NunyaLink

Immigration advice practice compliance checklist

A quick self-check against the IAA Code of Standards 2024. Tick what is in place; follow up anything you can't tick.

Registration and regulation

- [ ] Your IAA registration number appears on your letterhead, website and emails. Code 6.1
- [ ] Every adviser works only within the level and categories they are registered for.
- [ ] Professional indemnity insurance is current and adequate, with cover of at least £250,000. Tell your insurer about any potential claim or complaint. Code 8.2
- [ ] The IAA has every business address, and you tell it about any change within 10 working days. Code 8.1
- [ ] Significant business or personal changes are reported to the IAA in writing within a reasonable time; criminal charges, convictions and relevant civil proceedings straight away. Code 3.6, 3.7
- [ ] Each adviser can show how they keep their knowledge and competence up to date (continuing professional development). Code 4.4

Taking on a client

- [ ] You check for conflicts of interest before acting. Any real or potential conflict is explained in writing and the client agrees in writing. Code 5.2
- [ ] Every client gets a client care letter covering: who the client is and their immigration status, their instructions, your advice and the agreed work with estimated timescales, costs, client money, your contact details, the complaints procedure, and that you are regulated by the IAA, which can examine your files. Code 5.3
- [ ] You keep a signed and dated copy of the client care letter, or evidence that the client agreed to it electronically. Code 5.4
- [ ] You have a fee scale, share it with clients, and charge only reasonable fees for work actually done. Any departure from it is explained in writing. Code 9.1

Running the case

- [ ] Clients are updated in writing on progress at least every three months. Code 5.5
- [ ] Clients are told the outcome of their case in writing within 3 working days. Code 5.5
- [ ] Every dealing with or on behalf of the client is recorded in attendance notes. Code 8.5
- [ ] If you keep original documents, the client has a copy, and originals go back as soon as they have served their purpose. Code 8.7
- [ ] There is a plan for clients' cases to continue if an adviser is unexpectedly away, and clients are told in writing. The IAA is told about absences longer than a month. Code 5.6

Fees and client money

- [ ] A formal invoice is issued whenever payment is due, and every payment gets a receipt. Code 9.2

- [ ] Card payments are taken only for fees invoiced at least seven days earlier, and only with the client's prior authorisation. Code 9.3
- [ ] Money paid in advance is held in a separate client account, not the business account. Code 9.4
- [ ] Unused client money is returned promptly when the case ends or instructions end; disbursement refunds within 3 working days. Code 9.5, 9.6
- [ ] Refund requests and your decisions on them are recorded in writing. Code 9.7

Complaints

- [ ] You have a written complaints procedure that says how to complain, the timescales, how complaints are investigated and answered, and what you may do to put things right. Code 3.5
- [ ] The procedure tells clients they can complain to the IAA at any time. Code 3.5
- [ ] Every complaint is recorded in a central complaints log. Code 3.5

Closing a case and keeping files

- [ ] Clients get a closing letter when a case ends, when they withdraw their instructions, or when you stop acting. Code 5.8
- [ ] When a client asks, their file is transferred, normally within 3 working days, even if fees are outstanding. Code 5.9
- [ ] Client files and records are kept for at least six years, then securely destroyed. You keep a copy even when the original file has been transferred. Code 5.10
- [ ] Files are stored securely, in a file management system that lets you find any file and show it to the client or the IAA when asked. Code 8.4, 8.6

Data protection and promotion

- [ ] You follow UK data protection law: a privacy notice for clients, secure storage, staff access limited to what each person needs, and a way to spot and report personal data breaches to the ICO within 72 hours where required.
- [ ] You have checked with the ICO whether you need to pay the data protection fee.
- [ ] Client information stays confidential unless the client authorises disclosure or the law requires it. Code 4.5
- [ ] Your marketing makes no claims about success rates, does not criticise other advisers, and does not tout for business. Code 6.3–6.5

This checklist summarises the IAA Code of Standards 2024 and its Guidance Notes as published on 25 October 2026. It is a practical aid, not legal advice, and it does not replace the Code. Always check the current Code and guidance on GOV.UK.

Sources: IAA Code of Standards 2024 (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oisc-code-of-standards-commissioners-rules-2012); Code of Standards 2024: Guidance Notes (https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66a8b9eda3c2a28abb50d95d/Guidance_Notes___Code_of_Standards_2024.pdf); ICO: data protection fee self-assessment (https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/data-protection-fee/self-assessment/).

From Nunyalink Systems, makers of NunyaLink, case management for immigration advice practices: www.nlbusinessos.app