

Regulation of Property Agents (RoPA) Working Group

Millbank House

Tuesday 11 December 2018 11:00 – 12:30

Attendees: Lord Best (Chair), Luay Al-Khatib (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors – RICS), Andrew Bulmer (Institute of Residential Property Management – IRPM), David Cox (Association of Residential Letting Agents – ARLA), Anthony Essien (LEASE), Mark Hayward (National Association of Estate Agents – NAEA), Professor Christopher Hodges (Oxford University), Mette Isaksen (Citizens Advice), Richard Lambert (National Landlords Association – NLA), Dave Riley (National Trading Standards – NTS), David Pilling (Ombudsman Services – OS), Anne Frost (MHCLG), the secretariat.

Apologies: Wendy Martin, NTS

1. Introductions and Declarations of Interest

Attendees declared all relevant interests.

2. Review of RoPA Working Group meeting minutes and actions

Members agreed the minutes and noted the completion of the agreed actions.

3. Update from the RoPA Qualifications sub-group meeting, 3 December

Luay Al-Khatib, Andrew Bulmer and David Cox briefed the group on the discussions and outcomes of the sub-group meeting on 3 December.

The group considered the report, including agreement on the need for continuing professional development (CPD) and grandfathering arrangements, and concern around the competence of Right to Manage Companies.

4. Qualifications: decisions

a) Content and level of qualifications

The group agreed that not every agency employee should need to be qualified, and that the qualification levels of staff in supporting roles should be a matter for senior managers.

For those in agency roles where qualification will be required, Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) level 3 was regarded as appropriate. It was agreed that block management, and leadership roles, should merit a higher level of qualification.

It was agreed that qualifications should be modular – obtainable through the accumulation of the requisite credits across modules of the student's choosing.

It was agreed that the new regulator would determine the content of qualifications. Members agreed the new regulator should have discretion to specify the level of qualification required to perform a particular function. The regulator should have the power to proactively inspect agencies and ensure they had met the prescribed requirements.

Regulation of Property Agents working group meeting
These papers do not state government policy.

b) Provision

The group agreed that that Ofqual should be responsible for accrediting new qualifications if possible.

c) Continuing professional development

The group agreed that CPD levels and focus should be an operational decision for the new regulator, which would also have responsibility for prescribing, where necessary, re-validation requirements.

d) Grandparenting

Members agreed that, subject to such requirements on competence as the regulator might prescribe, existing practitioners should be given a period of time to become appropriately qualified or otherwise demonstrate competence.

5. Arrangements for future meetings

The group confirmed arrangements for future meetings.

6. Any other business

The group considered how to build implementation plans into its policy advice, and what transitional arrangements would be needed.