SFJ AB1 – SQA Unit Code H554 04

Communicate effectively with people

Overview

This standard is about communicating effectively with people – orally, in writing, using electronic and/or telecommunication and using non-verbal forms of communication. It covers engaging with people in the communication process as well as the importance of keeping information secure. This is an essential aspect of all jobs in the justice and safer communities sector.

The term 'people' is used broadly to cover any child, adult, group, community or agency that workers come into contact with, either directly or indirectly. It includes members of the public, individuals who are clients of the justice and safer communities sector, and colleagues in the workplace.

There are two sub-headings:

- AB1.1 Develop and maintain communication with people
- AB1.2 Maintain the security of information

Target Group

The standard is designed to be applicable to everyone who works in the justice & safer communities sector.

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Performance criteria

You must be able to:

AB1.1 Develop and maintain communication with people

P1 communicate in a manner that is consistent with relevant legislation, policies and procedures

P2 communicate with people in a form and manner and using language that:

- P2.1 is open and respectful of them as individuals
- P2.2 is consistent with their level of understanding, culture, background and preferred ways of communicating
- P2.3 promotes equality and values diversity

P3 communicate with people appropriately using different communication types, including:

- P3.1 non verbal
- P3.2 oral
- P3.3 written
- P3.4 electronic and telecommunication

P4 give people opportunities to check their understanding of the information you have given to them and ask questions

P5 take the appropriate action to reduce any barriers to effective communication, including:

- P5.1 environmental
- P5.2 personal
- P5.3 social

P6 make records in line with agency requirements that:

- P6.1 are accurate, legible and complete
- P6.2 contain only the information necessary for the record's purpose
- P6.3 are free from labelling and discrimination

P7 seek support when you are having difficulty communicating effectively

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

AB1.2 Maintain the security of information

P1 comply with relevant legislation, policies and procedures related to the security of information

P2 disclose information only to those who have the right and need to know it

P3 take the appropriate precautions when communicating confidential or sensitive information in relation to:

- P3.1 who might overhear or oversee the information
- P3.2 who might access the information

P4 maintain the security of records when handling and storing them

P5 alert the appropriate person when you think the security of information is not being maintained or information is being misused

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Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

K1 the relevant legislation, organisational policies and procedures that apply to communication and particularly the security and management of information

K2 the nature of effective communication (including when you feel confident to communicate and when you do not)

K3 the cycle of effective communication

K4 the reasons for effective communication being an essential aspect of work in the justice and safer communities sector

K5 barriers to effective communication including:

- K5.1 those related to personal differences e.g. in: culture, language, gender, literacy levels, experience, health / illness, familiarity with context, level of knowledge and skills
- K5.2 environmental barriers
- K5.3 social barriers
- K5.4 age
- K5.5 disability e.g. sensory/learning difficulties/wheelchair etc.

K6 how to modify communication so that the differences between you and the people you are communicating with are minimised

K7 how to communicate with people in ways which are open to them, show respect and promote equality and value diversity (non-verbally, orally, in writing and electronically)

K8 how to adapt communications style to be inclusive of individual levels of understanding in different contexts

K9 how the context in which communication takes place can affect people's ability to understand and communicate

K10 the reasons for checking with people to ensure that they understand the information you are giving them and allowing them to ask questions

K11 the actions that can be taken to reduce barriers to communication and how to put them into practice (including the use of other people such as interpreters and translators, advocates etc)

K12 the nature and purpose of the records you make

K13 the nature of information that might be sensitive and/or confidential and the subtleties of this

K14 the reasons for records only containing the information that is necessary for the record's purpose and being free from labelling and discrimination.

K15 current good practice of following up verbal communications with a written audit trail

K16 the reasons for only disclosing information to those people who have the right and need to know it and how you identify these people

K17 the circumstances where information must be shared

K18 what the appropriate precautions might be when communicating information

K19 how to handle and store information securely and safely

K20 the reasons for alerting an appropriate person when you have concerns about the handling of / misuse of information and who that person might be on different occasions and in different circumstances.

Scope/range related to performance criteria

In AB1.1 and AB1.2 P1 'relevant legislation, policies and procedures' may relate to:

- confidentiality
- data protection
- diversity
- equality
- freedom of information
- human rights
- information and related technology
- protective marking
- information sharing protocols

In AB1.1 P5, 'taking action to reduce barriers to communication' might include: seeking help from someone else (e.g. an interpreter, a colleague), changing the context of the communication (e.g. moving to somewhere quieter, shutting windows), delaying the communication, modifying the way in which you are communicating yourself.

In AB1.1 P6, ensure that grammar and spelling are correct as well as factually accurate.

In AB1.2 P3, 'appropriate precautions' will depend on a number of factors such as how the information is being communicated, the setting, who else is or may be present, who else accesses the setting at other times.

In AB1.2 P5, 'the appropriate person' might be: the worker's line manager, the person in the organisation responsible for IT etc.

Links to other NOS

This standard is designed to underpin all other standards as effective communication is an essential component of all actions in the sector.

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Originating organisation	Skills for Justice
Original URN	SFJ AB1
Relevant occupations	This standard is common to several occupations across the Justice and safer communities sector
Suite	Common standards across the Justice sector
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