



**Women's Aid in Scotland**  
**National Service Standards**  
**Guidance for Assessors**  
**April 2011**

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## Introduction

This guidance is to support workers who will be completing the service standards assessment for their own group.

There are 5 service standards and a number of assessment criteria within each standard. The standards have been written to ensure that the value of specialist domestic abuse services is clearly defined and that the criteria are underpinned by service user feedback, monitoring and evaluation.

There are three further documents that accompany this guidance:

- 1) Women's Aid in Scotland, National Service Standards - Summary
- 2) Women's Aid in Scotland, National Service Standards and assessment criteria - this includes the service standards and all the assessment criteria that are to be met
- 3) Guidance for group being assessed

All of these documents are available in electronic form on the members' area of the SWA website.

## Peer assessment

The Service Standards working group<sup>1</sup> opted for a peer assessment approach to ensure that groups are assessed by workers who understand and have experience of working within a Women's Aid setting. This approach also ensures that the assessment is independent and is being carried out by a worker who is external to the group.

The whole assessment process should take no longer than 5 working days; this includes completion of forms and visiting the groups.

Each assessor will be allocated a group to assess by SWA, based on geographical convenience.

As the assessor you are there to:

- 1) Support the assessment and its process
- 2) Help and support workers to assess and evidence the standards

The assessor is not there to give advice, but can share good practice where you have agreed to do this - see confidentiality agreement (Appendix 4).

The recommendation is that where possible, each group has two named assessors who can assess the member group. Having two assessors means that there is a contingency plan for sickness and holidays and that workers are able to share the workload.

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<sup>1</sup> WA workers and SWA part of the development of the Service Standards

## The Assessment Form

The form will start with the stated service standard followed by a number of assessment criteria, all of which are to be met. The assessment criteria are designed to help the assessor and the group being assessed to evidence and/or check/collate the evidence that the required criteria are met.

### **Assessment Criteria**

This is the overarching criteria groups are asked to meet. This is broken down in the 'criteria' and 'met by' columns. This detailed breakdown makes it easier for groups to evidence.

### **Criteria**

This is the specific criteria for groups to meet.

### **Met by**

This is what the groups are asked to meet and evidence.

### **Met Group**

Once the group have been through the 'met by' column and are able to evidence this, the group should tick this box and annotate evidence references and any other comments in the comments group box. If the group have not met the criteria then they should leave the box unticked/blank and annotate why the criteria have not been met.

### **Met Assessor**

If the assessor feels the group have /have not been able to evidence and meet the required criteria, the assessor would tick this box (met) or leave it unticked/blank (not met) and annotate in the assessors comments box at the end of the assessment criteria.

### **Examples of suitable evidence**

This is a list of examples of evidence which you may want to use to evidence these criteria. You can use other forms of evidence and/or might be able to evidence by discussing areas with your assessor.

### **Comments: Group**

This box is for groups to use to add any comments and state evidence sources.

### **Comments: Assessor**

There is a box at the end of each assessment criteria for the assessor to complete with any comments.

The assessor should also list here any parts of the criteria that have not been met. **For example in 1A.1 the group may not have met 1.4.**

## EXAMPLE OF ASSESSMENT: Standard 1, criteria A

### Standard 1

The services Women's Aid provide and the way in which we work are informed by our understanding of the gendered analysis of domestic abuse. We provide services which aim to address domestic abuse through prevention, protection, provision and participation. Our services are staffed and managed by women with specialist knowledge and training in domestic abuse.

#### Elements

- All workers, collective members, volunteers, directors and management committee members have an understanding of and a commitment to a gendered analysis of domestic abuse.
- All workers, collective members, volunteers, directors and management committee members are aware of how the elements of Prevention, Protection, Provision and Participation are delivered and embedded into services.
- Recruitment processes and continual professional development training ensures that all workers, collective members and volunteers have specialist knowledge and understanding of the impact of domestic abuse and the broader issues of violence against women.

#### Assessment Criteria A

All services are provided to women, children and young people by workers, collective members, volunteers, directors and management committee members with an understanding of the impact of domestic abuse.

Links to elements 1 & 3

Criteria	Met by	Met group	Met assessor	Examples of suitable evidence	Comments - group
1A.1 Recruitment and	1.1 There are mechanisms	☒	☒	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recruitment policy and procedures</li> <li>▪ Job descriptions for each post containing a</li> </ul>	The R&S policy was updated in Dec 2010.

<p>selection processes ensure that applicants have an understanding of the impact of domestic abuse</p>	<p>in place to ensure that workers have an understanding of the impact of domestic abuse</p>			<p>statement on the appropriate level of understanding of impact of domestic abuse</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal specification for each post stating whether such understanding is Essential or Desirable</li> <li>▪ Application form with area for demonstrating appropriate level of understanding.</li> <li>▪ Copy of interview plan and questions where the applicant has the opportunity to demonstrate their level of understanding</li> <li>▪ The interview panel ensure that through interview processes an applicant can demonstrate this understanding</li> <li>▪ Other....</li> </ul>	<p>Job descriptions have a statement.</p> <p>The last round of interviews happened in Jan this year, can use this as evidence.</p>
<p>1A.2 Recruitment panel members have the appropriate and relevant training</p>	<p>2.1 Panel members have been trained</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Personal development plans</li> <li>▪ Agenda and minutes of group meetings</li> <li>▪ Director/management committee minutes</li> <li>▪ Log of training attended</li> <li>▪ Other....</li> </ul>	<p>Partly met some of the board require training</p>
<p>1A.3 Induction processes clearly define how everyone should develop their understanding of domestic abuse from a</p>	<p>3.1 There is a mechanism in place to ensure that Induction processes define how everyone develops their understanding of domestic abuse from a</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Example of Induction plans which include furthering understanding of the impact of domestic abuse</li> <li>▪ Relevant parts of personal specification which the induction plan addresses</li> <li>▪ Checklist of induction plans for an individual employee which is signed off</li> </ul>	<p>There is a comprehensive induction process</p> <p>Worker was recruited in March this year, this induction pack</p>

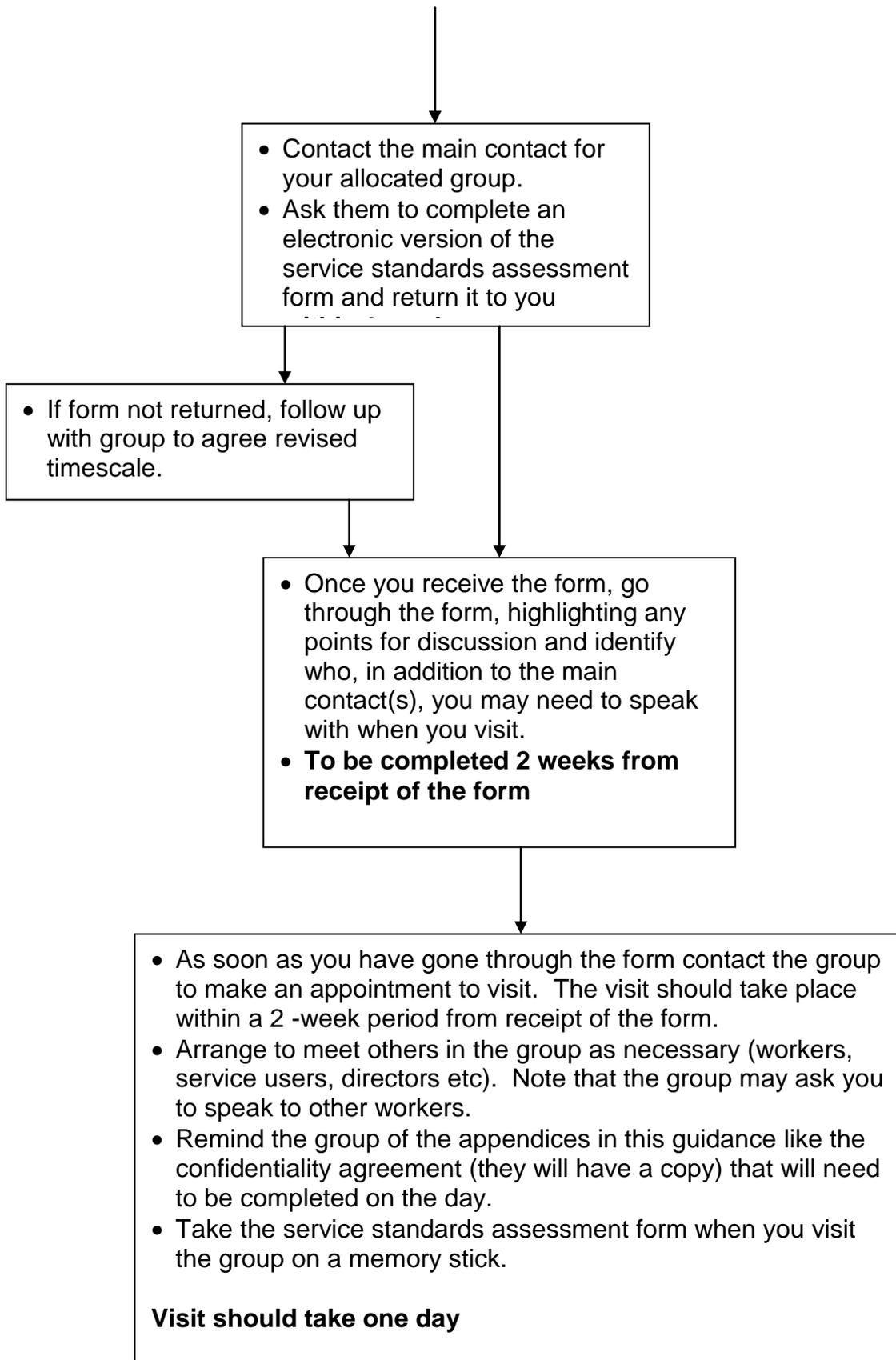
gendered perspective	gendered perspective			▪Other ....	can be checked
1A.4 All workers have attended training and/or refresher training in understanding the impact of domestic abuse from a gendered perspective within the last 3 years	4.1 All workers have attended training and/or refresher training in the understanding the impact of domestic abuse from a gendered perspective within the last 3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documented training strategy</li> <li>▪ Personal development plans</li> <li>▪ Support and supervision notes relating to training</li> <li>▪ Certificates of attendance</li> <li>▪ Log of training courses attended by the workers</li> <li>▪ Organisational and individual training records providing information that all workers have attended training and refresher training</li> <li>▪ Group meeting with agenda demonstrating sharing of the understanding of the impact of domestic abuse</li> <li>▪ Other...</li> </ul>	There are some workers who need to attend refresher training
1A.5 Development activities are planned to ensure reflective practice is used to explore workers' knowledge of the impact of domestic abuse from a gendered perspective	5.1 There is a mechanism in place to ensure that reflective practice is used to explore the knowledge of workers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support and supervision notes showing how reflective practice is used/encouraged to explore knowledge (what has worked well, what could be done differently)</li> <li>▪ Group meetings agendas with highlighted items or questions encouraging reflective practice</li> <li>▪ Away days' agendas, plans, activities relating to the criteria</li> <li>▪ Other....</li> </ul>	S&S and minutes are available as evidence. Also strategy day minutes can be used as evidence
1A.6	6.1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documented support and supervision</li> </ul>	S&S policy and notes

All workers participate in regular support and supervision	Regular support and supervision takes place			<p>policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Signed induction checklist showing that workers have been informed of the support and supervision policy</li> <li>▪ Diaries or calendars with dates for support and supervision</li> <li>▪ Agreed process of what happens before, during and after supervision</li> <li>▪ Preparatory notes</li> <li>▪ Copy of support and supervision notes signed by both participants</li> <li>▪ Action plans</li> <li>▪ Implementation plans</li> <li>▪ Peer assessments</li> <li>▪ 360</li> <li>Other.....</li> </ul>	available
1A.7 All workers participate in individual performance reviews and development	7.1 Regular performance reviews and development take place	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Documentation on relevant performance management policy and system is in place</li> <li>▪ Signed induction checklist showing that workers have been informed of the policy and systems</li> <li>▪ Diaries or calendars with dates for performance reviews</li> <li>▪ Agreed process of what happens before, during and after these reviews</li> <li>▪ Preparatory notes</li> <li>▪ Copy of agreed review and action plans for</li> </ul>	Performance reviews will be set up later in the year possibly Nov 2011

				the future signed by both participants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implementation plans based on the review</li> <li>▪ Support and supervision notes following on from the review</li> <li>▪ 360</li> <li>▪ Other.....</li> </ul>	
<b>Comments - Assessor</b>					
<p>1A.2 and 1A.4 are partly met</p> <p>1A.7 – Not met but group hope to achieve by Nov this year.</p> <p>All evidence checked and seen on the day of visit.</p>					

## The Assessment Process

### Before the peer assessment visit



## During the peer assessment visit

- Revisit the working together guidelines (Appendix 2) with the worker; restate the boundaries and the reason you are there (to help and support each other).
- Check who is available for you to speak to and agree times for discussion.
- Check consent and confidentiality forms; Appendix 3 and 4.

- Use the service standards assessment form (taken on a memory stick) and your notes to start the assessment; notice areas of good practice and comment on the form.
- Ensure you ask workers open questions to aid discussion.
- For example: “Can you talk me through your business plan?”
- Check evidence to support the assessment (**please use additional information on page 7 for an explanation of what evidence you may need to check**)
- **Ensure you complete the service standards assessment form in as much detail as**

- Finish by meeting the main contact to share and agree the criteria that are met, not met, which are not applicable and which criteria the group are working towards.
- Please note that you are not there to ask how the group should address unmet areas, but you may want to share good practice of how things have been done elsewhere/in your group.

- Where the group have not met all the standards and wish to, arrange a future date for you to come back to reassess the parts that have not

- Have a short evaluation session with the main contact using the evaluation form in Appendix 5.

## After the peer assessment visit

- If standards have been fully met, confirm this to Ash Kuloo at SWA. Ash will issue a certificate to the group.
- **No later than 2 weeks after the visit.**



- If standards are not fully met and the group want to achieve them – email the group to remind them that a date needs to be agreed to revisit the submission.



- Return feedback form to Ash – see Appendix 6. The feedback form is to let SWA know which standard and assessment criteria have not been met and why so that SWA can look at how best to support the groups
- In this form please also highlight those areas where groups have indicated as not applicable.



- Email a copy of the service standards assessment form back to the group

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

### **Evidence**

Groups may use other ways to evidence the standards i.e. Care Commission Self Assessment Form may provide evidence that meets certain parts of the standards.

It is preferable that you check all the evidence on the day of your visit; however, if this is not possible it can be sent on to you.

Some parts of the evidence may cover more than one criteria. You may also have to see more than one piece of evidence. For example, to cover Health and Safety you may be shown a Health and Safety policy, but you also would need to see evidence of how the policy is implemented. Another example may be that the group has a training plan in place, but in addition to viewing the training plan you also need to see evidence that the training plan is implemented.

### **Appeals**

There is no appeals process for the service standards. Carrying out the assessment is completely voluntary.

### **Disagreements**

The assessment process is one that should be approached in a facilitative way. However, if there are disagreements on whether or not criteria have been met, the assessee and assessor should try and discuss the reasons/rationale between themselves so that consensus and a positive solution can be reached.

### **Timescale**

The timescale for repeating the assessment is 3 years. Scottish Women's Aid will endeavour to send out reminders, but groups should record this information internally to prompt reassessment.

Groups should aim to have completed the service standards assessment in a period of no longer than 3 months from the start of the process.

If you have any questions/queries at any point please contact Ash Kuloo at SWA on 0131 2400 316/0131 226 6606 or via email at [ash.kuloo@scottishwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:ash.kuloo@scottishwomensaid.org.uk)



## Appendix 1

### Discussion Form

**This form is to be used where the piece of evidence submitted may not be enough to demonstrate that the criteria has been met or where there is no documented evidence**

Group being assessed:	
Date:	
Evidence number:	
Please state clearly the standard, assessment criteria, criteria and met by that this evidence is being collected for. Remember to cross-reference to other criteria.	
Signed by assessor:	

Date:	
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## **Appendix 2**

### **Agreement of how we work together**

The service standards are a tool to support groups to evidence their good practice and to measure how they meet this. If groups do not meet particular criteria, the process is there to support the group to work towards it.

The service standards working group felt it was important that there was mutual understanding in the assessment process, and developed the following list as a way of working together to support that understanding.

- Reach agreement
- Listen to one another
- Contribute – share ideas and concerns
- Give constructive feedback
- Give time to discuss and to go through the process
- Respect each other's views
- Be open minded
- Ensure confidentiality

## Appendix 3

### Consent Form: Service User

\_\_\_\_\_ Women's Aid have explained the service standards and confidentiality agreement to me.

I understand the project and the confidentiality agreement. I am happy for the assessor to come and talk to me about the services I receive from the group and use this information in line with the confidentiality agreement.

Signed by service user: \_\_\_\_\_

Signed by worker: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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### Consent Form: Workers/Volunteers/Board Members

The service standards and confidentiality agreement have been explained to me fully.

I am happy for the assessor to come and talk to me about the service standards and use this information in line with the confidentiality agreement.

Signed by Worker/Volunteer/Board Member:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signed by main contact for group:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date:  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 4

### Confidentiality Agreement

We agree that the information collected for the service standards will be used for that purpose only.

Assessors and those being assessed will only share information with SWA and each other about the process and how it worked.

If either the assessor or the group being assessed identify good practice/information through this process, this will only be shared with others (i.e. other groups, funders) with the group's permission and agreement.

Any identifiable information about workers, service users, directors and the service will not be shared.

*Signed by*

Assessor: \_\_\_\_\_

Main contact in group being assessed: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of group being assessed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5

### Assessment Evaluation Form

Please complete this form (assessor and main contact for the group being assessed) as you discuss any concerns and any issues which may have come up during the assessment process.

1. Background information	
Name of assessor:	
Name of group being assessed:	
Name of worker participating in this evaluation:	
2. Assessment process	
What worked well?	
What was difficult?	
What do you think should be done differently?	

### 3. Other

Your feedback about using the forms and information sheet:

Any other comments:

**Please return the completed evaluation form to:**

Ash Kuloo  
Scottish Women's Aid  
132 Rose Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 3JD

or by email to [ash.kuloo@scottishwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:ash.kuloo@scottishwomensaid.org.uk)

## Appendix 6

### Assessment Feedback Form

1. Background information	
Name of assessor:	
Name of group being assessed:	
Name of main contact in group:	
2. Please indicate the specific criteria that have not yet been met. For example: Criterion 1B.1, 1.2, not met because (reason why).	
3. Please indicate the specific criteria in the service standards that the group have stated are not applicable. For example: 1B.1, 1.2, not applicable because (reason why).	

**Please return the completed feedback form to:**

Ash Kuloo  
Scottish Women's Aid  
132 Rose Street  
Edinburgh  
EH2 3JD

or by email to [ash.kuloo@scottishwomensaid.org.uk](mailto:ash.kuloo@scottishwomensaid.org.uk)

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