Applying Principle 2

A number of competence standards have been created for the built environment, with many more being prepared. These standards where relevant to the role, Should be the starting point for identifying the required competencies



The image displays the BSI Communities Built Environment Competence Hub website interface and six example framework posters. The website header includes the BSI logo, 'Communities Built Environment Competence Hub', and navigation links: Home, Themes, Discussions, Resources, Insights, Calendar, and About ICSG. The main content area features a large heading 'Welcome back to the Built Environment Competence Hub' and a sub-heading 'This hub is managed by BSI, developed in collaboration with ICSG and BSR to bring industry together to engage on competence and share best practice. Find all the key resources, standards, tools, guidance and competence frameworks you need, in one place.'

The six example framework posters are:

- PAS 8671:2022:** Built environment – Framework for competence of individual Principal Designers – Specification. Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. bsi.
- PAS 8672:2022:** Built environment – Framework for competence of individual Principal Contractors – Specification. Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. bsi.
- PAS 8673:2022:** Built environment – Competence requirements for the management of safety in residential buildings – Specification. Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. bsi.
- CIPS:** Competence Framework for Procurement Professionals in the Built Environment in England. Sector Led Group 8 Commercial and Procurement. Working in partnership with ADVA, CIOB, CPA, Construction Products Institute, lwfm, and RICS.
- CIOB:** Working Group 9 – Site Supervisors. Built Environment – Framework for the competence of Site Supervisors in England.
- Citb:** Solid Plastering Competence Framework. Continue →

Figure 2: The Built Environment Competence Hub and example frameworks

9.2.5 Applying a Competence Framework

A competence framework helps individuals and organisations identify the competences required for a specified role. However, meeting all the criteria within a framework does not, on its own, demonstrate competence in that role. This is because:

- competence must always be considered in the specific context in which the role is performed.
- In some cases, roles do not require all the competencies listed in a framework.

Some competence frameworks describe the expected competences for a role. An example of this is the CIOB's Built Environment – Framework for the Competence of Site Supervisors in England. In such circumstances, it is expected that an individual undertaking such a role, as a minimum, meets the competence standards set out in the framework.

Other competence frameworks describe the expected competences for a function, where the function can be delivered by either an individual or an organisation. This will be the case in the following frameworks:

- **PAS 8671:2022** Built environment – Framework for competence of individual Principal Designers – Specification.
- **PAS 8672:2022** – Built environment – Framework for competence of individual Principal Contractors - Specification.
- **PAS 8673:2022** – Built environment – Competence requirements for the management of safety in residential buildings - Specification.

Where a function is delivered by several members of a team, not all members of the team will require all the competences described in the framework. In such circumstances the methodology shown in Figure 3 can be used to identify the relevant competences for each individual's role.

The methodology requires the person setting out the competences for the role to consider each requirement of the framework and determine whether it is relevant to the role or needs to be adjusted so that the competence requirement is appropriate for the role. The section below set out how to describe competence when doing so. It is essential that you ensure that all competences within the framework are delivered by one or more members of the team that is delivering the function.

A competence framework, however, will only set out the general competences for a role. Additional competences related to the working environment might also be required.

For example, a person contributing to an organisation's principal designer function may not be competent to carry out that function for all building types that the organisation works on. Someone experienced only in office design would not necessarily meet the competence requirements for NHS healthcare projects, which demand familiarity with the relevant Health Building Notes and Health Technical Memoranda (HTMs) and related specialist design considerations.

Working environment specific competences therefore need to be added to a role competence profile where appropriate.

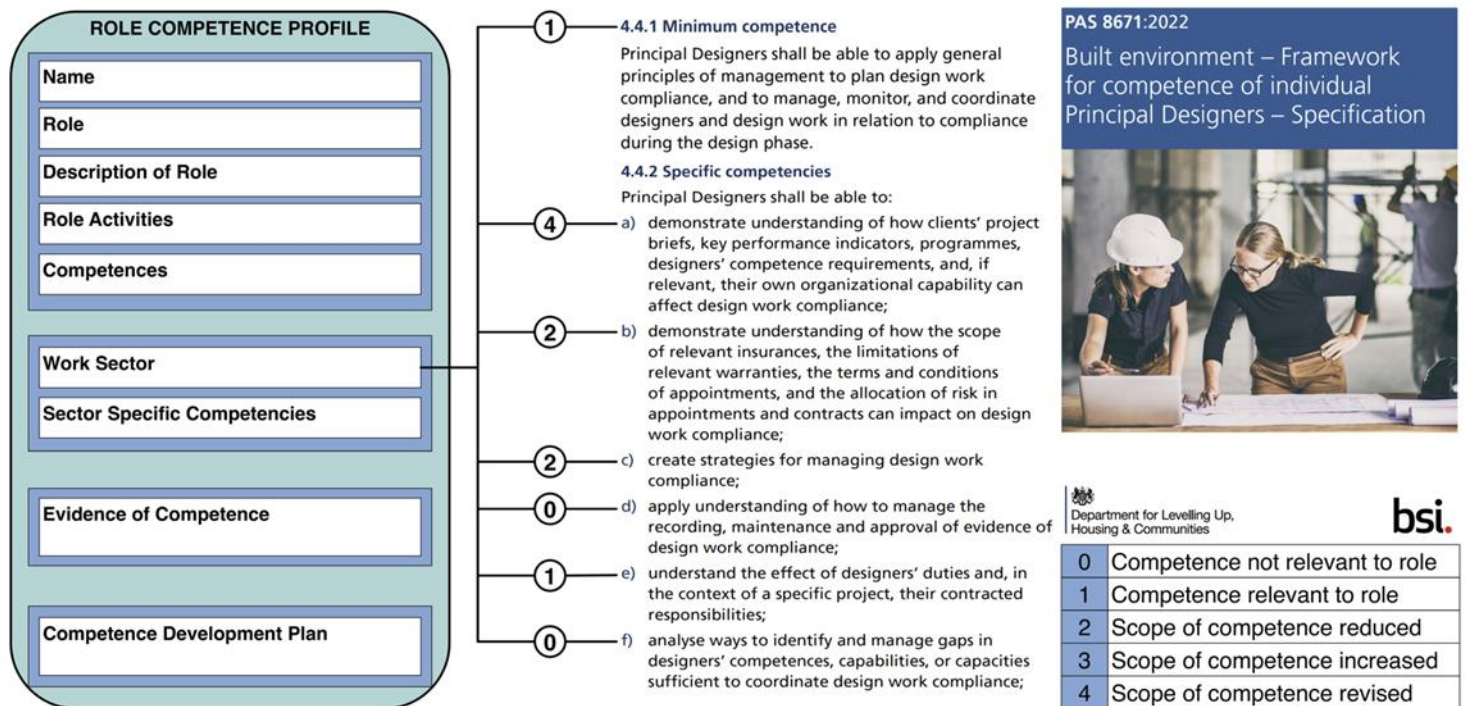


Figure 3: Illustration as to determining competencies from PAS 8671

9.2.6 Setting standards where there is no competence framework

Although BS 8670-1 is intended to set core criteria for contextualisation within sector-specific competence frameworks, it can also support the development of role specific competences where no relevant competence framework exists. In applying BS 8670-1, it is recognized that organisations might need to modify language to be relevant to the role being evaluated.

9.2.7 Considering safety-critical work

When establishing the competences of a role it is essential to consider whether the role:

- involves safety-critical work; or
- involves management, supervision or coordination of others undertaking safety-critical work;

and where it does, ensure that competencies are set at an appropriate level.

Safety-critical work is where a failure creates a risk of:

- the death of a significant number of people
- serious injury that needs immediate treatment in hospital or causes a permanent or irreversible disabling condition to a significant number of people.

In relation to design and construction, Sections 7 and 8 of the **CIOB and RIBA: A guide to managing safety-critical elements in Building Construction**¹ provides a rationale for the designation of safety-critical elements and examples of elements that might be safety-critical elements.

The expectations, and any subsequent requirements, should be recorded in the relevant Role Competence Profiles and applied consistently.

¹ A guide to managing safety-critical elements in Building Construction, CIOB and RIBA, 30 March 2023, <https://www.riba.org/media/bjxdxfef/ciob-riba-a-guide-to-managing-safety-critical-elements-2023pdf.pdf>, 24p.

9.2.8 Describing Competence

When managing competence, it is essential that those defining requirements use clear and consistent terminology. Under the **Building Regulations 2010** and the **Higher-Risk Buildings (Management of Safety Risks etc.) (England) Regulations 2023**, individuals must demonstrate the necessary **SKEB**, defined in **BS 8670-1**, as:

- **Knowledge:** understanding of relevant facts, theories and practices for a given role, function or task.
- **Skills:** ability to perform tasks consistently to achieve the intended outcome.
- **Experience:** practical engagement in relevant activities, enabling the development and application of knowledge and skills.
- **Behaviours:** professional attitudes and conduct that support competent performance.

Competencies in competence frameworks are commonly structured using Bloom's Taxonomy.

Bloom's Taxonomy uses measurable verbs to describe observable knowledge, skills and behaviours. Using these verbs in competence statements makes it clearer what an individual shall be able to do to demonstrate competence.

The level of competence required in a role profile can be varied by selecting verbs from different levels of the taxonomy.

To increase the expected level of a competence in a role competence profile, you would use a higher-level verb on the taxonomy. Similarly, to decrease the level you would use a lower-level verb.

For example, PAS 8671 has been drafted to include Bloom's Taxonomy verbs in each competence and it requires Principal Designers to be able to 'apply' the legislative and regulatory framework relevant to how design work meets legal requirements.

A manager within a practice that carries out the Principal Designer function might require a different level of competence depending on their responsibilities. They might only need to 'recall' or 'describe' that framework, or they might need to 'create' systems to ensure compliance with it.

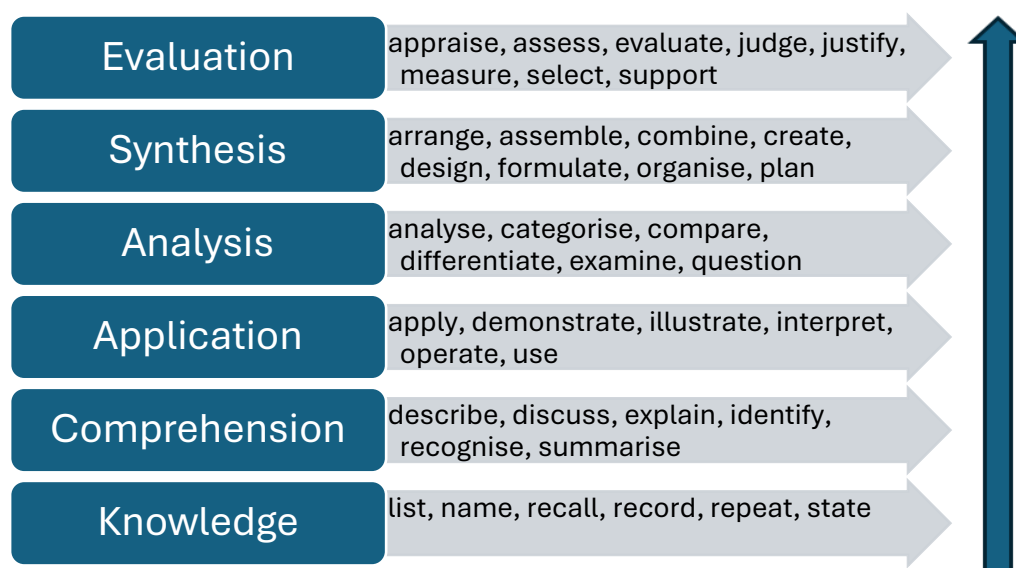


Figure 4: Shows how Bloom's levels can be used to define and adjust the competence level required for a particular role.

9.2.9 Practical actions

The actions summarised below support organisations in defining and maintaining competence criteria that are relevant, proportionate to risk, and aligned with recognised competence frameworks and good practice. The competences should be recorded in a Role Competence Profile that can be used for ongoing management of a role's competence throughout the remainder of the principles. See Appendix 3 for examples of Role Competence Profiles.

- Use the mapping of the organisation, including functions, services, contractual obligations etc. carried out in Principle 1, to establish the key roles and the organisational structure of the organisation:
 - Identifying the roles and organisational structure required to deliver the purpose and scope.
 - Ensure the organisational structure includes appropriate management and supervision, particularly where the scope includes safety-critical activities;
 - Record the organisational structure; and
 - Describe the roles and the interaction between the roles.
- Identify the competence criteria requirements as considered per section 9.2.1;
- Develop a Role Competence Profile for each key role, describing the necessary competencies (SKEB) by taking account of the role's operating framework:
 - Apply a relevant Competence Framework as set out in 9.2.3 and use the appropriate terminology (9.2.5) or use the guidance set out in 9.2.4 where no competence framework is available;
 - Identify where work associated with a role is safety-critical and keep a record of how the risk profile has been determined and how it has informed the organisation's competence requirements;
 - Ensure the described competencies are appropriate for the level of the role (e.g. trainee, practitioner, supervisor, manager or director);
 - Include any limits to the role and associated competence in the role competence profile; and
 - Identify sector specific competences.

9.2.10 What This Looks Like in Practice

- An organisational chart setting out the roles that comprise the delivery team(s) delivering the function or services
- Defined lines of responsibility where work interfaces with others
- Role descriptions or competence profiles
- Defined qualification, professional membership or certification requirements where relevant
- Minimum experience thresholds
- Behavioural expectations aligned with organisational values
- Reference to industry standards or professional frameworks

Smaller organisations might use straightforward written role competence profiles. Larger organisations can develop structured competence matrices or frameworks.

9.2.11 Reflective questions

These questions help organisations evaluate whether their competence criteria are comprehensive, risk-based, and aligned with recognised standards and frameworks.

- Do we have role competence profiles for all relevant roles and functions?
- Are competence requirements proportionate to the level of risk associated with each activity?
- Are third party organisations and external specialists engaged by the organisation assessed against equivalent competence standards?
- Are our competence criteria aligned with recognised competence frameworks (e.g. BS 8670- 1, PAS 8671, PAS 8672, PAS 8673, BS 8674, professional bodies' competence frameworks, other ICSG frameworks, competent person schemes, and trade bodies)
- Do we regularly review and update competence criteria when circumstances, risks, regulations, standards or roles change?
- Are behavioural expectations included alongside technical requirements?

Building on the foundations established in Principles 1 and 2, which define an organisation's purpose, scope, and competence criteria, Principles 3 to 15 set out the key requirements for the ongoing management of competence. They describe how to establish and maintain the policies and arrangements needed to manage competence effectively across all functions and roles. These principles apply to everyone working under the organisation's control, including employees, workers, self-employed individuals, and third-party providers. Together, they provide a coherent framework that enables the organisation to plan, implement, and maintain assurance that it can consistently and competently deliver the services and products it holds itself out to provide.

9.3 Principle 3 Decide processes and methods

9.3.1 Establish processes and methods

Once the purpose, scope, and competence criteria have been defined, organisations must establish effective, auditable and repeatable processes to manage competence consistently, including assessment, maintenance and recording. These processes provide the structure through which the ICC Principles are applied, ensuring that competence is embedded within organisational systems, supported by appropriate leadership, and continually improved as requirements evolve.

9.3.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations design and implement practical, proportionate processes for managing competence that are aligned with legal duties, good practice, and organisational objectives.

- Determine a process appropriate to the organisation's purpose, objectives, and complexity. The management approach should reflect the organisation's scale, activities, and risk profile;
- Establish or align organisational policies and procedures that reflect legal and regulatory requirements relevant to the functions the organisation performs (for example, in the role of principal designer, principal contractor, or accountable person, and any non-dutyholding role);
- Map existing arrangements related to competence management, training, mentoring, supervision, recruitment, and supply-chain management to identify gaps or overlaps;
- Define a clear, repeatable process that demonstrates how the 15 ICC Principles are applied across the organisation;
- Integrate competence management within existing systems, such as ISO 9001 or other recognised management frameworks, ensuring consistency of approach and evidence, where appropriate;
- Allocate appropriate resources, including leadership commitment, staff time, budget, and supporting tools (for example, training registers or competence management software), to implement, maintain, and continually improve the process;
- Assign roles and responsibilities, nominating competent individuals (for example, a senior manager or competence lead) to oversee each part of the process;
- Document and communicate the process in concise, accessible policies and procedures, ensuring they are available and understood by all relevant staff and third parties; and
- Establish a cycle of review and continual improvement, updating processes as organisational needs, legislation, or risks change.

9.3.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Defined competence management procedures for:
 - allocating / appointing personnel to roles;
 - recruitment of new personnel;
 - engaging third party organisations; and
 - managing competence records.
- Structured induction processes;
- Competence assessment methods (e.g. review of qualifications, training and experience; interviews; peer assessment; practical demonstration);
- Procedures for development of competence along with appropriate supervision;
- Role focused Continual Professional Development (CPD) expectations;
- A register of competence records; and
- Documented supervision arrangements.

9.3.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations assess whether their competence management processes are clear, consistent, and aligned with both regulatory expectations and organisational needs.

- Is there a documented process that sets out how competence will be managed across the organisation?
- Is there a clear process to ensure that responsibilities and resources are clearly assigned, understood, and proportionate to the organisation's size and risk?
- Have we integrated competence management into our existing policies, management systems, and governance arrangements?
- Do our policies and procedures explicitly reflect the organisation's legal and regulatory duties?
- Is there a mechanism in place for reviewing and improving our processes as the organisation, its services, or the wider regulatory environment evolve?
- How have we defined how competence will be assessed and evidenced?
- Is our approach proportionate to the complexity and risk related to our work?
- Do we have a consistent method for recording competence?
- How are supervision arrangements clearly defined?
- How do we periodically review whether our processes remain suitable?

9.4 Principle 4 Select and recruit individuals

9.4.1 Select and recruit individuals

Selecting and recruiting competent staff is a critical step in ensuring that the organisation can deliver its functions safely, effectively, and in compliance with legal duties. Recruitment decisions should be based on clear, evidence-based competence criteria and supported by transparent and consistent processes. This principle emphasises the importance of verifying competence before appointment, ensuring that all individuals whether employed directly or through the supply chain meet the organisation's defined competence criteria.

Recruitment processes should reflect the complexity and risk profile related to the role.

9.4.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations establish recruitment and selection arrangements that are fair, transparent, and aligned with the competence management processes described under Principle 3.

- Ensure recruitment and selection processes are aligned with the organisation's procedures for establishing competence set out under Principle 3;
- Base every appointment on clear Role Competence Profiles that describe the SKEB required for the role;
- Apply consistent criteria to internal appointments, agency workers, contractors, and consultants, ensuring that all individuals working under the organisation's control meet the same competence expectations;
- Request, review and validate evidence of SKEB against role competence profiles;
- Where relevant, competence verification by professional bodies or recognised third party providers, such as UKAS Accredited organisations or those registered with the Engineering Council, can be useful, subject to additional sector or role specific competence checks. Third party competence verification is most useful when competence is verified against an industry competence framework that is supported by the ICSG;
- In safety-critical roles and/or activities, or where risk profiles have been deemed higher, consider structured interviews and/or practical tests or exercises to confirm competence;
- Verify evidence of competence before appointment, including qualifications, licences, professional memberships, experience and references, and retain appropriate records;
- Provide structured induction, familiarisation, and role-specific training to confirm understanding of the organisation's policies, processes, and expectations;
- Use probationary or initial review periods to confirm that recruits demonstrate competence in practice and that any additional support needs are identified;
- Integrate competence considerations into workforce planning, ensuring that resource levels and capability match operational demand;
- Maintain records of documents, interviews or other activities that evidence competence of individuals that have applied for role or have been selected;

- Comply with all data protection requirements relating to the storage of personal data; and
- Periodically review recruitment and induction processes to confirm they remain effective and proportionate as the organisation and its risks evolve.

9.4.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Structured interviews aligned to competence criteria
- Verification of qualifications and certifications
- Review of portfolios or previous work
- Reference checks
- Probationary periods with defined supervision

9.4.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations evaluate whether recruitment and selection arrangements are consistently applied, proportionate to risk, and effective in assuring competence.

- Do our recruitment and selection processes and decisions align with our established competence management arrangements under Principle 3?
- Are competence requirements clearly defined and applied consistently to employees, agency staff, and contractors?
- Do we independently verify the competence evidence provided to us?
- Are induction and probation processes effective in confirming practical competence?
- Do we review and improve recruitment and induction arrangements as organisational needs and risks change?
- How do we assess behavioural suitability as well as technical ability?
- What are the supervision arrangements in place during induction or probation?

9.5 Principle 5 Determine competence within the workforce

9.5.1 Determining competence within the workforce

Where individuals are appointed, it is essential that their competence is verified and maintained through structured assessment. Determining the level of competence within the workforce allows organisations to ensure that individuals can carry out their roles safely, effectively, and in line with legal and organisational requirements. Regular assessment also helps identify development needs, ensures adequate resource levels, and provides assurance that the organisation retains the necessary capability to meet its duties.

9.5.2 Practical actions

The following actions support organisations in establishing proportionate, evidence-based approaches for determining and maintaining workforce competence.

- Evaluate each individual against the competence criteria defined for their role in line with the arrangements established under Principles 1 to 3;
- Use role competence profiles when recruiting people to assess their suitability for the role and any ongoing supervision and training that will be required if they are engaged by the organisation;
- Where competence cannot be fulfilled in-house, use the competence profiles to inform procurement, selection, and monitoring of external specialists;
- Ensure third party organisations engaged by the organisation (consultants, subcontractors and other supply chain partners) apply equivalent competence criteria and can demonstrate alignment with the organisation's competence management standards (see Principle 11);
- Use proportionate methods to assess competence — these might include direct observation, review of work outputs, professional discussion, verification of qualifications or CPD, and feedback from supervisors, peers, or clients;
- Place particular emphasis on observation of behaviours, as this often provides the most reliable evidence of how competence is demonstrated in practice;
- Engage staff in the process — encourage open feedback from employees about the training, experience, or support they feel they need to improve or maintain their competence;
- Record the outcomes of competence evaluations, noting strengths, development needs, and any required actions such as mentoring, training, supervision or reassignment;
- Ensure that competence evaluations are carried out by suitably experienced and impartial assessors, with clear criteria and evidence requirements;
- Confirm that the organisation maintains an appropriate balance between available competence and workload, ensuring adequate capacity to meet legal and contractual obligations;
- Periodically review the methods used for assessing competence to confirm they remain proportionate to the level of risk or risk profile, scale, and complexity of the work undertaken; and
- Review and update competence profiles periodically, or whenever changes occur to roles, risk profiles, legislation, or organisational structure.

9.5.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Initial competence reviews;
- Skills gap analysis;
- Supervisor sign-off;
- Observation of work; and
- Competence matrices where appropriate.

9.5.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations evaluate whether competence within the workforce is being assessed, maintained, and assured effectively.

- Have we evaluated each individual's competence (including supply chain's competence management) against the criteria established for their role?
- Do our assessment methods include direct observation of behaviour as well as review of technical knowledge and ability?
- Are assessments proportionate to the level of risk and complexity of the work?
- Do we actively seek and act on feedback from our workforce about their development needs and opportunities to improve competence?
- Are competence evaluations documented, and are outcomes used to inform training, development, and workforce planning?
- How do we identify and address competence gaps?
- How and when do we reassess competence when responsibilities change?

9.6 Principle 6 Develop competence

9.6.1 Developing competence

Developing and maintaining competence is an ongoing process that ensures individuals continue to perform their roles safely, effectively, and in line with evolving legal, technical, and organisational requirements. Competence development should be proactive and planned, addressing both current capability and future needs. A structured approach to professional development helps to build resilience, improve performance, and foster a culture of continual improvement within the organisation.

9.6.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations establish effective arrangements for maintaining and developing competence across all levels of the workforce.

- Recognise that training alone does not create competence. Development should address all four components of competence, **knowledge, skills, experience, and behaviours** in an integrated and proportionate way;
- Knowledge should be developed through structured learning, qualifications, and/or ongoing professional education relevant to the role and level of responsibility;
- Skills should be enhanced through supervised or coached practice, enabling individuals to apply their knowledge effectively and consistently in real work situations. There are many qualifications that address skills development too;
- Experience should be gained through mentored practice, reflection, and exposure to progressively more complex work, allowing professional judgement to develop over time;
- Behaviours are the observable actions and attitudes that demonstrate integrity, openness, collaboration, accountability, and a commitment to safety, quality, and continual improvement. These should be reinforced through leadership example, performance management, and feedback;
- Use the results of competence evaluations (see Principle 5) and risk assessments (and assessment of risk profile) to identify development priorities for individuals and teams;
- Match development methods to the type of need: formal training for knowledge, supervised practice for skills, and mentored experience for professional growth;
- Create individual learning or development plans that define objectives, timescales, and the evidence needed to demonstrate improvement;
- Where appropriate, provide structured supervision for all staff—recognising that supervision is required at every level, though the intensity of supervision should reflect the individual’s competence and the risk profile of the work;
- Encourage reflective practice and peer learning through coaching, feedback sessions, toolbox talks, and project reviews;
- Track and record all development activity, ensuring it evidences improvements in performance, not just attendance;

- Evaluate the effectiveness of development activities by observing how they enhance actual workplace performance and behaviour; and
- Reinforce the message that CPD, while essential, shall be purposeful, applied, and linked to measurable improvements in competence.

9.6.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- CPD expectations and recording;
- Training plans;
- Mentoring arrangements;
- Technical updates; and
- Post-project learning reviews and feedback loops.

9.6.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations assess whether their arrangements for developing and maintaining competence are structured, effective, and aligned with organisational objectives.

- Do we distinguish clearly between developing knowledge, skills, and experience?
- Are training, supervision, and mentoring activities aligned to defined competence criteria and the competence gaps identified in Principle 5?
- Do all staff have personal development plans with measurable objectives?
- Is the level of supervision proportionate to the individual's competence and the risk of their work?
- Do we evaluate whether learning activities genuinely improve performance and behaviour, rather than simply recording completion?
- How do we capture and share learning?

9.7 Principle 7 Assign responsibilities

9.7.1 Assign responsibilities

Assigning responsibilities effectively ensures that individuals only undertake tasks for which they have been deemed competent. Clear allocation of duties helps maintain accountability, supports safe decision-making, and prevents individuals from working beyond their level of competence. This principle reinforces the need for transparent structures, defined roles, and proportionate oversight to ensure that work is planned, managed, and delivered by suitably qualified and capable people.

9.7.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations assign responsibilities in a way that reflects the competence, authority, and experience of each individual.

- Establish clear procedures to ensure that work is only allocated to individuals who have been confirmed as competent for the specific task or role;
- Link task allocation directly to the competence profiles developed under Principles 2 and 5, ensuring that only those meeting the required SKEB criteria are authorised to within their role to contribute to outcomes sought;
- Consider risk assessments and method statements (RAMS) when allocating work — use these to confirm the level of competence, experience, and supervision required for each activity;
- Define and document clear role boundaries, specifying the types of tasks each role is permitted to perform and the conditions (including limits) under which they can do so;
- Introduce formal authorisation or permit-to-work arrangements for safety-critical activities and/or where the risk profile determines it, ensuring an auditable record of competence-based approval;
- Communicate responsibilities and limitations clearly to all staff, supervisors, and contractors, making sure they understand the limits of their authority and competence;
- Encourage and support a culture where staff can raise concerns or refuse tasks they do not feel competent to perform, without fear of blame or reprisal; and
- Periodically review task allocations in practice to confirm that competence remains appropriate as projects, risks, and personnel change.

9.7.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Documented role descriptions;
- Organisational charts;
- Defined reporting lines;
- Written delegation arrangements; and
- Clear escalation processes.

9.7.4 Reflective questions

These questions help organisations confirm whether responsibilities are allocated appropriately and proportionately to competence and risk.

- Are task and role boundaries clearly defined, documented, and communicated to all staff?
- Are tasks allocated only to individuals with verified competence for those activities?
- Are safety-critical activities, or higher-risk activities identified by the risk profile subject to additional authorisation and supervision?
- Are supervision arrangements proportionate and clear?
- Is task allocation integrated with the organisation's risk assessment and method statement process?
- Do individuals understand the limits of their role?
- Can staff safely decline tasks they are not competent to perform, and are such instances reviewed to improve planning and training?
- Are escalation pathways well understood?

9.8 Principle 8 Monitor competence

9.8.1 Monitor competence

Monitoring competence is an essential part of maintaining assurance that individuals and teams continue to perform to the required standard over time. Competence is not static, it can change as people gain experience, move into new roles, or as legislation, technology, and organisational priorities evolve. Regular monitoring provides evidence that competence is being sustained, allows early identification of gaps or performance issues, and supports continual improvement in safety and quality.

Monitoring competence should include proactive mechanisms for monitoring competence and reactive mechanisms that capture other indications as they arise.

9.8.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations establish systematic and proportionate arrangements for monitoring and maintaining competence across all levels of the workforce.

- Define proportionate methods for monitoring competence, such as observation, review of work outputs, investigation of failures, audits, or performance discussions;
- Establish the frequency of monitoring based on the risk profile of the role or activity, with higher-risk/safety-critical activities requiring more frequent or detailed review;
- Identify early signs of declining or insufficient competence, for example, through incident reports, near misses, quality concerns, or supervision feedback;
- Ensure monitoring activities are embedded within normal management processes, such as supervision, project reviews, performance management and incident and near miss reporting and any other investigation procedures;
- Where activities are safety-critical consider implementing a mandatory occurrence reporting system. Note: On work in relation to higher-risk buildings a mandatory occurrence reporting system capturing “safety occurrences” is mandatory;
- Consider implementing a voluntary and confidential reporting system to collect information about management of competence concerns, issues and events, which otherwise will not be revealed by a mandatory reporting system;
- Where the organisation fails to meet objectives to the appropriate standard, investigate to determine whether failure to manage competence effectively was either the cause or a contributory factor and address any issues found;
- Collect and record evidence of competence monitoring in a consistent and auditable format, enabling trends to be identified across teams or projects;
- Take corrective action where required, such as targeted training, increased supervision, or reassignment to tasks within the individual’s competence;
- Feed the results of monitoring back into the organisation’s wider competence management system to inform continual improvement (see Principle 3); and
- Periodically review whether the organisation continues to have access to a sufficient number of competent individuals to meet current and future workload demands.

9.8.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Regular one-to-one meetings;
- Project or technical reviews;
- Peer review;
- Mandatory occurrence reporting;
- Investigation of failures and near misses;
- Quality assurance checks; and
- Client feedback analysis.

9.8.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations evaluate whether their arrangements for monitoring competence are effective, risk-based, and embedded within routine management practice.

- Do we regularly monitor competence across all staff and roles?
- Are safety-critical activities or higher-risk activities identified by the risk profile monitored more frequently or in greater depth?
- Is evidence from monitoring recorded consistently and used to identify trends or issues?
- Do we identify issues early?
- Do we investigate where the organisation fails or might have failed to meet objectives to the appropriate standard, to determine whether failure to manage competence effectively was a causal or contributory factor?
- What are the arrangements that encourage people to report concerns relating to the management of competence?
- Do we act promptly and proportionately when issues are identified?
- Is monitoring recorded where appropriate?
- Are monitoring results reviewed and fed back into our overall competence management arrangements to support continual improvement?
- Are supervision arrangements effective and proportionate?

9.8.5 Voluntary and confidential reporting systems

The following key principles are to be considered when establishing a voluntary and confidential reporting system:

- **Trust** - The reporters need to be certain that the information will not be used against them; otherwise they will be reluctant to report their mistakes. A positive safety culture in the organisation provides the foundations of a successful occurrence reporting system.
- **Non-punitive** - The reporting person shall be protected against legal, administrative or disciplinary sanctions, except in case of gross negligence, criminal activity or intent.
- **Confidentiality** - Non-punitive systems should ideally be based on confidential reporting. The person reporting an incident needs to be confident that their identity and other information that might be used to identify involved other physical or legal personalities will not be disclosed.
- **Ease of reporting** - Submitting a report should be as easy as possible for the reporter. The reporting forms should be readily available to anyone wishing to file a report. They should be easy to compile and provide adequate space for narrative.
- **Acknowledgment** - To encourage further submission of reports the organisation should clearly communicate to its personnel that the voluntary reports are a valuable safety asset and acknowledge the efforts made by reporting persons. Whenever possible, feedback on the actions taken in response to a report shall be provided to the reporting person directly but also in the form of collective feedback to the reporting community.
- **Promotion** - The de-identified information received from the voluntary reporting system should be made available to all those engaged by the organisation to deliver their identified objectives in a timely manner.

9.9 Principle 9 Learning from Performance Shortfalls

9.9.1 Learning from Performance Shortfalls

Even in well-managed organisations, situations can arise where an organisation does not meet objectives to an appropriate standard and inadequate skills, knowledge, experience and / or inappropriate behaviours were a causal or contributory factor to the failure.

Organisations should respond constructively to any performance shortfalls so that the impact on safety is minimised and learning is maximised.

When things don't go as planned, organisations should focus on understanding the underlying cause (whether related to individual capability, system design, supervision, or organisational processes) and take proportionate action to prevent recurrence.

Performance Shortfalls can occur for several reasons:

- organisational culture such as time or commercial pressures to 'cut corners';
- team relationships such as poor leadership, communications or inter-personal relationships;
- other circumstances that affect the work environment such as general morale; actions of other people, suppliers, or clients; defects in equipment;
- personal situation such as illness, stress, fatigue, reduced fitness, relationship problems, death or illness in the family, financial problems, trauma following an accident; and
- failure to manage competence effectively such as people performing activities for which they have not been determined to be as competent, inadequate supervision, omissions or deficiencies in assessment or unclear or insufficient competence criteria.

Organisations should foster a culture that encourages all employees to recognise their limits of competence, to seek support when needed, and to feel empowered to decline work for which they are not yet competent.

Organisations should:

- Identify, understand, and manage performance issues in a fair and proportionate manner;
- Be able to demonstrate that they respond appropriately and consistently when incidents or near misses occur, including arrangements to:
 - Explore the contributing factors and root causes;
 - Learn and act to prevent recurrence;
 - Address any immediate consequences;
- Guide, support, and monitor behaviours while promoting open and confidential discussion of concerns;
- Provide mechanisms for confidential or anonymous reporting of non-conformities, near misses, and opportunities for improvement; and
- Maintain clear accountability for the management of competence at all levels of the organisation.

9.9.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations identify, investigate, and respond effectively to any competence-related shortfalls or performance issues.

- Encourages all employees to recognise their limits of competence, to seek support when needed, and to feel empowered to decline work for which they are not yet competent;
- Define what constitutes a competence shortfall. Include both individual and systemic causes, such as:
 - A design that, if built, would not meet the functional requirements of the Building Regulations;
 - Building work that fails to achieve compliance or quality standards;
 - When appointing a designer or contractor, not taking all reasonable steps to satisfy themselves that the person or organisation fulfils the competence requirement for the role;
 - A failure to comply with the dutyholder duties under the Building Regulations;
 - A safety occurrence that requires a mandatory occurrence report to be submitted;
 - A failure to follow agreed procedures client or dutyholder arrangements or the procedures set out in statutory documents (construction control plan, change control plan etc.), risk assessments, or method statements;
 - Identification of non-competent individuals without the necessary competence to undertaking an observed task;
 - A failure to correctly advise or support an Accountable Person for a higher-risk building in the discharge of their duties;
 - When managing building safety on behalf of an accountable person, a failure to comply with the requirements of the Building Safety Act;
 - In occupation, failures in maintenance, inspection, or resident engagement leading to non-compliance or a building safety risk;
- Establish procedures for investigating all relevant failures or near-miss events;
- Investigate all failures or near-miss events to determine whether inadequate skills, knowledge, experience and/or inappropriate behaviours were a causal or contributory factor to the failure;
- Integrate proactive checks and inspections of both compliance with process and completed work into normal work to identify potential failures early;
- Link procedures for investigation with Mandatory Occurrence Reporting (MOR): adopt MOR principles where risk demands, ensuring that competence-related events are captured, investigated, reported and acted upon;
- Encourage open reporting of competence concerns, failures or near-misses, protecting anonymity where needed and ensuring a just culture that promotes learning rather than blame;
- Investigate failures or near-miss events systematically, establishing whether the root cause lies with an individual's capability, supervision, or organisational process;

- Take proportionate corrective actions, from retraining, enhanced supervision, or mentoring to revising procedures or system improvements;
- Capture lessons learned and use them to update competence profiles, training programmes, and management arrangements;
- Share findings and learning across teams, projects, and functions to prevent recurrence and reinforce continual improvement;
- Guide, support, and monitor behaviours while promoting open and confidential discussion of concerns; and
- Maintain clear accountability for the management of competence at all levels of the organisation.

9.9.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Encourage and support appropriate behaviours;
- Encourage and support open reporting of competence concerns, failures or near-misses;
- Investigate failures or near-miss events to determine whether inadequate skills, knowledge, experience and/or inappropriate behaviours were a causal or contributory factor to the failure;
- Identification of factors contributing to failures and root causes;
- Take corrective and preventive actions;
- Appropriate sharing of lessons learned both inside and outside the organisation; and
- Proportionate support for individuals.

9.9.4 Reflective questions

These questions help organisations evaluate whether their arrangements for managing and learning from competence failures are robust, fair, and effective.

- Have we clearly defined what constitutes a failure for both activities and systems?
- Do our procedures capture and investigate competence-related failures or near-misses?
- Are failure or near-miss events reviewed against the client, accountable person or organisation's arrangements and statutory requirements?
- Do we apply require mandatory occurrence reporting where the risk justifies it?
- Can staff safely report failures or near-miss events, request supervision or refuse unsafe tasks without fear of blame?
- Do we systematically record, analyse, and share lessons learned to strengthen competence management?
- Do we respond proportionately and constructively to competence concerns?
- Do we analyse underlying causes rather than focusing solely on individual fault?
- How do we share and embed lessons learned?

9.10 Principle 10 Manage assessors' and managers' competence

9.10.1 Manage assessors' and managers' competence

All those responsible for defining competence, assessing competence, managing competence or supervising the work of others play a critical role in maintaining high standards across an organisation.

Their own competence directly influences the quality and consistency of competence management.

Ensuring that assessors, managers, and supervisors are themselves competent helps to build confidence in the organisation's competence assurance processes, reinforces credibility, and supports fair and objective decision-making.

Defining and assessing the competence of those who define, assess, or manage competence and those who supervise the work of others should be undertaken with an appropriate level of rigour. Getting this part of the management process wrong undermines the entire competence management process.

9.10.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations confirm and maintain the competence of those who manage, assess, or make decisions about others' competence.

- Identify all roles that make or influence competence decisions, including managers, supervisors, assessors, trainers and those overseeing the competence management arrangements (including those contracted);
- Define competence criteria and Role Competence Profiles specifically for these positions, covering technical understanding, assessment capability, leadership behaviours and communication skills;
- Verify that individuals in these roles have appropriate, skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours to make fair, consistent and evidence-based judgements about competence;
- Provide ongoing development and calibration for assessors, supervisors and managers to ensure consistency of approach across departments, projects or sites;
- Encourage collaboration and peer review between assessors, between managers and between supervisors to promote consistency and shared learning;
- Periodically monitor and evaluate the performance of those responsible for setting or assessing competence to ensure reliability and proportionality;
- Maintain records of assessor and managerial competence and review them regularly, especially when organisational structures or responsibilities change; and
- Where external assessors or verifiers are used, confirm that they meet equivalent standards of competence and impartiality.

9.10.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Arrangements for the selection of competence managers and assessors including defined competence criteria for those involved in the definition, assessment and management of competence;
- Rigorous application of the principles set out in Principles 2 to 7 of this guidance; and
- Periodic peer review of decisions about competence definition and assessment to calibrate assessment decisions.

9.10.4 Reflective questions

These questions help organisations evaluate whether their assessors and managers are competent and supported to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

- Have we clearly defined what competence looks like for managers, supervisors and assessors involved in the competence process?
- Do those setting or judging competence hold appropriate SKEB and relevant qualifications or experience?
- Do supervisors understand their role in maintaining and supporting competence within their teams?
- Do we review and monitor the consistency of assessments and decisions made by managers and assessors?
- Are competence records for assessors and managers kept up to date and periodically reviewed?
- Do we provide opportunities for ongoing calibration, peer review and learning for those responsible for competence oversight?
- Is assessment applied consistently?

9.11 Principle 11 Manage supply chain competence

9.11.1 Manage supply chain competence

Effective management of supply chain competence is essential to ensuring that all work carried out under an organisation's control meets the same standards of safety, quality, and professionalism. Engaging competent sub-contractors not only supports compliance with legal duties but also helps protect reputation, maintain project performance, and reduce risk. This principle emphasises the importance of verifying, monitoring, and reviewing the competence and organisational capability of all third parties involved in delivering work on behalf of the organisation.

9.11.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations ensure that all third parties (e.g. sub-contractors, consultants, and supply-chain partners) involved in delivering work on behalf of the organisation have the SKEB and/or organisational capability to support the delivery of the organisation's objectives to an appropriate standard and to comply with the organisation's statutory duties.

- Define competence and competence management expectations clearly within procurement, tender and contractual documentation, setting out how competence will be demonstrated, managed and reviewed;
- Verify that third party organisations manage competence to the same standard as the organisation. This involves assessing policies, competence management arrangements, supervision structures and assurance mechanisms, not just the qualifications of individuals;
- Recognise that pre-qualification alone is insufficient. It should be treated as an initial screening step, not a substitute for direct verification of competence management practices for specific project requirements;
- Verify before mobilisation that third-party organisations have arrangements in place to ensure all individuals under their control are competent for the specific tasks they will perform and have sufficient competent individuals to meet the objectives set out in their contract to the required standards. This includes reviewing how the third-party organisation assesses, supervises and maintains competence within their workforce;
- Embed competence requirements contractually, specifying that third-party organisations shall maintain and evidence competence throughout the contract lifecycle, including practical mechanisms for reinforcing and evidencing compliance and specify they should cooperate with audits or reviews;
- Monitor the performance of third-party organisations on site through audits, supervision reviews and proportionate spot checks to confirm that competence is being maintained in practice;
- Review the performance of third-party organisations periodically, including lessons learned from any issues or non-compliances, and use these findings to improve future selection and oversight;
- Promote mutual learning by sharing feedback, good practice and improvement actions with subcontractors to raise standards across the supply chain;

- Require third-party organisations to comply with any mandatory occurrence reporting, voluntary and confidential reporting system and failure and near miss investigation arrangements that the organisation has implemented; and
- When engaging individuals follow the same competence management processes that are in place for employees of the company.

9.11.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Verify that third party organisations manage competence to the same standard as the organisation;
- The use of feedback, investigation and monitoring arrangements that involved third party organisations and individual working under their control;
- Clear allocation of competence management responsibilities; and
- Ongoing monitoring of performance.

9.11.4 Reflective questions

These questions help organisations evaluate whether their arrangements for managing supply chain competence are robust, transparent, and proportionate to risk.

- Do third-party organisations demonstrate robust arrangements for managing competence?
- Are competence expectations and obligations clearly written into contracts and procurement documents?
- Do we verify third-party organisations' competence management arrangements before work starts, not just rely on pre-qualification evidence?
- Do our monitoring and review processes confirm that competence within third-party organisations is maintained throughout the contract?
- Do we monitor third-party organisations performance proportionately?
- Are responsibilities for managing competence clearly allocated between parties?
- Do we evaluate third-party organisations' performance and use lessons learned to inform future engagement and oversight?
- Where third-party organisations are nominated by clients or other parties, have we assessed and agreed roles, responsibilities and risks clearly?
- Do we involve third party organisations in our mandatory occurrence reporting, voluntary and confidential reporting system and failure and near miss investigation arrangements?

9.12 Principle 12 Manage information

9.12.1 Managing information

Accurate, accessible, and up-to-date information is fundamental to effective competence management. Organisations must maintain reliable records that demonstrate how competence is assessed, maintained, and assured across all roles and activities. Well-managed information enables transparency, supports decision-making, and provides evidence of compliance with legal and organisational requirements. It also ensures that competence-related data can be used to monitor trends, plan development, and drive continual improvement.

9.12.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations establish effective arrangements for collecting, managing, and maintaining competence-related information.

- Define what information needs to be recorded to demonstrate compliance with the organisation's competence management arrangements. This might include individual competence profiles, qualifications, training records, supervision records, and evidence of monitoring or review;
- Select record-keeping arrangements that are proportionate to the organisation's work activities, size and complexity;
- **For small organisations**, this might simply mean maintaining a copy of the competence standard used, an organisational chart, and a competence profile for each employee;
- **For larger organisations**, it might involve structured databases, digital platforms or integrated management systems;
 - Collect information consistently from employees, contractors and suppliers, ensuring that the same information is recorded for similar roles;
 - Keep records current by updating them after training, assessments, or changes in role or responsibility, and track expiry dates for qualifications, certifications or accreditations;
 - Secure all competence information, ensuring that only authorised staff can access or modify records;
 - Use the information collected to inform training plans, workforce development strategies and improvements to competence management arrangements;
 - Periodically review record-keeping practices to confirm they remain suitable, proportionate and effective; and
 - Determine archive requirements in line with legal and insurance obligations.

9.12.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Up-to-date competence records;
- Secure storage of qualifications and training evidence;
- Accessible documentation where required; and
- Clear retention arrangements.

9.12.4 Reflective questions

These questions help organisations assess whether their competence information is well managed, accurate, and effectively supports assurance and improvement.

- Have we defined what competence information we need to hold, how long and why?
- Is it accessible when required?
- Are our record-keeping arrangements proportionate to the work activities, size and complexity of the organisation?
- Are records consistently updated following training, assessment or organisational changes?
- Is access to competence information appropriately controlled, retained and secure?
- Do we use competence information to support decision-making and continual improvement?

9.13 Principle 13 Manage change

9.13.1 Managing change

Change is an inevitable part of organisational life, whether driven by new legislation, evolving technologies, restructuring, or shifts in workload and risk profile. Managing change effectively is essential to ensuring that competence requirements remain relevant and that individuals and teams continue to perform safely and effectively. A proactive approach allows organisations to anticipate the impact of change, adapt their competence management arrangements accordingly, and maintain assurance through periods of transition.

9.13.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations manage change in a structured, risk-based, and proactive manner to ensure competence is maintained during and after periods of transition.

- Identify and evaluate changes that could affect competence, such as new legislation, standards, technology, personnel, or organisational structure;
- Assess how proposed changes might alter role requirements, levels of supervision, or competence criteria;
- Update Role Competence Profiles, training plans, and development activities to reflect revised expectations or risks;
- Communicate changes clearly to all affected individuals and ensure they understand new roles, responsibilities, or procedures;
- Provide targeted training, mentoring, or additional supervision where change introduces new skills or knowledge requirements;
- Monitor the implementation of changes to confirm that competence is maintained and performance standards are not compromised;
- Record decisions, risk assessments, and actions taken in response to change for transparency and assurance; and
- Periodically review how effectively change has been managed and use lessons learned to strengthen future change processes.

9.13.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Reviewing competence criteria following regulatory updates;
- Updating role descriptions when responsibilities change;
- Assessing training needs before introducing new technologies; and
- Documenting changes to competence processes.

9.13.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations evaluate whether they are managing change effectively to maintain competence and safety.

- Do we have a process for identifying and assessing changes that might affect competence?
- Do we review and act on changes in legislation, standards or emerging risks?
- Are competence criteria updated when new or revised frameworks or standards are published?
- Are competence implications considered when new services are introduced?
- Do we reassess competence when roles or responsibilities change?
- Do we review competence before taking on work in unfamiliar sectors, territories or with new technologies?
- Are staff and contractors promptly informed about changes that affect their work?
- Is change documented and communicated appropriately?
- Do we check that updates to competence management arrangements have been implemented effectively?

9.14 Principle 14 Evaluation

9.14.1 Evaluation

Evaluation is a key mechanism for providing assurance that competence management arrangements are working as intended. Regular audits help confirm that policies and procedures are being applied consistently, identify areas for improvement, and demonstrate compliance with legal and organisational requirements. An effective audit process strengthens accountability, promotes transparency, and supports a culture of continuing learning and improvement.

Monitoring focuses on day-to-day operational performance. Evaluation and audit focus on whether the overall competence management system is functioning as intended.

9.14.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations plan and carry out audits that provide reliable assurance of the effectiveness of competence management.

- **For micro or small organisations**, this might involve a simple, documented review of whether competence profiles, training, and supervision arrangements still work as intended;
- **Larger or more complex organisations** should establish a structured audit programme, with planned reviews covering scope, frequency, and responsibilities proportionate to risk and scale;
 - Define review or audit criteria that reflect the organisation's competence management principles, relevant standards and legal duties.
 - Ensure that those conducting reviews or audits are competent and impartial, whether internal or external;
 - Gather and examine evidence such as competence records, training logs, supervision notes, and direct observation of practice;
 - Report findings clearly, identifying strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement;
 - Agree and implement corrective actions, and confirm that all findings are addressed and closed out; and
 - Use the outcomes of reviews and audits to inform future planning, training priorities and updates to the competence management arrangements.

9.14.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Periodic review of competence records;
- Sampling of recruitment and assessment decisions;
- Review of CPD compliance;
- Internal audit activities; and
- Quality assurance checks.

9.14.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations evaluate whether their auditing processes for competence management are robust, effective, and adding value.

- Do we have a proportionate process to review or audit the effectiveness of our competence management arrangements?
- Are review or audit criteria clear, objective and aligned with legal and competence standards?
- Are those conducting reviews suitably competent and independent of the activities being checked?
- Do reviews consider both documented evidence and practice on the ground?
- Are findings recorded, tracked and used to improve the organisation's competence arrangements?
- Do we confirm that identified actions have been implemented and are effective?
- Are audit and evaluation activities proportionate to our size and risk profile?
- Do we identify recurring issues or trends?

9.15 Principle 15 Review

9.15.1 Review

Regular review is essential to ensure that competence management arrangements remain effective, relevant, and strategically aligned with the organisation's objectives and legal duties. Regular reviews, by senior leadership, should allow organisations to assess the ongoing suitability of their policies, processes, and competence criteria, taking into account lessons learned from audits, incidents, or changes in legislation etc. and risk. A well-structured review process supports continual improvement and demonstrates a commitment to maintaining high standards of safety, performance, and professionalism.

Leadership review should consider not only individual competence but whether sufficient competent capacity exists to manage current and anticipated workload.

9.15.2 Practical actions

The following actions help organisations carry out systematic and evidence-based reviews of their competence management arrangements.

- Establish how formal reviews will take place and at what frequency;
- They should include review of scope of work activities, associated functions and related competence;
- For small or micro-organisations, this might involve a straightforward, documented discussion on whether competence arrangements are still working and what can be improved;
- For larger or more complex organisations, this should form part of a structured management review cycle linked to audit and assurance activities;
- Gather relevant evidence for review, including findings from audits, monitoring activities, incident investigations, project evaluations and workforce feedback;
- Analyse this information to assess whether competence management arrangements are effective, proportionate and achieving the intended outcomes;
- Identify improvements based on evidence, focusing on the effectiveness of training, supervision, communication and competence assessment methods;
- Record the outcomes of reviews, decisions taken and actions agreed;
- Implement improvement actions promptly and monitor their effectiveness over time, and agrees these with leadership; and
- Communicate learning and changes to all relevant staff, contractors and stakeholders to embed continual improvement.

9.15.3 What This Looks Like in Practice

- Consideration of evaluation, including audit findings and monitoring;
- Review of competence failures or near misses;
- Assessment of regulatory developments;
- Allocation of resources where required; and
- Evaluation by leadership.

9.15.4 Reflective questions

These questions can help organisations evaluate whether their review processes are effective in driving continual improvement in competence management.

- Do we have a regular and proportionate process to review the overall effectiveness of our competence management arrangements?
- Do we use evidence from audits, incidents and project reviews to inform these discussions?
- Do we confirm that adopted standards and competence requirements remain fit for purpose?
- Are improvement actions recorded, implemented and reviewed for effectiveness?
- Do we communicate outcomes and learning to drive continual improvement?
- Do senior leaders review competence management arrangements periodically?
- Are audit findings and competence issues considered at leadership level?
- Does leadership reinforce the importance of competence through behaviour and communication?

9.16 Conclusion

Together, these 15 principles provide a structured and proportionate framework for managing competence across all levels of an organisation and its supply chain. They emphasise that competence is not a one-off achievement but a continual process of development, assurance, and improvement.

Effective competence management depends as much on culture and behaviours as it does on policies and procedures. It requires visible leadership, clear accountability, and open communication to embed competence as a shared responsibility. When applied consistently, these principles help ensure that individuals and organisations have the capability, confidence, and integrity to deliver safe, high-quality outcomes strengthening organisational assurance and sustaining public trust in the built environment.

10. Proportionate approaches to integrating the ICC Principles

10.0 Introduction

The principles of competence management apply to all organisations operating within the built environment. However, the way in which those principles are implemented will vary depending on the size, structure and risk profile of the organisation.

Proportionality means applying the same core principles in a way that reflects:

- The nature of the services provided;
- The complexity of the work undertaken;
- The potential impact of higher-risk and safety critical activities; and
- The scale of the organisation

The objective is not to create unreasonable administrative burden. It is to ensure that competence is clear, supported and maintained in a way that is appropriate to the context.

Regardless of size, every organisation should be able to demonstrate that it:

- Has a clear understanding of the purpose and scope for the organisation;
- Understands what competence is required;
- Knows who holds that competence;
- There are enough competent people with the right combination of competences to deliver the company objectives to an appropriate standard;
- Supports individuals in maintaining it;
- Responds appropriately when competence gaps are identified; and
- Reviews and improves its arrangements over time.

Different organisations can apply management models at different levels of formality and documentation requirements:

- **SMEs or micro-businesses** – adopt a proportionate approach: maintain a clear scope of services, document organisational structure, create simple competence profiles and keep records demonstrating how competence is defined, checked and maintained.
- **Organisations not certified to ISO management systems standards or other specific industry standard** – use the 15 Principles to create a stand-alone competence process. Evidence can be drawn directly from the “how to evidence” guidance within each principle.
- **Tier 1 / Tier 2 organisations or those already certified to ISO management systems standards** – integrate the ICC Principles into their existing management systems and use **UKAS TPS 69** as a reference for formal accreditation of competence management.

Appendix 2 illustrates this through case studies.

10.1 Determining the Appropriate Level of Formality

Organisations should consider the following questions when determining the level of structure required:

- Has the risk profile identified activities appropriately as higher-risk and do we carry out safety-critical work? Is our work affected such activities?
- Do we manage complex supply chains?
- Do we operate across multiple projects, locations, jurisdictions?
- Are we subject to enhanced regulatory scrutiny?
- Do clients require formal evidence of competence arrangements?

Where risk, complexity or external expectations are higher, more formal systems will generally be appropriate.

Where risk and complexity are lower, simpler arrangements may be sufficient, provided they are deliberate and consistently applied.

The key test is whether the organisation can clearly demonstrate that competence is:

- Defined;
- Maintained;
- Monitored; and
- Reviewed.

If this can be shown confidently, the system is likely proportionate.

The options illustrated below are:

- A Simple Competence Process (Micro and Small Organisations);
- A Structured Competence System (Medium and Larger Organisations); and
- Integrating with Existing Formal Management Systems through the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) model (one of the most recognisable management methodologies).

10.2 A Simple Competence Process (Micro and Small Organisations)

For micro-businesses, sole practitioners and small organisations (including for example some resident management companies), competence management might already be embedded in everyday practice through direct oversight and close working relationships.

A proportionate competence process at this scale might include:

- Scope of services that requires competence management defined;
- Identification of relevant legal and professional obligations;
- Identification of relevant competence frameworks;
- Simple organisational chart showing roles and their relationships;
- Simple role competence profiles outlining required skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours;
- Verification of skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours;
- Identification of higher-risk or safety critical work activities;
- Direct supervision where appropriate;
- A basic register of competence evidence (such as supervisory sign off of skills, professional body memberships, qualifications, experience records, CPD records or trade certifications);
- Periodic review discussions to confirm arrangements remain suitable; and
- Processes for identification, reporting and rectification of non-compliance.

The diagram shows a 'ROLE COMPETENCE PROFILE' form with the following sections:

- Name
- Role
- Description of Role
- Role Activities
- Competences
- Work Sector
- Sector Specific Competencies
- Evidence of Competence
- Competence Development Plan

Figure 5: Illustrates the requirements for a Role Competence Profile

Monitoring competence may take place through day-to-day oversight, site visits, peer discussion or review of completed work.

Investigation of failures and near misses to determine whether competence issues were a causal factor is important and action taken when competence is found to be an issue.

Where concerns arise, action should be proportionate and timely — for example, additional supervision, targeted training or clarification of role boundaries.

The emphasis at this scale is clarity and accountability rather than complexity.

Note: A Micro and Small Organisation with a risk profile that was evaluated as higher-risk or delivering safety critical activities or functions can require a structured competence system as described below for Medium and Larger Organisations.

10.3 A Structured Competence System (Medium and Larger Organisations)

As organisations grow in size, complexity or risk exposure, competence management arrangements typically require greater structure and formalisation.

A more structured system might include:

- Scope of the system clearly defined and recorded;
- Identification of relevant legal and professional obligations;
- Identification of relevant competence frameworks;
- Organisational chart showing roles and their relationships;
- Documented Role Competence Profiles;
- Identification of higher-risk/safety critical work activities;
- Competence matrices covering multiple functions or disciplines;
- Formal assessment and re-assessment processes;
- Structured supervision frameworks;
- Defined procedures for voluntary and formal reporting of failures and issues including where appropriate, or required, a mandatory occurrence reporting system;
- Defined procedures for investigating incidents, report, and concerns to determine whether changes are required in relation to the management of competence;
- Defined procedures for managing competence failure;
- Digital competence management systems;
- Periodic internal audit; and
- Formal management review processes.

Where organisations manage higher-risk buildings or operate across multiple sites or regions, enhanced assurance mechanisms might be appropriate.

This does not represent a different standard. It reflects the need for more formal governance in more complex environments.

10.4 Integrating with Existing Formal Management Systems

This section explains how the 15 ICC Principles can be applied within a recognised Plan–Do–Check–Act/Review (PDCA) framework for those who want to do it.

Many organisations already operate management systems relating to quality, health and safety, environmental performance or building safety. Competence management should align with and where appropriate, be embedded within those systems rather than operate separately.

The PDCA cycle helps organisations of all sizes to plan, support, monitor and continually develop competence. It reinforces leadership, accountability and transparency, builds a culture of continuing learning and improvement, and promotes regulatory compliance, organisational capability and confidence among clients, residents and other stakeholders.

The PDCA structure used here, reflects the approach adopted within recognised standards and frameworks, including:

- ISO 9001 (Quality Management);
- ISO 45001 (Occupational Health and Safety);
- HSG65 (Managing for Health and Safety); and
- UKAS TPS 69 and similar third-party certification schemes.

Integration helps to:

- Avoid duplication;
- Improve consistency;
- Strengthen governance; and
- Simplify audit and review processes.

For example:

- Competence criteria may align with documented role profiles within a quality management system.
- Monitoring arrangements may align with existing supervision or performance review processes.
- Audit of competence arrangements may be incorporated into wider internal audit programmes.
- Management review may be embedded in existing leadership forums.

10.5 Mapping the ICC Principles to Plan–Do–Check–Act

The Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) model provides a recognised management framework through which the ICC Principles can be structured and implemented. The 15 ICC Principles can be aligned to the PDCA cycle as follows, illustrated by Figure 6 below.

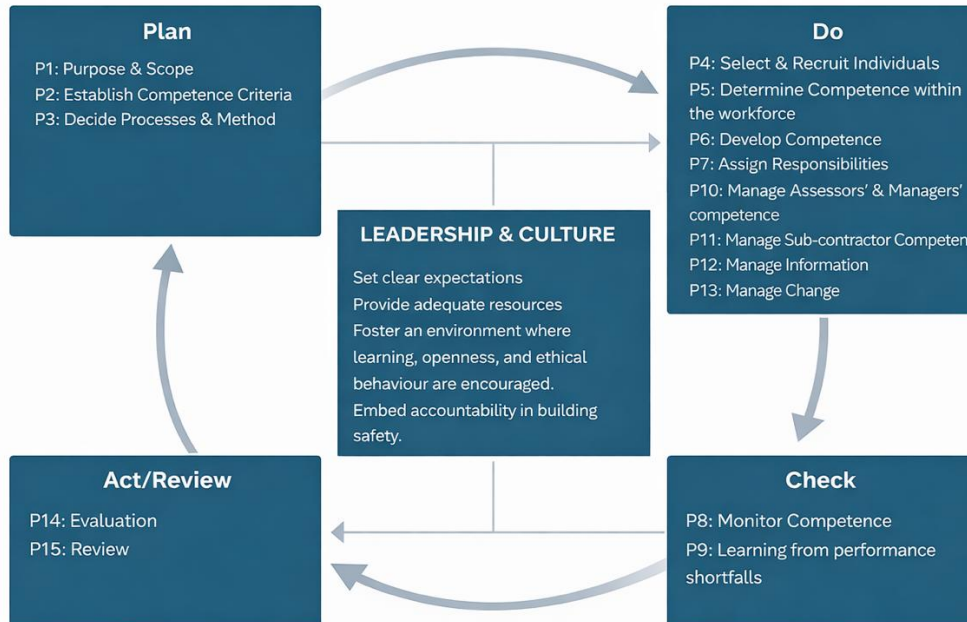


Figure 6: PDCA Mapped against ICC Principles.

10.6 Plan (Principles 1-3)

10.6.1 Purpose

Decide what competence is needed and how it will be achieved.

ICC Principles covered:

- 1 – Purpose and Scope
- 2 – Establish Competence Criteria
- 3 – Decide Processes and Methods

10.6.2 Practical considerations

- Organisations can, should they choose, integrate these steps into existing management systems (for example where the organisation is certified to a management systems standard such as ISO 9001, ISO 45001 or ISO 14001).
- Those without formal certification can create a bespoke competence process by documenting the outputs of Principles 1–3 and the associated diagnostic evidence.
- Clear planning ensures competence management is deliberate rather than reactive

10.7 Do (Principles 4-12)

10.7.1 Purpose

Implement the arrangements and make competence part of everyday operations.

ICC Principles covered:

- 4 – Select and Recruit Staff
- 5 – Determine Competence within the Workforce
- 6 – Develop Competence
- 7 – Assign Responsibilities
- 8 – Monitor Competence
- 9 – Learning from performance shortfalls
- 10 – Manage Assessors’ and Managers’ Competence
- 11 – Manage Supply Chain Competence
- 12 – Manage Information

10.7.2 Practical considerations

Larger organisations may embed these processes within HR, procurement and project controls.

SMEs and micro-businesses can adopt a lighter approach—for example a single register of staff roles and competences supported by simple evidence such as training records, certificates or CPD logs.

10.8 Check (Principles 13-14)

10.8.1 Purpose

Test whether the competence arrangements are effective.

ICC Principles covered:

- 13 – Manage Change
- 14 – Evaluation

10.8.2 Practical considerations

- Organisations can, should they choose, integrate these checks into their audit programmes if they already exist (for example where the organisation is certified to a management systems standard such as ISO 9001, ISO 45001 or ISO 14001).
- Smaller businesses can carry out periodic self-assessments or peer reviews using the diagnostic questions provided under each principle.

10.9 Act/Review (Principle 15)

10.9.1 Purpose

Act on and review findings to drive continual improvement.

ICC Principle covered:

15 – Review

10.9.2 Practical considerations

- Tier-1 or Tier-2 organisations might already have formal management-review cycles; they should ensure competence management is included in the agenda.
- SMEs and micro-businesses should hold proportionate reviews—for example, an annual meeting with key staff to review competence profiles and any new risks.

10.10 Summary

Mapping the ICC Principles onto the **Plan–Do–Check–Act/Review** model provides a structured yet flexible approach. Whether your organisation is large and complex or small and simple, following this framework will help you demonstrate that competence is defined, maintained, and continually improved.

Reflections on a Coherent and Scalable Framework

10.10.1 Key questions requiring confirmation to demonstrate competence management

Every organisation regardless of size should be able to answer confidently the questions in figure 7:



Figure 7: Organisational Check on Competence Management

Effective application of these principles enables organisations to demonstrate organisational management of competence in a proportionate and sustainable manner.

10.10.2 Common Pitfalls

Organisations might encounter challenges when implementing competence management arrangements. Common pitfalls include:

- Assuming qualifications alone demonstrate competence;
- Failing to define role boundaries clearly;
- Inadequate supervision of less experienced staff;
- Inconsistent assessment processes;
- Poor documentation of competence evidence;
- Neglecting supply chain oversight; and
- Treating competence as a one-off exercise rather than an ongoing process.

Recognising these pitfalls can help organisations strengthen their arrangements proactively.

10.10.3 Indicators of Good Practice

Organisations demonstrating effective competence management typically:

- Have clearly defined scopes of service and role responsibilities;
- Apply competence criteria consistently in recruitment and development;
- Monitor competence in practice, not just on paper;
- Respond promptly to identified gaps;
- Review competence arrangements periodically;
- Integrate competence into wider governance processes; and
- Promote a culture of openness and accountability.

Good practice is not defined by volume of documentation but by clarity, consistency and effectiveness.

Appendix 1 ICC Principles – Competence Management in the Built Environment

Plan

Principle 1 - Purpose and scope

Understand the organisational purpose to define scope of policies and procedures. These should be based on objectives, legal requirements, and good practice, ensuring alignment with the organisation's goals for safe buildings and the work it does or intends to do. Include relevant geographic, divisional, or structural elements where appropriate.

Organisations should:

- Clearly define what services and/or products they deliver. This will inform the scope in which competence is to be managed and the scope of associated policies and processes to be developed Clear in their scope
- Make sure that any instructions or contracts agreed to deliver or commission work are:
 - Clear within their scope
 - Within the remit of what the organisation is capable of delivering
 - Agreed by both sides
 - Take account of legal duties
- Clearly determine the extent across the organisation that the scope applies (geographically/whole organisation/ a division/project)
- Identify legal and best-practice obligations that may affect the delivery of its services.
- Demonstrate leadership and commitment to the improvement and management of the competence of all individuals and third parties under their control.

Develop

Principle 2 - Establish competence criteria

Establish simple and practical criteria for the skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours (SKEB) required for each role in the organisation. These criteria should reflect the actual and proposed work, activities carried out and the level of risk involved.

Organisations should:

- Define the key roles required
- Have a clear understanding of the key roles in the organisation.
- For each role briefly describe and document what competence looks like. This could be written as a short statement of the key skills knowledge, experience, and behaviours needed.
- Include different scopes of competence where relevant (e.g. trainee, experienced, supervisor) and ensure individuals understand which level applies to their work, while ensuring individuals can raise the limits of their competence, with appropriate supervision. Organisations should not ask staff to deliver beyond their competence and should ensure they have time and access to the required competence to meet the demands of the work being carried out and sufficient resource of the required competence.
- Use recognised frameworks if available and appropriate, such as those based on the core criteria set out in BS 8670- 1 and PAS 8671–8673. The Industry Competence Steering Group has developed competence frameworks using BS 8670- 1 for a range of roles across

industry and these should be looked to where they are in place. These frameworks and standards can help inform the approach needed and can be accessed via the BSI Competence Hub.

- Be able to evidence how risk has been assessed in relation to the organisation's work activities and how this has been factored into identifying the appropriate competence criteria.
- Where they sub-contract or engage others to do work, carry out appropriate checks, those external organisations are doing the above (see principle 11).

Principle 3 - Decide processes and methods

Establish efficient and consistently repeatable processes, procedures and methods that implement the requirements of the principles in this guidance.

Organisations should:

- Clearly determine processes appropriate for the organisation's purpose and objectives. Their complexity will be dependent on the size of the organisation and complexity of the project and the approach for managing competence will need to be contextualised to the role and organisation's determined scope and purpose.
- Allocate resource as appropriate to implement, maintain and continually improve processes in place.
- Put in place organisational policies that reflect the legal requirements for the functions the organisation performs e.g. in the role of a Designated Individual in relation to principal designer or contractor, or as a principal accountable person.

Operate

Principle 4 -Select and recruit Individuals

Select individuals that have an appropriate and demonstrable competence for the activities they will undertake.

Organisations should:

- Recruit and select individuals using role requirements that set out the SKEB needed for individuals to perform the activities they will carry out.
- Provide suitable induction, and training to ensure individuals can competently complete the work they have been appointed to carry out.
- Focus on the ongoing development of skills, knowledge, experience, and behaviours (SKEB) through supervised learning.

Principle 5 – Determine competence within the workforce

Determine the extent to which individuals under the control of the organisation currently meet the established competence criteria. This will include determining the extent to which the organisation has enough competent individuals to meet its legal and contractual duties and operational needs.

Organisations should:

- Periodically observe and evaluate individuals under the control of the organisation against competence criteria.
- Periodically assess whether the organisation, has access to a sufficient number of people with the right competencies to meet its duties and operational needs

- Assess whether reliance on external experts, subcontractors or third-parties affects overall organisational competence or capacity and ensure their competence forms part of organisational assessment.
- Review methods used for the above on a suitably periodic basis to ensure they remain proportionate to the level of risk associated with tasks.
- Identify any gaps or shortages in competence or capacity and take steps to plan, manage, or mitigate these risks.

Principle 6 - Develop competence

Extend and maintain the competence of employees so that they can meet relevant competence criteria.

Organisations should:

- Have an effective, structured approach to identifying both individual and organisational development needs, recognising that maintaining organisational competence requires sufficient numbers of competent people as well as competent individuals.
- Provide suitable, formal supervision where necessary and support learning and offer opportunities to improve and gain new skills
- Plan to maintain sufficient competent resource across the organisation, including through succession planning, upskilling and, where relevant, development of contractors or external experts who contribute to organisational functions.
- Support continuous professional development (CPD) and ensure that development activities demonstrably strengthen both individual competence and organisational capability
- Confirm the effectiveness of training and development through assessment, observation, and feedback, recognising that formal qualifications alone do not demonstrate competence.

Principle 7 - Assign responsibilities

Ensure that individuals under the control of the organisation only undertake work for which they have been deemed by the organisation as competent.

Organisations should:

- Have effective procedures to allocate tasks to suitably competent individuals.
- Clearly define and document responsibilities, expectations, and the required competencies for each role, and ensure these are communicated to relevant individuals.
- Have processes to ensure that role or task allocation aligns with the specific skills and competence levels required for each role or activity.
- Consider risk when allocating tasks to individuals and place additional focus on the competence required for safety-critical roles. Recognise the limits of individual's competence to undertake tasks when allocating work.

Principle 8 - Monitor competence

Monitor whether individuals under the control of the organisation deemed competent are continuing to perform competently and to initiate corrective action where appropriate.

Organisations should:

- Monitor workforce competence and initiate corrective action where necessary
- Periodically check that individuals consistently perform tasks within the limits of their competence.

- Evaluate competence needs for each project/contract on which the organisation is engaged.

Principle 9 - Learning from performance shortfalls

Respond constructively to any performance shortfalls so that all learnings that will improve safety are factored into future works. Where failures occur, whether relating to individual capability, system design, supervision, or organisational processes, proportionate action to prevent recurrence must be communicated to all relevant parties and implemented.

Organisations should foster a culture that encourages individuals and organisations in their control to recognise their limits of competence, seek support when needed, and feel empowered to decline work for which they are not yet competent.

Organisations should:

- Develop procedures to identify, understand, and manage sub-standard performance in a fair and proportionate manner.
- Demonstrate that they respond appropriately and consistently when incidents, failures, or near misses occur, including arrangements to:
 - Identify contributing factors and root causes
 - Take corrective and preventive actions
 - Address any immediate consequences
- Guide, support, and monitor behaviours while promoting open, confidential discussion of concerns.
- Provide mechanisms for confidential or anonymous reporting of non-conformities, near misses, and opportunities for improvement.
- Focus on consistency and collaboration to deliver a continual improvement approach and ensure learnings are carried between projects. Maintain a clear chain of responsibility and accountability for the management of individual and organisational competence throughout the management structure.

Principle 10 - Manage assessors' and managers' competence

Ensure that all managers and assessors are, themselves, competent to support and fulfil the requirements of competence management policies, procedures, and processes.

Organisations should:

- Ensure that those involved in setting competence levels and measuring individuals and organisations against the levels have, themselves, the necessary SKED to do so.

Principle 11 - Manage sub-contractor competence

Ensure as far as reasonably practicable that all relevant work activities carried out by sub contractors and anyone engaged to carry out work for the organisation are performed by competent staff.

Organisations should:

- Determine whether sub-contractors or others engaged to carry out work have the appropriate organisational capability, including their management of competence, to deliver on their obligations to the organisation contracting/engaging them.
- Ensure that procurement processes and contract arrangements between parties clearly reflect competence expectations, including the SKED requirements for the work • Use contract terms to specify, reinforce, and evidence compliance with competence

expectations, recognising that contractual clarity provides a practical mechanism for ensuring competence.

- Effectively monitor and review performance and competence of third parties under their control.
- Put in place appropriate arrangements to plan, manage, monitor, and review the processes needed to oversee the work of third parties.
- Where subcontractors are specified by another party, assess the impact on its own ability to meet legal obligations and agree roles and responsibilities accordingly.

Principle 12 - Manage information

Maintain accurate and up-to-date information about how competence is managed across the organisation. This information should be clear, easy to access, and detailed enough to support day-to-day working and show that the organisation's competence processes are being followed. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to the longer-term maintenance of archived records in line with the nature and scale of the work undertaken.

Principle 13 - Manage change

Monitor changes in the external environment and the internal operation of the organisation e.g. new types of work, changes in staff, and updates to regulations or industry practice and consider what these mean for how competence is managed. Make adjustments to systems, including job roles, processes, and methods where necessary.

Organisations should:

- Have a practical approach for setting out how competence is managed and how any changes will be introduced in line with the organisation's policies and responsibilities.

Evaluation and Review

Principle 14 - Evaluation

Check at suitable intervals, that the organisation's processes and methods for managing competence are working as intended. Make improvements where needed.

Organisations should:

- Carry out checks at planned intervals to provide information on whether management policies, procedures, systems in place:
 - conform to the organisation's own requirements; and
 - are effectively implemented and maintained
- Put in place proportionate quality assurance activities that help assess how competence is being managed
- Describe what activities are used to assess how effective competence management arrangements are
- Establish, maintain, and improve the processes, procedures, and methods used to manage competence

Principle 15 - Review

Regularly review what has been learned from day-to-day work, any competence-related issues, and any checks or audits. Use this information to decide whether changes or improvements are needed.

Organisations should:

- Periodically review whether the standards and approaches used still meet the needs of the organisation and the type of work it carries out
- Carry out post-project reviews to consider whether the right competence was applied at the right time, and identify any lessons or improvements to processes

Appendix 2 Example Case Studies

The Importance of Case Studies

Organisations working in the built environment operate in diverse and often challenging conditions. They might face commercial pressure, changing regulatory expectations, resource constraints, skills shortages, evolving technologies and complex supply chains. At the same time, they remain responsible for delivering work that can directly affect life safety and public confidence.

Competence management does not take place in isolation from these realities. Smaller organisations might struggle with limited time and administrative capacity. Growing organisations might face challenges maintaining consistency as they expand. Larger organisations might find it difficult to ensure alignment across multiple regions, disciplines and management layers.

The purpose of the following case studies is to illustrate how the same ICC Principles can be applied proportionately in different organisational contexts. They demonstrate how competence management can be embedded in day-to-day practice without creating unnecessary bureaucracy, while still providing appropriate levels of assurance.

These examples are illustrative rather than prescriptive. They are intended to help organisations recognise elements of their own circumstances and consider how competence arrangements can be strengthened in a way that reflects their scale, complexity and risk profile.

Across each example, the Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA) structure is used to show how competence management can operate as a coherent and continual process.

Organisation Profile

A sole practitioner providing fire risk assessment and advisory services to low- to mid-rise residential buildings.

Risk and Context

- Direct impact on life safety
- Limited internal structure
- No employed staff
- Occasional use of specialist consultants

Typical Challenges

- Managing workload while maintaining quality
- Keeping up to date with evolving regulation
- Avoiding working beyond personal competence
- Limited peer challenge or internal review
- Balancing commercial pressure with professional judgement

PLAN

The practitioner defines services clearly within engagement letters, documents the types of buildings assessed, and specifies limitations of scope. A personal competence profile is maintained and aligned to relevant standards. Where specialist input is required, this is identified at the planning stage.

DO

The practitioner maintains a CPD log, reviews completed reports, seeks peer review for complex projects, and refers work outside competence to specialists. A simple electronic register of qualifications and training is maintained.

CHECK

Regulatory updates are reviewed quarterly. Templates and assessment criteria are updated when guidance changes. An annual self-review of completed assessments is undertaken.

ACT / REVIEW

An annual structured reflection is carried out to identify development needs and confirm the appropriateness of service scope.

Key Learning Points

- Clear boundaries are critical.
- Peer engagement strengthens assurance.
- Proportionate self-review can provide effective oversight at this scale.

Organisation Profile

A property management company with 12 staff managing residential blocks up to 18 metres.

Risk and Context

- Responsibility for resident safety
- Reliance on external contractors
- Growing portfolio

Typical Challenges

- Maintaining consistent standards as the portfolio expands
- Verifying contractor competence without excessive bureaucracy
- Ensuring staff keep pace with regulatory change
- Balancing commercial and safety priorities
- Limited internal audit capability

PLAN

Service scope is defined in management agreements. Role descriptions are developed for building managers, and competence requirements are documented. Contractor competence expectations are specified contractually.

DO

Staff qualifications and experience are verified. Structured induction is provided. A simple training matrix is maintained. Contractors' assurance of management of competence is reviewed before appointment. Monthly supervision meetings support monitoring.

CHECK

Competence criteria are reviewed when regulations change. An annual review of competence records is undertaken, including contractor documentation sampling.

ACT / REVIEW

The senior manager conducts an annual competence review, updating training priorities and identifying resource needs.

Key Learning Points

- Simple systems can provide effective assurance.
- Supply chain oversight is a key competence risk.
- Growth requires periodic reassessment of structure.

Organisation Profile

A regional contractor delivering refurbishment projects in higher-risk residential buildings.

Risk and Context

- Multi-disciplinary teams
- Significant life safety implications
- Complex supply chain
- Increased regulatory scrutiny

Typical Challenges

- Coordinating competence across multiple disciplines
- Maintaining consistency across projects
- Managing subcontractor capability
- Integrating new regulatory requirements
- Ensuring supervision remains effective during growth

PLAN

A documented competence framework is developed. Role competence profiles are aligned with regulatory requirements. Formal assessment procedures are established.

DO

Structured recruitment processes are implemented. Competence matrices are used across departments. CPD tracking systems operate. Supervision hierarchies are clearly defined. Supply chain competence management is verified in addition to through pre-qualification processes.

Monitoring includes technical review meetings and quality assurance inspections.

CHECK

A formal internal audit programme is implemented. Change management procedures are triggered by regulatory updates. Training effectiveness is reviewed.

ACT / REVIEW

Competence metrics are reviewed quarterly by senior management. Audit findings are reported to the board. Resource allocation decisions reflect competence priorities.

Key Learning Points

- Increased risk requires increased structure.
- Audit supports consistency.
- Leadership oversight reinforces accountability.

Organisation Profile

A national multi-disciplinary organisation delivering design, construction and building safety services.

Risk and Context

- Complex governance
- Multiple regions
- High regulatory scrutiny
- Diverse and layered supply chain

Typical Challenges

- Ensuring consistency across regions and business units
- Maintaining cultural alignment as scale increases
- Managing digital competence systems effectively
- Responding quickly to regulatory and legislative change
- Demonstrating assurance to regulators and clients

PLAN

An enterprise-wide competence framework is integrated into corporate governance. Role competence profiles are standardised and aligned with professional standards.

DO

A centralised competence management system is implemented. Digital tracking of qualifications and CPD is maintained. Defined reassessment intervals operate. Supply chain competence audits are conducted.

CHECK

Formal internal audits are aligned with ISO systems. Independent external review is undertaken where appropriate. Change management is overseen by a governance board.

ACT / REVIEW

Board-level review of competence performance is conducted annually. Strategic risk reviews incorporate competence considerations. Continual improvement programmes are embedded.

Key Learning Points

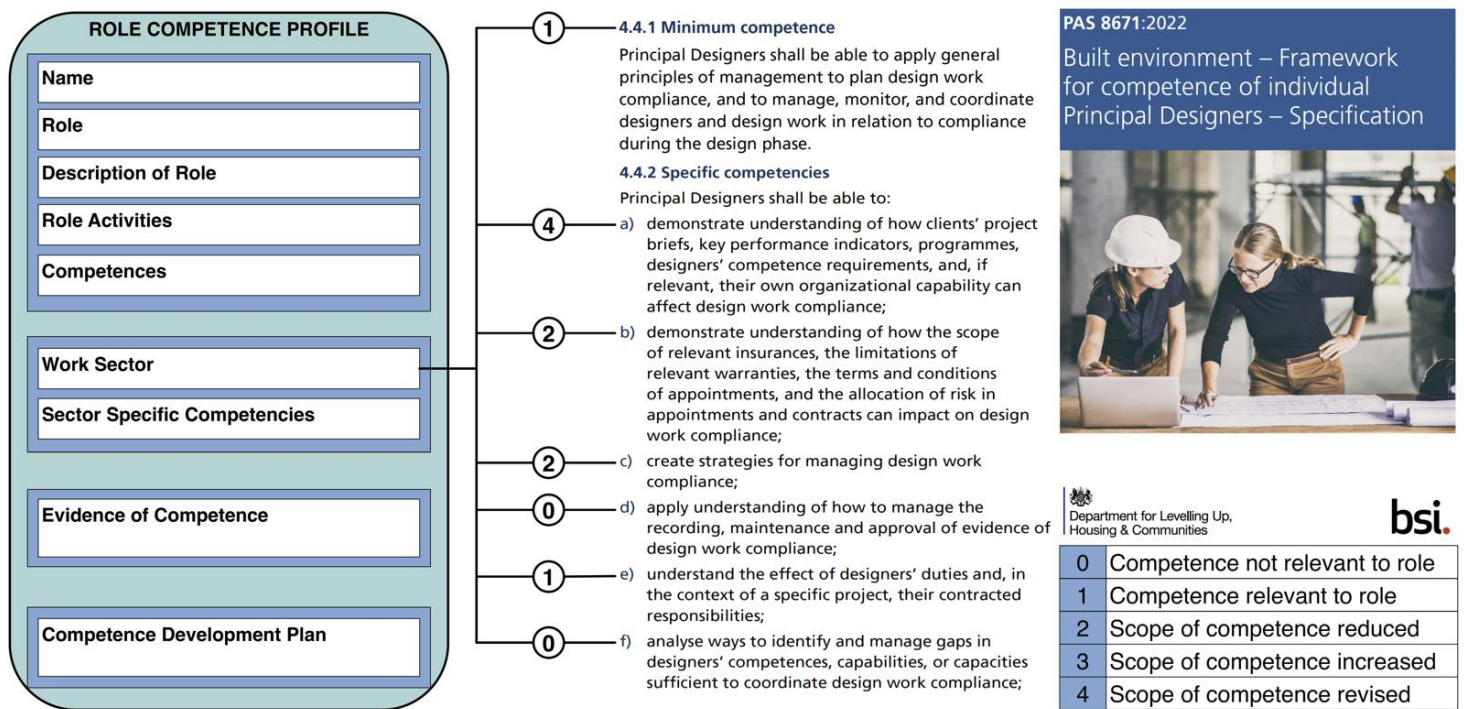
- Governance integration strengthens assurance.
- Digital systems support oversight but require effective management.
- Leadership culture remains critical despite structural complexity.

Appendix 3 Individual Competence Profile Template

Diagram 1 below looks at how the competence of an individual could be assessed following the 15 principles established by the ICC. When considering the role against the standard, the manager shall determine the relevance of the competence for the work activities in question e.g.: not relevant to the role (rating 0), relevant to the role (rating 1), whether the scope of the competence as written needs to be adjusted (i.e. the legislation that the person needs to understand and be able to comply with is more limited than described in the competence and therefore the competence scope needs to be reduced, the level of competence needs to be increased, or the competence as written does not capture the competence requirements for the role and needs to be re-written – ratings 2-4).

The example used in diagram 1, is an individual that is part of a team that delivers against the Principal Designer function. The work activities for their specific role do not require all of the competences as captured in the PAS 8671:2022. Following on from this, an individual competence profile can be drawn up as per examples 1 and 2 in the tables shown.

Diagram 1



Guidance for Example 1 – Trainee/junior Architectural Technologist (early career or those whose scope of competences are reduced – “rating 2”)

This example represents a technical support role that contributes to the Principal Designer function under CDM 2015 and the Building Safety Act (BSA)/ The Building Regulations etc. (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2023. It highlights how individuals in support positions can be competent within a defined scope without needing the full breadth of competencies listed in PAS 8671:2022.

Key guidance points

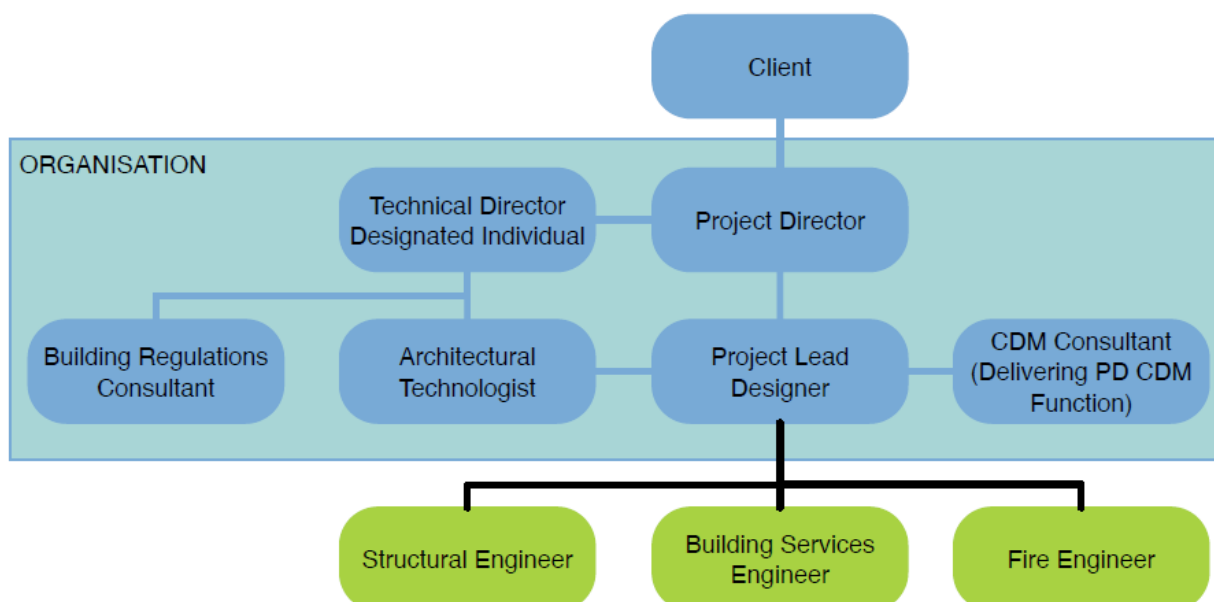
- The example shows how to tailor competence requirements to scope of work focusing on specific tasks (e.g. preparing drawings, identifying risks) rather than full Principal Designer duties.
- The “Rating 2” indicates that only parts of the PAS 8671 standard apply, reflecting a reduced scope or responsibility appropriate to the role.
- Behavioural competence (e.g. collaboration, seeking guidance, professional accountability) is key for developing professionals working under supervision.
- The Action Ref A1 identifies a development need, structured training to deepen understanding of design and coordination duties under the BSA.
- Evidence sources (e.g. training log, supervision records) should confirm the application of learning through real projects.
- This approach helps organisations show how competence is managed proportionately across a team, aligning to the ICC principles and the PDCA cycle in Section 2.

The table below is an example of the methodology applied. The ‘red’ shows where and what changes have been made to adapt the framework applied to the role.

When to use this approach

Use for individuals performing defined technical or support tasks within a function (e.g. Principal Designer team, Fire Safety team). It ensures competence is properly evidenced, contextualised, and scalable to the level of responsibility.

Context



Role Competence Profile (Example 1)

ROLE COMPETENCE PROFILE			
Name			
Role	Architectural technologist		
Role description	Providing advice and support to the lead designer on compliance with the building regulations		
Standard used	PAS 8671:2022	Manager	Aktar Islam
Role activities			
1	Advising on the suitability of technical routes to compliance		
2	Advising on evidence required to support the building regulation application		
3	Reviewing designs and the design and advising on compliance with the relevant requirements of the building regulations (including seeking advice from specialist building regulations advisor where necessary)		
Competencies			
1	Demonstrate behaviour in accordance with legal duties and the “behavioural competences” set out in BS 8670-1:2024, or any code of professional conduct aligned to BS 8670-1:2024.		
2	Apply the legislative and regulatory framework related to how designers and design work meets legal requirements.		
3	Apply general principles of management to plan design work compliance, and to manage, monitor, and coordinate designers and design work in relation to compliance during the design phase.		
4	Apply understand general principles of building design, general principles of construction, along with the “core criteria for building safety” set out in BS 8670-1:2024 sufficient to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) appraise designers’ evidence of design work compliance with the relevant requirements of the building regulations; b) manage the process for designers to achieve consensus that coordinated design work complies with relevant requirements; and c) appraise Principal Contractors’ comments affecting design work compliance. 		
5			

Work sector	Healthcare
Sector specific competencies	
1	Apply the healthcare design standards related to how designers and design work meet legal requirements.
2	Appraise designers’ evidence of design work compliance with Health Technical memorandum [HTM] and Health Building Notes [HBN]
3	

Evidence of Competence	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Competence development plan	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Assessor		Signature	
Date of last review		Date of next review	

Guidance for Example 2 – Property Manager (Level 3)

This example illustrates how to record and evaluate competence for a senior operational role responsible for managing safety across multiple buildings. It demonstrates how competence should reflect leadership, coordination, and assurance responsibilities rather than just technical delivery.

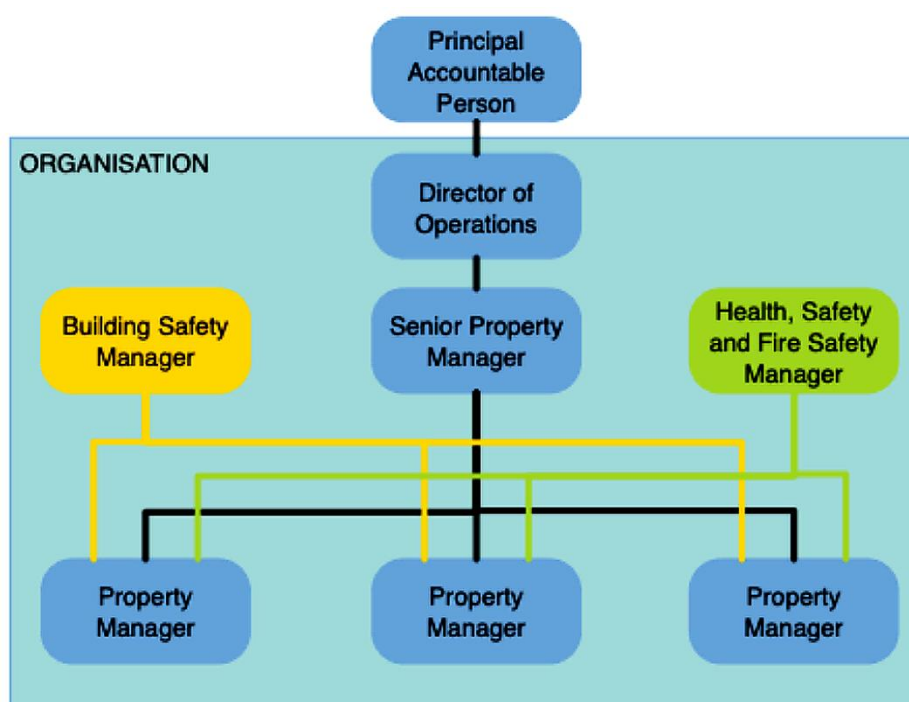
Key guidance points

- The example shows how to align a managerial or oversight role to relevant competence frameworks such as PAS 8673 and BS 8670-1.
- Evidence (e.g. training certificates, CPD logs, performance reviews) should be proportionate but verifiable, focusing on how the individual applies knowledge through leadership and decision-making.
- This format can be used to show compliance with Principles 5–8 of the ICC framework (determining, developing, and monitoring competence).

When to use this approach

Use for mid- to senior-level managers responsible for compliance assurance, risk management, or oversight of specialist teams. It's especially useful where the role includes leadership in safety culture and contractor management.

Context



Role Competence Profile (Example 2)

ROLE COMPETENCE PROFILE			
Name	Insert name		
Role	Property Manager		
Role description	Responsible for coordinating the day-to-day management across a residential property portfolio. The role includes overseeing risk assessments, contractor management, resident communication, statutory compliance, action tracking, record keeping and escalation of significant risks to clients, Responsible Persons, Accountable Persons or other dutyholders. The Property Manager is expected to recognise the limits of personal competence and obtain specialist advice where required.		
Standard used	PAS 8673	Manager	Line Manager
Role activities			
1	Manage health, safety, fire and building safety arrangements across a defined portfolio of residential buildings, including routine compliance monitoring and action tracking.		
2	Coordinate risk assessments, inspections, surveys and remedial actions, including FRA actions, fire doors, asbestos, legionella, emergency arrangements and planned maintenance.		
3	Procure, instruct and monitor competent contractors and consultants, communicate with residents, clients and dutyholders, and maintain suitable building safety records.		
Competencies			
1	Apply relevant legal and regulatory requirements for residential property management, health and safety, fire safety and building safety.		
2	Demonstrate professional behaviours, including accountability, integrity, communication, escalation and awareness of competence limits.		
3	Identify, assess and prioritise risks using proportionate, risk-based approaches and obtain specialist advice when matters fall outside personal competence.		
4	Manage, monitor and review control measures, action plans and compliance evidence, ensuring issues are allocated, tracked and closed out.		
5	Procure, appoint and oversee competent contractors and consultants, including reviewing evidence of competence, clarifying scope and challenging inadequate work.		

Work sector	Residential property management, including leasehold, rented, mixed-use and higher-risk residential buildings where applicable.		
Sector specific competencies			
1	Apply knowledge of managing agent, landlord/client, Responsible Person, Accountable Person and Principal Accountable Person roles, responsibilities and interfaces.		
2	Understand the practical application of the Building Safety Act, Fire Safety Order, Fire Safety Act, Fire Safety Regulations, CDM Regulations and related residential property requirements.		
3	Coordinate building-specific safety information, including FRA outputs, fire doors, compartmentation, smoke control, evacuation arrangements, resident engagement, mandatory occurrence reporting and golden thread records.		

Evidence of Competence			
1	Current CV, job description and record of relevant residential property management experience.		
2	Qualifications, training records and CPD covering health and safety, fire safety, building safety, asbestos, legionella, contractor management and resident engagement.		
3	Examples of action plans, compliance reports, risk assessment reviews, contractor instructions, resident communications or escalation records.		

4	Manager/assessor review, performance appraisal, audit outcomes, client feedback or case examples showing application of competence in practice.
5	Evidence of recognising limits of competence, including obtaining specialist advice, escalating concerns and challenging inadequate information.

Competence development plan	
1	Complete refresher training on current health, safety, fire and building safety duties relevant to residential property management.
2	Complete CPD on HRBs, safety case principles, resident engagement, mandatory occurrence reporting and golden thread information management.
3	Develop skill in procuring and reviewing specialist FRA, fire door, compartmentation, structural and building safety reports.
4	Review competence annually, or sooner following role change, regulatory change, audit findings, incidents or changes to the building portfolio.

Assessor	Line Manager	Signature	
Last review date	Insert date	Next review date	Insert date

Appendix 4 Legal and Regulatory Context

Competence management in the built environment operates within a broader legal and regulatory framework in England. The precise duties applicable to an organisation will depend on the services provided, the role undertaken and the nature of the buildings involved.

This appendix provides a high-level overview of key legislation and guidance relevant to competence in England. It is not exhaustive and does not replace legal advice.

Organisations should ensure they understand their specific statutory duties and seek professional advice where appropriate. While there are specific regulatory requirements in place where managing competence should be demonstrated, this guidance can be used across the built environment as best practice.

1. Building Safety Act 2022

The Building Safety Act 2022 introduced significant reforms to the regulation of higher-risk buildings in England. It established new dutyholder roles, strengthened regulatory oversight through the Building Safety Regulator, and reinforces requirements relating to competence, accountability and information management.

The Act emphasises that individuals and organisations undertaking work that can affect building safety must have the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours.

Further information:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/30/contents>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-safety-act-2022-overview>

2. Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 (HSWA) applies across Great Britain and provides the primary legal framework for workplace health and safety.

It places general duties on employers, employees and others to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of those affected by their activities. These duties include ensuring adequate information, instruction, training and supervision — all of which are directly linked to competence.

Further information:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1974/37>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/legislation/hswa.htm>

3. Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015) apply to construction projects.

The regulations place duties on clients, designers, principal designers, contractors and principal contractors. Dutyholders must ensure that individuals and organisations appointed to carry out work have the skills, knowledge, experience and organisational capability necessary for the role.

Further information:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/51/contents>

<https://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/>

4. Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005

The Fire Safety Order applies in England and Wales and places duties on the “Responsible Person” to take general fire precautions and carry out a suitable and sufficient fire risk assessment.

Those undertaking fire risk assessments or implementing fire safety measures should be competent.

Responsible Persons must ensure that any person engaged to assist them has sufficient training and experience or knowledge and other qualities to enable them to properly assist.

Further information:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1541/contents>

<https://www.gov.uk/workplace-fire-safety-your-responsibilities>

5. Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022 introduce additional requirements for responsible persons in high-rise residential buildings in England. These include duties relating to information sharing, record keeping and cooperation with fire and rescue services.

Effective compliance depends on access to competent individuals and appropriate organisational systems.

Further information:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2022/547/contents>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-england-regulations-2022>

6. Building Regulations (England & Wales)

The Building Regulations 2010 (England) (as amended) provide statutory requirements for the design and construction of buildings in England (and Wales has similar provisions coming into force on 1st July 2026) to secure the health, safety, welfare, convenience, access and security of persons in and around buildings as well as for the energy efficiency etc of buildings in use.

The Building Safety Act 2022 amended the Building Act 1984 to allow the strengthening of the regulatory framework, particularly in relation to higher-risk buildings.

The Building Regulations places specific duties and responsibilities on persons who carry out design and building work for all types of buildings, including building work to higher-risk buildings; where building control approval through the Building Safety Regulator in England and Local Authorities in Wales is required and there exists enhanced regulatory oversight during design, construction and occupation.

In the respective parts of the English and Welsh regulations ‘dutyholders and competence’ are controlled and require that any person carrying out design or building work must have the appropriate skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours necessary for the work they undertake. Organisations must have the organisational capability to carry out the work to comply with the Regulations.

The regulations reinforce the expectation that competence is both an individual and organisational responsibility.

Further information:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/2214/contents>

7. Defective Premises Act 1972

The Defective Premises Act 1972, with its extended s4B limitation periods under the Building Safety Act 2022, places a duty on those involved in the provision of a dwelling, including designers, developers, contractors and others undertaking relevant work, to ensure that the work is carried out in a professional or workmanlike manner, using proper materials, so that the dwelling is fit for habitation when completed. In a building safety context, it is important because it provides a route for claims where defects in design or construction make homes unsafe or unfit. The Building Safety Act 2022 significantly strengthened its relevance by extending limitation periods: generally 30 years retrospectively for historic claims and 15 years prospectively for future claims.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1972/35/contents>

8. Professional Standards and Industry Frameworks

In addition to statutory requirements, competence expectations might arise from:

- ICC Guidance;
- HSE Approved Codes of Practice and Guidance (e.g. L153 CDM 2015);
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Article 50 Guidance;
- British Standards Competence frameworks;
- Competence frameworks published by the Industry Competence Steering Group;
- Industry competence frameworks;
- Professional body membership and registration standards;
- Competent person scheme registration standards;
- Third-party certification competence schemes;
- UKAS-accredited competence schemes (e.g. BAFE SP205 Life Safety Fire Risk Assessment Scheme); and
- Client contractual requirements.

Organisations should consider how these expectations interact with statutory duties and internal governance arrangements.

7.1 Examples of Professional Standards and Industry Frameworks

The following publications provide recognised guidance and standards to support organisations in applying the ICC Principles for Competence Management. Not every document will be relevant to every organisation; select those that match your activities, size and risk profile.

7.2 Core Frameworks

- **ICC 15 Principles for Competence Management** – the primary framework for establishing and evidencing organisational and individual competence across the built environment.

- **UKAS TPS 69** – accreditation criteria for organisations seeking formal recognition of their competence arrangements.

7.3 British Standards & PAS Specifications

- **BS 8670-1:2024** Competence frameworks for building safety Part 1: Core Criteria – Code of practice. (Formerly known as BSI Flex 8670)
- **PAS 8671:2022** Built environment – Framework for competence of individual Principal Designers – Specification.
- **PAS 8672:2022** – Built environment – Framework for competence of individual Principal Contractors - Specification.
- **PAS 8673:2022** – Built environment – Competence requirements for the management of safety in residential buildings - Specification.
- **BS 8674:2025** – Built environment – Framework for competence of individual fire risk assessors. Code of practice.

7.4 Industry Competence Steering Group (ICSG)

The ICSG is developing a series of competence frameworks aligned with BS 8670-1. These frameworks should, where relevant, inform the development of individual competence profiles and form the basis for assessing individual competence. The BSI Competence Hub publishes finalised relevant competence frameworks.

7.5 Health & Safety Executive (HSE) Guidance

- **HSE – Managing for Health and Safety (HSG65)** – outlines 15 key principles for effective health and safety management.
- **HSE – Managing competence for safety-related systems** – guidance on ensuring competence when managing and maintaining safety-critical systems.

7.6 Quality & Occupational Health & Safety Management

- **ISO 9001** – international standard for quality management.
- **ISO 45001** – international standard for occupational health and safety management.
- **BS 99001** - Quality Management Systems Standard for the Built Environment

Important Note

Legislation and guidance can be amended over time. Organisations should ensure they consult current versions and remain aware of emerging regulatory developments.

Competence management arrangements should be reviewed periodically to ensure continued alignment with applicable legal and regulatory requirements in England.

Appendix 5 Key Definitions

This appendix provides definitions of key terms used in this guidance. Where statutory definitions apply, the legal wording takes precedence.

For the purposes of this guidance, the following definitions apply:

Accountable Person (AP)

Under the Building Safety Act 2022, a person or legal entity with a legal estate in possession in, or repairing obligation for, any part of the common parts of a higher-risk building. Accountable person is defined in Section 72 of the Building Safety Act 2022.

Principal Accountable Person is defined in Section 73 of the Building Safety Act 2022.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/30/section/72/enacted>

Assessor

An individual appointed by the organisation to evaluate whether people performing work under its control meet the organisation's defined competence criteria. This role relates to assessing workplace competence, capability, and behaviours in the context of organisational duties. In this context, this role is distinct from assessing qualifications/vocational training.

Audit

A structured and periodic review of the competence management system to assess effectiveness and consistency.

Behaviours

The observable things that an individual does or does not do

BSR

The regulator established under the Building Safety Act 2022 in England.

Building Lifecycle

The stages through which a building passes, from concept and design through construction, refurbishment, occupation, maintenance and finally decommissioning or demolition. Competence should be maintained and demonstrated across all these stages.

Competence (Individual)

The application of skills, knowledge, experience and behaviour [SKEB] to achieve a defined outcome. This reflects the definition in the Building Safety Act 2022 and the Building Regulations 2010, which expects individuals to deliver work in accordance with all relevant requirements, or to perform the functions for which they are responsible, having the necessary SKEB to that end.

Competence Criteria

Defined requirements describing the competence needed for a specific role.

Competence Management Process (or Framework)

A proportionate and documented way of planning, supporting, monitoring and improving competence—covering employees, managers, contractors and others in the supply chain so that services are delivered safely and in line with legal and industry requirements.

Competence Management System

The structured arrangements used to define, assess, monitor and improve competence.

Continual Improvement

Ongoing enhancement of competence arrangements in response to learning and change.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The activities undertaken by an individual to maintain and develop competence, including formal and informal learning, self-assessment, obtaining feedback and identifying areas for improvement.

Dutyholder

A person or organisation with legal responsibilities for building safety under the Building Safety Act 2022 or other relevant legislation (for example, client, principal designer, principal contractor, accountable person).

Function

A broad area of activity or responsibility within an organisation that contributes to achieving its overall objectives. Functions describe what the organisation does, for example, design, construction, project management, maintenance, fire safety, or facilities management. Each function may involve multiple roles, each requiring specific levels of competence to deliver the outcomes safely and effectively.

Higher-Risk Building (HRB)

A higher-risk building is defined in relation to Part 4 of the Building Safety Act 2022 is defined in Section 65 of the Act and the Higher-Risk Buildings (Descriptions and Supplementary Provisions) Regulations 2023

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/30/section/65/enacted>

For Part 3 – design and construction - a higher-risk building is defined in section 31 of the Building Safety Act 2022, which amends the Building Act 1984 in relation to the Building Regulations 2010 in Section 120D of the Act and the Higher-Risk Buildings (Descriptions and Supplementary Provisions) Regulations 2023

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1984/55/section/120D>

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2023/9780348242812/contents>

Higher-risk work

Higher-risk work refers to tasks that could significantly affect life safety.

Individual Competence

The competence of a person in a defined role.

Integrated Management System (IMS)

A management framework combining multiple organisational systems (for example quality, health and safety).

Knowledge

Technical understanding required to perform a role competently.

Leadership Review / Management Review

Periodic evaluation by senior leadership of competence arrangements.

Monitoring

Routine oversight of competence through supervision and review of work.

Organisational Capability

For the purposes of this Part 2A of the Building Regulations 2010, “organisational capability” means appropriate management policies, procedures, systems and resources to ensure:

- (a) individuals under the control of the organisation who are carrying out any building work or any design work comply with:
 - (i) regulation 11F(1) and (2) (competence: general requirement),
 - (ii) in case of the principal designer, regulations 11F(1) and (2) and 11G(1);
 - (iii) in case of the principal contractor, regulations 11F(1) and (2) and 11H(1);
- (b) individuals under the control of the organisation who are in training to develop the necessary skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours are appropriately supervised.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2214/regulation/11Q>

Peer Review

An independent review of decisions, designs or assessments by another suitably competent professional, often used to provide assurance where work is safety-critical or deemed higher-risk during risk profiling.

Plan–Do–Check–Act (PDCA)

A continual improvement framework used to structure competence management: define arrangements (Plan), implement and monitor (Do), assure effectiveness (Check), and review and improve (Act).

Principal Accountable Person (PAP)

Under the Building Safety Act 2022, the person or legal entity responsible for the structure and exterior of a higher-risk building where more than one Accountable Person exists.

Principal Accountable Person is defined in Section 73 of the Building Safety Act 2022.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2022/30/section/73/enacted>

Proportionality

Applying competence principles in a manner appropriate to organisational size, complexity and risk.

Responsible Person (RP)

Under fire safety legislation, the person or legal entity with control of premises and responsibility for fire safety compliance.

Responsible Person is defined in Article 3 of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005.

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2005/1541/article/3>

Role

The specific set of duties, responsibilities, and expected outcomes assigned to an individual or team within a function. Roles describe how the work is carried out and define the scope of authority, accountability, and competence required to perform the tasks effectively. Each role should have an associated Role Competence Profile that sets out the necessary SKEB for safe and compliant performance.

Role Competence Profile

A role competence profile is a clear, structured description of the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours that is required to be able to perform a role effectively and to the appropriate standards.

Safety-Critical Roles

Roles where a failure in competence could have serious consequences for the safety of building users, workers or the public. Examples include roles connected to fire safety, structural integrity, building design and building services management.

Scope of Services

The defined activities and responsibilities undertaken by an organisation.

SKEB Model

A model for defining and assessing competence by considering the combined impact of Skills, Knowledge, Experience and Behaviours.

Skills

The ability to perform an activity or task consistently with a specific intended outcome.

Supervision

Oversight provided to ensure work is carried out competently.

Supply Chain

All external parties engaged by an organisation to deliver services, products or works contributing to the design, construction, operation or maintenance of a building. The competence of supply-chain partners is a key element of organisational capability.

Supply Chain Competence

Verification and oversight of competence within contractors and consultants engaged by an organisation.

Abbreviations (Alphabetical Order)

AP – Accountable Person

BSR – Building Safety Regulator

CDM – Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015

CPD – Continuing Professional Development

HRB – Higher-Risk Building

HSWA – Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

ICC – Industry Competence Committee

IMS – Integrated Management System

ISO – International Organization for Standardization

PAP – Principal Accountable Person

PDCA – Plan–Do–Check–Act

QA – Quality Assurance

RP – Responsible Person

TPS 69 – UKAS Technical Publication 69
