

Six Culture Challenges

Workshop Resource

A working document for housing leadership teams
preparing for the Competence and Conduct Standard

competence-conduct.org
October 2026

A workshop resource for leadership teams

Use it as a workshop tool

Work through one or two challenges per session with your leadership team. Each challenge has a summary, a starting point, and three discussion questions designed for 15-20 minutes of conversation.

Use it as a briefing document

Share it with your board or executive team before a strategy session on the standard. The summaries distil the key tensions - the discussion questions give the group a structured way in.

Use it as a gap analysis starter

For each challenge, ask: where are we now? The discussion questions are designed to surface honest assessment. The disagreement between team members is usually the most valuable output



01

Evidencing culture change - not just training delivery

WHAT MAKES THIS COMPLEX

The standard asks for evidence that staff development translates into outcomes - not just attendance records. Most providers can show who attended what training. Fewer can show what changed as a result. The gap between 'we delivered the training' and 'here is what changed because of it' is where most providers will need to do new thinking.

A STARTING POINT

Map your current L&D reporting against the evidence the Regulator is likely to expect. If your reports show inputs (who attended what) but not outcomes (what changed as a result), that gap is your first priority. Resident feedback, complaint trends, and tenant satisfaction data are the closest most providers already have to culture outcome measures - the challenge is connecting them to your development programmes.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 Can you currently show that any training programme changed how people behave, not just what they know?
- 2 What data do you already collect that could serve as evidence of culture outcomes?
- 3 Who would need to be involved in connecting L&D activity to resident experience measures?

02

Defining professional behaviours when the Regulator won't provide definitive guidelines

WHAT MAKES THIS COMPLEX

The RSH will not provide a single framework of expected behaviours. Each organisation must determine what competence and conduct looks like for its own context and services. Qualifications have clear criteria. Behaviours don't. Defining what 'good conduct' means in practice - specific enough to be meaningful, broad enough to apply across diverse roles, and grounded enough to be evidenced - is a genuinely difficult piece of work.

A STARTING POINT

Test what you already have. Ask five resident-facing colleagues to describe the behaviours expected of them - without looking anything up. If the answers are consistent and grounded in real experience, that is a strong foundation to build on. If they vary widely, that is useful information about where to focus.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

How was your current code of conduct developed? Does it reflect your organisation's actual culture and context?

2

If you asked five resident-facing colleagues right now, would they give consistent answers about expected behaviours?

3

What would 'embedded' look like in practice - beyond a signed document at induction?



03

Giving residents genuine influence over your code of conduct

WHAT MAKES THIS COMPLEX

The standard explicitly requires that residents have meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise the code of conduct. Consultation can range from reviewing a finished document to shaping something from the beginning. The standard is explicit that it expects residents to have shaped the code of conduct - not just reviewed it.

A STARTING POINT

Review how your current code of conduct was developed. If residents were involved, at what stage? The earlier residents are part of the conversation, the closer the process sits to what the standard describes as meaningful influence. Reviewing a finished document and shaping one from the start are different things - the standard is clear about which it expects.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 At what stage were residents involved in developing your current code of conduct?
- 2 What would genuine influence - not just consultation - look like in your organisation?
- 3 How do you currently capture and act on residents' experience of staff conduct?

04

The risk of treating culture change as a compliance exercise

WHAT MAKES THIS COMPLEX

The standard was designed to drive culture change - the government's consultation response explicitly states it aims to 'drive the culture change necessary to eradicate unprofessional attitudes and stigma.' The risk is that providers build an impressive compliance architecture around the standard without the underlying culture shifting. The Regulator, taking an assurance-based approach, will be looking beyond the documentation.

A STARTING POINT

Ask your board a simple question: are we preparing for this standard as a compliance exercise or as a culture change programme? If the honest answer is compliance, the approach will need to shift. Compliance produces documentation. Culture change produces different resident experiences. The Regulator will be asking about the latter.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

If you are being honest, is your current preparation more compliance-focused or culture-focused?

2

What would a resident notice if your culture work succeeded? What would they notice if only the paperwork changed?

3

How would you know the difference between a well-documented process and a genuinely embedded culture?



05

Culture change takes years - but the requirements start in October 2026

WHAT MAKES THIS COMPLEX

Research consistently suggests that meaningful culture change takes three to five years. The broader culture and behaviour requirements do not have a separate transition period - they apply from October 2026. The Regulator is unlikely to expect complete transformation by then, but it will expect to see that the work has started, that there is a credible plan, and that progress is demonstrable.

A STARTING POINT

If you have not already, separate the qualifications workstream and the culture workstream explicitly. Give the culture work its own plan, its own timeline, its own leadership. It does not need to be finished by October 2026 - but it does need to be visibly underway, with clear milestones and a way of measuring progress.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Do you have a distinct culture workstream, or is culture change bundled into the qualifications programme?

2

What would 'visibly underway' look like to the Regulator if they asked today?

3

Is the urgency of qualifications crowding out the culture work?



06

Making this a cross-functional priority - not isolated to HR functions

WHAT MAKES THIS COMPLEX

The standard places obligations on the provider as a whole. Embedding a code of conduct requires operational managers. Evidencing culture change requires data from resident-facing teams. Giving residents genuine influence requires collaboration with engagement teams. Getting the board ready requires governance input. Cross-functional culture change requires more than one function can deliver alone, regardless of how capable that function is.

A STARTING POINT

Review who currently owns your Competence and Conduct Standard preparation. If it sits entirely within one function, consider whether the culture and behaviour workstream needs a cross-functional steering group with senior leadership sponsorship. This does not mean creating bureaucracy - it means ensuring the people who will need to embed, evidence, and sustain the culture work are part of shaping it.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

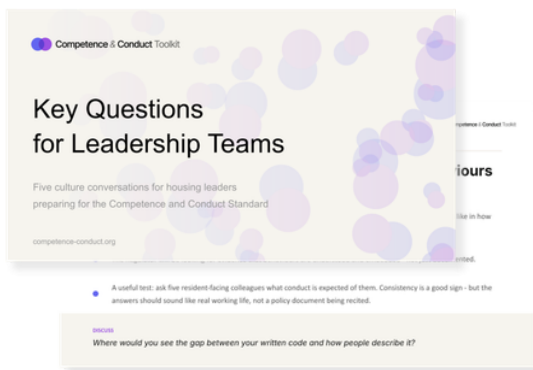
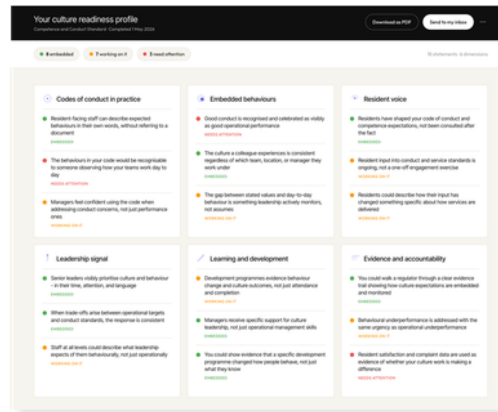
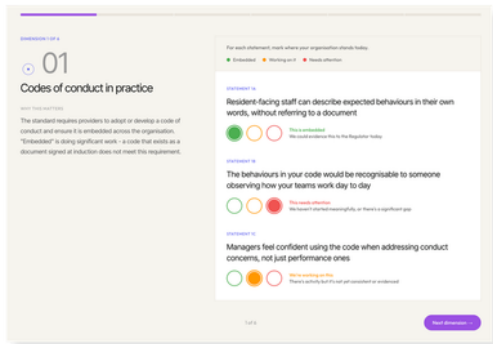
- 1 Who currently owns your Competence and Conduct Standard preparation? Is it one function or cross-functional?
- 2 Which functions would need to be involved for culture change to succeed - beyond HR and L&D?
- 3 Does the culture workstream have senior leadership sponsorship with real mandate and resource?

Other useful resources

Culture Readiness Diagnostic

A structured self-assessment across six culture dimensions of the standard. Takes about 5 minutes. Designed for leadership teams.

Try the assessment



Key Questions for Leadership Teams

Five culture questions designed as conversation starters for boards and executive teams.

Get the slide deck

The Full Standard Breakdown

What the Competence and Conduct Standard requires on culture, behaviour, and conduct - and what it deliberately does not prescribe.

Read Standards Summary