

Serious Case Reviews

Practice Guidance and Template for Authors of Single Agency Analysis Reports

This template contains **text in blue type** which is guidance for the author to follow when completing the SAAR. The author may type their information directly into the spaces provided.

For further information or advice on completing the SAAR contact:

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, contains the purposes and processes for Serious Case Reviews (SCR), the final product of which is an Overview Report that examines the actions of Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) agencies against their duty to promote and safeguard the welfare of children.
- 1.2** The key documents for ensuring a good Overview Report are the Single Agency Analysis Report's (SAAR's). This guidance aims to help SAAR authors to produce a good report.
- 1.3** This guidance is based on the Greater Manchester Serious Case Review Systems Approach at section 7.1.3
http://greatermanchesterscb.proceduresonline.com/chapters/g_gm_ser_case_re v.html, including the content on the SAARs at Appendix 1 in section 7.1.3
- 1.4** The SAAR process consists of 4 main stages:
- i. Establishing the facts (sections 5, 6 and 7 in this template)
 - ii. Analysis (section 8)
 - iii. Key Issues (section 8)
 - iv. Learning Points (section 9)

Voice of the Child – it is essential in any case review that there is clarity about how well the voice of the child has been heard and listened to in any interventions or service delivery by practitioners. This should include reporting and commenting on any direct or verbatim recording of the child/young person's views and any other indication given by the child/young person of their views/wishes/feelings. The Voice of the Child should be a central consideration in each SAAR.

2. SAAR PROCESS

- 2.1** When a Serious Case Review (SCR) is to be held, and an agency will be submitting a **Single Agency Analysis report**, these **will only be accepted using the pro-forma SCR Template for authors of SAAR reports**.
1. All type must be Calibri 12 apart from chronology and action plan where font Arial Narrow size10 is recommended.
 2. Make sure you make an explicit statement about involvement of family members and the child, and give reasons if they were not seen or involved.
 3. Address issues of diversity

4. Include and consider the child and the family's view and perspective on the events.
 5. Ensure that the information provided is appropriately evidenced in the report. Distinguish between fact, opinion, here-say, analysis and research.
- 2.3** Please also anonymise your SAAR from the outset. The SSCB administrator will provide a reference for the family members at the outset and a standard list of abbreviations and standard key anonymised references.
- 2.5** It is important that SAAR authors do not assume that people who read their reports have any knowledge of the issues under examination. Consequently, it is important to ensure that the evidence, upon which conclusions and recommendations are drawn, is clearly stated. Do not use abbreviations, jargon or initials. If acronyms are used they should, upon first use, be prefaced by the full name.
- 2.6** Each page of the SAAR should contain the header: **Strictly Confidential - Not to be distributed or reproduced without the permission of the SSCB**
- 2.7** It is important to note that as well as any other internal scrutiny arrangements, individual agencies will also have their Single Agency Analysis Reports assessed sequentially by:
- i. Their Designated Senior Manager who will 'Quality Assure' the SAAR report against required standards and accept its contents on behalf of your agency, before its submission, ensuring that the report is appropriately thorough, analytical and challenging; accept its contents on behalf of the agency and submit it to the serious case review panel. Please note that appropriate arrangements for the 'Quality Assurance' of SAAR reports should be made by each individual agency and prior submission of the report and sufficient time should be made to get this task completed within the timescale.
 - ii. The Independent Chair of the Case Review Panel and its members who have the authority to challenge SAAR reports where they deem them not to be of a sufficient standard. All the SAAR reports will be closely scrutinised, and if not of sufficient quality to aid the analysis and learning required for a SCR, these will be returned for 'Revision' to the agency.
 - iii. The final version of the SAAR must be signed and dated by the Senior Manager for the agency as well as the Author.

SINGLE AGENCY ANALYSIS REPORT

Serious Case Review in respect of	<i>Initials of child(ren) here</i>
Date of Birth	
Date of Death or serious incident <small>Delete as appropriate</small>	
Author of SAAR	<i>Please insert Name and Designation of report Author here</i> Signature _____ Date _____
Agency	<i>Name of agency Brief agency profile - what your agency does</i>
Quality Assured and Approved by	<i>Name and Designation of person quality assuring and signing off the report on behalf of the agency</i> Signature _____ Date _____
Date of Submission	<i>Date the report was submitted to SSCB</i>
Date of revision	<i>Date revised version submitted if applicable</i>
Date of final submission	<i>Date the final report was submitted, if applicable</i>

GUIDANCE: Please note that a final front sheet which is signed by the author and countersigning person will be required for the final SAAR. SCR administrator will ask for this when revisions are completed. However please ensure that the countersigning person has seen the SAAR at each submission stage.

SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

GUIDANCE: This is an example Introduction to the report. You do not have to use these phrases exactly. Continue to type in the box as you wish.

This Single Agency Analysis (SAAR) report of ***(insert Name of the Organisation here)*** is produced in accordance with Salford Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) procedure for conducting a Serious Case Review (SCR). It will form part of a multi-agency SCR Overview Report as recommended in 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' 2013.

This report has been prepared following a review of the ***(Insert specific agency and the service provided)*** to ***(insert child and family name)***. Its purpose is to look openly and critically at individual and organisational practice to see whether the case indicates changes could and should be made, and if so, to identify how those changes will be brought about.

SECTION 2 - KEY FOCUS POINTS

The Serious Case Review (SCR) should address the following key focus points:

In this section add the key focus points from the Terms of Reference for the Serious Case Review

SECTION 3 – AUTHOR DETAILS

You a need to use this section to state what your role is, how this equips you to undertake this review, and clarify that you do not have any operational involvement in the case

SECTION 4 - METHODOLOGY

GUIDANCE: Please explain how you did your report here. List the sources of information that your agency has used to compile your report. This might include paper records, IT systems searched, computer records, supervision notes etc. It should also include some details about staff that have been interviewed as part of this review, or if not why not. Please say if files could not be found and why. Also use this section to include list of abbreviations/ codes used (for names etc)

The following sources of information regarding **(insert Name of Subject(s) here)** have been used to inform the report:

SECTION 5 - FAMILY COMPOSITION as known to the agency

GUIDANCE: Please use this section for the family details as known to your agency (As per the example below, please delete and retype your information). If your agency is not aware of any of the information below please specify as 'not known'. Please add additional people to list below as needed using the reference names provided by the SCR administrator.

Please note that the SSCB administrator who does this will produce an outline Genogram using the information you provide in this section. This will be confirmed and agreed by the Case Review Panel and included in the SCR Overview Report.

Anonymised Name	Relationship to subject (if applicable)	Date of Birth	Date of Death (Or Serious Incident)	Address	Ethnicity or diversity needs
<i>Child 1</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>01/01/00</i>	<i>17/11/09</i>	<i>123 Wall Street</i>	<i>White British, CoE</i>
<i>Child 2</i>	<i>Sister</i>	<i>01/02/1990</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>123 Wall Street</i>	<i>White British, CoE</i>
<i>Mrs A</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>03/03/1970</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>123 Wall Street</i>	<i>White British, CoE</i>

SECTION 6 - COMPREHENSIVE CHRONOLOGY

Agencies are expected to provide a detailed chronology of their involvement including information about when the child was seen, details of that contact and relevance to the Terms of Reference. Also, please briefly summarise decisions reached, the services offered and/or provided to the child (ren) and family and other action taken. Note specifically each occasion the child was seen, whether the child was seen alone, and whether the child's wishes and feelings were sought, and expressed. The column on the right hand is for you to relate the entry to a particular term of reference, and you should enter just the number. Your entry may not be specifically relating to one, in which case leave it blank. This should also help you in your analysis of the contacts.

Please note, the chronology should be created separately from your SAAR using the template provided and should be the first thing you do. You are asked to submit it separately from the report as it needs to be collated with other chronologies for the combined chronology. However, it should also be inserted in to the report at the relevant point.

Example of Chronology table (Please delete to insert the chronology)

USE A SEPARATE ROW FOR EACH EVENT.

TO CREATE A NEW ROW AT THE END OF THE TABLE, WITH THE CURSOR IN THE END ROW AND COLUMN, PRESS THE TAB KEY (THE BUTTON ABOVE "CAPS LOCK").

Date	Source of Information	Subject of recording	Event description, actions and outcomes	Expected Practice/Standards	Relevant ToR Key Focus Points	Child Seen (y/n)
Enter the date dd/mm/yyyy ONLY	e.g. data systems, hard file, interview, etc.	e.g. Family member	Detail the event, any observations noted, reasons for decisions taken and action take/not taken with reasons	Refer to your own internal policies and standards and what was/was not met	Number the relevant TOR	Simply state Y or N

SECTION 7 NARRATIVE

This section should bring the chronology to life and tell the story of the child/ family involvement with your agency. This section will also include a description of the key events, highlighting concerns, omissions and good practice. It is important throughout this section to reflect on the experience of the child during your agency's involvement.

Type your text in this box

SECTION 8 – CRITICAL ANALYSIS – IDENTIFYING THE KEY ISSUES

GUIDANCE: In this section the author must review the information in the comprehensive chronology and produce a critical analysis. The information provided and the analysis should be appropriately evidenced and explicitly linked to each key focus points in the Terms of Reference.

Please ensure to clearly specify if any of the Key Focus Points are not relevant to your agency and/or service and the reasons why. Using the Key Focus Points as headings may be a good way to construct your critical analysis, learning and recommendations.

The report should focus on the child or young person and explicitly address issues of diversity. The author must consider how the services offered took account of the individual needs of the child and family, and were sensitive to their Race and culture, Age, Disability, Faith, Gender, Sexuality and Economic Deprivation. Please make sure to answer to the following questions:

- Does your agency routinely collect this information?*
- Does your agency use this information in assessments?*
- Have you any evidence that these have been taken account of in the delivery of a service to the child and their family?*

Practice at individual and organisational levels must be openly and critically analysed against national and local statutory requirements, professional standards and current procedural guidance.

Were existing internal policies and procedures adhered to?

Were SSCB or multi -agency policies and protocols adhered to?

Consider the actions taken (or not taken) against the children's needs and the agency's safeguarding duties?

How did the children feel about the service being offered?

Do their decisions and actions adhere to current best practice, national guidance and your agencies professional standards?

Where research is available on the issues being addressed, how the actions in this case compare to research findings?

Where decisions and actions did not adhere to duties, policies and procedures guidance and professionals standards, analyse what staff practise and organisational factors contributed?

Your analysis should reflect willingness by your agency to challenge practice and address wider agency responsibility. Please focus attention on why procedures were not followed, as well as identify what procedures had been followed or were lacking.

Good practice should be highlighted and areas for change in practice must be clearly identified. Where practice has changed from that detailed in the chronology, i.e. new service or revised procedures, this should be explained in the report.

Additional considerations to support analysis: Consider the events that occurred, the decisions made, actions taken and actions not taken. Where judgments were made or actions taken that indicate that practice or management could be improved, try to get an understanding not only of what happened, but 'why'. Consider the **context** in which decisions were made and what was going on in your agency at the time which may have influence decision making.

Consider specifically:

- When and in what way were the child (ren)'s wishes and feelings heard and addressed? Was this information recorded? How was this responded to by your agency? Did your agency listen to the child? This is particularly important to include in your review report.
- Were practitioners sensitive to the needs of the children in their work, knowledgeable about potential indicators of abuse or neglect and about what to do if they had concerns about a child?
- Did the organisation have in place policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and acting on concerns about their welfare? If

not, this needs to be addressed in your report. Were these adhered to? If not, why not?

- What were the key relevant points/opportunities for assessment and decision making in this case in relation to the child and family? Do assessments and decisions appear to have been reached in an informed and professional way?*
- Did actions accord with assessments and decisions made? If not, why not?*
- What are the management support systems like? Are training, supervision, administrative and recording systems satisfactory?*
- Do previous serious case reviews undertaken by the agency have similar issues raised? What progress has been made with actions identified in past serious case reviews and consider if practice has changed.*
- Constructive use of hindsight will benefit the analysis.*

type your text in this box

SECTION 9 – WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THIS CASE?

GUIDANCE: Following on from the critical analysis section previously, the author should identify specific lessons which his/her agency can learn from the case. These can include areas of good or poor practice identified, as well as ways in which practice can be improved. Relate the answers to the terms of reference. Lessons can be learnt from good or poor practice

Every area identified in section 6 where practice requires improvement should have a corresponding lesson learned in this section .

Every lesson learned and identified should have a corresponding recommendation in section 10.

- Have lessons from this case been identified for the way in which the organisation works to safeguard and promote the welfare of children?*
- Is there good practice to highlight as well as ways in which practice can be improved?*
- Are there implications for ways of working: training (single and multi-agency), management and supervision, working in partnership with other organisations,*

resources, policies and procedures, resources (financial , human assets, or technological)

Please note that this section will inform the subsequent section on recommendations for action.

Type your text in this box

SECTION 10 - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

GUIDANCE: Recommendations for action must flow from the previous ‘What do we learn from this case?’ section. Any recommendation about improving or developing new procedures should be specified in terms of the expected practice outcomes and followed through to ensure it happens. Individual agency recommendations for action contained in this SAAR report will be considered by the SCR Panel for inclusion in the Overview Report. The SCR Panel may also recommend further actions for your agency to be included in the Overview Report. You should add as many actions for your agency as are necessary.

Please note that any individual agency recommendations not included in the Overview Report are expected to be acted on within individual agency governance arrangements.

Recommendations for action must be included in the Single-agency Action Plan Template and the Template needs to be fully completed in order to be clear about;

- What action should be taken, by whom and by when?*
- What outcomes should these actions bring about and how will the organisation evaluate whether they have been achieved?*

Action Plan Template

INSERT YOUR LOGO HERE

[CHILD INITIALS] – SCR – [AGENCY NAME]

Lead Person: [NAME]

No	Recommendation	Key Actions	Evidence	Key Outcome	Lead Officer	Date
1	As they are written in section 10	<p>Indicate the actions or series of actions to be taken to achieve the expected outcomes. These must be Specific Measurable Achievable Realistic Time scale</p> <p>Examples might be deliver training, develop new policy, Introduce new standard, Review working practices , etc</p>	<p>Describe the evidence you will provide to the Board to show the actions are being undertaken or achieved</p> <p>These might include minutes of meetings, new policy, training material, etc</p>	<p>What improvements in service and child and family safety and welfare should result from actions</p> <p>Examples might be increased awareness of multiagency referrals, quicker access to services, etc</p>	Designation of lead officer charged with implementing the actions	Date by which actions will be completed
2						
3						

Appendix 1

This Document should be used by your counter-signer or QA manager to check the content of your report.

SINGLE AGENCY ANALYSIS QUALITY ASSURANCE FORM

Agency	
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Name and contact details of person completing this form	
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Child/ Family Identifier	
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Criteria	Yes	No	Partially	Comments
The scope of the review is unambiguous, outcome-focused and supported by clear terms of reference				
Author was independent of case management decision making				
Access to legal advice available for critical aspects				
Report is completed within agreed timescale				
Report includes genogram and full details of changes to the family composition for the identified time period including transient members as appropriate				
Report includes chronology of involvement for identified time period				
Report takes account of the individual needs of the child(ren) and family members				

Criteria	Yes	No	Partially	Comments
Report is sensitive to the racial, cultural and linguistic identity of the child (ren) and family members				
Report reflects a critical examination of the facts and provides a credible explanation for how and why events occurred				
Report reflects a critical examination of the facts and provides a credible explanation for actions/ decisions that were/ were not taken				
Practice at individual and organisational level is analysed openly and critically against local and national requirements, professional standards and local procedural guidance				
Good practice is highlighted beyond expected minimum practice				
Report contains an action plan with measurable and relevant recommendations for improvement and a timescale for implementation.				
Action plan has been agreed with relevant senior management groups				

Signed:

Date:

Please send this form together with the SAAR report and any accompanying documentation to the SSCB Senior Business Support – Vivienne Bentley.

Please ensure that all information is transmitted securely.