

VR Standards of Practice – Audit Tool

The VR Standards (2013) requires members to:

“Refer to these standards to conduct a self-audit at yearly intervals or less.”

This document is designed to help you undertake such an evaluation using the professional standards. You may wish to conduct this as a self-evaluation, as part of an appraisal and development process with an employer or a provider or as part of peer review.

Using the document

- Column 1, Standard, is taken directly from the VRA professional standards.
- Column 2, Examples of evidence, gives examples of the kinds of documents and items that can provide evidence that you meet the standard. It is not exhaustive. A key is at the end of the document.
- Column 3, Evidence, is for you to list your own evidence. Even if you are not presenting your evaluation to anyone else, it is a good discipline to identify how you could demonstrate that you meet the standards in your work.
- In Column 4 make an assessment of whether you meet the standard fully (Y), partially (P), or not at all (N). There may also be standards in section B that aren't relevant to the work you do – hence the X (not applicable) column.
- Column 5 is for you to summarise the actions you will take where you have ticked 'N' or 'P' (or X, if you want to develop into these areas). You may also identify that you could improve your practice further in some of the areas where you have ticked 'Y'. Actions can be as straightforward as a simple change of behaviour or process, or they could involve further learning, development and experience.



Name:

Date:

1. STANDARD		2. EXAMPLES OF EVIDENCE	3. EVIDENCE What evidence do you have that you do this?	4. STANDARD MET				5. ACTION PLAN What do you need to do to meet the standard?
				Y	P	N	X	
A. PROFESSIONAL PRINCIPLES								
A1	Consistently practise to a proficient standard, maintaining competence by continuing to acquire relevant knowledge and skills	1, 5, 6, 8						
A2	Demonstrate knowledge of current VR theory and practice as relevant to their area of practice	1, 7, 8						
A3	Provide documented information to the client, in a format that they can understand, that clearly defines the services being provided	1, 2, 3, 4, 5						
A4	Draw on relevant information and their own professional knowledge to make justifiable decisions and support clients' decision-making	1						
A5	Communicate information, guidance, instruction and professional opinions effectively and appropriately to clients and to other stakeholders involved in the VR process	1, 5, 6						
A6	Maintain an independent perspective when negotiating with stakeholders, working to resolve differences between ideas, principles or people	1, 4, 6						



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A7	Ensure that the funder is made aware of any duplication of service or double funding that the practitioner identifies	1						
A8	Accommodate the different ethnic and cultural backgrounds of clients and stakeholders where this may impact on the clients' return to work	1, 5						
A9	Ensure that staff, associates, students, volunteers and other individuals working with the client under the practitioner's supervision are adequately trained, skilled and supervised in accordance with the VRA standards, code of ethics and other relevant guidelines	3, 4,						
A10	Ensure that clients have adequate support where needed to enable them to communicate effectively and understand information communicated to them	1, 5, 6						
A11	Ensure that the service and the practitioner act to empower the client, enabling clients to make decisions wherever they are capable of doing so	1, 2, 4, 5, 6						
B. VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PRACTICE								
General considerations:								
B1	Identify how the VR process will need to be tailored to accommodate the client's impairment	1						



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B2	Identify the implications of the client's impairment in relation to employment or other useful occupation	1						
B3	Work to overcome obstacles, including unhelpful attitudes and misunderstandings on the part of clients and other stakeholders, which may prevent them from being able to benefit fully from the VR process	1, 5						
B4	Ensure that clients and other stakeholders understand their roles and responsibilities in relation to the VR process	1,5, 6						
B5	Ensure that clients and other stakeholders are aware of their rights in the VR process and are encouraged to participate fully in it	1, 2, 3, 5, 6						
B6	Consider individuals within the context of their family systems and communities and, where appropriate and with the client's permission, endeavour to engage the family and significant others in an effort to support their rehabilitation	1, 5						
B7	Respect client confidentiality within the limits of the law	1, 3						
B8	Ensure that the client's expectations of the service and the practitioner are realistic and the responsibilities of both parties are defined	1, 2, 3, 5, 6						
B9	Ensure that services are discontinued only when there are valid reasons for doing so	1,3						

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B10	Design interventions to be effective, efficient, and timely, and to make best use of the budget and resources that are available	1, 5, 6						
B11	Ensure agreed timings and timescales are met, providing fair reasons where this is not possible	1, 5						
B12	Maintain sufficient knowledge of relevant legislative and benefit systems to support their work with clients	1, 3, 8						
B13	Maintain an up-to-date knowledge of the various resources that can be used to assist the client in their community, or of the agencies that can assist the client in accessing these resources	1, 8						
Referrals:								
B14	Consistently follow clearly documented incoming and on-going referral procedures and criteria	1, 3, 5						
B15	Indicate the time frame within which they will respond to a referral	2, 3, 5						
B16	Ensure that they have informed consent from the client or the client's representative for the client to receive VR services and that this is regularly reviewed and documented	1, 3, 5						
B17	If a service has been started and subsequently is deemed inappropriate or cannot be continued, identify a suitable alternative	1, 3, 4						

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B18	Where a referral to another practitioner is made, ensure this is done in discussion and agreement with the client and where relevant other stakeholders, maintaining client confidentiality and safety throughout	1, 3, 4						
B19	Ensure, wherever possible, that any recommended/ referred provider offers an effective and professional intervention in line with Vocational Rehabilitation Association standards	3, 4						
Case Co-ordination:								
B20	Wherever possible, ensure service coordination remains under the supervision of one VR practitioner throughout the duration of the plan or intervention	1, 3, 5						
B21	Ensure that case transfers have as little impact on the client, the client's plan and other stakeholders as possible	1, 3, 5						
B22	Support the client to self-manage at time of closure or transfer, taking into consideration the client's priorities and options	1, 3, 5						
Assessment:								
B23	Use assessment tools only where they will provide information to aid the decision-making process	1, 3, 5						
B24	Make clear to the client at the outset how assessment results will be used and reported	1, 3, 5, 6						

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B25	Guide and assist the client and other stakeholders through the assessment process	1, 3, 5, 6						
B26	Differentiate between different kinds of assessment, recommending the most appropriate to meet the client's and stakeholders' needs and goals	1, 3, 5						
B27	Justify not carrying out, or discontinuing, an assessment once it has been recommended	1, 3, 5						
Return to Work:								
B28	Use understanding of recruitment processes, employment practices and labour market details to assist clients in finding and retaining work	1, 3, 5, 6, 8						
B29	Work with and influence relevant stakeholders to ensure clients' successful return to work	1, 3, 5, 6						
B30	Match people to work, taking account of the key factors associated with job retention and redeployment processes	1, 3, 5, 6						
B31	Identify the physical, psychological and cognitive demands of the job and ensure that the client's physical and mental capacities are sufficient to meet job demands, working with other professionals where necessary to do this	1, 3, 4, 5, 6						

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B32	Ensure that adjustments or modifications are made to the workplace and work processes where necessary to facilitate sustainable return to work	1, 3, 6						
B33	Develop and agree a phased return-to-work plan with the client, employer and other stakeholders when necessary to aid sustainable return to work	1, 3, 5, 6						
VR Plans:								
B34	In discussion with the client and other stakeholders, develop and agree an appropriate VR plan which is specific, measureable, achievable, realistic and time limited, reviewing and updating it at appropriate intervals	1, 3, 5, 6						
B35	Ensure that the plan takes account of the resources that are available to support it	1, 3, 5, 6						
B36	Adequately explain the VR plan and its specific components to the client or their representative, as a basis for informed consent	1, 3, 5, 6						
B37	With the client's consent, work to gain the employer's full participation in the VR plan	1, 3, 5, 6						
B38	Ensure that the client and the employer, where there is one, receive consistent and active support throughout the plan or service intervention	1, 3, 5, 6						
Records:								

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B39	Ensure data is collected for required purposes only and used appropriately	1, 3						
B40	Ensure client files and other records are professionally presented and maintained, logically organised, well managed, clear and concise, so that those using them find them comprehensive and understandable	1, 3, 6						
B41	Ensure that any changes made or needed to the VR process to accommodate the client are clearly recorded	1, 3						
B42	Follow professional and legal requirements related to confidentiality, storage and destruction of files, and to a client's right to access their own details	1, 3, 8						
Evaluation and Review:								
B43	Use a documented process, with appropriate timescales, for dealing with complaints and feedback and make this available to clients and stakeholders	1, 3, 4, 5						
B44	Request, collect and analyse outcome measures and feedback from clients to evaluate and continuously improve the services delivered	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						
B45	Comply with legitimate external audits and evaluations when requested	3, 5						
C. CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROFESSION								
C1	Refer to these standards to conduct a self-audit at yearly intervals or less	5, 8						

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C2	Maintain a personal/ professional development plan (PDP) that is updated at least annually, identifying how they will pursue and maintain knowledge and skills relevant to their area of expertise	8						
C3	Engage in regular CPD activities, keeping a log of the activities and demonstrating reflection on their practice along with taking action on information from feedback, audits and personal reflection	8						
C4	Make use of professional supervision, mentoring or peer review sessions to support practice and development	5, 8						
C5	Ensure supervision, mentoring or peer review sessions are documented, summarising the discussions that took place along with any agreed actions	5, 8						
C6	Contribute to the VR field for instance by publishing, presenting, training others, or disseminating results or good practice	7, 8						
C7	Undertake any research in a professional and responsible manner adhering to accepted research and ethical practices	7, 8						

Examples of evidence

These are items and sources that you may be able to use for evidence that you meet the standards, this is not an exhaustive list. If you are using these to present for assessment or peer review, (a) be selective – pick out and explain examples that provide good evidence of your practice, and (b) cross-reference your evidence to the relevant standards. Some items will need to be anonymised before they are shown to anyone without authority to see the relevant details.

	Type	Examples
1	Client records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reports • proposals • case notes • meeting minutes • action logs • return to work plans • job seeking programmes case closure notes • information provided to clients to support self management • details of onward referrals matching of assessment and client • details of assessment tools and methods used • adjustments made to any part of the process • examples of communication with key stakeholders • summary of local or sector employment and recruitment practices and contexts
2	Service information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • marketing information • client information sheets • web pages

	Type	Examples
3	Service/organisational procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies • procedures • processes • guidance • forms/templates • checklists • decision aids
4	Contractual records	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agreements with customers • agreements with associates • agreements with providers • contracts of employment • due diligence
5	Feedback, monitoring and evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feedback from clients and stakeholders • complaints • analysis of feedback and how this has been used • satisfaction surveys • audit records • equal opportunities monitoring • service evaluations • written audit of practice
6	Witness testimony	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • statements from others
7	Contribution to VR Field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations and training delivered • articles • reports • conference papers • web pages • research conducted including details of methodology used, any ethical issues and ethical clearance

	Type	Examples
8	Your continuing professional development records	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• development plan• records or certificates of attendance• learning log or reflective summaries• records of supervision

Please send us your feedback on the VR Standards of Practice for Practitioners and this audit tool.

Contact us at: admin@vra-uk.org or visit it us at: www.vra-uk.org

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