

**BRIEF INSTRUCTION FOR USE OF
THE EDINBURGH COMPETENCY STATEMENT GRID**

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Introduction

Many teachers do their best to harness the motives of all their pupils in order to nurture their distinctive talents, and many would like to be able to record the outcomes in ways that would make it easier for the future teachers of their pupils to build on what they have accomplished and so as to make it easier for their pupils to build on their accomplishments in the course of their future educational and occupational careers.

Unfortunately, the concepts and tools which are available to help teachers to do these things are currently extremely limited. The present research will help to fill these gaps.

The accompanying *Grid* and *Follow-Through Questionnaire* are designed to introduce the user to the *Edinburgh Competency Framework* - a way of thinking about pupils' values, motives, interests and competencies and the way in which those motives can be harnessed to enable them to practice, and thereby develop, their most important talents. The Framework also offers a way of assessing high level competencies for both formative and summative purposes.

This Framework has emerged from studies of the nature, development, and assessment of competence which have been carried out in homes, schools, and workplaces. A brief discussion of the thinking behind the Framework can be found in the accompanying *Guide*. More detailed discussions can be found in the publications cited in the *Guide*.

The reader will find it easiest to become familiar with the Framework if he or she works through the assessment of a single pupil. However, it should be noted in advance that the dual functions of this procedure (introducing the reader to the Framework and making an (incomplete) assessment of a particular pupil) makes it more cumbersome than it would be if it were used on a routine basis by anyone familiar with the Framework.

General Instructions

First, choose from your pupils *one* whose values and competencies you would like to think more carefully about. Ideally, you should know this pupil reasonably well, but he or she should be neither particularly outstanding nor pose serious problems.

Write this pupil's name in the space provided at the top left of the *Grid*.

Overview

A fundamental tenet of the Edinburgh Competency Framework is that people will only display high level competencies - like initiative, leadership, and the ability to communicate effectively - when they are undertaking activities they care about.

In assessing the pupil you have chosen you will therefore first be asked to identify the kinds of activity the pupil seems to be strongly motivated to undertake.

Thereafter, you will be asked to record the competencies which he or she displays whilst undertaking these activities.

Finally, a separate *Follow-Through Questionnaire* will explore the validity of the assessment in the light of the limitations of the information at your disposal. You will also be asked to consider the implications of the assessment for: (i) the pupils' individualised developmental program, (ii) educational processes in general, and (iii) staff development activities which may need to be investigated.

Recording the Pupil's Motives

If you have not already done so, write the name of the pupil you are going to assess in the space provided on the top left-hand side of the *Grid*.

Along the top of the *Grid* you will find a list of activities, or styles of behaviour, which the pupil may value.

Move across the *Grid*, entering, in Row 1, a tick each time you reach a statement which describes an activity which *you* think the person you are assessing feels strongly motivated to undertake. These will be activities

which he or she tends to undertake spontaneously, is enthusiastic about, applies his or her intelligence to undertaking, and/or persists in doing despite setbacks.

Leave blank the cells which do not apply to your selected pupil.

You may find it easier to read the headings across the top of the Grid if you rotate it so that the writing is horizontal.

The list of headings is not comprehensive. Spaces have been left after each group of items for you to enter any valued styles of behaviour that are important to the pupil you are assessing which do not appear in the printed list. Possible additions to those listed on the Grid will be found in the *Guide*.

If you have identified several different kinds of behaviour as being important to the person being assessed, the next step is to ask yourself whether some of these activities are undertaken in the course of trying to undertake other activities which, in some sense, represent the more basic values and concerns of the individual. For example, someone may manipulate others because he or she wishes them to help him or her gain the teachers' approval. Put the other way round, some of the activities you have ticked (even though separated in the list of possible motives) all hint at a deeper, underlying, more pervasive, or more dominant, motive in the individual. Motives do not necessarily have this hierarchical structure, however, and may co-exist, even compete. Should they form some kind of hierarchy in this case, number the more fundamental motive "1" in row 2, and the other motives (or groups of motives) 2, 3, etc.

If the motives of the person you are assessing do not have a hierarchical structure, you should next consider whether any groups of motives go together to form a cluster which should be considered as a whole. Perhaps they even have some central focus. If so, bracket them together and, if possible, identify the central theme, using your own words if there is not an appropriate label on the Grid.

If the motives of the person you are assessing neither form a hierarchical structure nor have a central focus, it will make your initial foray into this field easier if you are able to place at least the 4 or 5 that are *most* important to the person being assessed in rank order, using 1 for the most important.

If you feel that you do not have sufficient information to make an adequate assessment of the pupil you have selected, you could obtain additional information by interviewing him or her in the way described in the *Behavioural Event Interviewing* section of *Raven's Competence in Modern Society* or by talking to his or her relatives and friends.

Recording the Pupil's Competencies

Now turn the Grid back the right way round. You are now going to record the competencies which the pupil displays while carrying out the kinds of activities that you have identified as being *most* important to him or her.

Down the left hand side of the Grid you will find a list of competencies (or *components of competence*) which he or she may display - but note that the list currently runs on to three pages due to printing problems.

Once again the list is not comprehensive and you should write in any important competencies displayed by the pupil you are assessing that are not identified on the Grid. Additional examples of the kind of competence which might be entered under each heading are listed in the *Guide*.

You should now confine your attention to those styles of behaviour you have prioritised in Row 2 as being *most* important to the person you are assessing. Move down the column(s) numbered "1" in Row 2 and either enter a cross (X) in the appropriate cell for any component of competence displayed by the person being assessed whilst carrying out these behaviours and write in any other competencies which he or she displays.

The three footnotes referred to on the Grid will be found at the end of this document.

When you come to the second and third pages first tick, in Row 1, the activities in relation to which you are recording the pupils' competencies.

The Follow-Through Questionnaire

Now turn to the Follow-Through Questionnaire. This asks you to supply some of the further information that would be required to make a more

valid assessment of the pupil you are assessing and then to consider some of the implications for educational change.

You may find it helpful to discuss the completed Implications sections with others who have been through this exercise.

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE NOTES REFERRED TO IN SUPERScript ON GRID A

1. *All* competencies have interpenetrating cognitive, affective, and conative components. Thus, developing better ways of thinking about things involves initiating - on the basis of one's feelings - hunch-based "experimental inter-actions with the environment" in order to test one's emergent "insights" (often non-verbalised impulses), "monitoring" the effects of ones actions (using one's feelings) in order to learn more about the situation, the problem, and the effectiveness of the strategies which have been employed - and thereafter using feeling-based intuition to initiate further experiments to "test one's (non-verbal) "hypotheses." Clearly, this process involves considerable persistence. Thus, *cognitive activity is not primarily cognitive, never mind verbal.*

The question is whether the person being assessed **does** spontaneously display high levels of analytic and inventive cognitive skills whilst undertaking valued activities. Not only may these not result in formal understanding, they may not be verbalisable either. Knowledge *in* action (Schon) is often very different from knowledge *of* action. Someone who can show that he or she knows that, in a complex organisation, doing *this* here results in *that* happening over there clearly has an understanding of the way the organisation works even if he or she cannot explain the connections in words. The evidence one is looking for is whether they do things which indicate that they are in some sense striving to understand and, on some fundamental level, achieving a useful understanding.

A fuller discussion of this issue will be found in the "Important Note" under COGNITIVE COMPETENCIES in the *Guide*.

2. An important component of creativity is the ability to *see* how people and things which others regard as irrelevant to the activity can be harnessed to assist in carrying it out. For example, creative managers can find ways of engaging the energies of people whom others regard as deadwood. People who are creative in these ways

are much less likely than others to complain about the absence of resources.

A fuller discussion of this issue will be found under CAPACITY TO GENERATE COGNITIVE TRANSFORMATIONS in the *Guide*.

3. Fatalism, or the belief that it is wrong, or impossible, to interfere with the course of fate, sometimes seems characteristic of certain people. However, people tend to behave as if they can influence the outcomes of actions they care about. For example, although people may feel unable to influence society, they may well take very effective action to establish *warm* relationships with others. In other words, they may be fatalistic in one area but not in another. We must therefore seek to discover the **kind** of activities in relation to which people *behave* as if they can have an influence rather than whether they actually feel they can have an effect.

A fuller discussion of this issue will be found under CONATIVE COMPONENTS OF COMPETENCE in the *Guide*.

4. One of the most important ways in which effective parents, teachers, and managers promote development is by creating situations in which people come to realise that they *can* exercise high-level competencies in order to undertake activities they care about effectively. Such reality-based feelings of confidence are crucial to the release of competent behaviour. Put the other way round, insights into areas in which students lack confidence to do things they would need to do to undertake activities they care about successfully is of the greatest importance when designing the developmental experience they need.