

So, you want to develop a policy, but don't know where to start? Or you have policies in place, but you are not sure if they include everything. Or, are some of your policies up for review?

Templates & Forms Booklet

Organisational Resources Booklet 3, developed by the
Standards Support Project



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Introduction

It can seem quite dry to go through policies and procedures, but written policies are vital not only in times of crisis, but also for day to day effective working. The rationale for these policies can be found in the Quality Standards for Advocacy Schemes.

This booklet is designed to help you work toward the Quality Standards for Advocacy Schemes. It works along side Good Practice Links, which give guidance on demonstrating the Quality Standards areas. Here are some example policies, policy templates and guidance to help you develop your policies. If you feel anything is missing, please let us know.

Just remember to involve your staff and Trustees in the development of policies and make sure everyone, especially the people you support, are aware of them!

Appraisal Policy

Here is a sample appraisal policy.

1) Aims of a staff appraisal system

The staff appraisal system exists to ensure that there is regular consideration of the needs of each staff member and post. Managerial staff should meet individually at least once a year with each member of staff who is responsible to them.

The appraisal looks at the performance of the individual in his or her job (looking at performance against job description, work programmes and action points from the previous appraisal) and how that performance could be improved. The purpose of the appraisal meeting is therefore to clarify objectives; identify changes in the nature of the work done and possible new directions; help staff to make the most of themselves by reviewing their strengths and weaknesses with a view to planning action to assist development; and at the same time increase the effectiveness of X Advocacy Scheme. This might include changes in work practice, identification of training needs, and consideration of long-term plans. **It may also be a good opportunity for the managerial staff to support the staff member to acknowledge the good work they have been doing.**

2) What is a staff appraisal?

A Staff Appraisal is a structured approach, which builds on the systems for setting objectives, and undertaking reviews, which are already integral to the work of X Advocacy Scheme.

The basis of the system in X Advocacy Scheme is an annual meeting between the employee and his/her line manager, which allows both parties to prepare and discuss issues of concern. There are two Preparation Forms (one completed by the person being appraised and the other by the manager doing the appraisal). These are for the benefit of both the person carrying out the appraisal and the person being appraised to outline the areas they wish to cover. The employee and the manager each give the other party a copy of their preparation form prior to the appraisal meeting so that the points they contain can be considered.

The meeting is:

- To review progress and priorities.
- To explore and resolve any problems in these areas.
- To discuss the employee's potential and future training needs.
- To set targets for future work and training if relevant.

For the employee it is an opportunity to explore such questions as:

- What is expected?
- How am I doing?
- Where am I going?
- What can I do to improve?

This active appraisal is a positive way of helping people to develop their potential whilst carrying out their work. Benefits to the person being appraised include the chance to:

- discuss how you are getting on with the work in detail
- find out the line manager's views of your work
- explore ways of working more effectively
- discuss your future within the organisation
- discuss how you see your career developing
- share views on how you see you are being managed
- Give feedback to your manager.

The two parties should agree actions to be taken as a result of the meeting. In order that there should be no misunderstandings and to provide a point of reference, the meeting and agreements on action points should be recorded in writing, using the Report of a Staff Appraisal Meeting Form so that these can be referred to in subsequent meetings.

All staff are to be appraised including the Director, who should be appraised by the Chair.

3) How and when will it happen?

The first appraisal takes place 12 months after a new employee has started; thereafter appraisals should be completed annually at a time suitable to both parties and certainly before the end of the year. For the appraisal system to work well a number of things are vital:

- a) That an on-going supervision system is set-up and is working well in practice
- b) That there is adequate preparation by both parties before the meeting
- c) That the meeting itself should have certain established ground rules including: -
 - the meeting is a dialogue
 - each person has a right to be listened to
 - the meeting is confidential
 - there are underlying attitudes of respect, empathy and honesty
 - the meeting is conducted in a constructive and positive wayThe meeting will result in some agreed outcome or action.

4) How does this system relate to job descriptions and job re-evaluation?

The annual appraisal might sometimes raise issues, which point to the need for a change in job description. This would be recorded on the report form, and any necessary action would be taken in the usual way. However, the report form cannot be used as a basis for downgrading a post.

5) Disagreements

It may happen that the meeting throws up a major difference of opinion between the line manager and employee. However, that should rarely happen if the supervision system is functioning properly. If there is disagreement the Report of Staff Appraisal Form following the meeting should reflect the discussions of both participants. Both parties should agree that the Report of Staff Appraisal Form accurately reflects the discussions and any disagreements. If both parties wish, there can be a second meeting between the employee and line manager to try to resolve the disagreements. If there is a second meeting, the Report of Staff Appraisal Form should be written after the second meeting and again should reflect the discussions of both participants and be agreed as above.

6) How will an appraisal relate to a disciplinary or grievance process?

Nothing that happens in the appraisal process may be used as the basis for grievance or disciplinary action.

7) Confidentiality

The two preparation forms remain confidential to the individual member of staff and their line manager at the time.

The Report of Staff Appraisal Form is seen by the relevant member of staff and the line manager. The form will be retained on file for reference on future appraisals, including by a future line manager.

Appraisal Preparation Form

Preparation form—staff

Member of Staff:

Line Manager:

Part 1: The Job

1. (a) What has gone well since your last appraisal? (b) What successes have you had since your last appraisal? (c) What problems have you had/still have?
2. (a) How can the successes be built on? (b) How can the problems be overcome? (c) How can you and/or management help to improve the situation?
3. (a) List the action points agreed at the last appraisal or, for new staff, in the workplan. (b) Against each, say if you achieved what was expected in whole or in part. (c) Comment on whether time has been used well and if the action points were realistic.

Part 2 – Personal Development

1. What do you think are your strongest points and how might these be used to better effect? Has there been any change since the last appraisal?
2. Do you recognise any weak points in your work and how you might be helped with them? (Has there been any change since the last appraisal?)
3. What formal or informal training have you had in the past 12 months, and what effect do you think this has had on your ability to do your job?
4. What additional training/responsibility/experience do you think would be of most benefit to you (a) During the next 12 months? (b) In the future?
5. What work would you like to be doing in a year's time and in about four years' time?
6. How could your manager improve her/his management?
7. Are there any other issues or points that you would like to raise?

Preparation Form—Line Manager

Member of Staff:

Line Manager:

Part 1: The Job

1. (a) What has gone well since the employee's last appraisal? (b) What successes has the staff member had since the last appraisal? (c) What problems has the staff member had/still have?
2. (a) How can the successes be built on? (b) How can the problems be overcome? (c) How can the employee and/or management help to improve the situation?
3. (a) List the action points agreed at the last appraisal or, for new staff, in the workplan. (b) Against each, say if you achieved what was expected in whole or in part. (c) Comment on whether time has been used well and if the action points were realistic.

Part 2 – Personal Development

1. What do you think are the employee's strongest points and how might these be used to better effect? Has there been any change since the last appraisal?
2. Do you recognise any weak points in the staff member's work and how she/he might be helped with them? Has there been any change since the last appraisal?
3. What formal or informal training has the employee had in the past 12 months, and what effect do you think this has had on her/his ability to do your job?
4. What additional training/responsibility/experience do you think would be of most benefit to the employee? (a) During the next 12 months? (b) In the future?
5. Are there any other issues or points that you would like to raise?

Appraisal Report

Here is a sample staff appraisal report.

Member of Staff:

Line Manager:

Part 1 - The Job

This part covers the action agreed between the staff member and her/his line manager in respect of the functions s/he is expected to carry out.

1. List the action points agreed previously (i.e. work plan), and the achievements over the last 12 months, i.e. since the last appraisal.
2. List future action points and the proposed timescale.

Part 2 - Personal Development

Action should centre around the points set out in the meeting Preparation Forms, e.g. use of strong points; help with weak points; results of training; and possible additional training/experience/responsibilities and work situation.

1. List action/training undertaken in last year and what has been achieved.
2. List the training needed. (a) During the next twelve months. (b) In the future.
3. Any other issues raised:

State the implications for the job description (if appropriate)

This is a true record of a Staff Appraisal meeting held on:

Signed (Appraiser) Date

Signed (Staff Member) Date

Case Management/Recording Policy

A Case Management Policy or Case Recording Procedures could include:

The case management policy should clearly set out what information needs to be recorded and how people's contact with the advocacy service will be monitored. At a basic level, this will create a need for an initial contact sheet, and a closing interview sheet. Outline versions of these are given below to be adapted for your service. Some schemes may also want to ensure that forms used for supervision are of a format that tallies with these start and end points.

The policy should also contain;

- Recommendations for information to be kept in the file, e.g. key dates and progress made in relation to the issue.
- How files will be stored
- What will happen to the files at the end of the advocacy relationship
- A statement that files will be closed where a case has been resolved and no further action is required.
- Clarification of how files will be closed and whose decision this will be – e.g. whether files be closed where a client has not responded to x or more letters/ phone calls or not attended x or more appointments?; will it be decided by the caseworker and their line manager in supervision?
- How the client will be informed that their case is closed.
- How the client can contest this if they feel there any matters are unresolved.
- What will happen to any original documentation once the case is filed. (Will it be returned to the client? Will the client sign a receipt to say that they have received it?)
- What will happen if the client could not be contacted when the case file is closed. (Will the original documentation will be kept in the file and archived? If so, for how long?)

Case Management/Recording Systems

Initial Contact Sheet				
Name		Date		
Contact telephone number				
Contact address				
Have you used this advocacy service before?				
Advocacy Issue (to be recorded in clients own words wherever possible)				
How able would you feel to address this issue on your own at the moment?				
Not at all		I'll need some help		I can do this
1	2	3	4	5
Agreed plan, and who will do what				
Other advocacy issues arising				
I have been told what an advocate does and doesn't do				
I have been told about / been given the confidentiality policy				
I have been made aware of the complaints policy				

Case Management/Recording Systems

Name			Date	
<p>Did we address all of your issues?</p> <p>To be checked against the initial contact sheet</p>				
Advocacy Issue	Addressed?	Resolved?	Outcome	
<p>How satisfied were you with the outcomes?</p>				
Not happy at all		ok	really pleased	
1	2	3	4	5
<p>How able would you feel to address this issue in the future?</p>				
Not at all		I'll need some help	I can do this	
1	2	3	4	5
<p>Any matters that haven't been dealt with</p>				
I have been told what will happen to these notes				
I would / would not like to hear about volunteering opportunities				
I would / would not like to hear about what the board does				

Client Evaluation Forms

Here is a user friendly evaluation form developed by an Australian Advocacy scheme called DASH.

1 Overall, how helpful do you find DASH to be?



Very helpful

Helpful

Not sure

Unhelpful

Very unhelpful

2 How satisfied were you with the manner in which your DASH advocate gave you a say in the way he/she assisted you?



Very satisfied

Satisfied

Not sure

Unsatisfied

Very unsatisfied

3 How satisfied were you with the way your DASH advocate kept in touch



Very satisfied

Satisfied

Not sure

Unsatisfied

Very unsatisfied

5 Would you recommend DASH to others?



Definitely yes

Probably yes

Not sure

Probably not

Definitely not

6 Did you receive a copy of DASH's CONSUMER HANDBOOK, or did your advocate explain to you DASH's policy about privacy and your right to complain if you are



Definitely yes

Probably yes

Not sure

Probably not

Definitely not

7 If you received a CONSUMER HANDBOOK did you find it useful?



Definitely yes

Probably yes

Not sure

Probably not

Definitely not

8 From your experience, does DASH follow its rule that only your advocate can see your file?



Definitely yes

Probably yes

Not sure

Probably not

Definitely not

9 If you told DASH that you were unhappy with something they did, would they listen and try to fix the problem?



Definitely yes

Probably yes

Not sure

Probably not

Definitely not

10 What do you like most about DASH?

11 What do you dislike most about DASH?

12 Do you have any further suggestions that would help DASH to improve its service or general comments about DASH?

Thank you for taking the time to answer these questions

Client Evaluation Forms, continued

This is a helpful form to give people before and after you work with them to capture soft outcomes such as feeling happier and more self confidence.

How do you feel?

Please circle all relevant words



What are your skills?

Please circle all relevant words



Communications Strategy

A communications strategy could include:

- Introduction – What the strategy aims to do. How does it relate to your business or development plan? What are your principal aims of communication?
- Stakeholder analysis – who are your target audiences? How and what do you want to communicate via or to them?
- Programme of development – what are the 7/8 key areas of your strategy? E.g. improving your website, reaching a more diverse audience, developing information systems, etc. An appendix could go into more detail with target audiences, person responsible and deadlines.
- Annual communication cycle – do you have one? This could include a chart with frequency, activity and main audience
- Communication tools and accessibility – will you expand your communication via electronic means? Will you carry out an accessibility audit? How will you reach out to different community groups?
- Funding the strategy – will a percentage of your annual budget go towards implementing this strategy? Will you apply for grants for any areas of communication work? You might want to refer to your fundraising strategy in this section.
- Appendix could include audience, key messages and communication examples and how you will access the impact of these; detailed plan of activity, target audience, action, by when, lead person.



Complaints Policy and Form

A complaints policy could include:

- An introduction to state that your advocacy scheme aims to provide high quality services, but would like people you support and external agencies to let you know whether anything can be improved.
- The procedure for people you support or external agencies to make a complaint
- How long it will take for the advocacy scheme to respond
- How the advocacy scheme will respond
- Details about external support that is available to the person complaining
- The procedure of the person to make if they are not satisfied with the advocacy scheme's initial response – e.g. a letter to the Chair
- How long it will take and how your scheme will respond
- **The next step in the procedure should the person still not be satisfied – e.g. will it be taken to a management committee meeting?**
- Also invite positive feedback.
- What support will people you support receive when they plan to make a complaint? Do you have a reciprocal agreement with another advocacy scheme?
- A statement to demonstrate that the advocacy service welcomes all comments and complaints and its intention to deal with all complaints rigorously and fairly

Complaints Form	
Date of complaint	
Nature of complaint	
<u>Key issues</u>	
<u>Action points as a result of the complaint</u>	
Date Trustees informed, and their comments	
Date complaint resolved	
<u>Outstanding action points</u>	

Confidentiality Policy

A confidentiality policy should include:

- An introduction to state the importance of confidentiality
- A list of what the advocacy scheme will not do. E.g. supply or sell mailing lists to other organisations, etc.
- Confidentiality procedures in respect to whistle-blowing
- How the procedure links into the Data Protection Act
- Where hard and electronic copies of clients and staff personnel files are kept.
- Security of building – e.g. alarms, locking procedures.
- Statement of confidentiality that includes who the policy covers and that disciplinary action will be taken if confidentiality is breached.
- Are there any situations in which confidentiality might be breached within an advocacy relationship? E.g., if the person you support reports illegal activities or abuse? How will this be made clear to the person you support when you start working with them?
- Declaration of confidentiality for staff, volunteers and Trustees to sign.



Conflict of Interest Policy

A conflict of interest policy should include:

- The aim of the policy – e.g. to protect the name of the advocacy scheme and to clarify the fact that everything done by Trustees, staff and volunteers is in the good faith for the benefit of the advocacy scheme.
- Who the policy applies to (e.g., Trustees, staff and volunteers)
- The fact that Trustees have a legal obligation to act in the best interests of the advocacy scheme in accordance with the governing document
- State why conflicts of interest create a problem – e.g. they inhibit free discussion, result in actions or decisions that are not in the interests of the advocacy scheme, give the impression that the advocacy scheme has acted improperly.
- Is advocacy the only service of your organisation? If not, how will you ensure that the advocacy service will be kept conflict free from the other services?
- Explain that when making decisions, Trustees should act in the best interests of the advocacy scheme, not misuse the scheme's property, not misuse information for personal gain even after leaving the management committee, nor allow their personal interests or interests of anyone else to override the interests of the advocacy scheme and its partners.
- Stress that Trustees should not have a financial interest or stand to gain financially from the advocacy scheme. Financial interest should apply not only to money, but to anything with monetary value.
- Stress the process of the declaration of interest – when Trustees declare their interests on a declaration of interests form (see the template below) and state that this will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- State how a disclosure of interest will be declared – e.g., at a committee meeting or in writing to the Chair.
- State how the board will agree on what a conflict of interest is at a meeting – e.g. through a majority vote?
- How will these be recorded at management committee meetings – e.g. minuted by the Secretary?
- Statement that the service will remain operationally independent of funders and that this will be clearly stated in funding agreements.

Conflict of Interest Form

<p>I as Trustee of X Advocacy Scheme have set out below my interests in accordance with X Advocacy Scheme's conflict of interest policy.</p>	
<p><i>Please give details of the interest and whether it applies to yourself or, where appropriate, a member of your immediate family or some other close personal connection</i></p>	
<p>Current employment and any previous employment in which you continue to have a financial interest</p>	
<p>Appointments, voluntary or otherwise, e.g. Trusteeships, directorships, local authority memberships, tribunals etc.</p>	
<p>Any financial interests that are relevant to your position with X Advocacy Scheme</p>	
<p>Any contractual relationship X Advocacy Scheme</p>	
<p>Any conflicts not covered by the above</p>	
<p>To the best of my knowledge, the above information is complete and correct. I undertake to update as necessary the information provided, and to review the accuracy of the information on an annual basis in line with the X Advocacy Scheme's schedule of annual review by committee. I give my consent for it to be used for the purposes described in the conflicts of interest policy and for no other purpose.</p> <p>Signed</p>	

Data Protection Policy

Your policy should comply with the data protection principles. For more information about data protection, see <http://www.ico.gov.uk/>.

Some advocacy schemes merge their confidentiality and data protection policies. Others prefer to keep these policies separate. The main areas that should be covered around data protection are:

- Information about the Data Protection Act 1998. E.g., The Data Protection Act 1998 sets out basic principles which must be adhered to by any 'Data Controller' — a person or organisation controlling the use of personal data. Personal data includes both computerised records and structured manual records from which a living individual may be identified.
- Anyone processing personal data must comply with the eight enforceable principles of good practice. They say that data must be:
 - ⇒ fairly and lawfully processed;
 - ⇒ processed for limited purposes;
 - ⇒ adequate, relevant and not excessive;
 - ⇒ accurate;
 - ⇒ not kept longer than necessary;
 - ⇒ processed in accordance with the Data Subject's rights;
 - ⇒ kept secure;
 - ⇒ not transferred abroad without adequate protection.
- Personal data covers both facts and opinions about the individual, and can be any type of material, including text, photographs, video or audio material.
- What does this mean in practice? E.g. "In practice, this means that manual lists should be locked in a desk/drawer when not in use. Computerised lists should not be stored on a hard disk and floppy disks should be locked away when not in use".
- What is the scope of the policy? Does it help staff comply with the requirements of the act? Does your policy just focus on legal aspects, or also good practice?
- How will you ensure security information? Who has access to the information? What information is covered by the Act?
- E.g., The Data Protection Act covers all personal information held on computer or which can be accessed through a structured filing system.

- It applies to all paper filing systems in which information on individual employees, trustees, parents, children, supporters, members, volunteers and enquirers can be accessed, as well as to computerised data held on such individuals.
- What does the Act not cover? E.g. personal information held incidentally in other paper files.
- Where is electronic sensitive data stored? Who has access to it?
- Who has overall responsibility for the data protection policy? Will this be split up between departments or areas of data?
- What should staff do if they become aware of a breach of security?
- When you hold information about someone, can you easily answer why and how it is stored?
- Will there be any situations where information about people you support will be given out by phone or email? E.g., if the person making the request is authorised to have the information; if it is appropriate due to urgency or because the level of risk is low; the person whose data is being disclosed knows about it.
- Include a statement about personal data on your website.
- How will people you support go about accessing their files?
- How will you ask for consent to use case studies and photographs in publicity or other public information?
- Do you have members, donors and supporters? Will you give them an opt-out clause for data about them being passed on?
- How about data about other professionals?
- How about data on staff and volunteers?

Some organisations also include a policy statement within their policy. This could look something like:







It is the policy of the organisation that all personal data will be held in accordance with the principles and requirements of Data Protection and other relevant legislation, and that procedures will be put in place to ensure the fair processing of data relating to individuals ('data subjects'). All services and departments within the organisation will draw up operating procedures in accordance with this policy. These procedures will be monitored by Data Protection officers, appointed for each data type (staff, service users, etc.), who will ensure that mechanisms for sharing data across the organisation comply with current Data Protection legislation.

Equal Opportunities Policy

An equal opportunities policy could include:

- Guiding principles: Nature of your organisation, position on equal opportunities and discrimination. You could mention some of the Acts and models that you work towards – e.g. the Social Model of Disability or the Race Relations Act (1976), Sex Discrimination Act (1975), Disability Discrimination Act (1995), Carers and Disabled Children Act (2000), Human Rights Act (1998) and Race Relations Amendment Act (2000). This section could also be in the form of a policy statement. E.g. “X Advocacy is committed to the principle of equal opportunity for all its advocates, people we support, applicants for employment and management committee, regardless of the individuals’ race, etc.”
- Definition of discrimination – this could include definitions of direct, indirect, disability and victimisation.
- How will your policy be reviewed? Through a sub committee, or at management committee meetings? How often will it be reviewed? Will it be reviewed annually?
- How will it be monitored?
- How will equal opportunities be practiced during recruitment? Will this link into your recruitment policy?
- Include definitions of harassment and bullying. What is the process for reporting bullying and harassment?
- What support is available for staff that feel isolated?
- When and how will staff be trained in equal opportunities? How will you appoint the trainers?
- How will the policy be implemented in service provision? Are all services covered by this policy? Will services be reviewed? Will external consultants be required to read the policy? Will people receiving the services be consulted and involved?
- How will you develop your Advocacy service to reach out to different groups of disabled people? E.g., monitoring Advocacy provision, developing effective and appropriate outreach, including budget lines for accessibility, etc.
- What will you do to ensure your premises, environment, information and resources are accessible?
- What will happen if the equal opportunities policy is violated? Will this link in with the complaints and disciplinary procedures?
- Who is responsible for the implementation of the equal opportunities policy?

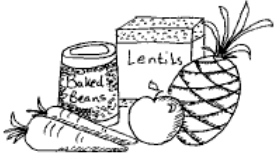
How do you monitor whether or not you are reaching out to a diverse range of people? Here is a Mapping Diversity form, which was developed by Advocacy Alliance in Bedford, which you might like to adapt for use in your own scheme.

<p>Diversity Profile</p> 	<p>Please Place Responses below</p> 
<p>Name</p> <p>What is your Name?</p>	
<p>Gender</p>  <p>Male /Female</p>	<p>Male Female</p>
<p>Age</p>  <p>How old are you?</p>	
<p>Birth</p>  <p>Where were you born?</p>	
<p>Religion</p>  <p>Do you follow a religion? Which one?</p>	

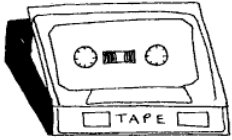
 <p>Languages</p> <p>What languages do you speak? The main one used?</p>	
 <p>Parents Birth Place</p> <p>Where were your parents born?</p>	
<p>Festivals What festivals do you</p>	
<p>Place of Worship</p> <p>Do you attend a place of Worship? Where and What?</p>	
<p>Meaningful Colours & Days</p>  <p>Mon Tue Wed Thur Fri Sat Sun</p> <p>Meaningful colours and days? Why?</p>	
<p>Clothing & Hair</p> <p>Clothing and hair requirements</p> 	

Food and Diet

Do you follow a special diet, or a requirement?



Music What music do like or listen to?



Spirituality, Faith & Guidance



Do you follow a Spiritual direction or belonging?

Expenses Claim Form

It is helpful to have an expenses claim form in an excel document. We have a template in excel. Please let us know if you would like us to email you a copy. Providing travel expenses is an essential part of supporting advocates. The claim form should include travel, and subsistence. A mileage rate of about 40p a mile is about average (in 2007).



Financial Policy

Here is an example financial policy which was developed by Community Accountancy Self Help, aimed at small charities:

1. Introduction

1.1 Financial records will be kept so that the Small Charity can:

(a) Meet its legal and other obligations, e.g. Charities Act 1992, Inland Revenue, Customs & Excise and common law.

(b) Enable the trustees to be in proper financial control of the Small Charity.

(c) Enable the Small Charity to meet the contractual obligations and requirements of funders.

1.2 The Small Charity will keep proper books of accounts, which will include:

(a) A cashbook analysing all the transactions in the Small Charity's bank account(s).

(b) A petty cash book if cash payments are being made.

(c) Inland Revenue deduction cards P11 and Schedule D numbers for freelance workers.

1.3 The financial year will end on the 31st March each year.

1.4 Accounts will be drawn up after each financial year within three months of the end of the year and presented to the next Annual General Meeting.

1.5 Prior to the start of each financial year, the trustees will approve a budgeted income and expenditure account for the following year.

1.6 A report comparing actual income and expenditure with the budget will be presented to the trustees every three months.

1.7 The AGM will appoint an appropriately qualified auditor/examiner to audit/examine the accounts for presentation to the next AGM.

2. Banking

2.1 The Small Charity will bank with Lotsadosh Bank plc at its Anytown Road Branch. Accounts will be held in the name of the Small Charity. The following accounts will be maintained:

Small Charity Account No 1

Small Charity Investment Account

2.2 The bank mandate (list of people who can sign cheques on the organisations behalf) will always be approved and minuted by the trustees as will all the changes to it.

2.3 The charity will require the bank to provide statements every month and these will be reconciled with the cash book at least every three months and the treasurer will spot check that this reconciliation has been done at least twice a year, signing the cash book accordingly.

The charity will not use any other bank or financial institution or use overdraft facilities or loan without of the agreement of the trustees.

3. Receipts (income)

- 3.1 All monies received will be recorded promptly in the cash analysis book and banked without delay (note this includes sundry receipts such as payment for telephone calls, photocopying etc.). The Small Charity will maintain files of documentation to back this up.

4. Payments (expenditure)

The aim is to ensure that all expenditure is on the charity's business and is properly authorised and that this can be demonstrated. The latest approved budget provides the cheque signatories with authority to spend up to the budgeted expenditure, not beyond it.

- 4.1 The Director will be responsible for holding the cheque book (unused and partly used cheque books) which should be kept under lock and key.
- 4.2 Blank cheques will NEVER be signed.
- 4.3 The relevant payee's name will always be inserted on the cheque before signature and the cheque stub will always be properly completed.
- 4.4 No cheques should be signed without original documentation (see below).

5. Payment documentation

- 5.1 Every payment out of the Small Charity's bank accounts will be evidenced by an original invoice (never against a supplier's statement or final demand). That original invoice will be retained by the Small Charity and filed. The cheque signatory should ensure that it is referenced with:

Cheque number

Date cheque drawn

Amount of cheque

Who signed the cheque.

- 5.2 The only exceptions to cheques not being supported by an original invoice would be for such items as advanced booking fees for a future course, deposit for a venue, VAT, etc. Here a cheque requisition form will be used and a photocopy of the cheque kept.
- 5.3 Wages and Salaries. There will be a clear trail to show the authority and reason for EVERY such payment; e.g. a cheque requisition, asking for payment to an employee, the Inland Revenue, etc. All employees will be paid within the PAYE, National Insurance regulations.
- 5.4 All staff appointments/departures will be authorised by the trustees, minuting the dates and salary level. Similarly, all changes in hours and variable payments such as overtime, etc, will be authorised either by the trustees.
- 5.5 Petty cash will always be maintained on the imprest system where by

Administration Worker is entrusted with a float as agreed by the trustees. When that is more or less expended, a cheque will be drawn for sufficient funds to bring up the float to the agreed sum, the cheque being supported by a complete set of expenditure vouchers, totalling the required amount, analysed as required.

5.6 Expenses / allowances. The Small Charity will, if asked, reimburse expenditure paid for personally by staff, providing:

- Fares are evidenced by tickets.
- Other expenditure is evidenced by original receipts.
- Car mileage is based on local authority scales.
- No cheque signatory signs for the payment of expenses to themselves.

6. Cheque Signatures and cash cards

6.1 Each cheque will be signed by at least two people.

6.2 A cheque must not be signed by the person to whom it is payable.

6.3 Hole in the wall type cash cards will not be used and if issued by the bank they will be immediately cut in half.

7. Other undertakings

7.1 The Small Charity does not accept liability for any financial commitment unless properly authorised. Any orders placed or undertakings given, the financial consequences of which are, prima facie, likely to exceed in total £5,000, must be authorised and minuted by the trustees. In exceptional circumstances such undertakings can be made with the Chairperson's approval that will then provide full details to the next meeting of the trustees. (This covers such items as the new service contracts, office equipment, purchase and hire).

7.2 All fundraising and grant applications undertaken on behalf of the organisation will be done in the name of the Small Charity with the prior approval of the trustees or in urgent situations the approval of the Chairperson who will provide full details to the next trustee's meeting.

8. Other rules

The Small Charity will adhere to good practice in relation to its finances at all times, e.g. When relevant it will set up and maintain a fixed asset register stating the date of purchase, cost, serial numbers and normal location. Additionally the Small Charity will maintain a property record of items of significant value, with an appropriate record of their use.

Downloaded from: www.cash-online.org.uk



Gifts and Hospitality Policy

Here are a couple of template gift and hospitality policies. The first focuses on the potential for people coming to your service to offer advocates and other team members gifts. The aim of such policies is to ensure the **accessibility** and **equality** of your service. The second type of policy deals with the gifts/hospitality that may be offered to you by organisations or the people acting on their behalf. The aim of these policies is to safeguard the **independence** of your service. An example of each type is provided below. These are followed by a form for recording such gifts.

Policy on receiving gifts

We understand that sometimes people want to give a gift and may be offended if we don't accept it. This policy should help you to understand why your advocate might refuse your gift.

We discourage people from giving gifts because the service we offer you is free. Giving gifts does not lead to better treatment by the advocacy service and not giving a gift will definitely not lead to a worse service. Being seen to receive gifts could lead others to think that they need to give something as well, and that could make it hard for some people to make use of advocacy.

If an advocate is offered a gift, the following procedure should be followed;

- The offer of any gift must be met with a polite refusal and an explanation that such gifts are not necessary and do not influence the advocacy X Advocacy Scheme will provide, now or in the future.
- If gifts are given, they should be returned with thanks wherever possible.
- If returning a gift is upsetting to the person, the worker may accept the gift but **only** on the clear basis that it will be shared with the team, as the work of one person is the result of the efforts of the team. Such gifts must be low in cost, not exceeding a value of £XX. Gifts received in this way must be recorded.
- Cash gifts offered to individual staff members cannot, be accepted under any circumstances.
- Gifts of cash offered to X Advocacy Scheme, i.e. bequests from wills, individual donations, donations from charitable grant agencies can be accepted on behalf of X Advocacy Scheme. The Manager should be informed of any such donation as they are responsible for thanking the donor and ensuring that the money paid into X Advocacy Scheme 's bank account.
- Where seasonal gifts are offered to staff by service users e.g. biscuits or chocolates at Christmas, these can be accepted on behalf of the team and made available in the office.

Template Gifts and Hospitality Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 X Advocacy Scheme follows the guidance on gifts and hospitality as follows:-

You should treat with extreme caution any offer or gift, favour or hospitality that is made to you personally. There are no hard or fast rules about the acceptance or refusal of hospitality or tokens of goodwill. For example, working lunches may be a proper way of doing business, provided that they are approved by X Advocacy Scheme and that no extravagance is involved. Likewise, it may be reasonable for a member to represent X Advocacy Scheme at a social function or event organised by outside persons or bodies.

You are personally responsible for all decisions connected with the acceptance or offer of gifts or hospitality and for avoiding the risk of damage to public confidence in X Advocacy Scheme. The offer or receipt of gifts or invitations should always be reported to the Advocacy Manager.

1.2 The policy had been drawn up in order to assist staff, volunteers and Trustees in dealing with offers of gifts and hospitality and to ensure that we are open and transparent in all our work.

1.3 We discuss as a team, including the management committee, all hospitality questions including what happens if an advocate is put in the will of someone they are supporting.

2. Gifts

2.1 Insignificant gifts, such as diaries, calendars, pens and similar tokens up to the value of £5 can be accepted. No alcohol, cheques or cash of any value can be accepted.

2.2 Significant gifts, above the value of £5 should not be accepted from clients. There may be occasions when it is appropriate to accept such a gift from other services, but the Member is advised to first consult the Advocacy Manager.

2.3 The offer of any gift above the value of £5 should always be recorded in the Register of Gifts and Hospitality, and the entry should indicate whether the gift has been accepted or declined.

3. Hospitality

3.1 Staff, volunteers and trustees may receive offers of hospitality, either during the course of their advocacy role, e.g. working lunches, or at social functions or events organised by outside persons or bodies. Staff, volunteers and trustees should always consider carefully whether it is appropriate to accept such offer of hospitality.

3.2 Staff, volunteers and trustees will need to exercise particular care when considering offers of hospitality from individuals or companies, particularly when they may have dealings with the Advocacy Scheme, as opposed to local voluntary or community groups.

3.3 Staff, volunteers and trustees should consider how the offer might be viewed by a member of the public, when deciding whether or not to accept an offer of hospitality.

3.5 All offers of hospitality should be recorded in the Hospitality Register.

3.6 If staff, volunteers and trustees are in any doubt whatsoever they are urged to contact the Advocacy Manager for advice.

Some advocacy schemes have a declaration of gifts and hospitality form to keep a record. Here is an example.

Name.....

Give details of the gift/hospitality

What was its estimated value?

Was the gift or hospitality accepted or refused?

When was the gift or hospitality received/refused?

Who was the recipient of the gift/hospitality? If not yourself, what is their relationship to you?

.....

Who made the offer?

What was the purpose of the offer?

I certify that I have read the rules and guidance overleaf and that to the best of my knowledge, I have complied with them

Signature of Member.....

Date of declaration

The form should be returned to:

.....
.....
.....
.....

Health & Safety Policy

4. Register

4.1 A Register of Gifts and Hospitality offered to Members is maintained by the Office Manager.

A health and safety policy could include:

- General policy statement about providing healthy and safe working conditions, equipment and systems of work for your employees, volunteers and committee members and to provide training and information as necessary.
- The policy should comply with terms and requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) and subsequent legislation.
- Why are you writing this policy? E.g., promoting safe and healthy working conditions for staff, volunteers and the people you support.
- Who is responsible for this policy?
- Who are the Safety Officers and what are their roles? E.g., investigating any accidents and dangerous occurrences, assessing potential hazards and reporting these, consulting staff and ensuring compliance with this policy, ensuring that staff and volunteers are trained in all areas of health and safety.
- Who is the First Aider or Appointed Person? What are their roles? Who is the Fire Officer? What is their role?
- What is everyone else's responsibility? E.g., cooperation on health and safety matters, not interfering with anything provided to safeguard their health and safety, take reasonable care of their own health and safety, report all health and safety concerns to the safety officer.
- Where do you keep your health and safety poster?
- Where is the First Aid box kept? Where is the Accident book kept? What are the Fire Procedures?
- How and who will identify risks?
- How will risk assessments be carried out? Who will lead on the risk assessment process?
- Are all staff given a copy of the policy that they sign?
- Will the policy be reviewed and updated regularly?
- What insurance will be held?
- Where will insurance information be kept
- Will training and equipment be put in place to minimise risks?
- VDU equipment – will your advocacy scheme follow regulations laid down in the Health & Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations 1992 Appendix II.
- Will your scheme ensure that you meet the requirements of the Electricity at Work Regulations 1989 to check and maintain electrical equipment supplied by the employer on a regular basis?

Induction Training Programme

Induction Training Programme

Advocates should be inducted within their first month. The induction should include training about advocacy as well as ensuring that the advocate knows the systems, history and aims of the project. Here is an example of what an induction training programme could include:

Admin and systems

- Keys and building security
- Petty cash and expenses
- Phones/messages
- Office diary
- PC knowledge
- Email system
- Database
- Computer network
- Committee and team meetings
- Booking leave and sickness procedure
- Post system and stationery
- Local area knowledge, places to eat, post office, etc.
- Procedures for dealing with enquiries
- Staff handbook

About the Advocacy Scheme

- History of the scheme
- Aims and objectives
- Funders
- Strategic plan
- Projects and services

About Advocacy (if a new advocate)

- What is advocacy?
- Makeup of advocacy sector
- Policy issues
- History of the sector
- Information about second tier support

The new advocate will be taking a lot of information in at this point so it is a good idea to make sure that they receive written information which they can look back at. Usually this will take the form of a staff handbook.

A staff handbook could include:

- Code of Practice for Advocates
- Contact details of staff and volunteers
- Equal opportunities policy
- Health and safety policy
- Leave and sickness policy
- Training and supervision policy
- Grievance and disciplinary procedure
- Gifts and hospitality procedure
- Confidentiality policy
- Any other key policies or procedures
- How to access/use ICT and other equipment
- Contact details for couriers, etc

Recruitment Policy

Where will instructions on the safe use of equipment such as photocopiers and computers be displayed?

- Do you have mechanisms for controlling substances hazardous to health?

Your recruitment policy could include:

- A recruitment procedure flowchart with times and stages
- Establishing a vacancy - is it always necessary to recruit a replacement when someone leaves? Are there internal applicants? Does the post need to be advertised externally?
- What are your advocacy scheme's procedures for preparing/reviewing job descriptions/person specifications?
- What are your procedures for establishing the composition and duties of an interviewing panel?
- How do you advertise vacancies?
- What will application packs consist of?
- What is your short-listing procedure?
- What are your interviewing procedures and how do you ensure that these fit into the Disability Discrimination Act 1995; Sex Discrimination Act 1975, Race Relation Act 1976, Employment Equality Regulations and Age Discrimination Act 2006?
- How do you devise the questions?
- Do you have an individual interview assessment form for interviewers to fill out for each candidate?
- How will decisions be made?
- What will happen to the paperwork? How will this fit in with the Data Protection Act?
- How will successful and unsuccessful candidates be contacted?
- Will this be different if there have been internal candidates?
- How long will it take for successful candidates to receive an employment contract?
- What will happen during induction?

Referral Procedures

Referral procedures could include:

- Explain what referral is – e.g., referral happens when another staff member or provider offers services that more closely meet the client's needs.
- State the requirements of effective referral – e.g., sufficient knowledge of the client and their needs, accurate knowledge of the proposed provider.
- Explain how staff can access information about proposed providers.
- State that the referral policy will act in line with the equal opportunities policy.
- **How waiting lists and set up and how the organisation sets it's criteria.**
- **Who can be referred to your services?** E.g. client group, postal code, etc,
- How do you prioritise referrals?
- **Who can refer?**
- Do you take referrals from particular agencies? Can clients self-refer?
- **How to self refer**
- The process that external agencies and public go through to make a referral – do they fill out a form? Do they call a certain number?
- **How referrals are divided amongst advocates**
- Allocation process – do particular staff members deal with particular cases?
- State the time frame that referrals are acted on.
- How are the people that have been referred contacted initially?
- **What happens next?**
- Is there a review of referrals? How is this done? E.g. team meeting, supervision.
- **Outgoing Referrals:** Transition period – explain how clients will be supported until the referral is acted upon.
- Clarity with the client – explain how advocates will provide information about the service that they are referring the client to.
- Explain the manner in which referrals are carried out – e.g., enabling, supportive, positive approach, motivating clients to act on the information they receive, etc.
- Include a statement about confidentiality and data protection.
- Information on how referral agencies will be kept up to date with the progress.

Here is a template referral form for self referrals and referrals from other services.

We offer advocacy to [put the client group and area you cover here].

We help people speak up when there are decisions to be made about their lives. We also make sure that the needs, views and preferences of people who find it difficult to make decisions are listened to.

The kinds of work we can help people with include: [List your main activities here]

Name of Referrer (or own name if self-referral)

Address

Tel.

Email

Relationship to person being referred (if applicable)

- I am referring myself
 - Other. Please specify
-

Client's name (leave blank if you are referring yourself)

Address

Tel.

Email

What is the best way to make contact with the client?

Gender of client

- Male
- Female

Date of birth of client:

Ethnicity of client:

- White British
- White Other (please specify)
- Black- Caribbean
- Black African
- Black Other (please specify)
- Indian
- Bangladeshi
- Pakistani
- Chinese
- Other (please specify)

What help is needed?

When do you need this help? (Are there any deadlines or important meeting dates?)

Is there any other information you would like to provide?

How did you hear about X Advocacy Scheme?

We need the signatures to show that people understand and agree to the referral.

Because of the Data Protection Act, we also need signatures to say that people agree to X Advocacy Scheme holding personal information (including the information on this form).

I would like X Advocacy Scheme to do this work. They can keep, and put on computer information about me. They must keep this information confidential unless I agree for it to be shared with other people.

Signed

Date

The referrer

(leave blank if self-referral)

I would like X Advocacy Scheme to do this work. X Advocacy Scheme can keep the information on this form and other information I provide needed to do the work. If the client has not signed above I am providing this information and asking for this referral in their best-interests.

Signed

Date

If you need any help filling in this form please telephone XXX-XXX-XXXX

Please return this form to [put address here]

We aim to let people know in writing within two weeks what help we can offer.

Risk Assessment

Risk Identified	Likelihood (1 – 5)*	Impact (1 – 5)*	Overall Risk Score (Likelihood x Impact)	What will you do to reduce the likelihood and impact?	How will the risk and action be monitored?

* 1 = very low; 5 = very high.

The above chart is a starting point for thinking about and prioritising how to deal with risk. Think about governance, financial, and operational risks.

Supervision

Fast Forward Training and Consultancy has developed a useful fact sheet on the content of supervision:

Supervision has three main elements – accountability/management, professional development, and emotional/supportive.

Accountability/management

Supervision is partly about control – the supervisor knowing what the supervisee is doing at work and having some say in what s/he does. This is necessary because the supervisor is **accountable**, to her/his seniors, to the organisation, and to the service users, for what the supervisee does (or doesn't do). Supervisors need to make clear to supervisees what is expected of them. Supervisors are also accountable to the people they supervise for their performance as managers. In other words, accountability is a two-way process.

Professional development

This element is concerned with the development of the skills the supervisee needs to do the job, and to move forward. It is also about her/his career development more generally. Therefore supervision should identify gaps in skills and knowledge and find ways to fill them. The training needs of the supervisee are therefore a part of this element. This needs to be done incrementally as an on-going process.

Emotional/supportive

Although supervision is about work, it needs to be acknowledged that people are individuals who have emotional needs and a life outside of work. Space should be given to encourage the supervisee to express how they personally **feel** about certain issues, how they are coping, areas of stress, and how they are getting on with other members of staff. Supervisees may also wish to raise certain personal concerns or pressures from their private lives, which are currently affecting their performance at work.

It is important to bear in mind that supervision should focus on work and the tasks required to complete it – we might call this idea 'task-centred supervision' – and that a healthy balance needs to be achieved between the three elements.

So, the type of form which you use to supervise advocates will depend on the balance you need to strike between these three elements. For paid advocates working with numerous cases simultaneously, the balance may be different from that of a volunteer advocate working with one person at a time.

Here are two examples of supervision forms .

You might be interested in thinking about these initial questions as a basis for an organisational training needs analysis:

Advocacy Supervision form			
Advocate:		Supervisor:	
Date:		Date of next supervision:	
Client:			
Advocacy Issue	Action since last supervision	Resolved or ongoing	Outcome or key forthcoming dates
Client:			
Advocacy Issue	Action since last supervision	Resolved or ongoing	Outcome or key forthcoming dates
Issues Arising and Training Needs			

Advocacy Supervision Form

Supervisee:

Supervisor:

Date:

Health/welfare of advocate

Actions and outcomes from last supervision

Agreed agenda

Notes and agreed action points with deadlines

Professional development and training needs

Signed Supervisor:

Supervisee:

Dates of next two supervision sessions:

Reciprocal Support Agreement

The following agreement is in addition to any code of conduct and any relevant organisational policies and procedures already in place within the two agreeing organisations, it does not take precedent over any of the aforementioned policies, procedures and code of conduct

Template Reciprocal Support Agreement

Xxxx and **xxxx** agree to the following terms and conditions when either named party is giving independent advocacy support to complainants going through the complaints process of the other named organisation in this agreement:

- Confidentiality will be adhered to in accordance with the confidentiality and complaints policy of the organisation the complainant is making a complaint against.
- The complainant will be given independent advocacy support in a manner that is in accordance with the advocacy aims of the named organisations.
- The organisation offering independent advocacy support to a complainant will give support that is effective and vigorous in accordance with the wishes of the complainant and specific to the complaint made.
- Support offered by the organisation offering independent support to complainant will be discretionary and dependent upon its available capacity at the time of complaint.
- The organisation that the complaint is made against will give full and clear information to complainant and the named advocate from the organisation supporting the complainant on its complaints policy and the process of complaints resolution within stated policy.

Both named organisations will agree upon a periodical review to manage future requests for support and ensure that too many requests are not being made on either party named in this agreement. Complaints will be resolved initially within the formal complaints procedure of the organisation that has a complaint made against them. If complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant then information must be given to the complainant of any further action they may be entitled to take. The organisation offering the complainant support will then need to consider its position as to whether or not to continue offering support to the complainant.

This agreement is only relevant and effective to the support offered by either of the named organisations when supporting a complainant through one of the named organisations complaints procedure.

Named organisations will need to place a time limit for full review of this document so that it remains relevant and functional.

Signed:

.....OrganisationManager/Trustee

.....OrganisationManager/Trustee

Advocacy Delivery Action Planning

The guidance below is a starting point for advocacy organisations intended to support you to develop a framework of thinking that can support the start up of an advocacy relationship and the action planning required to give effective advocacy support to an individual. The guidance should not be read as all encompassing and standard for all types of advocacy and client group. So please read and change as appropriate.

CLIENT DETAILS

- Record client details in accordance with organisations case opening form.
- Have you explored and recorded all aspects of client/partner's advocacy issue/s
- Identified any communication needs/resources to support effective communication?

SHARED ASSESSMENT OF NEED

- Write a summary of your assessment of advocacy issues.
- What outcome/s client/partner's wanted about the advocacy issue/s?
- Possible signposting for other issues identified if not advocacy related.
- Urgent issues and deadlines.

INFORMATION

- What relevant research and information needs are there for advocacy issues identified?
- What organisations have you agreed with client/partner to contact in relation to the advocacy issues?
- Give and record relevant information about each advocacy issue and any other signposting/referral necessary.

OPTIONS AND DECISIONS

- Go through relevant options and explain possible consequences of each, and record all options discussed.
- Help the client to make well informed decision/s through appropriate research and communication, and record decision/s reached.

APPROPRIATENESS

Have you:

- Considered how well your service fits the requirements of the client/partner/the issue/the circumstances?
- Considered the appropriate level and type of support offered?

CASE MANAGEMENT

- Have you followed the office procedure for opening a file?
- Are advocates and advocacy issues appropriately line managed?
- Is the advocacy relationship developing within the boundaries of the advocacy scheme's remit?
- Is there continuity and consistency in the advocacy support delivery?
- Is the client being kept informed?
- Is the advocacy relationship being reviewed regularly?

ACTION

This section should be the activities that have been agreed with client/partner through the consideration of the above items and issues.

- With client/partner agree what needs doing, who's doing what, time limits, deadlines and when/if met.
- Actions taken by advocate should fit in with principles of client/partner empowerment and independence?
- Are there any resources the client/partner needs to carry out the action? (if any actions are required)
- Are there any wider social policy issues, such as exclusion or discrimination issues.
- Action taken and outcomes achieved/not achieved is recorded.
- Any referral/signposting made internally/externally?

Terms of Reference

Are you managing an advocacy service that sits alongside other projects within an organisation? It is important to set clear boundaries for your advocacy service, to avoid conflicts of interest, demonstrate clarity of purpose and maintain independence. Here is a template terms of reference, which is adapted from a policy from *n compass*.

Protecting Independence within a Wider Organisation: Terms of Reference

Short background and explanation of how the advocacy service fits within a larger organisation and is committed to maintaining its independence.

Clear internal/external identity

1. The project will continue to be known as X Advocacy Scheme, a project managed by Y Organisation.
2. The project will continue to use the separate X Advocacy Scheme logo.
3. The project will develop a separate vision and mission statement which will feed into the organisational vision and mission statement.
4. The project will develop a separate annual development plan which will feed into the five year organisational strategy.
5. The project will develop a separate service specification, detailing all aspects of project delivery and policy/protocol.
6. The project will hold separate meetings with commissioners.
7. Y Organisation Senior Management will represent the project independently of others within the organisation.
8. The project will be clearly displayed as a separate team within the organisational structure.
9. The project will work towards developing its own clear infrastructure, with an experienced advocacy manager that will feed into the organisations Senior Management team.
10. The project will raise awareness of independent advocacy to other projects across the organisation to encourage a clear distinction between the support offered.

The organisation will recruit a board member with advocacy delivery/development knowledge and experience.

Independence

12. The project will adhere to the A4A Quality Standards for Advocacy Schemes.
13. The project will work towards achieving the Advocacy Quality Performance Mark.

The project will remain embedded in local, regional and national developments in advocacy.

Promotion

15. The project will continue to produce and display separate promotional leaflets and posters.

16. The project will develop and undertake a separate promotional strategy and volunteer recruitment methods.

17. The project will produce separate press releases and celebration of successes.

The project will encourage stakeholders requiring information on other projects within the organisation to contact their staff/students/volunteers directly.

Client procedure

19. The project will maintain a separate referral/assessment procedure onto the project.

20. The project will maintain separate case file documentation displaying the project name and logo.

The project will develop its own method of recording and monitoring project activity.

Staff/student/volunteer team

22. All staff, students and volunteers within the project will receive dedicated advocacy training.

23. The organisation will employ members of staff dedicated to working within X Advocacy Scheme.

24. Students/volunteers will be unable to support clients that receive support from other projects within the organisation that they also work across.

25. The project will hold separate weekly case reviews and monthly team meetings for all staff/students and volunteers which will feed into the overall bi-monthly staff meeting with a clear section to feed into the meeting.

26. Advocates will receive one to one supervision from the advocacy manager, who will receive supervision from a member of the Y Organisation senior management team. However, the advocacy manager will engage in external peer support with other advocacy managers and be offered external supervision as necessary. The advocacy manager will be encouraged to challenge senior management on issues they feel conflict with the principles and values of advocacy.

Internal conflicts of interest

27. A separate protocol will be developed to ensure if issues arise that could cause a conflict of interest for the Y Organisation senior management team, for example, if an advocacy client required support to complain against one of the other projects held within Y Organisation, to ensure that the independence of X Advocacy Scheme is not affected, yet remains supported throughout the issue. This protocol will also cover conflicts of interest for the advocacy manager, for example if a client requires support to complain against another advocate.

Training Needs Analysis

Does your project have a dedicated training budget?

Do advocates regularly attend training courses?

If so, are these courses mainly skills or knowledge based, or both?

Where would you normally go for information on training courses?

What skills or subjects would you particularly like to see training courses cover? What are the areas of priority for training?

This form might help you to identify any gaps in your training, Tick the relevant boxes. It does not matter if not all boxes are ticked, but it is important to have at least one tick in each row.



Task/knowledge	Advocates	Advocacy Managers	Other staff and volunteers	Management Committee/ Trustees
Providing good advocacy in line with the Code of Practice for Advocates				
Recruitment of staff, volunteers and trustees				
Supervision/appraisal skills				
Office management skills				
Knowledge of health and safety issues				
An appointed First Aid person				
Ability to deal with complaints				
Ability to deal with potential conflicts of interest				
Risk management skills				
Ability to develop new ideas				
Fundraising skills				
Business planning skills				
Strategic development skills				
Good knowledge of charity and company law				
Budgeting skills				
Financial management skills				
Communication/Marketing skills				
IT skills				
Networking skills				
Project management skills				
Equality and Diversity				

Whistleblowing Policy

It's a responsibility of the board to ensure there is an effective whistleblowing policy so there will always be a route for staff and volunteers to go through if they wish to make a disclosure in the interests of the people that they support.

This could include:

- An explanation of what whistle-blowing is. E.g. reporting wrongdoing by the advocacy scheme, its employees, volunteers or trustees.
- Explain what the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 is.
- Explain what whistle-blowing covers. E.g., criminal offences; financial or non-financial maladministration, malpractice, impropriety or fraud; non compliance with legal obligations; a danger to health and safety (e.g., known failings of a system used in the upkeep of a building that would endanger members of staff or the public). Improper conduct or unethical behaviour; deliberate covering up of information relating to any of these.
- Who can raise a concern?
- Are there any rules, e.g., disclosures must be in good faith, you must believe that it is true, you must not act maliciously or make false allegations or act for personal gain, etc.
- Will the identity of the person raising the matter be kept confidential, if preferred?
- What is the process of reporting? Who should you talk to? What will happen next?

Here is an example whistleblowing policy and procedure

1.1 Introduction

The Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 encourages staff to disclose information in the interests of the wider public by offering employment protection. The Act covers trustees, staff and volunteers.

- 1.2 This policy explains what whistleblowing means; expresses the commitment of X Advocacy Scheme in supporting staff and volunteers who whistleblow in the interests of protecting the public; provides a framework for dealing with whistle blowing; gives examples of whistleblowing; reassures staff and volunteers that concerns will be dealt with seriously and investigated fully with appropriate action being taken

2.0 What is Whistleblowing?

- 2.1 Whistleblowing is the process of disclosing information relating to malpractice or mistreatment which members of staff may have come across during the course of their work, which they feel would put the interests of the public at risk. This includes crimes, civil offences (including negligence, breach of contract, breach of administrative law), miscarriage of justice, danger to health and safety or the environment and the cover up of any of these.

3.0 Other policies and Procedures

- 3.1 X Advocacy Scheme has a range of policies and procedures that deal with standards of behaviour at work, they cover Discipline, Grievance, Harassment and Recruitment. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to use the provisions of these procedures where and when

appropriate. There may be times, however, when the matter is not about an employment issue and may need to be handled in a different way. For example:

- Malpractice or ill treatment of a client by a member of staff or volunteer
- Repeated ill treatment of a client despite a complaint being made
- A criminal offence has been, is being, or is likely to be committed
- Suspected fraud
- Disregard for legislation particularly in relation to health and safety, equality of opportunity and human rights
- Breach of standing financial instructions
- Showing undue favour over a contractual matter or to a job applicant
- A breach of a code of conduct
- Information on any of the above has been, is being or is likely to be concealed

4.0 The right to external disclosure

4.1 While X Advocacy Scheme would encourage staff and volunteers to disclose their concerns internally, it recognises that in some situations pursuing a concern externally might be the appropriate course of action. This might involve Government ministers, prescribed bodies such as the Health and Safety Executive, the Inland Revenue, the Audit Commission, the Utility regulators, the police or Social Services Adult Protection team.

5.2 It must be evident that any action was undertaken in good faith and that the whistleblower reasonably believed that the information and any allegation was true.

5.3 Where the individual has chosen to express his or her concern outside X Advocacy Scheme, to be protected they must meet at least one of the following criteria:

- that they reasonably believed they would be victimised if they raised the matter internally
- that they reasonably believed a cover-up was likely
- that they had already raised the matter internally and no action had been taken

Trade Unions

6.1 X Advocacy Scheme recognises that employees may wish to seek advice and be represented by their trade union officers. We recognise the importance of Trade Unions.

Procedure for dealing with Public Disclosure

Stage 1

If an individual is concerned about misconduct taking place inside X Advocacy Scheme that he/she thinks may damage or undermine the interests of the wider public they are advised in the first instance to share the details with their line manager. This may be done orally or in writing. If the individual is unable to raise the matter with his/her line manager they are advised to speak to the Coordinator. In the event that he or she feels unable to discuss their concerns with neither of these

individuals, he/she can contact the Chair.

The whistleblower will be asked whether he or she wishes his/her identity to be disclosed and will be reassured with regard to protection from possible reprisals or victimisation. He or she will also be asked to consider making a written or verbal statement.

A report will be prepared for the consideration of the Chair including recommendations for action.

The whistleblower will be informed of the outcome of his or her disclosure and the reasons for deciding to take/not take further action.

Stage 2

Where the decision has been made to take further action, the Chair will appoint the Coordinator or another senior officer if the complaint is about the Coordinator, as an investigating officer. He or she will agree terms of reference with the Coordinator and identify a deadline for the completion of the investigation.

The investigation will be carried out under the strictest confidentiality.

In certain cases such as allegations of mistreatment of clients, suspension from work may need to be considered immediately.

The investigation is essentially a 'fact finding' exercise, to establish whether there is a case to answer.

Once the investigation has been completed the investigating officer will report his or her recommendations to the Chair for further action.

Stage 3

On the strength of the information provided by the investigation the Chair will decide whether further action is necessary.

Where it is evident that statutory or legal requirements have been contravened which may result in civil or criminal action, the appropriate authorities will be informed.

Where there is no case to answer, but the whistleblower held a genuine concern and was not acting maliciously, X Advocacy Scheme will ensure that the employee suffers no reprisals or victimisation.

Where it is established that false allegations have been made maliciously, it will be considered appropriate to refer to the disciplinary procedure.

Stage 4

The Whistleblower will be informed of the outcome of the investigation and any appropriate action that has been taken.

If he or she is dissatisfied with this response X Advocacy Scheme recognises the lawful right of the individual to take the matter further.

To receive independent and confidential advice members of staff may wish to speak to **Public Concern at Work**, at Suite 306, 16 Baldwin Gardens, London EC1N 7RJ. Tel 020 7404 6609. Email address: whistle@pcaw.co.uk or contact their Trade Union representative.

**If you are really proud of your forms or policies,
why not share them with the rest of the
advocacy movement?**

**Please email any suggested amendments or
additions to info@actionforadvocacy.org.uk**

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