



QMS COVID -19 Frequently Asked Questions

Assurance Schemes

Q. My Annual assessment is due, but I don't want anyone on farm as I am self-isolating/vulnerable, will my membership get suspended?

A. If you can accommodate a remote assessment, Lloyd's Register will make contact with you to arrange. If you cannot accommodate an assessment either remotely or physically, Lloyds Register will notify QMS to discuss further.

Q. I cannot accommodate an assessment physically or remotely – will my membership be suspended?

A. Lloyd's Register may ask if there is a representative that may be able to take part in the assessment on your behalf, if this is not feasible, they will revert to QMS for further guidance.

Q. Why are assessors coming on farm during this pandemic? Is it safe?

A. Lloyd's Register have agreed strict procedures around biosecurity and safety with QMS and in line with government guidance. These will be discussed with you prior to a physical assessment taking place.

Q. What is a remote assessment?

A. A remote assessment is a desktop review of documents, followed by a livestream video call to view your farm activities, if a livestream video call is not possible then a telephone interview will take place. A combination of both elements will allow for a full surveillance assessment to be conducted remotely.

Q. I have applied to join the scheme, how long will it take to become approved?

A. Lloyds Register will try to prioritise the new applicants. If the assessment can be conducted physically this will be the first option, however, assessments can be conducted remotely, and the assessor will 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. I'm self-isolating due to COVID-19, can I still tend to my stock?

A. Yes, advice from Animal Health colleagues is "Key agricultural workers who are required to self-isolate as a case or contact of a case should be able to leave their home to tend to their livestock / other farm duties, as long as they are not in contact with other people in the course of their duties or during travel to/from work."



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. If your vet cannot carry out your quarterly vet visit physically, they will have the option to do this remotely and your certification should not be affected.

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.