

vra

vocational rehabilitation association

*"Working Together To Get People Working"*

# VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION STANDARDS OF PRACTICE



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## A MESSAGE FROM OUR PATRON

These professional Standards of Practice are not merely a highly significant and laudable achievement of the Vocational Rehabilitation Association (VRA); not just a key milestone in the evolution of the VRA. Their publication is an inestimable contribution towards the paradigm shift we are now witnessing in recognising a life in work as the most effective means to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, their families, and their communities in which they live. The VRA has vigorously embraced society's moral obligation to move people of working age into a life of work; to encourage and support sick and disabled people to remain in, or (re-) enter work as soon as possible when their health condition so permits. The VRA also provides that impetus, context, and infrastructure for professionals engaged in the many interdisciplinary activities which constitute vocational rehabilitation to meet the needs of society in delivering that obligation.

A profession's aspirations for national recognition of its members' skills, competencies, commitment and reputation to deliver quality services and tangible outcomes must have at their heart standards of practice that are evidence-based, practice-driven, transparent and comprehensive. With this publication the VRA's Standards Task Group has most certainly achieved that.

The development of these standards should prove to be a seminal event in progressing the personal and professional development of all who are engaged in vocational rehabilitation; will enhance and inform cogent and coherent schemes for education and training, and facilitate accreditation and proper recognition of professionally orientated qualifications. The publication of these professional Standards of Practice marks out the Vocational Rehabilitation Association as a predominant organisation in the United Kingdom for serving the needs and interests of all those practitioners involved in vocational rehabilitation. Furthermore, the adoption of these standards by those engaged in, or associated with, the diverse and multi-talented areas of vocational rehabilitation should provide the longed-for step gain in delivering a wider breadth and enriched quality of support for disadvantaged and disabled people who seek to pass along the avenues to well-being that are offered by a life in rewarding work.



**Mansel Aylward** CB, FFOM, FFPM, FRCP  
Patron  
Vocational Rehabilitation Association (VRA)  
April 2007

## FOREWORD

# THE CHAIR OF THE VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION ASSOCIATION

### *Vocational Rehabilitation is not new.*

Vocational Rehabilitation is not new to the UK. Vocational Rehabilitation providers have been practising since the early 1900's. What is new to this country is the acknowledgement that Vocational Rehabilitation is a profession.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Association defines Vocational Rehabilitation as a process, which enables persons with functional, psychological, developmental, cognitive, and emotional impairments or health conditions to overcome barriers to accessing, maintaining or returning to employment or other useful occupation.

The VRA is committed to developing the infrastructure necessary for the VR profession. This includes professional education and training, networks, employment opportunities, information sources, a code of ethics, accreditation/certification processes and professional Standards.

### *What is the Vocational Rehabilitation Association?*

The Vocational Rehabilitation Association (VRA) is a registered charity (number 1056380) and is the UK's leading professional association for those working in or with the field of vocational rehabilitation.

First established in May 1994 the VRA is an organisation dedicated to serving the best interests of professionals who are active in vocational rehabilitation. It currently has a membership reflecting a wide mix of Vocational Rehabilitation practitioners and organisations involved or interested in vocational rehabilitation.

### *How did the standards evolve?*

The publication of these standards is a key milestone for the VRA. In 2000-2002 the VRA participated in Government-sponsored research into the job definitions and qualifications of those with responsibility in providing employment support, information, advice and guidance for disabled people. A key finding of this research was that:

- There is a recognised need for essentially competence-based, practice-led and professionally orientated qualifications.
- Further standards and qualification development work is going to be needed if a suitable range of accredited qualifications is to be made available for the field.

On reviewing these findings, it is to the credit of the VRA Trustees both past and present that they identified a number of key priorities: to establish professional Standards of Practice, to promote training and development for VR professionals, and to identify/accredit qualifications which meet these standards. The creation of nationally recognised Standards was clearly an essential first step for the profession to develop. All involved from the beginning can be proud of the outcome.

Since 2005, our Standards Task Group has undertaken a comprehensive analysis of the subject, developing a set of standards that have been subject to broad consultation and consensus. This has been undertaken on a voluntary basis by our Task Group members, for which we are most grateful.

However none of this would not have been possible without the total commitment, energy and driving force for change from our VRA Vice Chair and Standards Task Group Chair, Gail Kovacs. She has brought her extensive international expertise of Vocational Rehabilitation to the VRA, and in doing so has sacrificed considerable amounts of personal time to write, edit and present this comprehensive set of Vocational Rehabilitation Standards.

These standards will embed a quality of delivery by our members and the sector at large for the good of disabled and disadvantaged people seeking to enter, remain in and return to meaningful employment.

I commend them to you.

**Tim Dawson, MSc**

Chair

Vocational Rehabilitation Association (VRA)

April 2007

## INTRODUCTION

# The Chair Of The VRA's Standards Task Group

### *Opening Statement*

The Vocational Rehabilitation Association's (VRA) Standards Task Group and their dedicated Advisors have worked for over two years on this standards document. We are pleased not only to finish our task but to be presenting to you what we believe to be one of the most comprehensive sets of Vocational Rehabilitation standards in existence and the first set of Vocational Rehabilitation standards in the UK.

### *The Challenge*

The immediate intent of this publication is to challenge each of you working within the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice (see the document) to reflect on and to evaluate your own practice and approaches. This should lead to confirming well established competencies and/or identifying personal needs for improvement within your own service delivery. It should also identify further training requirements and support professional well-being.

### *The Intent*

As the Vocational Rehabilitation Association evolves and adopts more responsibility, this document will be used to:

- confirm individual membership level.
- establish value statements within the field.
- revisit the VRA Code of Ethics.
- establish a mentorship scheme for those working in individual practice.
- develop specific educational/training processes to meet member needs.
- evolve a system of Vocational Rehabilitation accreditation/certification.

The document helps to measure the individual practising in Vocational Rehabilitation as a member of a team or as an independent operator. It is not intended to replace already well established accreditation processes that measure programmes and facilities. Where the term "organisation" is used, reference is to the individual functioning in a self employed status.

The vast nature of the field of Vocational Rehabilitation means that there will be some overlap with other professional bodies and their scopes of practice. There are already therefore a number of regulated health professionals working in rehabilitation that have their own standards of practice as a result. We are not suggesting through the development of the VRA standards that these individuals should have yet another set of standards, rules and administrative processes to follow. We are, however, encouraging them to consider the VRA Standards should they be completing tasks outside of their own professional basis and within the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice. Where there are overlaps (e.g. job analysis for an Occupational Therapist), the Occupational Therapy standards apply. A non regulated health practitioner performing job analysis

however must abide by the VRA Standards. We have made every attempt to ensure that the standards do not in and of themselves discriminate against individuals with disabilities or disadvantages from working in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation. The Disability Rights Commission has been a valuable resource in reviewing and advising with this focus.

### *In Appreciation*

Although the members of the Standards Task Group themselves represent a diverse group of practitioners and interested parties, we could not have completed the task successfully without the independent and objective review of our Advisors. We thank them for their commitment, dedication and contribution of volunteer hours to the field of Vocational Rehabilitation. Through two years of due diligence they worked with us offering comments and suggestions and challenging us to think in terms of our clients, our peers, our funders and all the significant others interested in our field. For their engagement and expertise we thank:

|                                    |   |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Professor Mansel Aylward</b>    | UnumProvident Centre for Psychosocial Disability & Research |
| <b>Mike Clarke/Ceri Goodrum</b>    | Remploy   |
| <b>Dr. Andrew Frank</b>            | British Society of Rehabilitation Medicine                  |
| <b>Dr. Bob Grove</b>               | Sainsbury Centre for Mental Health                          |
| <b>Donal McAnaney</b>              | Irish Association of Rehabilitation Professionals           |
| <b>David Parsons</b>               | Host Policy and Research                                    |
| <b>Joanne Pratt</b>                | Caledonia University  |
| <b>Miles Rinaldi/Simon Francis</b> | National Institute of Mental Health in England              |
| <b>Philippa Simkiss</b>            | Royal National Institute for the Blind                      |
| <b>Marilyn Sycamore</b>            | Papworth Trust  |
| <b>Lynne Turner-Stokes</b>         | Northwick Park Hospital                                     |
| <b>Michelle Valentine</b>          | Disability Rights Commission                                |

When compiling the Standards, the Task Group referred to numerous documents reflecting standards in other fields. Some of these are noted herein under "key resources". We wish to give special mention to both the College of Occupational Therapists (COT) and to the Case Management Society of the UK (CMSUK) for their generous offers to "borrow" from their standards documents. These resources were an excellent basis for our efforts.

### *And your Standards Task Group*

As with any Task Group that survives two years, there are core participants who make it to most meetings and there are others in the background, often geographically challenged, contributing in their way. We would like to acknowledge each and every one.

The core group who offered facilities, attended meetings, developed products, reviewed standards, took minutes and survived the agendas includes:

|                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| <b>Nick Bason</b>          | Employers' Forum for Disability<br>(recent addition) |
| <b>Nicholas Cull</b>       | Barlow, Lyde and Gilbert                             |
| <b>Morag Heighway</b>      | Norwich Union  |
| <b>Gail Kovacs (Chair)</b> | KMG Health Partners/Healthy Minds at Work            |
| <b>Andrew Pemberton</b>    | Human Focus  |
| <b>Joy Reymond</b>         | UnumProvident  |
| <b>Fletcher Trowse</b>     | HCML   |
| <b>Barry Williams</b>      | Alphacare Rehab                                      |

*Supporting us from a distance were:*

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Roger Butterworth</b> | KMG Health Partners/Healthy Minds at Work |
| <b>Colin Ettinger</b>    | Irwin Mitchell                            |
| <b>Margaret Eve</b>      | DWP/Jobcentre Plus                        |
| <b>Leonie Nowland</b>    | ICAS                                      |

My personal thanks and appreciation goes to all of these individuals for sharing with me not just their expertise and hours of hard work but a camaraderie and encouragement beyond compare. It is time for joint celebration.

The Vocational Rehabilitation Association would also like to thank the employers attached to the Task Group Members for sharing these individuals with us and, in some cases, providing a location and refreshments for our meetings. Thank you for participating.

As for me, it has been my honour to serve.

**Gail Kovacs**, BA, BPE, RRP, CCRC, ABDA  
VRA Vice-Chair  
Chair of the Standards Task Group.

## PUBLICATION DETAILS

*Publication date: 18 June, 2007*

*Date for review: 30 June, 2009*

This is the first edition of the VRA standards. We encourage and solicit feedback in our ongoing effort to develop the fairest and most accurate set of standards possible. We will review this document again in approximately two years from publication date to make additions and corrections as needed.

Enquiries and feedback related to this document and to its development can be directed to: [im@vocationalrehabilitationassociation.org.uk](mailto:im@vocationalrehabilitationassociation.org.uk)

### *Acknowledgement:*

We gratefully acknowledge Remploy for the publication costs of this document. Remploy is committed to advancing the field of Vocational Rehabilitation and subscribes wholeheartedly to these standards of practice.

### *Additional Copies:*

A non printing electronic copy of the VRA Standards Of Practice is available free to members and non members. A hard copy is available for a fee of £10.00, (to cover costs). To download an electronic copy or to order a hard copy of the VRA Standards Of Practice document please visit [www.vocationalrehabilitationassociation.org.uk](http://www.vocationalrehabilitationassociation.org.uk)

### *Reference as follows:*

VRA Standards of Practice. Report of the Standards Task Group  
(Chair: Kovacs, G.) VRA Glasgow 2007



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## **PROFESSIONAL SCOPE OF PRACTICE STATEMENT**

Vocational Rehabilitation is a process of facilitation, grounded by a belief in the dignity and worth of all people, designed to assist people with impairments or health conditions to secure employment and to integrate into the community.

The process is interdisciplinary by nature, and may involve functional, bio psychosocial, behavioural and/or vocational interventions. The techniques utilised within this process may include, but are not limited to:

- assessment and appraisal;
- goal setting and intervention planning;
- provision of health advice and promotion, in support of returning to work;
- support for self management of health conditions;
- career (vocational) counselling;
- individual and group counselling focused on facilitating adjustments to the medical and psychosocial impact of disability;
- case management, referral, and service coordination;
- programme evaluation and research;
- interventions to remove environmental, employment, and attitudinal obstacles;
- consultation services among multiple parties and regulatory systems;
- job analysis, job development, and placement services, including assistance with employment and job accommodations; and
- the provision of consultation about and access to rehabilitation technology.

## **INDIVIDUAL SCOPE OF PRACTICE**

- An individual may practice in one or more areas of Vocational Rehabilitation but they will limit their professional activities as determined by a practitioner's own abilities and skills within the VR field, or as determined by their individual professional associations. A person is ethically bound to limit his or her practice to their individual scope of practice.
- An individual may increase their scope of practice by undergoing suitable training and accreditation or via suitably monitored work experience.

## 1.0 SERVICE DELIVERY

### *Intent:*

These Service Delivery standards make clear what consumers can expect in terms of roles, responsibility, quality, timeliness, cost effectiveness and professionalism when they receive services from Vocational Rehabilitation professionals.

The development of service delivery standards contributes directly to ensuring accountability for continuing competence and for improving the quality of health services.

## 1.1 WORKING WITHIN THE SCOPE OF PRACTICE

### 1.1.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must acknowledge and work within their Scope of Practice as defined by the Vocational Rehabilitation Association. (See VRA Scope of Practice statement within the Standards document).

### Guidance:

The Scope of Practice is a statement that identifies knowledge and skills required for the profession in order to provide effective Vocational Rehabilitation services to persons with physical, mental, developmental, cognitive and emotional disabilities / disadvantages. It identifies the disciplines and processes that define the field and how Vocational Rehabilitation is different from other fields of practice.

Several rehabilitation disciplines and related processes are linked within the central field. These include but are not limited to rehabilitation counselling, career counselling, vocational evaluation, work adjustment, job development, job placement and case management. An individual scope of practice may overlap with the central scope for Vocational Rehabilitation. An individual scope is based on one's own knowledge of what abilities and skills have been gained from education, professional experience and continuous professional development. A Vocational Rehabilitation professional is ethically bound to limit their practice to within their own individual scope.

Within the UK, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to gain and maintain knowledge, education and professional experience for compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and specifically with reasonable adjustments.

Where services outside the individual's scope of practice are required policies and procedures for access to specialist interventions must be written and clear.

### 1.1.2 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals and services must ensure that auxiliary staff, students and volunteers are adequately trained and supervised in accordance with the relevant Vocational Rehabilitation Association standards and guidelines provided herewith.

### Guidance:

Unless auxiliary staff, students and volunteers are being directly supervised, it is the responsibility of the Vocational Rehabilitation professional to assign tasks only to individuals with the education, experience and skill to complete the assignment competently and accurately.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 1.2 CLEARLY DEFINING SERVICES

### 1.2.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals shall ensure that their services are clearly defined and identifiable and that duplication of service is avoided.

### Guidance:

Services, roles, responsibilities, processes, interfaces and expected outcomes are clearly defined in discussions with the client and with the purchaser of service. These items are included in the written plan or service agreement. Service and promotional material must also clearly and concisely define the above points.

Clients must understand why they are participating, what will be required of them and what will be achieved, who they will be working with, where services are delivered, and the time frames for delivery. Service purchasers and employers must be advised on what they are funding and what they will get in the way of return.

Service providers must take reasonable precautions to ensure clients and their employers are not exposed to duplicate services such as a second vocational assessment or a second worksite analysis unless otherwise necessary and agreed. Vocational Rehabilitation professionals have an ethical requirement to recommend only services that positively influence the rehabilitation plan and that remove obstacles to employment. Over assessing or over servicing clients is inappropriate.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 1.3 THE REFERRAL PROCESS

### 1.3.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals shall have clearly documented incoming and ongoing referral procedures and criteria for appropriate referrals by which they abide. Procedures include accepting, recording and allocating the referral.

#### Guidance:

A professional referral is essential to providing the client and the employer with the most suitable intervention and support. The referral carefully matches the client and their needs with the resources available internally or externally. A professional referral maximises problem resolution, improves job performance and increases client well being. It ensures that we “do the right job” and that we “do the job right”.

Crucial to a client’s pathway to work is a timely, confidential and accurate referral to a Vocational Rehabilitation service. This enables the client to benefit from the most appropriate service at an optimal time.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Ensure that the referral is appropriate through the collection of relevant and detailed information
- Have set criteria around which to accept or deny a referral.
- Decline the referral if it appears that the Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service cannot meet the needs of the individual or employer.
- Provide the referral source with a reason, in writing, for declining the referral. For example, the client may require assistance that is outside of the Vocational Rehabilitation professional’s individual scope of practice. Where possible, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional will offer suggestions and alternatives to the referral source or will signpost to other services.
- Inform the client, the employer and the referral source if there is a waiting period for service delivery. The potential waiting time should be indicated.
- Record or maintain the referral details in the file records. This information includes referral source details and date of the referral for the statutory required period.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

### 1.3.2 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals should indicate the time frame within which they will respond to a referral. This may be guided by agreed upon contracts, available resources and specific policies.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Have a clearly documented policy relative to referral process and time frames. This may be based on contractual requirements.
- Demonstrate a process for assigning work on a priority basis taking into consideration client and referral source needs and available resources.
- Demonstrate timely contacts with the client, the employer and other relevant parties.
- Provide written confirmation that the referral has been accepted.

### 1.3.3 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional has clear, documented intake or referral acknowledgement procedures.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Establish contact with the client and/or the employer within specified time frames of receipt of referral as outlined in policy documents.
- Advise the client/employer of contact details and best methods for communicating with the professional.
- Provide the client /employer with information about the service being provided. This should be adequate enough for client/employer decision-making relative to participation.
- Determine specific client/employer needs. This includes assisting them with clarification.
- Provide other information to the client/employer based on their needs. Options should be provided along with guidance in selecting the most appropriate alternative.
- Offer the client/employer a supportive service environment.
- Enable the client/employer to explore their issues.
- Advise the client/employer on next steps and appointment requirements.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

### 1.3.4 Standard:

Once service has been started and subsequently is deemed inappropriate or cannot be continued, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional should, in discussion, with the client and employer, consider referring to another named professional. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is expected to protect both the client/employer and their relevant details during this process and to ensure wherever possible that the next provider offers a quality and professional intervention.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must ensure that services provided personally or accessed through others are provided in a professional, ethical and fiscally responsible manner. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Understand basic requirements of specific services.
- Know what to look for when evaluating services.
- Have a basic understanding of evaluation and auditing processes.
- Be able to share issues and concerns with other service providers.
- Ensure that issues are resolved in a sound and timely manner.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service must also:

- Ensure that 'referral on' criteria are in place.
- Evaluate the need for additional services, in order to provide quality, professional interventions.
- Ensure that the next intervention is necessary to move the client/ employer through the Vocational Rehabilitation process and toward their goals.
- Ensure to the extent possible that the next intervention will continue to minimise or prevent client impairment, reduce activity limitations, and lessen participation restrictions.
- Establish a list of local referral possibilities.
- Establish personal links where appropriate to ensure the client/employer receives the best service possible.
- Recommend additional quality service options in a timely manner.
- Discuss referral options with the client/employer and outline advantages and disadvantages of the options.
- Determine announced and hidden costs of the next intervention.
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries in researching referral options, in making the referral and in following up where agreed. This includes protecting the confidential nature of client/employer information other than where consent is given.
- Avoid or declare conflict of interest if referring on to a service to which the professional or practice is attached.
- Have approval from the payer for the referral.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 1.4 CLIENT / EMPLOYER ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND GOAL SETTING

### 1.4.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must understand the nature of any assessment he or she recommends, and be able to assess its appropriateness to the client's circumstances.

### Guidance:

In order for the Vocational Rehabilitation professional to appreciate and access appropriate assessments they must understand the assessment process, appropriate assessment protocols, the basis of assessment, the theory behind test and measurement, the difference between norm and criterion referenced testing, the nature of administration, scoring and interpretation and the professional and ethical use of assessment outcomes.

If functioning in the Assessor's role, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional must have an in depth understanding of their specific assessment area, specific skills and competencies and experience in providing the assessment.

### 1.4.2 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals should ensure that assessments are appropriate and safe. The client must provide their consent.

### Guidance:

A thorough and reliable assessment is important in the client's journey into vocational or avocational activity. Assessment helps to determine the appropriate and effective recommendations and interventions for the client. The client may require more than one assessment along the way

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Review referral details and screening information to determine the need for assessment.
- Prepare the client ahead of time to ensure they know what to expect, have location details, arrange appropriate transportation, understand time frames, are dressed comfortably, bring nourishment if necessary and have assistive devices with them.
- Provide a clean, safe and accessible assessment environment.
- Evaluate and record the client's physical, emotional and personal safety before and during assessment.
- Explain the nature and purpose of Vocational Rehabilitation and available services.
- Gain commitment and understanding by explaining the process and purpose of the assessment to the client and / or their carers.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

- Obtain documented consent before the assessment begins. Any associated costs for the client must also be explained prior to requesting consent.
- Counsel the client on realistic expectations of the assessment and the rehabilitation process.
- Follow the same basic parameters when assessing within an employer environment (e.g. Physical Demands Analysis) or in behalf of an employer (e.g. meeting Disability Discrimination Act requirements).

### 1.4.3 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be able to differentiate between various assessments and must be able to recommend the most appropriate assessment to meet the client's/ employer's needs.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Understand and appreciate the various assessments available within Vocational Rehabilitation including their purpose, the credentials and skills of the Assessor, assessment structure, process, impacts and potential outcomes.
- Appreciate how some assessments may overlap but may independently still add value to assisting the individual/employer with decision-making.
- Accurately interpret a client's need for a specific assessment based on all bio/psycho/social factors.
- Accurately interpret an employer's need for a specific assessment based on interviews and identified company issues.
- Determine and relate to significant parties the value that the assessment brings to the job retention or job redeployment process.

### 1.4.4 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must have justification for not carrying out or for discontinuing an assessment.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Only complete assessments that are within their individual scope of practice.
- Ensure that clients, employer team members and others are not at risk from hazards before or during assessments.
- Document any decision and rationale not to assess and inform the referral source.
- Provide written justification for terminating the assessment. Reasons might relate to sudden illness, distress, consent not given, participation refused, risk to the client / employer staff / professional (within reason and based on Health and Safety Executive guidelines).

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

### 1.4.5 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must guide and assist the client/ employer through the assessment process.

#### Guidance:

Clients/employers are active participants in the assessment process. Services are provided “with” them, not “for” or “to” them.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Educate the client/employer on the assessment process.
- Share with the client/employer the professional’s role and responsibilities and the client’s / employer’s roles and responsibilities throughout the process.
- Encourage the client / employer to communicate and provide feedback during the process.
- Advise the client to do their best. Advise the employer to communicate accurately and thoroughly.
- Inform the client / employer of any potential positive and / or negative consequences from participating.

### 1.4.6 Standard:

The assessment tool should match the need and should be appropriately applied by the professional. It must be recognised that it is only a tool to support the client / employer and the professional during the decision making process.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Ensure that all assessments are individualised and meet the needs of the client / employer.
- Work with standardised assessment or assessment tools adopting recognised models of best practice, where possible.
- Work within a shared or single assessment process where one is established.
- Determine that the professional who carries out the assessment has the necessary knowledge and skills.
- Record all assessment details, including the date, time, location, those present and outcomes.
- Ensure that the client /employer’s staff involved in the assessment are safe from a mobility, environment and assessment equipment perspective.
- Reinforce with the client / employer the need to report any significant issues developing during the course of the assessment.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

### 1.4.7 Standard:

The values and needs of the client and their referral sources are taking into consideration during the assessment. The needs of the employer must be taken into consideration during the provision of employer related services.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Obtain full details relevant to the assessment from all participants and interested parties as is appropriate.
- Conduct a thorough and relevant interview with the client / employer as part of the assessment.
- Identify the client's / employer's goal and expected outcomes of the assessment.
- Ensure assessments are client-centred, respecting their needs, interests, occupation, role, environment and lifestyle.
- Consider the background and culture of the client and the respective values to be applied during assessment.
- Where realistic, ensure the assessment is conducted in the client's preferred language. In the least, interpretation services should be available.
- Ensure assessments are conducted in suitable locations to maintain privacy and confidentiality.
- Use the outcomes of the assessment as baseline comparison measures.
- Use the assessment to determine the client's perceptions of their vocational status and quality of life.
- Provide the client with a debriefing opportunity so the assessment results are clear and understandable. The client must appreciate the impact of the assessment on the overall plan and have the opportunity to comment on the assessment outcomes and process.
- Should the client want others to receive the assessment results, a consent form must be completed specifically identifying the recipient of the details.
- Similarly, outcomes of assessments conducted on behalf of an employer must be shared with the employer, as appropriate, abiding by Data Protection Act regulations.
- Provide rationale for recommendations.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

### 1.4.8 Standard:

The client and the Vocational Rehabilitation professional should agree the goals for interventions arising from the assessment. These goals should be based on the client's priorities and needs as indicated by the assessment. The same holds true for interventions recommended to employers.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will:

- Analyse assessment findings and determine the client's abilities, obstacles to retaining / finding work and potential for change.
- Clearly identify and document the client's / employer's assessed needs and the goals and objectives of various interventions.
- Confirm with the client / employer the priorities for the interventions.
- Clearly document the client's / employer's priorities and selected options.
- Work with the client when identifying and choosing the goals for intervention. Work with the employer as required.
- Establish realistic and achievable goals incorporating time frames and cost estimates.
- Determine how to resource interventions.
- Record key observations, measurements and analyses in the client's paper or electronic file.
- Incorporate findings into information provided previously on the file by other professionals.
- Communicate assessment outcomes and the goals / plan of action with other members of the vocational rehabilitation team.
- Clearly document next steps and / or actions.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

### 1.4.9 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must regularly assess and evaluate the appropriateness of the service or plan being developed or delivered.

#### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation is a constant process of ongoing monitoring and quality control. Adjustments to services and plans are consistently made based on evaluation activity. Service delivery is fluid. It is the responsibility of the Vocational Rehabilitation professional to monitor actions and plans and to recommend adjustments as required.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service must:

- Understand the roles and functions of multidisciplinary health care providers in diagnosing and treating injury or impairment.
- Assess the effectiveness of provider services and resources.
- Evaluate the client's adjustment to disability.
- Assess the client's return-to-work needs including the need for assistive devices, rehabilitation technology, workplace adjustments and the like.
- Assess workplace factors that impact on outcomes.
- Evaluate other obstacles impacting on return to work.
- Assess factors that contribute to motivation and readiness to participate in Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Identify incentives and disincentives to client/employer engagement.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service must also:

- Develop an information and evidence resource kit to support best practice.
- Evaluate this evidence and compare findings with any plan intervention.
- Be able to share issues and concerns with the service providers.
- Ensure that issues are resolved in a sound and timely manner.
- Evaluate the impact on the overall plan and adjust accordingly.

The client and / or referral source may request adjustments to the plan prior to commitment. Any agreed changes must be based on fact, be professional / ethical, be in the best interests of the client and be documented.

In these circumstances, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional must remain professional and ethical during any plan negotiation phase. They must evaluate the request for adjustment to ensure that:

- It is a logical request based on fact.
- The plan is still in the client's best interest.
- It falls within the parameters of these standards of practice.
- It does not jeopardise the Vocational Rehabilitation practitioner's professional and ethical responsibilities.
- It does not jeopardise the viability of the provider's business / practice.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

- The plan is still realistic and achievable.

Periodically client or service provider circumstances change necessitating an amendment to the plan once it is in progress. Amendments should be treated in the same way with the same due diligence as with the initial plan development and be documented in the client's file.

Plans might need amending due to:

- Change in the client's bio/psycho/social state (temporary or long term).
- An inappropriate plan or part of plan to begin with.
- Services or potential outcomes (e.g. Employers) becoming no longer available.
- The introduction of new obstacles.
- A change in the labour market.
- A change in legislation / funding possibilities.
- Other potential impacts.

Whatever the reason, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service must work with the client / employer to:

- Identify the changes required to the plan.
- Add, change or delete interventions as required.
- Adjust time frames and identify new milestones.
- Identify new resources.
- Re-cost the plan.
- Solicit buy-in from all Stakeholders.
- Re-sign the plan.

## 1.5 OBSTACLE RESOLUTION

### 1.5.1 Standard:

The assessment and vocational rehabilitation plan must include the identification and removal of obstacles that impact on the client's potential for accessing services, programmes and resources and on their potential for finding and / or keeping work. Obstacles can be found at the individual level (client, family, social network), the organisational level (employer, agency, association, union) or the systemic level (government policies, benefits systems, interagency activity).

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Conduct initial and ongoing assessments that identify and help resolve obstacles. Obstacles can be categorised as biological, personal / psychological, and environmental / social.
- Develop a plan of action for decreasing or removing identified obstacles. Access issues relative to physical environments or employer policies often need to be resolved.
- Provide details for methods to address these issues.
- Educate and inform those creating or experiencing the obstacles.
- Assist the client/employer with the elimination of the obstacles.
- Advocate in the client's behalf in order to eliminate obstacles.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 1.6 SITUATIONAL / COMMUNITY BASED ASSESSMENTS

### 1.6.1 Standard:

Situational and community based assessments have a role to play in Vocational Rehabilitation and must be accessed when needed.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Understand the role of these assessments in building client skill, tolerance, confidence and motivation.
- Explain the value of these assessments to clients, employers and referral sources.
- Identify where these assessments can be found in the local community.
- Determine the specific details of each assessment utilised.
- Access these services when required.
- Ensure that services are provided by qualified staff.
- Evaluate these assessments for quality and effectiveness.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.7 REHABILITATION PLANNING/ COSTING

### 1.7.1 Standard:

The rehabilitation plan has been identified and negotiated with the client and should be based upon the agreed goals and objectives. Where one exists, the employer should have participated in this process. Adequate consultation with all relevant parties should be documented. Timely retention of, or return to, appropriate employment is identified as the expected outcome.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation provider is required to:

- Create an action plan that offers the best options for meeting the agreed goals and that means the most to the client.
- Ensure that the plan is consistent with assessed measures. The plan must reflect the client's abilities, limitations, interests, skills, experience and training. It must have a reasonable probability for success.
- Ensure that the plan is consistent with productivity and business needs of the employer.

### 1.7.2 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must ensure that the plan is realistic, achievable, time limited and aligned with best practices.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional's plan must:

- Clearly demonstrate that current medical, psychological, physical, social and vocational statuses have been considered in the development and evaluation of the rehabilitation objectives.
- Detail objectives and the nature of interventions.
- Ensure that plans are supported by appropriate assessments.
- Indicate who is responsible for coordination.
- Incorporate existing resources making the best use of their skills and abilities.
- Collaborate with other professionals to ensure the client and the employer are receiving a cohesive and compatible level of service.
- Design the plan around identified evidence or descriptions of best practice to support the potential for success.
- Ensure that the plan results in a safe and secure environment for the client and for co-workers.
- Defend the plan on the basis of client and employer need and best practices.
- Ensure that interventions and processes within the plan are time limited with significant milestones identified.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

**1.7.3 Standard:**

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must ensure that financial resources are available to support the plan.

**Guidance:**

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Cost the plan and establish cost effectiveness.
- Determine funding resources for the plan.
- Ensure resources continue for the duration of the plan.
- Inform the client of ongoing benefits received during Vocational Rehabilitation, and the implications or effects on benefits of plan adjustment / termination. Where the Vocational Rehabilitation professional has limited knowledge of the client's specific benefits circumstances or of benefits in general, the client must be referred to benefit providers.

**1.7.4 Standard:**

All parties must commit to the plan in order for it to successfully complete.

**Guidance:**

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service must:

- Advocate and promote the client's involvement and full participation in developing the plan.
- Seek plan approval from the client and referral source prior to implementation.
- Seek employer support for the plan where an employer is involved.
- Obtain the client's signature on the plan.
- Also sign the plan as an indication of commitment.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.8 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

### 1.8.1 Standard:

The plan must be implemented in a timely fashion with full client preparation and participation.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service must ensure that:

- Decisions to implement the plan are made quickly so the client's commitment does not falter.
- Communications with the client are maintained during the decision-making process.
- The client signs off on any adjustments made to the plan post submission
- The referrer / employer is informed of all adjustments to the plan post submission.
- The professional also signs off on any adjustments made to the plan post submission.
- The client is adequately prepared for the first phase of the plan.
- The client understands their roles and responsibilities and the professional's roles and responsibilities during the plan.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.9 CASE MANAGEMENT / SERVICE INTEGRATION

### 1.9.1 Standard:

Services must be integrated in a timely and cohesive manner according to identified plan activities and dates.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Provide coordination and promote the plan for the benefit of the client and the employer if one is involved.
- Establish procedures for exchanging information with other services.
- Ensure that interventions are carried out in suitable and safe environments.
- Ensure that respective service providers are aware, well in advance, of the client start and end dates within their programme and are prepared to receive the client accordingly.
- Provide the respective service providers with client information after informed consent is received.
- Ensure that the client is fully prepared for the next intervention.
- Provide direction in writing to the respective service providers around service delivery time frames, required adjustments, specific client needs, reporting and invoicing.
- Receive and review communications from other service providers.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.10 SERVICE CO-ORDINATION AND MONITORING

### 1.10.1 Standard:

It is important that the client / employer receive consistent and active support during their plan or service intervention.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional coordinating the plan is responsible for monitoring. They must:

- Maintain contact with the client / employer as recorded in and required by the plan.
- Respond to all client / employer communications addressing concerns immediately where required.
- Review progress and achievement with clients / employers and celebrate their successes.
- Resolve issues as they arise and are identified.
- Document all contacts with the client / employer.
- Demonstrate a regular review of the rehabilitation plan or service intervention with the client / employer.
- Ensure that the client/employer is informed about all reasonable options and services available.
- Monitor and record decisions or actions taken that potentially put the plan at risk and could negatively impact on the client's / employer's choices.
- Identify, record and elaborate on any needs that have not been met through the plan.
- Appreciate and respect client / employer decisions if at any time they wish to discontinue an intervention.

### 1.10.2 Standard:

The quality of the intervention must also be monitored and evaluated on an ongoing basis.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional coordinating services must:

- Recognise a base measure as a comparison for change in the client's/ employer's status.
- Evaluate the intervention through this comparison.
- During evaluation, access evaluation tools that work with outcome measures.
- Accurately and correctly interpret evaluations by understanding their purpose and importance to the process.
- Verify that progress is being made towards the agreed goals and objectives through the use of documents and outcome measures.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.11 VOCATIONAL COUNSELLING

### 1.11.1 Standard:

Where the Vocational Rehabilitation professional engages in counselling, he or she is expected to maintain their counselling skills in order to adequately counsel the client or employer. An alternative is to delegate this activity to an appropriately trained individual.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service must:

- Recognise their limits in the counselling area to within very specific parameters as identified by the counselling core curriculum and the professional's own scope of practice.
- Identify specific counselling areas beyond their level of expertise. These might include drug and alcohol abuse, mental health, crisis intervention, family counselling, etc.
- Maintain a roster of professionals and community resources available to the client that offers additional client support.
- Refer the client to their medical specialist or specialised community service when counselling extends beyond the vocationally related sphere and the professional's individual scope of practice.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 1.12 CASE TRANSFER

### 1.12.1 Standard:

Wherever possible, service coordination remains in the hands of one Vocational Rehabilitation professional throughout the duration of the plan or intervention.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should:

- At time of referral, conduct a personal review of workload to ensure for their longevity on the file. They should not be accepting work that they may not be in position to competently complete. Planning will identify any potential issues and resolve them before file reallocation becomes a necessity.
- Seek out supervisor review or peer supervision to ensure for quality performance levels where volumes are concerned.

The referral source should likewise:

- Avoid transfer of client by working directly with the Vocational Rehabilitation professional to resolve any service issues.
- Communicate direction and expectations clearly and succinctly to the Vocational Rehabilitation provider or company to avoid the development of issues.

### 1.12.2 Standard:

Case transfer should occur with as little impact on the client and the client's plan as possible.

#### Guidance:

Where file transfer is required, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Ensure that all file notes are up to date and that the hard copy and electronic files meet professional standards.
- Ensure that the new provider receives the documentation in time to review prior to communicating with the client/employer.
- Communicate the transfer to the client/employer as it is occurring. It is best if the new provider can be introduced to the client/employer in person.
- Ensure that the referral source is aware of the change, preferably with time to provide full agreement.
- Ensure that client/employer confidentiality is maintained throughout.
- Where the Vocational Rehabilitation professional is absent for short periods of illness or vacation, a backup provider should be identified as the client/employer contact. This should be communicated by the Vocational Rehabilitation professional to the client / employer in advance, if possible.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.13 CLOSURE

### 1.13.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should determine the client's ability to self manage at time of closure or transfer. The client's priorities and options must be taken into consideration.

#### Guidance:

Closure usually occurs when the plan or intervention has ended or is no longer being effective. Amendments may not lead to positive outcomes. Closure may be suggested by the Vocational Rehabilitation professional, by the client or by the referral source.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Determine the client's progress against predetermined milestones.
- Record the amount of support needed to achieve milestones.
- Identify possible amendments or options for any ongoing support or services that might maintain or improve upon the outcomes achieved.
- Identify and suggest any reasonable adjustments, accommodations and / or environmental modifications required.
- Identify and suggest follow-up, other activities or re-assessments that might help to improve the client's situation.

### 1.13.2 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation services should be discontinued only when the client has met their goals, no longer meets service criteria, or withdraws their consent. Services should also be discontinued should the plan fail and further plan adjustments are unreasonable or not feasible.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Include closure as a component of the rehabilitation plan.
- Develop and implement a closure component that meets the client's goals and agrees with the direction of the overall plan.
- Develop and implement a closure plan that meets the needs of the employer if one exists, the family or carer, the community or other support resources. This may not always be realistic but it must be considered.
- Ensure sufficient time is allotted for the co-ordination and effective delivery of the closure.
- Communicate the closure with members of the client's rehabilitation team, informing them as to its implementation and conclusion.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 1.14 WRITTEN SERVICE STANDARDS

### 1.14.1 Standard:

All Vocational Rehabilitation professionals need reminding periodically of requirements and expectations. They should, therefore, have access to written service standards.

#### Guidance:

Written service standards must:

- Be clear and concise and cover all aspects of service delivery from referral to close of intervention.
- Demonstrate that the service delivery philosophy reflects requirements of legislation, policy, guidelines and procedures issued by any monitoring authority such as the VRA.
- Demonstrate evidence in participation in self-regulation, based on performance data.
- Provide rationale for expectations.
- Identify who is responsible for each specific activity.
- Indicate time frames for completion.
- Be measurable so the Vocational Rehabilitation professional can compare their actions against expectations.
- Be signed off by all those falling under their guidance.
- Be part of the professional's performance review process.
- Be reviewed, as least annually, to ensure they are up to date and aligned with overall professional practices.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.15 CLIENT / EMPLOYER PARTICIPATION, ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 1.15.1 Standard:

Clients / employers have a right to full participation in the Vocational Rehabilitation process.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Promote this right at all times.
- Advise the client / employer on what “full participation” means and on how they will benefit from active involvement.
- Do “with” the client / employer and not “for” or “to” wherever possible.
- Fully engage the client / employer from start of service through to closure.
- Constantly reinforce the client / employer decision-making process.
- Demonstrate to the client / employer ways in which their participation has been beneficial.

### 1.15.2 Standard:

In order for clients / employers to benefit from full participation, they must understand their role and responsibilities within the Vocational Rehabilitation process.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must clearly outline and frequently review with the client / employer:

- Their role and responsibilities during Vocational Rehabilitation.
- The professional’s role and responsibilities during the process.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.16 PARTICIPATION OF SIGNIFICANT OTHERS

### 1.16.1 Standard:

Significant others must clearly understand their role recognising that the client is the key decision-maker.

### Guidance:

Within the Vocational Rehabilitation process significant others might include medical / clinical practitioners, family, friends, employers, union representatives, other advocates, etc. Each may have specific and key roles to play. Decision rests with the client.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional or service must:

- Acknowledge the client's need / interest in having others participate with them during Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Encourage the client to recognise the limits of other stakeholders' participation within the process.
- Ensure that the client communicates these parameters to those who are overly eager to do "for" the client.
- Activate participation of these stakeholders at the appropriate times in the process.
- Protect the rights and confidentiality of the client during stakeholder participation.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 1.17 POLICY AND PROCEDURE (OPERATIONS & ADMINISTRATION)

### 1.17.1 Standard:

As with Service Standards, Vocational Rehabilitation practices should have written policies and procedures in place. These should cover all aspects of operations and administration.

#### Guidance:

Explicit procedures ensure that all those involved in the delivery of Vocational Rehabilitation services are clear about the daily actions that contribute to consistency, effectiveness and professionalism. They provide the basis for staff induction and training and for monitoring and evaluating individual and team performance.

Written policies and procedures must:

- Include policies around emergencies, crisis intervention, complaints, consent, confidentiality, safety and security, substance and other abuse, harassment, quality control, etc.
- Be clear and concise.
- Provide rationale for expectations.
- Identify who is responsible for each activity.
- Indicate time frames for actions.
- Be signed off by all those falling under their guidance.
- Be part of staff performance reviews.
- Be reviewed, at least annually, to ensure they are up to date and aligned with overall service and business practices.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 2.0 CLIENT PROTECTION

### *Intent:*

This standard links directly with the Vocational Rehabilitation Association's Code of Ethics. Along with the Code, the standard protects clients receiving Vocational Rehabilitation services, it guides professionals who are confronted with ethical dilemmas, and it establishes stakeholder and public trust and faith in the profession. The standard ensures that the Vocational Rehabilitation professional practices ethically and professionally to avoid activity or conduct that will cause unjust harm to others. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will respect the individual's integrity and promote and protect the welfare of the client.

## 2.1 CONSENT

### 2.1.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must obtain consent from the client or representative for the client to receive Vocational Rehabilitation services. This consent is maintained until the client withdraws it. It is regularly reviewed with the client. The client should understand the reason for the consent process.

### Guidance:

All clients are entitled to provide informed consent, refusal or expression of choice regarding:

- Service delivery
- Release of information
- Concurrent services
- Composition of the service delivery team
- Involvement in research projects.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Ensure that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to complete the consent process.
- Explain to the client, and formally document, the suggested action plan prior to requesting consent.
- Ensure for an accessible consent process. This might require the use of easy words, pictures and detailed explanations in an appropriate manner. This will reinforce the independence and dignity of the client.
- Keep the client informed and review consent with the client throughout the action plan.
- Record how the client gives consent. This could be: orally, in writing, through a representative, through other means.
- Ensure consent is formally documented in all circumstances where the client or significant others could be at risk.
- Ensure that carers and/or other family members are taken into consideration and included if necessary when discussing and obtaining consent.
- Ensure the client has the mental capacity to give consent. The assumption is that they have unless a formal assessment of the client has indicated otherwise.
- Obtain written consent before audio-recording, photographing or videoing a client for information purposes, research, training or publication. Full explanation for the activities must be given.
- Maintain all written consent forms in the client's records.
- Ensure consent is obtained and documented before a student participates with a client either with the professional or independently.
- Encourage their employer, if there is one, to update and maintain policies and procedures related to consent and release of information.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

### 2.1.2 Standard:

In cases where gaining consent is difficult, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional should apply appropriate legal approaches.

#### Guidance:

##### *(a) Adults with impaired capacity.*

A client may not be incapacitated simply by the nature of their mental disorder / learning disability. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must keep this in mind when seeking consent since, in common law, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional has a duty to act in the best interests of the client. The professional's responsibility is to preserve the life, health and general well-being of the client.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Provide the client with the opportunity to make decisions and to give consent.
- Record when consent is given freely.
- Determine and record the client's legal status, for example whether they are detained under the Mental Health Act 1983 (Great Britain, Parliament 1983).
- Act in the client's best interests in cases where the client does not have the requisite capacity to make their own decisions.
- Be aware of and abide by the legal requirements captured under the consent to treatment area of the Mental Health Act 1983 (Great Britain, Parliament 1983).

##### *(b) Language or communication barriers*

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to :

- Work with an interpreter when there are language barriers.
- Identify and record the need for and future use of an interpreter in the client's file.
- Introduce communication aids to reduce communication barriers and record the adjustments in the client's files.
- Adopt and follow procedures for engaging interpreters and / or communications aids.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

### 2.1.3 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should fully outline the vocational rehabilitation plan and its specific components to the client or their representative. This is the basis of “informed consent”.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Produce personal identification if requested when reviewing consent with the client.
- Provide full details about vocational rehabilitation services, assessments and interventions relevant to the client. This includes but is not limited to the reason for the activity, preparing for the activity, its process, potential outcomes, possible risks and alternatives.
- Clearly define the professional’s and the client’s rights and responsibilities around the provision of consent and around the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Access appropriate languages and formats when providing information to ensure for clarity and understanding.

### 2.1.4 Standard:

The client or their representative has the right to refuse or withdraw consent at any time. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must acknowledge and respect that right.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Advise the client that they can withdraw and refuse consent at any time without negative impact on future service or care.
- Record when a client refuses consent and the client’s purpose in so doing.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 2.2 CONFIDENTIALITY

### 2.2.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must, due to professional, personal and legal requirements and commitment, respect client confidentiality. There are some statutory and common-law exceptions to this rule.

### Guidance:

The confidential and professional relationship between the Vocational Rehabilitation professional and the client underpins the effectiveness of any service, its moral obligations and its credibility.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Restrict the communication of information to what is necessary and relevant with respect to the client's right to privacy.
- Keep confidential and to safeguard information about the client obtained in the course of vocational rehabilitation or research except where this conflicts with the responsibility to the law or when maintenance or confidentiality would result in a significant risk of substantial harm to the client or to others. False assumptions and stereotyping must be avoided when assessing risk of harm to fully protect the client's confidentiality.
- Provide to clients at point of referral a written policy statement on confidentiality. This policy should be available in and accessible through other formats.
- Ensure that the client is aware of and understands their rights and the limits of confidentiality at the onset of vocational rehabilitation services. These limitations or variations could relate to company policies, government regulations or court orders.
- Discuss communication of information with the client. Encourage self report first if the timing is such that the client or others are not in imminent risk.
- Safeguard information, records and other information storage so as unauthorised individuals do not gain access. Access levels for different staff within providing organisations shall be clearly defined.
- Offices from which Vocational Rehabilitation services are provided shall be located and designed so as to ensure client privacy. Telephone services should be appropriately designed with consideration for privacy. Appropriate adjustments need to be considered for deaf or hearing impaired individuals.
- Review all reports carefully to ensure that individual confidentiality is not compromised.
- Unless specific situations where the law requires disclosure exist, provide other professionals with information only if they are directly involved in the client's health and wellbeing.
- Disclose to third parties not directly involved in the client's health and wellbeing only after written consent is received. Exceptions occur where the disclosure is required by law.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

- Where confidentiality will be breached all reasonable steps must be taken to inform the client.
- Report to the appropriate authority actions of the client that may cause injury to self or others, after discussion with the client. As above, false assumptions and stereotyping must be avoided when assessing risk of harm to fully protect the client's confidentiality.
- Record why the disclosure was legally justified and details around the nature of disclosure. This includes the details of the parties to which information has been provided.
- Apply the same standards for confidentiality to oral, written and electronic communications and records.
- Update and maintain written procedures around confidentiality.
- Understand and appreciate the impact of confidentiality agreements on all other relevant policies and procedures, government regulations (like data protection and health and safety) and risk management.
- Respect and integrate the confidentiality requirements of other related professionals.
- Stimulate and facilitate early discussions with purchasing organisations about confidentiality and any proposed limitations or variations.

## 2.3 ADVOCACY / EMPOWERMENT

### 2.3.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will have policies promoting the rights of persons served.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional and / or service will also strive to eliminate attitudinal and other barriers that may prevent a disabled person from being able to benefit fully from the vocational rehabilitation process.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will:

- Advocate for client freedom from abuse, financial or other exploitation, retaliation, humiliation and / or neglect.
- Provide the client with access to information in sufficient time for decision making including information related to representation, self help and advocacy.
- Not discriminate in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services on the basis of disability, race, origin, religion, gender, age or sexual orientation.
- Study and apply the principles under the respective duties of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Provide professional services to the client as an individual within a holistic framework.
- Promote equitable access to services.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 2.4 SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE

### 2.4.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will ensure that all individuals providing “support and assistance” to the client during vocational rehabilitation services are fully prepared and skilled to do so.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional frequently accesses other resources in the course of service provision. Their roster of support incorporates other professionals, volunteers, family members, and employer/community resources. Those providing support and assistance contribute to the client’s physical, psychological, social, financial and vocational needs to enable the successful completion of the client’s vocational rehabilitation.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will provide information and training to persons in a supporting and assisting role within their own organisation. The professional is required to:

- Ensure that the information, training and strategies put in place support the development of skills and competencies. The activity may be recognised as part of the assistant’s continuing professional development.
- Apply teaching techniques and strategies appropriate to the assistant’s learning style and to their function. There should be a plan of action that considers the amount, nature and frequency of training.
- Ensure that the instruction put in place is designed to apply the basic principles and values inherent in vocational rehabilitation. This includes consideration for the assessment and management of risk, the adoption of safe practices, the consideration of consent and confidentiality of clients and the demonstration of core values like respect, choice, opportunity and equality. Managing risk must be applied in a way that does not discriminate.
- Supervise and mentor the assistant to ensure learning is integrated into daily practice.

### 2.4.2 Standard:

For paid staff, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional will assess and determine training needs and seek evidence that training requirements are met.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Ensure that training delivery is monitored and delivered to the highest standards.
- Consider current legislation when developing, implementing and providing training.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 2.5 CLIENT PROTECTION

### 2.5.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional has a “duty of care”. They must therefore always inform and educate the client about their rights and preserve the client’s rights at all times.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Identify an appropriate course of action and take it in circumstances where they are aware of harm or abuse.
- Provide materials in appropriate formats that educate clients about their rights and that guide them towards safety from abuse.
- Treat all clients with respect.
- Establish an environment where clients feel comfortable and empowered enough to address attitudes and behaviours they deem to be inappropriate.
- Make available a written code of conduct.
- Respect the client’s personal privacy as a given right.
- Appreciate that physical contact with a client may be misinterpreted by the client and significant others.
- Identify and address unacceptable behaviour.
- Communicate immediately all allegations / suspicions of abuse.
- Follow current legislation, procedures and guidelines when reporting allegations / suspicions of abuse.
- Demonstrate client trust and belief as a form of support when clients seek help or guidance.
- Take special care when discussing sensitive issues.
- Reinforce with clients that discussions about their concerns will take place in confidence and in appropriate locations.
- Reinforce with clients that they can have access to others where appropriate if they are uncomfortable in talking to their current service provision team.

### 2.5.2 Standard:

Clients must be fully aware of the extent of services that the Vocational Rehabilitation professional can provide in order to avoid unrealistic expectations.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional and / or service is required to:

- Clearly self-define the nature of duties, responsibilities and loyalties in order to minimise the risk of unrealistic expectations and conflict of interest.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

### 2.5.3 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation services will be provided within the framework of a professional relationship.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Clarify professional relationships with clients and other stakeholders.
- Avoid dual commercial or personal relationships that could impair professional judgment or risk exploitation.
- Refer clients who may compromise an objective relationship to other suitable or appropriate professionals.
- Avoid personal relationships that could present perceived conflict.
- Avoid fostering dependent relationships with the client and / or family members.

### 2.5.4 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional shall not participate in fraudulent, deceitful, dishonest or misrepresentative actions of any kind or in any form of conduct that adversely reflects on the field of vocational rehabilitation.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Not abuse the relationship with the client to promote personal or financial gain, or financial gain for an employer.
- Not allow personal benefit or financial gain to interfere with professional conduct, judgment or actions.
- Be subjected to disciplinary actions for violations of laws, regulations, statutes, or professional codes that implicate the professional's conduct in the future.
- Refuse to participate in employment or business practices that conflict with moral, ethical, or legal standards.

### 2.5.5 Standard:

Only services actually required by the client will be provided and service will terminate when they are no longer needed.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will:

- Provide only those services identified and agreed to within the plan.
- Terminate vocational rehabilitation services when the client can no longer benefit. The agreed action plan will help to determine the closure of the services.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

- Document final contact with the client where case closure has been discussed and agreed. If not agreed, this too should be documented.
- Advise all relevant parties of the imminent case closure.
- Update and maintain documented procedures for ensuring prompt case closure when either rehabilitation objectives have been met or are no longer attainable.

## 2.6 SAFETY AND SECURITY

### 2.6.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should provide service with a focus on client protection and safety. They should also ensure for their own safety and protection.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Adhere to health and safety regulations, policies and procedures.
- Practice only within their professional and individual scope of practice and competencies, with consideration for their education, training and / or experience.
- Assess, identify, avoid and / or manage potential harm in order to minimise the risk. Positive risk-taking may, however, be an acceptable aspect of intervention in Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Study and learn from adverse situations and apply findings to improve service delivery.

### 2.6.2 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional acknowledges their requirement to build awareness and understanding of potentially harmful issues in service delivery.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Protect their clients by ensuring trained and competent human resources are assigned during service provision. Recruitment and selection procedures must reflect this commitment.
- Apply staff procedures and a code of conduct to reflect protection guidelines.
- Share knowledge and information about potentially harmful situations, protection and good practice with clients, families, staff and other professionals and agencies.
- Share client concerns with other service providers with a view to service delivery improvement.
- Follow best practice guidelines where clients reveal violent or suicidal thoughts. Both client needs and the safety of others must be considered.
- Keep informed so they can appropriately revise and maintain procedures for staff / volunteer, recruitment, selection and induction.
- Mentor and support inexperienced staff.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

### 2.6.3 Standard

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should ensure client and staff safety through the proper and professional use of equipment.

#### *Guidance:*

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Match the equipment to the task. This requires skill in identifying, selecting and using the most appropriate tools.
- Ensure equipment is only used for the purpose for which it was developed and follow manufacturing guidelines and procedures.
- Ensure the equipment is properly maintained and safe for use.
- Provide clients with adequate information and training to ensure they use loan equipment in a safe and effective manner.
- Keep all equipment in a safe and secure manner.
- Ensure for their own safety by following equipment manual handling operations.
- Ensure equipment is safely placed and restrained for transportation purposes.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 2.7 CRISIS MANAGEMENT / INTERVENTION

### 2.7.1 Standard:

The reporting of accidents, injuries and / or near misses is essential. Reporting ensures that information is communicated and significant events that could jeopardise the health and safety of participants and personnel are documented. Careful thought must be given as to how clients are supported in urgent, serious or emergency situations in a timely fashion and consistent with organisational policy. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will also show evidence of planning to deal with emergencies that occur out of hours which would inadvertently affect clients.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Demonstrate that they follow legal requirements regarding the reporting of accidents or injuries occurring during service delivery and / or within specific premises to the proper authorities.
- Have clear, current programmes, systems and policies in effect to identify, manage, eliminate, avoid or reduce real and potential risk. Introduce contingency plans for risks that cannot be avoided.
- Have critical incident processes in place. This includes determining what constitutes a critical incident, how investigations are to be conducted, how documentation is to be completed, who is responsible for completing documentation, who is notified, and where written documentation of incidents is to be kept. Change process and procedures where review suggests this is beneficial.
- Complete a critical incident form as required that includes date, time, location, who was involved, what led to the incident, a description of what happened, the consequences of the incident, witnesses, who was notified and follow up recommendations. Information provided should be descriptive and factual.
- Review critical incidents on a regular basis to determine causes, trends, actions for improvement, results of performance improvement plans, necessary education and training of personnel, prevention of recurrence, internal and external reporting requirements.
- Have a procedure in place for triggering and coordinating critical incident or emergency services.
- Have clear procedures and guidelines for dealing with crisis situations such as suicide risk or behaviour, potential threat to life and safety of others and critical incident management.
- Implement a contingency plan where emergencies occur out of normal working hours.
- Have a policy for servicing clients working with Vocational Rehabilitation practitioners who are lone workers, who require vacation or sickness absence coverage.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

- Where positive risk taking is an important part of service intervention, assess the likelihood of risk and ensure safe practice is applied.
- In all cases, record the results of any risk assessment.
- Participate in training related to abuse, harassment and violence at work in order to build knowledge and awareness and to develop strategies that can be put into play.

## 2.8 REPORTING ABUSE, CONCERNS, HARASSMENT

### 2.8.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must identify and report suspected or actual abuse following recognised best practice.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be open to the possibility that abuse exists. This will enhance their ability to recognise it especially since abuse is not always readily visible. If the Vocational Rehabilitation professional suspects that something is wrong, it is important to record their reasons for concern and any allegations or reports of incidents they receive.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Have guidelines which define abuse, describe reporting processes and outline response approaches for allegations and expressions of concern. These should clearly outline ways for when and how to register suspected and actual abuse with supervisors, with other organisations and with the proper authorities. Client consent should always be taken into consideration. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should adhere to best practice.
- Develop and maintain formally documented procedures, incorporating record-keeping and actions to take if abuse is alleged or reported.
- Maintain contact details for available support services.
- Recognise the extent and boundaries of their responsibility.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 2.9 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES

### 2.9.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional has a formally documented and published complaints procedure with an aim to protecting the client where standards are not met. Procedures must incorporate the recording and reporting of complaints.

### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation services must be designed to ensure the highest possible standard of provision. However, it is recognised that from time to time complaints about the quality or delivery of service will arise.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Ensure that complaints processes are accessible to the specific client.
- Take all complaints seriously.
- Acknowledge within five business days and conduct a speedy and comprehensive investigation.
- Provide the client with realistic time frames for completing the investigation and reporting and with details of how the investigation will proceed.
- Learn from the experience and make programme improvements as a result.
- Identify a contact point for complaints.
- Define the difference between a complaint and negative feedback.
- Provide a clear statement as to the manner of communications – oral, written or both.
- Ensure that third party service providers are built into the complaints policy and procedure.
- Announce who will be investigating the complaint and within what time scale. If an independent third party is involved, this along with their role should be indicated.
- Indicate various levels of review within the process.
- Update and maintain a procedure for internal documentation of the investigation and review.
- Maintain a formally documented record of each and every complaint for two years from point of notification.
- Update and maintain a procedure for resolving disputes following investigations of complaints.
- Make available any written records and other formal documents of complaints where required by specific audits or evaluation processes.
- Take into consideration the complaints lodged and the Disability Equality Duty when reviewing and improving service delivery.

Where the complaint relates to any ethical issue, such as a breach of confidentiality, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional will ensure that investigation and / or review is conducted by someone having appropriate qualification and / or experience in such areas.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

The investigation of and response to any complaint should be carried out in a constructive manner and providers should not be unduly protective or defensive.

A review of formal complaints should be conducted annually to determine trends, areas needing performance improvement and actions to be taken.

### **3.0 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ MAINTENANCE**

*Intent:*

This section ensures that Vocational Rehabilitation professionals acquire and maintain the skills, knowledge and experience necessary to deliver a high quality Vocational Rehabilitation service. This level of expertise will be demonstrated through:

- Academic learning
- Documented experiential learning through paid and voluntary employment
- Supervision and / or mentoring
- Relevant credentials
- Affiliation with professional bodies and adherence to adopted standards
- Ongoing commitment of time to relevant professional training and research (lifelong learning)
- Active participation in the Vocational Rehabilitation professional community through research, membership in Vocational Rehabilitation associations, supervision of others employed in the Vocational Rehabilitation field, etc.
- Doing the right job (within the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice) and doing the job right.

This variety of options for demonstrating competencies ensures that all capable individuals currently working within the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice but with minimal educational achievement levels are able to continue in this field and pursue their career. It also encourages individuals with the empathy and desire to help others to consider Vocational Rehabilitation as their career option.

## 3.1 EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS

### 3.1.1. Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals require a University degree.

#### Guidance:

Post secondary education provides the individual with technical skills, transferable skills and personal characteristics to professionally and ethically provide service. Degrees in Vocational Rehabilitation, Counselling, Vocational Evaluation, Disability Management or Case Management are acknowledged. Other acceptable fields of study include Occupational Health, Rehabilitation Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, Psychology, Psychiatry, Social Work, Social Sciences, Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, and Education to name a few. These and other programmes that directly relate to the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice will be considered by the Vocational Rehabilitation Association based on specific curriculum.

### 3.1.2 Standard:

Individuals are given chartership status if they can demonstrate equivalency through other education, training or experience.

#### Guidance:

Where an individual lacks the educational requirements, the Vocational Rehabilitation Association will review other education, training and experience to determine and rule on equivalency.

The other means of satisfactorily developing educational requirements is through direct work related experience and supervision. Please refer to 3.2 Experiential Requirements.

### 3.1.3 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are expected to:

- Demonstrate educational levels by providing certificates, documents, transcripts of courses, as or when required for evidence to the Vocational Rehabilitation Association or to their respective professional body providing that body represents activities listed within the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice.
- Pursue specific educational levels if they are a requirement of their assigned position.

#### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals may be called upon at any time to demonstrate their right to practice in the field. Documentation should be maintained and available.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**VRA STANDARDS**

Professional Development/Maintenance

Should professional requirements change, the individual will be required to engage in educational processes in order to comply with new requirements and to continue to practise in the field.

## 3.2 EXPERIENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

### 3.2.1 Standard:

In the absence of a recognised and related diploma or degree in the field, Vocational Rehabilitation professionals require 4 years of directly related and supervised or mentored work experience.

#### *Guidance:*

The applicant must demonstrate an in-depth knowledge of Vocational Rehabilitation through a positive report on the breadth and quality of activities performed on the job. This report is generated by a direct supervisor who is a recognised Vocational Rehabilitation professional. The report can also come from an external audit or a mentor recognised as a Vocational Rehabilitation professional.

This requirement recognises that some practitioners have acquired their Vocational Rehabilitation skills from their employment situation. Experiential learning is acknowledged as a suitable substitute for academic training. This ensures that professionals who cannot afford the time or costs required of post secondary education, or who have been denied access to educational opportunities because of their disability, but who demonstrate the interest, motivation, aptitudes and abilities to function in Vocational Rehabilitation are recognised as qualified practitioners.

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to demonstrate their experience through documents provided by current and / or previous Vocational Rehabilitation supervisors / mentors as indicated above.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

### 3.3 COMPETENCIES

#### 3.3.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must demonstrate the competencies required to complete their assigned tasks.

#### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to:

- Consider appropriate selection criteria when recruiting and matching Vocational Rehabilitation professionals to work. Appropriate selection criteria might include interests, aptitudes, skills, and / or functional levels with consideration for possible adaptations. This means that Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must have the competencies to do the job as identified through the Host Report. The components of the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice required for the job should be considered against the candidate's own individual scope of practice. This is usually a requirement of bodies accrediting Vocational Rehabilitation programmes and facilities.
- Be professionally competent in completing their tasks.
- Identify their own limitations and individual scope of practice and ensure work is performed only within the parameters of those limits / scope.
- Seek out supervision and / or mentorship for areas in which they are not fully trained or experienced.
- Consult or refer to supplement their abilities.
- Continue to build competencies based on education, training and experience.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 3.4 CREDENTIALS

### 3.4.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals should pursue and maintain professional credentials specific to their area of expertise where credentials exist.

### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to:

- Work toward achieving relevant credentials specific to their assigned tasks where such credentials exist in order to meet minimum requirements.
- Maintain that credential once achieved by meeting standards, adhering to ethical and legal practice, and completing the number of certified educational units required for that specific certification process.
- Renew their credential as required.
- Honour the integrity and respect the limitations placed upon the credential's use.
- Provide information about their credentials, if requested.
- Promote the credential on behalf of the profession.
- Cease using the credential for self promotion should the professional lose the right to access.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 3.5 STANDARDS

### 3.5.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals should ensure that services are effectively managed using evidence based practice which is in line with current national guidelines, frameworks, standards, and legislation.

### Guidance:

Depending on their role and function, Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to adhere to the standards of practice of the Vocational Rehabilitation Association (VRA) and / or the standards of practice of other professional associations / colleges that demonstrate functionality within the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 3.6 ETHICS

### 3.6.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must adhere at all times to the professional code of ethics.

#### *Guidance:*

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are expected to work within acknowledged standards of practice and to abide by the Vocational Rehabilitation Association's Code of Ethics. It is the individual's responsibility to make sure this occurs in practice.

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to be professionally responsible and accountable in accordance with their individual scope of practice, their specific training and their work and other experience by:

- Practising legally and ethically within the parameters of their scope, experience, qualifications, training and insurance coverage.
- Practising in a safe, effective, ethical, equitable and non-discriminatory manner.
- Maintaining high standards of personal conduct.
- Recognising the limits of their scope and abilities.
- Knowing when to seek guidance and advice.
- Exercising a duty of care which is a professional obligation requiring that the Vocational Rehabilitation professional maintain a reasonable standard of care while performing any acts that could foreseeably harm others.
- Maintaining, where possible, their own health and care to ensure they are fit to practice.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

### 3.7 PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION

#### 3.7.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals should have support with their delivery and development through regular supervision or mentorship. For those new to the field or without academic status in Vocational Rehabilitation, this is a way to demonstrate the existence of knowledge and skills.

#### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to:

- Participate in supervision or mentorship activity aimed at periodical review of service delivery and professional skills enhancement.
- Have a formal agreement, verbal or written, with a supervisor or mentor that demonstrates adherence to this standard.
- Document and sign off, in formats appropriate for the professional, meeting dates, frequency, duration, location (including accessibility items), content, process and confidentiality matters.
- Ensure that the supervisor or mentor has the equivalence of 5 years of training / experience in Vocational Rehabilitation. It is preferred that they be a professional member of the Vocational Rehabilitation Association or of a professional association with overlapping or similar scope of practice.
- Maintain and respect the confidentiality of the supervisory / mentoring relationship.
- Schedule supervisory / mentoring meetings in an appropriate confidential and accessible location and with enough time dedicated to the process.

#### 3.7.2 Standard:

Supervision / mentorship sessions should be documented outlining the discussion and any agreed action.

#### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to:

- Objectively document all supervision / mentorship activities.
- Ensure that all participating parties agree and sign the document.
- Keep supervision / mentorship records for a minimum of 7 years to coincide with time frames for most legal requirements.
- Ensure supervision / mentorship records are available for performance reviews or for credentialing purposes. In particular for non-degreed Vocational Rehabilitation professionals, these records may be used to validate time, experience, ability and commitment in the field.
- Ensure that these records and any agreed contracts are available for any potential formal or informal disciplinary action or grievance.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 3.8 PERFORMANCE REVIEWS

### 3.8.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals should participate in an annual performance review with their immediate supervisor should one be available or assigned.

#### Guidance:

The review is based upon current practice plus established individual and programme related goals and objectives. Learning and development needs are identified. The professional is expected to prepare for the review, allow adequate time for discussion, agree and record personal objectives and development needs and follow up on agreed actions. This is another recognised method for demonstrating competencies to practice.

### 3.8.2 Standard:

Where the professional is functioning as an independent practitioner they must refer to these standards, conduct an annual self audit and seek out peer review or mentoring.

#### Guidance:

In self-employed situations, the professional is expected to seek out training and enhancement in their own behalf.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 3.9 SKILLS ENHANCEMENT

### 3.9.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals should practice to high standards of competence through the attainment and maintenance of knowledge, skills and appropriate personal characteristics.

### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to:

- Dedicate at least 4 hours per month to formal or informal continuing development activities.
- Participate in research or evaluation on effective practice related to Vocational Rehabilitation as and when appropriate.
- Provide opportunities for skills enhancement to support workers who assist within the field.
- Assist with training and development of other professionals, services and agencies.
- Develop opportunities that assist their employer and their colleagues to gain access to and to contribute to the field of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Apply their newly learned skills and knowledge in a safe and responsible manner and for the benefit of service users and carers.
- Ensure learning opportunities are accessible to all Vocational Rehabilitation professionals from a disability, social and cultural perspective
- Work in study groups and team training activities as appropriate to understand and appreciate team member roles and to develop team skills.
- Provide evidence of skills enhancement and life long learning through documentation kept within a professional "portfolio". The format of the documentation and portfolio must meet the needs of the professional e.g. in non-written format for individuals with visual impairments.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 3.10 LIFE LONG LEARNING

### 3.10.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals should continue to develop their knowledge, skills and personal attributes, and therefore their competencies to practise.

### Guidance:

Through professional development, Vocational Rehabilitation professionals will be able to enhance services delivered. Life long learning ensures that professionals are aware of new developments in the field. It also provides support and minimises the risk of professional burnout. Motivation and job satisfaction are likely increased.

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to:

- Continue professional development by pursuing and participating in learning opportunities in Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Provide supervision, performance appraisal systems and support for professional development to their team members. Regular supervision and feedback should be provided at a local level.
- Participate in events and reading activities that explore national / international practices and development in the field. In this way, the professional will be aware of wider developments which affect their work.
- Share good practice with others working in Vocational Rehabilitation.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 3.11 PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION

### 3.11.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are expected to be members of appropriate professional bodies as part of their commitment to self development and their promotion of the field. These professional bodies should relate directly to the Vocational Rehabilitation Scope of Practice. The professional body should also consider reasonable adjustments so that all members can fully participate in professional activities.

#### *Guidance:*

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are expected to:

- Be members of a professional body and abide by the required standards and code of ethics.
- Maintain membership as required by the Association.
- Contribute wherever possible to the activities of the Association.
- Develop, maintain and use networks and contacts with other Vocational Rehabilitation professionals.

#### **STANDARD DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

#### **EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED**

## 3.12 PROFESSIONAL CONTRIBUTION

### 3.12.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional shall contribute to the field as part of their professional requirements.

### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to:

- Contribute to the discipline of Vocational Rehabilitation and of society's understanding of the field.
- Recognise that self discipline of the profession is a privilege and that they have a responsibility to merit the retention of this privilege.
- Conduct themselves in such a manner as to merit the respect of the public for members of the profession.
- Not defame the reputation of colleagues.
- Protect all colleagues wherever possible from harassment and victimisation.
- Avoid making comments about a colleague's inability to do the job.
- Provide support and contribute to their professional association(s).
- Contribute to the field through research, articles, best practices, learning opportunities, colleague support and mentoring, committee participation and information sharing.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 3.13 RESEARCH

### 3.13.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals who undertake research should do so in a professional and responsible manner adhering to research best practices published by recognised authorities and supported by the Vocational Rehabilitation Association.

#### Guidance:

There is a need for evidence based research within the field of Vocational Rehabilitation. There is also a need to complete research within a professional framework. Vocational Rehabilitation professionals who undertake research are therefore required to:

- Refer to and adhere to guidelines in research ethics.
- Take all reasonable steps to prevent harm to participants, researchers or significant others throughout the research process and beyond.
- Maximise the potential benefits of the research through appropriate dissemination of findings.
- Respect disability, sexual orientation, cultural, religious belief, race, gender and other differences in a research population.
- Establish a research environment in which participants are able to act on their own, freely made decisions.
- Act with integrity and honesty at all times.
- Act in an impartial and fair manner at all times.
- Establish and maintain the confidentiality and/or anonymity of participants.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 3.14 PROFESSIONAL INSURANCE

### 3.14.1 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must demonstrate coverage either directly or through their employer of professional indemnity and public liability insurance.

### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are required to:

- Access and maintain professional insurance for the duration of practice.
- Demonstrate professional insurance coverage as and when requested.
- Meet the requirements of the insurer to maintain coverage.
- Encourage insurers to review their policies and practices to remove any items that discriminate against disabled persons.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 4.0 PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE

### *Intent:*

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are committed to facilitating the personal, social and economic independence of individuals with disabilities. To be successful, they must have an acceptable minimum level of knowledge derived from a combination of education and experience. The acceptable level is based on a body of knowledge that encompasses laws, public regulations and the delivery of rehabilitation services. The Vocational Rehabilitation Association encourages professionals to continue to expand their knowledge levels in order to enhance the quality of the services they provide.

## 4.1 KNOWLEDGE OF VR THEORY AND PRACTICE

### 4.1.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must demonstrate knowledge of Vocational Rehabilitation theory and practice.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be able to:

- Identify and define the principles of and key services delivered within effective Vocational Rehabilitation as detailed within this document.
- State the rationale for and objectives of Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Identify the social and economic benefits of Vocational Rehabilitation in the community and in the work place.
- Describe the Vocational Rehabilitation service delivery process.
- Describe the scope of a Vocational Rehabilitation professional's practice and the specific roles and functions therein.
- Develop and utilise an informational network with other Vocational Rehabilitation professionals.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 4.2 KNOWLEDGE OF THE LABOUR MARKET, RECRUITMENT PROCESSES AND EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

### 4.2.1 Standard:

In order to assist an individual in finding and retaining employment, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional must understand recruitment processes, employment practices and labour market details.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Be able to advise and guide individuals in how to find and keep jobs. Assisting individuals with interviewing skills, curriculum vitae development, employer cold calling, etc., is an important role.
- Know how to collect, analyse and synthesise workplace data like statistics on employment and injury rates.
- Demonstrate knowledge of inter-related workplace systems such as union, employer, human resources, insurer, occupational health, solicitor, employee assistance programmes, etc.
- Understand the differences and similarities between union and non-union employment environments and the impact on recruitment and maintenance.
- Apply knowledge of collective agreements, arbitration and grievance procedures.
- Demonstrate knowledge and application of various pieces of legislation and other documents impacting on recruitment and employment including but not limited to the Rehabilitation Code and the Disability Discrimination Act.
- Understand and be able to facilitate mediation and conflict resolution processes.
- Apply their knowledge to assist employers with risk assessment, risk management, policy / procedural development and the fulfilment of legislative responsibilities.
- Know the various factors associated with labour market surveys and apply their knowledge in supporting clients into new employment. Factors may include wages, other forms of compensation, job prerequisites, hours of work, skills requirements and credentials.
- Be knowledgeable enough to advise, inform and support employers and to promote the benefits of recruitment of people with disabilities.
- Know the negative impacts of stigmatism and how to argue against this social issue.
- Be able to identify the systemic barriers to employment and the potential products and interventions like health promotion material, sample policies and procedures, and management training programmes available to remove these obstacles

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 4.3 KNOWLEDGE OF THE JOB MATCHING PROCESS, JOB RETENTION AND RETURN TO WORK

### 4.3.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must know how to match people to work. They must also know the key factors associated with job retention and redeployment processes.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Understand and appreciate the impact that function, interests, aptitudes, academic achievement levels, skills, temperaments, work attitudes and work behaviours have on individual work needs and work sustainability. These factors influence work potential.
- Know what assessment processes are used to determine the job matching factors and how to undertake or to refer to these assessments.
- Understand how to analyse job duties and requirements and to conduct or refer for a functional analysis.
- Understand the purpose and process of ergonomics and its value in Vocational Rehabilitation.
- Be able to develop capacity within the workplace to provide early intervention with the client, the client's representative, the supervisor and health care providers.
- Know how to facilitate rehabilitation interventions and return-to-work coordination with short term and long term benefits representatives.
- Be able to identify the client barriers to employment and the potential services available to remove these barriers. An example of an available service is the government funded return-to-work under the Department for Work and Pensions Pathways to Work scheme.
- Know how to develop guidelines and procedures for transitional work programmes like work trials.
- Be able to facilitate reasonable adjustments, job modification, workplace redesign and assistive technology.
- Know how to develop, implement and monitor job retention and return to work plans with the client, the client's representative, the supervisor and health care providers.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 4.4 MEDICAL ASPECTS OF DISABILITY

### 4.4.1 Standard:

Recognising that vocational interventions are now being introduced early within the client's journey back to work, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional must have a knowledge of and appreciation for medical conditions and, in particular, their impact on work. They must have enough understanding to determine the effect of the medical situation on the client's employability and on plan development, implementation and success.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should be able to identify, at a minimum:

- The nature of the impairment or illness be it physical, mental or both.
- The common forms of treatment and their impact on functioning levels.
- The usual time frames for resolution.
- Appropriate care options or settings.
- Specialty programmes or services.
- Relevant disciplines and professionals involved in medical management and treatment.
- Typical supplies and equipment available to assist the client.
- Community resources to support the client and the Vocational Rehabilitation professional.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be knowledgeable enough to facilitate communication that avoids duplication of information and helps to efficiently move the client through the continuum of care. They must be aware of the client's care team and funders and communicate effectively with those involved.

When developing the return-to-work plan and considering employment options, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional should use this knowledge to:

- Ensure that the plan and goal are functionally appropriate for the client and are realistic and sustainable.
- Estimate time frames for completion.
- Predict potential modifications and outcomes.
- Promote health and well-being.
- Identify any issues concerning benefits.
- Minimise or prevent any further impairment.
- Reduce activity limitations.
- Lessen participation restrictions.
- Ensure for the safety of the client while they are at work.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 4.5 PSYCHO-SOCIAL ASPECTS OF DISABILITY

### 4.5.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must have an awareness of the potential existence and effect of psycho-social issues or barriers on the client's employability. They need to be able to recognise the existence of psycho-social issues and possess the knowledge and skills to effectively address or facilitate the removal of these barriers to work.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must understand that:

- Clients and significant others have personal perceptions, beliefs and behaviours relative to their impairment that may influence progress within rehabilitation.
- All work has psycho-social aspects to it like interaction and problem solving with supervisors, peers, and / or customers.
- There might be organisational and systematic obstacles to entering / re-entering work like limited knowledge of adaptations on the part of the employer.
- Clients and significant others have general attitudes about health and disability.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be knowledgeable enough to identify issues and either address them or refer the client to an appropriate professional who can assist with:

- Attitudes, beliefs and expectations about pain and disability.
- Attitudes, beliefs and expectations about health care.
- Uncertainty, anxiety, avoidance of situations based on fear.
- Depression, distress, low mood, negative emotions.
- Coping strategies.
- Motivation, readiness to change or to apply effort.
- Failure to take personal responsibility for rehabilitation.
- Illness behaviour.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should know how to assess and confirm the existence of these issues either themselves or through the use of qualified professionals. They must understand which interventions shift misguided beliefs and behaviours (psycho) and which restore normal social function and participation (social).

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 4.6 VOCATIONAL ASPECTS OF DISABILITY

### 4.6.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must understand how work and work environments can cause disability. Work related accidents and onset of illness are common and must be avoided and prevented first and foremost. Whether entering or re-entering work, the client should be well matched to the job and to the environment.

### Guidance:

When assisting a client into work, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be aware of various job matching parameters to ensure for employment satisfaction and sustainability. These include:

- Physical and mental functioning levels
- Physical and mental demands of work – those aspects of the job that demand cognitive functioning and mental awareness
- Client interests
- Client Aptitudes
- Academic achievement levels
- Education and experience
- Data / people / things (machinery and equipment interfaces) skills
- Transferable skills
- Temperaments / personal characteristics
- Work attitudes and behaviours.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should know how to identify these items both within the client and on the job. They must appreciate that the more client factors that match work related factors, the greater the chance for success and reduced risk for re-injury or illness.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be aware of other key factors that could impact on return to work. These include:

- Control over job demands and working environment
- Social support at work and / or relationships with co-workers and / or employer
- Self-perception of current or future employability
- Sick certification practice
- Occupational health provision
- Employer's understanding of common health problems and sickness management
- Employer perception of re-injury and resulting liability should the client return to work prematurely
- Ongoing contact and communication between client, employer and health professionals
- Modified work
- Rules of employment, duties and sick pay

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

- Organisational size and structure
- Organisational culture
- Impending change like downsizing
- Potential termination of employment
- Detachment and distance from the labour market
- The local job market
- Availability of suitable work
- Employer discrimination
- Transport
- Child care
- Benefit system disincentives
- Pension and other financial disincentives
- Litigation
- Lack of information.

## 4.7 LEGISLATION / BENEFITS SYSTEMS

### 4.7.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must know the various legislation pieces and benefit systems that impact on their work with clients.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should refer to specific pieces of legislation when they are:

- Developing the rehabilitation plan.
- Explaining eligibility and entitlement to clients.
- Referring clients to appropriate resources for advice.
- Identifying and accessing funding programmes.
- Establishing relationships with advocacy organisations and / or return-to-work organisations.
- Utilising cost containment strategies.
- Interpreting health and safety regulations.
- Communicating the implication of medical reviews and decisions.
- Applying policy and legislation in arriving at decisions.
- Advising clients on rights and responsibilities, implications for employers, implications for treatment and service providers.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must appreciate the concepts of:

- Benefit incentives and disincentives
- Client difficulty in understanding and dealing with benefits systems
- Limited availability and access
- Lack of information about alternative benefits and available support options.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 4.8 REHABILITATION POLICY

### 4.8.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must know and respect their limits of service provision based on relevant rehabilitation policies. They must practice within the guidelines established by the respective professional bodies or by the Vocational Rehabilitation Association.

### Guidance:

Policies are the basic principles that form the foundation of the rehabilitation programme. They are separate from the detailed design of the service and the day to day operating procedures. Most purchasers of service or referrers have vocational rehabilitation policies that clearly define service delivery parameters. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be aware of these policies and adhere to them in their day to day activities.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should clearly define for the client during initial contact their role, responsibilities and boundaries under the policies so the client has realistic expectations.

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals and their employers should have their own agreed and clear rehabilitation policy accessible to everyone that addresses:

- The intended benefits to both the organisation and to the client.
- The commitment of the organisation to the physical and mental well-being of all employees and clients.
- The neutral position of the provider.
- The problems and services covered by the provider.
- Confidentiality and record keeping.
- The role of the organisation in relation to the rehabilitation community.
- The location of further information.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 4.9 INDIVIDUAL COUNSELLING

### 4.9.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must demonstrate knowledge of and skill in reality based counselling techniques with a view to identifying and addressing barriers to successful vocational rehabilitation outcomes.

### Guidance:

The Oxford Dictionary of Nursing defines Counselling as “a method of approaching psychological difficulties in adjustment that aims to help the client work out their own problems”.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be able to identify the need for cognitive, affective, behavioural, and systemic counselling strategies. Referrals might be made for but are not limited to:

- Appraisal
- Individual, group, marriage, and family counselling
- Guidance and consulting to facilitate normal growth and development including educational and career development
- The utilisation of functional assessments
- Career counselling for persons requesting assistance in adjusting to a disability or handicapping condition.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be able to utilise information captured through interviews, assessments, testing, etc., to educate and empower the client to resolve their issues. This implies sound analysis and synthesis of details and packaging it into a format that the client can understand, appreciate and apply. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must demonstrate skills related to counselling such as listening, restatement, indication of understanding, reflection, practice and acknowledgement.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 4.10 FAMILY SUPPORT AND ADVICE

### 4.10.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional makes a commitment to considering individuals within the context of their family systems and communities. Where appropriate, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be able to engage the family and significant others in an effort to support their client's rehabilitation.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must recognise that the family can be both:

- A support for the client in returning to work.
- An obstacle to the client returning to work.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should engage the family, where permitted, to best utilise their support or to address any obstacles to which the family contributes.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 4.11 MULTICULTURAL ITEMS/ LANGUAGE

### 4.11.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must appreciate different ethnic and cultural backgrounds in their clients that may impact on return to work.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is expected to:

- Respect all races, religions and ethnic groups.
- Demonstrate tact and empathy with all individuals.
- Establish rapport with clients and their families.
- Review and research how individuals from various cultural backgrounds relate to work and return to work interventions and apply this knowledge during the rehabilitation process.
- Demonstrate awareness of the characteristics and consequences of non-verbal communication and how this can be affected by culture, age, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs and socio-economic status.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must respect the client's/ family's rights to communication in their own language. It is the professional's responsibility to arrange for qualified interpretation and translation services as required so that communication is clear and so there are minimal misunderstandings. The professional must be aware of where to access such services in the community.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 4.12 COMMUNITY RESOURCES

### 4.12.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be knowledgeable about the various resources they and / or the client can access in the community or of agencies that can assist the client in accessing these local resources.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must:

- Build and maintain a local community resource network.
- Communicate and collaborate with these resources for the benefit of the client.
- Access only those resources who they believe to be practicing professionally and ethically.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 4.13 HEALTH, SAFETY AND PREVENTION

### 4.13.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must have knowledge of Health and Safety legislation and promote prevention of illness and accidents in the workplace.

#### Guidance:

Increasingly, the workplace must put more emphasis on prevention, reduction of lost time from injury and illness and promoting the employability of the worker. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional's role should be oriented to:

- Developing workplace strategies to reduce incidence.
- Lowering human and financial costs.
- Documenting significant barriers.
- Maintaining the productivity of the worker.

As a result, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional should be aware of basic principles of workplace safety, ergonomics, occupational health and safety best practice and organisational culture. Promotion and encouragement of job retention is important.

The guidelines established by the Health and Safety Executive should be reviewed by the Vocational Rehabilitation professional. These guidelines and others related to health and wellbeing in the workplace should be introduced to employers with each possible opportunity.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 5.0 TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

### *Intent:*

Transferable skills are developed over time and are applicable across a variety of employment situations. Vocational Rehabilitation professionals rely on their transferable skills as the foundation for professional activity and client support. It is important that they keep these skills current in the performance of their duties.

## 5.1 COMMUNICATING

### 5.1.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to communicate information, guidance, instruction and professional opinions effectively and appropriately to clients and all others involved in the vocational rehabilitation process.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must have excellent communication skills regardless of the method used for transferring information. They should communicate at a level appropriate for the client's comprehension. In this way they will be able to share information with the client that enables the client to make informed choices. They should also be able to use their interpersonal and counselling skills to encourage the client's active participation. Positive communication facilitates rapport building, mutual respect and trust even in situations of personal incompatibility. It allows the professional to communicate effectively and to relate to individuals from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must also use these communication skills when liaising with employers, unions, community resources, professional peers and client support mechanisms.

Communications are used when:

- Informing, presenting options, checking progress and facilitating processes.
- Listening and responding to voice messages.
- Conducting and / or participating in meetings.
- Assessing clients and suggesting plans.
- Answering questions and providing information to significant others.
- Giving advice and guidance.
- Networking as part of professional development.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 5.2 PROFESSIONAL REPORTING

### 5.2.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will be truthful and accurate and adhere to their professional codes of conduct in all client and employer reporting processes and in public statements and promotional literature concerning the services, programmes, products and profession.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will maintain professional integrity at all times. They will present their professional opinions and / or recommendations without being influenced by referral sources or funders.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 5.3 PROFESSIONAL RECORD KEEPING

### 5.3.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to create and maintain records of services to both the client and purchasing organisation that are consistent with purchasing and provider organisation policies, programme procedures and all applicable legal and professional requirements. A record should be kept of all Vocational Rehabilitation activity and interventions made or implemented with or on behalf of the client.

### Guidance:

The purpose of the records is to relate a detailed, accurate and justifiable history of the services and support provided before and during the vocational rehabilitation plan. Records are often used during audits, identification of evidence based practice and research. They can lead to service improvement. Valuable feedback can be provided on themes and trends.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Advise the client at the start of service delivery that formal documentation will be maintained of service delivery.
- Capture the client's name, address and date of birth on all maintained formal documentation.
- List details of people involved in the client's vocational rehabilitation plan.
- Record all referral details, date and source of referral and reason for referral.
- Detail any relevant social, medical or vocational information.
- Record the date and time of all interventions and assessments, approaches applied and results.
- Capture client suggestions, concerns and interests about their future or about their return to work plans.
- Develop and record time frames for service delivery.
- Receive and maintain consent and details of the consent given.
- Document date and time of all plan activities and interventions. Capture the results and all associated costs, if details are available.
- Record and date all progress, milestones and amendments to goals, interventions or durations.
- Record all service delivery, results and decisions made by other service providers as they relate to the progress within the plan.
- Record all correspondence, telephone communications and formal documentation related to the client's progress and / or plan.
- Record and date communications with family and any results.
- Maintain details of all guidance and advice provided to the client and to their family. Include details of individuals providing support and assistance.
- Record all transfer or closure details.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

- Track in the file the destination of signposted referrals or case transfers and information that needs to be considered during the transfer process.
- Document any evaluation responses, complaints and other forms of feedback.

### 5.3.2 Standard:

Vocational Rehabilitation records should be professionally presented and maintained, logically organised, well managed, clear and concise, so that those referring to them find them accessible.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Keep files organised and in good shape demonstrating a systematic approach.
- File reports in chronological order.
- Document and maintain only thorough, factual, objective and accurate information.
- Avoid the use of slang, abbreviations and acronyms.
- Ensure records are legible. If amendments are required, original text must remain legible.
- Sign and date all entries, additions or amendments.
- Validate assistant and support staff reporting by countersigning their records.
- Follow professional guidelines when working with electronic records by clearly identifying the author and by meeting the same standards of documentation.
- Purchasers and providers shall agree the ownership of records and procedures covering the transfer of ownership when appropriate; for example, when a purchaser changes provider and wishes to ensure continuity of services for its client.

### 5.3.3 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must follow professional and legal requirements related to confidentiality, storage and destruction of files and to a client's right to access their own details.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to:

- Be aware of and adhere to the Data Protection Act 1998, other legislation and local practice relative to a client's right of access to their information and to procedures for confidentiality, storage and destruction of files.
- Store records in a safe and secure manner eliminating access by unauthorised persons, damage or loss.

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

#### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

#### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

- Ensure computerised files are password protected and as safe as possible from unauthorised access.
- When facsimile or any other form of electronic communication is used to transmit or record any written information that could identify a client, it is the responsibility of the Vocational Rehabilitation provider to ensure that it is secure and that it includes a limit of disclosure.
- Keep client records outside the provider's premises secure either under supervision or secured in a locked or restricted area.
- Transfer paper documentation by sealed, addressed envelopes or boxes using reputable companies.
- Transfer formal documentation in a vehicle by a secure method in a locked compartment out of visual parameters and, wherever possible, remove any information which could lead to identification of the subject of the record.
- Ensure the safekeeping of all other formal documentation that may be used as legal evidence.
- Store and destroy records according to legal and local practice and guidance. When client records are destroyed it shall be done in such a way that there is no risk to confidentiality. When records kept electronically are no longer needed they shall be physically destroyed or reformatted or magnetically wiped. They should not merely be erased.

## 5.4 RESOLVING CONFLICTS / MEDIATING

### 5.4.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is expected to maintain an independent perspective when applying conflict resolution skills in interactions with various stakeholders. They work towards eliminating a disagreement or clash between ideas, principles, or people.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional utilises knowledge, experience and problem solving skills to:

- Present options based on facts, policy, collective agreements and applicable legislation.
- Resolve issues between management, union and the client.
- Reconcile differences of opinion ranging from the perceived needs of the client to the perceived abuse of benefits.
- Facilitate a return to work.
- Find solutions appropriate for the uniqueness of each case.
- Solve disputes of coverage to determine who is responsible.
- Solve problems with doctors, other health care providers or employers who are perceived as presenting barriers to positive rehabilitation outcomes for the client.
- Provide information and guidance relative to return to work.
- Find ways of getting endorsement of programmes within corporate structure.
- Develop realistic plans to achieve desired goals and objectives.

### 5.4.2 Standard:

Where conflict resolution fails, the professional, based on knowledge and experience, should recommend professional mediation services.

### Guidance:

Mediation is “the intervention by a third party between two sides in a dispute in an attempt to help them reach an agreement”. This is a specialist skill that may require an external, third party participation.

The Vocational Professional should be familiar with mediation services and providers and be prepared to recommend their involvement when conflict resolution fails.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 5.5 ADVOCATING

### 5.5.1 Standard:

Within reason, the Vocational Rehabilitation professional is expected to advocate on behalf of the client.

#### *Guidance:*

An Advocate is someone who uses their role to promote and safeguard the well-being and interests of the client by ensuring that they are aware of their rights and have access to information to make informed decisions. With this definition in mind, advocacy is an integral part of the role of the Vocational Rehabilitation professional.

Difficulty arises, however, when the professional “encourages”, “backs” or “sponsors” their client thereby taking it out of the factual realm. Advocacy is best applied through sound communication processes and clear expectations.

### **STANDARD DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

### **EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED**

## 5.6 DECISION MAKING

### 5.6.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is expected to draw on factual information and their own professional knowledge in making their own decisions and in supporting client decision making activity. They must be prepared to defend their decisions when called upon to do so.

### Guidance:

Decision making translates the knowledge, skills and values of the Vocational Rehabilitation professional into action and ensures they stay within their individual scope of practice.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional makes important decisions, for example, during:

- The engagement of the referral source and client.
- Case load management activities.
- The presentation of oral and written information.
- Service termination.
- The development of policies and procedures that reinforce accountability.
- The creation of collaborative processes.
- Programme costing and evaluation activities.
- Legal and ethical decision making.
- Crisis situations such as suicide risk, potential threat to the life and safety of others and critical incident management.

The basis of their efforts assists clients to:

- Clarify their requirements.
- Identify a range of options for achieving their requirements.
- Select a course of action.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 5.7 NEGOTIATING

### 5.7.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must apply negotiating skills “in good faith” during the course of their duties.

### Guidance:

Negotiating is defined as “the attempt to come to an agreement on something through discussion and compromise”. The Vocational Rehabilitation professional draws upon their knowledge, education, research skills, communication skills and experience in order to negotiate with clients, their family, referral sources, employers, unions, health professionals, community resources and significant others. In this way, the professional is able to exchange offers on the client’s behalf and establish agreements that best meet the client’s needs.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 6.0 CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

### *Intent:*

This section guides Vocational Rehabilitation professionals functioning as independent practitioners towards sound business practices and approaches. Affairs should be managed in accordance with accepted financial practices and legal compliance. Professionals must understand and comply with all applicable laws, rules and regulations of any government, regulatory operation, licensing agency or professional association governing their professional activities.

Some aspects of this section or suggestions made may be more appropriate for larger Vocational Rehabilitation organisations. Each professional must deem what is appropriate at any point in time for their business but must be fully aware of their legal and fiscal responsibilities as an independent practitioner.

Some standards in this section can be cross referenced to section 5, in particular data protection, record management, file destruction and other records.

This section complements facility and programme accreditation provided by other organisations. Providers should be encouraged to support their professional standards with an accreditation of their services and facilities where appropriate.

## 6.1 LEGAL REQUIREMENTS, INSURANCE AND PARTNERING

### 6.1.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must comply with all legal and regulatory requirements.

### Guidance:

Many Vocational Rehabilitation professionals are practicing as independent service providers. In this capacity, they must be responsible for their own corporate governance. These standards should assist them in applying best practice.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be able to demonstrate:

- that their service delivery philosophy reflects requirements of legislation, policy, guidelines and procedures issued by any monitoring authority.
- adherence to confidentiality requirements, reporting requirements, contractual agreements, licensing requirements, corporate status reporting, employment practices, and all other requirements identified within the field.
- coverage for professional and product indemnity and public liability insurance. This needs to extend throughout and beyond the duration of the professional practice to cover lapsed time for possible claims lodged after company closure.
- coverage for employers' liability.
- a healthy and safe environment as required by the Health and Safety Executive.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 6.2 PROCUREMENT

### 6.2.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must ensure for accurate audit trails when establishing partnerships or associations.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must be able to demonstrate:

- Documented consultant contracting processes that meet legal requirements and that ensure the same level of professional standards are applied.
- Documented partnership and service level agreements.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 6.3 PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

### 6.3.1 Standard:

All programmes must be managed in a sound and responsible manner at all times. Appropriate management must be in place.

#### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is required to have appropriate administrative structures, including staffing and staff reporting arrangements, delegations and approvals.

Case/caseload management systems and procedures must be in place.

Adequate and appropriate financial and human resources should be available to ensure for ongoing operations and sustainability. There must be an adequate number of personnel to:

- meet the established outcomes of the clients
- ensure the safety of clients
- deal with unplanned absences of personnel
- meet the performance expectations of the organisation.

Formally documented procedures must be in place to verify the credentials and backgrounds of all personnel and to support job retention. Performance reviews must be conducted at least annually.

Facility policies around health and safety, critical incidents and emergency services must be in place, obvious and formally documented. Procedures should be tested frequently. Personnel should receive initial and ongoing competency based training in relevant procedures.

Management is responsible for:

- establishment of the mission and direction of the operation
- promotion of value in the programmes and services offered
- balancing the expectations of clients and other stakeholders
- financial solvency
- compliance with insurance and risk management requirements
- ongoing performance approval
- development and implementation of corporate responsibilities
- compliance with all legal and regulatory requirements.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 6.4 EXTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE

### 6.4.1 Standard:

Upon request and as required, Vocational Rehabilitation professionals may be subjected to external audits and evaluations. As the form of evaluation is often useful, providers should participate especially where compliance is a requirement of the service agreement.

### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must show evidence of participation in required audits and evaluations where these are requirements of the delivery.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 6.5 INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE / PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT

### 6.5.1 Standard:

A process of planning, monitoring, evaluating and improving programmes and services must be evident.

#### Guidance:

Vocational Rehabilitation professionals must have documented procedures for:

- internal quality assurance standards and procedures
- staff recruitment, training, supervision and performance appraisal
- staff development.

There should be regular programme evaluations to measure outcomes. These should be both qualitative and quantitative.

An annual performance analysis might include the following areas:

- business functions
- service delivery (effectiveness and efficiency)
- service access
- feedback
- areas needing improvement
- suggestions for change.

Performance information can be shared with clients, personnel, referral sources and other stakeholders.

### 6.5.2 Standard:

All Vocational Rehabilitation programmes will make available to staff members formal complaints procedures relative to professional service delivery. This will provide a mechanism for feedback to the employer on professional issues within their environment.

#### Guidance:

Employers of Vocational Rehabilitation programmes are required to:

- Have written grievance procedures readily accessible and published including the resolution of disputes.
- Identify what constitutes a complaint or grievance versus negative feedback.
- Recognise a contact point and backup.
- Ensure that individuals dealing with complaints, especially where ethical issues are involved, have the appropriate qualifications and / or experience in such areas.
- Recognise whom else may be involved such as an external third party.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

- Identify time scales and make these clear to the complainant.
- Consider all complaints as serious.
- Respond immediately and appropriately.
- Clearly identify the process of communications and documentation; orally, written or both.
- Conduct a speedy and comprehensive investigation.
- Respond in a timely and constructive manner.
- Learn from the process and make improvements where necessary.
- Rectify any identified deficiencies and notify the complainant of actions taken.
- Maintain complaints on file for an agreed upon period of time reflecting legal and professional obligations.
- Provide grievance documents during the course of any service audit or evaluation.
- Incorporate complaints procedures into contracts between the employer and staff member.

## 6.6 INPUT FROM PERSONS SERVED

### 6.6.1 Standard:

Input from clients should be solicited, collected, and analysed in order to create services that meet or exceed the expectations of clients, the community and other stakeholders.

#### Guidance:

A formal system must be in place to evaluate client satisfaction with the programme. This information is used to determine client expectations and preferences and to better understand how the organisation is performing. To ensure that all clients are able to participate in the evaluation process a number of mechanisms could be used to solicit and collect input. They could include:

- written surveys
- advisory groups
- face-to-face meetings
- conferences
- focus groups
- telephone conversations
- chat rooms / consumer boards
- presentations to clients
- suggestions boxes
- complaints procedures
- communication logs.

The extent of the evaluation process is relevant to the size of the service provider's company. Smaller operations may find that one or two forms of evaluation might suffice.

Collection of information should be ongoing throughout the year and integrated into the business practices of the organisation.

Input received should be used in:

- programme planning
- performance improvement
- strategic planning
- financial planning
- human resource planning.

The analysis is used in determining if the organisation is:

- meeting the needs of clients
- offering relevant services and products
- identifying new opportunities for growth and development of programmes and services.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 6.7 CUSTOMER SERVICE

### 6.7.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should be mindful of who their customer is and should ensure for appropriate customer service levels at all times.

### Guidance:

To a Vocational Rehabilitation provider there are a number of potential customers. Customer service concepts should be applied at all times and to all parties.

A good definition of customer service in the field of Vocational Rehabilitation is:

- Doing the job right
- Doing the right job.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 6.8 ACCESSIBLE FACILITIES AND SIGNAGE

### 6.8.1 Standard:

It is important that all Vocational Rehabilitation providers promote accessibility and the removal of barriers.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must address accessibility issues in order to:

- enhance the quality of lives of clients
- implement non-discriminatory practices
- meet legal and regulatory requirements
- meet expectations of other stakeholders.

Accessibility planning addresses:

- architecture
- environment
- attitudes
- finances
- employment
- communication
- transportation
- other items
- time lines and actions for removal of barriers.

The operation should review accessibility items regularly and generate reports specific to this issue. The Disability Rights Commission and disability specific organisations are excellent resources.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 6.9 FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

### 6.9.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional strives to be financially responsible and solvent, conducting fiscal management in a manner that supports their mission, values and annual performance objectives. They must demonstrate that continuity processes like disaster recovery and succession plan procedures are in place.

### Guidance:

Fiscal practices adhere to established accounting principles and business practices. Fiscal management covers daily operational cost management and incorporates plans for long term solvency. There is evidence of an annual review or audit of the financial statements by an independent accountant. There should also be evidence of a risk management plan.

When charging for services, providers should be able to demonstrate adherence to identified cost areas (where they exist), accepted industry standards and reasonableness of fee schedule. Tracking of services to ensure for accurate billing should be evident. The funder of service must authorise and document expenditures in a case.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should identify and implement realistic cost containment strategies. They must establish and maintain fiscal policies and procedures including internal control practices.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 6.10 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

### 6.10.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must make full and fair disclosure of all matters that could reasonably be expected to impair their independence and objectivity or to interfere with respective duties to their clients or prospective clients.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must ensure that such disclosures are prominent, are delivered in plain language, and communicate the relevant information effectively.

Organisational systems must be in place to ensure and maintain the professional independence of the rehabilitation practice.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must disclose to their employer, clients and prospective clients, as appropriate, any compensation, consideration or benefit received by, or paid to, others for the recommendation of products or services. They must not accept gifts, benefits, compensation or consideration that competes with or might reasonably be expected to create a conflict of interest with their clients or referral sources.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 6.11 USE OF TECHNOLOGY

### 6.11.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must have a technology and system plan.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must demonstrate appropriate knowledge and applications of technology by addressing potential issues around:

- hardware
- software
- security
- confidentiality
- user friendly interfaces
- backup policies
- assistive technology
- alternative access formats
- disaster recovery
- virus protection.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 6.12 DATA PROTECTION

### 6.12.1 Standard:

Data protection legislation must be adhered to in a consistent and totally compliant manner. Data must be collected for specific purposes and used accordingly.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is expected to:

- work within the parameters of the data protection legislation.
- have a data protection policy in place.
- respect confidentiality of information under the guidelines of laws, regulations and the Vocational Rehabilitation Association's Code of Ethics.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 6.13 RECORD MAINTENANCE

### 6.13.1 Standard:

It is the Vocational Rehabilitation professional's responsibility to ensure that client files and other records are professionally presentable, maintained and stored at all times.

### Guidance:

Appropriate record keeping, handling and storage of case records must be evident. This includes the maintenance of confidentiality safeguards around data storage.

Special care must be in place to ensure confidential records are not left open on desks, near photocopiers or on computer screens.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 6.14 FILE DESTRUCTION

### 6.14.1 Standard:

Inactive files must be securely destroyed once required time lapses.

### Guidance:

Closed files must legally be retained for a set period of time from date of closure. The time frame is relative to jurisdictional requirements or data retention policies. During this time, they can be returned to the referral source or stored. Once this time lapsed, files must be destroyed in such a way that client data is not at risk. This is typically through a shredding process.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 6.15 OTHER RECORDS

### 6.15.1 Standard:

All other records of a confidential nature, like financial and business items, must be stored securely as per client files.

### Guidance:

This information must be maintained according to legal requirements.

This may vary depending on the item and on the jurisdiction. The provider should explore what their specific requirements might be.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 7.0 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

### *Intent:*

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must develop their business plan with the highest levels of service quality, ethical practice and legal responsibilities in mind. Service definitions and target populations must be clearly defined. Services must be easily identified and recognised. Programmes must be promoted in a professional and responsible manner. Expansion only occurs when appropriate resources are in place to provide for service delivery to the standards set out in previous sections.

## 7.1 SERVICE DEFINITION

### 7.1.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must achieve and maintain good business practice. They must be able to clearly define the nature and structure of their legal status and overall practice. The business identity must be clear and easily interpreted.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should have:

- A mission statement
- A business plan
- Written objectives
- Service descriptions
- A scope of practice statement
- An indication of how the services are managed
- Professional development practices
- Staff supervision processes
- A complaints procedure.

Clients and purchasers of service must be able to clearly understand the services they are accessing, why they are participating, the procedures, the expected outcomes, costs, travel and other requirements, professional involvement, and their own roles and responsibilities.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 7.2 SERVICE DESIGN

### 7.2.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will design services to be of high quality, efficient and cost effective.

### Guidance:

Services need to be outcome oriented and process driven. Specific programme targets need to be identified and built into delivery mechanisms.

Facilities and resources should be constantly and consistently monitored and evaluated to ensure for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Clients must be fully aware of business hours and office and professional accessibility within and outside those hours.

Formal service agreements and/or contracts should be drawn up and agreed with potential referral sources upon request. Fees reflecting the nature of the services delivered and fair market value should be set and reviewed regularly. Prior to any service delivery or expenditure, authorised documentation from the referral source and payer, if different, should be obtained.

### STANDARD DEMONSTRATED

YES  NO

### EVIDENCE/ACTION REQUIRED

## 7.3 RISK MANAGEMENT

### 7.3.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional must apply risk management processes within their practice.

#### *Guidance:*

Every attempt is made to keep the business functional and performing with minimal risk to ensure for its service continuity and commitment to clients and referral sources. There must be some demonstration of financial risk management.

Effective practices must be in place to ensure the service is operating within UK business parameters and meeting the needs of all governing bodies.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional is responsible for updating business practice knowledge. They should seek mentoring and advice for business practices and development as needed.

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional should carry out strategic planning activity relative to business progress and future initiatives.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

## 7.4 PROMOTION AND MARKETING

### 7.4.1 Standard:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will promote the business in a professional and ethical manner.

### Guidance:

The Vocational Rehabilitation professional will function with integrity at all times when advertising or promoting their business. Only verifiable information should be presented in marketing information. Care must be taken not to misrepresent the professional or the business.

The use of third party external logos must be approved ahead of use as they are usually copyrighted.

Information regarding the services must be presented adequately and in accessible format so that clients and referral sources can make responsible and informed decisions about accessing these services.

**STANDARD  
DEMONSTRATED**

YES  NO

**EVIDENCE/ACTION  
REQUIRED**

# GLOSSARY

## GLOSSARY

### A-B

- **Activities of daily living (ADLs):**  
activities required for 'everyday' life and personal care, eg. dressing, eating, grooming, bathing, and toileting in any environment.
- **Activities of daily living (ADLs) Assessment:**  
is a term used by healthcare professionals to objectively assess an individual's environment (living, work or other) to identify the need for /and the level of, aids, equipment or care a person may require to perform their everyday activities as independently as possible.
- **Accessible:**  
to be made without difficulty and easy to approach, enter, participate in, operate, or use safely, independently.
- **Accommodation (at work):**  
modifications in a work environment to allow a person with a disability to complete the duties of a job.
- **Assessor (Rehabilitation):**  
a rehabilitation professional who conducts an assessment for the purposes of objectifying an individual's current status and potential future requirements.
- **Bio-psychosocial:**  
the biological, psychological, and social aspects of an individual's health status.

### C-D

- **Career Counselling:**  
counselling on career opportunities and employment prospects.
- **Case Management:**  
(as defined by the CMSUK): a collaborative process which assesses, plans, implements, co-ordinates, monitors and evaluates, the options and services required to meet an individual's health, care, educational, and employment needs, using communication and available resources to promote quality cost effective outcomes.
- **Community Based Assessment:**  
an assessment of individual capacities within their individual own environments.
- **Confidentiality:**  
disclosure in strict privacy.
- **Consent:**  
permission of approval.

- **Counselling:**  
advice, opinion or direction given in support of directing the judgment/s of another.
- **Continuing Professional Development:**  
a broad spectrum of activities completed by a professional to maintain and uphold his or her professional knowledge, skill requirements and credibility, to perform within the scope of their profession.
- **Disability:**  
a medically diagnosed condition that makes it difficult to engage in the activities of daily life
- **Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) (UK):**  
see Disability Discrimination Act (1995); An Act to make it unlawful to discriminate against disabled persons in connection with employment, the provision of goods, facilities and services or the disposal or management of premises; to make provision about the employment of disabled persons; and to establish a National Disability Council.
- **Disability management:**  
a process to prevent, identify, monitor and / or facilitate the rehabilitation of a disability, and the provision of services to support that individual.

## **E-F**

- **Eligibility:**  
meeting the requirements to participate in, compete, or to work for – as qualified to do so.
- **Employee:**  
an individual who is working for another person or a business for pay.
- **Employed:**  
to engage the services of, or to put to work.
- **Employer:**  
a person or business that pays one or more people.
- **Employment Goal:**  
desired types of employment an individual pursues.
- **Employment Outcome:**  
successfully securing and maintaining employment by an individual.
- **Ethics:**  
the rules of conduct recognised with respect to a particular individual's scope of practice.
- **Functional Assessment:**  
The objective measurement of behavior in interaction with the environment which is interpreted according to the assessment's intended use. It has the purpose to appraise and measure ability, competence, or performance.

## **G-H**

- *Goal Setting:*  
Goal setting involves defining a clear objective and ensuring that others are made aware of what is expected from him or her, so that objective can be achieved.

## **I-J**

- *Impairment:*  
any condition that inhibits an individual from being unable to perform as a consequence of physical, mental, or other unfitness.
- *Job Analysis:*  
a comprehensive assessment of the requirements necessary to complete a job.
- *Job Coach:*  
a person employed to assist an individual with a disability to locate employment or adjust to the duties of a job. Job coach support is usually temporary and is gradually reduced as the person learns their task.

## **K-L**

## **M-N**

- *Modified Work:*  
temporary or permanent changes made to an individual's working environment to accommodate injury or disability so that they can perform the maximum duties required.

## **O-P**

- *Professional Accreditation:*  
the granting of approval to an institution by an official review board after an individual / or organisation has met specific requirements to perform duties within those requirements.
- *Professional Association:*  
A body or organisation that exists to further a particular profession, to protect both the public interest and the interests of professionals.

## **Q-R**

- *Referral:*  
Evaluating and identifying the needs of a client to determine the advisability of referrals to other specialists, advising the client of such judgments, and communicating as requested or deemed appropriate to such referral sources. (Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification).

- **Rehabilitation Counselling:**

Rehabilitation counseling is a systematic process which assists persons with physical, mental, developmental, cognitive, and emotional disabilities to achieve their personal, career, and independent living goals in the most integrated setting possible through the application of the counseling process. The counseling process involves communication, goal setting, and beneficial growth or change through self-advocacy, psychological, vocational, social, and behavioral interventions. The field of rehabilitation counseling is a specialty within the rehabilitation profession with counseling at its core, and is differentiated from other related counseling fields. (Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification)

- **Rehabilitation Counsellor:**

A professional person certified to provide varied and specialised rehabilitation services for persons with disabilities as defined by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification.

- **Rehabilitation Process:**

the process a person with disability undergoes when in receipt of Vocational Rehabilitation services.

- **Rehabilitation Services:**

the provision of any service (people, equipment, guidance, therapy, etc.) that assists an individual with a disability achieve his or her goals.

- **Research:**

A systematic effort to collect, analyze, and interpret quantitative or qualitative data that describe how social characteristics, behavior, emotions, cognition, disabilities, mental disorders, and interpersonal transactions among individuals and organizations interact. (Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification)

- **Return to Work Programme:**

usually a graduated process and a form of work conditioning that includes a work schedule that is designed to be assistive to the employee's recovery from illness and/or injury. It is usually structured in accordance with medical recommendations and work requirements.

## **S-T**

- **Suitable Duties:**

Suitable duties are short-term work duties, agreed between the employer and the injured worker, to assist the injured worker's rehabilitation.

- **Transferable Skills:**

Those individual skills and abilities which can be applied equally from one job to another.

## U-V

- **Unemployed:**  
not engaged in a gainful occupation
- **Vocational Assessment:**  
a comprehensive process conducted over a period of time, usually involving a multidisciplinary team, with the purpose of identifying individual characteristics, education, training, and placement needs, serving as the basis for planning an individual's educational program and which provides the individual with insight into vocational potential.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation:**  
see: Professional Scope of Practice Statement
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Services:**  
any identified service which provides an individualised plan for employment.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Counsellor (and or Professional):**  
a person who helps people with disability prepare for and secure employment.
- **Vocational Plan:**  
the overall strategy developed by an individual with disability, in conjunction with his or her advocates, and the VR Counsellor, in pursuing and obtaining employment.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Association (UK):**  
the Vocational Rehabilitation Association (VRA) is a registered charity (number 1056380) and is the UK's leading professional association for those working in or with the field of vocational rehabilitation. First established in May 1994 the VRA is an organisation dedicated to serving the best interests of professionals who are active in vocational rehabilitation. It currently has a membership reflecting a wide mix of Vocational Rehabilitation practitioners and organisations involved or interested in vocational rehabilitation.
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Program(s):**  
a range of services provided to people with disability to enhance their opportunities to pursue employment.
- **Vocational Services:**  
the delivery of services through which individuals with a disability are offered assistance to be able to locate and secure employment – usually provided by a VR Professional.
- **Vocational Training:**  
a 'hands on' program that usually involves work assessment, placement and training to increase an individual's capacity to secure, and maintain employment.

## **W-Z**

- ***Work Adjustment:***

Work adjustment specialists provide services focusing on the development and implementation of systematic, individualized treatment/training programs for persons with disabilities. Adjustment specialists must possess skills in behavior change techniques, individual and group counseling, instructional techniques, job development, job placement, and community integration. (US Department of Education)

- ***Work Trial:***

a Work Trial is a short period of work experience as part of an occupational rehabilitation program, usually used when an employer responsible for the injury cannot provide suitable duties, or to assist an individual increase his or her skills by way of work experience.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

A document of this nature could not possibly have been developed without reference to already existing standards, materials and published works. Items by Aylward, Frank, Waddell, Burton, Grove, Scott-Parker, Thurgood, Butterworth, Pickvance, Francis come to mind but there were others as well. The Standards Task Group not only reviewed some of these experts' products but engaged in conversation with many of them along the way. For their contributions, we are grateful.

In the main, we reviewed far too many documents that influenced our work over the past two years to mention here so only the key ones have been listed under Key Resources.

Of equal importance was the breadth of experience of each member of the Standards Task Group and the Advisors. Each individual contributed in their own special way to the process. This has been an excellent example of "working together works".

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