

Professional Indemnity - External Accreditations for Law Firms

A guide to external accreditations for Law Firms.

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Introduction

Law firms today face a myriad of risks, from claims and complaints to data breaches and regulatory issues.

Obtaining quality accreditations from external providers is an effective way to help identify and mitigate potential risks. Securing external accreditations can also help to enhance a firm's risk profile, helping to demonstrate to clients and insurers that a firm has a proactive approach to risk management and governance, and is prepared to invest appropriately in risk prevention.



Investigating which accreditations are available to law firms, and deciding which would be of most benefit to a business in terms of time and financial cost can be cumbersome and confusing.

This guide highlights some of the key accreditations available to law firms, detailing what they cover, and the investment required in terms of time and cost.

Guide

Accreditation	What is it?	How long will it take?	How much will it cost?
B Corp	<p>B Corp is a certification that businesses meet high ESG standards. Obtaining this standard includes completion of a B Impact Assessment, meeting the B Corp legal requirement, and signing the B Corp Agreement and Declaration of Interdependence.</p> <p>This is recertified every 3 years. Further information is available here: B Corp Certification - B Lab UK</p>	Completion typically takes around 12 months	<p>Fees are based on the company's revenue, and are split between submission fees, verification fees and annual fees.</p> <p>A £20 million business could expect to pay £4,000 on submission and verification fees and an annual fee of £12,000.</p>
CQS (Conveyancing Quality Scheme)	<p>This is a Law Society standard designed for residential conveyancing firms, which aims to address and improve the quality and consistency of conveyancing services, to combat fraud and money laundering, and to enhance public confidence in the conveyancing process.</p> <p>There are overlaps between this standard and Lexcel.</p> <p>Further information is available here: Conveyancing Quality Scheme The Law Society</p>	3-6 months	<p>There is an initial application fee, which varies depending on the size of your firm (between £167 for a sole practitioner and £1,942 for a firm of more than 70 partners). In addition, there are annual membership fees, (currently on a similar scale as above).</p>
Cyber Essentials	<p>A government backed Cyber Security scheme, based on verified self-assessment against 5 measures. Further information is available here: Cyber Essentials Accreditation</p> <p>Cyber Essentials - NCSC.GOV.UK</p>	2-4 weeks	£300 - £600 plus VAT, depending on organisation size.
Cyber Essentials Plus	<p>An enhanced certificate, involving an external technical verification that the standards have been met. Further information is available here: https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberessentials/overview</p>	6 months	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, but typically costs from £1,400 plus VAT

Accreditation	What is it?	How long will it take?	How much will it cost?
ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management	A certificate confirming your organisation meets the international standard for Quality Management covering how to establish, implement and maintain quality management systems, and how to ensure they are continually improved. Further information is available here: ISO 9001:2015 - Quality management systems — Requirements	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, but the Certification Body will require at least 3 months of evidence, and the whole process will typically take 6 months.	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, the certification body instructed and the number of audit days required, but typically between £3,000 - £10,000.
ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems	A certificate confirming your organisation meets the international standard for Environmental Management Systems, covering how to reduce environmental impact and promote sustainability. Further information is available here: ISO 14001:2015 - Environmental management systems	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, but it would typically take between 6 months and 2 years.	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, the certification body instructed, and the number of audit days required £4,000 - £15,000
ISO 22301:2019 Security and resilience - Business continuity management systems	A certificate confirming that your organisation meets the international standard for Business Continuity Management Systems, helping to safeguard against, minimize the chances of, and recover from disruptive incidents. Further information is available here: ISO 22301:2019 - Business continuity management systems	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, but typically this will take 6-18 months.	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, the certification body instructed and the number of audit days required £8,000 - £30,000
ISO 27001:2022 Information Security Management	A certificate confirming your organisation meets the international standard for Information Security. This standard ensures that the company systematically manages sensitive information, ensuring its confidentiality, integrity, and availability. Obtaining this certification typically involves implementing recommendations after an initial assessment, followed by a visit by an auditor. Further information is available here: ISO/IEC 27001:2022 - Information security management systems	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, but typically this will take 6-18 months.	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, the certification body instructed, and the number of audit days required, but typically between £5,000 - £10,000 (though the cost of any required consultancy or training fees can add £10,000 - £20,000)

Accreditation	What is it?	How long will it take?	How much will it cost?
ISO/IEC 42001:2023 Artificial Intelligence Management Systems (AIMS)	An AI management system standard, providing guidance for establishing, implementing, maintaining and improving AI management systems. It covers ethical considerations, transparency, and continuous learning. Further information is available here: ISO/IEC 42001:2023 - AI management systems	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, but it would typically take between 6 months and 1 year.	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, but it would typically cost between £8,000 - £45,000
ISO 45003:2021 Psychological Health & Safety at Work	A standard providing guidance for developing, implementing and improving systems for managing psychosocial health and safety at work. Further information is available here: ISO 45003:2021 - Psychological health and safety at work	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, and the systems already in place, but it would typically take between 8 months and 1 year.	Dependent on the size and complexity of your network, but it would typically cost between £7,300 - £28,000
Lexcel	This is a Law Society Standard that covers client care, compliance and risk management, and practice management. There is a certain amount of overlap between this standard and ISO 9001, but they complement each other. Further information is available here: Lexcel The Law Society	6 months	Annual registration fees cost between £60 - £865
Law Society Practice Specific Accreditations	The Law Society has a number of practice-specific accreditations that cover areas such as: Children Clinical negligence Conveyancing Criminal litigation Family law Family mediation Immigration and asylum Mental capacity Mental health Personal injury Wills and inheritance	Varying, depending on current standard and accreditation sought.	Varying, depending on current standard and accreditation sought.

	<p>These accreditations have varying requirements, from certifying a particular number of working hours dedicated to a specialism, to demonstrating particular systems and process systems. Further information is available here: Law Society accreditations The Law Society</p>		
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Aviva Risk Management Solutions can offer access to a wide range of risk management products and services at preferential rates via our network of Specialist Partners.

For more information please visit:

[Aviva Risk Management Solutions – Specialist Partners](#)

Sources and Useful Links

- [B Corp Certification - B Lab UK](#)
- [Conveyancing Quality Scheme | The Law Society](#)
- [Cyber Essentials - NCSC.GOV.UK](#)
- <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/cyberessentials/overview>
- [ISO 9001:2015 - Quality management systems — Requirements](#)
- [ISO 14001:2015 - Environmental management systems](#)
- [ISO 22301:2019 - Business continuity management systems](#)
- [ISO/IEC 27001:2022 - Information security management systems](#)
- [ISO/IEC 42001:2023 - AI management systems](#)
- [ISO 45003:2021 - Psychological health and safety at work](#)
- [Lexcel | The Law Society](#)
- [Law Society accreditations | The Law Society](#)

Additional Information

Relevant Loss Prevention Standards include:

- Cyber Essentials Accreditation

To find out more, please visit [Aviva Risk Management Solutions](#) or **speak to one of our advisors.**

Email us at riskadvice@aviva.com or call 0345 366 6666.*

*The cost of calls to 03 prefixed numbers are charged at national call rates (charges may vary dependent on your network provider) and are usually included in inclusive minute plans from landlines and mobiles. For our joint protection telephone calls may be recorded and/or monitored.

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