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The Professional Map from the CII: Personal Finance



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# INTRODUCING THE PROFESSIONAL MAP

Put simply, the Professional Map is a competency framework for the personal finance profession, detailing the standards of professional competence needed to develop and excel in an evolving market.

The CII's Professional Map is...

## Outcomes based

Making good decisions means understanding the potential impact of our actions (for our customers, our teams, and our business). That's why the Professional Map does not exclusively talk to *what* we do, but also explores *how* and *why* we do it.

## Always relevant

The framework provides a shared language, allowing for a common understanding of professionalism. It has been designed to be inclusive and agile, by using geography, sector, and product agnostic wording – so that it is both relevant to a broad range of stakeholders, and adaptive to any context (even when the specifics change).

## Future ready

The Professional Map has been designed to allow for continuous review and adaptation as the professional landscape evolves. This means we're able to rapidly respond to, and reflect, shifting professional needs over time.

## Is the Professional Map for you?

For individuals, the Professional Map provides clarity around what your peers and potential employers expect you to do in your current role. It can also help you identify your career pathway and gaps in your skillset; establish learning opportunities; and support you in preparing for an appraisal.

For managers, it can help you to support your team so that they excel in their roles, and progress their careers – helping you to better articulate your expectations and map development areas, with precision and confidence.

For employers and HR functions, the Professional Map provides a market-led standard against which to assess and build capability across teams, and enhance key pillars of people management, such as competency-based recruitment; performance management; and training. It can also evidence to the regulator a commitment to people development. Use it to champion a positive working culture and map your way to a future-ready workforce, and better customer outcomes.

**"The Professional Map will become the 'Golden thread' in what the CII offers – providing a common set of competencies that will enable alignment between professional standards and lifelong learning – delivered through world-class learning content, qualifications and membership."**

**GILL WHITE, CHIEF CUSTOMER OFFICER, CII**

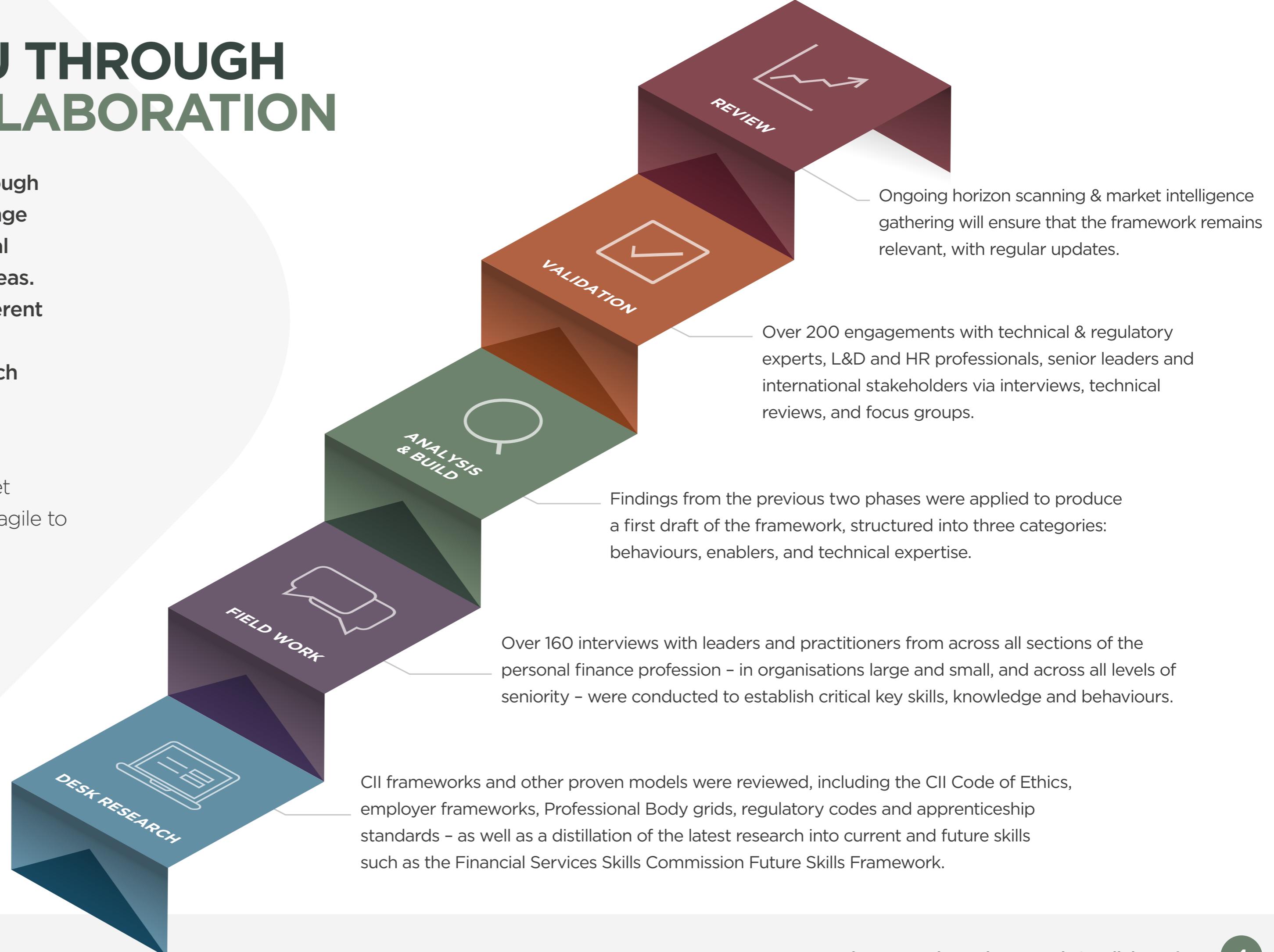


# BROUGHT TO YOU THROUGH RESEARCH & COLLABORATION

The Professional Map has been developed through extensive research and collaboration with a range of leaders and practitioners across the personal finance profession – both in the UK and overseas. It combines insight from organisations of different size and type around the key competencies exemplified by successful professionals, at each stage of their careers.

The framework is the outcome of four robust research phases, followed by an ongoing market review – to ensure that it remains relevant, and agile to market and societal shifts.

**Figure 1: The Professional Map development process**



# THE COMPONENTS EXPLAINED

The competencies have been structured into three categories – behaviours, enablers, and technical expertise. Each of the competencies within these categories describe the capabilities professionals should be able to demonstrate across four bands of experience.

- **Behaviours** describe the interpersonal, intellectual, and ethical actions and attitudes professionals need to demonstrate in the way they approach their work and working relationships, irrespective of their role.
- **Enablers** describe the knowledge and activities relating to data and technology, ethics, and compliance – as well as the core practice areas – for professionals to perform their role effectively, and to a high standard, irrespective of their role.
- **Technical Expertise** is the function-specific knowledge and skills professionals need to be effective in their role.

Figure 2: The components explained



The function-specific knowledge and skills professionals need to be effective in their role.

- Financial planning and advice
- Paraplanning
- Mortgage broking
- Supporting functions

The knowledge and activities relating to data and technology, ethics, and compliance – as well as the core knowledge requirements – for professionals to perform their role effectively, and to a high standard, irrespective of their role.

- Ethics and compliance
- Data and technology
- Core practice



# THE BANDS EXPLAINED

There are four bands of experience, providing a pathway from entry level to strategic leadership roles. Each band is defined by a set of characteristics concerned with an individual's effort, knowledge base, experience, and impact.

**Figure 3: The bands explained**

	BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
<b>TYPICAL JOB ROLES</b>	<i>Front line staff, administrative and entry level roles</i>	<i>First line managers, team leaders, regulated and specialist roles</i>	<i>Middle managers, and senior technical roles</i>	<i>Senior leaders and business owners</i>
<b>NATURE OF WORK</b>	Tactical, focusing on the day to day	Operational, with some complexity	Complex, with challenging requirements	Strategic, with a significant level of complexity and challenge
<b>SPHERE OF INFLUENCE</b>	Line manager, immediate colleagues and customers/clients	Managers, colleagues, customers/clients and external professionals	Wider range of stakeholders, both internal and external	Senior stakeholders from across the profession, customers, suppliers and regulators
<b>FOCUS OF ACTIVITY</b>	Deliver immediate and short-term outcomes	Directly create short-term value, contribute to longer-term value	Create medium to long-term value	Create long-term value
<b>FOCUS OF THINKING</b>	Gather and use information	Contribute to the thinking and analysis of information	Critically question information and evaluate it to make informed judgements and decisions	Develop evidence-based thinking, using qualitative and quantitative data to shape the future activity
<b>FOCUS OF KNOWLEDGE</b>	Knowledge of the principles of personal finance	Broad understanding personal finance practice	Deeper understanding of the concepts of personal finance, with specialism in a functional area	Deep technical knowledge in an area, or an excellent understanding of the broader environment
<b>WHERE TIME IS SPENT</b>	Customer/client services, providing information, handling data, following procedures	Issue identification, analysis and evaluation, proposal and delivery of solutions to agreed standards, and within agreed limits	Understanding the wider business context and risk, bringing strands of activity together, innovating	Developing strategies and plans, making complex judgements, considering the organisation and sector position
<b>BREADTH OF FOCUS</b>	Team	Department	Area or responsibility/Organisation	Organisation/Profession/Wider society



# THE STANDARD EXPLAINED

Collectively, behaviours, enablers and technical expertise make up the standard for what it means to be a well-rounded professional in the personal finance profession. Each band holds 11 competencies, made up of seven behaviours, three enablers, and the relevant area of technical expertise (see figure 4).

The behaviours and enablers are universal, in that they are transferable competencies that enable professionals to make decisions through an ethical lens and perform at their best, regardless of their role. Technical expertise competencies, however, are function specific.

Figure 4:  
The standard explained



# THE COMPETENCIES EXPLAINED

The competencies are cumulative. This means, that an individual working in band three is expected to already be demonstrating band one and two competencies. However, not all the outcome based statements have a clear progression horizontally across the bands; and as such these should be digested by band (column), as demonstrated in the following graphic.

Figure 5: The competencies explained

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: FINANCIAL PLANNING & ADVICE			
Working as a financial adviser or planner requires technical knowledge and skills that are relevant to this discipline. The scope of the work being covered will be determined by the job being performed and the area of personal finance in which you operate.			
BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I understand the role, duties and responsibilities of someone offering financial advice and planning and the services they provide in meeting clients' needs and suitability	I use skillful questions and active listening with clients to gather information on their motivations and needs and undertake thorough fact finding	I use my extensive knowledge of questioning, active listening and coaching skills to engage with clients in order to discover their underlying motivations and needs	I have developed a specialist area of financial planning and advice
I can explain the difference between different types of financial service, including regulated financial advice versus guidance	I understand the range of available products and how they apply to different client circumstances	I use my knowledge and experience to work out which options to consider in order to create different financial planning scenarios	I engage with clients who have complex financial circumstances and make use of relevant specialists where needed
I can explain the difference between the different types of regulated financial advice: independent, restricted, and execution-only	I process and evaluate information provided by the client, using accepted methodologies, to identify solutions that best meet their needs and suitability	I illustrate options for the client using financial and cash flow models	I develop bespoke comprehensive financial options and solutions for clients with complex requirements
I collect and collate information in order to fully understand the client's existing financial position	I research and identify tax efficient financial solutions to support clients' needs and suitability	I understand the client's risk appetite, the reasons for it and the impact that this has on their choice of options	I hold the organisation's strategic relationships, with clients, product providers or other experts
I follow the organisational policies and procedures for the issue of documentation	I use my knowledge of lenders, products, product providers and market requirements and suitability to identify optimal solutions	I work with and support the client to identify the possibilities and to make choices that meet their wants and needs	I organise comprehensive administration guidance for clients who have complex requirements
I onboard new clients ensuring regulatory and compliance requirements	I draft reports, ensuring information is collated, recommendations are researched and generated in line with my organisation's compliance standards	I use my knowledge of clients' needs to identify optimal solutions	I review internal and external performance and ratings and utilise this to the best advantage for clients
I understand the concept of client risk appetite and the client's preparedness to accept risk	I make structured, straightforward recommendations using a combination of new and existing personal finance solutions appropriate to the client	I take into account the relevant issues when selecting and deselecting product providers for clients with complex requirements	I make recommendations for the organisation's approach to client engagement

Category title and competency

Definition of competency

Bands

Outcome based statements

**"We'd like to thank those individuals and organisations who have helped shape the Professional Map. We will continue to review the framework with ongoing market engagement."**

**VANESSA RIBOLONI, INSIGHT MANAGER, CII**



# BEHAVIOURS: CURIOSITY

Future focussed, is inquisitive and open-minded, shows an interest in what is going on around them, wants to learn and develop, generates new ideas, is creative in their thinking and is open and adaptable to change.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I am interested in my work and show an interest in activities beyond my immediate responsibility	I am interested in why things are done in certain ways, and question beyond the obvious	I seek to understand issues in depth to tackle root causes of business challenges or opportunities	I strive for full mastery of complex issues and how they apply to my customers and business
I reflect on my capabilities, am open to new learning opportunities and continually develop my skills	I am keen to broaden my experience and invest time in learning activities to continually stay up to date and prepare for the future	I proactively spot and implement opportunities to coach others to help them learn and develop	I create a culture that allows individuals to learn and develop themselves
I am open to different ways of working	I am open to change and communicate and implement its benefits	I actively promote and champion change initiatives	I create and lead strategic change initiatives whilst balancing short term business needs
I think of new ways of approaching issues and offer different ideas	I propose realistic, innovative solutions and improvements	I support and drive innovation, disruptive thinking and new initiatives	I role model creative and disruptive thinking throughout the organisation
I am aware of changing business, technological and economic factors	I adapt quickly to changing business, technological and economic factors	I identify and embrace changes in working practices and implement plans that maximise the benefits of those changes	I lead strategic changes in working practices and implement organisational plans that maximise the benefits of those changes



# BEHAVIOURS: CUSTOMER FOCUS

Recognises customers' needs, meets their requirements and adds value to customer outcomes, balances customer and business demands and demonstrates commercial awareness.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I take measures to understand what the customer requires and ensure that I consistently meet their demands and needs	I anticipate customers' future demands and needs and initiate appropriate action	I use customer feedback to inform business plans and priorities	I create strategies and systems that reinforce the importance of providing an excellent customer experience
I treat all customers fairly and take particular care when dealing with those in vulnerable circumstances	I proactively seek to understand the needs and issues of customers and ensure I am serving their wider best interests	I use feedback to strive for fair customer outcomes and anticipate circumstances from which vulnerabilities may arise	I inspire and champion a culture focused on good customer outcomes
I understand there may be a conflict between customer and business needs	I lead by example through identifying opportunities to add value to customer outcomes	I encourage others to use their initiative to achieve better customer outcomes	I ensure that the customer is at the heart of decision making and business planning
I know the business drivers for my organisation	I make decisions that balance the customer and business requirements	I take decisions that account for longer term customer and business requirements	I demonstrate broad business thinking and sound commercial judgement in generating ideas
I understand who does what in my organisation, who my key stakeholders are and how this impacts on my responsibilities	I stay up to date with changes in my organisation and the market	I invest time in staying up to date with market trends, customer demands and competitor activity	I produce robust strategies to develop sustainable customer propositions



# BEHAVIOURS: DRIVE TO DELIVER

Takes accountability for their work, organises and prioritises, delivers results, is action oriented, sets and achieves goals and demonstrates resilience.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I know how my role contributes to the department and I complete my given objectives	I know how my role contributes to the organisation and I complete my objectives	I work towards the organisation's goals by setting aligned objectives and stretching targets for myself	I set the strategy and targets to allow people to focus their efforts on achieving the organisational goals
I take action to make things happen	I maintain momentum demonstrating perseverance and tenacity in my work	I introduce new and enhanced processes to help manage the completion of tasks	I develop and implement plans for the business in order to achieve departmental or organisational strategy
I deliver what is asked of me on time and to the required standard	I consistently achieve high quality results on time and to budget	I reschedule priorities and timescales in light of changing requirements	I assess and review the planning process on completion of projects to enhance future planning
I manage my time through planning and prioritising my workload, taking importance and urgency into account	I am agile and effectively manage competing demands on my time	I encourage those around me to adapt and respond to quickly changing demands	I ensure my organisation is able to adapt and respond to quickly changing demands
I respond positively to challenge and accept and act upon feedback	I am resilient and recover quickly from setbacks	I remain composed in the light of adversity	I identify and adopt best practices from other organisations and the wider profession



# BEHAVIOURS: IMPACT

Communicates with others in a clear, concise and purposeful way, adapts their communication style to suit the audience, creates a positive impact, uses logical argument to influence, is credible and has a good reputation.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I present myself and my ideas in a professional manner	I adapt my communication style depending on the needs and objectives of the audience	I am credible and confident in situations where strong opposition or potential conflict exists	I build a culture that encourages open communication and information sharing at all levels
I communicate clearly so that my messages are understood by others	I present my ideas and information in a way that positively influences outcomes	I enthuse, motivate and generate commitment from others through my style of communication	I build confidence in and gain acceptance of ideas and strategies by relating them to stakeholders' needs and goals
I provide self-assured responses in a credible manner	I contribute to discussions and activities in an informed and confident way	I develop confidence and influence across my team	I create a culture where sustainable long term agreements are developed despite competing objectives
I influence others through the use of logical argument	I argue constructively in order to persuade	I negotiate and achieve win-win solutions	I actively influence the external environment by spotting opportunities within and beyond my organisation
I demonstrate my credibility within the organisation by creating a positive impression	I am prepared to take on new and challenging work	I am known externally and internally as being an authority on my subject	I actively reinforce and further a good reputation within the profession



# BEHAVIOURS: INCLUSIVITY

Builds positive working relationships, networks effectively, listens to and respects the views and opinions of others, supports those around them, works across boundaries, recognises and appreciates diversity.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I proactively develop relationships with colleagues and customers	I build positive, constructive relationships within the business and with external stakeholders	I network with others in my field and beyond, both internally and externally	I proactively seek opportunities to develop relationships throughout the profession
I act in a friendly and supportive manner responding appropriately and willingly to requests for help	I anticipate when others need support and collaborate with colleagues to achieve tasks	I consistently share knowledge and insights that are useful to my internal and external stakeholders including pro bono and contribution to the wider profession	I collaborate cross functionally to tackle broader and longer term strategic matters
I listen to other people with respect, recognising that they may have a different perspective	I actively listen to others in order to address their views and concerns	I proactively build diverse teams in order to increase effectiveness	I develop and role-model an inclusive culture throughout the organisation and the profession
I share relevant information with colleagues and customers and keep them up to date	I proactively share knowledge with other teams and other functions	I instigate collaborative development activities to improve relationships and organisational performance	I develop an organisation wide communication strategy to cascade objectives both internally and externally
I consider the needs and feelings of others in order to gain a wider perspective	I respect and draw upon the strengths of different individuals	I encourage others to embrace an inclusive culture	I instigate processes to increase equality, diversity and inclusion & ensure that the organisation leverages its diversity effectively



# BEHAVIOURS: INSIGHT

Builds the information from a variety of sources, cuts through complexity, considers options, solves problems and makes decisions.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I recognise when there are issues to be resolved	I assimilate and manage large quantities of information and identify patterns and trends	I consider the wider context of situations and deal with any ambiguities	I simplify highly complex business situations to identify key issues and priorities
I collect all the information required and ensure that details and facts are correct and complete	I critically analyse relevant information and draw inferences from it	I bring insight to and query issues that seem strange or unexpected	I engage others and bring teams together to co-operate and solve problems
I probe and question in order to understand issues	I grasp a problem quickly and can identify its root cause	I explore the causes of problems, using analysis of patterns and trends, and consider future possibilities, before taking action	I recognise the possible implications that existing problems may have on the future and I anticipate possible future scenarios
I solve routine problems in the context of my role	I identify and evaluate options before coming up with solutions	I incorporate elements of different ideas into one in order to provide effective solutions	I provide solutions based on new processes and knowledge recognising the wider business impact
I take straightforward decisions within the limits of my authority	I recommend clear solutions to challenging problems	I combine others' skills and insights with my own judgement, in order to ensure the best decisions are made	I provide professional insights to contribute to the wider sector debate



# BEHAVIOURS: INTEGRITY



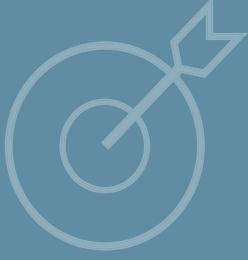
Demonstrates high levels of integrity, is honest, takes responsibility for their actions, is confidential in their dealings, knows the limits of their capabilities, exhibits courage and leads by example.

BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I can be relied on to do what I say I will do and am truthful in my business dealings	I provide explanations for the choices and decisions I make	I consistently role model professional principles, values and personal integrity in order to build trust	I role model and promote ethical leadership and professional principles and values in the organisation and the wider profession
I admit when tasks are beyond my level of capability and I seek advice when needed	I critically analyse relevant information and draw inferences from it	I proactively seek feedback in areas where I know I lack appropriate expertise, and help others to identify the limits of their capability	I work within the limits of my own and the organisation's capability and know when to stop, question or challenge
I take responsibility for my own performance and behaviour and I own up to my mistakes	I am not afraid to ask questions of and challenge others at all levels of the business	I take responsibility for my decisions even when they are challenged, and encourage others to ask questions - making it clear I am open to challenge	I take collective responsibility for agreed decisions
I demonstrate consistency in what I say and do	I seek to build relationships based on trust	I have the courage to stand by my convictions	I create a culture where staff are not afraid to challenge or admit to mistakes
I handle personal and business information sensitively and confidentially	I understand the importance of careful handling of personal and business information	I role model and uphold the standards of confidentiality and support the systems and processes to ensure regulatory compliance	I actively promote trust in the business and the profession



# ENABLERS: ETHICS & COMPLIANCE

Acts with integrity, impartiality and independence, demonstrates principled behaviour, adheres to organisational and professional standards and manages risk.

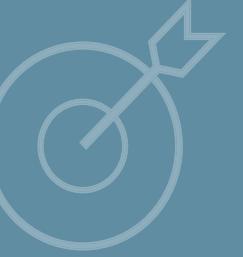


BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I know, understand and act in compliance with my organisation's policies, guidelines and processes	I understand, and work within, the ethical, legal and regulatory duties and know how these relate to my role and the organisation	I monitor changes in legislation and regulation and respond to these changes to ensure ongoing compliance	I contextualise, maintain and communicate relevant legislation and regulation at all levels of the business
I fulfil the responsibilities of my role as instructed and work within the limits of my authority	I understand and work within the regulatory and legislative requirements in place for my specific role and in my local jurisdiction	I am aware of and fulfil my supervisory requirements as outlined by regulation and legislation, and help others to understand the regulatory requirements relevant to their roles	I analyse the impact on employees and business processes of changes to regulatory bodies, regulatory rules and guidelines
I am aware of, and comply with, the compliance procedures I am expected to adhere to, including my organisation's protection of data, conflict of interest and complaint processes	I comply with my organisation's compliance procedures, including complaint handling, anti-money laundering and handling client money	I consider whether the compliance arrangements in my area are effective and, if not, take measures to ensure they are adhered to	I ensure that all employees are aware of the legal, regulatory and compliance requirements and that processes and procedures are in place to manage any breaches
I know the content of the CII Code of Ethics and work within it	I know the content of the CII Code of Ethics and apply it consistently in practice	I role model the behaviours laid out in the CII Code of Ethics so that others may understand it	I proactively use the CII Code of Ethics as a tool to drive ethical behaviours in my organisation and the profession
I understand the consequences of ethical and unethical conduct	I understand that decisions I make will impact all kinds of stakeholders, and am mindful of the consequences of my actions	I am aware of the potential vulnerable circumstances of customers which may impact decision making, and I take appropriate action	I identify behaviours that do not meet ethical or regulatory standards and implement changes to ensure the highest professional standards are in operation
I am able to explain conflicts of interest and the potential consequences for a customer	I recognise when I have a conflict of interest and draw it to the attention of the necessary people	I am confident in both raising and receiving concerns and know how to appropriately escalate issues	I ensure that policies and procedures within the business are not discriminatory
I am aware of my organisation's speak up/whistleblowing policy and procedures and raise concerns when appropriate	I am aware of the importance of speaking up/whistleblowing, and understand how raising concerns leads to improved working practices	I promote and encourage the use of the organisation's speak up/whistleblowing policy and procedures	I ensure that the business has an effective and well-functioning speak up/whistleblowing culture, where staff are not afraid to raise concerns, and no one is victimised or disadvantaged as a result of speaking up



# ENABLERS: DATA & TECHNOLOGY

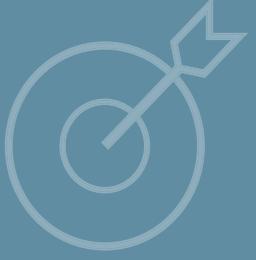
Understands and utilises the benefits of existing and emerging technologies and makes effective use of data and insights to support decisions.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I understand and can use the technology tools required for my role	I understand and utilise the technology that is available in my organisation	I use technology to support the delivery of best practice and deliver optimal customer outcomes	I ensure that processes exist within the organisation to ensure the timeliness, accuracy and validity of data and insights
I am open to changing the way I work in the light of new technologies	I keep up to date with new and emerging technologies and apply them in my work whilst being aware of their risks	I use developments in technology and the use of data and insights to add value to my functional area	I ensure that everyone in the organisation is using data, insights and technology effectively to add value
I use appropriate digital and non digital data in my work	I make suggestions as to how technology can be used to improve processes	I embrace developments in working practices and technology and adopt them in my day to day activities	I drive digital and technological transformation in the organisation
I use technology to effectively communicate with others	I analyse and evaluate data and insights using appropriate technologies	I use data and technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of processes and drive operational change	I investigate and implement emerging technologies to drive business improvement
I understand how to use social media at work and the risks associated with it	I apply technologies to present information	I make evidence based and data driven decisions	I collaborate with others in the profession to find new ways to use technology in my organisation



# ENABLERS: CORE PRACTICE

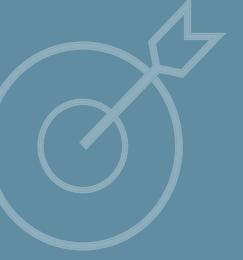


Irrespective of the area of personal finance in which you work there is a level of knowledge and skill that you need in order to be successful at the various stages of your career. These, along with key critical behaviours, combine with your deeper technical expertise to ensure a rounded personal finance professional.

BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I use common personal finance terminology and I understand the structure and main activities of the sector	I take time to understand clients needs, solutions and suitability	I demonstrate an in-depth understanding of personal financial needs, factors affecting them and how these influence the selection of appropriate solutions	I identify and anticipate changes to my organisation's products and services to ensure we have the best offering for clients
I question to understand and actively listen to the responses	I make use of follow up questions and listen to understand the speaker's perspective	I ask probing questions and use deeper listening to understand the motivations, values and beliefs of others	I apply my specialist knowledge of personal finance to meet clients' complex needs and to provide insights to external stakeholders
I understand the legal and regulatory framework and how my organisation delivers services within this	I communicate how individual circumstances and external factors affect financial needs	I appreciate how changes in client or external circumstances can affect the selection of relevant products	I review systems, processes and controls in my area of the organisation and take the appropriate action if the required standards are not met
I know the range and features of the personal finance solutions that I work with and how they can fulfil client's requirements	I explain the range and features of the personal finance solutions relevant to my role that are available to clients	I help clients to prioritise their needs and interests and identify relevant solutions to meet them	I develop and review responsibilities and authority levels within my area of accountability
I consider and respond to the needs of the client	I understand the process of identifying appropriate financial solutions	I ensure clients have the information and tools necessary to make capable and informed decisions	I monitor and evaluate service standards in providing client satisfaction
I undertake research in order to prepare information to support the identification of suitable financial solutions	I support the provision of clear regulatory information and disclosure	I interpret the significance of complex products and services and apply them to my clients' requirements	I proactively report to external regulatory organisations to ensure compliance
I understand my organisation's administrative and client support processes	I understand general market processes in my area of work and how my organisation's procedures differ	I prepare accurate research and available market analysis in formulating solutions for clients	I ensure that there is a strong business development focus within the organisation
I maintain accurate client records, input data and check that all documentation is in place	I proactively identify changes to client circumstances and carry out regular client reviews to ensure their existing arrangements remain relevant	I attract new clients and cultivate existing relationships	
I undertake administration to support client solutions	I direct clients to get advice on matters outside my area of expertise in accordance with my organisation's referral process	I oversee and coach those under my supervision where appropriate in accordance with the regulatory requirements	



# ENABLERS: CORE PRACTICE (cont.)



Irrespective of the area of personal finance in which you work there is a level of knowledge and skill that you need in order to be successful at the various stages of your career. These, along with key critical behaviours, combine with your deeper technical expertise to ensure a rounded personal finance professional.

BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I give clients accurate and up to date information and understand the consequences of not doing so	I maintain and enrich existing client relationships	I monitor and update key performance indicators and client retention rates	
	I am alert to the main indicators of fraudulent activities and raise my concerns in line with my organisation's policy and processes	I understand how new and emerging products and services could affect the clients' needs and suitability, ensuring that they remain relevant	
	I have applied for and attained the relevant authorisations to allow me to carry out my role where required		
	I keep up to date with new and emerging products, and understand how they affect clients' needs and suitability		



# TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: FINANCIAL PLANNING & ADVICE

Working as a financial adviser or planner requires technical knowledge and skills that are relevant to this discipline. The scope of the work being covered will be determined by the job being performed and the area of personal finance in which you operate.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I understand the role, duties and responsibilities of someone offering financial advice and planning and the services they provide in meeting clients' needs and suitability	I use skillful questions and active listening with clients to gather information on their motivations and needs and undertake thorough fact finding	I use my extensive knowledge of questioning, active listening and coaching skills to engage with clients in order to discover their underlying motivations and needs	I have developed a specialist area of financial planning and advice
I can explain the difference between different types of financial service, including regulated financial advice versus guidance	I understand the range of available products and how they apply to different client circumstances	I use my knowledge and experience to work out which options to consider in order to create different financial planning scenarios	I engage with clients who have complex financial circumstances and make use of relevant specialists where needed
I can explain the difference between the different types of regulated financial advice: independent, restricted, and execution-only	I process and evaluate information provided by the client, using accepted methodologies, to identify solutions that best meet their needs and suitability	I illustrate options for the client using financial and cash flow models	I develop bespoke comprehensive financial options and solutions for clients with complex requirements
I collect and collate information in order to fully understand the client's existing financial position	I research and identify tax efficient financial solutions to support clients' needs and suitability	I understand the client's risk appetite, the reasons for it and the impact that this has on their choice of options	I hold the organisation's strategic relationships, with clients, product providers or other experts
I follow the organisational policies and procedures for the issue of documentation	I use my knowledge of lenders, products, product providers and market requirements and suitability to identify optimal solutions	I work with and support the client to identify the possibilities and to make choices that meet their wants and needs	I organise comprehensive administration guidance for clients who have complex requirements
I onboard new clients ensuring regulatory and compliance requirements	I draft reports, ensuring information is collated, recommendations are researched and generated in line with my organisation's compliance standards	I recommend financial solutions that meet the clients' motivations taking into account the client's stage of life	I review internal and external performance and ratings and utilise this to the best advantage for clients
I understand the concept of client risk appetite and the client's preparedness to accept risk	I make structured, straightforward recommendations using a combination of new and existing personal finance solutions appropriate to the client	I take into account the relevant issues when selecting and deselecting product providers for clients with complex requirements	I make recommendations for the organisation's approach to client engagement



# TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: FINANCIAL PLANNING & ADVICE (cont.)

Working as a financial adviser or planner requires technical knowledge and skills that are relevant to this discipline. The scope of the work being covered will be determined by the job being performed and the area of personal finance in which you operate.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
	I present financial solutions to clients, explaining complex ideas in a way that they understand	I use my advanced technical and market knowledge to inform client solutions	I design fair, clear and transparent fees for services provided by my firm, taking into account product, platform and fund management charges, and ensuring they are consistent with delivering good client outcomes
	I source solutions from product providers to meet the clients' requirements	I present accurate and comprehensive information to clients with complex requirements regarding proposed solutions, identifying the potential advantages and disadvantages	I identify and anticipate internal and external current and emerging risks and put in place mitigation strategies to ensure the financial and operational resilience of my firm
	I take into account relevant protocols, agency agreements and regulatory requirements that impact the way advice is managed	I negotiate with product providers to source solutions to meet client interests	
	I ascertain the client's risk appetite, understand the impact of different types of risk and I act accordingly	I evaluate and review the performance of my clients' financial affairs and build long term relationships	
	I ensure clients understand the different fees and charges they will pay for and how these add value to them	I apply fair, clear and transparent fees for the services provided by my firm and any associated charges, ensuring clients understand how these breakdown and add value to them	



# TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: PARAPLANNING



Working as a paraplanner requires technical knowledge and skills that are relevant to this discipline. The scope of the work being covered will be determined by the job being performed and the area of personal finance in which you operate.

BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I understand the role, duties and responsibilities of a paraplanner, how these differ from that of an adviser, and the services they provide in meeting clients' needs	I can explain the difference between different types of financial service, including regulated financial advice versus guidance	I use my knowledge of product ranges, product providers and client demands and needs to identify optimal solutions to meet complex client requirements	I review and analyse product provider results and ratings in order to make recommendations to meet clients' needs
I obtain straightforward client information and provide support to the financial adviser/planner to enable them to give accurate advice to clients	I can explain the difference between the different types of regulated financial advice: independent, restricted, and execution-only	I understand complex arrangements and complex financial products and apply these to meet the needs of clients	I analyse complex financial products and schemes to evaluate if they meet the client's needs
I perform straightforward calculations to inform the financial plan	I onboard new clients ensuring regulatory and compliance requirements	I take into account all of the required issues when selecting product providers for complex cases	I support the design of financial plans for clients with complex wealth management portfolios covering multiple 'what if' scenarios
I use template forms and reports to prepare straightforward information for analysis by a financial adviser/planner	I undertake straightforward research and perform relevant calculations to identify solutions to meet the client's needs and suitability	I assess and analyse client information, and consider different scenarios, to create financial plans and solutions	I assess clients' future needs, suitability and service requirements within my area of the business and proactively respond to these
	I use client information to create basic straightforward financial plans and solutions	I produce accurate and complex reports having evaluated the data	I develop and provide comprehensive administration guidance to clients who have complex requirements
	I take into account all the relevant issues and suggest the most suitable solution for straightforward cases	I provide information to clients regarding proposed solutions, identifying the potential advantages and disadvantages for the client	I develop and make recommendations for the annual client service cycle, including what it should contain and what is considered best practice
	I ensure that solutions and recommendations are researched and appropriately signed off	I evaluate and review the performance of my client's financial affairs and make appropriate suggestions for improvements	I identify and anticipate changes to product ranges and market requirements, and recommend appropriate action to meet clients' needs and suitability
	I liaise with providers and other relevant third parties in line with my organisation's policy	I issue documentation in an accurate and timely manner for complex, high-net-worth clients	
	I evaluate information provided by clients to identify my organisation's services and relevant products that best meet both the real and perceived needs of the client		



# TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: MORTGAGE BROKING

Working as a mortgage intermediary requires technical knowledge and skills that are relevant to this discipline. The scope of the work being covered will be determined by the job being performed and the organisation in which you operate.



BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
I know the mortgage intermediary's role, duties and responsibilities when acting as an agent of the client or of the lender or product provider	I describe the property and mortgage market and the economic context for giving mortgage advice	I explain the principles, procedures, costs, regulatory requirements and legal implications associated with raising additional money, transferring, amending and redeeming mortgages	I take responsibility for analysing the lenders and products available for recommendation across my organisation
I describe the main types of mortgage and the regulatory and legal environment relating to mortgages	I explain the rules and regulations governing the sale of mortgage related protection products	I evaluate the circumstances of clients with complex requirements to understand their needs and suitability and analyse, identify and advise on lenders products and services to meet them	I consider emerging regulatory and legislative changes and recommend appropriate action to the services, lender and product ranges offered by my organisation
I understand the house-buying process, the legal cycle, the key parties involved and their requirements and roles	I undertake accurate and thorough client fact finding	I understand financial solutions that are appropriate to the client's stage of life and refer them to specialists where required	I assess future complex needs and service requirements of clients and I proactively respond to these
I understand the different factors that affect property values and the implications for consumers and mortgage lenders	I evaluate information provided by clients to identify lenders, products and services that best meet both the real and perceived needs of the client	I use my knowledge of lenders, products, product providers, market requirements and client demands and needs to identify optimal solutions	I develop comprehensive bespoke solutions for clients with complex needs and proactively oversee the ongoing management of their affairs
I understand the process of assessing client eligibility	I explain and calculate the options open to borrowers	I help my clients progress transactions by guiding them through the process from offer to completion	I organise comprehensive administration guidance for clients who have complex requirements where appropriate
I know the principles and implications of different forms of additional security that may be taken to support a mortgage application	I produce accurate solutions for clients, carrying out research, due diligence and relevant analysis	I proactively consider the ongoing needs and suitability of my clients and make appropriate recommendations	I identify and anticipate internal and external current and emerging risks and put in place mitigation strategies to ensure the financial and operational resilience of my firm
I prepare straightforward information for analysis by a mortgage intermediary, using template forms and reports	I explain the implications, rights and remedies for the borrower and the lender of non-payment of the mortgage and associated products	I analyse the results of product performance and I compare criteria before utilising these to the best advantage when identifying solutions for clients	



# TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: MORTGAGE BROKING (cont.)



Working as a mortgage intermediary requires technical knowledge and skills that are relevant to this discipline. The scope of the work being covered will be determined by the job being performed and the organisation in which you operate.

BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3	BAND 4
	I understand the risks associated with debt consolidation for the client and the implications for mortgage lenders	I apply fair, clear and transparent fees for the services provided by my firm and any associated charges (product, valuation and conveyancing), ensuring clients understand how these breakdown and add value to them	I design fair, clear and transparent fees for services provided by my firm, taking into account product, valuation and conveyancing charges, and ensuring they are consistent with delivering good client outcomes
	I liaise with lenders and product providers and other relevant third parties		
	I select and recommend lenders and product providers, following my organisation's procedures and compliance guidance		
	I draft reports, ensuring information is collated, recommendations are researched and generated in line with my organisation's compliance standards		
	I ensure clients understand the different fees and charges they will pay for (including advice, product, valuation and conveyancing) and how these add value to them		



# TECHNICAL EXPERTISE: SUPPORTING FUNCTIONS



Working within the profession, having a knowledge of personal finance in the areas outlined below will help you to be more successful in your area of functional operation.

- I know the value of personal finance products, their purpose and role in society and understand the circumstances in which they might be needed
- I understand the structure and main activities of the personal finance sector
- I know the differences and the interrelationships between the various roles within the personal finance sector
- I know the difference between different types of financial service, including regulated financial advice versus guidance
- I know the difference between the different types of regulated financial advice: independent, restricted, and execution-only
- I know the common terminology used in personal finance
- I know the personal finance products and services that my organisation offers and how they can meet client requirements
- I know what is meant by professionalism and understand the consequences of ethical and unethical conduct
- I know the content of the CII Code of Ethics and how to apply this in my role
- I know and work within the legal, regulatory and ethical frameworks that govern the financial services profession
- I am aware of my organisation's policies on data protection, complaint handling and conflicts of interest and work within them
- I am aware of my organisation's speak up/whistleblowing policy and procedures and raise concerns when appropriate
- I am aware of and fulfil my supervisory requirements where relevant as outlined by regulation and legislation

**These are foundation level competencies, covering the knowledge and skills required by professionals working in supporting functions. As such, these are relevant to those working in customer service, marketing, HR or finance, for example. While these individuals will be associated with their own Professional Bodies – following their own competency standards – the subject-matter competencies outlined here will empower them to speak with credibility in the workplace and make better informed decisions.**





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