



Briefing 16/38 September 2016

SWITCH Competence Assessment Tool

To: All Chief Executives, Main Contacts and APSE Contacts in Scotland

For information only to England, Northern Ireland and Wales

Key Issues:

The purpose of this briefing is to advise our members of the development of the SWITCH Competence Assessment Tool for managers, supervisors and team leaders in waste and resource management to assess teams against a range of competences and skills relevant to their job roles. This briefing covers:

- A brief overview of SWITCH Forum
- An overview of the Competence Framework
- An explanation of how to use the Competence Assessment Tool

A free copy of the Competence Assessment Tool can be obtained through the Zero Waste Scotland website: <http://www.zerowastescotland.org.uk/content/switch-competence-assessment-tool-0>

1.0 Introduction to SWITCH Forum

The SWITCH Forum (Scottish Waste Industry Training Competence, Health & Safety) is a free-to-join, multi-partnership forum of organisations within the resource management industry. Its members include local authorities and the following organisations:

- Zero Waste Scotland
- Chartered Institution of Wastes Management (CIWM)
- Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA)
- Scottish Government
- Private waste management companies and advisory bodies

APSE is an ambassador of the SWITCH Forum. A full overview of the SWITCH Forum can be found in [APSE Briefing 16-02](#).

2.0 SWITCH Competence Assessment Tool

The SWITCH Competence Assessment Tool is available for use by managers, supervisors and team leaders to assess their team members against the competences relevant to their job roles outlined below. The tool is informed by SWITCH's Competence Framework, which was developed in consultation with the resource management industry.

For the individual, the framework provides clarity as to what is expected from them in their job role, ensures the equal treatment of employees with the same job roles and can be used to support their development of competence.

For the employer, this allows the competence of their staff to be measured in an easily comparable format and can be used to identify training needs and highlight highly performing employees who may be suitable for job progression. The tool's Team Dashboard tab in Microsoft Excel allows all team members competence to be compared in one place.

It is important to note that consultation with staff and/or trade unions is likely to be required prior to implementing this Framework.

The Framework

The Framework is split into 3 levels and 20 different competences outlined below. Since the framework applies to different job roles (MRF, HWRC, collection, driving, manual street and machine), not every competency applies to every role.

Framework levels	
1	Has very little autonomy and works at a basic operative level, carries out duties as instructed by the supervisor
2	Has the skills and knowledge to carry out work unsupervised and could be leading a small team of others, maintaining productivity and resolving problems as they arise. They will usually report to the manager
3	Has responsibility for controlling and administering teams or a group of staff. Plans and directs the work of a group of individuals, monitoring their work, providing feedback and taking corrective action when necessary

Framework Competences			
1	Compliance with waste legislation	11	Mechanically handling waste
2	Compliance with emergency procedures	12	Manual street cleansing
3	Compliance with environmental legislation	13	Loading waste transport vehicles
4	Maintaining a healthy and safe environment	14	Transportation of waste
5	Processing received waste	15	Operation of plant and machinery
6	Working with other people	16	Controlling vehicle movement
7	Manual handling / Object handling	17	Reporting and recording information
8	Providing customer service	18	Supervision of operations
9	Working at height	19	Mentoring and coaching
10	Manual collection of waste	20	Risk assessment

The Questionnaire

The user guide recommends that the questionnaire should (if possible) be provided to each employee (as either a printed or blank electronic copy) to rate themselves against each relevant competency using the rating system below (1, 2, 3 or n/a):

Competence ratings	
1	I have very little knowledge or experience of this and would need some guidance or further training to achieve it
2	I have enough skill and/or knowledge to do this confidently on a regular basis without any support
3	I am very confident I can do this and feel I have developed such a high level of knowledge and / or experience that I could help others do this also
N/A	Competence not required for my job role

After the employee has completed this, they should meet with their Line Manager to review and discuss the self-assessed ratings and identify any potential training needs.

3.0 More information on SWITCH Forum

You can find more information on the SWITCH Forum at their website [here](#). For more information on the Competence Assessment Tool, click on the links below.

- [SWITCH Embedding Competency Handbook](#)
- [SWITCH Competence Assessment Tool User Guide](#)
- [Request a copy of the SWITCH Competence Assessment Tool](#)

4.0 APSE Comment

APSE welcomes the release of the SWITCH Competence Assessment Tool and the contribution it will make to improving competency in the workplace. APSE recommends that local authorities consider adopting the Assessment Tool as part of their commitment to the continuous improvement of staff and to enable them to identify individuals suitable for future progression.

APSE is represented on the SWITCH Executive Steering Group through our Scottish Waste & Recycling Secretary, Andy Malcolm of Dundee City Council and will continue to ensure our membership are updated on all SWITCH developments through our Scottish Waste & Recycling advisory group. For more information on our Scottish Waste & Recycling advisory group please contact the APSE Scotland office on 01698 459 051 or email Lmelville@apse.org.uk.

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