



Interviewer Quality Control Scheme

Welcome,

The IQCS standards cover the recruitment, training and appraisal of fieldwork staff, and the implementation of various administrative and validation procedures to maintain the quality and accuracy of data collected.

The IQCS standards have been serving the needs of the market research industry since 1978, and are held in high regard by both clients and the research industry, globally.

The IQCS Council comprises elected members working in the industry and representing not only the various types of market research fieldwork undertaken, but also clients and various other industry bodies, including the MRS, AQR, MRQSA and AURA.

There are two tiers of membership:

**Full Members**, who enjoy all the benefits of membership and have their fieldwork annually assessed and accredited by our independent inspectors, and

**Member Only** companies, who enjoy all the benefits of membership, but are not assessed by the IQCS.

Periodically standards are reviewed to reflect any shifts in working practices, staffing requirements or the impact of new legislation and comments and requests from the membership are taken into consideration for input before a draft, amended version is circulated for comment.

Both tiers of membership provide the unique opportunity to input into the standards and help maintain the currency and relevance of these to the contemporary fieldwork environment.

Take a look at our new website.

[www.iqcs.org](http://www.iqcs.org).

You'll find lots of useful information about the **IQCS Council Members**, **how to join the IQCS**, **arranging advisory visits**, and much more.....

The Interviewer Quality Control Scheme (IQCS) is an independently run scheme, which requires members to adhere to a set of benchmark market research industry standards.

[www.iqcs.org](http://www.iqcs.org)

## The IQCS provides a wealth of benefits for members:

- Opportunities to meet fellow member fieldwork managers at IQCS social events, including the summer party and AGM
- The chance to participate in Working Forums on subjects requested by the membership.
- Access to free advice and information via the IQCS Web Site ([iqcs.org.uk](http://iqcs.org.uk)) where we have a discussion group facility and post relevant, current information, and through our Administrator, Gill Wareing
- The chance to comment on and input into the content of the standards



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## Working Forums

Our popular Working Forums not only provide valuable information and insight to fieldwork managers concerning a range of issues, but also give you the opportunity to meet and share knowledge with fellow managers.

Forums are usually held in response to issues which our membership have indicated need clarification or debate and are usually very interactive and extremely well received. Many of the recommendations for fieldwork standards and good practice have originated from working forums.

Past forums have covered: The new Global ISO Standards – ISO 20252, Supervisor Training, Interviewer Training and Retention, Health and Safety, The Use of Electronic Signatures, Inspections, Current Data-Protection Legislation, and Group Recruitment Standards.

## The Inspection process

Full Member companies are audited annually by one of our elected inspectors, all of whom have years of market research operational experience behind them, and proven professional competence. They are able to bring a wealth of industry knowledge and experience to bear throughout the inspection process.

All inspection reports are submitted to a judging panel of IQCS Council members. These reports are in an unattributed format to maintain individual company anonymity and the panel review the inspectors' comments on the inspection and make a final decision on grading.

By having all inspections reviewed by a central panel, the IQCS Council is able to identify any common trends or shortfalls across the inspected companies, and recommend any necessary amendments to the existing standard or changes to the inspection process as a result.



## The IQCS, MRQSA and ISO20252

In 1997 the Market Research Quality Standards Association (MRQSA) elected to incorporate the IQCS standards to form the fieldwork section of their own standard, BS7911. The MRQSA standard expanded on the IQCS model to embrace Data Processing and Executive standards – retaining IQCS involvement as custodians of the fieldwork element of this broader standard.

Currently a MRQSA company can elect to have the fieldwork element of the BS7911 standard inspected by either IQCS inspectors or the British Standards inspectors for accreditation purposes. MRQSA is however being phased out in May 2008, to be replaced by the new Global ISO standard ISO20252, launched May 2006.

## What are the advantages in joining?

Membership of IQCS provides an assurance to clients that benchmark levels of training, appraisal and validation are in place to maintain standards of interviewer-administered data-collection.

In order to be a member the company must have first demonstrated to the inspectors and IQCS Council representatives that individuals involved in supervisory and interviewing tasks are adequately and

appropriately trained, and work is properly administered and validated in accordance with the benchmark levels specified by the scheme.

Current membership comprises a range of companies of all sizes, and from all over England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Many see membership of the scheme as the only quality assurance 'badge' necessary to provide clients with their assurance of a commitment to maintaining standards of data-collection.

Others are existing MRQSA members, who may either currently elect to retain IQCS membership for the benefits of belonging to this scheme or have chosen to have the fieldwork element of the standards inspected by IQCS inspectors.

With the dissolution of the BMRA and the MRS now assuming many of their former areas of corporate responsibility to the research community, the previous stipulation that companies with a turnover of £1 Million be accredited to MRQSA is no longer required. The options will therefore either be to seek accreditation to ISO20252, or the IQCS.

## How Do I Join?

Anyone who can demonstrate they have been working in the spirit of the standards for at least six months is able to apply for inspection and membership, either via the website at [www.iqcs.org](http://www.iqcs.org), or by telephoning IQCS Administrator, Gill Wareing on 01737 379261, or emailing at [gillm.wareing@ntlworld.com](mailto:gillm.wareing@ntlworld.com)

A current copy of the IQCS Benchmark Standards is available on the website to help those unfamiliar with the IQCS Minimum Standards understand the basic principles and requirements.

## Advisory Visits

In order to help prepare companies for the initial inspection and membership, we can arrange an advisory visit where one of our inspectors will come along to provide advice and assistance on what is required in order to meet the IQCS benchmark standards. Feedback from members has been very positive in relation to advisory visits and we do strongly advise anyone new to IQCS BS7911, or ISO20252 to take advantage of this facility as an initial stage towards interviewer administered data-collection quality control procedures.



Visit us at:  
[www.iqcs.org](http://www.iqcs.org)

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