IAPCO's Code of Quality Control

1.   Introduction

There is a consensus within IAPCO that – in addition to the quality verification process upon application – a continuous process for Quality Control for members is required

2.   Process

This process should be applied equally to all members. It should be practical in its application, and affordable, and should be supported by a process for taking appropriate action towards those members who fail to meet the Quality Control standards set by IAPCO.

3.   Quality Committee

A Quality Committee (QC) is appointed to manage and oversee IAPCO's Quality Control processes.

4.   **IAPCO's Quality Control process consists of the following elements**:

- Step 1: All members should submit their "Company Report" annually confirming their continued activity in the field of conference organisation and supplying company information;
- Step 2: All members should do an annual self-assessment by means of a so-called "Self-assessment Checklist";
- The QC will verify that each member submits the Company Report and the Self-assessment Checklist annually. In addition, the QC will verify the accuracy of the data submitted on the Company Report, and that it meets the criteria set for this;
- IAPCO will hold an annual "Quality Seminar" explaining its quality philosophy and Code of Quality Control.

5.   Step 1: Company Report

- IAPCO members are to submit their Company Report annually, providing details on their activities over the past year, the education and training provided for their staff; and their involvement with other industry associations.
- Members must sign up to abide by the IAPCO Code of Conduct and to the IAPCO Guidelines for Financial Management.

6.   Step 2: Self-assessment Checklist

- Every member should fill out a Self-assessment Checklist once a year.
- This list includes statements on a range of topics (abstract handling, speaker & programme management, marketing & promotion, budgeting, financial management, exhibition, sponsorship, registration, on-site management etc.) and there are multiple statements per topic. The statements are "multiple-choice", and answers are linked to scores.

- Based on their total scores, members will be "ranked" in relation to each other and will be grouped in one of three segments: 0-10%; 11-49%; and 50-100%. Members will be informed individually in which segment they scored.
- As such, the self-assessment is a tool for identifying potential weaknesses compared to a market average, and helps members to constantly improve their level of services.
- The self-assessment will be done by means of an on-line database, to which each member will have unique access. Data submission will be anonymous: only the member submitting the data will know what information was submitted. A computer programme managing the database will calculate the scores, rank the companies and group them into one of the three segments. An automatic e-mail will be generated which informs the member in which segment they scored. Neither the Council, nor the QC, nor any other member will have access to the data within the database at any time.

7.   Submissions

The submission of the "Company Report" and the "Self-assessment Checklist" is mandatory. Dates for submission will be specified by the Council. A list of all members indicating whether they did, or did not, submit (a) the Company Report, and achieve the approval of the submission by the QC, and (b) the Self-assessment Checklist, will be published on IAPCO's website so that information about member compliance with "IAPCO's Code of Quality Control" is public and accessible to members, suppliers and clients alike.

8.   IAPCO Quality Checks

The QC will oversee adherence to the Quality Control standards and processes, and if required they will take action as defined below. Their activities include:

Verifying the Company Report
Verifying the Company Report as submitted annually:
- All Company Reports need to be completed by a date set by the Council. Failure to comply may lead to membership exclusion.
- In order to check that members are maintaining their position within the meetings industry, by way of education, activity and involvement, the QC will score the responses to ensure that the required standard has been met.
- In case of doubt or concern, the QC will double-check with the member and may request further information regarding the activities of the member.
- Where a member is unable to meet the required standard by way of scores, the QC reports this to the Council in writing.
- The Council will contact the member in writing and will ask the member if they wish to give further information regarding their submitted Company Report content.
- The Council will evaluate the situation based on the available information, and will formulate a recommendation to the General Assembly. This may lead to exclusion of the member.

Verifying the Self-assessment Checklist
Verifying that members submit the Self-assessment Checklist annually:
- All self-assessments need to be completed by a date set by the Council. Failure to comply may lead to membership exclusion.
- The QC will verify that all members have submitted the Self-assessment annually. If this is not the case by the deadline set by the Council, the QC reports this to the Council in writing. The Council will contact the member in writing and will ask the member if they wish to give further information regarding their non-compliance with the Quality Control process. The Council will evaluate the situation based on the available information, and will formulate a recommendation to the General Assembly.

- The computer programme managing the on-line database will compile the total scores of all members in one list and will identify three segments of scores: 0-10%, 11-49%, and 50-100%. Members will be informed automatically in which segment they ranked.
- If a member scores in the bottom 10% they may request a "Quality Assessment" by the QC. A Quality Assessment involves a meeting between one or more representatives of the QC and the member, aimed at doing a more detailed analysis of its PCO services with as the objective to identify areas which require improvements, accompanied by advice for the member if so desired.

9. Quality Assessment

Members may contact the QC at any time for information and advice on how to improve the quality of their services.

9. Quality Seminar

IAPCO will design a "Quality Seminar", aimed at explaining the IAPCO Code of Quality Control, as well as serving as a forum for discussions about what constitutes quality in congress organising.

- The Quality Seminar will take the format of a short session including Q&A, and will be presented by a designated member of the QC.
- It will include the importance of quality as a key constituent of the Association as well as addressing a particular topic on a quality-related issue as prescribed by Council.
- The Quality Seminar will be held in conjunction with the Annual Meeting and General Assembly of IAPCO, thus enabling every member to attend at least once every three years (in line with membership requirements, every company member should attend a General Assembly at least once every three years and every international office member at least once every four years). Non-attendance of the Quality Seminar for three/four consecutive years may lead to exclusion of the member.

10. Committee of Ethics

The IAPCO Quality Control process as managed by the QC is "member-driven" and is a continuous process. If a third party (a client, a supplier, another PCO, etc.) reports concerns about quality of services as provided by a member (a "complaint"), this is referred to the "Committee of Ethics" who will follow the general guidelines of "IAPCO's Code of Conduct", as approved at the General Assembly held in Lisbon, Portugal, in February 2015.