



# NHS Director Competencies:

## A maturity matrix to support development and improvement

Good Governance Institute

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PROGRESS LEVELS 	0	1 APPOINTABLE	2 EARLY PROGRESS	3 FT LEVEL	4 MATURITY	5 EXEMPLAR
KEY ELEMENTS 	No	Meets the standard for appointment to an NHS Trust board	Demonstrates application of competencies to add value to the board	Meets the level to be part of board passing Monitor assessment	Proven success in independent director role. Appointable to an FT board	Demonstrates leadership and added value at the highest level
<b>UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE</b> directors must understand their role within a corporate board and their governance and legal responsibilities.		Able to articulate governance and legal responsibilities of directors, and how governance works in an NHS organisation	Able to use constructive challenge in a way that is valued by colleagues	Able to explain BAF and provide examples without reference to documents	Can show how governance tools or concepts, such as risk appetite, have been used to improve governance in own organisation	Accepted expert on governance and involved in commenting or teaching around role of board
<b>TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE</b> anyone sitting on a board should have a sound and relevant knowledge of the law, finance, accountancy and compliances as it effects their organisation and role		Knowledge and experience of appropriate legal issues. Able to read and explain a set of accounts. Able to understand data and metrics	Able to describe compliance/regulation regimes for healthcare organisations. Understands relevant healthcare legislation	Understands and can explain concepts such as EBITA, and why these are important. Knowledgeable about Monitor's governance codes and FT authorisation process	High level of relevant professional experience, e.g. commercial law, and board level experience in complex, large-scale organisation	Has led the board of complex organisation, or has had a board level leadership role in significant national/international enterprise
<b>UNDERSTANDING THE ORGANISATION AND THE MARKET</b> directors working in the NHS must understand the strategy and services of their own organisation, and be knowledgeable about national policy as it effects healthcare.		Can describe the various types of NHS organisation and their functions/purpose	Can comprehensively describe own organisation, local healthcare economy and principle market features. Understands main healthcare processes of organisation and funding streams	Fully conversant with IBP and is able to describe how this was constructed. Would be confident to represent organisation. Knowledgeable about significant care pathways	Significant understanding of local health and social care market, including development aspirations of main stakeholders and local political forces	A national-level expert in a main specialism of the organisation, or in relevant management discipline in healthcare
<b>STRATEGIC THINKING</b> the ability to focus on strategy is a key factor of working on a board.		Able to distinguish strategic from operational issues. Understands main policy strands affecting health and social care	Able to articulate local strategy and describe how it was developed. Fully conversant with policy environment	Able to describe risk environment to strategy, and relevant controls to these risks	Has contributed to reviews of strategic direction. Demonstrates insight and understanding of macro themes of the UK's healthcare development and policy and can apply this knowledge to local context	Has been intimately involved in strategic development of market, or directed national-level strategic initiatives
<b>VOCATIONAL SKILLS</b> directors need to have a number of skills related to the working methods.		Able to digest and understand board papers. Experience of working in a senior team. Can understand a brief around a complex issue	Is able to Chair committee and contribute to quasi-judicial proceedings. Can make relevant challenge points around main areas of board work. Able to explain complex issues crisply. Quickly understands key points within a complex argument	Outputs from committees chaired demonstrate reason and logic, and are able to contribute as evidence of assurance for the organisation. Is able to rapidly review complex papers, such as business cases and can identify and test key points	Is able to dissect and offer commentary on complex papers, strategies and reports. Provides the board with stability and support by being able to reference back to previous decisions	Has successfully contributed to multiple boards of significant organisations over a period of at least a decade
<b>BEHAVIOURS</b> directors need to have personal gravitas and work in a professional manner.		Has gravitas. Demonstrates listening skills and is able to crisply and succinctly contribute relevant points to discussion	Trusted by colleagues for personal integrity. Self-aware and politically savvy. Has natural authority. Good powers of persuasion	Able to answer detailed questions in board-to-board situation in clear, straight-forward manner. Unflappable under pressure	Has confidence to provide direct, relevant feedback to colleagues and authority/credibility in that such feedback is accepted as useful. Trusted by colleagues as a sounding board	Can withstand considerable personal and professional pressure. Imparts confidence and is considered a peer by national-level leaders
<b>LEADERSHIP CALIBRE</b> directors should have strong influencing skills, good powers of judgement, insight and vision, and good listening skills.		Experience of having held a senior position	Has been able to exert influence and to persuade through reasoned argument. Discusses ideas rather than examples. Has achieved own PDP plan objectives for last year	Would be able to deputise for any other non-executive director if required	Has chaired board committee, or acted as SID, or has taken on a specific leadership assignment on behalf of Trust (e.g. partnership board membership)	Appointable as Chair of NHS Foundation Trust or similar. Has been trusted by peers outside of own organisation with a leadership role