



## QMS COVID -19 Frequently Asked Questions

### Assurance Schemes

#### **Q. Are all QMS Schemes affected by the suspension of face to face assessments?**

**A.** As of 18<sup>th</sup> March, the decision was taken to suspend all QMS face to face assessments for all Processors, Auction Markets, Hauliers, Pig and Cattle & Sheep farms.

#### **Q. How will my membership continue if face to face assessments are suspended?**

**A.** Members that are due their annual assessment will be contacted by a Lloyd's Register assessor to conduct a Remote Assessment

#### **Q. What is a remote assessment?**

**A.** A remote assessment is a desktop top review of documents, telephone interview or livestream video. A combination of both elements will allow for a full surveillance assessment to be conducted remotely.

#### **Q. When will remote assessments start?**

**A.** Once the assessor team have been trained and the system is ready, remote assessments will start to take place on or around the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020. You will be contacted by an assessor to arrange a suitable time for both elements to take place.

#### **Q. Will everyone get a remote assessment?**

**A.** If your annual assessment is due then you will be contacted, it is uncertain how long these procedures will be in place and QMS will continually review the advice from the Scottish Government and updates will be issued as required.

#### **Q. I have applied to join the scheme, now that face to face assessments are suspended how long will it take to become approved?**

**A.** Lloyds Register will try to prioritise the new applicants and ensure both elements of the remote assessment take place. Applicants will have the same rectification period of 30 days for any non-compliances that may be raised.

#### **Q. I farm alone, and I have fallen ill and unable to tend to my stock. What should I do?**

**A.** In line with standard 2.11 Contingency Planning and 7.1 Feeding and watering, you must implement your contingency plan (templates of both plans can be found in your standards document) and ensure the welfare of your animals is maintained. Consider contacting a neighbour or farmer friend who may be able to help in an urgent situation. There are also options for you to contact NFU or RSABI to see what advice or support they can offer.

#### **Q. Do I need to renew my membership when it becomes due?**

**A.** Yes, memberships must be renewed for the certificate to remain valid.



**Q. I have had a non-compliance raised and I can't comply as I am dependant on a third-party service. What should I do?**

**A.** During the course of the assessment should there be a standard or an element of a standard that requires a service from a third-party, and you are unable to provide the evidence that this has been undertaken, then a non-compliance will be raised. However, the period for you to demonstrate compliance (normally 30 days) may be extended by the certification body Lloyds Register, to allow for the current situation. Contact LR to discuss further.

### **Pig Assurance Scheme Members**

**Q. My vet is unable to carry out my quarterly vet visit – will I get a non-compliance?**

**A.** Your Certification will not be affected due to your vet not being able to complete your quarterly vet visit during this period of social distancing.

QMS have currently granted a derogation for QVRS during this period which will be reviewed regularly.

**Q. My vet is unable to visit to sign-off staff as competent in certain farm tasks. Can they carry out these tasks and get signed off when my vet is able to visit?**

**A.** In order to comply with the standards, certain tasks such as injecting pigs and euthanasia can only be carried out by people deemed competent by a vet. However, the standards do permit the tasks to be carried out by someone not yet signed off, if they are supervised by another member of staff that has been signed off by the vet. However please remember staff will need to keep to the government social distancing guidance of remaining 2 meters apart.