



Commissioning and procuring external expertise against the **Profession Map**: *a guide to using the standards*

The Profession Map sets the international standard for people professionals and describes the knowledge and behaviours needed to deliver leading-edge people services and execute impactful people strategies. This step-by-step guide will support you in using the Profession Map to commission and procure new or existing people services and expertise as part of your operating model or supply chain.

For further information on procurement, access the [**Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply \(CIPS\)**](#) website. There's also a joint [**CIPD, CIPS and REC \(Recruitment and Employment Confederation\)**](#) report focusing on how to make recruitment supply chains effective.



Step 1

Decide on the level of impact the service or supplier will have

Within the [Profession Map](#), the standards sit at four levels, each describing a different level of impact people professionals have in the work they do:



Foundation level: Tactical, day-to-day work, delivering immediate and short-term outcomes.



Associate level: Operational work, influencing colleagues and customers to deliver short-term value.



Chartered Member level: Thinking at a strategic level, delivering work that has complexity, and working with and influencing a range of stakeholders to create medium-term value for the organisation.



Chartered Fellow level: Thinking and working at a strategic level, influencing stakeholders across the profession to create long-term organisation value.

The [Find your level](#) section provides a summary and a more detailed description of the levels. Read the level descriptions and decide which level best aligns to the work you need to commission/procure.

If you're commissioning a piece of work which requires both complex strategic thinking and input as well as administrative support, for example, we suggest you use the highest level required. Alternatively, if you're commissioning a piece of work needing multiple roles, you may choose to use multiple levels to specify the work.

Step 2

Decide whether the supplier requires specialist knowledge

As well as the core behaviour and knowledge standards that apply to all people roles, there are nine people specialisms which define the expert knowledge you need in each of these areas.

These specialisms will be important if you're commissioning or procuring technical or specialist expertise (for example, on Reward or Inclusion and diversity), or a service that is focused on a specific area, such as Learning and development or Resourcing.

Step 3

Identify the key standards for the service or supplier

Read the core knowledge, core behaviour and any specialist standards at the level(s) identified in step 1. Identify any core knowledge and behaviour standards which are specifically required for the work that needs delivering. You may also need to supplement these with organisation or sector-specific requirements (for example, knowledge of a particular industry).

The following questions will help:

- Which standards are critical in enabling the service/supplier to add value to the organisation now and in the foreseeable future?
- Which behaviours are important to ensure organisational fit and alignment with the organisation's values?
- Which knowledge areas are gaps for the existing team/employees? How can I commission/procure the service in a way that ensures knowledge transfer?

Step 4

Use the standards to inform the commissioning and procurement approach

The standards can be used to inform multiple stages of the commissioning or procurement cycle in terms of the capabilities that will enable the successful delivery of the service. This includes:

- understanding the organisation's need and developing a specification or pre-purchase questionnaire
- supplier selection and evaluation of the bid, tender or quotation
- drafting of contract and service level agreements
- supplier performance management and improvement.

For example, if you're procuring a people advisory service at the Associate level, this is how you might take some standards and turn them into supplier requirements:

Policy, regulation and law relevant to your work and how to ensure people practices are compliant (from the core knowledge area: People practice) **becomes...** Knowledge of relevant policy, regulation and law to ensure compliance.

How to apply your organisation's people policies in a wide range of situations to support effective case management and employee relations practice (from the specialist knowledge area: Employee relations) **becomes...** How to apply the organisation's people policies in a wide range of situations to support effective case management.

Demonstrate professionalism and consistency in what you say and do in order to build trust (from the core behaviour: Ethical practice) **becomes...** Professionalism and consistency in what you say and do in order to build trust.

Demonstrate a proactive approach to developing your professional knowledge, skills and experience (from the core behaviour: Passion for learning) **becomes...** Proactive approach to developing professional knowledge, skills and experience.

For example, if you are procuring an organisation design consultant at the Chartered Member level to create or review your organisation design principles and framework, this is how you might take some standards and turn them into supplier requirements:

Build collaborative relationships across organisation boundaries, cultures and other disciplines (from the core behaviour: Working inclusively) **becomes...** Build collaborative relationships across organisation boundaries and other disciplines.

Acquire and source multiple sources of evidence (e.g. internal and external professional expertise, research and stakeholder concerns and values) to test assumptions and ideas (from the core behaviour: Insights focused) **becomes...** Acquire and source multiple sources of evidence to test assumptions and ideas.

How to apply different diagnostic methods at business or organisation level to create insight on behaviour and culture (from the specialist knowledge area: Organisation development and design) **becomes...** How to apply diagnostic methods at organisation level to create insight on culture.

How to design and shape operating models, systems and structures to meet current and emerging business needs (from the specialist knowledge area: Organisation development and design) **becomes...** How to design and shape operating models and structures to meet emerging and future business needs.

How to design good work at organisation level, and why it's important (from the specialist knowledge area: Organisation development and design) **becomes...** How to design good work.