

Practice Assurance Committee

Accountability

1. The Practice Assurance Committee is accountable to the Professional Standards Board.

Composition

2. The Committee normally comprises not fewer than ten members, of whom at least eight must be Institute members and two must be non-accountant members.
3. At least half the accountant members should be drawn from 'unregulated' firms and, together with members from regulated firms, provide broad representation of firms across the size spectrum that are covered by Practice Assurance. At least one member should be a PC holder in a non-member firm.
4. The Committee may not include any person who is a member of the Investigation, Disciplinary or Appeal Committees. Members of Council do not serve on the Committee.

Powers and authorities

5. The Committee is responsible for all operational matters relating to the Practice Assurance scheme.
6. The Committee has the following specific responsibilities:
 - (a) considering reports arising from review visits where serious areas of concern have been identified in the provision of accountancy services to the public, particularly where the firm or Practising Certificate (PC) holder has been unwilling or appears to be unable to rectify them;
 - (b) considering reports on failures by members or firms to comply with their obligations arising from the Practice Assurance Regulations (e.g. to co-operate, etc);
 - (c) indicating to firms or PC holders the action the Committee considers appropriate in the light of the above reports;
 - (d) considering whether to refer a complaint for investigation in accordance with the Disciplinary Bye-laws in the event of failure by a firm or PC holder to take the steps recommended by the Committee or where very serious matters have been reported to the Committee;
 - (e) considering issues where staff require practical advice on such matters as interpretation of the guidance and best and acceptable practice;

- (f) making recommendations to the PSB on matters of policy arising from the above and responding to requests from the PSB for comments on any issues;
- (g) considering issues raised by individual members and firms including any dissatisfaction with the handling of visits or other aspects of the Practice Assurance arrangements.

Modus operandi

7. The Committee will carry out its responsibilities in accordance with the Practice Assurance standards and guidance, the Practice Assurance regulations, any guidance issued by the PSB and within the framework of the general duties and procedural requirements for Committees set out in Annex 6 of the Scheme of Delegations. The Committee may seek advice from any source that it considers appropriate to enable it to discharge its responsibilities.
8. The Committee will normally meet every eight weeks at Chartered Accountants' Hall but may meet more or less frequently on the instructions of the Chairman.
9. The quorum of three members shall include one non-accountant member and at least one member from an 'unregulated' firm.
10. The Committee may delegate its powers to a Sub-committee (for instance to enable urgent matters to be considered promptly). A Sub-committee must include one non-accountant member and at least one member from an 'unregulated' firm.