

STREAMLINED WITNESS STATEMENT INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Application to the Scottish Redress Scheme | Target interview time: 45-60 minutes

How to keep the call within one hour: Prefill dates, placements and record-based information before the call. Ask the short core questions first. Only use the detailed prompt bank where the client identifies that type of harm. Do not read every example aloud. Where the same pattern occurred at more than one institution, record what was the same and ask only what was different. At 55 minutes, finish the current incident, complete the welfare check and record any follow-up action rather than rushing sensitive evidence.

Suggested time plan

Stage	Target time	Approach
Opening and consent	3 minutes	Confirm welfare, control of the meeting and consent.
Background and entry into care	7 minutes	Ask once for the whole statement, not for each placement.
Chronology	5 minutes	Confirm the prefilled placement list and correct any gaps.
Placements and harm	25-30 minutes	Use one compact placement sheet per institution; relevant prompts only.
Impact, support and evidence	10-12 minutes	Ask once across the whole life course.
Reason for applying and close	3-5 minutes	Final information and welfare check.

Client and application details - prefill before the call

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Applicant full name	Angela Cross
Date of birth	22d May 1967
Current address	44 Woodburn Bank Dalkeith EH22 2EY
Application reference	APP639700
Statement taker / interviewer	Leah Pearson - Claims Handle
Date and method of meeting	31st July 2026 - 14:30
Legal representative / organisation	MMA Legal
Known support needs or adjustments	N/A

1. Opening and consent

Suggested opening: You are in control of this meeting. You may take a break, skip a question or ask me to reword anything. Some questions may be upsetting because they concern your time in care and its impact.

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Are you comfortable and happy to continue today?	
Do you need anyone with you, a break or any other adjustment?	
Do you understand the purpose of the statement and agree that it may be used for your Scottish Redress application and supporting evidence?	

2. Personal background and entry into care

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Where did you grow up, and who lived with you before care?	
What was home life like before care? Include any family, health, education or social work difficulties that are relevant.	
How did you come to enter care, who made the decision, and were you told why?	
Did you have siblings, and were you separated from any of them?	
How old were you when you first entered care, and how did you feel at the time?	
Is there anything important about your childhood health, learning needs, vulnerability or name history that should be recorded?	

3. Care placement chronology - confirm rather than rebuild on the call

Efficiency rule: Use records to prefill this table. Read the list back to the client and ask whether anything is missing or incorrect. A return home may be included where it helps explain the sequence.

No.	Care setting / institution	Location	Approx. dates / age	Placing authority	Notes / source
1	Entered care	Inverness	1969 - 2+	Highland Council	Through psychology reports; severe physical and emotional abuse by mother.
2	Rosedene	Inverness	7th June 1979 12 Left: 29th June 1981	Highland Council	Confirmed by Highland Council institutional register
3	Hawthornbrae Children's Home	Edinburgh	15th March 1982	Highland Council	Reason recorded as lack of parental care and breakdown of home placement.
4	Fostered	Edinburgh	15th August 1983	Highland Council	Recorded the day after a self-poisoning entry.

No.	Care setting / institution	Location	Approx. dates / age	Placing authority	Notes / source
5	Demitted to father and stepmother	Inverness	5th September 1983	Highland Council	Supervision terminated; record states she decided to live with her father.
6	Returned Hawthornbrae	Edinburgh	September 1983	Highland Council	Later correspondence refers to her return and readmission in September.
7	Left care for temporary accommodation	Edinburgh	January 1984 16	Highland Council	Placement considered no longer appropriate; suitable alternative accommodation was not guaranteed.

4. Compact placement sheet - complete one per institution

Placement interview rule: Aim for 5-7 minutes per institution. Start with the combined harm question. Tick the relevant categories and use only the matching prompts on the next page. Obtain one clear example per relevant type, plus the most serious incident if different.

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Institution name, location, approximate dates / age and who placed you there	
What type of setting was it, and how long were you there?	
In a few sentences, what was ordinary daily life like: accommodation, routines, school/work, food, clothing, hygiene and contact with family?	
How did staff and other children generally treat you? Were there rules, punishments, isolation or unsafe arrangements?	
Did anything happen there that you now consider abuse, neglect or harmful? ☐ Sexual ☐ Physical ☐ Emotional ☐ Neglect ☐ Other	
Who was involved or responsible? Include names, roles, descriptions, staff or other children where remembered.	
Give one clear example of what happened. Where and when did it occur, and what happened before, during and afterwards?	
How often did this happen, over what period, and did it change or become worse?	
What immediate effects did you experience: pain/injury, fear, shame, sleep problems, bedwetting, running away, behaviour or school changes?	
Did anyone witness it, know about it, or experience something similar?	

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Did you tell anyone or try to get help? What response did you receive? If not, why not?	
What was different at this placement compared with the others?	

5. Conditional harm prompt bank - use only when relevant

Trauma-informed use: These are prompts, not a script. Ask the category heading first. Use examples only if the client needs help understanding the question. Do not ask for graphic detail that is unnecessary to explain what occurred.

Category	Use only where the client identifies this type of harm
Sexual abuse	Unwanted sexual touching or exposure; sexual comments/images; being made to watch; pressure or force to take part; attempted or actual penetration/oral activity/masturbation; photography or filming; grooming, gifts, threats or secrecy; number of people involved and approximate frequency/duration.
Physical abuse	Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, shaking, throwing, restraint, locking in, exposure to cold or water, denial of food or toilet access, or use of an object. Record injuries/pain and whether treatment was provided, needed, hidden or ignored.
Emotional abuse	Threats, humiliation, blame, name-calling, isolation, different treatment, denial of family contact, being made to feel powerless or unwanted, or being forced to witness the abuse or humiliation of others.
Neglect	Inadequate or withheld food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, supervision, safety, medical care, education or emotional support; unsafe confinement; or failure to protect from bullying, violence, sexual harm, older children or unsafe adults.

Placement interview rule: Aim for 5-7 minutes per institution. Start with the combined harm question. Tick the relevant categories and use only the matching prompts on the next page. Obtain one clear example per relevant type, plus the most serious incident if different.

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6. People involved, reporting and institutional knowledge - ask once after all placements

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Across all placements, who were the main people responsible? Record names, nicknames, roles, descriptions or identifying details.	
Were other children affected, and did you witness abuse or harm to anyone else?	
Why do you believe staff or the institution knew, or should have known, what was happening?	
Were complaints discouraged, ignored or punished? Were you moved, threatened or disbelieved?	
Have you ever reported the abuse to police, an inquiry, a professional or any authority? What happened?	

7. Movement between placements and leaving care

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Why did you move between placements, and were the reasons explained?	
Did you run away, refuse to return or ask to be moved? What happened?	
When and at what age did you leave care, and what were your circumstances afterwards?	

8. Impact - ask once for the whole experience

Efficiency rule: Avoid repeating separate impact questions for each institution. Ask how the combined experience affected the client, then identify any placement or incident that had a particular effect.

Question / prompt	Response / notes
How did the experience affect you at the time: safety, trust, confidence, sleep, behaviour, education, relationships or ability to speak up?	
How has it affected your mental health, including anxiety, depression, trauma symptoms, panic, flashbacks, nightmares, self-harm or suicidal thoughts?	
How has it affected physical health, sleep, pain, alcohol or substance use?	
How has it affected relationships, parenting, friendships, intimacy, trust or isolation?	
How has it affected education, work, confidence, opportunities, finances, housing or day-to-day stability?	
Are there triggers, places, smells, authority figures, institutions or situations you avoid?	
What impact has this had on your life overall, and what do you think may have been different if it had not happened?	

9. Support and treatment

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Have you received counselling, therapy, mental health, addiction, GP, hospital or other professional support?	

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Have you been diagnosed with any relevant condition, and have you taken any related medication?	
Are you receiving support now? If you delayed seeking help, what made it difficult?	

10. Evidence and supporting information

Question / prompt	Response / notes
What records may support the statement: care, social work, school, medical, police, counselling, prison/probation, benefits or other records?	
Are there records of injuries, running away, behaviour or school changes, self-harm, substance use, complaints, moves or family contact issues?	
Are there letters, photographs, reports, inquiry evidence, apologies, decisions or previous correspondence?	
Could any sibling, former resident, relative, friend, partner or professional provide a supporting statement?	
Are records missing or incomplete, and has an evidence bundle already been obtained?	

11. Previous claims, applications or payments

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Have you previously made any civil claim, criminal injuries claim, Redress application, complaint, police report, inquiry statement or claim to another scheme about this abuse?	
Did you receive any payment, apology, settlement or decision, or sign any waiver/discharge? Do you have copies?	

12. Reason for applying

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Why are you applying to the Scottish Redress Scheme, and what would you like to come from telling your story?	
What would acknowledgement mean to you?	
Is there anything else you want Redress Scotland to understand about what happened or the harm you have lived with?	

13. Closing and welfare check

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Is there anything important we have not covered, or wording you want handled carefully?	
How are you feeling after discussing this, and do you feel safe to end the call?	
Is there someone you can contact for support, or would you like support service details?	

Question / prompt	Response / notes
Have the next steps been explained?	

Back-office drafting checklist - not asked aloud

Check	Completed
Statement is in the client's own words where possible.	[]
Chronology and each relevant institution are clear.	[]
Relevant abuse/neglect types are identified without unnecessary repetition.	[]
At least one clear example and the most serious incident are recorded.	[]
Frequency, duration, people involved, witnesses and reporting are addressed.	[]
Immediate and long-term impact are addressed once across the whole statement.	[]
Evidence, previous claims/payments and memory gaps are recorded.	[]
Client has reviewed amendments and signed the statement of truth.	[]

Statement of truth / declaration

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true to the best of my knowledge and recollection.

Signed	Name	Date