

CEDR CASEWORKER COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

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Good practices, or 'competencies', are foundational professional strengths that help all caseworkers to do their job well. Competencies underpin the way in which a caseworker approaches a situation, driving their behaviour and guiding their level of success.

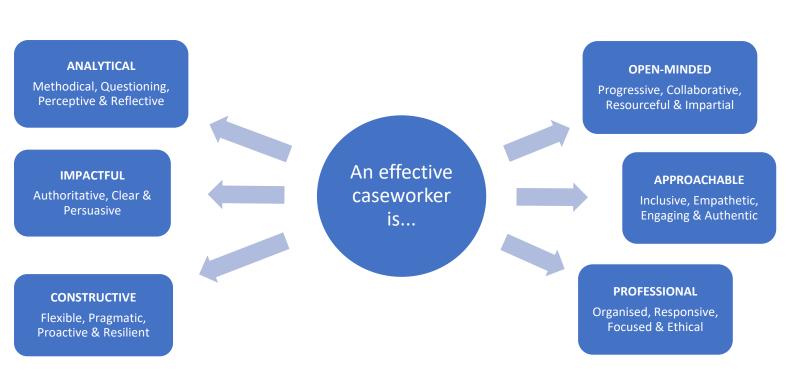
In delivering its consumer dispute resolution services across a wide range of industries and sectors, CEDR seeks to adhere to, and where possible build upon, the competencies set out in the Ombudsman Association's Caseworker Competency Framework, which was created in 2018 and sets out what is considered to be good practice in the way in which caseworkers interact with others and make decisions.

CEDR's caseworkers

CEDR supports its service users in many different ways. A caseworker is a member of staff who has a direct role in helping to resolve a complaint. This includes staff members who give advice, carry out investigations and make decisions on cases.

Caseworkers at CEDR can be distinguished into two groups: **administrative caseworkers**, who are those engaged in the administration of cases; and **adjudicative caseworkers**, comprising the adjudicators, conciliators, arbitrators and other neutrals who carry out case investigations and evaluate the merits of cases in order to reach decisions.

Complaints referred to CEDR may be resolved by mutual agreement between the parties, in which case users will have contact with perhaps one administrative caseworker. Alternatively, a complaint may involve a full investigative adjudication and assessment of its merits, where an adjudicative caseworker will be involved. Different CEDR caseworkers will become involved depending on the unique circumstances of each case.





Core competency 1: ANALYTICAL

An effective caseworker critically examines information and issues to arrive at well-reasoned and appropriate decisions that stand up to scrutiny.

	Methodical	Questioning	Perceptive	Reflective
Administrative caseworkers	 Carries out tasks systematically Distils complex problems into manageable parts Gathers and assimilates information efficiently Engages with internal expert advisers where relevant Draws reasonable conclusions from complicated or incomplete data in making an initial assessment 	 Looks at problems and evidence with a critical eye Probes to identify the key issues, separating opinion from fact at the intake stage Actively listens and clarifies understanding Identifies knowledge gaps and seeks to address them, where appropriate Checks the meaning and source of information, where appropriate 	 Considers problems in their wider organisational and external contexts Identifies and reports trends across data and experiences Understands when to escalate issues or seek input Recognises the validity, relevance and limitations of different types of evidence Detects and guards against risks 	 Monitors progress against plans and objectives Identifies and learns from mistakes Measures and evaluates the success of a Seeks feedback and acts upon it in a timely manner Considers how others within or outside CEDR might benefit from learnings
Adjudicative caseworkers	 Carries out a systematic and detailed investigation of the evidence and law Distils complex information into manageable parts Understands and assimilates information efficiently Draws reasonable conclusions from complicated or incomplete data in making decisions Applies sound and comprehensive reasoning to reach logical decisions 	 Looks at problems and evidence with a critical eye Probes to identify the key issues, separating opinion from fact at the investigation and decision-making stages Identifies knowledge gaps and seeks to address them by requesting further evidence Checks the meaning and source of information where appropriate 2 	 Considers 'the bigger picture', looking at problems in wider organisational and external contexts Identifies and reports trends across data and experiences Understands when to escalate issues or seek input Recognises the validity, relevance and limitations of different types of evidence Detects and guards against risks 	 Monitors performance against objectives Identifies and learns from mistakes Measures and evaluates the success of a decision or approach Seeks feedback and acts upon it in a timely manner Considers how others within or outside CEDR might benefit from learnings



Core competency 2: IMPACTFUL

An effective caseworker uses their communication skills to influence a diverse range of people, building consensus and understanding.

	Clear	Persuasive	Authoritative
Administrative caseworkers	 Uses plain language that is easy to understand Communicates complex issues in a concise and straightforward manner 	 Adjusts communication tone and style to suit the audience Presents information in a way that is evidence- 	 Quickly builds credibility Displays confidence in own ability and explanation of
	 Drafts documents in Plain English Provides explanations before misunderstandings occur 	 based and convincing Strikes a sound balance between directness and diplomacy Communicates using appropriate methods and timing 	process Interacts confidently with others and appropriately articulates points of view Makes robust decisions, as
			appropriate for role level and case stage
Adjudicative caseworkers	 Uses clear and plain language that is easy to understand for a consumer audience Avoids jargon where possible Communicates complex issues in a concise and straightforward manner Drafts well-structured, comprehensible decisions in Plain English Provides explanations before misunderstandings occur 	 Adjusts communication tone and style to suit the audience Presents information in a way that is evidence-based and convincing Strikes a sound balance between directness and diplomacy Communicates using appropriate language and tone 	 Quickly builds credibility Displays confidence in own ability and decision-making Clearly explains the rationale for decisions or actions Interacts confidently with others and appropriately articulates points of view Makes robust decisions



Core competency 3: CONSTRUCTIVE

An effective caseworker successfully navigates changing and sometimes challenging environments to respond dynamically to service users' needs and achieve personal and organisational goals.

	Flexible	Pragmatic	Proactive	Resilient
Administrative caseworkers	 Adjusts priorities to reflect the demands of customers, both internal and external Shows awareness of how an approach impacts on others and adapts accordingly Embraces change and seeks opportunities to learn from it Responds nimbly to changing work practices and situations Is willing to take on new tasks or roles 	 Reaches sustainable initial assessments, taking into account their practical implications Provides usable results and outputs Undertakes initial assessments of appropriate depth relative to all the circumstances 	 Takes initiative in achieving and improving outcomes Takes ownership of intake tasks Thinks ahead and prepares for the future 	 Shows tenacity in pursuing goals and managing workload Accepts that situations are sometimes uncertain and continues to strive for excellence despite this Knows when to ask for help and support Deals calmly with conflict and meets the challenges of difficult/complex complaints
Adjudicative caseworkers	 Shows awareness of how an approach impacts on others and adapts accordingly Embraces change and seeks opportunities to learn from it Responds nimbly to changing work practices and situations Is willing to take on new tasks or roles 	 Reaches realistic and sustainable decisions, taking into account their practical implications Provides usable results and outputs Looks for mutually beneficial solutions Undertakes investigations of appropriate depth relative to all the circumstances 	 Takes initiative in achieving and improving outcomes Takes ownership of tasks and decisions Thinks ahead and prepares for the future 	 Shows tenacity in pursuing goals and managing workload Accepts that situations are sometimes uncertain and continues to strive for excellence despite this Knows when to ask for help and support Deals calmly with conflict and meets the challenges of difficult/complex complaints



Core competency 4: APPROACHABLE

An effective caseworker creates an open and reassuring culture to earn the trust of others and generate confidence in the case-handling process.

	Inclusive	Empathetic	Engaging	Authentic
Administrative caseworkers	 Treats others with courtesy, dignity and respect at all times Recognises diversity and difference Adopts an open and appropriate communication style Works to make the service accessible to all Contributes to a positive organisational culture 	 Sees things from other people's perspectives, recognising and accounting for the barriers they might face Shows sensitivity, discretion and tolerance towards others Quickly builds trust and rapport Delivers difficult messages with 	 Approaches situations with enthusiasm, conviction and positivity Presents information on process in a way that fosters genuine understanding Uses relevant illustrations and comparisons to explain complex concepts 	Acts with integrity, openness and honesty Leads by example Is sincere and candid in interactions with others Sets high personal standards
Adjudicative caseworkers	 Treats others with courtesy, dignity and respect at all times Recognises diversity and difference Adopts an open and appropriate communication style Works to make the service accessible to all Contributes to a positive organisational culture 	tact and sensitivity • Sees things from other people's perspectives, recognising and accounting for the barriers they might face • Shows sensitivity, discretion and tolerance towards others • Quickly builds trust and rapport • Delivers difficult messages with tact and sensitivity	Approaches situations with enthusiasm, conviction and positivity Presents decisions in a way that fosters genuine understanding Uses relevant illustrations and comparisons to explain complex concepts	Acts with integrity, openness and honesty Leads by example Is sincere and candid in interactions with others Sets high personal standards



Core competency 5: OPEN-MINDED

An effective caseworker approaches problems and new ideas without prejudgement to generate fair solutions that maximise the potential of available resources.

	Progressive	Collaborative	Resourceful	Impartial
Administrative caseworkers	 Embraces innovation and looks for ways to get the most from new approaches Identifies and suggests improvements to ways of working Keeps abreast of relevant 	 Develops strong working relationships and networks Seeks input and insights from others Works effectively in a team Delivers timely and 	 Develops options and considers alternatives Weighs costs and benefits of possible approaches, taking into account the interests of all parties, to 	 Acts with neutrality and objectivity Is aware of how decisions are affected by unconscious bias Is able to make difficult or unpopular decisions at
	professional developments	constructive feedback to others • Shares	maximise the effectiveness of the process • Manages	the intake stages when necessary
		knowledge	limited resources efficiently to	
			achieve results	
Adjudicative caseworkers	Embraces innovation and looks for ways to get the most	Develops strong working relationships and networks	Develops options and considers alternatives	 Acts with neutrality and objectivity Is aware of how
	from new approaches Identifies and suggests improvements to	 Seeks input and insights from others Works effectively in a 	 Weighs costs and benefits of possible approaches, taking into 	decisions are affected by unconscious bias and openly interrogates
	 ways of working Keeps abreast of relevant professional developments 	team • Delivers timely and constructive feedback to	account the interests of all parties, to maximise the effectiveness of	decision- making processes to minimise its impact
		others • Shares knowledge	the process Manages limited resources efficiently to achieve results	Is able to make difficult or unpopular decisions when necessary



Core competency 6: PROFESSIONAL

An effective caseworker strives for excellence in all their individual and team endeavours to meet other people's expectations and deliver a high-quality service.

	Organised	Responsive	Focused	Ethical
Administrative caseworkers	 Plans and prioritises workload effectively Follows relevant systems, processes and policies Keeps complete and clear records of all interactions Successfully manages interconnected processes 	 Delivers on promises and meets agreed deadlines Responds to others in a timely manner Demonstrates focus on impartiality Operates at pace Revisits plans when circumstances change 	 Sets objectives and has direction Pursues personal and organisational goals with energy and determination Shows commitment to and pride in high quality service delivery Strives for continuous improvement 	Upholds CEDR's values Acts in accordance with fundamental principles such as fairness, equality and respect for individual rights Pursues justice in both outcomes and processes at the intake
Adjudicative caseworkers	 Plans and prioritises workload effectively Follows relevant systems, processes and policies Keeps complete and clear records of decisions Successfully manages interconnected processes 	 Delivers on promises and meets agreed deadlines Responds to others in a timely manner Demonstrates focus on impartiality Operates at pace Revisits plans when circumstances change 	 Sets objectives and has direction Pursues personal and organisational goals with energy and determination Shows commitment to and pride in high quality service delivery Strives for continuous improvement 	stages Upholds CEDR's values Acts in accordance with fundamental principles such as fairness, equality and respect for individual rights Pursues justice in both outcomes and processes