

EQUASS Assurance Checklist for Applicants and Auditors

**Overview of how EQUASS Assurance Indicators must be
demonstrated and verified.**



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Overview

This document describes the way the EQUASS assurance indicators should be demonstrated and verified.

All indicators in BLACK must be demonstrated and verified through documentation.

All indicators in RED must be demonstrated and verified through interviews.

All indicators in BLUE could be demonstrated in documentation or in other ways (such as interviews, etc.). This is up to the social service provider how to demonstrate the performance. The verification of the performance should be carried out in a way, which complies with the way performance is demonstrated.

Principles for quality		Dimensions	Criteria	Indicators
1	Leadership	Mission, vision and quality policy	1 & 2	1, 2, 3, 4
		Communication	3 & 4	5, 6, 7, 8
		Annual planning	5 & 6	9, 10, 11, 12
		Contribution to society	7 & 8	13, 14, 15, 16
2	Staff	Managing Human Resources	9 & 10	17, 18, 19, 20
		Qualification and Development of staff	11.&12	21, 22, 23a, 23b, 23c, 23d, 24
		Staff engagement	13 & 14	25, 26, 27, 28
3	Rights	Rights and duties	15 & 16 & 17	29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34
		Self determination	18 & 19	35, 36, 37, 38

4	Ethics	Policy on ethics	20 & 21 & 22 & 23 & 24	39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48
		Roles and responsibilities	25	49, 50
5	Partnership	Partners in service delivery	26 & 27	51, 52, 53, 54
6	Participation	Involvement of person served	28 & 29	55, 56, 57, 58
		Empowerment of person served	30 & 31	59, 60, 61, 62
7	Person Centred	Identifying customer demands	32 & 33	63, 64, 65, 66
		Individual planning	34 & 35	67, 68, 69, 70
8	Comprehensive ness	Delivery process	36 & 37	71, 72, 73, 74
		Continuing service delivery	38 & 39	75, 76, 77, 78
		Holistic approach	40 & 41	79, 80, 81, 82
9	Result Orientation	Measuring results	42 & 43	83, 84, 85, 86
		Evaluating results	44 & 45	87, 88, 89, 90
		Reporting results	46 & 47	91, 92, 93, 94
10	Continuous Improvement	Continuous improvement cycle	48 & 49	95, 96, 97, 98
		Innovation	50	99, 100

1. LEADERSHIP

EQUASS Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services demonstrate leadership within the social sector internally by good governance and within the wider community by promoting positive images, challenging low expectations, encouraging best practice, enabling more effective use of resources, inspiring innovation, and aiding the creation a more open and inclusive society.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

1. The social service provider defines documents and implements its vision and mission values on service provision.

	Indicator	D	O
1	The social service provider has documented its: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. vision b. mission c. corporate values 	X X X	- - -
2	Staff is aware of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the vision b. the mission c. corporate values of the social service provider 	- - -	X X X

2. The social service provider defines, documents, and implements its quality policy by determining long term quality goals, and its commitment to continuous improvement.

	Indicator	D	O
3	The social service provider has a documented a quality policy containing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. long term goals b. commitment to continuous improvement 	X X	- -
4	Staff is aware of the quality policy of the social service provider.	-	X

3. Persons served, family members and service user organisations are able to give feedback on their individual and collective experience of programmes and services.

	Indicator	D	O
5	Stakeholders have the opportunity to give feedback on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. programmes b. services 	X X	X X
6	Feedback is documented from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. funding bodies b. persons served 	X X	- -

4. The social service provider informs all stakeholders about the offered programmes and services available.

	Indicator	D	O
7	Information is available on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development of programmes and services b. Processes and procedures c. Performance of the organisation d. Upcoming relevant events e. Opportunities for involvement of persons served 	X X X X X	X X X X X
8	Stakeholders are aware of the programmes and services offered.	-	X

5. The social service provider management establishes and documents an annual planning and review process.

	Indicator	D	O
9	The process of annual planning is documented.	X	-
10	The annual planning process is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Implemented b. Reviewed periodically 	X X	X X

6. The plan includes:

- Annual outcomes / targets
- The activities to be undertaken in achieving the annual targets
- Monitoring of the performance of the organisation in meeting its annual targets
- Time-scales and procedures for review and revision.

	Indicator	D	O
11.	The annual planning process has a cyclical character:		
	a. Objectives / targets	X	-
	b. Key activities	X	-
	c. Tangible results	X	-
	d. Review of objectives and targets	X	-
12	The Board of Management approves the annual plan.	X	X

7. The social service provider demonstrates organisation's success in satisfying the needs and expectations of the society.

	Indicator	D	O
13	The social service provider collects feedback from stakeholders in the society.	X	X
14	The social service provider can show tangible results in meeting needs and expectations of the society.	X	X

8. The social service provider demonstrates organisation's social responsibility through activities contributing to the society.

	Indicator	D	O
15	The social service provider is involved in community-based activities.	X	X
16	The social service provider can show evidence of its added value to the society.	X	X

2. STAFF

EQUASS Principle for Quality

Organisations providing social services lead and manage their personnel and their performance to achieve the organisations business objectives and the delivery of a person centred services. They are committed to the employment and promotion of qualified personnel based on required knowledge, skills and competences. They promote a culture of engagement, development and continuous learning of staff and professionals for the benefits of person served and other stakeholders. The organisation provides health, safety, well - being and appropriate working conditions of its personnel.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

9. The social service provider has a staff recruitment and retention policy that promotes the selection of qualified personnel based on required knowledge, skills and competences.

	Indicator	D	O
17	The service provider has a documented: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Staff recruitment policy b. Criteria for staff recruitment c. The process for staff recruitment d. Its policy for equality and non-discrimination 	X X X X	- - - -
18	The staff recruitment and retention policy is based on selection of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Knowledge b. Skills c. Competences 	X X X	X X X

10. The social service provider operates in compliance with mandatory national legislation, providing appropriate working conditions, adequate and agreed staff level and staff ratio, and appropriate rewarding for staff and volunteers.

	Indicator	D	O
19	The social service provider has documented <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Its policies in compliance with the employment legislative framework. b. Its policy for showing recognition to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Staff ii. Volunteers (if applicable). 	X X X	- - -
20	The social service provider evaluates the working conditions of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Management b. Staff c. Volunteers (if applicable). 	X X X	X X X

11. The social service trains all staff based on a plan for learning and development and evaluates the effectiveness of the training.

	Indicator	D	O
21	The plan for staff qualification, staff development and staff support is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Documented b. Evaluated on annual basis 	X X	- -
22	The social service provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Demonstrates records from all training activities of staff b. Evaluates the effectiveness of the training activities (based on feedback from staff and other stakeholders) 	X X	- -

12. The social service provider applies requirements for competence in the identified roles and functions of staff and evaluates them on annual basis.

	Indicator	D	O
23	The competence requirements for staff has been: a. Identified b. Specified c. Documented d. Evaluated on an annual basis	X X X X	X X X
24	The performance of staff members, who are directly involved in the provision of services to the persons served, is reviewed periodically.	X	X

13. The social service provider recognises the staff as a resource for feedback on organisational performance, service development and staff development.

	Indicator	D	O
25	The social service provider has a policy and procedure for active involvement of staff in: a. The planning of the service b. The evaluation of the service	X X	- -
26	The social service provider: a. records staff involvement and feedback from staff b. utilises that feedback in the staff development of strategic and annual planning	X X	- -

14. The social service provider has mechanisms in place to enhance satisfaction and motivation of staff

	Indicator	D	O
27	Social service provider measures, records and reviews the satisfaction and motivation of staff.	X	-
28	Social service providers implement mechanisms for recognition of staff.	X	X

3. RIGHTS

EQUASS Principle for Quality

Organisations providing social services are committed to protecting and promoting the rights of the person served in terms of equal opportunities, equal treatment and freedom of choice, self-determination and equal participation. Organisations providing social services are ensuring informed consent and adopting non-discrimination and positive actions within their own services. This commitment is apparent in all elements of service development and delivery and in the values of the social service provider.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

15. The social service provider assures the rights of persons served outlined in a Charter of Rights that is based on the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of the Council of Europe and other international human rights conventions, especially those elaborated under the United Nations.

	Indicator	D	O
29	The social service provider has documented: a. A charter of rights for the persons served b. A charter which is compliant with international human rights conventions	X X	- -
30	All staff including volunteers is aware of the rights and duties of the persons served.	-	X

16. The social service provider informs the person served about his/her rights and duties especially to equal treatment on grounds of age, disability, gender, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation before receiving the services.

	Indicator	D	O
31	The social service provider can show evidence of informing the persons served about their rights and duties.	X	X
32	Persons served are aware of their rights and duties.	-	X

17. The social service provider has accessible complaint management system that registers feedback on performance from persons served, purchasers and other relevant stakeholders.

	Indicator	D	O
33	The social service provider has a documented complaint management system that assures appropriate and objective investigation.	X	-
34	The social service provider shows transparency of results in the complaint management system.	X	-

18. The social service provider respects the fundamental right to self-determination of the person served. They freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development.

	Indicator	D	O
35	The social service provider demonstrates its support the self-determination of the person served.	X	X
36	The social service provider evaluates its performance on respecting the right to self-determination with the persons served on annual basis.	X	X

19. The social service provider facilitates the person served in choosing and having access to advocates and/or supporting persons.

	Indicator	D	O
37	The social served provider informs persons served how to access advocates and/or supporting persons.	X	X
38	The social service provider evaluates its performance in facilitating persons served in having access to advocates and/or supporting persons on annual basis.	X	X

4. ETHICS

EQUASS Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services operate on the basis of a Code of Ethics that respects the dignity of the persons served and their families or carer takers, protects them from undue risk, specifies the requirements for competence within the organisation of the social service provider, and promotes social justice.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

20. The social service provider defines and documents its policy on ethics that respects and assures the dignity of the persons served, protects them from undue risk and promotes social justice

	Indicator	D	O
39	The social service provider has documented its policy on ethics reflecting the dignity of persons served and protecting them from undue risk.	X	-
40	The social service provider informs staff (including volunteers if applicable) about the policy on ethics and the principles and values that govern behaviour in service delivery.	X	X

21. The social service provider operates mechanisms that prevent the physical, mental and financial abuse of persons served.

	Indicator	D	O
41	The social service provider has:		
	a. Documented policies to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served	X	-
	b. Procedures to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served	X	-
42	The social service provider evaluates the effectiveness of its policy to prevent physical, mental and financial abuse of person served.	X	X

22. The social service provider provides services in a safe system of working within a safe environment to ensure the physical security of persons served, their families and caretakers.

	Indicator	D	O
43	. The social service provider has documented: a. a health and safety plan for each of its service locations b. procedures to ensure a safe environment and physical security of persons served	X X	- -
44	The social service provider identifies: a. measures for ensuring health and safety for each of its service locations b. improvements for ensuring health and safety on annual basis	X X	X X

23. The social service provider defines, documents, monitors and evaluates a set of principles, values and procedures that govern behaviour in service delivery containing aspects of confidentiality, accuracy, privacy and integrity.

	Indicator	D	O
45	The social service provider has defined a set of principles, values and procedures (code of Ethics) to assure and to govern behaviour in service delivery.	X	-
46	Staff (including volunteers if applicable) is aware about the set of principles, values and procedures that govern behaviour in service delivery.	-	X

24. The social service provider defines, documents, monitors and evaluates procedures for assuring confidentiality of data regarding the persons served and the service provided to them.

	Indicator	D	O
47	The social service provider has a policy and procedures for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assuring confidentiality of information of persons served b. Recording information on the persons served access to personal data 	X X	- -
48	The social service provider's reviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Its policy on confidentiality at least every two years with staff and persons served b. Its procedures on confidentiality at least every two years with staff and persons served 	X X	X X

25. The social service provider defines the roles and responsibilities, authorities and the interrelation of all personnel who manage, design, deliver, support and evaluate the service provision to person served.

	Indicator	D	O
49	The social service provider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b. Defines the roles and responsibilities of management c. Communicates the roles and responsibilities of management 	X X	- -
50	The social service provider; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Defines the roles and responsibilities of the functions directly involved with services delivery to the persons served b. Communicates the roles and responsibilities of the functions directly involved with services delivery to the persons served 	X X	- -

5. PARTNERSHIP

EQUASS Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services operate in partnership with public and private sector agencies, employers' and workers' representatives, funders and purchasers, organisations of person served, local groups, families and carers to create a continuum of services and achieve more effective service impacts and a more open and inclusive society.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

26. The social service provider works in partnership with other organisations in the provision of services.

	Indicator	D	O
51	The social service provider has partnerships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Social partners in the delivery of services for the persons served b. Funding agencies in the delivery of services for the persons served c. Organisations of persons served in the delivery of services for the persons served (if applicable) 	X	X
52	The social service provider evaluates the added value of its partnerships on regular basis.	X	X

27. The social service provider works in partnership with persons served, purchasers and other stakeholders in the development of services.

	Indicator	D	O
53	In development of services, the social service provider involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Person served and their representatives b. Purchasers c. Funders 	X	X
54	The social service provider involves relevant external stakeholders in assessment of needs.	X	X

6. PARTICIPATION

Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services promote the participation and inclusion of person served at all levels of the organisation and within the community. Social service providers involve service users as active members of the service team. In pursuit of more equal participation and inclusion, social service providers should facilitate the empowerment of the persons served. They work in consultation with representative bodies and groups to support advocacy, the removal of barriers, public education and active promotion of equal opportunities.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

28. The social service provider includes persons served as active participants in planning and have set up appraisal made up of on-going of an on-going structured dialogue process in the management of the service, including the definition of the needs, the definition of the services, as well as of the evaluation of quality.

	Indicator	D	O
55	The social service provider has a policy and procedures for active involvement of person served in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assessing needs b. Planning of the services c. Evaluation of the services 	X X X	- - -
56	Persons served participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assessing individual need b. Planning of the individual services c. Evaluation of the received services 	X X X	X X X

29. The social service provider institutes an annual evaluation of participation of persons served both on individual and/or group basis.

	Indicator	D	O
57	The measures, activities and policy for participation have been agreed with the persons served or representatives of persons served.	X	X
58	The social service provider reviews the measures, activities and policy for participation of persons served or representatives of persons served on an annual basis.	X	X

30. The social service provider operates specific instruments for the persons served to improve their personal empowerment and personal situation and that of their community

	Indicator	D	O
59	The social service provider systematically facilitates the empowerment of the persons served on individual basis.	X	X
60	The social service provider has achieved tangible results in strengthening the empowerment of persons being served.	X	-

31. The social service provider operates specific mechanisms for establishing an empowering environment.

	Indicator	D	O
61	The social service provider has identified measures for creating an empowering environment in the organisation.	X	X
62	The social service provider trains staff to facilitate the empowerment of persons served.	X	X

7. PERSON CENTRED APPROACH

EQUASS Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services operate processes aiming at the improvement of quality of life of persons served that are driven by the needs of both the persons served and potential beneficiaries. They respect the individual's contribution by engaging them in self - assessment, service-user feedback and evaluation and that value personal as well as service goals taking into account the physical and social environment of the person served. All processes are subject to regular review.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

32. The social service provider selects programmes which are based on a needs assessment at the location which is most convenient for the person served, family and care takers

	Indicator	D	O
63	The social service provider has identified the needs of: a. its current persons served recently (< 3 years) b. its potential persons served recently (< 3 years)	X X	X X
64	The social service provider offers its services at the most convenient location for persons served, families and carers.	X	X

33. The social service provider offers programmes consistent with the identified needs of its customers and objectives for the programme.

	Indicator	D	O
65	The social service provider has identified the needs for programs of: a. The financing bodies b. Other relevant external stakeholders	X X	X X
66	The social service provider determines the success rate(s) of existing programmes: in reaching their objectives and in meeting the needs of the persons served	X X	- -

34. The social service provider operates individual processes that are driven by the needs of the persons served.

	Indicator	D	O
67	The social service provider delivers services based on the needs of the persons served.	X	X
68	The social service provider records the identified needs and expectations of the person served in an Individual Plan.	X	-

35. The social service provider documents the planning of services based on the identification of individual needs and expectations of persons served in an Individual Plan.

	Indicator	D	O
69	The Individual Plan contains:		
	a. the desired situation of the person being served	X	-
	b. overall goals	X	-
	c. specific measurable objectives	X	-
	d. methods / techniques / interventions to be used	X	-
	e. Staff involved and responsibilities for implementation	X	-
70	Each Individual Plan is agreed by the person served or his/her guardian.	X	X

8. COMPREHENSIVENESS

EQUASS Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services ensure that the person served can access a continuum of holistic and community based services, which value the contribution of all persons served and potential partners including the local community, employers and other stakeholders and that span from early intervention to support and follow up. The services should be delivered through a multi-disciplinary team approach or multi -agency partnership with other service providers and employers.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

36. The social service provider identifies, documents, and maintains the key service delivery processes to the persons served in line with its vision, mission statement and quality policy.

	Indicator	D	O
71	The key service delivery processes of the social service provider are <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. identified b. documented c. reviewed on regular basis 	X X X	- - -
72	The key service delivery processes of the social service provider are compliant with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. the mission b. the quality policy of the organisation c. the specifications made by purchasers and funders 	X X X	X X X

37. The social service provider reviews this delivery process and maintains control over the delivery of the service.

	Indicator	D	O
73	The social service provider: a. monitors the performance of the key service delivery processes on regular basis b. reviews the performance of the key service delivery processes on a regular basis	X X	X X
74	The social service provider: a. carries out internal audits on the delivery of key service delivery processes b. reports on the outcomes of key service delivery processes	X X	- -

38. The social service provider ensures that the person served can access a continuum of services that span from early intervention to support and respond to changing requirements over time.

	Indicator	D	O
75	. Evaluation on continuing service delivery is carried out on annual basis.	X	X
76	The social service provider implements measures for assuring a continuum of services.	X	X

39. The social service provider develops a seamless continuum of services and reduces barriers in a multi-disciplinary or multi-agency setting.

	Indicator	D	O
77	The organisation identifies and reports barriers: a. to the seamless continuum of programmes on annual basis b. on access to programs and services on annual basis	X X	- -
78	The social service provider operates services characterised by a multidisciplinary approach to the persons served in their Individual Plan.	X	X

40. The social service provider operates services from a holistic approach based on the needs and expectations of the person served with the aim of improving the quality of life for the person served.

	Indicator	Document	Other ways
79	The social service provider ensures that quality of life is specific to and defined for each person and/or family receiving services.	X	X
80	The effectiveness of Quality of life initiatives are:		
	a. measured	X	-
	b. reported	X	-

41. The social service provider identifies the needed competences, skills and support for staff to enhance the quality of life for person served.

	Indicator	Document	Other ways
81	The social service provider specifies the skills and competencies for staff to enhance quality of life of persons served.	X	-
82	The social service provider evaluates the skills and the competencies for staff to enhance quality of life of persons served on annual basis.	X	X

9. RESULT ORIENTATION

EQUASS Principle for Quality

Organisations providing social services are aiming for results, in terms of both how they are perceived, on achievements they have made and on the benefits they are providing to the persons served, their family members, carers, employers, other stakeholders and the general community. They also aspire to the achievement of best value for their purchasers and funders. Service impacts are measured, monitored, and are an important element of continuous improvement, transparency and accountability processes.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

42. The social service provider identifies its business results and provides formal periodic and independent review and procedures to achieve the targeted results.

	Indicator	D	O
83	The social service provider:		
	a. measures its performance against business objectives annually	X	-
	b. reports its performance against business objectives annually	X	-
84	An independent external body reviews business results and performance.	X	-

43. The social service provider identifies and registers the outcomes and benefits for person served of the receive services on individual and collective basis.

	Indicator	D	O
85	The social service provider measures:		
	a. the achieved results of the objectives of each Individual Plan	X	-
	b. benefits for persons served of each individual Plan	X	-
86	The social service provider measures:		
	a. the achieved results of the received services on collective basis	X	-
	b. benefits for persons served of received services on collective basis	X	-

44. The social service provider evaluates its business results in order to determine best value for purchasers and funders ('best value' can also be expressed in relation to the increased quality of life offered to the person being served).

	Indicator	D	O
87	The social service providers evaluates added value of the business results for its: a. purchasers b. funders	X X	- -
88	The social service provider evaluates added value of the services for quality of life of the persons served.	X	-

45. The social service provider evaluates the individual and collective satisfaction of persons served and other stakeholders by internal and/or external evaluation.

	Indicator	D	O
89	The social service provider measures the satisfaction of: a. its persons served b. its purchasers c. its funding bodies	X X X	- - -
90	The service provider assures appropriate and objective measurement of satisfaction of its stakeholders.	X	-

46. The social service provider provides accessible and easily understandable records on outcome, including personal perception and achievements

	Indicator	D	O
91	The report on records and outcomes is communicated to stakeholders in understandable form and language.	X	-
92	The service provider records outcomes include personal perceptions and achievements.	X	-

47. The social service provider actively disseminates organisation performance among its staff, person served and external stakeholders.

	Indicator	D	O
93	The social service provider reports its performance to:		
	a. Purchasers	X	-
	b. funding bodies	X	-
	c. staff	X	-
	d. persons served	X	-
94	The social service provider reports:		
	a. results on an annual basis	X	-
	b. personal perceptions on an annual basis	X	-
	c. achievements on an annual basis.	X	-

10. CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

EQUASS Principle for Quality:

Organisations providing social services are proactive in meeting market needs, using resources more effectively, developing and improving services and utilizing research and development to achieve innovation. They strive for effective communications and marketing, value 'persons served', funders' and stakeholders' feedback and operate systems of continuous quality improvement.

Criteria for EQUASS Assurance

48. The social service provider has a standard procedure for continuous improvement on the basis of an improvement cycle.

	Indicator	D	O
95	The organisation implements a documented quality improvement system which is characterised by a cyclic manner (PDCA) meaning: a. planned actions reaching the objective b. implementing the actions c. measuring the results of the actions d. implementing corrective actions	X X X X	X X X X
96	The results of quality improvement projects are documented.	X	-

49. The social service provider identifies performance indicators for measuring the results of the improvement actions.

	Indicator	D	O
97	The social service provider establishes performance indicators for measuring the results of all improvement projects.	X	-
98	The social service provider defines: a. objectives for all improvement projects b. measures the results for all improvement projects	X X	- -

50. The service provider introduces and manages innovative ways of working that have been identified based on the needs of stakeholders.

	Indicator	D	O
99	The social service provider can demonstrate at least:		
	a. two examples of innovative ways of working	X	X
	b. two examples of emerging needs of stakeholders	X	X
100	The social service provider:		
	a. manages the innovation projects	X	-
	b. Monitors the innovation projects	X	-
	c. records the results of the innovation projects	X	-