



Due Diligence for Suppliers and Partners

Guidance

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About This Guidance

This guidance outlines why due diligence of partners and suppliers is a vital part of keeping children, young people and adults at risk, safe. It offers an approach to how you might carry out a due diligences process and what you may assess.

Purpose of Due Diligence

We all have a responsibility to ensure the children, young people and adults at risk we work with are safe. This includes those that you are in direct contact with, or those that are affected by your work with partners and suppliers. Appropriate due diligence is a vital part of safeguarding governance and any failure to do so could be raised as a serious concern.

Appropriate due diligence assesses a supplier or partner's ability to mitigate safeguarding risks in their work. Due diligence does not shift accountability. It is the responsibility of your organisation to ensure any partners or suppliers are capable of delivering any activities with appropriate systems of control, to keep children, young people and adults at risk safe.

How to Complete Effective Due Diligence

Safeguarding due diligence completes an investigation, audit or review to confirm a partner or supplier is upholding the necessary safeguarding standards. Ensure enough time to commit to the process and that appropriate measures are in place.

Whilst you may wish to consider proportionate measures to the level of work taking place, it should not be considered an optional process when it comes to ensuring the safety of children, young people and adults at risk. As such, you can use any methods of due diligence you feel will best meet these outcomes and may choose a variety of methods depending on the partner or supplier in question. You could consider any of following:

- Self-audit tools or questionnaires
- Internal audit reports
- Monitoring visits
- Interviews and meetings to discuss safeguarding
- 360 review with partners or funders to share insights and capture references or testimonials
- Reviewing copies of relevant documents

It is advisable to ensure you have a record of the process and communication relating to the due diligence.

What to Assess

Your assessment will seek assurance about how an organisation's delivery does not put any child or adult at risk of harm. It will also likely assess how equipped they are to respond to any concerns or incidents if they were to arise.

Your organisation can define what and how to carry out due diligence, including the appropriate levels of proportionality depending on the size of the organisation. To support the decision making process you may wish to align with a due diligence framework endorsed by your membership or regulatory body, or that of your partners, if they have one. The [Department for International Development produced an Enhanced Due Diligence: Safeguarding for external partners \(2020\)](#), outlines the following areas of consideration in a due diligence process:

- Safeguarding
- Whistleblowing
- Human Resources
- Risk Management
- Code of Conduct
- Governance



Whilst there may be some commonalities in due diligence, tailoring any standards or processes to that of your organisation's needs to meet your culture, working practices and standards facilitates a more relevant approach. A policy does not immediately assume it's comprehensive and consistent application in practice, or confirm their culture.

Due Diligence Outcomes

Having identified, verified and put appropriate monitoring mechanisms in place or a partner or supplier, you will most likely have three outcomes:

1. Proceed with partnership
2. Conditional agreement
3. Improvement required

If you are happy to proceed with the partnership, be sure to keep a record of any activities or reports that provide evidence of your decision. Be sure to keep it up to date and implement any quality assurance processes agreed with the partner or supplier.

If areas of improvement have been identified, you may embark on a conditional agreement and identify required areas of adjustment before the partnership begins. If any significant concerns are raised you may wish not to proceed with