

NCQPA

**NATIONAL
CARE
QUALITY**

PROFESSIONALS
ASSOCIATION

NCQPA REGISTERED MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

SEPTEMBER 2019

Version 1.1 September 2019 / rev 2020



Forward

This is the first revision of the draft edition of the NCQPA Registered Membership Handbook*, which has been prepared by NCQPA, and contains the information required by an individual, company or service to become a NCQPA Registered Member. Members can apply for membership in order to be included on the NCQPA Registered List on their website.

Comments and suggestions on this draft handbook are welcomed from all stakeholders, and further information on how to become involved is available on the website <https://www.ncqpa.org.uk/>

** With thanks to HLS Healthcare Risk Solutions for their support with the original draft of this document.*

Registered Membership Handbook – Timetable for Review

Date	Version	Comment
November 2018	Version 0.1	Pilot stage and consultation
January 2019	Version 1	First version published following pilot
January 2020	Version 2	Second version following assessment cycle completed

The Registered Membership Framework Assessment Criteria may not be reproduced without written prior permission from NCQPA.

Contractual and legal considerations

The NCQPA Registered Membership Framework and Assessment Criteria do not purport to include all the necessary provisions of a contract. Members are responsible for its correct application. Compliance with the NCQPA Framework cannot confer immunity from legal obligations.

Framework Development and the Pilot Process

The Membership Framework and the Assessment Criteria produced by NCQPA will be developed using available best practice. We have taken into consideration the requirements made within PAS 1616:2016, Healthcare – Provision of clinical services – Specification. This document was produced by the Clinical Services Accreditation Alliance (CSAA) and its development was facilitated by BSI Standards Limited. The assessment process will be based on the principles of ISO9001:2015.

Once the Membership Framework and the Platinum Assessment Criteria have been developed, NCQPA will undertake a period of consultation, which will aim to refine assessment criteria and finalise the evidence that will need to be provided by Members. Version 1 of the Standards will be released after the pilot period in January 2019; and from then there will be an annual revision date established.

Continual feedback on both the Membership Framework and the Assessment Criteria will be continually sought from all NCQPA Members and other key stakeholders, and comments and suggestions collated for discussion at the NCQPA Approval Committee. See page 13 for more information.

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Introduction to the National Care Quality Professionals NCQPA Registered Membership Framework

National Care Quality Professionals (NCQPA) has been founded as an Independent Care Quality Membership Organisation, to promote a shared vision of outstanding care.

NCQPA are leading the way in setting and raising standards in the independent care quality sector.

Leading, independent care quality professionals, care quality consultancy organisations, trainers and training providers are signing up to our code of ethics and professional conduct. All are assessed against our tried and tested quality standards framework, with the aim of receiving our quality mark and NCQPA registration.

Eligibility criteria

Any Independent Care Quality Professionals, Care Quality Services, Centres, Consultancies and/or Training Providers can apply to be included within the NCQPA Membership Framework.

Types of Membership

NCQPA Members are expected to operate to a high standard, and to sign up to the NCQPA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

We have introduced two types of NCQPA Membership, one for the individual care quality professionals and one for organisations, which will hopefully allow a

dedicated community of Care Quality Professionals to develop.

As well as ensuring that all our Members are competent, have a drive to stay ahead of their field, and keep abreast of current and future thinking within the health and social care setting; Membership will provide recognition that the individual/service is committed to quality improvement, and to providing the best possible services to their clients.

NCQPA Individual Membership

Any health or social care quality professional is invited to apply for NCQPA Membership. This Membership will entitle individuals to become part of a Care Quality Network, on a National Scale. Membership will provide support, training events, sector updates and facilitate the sharing of good practice. Members contact details will also be displayed on the NCQPA website for potential clients. Members can use the NCQPA logo on documentation to advertise their commitment to quality. See page 6.

NCQPA Organisational Membership

Organisational Membership has been designed for organisations to apply for membership. Organisations with more than 2 employees may wish to consider this membership option.

How to become an NCQPA Member

The Registered Membership assessment process begins when the applicant submits an application request to NCQPA. Once this is received, an off-site assessment date will be

decided upon, in consultation with the NCQPA Assessment Team and the Applicant Member.

Applicant members will submit a small portfolio of evidence electronically, who will verify that NCQPA requirements have been met, and will send an assessment report to the NCQPA Approval Committee.

Membership will be awarded by the NCQPA Approval Committee following the receipt of the assessment report, and when there are no outstanding major non-conformities against the standards and corrective action plans are in place to address minor non-conformities.

Following a successful assessment, the registered member will be displayed on the NCQPA Registered Member list for one year.

Registered Members will have to submit key documentation for an off-site review annually.

Steps in the Process

- I. Organisations and/or individuals submit Application for Membership to NCQPA.
- II. Organisation and/or individual signs contract with NCQPA.
- III. Assessment date chosen by organisation and/or individual in consultation with Assessor.
- IV. Assessment conducted by assessment team.
- V. Assessment report sent to organisation and/or service and NCQPA Approval Committee.
- VI. If the organisation and/or individual has to resolve any areas of non-conformity, the action plan can be submitted, and the final report will be submitted for consideration to the Approval Committee.
- VII. NCQPA notifies the organisation and/or service of the Committee's decision.
- VIII. Organisation and/or individual awarded certificate.

Organisational Member Assessment

In addition to NCQPA Individual Membership it is possible for larger services or organisations to apply for Member Status. This involves a greater level of scrutiny from NCQPA, in terms relation to the off site assessment.

The Assessment Team

All members of the assessment team will have successfully completed their assessor training programme.

Assessors will not be appointed if they have been employed either full time, part time or on a consultancy basis to an organisation and/or service in the preceding two years.

The assessment team are required to observe confidentiality as to both the process and the outcome of the assessment.

For each assessment, the Lead Assessor is responsible for ensuring that all assessment activities are completed with the specified timeframes and according to the NCQPA.

Reporting of Assessment Findings

Assessment Report

A written report outlining the assessment findings shall be completed by the assessment team and sent to the organisation and/or service within 10 working days.

Assessment Findings Definition

When objective evidence exists that a requirement has not been addressed (intent), a practice differs from the defined system (implementation) or the system is not effective (effectiveness).

Fail

A Fail will be given when there is either:

- An absence of one or more required system elements or a situation which raises significant doubt that the services will meet specified requirements
- A group of category minor non-conformities indicating inadequate implementation or effectiveness of the system relevant to a requirement of the standard and/or,
- A minor non-conformity that is persistent (or not corrected as agreed by the organisation and/or service) shall be up-graded to major non-conformity

In Development

An 'in development' will be when the organisation and/or service has a lapse of either discipline or control during the implementation of system/procedural requirements, which does not indicate a system breakdown or raise doubt that services will meet requirements. The overall system requirement is defined, implemented and effective.

Observation

An area of concern, a process, document or activity that is currently conforming but may,

if not improved, result in a nonconforming system, product or service in the future.

Opportunities for Improvement

These are observations that cannot be directly referenced to either a non-fulfilment of either the requirements of the standard and/or a requirement in the organisation and/or service's system but is an idea that may improve your system.

Once all the Standards have been successfully addressed, the organisation/individual will be accepted as an NCQPA Member and will be able to use the Membership Logo.

Use of the NCQPA Membership Logo

A NCQPA organisation and/or individual may use the Membership logo on letters, documents and other promotional material including the organisation and/or service web-sites.

Organisations and/or Individuals shall be careful not to make or permit misleading statement regarding its Membership.

The NCQPA Membership Logo shall never be shown as larger than organisation and/or service's own logo and the Membership logo shall always be shown in its entirety.

Suspension or Withdrawal of Membership

Where an organisation and/or Individual operates outside of the agreed conditions of the NCQPA requirements there are two stages of consequences:

A time limited invalidation (suspension) or a permanent invalidation (Withdrawal).

Suspension of Membership

NCQPA may initiate suspension in cases where:

- NCQPA becomes aware through assessments, external investigations, complaints or other activities, that the provision of services by Members poses a risk to the NCQPA as an organisation, or their clients.
- A Member fails to submit additional required evidence within 10 working days of receiving their NCQPA assessment report.
- Periodic assessments and re-certification assessments are not allowed to be conducted according to required frequency or as scheduled;
- The organisation and/or Individual violates terms of the signed NCQPA agreement, including non-payment of fees or refusal of access
- The NCQPA Approval Committee judges that the organisation and/or individual has made false public claims regarding its Membership (e.g., Certification is used in a way that is unjustifiable or deceptive in advertising.)

NCQPA may also choose to only give the organisation and/or service a warning that suspension is being considered, but when they decide that suspension of Membership is appropriate the organisation and/or individual will be informed in writing. This letter will describe the situation that has led to suspension as well as the requirements and timelines that must be met to have Membership reinstated. The organisation and/or service will have 10 working days from receiving the notification letter to respond or to appeal the decision.

During suspension both the organisation and/or service and NCQPA shall inform enquirers that this is the case and use of all advertising matter containing a reference to NCQPA Membership are prohibited during time of suspension. NCQPA Membership shall

not be suspended for a period longer than 6 months.

Verification that the requirements have been met may require additional on-site assessments that will be charged to the organisation and/or service based on the rates and costs used in the original contract.

Withdrawal of Membership

NCQPA Membership will be withdrawn from the organisation and/or service if they do not meet the conditions of suspension; and a suspension is not considered to be an adequate action.

Any decision to withdraw Membership shall be communicated through a formal letter. The organisation and/or service shall be required to terminate any use of the NCQPA Membership logo and any reference to NCQPA and return any certificate(s). The organisation and/or service will be informed of its right to appeal.

Appealing Decisions

Membership of NCQPA is a voluntary arrangement between the organisation and/or service and NCQPA. The decision to refuse, suspend or withdraw Membership will have been confirmed in writing to your organisation and/or individual, accompanied by the reason why this decision was made. If the Approval Committee refuses or withdraws Membership your organisation and/or service may appeal against the decision under the following procedure.

The right of appeal is granted solely to provide an institution with the means of challenging either the assessment made by the assessors in the course of the assessment or the judgement of the Approval Committee in coming to its decision.

An organisation and/or individual has no right within this appeals procedure to challenge

either the criteria used for the assessment, the standards required for Membership or the general regulations that certified organisation and/or services must follow. For complaints about the criteria, standards and regulations of the NCQPA Registered Membership Framework see page 13 of this handbook.

Lodging an Appeal

If your organisation and/or individual wishes to appeal a decision it must be sent in writing (email or letter) to NCQPA.

This written notice must be received by the NCQPA within 10 working days of the date of the letter that confirms refusal, suspension or withdrawal of Membership.

Grounds for an Appeal

The appeal submission must clearly state the grounds for the appeal, this may be:

- a) The Approval Committee did not have all the relevant information available at the time, and/or
- b) The decision was not made in accordance with the procedures or criteria set out in the NCQPA Registered Membership Handbook.

The Appeals Process

An Appeal Committee will be convened to hear the Appeal. This will be an unbiased body made up of one independent chair, one layperson and one member of NCQPA who was not involved in the original decision of the Approval Committee.

NCQPA will send the organisation and/or service a list of individuals who may be asked to serve on the Appeal Committee. If the organisation and/or service objects to any of these individuals serving, its objections and

rationale should be sent to NCQPA within five working days of receipt of the list.

In the period between the notice of appeal and the outcome of the appeal, a Member organisation and/or individual remains a Member and a Non-Member organisation and/or service remains a Non-Member.

Only material which was in existence at the time of the assessment can be considered at an appeal. Any submission of material which was in existence at that time but was not supplied to the assessor must be accompanied by an explanation of why it was not supplied.

The appeal hearing will consider relevant documentation this may include:

- The relevant assessment report(s)
- Written submissions from the assessors who carried out the relevant assessments
- The appeal submission and/or
- Any other evidence as agreed by both the NCQPA and the applicant.

The appeal will normally take place within 20 days working days of the notice of appeal.

At the end of the hearing, the Appeal Committee makes one of three decisions:

- To dismiss the appeal
- To order a new assessment at NCQPA expense or,
- To instruct the Approval Committee to award or reinstate Membership

If the appeal is dismissed, the decision of the Approval Committee will then be confirmed. If the organisation and/or service wishes to apply for Membership a full new application will be need to be submitted but this will not be considered until NCQPA is satisfied that the action points in the refusal/withdrawal letter have been met.

The Appeal Committee will inform the organisation and/or service of its decision within ten working days of the appeal hearing.

The Chair of the Appeal Committee will make a written report to the Approval Committee,

setting out the decision, its grounds and, if appropriate, recommending changes in the assessment process.

Complaints

Complaints

NCQPA is committed to working in an open, transparent and accountable way. This includes responding to complaints by organisations and/or services or other stakeholders by investigating them thoroughly and making improvements as a result.

Complaints about assessors

Assessors and staff are made aware of their roles and responsibilities and our Code of Conduct during our induction programme and ongoing training. NCQPA takes seriously its duty to prepare assessors and staff to do their work effectively, professionally and with courtesy and respect for the organisation and/or service, its service users and staff. In we expect applicant and certified organisation and/or services to treat assessors and their staff with the same respect, courtesy and professionalism. The Code of Conduct is available upon request.

NCQPA recognises that there might be occasions when organisation and/or services may wish to complain about the conduct, behaviour or actions of its staff. Complaints such as these should be addressed to the Director.

These complaints will be investigated and a response provided to the organisation and/or service within 20 working days. The assessor concerned will not be informed of the complaint until the assessment report has been completed and submitted to the Approval Committee.

Complaints about the NCQPA Registered Membership Framework and Assessment Criteria

Any complaints about the NCQPA Registered Membership Framework and Assessment Criteria should be submitted in writing to the Director. These complaints will be considered by the Management Committee and the complainant will be informed of the outcome within 10 working days of the meeting.

Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Documentation

NCQPA will abide by confidentiality requirements. Information will only be shared with NCQPA for Membership and Assessment purposes. Personal information will not be retained, and will be destroyed following a successful membership application. Non-Disclosure documents will be signed should they be submitted by the Applicant Member to the assessor.

Customer Satisfaction Measurement and Improvement

An assessment feedback form is emailed to every organisation and/or individual after every assessment. This enables the organisation and/or individual to make both positive and negative comments about the assessment process and the standards. It is not a mechanism to make a formal complaint.

The Measurement Scale

A scale of 1-5, where the rating 1 means dissatisfied and 5 means being delighted shall

be used to ensure that results are comparable.

Organisation and/or individuals will also be invited to provide additional information to justify their scores.

Evaluation and Use of Results

The results of these customer satisfaction measurements shall be continuously evaluated and used to improve the schemes. The Head of Assessments shall be promptly informed if completed forms are returned that include low scores (1 & 2).

In these circumstances the assessor may contact the organisation and/or service for the rationale for the low scores and seek suggestions for improvement.

Records, Reviews and Reporting

Records shall be kept of all client satisfaction measurements performed. Results shall be analysed and reviewed during the NCQPA Approval Committee meetings.

Individual feedback (both positive and negative) will be shared with individual assessors.

Further Information

This Handbook is intended to provide a guide to the NCQPA Registered Membership Forum and the Assessment Process.

However additional information about NCQPA events is available on our website <https://NCQPA.org.uk/about-NCQPA/>

Appendix 1: NCQPA Individual Applicant Member Standards

No.	NCQPA Assessment Criteria	Suggested evidence*
1	Vision, Values, Principles and Ethics	
	<i>All Members adhere to the vision, values, principles and ethics of NCQPA</i>	<i>Read the NCQPA documentation and sign document illustrating a wish to adopt principles.</i>
a	All Members adhere to the vision, values and principles of NCQPA	
b	All Members will sign up to the NCQPA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct	
2	Insurance	
	<i>Members will have the necessary insurance documentation to cover their services</i>	<i>Insurance documentation</i>
a	Members will have arrangements in place to cover liabilities arising from their operations	
3	Contracts	
	<i>Members have in place, individual agreements (contracts, Short Form Agreements etc) with each client which include:</i>	<i>Contract / Short Form Agreement</i>
a	Scope of work	
b	Start date and Date of Completion	
c	Statement indicating that the advice given is only advisory	
d	Mechanisms for addressing a serious concern (within and outside of the organisation if required e.g. with the CQC)	
4	Competency – Education, Skills, Knowledge and Experience	
	<i>Members will ensure that the education, skills, knowledge and experience of both themselves and for any sub-contractors/associates utilised are checked and maintained.</i>	<i>Portfolio of development /CPD</i>
a	Members should ensure they keep a portfolio of development which illustrates any CPD/professional practice they have undertaken in order to keep themselves up to date with current practice.	
5	Working with the Vulnerable	
	<i>Members should be able to demonstrate that they have been checked to work with vulnerable people.</i>	<i>Understanding of regulatory requirement & when last updated</i>

* This is suggested evidence only; the applicant member may wish to provide other evidence which fulfils this Standard.

** NCQPA membership shows that registered members have met our association quality assessment framework. However, Care Quality Commission (CQC) Registered Providers maintain the responsibility of carrying out due diligence and any relevant safeguarding checks required by them under relevant regulations, legislation and/or best practice in relation to any person/s or supplier organisations becoming involved, either directly or indirectly in their care services, staff or individuals supported. Please seek legal advice where required.

Appendix 2: NCQPA Organisational Applicant Member Standards

No.	NCQPA Criteria	Suggested Evidence
1	Vision, Values and Principles	
	<i>All Member Organisations adhere to the vision values, principles and ethics of NCQPA</i>	Signed Statement
a	All Member Organisations adhere to the vision values, principles and ethics of NCQPA	
b	All Member Organisations will sign up to the NCQPA Code of Ethics	
2	Insurance	
	<i>Member Organisations will have the necessary insurance documentation to cover their services</i>	Appropriate Insurance documentation
a	Member Organisations will have arrangements in place to cover liabilities arising from their operations	
3	Contracts	
	<i>There are individual agreements (contracts, Short Form Agreements etc) with each client which include:</i>	Examples of current/recent contracts
a	Scope of work	
b	Start date and Date of Completion	
c	Statement indicating that the advice given is only advisory	
d	Mechanisms for addressing a serious concern (within and outside of the organisation if required e.g. with the CQC)	
4	Quality of Service	
	<i>Member Organisations will have arrangements in place for the production and revision of relevant policies, provisions and guidelines, including:</i>	Policy, procedure or guideline
a	Complaints Policy	
b	Appeals policy (if relevant)	
c	Internal monitoring and quality improvement	
d	Non-discriminatory procedures	
e	Employment procedures including DBS (where relevant)	
5	Competency – Education, Skills, Knowledge and Experience	
	<i>Member organisations will ensure that the education, skills, knowledge and experience of both themselves and for any sub-contractors/associates utilised are checked and maintained.</i>	Policy Procedure or Guideline

a	Recruitment	
b	Workforce planning	
c	Scheduling	
d	CPD	
e	Professional practice	
f	Ensuring that individuals do not operate outside of their scope of practice	
g	Competency	
h	Challenging poorer practice	

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