Reporting Accountants Report – Checklist before Submission

1. **Form** – for periods commencing before 1 December 2014, use the form that is under the Solicitor's Accounts Regulations 2001 – 2013. For periods commencing 1 December 2014 or later, use the form under the Solicitor's' Accounts Regulations 2014. Please note that the correct versions of the forms are available on the [Law Society website](#).

2. **Completeness**: ensure you have attached all pages 1 – 11, the cover letter and, if the firm is in Northern Ireland, the NI Report.

3. **Date:** check the date in the following places:
   - Page 1 – date signed
   - Page 2 – Accounting Period **from** and **to** dates
   - Page 3 (3) – period end date
   - Page 3 (4) – date signed by Reporting Accountant
   - Page 5 – date signed by the Solicitor
   - Appendix 3 – accounting period **from** and **to** dates
   - Appendix 3 – balancing statement dates – half year and year end dates
   - Appendix 5 - accounting period **from** and **to** dates

4. **Signatures:** Reporting Accountant's signature on cover letter and page 3 (4), and solicitor's signature on page 5. These must be original signatures - photocopies or scanned copies will **not** be accepted.

5. **Names:** Firm name must be entered correctly on Page 1, Page 5, Appendix 3 and Appendix 5. Reporting Accountant's name to be entered on page 2 and page 4.

6. **Values matching**:
   - Page 3 (3) (i) = Appendix 3 (c)
   - Page 3 (3) (ii) = Appendix 3 (d)
   - Page 3 (3) (iii) = Appendix 3 (h)
   - Appendix 5 (a) = Appendix 5 (b) – subject to any adjustments for credit balances noted in Appendix 5 (c).

7. **Calculations:** the calculations in Appendix 3 should be checked to ensure they agree and that the only figures shown in parenthesis on this schedule are deficits in App 3 (i). The calculation instructions are printed on the form - these need to be followed carefully.

8. **Outstanding Lodgements** – only amounts that have been lodged to the bank before the period end can be shown as outstanding lodgements. If there are outstanding lodgements greater than three days, proof will be sought that the funds were actually lodged before the period end.

9. **Outstanding cheques** – cheques that are over six months old need to be cancelled and reissued, or the funds written back to the client account. The requirement for the Solicitors Accounts Regulations 2001 – 13 was to show outstanding cheques less than and greater than **three** months. This changed in the Solicitor's Accounts Regulations 2014 to less than and greater than **six** months, so please ensure that any cheques greater than six months are dealt with appropriately in the report.

10. **Appendix 5** – Office Account - please note that if Appendix 5 (a) and (b) are shown as nil, we will ask for confirmation that the office ledgers are being properly maintained. The balances on these should never be negative, so any balances shown in parenthesis will trigger the return of the form for correction. It is possible for the balances on the office ledger to be zero - to be correct in this instance, it would be helpful to note this on the cover letter.

11. **To Qualify or not to qualify**: on page 2 of the form you will see the following:

…I am of the OPINION that:

(1)   during the above-mentioned Accounting Period, the provisions of Part II and Part III(A) and Part III(B) and Part III(C) of the Solicitors Accounts Regulations, 2014 have been complied with by the above-named Solicitor(s), other than in respect of:

(i)**   certain trivial breaches due to minor clerical errors or mistakes in accounts – keeping, each of which was rectified by the above-named Solicitor(s) on being discovered and none of which, in my opinion, resulted in any loss to any client;

Your answer to this should determine whether you qualify the report or not.

After that, it is qualified in Appendix 1 if there is a lack of documentation, or Appendix 2 if documentation is available.

12. **Appendix 4** – this is where you add any extra details of surpluses, deficits, debit balances on client accounts, credit balances on office ledger.