

A GUIDE FOR QUALITY TEAMS

THE FORENSIC SCIENCE REGULATOR'S (FSR) STATUTORY CODE

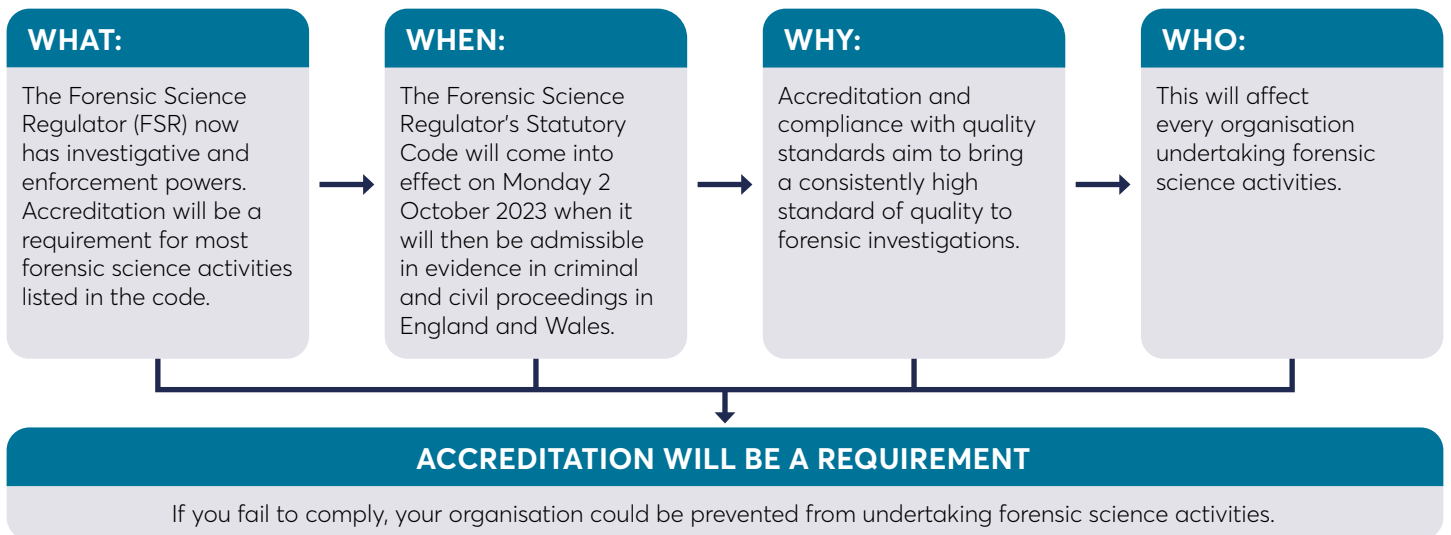
Forensics is a key part of the criminal justice system in England and Wales so it's vital that the forensic science activities we provide are suitable. The best way for us to achieve this is through accreditation and compliance with quality standards, and through meeting the requirements of the FSR Code.

Due to a recent act of parliament, the **Forensic Science Regulator Act 2021**, the FSR now has investigative and enforcement powers. The act also required a **Statutory Code** to be produced, which will come into effect on Monday 2 October 2023. Ultimately, this means that accreditation will be a requirement for most forensic science activities listed in the code.

For accreditation to be successful, everyone within your organisation needs to work together. These videos and supporting guide aim to explain the changes to the code and to show how you can play your part in achieving accreditation for your organisation.



WHAT'S CHANGING?



WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

Accreditation is provided by UKAS, the national accreditation body for the United Kingdom. UKAS is appointed by the government to assess and accredit organisations.

UKAS will visit your organisation to gather evidence of your compliance which your organisation is responsible for demonstrating. It's important to remember that building an open and transparent relationship with UKAS will help to maximise your chance of success.

Read more about UKAS: www.ukas.com

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF ACCREDITATION?

Accreditation and compliance with quality standards aim to bring a consistently high standard of quality to forensic investigations. Complying with the code may require changes to your organisation's working practices, but there are a multitude of benefits:



Helping the public and victims of crime trust in what we do



Giving forensic professionals confidence in processes and results



Increasing confidence when presenting evidence in court



Promoting training to support compliance



Driving innovation through continuous improvement

SO, WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR ME?

You are already living and breathing quality standards in your daily lives, but with the code now backed by legislation, this may add additional pressure to your already challenging role. You will be key to your organisation achieving accreditation, but you will need the whole team behind you to see success.

IF YOU FAIL TO ACHIEVE ACCREDITATION...



This could impact on the admissibility of the evidence provided by your organisation.



Your organisation will be at greater risk of investigation and enforcement by the FSR.



UKAS may impose sanctions and you may risk having your accreditation suspended or withdrawn.

WHAT TO DO NEXT...

1.

Build an open and transparent relationship with UKAS.

2.

Take time to agree improvement actions at the earliest opportunity.

3.

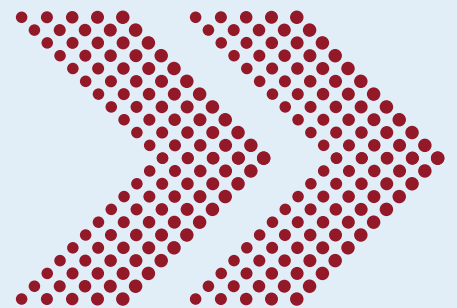
Have the confidence to challenge if you believe you are compliant.

4.

Champion all things Quality. Help your teams and wider organisation understand the benefits of accreditation and compliance with quality standards.

5.

Familiarise yourself with the specific challenges faced by each of your teams so that you can help to unblock any issues.



Together, we all need to play our part in the vital work of keeping communities safe. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation as forensics undergoes its biggest change in decades.

ABOUT US: FORENSIC CAPABILITY NETWORK

The Forensic Capability Network (FCN) is a membership organisation for the forensic science community. Following investment by the Home Office, FCN is operated by the policing community on behalf of police forces and law enforcement organisations in England and Wales. Amongst other things, the FCN provides a knowledge base, development programmes and support to forensics practitioners.

www.fcn.police.uk | www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forensic-science-regulator | To find out more, just visit the FCN and FSR websites.