



IAA Newsletter

October 2026

Welcome



Welcome to our October newsletter.

Engagement remains a key priority for the Immigration Advice Authority (IAA), and earlier this month we were pleased to continue conversations by bringing together representatives from across the immigration advice sector for a stakeholder roundtable. The discussion provided valuable insight into the challenges, risks and opportunities facing the sector and will help inform our future work.

You can read more about the event in this edition, along with updates on two important areas of work for the IAA: our forthcoming consultation on new financial penalties powers and the significant changes being introduced to the competence assessment process. Together, these developments will help strengthen standards, support competence and reinforce public confidence in immigration advice services.

As always, we remain committed to providing clear information, practical guidance and opportunities for engagement.

I hope you find this newsletter informative and useful.

Best wishes

Gaon Hart

Immigration Services Commissioner

Sector stakeholders meet for roundtable discussion

On 14 October, the Immigration Services Commissioner hosted a stakeholder roundtable, bringing together representatives from across the immigration advice sector, including regulated organisations, charities and other key sector partners.

The event provided an opportunity to discuss current challenges, emerging risks and opportunities to strengthen collaboration across the sector. The discussion generated a constructive exchange of views, helping to inform our understanding of the issues affecting both advisers and advice seekers.

We are grateful to everyone who participated and shared their insights. The feedback received will help inform our ongoing work to support high standards and improve outcomes for service users.

Changes to the competence assessment process

We are introducing a new competence assessment process designed to better support candidates, strengthen assurance of competence, and improve the overall assessment experience.

Key changes include:

- Assessments based on revised syllabuses that better reflect the knowledge, skills and competence required for practice.

- A new assessment component covering the Code of Standards, ethics and professional behaviours.
- More frequent assessment opportunities and a new assessment platform to improve the candidate experience.
- Access to approved websites during assessments, replacing the current resource book.
- A revised application journey, requiring candidates to pass the competence assessment before progressing with registration.

The online competence assessment is currently paused while the new arrangements are implemented. Subject to final arrangements and external dependencies, assessments are anticipated to resume from November 2026.

Candidates planning to undertake a Level 1, 2 or 3 assessment should review the new syllabuses and familiarise themselves with the revised arrangements. A range of supporting resources has been published on the IAA website, and a series of webinars will be announced shortly to explain the changes and answer questions.

[Read the full details and access supporting resources on the IAA website.](#)

Have your say: new financial penalties powers

As we prepare to implement the new financial penalties powers introduced through the [Border Security, Asylum and Immigration \(BSAI\) Act](#), we will be launching a consultation later this autumn/winter and are keen to hear your views.

The new powers will provide us with an additional enforcement tool, enabling us to impose financial penalties where regulated advisers fail to meet their compliance obligations. They will also strengthen our ability to take action against individuals and businesses providing immigration advice illegally without the necessary authorisation.

We are confident that these powers will strengthen our ability to be a robust and effective regulator, helping to uphold standards across the profession, protect consumers and maintain confidence in regulated immigration advice services.

We encourage you to take part in the consultation when it launches and share your views. Your feedback will help shape how these powers are applied in practice and ensure they are implemented in a way that is fair, proportionate and effective.

Please look out for future communications with details of how to participate.



Immigration Advice Authority

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