



# ***Approving the IRB's quality assurance plan***

## **STATUS**

1. For decision.
2. The paper is considered to be confidential as it relates to emerging strategy or policy.  
[Approved by IRB for publication](#)

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

3. Under its terms of reference, the IRB has responsibility for the quality assurance of the Professional Standards Committees.
4. The IRB developed a plan for the quality assurance of the committees in 2017. As some time has passed since the plan was developed and there have been some changes to the governance processes, the plan has been reviewed and updated. As part of the review, feedback was sought from the IRB members and included in the updated plan.
5. The purpose of the paper is to seek the IRB's approval of the updated plan. The views of the IRB are also being sought as to the data they require as part of the quality assurance process and whether any changes should be made to process to review the hearing committees.
6. IRB members may wish to consider if the review timetable for the committees agreed previously remains valid based on their observations of committees this year.
7. A copy of the final plan (and the timetable for committee review), as approved by the IRB will be shared with the chairs of the Professional Standards committees to increase their awareness of the QA programme.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

8. That the IRB
  - a) Approves the quality assurance plan
  - b) Considers the data the IRB requires as part of the quality assurance process,
  - c) Considers whether any adaptations need to be made to review process for the hearing committees, and
  - d) Confirms the current programme to review the committees.

## BACKGROUND

9. Under its terms of reference the IRB has responsibility for the general oversight of the performance of the Professional Standards committees (paragraph 11(e) of the IRB's terms of reference).
10. The IRB's terms of reference also include a commitment to the training of the committee members (paragraph 25 of the IRB's terms of reference). Appraisal of committee members and where necessary performance management and effectiveness review (paragraph 26 of the IRB's terms of reference) has been delegated to the Regulatory & Conduct Appointments Committee (RACAC). Reviewing the structure and membership of the committees of which the IRB has oversight and their training and competence (paragraph 27 of the IRB's terms of reference) is undertaken in conjunction with RACAC.
11. After its most recent quality assurance meeting on 14 September, the IRB agreed that its quality assurance plan should be reviewed and updated
12. Attached at Appendix A is an updated version of the quality assurance plan. The plan has been updated based on feedback received from IRB members after the meeting on 14 September. The plan has also been subject to a general refresh to take into account changes made since the plan was initially devised in 2017. The creation of the RACAC has meant that certain aspects of the plan are now the responsibility of the RACAC.
13. A copy of the final plan (and the timetable for committee review), as approved by the IRB will be shared with the chairs of the Professional Standards committees to increase their awareness of the QA programme.
14. Attached at Appendix B is the review timetable previously agreed by the IRB. IRB members may wish to consider if the review timetable for the committees agreed previously remains valid based on their observations of committees this year.

### Data and reporting

15. As part of the approval process the IRB members are asked to consider the data it would find useful as part of the quality assurance plan. The plan originally envisaged that each committee subject to review would produce an activity report setting out the committee's activities over the year. The relevant text is highlighted in the updated plan. The IRB is asked to consider whether such a report is required given that:
  - i. Information on complaints and cases of note are reported to the IRB as part of the Chief Officer's update
  - ii. Reports from the regulatory committees are routinely included in the Reading Room for IRB meetings
  - iii. Professional Standards KPIs and the newly developed dashboard are reported to the IRB
  - iv. The committee chairs have the opportunity to highlight trends and other information about the work of the committee when they attend the QA review meeting.

### Hearing committees

16. As certain aspects of the business of the hearing committees take place in private, observers from the IRB are unable to review all aspects of the committee's performance. IRB members are asked to consider whether they are content to continue with the current approach to reviewing the hearing committees, recognising that there are limitations on their observations or whether they would wish to have additional assurance as part of the process, for example more statistical information.

## APPENDICES

**Appendix A: Revised quality assurance plan and appendices**

**Appendix B: Committee review timetable**

<b>Executive Director/Director or other sponsor</b>	Duncan Wiggetts, PSD Chief Officer
<b>Author</b>	Tracy Stanhope, IRB Secretary
<b>Date of report</b>	12 October 2021