

Small and medium sized firms

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PREFACE

> The purpose of the illustrative risk matrix (guide) is to assist non-network audit and assurance firms in identifying, assessing and documenting quality risks as required by "The firm's risk assessment process" component of <u>ASQM 1/PES 3</u>.

- > This guide can be used in conjunction with the <u>First-time Implementation Guide</u> prepared by the International Auditing and Assurance Standard Board (IAASB) to obtain a better understanding of the Quality Management Standards and their requirements.
- > This guide is not a substitute for reading the Quality Management Standards.

How to use this illustrative matrix

- 1. This guide is based on the six components which comprise quality objectives the firm is required to establish, that form the basis for identifying and assessing quality risks and designing and implementing responses.
- 2. Each section in the guide presents quality objectives of a different component in a table which is to be used as follows:

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
Consider whether a quality objective, or an aspect thereof, is not relevant depending on the nature and circumstances of the firm or its engagements. e.g., the quality objective under Engagement Performance (b) addressing direction, supervision and review may not be relevant for a sole practitioner.	Have firm-wide conversations that are specific to your firm and its engagements to identify quality risks to achieving the quality objectives using this illustrative risk matrix as a guide. A risk is a quality risk if the risk has a reasonable possibility of: > occurring; and > individually, or in combination with other risks, adversely affecting the achievement of one or more quality objectives. If additional quality risks are required, add these to the relevant component table.	Refer to the applicable sections of the CA ANZ Pro-forma toolkit: Audit quality management – Small and medium sized firms which provides illustrative documentation (i.e., policies, checklists, sample letters and forms) to assist non-network audit and assurance firms when implementing responses to address and mitigate quality risks identified. Firms also need to document how the responses address the quality risks to comply with paragraph 58(c) of ASQM 1/PES 3.

1. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(a) The firm demonstrates a commitment to quality through a culture that exists throughout the firm, which recognises and reinforces:	Responsibilities with regards to quality are unclear and/or not well recognised among personnel because the accountabilities are not adequately updated and communicated.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement 3.2 Assignment of responsibilities
(i) The firm's role in serving the public interest by consistently performing quality engagements;	Firm's leadership do not prioritise quality in key strategic decisions and actions.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement
(ii) The importance of professional ethics, values and attitudes;(iii) The responsibility of all personnel for quality	Leadership and personnel prioritise other considerations (for example financial and operational performance) ahead of ethics, professional standards, values, and attitudes.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement 3.2 Assignment of responsibilities
relating to the performance of engagements or activities within the system of quality management, and their expected behaviour; and	Leadership and personnel do not apply scorecards and quality benchmarks to clearly recognise and reinforce the firm's role in serving the public interest by consistently performing quality engagements.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement 3.2 Assignment of responsibilities
(iv) The importance of quality in the firm's strategic decisions and actions, including the firm's	Quality benchmarks are not given the appropriate weighting in the performance review process.	7.5 Professional staff performance review
financial and operational priorities.	Resource allocation for the system of quality management is not given priority.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement 1.2 System of quality management 'hub' document
	Quality management responsibilities are not allocated to the appropriate leader/s or personnel.	3.2 Assignment of responsibilities
	The firm has incentives that are focused on financial and operational priorities, which may discourage behaviours that demonstrate a commitment to quality. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement
(b) Leadership is responsible and accountable for quality.	Firm leadership do not clearly take responsibility and exercise accountability for quality with an emphasis on timely remedial action.	3.2 Assignment of responsibilities 9.2 Monitoring and remediation process policy statement
	The system of quality management is not designed to capture and provide information to assess and manage leaders' achievement of quality.	9.2 Monitoring and remediation process policy statement 9.4 Firm feedback form 1.1 Documentation policy statement
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(c) Leadership demonstrates a commitment to quality through their actions and behaviours.	Firm leadership do not demonstrate a consistent commitment to quality through actions and behaviours through firm-wide communication.	9.2 Monitoring and remediation process policy statement 9.4 Firm feedback form
	Performance evaluations are not implemented on a timely basis for key leadership roles, including engagement partners, engagement quality reviewers, subject matter experts and those assigned responsibility for the firm's system of quality management.	3.2 Assignment of responsibilities 7.5 Professional staff performance review 7.6 Administrative staff performance review
(d) The organisational structure and assignment of roles, responsibilities and authority is appropriate to enable the design, implementation and	[Insert additional risks as applicable] Organisational structure and assignment of roles, responsibilities and authority is unclear and not well understood by firm personnel.	1.2 System of quality management 'hub' document 1.3 Firm structure
operation of the firm's system of quality management.	Organisational structure and assignment of roles, responsibilities and authority is not appropriate to enable the design, implementation, and operation of the firm's system of quality management. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	3.2 Assignment of responsibilities
(e) Resource needs, including financial resources, are planned for and resources are obtained,	Adequate resources are not able to be obtained to support the firm's commitment to quality.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement 3.2 Assignment of responsibilities
allocated or assigned in a manner that is consistent with the firm's commitment to quality.	Resource needs, including financial resources, are not adequately planned for, which may impact on allocation/assignment.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement 3.2 Assignment of responsibilities
[Insert additional quality objectives if applicable]	[Insert additional risks as applicable] [Insert additional risks as applicable]	

2. RELEVANT ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(a) The firm and its personnel: (i) Understand the relevant ethical requirements to	Relevant ethical requirements are not clearly documented and communicated within the firm.	4.1 Relevant ethical requirements policy statement
which the firm and the firm's engagements are	Relevant ethical requirements are not well understood	4.1 Relevant ethical requirements policy statement
subject; and	by personnel.	4.2 Annual independence confirmation
(ii) Fulfill their responsibilities in relation to the	Personnel do not fulfill their responsibilities in relation to	4.2 Annual independence confirmation
relevant ethical requirements to which the firm	relevant ethical requirements.	4.3 Independence resolution memorandum
and the firm's engagements are subject.		9.6 Client complaint record
	Personnel / firm knowledge relating to relevant ethical	4.2 Annual independence confirmation
	requirements is not kept up to date.	7.7 Training and development record
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
(b) Others, including the network, network firms,	Relevant ethical requirements are not well understood	5.2 Client screening questions
individuals in the network or network firms, or	by other key parties.	5.5 Ethical letter
service providers, who are subject to the relevant ethical		7.9 New service provider request form
requirements to which the firm and the firm's	Other key parties do not fulfill their responsibilities in	6.3 Using experts' work
engagements are subject:	relation to relevant ethical requirements.	6.4 Checklist for use of outside experts
(i) Understand the relevant ethical requirements that		7.9 New service provider request form
apply to them; and	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
(ii) Fulfill their responsibilities in relation to the relevant ethical requirements that apply to them.		
[Insert additional quality objectives if applicable]	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	

3. ACCEPTANCE AND CONTINUANCE OF CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS AND SPECIFIC ENGAGEMENTS

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(a) Judgments by the firm about whether to accept or continue a client relationship or specific engagement are appropriate based on: (i) Information obtained about the nature and circumstances of the engagement and the integrity and ethical values of the client (including management, and, when appropriate, those charged with governance) that is sufficient to support such judgments; and (ii) The firm's ability to perform the engagement in accordance with professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements.	Adequate information about new or continuing clients and engagements is not obtained and considered on a timely basis. There is a lack of accountability or review process for judgements made about whether to accept or continue a client relationship or specific engagement. Engagement considerations, including scope of engagement and operational requirements, are not clear enough to properly assess the firm's ability to perform the engagement in accordance with professional standards and applicable legal and regulatory requirements. There are insufficient personnel available to perform all	5.1 Acceptance and continuance of client relationships and specific engagements policy statement 5.2 Client screening questions 5.6 New client acceptance checklist 5.7 Client retention checklist 5.1 Acceptance and continuance of client relationships and specific engagements policy statement 5.2 Client screening questions 5.6 New client acceptance checklist 5.7 Client retention checklist 5.4 Welcome letter 5.5 Ethical letter 5.6 New client acceptance checklist 5.6 New client acceptance checklist
	engagements during times of peak demand. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	5.6 New client acceptance checklist
(b) The financial and operational priorities of the firm do not lead to inappropriate judgments about whether to accept or continue a client relationship or specific engagement.	Revenue inappropriately influences judgments about whether to accept or continue a client relationship or specific engagement.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement 5.1 Acceptance and continuance of client relationships and specific engagements policy statement 5.2 Client screening questions 5.6 New client acceptance checklist 5.7 Client retention checklist 8.2 Culture assessment - quality
	Revenue or other financial targets relating to operating results are inappropriately weighted in performance reviews. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	5.1 Acceptance and continuance of client relationships and specific engagements policy statement 7.5 Professional staff performance review 8.2 Culture assessment - quality
[Insert additional quality objectives if applicable]	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	

4. ENGAGEMENT PERFORMANCE

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(a) Engagement teams understand and fulfill their responsibilities in connection with the engagements,	Policies and processes for supervision and review are not clearly set out and understood by team members.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form
including, as applicable, the overall responsibility of engagement partners for managing and achieving quality	Adequate skills and experience are not available at critical points of engagement or to manage complex	6.2 Work control form 6.3 Using experts' work
on the engagement and being sufficiently and	issues.	6.4 Checklist for use of outside experts
appropriately involved throughout the engagement.	Respective roles and responsibilities of engagement team members are unclear.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form
	Engagement team members, including engagement partners, are allocated a reasonable amount of time to complete their work and achieve quality on the engagement.	6.2 Work control form
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
(b) The nature, timing and extent of direction and supervision of engagement teams and review of the work performed is appropriate based on the nature and circumstances of the engagements and the resources	Adequate levels of review and supervision are not provided to less experienced engagement team members by more experienced engagement team members.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form
assigned or made available to the engagement teams,	Composition of engagement team members is not	6.2 Work control form
and the work performed by less experienced engagement team members is directed, supervised and reviewed by	appropriate for the type of engagement, nature of	6.3 Using experts' work
more experienced engagement team members.	client and/or the industry in which it operates. Complex audit areas or unexpected issues are allocated	6.4 Checklist for use of outside experts 6.2 Work control form
more experienced engagement teamments.	to personnel who lack the appropriate knowledge or experience.	6.2 Work Control form
	Changes in firm or engagement circumstances during	5.2 Client screening questions
	the engagement are not properly considered during the engagement.	5.3 New client form 6.2 Work control form
	The engagement is not conducted in accordance with applicable professional standards.	4.1 Relevant ethical requirements policy statement 6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.6 Engagement quality review form
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
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Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(c) Engagement teams exercise appropriate professional judgment and, when applicable to the type of engagement, professional scepticism.	Engagement team members do not have adequate experience and training to exercise appropriate professional judgement / scepticism.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form 7.5 Professional staff performance review
	Professional judgement / scepticism is appropriately applied but not adequately documented.	6.5 Differences of opinion resolution
	Risk areas have not been adequately considered to prompt engagement teams to exercise appropriate professional judgement / scepticism.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form 9.3 Engagement review form
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
(d) Consultation on difficult or contentious matters is undertaken and the conclusions agreed are implemented.	Inadequate consideration of risks leads to consultation not being undertaken.	6.3 Using experts' work 6.5 Differences of opinion resolution 6.6 Engagement quality review form
	Inadequately experienced personnel are assigned to gather information on and consider difficult or contentious matters.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form
	A lack of appropriate process and follow up leads to either consultations not being held or agreed conclusions not being implemented on difficult or contentious matters.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form 6.3 Using experts' work 6.4 Checklist for use of outside experts 6.5 Differences of opinion resolution 6.6 Engagement quality review form
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
(e) Differences of opinion within the engagement team, or between the engagement team and the engagement quality reviewer or individuals performing activities within	Differences of opinion are not brought to the attention of the firm or appropriately dealt with due to a culture of agreeability or fear of reprisal.	6.5 Differences of opinion resolution
the firm's system of quality management are brought to the attention of the firm and resolved.	Differences of opinion are not appropriately resolved due to a lack of time and resources.	6.2 Work control form 6.5 Differences of opinion resolution
	More experienced engagement team members or other individuals exert authority to inappropriately overrule differences in opinion. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form 6.5 Differences of opinion resolution

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(f) Engagement documentation is assembled on a timely basis after the date of the engagement report, and is appropriately maintained and retained to meet the needs	Engagement documentation is not assembled and secured on a timely basis after the date of the engagement report.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement
of the firm and comply with law, regulation, relevant ethical requirements, or professional standards.)	Engagement documentation is not appropriately maintained and retained to meet the needs of the firm and comply with law, regulation, relevant ethical requirements, or professional standards.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement
	Archived documentation is reopened and revised without approval.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement
	Firm's policies and processes on engagement documentation are not clearly communicated to all personnel. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	1.1 Documentation policy statement 6.1 Engagement performance policy statement
[Insert additional quality objectives if applicable]	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	

5. RESOURCES

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
Human Resources (a) Personnel are hired, developed and retained and have the competence and capabilities to: (i) Consistently perform quality engagements, including	Recruitment policies and processes are unclear or inappropriately documented to recruit personnel that have the knowledge and experience relevant to the engagements the firm performs.	7.1 Resources policy statement 7.3 Candidate interview and evaluation checklist 7.4 New staff orientation checklist
having knowledge or experience relevant to the engagements the firm performs; or	The technical skills and professional education of firm personnel are not maintained as required.	7.7 Training and development record
(ii) Perform activities or carry out responsibilities in relation to the operation of the firm's system of quality management.	Personnel are not appropriately supervised, mentored, or motivated to consistently perform quality engagements.	7.1 Resources policy statement 7.2 Job description 7.7 Training and development record
	Internal training is not appropriately developing competence of the firm's personnel.	7.5 Professional staff performance review 7.7 Training and development record
(b) Personnel demonstrate a commitment to quality through their actions and behaviours, develop and maintain the appropriate competence to perform their	[Insert additional risks as applicable] Performance evaluations are not held on a timely basis during or after each engagement.	7.1 Resources policy statement 7.5 Professional staff performance review 9.3 Engagement review form
roles, and are held accountable or recognised through timely evaluations, compensation, promotion and other incentives.	Compensation and incentives are focused on financial and operational priorities which are not consistent with achieving quality objectives.	7.1 Resources policy statement 7.5 Professional staff performance review
	Performance evaluations are unclear about achieving outcomes, compensation, or incentives.	7.5 Professional staff performance review
	Personnel's workload is not considered when setting performance benchmarks against quality objectives. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	7.2 Job descriptions 7.5 Professional staff performance review
	[mont daditional mone do applicable]	

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Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(c) Individuals are obtained from external sources (i.e., the network, another network firm or a service provider) when the firm does not have sufficient or appropriate personnel to enable the operation of firm's system of quality management or performance of engagements.	The firm's policies and processes for quality management and performance of engagements are not appropriately communicated to/agreed with externally sourced personnel prior to them commencing work on an engagement.	6.3 Using experts' work 7.1 Resources policy statement 7.9 New service provider request form
	Externally sourced personnel do not have the appropriate capabilities or experience to comply with the firm's quality management system or perform the engagements as required.	6.3 Using experts' work 7.9 New service provider request form
	Firm does not have onboarding policies and processes to support personnel obtained from external sources comply with the quality management system. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	7.4 New staff orientation checklist
(d) Engagement team members are assigned to each engagement, including an engagement partner, who have appropriate competence and capabilities, including being	Resource allocation including budgeted time and personnel allocation for each engagement is not adequate, but not addressed by the leadership team.	3.1 Governance and leadership policy statement 6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form
given sufficient time, to consistently perform quality engagements.	Engagement team members and/or partners do not have appropriate competence and capabilities to consistently perform quality engagements.	7.2 Job descriptions 7.5 Professional staff performance review 7.7 Training and development record
	There are unreliable or no measurement indicators to assess whether resources assigned to each engagement are adequate.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
(e) Individuals are assigned to perform activities within the system of quality management who have appropriate competence and capabilities, including sufficient time, to	Individuals are not allocated the responsibility and sufficient and appropriate resources to perform activities within the system of quality management.	6.2 Work control form 7.2 Job descriptions
perform such activities.	Time for supervision and review is not provided for.	6.2 Work control form
'	Additional time is not allocated when required for key matters.	6.1 Engagement performance policy statement 6.2 Work control form
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
Technological Resources (f) Appropriate technological resources are obtained or developed, implemented, maintained, and used, to enable	Technological resources are not enabling the operation of the firm's system of quality management and the performance of engagements.	7.1 Resources policy statement 7.8 Technology acquisition request form
the operation of the firm's system of quality management and the performance of engagements.	Technological resources are not being used to their full potential.	7.1 Resources policy statement 7.8 Technology acquisition request form
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	

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Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
Intellectual Resources (g) Appropriate intellectual resources are obtained or developed, implemented, maintained, and used, to enable	Intellectual resources are not enabling the operation of the firm's system of quality management and the consistent performance of quality engagements.	7.1 Resources policy statement
the operation of the firm's system of quality management	Intellectual resources are not being used to their full	7.1 Resources policy statement
and the consistent performance of quality engagements,	potential.	7.5 Professional staff performance review
and such intellectual resources are consistent with	Intellectual resources are not consistent with professional	7.1 Resources policy statement
professional standards and applicable legal and	standards and applicable legal and regulatory	
regulatory requirements, where applicable.	requirements.	
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
Service Providers	Consistent and rigorous procurement, security and	7.1 Resources policy statement
(h) Human, technological or intellectual resources from	implementation policies and processes for technology and	7.8 Technology acquisition request form
service providers are appropriate for use in the firm's	intellectual resources are not applied.	7.9 New service provider request form
system of quality management and in the performance of	Personnel are recruited for specialist skills but are not	7.1 Resources policy statement
engagements, taking into account the quality objectives in	appropriate for use in the system of quality management.	7.9 New service provider request form
paragraph 32 (d),(e),(f) and (g).	Policies and processes on how to apply and secure the	7.1 Resources policy statement
	firm's technological and intellectual resources are not clear	7.7 Training and development record
	and/or miscommunicated to personnel.	8.1 Information and communication policy statement
	Technological resources are not strategically assessed for future capabilities and engagement needs.	7.8 Technology acquisition request form
	Changes made to IT systems and programs are not adequately reviewed and approved / authorised.	7.8 Technology acquisition request form
	Personnel are not given the appropriate training and	7.1 Resources policy statement
	support to manage changes to IT systems or new	7.7 Training and development record
	technological resources.	
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
[Insert additional quality objectives if applicable]	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	

6. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(a) The information system identifies, captures, processes and maintains relevant and reliable information that supports the system of quality	Appropriate resources are invested in information systems but systems are not utilised to their full potential.	7.1 Resources policy statement 7.7 Training and development record 8.1 Information and communication policy statement
management, whether from internal or external sources.	Information systems are not regularly reviewed or upgraded for operational purposes and engagement performance needs.	7.8 Technology acquisition request form
	Information systems are not tested or evaluated for data security on a regular basis.	7.8 Technology acquisition request form
	Back-up of data and information is not performed regularly enough and for selected databases.	7.8 Technology acquisition request form
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
(b) The culture of the firm recognises and reinforces the responsibility of personnel to exchange information with the firm and with one another.	Firm's culture does not encourage / reward personnel who share knowledge and reliable information with well-intentioned motives.	8.1 Information and communication policy statement 8.2 Culture assessment - quality
	Firm does not have adequate policies and processes about information sharing.	8.1 Information and communication policy statement
	Personnel are not adequately trained on these policies to recognise instances when the responsibility to exchange information arises.	7.7 Training and development record 8.2 Culture assessment - quality
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	
(c) Relevant and reliable information is exchanged throughout the firm and with engagement teams, including: (i) Information is communicated to personnel and engagement teams, and the nature, timing and extent of the information is sufficient to enable them to understand and carry out their responsibilities relating to performing activities within the system of quality management or engagements; and (ii) Personnel and engagement teams communicate information to the firm when performing activities within the system of quality management or engagements.	Firm does not implement policies and processes to encourage personnel to share information with senior managers and other teams that need to be informed.	8.1 Information and communication policy statement
	Personnel are not encouraged, through policies and processes, or firm culture, to share information with team members about relevant engagement matters.	8.1 Information and communication policy statement
	Firm does not establish and/or use appropriate communication channels to facilitate an open exchange of information.	7.7 Training and development record 8.2 Culture assessment - quality
	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	

Quality Objectives	Illustrative Quality Risks	Illustrative Risk Responses
(d) Relevant and reliable information is communicated to external parties, including: (i) Information is communicated by the firm to or within the firm's network or to service providers, if any, enabling the network or service providers to fulfill their responsibilities relating to the network requirements or network services or resources provided by them; and (ii) Information is communicated externally when required by law, regulation or professional standards, or to support external parties' understanding of the system of quality management.	Written and verbal communication are not sufficiently clear for the specific audience and requirements. Firm's policies and processes do not identify relevant, reliable information for communication to firm's network,	7.7 Training and development record 8.1 Information and communication policy statement
	service providers and external parties. Reliable technical and legal expertise are not readily available as and when required. Continuous professional education, technical updates and soft skills development are not emphasised in internal training.	6.3 Using experts' work 6.4 Checklist for use of outside experts 7.7 Training and development record 9.3 Engagement review form
	The firm does not have appropriate policies and processes in place to provide personnel with guidance on how to present information, or how to respond to requests for information under, law, regulation, professional standards or to other external parties who need to understand the firm's system of quality management. [Insert additional risks as applicable]	8.1 Information and communication policy statement
[Insert additional quality objectives if applicable]	[Insert additional risks as applicable]	

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