

CQI framework

Framework for the Governance of Special Interest Groups

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Revision history

Revision number	Description	Revised by	Date and time
0	Original document	Caroline Whitson	June 2019

1. Context

1.1. What is a Special Interest Group?

The CQI defines a Special Interest Group in the following way:

A formal, member-led group of quality professionals, united by a common sphere of interest, and acting on behalf of the CQI to advance the practice of quality in their sphere and to support the CQI.

The CQI recognises three categories of SIGs. These are:

Sector

Comprising of quality professionals who have an interest in a specific business sector (e.g. Construction, Defence, Pharmaceuticals, Nuclear, Rail).

Specialism

Comprising of quality professionals who have an interest in a specific aspect of quality, such as business improvement or audit.

Demographic

Comprising quality professionals from specific demographic groups (e.g. young quality professionals, undergraduates, women in the quality profession).

1.2. Principles of this Framework

This Framework outlines the governance and operational arrangements for the CQI's Special Interest Groups (SIGs). It outlines how the SIGs relate to, and are supported by, other groups and departments of the CQI. SIGs are volunteer run groups that are constituent parts of the CQI corporate whole and operate within the CQI's governance and operational structure.

This Framework sits under the CQI's overall Framework for the Management of Corporate Governance. The Framework for the Management of Corporate Governance takes precedence over this document.

1.3. Stakeholders for this Framework are:

Special Interest Group Committee Members – require information and confidence of how they will be supported by the CQI and what the CQI expects of them.

Special Interest Group Members – require confidence that the governance of SIGs is fit for purpose and transparent.

CQI Executive – require clarity on the management of SIGs and their governance.

CQI Board of Trustees – require confidence that all aspects of SIG governance are maintained and fit for purpose.

CQI Membership Council – require information on their responsibility for the good governance of the SIG network.

2. Purpose of Special Interest Groups

The core objectives and purpose for any SIG will be:

- a) To provide insights to inform the development of CQI policy and activities
- b) To promote quality/the quality profession in their sphere of activity
- c) To support the professional development of SIG members
- d) To be a source of information for SIG members
- e) To promote CQI & IRCA membership to non-members.

3. Approach

3.1. The Governance of Special Interest Groups

3.1.1. Within CQI Corporate Governance

- a) The CQI Board of Trustees has a legal responsibility to ensure the effective governance of the SIG network. SIGs are part of the CQI and are not separate legal entities.
- b) The CQI Board of Trustees delegates responsibility for the effective governance of the SIGs to the Membership Council and delegates the operational management of the SIG network to the CQI Executive.
- c) SIGs operate in accordance with this Framework and the Framework for the Management of Corporate Governance.
- d) Every SIG will have its own Terms of Reference that define the SIG's scope, and its operating model. Changes to SIG Terms of Reference must be approved by the Membership Council and they will be reviewed regularly by the Membership Council.

3.1.2. SIG Committee Terms of Reference

Further to 3.1.1 d (above) the composition of a SIG's committee is defined in its SIG's Terms of Reference. While a SIG may choose to create posts on their committee that reflect the scope and activities of the SIG, the following will apply in all cases:

- A SIG must have a minimum of three Office holder positions.
- SIG Office holders are defined as: Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary (optional) and Treasurer (optional)

- The process for electing Office holders is outlined in each SIG's Terms of Reference.
- All Office holders must be CQI or IRCA members
- SIGs will hold an annual review meeting to formally elect office holders and committee members, and to review SIG activities
- The tenure of Office holders will be defined in the SIG Terms of Reference
- The SIG committee has the authority to establish and close sub groups. The governance arrangements for standing sub groups will be outlined in the SIG Terms of Reference.

3.1.3. SIG Membership

- a) All CQI/IRCA members can join a SIG at any time.
- b) Non-members of the CQI/IRCA must pay an annual SIG membership fee. Fees will be approved by the Membership Council.
- c) All CQI/IRCA members and fee-paying SIG members will receive preferential access and rates for SIG events and activities.
- d) All SIG Members (whether members of the CQI/IRCA or not) must abide by the CQI's Professional Code of Conduct and are subject to its associated complaints process.

3.1.4. SIG activity

- a) All SIG activity should support CQI's purpose, strategy and Royal Charter plus the core objectives of SIGs as listed in section 2.
- b) SIGs will devise their own strategies and annual plans within their scope of activity (as defined by their Terms of Reference).
- c) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the SIG network are set by the SIG Chairs and approved by the Membership Council.
- d) An annual review of SIG activity will be submitted to the Membership Council as per the reporting schedule determined by the Membership Council.

3.2. Executive Support to Special Interest Groups – Operating Principles

The CQI Executive will support SIGs in fulfilling their purpose and objectives. The CQI can provide support in the following areas:

3.2.1. Governance Support

- a) Representatives from the SIG Committees will meet regularly, at a minimum of twice a year, as a 'SIG Chairs' Committee' facilitated by the CQI. They exist to:
- Facilitate collaboration and alignment across the SIG network
 - Appoint their representative(s) to the Membership Council
 - Provide a mechanism for upward and downward communications with the CQI Executive
 - Supporting SIGs in problem-solving and resolving disputes.

This will be facilitated by the CQI.

- b) All SIG governance documents will be reviewed on a regular basis as specified by the Framework for the Management of Corporate Governance.

3.2.2. Financial Support

- a) The overall budget allocation for the SIG network is determined by the CQI Board of Trustees annually.
- b) Financial processes relating to SIGs are determined by the CQI Executive and detailed in the SIG Handbook.

3.2.3. Membership Support

- a) The CQI Executive will hold the personal data belonging to SIG members.
- b) The CQI Executive will administer the process of CQI/IRCA non-members joining or renewing their SIG membership.
- c) The Professional Networks team can facilitate engagement between SIGs and the rest of the organisation.
- d) SIG Committees will be provided with reports concerning the composition of their membership.

3.2.4. Communications and Digital Support

All internal (to SIG members) and external communications by SIGs must be aligned with current CQI policy.

- a) **Contacting the membership**

- The CQI will facilitate communications between SIGs and their members utilising the CQI's communications channels.
- b) **Creating Marketing Materials and Online Content**
- The CQI can support SIGs with appropriate marketing materials.
 - The CQI can provide SIGs with guidance on creating online material for websites and social media including video content.
 - The CQI will support SIGs in ensuring that SIG materials are consistent with the CQI brand.
- c) **CQI Publications**
- The CQI will promote the work of the SIG Network in Quality World.
 - SIGs may submit articles for inclusion in Quality World or Knowledge. These articles are subject to editing and are included at the discretion of the Editor. Quality World cannot guarantee an article's inclusion in a specific issue.
- d) **Online**
- The CQI will provide each SIG with an area on the CQI website.
 - The CQI will provide support to ensure that SIGs comply with data protection laws.

3.2.5. Event Support

- a) Events and conferences are self-financing events, unless formally agreed otherwise by the Professional Networks Team.
- b) The income and expenditure for events are administered centrally.
- c) The CQI can offer support for advertising events and where appropriate/possible will offer support at the event.

3.2.6. Facilities Support

- a) CQI meeting facilities are available for use by SIG Committees for meetings and small-scale events; this includes the provision of drinks, lunch and teleconferencing/online meeting facilities.

3.2.7. Strategy and Development Support

- a) The CQI will ensure that SIGs are aware of current CQI strategy and policy.
- b) The CQI will support the SIG Committee to maintain alignment with the CQI as a whole.
- c) If relevant the CQI will support the development and delivery of bespoke training solutions according to the SIGs' needs.
- d) Input from SIGs will be considered in the development of CQI strategy and policy.

3.3. Establishing, Reviewing and Retiring Special Interest Groups

3.3.1. Establishing a Special Interest Group

- a) To set up a new or re-launch an existing SIG the 'Process for Setting Up A SIG' will be followed.

3.3.2. Special Interest Group Problem solving

This Problem Solving Process is in line with the CQI Volunteer Policy.

Definitions

Problem: A situation that is not ideal, where a volunteer is not performing their role as agreed which is impacting on the volunteer experience for others or a volunteer's ability to fulfil their role. Or if the CQI is not fulfilling the volunteer's expectations as per this Framework and Volunteer Policy.

Serious problem: a situation which creates a high level of risk for the organisation.

Complaint: A submission of a problem concerning the actions of the CQI.

CQI Professional Code of Conduct: A statement of acceptable professional standards and behaviours by CQI or IRCA members, SIG members and volunteers.

SIG problem with CQI

1. If a SIG has a problem with the CQI in respect of their relationship with the CQI, its staff, the support provided, or any other matter, in the first instance it should be resolved through an informal discussion between the SIG and the CQI exec to address any issues.
2. If the problem is not able to be resolved informally the SIG can make a formal complaint through the CQI's External Complaints Process.

Individual problem

1. If there is a problem with an individual(s) on a SIG Committee, it should be dealt with by the Chair or another Office holder on the committee. In the first instance an informal discussion about the problem should be had with all parties involved. The CQI executive can support with this conversation if required.
2. The Office Holder dealing with the problem may also approach the 'SIG Chairs' group for support and advice on the matter.
3. If it is a serious problem and cannot be resolved by an informal discussion a formal complaint can be made against the individual(s) by submitting a complaint against the CQI Professional Code of Conduct.

Whole SIG problem

1. A SIG that no longer meets an identified need may be retired or reformulated at the written request of the SIG Committee, or CQI Executive to the Membership Council.
2. If a problem cannot be resolved by the SIG or is serious or urgent in nature, the Membership Council will recommend any actions to the CQI executive, including but not limited to:
 - Referring the matter to the SIG Chairs' Committee for intervention
 - Suspending the activities of the SIG
 - Removing or installing SIG Officers and committee members
 - Retiring the SIG
3. The CQI Chief Executive may suspend and review the activities of a SIG with immediate effect in order to protect the interests of the CQI.

4. Associated documents

Established

Volunteer expense policy (FIN.POL.123)

Membership Council Terms of Reference (CQI0119)

A Framework for the Management of Corporate Governance (GAI.FW.138)

CQI Professional Code of Conduct (PSM.FW.002)

Volunteer Policy

Volunteer Agreement

Draft

Social Media Policy (draft)

Photography and Recording Policy (draft)

Special Interest Group Terms of Reference (draft)

Special Interest Group Chairs Terms of Reference (draft)

Setting up a Special Interest Group (draft)

To be Written

Special Interest Groups Handbook (To be written)

5. Measurement of framework effectiveness

This framework will be reviewed annually as specified in the Framework for the Management of Corporate Governance.

The effectiveness and implementation of this Framework will be monitored by the Membership Council and CQI Executive. The effectiveness will be measured against the stakeholders requirements being met as outlined in section 1.3.