GES Competency Framework

GES Competencies: Assistant Economist¹

1. Application of knowledge
Apply economic tools and techniques, and synthesise evidence from a range of sources, as appropriate. Particular reference should be made to the Green and Magenta Books that contribute to the policy/ROAMEF cycle².

- Provide expert advice with regards to appraisal, impact assessments, evidence based business cases, and evaluation.
- Apply techniques such as monetisation and discounting as outlined by the Green Book³, in order to apply Cost Benefit Analysis.
- Apply techniques to establish/identify robust counterfactuals in order to effectively measure policy impact and causation, as detailed in the Magenta Book⁴.
- Have an in-depth theoretical and empirical knowledge of how markets function, being able to advise on the impact that various policy interventions might have. Understanding the role incentives play in forming rational decisions, and how markets affect and reflect incentives of economic agents.

2. Analysis of data
Be able to analyse and handle data for the purposes of producing evidence for policy advice.

- Work with and understand economic models and interpret output data for the purposes of providing supporting evidence.
- Source, handle and process data sets based on best evidence/economic theory to form estimates about outcomes of likely policies.
- As appropriate, ensure that micro-economic estimates are consistent with the prevailing macroeconomic environment.
- Be able to explain key assumptions feeding into the model, ensure that they are transparently presented with results and that key risks and sensitivities are assessed.
- Apply econometric knowledge to understand how parameters used in models are estimated; be aware of issues relating to model specification and efficiency.
- Be proficient in using Excel and other relevant software packages.

3. Effective communication
Provide effective and appropriate written and oral communication to colleagues and stakeholders from many different backgrounds.

- Build effective working relationships with policy colleagues and other analytical professions, to facilitate continuous discourse and build mutual understanding of how to work together.
- Communicate effectively with non-economists, conveying the relevance and impact of economic concepts without the use of specialist terminology.
- Be able to tailor the details of their communications, ensuring that it is appropriate to the needs to the audience.
- Be able to provide wider socio-economic and political contexts that might impact and influence the appropriate policy response.

¹ Assistant Economist is a training grade, we therefore expect AEs to develop these competencies over a number of posts, under supervision from their line manager or development officer.
⁴ The Magenta Book: Guidance for Evaluation http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/data_magentabook_index.htm