

F9EX 04 (BI201) Assess the Needs of and Risks to Victims/Survivors of Domestic Abuse/Violence

Elements of competence

- BI201.1 Gather information regarding the victim/survivor and their circumstances**
- BI201.2 Assess the information, agreeing needs and identifying risk**
- BI201.3 Agree the victim/survivor's needs from appropriate interventions**

About this Unit

This standard is about assessing the risks to victims/survivors of domestic abuse/violence. It includes involving the victim/survivor, wherever possible, in the assessment and in agreeing the consequent factors and needs to be addressed. It is acknowledged that domestic abuse/violence can include sexual abuse/violence where this is perpetrated by a family member who is the abuser.

Where an assessment tool is used, this can be paper-based and/or electronic.

The resultant outcomes will then inform the development and implementation of appropriate intervention plans, with this activity being addressed in separate but related units of national occupational standards.

It is recognised that abuse can occur without physical violence, yet can be equally damaging to those affected. Throughout this standard, where the term 'abuse' is used it is taken to include instances also involving physical violence.

Evidence Requirements for the Unit

It is essential that you adhere to the Evidence Requirements for this Unit — please see details overleaf.

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| Specific Evidence Requirements for this Unit |
| Simulation: |
| Simulation is NOT permitted for this Unit. |
| The following forms of evidence ARE mandatory: |
| <p>Direct Observation: Your assessor or expert witness must observe you in real work activities which provide a significant amount of the Performance Criteria for most of the Elements in this Unit. For example your assessor may observe your practice at meetings during the assessment process with the service user(s), gathering information from individuals within and outside your own organisation and reviewing the information gathered in order to identify risk factors and the vulnerability of those involved.</p> <p>Reflective Account/professional discussion: These will be an explanation or a description of your practice in particular situations based on current working practices. For example an account of your practice in preparing for the assessment process and discussions/meetings with relevant others, any cultural issues, how you enabled active participation by the service user(s), your judgements on the degree of vulnerability and risk factors. You could also include an explanation of how legislation, policies and procedures affect your practice.</p> |
| Competence of performance and knowledge could also be demonstrated using a variety of evidence from the following: |
| <p>Questioning/professional discussion: May be used to provide evidence of knowledge, legislation, policies and procedures that cannot be fully evidenced through direct observation or reflective accounts. In addition the assessor/expert witness may also ask questions to clarify aspects of your practice.</p> <p>Expert Witness: A designated expert witness may provide direct observation of practice, questioning, undertaking a professional discussion or providing feedback on a reflective account.</p> <p>Working with Victims, Survivors and Witnesses can pose a number of challenges for direct observation of practice by assessors not based in the workplace and it is vital that expert witnesses are identified at the planning stage as they will be require to work closely with your assessor in the evidence gathering process.</p> <p>Witness testimony: Can be a confirmation or authentication of the activities described in your evidence which your assessor has not seen. This could be provided by a work colleague or another key person. It is NOT appropriate to use witness testimony from any member of their family or circle of friends.</p> <p>Products: These can be risk assessments, assessment records and/or any agency approved forms and records. Copies of material/brochures/application forms on services the candidate has sought out and prepared for the service user. Where products have not been developed or compiled by the candidate you need to provide an explanation of the contribution you made to them or your reasoning for offering them to the service user(s), eg brochures and application forms.</p> <p>Due to the nature of this Unit considerable care should be given to the inclusion of any anonymised records in your portfolio. They should remain where they are normally stored and checked for their authenticity by your assessor as well as occasionally by your Verifier. Where records are included great care should be taken to ensure they are anonymised to ensure confidentiality.</p> |

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General guidance

- ◆ Prior to commencing this Unit you should agree and complete an assessment plan with your assessor which details the assessment methods (including potential products) and the tasks you will be undertaking to demonstrate your competence.
- ◆ Evidence must be provided for ALL of the Performance Criteria, ALL of the knowledge and parts of the scope that are relevant to your job.
- ◆ Candidates and assessors should ensure that knowledge evidence should be **integrated** into the reflective accounts, direct observations and if appropriate in professional discussions. Care should be taken to **avoid** assessment of knowledge through set or banks of questions as they generally do not reflect real work practice.
- ◆ The evidence must reflect the policies and procedures of your workplace and be linked to the current legislation, values and principles of best practice within the Community Justice Sector and in particular those staff working with victims survivors and witnesses.
- ◆ ALL evidence must relate to your own work practice.

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Knowledge Specification for this Unit

Competent practice is a combination of the application of skills and knowledge informed by values and ethics. This specification details the knowledge and understanding required to carry out competent practice in the performance described in this Unit.

When using this specification **it is important to read the knowledge requirements in relation to expectations and requirements of your job role.**

You need to provide evidence for ALL knowledge points listed below. There are a variety of ways this can be achieved so it is essential that you read the 'knowledge evidence' section of the Assessment Guidance.

| You need to show that you know, understand and can apply in practice: | Enter Evidence Numbers |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Legislative, regulatory and organisational requirements | |
| 1 Legal and organisational requirements which relate to undertaking risk-led assessments of victims/survivors of domestic abuse/violence, and their impact for your area of operations. | |
| 2 Legislation, policies and procedures relating to data protection, health and safety, diversity and their impact for your area of operations. | |
| 3 The role of your organisation and its services relating to tackling domestic abuse, including the provision of support to victims/survivors. | |
| 4 The limits of your authority and responsibility, and the actions to take if these are exceeded. | |
| Key, general requirements in addressing domestic/sexual abuse/violence | |
| 5 What constitutes domestic abuse/violence, and its prevalence in the community. | |
| 6 Signs of abuse and the methods used by abusers to gain power and control. | |
| 7 The impact upon all of those affected by domestic abuse, including victims/survivors and children. | |
| 8 How children may be used by abusers as part of their abuse. | |
| 9 Typical types of information and areas of support sought by those affected by domestic abuse, and the sources of information available to them. | |
| 10 The role of the principal external support agencies, and multi-agency arrangements towards providing support and interventions for victims/survivors in your area. | |
| 11 How cultural, social and gender related aspects impact upon domestic abuse. | |
| Requirements particular to assessing needs and risks | |
| 12 The relevant risk assessment instruments/process(es) and how to undertake these. | |
| 13 The information required towards making an assessment of victims/survivors, appropriate to addressing the risks to them from their abusers. | |
| 14 Methods of verifying and corroborating the information required. | |
| 15 How to distinguish between directly observed evidence, evidence from reliable sources and hearsay. | |

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| You need to show that you know, understand and can apply in practice: | Enter Evidence Numbers |
|---|------------------------|
| Requirements particular to assessing needs and risks (cont) | |
| 16 Factors impacting upon the vulnerability of victims/survivors of domestic abuse. | |
| 17 Circumstances requiring additional assessments and how to arrange these. | |
| 18 Circumstances where victims/survivors are considered to be at a very high risk, requiring particular support and an associated risk management plan, and how to progress such a plan. | |
| Requirements relating to communicating with victims/survivors | |
| 19 Different styles and forms of communication that may be appropriate and the importance of building trust and empathy with victims/survivors, and the methods of achieving this. | |
| 20 The importance of non-verbal communication, such as body language, and how different cultures use and interpret body language in different ways. | |
| 21 Possible barriers to communication, their causes, and ways to overcome them, including the feelings and reactions which victims/survivors may have that hinder their ability to discuss abuse. | |
| 22 The importance of being aware of your own values and beliefs, and their impact upon your ability to challenge discriminatory or potentially damaging attitudes and behaviour. | |
| 23 Limits of confidentiality applying to your job role, and the circumstances when it is necessary to go against a victim/survivor's expressed wishes in their best interests, and in such cases the importance of ensuring that they understand what is happening and why. | |

F9EX 04 (BI201) Assess the Needs of and Risks to Victims/Survivors of Domestic Abuse/Violence

BI201.1 Debrief and provide emotional support to colleagues tackling domestic and/or sexual abuse/violence

| Performance Criteria | | DO | RA | EW | Q | P | WT |
|----------------------|---|----|----|----|---|---|----|
| 1 | Describe clearly and accurately your role and responsibility to the victim/survivor, explaining the information being sought, the reasons for seeking it, and with whom it may be shared. | | | | | | |
| 2 | Ensure that the discussion with the victim/survivor takes place in an appropriate and safe environment for the individual. | | | | | | |
| 3 | Confirm your organisation's policy relating to confidentiality, including which parties may require particular information, and the circumstances where information may be divulged. | | | | | | |
| 4 | Confirm that it is acceptable to the victim/survivor to proceed. | | | | | | |
| 5 | Identify the victim/survivor's relevant circumstances, including their relationship to the abuser, their living arrangements and environment, family and personal situation, education/employment situation, financial situation, physical and mental health, and their attitudes, beliefs and needs. | | | | | | |
| 6 | Explore with the victim/survivor their situation and the problems which the abuse is causing, and the aspects with which they would welcome help. | | | | | | |
| 7 | Obtain verification and/or corroboration for the information, where required and where possible. | | | | | | |
| 8 | Arrange for an accurate record to be made, where relevant and with the victim/survivor's consent, of any bruising or injuries which they have sustained due to the abuse, in line with your organisation's procedures. | | | | | | |
| 9 | Communicate in a manner, and at a pace, appropriate to the victim/survivor, and which is free from discrimination and oppression, remaining non-judgemental in your discussion with the victim/survivor. | | | | | | |
| 10 | Allow the victim/survivor to progress at their own pace, treating them with dignity and respect, listening actively and checking for understanding. | | | | | | |

DO = Direct Observation
EW = Expert Witness

RA = Reflective Account
P = Product (Work)

Q = Questions
WT = Witness Testimony

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BI201.1 Debrief and provide emotional support to colleagues tackling domestic and/or sexual abuse/violence

| Performance Criteria (cont) | | DO | RA | EW | Q | P | WT |
|-----------------------------|--|----|----|----|---|---|----|
| 11 | Maintain accurate and up-to-date records, setting out details of the victim/survivor's relevant circumstances. | | | | | | |

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BI201.2 Assess the information, agreeing needs and identifying risk

| Performance Criteria | | DO | RA | EW | Q | P | WT |
|----------------------|--|----|----|----|---|---|----|
| 1 | Determine the potential risk factors identified from the assessment process, providing evidence to show the basis for your decision, and to explain the strength and nature of the link between a factor and the likelihood of further harm to the victim/survivor and where relevant to their children. | | | | | | |
| 2 | Assess the relevant factors, including the victim/survivors' relationship with the abuser, their living arrangements and environment, family and personal situation, financial situation, physical and mental health, and their attitudes, beliefs, confidence and needs. | | | | | | |
| 3 | Use your professional judgement to assess the significance of both the victim/survivor's overall situation to determine the level of risk, and of particular aspects of their situation, to identify priority areas for interventions and support. | | | | | | |
| 4 | Determine correctly the likely outcome(s) of the risks identified, including whether the victim/survivor is vulnerable to harm, and/or there is a risk of harm to others, including their children where relevant. | | | | | | |
| 5 | Determine the circumstances likely to be contributing to the causes of the victim/survivor's distress and those influences that might help to reduce, or prevent the distress. | | | | | | |
| 6 | Identify any circumstances which may mean that the victim/survivor, and/or their children where relevant, are particularly vulnerable. | | | | | | |
| 7 | Discuss and identify the needs of the victim/survivor towards assisting them to address the abuse/violence. | | | | | | |

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BI201.2 Assess the information, agreeing needs and identifying risk

| Performance Criteria (cont) | | DO | RA | EW | Q | P | WT |
|-----------------------------|--|----|----|----|---|---|----|
| 8 | Identify correctly where additional assessments are required, and make the appropriate arrangements promptly, recording your reasons for the additional requirement clearly. | | | | | | |
| 9 | Ensure that your risk assessment is placed in the context of the victim/survivor's circumstances, and is defensible. | | | | | | |
| 10 | Complete the appropriate assessment fully and correctly, maintaining accurate and up-to-date records, setting out the risks and protective factors identified, the likelihood of the abuse recurring and the likely imminence and possible severity of such abuse. | | | | | | |

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BI201.3 Agree the victim/survivor's needs from appropriate interventions

| Performance Criteria | | DO | RA | EW | Q | P | WT |
|----------------------|--|----|----|----|---|---|----|
| 1 | Involve the victim/survivor in the risk assessment, explaining the process used and the rationale for the resultant outcomes. | | | | | | |
| 2 | Explain clearly to the victim/survivor the impact of the risk and protective factors identified. | | | | | | |
| 3 | Explain the options available to the victim/survivor, and recognise and respect their wishes, agreeing with the individual the preferred options and associated actions. | | | | | | |
| 4 | Determine and acknowledge the victim/survivor's own coping mechanisms, where relevant, and identify and agree coping mechanisms that might be developed. | | | | | | |
| 5 | Use agreed procedures and appropriate protocols for multi-agency liaison. | | | | | | |
| 6 | Explore and agree with the victim/survivor the way forward in progressing criminal proceedings and referring cases, where a potential crime has been committed, promptly to the necessary authority, in line with your organisation's procedures and with the victim/survivor's consent wherever possible. | | | | | | |

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BI201.3 Agree the victim/survivor’s needs from appropriate interventions

| Performance Criteria (cont) | | DO | RA | EW | Q | P | WT |
|-----------------------------|---|----|----|----|---|---|----|
| 7 | Ensure that relevant procedures are agreed with the victim/survivor and are in place to provide ongoing support to the victim/survivor, with a frequency appropriate to the level of risk identified. | | | | | | |
| 8 | Alert relevant persons promptly where you identify real and particular concerns regarding the risk of harm to the victim/survivor, and/or their children where relevant. | | | | | | |
| 9 | Ensure that your analysis is justified and defensible, with a clear rationale for your conclusions, associated recommendations and subsequent plans. | | | | | | |
| 10 | Provide your report, including all relevant information, promptly to the relevant person(s). | | | | | | |

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To be completed by the candidate

I submit this as a complete Unit

Candidate's name:

Candidate's signature:

Date:

To be completed by the assessor

It is a shared responsibility of both the candidate and assessor to claim evidence, however, it is the responsibility of the assessor to ensure the accuracy/validity of each evidence claim and make the final decision.

I certify that sufficient evidence has been produced to meet all the Elements, PCs and Knowledge of this Unit.

Assessor's name:

Assessor's signature:

Date:

Assessor/internal verifier feedback

To be completed by the internal verifier if applicable.

This section only needs to be completed if the Unit is sampled by the internal verifier.

Internal verifier's name:

Internal verifier's signature:

Date: