



IAPCO's Code of Quality Control

1. Introduction

There is a consensus within IAPCO that – in addition to the quality verification process upon application – a continuous process for Quality Control for members is required.

2. Process

This process should be applied equally to all members. It should be practical in its application, and affordable, and should be supported by a process for taking appropriate action towards those members who fail to meet the Quality Control standards set by IAPCO.

3. Quality Committee

A Quality Committee (QC) is appointed to manage and oversee IAPCO's Quality Control processes.

4. IAPCO's Quality Control process consists of the following elements:

- Step 1: All members should submit their "Company Report" annually confirming their continued activity in the field of conference organisation and supplying company information;
- Step 2: All members should do an annual self-assessment by means of a so-called "Self-assessment Checklist";
- Step 3: All members should annually submit data on two congresses which are "in progress", to take place during the forthcoming year, following the format of a so-called "Congress Checklist", as proof of continued PCO activities.
- The QC will verify that each member submits the Company Report, Self-assessment Checklist and the Congress Checklist annually. In addition, the QC will verify the accuracy of the data submitted on the Company Report and the Congress Checklist, and that they meet the criteria set for this;
- IAPCO will hold an annual "Quality Seminar" explaining its quality philosophy and Code of Quality Control.

5. Step 1: Company Report

- IAPCO members are to submit their Company Report annually, providing details on their activities over the past year, the education and training provided for their staff, and their involvement with other industry associations.
- Members must sign up to abide by the IAPCO Code of Conduct and to the IAPCO Guidelines for Financial Management.

6. Step 2: Self-assessment Checklist

- Every member should fill out a Self-assessment Checklist once a year.
- This list includes statements on a range of topics (abstract handling, speaker & programme management, marketing & promotion, budgeting, financial management, exhibition, sponsorship, registration, on-site management, etc.) and there are multiple statements per topic. The statements are "multiple-choice", and answers are linked to scores.
- Based on their total scores, members will be "ranked" in relation to each other and will be grouped in one of three segments: 0-10%; 11-49%; and 50-100%. Members will be informed individually in which segment they scored.
- As such, the self-assessment is a tool for identifying potential weaknesses compared to a market average, and helps members to constantly improve their level of services.
- The self-assessment will be done by means of an on-line database, to which each member will have unique access. Data submission will be anonymous: only the member submitting the data will know what information was submitted. A computer programme managing the database will calculate the scores, rank the companies and group them into one of the three segments. An automatic e-mail will be generated which informs the member in which segment they scored. Neither the Council, nor the QC, nor any other member will have access to the data within the database at any time.

7. Step 3: Congress Checklist

- IAPCO members are to annually submit a Congress Checklist, providing details on two congresses to be organised during the forthcoming year. These congresses should either be national or international, with a minimum duration of 3 days, and they should be attended by at least 400 participants. The Congress Checklist shall include details such as name of the congress and client organisation, date and venue of the event, number of participants, etc., and all deadline dates, such as abstract submission, reduced registration, exhibition application cut-off, etc. A pre-defined format for this Congress Checklist is provided by IAPCO.
- The member should specify which PCO services were provided (to be selected from a series of 16 main PCO services indicated on the form): for the congresses included in the Congress Checklist, the member should have provided at least 10 of the 16 PCO services.

8. Self-assessment Checklist Submissions

The submission of the "Company Report", "Self-assessment Checklist" and "Congress Checklist" is mandatory. Dates for submission will be specified by the Council. A list of all members indicating whether they did, or did not, submit (a) the Company Report and the Congress Checklist, and achieve the approval of the submission by the QC, and (b) the Self-assessment Checklist, will be published on IAPCO's website so that information about member compliance with "IAPCO's Code of Quality Control" is public and accessible to members, suppliers and clients alike.

9. IAPCO Quality Checks

The QC will oversee adherence to the Quality Control standards and processes, and if required they will take action as defined below. Their activities include:

Verifying the Company Report

Verifying the Company Report as submitted annually:

- All Company Reports need to be completed by a date set by the Council. Failure to comply may lead to membership exclusion.
- In order to check that members are maintaining their position within the meetings industry by way of education, activity and involvement, the QC will score the responses to ensure that the required standard has been met.

- In case of doubt or concern, the QC will double-check with the member and may request further information regarding the activities of the member.
- Where a member is unable to meet the required standard by way of scores, the QC reports this to the Council in writing.
- The Council will contact the member in writing and will ask the member if they wish to give further information regarding their submitted Company Report content.
- The Council will evaluate the situation based on the available information, and will formulate a recommendation to the General Assembly. This may lead to exclusion of the member.

Verifying the Congress Checklist

Verifying the Congress Checklist as submitted annually by each member and checking that the member performed at least 10 of the 16 PCO services as indicated on the pre-formatted forms.

- In order to check that congresses meet the pre-established criteria and that the services listed by the member were indeed handled by this member, the QC can select one or both congresses listed and verify the congress format and the services provided by consulting web sites, looking at printed congress material, or by asking the client organisation.
- In case of doubt or concern, the QC will double-check with the member and may request further proof that the services have indeed been provided as indicated on the Congress Checklist.
- References will be sought by the QC at random for the returns submitted.
- In case a member is unable to comply with the rule of submitting the minimum required number of congresses and/or the minimum number of PCO services per congress, the QC reports this to the Council in writing.
- The Council will contact the member in writing and will ask the member if they wish to give further information regarding their non-compliance with the Congress Checklist requirements.
- The Council will evaluate the situation based on the available information and will formulate a recommendation to the General Assembly. This may lead to exclusion of the member.

9. Quality Assessment

Members may contact the QC at any time for information and advice on how to improve the quality of their services.

10. Committee of Ethics

The IAPCO Quality Control process as managed by the QC is “member-driven” and is a continuous process. If a third party (a client, a supplier, another PCO, etc.) reports concerns about quality of services as provided by a member (a “complaint”), this is referred to the “Committee of Ethics” who will follow the general guidelines of “IAPCO’s Code of Conduct”, as approved at the General Assembly held in Lisbon, Portugal, in February 2015.

HQ/SECRETARIAT

THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL CONGRESS ORGANISERS (“IAPCO”) has a registered office at c/o Prager Dreifuss, Muhlebackstrasse 6, 8008 Zurich, Switzerland, registration no. CH-020.6.900.220-3/. Administration and secretariat services are provided by outsourced contractors based in UK and Belgium. Contact details: info@iapco.org

REPRODUCTION

Reproduction of any part or of the entire document is subject prior authorisation and approval from IAPCO. Copyright IAPCO: Latest edition December 2018.