

Strand 2: Working in government

Working in government is a vast topic, ranging from basic awareness through to specialist expertise – but the common themes throughout a Civil Service career will include things like managing public money, understanding the relationship with ministers and Parliament, and having a basic grasp of other professional areas and how to work with them.

Watch this video on [getting things done in government](#)

Our [new induction course](#) is designed to give new joiners a basic awareness of the Civil Service and how government works.

Opportunities to gain a deeper understanding of specific aspects of government are highlighted below. As well as formal training, look out for informal opportunities, these will add greatly to your understanding of the government context.

Here is a selection of some examples of the training available within Strand 2, to help you build your knowledge of working in government:

Effective communication – Government Communications Service

We all have a duty to ensure that ministers, senior officials and organisational leaders are briefed and informed to enable the effective operation of public services and improve people's lives. We communicate using a variety of means on a regular basis, for example [writing effective emails](#) training provides useful tips on how to write and structure your emails.

For more information on how you can develop your communication style visit [Government Communication Service](#).

How you contribute to the delivery of public services – Operational Delivery

Operational Delivery, sits at the heart of public service delivery, in order to create and deliver exceptional services to citizens. Whether you work directly or indirectly with individuals or businesses, ultimately we deliver for people and it is key that we develop understanding to support our citizens. You can undertake the Operational Delivery Induction and further your knowledge and skills through a vast range of [development training](#) and opportunities to network wider within the [community](#). For more information about how you contribute to the delivery of public service visit the Operational Delivery profession [GOV.UK page](#).

Gaining basic Data, Digital and Technology skills (DDaT)

The DDaT profession has published [the DDaT Essentials](#) which are vital skills for senior civil servants to keep pace with digital, data and technology developments and help government provide better services for users. The

following courses will support upskilling in these vital areas.

Data

- [Data visualisation 101](#) provides good data visualisation techniques to reduce complex evidence to its core, allowing stakeholders to understand what matters. The techniques in this training will provide individuals with the techniques to produce reports that better support the needs of busy decision-makers.
- [Data quality](#) will support individuals who regularly or occasionally use data for reporting purposes. This e-learning helps individuals to consider data quality issues and equips them to have more effective discussions with data specialists.
- [Data and analysis](#) provide individuals with the skills to analyse and use open data and traditional sources of data to be able to communicate what the data tells you. Here the topic covers the risk that arise from data use as well as the issues around privacy such as data sharing and matching.

Digital

Technology

[Introducing the basics of artificial intelligence \(AI\) in government](#) will give you the basics of AI and its use in government. You will be able to describe AI in terms of machine learning and natural language processing as well as explain the role of algorithms in AI and most importantly discuss the importance of ethics and transparency in using AI

The [GDS academy](#) has a host of courses for all civil servants you can also email gds.academy@digital.cabinet-office.gov.uk for more information.

Gaining analysis skills

We don't all need to be experts in analysis but we need to know how to ask the right questions, interrogate the information we are receiving or seeing and use this insight and evidence to provide us with knowledge and better understanding. To find out more about the Analysis Function and the opportunities available to develop your skills, you can;

Being commercially aware

The Government Commercial Function is a cross-government network procuring or supporting the procurement of goods and services for the government. Using the interactive materials available on the [Civil Service Learning](#) website you can watch a short animation, test yourself and develop your commercial capabilities to ensure that the decisions you are making can help drive value and growth. [Find out more about the Government Commercial Function](#).

Being a consultant in government – The Government Consulting Hub

Have you ever wondered how the government delivers consultancy work

internally and what skills are needed? The Government Consulting Hub (GCH), based in the Cabinet Office is a cross government team providing a centre of expertise on consultancy. One of their aims is to build longer term capability in consulting skills and provide a range of training offers and programmes across all grades and levels of government. Future offers will provide opportunities to get experience in consulting projects to apply and reinforce skills learnt. For further information please get in touch: gch-skills@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

Contract management for non contract management professionals

It is essential that we all have skills to negotiate with, manage and monitor contracted suppliers effectively, to ensure the government and citizens receive the goods and services they pay for at the quality they expect. You can [sign up for the interactive foundation level online learning here](#), there are 6 modules that take 1 to 3 hours.

Developing your financial knowledge – Finance for non-finance professionals

We all have a responsibility to use public money responsibly, and competent financial management is a core skill for civil servants. There are some specific rules and conventions about how certain things are handled which ensure that policies, programmes and projects run smoothly and serve the intended purposes. The [Finance Foundations](#) learning available via the Government Finance Academy will get you started in gaining a better understanding. Finance Foundations is an introduction to the 11 Finance Skills.

Additionally, you can familiarise yourself with guidance to better equip you to manage public monies:

Understanding policy

Policy is the management of the government's role in improving the welfare, security, and prosperity of the nation to secure meaningful outcomes for citizens. The cross-government Policy Profession Unit supports civil servants in government who deliver and design public policy.

Policy making centres around 3 main activities:

- Strategy: Understanding and solving complex issues facing society
- Democracy: Carrying out the work of government with openness and accountability
- Delivery: Implementing and continuously improving policy in partnership with others

The [Policy Profession Standards](#) set out the skills and knowledge required to meet current and future policy challenges. They have been developed in consultation with subject matter experts from across professions, functions, and external partners. The standards outline the three policy profession levels: developing, practitioner and expert.

Policy profession learning

Policy profession learning comes from a range of sources, including departments, other professions, outside of government and centrally designed and delivered learning. Learning is mapped against each of the 3 levels with the majority being designed and delivered by an active community of practice. The central policy profession learning offer focuses on core learning, accredited learning and learning from each other.

- Developing (Level 1): Departments offer domain specific induction to those new to the profession whilst the [Introduction to policy course](#) is available for all as e-learning. [Knowledge Series events](#) provide a series of key foundational learning opportunities at this level from understanding your stakeholders to leadership skills. [Level 4 policy apprenticeships are available](#) for those wanting high quality structured learning interweaved with practical experience.
- Practitioner (Level 2): [The King's postgraduate programme](#) offers an exciting way to improve your capability in professional policy making skills as a mid-career policy professional. It includes modular courses on a vast array of topics from Empathy and emotions in policy making through to data analytics in policymaking. The Policy Profession also provides a series of practitioner-led [Knowledge Series events](#) at level 2, as well as a range of mentoring opportunities with other professions, academic and other public policy partners. In addition, many departments offer domain specific "Policy Schools" at mid-career level.
- Expert (Level 3) : [The Executive Masters of Public Policy](#) (EMPP), provided by London School of Economics, is our flagship co-designed and co-delivered executive programme. We also provide a series of senior practitioner led learning through our [Knowledge Series events](#) (including the "Leaders Teaching Leaders" programme) and promote fellowships with external partners (academic and learned societies in particular) and various events (such as the 4 Nations events).

If you are interested in learning more about the Profession and what it has to offer, visit the [Policy Profession website](#). You will need to register with a government email address. Alternatively you can visit the [Policy Profession Pages](#) on GOV.UK and email enquiries.mailbox@policyprofession.gov.uk to sign up for news and events.

Understanding Parliament

Regardless of your role, the work that we all do as Civil Servants is scrutinised by the UK Parliament on an ongoing basis. All departments, their ministers, and the services they provide are examined through questions, debates, and scrutiny committees. This scrutiny covers ideas for new policies and laws, through to the daily experiences of the public when accessing services.

Understanding Parliament is essential for all civil servants in order to support ministers, ensure our work is effectively communicated to the public, and develop new services that meet the needs of the public.

Find out more about Parliament through the range of training courses available on the Civil Service Learning site, and through your department's Parliamentary Branch.

Devolution and you

Do you know how devolution impacts the policies you work on or the public service that you manage? Find out more on the devolution page about how gaining a greater understanding of devolution will help you deliver more effectively for citizens across the UK using a range of learning tools available to you. Find out more by emailing devolution@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

Understanding the Civil Service

The Civil Service Code governs how all civil servants must conduct themselves. Developing an understanding of the Code is a key part of induction training for new civil servants, and other tailored training is available to civil servants as required. The Civil Service Code is available online at the following link: [Understanding the Civil Service](#)

Advising, briefing and drafting

We all have a duty to ensure that ministers, senior officials and organisational leaders are briefed and informed in a concise manner. It is crucial that your writing is accurate, brief and clear and the information you provide is prepared in the correct way.

Navigate legal processes – Government Legal Department (GLD)

You don't need to be a lawyer to understand the legislation that affects how we work across government. Gaining a basic understanding of legal principles is available at your fingertips through the GLD- legal platform.