

# The Scottish Legal Aid Board

## Competency Guidance for Applicants

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We use a competency approach to recruitment i.e. at all stages of the recruitment process you will be assessed against the competencies we consider necessary to do the job. This approach starts from the applications stage so it is important that you complete your application as fully, but concisely, as possible to demonstrate how you meet the requirements of the post. It is therefore important that you study the selection criteria carefully before you complete the application.

We will invite for interview those candidates who from their application seem best suited to the appointment. You will be given further details about the selection process with your letter of invitation.

The information in this guidance document will provide you with a more in depth description of the competencies applicable to the grade of job you are applying for, what competencies are and guidance on competency based interviews. This information should assist you when completing Step 5 of the Application Form and to prepare if you are selected and invited to attend an interview.

Please note that the Job Description / Person Specification will state which of the competencies are relevant to the post you are applying for and not all the competencies detailed below will be relevant for every post.

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### What is a competency?

*‘Behaviour which is driven by underlying characteristics such as skills, traits, motives, bodies of knowledge, and awareness of self-image and social roles’*

*‘The things that people do that make them successful in their job and which differentiate the good performer from less effective colleagues’.*

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### Competencies Relevant to roles in Grades 4-6

The Scottish Legal Aid Board (SLAB) recruitment process is based on the Scottish Government’s Skills for Success Framework. Each Grade has specified key competencies, skills and essential and desirable criteria required to perform in the post.

## Grades 4, 5 & 6

### Self awareness

- Responsible for personal behaviour and is accountable for own actions, health and wellbeing
- Aware of personal strengths and takes pride and responsibility for performance at work and is responsive to constructive feedback
- Adaptable and embraces new ways of doing things, contributing ideas and energy to continuous improvement
- Takes control of personal and professional development, actively managing own Personal Learning Plan as well as supporting the development of others when needed

### People Management

- Prioritises and agrees objectives aligned with the Operational Plan to engage staff, maximise adaptability and build capacity to deliver
- Credible with staff, creating conditions to build confident effective teams that empower, value and motivate people, managing workload and equalities
- Raises performance using constructive challenge, feedback and coaching skills, seeking support and advice from HR professionals when needed
- Aware of impact on others and creates a positive environment for innovation, learning, health and wellbeing

### Communications and engagement

- Engages and is credible with stake-holders and is connected to a range of internal and external networks
- Communicates clear & creative ideas that meet the needs of a range of audiences, ensuring objectives & outcomes are achieved
- Produces concise, clear, well structured written work using SLAB guidance
- Considers and communicates the impact of decisions on wider policies and programmes

### Improving Performance

- Demonstrates ongoing use of relevant performance improvement tools and techniques including skills development
- Uses Programme and Project Management Principles effectively and proportionately
- Adapts quickly to fit skills and resources to changing circumstances and expectations
- Applies risk management principles to decision making and controls opportunities and threats to achieving objectives

### Analysis and Use of evidence

- Use evidence to assess measure and evaluate projects and policies, considering the impact on other policies and government outcomes
- Engages with analytical specialists at appropriate stages of policy and programme development
- Interrogates analytical and management information to draw out key messages and findings to support decisions
- Organises and collates robust information from a variety of sources in decision making, sharing knowledge and information across the wider system

### **Financial Management**

- Uses accurate and relevant financial data to create objectives and targets relevant to budget responsibilities
- Takes responsibility for the monitoring and controlling of expenditure
- Understands & applies the principles of Budgeting, Financial Management & Resource Accounting outlined in the Scottish Public Finance Manual
- Maintains regular contact with relevant finance staff, and knows when to seek advice from audit, risk, and procurement and finance professionals

Competencies for Grades 1-3 may also be relevant

### **Team work**

- Knows and understands the contribution the team makes to SLAB's performance, and Operational Plans
- Can be relied on to deliver agreed personal objectives and is aware of how their work connects with the work of others
- Builds networks and maintains good working relationships with colleagues, valuing their diversity and contribution and is open to different points of view
- Contributes views, ideas and experience to improve the team's performance, offering and/or seeking practical help when necessary

### **Customer Service**

- Knows and understands internal and external customers & how their role fits into SLAB and the wider public sector
- Understands customer needs and expectations and responds in a helpful and professional way
- Builds positive working relationships with customers and works to agreed time scales and standards of quality
- Takes responsibility to review and improve customer service, listening to and acting on feedback

### **Information Management**

- Uses a range of corporate systems and is aware of security and organisational procedures
  - Accesses, manages, stores, retrieves information through effective use of SLAB Information Systems
  - Shares and presents information of all kinds in an appropriate format accurately and on time
  - Contributes to the continuous improvement of Management Information Systems
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## Competency Based Interview Guidance

The competency based interview format encourages you to talk very specifically about what you have done and not how you would act in hypothetical situations, what you know about something or for very general information about yourself.

The questions are designed to tell us more about specific job related abilities and you will be asked to give specific examples of your past experience. We need to know in each case the situation or task you were involved in, the action you took and what the end result was.

Do not worry if it takes time to think up a relevant example, this is to be expected. It is more important that the example is relevant and that it addresses the question. Please try to give examples of your recent work experiences. Make sure your answer shows what you did and try not to use statements that don't show your contribution e.g. "We did this".

**In preparation, you may wish to think of a situation and ask yourself the following questions:**

- What did **you** do?
- What was **your** contribution?
- How did **you** tackle the problem?
- What was the outcome?
- Did **you** achieve your objective?
- How did **you** know you achieved your objective?
- What have **you** learned from the experience?

The interviewers will make notes to make sure they record all the relevant information. You will be given the opportunity to ask any questions you have.

In addition to the competency based questions some roles may require specific technical questions to be asked at interview.

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