
Overview

This standard relates to restorative practice and processes and is about facilitating informal restorative processes involving communication with the participants concerned.

Restorative practice brings those affected by conflict or crime into communication. This enables everyone involved in a situation to play a part in repairing the harm and finding a positive way forward.

The circumstances where informal processes might be appropriate are varied. This standard is intended for a wide and diverse range of applications both proactively, to prevent harm, as well as in response to an incident of harm.

Informal restorative processes can involve work with just one individual, with two people, or as a group process, involving several participants. They are often used on the spot to deal with conflict as it occurs, rather than after the event and following a time of preparation. They are used by practitioners integrated into their daily work, rather than as a discrete, separate process.

There are three elements

- 1 Engage with participants to de-escalate or avert conflict or misunderstanding
- 2 Facilitate an informal restorative meeting
- 3 Facilitate a pro-active or problem solving circle

Target group

This standard is for those with responsibility for facilitating informal restorative processes which involve communication with participants. It is also applicable for those who use restorative processes for relationship building within a group or community, to prevent or minimise the likelihood of conflict or harm occurring.

Performance criteria

Engage with participants to de-escalate or avert conflict or misunderstanding

You must be able to:

- P1 create a safe environment for an informal restorative process, including:
 - P1.1 facilitating relationship building
 - P1.2 acknowledging diversity and difference between participants
 - P1.3 managing conflict and aggression
 - P1.4 assessing imbalances of power and acting to redress these
- P2 communicate at a pace and level suited to the participants, and keep discussions free from judgement, discrimination and oppression
- P3 facilitate the process using information gained through listening actively to participants
- P4 check for participant understanding using recognised methods
- P5 promote appropriate dialogue with participants, and enable all involved to express themselves
- P6 recognise, read and act upon non-verbal signals
- P7 summarise discussions and reflect this back to participants
- P8 feedback to participants, and receive feedback from participants when offered
- P9 work with participants to make collective choices

Facilitate an informal restorative meeting

You must be able to:

- P10 assess the incident and determine whether an informal restorative process is appropriate, taking into account:
 - P10.1 the nature of the incident
 - P10.2 any safety or other risks associated with progressing the process
 - P10.3 your own competence
- P11 identify a suitable restorative approach
- P12 check that the involvement of participants is voluntary
- P13 agree ground-rules for the process, and address breaches of these when they occur
- P14 identify when harm or potential of harm is an issue, and acknowledge this with participants where needed
- P15 enable the relevant participant to recognise the impact of their actions on others, including the potential for harm
- P16 allow participants opportunities to make appropriate input, and permit the views of other participants to be voiced and considered
- P17 facilitate discussion, being alert to the emotional needs and reactions of participants
- P18 manage difficult situations and participant stress where these occur
- P19 facilitate participants to agree relevant and appropriate decisions about the way forward, and summarise these concisely

- P20 acknowledge input of participants involved and determine with them when to bring the informal process to a close
- P21 assess whether a further process would be of benefit, and progress relevant, agreed actions to assist participants in taking this forward
- P22 maintain records of points discussed and outcomes agreed in line with organisational requirements if required
- P23 provide relevant information to those who need it and are entitled to it, whilst maintaining the necessary confidentiality
- P24 review and reflect on your involvement in the process, and use findings to inform your development and to improve your practice

Facilitate a pro-active or problem solving circle

You must be able to:

- P25 agree the purpose of the session with participants so that everyone is clear what the purpose is and aims are
- P26 establish an agreed set of ground rules with the participants at the outset
- P27 use appropriate methods to give participants an equal chance to speak in turn
- P28 allow participants the right to pass and offer opportunities to participate when those who have passed are ready to contribute
- P29 address breaches of ground rules without alienating participants
- P30 facilitate ownership of decision-making and problem-solving, and work to share responsibilities with participants

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

General/key knowledge relating to restorative practice

- K1 legislation and guidelines of good practice that relate to assessing the appropriateness of restorative processes, including:
 - K1.1 the impact of these on your work
 - K1.2 confidentiality and data protection requirements
- K2 the nature of values and principles underpinning restorative processes
- K3 the purpose and potential benefits of restorative practice
- K4 partner organisations you might work with in the restorative process, including:
 - K4.1 their principal roles and responsibilities
 - K4.2 how to determine and differentiate these roles
- K5 the meaning of needs in a restorative practice context
- K6 the potential range of needs of all involved within the restorative process
- K7 the importance of, and how to create, a safe environment for participants
- K8 the meaning of risk in a restorative practice context, including:
 - K8.1 how to distinguish between criminogenic and restorative risk concerns
 - K8.2 how these concerns may or may not apply
- K9 the importance of treating all participants with respect and avoiding both the stigmatisation and stereotyping of any participant
- K10 effective telephone and face to face communication techniques, including:
 - K10.1 active listening
 - K10.2 questioning for understanding
 - K10.3 awareness of and ability to read non-verbal signals
 - K10.4 summarising and reflecting back
 - K10.5 giving and receiving feedback
 - K10.6 challenging constructively and positively
 - K10.7 enabling participants to make their own choices
 - K10.8 recognising and working with the positions, interests and needs of participants
- K11 how to judge what information may be shared between participants and how gaining additional information might be used by the participants
- K12 the importance of gaining permission before sharing information between participants
- K13 your role, responsibilities and competence, and who to seek assistance and advice from if necessary
- K14 how to recognise the effects on yourself of working upon restorative processes, and how to seek appropriate supervision and personal support
- K15 principles of effective equality, diversity and anti-discriminatory practice

Knowledge relating to facilitating informal restorative processes

You need to know and understand:

- K16 various recognised definitions of informal restorative processes
- K17 distinguishing features, suited settings and different uses of informal restorative processes, including:
 - K17.1 with one individual to de-escalate or avert conflict or misunderstanding
 - K17.2 street RJ (restorative justice)
 - K17.3 corridor conferencing
 - K17.4 peer mediation
 - K17.5 circles
- K18 factors to take into account when assessing appropriate locations for informal processes
- K19 methods of encouraging the effective and active involvement of those involved in informal restorative processes
- K20 how to enable informed choice, whilst avoiding coercion
- K21 types of support available to participants involved in an informal restorative process
- K22 protocols and ground-rules for behaviour and communication during an informal restorative process, including:
 - K22.1 what ground rules are
 - K22.2 the purpose of ground rules
 - K22.3 why it is important to use ground rules
 - K22.4 what to do if ground rules are breached
- K23 how to balance the benefits of a wider group of people participating with the available time and resources required
- K24 how to facilitate communication without unduly intervening in the process
- K25 how to allow participants to engage
- K26 group dynamics, including:
 - K26.1 types of power imbalance that can occur
 - K26.2 the reason for power imbalances
 - K26.3 strategies for addressing power imbalances
- K27 how to assist participants to find ways of managing their anxieties about the restorative process
- K28 information required to make an assessment of participants and their safety and other risk factors within an informal restorative process
- K29 types of safety and other risks associated with an informal restorative process, and methods of managing these throughout the process

Additional Information

Values

Restorative practices are underpinned by a set of values, these include:

- 1 empowerment
- 2 honesty
- 3 respect
- 4 engagement
- 5 voluntarism
- 6 healing
- 7 restoration
- 8 personal accountability
- 9 inclusiveness
- 10 collaboration
- 11 problem solving

Glossary

Risks

In a restorative practice context, risks (factors/concerns/assessment) relate primarily to participant and practitioner safety. In this context, risk of harm may be physical, psychological and / or emotional.

Restorative practice processes can also contribute to minimising the occurrence (or 'risk') of re-victimisation and reoffending.

External links

These standards reflect the content of the Restorative Justice Council's Best Practice Guidance for Restorative Practice (2011)

SFJ DJ204

Facilitate informal restorative processes

Developed by	Skills for Justice
Version number	2
Date approved	January 2013
Indicative review date	January 2018
Validity	Current
Status	Original
Originating organisation	Skills for Justice
Original URN	SFJ DJ204
Relevant occupations	Restorative Practitioner; Probation staff; Youth Offending Team Officer
Suite	Restorative Practice
Key words	Facilitate; informal; restorative; processes; pro-active; problem solving; circles