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# SIMPLE QUALITY PROTECTS

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QUALITY ASSURANCE FOR THE THIRD SECTOR

## INTRODUCTION

SQP is a unique quality programme designed to support West Berkshire's voluntary and community sector. Charities carry out essential work in our community, protecting the most vulnerable and providing important services.

The aim of SQP is to see that trustees have relevant safeguards in place to protect themselves, the charity and its beneficiaries and that it has given due consideration to key areas. Whilst it is the duty of the trustee to make the final decision as to how to implement your work, quality assurance is undertaken by the whole organisation, we can provide guidance and support to ensure the right decisions are made.

This SQP booklet is a self-assessment tool to ensure you have asked the most important questions. For more scrutiny contact the EWB team who will provide a consultation based on this self-assessment tool along with additional support to reach your desired level.

The completion of the standard takes a considerable organisational commitment from trustees, staff and volunteers. However this investment will reap rewards by enabling organisations to demonstrate quality, identify how to improve services and convey continuous improvement to potential funders.

*Simple Quality Protects will help your organisation to:*

- Demonstrate to funders the quality of your service
- Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of your group
- Design services that fit the needs of your clients
- Improve the satisfaction of service users, staff and volunteers
- Demonstrate services are delivered whilst safeguarding children and vulnerable adults
- Identify areas for improvement
- Ensure your policies and procedures are fit for local commissioning, tendering and procurement and funders requirements

## BRONZE LEVEL

Having solid foundations.

A good constitution and a solid structure are essential for running a strong charity. The constitution should identify clear purposes and provide the basis for major decision making. The emphasis of Bronze SQP is upon the development of basic policies and administrative procedures, encouraging the management committee to think about planning, reviewing, communicating with users and showing that the organisation meets basic legislative requirements.

The section will cover:

1. Governance
2. Active Management
3. Organisation Specific Policies
4. Equal Opportunities Policy
5. Health and Safety Policy
6. Confidentiality
7. Premises
8. Operating Guide
9. Protecting your money
10. Looking after your volunteers



BRONZE LEVEL – Active Management

**WHAT IS THIS?**

The Management Committee has the ultimate responsibility for all aspects of the running of the organisation. It is important that they meet regularly and develop the skills to be able to plan and review activities as well as engage in problem solving. Their role is to ensure that the organisation is clear about its purpose and that everything that it does reflects this.

Members of the Management Committee are Trustees of the organisation and have individual responsibility for the general control and management of the administration. They must understand their responsibilities under all relevant legislation and be able to show that they are compliant. This is done through the development of policies, plans and the processes that they put in place to regularly check and review activities.

A code of conduct is a useful document that lists the basic responsibilities and obligations of the management committee and trustees to which everyone should sign up.

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
Are regular trustee meetings held?	Agenda	
Is an AGM held to approve the annual report/accounts? (membership organisations only)	Agenda	
Is a membership list kept up to date? (membership organisations only)	Membership list	
Do trustees receive an induction?	Induction pack/plan	
Are the trustees provided with the following? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your constitution</li> <li>• Your latest accounts</li> <li>• Your latest annual report</li> <li>• The Essential Trustee (Charity Commission Guidance)</li> </ul>		
Are the trustees aware of the distinction between trustees, members and beneficiaries?	Documents/Links	
Are your constitutions rules followed? (refer to section 1)	Constitution	
Are your organisations policies implemented and followed?	Policy documentation	
Is there a procedure in place for policy review?	Documentation of procedure	
Are trustees offered training for their roles and responsibilities?	Induction pack/plan	

**Actions to be Taken**

Date	What needs to be done?	Who will do this?	When will it be done by?

## BRONZE LEVEL – Organisation Specific Policies and Procedures

**WHAT IS THIS?**

If you are working with identifiable groups such as children and young people or adults at risk you will need to show that you understand the legislative requirements. This element covers Safeguarding Children; Safeguarding Adults; Vetting and Barring and Basic Training.

**Children and young people**

A safeguarding policy is the minimum requirement. It describes how you will comply with the law and ensure all aspects of the safety of your users. It will include staff and volunteer recruitment and training, reporting, confidentiality, understanding and use of legislation and policy. It will include the name of the person responsible for safeguarding in the organisation. It is very important that it is reviewed regularly and kept up to date.

**Adults at risk**

A safeguarding adults policy will recognise that some adults need special support due to their age, disability, mental health issues or general poor health and that they may need the protection to ensure that they are kept safe and their rights are maintained. All those who work with these adults have a duty to be able to recognise, and know how to act upon, indicators that an individual's welfare or safety may be at risk. They should have a basic knowledge of the indicators of possible abuse and neglect and how to respond. They should also be aware of how an individual may obtain help.

Safeguarding is the term now used to cover both child protection and prevention.

Members of staff and volunteers are likely to need to be checked by the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). DBS checks examine the background of individuals to identify convictions and in some situations other history. Using this information the organisation can decide if a person is suitable to work with children or adults at risk. Anyone wishing to work or volunteer for an organisation that helps children or adults at risk must have a DBS check if they are going to be in contact with clients and users.

The Disclosure and Barring Service was established when the Criminal Records Bureau and the Independent Safeguarding Authority were merged in 2012. At this time some of the regulations about who should be checked were changed.

Training will help staff and volunteers to understand what child protection and safeguarding is and to work in appropriate ways with children. It will also help them to identify problems and to know how to report them. Information about local courses should be available from your local authority, Empowering West Berkshire or Large national charities working with children, such as the NSPCC and Safe Network may also offer courses (at a cost). Your local authority will have a Policy and Good practice Guidance Manual

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
Do you have a Safeguarding Children and Young Peoples and or Safeguarding Adults Policy?	Policies and Procedures	
Does the policy has a page noting how it was developed and who is responsible for it?	Policies and Procedures	
Do you a Log to show all staff and volunteers have read and understand?	Policies and Procedures	
Have you logged date and method of review shown on the document?	Policies and Procedures	
Have all staff and volunteers that require it had safeguarding training. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide sample training certificates.</li> </ul>	Policies and Procedures/HR	

- Schedule showing who has completed training and when updates are due.

Evidence that staff and volunteers who require it have had a Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) check.

- Schedule showing programme for updating.

Policies and Procedures/HR	

**Actions to be Taken**

<b>Date</b>	<b>What needs to be done?</b>	<b>Who will do this?</b>	<b>When will it be done by?</b>

BRONZE LEVEL – Equal opportunities / equality and diversity policy.

**WHAT IS THIS?**

An equal opportunities policy will cover all types of discrimination - race, gender, age, disability, religion, sexuality - and describes how the organisation will promote equality for all users, volunteers and staff.

It should ensure that the organisation complies with the requirements of legislation notably the Equality Act 2010. Details and guidance can be found on the government’s Home Office website – [www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/equalities/)

A booklet has been produced for voluntary organisations. “Equality Act 2010: What do I need to know? A summary guide for Voluntary and Community Sector Service Providers”. This is available as PDF document from the website above.

Your policy should include a plan of action. The first thing to do is to agree your statement and then assess how close you are to achieving it and what you need to do to get there. This becomes your action plan.

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
<i>Do you have An equal opportunities policy with page noting how it was developed.?</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>Do you a Log to show all staff and volunteers have read and understand?</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>Have you logged date and method of review shown on the document.</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>Do you have an Action plan showing how it will be implemented and who is responsible for it?</i>	Policies and Procedures	

**Actions to be Taken**

Date	What needs to be done?	Who will do this?	When will it be done by?

BRONZE LEVEL –Health and Safety Policy and Procedures

**WHAT IS THIS?**

A health and safety policy describes your general approach and lists the main areas where safety may be an issue. It should be quite straight forward and cover how hazards will be dealt with. It will describe the arrangements that you have put in place to ensure the health and safety of users, volunteers and staff.

It must allocate responsibility for action in an emergency and say who will do what and when. It will also describe how you will implement and monitor health and safety controls and train staff and volunteers.

It should ensure that the organisation complies with the requirements of legislation and include a plan of action. The website of the Health and Safety Executive – [www.hse.gov.uk](http://www.hse.gov.uk) – is very useful and should be the main source of advice for this topic.

The first thing to do is to agree your policy and then assess how close you are to achieving it and what you need to do to get there.

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
Do you have An Health and Safety Policy and Procedure with page noting how it was developed.?	Policies and Procedures	
Do you a Log to show all staff and volunteers have read and understand?	Policies and Procedures	
Have you logged date and method of review shown on the document?	Policies and Procedures	
Are your Emergency procedures are displayed prominently?	Policies and Procedures	
Do you have a log of training and copies of certificates as appropriate?	Policies and Procedures	
Can you provide example records of checks undertaken including risk assessments?	Policies and Procedures	

**Actions to be Taken**

Date	What needs to be done?	Who will do this?	When will it be done by?

BRONZE LEVEL – Confidentiality (Data Protection)

**WHAT IS THIS?**

Organisations will have a range of management and administrative systems and keep records of attendance and usage. This will include the names and other details of users. The Data Protection Act 1998 is the law which covers individual’s rights to privacy and all organisations must comply with it.

Whether records are kept electronically or in paper form you must be able to provide assurances that the information you keep is only what is necessary, that you keep it safe and that everyone understands the procedure for usage. People have the right to see information that you keep about them and you must make arrangements for that too.

A confidentiality policy explains how the information that you hold about people will be kept secure. This will include who will have access to the information within the organisation. If you are working with children and young people you will need to develop a policy, which specifically reflects the particular needs of this group.

If you need or intend to share information about people, the policy should also be very clear about who information will be shared with, how this will be done and how you will get the consent of the individual/s concerned.

The organisation will also need to be prepared to deal with complaints, so you should think about how you are going to respond and draw up a simple complaints procedure that will support users, staff and volunteers.

Keeping good records is an important first step to knowing how your services are used and making monitoring easier.

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
<i>An outline showing how records are taken and kept which explains the procedure to be followed for data protection</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>A confidentiality policy showing who is responsible for implementing it and including (where appropriate) sample consent forms for activities and photography.</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>A basic complaints procedure that includes a date for review.</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>A record showing that all staff and volunteers have read and understood the policy and procedure, with training being completed, where necessary.</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>An example record sheet and user information form.</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>A log of people able to access and use files along with a record of use.</i>	Policies and Procedures	

**Actions to be Taken**

Date	What needs to be done?	Who will do this?	When will it be done by?

BRONZE LEVEL – Premises

**WHAT IS THIS?**

*If you rent premises you should ensure that you have a lease which clearly describes the terms that apply to your use. There will be requirements for the landlord and for your organisation as the tenant. This will include having adequate and appropriate insurance for your activities.*

*Access for users with additional needs should be taken into consideration as you want your activities to be accessible for all.*

*In addition there is legislation that covers the safety requirements for premises providing services for children with which you must comply. Grants, contracts and insurance will depend upon this and you may also be subject to inspections. This is referred to as “suitable premises, environment and equipment”.*

*If you own premises you must be able to show that you clearly understand and address your responsibilities.*

*You should also maintain an inventory of equipment and have a method of regularly checking its condition and suitability.*

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
<i>Do you have a copy of your lease or contract for us?</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>Copies of insurance certificates including public liability?</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>A copy of First Aid and fire procedures, filed and displayed in a prominent place?</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>An equipment inventory which includes its condition and how it will be checked.</i>	Policies and Procedures	

**Actions to be Taken**

Date	What needs to be done?	Who will do this?	When will it be done by?

BRONZE LEVEL –Operating Guide

**WHAT IS THIS?**

An operating guide is a simple document that describes your services and standards and is published for staff, volunteers and users to see. It will include such things as a calendar, timetable of events, opening times, services provided, expected standards of behaviour by users, limitations of the service (what it can and cannot do), and contact details. The document will be as detailed as is necessary but should be clear and regularly updated.

In some circumstances it may include guidelines for users or a simple “contract” stating roles and responsibilities, what the organisation will do for clients and users and what they will do in return.

It should be a useful document and source of reference that brings a lot of basic information in one place.

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
<i>The operating guide on view in the premises.</i>	Procedures/Venue	
<i>Date and method of review shown on document.</i>	Policies and Procedures	
<i>Minutes of management committee meeting endorsing the guide.</i>	Policies and Procedures	

**Actions to be Taken**

<b>Date</b>	What needs to be done?	Who will do this?	When will it be done by?

BRONZE LEVEL – Looking after your money

**What is This?**

Any money you receive must be used for the benefit of the group or your beneficiaries. Where things go wrong there may not only be a financial cost, but also you risk harm to your reputation. Its important to have procedures in place to protect your charity/organisation and its trustees from harm

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
Are there written procedures in place for handling all types of payment?	Finance Procedures	
Do you have at least two authorised signatories?	Finance Procedures	
Is there a procedure in place for counter-signing payments?	Finance Procedures	
Is the organisation aware of its HMRC obligations?	Finance Procedures	
Do you have an appropriate book keeping system?	Finance Procedures	
Do the trustees receive regular financial reports?	Finance Procedures	
Are you up to date with your account filing obligations (Internally/Charity Commission/Companies House)?	Finance Procedures	
Do you prepare an annual budget?	Budget	
Are there procedures in place to track the budget against expenditure?	Budget/Minutes	
Does the group have a bank account in its own name?	Bank Records	
Do you have a reserves policy in place?	Reserves Policy	

**Actions to be Taken**

Date	What needs to be done?	Who will do this?	When will it be done by?

BRONZE LEVEL – Looking after your Volunteers

**What is This?**

Volunteers are a major asset to our sector and make a real difference to the work we carry out. Since volunteers are giving up their time to support our causes it is essential they know they are valued and part of the team. Keeping volunteers engaged and being clear about your shared expectations will improve loyalty and help you get the very best from your volunteers.

	WHERE MIGHT YOU LOOK?	Y/N OR N/A
<i>Do you supply volunteers with a memorandum of understanding explaining what is expected of them?</i>	Memorandum of understanding	
<i>Do you have clear recruitment and selection procedures for volunteers?</i>	Volunteer Policy	
<i>Is there an induction process?</i>	Volunteer Policy or written procedure	
<i>Do you have someone designated to oversee the work of volunteers and provide support?</i>	Memorandum of understanding or Role description	
<i>Are there safeguards in place to prevent volunteers from acquiring employment rights?</i>	Volunteer Policy	
<i>Are actions of your volunteers insured where appropriate (e.g. through your professional liability insurance)?</i>	Insurance Policy	
<i>Do you have an internal complaints procedure for volunteers?</i>	Volunteer Policy	
<i>Do you have a procedure for dealing with complaints relating to volunteers and their removal where necessary?</i>	Volunteer Policy	

**Actions to be Taken**

Date	What needs to be done?	Who will do this?	When will it be done by?