



Building a stronger resilience workforce through National Occupational Standards

July 2026

Foreword

In an increasingly complex and unpredictable world, the UK's risk landscape continues to evolve, with new challenges threatening the safety and wellbeing of our communities. To strengthen resilience, we must continue to build the capability needed to anticipate, prepare for, respond to and recover from adverse events.

The Resilience & Emergencies National Occupational Standards (NOS) provide a vital framework to support this effort. These employer-led standards set the benchmark for competence, helping to standardise and strengthen the UK's resilience workforce to a nationally recognised level. They provide the foundations for building skills capacity across our nations and regions, enabling us to mitigate the risks posed by a range of disruptive challenges.

Building on the initial suite of standards, this updated edition introduces four new standards with a dedicated focus on strategic resilience leadership. Together, the expanded suite supports resilience professionals at operational, tactical and strategic levels, helping organisations develop the skills and leadership needed to meet increasingly complex and interconnected challenges.

Developed with input from over 375 experts across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, the NOS will guide recruitment, training and performance management for organisations involved in mitigating, planning and responding to emergencies and crises, helping to strengthen resilience across the UK.

Rosehanna Chowdhury, CEO
UK Resilience Academy



What is resilience?

Resilience has been defined as having a system of understanding, mitigating, planning and responding to emergencies or adverse events, ensuring there are frameworks, systems and capabilities in place which underpin the UK's resilience to civil contingencies risks.

Resilience is needed to ensure society has a way to predict and prevent adverse events, and to make sure that they are ready to respond if they do happen.

Building the capacity and capability of those working within and across the wider resilience sector will be the primary objective of the Resilience Academy, supporting resilience practitioners in the planning for and the management of a range of crises and adverse events.

Training and development programmes will be based on **National Occupational Standards** to ensure that individuals working across the resilience sector have the required knowledge and skills to enable them to competently carry out their roles.

The UK Resilience Academy defines the resilience professional as an individual working within the sector who is able to:



adopt a whole-of-society approach, building partnerships, empowering stakeholders and ensuring accountability



work collectively to understand the complex and dynamic systems they operate in, mitigating and anticipating risks where possible



develop policy frameworks, capabilities and co-ordinate arrangements so that they are prepared for disruptive events



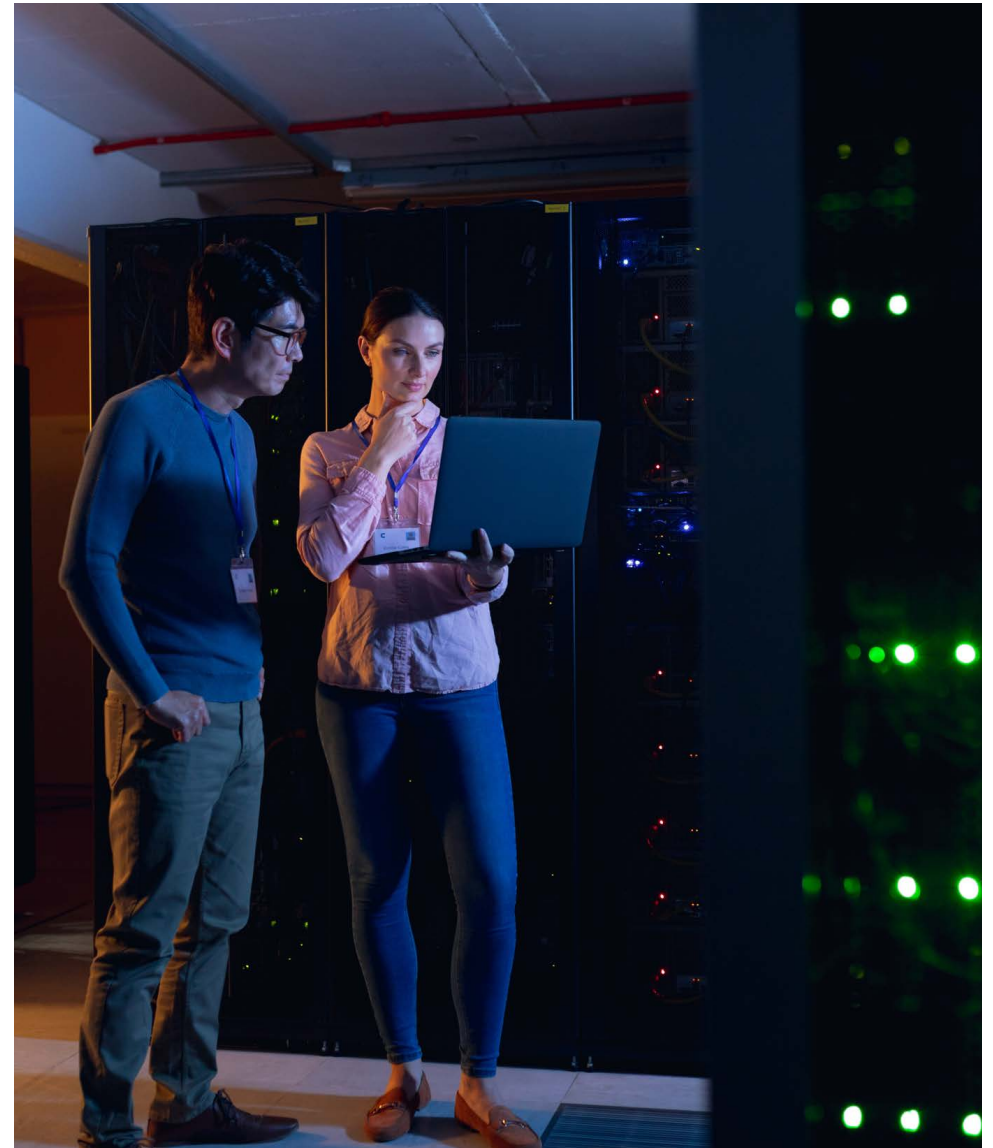
respond swiftly and effectively to protect people, addressing their needs while supporting the resilient recovery of organisations, businesses, and communities



evaluate and continuously improve their practice

National Occupational Standards

- National Occupational Standards (NOS) describe the skills, knowledge and understanding needed to undertake a particular task or job to a nationally recognised level of competence.
- They focus on what the person needs to be able to do, as well as what knowledge and understanding they must have to work effectively.
- Each National Occupational Standard describes the minimum standard to which an individual is expected to work in a given occupation and contains an agreed set of knowledge, understanding and performance criteria that must be met, in order for someone to be deemed competent.
- Developed by expert groups, each NOS undergoes a rigorous nationally determined UK wide process to achieve their status and are approved for use by a panel that includes representation from each of the four nations (England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland).



National Occupational Standards and the Resilience Workforce

In response to the need to build capacity across government, industry and civil society to strengthen the UK's resilience, a review of the existing civil contingencies suite of NOS has been undertaken.

This review has resulted in a suite of newly refreshed NOS which apply across the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, outlining the knowledge and skills required by individuals to perform effectively in any given role.

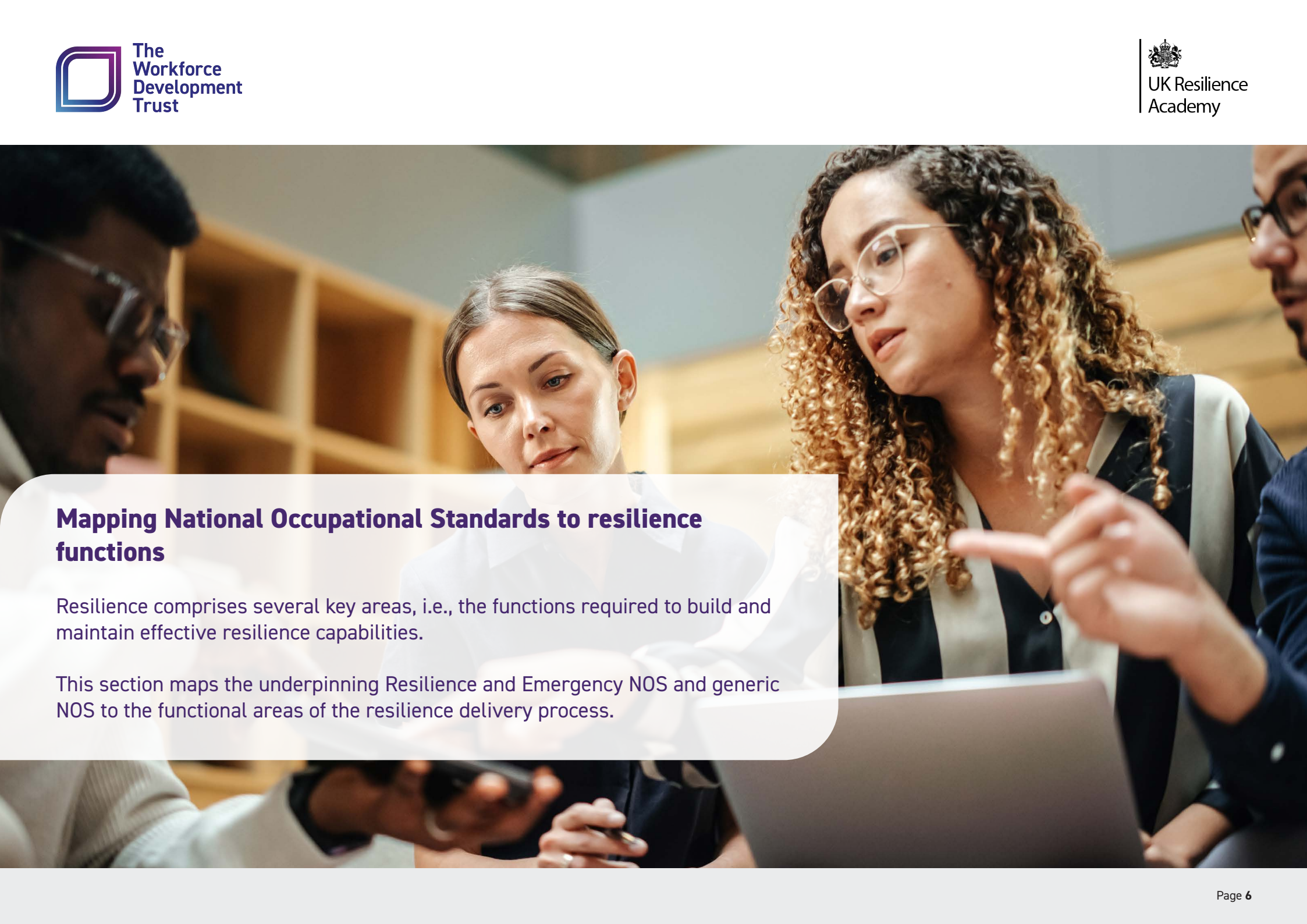
The Resilience and Emergency NOS can be utilised in a number of ways to support the growth and development of a sustainable resilience workforce in helping to attract, recruit and retain individuals, and to embed a consistent and standardised UK wide approach to resilience.

These include:

- providing a **clear** and **nationally agreed articulation** of the competences required to underpin the process of resilience delivery, used as measure of **competence** within the workplace
- assisting in the **development** of **job descriptions, roles, role redesign, service design** and organisational **workforce planning**
- supporting **performance management** and **appraisals processes** within the workplace
- assisting **skills assessment**, identifying **skills gaps** of areas for **professional development** and supporting **career progression**
- supporting **managers** and **individuals** to help **identify progression routes** and to **identify** the **education** and **training** required to allow an individual to undertake **additional** activities
- supporting the **development** of resilience **career pathways** aiding **training** and **skills analysis**
- helping **commissioners** to **articulate** the **education** and **training** required by individuals working in the resilience workforce
- informing the **design** and **delivery** of **education** and **training** programmes
- providing guidelines for the **development** of **qualifications, certification** and **accreditation**

Alignment with the NOS is essential for developing competency-based job roles, which ensures standardisation and consistency in quality delivery.

The core Resilience and Emergency NOS serve as the foundation, while a range of generic NOS also support the resilience function and are applicable across a range of roles and sectors.



Mapping National Occupational Standards to resilience functions

Resilience comprises several key areas, i.e., the functions required to build and maintain effective resilience capabilities.

This section maps the underpinning Resilience and Emergency NOS and generic NOS to the functional areas of the resilience delivery process.

Resilience functional area	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
 Anticipate and Assess Contexts and risks: data, analysis, insight, foresight and assessment	Work with partners and stakeholders Manage and share information for decision-making in resilience and emergencies Anticipate and assess the risk of emergencies Use strategic foresight to enhance long-term organisational and societal resilience Lead the identification and management of systemic and chronic risks Direct the financial and economic dimensions of resilience Work strategically to plan and prepare for incidents and emergencies	Plan, implement and manage systems for the exchange of sensitive information, data and intelligence Interrogate and use management information to inform board decisions

Resilience functional area	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
 Prevent Prevent or reduce risks	Work with partners and stakeholders Work with communities to raise risk awareness, increase preparedness and resilience Manage and share information for decision-making in resilience and emergencies Anticipate and assess the risk of emergencies Evaluate and improve response and recovery capabilities, arrangements and plans Lead the identification and management of systemic and chronic risks	Develop knowledge and communicate information Evaluate your organisation's operating environment Develop your organisation's vision, strategies and business plans Develop operational plans and manage risks Manage the environmental and social impacts of your work Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements Promote equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion in your organisation Develop your organisation's values and culture Lead meetings to achieve objectives Develop and maintain your professional connections Interrogate and use management information to inform board decisions Review and support the management of risks for the organisation Develop and manage multi-agency partnerships

Resilience functional area	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
 Prepare - Emergency and recovery planning - Response capability development a. resilience learning, training and development b. testing and validating readiness, response and recovery capabilities - Monitoring and readiness	Work with partners and stakeholders Develop response and recovery capabilities, arrangements and plans Work with communities to raise risk awareness, increase preparedness and resilience Promote business continuity management Work strategically to plan and prepare for incidents and emergencies	Develop your knowledge, skills and competence to meet the requirements of your work Provide leadership to your team Develop, maintain and evaluate business continuity plans Support employees' learning and development Develop training sessions Prepare and develop resources to support training Develop and implement health and safety emergency response systems and procedures Provide healthy, safe and secure working environments and practices Identify, assess and control health and safety risks Plan, organise and monitor volunteering activities Plan the workforce Manage and quality assure work in your team Manage programmes of work or projects Manage yourself to achieve your work and personal objectives

Resilience functional area	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
 Respond - Incident planning and strategy - Managing the incident system - Managing the continuity of business functions, services and products - Delivering the response - Supporting the response - Recording the incident - Evaluation and accountability	Respond to emergencies Manage and share information for decision-making in resilience and emergencies Develop response and recovery capabilities, arrangements and plans Communicate with individuals and communities to enable early action and response Promote business continuity management Provide care and assistance to meet the immediate and longer term needs of people impacted by emergencies	Identify, assess and control health and safety risks Manage physical resources Manage financial resources Lead your organisation Lead and motivate volunteers Manage a project Build teams and allocate work to team members Manage continuous improvement of overall performance of your organisation Ensure an effective approach to project and process evaluation Recruit, induct and retain employees into their roles Manage budgets
 Recover - Transition to business as usual and business recovery - Stabilisation - Delivering and facilitating the recovery - Evaluation and accountability of recovery	Develop response and recovery capabilities, arrangements and plans Promote business continuity management Manage recovery programmes or workstreams Evaluate and improve response and recovery capabilities arrangements and plans Provide care and assistance to meet the immediate and longer term needs of people impacted by emergencies	Develop your organisation's vision, strategies and business plans Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements Manage business processes Manage programmes of work or projects Evaluate your organisation's operating environment Develop, maintain and evaluate business continuity plans Manage continuous improvement of overall performance of your organisation Develop and manage multi-agency partnerships

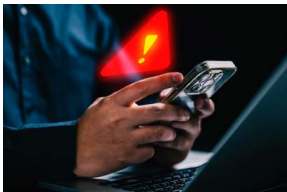
Mapping National Occupational Standards to role types

Resilience professionals work in a number of different types of roles. In addition to mapping the core Resilience and Emergency NOS and generic NOS to functional areas, the NOS can also be aligned to the role types, as outlined in this section.

Role type	Role descriptor	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
Response 	Those who step up to respond during an emergency or crisis, including operational, tactical, and strategic roles. These also include those supporting through communications, information management and specialist technical advice.	Work with partners and stakeholders Manage and share information for decision-making in resilience and emergencies Respond to emergencies Provide care and assistance to meet the immediate and longer-term needs of people impacted by emergencies Communicate with individuals and communities to enable early action and response Work with communities to raise risk awareness, increase preparedness and resilience	Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory and ethical and social requirements Develop and implement health and safety emergency response systems and procedures Identify, assess and control health and safety risks Manage physical resources Provide healthy, safe and secure working environments and practices Interrogate and use management information to inform board decisions

Role type	Role descriptor	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
Capability development 	Those who define and assure resilience capabilities through learning, training and development, and by using exercises to test and validate them.	Work with partners and stakeholders Work with communities to raise risk awareness, increase preparedness and resilience	Develop your skills, knowledge and competence to meet the requirements of your work Develop and maintain your professional connections Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements Promote equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion in your organisation Develop knowledge and communicate information Support employees' learning and development Prepare and develop resources to support learning Develop training sessions

Role type	Role descriptor	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
Emergency and recovery planning 	Those who plan the emergency response to disruptive events on people, property, infrastructure and the environment, and who plan the recovery from the impacts.	Work with partners and stakeholders Develop response and recovery capabilities, arrangements and plans Manage recovery programmes or workstreams Evaluate and improve response and recovery capabilities, arrangements and plans Work strategically to plan and prepare for incidents and emergencies	Develop and manage multi-agency partnerships Develop and implement health and safety emergency response systems and procedures Manage the environmental and social impacts of your work Evaluate your organisation's operating environment Develop, maintain and evaluate business continuity plans Manage programmes of work or projects Ensure an effective approach to project and process evaluation
Organisational resilience and continuity 	Those who enable a resilience culture, including leadership, systems, and governance. These people identify and protect critical functions, services and products, and plan to ensure continuity and swift recovery.	Work with partners and stakeholders Promote business continuity management Evaluate and improve response and recovery capabilities, arrangements and plans Work strategically to plan and prepare for incidents and emergencies	Develop and manage multi-agency partnerships Provide leadership to your team Ensure compliance with legal, regulatory, ethical and social requirements Evaluate your organisation's operating environment Develop operational plans and manage risks Develop your organisation's values and culture Develop, maintain and evaluate business continuity plans

Role type	Role descriptor	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
Risk reduction 	Those who reduce the frequency and magnitude of hazards or threats, or the susceptibility of people, assets and systems. For example, these people may design and implement flood defenses, or undertake research and development for cyber security protection, to reduce the likelihood and scale of emergencies or crises.	Manage and share information for decision-making in resilience and emergencies Anticipate and assess the risk of emergencies Work with communities to raise risk awareness, increase preparedness and resilience Lead the identification and management of systemic and chronic risks	Develop knowledge and communicate information Identify, assess and control health and safety risks Develop operational plans and manage risks Plan, implement and manage systems for the exchange of sensitive information, data and intelligence Review and support the management of risks for the organisation

Role type	Role descriptor	Core Resilience and Emergency NOS	Generic NOS
Context and risk analysis and foresight 	Those who gather data, analyse, model, assess and monitor the contexts in which risks occur, and the risks themselves.	Manage and share information for decision-making in resilience and emergencies Anticipate and assess the risk of emergencies Use strategic foresight to enhance long-term organisational and societal resilience Lead the identification and management of systemic and chronic risks Direct the financial and economic dimensions of resilience Work strategically to plan and prepare for incidents and emergencies	Plan, implement and manage systems for the exchange of sensitive information, data and intelligence Interrogate and use management information to inform board decisions

The Resilience and Emergency NOS will support resilience workforce transformation, helping to increase the flexibility of roles across the resilience workforce; enable the identification of suitable training and education to support the ongoing development of individuals, and help to improve recruitment and retention, supporting opportunities for career progression.

They enable the development of new roles in response to changing service demands and changes in service delivery, and alongside new methods of delivery of education and training.

Identification of the competences which underpin the functions and roles within the resilience sector, articulate clearly the skills and knowledge required, helping to ensure the quality, efficacy and sustainability of resilience delivery.

For further information on how the Resilience and Emergency NOS can be used by individuals, strategic, operational and recruiting managers in practice, please access the following guides:

- Toolkit for HR and line managers
- Toolkit for learning & development managers



Contact

The Workforce Development Trust:
wdtrust.org.uk/nos-for-resilience-and-emergencies

UK Resilience Academy
ukresilienceacademy.org/develop