

Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)

INTRODUCTION

The following principles have been drawn up in partnership by trade unions and professional organisations which collectively represent over 4 million members who will be affected by the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) Vetting and Barring scheme. We strongly support and advocate safe and effective public protection, and our principles seek to reflect this, but also identify areas of concern surrounding the approach and implementation of the scheme.

These principles are supported by Aspect, Association for College Management, Association of Teachers and Lecturers, British Association of Occupational Therapy, British Dietetic Association, British Orthoptic Society Trade Union, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, Community and District Nursing Association, Fire Brigades Union, GMB, Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association, Managers in Partnership, National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers, Napo, National Union of Teachers, Royal College of Midwives, Royal College of Nursing, Society of Chiropractors and Podiatrists, Society of Radiographers, Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru, UNISON, Unite and University and College Union.

Principles

1. Robust and effective national and cross-border mechanisms must ensure public protection across the UK. The role and remit of existing regulatory bodies and the ISA and the relationship between these organisations should be clearly defined.
2. There should be no duplication of regulatory mechanisms that would lead to over-regulation. Clear arrangements should exist for the secure transfer of relevant information between existing regulators, employers and ISA.
3. Individuals should not have to pay twice for public protection. All set up and running costs associated with ISA should be met by employers and/or governments. Individual employees should not have to fund the proposed ISA fee; in particular we believe that the £64.00 registration fee in England and Wales, and £58 in Northern Ireland (fee in Scotland as yet to be announced) if applied, will have a disproportionate impact on low paid women workers and those working part-time.
4. The barring process should adhere to the principles of natural justice and all relevant legislation and not on unproven allegations. This must include the right of individuals to a fair hearing, appeal and to be provided with specific details about charges and relevant supporting information. An individual who suffers loss or damage as a result of a mistake is entitled to seek compensation.
5. Information and data in respect of all ISA processes must be secure and the systems in place must have the confidence of all those who work with vulnerable adults and children.
6. ISA systems and process must not, even unintentionally, deter or disincentivise appropriate individuals from seeking roles that will involve working with or caring for vulnerable adults or children.
7. ISA systems and process should be subject to equality and diversity impact assessment.

