National Skills Academy of Social Care	
Nature of the Engagement	NSA Social Care embarked upon a programme to identify and develop leaders of the future from their graduate population. MCW were commissioned to develop a graduate assessment centre. The Academy has been set up as part of a wider effort to develop the profile of the Social Care Network and in this instance to promote excellent in the provision of management and leadership development. This project was the Academy's first graduate recruitment scheme designed to develop the leaders of the future within the Social Care arena.
Key Stakeholders & their challenges	Like many of MCW's engagements in the public and not-for-profit sectors, this project involved a number of different stakeholders, whose requirements needed to be managed simultaneously. In this instance these included: • National Skills Academy – Social Care • The DH • Circa 20 local councils, charities and think tanks Through engaging deeply with the stakeholder body, we were able to identify and help articulate the key competencies needed to for future leaders at the Academy.
Approach & Methodology	Our approach was to develop a competency based psychometric questionnaire which would provide the assessing panel with an indication of how well the candidate fitted the profile of a leader within social care. We developed a framework which indicated both Essential and Desirable competencies. MCW also designed group and individual presentation exercises for the candidates to complete. We marked the exercises using both quantitative and qualitative scales against the same competencies that were development for the psychometric assessment. This enabled the panel to construct a holistic picture of the candidates performance, that would then be easy to benchmark.
Team deployed and skills required	Two MCW directors and two associates were used on this project which required the following skills: • Objective assessment skills for the online profiling and assessment centres • Competency interviewing • Psychometric administration and feedback
Impact	Our approach of strategic engagement with the assessment panel and the use of benchmarking psychometrics enabled the Academy to select the right candidates in a fair and transparent manner. We were subsequently asked to support successful candidates with their development through working with them on individual, structured management and personal development plans.