

---

## Overview

This standard is about assessing the communication needs and abilities of vulnerable individuals before they provide evidence to police or at court.

It is recognised that some individuals have communication difficulties and you will help them overcome their difficulties in order to give the best evidence they can when they are being interviewed by police or at court.

You will help to make the justice process accessible to some of the most vulnerable people in society and in some cases, this will make the difference for individuals to be able to participate effectively and receive a fair trial.

## Performance criteria

- You must be able to:*
1. obtain consent from individuals or appropriate adults to carry out assessments in line with organisational requirements
  2. gather information on individuals from other agencies in line with organisational requirements
  3. gather information from previous interviews or assessments in line with organisational requirements
  4. arrange assessments with individuals in line with organisational requirements
  5. explain purpose of meeting and your role to vulnerable individuals
  6. assess communication needs and language abilities of individuals and:
    - 6.1 consider their language capacity, preferences and needs
    - 6.2 interpret results from assessment
  7. check individuals' understanding of information to meet their needs, and:
    - 7.1 adapt your communication as necessary
  8. evaluate the suitability of using an intermediary
  9. provide guidance to those participating in interviews of the best way to communicate with individuals
  10. attend interviews with investigating officers and individuals in line with organisational requirements
  11. help officers deal with any issues impacting on communication with individuals during interviews
  12. carry out supplementary assessments if required
  13. provide written report to courts in line with organisational requirements, including:
    - 13.1 communication needs and abilities of individuals
    - 13.2 recommendations on how individuals should be questioned in court
    - 13.3 recommendations on special measures
    - 13.4 how quality of evidence could be improved
  14. record relevant information in line with organisational requirements
  15. retain records whilst considering data protection regulations

## Knowledge and understanding

### *You need to know and understand:*

1. legislation, organisational policies and procedures relevant to your jurisdiction
2. how to ascertain the communication needs and abilities of individuals from other agencies
3. how to communicate with individuals in ways suitable to them, which supports:
  - 3.1 respect
  - 3.2 equality
  - 3.3 diversity
4. the range of conditions that can affect individuals' ability to communicate
5. how to arrange assessments with individuals and the factors to consider
6. reasons why an appropriate third person must always be with you when meeting with individuals
7. how to carry out and interpret assessments of communication capacity, needs and language abilities of individuals
8. how to use appropriate forms and styles of communication to meet the needs of individuals
9. the importance of checking people's understanding and allowing questions to be asked
10. how to establish rapport with individuals
11. the roles and responsibilities of everyone during interviews  
how to provide initial assessment reports from information gathered during assessments, including:
  - 11.1 information on best ways to communicate with individuals
  - 11.2 ways to present information on communication needs and abilities of individuals
12. reasons for disclosing information to people who have the right and need to receive it

SFJGM1

Assess communication needs of vulnerable individuals before they give evidence



---

**Developed by** Skills for Justice

---

**Version Number** 2

---

**Date Approved** February 2018

---

**Indicative Review Date** February 2023

---

**Validity** Current

---

**Status** Original

---

**Originating Organisation** Skills for Justice

---

**Original URN** SFJGM1

---

**Relevant Occupations** Intermediaries

---

**Suite** Courts, Tribunals and Prosecution

---

**Keywords** Intermediaries; vulnerable individuals; evidence; assess

---