A Competency Framework

for the

Education and Training Inspectorate

COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

1. Why do we need a Competency Framework?

1.1 Inspectors are all professionals and display extensive expertise over a wide area of the education system. They bring considerable knowledge from their previous employment but also need to develop the professional skills, aptitudes, attitudes and behaviours, which are essential in order to do the work of an inspector, and fulfil the mission statement of the organisation:

'to promote improvement in the interests of all learners'.

1.2 On a personal level all inspectors learn a great deal from others by asking questions, or working as part of a team. Up to now, there has been no benchmark or process to help an inspector evaluate his/her professional skills, aptitude, attitudes against criteria which reflect the breadth of an inspector's work.

1.3 The purpose of this document is to set indicators which reflect:

- the agreed vision and mission statements;
- the agreed values and associated behaviours;
- the protocols identified in 'The Charter for Inspection' and 'The Common Framework for Inspection;
- the service standards; and
- the competences outlined in the 'Professional Skills for Government' agenda.

1.3 In recent years there has also been a shift in emphasis within inspection towards self-evaluation, evaluating performance, identifying strengths and areas for improvement and implementing action to deal with the areas for improvement.

1.4 This level of self-evaluation applies, not only to organisations, but also to individuals within organisations. The Inspectorate has added to the self-evaluation agenda by publishing documents such as 'Together Towards Improvement', 'Improving Quality – Raising Standards' and 'The Reflective Teacher'. The organisation has undertaken the evaluation process associated with the 'Charter Mark –Excellence Award', which facilitated the review of processes, procedures and service standards and the overall performance of the organisation.

1.5 The document is **not intended** to be used as part of the Northern Ireland Civil Service annual appraisal, but will enable individuals at every level in the organisation to build on strengths and improve performance. The outcomes of any self-evaluation should inform the content of an individual's Personal Development Plan.

2. How is the framework made up?

2.1 The framework is divided into 6 Competences:

1. Professional Expertise
2. Analytical Skills
3. Communication
4. Interpersonal Effectiveness
5. Personal Effectiveness
6. Leadership and Management.

2.2 Each of these competences is divided into Key Features which reflect the competence. Each Key Feature has associated Behaviour Indicators which characterise the overall competence. The complete competency framework is outlined in the following table:

Competency Framework

Competence	Key Features	Behaviour Indicators
Professional Expertise	• Professional knowledge • Professional development	• has appropriate, sufficient and relevant knowledge and expertise in the key aspects of learning and teaching, the curriculum, education policy and organisational management issues; • internalises and/or records observable information from a variety of sources in order to make an accurate evaluation; • is able to analyse situations and solve problems quickly and to offer sound courses of action; • uses ICT effectively and appropriately to assist in the operation of his/her work ; • is aware of his/her staff development needs and works to have these addressed through regular and relevant training and development.
Analytical Skills	• Collate • Analyse • Interpret • Evaluate • Identify actions	• gathers sufficient and appropriate evidence efficiently; • analyses information, including data, accurately; • interprets information to formulate sound hypotheses; • identifies and pursues further sources of relevant evidence and test assertions; • selects evidence relevant to the criteria on which judgements are to be based; • reaches unequivocal and coherent judgements which are fully consistent with the evidence; • makes accurate and evaluative records that can withstand scrutiny and challenge, and which substantiate evaluations; • weighs up conflicting evidence and reaches balanced and objective evaluations.

Communication	• Oral • written	• provides policy advice which is succinct, unambiguous and supported appropriately with evidence and reasoned argument; • communicates effectively with people both orally and in writing in a way which seeks to promote improvement; • presents information in a manner which empowers and enables; • negotiates effectively in order to gain co-operation, considering sensitively the effect on others of evaluations; • persuades and influences others to take on board inspection findings to promote improvement; • uses appropriate questioning strategies to gain the information needed; • listens calmly, with empathy, and responds using appropriate approaches; • produces written reports and associated documentation that are fit for purpose within the agreed timescale and match the varying needs of inspection audience.
Interpersonal effectiveness	• teamwork • influence • pre-empting • resolving conflict • consultation	• deals with others in a sensitive manner; • is able to engender respect in others and is respectful towards others; • has the ability to give feedback in a constructive and sensitive manner; • establishes good rapport with others; • is honest, open and approachable in dealing with others; • is an active, effective and reliable team member/leader, contributing to team evaluations; • works effectively alongside external organisations/agencies; • works in a manner with all others which utilises persuasion rather than control; • co-operates with colleagues and learns/gains support from others; • works effectively as a team leader/member; • acts as a good role model; • creates and maintains a positive, professional and productive climate in which team members are able to operate collaboratively and openly; • is aware of and informed about how issues impinge on the wider educational environment.

Personal Effectiveness	• problem solving • decision making • commitment to values • attitude • organisational skills	• behaves professionally, adapting flexibly to the role assigned; • demonstrates through their work the organisation's values of Truth, Example, Dignity and Service; • is comfortable and assured in a variety of situations; • deals calmly, assertively and appropriately with challenging behaviour; • deals objectively with any criticism of their role/work and does not take it personally; • is resistant to inappropriate pressure from others and at all times maintains professional independence; • plans and organises work to make the best use of the time available; • is willing to take on new tasks and get involved in other work outside of core duties where other work permits; • reflects on the quality of own work in a critical manner and makes adjustments as appropriate; • conveys enthusiasm and commitment for their work; • is thorough and accurate and completes work to a high standard within an agreed timescale; • has a genuine desire to promote improvement in the interests of all learners; • is able to manage available time in a manner which balances effectively both professional and personal interests.
Leadership and Management	• vision • commitment • strategic planning • empowering others	• builds and supports a team to achieve its goals consistently to a high standard; • has a clear understanding of the goals to be achieved; • establishes and communicates clear expectations; • plans and organises the work of others efficiently, making best use of time and other available resources; • recognises and makes best use of the strengths and expertise of team members, giving honest and constructive feedback; • contributes to the professional development of colleagues; • takes responsibility for the quality of own work and that of the team; • edits the work of others to agreed protocols and standards • acknowledges and values the contribution of others;

		• leads a team to achieve consensus where opinions differ; • when appropriate, manages a budget effectively and efficiently.

2.3 As already indicated, the framework encompasses the values, protocols and standards of the organisation. The links between the values, competences and behaviour indicators are outlined in the diagram at Annex 1. As will be seen from the diagram, they are all interlinked and incorporated within the four values of truth, dignity, service and example.

3. How Might the Document be Used?

3.1 The 'Competency Framework' will help all in the organisation to quality assure the work undertaken, both individually and collectively. In addition the framework exemplifies the characteristics of good practice which:

- promote consistency within and across teams;
- identify strengths and areas for improvement, for individuals and teams;
- provide a basis for discussion; and
- promote professional dialogue.

3.2 The document can be used to promote and support:

- Personal Development
- Organisational Development
- Staff development

Personal Development

The document may be used to:

- encourage colleagues to reflect on their own practice;
- promote consistency in the outworking of the organisational values;
- form an integral part of induction for new colleagues;
- identify personal and professional development needs and consequently inform staff and personal development.

Organisational Development

The document may be used to:

- assist with the recruitment of inspectors by matching and evaluating the applicants' skills and ability against the relevant competences;
- promote consistency in the ways of working to reflect published processes and protocols for the organisation;
- support a process of critical self-evaluation and facilitate benchmarking of the organisation's performance;
- promote core values/professional skills /competences;
- provide guidance for teams to enhance the effectiveness of teamwork;
- improve the quality /performance of the organisation through identifying and supporting personal development needs.

Staff Development

The document may be used to:

- perform a training needs analysis to identify organisational and personal staff development requirements;
- provide information for Personal Development Plans (PDPs);
- improve an individual's ability to perform his /her responsibilities more effectively;
- inform centrally programmed staff development.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The mission statement of the Inspectorate is:

'to promote improvement in the interests of all learners'.

4.2 In order to accomplish this mission statement it is important that everyone evaluates individual performance, recognising strengths and acting on the areas for improvement to promote an efficient and effective organisation.

4.3 The development of an effective self-evaluation process is promoted by the organisation in the range of published documents identified in the introduction. It is essential, therefore, that as an organisation, both collectively and individually, we undertake the same processes of self-evaluation leading to improvement which we promote for others.

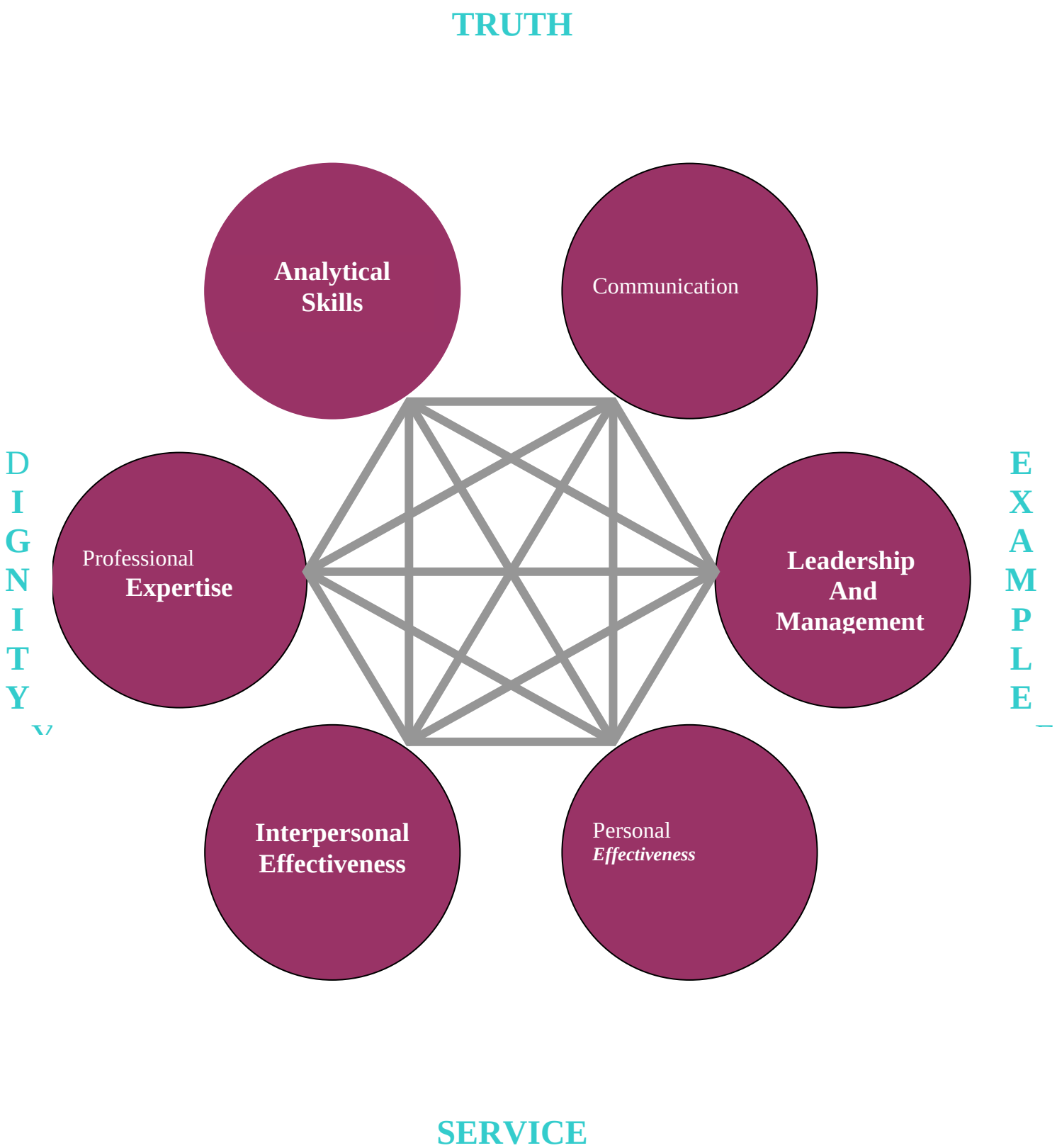
4.4 The ultimate aim of this document is to help everyone within the organisation:

- to do the job better;
- to illustrate best practice;
- provide a framework for roles and responsibilities.

4.5 It is anticipated that everyone will be able to use the outlined Competences, Key Features and Behaviour Indicators illustrated in this framework to evaluate his/ her own performance in the interests of further improvement and participate effectively in team development sessions.

4.6 The document will be reviewed and updated as required to meet the needs of the 'Professional Skills for Government Agenda' and any development of 'National Occupational Standards for Inspection'.

APPENDIX 1


TRUTH
Analytical Skills
Communication
DIGNITY
Professional Expertise
Leadership And Management
EXAMPLE
Interpersonal Effectiveness
Personal Effectiveness
SERVICE