Competences for administrative and clerical roles

1. Word processing and filing

<table>
<tr><td colspan="2">1.1. Produce new or update ' documents' from provided materials
(based on written copy, audio tape or verbal instructions)
including work on: memos, letters, reports, promotional materials, address lists, labels, statistics, financial statements</td></tr>
<tr><td>To do this you need to be able to:

1. Uncertainties in text are identified and rectified

2. Format is appropriate to content and recipient

3. Enclosures are attached

4. Produce work within agreed deadlines

5. Report reasons promptly, where work is not achievable within deadline

6. Collated and distribute copies as directed

7. File documents using the bureau system and index in a way that ensures that they are easily accessible to other bureau staff</td>
<td>Before doing this you need to:

a) Know 'house style' on layout and terminology

b) Understand confidentiality issues

c) Understand procedures for checking and signing

d) Understand grammar, and punctuation

e) Understand how to use copier

f) Know word processing programme used in bureau:
▪ text
▪ layout
▪ directions

g) Understand procedures for backup

h) Know bureau procedures and systems for filing

i) Have awareness of health and safety issues working with VDUs</td></tr>
</table>

2. Receive and send telephone calls, faxes, mail and electronic mail

2.1. Receive telephone calls on ex-directory line

To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Record request / reason for call	*a) Listen to the caller*
2. Take messages	*b) Question the caller*
3. Transfer calls	*c) Summarise*
4. Take action and call back where appropriate	*d) Take notes*
5. Take messages from answer machine	

2.2. Receive and send fax/E-mail

To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Pass on to appropriate person	*a) Know people's movements*
2. Contact sender if appropriate	*b) Know how fax works*
3. Check whether fax/E-mail has been received where appropriate	*c) Know how E-mail program works*

2.3. Make telephone calls	
To do this you need to be able to: 1. Make calls on instructions or with own authority	**Before doing this you need to:** *a) Use telephone with clarity*

2.4. Receive and send mail	
To do this you need to be able to: 1. Process incoming mail accurately and pass on to correct person 2. Follow procedures for mail which has unclear destination 3. Prepare outgoing mail for dispatching within agreed deadlines 4. Keep post book up to date 5. Post mail including recorded deliveries	Before doing this you need to: *a) Know distribution systems* *b) Know procedures for restocking stamps/franking machine*

3. Case monitoring required for general civil contract (formerly legal aid contract)

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">3.1. Maintain case records</th></tr>
<tr><td>To do this you need to be able to:
1. record client’s details, e.g. type of case, hours spent, proof of eligibility
2. Complete the relevant electronic pro-forma
3. Maintain confidentiality
4. Monitor and follow up any key dates for each case e.g. receipt of proof of eligibility, reminders, disbursements</td><td>Before doing this you need to:
a) Interpret written entries made by the Case Worker
b) Have basic IT skills -= use of mouse and keyboard
c) Understand why records need to be kept
d) Know the bureau’s confidentiality policy
e) Understand the basic process for each area covered by the caseworker
f) Be able to write letters</td></tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">3.2. Ensure that LSC & CLS monitoring requirements are met</th></tr>
<tr><td>To do this you need to be able to:
1. Monitor and record Case Worker time spent on each individual client’s case
2. Monitor and record total time spent on clients’ cases by the Case Worker
3. Monitor the amount of funding available for clients
4. Identify any over/ under achievement of ‘targets’
5. Produce reports and collate statistics as required by the Legal Services Commission, Case Worker or Manager</td><td>Before doing this you need to:
a) Know how to work with the range of computer programs used in the bureau, e.g.:
▪ Excel
▪ Casetrack
▪ Access
▪ Internet
▪ Bureau database
b) Display high numeracy/statistical ability
c) Understand and be able to interpret LSC and CLS requirements
d) Identify the information that LSC, manager and Case Worker will require and the frequency it will be needed
e) Show attention to detail, but understand the need for a pragmatic approach</td></tr>
</table>

4. Producing information from spread sheets and databases

4.1. Use existing databases and spreadsheets

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Enter data into the computer 2. Check accuracy of details entered 3. Produce reports and charts upon request	*a) Have basic IT skills – use of mouse and keyboard* *b) Work accurately – pay attention to detail* *c) Know how to work with a range of computer programs to produce reports or charts, e.g.:* ▪ *Excel* ▪ *Casetrack* ▪ *Access* ▪ *Internet* ▪ *Bureau database*

4.2. Adapt or redesign existing databases and spreadsheets

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Design databases or spreadsheets to meet bureau-specific requests 2. Re-format existing databases or spreadsheets	*a) Have basic IT skills – use of mouse and keyboard* *b) Work accurately – pay attention to detail* *c) Understand requests for information and be able to translate these requests into the relevant format* *d) Know how to design databases and spreadsheets* *e) Know how to adapt the range of programs used in the bureau*

5. Maintain & develop administrative systems

5.1. Analyse and evaluate existing system(s)	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Identify specific requirements of the system(s) for the Manager, Case Workers or external organisations such as CLS 2. Assess the current system(s) for effectiveness in meeting these requirements 3. Identify where the system may need to be changed or a new system developed in order to meet requirement of relevant parties	*a) Understand how the system operates* *b) Know which areas need to be covered by the administrative system(s), e.g. welfare benefits debt etc* *c) Know what requirements all relevant parties have of the system(s)* *d) Have a logical, structured approach*

5.2. Develop new system(s)	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Visualise the new system, i.e. anticipate how it will look, what it will need to do and how it will operate 2. Design the new working system, ensuring that it has the capacity and capability to meet the requirements of relevant parties 3. Develop the component parts of the new system, e.g. new proforma, instructions for use, additional documentation etc. 4. Implement new system, ensuring that all parts function effectively	*a) Know what requirements all relevant parties have of the system(s)* *b) Have organisational skills* *c) Be pragmatic- looking for practical and useable solutions* *d) Have basic and additional IT skills, e.g. design of forms, use of databases etc.* *e) Know how to plan* *f) Understand how to evaluate the success of the system*

6. Stock control of leaflets & materials

6.1. Monitor stocks of leaflets, consumables, small items of equipment	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Do periodic check of levels 2. Do periodic check/for out of date stocks 3. Respond to queries/requests 4. Maintain and update inventory of leaflets and other materials 5. Produce reports when required	*a) Keep up to date list of range of stocks* *b) Be aware of amount of turnover* *c) Know bureau procedures including record keeping* *d) Know agreed periods of checking* *e) Be aware of any budget restrictions*

6.2. Order stocks	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Identify shortages against current and anticipated needs 2. Place orders 3. Keep dated records of orders 4. Research suppliers, negotiate discounts and obtain quotations where necessary	*a) Know the procedures for ordering leaflets for main sources including lead in times* *b) Understand the limits of authority for ordering paid items* *c) Procedures for emergency orders*

6.3. Process stocks	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Take deliveries, checking against orders 2. Maintain storage system 3. Ensure stock is stored safely 4. Replenish leaflets by routine checks on request	*a) Know procedures for disposing of out of date leaflets* *b) Understand any Health & Safety implications of storage*

6.4. Maintain, develop and improve systems	
To do this you need to be able to	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Identify opportunities/ideas for improving system 2. Take appropriate action to improve system	*a) Maintain current records of names and addresses of suppliers*

6.5. Maintain equipment	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Monitor servicing arrangements 2. Deal with breakdowns	*a) Knowledge of service agreements*

7. Updating information

7.1. Update the Citizens Advice paper information system & reference books	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Check contents of the monthly updating pack 2. Amend and replace circulars and reference books 3. Seek clarification on any areas of uncertainty 4. Destroy out of date material 5. Keep record of contents lists and action list 6. Produce updated material within agreed deadlines	*a) Understand the structure of the system including how the index works, how the different parts fit together including reference books* *b) Understand how to find individual circulars and paragraphs* *c) Understand the structure of the bureau local information system* *d) Understand procedures for removing sections of the information for updating* *e) Have an attention to detail*

7.2. Update the Citizens Advice information system (CD ROM)	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Load new version on to appropriate computers	*a) Understand the steps to take in overwriting existing version* *b) Understand the bureau policy on storage of previous CDs*

7.3. Update other information e.g. training packs, Research and campaigns	
To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Update information as agreed 2. Produce updated material with agreed deadline 3. Deal with out of date material	*a) Know which aspects of bureau information needs updating* *b) Know how to do updates* *c) Know what to do with out of date material*

8. Helping to arrange meetings, training sessions and other events

8.1. Liaise with manager/tutor to identify requirements	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Make notes of requirements	*a) Understand access issues* *b) Awareness of limitations of room size* *c) Understanding of Health & Safety issues such as evacuation and fire*

8.2. Prepare materials including equipment	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Copy agendas, handouts etc	*a) Be able to use the copier*

8.3. Organise equipment	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Order equipment through venue or outside source 2. Arrange equipment to be transported to venue 3. Arrange refreshments including agreeing times and location	*a) Know where to obtain equipment* *b) Understand the limits of authority for ordering paid items*

8.4. Accommodate special needs	
To do this you need to be able to:	*Before doing this you need to:*
1. Make special arrangements for people with disabilities e.g. access 2. Make necessary security arrangements 3. Arrange transport	*a) Identify any special requirements*

8.5. Organise room(s)	
To do this you need to be able to: 1. Book venue 2. Specify layout of room including furniture	**Before doing this you need to:** *a) Know the availability and capacity of local venues* *b) Know about ease of access*

8.6. Organise invitations	
To do this you need to be able to: 1. Ensure that participants are invited with enough notice 2. Send joining instructions including: ▪ start and end times ▪ what to bring ▪ directions 3. Ensure that papers are circulated	**Before doing this you need to:** *a) Know bureau practice on papers for meetings*

8.7. Prepare venue and provide reception	
To do this you need to be able to: 1. Set out room and check refreshments, papers and practical arrangements 2. Welcome people 3. Direct people to room and refreshments 4. Compile attendance records where appropriate	**Before doing this you need to:** *a) Know normal bureau practice on room layout and reception*

8.8. Clear up after the meeting	
To do this you need to be able to: 1. See people from venue 2. Clear up papers, cups etc 3. Check security	**Before doing this you need to:** *a) Know policy and expectation of venue*

9. Taking notes/ minutes at formal and informal meetings
Bureau Trustee Boards (Management Committees), staff meetings etc

9.1. Take notes / minutes	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Record clearly and accurately any decisions taken 2. Identify attendance where appropriate (e.g. at formal meetings) 3. Work with chair of meeting including asking for clarification of any ambiguity	*a) Understand structure/terms of reference of committee/ group* *b) Take notes* *c) Be able to produce concise summary of relevant discussion* *d) Know the required format (eg verbatim or descriptive minutes or decisions and action list)* *e) Be able to work with varying chairing styles* *f) Understand that notes for Management Committee meetings form a legal record until notes are transcribed and agreed*

9.2. Transcribe notes/minutes	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Set out so decisions and actions are clearly apparent 2. Where appropriate have draft minutes checked 3. Work produced within agreed time limits	*a) Know required format or house style including:* ▪ *Numbering procedure* ▪ *How to highlight decisions and action* ▪ *Amount of detail to include* ▪ *whether attendance list is needed*

9.3. Circulate notes/ minutes	
To do this you need to be able to: 1. Maintain circulation list where appropriate 2. Circulate minutes in accordance with bureau policy within agreed deadlines 3. File copy according to bureau procedures	**Before doing this you need to:** *a) Know who to circulate to* *b) Know deadlines* *c) Know where to file copy of minutes/notes* *d) Understand when need for chair to sign at next meeting*

10. Contact with general civil contracts (formerly legal aid contracts) clients

10.1 Establish contact with clients	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Welcome client to bureau 2. Ensure that confidentiality is assured 3. Treat with respect and non judgmentally 4. Acknowledge children and/or any special needs and take appropriate action 5. Try to reassure and calm client if they are agitated	*a) Have a welcoming manner* *b) Give client full attention* *c) Understand difficulties that clients may have in using the bureau* *d) Be able to use sensitive and appropriate language* *e) Communicate effectively*

10.2. Give and receive information	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Take messages from clients and from the Case Worker 2. Communicate time-scales to clients 3. Explain letters and forms in a way that is understandable to the client 4. Relay messages to clients and Case Workers 5. Accept documentation from the client 6. Communicate any urgent dates to the client	*a) Be an attentive listener* *b) Question effectively* *c) Explain in a way that the client is able to understand* *d) Take notes* *e) Understand the significance of any relevant time-scales/deadlines*

10.3. Carry out a preliminary identification of the client's enquiry

To do this you need to be able to	Before doing this you need to:
1. Listen to the client and ask questions 2. Read through any letters, forms or other documentation that they may have brought with them and identify important facts about the client's situations 3. Assess and react to the urgency of the situation 4. Identify whether the client's problem should be referred to the Case Worker or to another adviser 5. Refer the client to the Case Worker or to another adviser 6. Refer for immediate action or make appointment as appropriate	*a) Know your own limitations and boundaries of responsibility* *b) Understand how the client may be feeling* *c) Have a tactful and patient approach* *d) Listen actively* *e) Question effectively and sensitively* *f) Summarise* *g) Take notes* *h) Understand the basic processes for whichever area(s) your case Worker deals with* *i) Understand the significance of any relevant time-scales/deadlines* *j) Recognise any key forms and documentation and understand their significance* *k) Know how to access and use the Case Worker's diary system*

11. Administering bureau finances

11.1. Operate financial systems

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Calculate totals and balances correctly	*a) Be able to add up figures correctly, using whatever technology is available*
2. Follow procedures for handling cash, security and confidentiality	*b) Ability to work accurately*
3. Identify discrepancies and refer to the appropriate person where necessary	*c) Know bureau procedures for handling cash, security and confidentiality*
4. Use whatever technology is available eg calculators, computer	*d) Know who to refer to if discrepancies are identified*
5. Operate within the limits of own responsibility / authority	*e) Be able to use calculators and agreed computer programs where available*
6. Operate within data protection laws	*f) Know limitations of own responsibility / authority*
7. Extract information from records for manager and management committee	*g) Understand how data protection law applies to Bureau financial procedures*
8. Liaise with treasurer / bank	*h) Be able to extract information from records when asked to do so*

11.2. Record and bank payments coming in to the bureau

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Monies received (cash and cheques) are checked against any relevant documents 2. Monies received are correctly recorded, in accordance with bureau procedures 3. Receipts are issued where necessary 4. Paying-in documents are correctly prepared	*a) Know bureau procedures for recording and paying in cash and cheques*

11.3. Make and record payments going out of the bureau

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Payments are made and recorded in accordance with bureau procedures	*a) Know bureau procedures for making payments by cash, cheque or bank transfers*
2. Payments are properly authorised	*b) Know who is authorised to make payments*
3. Cheques are correctly prepared and signed by the designated person(s)	*c) Know how to prepare cheques*
4. Standing orders, direct debits etc are correctly documented	*d) Know who can sign cheques and how many signatures are required*
	e) Know how to set up standing orders, direct debits etc

11.4. Keep petty cash records

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Operate a system for petty cash	*a) Know how an imprest system works*
2. Divide payments between the correct expenditure heads	*b) Know how to divide payments between expenditure heads*
3. Record cash withdrawals from the cash account	*c) Know how to record cash withdrawals*
4. Check that petty cash claims are properly authorised, within specified limits, and supported by receipts	*d) Know bureau procedures for authorising petty cash claims, limits on payments and acceptable evidence*
5. Reconcile the balance of cash in hand with the petty cash records at appropriate intervals	*e) Be able to reconcile cash in hand and records*
6. Transfer totals of petty cash expenditure to the cash book under the correct expenditure heads, in accordance with bureau procedures	*f) Know bureau procedure for transferring petty cash totals to cash book*

11.5. Account for transactions

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Prepare bank reconciliation accurately and on time	*a) Be able to reconcile bank statements with bureau records statements*
2. Ensure that transactions are supported by properly authorised documents	*b) Know how to check paying-in-slips, cheque stubs etc against records, and how to file them*
3. Record transactions in the cash book under correct expenditure/income heads	*c) Know how to analyse transactions to correct headings*
4. Record transfers of money between different accounts	*d) Know how to record transfers between accounts*
5. Cross-check totals and balances	*e) Know how to cross check records*

11.6. Operate and maintain a payroll accounting system

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
1. Ensure that gross earnings are properly authorised and correctly calculated	*a) Be able to prepare payroll for employees paid weekly, monthly or for other periods*
2. Keep relevant details of employees up to date	*b) Be able to check the calculation of gross earning*
3. Transfer gross earning to the payroll correctly	*c) Know the procedure for keeping up to date information on pay scales, tax codes and agreed deductions*
4. Calculate deductions within legal requirements and bureau procedures	*d) Be able to calculate tax, national insurance and other deductions*
5. Transfer a summary and analysis of the payroll to the cash book or other appropriate records	*e) Understand the principles of PAYE and NI*
	f) Know bureau procedures for holiday pay and pension deductions
	g) Know legal requirements for keeping documents and records

11.7. Make authorised payments to employees	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Prepare pay slips correctly and check them against other records	*a) Be able to prepare pay slips*
2. Process payments on time payments by cash, cheque etc	*b) Be able to make and record bank transfers, depending on bureau procedure*
3. Explain payroll information to employees and deal with enquiries from employees	*c) Be able to explain payroll information and deal with enquiries courteously and confidentially*
4. Issue annual tax records promptly (e.g. P60) and other documentation (e.g. P45)	*d) Be able to prepare tax documentation where appropriate*
5. Liaise with tax office	
6. Operate computerised pay roll if installed	

11.8. Make authorised payments, claims and returns to Inland Revenue, Customs and Excise (VAT) and DSS	
To do this you need to be able to:	**Before doing this you need to:**
1. Prepare payments and documents correctly and submit them on time	*a) Know the requirements of the different agencies*
2. Check deduction records with payroll records	*b) Know the time limits for payments and returns*
3. Deal with enquiries from the Inland Revenue, Customs and Excise and DSS	*c) Be able to prepare and submit payments and documents*
	d) Be able to deal with enquiries promptly, courteously and effectively