



The Law Society

## CQS Assessments

As part of membership to the Conveyancing Quality Scheme (CQS), member practices may be subject to an assessment during their membership. The assessment will be desk based initially and may lead to a visit to your practice by a CQS Assessor.

Assessments are a vital part of the Scheme to ensure compliance by members and raise standards. Further, assessments are necessary to maintain and further gain stakeholder support for the Scheme.

### What is the purpose of the assessment?

The purpose of the assessment is to assess the member practice's compliance with the Scheme.

These will be covered by the following three areas:

1. Core Practice Management Standards (CPMS)
2. Adherence to the Law Society Conveyancing Protocol
3. Compliance with the CQS Practice Agreement Obligations.

We may also ask you questions around any other area of concern for us.

### What may we ask from you?

We may ask for information relating to any of the three areas set out above or anything else of concern to us. In relation to each of the above we may ask for the following information;

1. CPMS- we may ask that you send in some or all of your CPMS documentation for us to review.
2. Adherence to the Law Society Conveyancing Protocol- we may ask you some questions for you to respond to.
3. Compliance with CQS Practice Agreement obligations- we may ask you to confirm the following to us (this list is not exhaustive):
  - a) That all relevant persons have completed the mandatory training within the timescale set.
  - b) That the SRO/Practice has reported any staff changes within the timescales set.
  - c) That the SRO/Practice has reported any serious regulatory complaints within the timescales set.
  - d) That the SRO/Practice has provided an update on complaints within the timescale set.
  - e) That the SRO/Practice has reported to the CQS office any plans of a merger.
  - f) That the SRO/Practice has reported to us any change of business model or status.
  - g) That the Practice is using the CQS logo in an appropriate manner.

### **What happens once I have provided this information?**

We will consider the information you have provided to us and determine whether one of the following outcomes to our assessment applies:

- a) Confirm accreditation continues.
- b) Confirm accreditation continues on condition that urgent corrective action is taken within a specific timescale.
- c) Confirm accreditation is on hold pending urgent corrective action.
- d) Revoke membership.
- e) We may decide to refer our assessment to the CQS Assessment Panel for guidance and/or a decision to be made.
- f) Decide that your Practice should have an assessment visit from one of our CQS Assessors.

### **What will happen if my Practice is selected for an assessment visit?**

We write to you explaining why we have decided to take this step, what will happen next and when. One of our CQS Assessors and/or a member of the CQS Team will visit your Practice and speak with the Senior Responsible Officer.

The purpose of the visit may be to gather information pertaining to the 3 core areas as set out above which relate to compliance with the scheme. We may ask the Assessor to complete a file review.

### **My firm has been selected for assessment and I don't think this is right. What can I do?**

We remind you of the Practice's obligations under the Practice Agreement which sets out that the member Practice will:

*'Co-operate with monitoring audits as required on a risk based or random assessment or following concerns raised with the Law Society;'*

and

*'Co-operate with robust enforcement of the Scheme by The Law Society;'*

If you have any queries about the assessments or the CQS please contact the CQS Office on 0207 316 5550 or email [cqs@lawsociety.org.uk](mailto:cqs@lawsociety.org.uk)