

Civil news: Specialist Quality Mark contract from 1 October 2022



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A new Specialist Quality Mark (SQM) contract begins on 1 October 2022 following a successful tender from Recognising Excellence, the existing supplier.

Has anything changed for providers?

An early booking discount is being introduced for SQM holders who apply for reaccreditation early. We have also managed to reduce the cost of an audit for the majority of SQM holders and applicants.

These improvements were introduced through the tender by the Legal Aid Agency (LAA) as part of efforts to achieve better value for SQM holders and applicants.

For the most part, the terms of the SQM contract remain broadly the same.

Recognising Excellence will now continue to administer the SQM scheme on behalf of the LAA.

Standard and guidance updates

Changes to the standard and guidance for the SQM also come into force on 1 October 2022. These apply to all requests for an SQM audit made after this date.

Advance notice of the changes was given in the early part of 2022. A summary can be found on our legal aid pages on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Further information

Legal Aid Agency quality standards – for changes to the

standard and guidance for the SQM

SQM – Recognising Excellence – how to apply for the SQM through Recognising Excellence

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