

Quality Policy

At the heart of Equita's operating philosophy is a commitment to deliver an enhanced service on behalf of our Clients. This is achieved through the provision of a highly professional service where quality standards are maintained and applied to all aspects of our service from initial staff training to operating procedures.

This commitment pervades all our activities and provides assurance to local authorities that their partner in the recovery process is dedicated to achieving, and in many respects surpassing, set quality standards.

The Quality Policy of the Management of Equita is to guarantee customer satisfaction by ensuring that the Client's quality requirements are determined, satisfied and recorded throughout each phase of the contract.

To accomplish these objectives Equita has successfully achieved transition to ISO 9001:2008 accredited by QMS International PLC. The scope of the certification is financial enforcement, collection and process servicing.

The purpose of our Quality Assurance Programme is to define the essential management and organisational criteria to be applied to all aspects of Equita's work, with the objective of completing all tasks expeditiously and efficiently. The Quality Assurance Programme is not a separate function but forms an integral part of Equita's overall operating philosophy, and is adhered to by all members of staff throughout the organisation.

The Quality Assurance Programme defines that the responsibility for achieving these quality objectives rests not only with those responsible for performing the work but also, and above all, with those responsible for managing them.

Staff Training

Equita operates a comprehensive City and Guilds accredited training scheme designed to encourage individual employees to fulfil their potential. Our training schemes are regularly reviewed to take into account any changes within the company as well as external factors, for example changes regarding Client instructions and the implications of new legislation. All new employees undergo induction training incorporating Health and Safety, Client Care, Service Excellence, Quality and Data Protection issues.

Key business skills and vocational training are tailored to individual needs as identified in appraisals, performance plans and progress reviews. Regular training is particularly relevant to customer facing staff.

We provide courses for our Bailiffs on negotiation skills, accountancy procedures and stress management. Equita's Management is responsible for ensuring that only properly trained personnel are used for any activity, which may affect quality.

Information Technology

Equita has made significant capital investment in the latest technology to enhance service delivery for our Clients, and to provide a more efficient and responsive infrastructure.

All bailiffs are issued with digital pens, which download information in real time. This allows for the secure and complete transfer of data. We also apply an internet payment facility and chip and pin devices to assist debtors with settlement of their outstanding debt. Equita also have a Web based interface allowing Clients to access their portfolio of live cases via the Web in real time.

Regular reviews of our internal systems and facilities are conducted, and we carefully assess new developments, which might further enhance our service delivery. Innovative development represents our commitment to the provision of a high quality service. Ongoing investment in new technology satisfies our policy of continuous improvement.

Management Reports

Detailed management and remittance reports are compiled enables both Clients and Equita to analyse contract performance. Detailed statistical information allows for careful monitoring of the service provided and ensures that quality standards are maintained.

Case Management

Information received from debtors is immediately recorded onto our IT system together with any instructions from the Client. All information recorded complies with Data Protection legislation and, with numerous secure servers supporting Equita's business, our Clients are assured of confidentiality of information at all times.

Audit Procedures

Equita's assigned Quality Manager has overall responsibility for the maintenance and administration of the documented quality system. The Quality Manager is assisted by six Quality Co-ordinators responsible for providing information and undertaking internal audits. QMS International PLC audits Equita as part of the certification requirements. Equita's head office at Northampton is audited every six months, and the regional offices at Birmingham, Liverpool, London and Manchester are audited annually.

Procedures within the current Quality System cover all aspects of the business:

- External bailiff operations encompassing preparation and calling, payment, levy procedure, van action, repossessions and process serving.
- Internal office administration covering all aspects of office administration including tenders, quotations and contracts, new data and computer data transfer, telephone administration, warrant administration, work allocation and Client records, case queries (written and front desk), processing of bailiff reports, levy, van and no effects administration, proceeds of sales and auctions, banking, remittance control, rent, repossessions and process serving administration, complaints, analysis and purchasing.

- Quality administration incorporating system audit and review, preparation of procedures, corrective action, Quality Manual issue and change control, supplier selection and assessment, and control of quality records and training.