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# **Local Government Staff Commission for Northern Ireland**

## **HUMAN RESOURCE STANDARDS**

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## **Approach to Standards Development (Launched September 2005)**

- **Based on best practice**
- **Based on existing quality standards**
- **Simple and accessible**
- **Continuous improvement model**
- **Driven by user group**
- **Means to measure HR performance and impact of initiatives**



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## Broad Principles

- **Assessment and validation not inspection**
- **Self assessment and third party assessment**
- **Outcome confidential to organisation**
- **Voluntary assessment**
- **Direct and add value to organisation and LGSC work**
- **Evolving standards and assessment**



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# **Contributors**

- **16 Councils**
- **Northern Ireland Housing Executive**
- **Local Government Services Management Board**
- **Association for Public Service Excellence**
- **Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development**
- **Department of Finance and Personnel**
- **Equality Commission**
- **Labour Relations Agency**
- **Northern Ireland Joint Council**
- **Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance**
- **Public Service Reform Unit**
- **LG Staff Commission Members and Staff**



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# Framework

- **16 Indicators in 4 Sections**
  - Overarching
  - Employee Relations
  - Equality
  - Learning and Development
- **4 Levels of Assessment - Each Indicator**
  - Establish
  - Strengthen
  - Strategic Integration
  - Outcomes



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# **Indicators - Overarching**

- 1. Corporate aims and culture**
- 2. Internal communications**
- 3. Performance management**
- 4. HR unit / capacity**



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# **Indicators – Employee Relations**

**5. Absence management**

**6. Implementation of policies and procedures**

**7. Information, consultation and negotiation**

**8. Organisation reviews**

**9. Pay, benefits and conditions of service**



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# **Indicators - Equality of Opportunity**

**10. Commitment to equality**

**11. Equal working environment**

**12. Recruitment and selection**

**13. Equality of access to human resources  
services**



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## **Indicators – Learning and Development**

- 14. Developing strategies and plans for learning and development**
- 15. Implementing learning and development**
- 16. Evaluating the impact of learning and development**



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## **Support Materials**

- **Interview guidance**
- **Sample questions for different staff**
- **Assessment report – examples**
- **Template for follow up workshop to Assessment Report**
- **Detailed workbook for all indicators and levels**
- **Model answers to workbook questions**



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## **Workbook / Model Answers**

- **Each Indicator and Level**
  - **‘Assessed by’**
  - **Self assessment questions**
  - **Model documentary evidence**
  - **Model interview evidence**
  - **Improvement plan needed?**
  - **Example of indicator improvement plan**



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# Assessment Process

- **Self assessment**
- **Request assessment from LGSC**
- **Assessment by LGSC Policy and Professional Officers (with support if required)**
- **Assemble documents (workbook model answers)**
- **Organise interviews**
- **Assessment**
- **Report and follow up**



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## **Interviews**

- **Elected Members**
- **Chief Executive and another Senior Manager**
- **Trade Unions**
- **Managers and Supervisors Group Interview**
- **Employee Group Interviews, e.g.,**
  - **Headquarters staff**
  - **Operational services staff**
  - **Leisure services staff**



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## **External Assessments**

- **Armagh City and District Council (twice)**
- **Belfast City Council**
- **Moyle District Council**
- **Newry and Mourne District Council**
- **Newtownabbey Borough Council**
- **Northern Ireland Housing Executive**



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## **Report Contents**

- **Methodology**
- **Key Issues Identified**
- **Key Improvement Suggestions**
- **Each Indicator**
  - **Level achieved**
  - **Summary of evidence**
  - **Improvement plan (next slide)**



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# **Improvement Plan Format**

- **Objective(s)**
- **Actions / initiatives**
- **People responsible / resources needed**
- **Reporting arrangements and timescales**



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## **Benefits**

- **External validation**
- **Improvement plan**
- **Process of self assessment and preparation**
- **Evidence based case for resources / improvements / plans**
- **Ability to measure impact of initiatives**
- **Raises awareness of HR in organisation**



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# Problems

- **Work needed to prepare**
- **Other issues / problems may be raised in interviews**
- **Inviting negative criticism**
- **Time between introducing an initiative and measuring the outcomes**



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## More Information

- Standards Framework in conference pack
- Limited number of hard copies of Standards – full set of materials
- All can be downloaded - LGSC website  
<http://www.lgsc.org.uk>  
Publications (drop down menu – HR Standards)