



CHIEF CORONER

GUIDANCE No.20

CORE COMPETENCIES FOR ASSISTANT CORONERS

1. The purpose of this Guidance is to provide advice for senior coroners (SCs) in bringing forward newly appointed assistant coroners (ACs) into coroner work.¹
2. SCs are expected to satisfy themselves that a newly appointed AC (with no or limited previous coroner experience) has sufficient core competencies before acting alone. If the competencies are sufficiently satisfied, the AC may be allowed to act alone before completing the compulsory induction course.
3. For this purpose a Core Competencies Form has been designed. It is attached to this Guidance.
4. SCs should therefore provide arrangements so that newly appointed ACs may learn and develop the necessary experience and skills so as to be able to satisfy each competency.
5. When a competency is completed it should be signed off on the Form. A completed form should be sent to the Chief Coroner's office.
6. Not all competencies need be completed at once before some kinds of work may be undertaken. For example, an AC may have court skills and experience but little knowledge of coroner office work. Ideally, all competencies are learned together, as they complement each other, and inform all aspects of an AC's developing skills. But it is recognized that some skills may be complete before others, so that some areas of work may be undertaken before others.
7. It is the responsibility of the SC to ensure that each competency is completed to his/her satisfaction. It is essential that all ACs are sufficiently qualified before they act in any coroner capacity without supervision.
8. Opportunities should always be provided for a newly appointed AC to learn the procedures of the local office and for in-house training and shadowing. It is also important that the SC should work together with all coroners in the team and hold regular team meetings to discuss local coroner issues of importance.

HH JUDGE PETER THORNTON QC
CHIEF CORONER

19 October 2015

¹ My thanks to Louise Hunt, senior coroner for Birmingham and Solihull, for her input into this Guidance and the contents of the Form.