



National Network for Chairs
of Adult Safeguarding Boards

Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) - Business Manager Induction Pack

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Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) - Business Manager Induction Pack

With recognition that each SAB operates within its own local context, this checklist is intended to be flexible. It can be adopted in full or adapted to reflect local governance arrangements, Board priorities, and specific local needs.

We fully recognise that there is significant variation across the country in roles, responsibilities, structures and capacity, and that job titles may also differ between

local areas but for the purpose of this document we will refer to the role as SAB Business Manager.

1. Welcome and Purpose

Welcome to your role as **Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Business Manager** and to the wider safeguarding partnership.

This induction pack complements your organisation's corporate induction by focusing specifically on your role within the SAB and the multi-agency safeguarding system. Starting a new role can feel complex, particularly in a partnership environment, and this guide is designed to help you feel confident, connected and clear in your responsibilities.

Using This Pack

This induction pack has been developed to support local areas and to provide a helpful starting point for those in the Business Manager role. It is **not mandated** and does not replace local arrangements or expectations.

We fully recognise that there is significant variation across the country in terms of roles, responsibilities, structures and capacity. As such, this pack should be used with that in mind and adapted to reflect your local context if you choose to use it.

Use the content flexibly—dip in and out of sections as needed, drawing on what is most relevant to your role and local priorities. It is intended as both a practical guide and an ongoing reference point to support your day-to-day work.

Purpose of this Pack

This pack will support you to:

- Understand the statutory role and function of the SAB – [Care Act 2024](#) and [Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(Chapter 14\)](#)
- Develop strong **governance and operational oversight**
- Build effective **multi-agency partnerships**
- Enable the Chair and Board to **deliver strategic priorities and drive improvement**

Your Role

As Business Manager, you are central to the success of the SAB. You provide the structure, coordination and insight that enables the Chair and partners to work effectively together, deliver assurance, and make a meaningful difference to people's lives.

The role brings together key functions including governance, performance, safeguarding adults reviews, partnership development, and system coordination.

Developing in Role

While this pack outlines the core functions of the Business Manager role, it is important to recognise that the role often develops over time. In many areas, Business Managers take on a broader system leadership function—contributing to regional and national work, leading multi-agency improvement activity, supporting workforce development, and influencing policy and practice beyond the local Board. *(Please see Section 11 for further information on Regional and National Connections.)*

The scope of the role will vary depending on local context, capacity and ambition. This pack should therefore be seen as a starting point, supporting both your initial transition into the role and your ongoing development.

The Importance of your Wellbeing, Supervision and Self-Care

Business Managers working in safeguarding are often exposed to complex and sensitive issues, making it essential to prioritise wellbeing.

Regular supervision provides a valuable space for reflection, support and managing the impact of the role, as well as ensuring continued professional development.

Alongside this, it is important to actively practise self-care, maintain healthy boundaries and seek support when needed.

Business Managers should also familiarise themselves with their organisation's wellbeing offer, such as employee assistance programmes or occupational health services, to help sustain resilience and effectiveness in their role.

2. Role Overview

Core Purpose

To lead and coordinate the business, governance, and delivery functions of the SAB, ensuring statutory duties are met and high-quality safeguarding outcomes are achieved.

Key Responsibilities

- Governance and Board management
- Strategic planning and delivery monitoring
- Co-ordination of Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)
- Performance, data and quality assurance

- Partnership coordination and engagement
- Supporting the Independent Chair
- Collation of the annual/bi-annual safeguarding self-assessment
- Have oversight of the development of the Annual Report
- Manage and have oversight of the local SAB budget including producing budget reports with support from finance officer and Senior Leadership (who this may be can vary depending on your local arrangements)

This role operates within a strategic, partnership environment rather than an operational one, requiring strong collaboration, professional communication, and effective management of priorities and visibility across agencies. It also involves confidently navigating challenge and conflict, balancing different perspectives, and supporting constructive, solution-focused discussions to maintain effective partnership working.

While the Business Manager role is often hosted or funded by a Local Authority (however, it needs to be acknowledged that this may vary depending on your individual areas arrangements and your individual job description), it is important to recognise that the role operates on behalf of the Safeguarding Adults Board as a whole, rather than any single agency.

You will need to maintain a clear focus on supporting the priorities of the Board and the wider partnership, ensuring that your time is used in a way that reflects collective ownership and accountability. This includes being confident in constructively challenging requests that may disproportionately favour the interests of one partner over the agreed priorities of the Board.

Maintaining this balance is key to ensuring the integrity, effectiveness and independence of the role, and supports strong, transparent partnership working across the safeguarding system.

3. Statutory Responsibilities and Your Role

Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs) are established under the **Care Act 2014** and are responsible for ensuring that local safeguarding arrangements are effective. Their statutory duties include:

- Developing and publishing a **Strategic Plan**
- Producing an **Annual Report**
- Commissioning **Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)** where criteria are met

These responsibilities are delivered through strong partnership working, with statutory partners sharing collective accountability for safeguarding outcomes.

Your Role as SAB Business Manager

As the **Business Manager**, you play a pivotal role in enabling the Board to meet its statutory responsibilities. While the Independent Chair provides strategic leadership, you ensure the infrastructure, coordination and oversight are in place for the Board to function effectively and demonstrate impact.

In this role, you will:

- Support delivery and monitoring of the SAB's statutory duties
- Maintain clear, robust and compliant governance arrangements
- Coordinate partner contributions to deliver the Strategic Plan
- Enable effective reporting, constructive challenge and assurance at Board level
- Support the Chair to drive priorities, oversight of risk, and performance

You are not responsible for operational safeguarding delivery within partner agencies. However, you provide essential system leadership—bringing partners together, maintaining clarity of purpose, and supporting the Board to evidence its effectiveness.

Your confidence and expertise will grow over time through experience, reflection, and engagement with partners.

Legislative Framework

The work of the SAB is underpinned by key legislation and statutory guidance. You are not expected to have detailed legal expertise, but a working understanding will support effective governance and decision-making.

Key frameworks include:

- [Care Act 2014](#) (including Section 42 and SAB duties)
- [Care and Support Statutory Guidance](#)
- [Mental Capacity Act 2005](#)
- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)
- **Data protection and information-sharing guidance**

Your understanding will develop through reading, observation, and active participation in Board activity.

Core Statutory Outputs

Strategic Plan (Care Act requirement)

The Strategic Plan must:

- Set out how the SAB will meet its objectives and safeguard adults locally

- Be informed by needs analysis, learning (including SARs), and partner intelligence

Annual Report (Care Act requirement)

The Annual Report must include:

- What the SAB has done during the year
- What each partner has contributed
- Evidence of impact and improvement
- Findings from SARs and resulting actions
- Examples of best practice and achievements

The report must be published and shared with key system leaders (e.g. Health and Wellbeing Boards and Scrutiny Committees).

Style and presentation may vary across SABs nationally; however, it is essential that all statutory requirements are met as set out in the Care and Support Statutory Guidance.

4. Keeping the Voice of the Adult Central

The voice of the adult is central to all safeguarding activity and should underpin the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board. While much of the Business Manager role focuses on governance, processes and assurance, it is important to ensure that the experiences, views and outcomes of adults with care and support needs remain visible within this work.

This means looking beyond data and performance measures to consider what they tell us about people's lived experiences. As you develop in your role, you will support the Board to ensure that the voice of the adult is reflected in reports, Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs), audits and learning activity.

You are not expected to gather this information directly, but you play a key role in ensuring it is captured, considered, and used to inform improvement. Central to this is the principle of *Making Safeguarding Personal*, which emphasises understanding what matters to the adult and the outcomes they want to achieve through safeguarding.

Maintaining a focus on the lived experience of the adult helps ensure that the work of the Board remains person-centred, outcome-focused, and responsive to individual needs. This approach supports a shift from process-driven activity to one that prioritises meaningful engagement, personal outcomes, and continuous learning to improve practice.

5. Getting Familiar with Key Documents

Spending time getting familiar with key documents will help you build a strong foundation in your role. These documents provide essential context about how the Board operates, its priorities, and how effectiveness and impact are measured. You do not need to absorb everything at once—use them as reference points and revisit them as your understanding develops.

The following documents are particularly helpful to review during your first few weeks:

Governance

- SAB Constitution / Terms of Reference
- Sub-group Terms of Reference
- Scheme of delegation

Strategy and Planning

- Current Strategic Plan
- Annual Reports (last 2 years)
- Business / delivery plans

Assurance and Quality

- Quality Assurance Framework
- Performance dashboards and reports
- SAB Risk Register

Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)

- Recent SARs and action plans
- SAR policy and procedures
- Essential Guide to SARs

Data and Intelligence

- [Safeguarding Adults Collection \(SAC\)](#)
- Local performance data and benchmarking

6. Understanding the System

Developing a clear picture of the governance and how safeguarding operates locally will support you to be effective in your role; this understanding will develop over time as you observe meetings, review information, and build relationships across the partnership.

Key Partnerships include:

- Local Authorities (including Adult Social Care leadership)
- Those areas with District Councils in two-tier areas (key partners in housing, prevention and community-based safeguarding)
- Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Police
- Fire and Rescue Service
- Ambulance Service
- Providers and commissioned services
- Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations

Wider Strategic System Links

- Community Safety Partnership
- Children's Safeguarding Partnership
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Domestic Abuse Partnerships/Boards

Key Safeguarding Pathways

Please note that these arrangements may vary locally and may not all be in place within your area.

- MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) – names can vary nationally
- MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)
- Self-neglect
- Hoarding
- Transitional safeguarding
- Complex safeguarding (e.g. exploitation, cuckooing)
- Homelessness

7. Key Relationships

Building relationships early on is key to feeling confident and effective in your role. However, there is no expectation to meet everyone immediately—prioritise key relationships first and build connections over time.

Priority Relationships needed:

- SAB Independent Chair
- Board members (particularly statutory partners)
- Sub-group Chairs
- Director of Adult Social Services (DASS)
- Commissioning leads
- Principal Social Worker (PSW)

Wider Engagement:

- Partnership leads across the safeguarding system
- Provider forums and stakeholders
- Public Health, Community Safety and Children's Partnerships
- Local Coroner's Office – there is [National SAB Guidance on the Interface between SARs and Coronial Processes](#) that would be beneficial to read prior to engagement with your local coroner's office.

8. Governance and Business Management

A core part of your role is ensuring that the SAB operates as a well-governed, transparent and effective partnership. This is about more than administration—it is about creating the conditions for strong leadership, constructive challenge and clear accountability across the system.

You will not be expected to refine or redesign everything immediately. A key first step is to understand how governance currently operates—what works well, where there are gaps, and how partners engage. From there, you can begin to identify opportunities to strengthen and improve arrangements over time.

Your role is to bring structure, consistency and clarity to the Board's work, ensuring that decision-making is well-evidenced, priorities are progressed, and outcomes are clearly tracked and reported.

Board Management

You will lead the day-to-day coordination of Board business, ensuring that meetings are purposeful, well-structured and aligned to strategic priorities.

Effective forward planning is essential to ensuring strong attendance and engagement at Board and sub-group meetings. As Business Manager, you should aim to establish a **clear annual cycle and forward plan**, with key meetings scheduled at least 12 months in advance wherever possible.

This level of planning supports senior leaders to prioritise attendance, reduces the need for short-notice meetings, and contributes to more consistent and effective partnership working.

This includes:

- Developing a **forward plan** and annual business cycle to structure the Board's work
- Working closely with the Chair to **shape agendas** that focus on priorities, risk and assurance
- Coordinating **high-quality Board papers**, ensuring reports are clear, concise and outcome-focused
- Ensuring **decision-making is transparent**, with clear recording of actions, rationale and next steps
- Maintaining a clear **audit trail** to evidence how the Board is fulfilling its statutory role

Over time, your influence will help shift Board meetings from information-sharing towards analysis, challenge and impact.

Sub-groups

Most SAB business is progressed through sub-groups (and (task and finish groups). Your role is to ensure these operate effectively and remain aligned to the Board's priorities.

This includes:

- Maintaining **clear reporting lines** into the SAB, with consistent escalation of risks and issues
- Monitoring delivery of **sub-group workplans**, ensuring progress is tracked and reported
- Supporting sub-group Chairs to maintain focus, clarity and momentum where needed

- Ensuring that sub-group activity contributes meaningfully to the **Strategic Plan** and overall assurance

Well-functioning sub-groups are critical to the Board’s effectiveness—they are where much of the detailed work and partnership activity takes place.

Documentation and Record-Keeping

Strong governance relies on accurate, accessible and well-managed documentation.

You will:

- Maintain **clear and accurate records** of meetings, including minutes, actions and decisions
- Ensure **document control**, with version management and consistent storage
- Support accessibility, so partners can easily locate and use key documents
- Provide evidence of the Board’s activity, challenge and impact when required
- Good record-keeping is essential not only for transparency, but also for demonstrating accountability and learning over time.

Typical SAB Annual Cycle

While each SAB will operate slightly differently, most follow a broad annual cycle linked to statutory requirements and planning activity:

Quarter 1

- Finalise the **Annual Report**
- Publish and disseminate findings to partners and key stakeholders

Quarter 2

- Review or refresh the **Strategic Plan**
- Support **partnership priority setting** based on emerging risks, data and learning

Quarter 3

- Undertake a **mid-year performance review**
- Assess progress against priorities and identify any areas requiring additional focus
- Financial Planning

Quarter 4

- Provide **delivery plan assurance**

- Begin drafting the next **Annual Report**, drawing together evidence of impact and learning

This cycle helps ensure that the Board remains focused on continuous improvement, learning and accountability throughout the year.

9. Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)

Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) are a key part of the Board's statutory responsibilities and play an important role in understanding how local systems can better protect adults at risk.

As Business Manager, you will depending on your local arrangement lead or support the coordination and oversight of SAR processes. This includes helping to ensure that reviews are well-managed, learning is captured meaningfully, and—most importantly—that learning leads to real improvements in practice.

When starting in role, it can be helpful to take time to understand how SARs are currently managed locally. Reviewing recent SARs, action plans and how learning has been implemented will give you valuable insight into the strengths of the system as well as areas for development.

You are not expected to be an expert immediately. Over time, you will develop confidence in managing SAR processes, working with reviewers, and supporting the Board to use learning as a driver for change across partner agencies.

Please remember - there is a national [Essential Guide to Safeguarding Adult Reviews \(SARs\)](#) which can support local partnerships in delivering high-quality, consistent approaches to learning and improvement.

There is also the [CLEAR framework \(Learning to Impact\)](#) provides practice guidance to support the effective implementation of learning, helping partnerships translate Safeguarding Adults Review findings into meaningful improvement.

Responsibilities

- Coordinate SAR referrals and decision-making processes
- Commission and manage reviewers
- Oversee delivery of SARs and reports
- Monitor action plans and learning implementation

Learning and Impact

- Ensure dissemination of learning
- Track evidence of practice change

- Integrate SAR learning into strategic priorities

10. Performance and Assurance

Performance and assurance are central to the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board, providing confidence that partners are working effectively together to protect adults at risk.

In your role as Business Manager, you will help bring together different sources of information—such as data, audit findings, and partner reports—to build a clear picture of how well the safeguarding system is working.

When you first start, focus on understanding the current performance framework, what information is reported to the Board, and how this supports challenge, learning and improvement. Over time, you will develop confidence in identifying key themes, highlighting risks, and supporting the Board to ask the right questions of partners.

This area of work is not just about data, but about developing meaningful insight. Your role will be to help ensure that performance information is used effectively to drive improvement, strengthen accountability, and ultimately improve outcomes for adults with care and support needs.

Key Functions

- Manage performance framework
- Analyse safeguarding data
- Provide insight to Board on risks and trends

Performance data is most meaningful when considered in context. It is important to ensure that local data is **benchmarked against regional and national comparators**, enabling the Board to understand variation, identify areas for improvement, and recognise good practice.

You should support the development of a **broad and balanced performance framework**, avoiding reliance on a small number of recurring metrics. Instead, data should align with local priorities and strategic objectives, with clear measures, targets and regular tracking of progress to demonstrate impact and drive improvement.

Assurance

- Support development of multi-agency audits
- Ensure triangulation of data, practice and feedback

- Provide evidence-based reporting to Board

Strategic Plan and Delivery

The Business Manager plays a critical role not just in coordinating activity, but in driving delivery and accountability against the SAB's Strategic Plan.

While the Strategic Plan sets the Board's overarching direction, it is the Delivery Plan that translates this into tangible action. You will lead the development and ongoing management of this plan, ensuring that priorities are actively progressed and impact can be clearly demonstrated.

Your role in delivery

You will:

- Lead the development of an annual Delivery Plan aligned to the Strategic Plan
- Ensure a clear line of sight between:
 - Priorities → Outcomes → Measures → Accountable leads
 - Embed key sources of learning and intelligence, including:
 - Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) findings
 - Performance data and emerging themes
 - Adults and lived experience insights

Your role is to ensure that the plan moves beyond intent and into measurable system change.

A practical delivery model

- To support consistency and accountability, Delivery Plans should follow a simple, transparent structure:

• Priority	• Outcome	• Measure	• Lead Agency	• RAG Status
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This approach ensures:

- Clarity about what success looks like
- Named accountability across partners
- Regular tracking of progress and risk
- A shared understanding of delivery across the partnership

Training, Learning and Workforce Development

A core function of the Safeguarding Adults Board is to ensure there is a strong, effective and accessible **multi-agency training and development offer**. This should support practitioners and partners to develop the knowledge, skills and confidence required to work effectively with adults at risk.

As Business Manager, you will play a key role in **commissioning, coordinating and assuring the quality and impact of safeguarding training**, ensuring it reflects local priorities and learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs), audits and performance activity. Over time, you may also contribute directly to the development or delivery of training sessions, workshops or learning events.

It is important that training is not delivered in isolation, but forms part of a **wider learning and improvement framework**, ensuring that insights from SARs and other review activity are translated into practice and embedded across the partnership.

Annual Report

The Annual Report is a core statutory requirement and a key mechanism for demonstrating the SAB's impact, effectiveness and system leadership.

Your role extends beyond oversight—you are central to the production, quality assurance and credibility of the report.

Your responsibilities

You will:

- Develop and manage the annual reporting timetable
- Coordinate partner contributions, setting clear expectations and templates
- Ensure the report demonstrates:
 - Impact, not just activity
 - Evidence of system change, including learning from SARs
- Draft and/or quality assure the full report to support Chair sign-off
- Plan publication and dissemination, ensuring findings reach partners, leaders and stakeholders

A strong Annual Report tells a clear story: what has changed, why it matters, and how the system is improving.

Performance and the “Golden Thread”

An effective performance framework underpins both delivery and reporting.

It must:

- Directly evidence progress against the Strategic Plan
- Provide a strong evidence base for the Annual Report

As Business Manager, you are responsible for maintaining the “golden thread”:

Strategic Plan → Delivery Plan → Performance → Annual Report

This ensures alignment, consistency and credibility across all SAB activity.

Driving quality and accountability

In this role, you will:

- Ensure partners provide robust evidence, not purely descriptive updates
- Identify and escalate gaps in delivery, contribution or impact to the Chair where required
- Support transparent reporting, including areas of weakness or limited progress
- Enable a culture of constructive challenge, ensuring the Board remains focused on improvement

This is a key leadership aspect of the role. You are not just coordinating information—you are helping the Board to hold the system to account and demonstrate real impact for people at risk of abuse or neglect.

11. Regional and National Connections

Building connections beyond your local area is an important part of the Business Manager role. Regional and national networks provide valuable opportunities to share learning, gain insight into emerging themes, and understand how other areas are approaching similar challenges.

As you settle into your role, linking in with these networks will help you feel supported and less isolated, particularly in what can often be a small team or standalone function. These connections can also provide a helpful space to test ideas, seek advice, and benchmark your local arrangements against others.

There is no expectation to engage with everything immediately—start by identifying the key networks relevant to your role and priorities, and build your involvement over time.

Engaging in regional and national forums will support your professional development, strengthen your practice, and help ensure your Board remains informed and connected to wider safeguarding developments.

11.1 National Networks and Peer Support

As a SAB Business Manager, you are part of a wider **national and regional network of professionals** undertaking similar roles. These networks provide valuable opportunities for learning, support and consistency of practice across the country.

National and regional networks are held **periodically throughout the year** and typically take two forms:

- **Formal network meetings** with a structured agenda, often focused on key policy updates, emerging safeguarding themes, and shared learning (including from Safeguarding Adults Reviews)
- **Informal information-sharing sessions or “catch-ups”**, providing space to discuss challenges, exchange ideas and sense-check approaches with peers

These forums are an important source of:

- Up-to-date information on **national policy and practice developments**
- Shared solutions to common challenges in governance, performance and delivery
- Opportunities to learn from **innovation and good practice** across other SABs
- Professional support and peer connection

Engagement in these networks will support your development in the role and help ensure your Board remains aligned with **national expectations and emerging best practice**.

Networks

- Regional SAB Business Manager network (this may vary across the country)
- National SAB networks

Key Resources

- [National Network for Chairs of Adult Safeguarding Boards](#)
- [National Network of SAB Chairs](#) – there are a range of resources available here including the SAR Escalation Protocol, National SAB Guidance on the Interface between SARs and Coronial Processes, Essential Guide to SARs, National Care Act Checklist etc.

- [SAB Manager Network](#)
- [Partners in Health \(LGA\)](#)
- [Research in Practice](#)
- [Ann Craft Trust](#)

12. First 30–60–90 Day Checklist

The first few months are about **building understanding, relationships and insight**. You are not expected to make immediate changes—focus first on learning how the Board currently operates, then begin to identify opportunities for improvement.

First 30 Days — Orientation and Insight

- ☐ Meet key stakeholders across the partnership
- ☐ Arrange regular 1:1s with your line manager and immediate team (in line with local policy)
- ☐ Review core SAB documents (e.g. Strategic Plan, Annual Report, governance structures, SARs)
- ☐ Review SAB Budgets/meet with relevant finance officer who has oversight of the budget
- ☐ Observe Board and sub-group meetings to understand dynamics and culture
- ☐ Develop an understanding of current **priorities, risks and system pressures**
- ☐ Make contact with your **local Coroner's Office** to establish relationships and understand local processes

30–60 Days — Analysis and Early Influence

- ☐ Map current delivery against the **Strategic Plan**
- ☐ Review and assess the **Delivery Plan structure and effectiveness**

Identify any gaps in:

- Governance arrangements
- Performance framework
- SAR processes and learning implementation
- Review the **Annual Report production process**, including timelines, partner input and quality

- Begin to strengthen reporting and assurance, focusing on clarity and impact

60–90 Days — Embedding and Improvement

- ☐ Embed a clear **forward plan and governance cycle**
- ☐ Support the Chair to sharpen **strategic focus and oversight**
- ☐ Improve visibility and quality of **performance reporting and impact evidence**
- ☐ Identify and begin to implement improvements in:
- ☐ **Annual reporting quality** (clearer narrative on impact and system change)
- ☐ **Delivery plan clarity** (stronger alignment between priorities, outcomes and measures)
- ☐ **Evidence of impact** (moving from activity reporting to demonstrable change)

13. Practical Checklist

Immediately Required

- ☐ Access to systems, files, meeting schedules and emails
- ☐ Familiarise yourself with the Governance Structure
- ☐ Contact list of Board partners

Early Priorities

- ☐ Understand SAR policy and pathway
- ☐ Review SAB risk register
- ☐ Confirm reporting templates and expectations

Ongoing Focus

- ☐ Maintain strong partner engagement
- ☐ Ensure Board effectiveness
- ☐ Drive continuous improvement

14. Suggested Success Measures

You will know you are effective when:

- The Board operates in a structured and timely way
- Partners are engaged and accountable
- Performance information is clear and used effectively
- SAR learning leads to demonstrable improvement
- The Chair is well-supported and able to provide effective leadership

15. Support and Development

- Identify mentoring or buddy arrangements – nationally, regionally or locally
- Attend regional and national forums
- Engage in continuous professional development