

Genetics in Clinical Practice for Non-Genetics Healthcare Staff Competence Guidance

This information has been written by Skills for Health. It explains the structure and terminology used in Skills for Health Competences.

Competences

Each competence is designed to address a discrete area of function and responsibility which a person working in a healthcare role may be asked to undertake.

Each competence contains the following sections which are explained in more detail below:

- Summary
- Links
- Performance criteria
- Scope
- Knowledge and understanding

Competence Summary ('about this competence')

The competence summary describes the functions and responsibilities covered by the competence, and gives the specific focus of the competence. It will also detail what is specifically not covered where this is appropriate and where clarification is needed, for example, where a competence is only applicable for adults and there is a separate competence for children. The summary may also detail where the competence can be carried out and indicate for whom it is suitable.

Links

The front page of each competence contains details of the relationships between the competence and the Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) and gives an **indication only** of the level at which it may be applied.

Scope

Because competences are about functions and responsibilities, rather than specific tasks, they can apply to a range of different contexts. Scope statements are intended to be illustrative rather than comprehensive, and set out those which a competent person might be able to address. For example, the Performance Criteria within a competence may refer to performing a particular function in relation to *individuals*. The Scope statement for this term might then show that *individuals* can fall into several types ie adults, children, older people and people with communication differences; and that those *individuals* may be conscious or unconscious.

Performance Criteria

The Performance Criteria describe what someone has to do to meet best practice expectations in carrying out the aspect of work being described. For someone to be competent, their work must consistently match up to all the Performance Criteria.

Performance Criteria are numbered for ease of reference. However, please note that this numbering does not imply any priority order. A competent person needs to produce work that matches the standard set down by the full set of Performance Criteria. Performance Criteria do not all need to be performed every time a function is performed, as this is not always necessary or appropriate. However, they must all be achieved over a period of time for someone to say they are competent.

Some terms used in the Performance Criteria refer to different contexts in which the responsibility may be carried out at work. These are shown in bold type and the different contexts detailed in the Scope section of the competence.

Knowledge and Understanding

All practice needs to be underpinned by a certain amount of Knowledge and Understanding regarding any underlying principles, policies and practices, and any particular functions and responsibilities being addressed by the competence. The Knowledge and Understanding section of the competence identifies what requirements underpin the ability to successfully carry out the actions described by the Performance Criteria. As with the Performance Criteria, the Knowledge and Understanding statements are numbered for ease of reference but again this does not imply any form of priority order. A competent person will draw on the entire body of Knowledge and Understanding in carrying out their work, although not all of this will necessarily be required every time the competence is performed in practice.

Each statement will be preceded by the depth at which the knowledge should be applied. The following points explain the depth criteria.

- **Basic awareness of....**Use when the criteria demand only a very limited and generalised understanding that something exists but an individual would not need to know any details.
- **Factual awareness of....**Use when the criteria call for a knowledge that is detailed on a factual level, but does not involve any more than a superficial understanding of any principles or theories.
- **Working knowledge of....**Use when the criteria call for the application of factual knowledge in a manner that takes account of widely understood technical principles and implications within the field of practice.
- **In-depth knowledge of....**Use when the criteria demand a broad and detailed understanding of the theoretical underpinning of an area of practice, including conflicting theories and constructs.
- **Critical knowledge of....**Use when the criteria call for the ability to evaluate and devise approaches to situations that depend on the critical application of theories and conceptual constructs within the area of practice.