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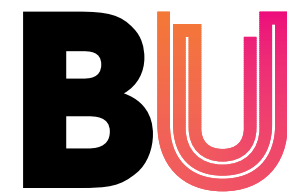
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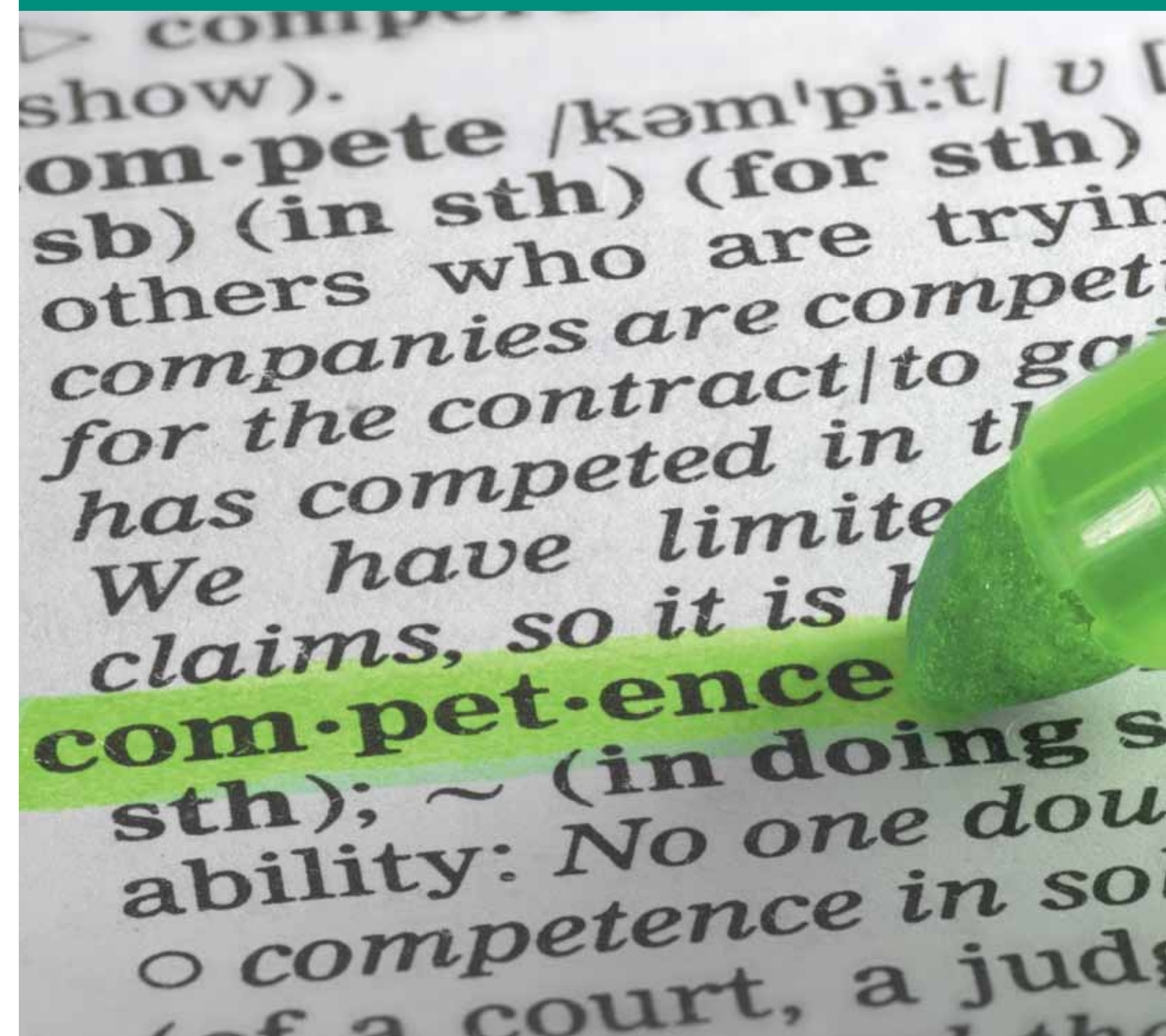
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# Towards a National Competence Framework for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Consultation Document



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## Introduction

Safeguarding adults who are at risk of harm is at the heart of the Government's desire for individuals 'to be empowered to make decisions'<sup>1</sup>. A National Competence Framework is required to achieve this. It will support the safeguarding of vulnerable adults whilst balancing risk alongside empowering people who use services to make informed choices.

The project team have drawn upon findings from Care Quality Commission inspection reports focused on safeguarding adults, alongside several Serious Case Reviews to identify common emerging themes. A literature search of the relationship between knowledge and practice has also been undertaken. This can guide discussions with experienced practitioners/managers via informal interview and focus group to identify what such a framework might need to incorporate. Carers and people who use services have also been consulted. The project team have developed the National Competence Framework based on work undertaken by East Sussex County Council and Brighton and Hove City Councils. This has been used to facilitate discussions with practitioners, service users and carers<sup>2</sup>.

The following is the proposed National Competence Framework for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. This framework is not meant to stifle local implementation – just the opposite. It aims to provide a scaffold to implement the safeguarding of adults vulnerable to abuse. In this consultation we are seeking your views on the proposed framework. Please use the contact details at the end of this document to provide feedback.

The framework is split into two main sections: Practitioner's Competence and Manager's Competence.

## What is a competence?

A competence is the combination of the skills, knowledge and experience held by individual staff and how they utilise these qualities to inform their practice in a way that is commensurate with their occupational role and responsibilities. To be competent you need to be able to interpret a situation in its context and to have a repertoire of possible actions to take. You will have been trained in the possible actions in the repertoire, where this is relevant. Regardless of training, competence grows through experience and the abilities of an individual to learn and adapt. This framework has been mapped against the GSCC Code of Practice for social care workers, National Occupational Standards, and the ADASS Safeguarding Standards.

## Who should complete the National Competence Framework for Safeguarding Adults?

All staff should be assessed as competent against the competencies that are relevant to their occupational role. All staff, regardless of their role, should know when and how to report any concern about abuse of an adult. All staff need to be competent in the first five competences as described in the framework. Beyond this it will depend on their occupational role and level of responsibilities. This is described in the document, but can be summarised in the table. The framework seeks to support a proportionate response to suspected abuse from all those who work with adults.

Practitioner's Competence		
	Including, but not limited to:	Competences
All Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Care / support staff</li> <li>▪ Nursing staff</li> <li>▪ Police officers</li> <li>▪ Health and social care professionals</li> <li>▪ Bus drivers / escorts</li> <li>▪ Day service staff</li> <li>▪ All staff in health care settings (e.g. OTs, physiotherapists, GPs etc.)</li> <li>▪ HR staff</li> <li>▪ Clerical and admin staff</li> <li>▪ Domestic and ancillary staff</li> <li>▪ Health and Safety Officers</li> <li>▪ Elected Members</li> <li>▪ Volunteer Befrienders</li> <li>▪ Charity trustees.</li> </ul>	1-5
Qualified Practitioners and all frontline Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social work team managers</li> <li>▪ Integrated team managers</li> <li>▪ Head of Nursing</li> <li>▪ Health and Social Care Provider Service Managers (Safeguarding champions).</li> </ul>	1-15
Investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social Worker or Care Manager who has received joint training, with the Police, on adult protection</li> <li>▪ ABE Trained Investigating Officers.</li> </ul>	1-5 and 16-24
Manager's Competence		
Strategic Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Investigating Managers</li> <li>▪ Operational Managers</li> <li>▪ Heads of Assessment and Care managers</li> <li>▪ Service Managers.</li> </ul>	1-33
Senior Managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Heads of Support Services</li> <li>▪ Heads of Directly Provided Services</li> <li>▪ Heads of Assessment and Care Management Services.</li> </ul>	1-38

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health, Ministerial statement 'Government response to the consultation on Safeguarding Adults – the review of the no secrets guidance', 2010, page 1

<sup>2</sup> Galpin D, Morrison L. Towards a National Competence Framework for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults. 3rd Ed. Bournemouth; Bournemouth University; 2010; 3:11

## What are the timescales for completion?

It is suggested that all newly appointed staff should be assessed by their line manager as competent against their relevant competencies, within the first six months of entering their post. A completed copy of the National Competence Framework for Safeguarding Adults might accompany any Appointment Support / Probationary Review paperwork at the end of week 24 of this process. Once staff have been assessed as competent, it is suggested they should seek to maintain their own skills and knowledge and be re-assessed a minimum of every three years.

## Carrying out the assessment of competence

The assessment of competence should combine a mix of direct observation of practice, as well as a process of exploration, discussion and questioning in supervision and appraisal meetings. Assessment should also reflect a knowledge and understanding of Local Authority Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults, Operational Instructions and Safeguarding Practice Standards.

## Supporting the development of competence

All staff can be helped to develop their safeguarding competence. This can be done by participating in formal training and development opportunities, including the completion of vocational or professional awards. There are also many opportunities for staff to learn and develop within the workplace. This could be via discussions in team meetings, 'buddying up' with more experienced practitioners, coaching and mentoring opportunities and 'learning lunches'. One thing is essential: the role of the line manager and their ability to encourage, enable and motivate staff to develop and learn.

## Practitioners Competence

The following 1-5 competences apply to staff at all levels, including volunteers eg. day service staff, police officers and nursing staff. Staff will be able to:

Alerting					
Competence	Suggested Evidence	Links to NoS	Supported Evidence	Date	Manager Signature
1 Understand and apply the safeguarding standards that underpin all safeguarding adults activity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates understanding of local authority role: duty to protect; respect for individual rights; treating reports seriously; concept of proportionality; principles of and limits to confidentiality, codes of conduct and influences of cultural background.</li> </ul>	HSC24c			
2 Recognise an adult potentially in need of safeguarding.	Obtained through questioning, written accounts and observation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates clear understanding of the meaning of 'vulnerable adult' in as defined in relevant policy guidance, eg. 'No Secrets' (2000).</li> <li>▪ Can describe types of abuse and can recognise the indicators and evidence for each type.</li> </ul>	HSC24c			
3 Understanding all procedures for making a 'Safeguarding Alert' including where and who they should be reported to.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can describe the measures to ensure the immediate safety of a vulnerable adult, considering risk and relevant multi-agency involvement.</li> <li>▪ Know, understand and <b>take appropriate action</b> to level of responsibility.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates understanding of employing agencies' Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures.</li> </ul>	HSC24c HSC21c			
4 Understand dignity and respect when working with individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates appropriate ethical practice, with reflection on own values and attitudes with the complexities of Safeguarding practice.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates work practice in line with organisational and local health and safety risk management procedures.</li> <li>▪ Demonstrates pro-active steps to minimise vulnerability, eg. use of supervision; adhering to policies; including, whistle blowing. Non discriminatory person centred approach.</li> </ul>	HSC24 a,b,c			
5 Understands the application of relevant policy and legislation that supports safeguarding adults activity.	As appropriate to role. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Demonstrates understanding of <b>Mental Capacity Act</b> and the <b>Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards</b> as well as other relevant documentation, eg. No Secrets, Human Rights Act, Care standards for registered services.</li> </ul>	HSC24c			



In addition to competences 1-5 as stated above, **Qualified Practitioners and all frontline Managers** (including staff who may act as the senior staff on duty) who manage or supervise staff providing services directly to the public, eg. Social Work Team Managers, Voluntary and Independent Sector Managers, Heads of Nursing, Health and Social Care Provider Service Managers etc. will be able to:

Supporting					
Competence	Suggested Evidence	Links to NoS	Supported Evidence	Date	Manager Signature
6 Effective oversight of the safeguarding process; including staff competence and attention to timescales.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation and evidence to; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure and help staff to address development needs including arranging training; support in supervision; discussion at staff meetings etc; promotion of safeguarding; use of competence framework with supervisees.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	HSC42			
7 Understand the policy and procedural frameworks in safeguarding adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates critical understanding on the levels, thresholds or pathways of investigating in response to a 'safeguarding referral' and the requirements of gathering initial information.</li> <li>Describe the purpose of a <b>safeguarding strategy meeting/discussion</b>, and how to contribute to this and any subsequent <b>investigation plan</b></li> <li>Describe the purpose of a <b>safeguarding case conference</b>, and how to contribute to this and any subsequent <b>protection plan</b>.</li> </ul>	HSC24 HSC24c HSC35c HSC45			
8 Understand the requirements of undertaking a safeguarding enquiry.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Responding at the appropriate level using appropriate forms and systems.</li> <li>Observed to do this, or reflective account provided.</li> </ul>	HSC31d HSC45 HSC42			
9 Support service users to understand safeguarding issues and know how to protect themselves from possible abuse.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of raising awareness with service users, eg. accessible information, promotion of safeguarding in service user meetings, awareness raising sessions with service users.</li> </ul>	HSC45			
10 Ensure service users/carers/patients are supported appropriately.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate appropriate behaviour as in competence (4)</li> <li>Demonstrates understanding of how abuse has or may affect people</li> <li>Describe the potential impact of abuse on vulnerable adults, the staff or individuals who are alleged to have committed abuse and the informal carer who may have raised the alarm.</li> </ul>	HSC24c HSC45			
11 Understand how best evidence is achieved.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe why it is important to preserve evidence.</li> <li>Demonstrate a comprehensive and detailed knowledge of gathering, evaluating and preserving evidence.</li> </ul>	HSC24c			
12 Understand when to use emergency systems to safeguard adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use emergency services when necessary and describe when emergency protection plans may be required.</li> </ul>	HSC24c			
13 Understand the application of <b>Mental Capacity Act (MCA)</b> and the <b>Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS)</b> .	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the requirements and procedures for applying the MCA or DoLS.</li> </ul>	HSC45 HSC42c			
14 Ensure adherence to relevant Safeguarding Adults regulatory requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand and use, where appropriate the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) and National Minimum Standards.</li> </ul>	HSC411 HSC42b			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintain accurate, complete and up-to-date records of action taken supported by appropriate evidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence of collation and monitoring of 'Safeguarding Alerts' within your service through observation and discussion.</li> </ul>	HSC41d			

In addition to competences 1-5, **Investigators eg.** Social Workers or care managers who have received joint training with the Police, on Safeguarding, will be able to:

Investigation					
Competence	Suggested Evidence	Links to NoS	Supported Evidence	Date	Manager Signature
16 Understand appropriate level of skill and knowledge required to undertake a safeguarding adults investigation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates thorough knowledge and application of all purposes, duties, tasks of a Safeguarding investigation.</li> <li>Evidence from observed behaviour and documentation may contribute to assessment of competence. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults (SVA) records and feedback from others.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS Units 4, 9, 11,12, 16,17			
17 Assess and analyse the risk of current and future abuse, and work with others to minimise the risk of further abuse taking place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can identify harms and dangers.</li> <li>Demonstrates consideration of capacity and seek to promote dignity, choice and independence.</li> <li>Demonstrate positive risk management.</li> <li>Demonstrate confidence and flexibility in dealing with the complexities, in principle and in practice, of risk analysis and assessment.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS (SW) Units 4,12			
18 Effectively work in partnership with other agencies, ensuring there is sound communication and clarity regarding roles and responsibilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation. Reflective account, SVA records and feedback from others.</li> <li>Facilitates critical reflection upon the roles and responsibilities of the different agencies involved in Safeguarding.</li> <li>Can use skills, systems and information sharing tools to engage in multi-agency information sharing.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS (SW) Unit 17			
19 Co-ordinate the collection of information and evidence and record, report and present this information using appropriate systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates appropriate use of Care First.</li> <li>Observation, reflective accounts, SVA records, feedback from others.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS (SW) Units 11, 16			
20 Ability to establish and maintain an outcome focused approach for users/carers/patients.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify and describe the potential impact of physical, sensory or psychological impairment on the vulnerable adult when involving them in the investigation.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS (SW) Unit11, 12			
21 Understand and apply the definition of a 'vulnerable' and 'intimidated' witness as defined in Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act (1999).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List all the factors that would deem an individual vulnerable.</li> <li>Describe the implications of Section 16 and 17 of the Youth Justice and Criminal Evidence Act (1999).</li> </ul>	HSC NoS (SW) Units 4, 12, 17			
22 Understand how to plan and prepare an <b>Achieving Best Evidence interview</b> and be able to implement the subsequent 'interview plan' in partnership with co-interviewer, eg. Police.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion/observation/reflective account, records of interview plans and testimonies from police colleagues, intermediary or service user.</li> </ul>	HSC NoS (SW) Units 4, 11, 16,17			
23 Understand and employ the need for particular support for vulnerable and/or intimidated witnesses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can describe 'special measures' available locally.</li> <li>Identify particular communication needs, eg. use of interpreters, speech and language therapist, communication aids etc.</li> </ul>	HSC NoS (SW) Units 4, 11,12, 17			
24 Evaluate interviews with victims and witnesses and carry out any post interview processes as required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion of success interview - how well did the interview meet planned objectives?</li> <li>Describe how the interview impacted on the investigation plan.</li> <li>Demonstrate how post-interview support was provided for the vulnerable adult.</li> </ul>	HSC NoS (SW) Unit 16			

## Manager's Competence

In addition to competences 1-24, **Strategic Managers, eg.** Service Managers, Investigating Managers, Operations Managers, Head of Assessment and Care Management etc. will also be able to:

Managing investigations					
Competence	Suggested Evidence	Links to NoS	Supported Evidence	Date	Manager Signature
25 Actively engage in a positive multi-agency approach to safeguarding adults.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate an understanding of the different roles and responsibilities of all agencies involved in investigations and ensure these are met.</li> <li>Explain where any relevant information would be found.</li> <li>Show awareness of updated protocols.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Unit 17			
26 Provide a consistent, quality SVA service.	Obtained by observation, SVA records, written accounts, feedback from others. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide sound, consistent and objective decisions in line with national multi-agency policy and procedures.</li> <li>Carry out effective monitoring and auditing</li> <li>Can demonstrate established systems e.g. maintaining records, protection plan monitoring and time management.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Units 4, 9,12, 15, 19, 21			
27 Co-ordinate safeguarding adults decision making, assessment / investigation and protection planning processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtained by observation, SVA records, written accounts and feedback from others.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Units 4, 9,12, 15, 17,19			
28 Convene and chair safeguarding adults meetings or discussions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Obtained by observation, SVA records, written accounts and feedback from others.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Units 11,16, 17			
29 Understand the requirements and function of supervision in the context of SVA.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supervision notes and description of local requirements.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Unit 21			
30 Ensure accurate records.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation and SVA records.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Unit 16			
31. Understand practice guidelines on preserving evidence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrates understanding of issues in relation to presentation of records, forensic, oral accounts and working with witnesses.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Unit 16			
32 Ensure effective risk assessment and management of all actions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As competence (31). Demonstrates consideration of harm and hazards, maintaining choice, control, dignity and independence of people who use services.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Units 3,4,9,12			
33 Understand the competences of Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) Assessors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain what special measures are available locally.</li> <li>Ensure team are sufficiently trained to meet local demand.</li> <li>Appropriate involvement of ABE investigations in SVA processes.</li> </ul>	HSC45 NoS(SW) Unit 21			

In addition to competences 1-33, **Senior Managers, eg.** Head of Service and above will also be able to:

Leadership					
Competence	Suggested Evidence	Links to NoS	Supported Evidence	Date	Manager Signature
34 Lead and manage staff and services; enabling access to training and providing support and respect.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can provide evidence e.g. staff development records, of staff attaining a level of SVA competence commensurate with their occupational role and responsibilities.</li> <li>Describe how they promote understanding and adherence to SVA policies and processes.</li> </ul>				
35 Ensure plans and targets for SVA are embedded at a strategic level across organisational settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Include Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA), SVA Board, SVA Training Strategy Sub Group, contributing to policies and procedures etc.</li> <li>Evidence from plans and targets.</li> </ul>				
36 Go about increasing public awareness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise and promote SVA policy and procedures.</li> <li>Observation.</li> <li>Can describe own contribution.</li> </ul>				
37 Ensure contractual arrangements with service providers adhere to Safeguarding Adults policy and procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Should be able to describe at least three ways senior managers ensure this.</li> </ul>				
38 Develop service user and carer involvement in the evaluation and development of Safeguarding Adults services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure service users and carers are supported, involved in all aspects of SVA activity and their feedback impacts upon service plans, locality action plans and the delivery of Safeguarding.</li> <li>Should be able to list at least three areas of service user involvement.</li> <li>Describe how existing user and carer networks are involved in SVA activity.</li> </ul>				