

Quality Assessment Framework

Core Service Objectives

Communities and Local Government
February 2009

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Administering Authorities and service providers are strongly urged to read the guidance “Using the Quality Assessment Framework” when assessing services against these standards.

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PLEASE NOTE: Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards. *The indicative evidence for levels A and B are not intended to act as a checklist or to prescribe the services that organisations would be providing if they were judged by reviewing officers to have an excellent or a good service. When assessing compliance with level A and B standards therefore, it is acceptable to cite alternatives to the evidence examples where these genuinely demonstrate that the standards are being met by other means.*

While meeting individual standards cannot guarantee the achievement of specific outcomes with clients, in general they will support the service to better meet outcomes in the domains indicated.

C1.1 Assessment and Support Planning
All clients receive an assessment of their support needs and any associated risks. All clients have an up-to-date support and risk management plan. Assessment and support planning procedures place clients' views at the centre, are managed by skilled staff and involve other professional and/or carers as appropriate.

Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Achieve economic well-being, Enjoy & achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe</i> and <i>Make a positive contribution</i> .			
C1.1.1	The needs of applicants / clients and any inherent risks are assessed on a consistent and comprehensive basis prior to a service being offered, or very shortly afterwards as appropriate to the needs of the client group.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		Level C	<p>The needs and risk assessment policy and procedure is written down and reviewed in response to changing legislative or contractual requirements and at least every three years.</p> <p>The procedures state how clients will be involved.</p> <p>Staff understand and follow the procedures.</p> <p>There is a needs and risk assessment tool appropriate to the client group.</p> <p>The needs and risk assessment procedures are covered in staff induction</p>

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			<p>and training programmes.</p> <p>Risk assessment procedures address:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk to self • Risk to others (including staff and the wider community) • Risks from others (including staff and the wider community). <p>Needs and risk assessments take into account the views of other services as appropriate.</p> <p>Copies of all assessments are securely stored and accessible to relevant staff and clients.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		Level B	<p>The service works constructively with risk and does not use risk assessment to exclude applicants inappropriately.</p> <p>Staff harness individual clients' insight into the assessment of needs and risks.</p> <p>Specialist expertise is sought, where required, when conducting needs / risk assessments.</p>	
		Level A	<p>The needs and risk assessment policy and procedures encourage appropriate risk taking and discourage risk avoidance as the key feature of support delivery.</p> <p>Needs and risk assessments balance promotion of independence with effective risk management.</p> <p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made to improve service delivery as a result of policy and procedure review.</p> <p>Policy and procedure review can show the</p>	

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			impact of client and stakeholder involvement.	
Standard		Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Achieve economic well-being, Enjoy & achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution.</i>				
C1.1.2	All clients have individual outcomes-focussed support and risk management plans that address the needs and risks identified by the assessment process.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>		
		Level C	<p>Support and risk management plans identify control measures to eliminate, minimise or respond to identified risks.</p> <p>Clear links can be seen between assessments of clients' needs and associated risks, and their support / risk management plans.</p> <p>Support plans incorporate individual outcomes which have been negotiated with clients and, if appropriate, carers, relatives or other advocates.</p> <p>In short-term accommodation based services, move on and resettlement needs are addressed from the start of service delivery.</p> <p>Support plans incorporate SMART objectives that are clearly understood by clients, as milestones towards achieving outcomes.</p> <p>Copies of all support / risk management plans are securely stored and accessible to relevant staff and clients.</p> <p>The service is aware of, and seeks to take into account, other care and support services provided.</p>	
<i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would</i>				

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		<i>expect of services delivered to such standards</i>	
	Level B	Support planning takes account of the wider needs of the client (beyond those being met directly in the service) which impact upon their need for support. The service proactively seeks to engage other agencies in supporting clients. Specialist expertise is sought, where required, when drawing up support / risk management plans.	
	Level A	Support and risk management plans complement any statutory care plan or support plans provided by other agencies. Support and risk management plans indicate that clients are encouraged to take reasonable risks in developing their independence. Mechanisms are in place between the service and external agencies to facilitate and enable joint working. Client outcomes are used to inform service development and strategic planning.	

Standard		Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Stay safe and Make a positive contribution .				
C1.1.3	Needs / risk assessments and support / risk management plans are reviewed regularly on a consistent and systematic basis.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>		
		Level C	The frequency of individual reviews reflects the needs and risks identified by the assessment process. Clients' files show that all clients' needs have been reviewed with appropriate frequency and at least annually.	

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			<p>Clients' files show that risk assessments have been reviewed with appropriate frequency, following an incident or significant change in circumstances, and at least annually.</p> <p>Individual support and risk management plans are revised in response to reviews to reflect changing outcomes and objectives.</p> <p>Support and risk management plans record intended review dates.</p> <p>Needs / risk assessments and support / risk management plans are quality monitored internally.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		<p>Level B</p>	<p>Procedures state that reviews can be initiated at any time by a client and clients confirm this is the case.</p> <p>This right is explained within the service description, clients' handbook, etc.</p> <p>Staff are proactive in identifying and reviewing changing need and risk.</p>	
		<p>Level A</p>	<p>Reviews are co-ordinated to complement the reviews of any statutory care plan or support plans provided by other agencies.</p> <p>The service takes a case conference approach that includes engaging other services in reviews.</p> <p>Reviews of needs and risks (client outcomes) are used to inform service development and strategic planning.</p>	

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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence	
<p>This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Achieve economic well-being, Enjoy & achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe</i> and <i>Make a positive contribution</i>.</p>				
<p>C1.1.4</p>	<p>Needs and risk assessment, support planning and reviews involve clients and take full account of their views, preferences and aspirations.</p>	<p><i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i></p>		
		<p>Level C</p>	<p>There is evidence of clients' views being incorporated. Where clients disagree with assessments or reviews their views and reasoning are recorded. Clients have access to their file and are provided with a copy of assessments and reviews if they wish. The service complies with the Data Protection Act. Clients confirm that their views have been listened to and taken into account. Clients confirm that information is made available to them to meet their cultural, religious and/or lifestyle needs. Clients confirm that they are supported to meet their cultural needs and are able to observe their religious and cultural customs.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		<p>Level B</p>	<p>Needs and risk assessments, support plans and reviews seek to involve other professionals, carers, family and/or friends as the client wishes. The support plan is person centred.</p>	
<p>Level A</p>	<p>Needs and risk assessment and support planning procedures balance respect for</p>			

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			<p>clients' views, preferences and aspirations with effective risk management.</p> <p>Staff are able to describe how they deal with disagreements and how they balance respect for clients' wishes with effective risk management.</p> <p>Clients confirm how they have been supported to access a range of services to meet their diverse needs – both those provided by the organisation and those available through other providers.</p>	
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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
<p>This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Achieve economic well-being, Enjoy & achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe</i> and <i>Make a positive contribution</i>.</p>			
<p>C1.1.5</p>	<p>Staff carrying out needs and risk assessments and negotiating support and risk management plans are competent to do so.</p>	<p><i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i></p>	
		<p>Level C</p>	<p>Clients confirm that staff are sensitive to their particular needs and respect their right to choice and control.</p> <p>Staff are able to describe outcomes the service can help clients to achieve, and how they would support them to do so.</p> <p>Staff directly supporting clients have been trained in needs and risk assessment and support planning.</p> <p>Staff are able to describe the assessment and support planning processes and the rationale behind the key elements.</p> <p>Staff are experienced in working with those needs most commonly encountered amongst clients.</p> <p>Staff are knowledgeable about the range of services and support provided by their own organisation that may meet the needs of</p>

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			<p>clients. Staff are appropriately inducted and supervised. Staff understand and are sensitive to the diverse needs of clients.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		<p>Level B</p>	<p>Staff are aware of relevant individuals in key agencies and can give examples of regular information sharing. Staff are knowledgeable about and can facilitate access to support and services provided by other organisations that may meet the needs of clients. There is a variety of staff training targeted to meet the needs of the clients being supported.</p>	
		<p>Level A</p>	<p>Staff are able to explain the concept of “appropriate risk taking” and how this impacts on their work. Staff are committed to continuing professional development.</p>	

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PLEASE NOTE: Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards. *The indicative evidence for levels A and B are not intended to act as a checklist or to prescribe the services that organisations would be providing if they were judged by reviewing officers to have an excellent or a good service. When assessing compliance with level A and B standards therefore, it is acceptable to cite alternatives to the evidence examples where these genuinely demonstrate that the standards are being met by other means.*

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C1.2 Security, Health and Safety			
The security, health and safety of all individual clients, staff and the wider community are protected.			
Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution.</i>			
C1.2.1	There is a health and safety policy which has been reviewed in the last three years and is in accordance with current legislation. <i>(Note: where they are not the same body, some of the legislative requirements may be the responsibility of the landlord rather than the support provider.)</i>	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		Level C	The health and safety procedures are covered in staff induction. Staff are able to describe the health and safety procedures and the impact on their work. Staff confirm they are consulted on the health and safety policy and procedures. Clients confirm they are aware of the health and safety procedures.
		<i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i>	
	Level B	Clients confirm they have been consulted about health and safety policies and procedures and that their views are taken into account.	

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			There is a range of information provided to clients about health and safety within the service.	
		Level A	<p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made as a result of policy and procedure review.</p> <p>Policy and procedure review can show the impact of client involvement.</p> <p><i>In very short-term housing it may be more desirable or practical to involve an alternative person or organisation in lieu of clients (e.g. a principal referral agency). The intention is to bring a perspective that is external to that of staff involved in day-to-day service delivery.</i></p>	

Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution (at levels A and B only)			
C1.2.2	The service has a co-ordinated approach to assessing and managing security, health and safety risks that potentially affect all clients, staff and the wider community.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		Level C	<p>A formal procedure exists for conducting risk assessments.</p> <p>The procedure is documented and covers all potential risks (other than risks to <i>individual</i> clients) and appropriate information sharing mechanisms.</p> <p>Staff are able to describe the approach to risk assessment.</p> <p>Risk assessments of the service and any premises within which the service is delivered, are conducted at service inception and with appropriate frequency thereafter, following an incident, and at</p>

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			<p>least annually.</p> <p>There are regular health and safety inspections to monitor risk.</p> <p>There are records of the inspections, participants, key findings and action taken.</p> <p>Where staff work alone, risk assessments specifically address the risks faced by lone workers and clients.</p> <p>There is a lone working policy that sets out procedures to minimise the risks to people working alone and to clients.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		Level B	<p>Clients are involved in risk assessments (<i>other than individual client risk assessments</i>), which record their participation.</p>	
		Level A	<p>There is a dynamic approach to risk management and the service proactively looks to reduce risk, but is not risk averse.</p>	

Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
<p>This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Be healthy, Stay safe</i> and <i>Make a positive contribution</i> (at levels A and B only)</p>			
C1.2.3		<p><i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i></p>	
		Level C	<p>Emergency call-out and out-of-hours support arrangements are documented and publicised to clients in ways appropriate to their needs.</p> <p>Clients and staff understand both the emergency call-out procedures and any out-of-hours support procedures.</p>

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		<p>Clients and staff can correctly describe the arrangements.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>	
	<p>Level B</p>	<p>The service equips clients and staff to deal with a crisis or emergency.</p> <p>There is a plan for dealing with any disruption to the service.</p> <p>Emergency numbers and other appropriate contact details are well publicised to clients in handbooks, leaflets, posters, etc.</p> <p>There is a periodic (at least annual) review of the effectiveness of emergency call-out or out-of-hours support procedures.</p> <p>Client feedback is actively sought about the effectiveness of current arrangements. <i>(This may not apply to very short-term housing)</i></p>	
	<p>Level A</p>	<p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made to improve service delivery as a result of review or testing of current emergency call-out or out-of-hours support procedures.</p> <p>Review of these arrangements can show the impact of client involvement.</p> <p>Clients are involved in testing the effectiveness of current arrangements. <i>(This may not apply to very short-term housing).</i></p>	

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C1.3 Safeguarding and Protection from Abuse

There is a commitment to safeguarding the welfare of adults and children using or visiting the service and to working in partnership to protect vulnerable groups from abuse.

There is a difference between safeguarding vulnerable adults/children and adult/child protection. Safeguarding is everybody's responsibility, and includes measures to prevent or minimise the potential for abuse occurring. Protection is a statutory responsibility in response to individual cases where risk of harm has been identified.

When it comes to a service's safeguarding responsibilities towards children, it may be helpful to think of services as one of four types:

- Services where children are known to live
- Services where children may live
- Services where children may visit
- Services where children neither live or visit, but clients may have access to children

While we recognise the variable degree of contact different services will have with children, **all** the following standards are relevant to **all** services. How you implement them, and how detailed your policies are, may depend on the nature of this contact.

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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence	
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution (at level A only).				
C1.3.1	There are robust policies and procedures for safeguarding and protecting adults and children, that are less than three years old and in accordance with current legislation.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>		
		Level C	The procedures address both adults and children and comply with good practice. (See guidance) There are recruitment checks, including professional references and CRB checks, for staff and volunteers. There is a whistle blowing procedure in accordance with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. Individual client risk assessments address the potential for abuse from others. Lone working risk assessments address the increased risk to clients. CRB checks are updated in accordance with contractual requirements.	
		<i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i>		
		Level B	There is a periodic (at least annual) review of the effectiveness of safeguarding and protection from abuse policies and procedures and their implementation. The policy and procedure review seeks to identify and address disincentives to reporting concerns. CRB checks are updated every three years.	
Level A	There is a planned approach to working with other agencies.			

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			<p>The service can demonstrate that key safeguarding partners are involved in policy and procedure review.</p> <p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made to improve service delivery as a result of review or following an incident.</p> <p>Policy and procedure review can show the impact of client and stakeholder involvement.</p>	
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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
<p>This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution (at level A only).</p>			
<p>C1.3.2</p>	<p>Staff are aware of policies and procedures and their practice both safeguards clients and children and promotes understanding of abuse.</p>	<p><i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i></p>	
		<p>Level C</p>	<p>Prompt action is taken in response to individual concerns from staff, clients or others and appropriate support is provided to them.</p> <p>Support is provided to victims of abuse.</p> <p>The service works appropriately with alleged perpetrators.</p> <p>A log records details of cases and outcomes and shows that appropriate action is taken, including reporting to appropriate authorities, (including the service commissioner and contract manager.)</p> <p>Safeguarding and protection from abuse policies and procedures are covered in staff induction and training programmes, and integrated into staff management practices.</p>

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			<p>Staff are able to describe the policies and procedures, the reasons behind them and the implications for their work.</p> <p>Staff are able to describe how their practice promotes safeguarding.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers can describe how they would report any actual or suspected abuse or neglect, and who incidents should be reported to.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		<p>Level B</p>	<p>Staff are appropriately supported through supervision in dealing with abuse cases.</p> <p>Staff are aware of the potential impact on themselves and clients of being involved in abuse cases.</p> <p>Staff receive specialist training appropriate to the needs of the client group.</p>	
		<p>Level A</p>	<p>The service is proactive in promoting and sharing good practice beyond the service on safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.</p> <p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made to improve service delivery as a result of policy and procedure review.</p> <p>Policy and procedure review can show the impact of client involvement.</p>	

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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence	
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution (at level A only).				
C1.3.3	Staff are made aware of and understand their professional boundaries and their practice reflects this.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>		
		Level C	<p>There is a documented risk assessment addressing the potential for personal benefit through abuse and this has been reviewed in the last three years.</p> <p>There are procedures to prevent staff from personal benefit when working with vulnerable people.</p> <p>The nature and limits of relationships between staff and clients, children of clients or children visiting the service are covered in staff induction and training programmes, and integrated into staff management practices.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers are able to describe the policies concerning relationships with clients, children of clients or children visiting the service.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers are able to explain how their practice maintains effective boundaries.</p> <p>A Code of Conduct (or similar document) makes clear appropriate boundaries for staff and volunteers.</p> <p>Information to clients makes clear what are appropriate boundaries for staff and volunteers.</p>	
		<i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i>		

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		Level B	Staff receive appropriate training. There is a periodic (at least annual) review of the effectiveness of the policies and their implementation. The service has mechanisms in place that reinforce professional boundaries.	
		Level A	The service can demonstrate that changes have been made to improve service delivery as a result of policy and procedure review. Policy and procedure review can show the impact of client involvement.	

Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution .			
C1.3.4	Clients understand what abuse is and know how to report concerns	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		Level C	<p>The safeguarding and protection from abuse procedure is promoted in ways appropriate to clients' needs.</p> <p>Clients understand what constitutes abuse and know to whom they should report any concerns.</p> <p>Clients confirm they know what support they can expect to receive if they report a concern.</p> <p>Clients know how to report concerns outside the organisation.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they feel confident that concerns will be dealt with appropriately.</p> <p>The service feeds back appropriately on action that has, or has not, been taken, and</p>

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			why.	
		<i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i>		
		Level B	The service promotes safeguarding and protection with clients on a regular basis e.g. through house meetings or key working.	
		Level A	<p>Clients are able to influence how they receive information about safeguarding and protection from abuse and the reporting mechanisms for raising concerns.</p> <p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made in response to client feedback.</p>	

Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Enjoy and achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution (at level A only).			
C1.3.5	The service is committed to participating in a multi-agency approach to safeguarding vulnerable adults and children	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		Level C	<p>In services specifically working with children and young people there is a designated, appropriately trained and supported child protection lead.</p> <p>In services specifically working with children and young people, there is an awareness of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and how this relates to, and is separate from, child protection.</p> <p>The service works jointly with other appropriate agencies to promote the safeguarding of adults and children.</p> <p>Where appropriate, the service engages</p>

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			<p>with local MAPPA and MARAC arrangements.(See guidance)</p> <p>The service engages in multi-agency working in response to specific cases of adult or child protection.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		<p>Level B</p>	<p>The service engages in multi-agency working to promote safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children.</p> <p>In services specifically working with children and young people, there is an understanding of the implementation of the Common Assessment Framework and the service’s potential role within it.</p>	
		<p>Level A</p>	<p>There are information sharing protocols in place and the service proactively engages with local safeguarding partnerships.</p> <p>In services specifically working with children and young people, the service is actively engaged in the Common Assessment Framework.</p>	

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C1.4 Fair Access, Diversity and Inclusion
There is a demonstrable commitment to fair access, fair exit, diversity and inclusion. The service acts within the law and ensures clients are well-informed about their rights and responsibilities.

Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Enjoy and achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution.			
C1.4.1	Fair access, fair exit, diversity and inclusion are embedded within the culture of the service and there is demonstrable promotion and implementation of the policies.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		Level C	<p>There is a policy (or policies) and procedures that cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • equal opportunity, diversity, anti-discriminatory practice and harassment • discrimination on any grounds that cause a person to be treated with injustice (see guidance) • clients and staff • access to services and employment and promote community cohesion and social inclusion. <p>The policies and procedures have been reviewed in the last three years and are in</p>

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		<p>accordance with current legislation and the CRE Code of Practice on Racial Equality in Housing.</p> <p>There is a recruitment and selection policy that aims to eliminate discrimination in recruitment processes.</p> <p>There is a planned approach to managing and responding to concerns or incidents.</p> <p>The service has its own Equalities Scheme (which includes the above policies and procedures) or signs up to the local authority one. (See guidance)</p> <p>The service has its own Equalities Action Plan and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collects equalities data on successful and unsuccessful applications and exits from the service, and • reviews the equalities data, sets targets to address gaps or weaknesses and monitors performance against these. <p>Equality and diversity policies and procedures are covered in staff induction and training programmes, and integrated into staff management practices.</p> <p>Staff are able to describe the policies and procedures, the principles behind them and the implications for their work.</p> <p>Staff understand and are sensitive to the diverse needs of clients.</p> <p>Policies and procedures are communicated to clients in ways appropriate to their needs and clients can confirm that this happens.</p> <p>Clients confirm that information is made available to them to meet their cultural, religious and/or lifestyle needs.</p>	
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			<p>Clients confirm that they are supported to meet their cultural needs and are able to observe their religious and cultural customs.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		<p>Level B</p>	<p>There is a periodic (at least annual) review of the effectiveness of the equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory policies and plans.</p> <p>Equality access targets are set for under-represented groups as identified by the Equalities Action Plan, and performance monitored.</p> <p>Equality Impact Assessments are conducted when producing or reviewing any policy, procedure, function, service or strategy.</p> <p>Records show that staff are specifically recruited or trained to ensure their understanding and sensitivity to the diverse needs of clients.</p> <p>The communication needs of clients are catered for.</p> <p>Staff support clients to understand the occupancy agreement and other documents they have signed and to know their rights and responsibilities.</p>	
		<p>Level A</p>	<p>The harassment procedures detail effective management responses when working with victims and alleged perpetrators.</p> <p>There is a co-ordinated multi-agency approach to preventing and challenging bullying, harassment and discrimination.</p> <p>The service can demonstrate changes</p>	

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			<p>have been made to improve service delivery as a result of policy and procedure review.</p> <p>The service can demonstrate changes have been made to improve service delivery as a result of monitoring performance.</p> <p>Policy and procedure review show the impact of client involvement.</p> <p>Resources are made available to support equalities and diversity activity.</p>	
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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Make a positive contribution.</i>			
C1.4.2	The assessment and allocations processes have been reviewed in the last three years and ensure fair access to the service.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		Level C	<p>There is a documented and objective procedure that specifies how enquiries and applications are processed, assessed and prioritised, and how decisions are communicated to applicants.</p> <p>There is an up-to-date and accurate description of the service that is actively promoted, detailing whom it is for and how it can be accessed.</p> <p>The eligibility criteria, means of prioritising applications and the application process are written in plain English and other formats appropriate to the client group.</p> <p>The communication needs of clients are catered for in helping them to understand the information.</p> <p>Unsuccessful applicants are informed of reasons for refusal and signposted to more</p>

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		<p>appropriate services or back to the referral agency.</p> <p>There is a right of appeal against decisions arising from assessments.</p>	
<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>			
	Level B	<p>Particular attention is paid to ensuring fair access to under-represented groups as identified by the Equalities Action Plan.</p> <p>The eligibility criteria and application process are actively promoted to relevant agencies and the wider community.</p>	
	Level A	<p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made to improve service delivery as a result of policy and procedure review.</p> <p>Policy and procedure review can show the impact of client and stakeholder involvement.</p> <p>Fair access is assured by independent audit.</p> <p>There is a proactive approach to working with service commissioners in identifying local need and adapting services accordingly.</p>	

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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
<p>This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Enjoy and achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution.</i></p>			
<p>C1.4.3</p>	<p>There is a commitment to ensuring fair exit from the service.</p>	<p><i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i></p>	
		<p>Level C</p>	<p>The service has clear procedures for staff to follow when terminating a service, including ending tenancies or licences.</p> <p>In short-term accommodation based services, move on and resettlement needs are addressed from the start of service delivery.</p> <p>In short-term accommodation-based services, there is a move-on application process which has been reviewed in the last three years and includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • how to apply • the eligibility criteria for move-on accommodation, and • the means of prioritising applications. <p>The move-on application process is written in plain English and other formats appropriate to the needs of the client group.</p> <p>Staff comply with the law and good practice when terminating the service.</p> <p>In short-term accommodation based services, the service seeks to achieve planned moves wherever possible.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they are given information about possible grounds for termination of the service, including eviction and withdrawal of floating support.</p>

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			<p>Clients are given information on how to get independent advice if they are threatened with termination of service and are signposted to other appropriate services.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		Level B	<p>The service works creatively to improve fair exit and move on outcomes for individual clients into the community.</p>	
		Level A	<p>In short-term accommodation based services, there is a move on strategy. The service can demonstrate that changes have been made as a result of policy and procedure review. Policy and procedure review show the impact of client and stakeholder involvement. Fair exit is assured by independent audit. The service works with service commissioners in developing strategic solutions to improve fair exit and move on outcomes for clients into the community.</p>	

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PLEASE NOTE: Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards. *The indicative evidence for levels A and B are not intended to act as a checklist or to prescribe the services that organisations would be providing if they were judged by reviewing officers to have an excellent or a good service. When assessing compliance with level A and B standards therefore, it is acceptable to cite alternatives to the evidence examples where these genuinely demonstrate that the standards are being met by other means.*

While meeting individual standards cannot guarantee the achievement of specific outcomes with clients, in general they will support the service to better meet outcomes in the domains indicated.

C1.5 Client Involvement and Empowerment
<p>There is a commitment to empowering clients and supporting their independence. Clients are well informed so that they can communicate their needs and views and make informed choices. Clients are consulted about the services provided and are offered opportunities to be involved in their running. Clients are empowered in their engagement in the wider community and the development of social networks.</p> <p>Involvement and empowerment will mean different things to different people. Some clients wish not to get involved at all and some wish to play a very active role, for example in future planning and governance. It is the responsibility of each provider to offer an opportunity to each individual to get involved.</p>

Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Enjoy and achieve</i> and <i>Make a positive contribution</i>			
C1.5.1	Level C	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		<p>Clients confirm that they were able to visit the service and meet with staff before accepting an offer, where appropriate.</p> <p>Staff have a good understanding of what the support service can do to meet clients' needs.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they know about the range of services provided by the support</p>	

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		<p>provider to meet their needs</p> <p>Clients and referral agencies confirm that information about the service is available in plain English and formats appropriate to the needs of the client group.</p>	
<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>			
	<p>Level B</p>	<p>The service promotes and advertises to clients the range of services to meet their diverse needs – both those provided by their support provider and those available through other providers.</p> <p>Client feedback is actively sought on the quality of information about the service.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • were able to meet with existing clients before accepting an offer, where appropriate • were provided with a range of information about the service prior to take up • are offered opportunities to have a say in what kind of information they want, and in what formats. 	
	<p>Level A</p>	<p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made to improve the quality of information in response to client / stakeholder feedback.</p> <p>Clients are offered opportunities to play a part in producing information.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they understand how to access a range of services to meet their diverse needs – both those provided by their support provider and those available through other providers and are able to</p>	

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			describe the choices available to them.	
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Standard		Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: Enjoy and achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution.				
C1.5.2	Clients are consulted on all significant proposals which may affect their service and their views taken into account.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>		
		Level C	<p>A statement of rights and responsibilities is in place, which includes the right to be consulted.</p> <p>Formal and/or informal consultation takes place and proposals are developed or amended where possible in the light of client feedback.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they receive feedback on changes that have or have not been made, and why.</p>	
		<i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i>		
		Level B	<p>Client feedback is actively sought on their preferred methods of consultation.</p> <p>Clients are offered a range of opportunities to give their views, make comments, and offer ideas - both individually and in groups - about the services provided.</p> <p>Mechanisms for consultation are wide-ranging and aimed at securing the inclusion of all clients, to the extent and at the level they wish to be involved.</p> <p>Appropriate support is available to enable clients with different needs to be consulted. (e.g. travel expenses, signing, audio loop systems).</p>	

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		Level A	<p>Consultation focuses on clients' concerns and they have opportunities to play an active role in shaping current and future service delivery.</p> <p>Mechanisms for consultation are open and flexible so that clients can raise their own issues and concerns and not just respond to what the service defines as important.</p> <p>Forums and opportunities are available so that clients can come together, to share experiences and discuss what will meet their needs.</p> <p>Decision-making mechanisms facilitate client involvement in designing and developing services and setting quality standards.</p> <p>There is a periodic (at least annual) review of the effectiveness of consultation mechanisms and the outcomes achieved.</p> <p>The service can demonstrate that changes have been made to improve consultation mechanisms in response to client feedback and review.</p>	
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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Enjoy and achieve, Be healthy, Stay safe and Make a positive contribution.</i>			
C1.5.3	The service encourages clients to do things for themselves rather than rely on staff.	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		Level C	<p>The service has a clear, documented approach to empowering clients and supporting their independence.</p> <p>Assessments of client risk balance promotion of independence with effective</p>

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		<p>risk management.</p> <p>Support plans or key working records indicate that clients are encouraged to take reasonable risks in developing their independence.</p> <p>Staff understand the approach and can describe how they work with clients to promote independence.</p> <p>Independence is promoted through appropriate skills training and/or equipment and adaptations and services relevant to individual needs.</p> <p>Clients can provide examples of specific initiatives that have expanded their skills, confidence and self-esteem.</p> <p>Empowerment and promoting independence are covered in staff induction and training programmes, and integrated into staff management practices.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they are empowered to make their own informed choices about friendships and intimate relationships, in line with the existing risk assessment.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they are encouraged to take part in active decision making about their home and the services they receive.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>	
		<p>Level B</p> <p>There is a documented approach to risk taking that enables staff to understand the meaning of “appropriate risk taking” and discourages risk avoidance as the key feature of support planning.</p> <p>The approach to support focuses on individual strengths and supports people to</p>	

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			<p>develop their own solutions to problems. Clients and staff can confirm that this happens. Clients confirm that they are able to visit or receive friends and family as and when they choose. <i>(When applying this standard account must be taken of safeguarding and health and safety considerations and clients' support plans.)</i></p>	
		Level A	<p>There is a strategic approach to promoting independence. Expertise and resources are available to enable clients to develop their talents and abilities.</p>	

Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
<p>This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Achieve economic well-being, Enjoy and achieve, Be healthy and Make a positive contribution.</i></p>			
<p>C1.5.4</p>	<p>Clients are encouraged to consider ways in which they can participate in the wider community.</p>	<p><i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i></p>	
		<p>Level C</p>	<p>Support plans show that staff and clients have discussed any wishes for employment, training, education, social and leisure activities outside of the service. Clients confirm that information concerning the availability of such services, activities and opportunities is made readily available in ways appropriate to their needs. The service actively encourages and promotes links with friends and family, where appropriate. Support plans reflect that clients have been enabled to overcome barriers to participating in the wider community, where</p>

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		<p>appropriate.</p> <p>With the exception of certain services (see guidance), clients can confirm that there are no policies or rules that prevent them from visiting or receiving friends and relatives.</p> <p>Staff induction and training highlight the importance of engagement in the wider community and the steps to be taken to promote it.</p> <p>Clients are encouraged to play an active part in their local community and democratic structures.</p>	
<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>			
	Level B	<p>Clients confirm that they are able to participate in activities within the wider community such as leisure services, training, education and employment, and the service provider provides appropriate support to enable this.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they are encouraged and supported to participate in services in the wider community.</p> <p>The service provides clients with appropriate confidence building and skills development to participate in the wider community.</p> <p>The service encourages client access to skills training, counselling, advocacy etc. <i>(These may be provided directly by the service provider or by other external agencies.)</i></p>	
	Level A	<p>There is a strategy for maximising clients' participation in the wider community.</p>	

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			<p>Staff understand and work to deliver the strategy with clients.</p> <p>Clients are involved appropriately and effectively in such activities as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • staff recruitment • business planning • review of the service description and its aims and objectives • management structures e.g. board of management, sub-committees, AGMs, community forums, etc. 	
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Standard	Performance Level	Essential requirements (C) or Indicative evidence (A / B)	Evidence
This standard supports the service to meet outcomes in the following outcome domains: <i>Make a positive contribution.</i>			
C1.5.5	<p>There is a written complaints policy and procedure that has been reviewed in the last three years and this is used as a tool for service development.</p>	<i>Basic minimum requirements for an adequate service (Performance Level C)</i>	
		<p>Level C</p>	<p>The complaints procedure is as straightforward as possible.</p> <p>The complaints procedure specifically addresses complaints from external individual or organisations.</p> <p>Action is taken in response to individual complaints.</p> <p>A log records outcomes to complaints and shows that appropriate action is taken within reasonable response times.</p> <p>Outcomes of complaints are fed back to complainants.</p> <p>There is an appeals process.</p> <p>The procedure is available in plain English and other formats appropriate to the needs of the client group. (See guidance)</p> <p>The procedure is publicised in ways appropriate to the needs of the client group e.g. in client induction or welcome packs, handbooks, notice boards, etc.</p>

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			<p>In accommodation-based services where the landlord and support provider are not the same body, the procedure clearly states who to complain to about the support service.</p> <p>Staff receive training in dealing with and encouraging complaints.</p> <p>Staff, clients and third parties know how to use the procedure and are empowered to do so.</p> <p>Clients confirm that they feel able to complain and are confident that their complaint will be dealt with in a positive manner.</p> <p>Independent advocacy is sought to help clients, carers and family members to use the complaints system, where appropriate.</p>	
		<p><i>Evidence examples for Level B and A services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards</i></p>		
		<p>Level B</p>	<p>The organisation and its staff see complaints as a positive tool.</p> <p>There is a periodic review (at least annual) of complaints received.</p> <p>There is a periodic review (at least annual) that asks whether there is sufficient awareness of the procedure and what would inhibit complaints.</p>	
		<p>Level A</p>	<p>The service can demonstrate that reviews of policy, procedure and complaints received have been used to improve service delivery.</p> <p>Reviews of policy, procedure and complaints received can show the impact of client and stakeholder involvement.</p>	