



# PRACTICE ASSURANCE VISITS



Your Practice Assurance visit is designed to reassure you that your practice is meeting the requirements of the principles-based Practice Assurance standards, other relevant regulations and the Code of Ethics.

If you have a DPB licence, the visit will also cover how the firm meets the requirements of the *DPB Handbook*.

During the visit, you will also have the opportunity to discuss any other matters regarding your firm.

# PRACTICE ASSURANCE VISITS

## BEFORE THE VISIT

We will phone you usually 7 to 14 days before the visit to answer any questions you may have, and to discuss practical arrangements.

You will need to have ready for review the documents and records listed opposite. Not every document or record listed will necessarily be relevant to your practice.

## THE OPENING MEETING AND REVIEW

Our approach is open and friendly, starting with an opening meeting to gain a general picture of your firm.

Our review varies from firm to firm, but usually covers:

- a sample of client files;
- a sample of fee notes, commission statements, office and client bank account records;
- your professional indemnity insurance policy and proposal form; and
- other matters which might have arisen during the opening meeting.

We do not form judgements on your professional advice or examine your clients' affairs in depth. We concentrate on finding out how your firm demonstrates that it meets the principles-based Practice Assurance standards, other relevant regulations and the Code of Ethics. If you have a DPB licence, we will look at how the firm meets the requirements of the *DPB Handbook*. The standards can be applied in different ways and we consider whether your approach is appropriate for the size and nature of the firm and the work it undertakes.

## THE CLOSING RECORD

After our review, we record our findings and discuss them with you.

The purpose is to discuss:

- any issues that have arisen; and
- your initial thoughts on any actions we may suggest to help your firm.

## YOUR RESPONSE

We ask you to respond in writing to each of the findings within 15 business days. You need to explain what action you plan to take and by what date.

## AFTER THE VISIT

When we receive your response, we complete our working papers which may include a quality control review.

If we have any questions or need additional information, we will give you a ring. We will only be able to close the process once we have received and reviewed your responses.

You will usually receive a letter from us to confirm that your visit has been completed satisfactorily, or to request additional information so that we can close the visit.

In some circumstances, we may need to report matters to the Practice Assurance Committee (PAC) or the Investment Business Committee (IBC). If this happens, we will keep you fully informed and send you a copy of our report for comment before it is considered by a committee.

## COMPLAINTS

There is a formal process for handling complaints. Please write to the director, QAD, if you have any comments about the visit process. If your comments are about the director, QAD, please write to the chief executive at:

ICAEW  
Chartered Accountants' Hall  
Moorgate Place  
London EC2R 6EA UK



## LIST OF DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

This is what you need to prepare and have ready for the visit.

Not every document or record listed will necessarily be relevant to your practice.

## FIRM INFORMATION

- PII policy (including policies for connected entities), most recent renewal/proposal documentation and details of claims history and of any current claims or notifiable events
- Fee protection insurance policy and examples of all documentation sent to clients
- Alternate agreement
- Copies of any promotional or marketing material (eg, newsletters, budget circulars, website)
- Sample of firm's letterhead, fax header and email template

## PERSONNEL INFORMATION

- List of staff and their responsibilities
- CPD records for the current and previous year for principals and qualified staff
- Example of contract of employment
- Subcontractor and consultancy agreements

## ACCOUNTING RECORDS

- List of practice bank accounts and of current mandated signatories
- Bank statements and cashbook (or access to electronic records) for the above accounts for the last six months
- Client bank account statements, cashbook (or access to electronic records) and reconciliations for the last 12 months; trust letter(s) from the bank, details of alternate, and compliance review

- Letters notifying clients of commission received in the last 12 months, and commission statements for the last 12 months
- Fee notes for the last 12 months

## CLIENT RECORDS

- Access to client files

## SELF-MONITORING

- Most recent annual review of compliance with the Clients' Money Regulations
- Most recent review of compliance with the Money Laundering Regulations 2007
- Most recent review of compliance with the Practice Assurance standards
- Most recent annual review of compliance with the *DPB Handbook* (if licensed)

## SOURCES OF INFORMATION

[icaew.com/practice](http://icaew.com/practice)  
[icaew.com/faculties](http://icaew.com/faculties)  
[icaew.com/sigs](http://icaew.com/sigs)  
[icaew.com/helpsheets](http://icaew.com/helpsheets)  
[icaew.com/cpd](http://icaew.com/cpd)  
[icaew.com/pii](http://icaew.com/pii)  
[icaew.com/qad](http://icaew.com/qad)  
[icaew.com/moneylaundering](http://icaew.com/moneylaundering)  
[icaew.com/support](http://icaew.com/support)  
[icaew.com/membershandbook](http://icaew.com/membershandbook)



ICAEW is a founder member of the Global Accounting Alliance, which represents around 775,000 of the world's leading professional accountants in over 165 countries around the globe, to promote quality services, share information and collaborate on important international issues.

As a world-class professional accountancy body, ICAEW provides leadership and practical support to over 134,000 members in more than 160 countries, working with governments, regulators and industry to maintain the highest standards.

Our members provide financial knowledge and guidance based on the highest technical and ethical standards. They are trained to challenge people and organisations to think and act differently, to provide clarity and rigour, and so help create and sustain prosperity. ICAEW ensures these skills are constantly developed, recognised and valued.

**Because of us, people can do business with confidence.**

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