| Police Scotland logo | Freedom of Information Response Our reference: FOI 25-1365  Responded to: 14 May 2025 |
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Your recent request for information is replicated below, together with our response.

Tackling domestic abuse is a priority for Police Scotland and we are committed to working with our partners to reduce the harm it causes and ultimately eradicate it.

Domestic abuse is a despicable and debilitating crime which affects all of our communities and has no respect for ability, age, ethnicity, gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Police Scotland will not tolerate it.

Police Scotland will proactively target perpetrators and support victims to prevent domestic abuse from damaging the lives of victims and their families.

Police Scotland defines domestic abuse as:

“Any form of physical, verbal, sexual, psychological or financial abuse which might amount to criminal conduct and which takes place within the context of a relationship. The relationship will be between partners (married, cohabiting, civil partnership or otherwise) or ex-partners. The abuse may be committed in the home or elsewhere including online”

Please note that the definition of Domestic abuse in Scotland differs from the definition of Domestic Violence in England and Wales which includes wider familial abuse e.g. from parents or children etc.

**Given the reasons to avoid leading and suggestive questions, what is the Police Scotland policy or approach to asking the Domestic Abuse Questions (DAQ) which are suggestive and leading, either prior to, or following a SOLO VRI and how are the 2 approaches consistent or balanced?**

When someone is experiencing domestic abuse, it is vital to make an accurate and fast assessment of the danger they are in so they can get the appropriate help as quickly as possible.

The Domestic Abuse Questions (DAQ) are a tried and tested set of questions used to identify, assess and help manage risk in a standardised framework.

The DAQ structures and informs decisions already being made by officers. It acts as a guide and does not provide an absolute measure of risk using cut off scores. Identification and assessment of risk is not a predictive process and there is no existing accurate procedure to calculate or foresee which cases may result in further harm. Rather, risk identification and assessment is based on structured professional judgement.

The answers to the DAQ will support the measures which require to be put in place for safeguarding the victim/s welfare. It is intended for professionals, including our partner agencies and aims to provide a consistent understanding of risk across professions.

The DAQ are based on the Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse, Domestic Abuse Stalking and Harassment (CADDA DASH) questions that are used in England and Wales and also by third sector agencies such as Women’s Aid and ASSIST. The DAQ adds an additional three questions to the DASH regarding child protection.

The DASH can be found on the following link.

<https://safelives.org.uk/resources-for-professionals/dash-resources/>

In summary, the DAQs are for the purpose of conducting a risk assessment for the victim/s.

A SOLO VRI is an interview carried out by specially trained officers investigating complaints of serious sexual crime in order to obtain evidence from a victim.  The victim/s in these offences may or may not be in an abusive domestic relationship.

Both approaches are consistent and balanced.

If you require any further assistance, please contact us quoting the reference above.

You can request a review of this response within the next 40 working days by [email](mailto:foi@scotland.police.uk) or by letter (Information Management - FOI, Police Scotland, Clyde Gateway, 2 French Street, Dalmarnock, G40 4EH). Requests must include the reason for your dissatisfaction.

If you remain dissatisfied following our review response, you can appeal to the Office of the Scottish Information Commissioner (OSIC) within 6 months - [online](https://www.foi.scot/appeal), by [email](mailto:enquiries@foi.scot) or by letter (OSIC, Kinburn Castle, Doubledykes Road, St Andrews, KY16 9DS).

Following an OSIC appeal, you can appeal to the Court of Session on a point of law only.

This response will be added to our [Disclosure Log](http://www.scotland.police.uk/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/disclosure-log) in seven days' time.

Every effort has been taken to ensure our response is as accessible as possible. If you require this response to be provided in an alternative format, please let us know.