

Competences for social policy roles

1. Generic/ Crosscutting

1.1 Apply Citizens Advice principles to social policy work	
<p>To do this you need to be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involve service users 2. Ensure that equality and diversity are promoted in social policy work 	<p>Before doing this you need to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Be committed to the empowerment of clients through social policy work b. Be aware of Citizens Advice equality and diversity policies c. Understand how evidence from the experience of clients is used to promote change in policy and practice

1.2 Keep up to date with existing and potential current issues	
<p>To do this you need to be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Monitor Citizens Advice's and other publications and newsletters 2. Monitor trends in enquiries to identify potential local issues 3. Network where required with other people within CAB service involved in social policy work including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • national (England and Wales) social policy staff • regional social policy staff • other bureaux in the locality • regional and county groups 4. Communicate with people outside the CAB service involved in social policy work including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • other groups and organisations in the locality • key local agencies 	<p>Before doing this you need to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Be able to use CABlink, BMIS email and the Internet b. Be aware of internal and external communication channels c. Be aware of current national and regional social policy issues d. Be aware of future changes in legislation or regulation where a social policy response may be appropriate e. Be aware of equalities and human rights legislation and its relevance to effective social policy work f. Understand of the role of Citizens Advice regional and central social policy staff g. Know which other organisations are involved in social policy or similar work h. Be able to communicate both orally and in writing with other staff and volunteers, organisations and bureaux i. Be aware of the roles and responsibilities of other staff in the bureau

Competences for social policy roles

2. Co-ordination

2.1 Plan, develop and evaluate social policy work strategically

To do this you need to be able to:

1. Advise managers on bureau's compliance with social policy requirements of the Citizens Advice membership scheme and any relevant external partnerships or stakeholders.
2. Review priorities and effectiveness of existing social policy work in the bureau and communicate these to the appropriate manager
3. Contribute to drafting a social policy plan, identifying priorities for campaigns and development
4. Monitor the implementation of the social policy plan and report on progress

Before doing this you need to:

- a. Have an overview of the level and standard of social policy work expected by the bureau and the Citizens Advice membership Scheme
- b. Know how to devise and implement a work plan and evaluate progress

2.2 Maintain profile of social policy in the bureau

To do this you need to be able to:

1. Report on social policy issues at workers' meetings
2. Contribute to bureau annual report
3. Maintain a newsletter or bulletin or social policy notice-board
4. Promote discussion with advisers about issues in social policy bulletin and evidence papers
5. Make a verbal or written presentation to the bureau management team or trustee board on aspects of bureau, regional and national social policy work
6. Involve advisers in social policy co-ordination and other social policy activities
7. Ensure that advisers and other staff understand the impact of social policy work, e.g. by reporting on successful campaigns

Before doing this you need to:

- a. Have a detailed understanding of the purpose and practice of social policy work
- b. Be aware that advisers need to have a commitment to righting injustice
- c. Be able to do clear and concise verbal presentations
- d. Be able to write clear and concise reports
- e. Have a working knowledge of MS Word or bureau word processing program
- f. Have an overview of how to encourage and support advisers involved in social policy activities
- g. Be aware of how social policy relates to the roles of all paid staff and volunteers, including trustees

Competences for social policy roles

2.3 Ensure bureau communicates on social policy work within the Citizens Advice service	
To do this you need to be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Co-ordinate the bureau's involvement in national, regional or local social policy activity2. Ensure that the bureau engages with national and regional social policy conferences3. Ensure the outcomes of bureau work including engagement in campaigns are reported to Citizens Advice	Before doing this you need to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Know the frequency and method of reporting on social policy workb. Be aware of the structures and mechanisms for social policy work in the Citizens Advice service at national, regional and local levelc. Be aware of other lines of communication, e.g. LARFs, newsletters, e-mail updates,d. Be aware of events and booking procedures etc

2.4 Co-ordinate a range of in-bureau training	
To do this you need to be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Liaise with the bureau training supervisor2. Explain and discuss social policy with new trainees, answering questions resulting from any course attended and training packs completed3. Ensure that social policy is integrated into all induction and training as appropriate4. Run small group sessions for new and existing staff on how social policy works in the bureau, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• identifying social policy issues• how to submit effective bureau evidence	Before doing this you need to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Have a detailed understanding of where and how social policy is included in relation to training for advisers, gateway assessors, receptionistsb. Know how to set up a one-to-one coaching sessionc. Know how to run a small group training sessiond. Know about resources for training including the CABlink training sitee. Know how to create and submit effective bureau evidence

Competences for social policy roles

3 Evidence gathering

3.1 Develop and maintain effective systems for bureau evidence	
To do this you need to be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensure that systems for completion and submission of bureau evidence are in place and working effectively2. Evaluate and submit completed bureau evidence3. Retrieve information from completed bureau evidence4. Review systems and propose improvements	Before doing this you need to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Understand the operation of Citizens Advice's evidence systems as they affect the bureaub. Have a detailed understanding of the electronic (and paper) systems for social policy that are in place in the bureauc. Be aware of other bureau systems that impact on the social policy systemd. Have methodical approach to system maintenance

3.2 Ensure effective involvement of bureau staff (paid and volunteer) in gathering evidence	
To do this you need to be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Help identify the potential for evidence in a client's enquiry or case2. Ensure advisers, Gateway assessors etc are aware of current issues and priorities for evidence collection3. Check completed bureau evidence and correct where necessary4. Rewrite, or help rewrite bureau evidence where necessary5. Provide feedback to advisers on level and quality of evidence6. Identify and inform appropriate bureau staff of an adviser's training needs7. Monitor overall production of evidence, identify any gaps and recommend appropriate action	Before doing this you need to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Have a good working knowledge of CASE/Petrab. Have a detailed understanding of what happens to bureau evidence and how it is usedc. Have a detailed understanding of what is good practice in submitting bureau evidenced. Be able to effectively submit bureau evidencee. Be able to give effective feedback to advisersf. Be able to help advisers write bureau evidence and learn from the experienceg. Know limits of authority

3.3 Provide evidence to support social policy action and campaigns	
To do this you need to be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Identify evidence needed to support national or local social policy action2. Help advisers and assessors to spot relevant cases and clients3. Carry out client/waiting room surveys	Before doing this you need to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Be aware of campaigns, calls for action etcb. Know how to carry out a survey using materials provided by Citizens Advicec. Identify relevant social policy evidence from a larger body of informationd. Understand the role of advisers and assessors

Competences for social policy roles

4 Taking social policy action

4.1 Initiate and plan social policy analysis and research

To do this you need to be able to:	Before doing this you need to:
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Write a research proposal and present to colleagues/managers/trustees2. Collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative evidence from a range of sources including surveys3. Produce reports, briefings, consultation responses, call for evidence	<ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Have a detailed understanding of common research methodology including survey designb. Know how to design and carry out a surveyc. Know how to use CASE/Petra to extract management informationd. Have an understanding of report writing, including presentation of statistical datae. Understand the need for accurate proof-readingf. Understand the importance of good quality presentation

Competences for social policy roles

4.2 Engage with external partners and agencies on social policy issues

To do this you need to be able to:

1. Develop effective on-going relations with appropriate authorities, agencies, organisations and individuals at local and national levels, including councillors, MPs, Assembly Members, MEPs and local and national statutory and non-statutory organisations
2. Network with other local groups and agencies involved in social policy work
3. Produce regular social reports and briefings for a range of stakeholders
4. Ensure that the bureau's social policy and campaigning work is reflected in its website and print publications
5. Respond to regional and national consultations in collaboration with Citizens Advice and other bureaux
6. Respond to consultations undertaken by local agencies such as local authorities and health bodies
7. Working with managers, specialist advisers etc, use the bureau's external links to promote social policy objectives
8. Contribute to other organisations' social policy work in line with bureau's objectives and priorities

Before doing this you need to:

- a. Know how to work with elected representatives
- b. Have a good knowledge of local organisations etc, and of the bureau's lines of communication with them
- c. Have networking skills
- d. Have the ability to present a case to a range of audiences
- e. Have a basic understanding of writing for the web
- f. Be aware of the consultation procedures of central and local government and other bodies
- g. Have an understanding of how other organisations carry out social policy work
- h. Know limits of authority and understand bureau clearance procedures

4.3 Work with the media

To do this you need to be able to:

1. Draft a press release and draw up a circulation list for distribution
2. Take part in a radio, TV or press interview
3. Advise managers and trustees on media issues, including responding to bad publicity
4. Enable clients to engage with the media

Before doing this you need to:

- a. Be able to write effective reports and press releases
- b. Know local media contacts
- c. Have a detailed understanding of media work, including developing relationships, responding to approaches and taking initiatives such as press releases
- d. Understand the principles and procedures for client involvement in media work
- e. Know limits of authority and understand bureau clearance procedures

Competences for social policy roles

4.4 Take part in national or regional Citizens Advice social policy action

To do this you need to be able to:

1. Inform managers and colleagues about national or regional campaigns, surveys etc
2. Use national campaign materials etc locally
3. Adapt standard materials, template letters etc for local use
4. Liaise with national and regional colleagues and report back on action

Before doing this you need to:

- a. Be aware of Citizens Advice campaigns and understand the role of bureaux in them
- b. Be able to relate national or regional issues and materials to a local context
- c. Be aware of the roles of national and regional colleagues and of the importance of maintaining communication with them
- d. Be aware of the importance of maintaining consistency with national policy objectives
- e. Know limits of authority and understand bureau clearance procedures

Competences for social policy roles

5 Campaigning

5.1 Initiate and carry out local action for change, including campaigns

To do this you need to be able to:

1. Plan local action for change, identifying objectives, target group, methods, timescale and management arrangements
2. Implement a local campaign
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of the project and report to managers, and Citizens Advice (e.g. via LARFs)

Before doing this you need to:

- a. Know boundaries of own authority
- b. Have an overview of the working constraints with the bureau and the resources available
- c. Have a detailed understanding of the range of methods for taking up social policy issues, including low profile approaches
- d. Have negotiating skills
- e. Have a detailed understanding of how to plan and manage campaigns
- f. Know how to use statistical data to present a case or argument
- g. Know how to design and produce posters, petitions, lobbying letters
- h. Have a detailed understanding how to evaluate campaigns