

Q&A - Perform Assurance

The purpose of the assurance process is to ensure that good practice is achieved throughout the Child Maintenance Group's (CMG) operational departments, to identify areas of weakness or strength and to embed improvements.

The process is carried out by the Quality and Assurance team (Q&A).

Assurance is carried out on both random and targeted business decisions, service requests (SRs) and activities associated with a specific case or location.

The executive team and senior managers determine the type of checks to be made based on the CMG/Northern Ireland Child Maintenance Service, client service standards including:

- Cash value accuracy i.e. calculations, change of circumstances
- Quality targets measured in line with the use of procedures
- Client handling/client experience - through use of voice recording

The percentage of checks to be made is based on:

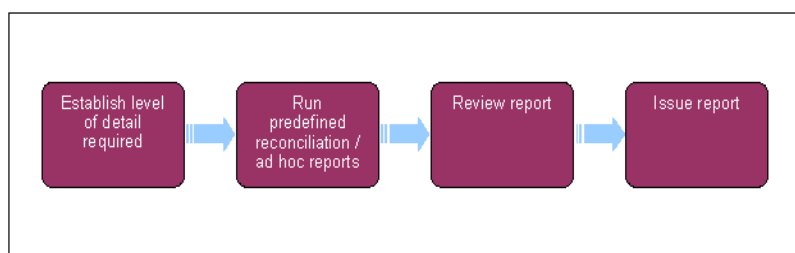
- Random sample sizes
- Service requests completed within a set period of time
- Decisions agreed in line with quality and assurance target volumes


and additional ad hoc checks including:

- Issues identified through checking
- New initiatives introduced into operations


The system pre-defined filters are used to select the sample for checking. Only completed SRs are assured, these may include failed SRs and SRs on cases that are closed.

This procedure advises the reasons for performing assurance, how to perform assurance and what activities are assured.



 This procedure uses the terms receiving parent and paying parent.

The receiving parent is the parent who receives or who is expected to receive child maintenance, known as the parent with care (PWC) or person with care (PeWC) on the system and in legislation. The paying parent is the parent who pays or who is expected to pay child maintenance, known as the non resident parent (NRP) on the system and in legislation.

 Prior to the assurance process the Quality and Assurance (Q&A) team leader runs a report of assurance tasks from previous visits to identify:

- common errors
- a development/action plan to discuss with the business manager/s


The Q&A team leader discussed any findings and updates from previous visits and the expectations of the current visit with the Business Area managers.

Select assurance criteria

Assurance team leader


1. Navigate to the **Service** tab and select the **Q&A** service request then the **query** button.
2. Select **process** and apply criteria to enable the sample selection. There are up to 26 filters to choose from which include:
 - assurance status
 - area
 - case/ case stage / case status / case sub status
 - close date
 - enforcement region
 - first name
 - grouping comment

A list of tasks will be displayed that satisfy the required type to be assured.

 The percentage to be checked is determined by Q&A prior to locating the SRs using the selection filters and a combination of the Management Information Data Warehouse and the Q&A access database.

Select tasks

3. Highlight the SR to be assured and update the **date** and **grouping comment**. Cases cannot be moved to work allocation without a comment.


 The comment reflects the type of assurance tasks in a group (e.g. grouped by date, location, and business process). This provides easy identification and selection in future.
4. Select the cases to assure, more than one case can be selected by holding the ctrl key and highlighting cases. Once all of the cases are highlighted, select the **assure** button.
5. Confirm the quota has been met by the selection.
6. For each case selected for assurance the system generates a **Perform Assurance** child SR. These can be viewed in the work management screen.
7. Assign the **Perform Assurance** SRs to caseworkers. For more information refer to [Work Allocation](#).

 To remove/cancel an assurance SR, select the SR and cancel assurance flag.


Perform assurance

Analyst

8. Select the service tab and go to the SR assurance/coaching task view and select an assurance SR (note that assurance SR's cannot be accessed through **My Service Requests**). Within the assurance SR selected, drill down on the **Originating** SR that is subject to assurance.

 If the assurance activity has a cash value implication ie: a Perform Calculation SR, you need to ascertain whether the paying parent has multiple cases on CMS2012. To do this you can select cases In the **additional** tab in the **NRP contact summary**.

9. Drill down into the **Originating** SR to perform assurance. Any linked SRs eg: CofC SR should also be checked against reported change from telephone call or letter.

 In the Service Request screen, sort by Process to identify all the Perform Calculation SRs and CofCs SRs and any sub-areas to refine the search.

 The details of the original SR (including SR number) are displayed on the assurance SR.


Review telephony

10. Identify the call activity in the original SR then listen to the call using Verint. For more information refer to [Verint](#).

11. Carry out assurance on the SR.


Provide feedback

12. Give offline, face to face feedback (wherever possible) to the caseworker and the team leader. Provide details of all checked cases, this includes those that have passed, failed and failed cases that require no corrections.

 If the current caseworker is not the caseworker who completed the task being assured, the onus is on the original caseworker to liaise with the current caseworker to ensure that corrective action is completed. Discuss process issues, client experience issues and root causes identified through failures with the original caseworker. This is not recorded on the system.

Challenge/ respond

Original caseworker


 If the team leader and/or the caseworker who made the error disagree with the outcome they may challenge the Q&A decision. The challenge must be made within three working days starting from the day after the caseworker has received feedback. This is an offline process.

13. To request a review the team leader should email the Q&A team leader detailing the reasons for the challenge with relevant procedural references.
14. The Q&A team leader appoints an Q&A analyst to re-perform the assurance. This analyst will have had no involvement in the original decision.
15. Once the repeat assurance is complete, the outcome of the assurance is passed to the Q&A team leader.
16. The Q&A team leader examines the findings and makes a final decision.
17. The Q&A team leader provides feedback via email to the team leader and caseworker and informs them that the outcome was challenged and:
 - the original decision has been upheld and an explanation of the decision
 - the original decision has been overturned and an explanation of the decision

 The Q&A team leader should consider if there are any training needs for the analyst.

Record findings

Analyst

 Findings are recorded on the operational coaching screens by the Q&A analyst. Findings are also recorded in the Q&A offline Access system.

- Root cause is recorded in the Access database
- Financial accuracy is recorded in the Access database
- Client experience is recorded in the Access database

18. In the **more info** tab of the assurance SR, select the **create assessment** button.

19. Complete the **decision date** and then go to the **Q&A assessment** tab to view the assurance SR. Select each of the following fields. From the dropdown list select the applicable reason eg pass, fail N/A, fail-direct debit and complete the **comment** field. The areas for assurance will broadly cover the following criteria:

- assessment accuracy - income
- assessment accuracy - eff dates
- caseworker decision validity
- quality of documentation
- call handling
- misuse of internal process (by a caseworker eg mistreating a client, not adhering to due process when making a decision)
- departed from agreed approach
- authorisations
- debt steer
- notifications
- DEO contact
- non standard payments
- positive client contact
- updated notif info onto system
- enforcement action
- payment methods
- system adjustments

20. If the result of the assurance is **pass**, the Q&A analyst should:-

- enter the more info tab and update the **resolution code** to **pass**
- complete the **feedback required** and **feedback provided to** fields
- update the activities to either done or not required
- change the **Status** to **Closed** and the **Sub Status** to **Complete**

21. If the result of the assurance is **fail**, the Q&A analyst should:-

- enter the **more info** tab, update the **resolution code** with the appropriate fail reasons


- complete the failure reason
 - complete the **feedback required** and **feedback provided to** fields
 - where corrective action is required check the **corrections** checkbox
 - complete the **cash value accuracy** box
 - input finance figures and/or effective date details (if appropriate)
 - update the activities to either done or not required
22. If the case has failed, update the SR status to **pending assignment** and if appropriate, select the checkbox **corrections required**. Set a wait status for the challenge period, ie 3 days after date of feedback.
23. If the case has failed with no corrections required, update the SR **status** to **closed**, after the challenge period has expired.

Corrections required

24. From assurance SR select **generate corrections**. A new SR is automatically created with the following values:
- **process = centre of excellence**
 - **area = assurance**
 - **sub-area = communicate corrections required**

The assurance SR **notification** field is updated with the new, corrective SR number.

 If the client details have not automatically populated within the SR manually populate them to relate the SR to the RP/PP.


25. Navigate to the related SR view and select the corrective SR.
26. Go to the correction summary view and populate the **correction description** field with the corrections required.
27. Update corrective SR **status** to **pending assignment**.
-  The SR will automatically move to the correct segment.
28. Navigate back to the assurance SR updating the **notification status** field to **corrections in progress**.
29. Set an initial wait activity of seven days in the assurance SR **more info** applet. Populate the **expected completion date** field as a reminder to check corrections have been completed.

Complete corrective action

Case owner

 Operational team leaders will need to consider specific coaching requirements. For more information refer to **Operational coaching** in related items.

30. The allocation of the corrective SR is dependent on the position of the case group:
- If the case group is held in the segment hopper and the SR has been created by Q&A and set to pending assignment the SR will be assigned to the segment hopper. The SR will be visible to team leaders and segment managers in the unassigned SR screen.
 - If the case group is assigned to a caseworker and the SR has been created by Q&A and set to pending assignment the SR will be assigned to the caseworker.

 If the case has moved to another business segment then the current owning team should carry out the corrective action.

31. Open the corrective SR, analyse the corrections required and apply the changes. Create the relevant SR to progress, this will usually be a change or circumstances SR as below but some processes may require different SRs eg Variations:

- **Process = change of circumstances (CofC)**
- **Area = relevant to the correction required**
- **Sub-area = relevant to the correction required**

32. Update the SR to **in progress**.

33. When all corrections have been complete navigate to the **Correction Summary** tab and complete the **Corrective Action Details**. Update the **Status** of the corrective SR to **Closed**.



The assurance SR will be in the analyst work queue as a reminder to check corrections are completed.

Check corrections

Analyst

34. Check Corrections SR has been closed and completed.

35. If Corrections SR has not been completed, notify the operational team leader (by telephone/ email) that the action remains outstanding. Set a new wait period on the assurance SR of seven days.

36. If Corrections SR has still not been completed after second wait period, alert the Q&A HEO who will escalate this to the Operations HEO.

37. If Corrections SR has been completed, navigate to the assurance SR **more info** and update the notification status to **corrections completed**.

38. Update the assurance SR **status** as **closed**.

Produce reports

Assurance team leader



The Q&A team leader will analyse the findings based on:

- cash value accuracy
- procedural findings
- client experience

The Q&A team leader will complete a report which is fed back to the management team.

39. Reports are obtained from the Management Information Data Warehouse and the Q&A Access Database.



Designated members of the assurance team will be responsible for providing feedback to business managers about how their area has performed based on the reports from the Management Information Data Warehouse and the Q&A Access Database.

A standard set of reports, including statistics and analysis is produced every month but can be produced at any time.

The following reports will be required:

- overall summary of success rate for each business item
- location success rate for each business item

- periodic success rate for location based on all business items

Reports can change to respond to management information needs. A report produced on assurance done on a client will be about the tasks assured not the individual.

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[Suspicion Of Criminal Activity](#)

[Verint](#)

[Work Allocation](#)

[Can Q&A decisions be challenged?](#)

Yes. The originating team/caseworker has the right to challenge the Q&A decision. It must be presented to Q&A within five working days of receiving the corrective SR and must have supporting evidence.