



INFORMATION ON FQA CHANGES

(PTO)

BASIS is restructuring the way members with the fertiliser (FACTS) qualification stay up to date and maintain an appropriate status.

Currently, many FACTS Qualified Advisers (FQAs) are members of both the BASIS Professional Register and the FACTS Annual Scheme to maintain their FQA status, but not all.

The FACTS Management Committee has agreed that in future it will be compulsory to have membership of both schemes to maintain the widely recognised FQA professional status.

This is to ensure all FQAs benefit from Continuing Professional Development through the BASIS Professional Register together with the information provided by the FACTS Annual Scheme.

Not everyone may wish to follow this route. Therefore, there will be two types of membership for individuals once they have become FACTS qualified.

The well-established FACTS Qualified Adviser (FQA) status remains. This is for those who give crop nutrition advice on farm.

A new FQA category of the Professional Register will be introduced, which will combine the Professional Register and FACTS Annual Scheme memberships together. Those who wish to retain their FQA status will need to have membership of the Professional Register with the FQA category.

Anyone who has completed the Nutrient Management Planning training modules and online assessment will automatically be added to the Professional Register FQA category.

For anyone who chooses not to join the FQA scheme, e.g. farmers looking to self-advise and those not engaged in day-to-day agronomy, there will be a new membership category: 'FACTS Subscriber'.

FACTS Subscribers will enjoy all the benefits of regular information and access to the FACTS Annual Scheme, but they will not need to maintain CPD through the BASIS Professional Register. However, FACTS Subscribers will be unable to deliver advice to third parties on crop nutrition and will not receive an FQA membership card.

The timeline for introducing these changes is as follows:

October 2014	<u>All</u> FACTS Annual Scheme members will be sent an invoice as normal for the 2015 membership year.
April 2015	<u>All</u> Professional Register members will be sent an invoice as normal for the June 2015 – May 2016 Professional Register year.
October 2015	<u>Only</u> FACTS Subscribers will be sent an invoice, for the 2016 FACTS Annual Scheme membership year.
April 2016	Professional Register FQA members will be sent an invoice for the joint membership scheme for the June 2016 – May 2017 Professional Register year.

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INFORMATION ON FQA CHANGES - continued

The new FACTS Subscriber scheme is a way for those with an involvement in crop nutrition that does not directly involve giving advice to access the FACTS information service which is a unique feature not offered by other professional development schemes.

Overall, we have simplified the route to gaining FQA status and created a robust route to membership.

Other changes will include a reduction in the permitted time between passing the FACTS examination and passing the NMP.

The changes will not come fully into force until 2016 to ensure that there is sufficient time for FACTS members to understand and adapt to the changes.

Further details will be circulated to FACTS members over the coming months. In the meantime, if you have any queries please contact Stephanie Hickling-Mace on: 01335 340858 or email stephanie@basis-reg.co.uk