

Justice and Community Safety Directorate

Suitability

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Once the Restorative Justice Unit (RJU) receives a referral from a referring entity for an offence, the referral is allocated to a convenor. The convenor is responsible for assessing and preparing the victims, offenders and supporters.

Prior to a conference, the convenor assesses and prepares each potential participant. This often takes more than one meeting. The assessment process seeks to:

- explain RJ and inform the participant of any implications that their participation may have on the management of criminal proceedings;
- discuss the participant's perception of the offence, the impact it has had on them and others and explore what they think needs to happen to make things better;
- determine their suitability to participate in a conference; and
- obtain informed consent from each suitable person to participate in a conference.

When considering the suitability of a referral, the RJU takes into account a number of general and personal factors surrounding the offence. These include:

- each participant's personal characteristics;
- each participant's motivation for taking part in RJ;
- the impact of the offence as perceived by each participant;
- the nature of the offence, including the level of harm caused and any violence involved;
- the appropriateness of RJ at the current stage of the criminal justice process;
- any potential power imbalances between the people who are to take part in RJ; and
- the physical and psychological safety of anyone who is to take part in RJ.

If a matter is found suitable, a [conference](#) will be organised.

If a matter is found not suitable the referring entity, the victim and offender is notified. The referring entity will then make a decision on what to do next.