

Role and responsibilities of the consultant reviewer

Although consultant reviewers may have a different employment status to other reviewers, each of them is a full member of the joint review team. The consultant reviewer participates in all the key information-sharing and decision-making meetings.

Their role is to:

- provide specific expertise in looking at particular areas within the evaluative framework;
- complement the skills and knowledge available within the review team;
- provide an element of challenge to the review team, acting as one of the safeguards that help to ensure fair play and a focus on key issues.

In some circumstances, the operations manager for joint review in either SSIW or WAO may fulfil this role.

The individual remit for each consultant reviewer is negotiated with the relevant operations manager in WAO or SSIW and the lead reviewer. This may involve taking responsibility for evaluating a specific service area but it is more likely that their work will focus on the way in which the local authority provides overall direction for social services. Therefore, the time of the consultant reviewer will tend to be used for meetings with key corporate and political representatives and for analysis of other relevant evidence.

Likely allocation of time

- pre-fieldwork reading and briefing -3 days;
- analysis of broad phase fieldwork - 2 days;

- participation in detailed phase fieldwork - 5 days;
- final analysis - 2 days
- contribution to the report 2 days
- feedback meetings 1 day.