



## Competence Framework for Safeguarding Adults

### Introduction

This competency framework seeks to develop and demonstrate the competency of staff in delivering services that safeguard adults with care and support needs. The competency framework has been developed to reflect the statutory duties within the Care Act 2014 and the culture and practice changes that are required by Making Safeguarding Personal.

### What is a competence?

To be competent an individual must have sufficient knowledge, judgement, skills, experience and motivation to carry out duties relevant to their role and position within the organisation.

Embedding a competence based approach to learning and development is not something that occurs as a result of attending one training sessions, and it is recognised that evidencing the competence, culture and practice changes that are expected will take time to develop.

Individuals will develop their competence through a mix of blended learning approaches i.e. face to face learning, initial training, on-the-job learning, instruction, coaching, mentoring, informal learning, formal learning, shadowing, e-learning, action learning, assessment and formal qualification.

### Who should complete the competency framework for safeguarding adults?

All staff should be assessed as competent against the competencies that are relevant to their role and position within the organisation.

All staff, regardless of their role should know when and how to report any concern about the abuse of an adult. It is expectation of the organisation that **all staff** will be able to evidence competence in the first 5 competencies within this framework. Beyond this it will depend on their role and level of responsibility that an individual holds within their organisation.

### How will competence be evidenced?

Staff will be required to complete an individual learning plan once they have attended safeguarding adults training, which will be used to demonstrate how they will embed the learning from the course and will provide evidence of their competence. This plan should be reviewed with their line manager through supervision and annual appraisals (where necessary) to ensure that managers can sign staff off as being competent.

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## Practitioners Competence

Level	Description	Including but not limited to the following staff groups:	Competencies
Foundation	<p><b>All Staff</b> People who have a responsibility to contribute to safeguarding adults but do not have specific organisational responsibility or statutory authority to intervene.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Care/support staff</li> <li>• Nursing staff</li> <li>• Police officers</li> <li>• Health and Social Care Professionals</li> <li>• Bus drivers/escorts</li> <li>• Day service staff</li> <li>• All staff in healthcare settings (e.g GP's, Physios, OTs etc)</li> <li>• HR staff</li> <li>• Clerical and admin staff</li> <li>• Domestic and ancillary staff</li> <li>• Health and safety officers</li> <li>• Housing officers</li> <li>• Elected members</li> <li>• Volunteers</li> <li>• Charity Trustees</li> <li>• Do we need to think about training for adults with care and support needs, their family and carers?</li> </ul>	1 - 5
Intermediate	<p>People who have considerable professional responsibility for safeguarding adults. They have to be able to act on concerns and contribute appropriately to local and national policies, legislation and procedures. This group needs to work within an inter or multi-agency context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allied professionals i.e. ambulance, fire and police</li> <li>• Education specialists</li> <li>• Frontline managers</li> <li>• GP's</li> <li>• Heads of nursing</li> <li>• Nurses and other relevant qualified health care practitioners</li> <li>• Safeguarding adult co-ordinators</li> <li>• Social workers, advanced practitioners</li> <li>• Team managers – health, social care, voluntary and independent sectors</li> </ul>	6 - 12
Specialist	<p>People who are responsible for ensuring the management and delivery of safeguarding adult services are effective and efficient. In addition they will have oversight of the development of systems, policies and procedures within their organisation to facilitate good working partnerships with allied agencies to ensure consistency in approach and quality of service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heads of service</li> <li>• Senior managers</li> <li>• Team Leaders</li> <li>• Senior clinical leads</li> <li>• Clinical directors</li> <li>• Service managers</li> <li>• Operational managers</li> </ul>	13 - 16
Strategic Management	<p>People who are responsive in ensuring their organisation is, at all levels, fully committed to safeguarding adults and have in place appropriate systems and resources to support this work in an intra and inter agency context.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chief executive</li> <li>• Walsall Safeguarding Adults Board Members</li> <li>• Adult safeguarding leads</li> <li>• Assistant directors</li> <li>• Executive directors</li> </ul>	17 - 20

<b>Competence Level</b>	<b>How this is demonstrated</b>	<b>Suggested evidence</b>
1	Understand what safeguarding is and their role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear understanding of their role in identifying and reporting concerns.</li> <li>• Understand local and national policy.</li> <li>• Understand the primary duties under the Care Act 2014.</li> </ul>
2	Recognise an adult potentially in need of safeguarding and take appropriate action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand local authority role</li> <li>• Applies policies appropriately</li> <li>• Treat reports seriously</li> <li>• Understand limits to confidentiality</li> </ul>
3	Understand the procedures for a safeguarding alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clear understanding of meaning of 'adults with care and support needs' as defined by the Care Act statutory guidance.</li> <li>• Understand common types of abuse as outlined in the Care Act Statutory Guidance – new categories include domestic violence, self neglect, modern day slavery and organisational abuse.</li> <li>• Recognise indicators / signs of different forms of abuse.</li> <li>• Understand risk factors.</li> <li>• Understand the process for raising a safeguarding concern.</li> </ul>
4	Understand the procedures for a safeguarding alert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand employer's Safeguarding Adults policy and procedure.</li> <li>• Understand how making safeguarding personal relates to the decision to raise a safeguarding concern with the Local Authority.</li> <li>• Understand how and when it is safe to speak to an adult with care and support needs prior to raising concerns with the Local Authority.</li> <li>• Understand when it is appropriate to raise a concern without the permission of the adult with care and support needs.</li> <li>• Know what actions you should take when there are concerns about an adult's immediate safety and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Know who to contact and how to make a referral.</li> </ul>
	Understand working with individuals with dignity and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Value individuality and be non-judgmental.</li> <li>• Recognise the individual's right to live in an abuse free environment.</li> <li>• Be aware of how your values and attitude influence your understanding of the situation.</li> <li>• Listen to individuals and allow individuals time to communicate any preferences and wishes.</li> </ul>

<i>Competence Level</i>	<i>How this is demonstrated</i>	<i>Suggested evidence</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand person centred approaches to safeguarding and how to ensure the persons views and outcomes are captured when you become concerned about someone's safety.</li> <li>• Understand when it is not safe to speak to the adult at risk prior to raising the concerns with the council.</li> <li>• Understand when you should raise a safeguarding alert without the adult's capacity and how to inform the adult about your actions.</li> </ul>	
5	Knowledge of policy, procedure and legislation that supports Safeguarding Adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate knowledge of national and local organisational policies e.g. Mental Capacity Act, DoLs, Care Act 2014, Chapter 14 Care Act Statutory guidance (key messages) – Making Safeguarding Personal, Human Rights Act 1998, employer's policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Understand how to 'whistleblow' within policy and procedures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applies policies appropriately</li> <li>• Awareness and confidence to 'whistleblow'</li> </ul>
6	Demonstrate skills and knowledge to contribute effectively to the safeguarding process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works to local and national guidance in safeguarding</li> <li>• Understand how to apply S42 of the Care Act 2014 when making decisions about safeguarding concerns.</li> <li>• Ensure risk management issues are identified and managed within the first 48 hours to ensure adults are safeguarded from ongoing risks.</li> <li>• Responds to safeguarding concerns in a timely manner which is directly informed by an assessment of the level of risk and the views and outcomes of the adult with care and support needs.</li> <li>• Practice effective multi-agency partnership e.g. convenes strategy meetings in accordance with the West Midlands Procedures and expectations of Making Safeguarding Personal, and the duty to cooperate under S6&amp;7 of the Care Act.</li> <li>• Attend and contribute to Safeguarding enquiries, safeguarding plans, safeguarding meetings and information sharing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Meets and responds timely to the requirements of organisational local and national guidance</li> <li>• Identify and reduce potential / actual risks after disclosure or allegation</li> <li>• Adheres to requirements of making safeguarding personal</li> <li>• Attend / actively contributes to safeguarding enquiries, plans, investigations, meetings and share information, using multi agency approach</li> <li>• Awareness and confidence to 'whistleblow'</li> <li>• Escalates appropriate concerns to senior management and / or legal services</li> <li>• Develops protective strategies</li> </ul>

<i>Competence Level</i>	<i>How this is demonstrated</i>	<i>Suggested evidence</i>	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop protective strategies for those that decline services and understand when it is appropriate to escalate concerns to senior management and / or legal services for advice on avenues of support.</li> <li>• Has awareness of and confidence to use 'whistleblowing' policy and procedures when required.</li> </ul>	
7	Awareness and application of range of organisational local and national policy / procedure frameworks when undertaking safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show clear understanding of the purpose of a safeguarding enquiry and how to undertake this in response to a safeguarding concern in the context of Care Act Statutory Guidance and Making Safeguarding Personal.</li> <li>• Describe the purpose of a strategy meeting and contribute to this and any subsequent plans for enquiry.</li> <li>• Understand what happens after a safeguarding enquiry.</li> <li>• Understand the purpose of the safeguarding adults plan, when there is a duty to produce one and the purpose of the safeguarding planning meeting / case conference.</li> <li>• Apply inter-agency frameworks and recording systems.</li> <li>• Be aware and challenge if necessary organisational cultures that may lead to poor practice in safeguarding.</li> <li>• Understand when and how to contact the police in response to a potential or actual crime.</li> <li>• Understand what to do when concerns relate to individuals in position of trust and an overview of the role of the Designated Safeguarding Adults Manager.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Know how legislation / policy informs a specific piece of work – including: Mental Capacity Act, DoLS, HR Act '98, Sexual Offences Act '03, PACE '84, Fraud Act, Care Standards Act '00, Court Protection MCA, ISA, POVA, MAPPA, MARAC</li> <li>• Be aware of, and how to challenge, organisational cultures that may engender poor safeguarding practice</li> </ul>
8	Ensure service users / carers are supported appropriately to understand safeguarding and to maximise decision-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with clients to ensure they are fully aware of all options available to them and also of the preventative measures that they may be able to put in place to protect themselves from abuse.</li> <li>• Recognise adults rights to freedom of choice and how this relates to risk.</li> <li>• Understand how undue influence and coercion can affect someone's decision making and the duty to intervene in these cases.</li> <li>• Show understanding of how abuse may affect individuals'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to ensure people are aware of all options and preventative measures – including lasting PoA, police role</li> <li>• Recognise and actively promote service user's freedom of choice</li> <li>• Provide written and verbal information on local Safeguarding Adults processes and how service users and carers can access them</li> <li>• Actively engage with people who decline services and / or engage others to do so</li> </ul>

<i>Competence Level</i>	<i>How this is demonstrated</i>	<i>Suggested evidence</i>
	<p>decision making processes and the support people may need in order to help them recover from abuse and identify / manage their own risks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information on local and national groups that may be able to provide support.</li> <li>• Effectively communicate the requirements of making safeguarding personal.</li> <li>• Understand the potential for safeguarding responses to become abusive in their own right and the need to ensure risks are balanced with the wishes and feelings of the adult.</li> <li>• understand the need to ensure all adults understand when actions are needed that they do not agree with – serious crime, public interest, risk to their vital interests.</li> <li>• Describe the potential impact of abuse on adults at risk and their ongoing care and support needs.</li> <li>• Recognise that adults who cause harm may have care and support needs in their own rights and the Local Authorities duties in such cases.</li> <li>• Understand when an independent advocate must be appointed to be compliant with S68 of the Care Act.</li> <li>• Understand the Local Authorities statutory duties in relation to Carers and Safeguarding (to include the fact that in most cases Carers are generally not eligible for S42 as they do not have care and support needs).</li> <li>• Understand and evidence how the views and wishes of the adult inform the process, are reviewed during the course of the safeguarding response and are evaluated at the end of the process.</li> </ul>	
9	<p>Understand how to get best evidence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand when immediate advice will be needed from the police in response to a safeguarding concern.</li> <li>• Show a comprehensive and detailed knowledge of gathering, evaluating and preserving evidence.</li> <li>• Describe why it is important to preserve evidence.</li> <li>• Understand good case recording systems and the need to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the importance of preserving evidence and case recording</li> </ul>

<i>Competence Level</i>	<i>How this is demonstrated</i>	<i>Suggested evidence</i>	
		<p>ensure this identifies evidence and professional judgements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the potential for having to defend safeguarding decisions in a Court of Law.</li> </ul>	
10	Understand when to use emergency systems to safeguard adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe when you would use emergency services.</li> <li>• Describe situations that will require escalation to senior managers and / or legal services.</li> <li>• Contacting emergency duty team.</li> <li>• Describe when emergency safeguarding adult plans may be required.</li> <li>• Use legislation where immediate action may be required e.g. Section 4 of the Mental Health Act 1983 or urgent authorisation under DOLs.</li> <li>• Understand when it is appropriate to contact the police for advice on the use of emergency powers.</li> </ul>	
11	Maintain accurate, complete, and up-to-date records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of understanding and utilising appropriate recording systems as per local policy and in a timely manner.</li> <li>• Evidence of effective report writing.</li> <li>• Evidence of appropriate information sharing in accordance with the safeguarding adult's board information sharing agreement, local policies and sections 6, 7 and 45 of the Care Act 2014.</li> <li>• Evidence of effective multi-agency partnership working.</li> <li>• Evidence of risk assessments and management plans that meet required outcomes.</li> <li>• Evidence of accurate case recordings.</li> <li>• Know how to share information appropriately, taking into consideration confidentiality, data-protection issues, Care Act Statutory Guidance, the pressing need test, and local policies.</li> <li>• Explicit understanding of issues of confidentiality and data protection.</li> </ul>	<p>Evidence of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection planning</li> <li>• Collating and monitoring 'Alerts'</li> <li>• Report writing, information sharing, partnership working</li> <li>• Risk assessment and management plans</li> <li>• Contemporary case records</li> <li>• Explicit understanding of confidentiality and data protection</li> </ul>

<i>Competence Level</i>	<i>How this is demonstrated</i>	<i>Suggested evidence</i>	
12	Show skills and knowledge to undertake a Safeguarding Adults investigation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show thorough knowledge and application of purpose, duties, tasks involved in safeguarding enquires.</li> <li>• Plan and participate in the implementation of agreed safeguarding adult plans following on from a safeguarding enquiry.</li> <li>• Understand and include the roles of different agencies in enquires in accordance with Care Act Statutory Guidance, West Midlands Procedures, and local guidance.</li> <li>• Escalate appropriately when there is an insufficient response from organisations or agencies to senior managers.</li> </ul>	Evidence of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding adult plans</li> <li>• Multi-agency involvement</li> <li>• Escalates to senior managers when appropriate</li> </ul>
13	Actively support a positive multi-agency approach to safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate an understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved in investigations and ensure these are met.</li> <li>• Show awareness of updated protocols and follow / implement them.</li> <li>• Demonstrate application of learning from CQC inspections and Safeguarding Adults Reviews in service development.</li> <li>• Challenge poor practice at an intra and inter agency level.</li> <li>• Demonstrate leadership in your organisation and across organisations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenge poor practice at intra and inter agency level</li> </ul>
14	Support development of robust internal systems to provide consistent, high quality safeguarding service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in effective monitoring and auditing of performance management and quality assurance.</li> <li>• Compliance with training to support the development and knowledge base for safeguarding adults.</li> <li>• Ensure supervision is carried out in accordance with agreed procedures and that safeguarding forms a central part of the discussion.</li> <li>• Ensure supervisors are suitably trained to carry out the supervisory role.</li> <li>• Adhere to 'whistleblowing' policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Employ safer recruitment practice.</li> <li>• Monitor safeguarding activity within your team, resolve any concerns, and escalate concerns that require input from</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out effective monitoring and auditing</li> <li>• Demonstrate effective learning, development and CPD activities are delivered and commissioned as required</li> <li>• Evidence that learning is transferred to practice</li> <li>• Ensure regular supervision is in place – with suitably trained supervisors</li> <li>• Monitor Safeguarding systems</li> <li>• Ensure the workforce has the necessary skills and knowledge to work effectively</li> </ul>

<i>Competence Level</i>	<i>How this is demonstrated</i>	<i>Suggested evidence</i>	
		<p>senior management to resolve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the workforce has the necessary skills and knowledge to work effectively and comply with safeguarding requirements.</li> </ul>	
15	Chair Adult Safeguarding meetings and / or discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand local policy and procedures as to when senior management chair role required, e.g. large scale inquiries or sexual offences.</li> <li>• Understand situations that present reputational risk to the council so that issues can be escalated appropriately to the directorate management team.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify reputational risk and escalates appropriately</li> </ul>
16	Ensure record systems are robust and fit for purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop, implement and monitor the use of a series of single agency and multi agency performance management and quality assurance audits to provide assurance to the Directorate and Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) on how safeguarding is embedded in the organisation.</li> <li>• Develop, implement and monitor the use of systems that produce collective intelligence to ensure this is appropriately with key internal and external partners as a means of proactively identifying patterns, themes and trends across the commissioned services and statutory agencies.</li> <li>• Develop and implement systems that support managers and front line staff to embed personalised safeguarding response in a statutory setting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement audit and inspection regimes</li> <li>• Demonstrate established systems to support outcome focused good practice, e.g. record keeping, protection plan monitoring, time management</li> </ul>
17	Lead development of effective policy and procedures for safeguarding adult and contribute to multi-agency policy and procedure developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain a clear organisational and operational focus on Safeguarding Adults;</li> <li>• Make sure relevant statutory requirements and other national standards are met;</li> <li>• Ensure that the Safeguarding Adults policies and procedures are co-ordinated and effectively implemented across the multi agency partnership.</li> <li>• Work with partner agencies to develop a consistent intra and inter-agency approach to safeguarding.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide leadership, stating clear aims and objectives for safeguarding adults</li> <li>• Ensure monitoring and auditing systems are robust</li> <li>• Ensure contractual arrangements with providers adhere to safeguarding policy and procedures</li> <li>• Effectively communicate a pro-active approach to safeguarding throughout the organisation</li> </ul>

<i>Competence Level</i>	<i>How this is demonstrated</i>	<i>Suggested evidence</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate strategic understanding of the scope of safeguarding services across the whole organisation.</li> <li>• Work in partnership with a range of agencies to promote safeguarding across all services.</li> <li>• Provide leadership for the workforce stating clear aims and objectives in safeguarding adults.</li> <li>• Ensure contractual arrangements with service providers adhere to the adults safeguarding policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Ensure arrangements are in place and adhered to for proactively assuring the quality of care.</li> <li>• Ensure systems are in place to adhere to safer recruitment practices.</li> <li>• Effectively communicate a proactive approach to safeguarding adults within your organisation.</li> <li>• Be accountable for organisational practice.</li> <li>• Ensure 'whistleblowing' systems are in place and adhered to.</li> <li>• Ensure effective training, policy and procedures are in place to support effective risk and decision making practice.</li> <li>• Ensure systems are in place for large scale enquiries within the organisation.</li> <li>• Ensure systems are in place to respond to complaints and compliments in relation to safeguarding.</li> <li>• Ensure systems are in place for responding to 'position of trust within the organisation.</li> </ul>	

<b>Competence Level</b>	<b>How this is demonstrated</b>	<b>Suggested evidence</b>
<p>18 Ensure plans and targets for Safeguarding Adults are embedded at a strategic level</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the strategic priorities and business plan of the SAB are understood and reflected across the organisations priorities.</li> <li>• Leading commitment to outcomes for adults at risk of harm.</li> <li>• Develop the means to measure whether outcomes are realised so that practitioners and boards know how efficient they are.</li> <li>• Ensure services and procedures drive engagement with people and discuss with them the outcomes that they want at the beginning, middle and end of the process.</li> <li>• Develop the means to ensure staff are competent in working with families and networks and have skills, knowledge and permission to use the full range of legal and social work interventions.</li> <li>• Engage with local criminal and justice systems to make sure victims get the same access to justice as everyone else.</li> <li>• Develop the means to ensure the performance and quality of safeguarding services is regularly checked and audited and systems are in place to support areas for development.</li> <li>• Lead and participate in statutory inspections and be accountable for developing and implementing SMART action plans.</li> <li>• Be aware of the findings from Safeguarding Adults Reviews and be accountable for developing and implementing SMART action plans to address findings in respect of the organisation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure audit systems are robust</li> <li>• Be aware of findings from Safeguarding Adults Reviews and any implications for service delivery in respect of Safeguarding Adults in the organisation</li> </ul>
<p>19 Promote awareness of Safeguarding Adults systems within, and outside of, the organisation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ratify local safeguarding policy and procedures.</li> <li>• Ensure systems are in place so provide assurance that the workforce are aware of the SAB constitution, risk register, strategic plan, annual business plan, and how their work can contribute to the SAB's priorities.</li> <li>• Ensure policies and procedures are accessible to staff.</li> <li>• Ensure systems are in place to identify and address</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Publicise and promote safeguarding policy, procedures and the SAB</li> </ul>

<b>Competence Level</b>	<b>How this is demonstrated</b>	<b>Suggested evidence</b>	
		<p>organisational, procedural and practice issues that impact on positive outcomes in safeguarding.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can identify systems and structures in place used to raise awareness of safeguarding at a local and national level.</li> </ul>	
20	Develop and maintain safeguarding systems to ensure the active involvement of service users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embed the ethos of making safeguarding personal.</li> <li>• Audit the safeguarding outcomes and be accountable for implementing required improvements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide evidence of how service users, patients, carers and customers are involved in safeguarding activity</li> </ul>