



Practice management

Quality Assurance & business continuity services from Aon to help practices meet new Code of Conduct obligations

From 1 July 2007 firms face new obligations under the Code of Conduct. Among these duties, under Rule 5, is the effective management of the firm, and specifically the management of risk and continuation of the practice in the event of emergencies.

It is anticipated that most well-run firms will already be complying, but the challenge will be providing the necessary evidence of its management and the mechanism for periodic review.

Aon understands your needs, with our knowledge gained from dealing with the professional indemnity of 23% of firms in England & Wales.

Our expertise means that we have in place tools that can help firms provide evidence of compliance.

Practices up to 10 partners that agree to us providing a professional indemnity quotation can obtain a FREE quality assurance analysis and report that will help to demonstrate that the practice has taken its Rule 5 duties seriously. You will also earn valuable CPD points.

We work closely with insurers in the legal sector – QBE for professional indemnity for practices up to 10 partners and Ecclesiastical Insurance Group for office insurance – to provide these services as part of our insurance offering. Read on to find out more...

New rules, new obligations

In particular Rule 5 requires a systematic and effective approach for the management of the firm, such as:

- Management of risk, which includes the identification and assessment of all business and client risks and the use of Quality Assurance procedures to control those risks
- Continuation of the practice of the firm in the event of emergencies with the minimum interruption to clients' business

Evidence will be required to demonstrate compliance that appropriate arrangements are in place and are operating, and there is a mechanism for periodic review of their effectiveness.

The SRA has published guidance notes on <http://www.sra.org.uk/code-of-conduct.page>

While there is no requirement that these take a particular form, it does beg the question how firms practically will demonstrate compliance?



Management of risk – Our Quality Assurance process

Assurance process

Aon and QBE have been promoting the use of quality assurance as a risk management tool to practices up to 10 partners for over 5 years. During this time over 3,000 firms have participated in our quality assurance initiative.

In a recent survey undertaken by us, over 90% of clients that responded said that the QA offering is valuable to the practice.

With the Code of Conduct coming into force, the benefit of our process really comes of age.

To reinforce our commitment to assist in clients' quality assurance, our client managers have recently undergone a Lexcel awareness training programme.

How it works

The quality assurance process (see www.qbeurope/qualityassurance) uses a self-assessment questionnaire, which is used to perform an analysis of your management processes and prepare a report containing the findings.

The report is free of charge to practices that agree to Aon providing a professional indemnity quotation at the 2007 renewal.

A detailed checklist will assist you in prioritising and addressing issues that might require attention – a feedback facility enables you to submit changes that you implement for further evaluation.

By participating, you will benefit from an impartial review of your business and administrative practices.

By using the questionnaire and dealing with any recommendations made, the process will help to demonstrate that the practice has taken its Rule 5 duties seriously as the completion, feedback and action loop incorporates both risk assessment and risk management activities required under the rule.

It will be delivered to you in hard copy, with additional information available on our dedicated website.

Furthermore, the partner/solicitor completing the questionnaire process will earn valuable CPD points as this process is recognised by the Law Society as a distance learning tool.

Continuation of the practice of the firm in the event of emergencies

There is a continuing duty to ensure that the practice of your firm will be carried on with the minimum interruption to clients' business even in the event of emergencies. It should include all business interruption events – physical (not just damage) or personal.

In respect of damage to offices, Aon and our office scheme insurer Ecclesiastical have:

- Guidance notes to assist in planning business continuity
- A post-loss business continuity offering for our office insurance clients

Contact us

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