

VR Standards of Practice – Audit Tool

The VR Standards (2019) 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. You can attach evidence or create a folder of evidence that you can create hyperlinks to.
- 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 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.



Audit checklist

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 practice to a proficient standard, maintaining competence by continuing to acquire, maintain and improve 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 and gain informed consent.	1, 2, 3, 4						
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, 2, 4, 5, 6						
A6	Work with and influence relevant stakeholders to ensure the client's successful return to work.	1, 5, 6						

A7	Maintain an independent perspective when negotiating with stakeholders, working to resolve differences between ideas, principles or people	1, 4, 5, 6						
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B1	Identify how the VR process will build on the client's existing ability and capacity.	1					
B2	Identify the implications of the client's needs in relation to their employment or occupation.	1					

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B3	To encourage cooperation and collaboration at all times working to overcome obstacles to allow the client 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, 4, 5, 6						
B5	Ensure that clients and other stakeholders are aware of their rights in the VR process.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6						
B6	Ensure that clients and other stakeholders are empowered to participate fully in the VR process.	1, 5, 6						
B7	Consider individuals within the context of their family systems and communities.	1, 3, 5, 6						
B8	Where appropriate, seek the client's permission to engage the family and others, where appropriate, in relevant aspects of the VR process.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6						
B9	Respect client confidentiality within the limits of the law.	1,3, 4						
B10	Ensure that the client's expectations of the service and the practitioner are realistic.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6						
B11	Design interventions that make best use of the budget and resources that are available.	1, 2, 3, 5, 8						

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B12	Use an appropriate medium for communication and the delivery of support considering options such as face to face, telephone and online and taking into account factors such as client preference, budget, location and data security.	1, 3, 8						
B13	Ensure agreed timings and timescales are met, providing fair reasons where this is not possible.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8						
B14	Be able to demonstrate up-to-date knowledge of relevant legislative and benefit systems to support clients.	1, 2, 3, 4, 8						
B15	Be able to demonstrate an up-to-date knowledge of the various agencies and resources that can be accessed to assist the client in their community.	1, 3, 5, 8						
Referrals:								
B16	Consistently follow clearly documented incoming and on-going referral procedures and criteria.	1, 3, 4, 5						
B17	Indicate the time frame within which they will respond to a referral	2, 3, 4, 5						
B18	Ensure that they have documented informed consent from the client, or the client's representative, for the client to receive VR services.	1						



B19	Be able to demonstrate that consent is regularly reviewed and documented.	1, 2, 3, 4					
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B20	If a service has been started and subsequently is deemed inappropriate or cannot be continued, identify a suitable alternative.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						
B21	Discuss and gain consent from the client (or their representative) for any referral to other stakeholders, document this and ensure that this is reviewed where necessary.	1, 3						
B22	Be able to demonstrate that client confidentiality and safety are maintained throughout the process through reference to policy, process and practice.	1, 3, 4, 5						
B23	Where making an ongoing referral, do so to a provider that offers an effective and professional intervention in line with Vocational Rehabilitation Association standards wherever possible.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						
Funding and Resources:								
B24	Ensure where possible that the funder is made aware of any duplication of service or double funding that the practitioner identifies.	1, 3, 4, 5						
B25	Design interventions that make best use of the budget and resources that are available.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						
B26	Ensure that the plan takes account of the resources that are available to support it.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						

B27	Be able to conduct a cost/benefit analysis of the various VR options available to advise the client and funder on the most cost-effective VR options available.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8					
B28	Negotiate new funding and resourcing in response to emerging or changing needs to implement the VR plan	1, 3, 4, 8					
B29	Where appropriate identify to the funder and/or client where public or third sector funded provision may be available.	1, 3, 4, 8					
Case Co-ordination							
B30	Wherever possible, ensure coordination remains under the supervision of one VR practitioner throughout the duration of the service.	1, 3, 4, 5					
B31	Ensure that case transfers have as little impact on the client, the plan and other stakeholders as possible.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8					
B32	Support the client to self-manage at time of closure, taking into consideration the client's priorities and options.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8					
Assessments:							
B33	Use assessment tools only where they will provide information to aid the decision-making process.	1, 3, 5, 8					
B34	Differentiate between different types of assessment, recommending the most appropriate to meet the client's and stakeholders' needs and goals	1, 3, 5, 8					

B35	Make clear to the client how assessment results will be kept, stored, length of storage, security, who else will have access and how they will be used and reported	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8					
B36	Guide and assist the client and other stakeholders through the assessment process.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5					
B37	Justify not carrying out or discontinuing an assessment once it has been recommended.	1, 3, 5, 8					

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VR Plan:								
B38	Adequately explain the VR plan and its specific components to the client or their representative, as a basis for informed consent.	1, 3, 4, 5						
B39	Ensure that any plan takes account of the resources that are available to support it.	1, 3, 5, 8						
B40	In collaboration with the client, their employer, and other stakeholders where the client has consented; develop and agree an appropriate phased return-to-work plan which is specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and has timed targets	1, 3, 5, 6, 8						
B41	Be able to demonstrate that the client and the employer (where there is one), are offered consistent and active support throughout the plan or service intervention	1, 5						
B42	Regularly review progress and update the plan when appropriate.	1, 3, 5						
B43	Demonstrate up-to-date knowledge of recruitment processes, employment practices and labour market details to assist clients in finding and maintaining work.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						



B44	Match the client to appropriate opportunities, taking account of the key factors associated with the job/occupation.	1, 8					
B45	Ensure that the client's capacities are sufficient to meet the physical, psychological, cognitive and social demands of the job, working with other professionals where necessary to achieve this.	1, 3, 5, 6, 8					

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B46	Recommend an appropriate package of in-work support to enable a sustainable return to work.	1, 3, 5, 8						
B47	Facilitate negotiations between the client and their employer to assess and make adjustments or modifications to the workplace, work processes, working patterns and role and responsibilities.	1, 5, 8						
B48	Identify and facilitate natural supports within the workplace and internal and external support where appropriate including job coaching, mentoring and training for example.	1, 2, 3, 5, 8						
Case Closure:								
B49	Where funding for the practitioner's services and/or other recommended services are discontinued, signpost the client to the most appropriate ongoing support options should these be needed to complete the plan.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						
B50	Any case closure should be undertaken in a timely manner; the practitioner should ensure all stakeholders are aware why case management is being withdrawn.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						

B51	Where the case is closed at the recommendation of the practitioner, they should be able to justify this action and there should be a plan in relation to instigation of further support if appropriate.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8					
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Evaluation and Review:								
B52	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						
B53	Request, collect and analyse outcome measures and feedback from clients to evaluate and continuously improve the services delivered.	1, 3, 5, 6, 8						
B54	Comply with legitimate internal and external audits and evaluations when requested.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						
B55	Routinely question why they are taking certain actions to identify opportunities for improvement and innovation	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						
B56	Commit to lifelong learning within their scope of practice.	7, 8						
B57	Apply critical appraisal skills in order to weigh the level of available evidence: its strength, significance and relevance.	8						
B58	Blend different sources of evidence into a coherent and realistic picture of the available research.	2, 3, 5, 8						
B59	Evaluate of their own practice - especially	5, 8						

	outcomes							
B60	Integrating external and internal evaluation and research evidence into improvements or innovations to their own practice.	1, 2, 3, 5, 8						
B61	Demonstrate the ability to influence others in their organisation and beyond in terms of the adoption of Evidence Based Practice and the findings from research and evaluation.	1, 5, 7, 8						
B62	Adopt client-centred service development – including informed consent.	1, 3, 4, 5, 8						
Records:								
B63	Ensure data is collected and used for required purposes only, used appropriately and destroyed securely when it is no longer required.	1, 3, 4, 5						
B64	Ensure the client is aware of their rights in respect of their data.	1, 3, 4, 5						
B65	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, 4, 5						
B66	Ensure that any changes made or needed to the VR process to accommodate the client are clearly recorded.	1, 3, 4, 5						
B67	Follow professional and legal requirements related to confidentiality, storage and destruction of files, and to a client's right	1, 3, 4, 5						



	to access their own details.							
C. CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT AND CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROFESSION								
C1	Refer to these standards to conduct a self-audit at yearly intervals or less	3, 5, 6, 8						
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	7, 8						

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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	5, 6, 7, 8						
C4	Make use of professional supervision, mentoring or peer review sessions to support practice and development	5, 7, 8						
C5	Ensure supervision, mentoring or peer review sessions are documented, summarising the discussions that took place along with any agreed actions	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	• 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	• marketing information • client information sheets • web pages
3	Service/ organisational procedures	• policies • procedures • processes • guidance



		• forms/templates • checklists • decision aids
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	Type	Examples
4	Contractual records	• agreements with customers • agreements with associates • agreements with providers • contracts of employment • due diligence
5	Feedback, monitoring and evaluation	• 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	• statements from others
7	Contribution to VR Field	• Presentations and training delivered • articles • reports • conference papers • web pages • research conducted including details of methodology used, any ethical issues and ethical clearance

3	Service/ organisational procedures	• policies • procedures • processes • guidance • forms/templates • checklists • decision aids
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Please send us your feedback on the VR Standards of Practice for Practitioners and this audit tool. Contact us at enquiries@vrassociation.org.uk or visit it us at: www.vra-uk.org

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