

BACP Course Accreditation Scheme

Application Process

Pre-application stage

A course should consider if it clearly meets all the requirements for accreditation. If certain, it can begin to prepare an application according to the guidance available from BACP, completing the application form with clear reference to an accompanying portfolio of evidence.

It is important to get a course application right in advance of its submission to BACP.

Intention to apply for course accreditation

All courses must contact BACP with their anticipated application date. Please notify us approximately two months in advance.

Submission of application to BACP

Applications must be submitted to BACP electronically and in print (x2 hard copies). All supporting evidence must be included (indexed, cross referenced, clearly labelled and ordered) and the Application Stage fee must be paid. BACP will acknowledge receipt of the application upon arrival.

Application Stage

The Application Stage is now officially in progress

Application received at BACP

BACP will book the application onto its systems, process the fee and check for current organisational membership. The Application Stage fee must be paid in order for the Application Stage to commence. BACP cannot accept applications from non-members.

Eligibility & quality check

The quality of the application will be checked to see that it appears to be complete, in date, clearly and specifically referenced, sufficiently evidenced and that all Eligibility Criteria appear to be met. If there are minor queries regarding eligibility, the course will be asked for more information. Poor quality or obviously incomplete submissions cannot be assessed and will be returned for revision. Revised applications may be required to pay an additional resubmission fee.

An application cannot be sent forward for assessment until this step is completed successfully.



Initial assessment

The application will be allocated to a BACP accreditation assessor. They will make an initial read-through to confirm eligibility and that all criteria are addressed, evidenced and appear to be met. Eligibility must be approved before the application can continue to a full assessment.

There may be queries at this stage, which must be resolved before the application can move forward in the assessment process. Applications will not be queried indefinitely and will be withdrawn from the assessment process where sufficient information is not forthcoming.



In-depth assessment

A second assessor is then allocated to join the initial assessor. Both assessors will make an in-depth assessment against each criterion for the scheme. Where any parts of the application are not clear to the assessors, there may be further, more detailed queries at this stage. We would only expect to take up minor queries at this point, as an incomplete application would usually be returned much earlier in the process.

Only when the application is deemed to meet all criteria will the assessors indicate readiness to make their quality assurance visit to the course. The Visit Stage fee must be paid in order for the application to proceed to the Visit Stage.

At this stage, the initial assessor becomes known as the lead assessor, as he/she takes on responsibility for leading the assessment process, the visit day and writing the accreditation report. The second assessor works alongside the lead assessor and will accompany them on the visit.



Visit stage

The Visit Stage is now officially in progress.

Visit date, timetable and arrangements

A visit lasts for approximately four hours and will be scheduled for a typical term-time day when final year students are in session. Mutually convenient dates will be considered by the assessors, who will then confirm the visit day. The course will be asked to provide a draft timetable in advance, based on BACP's course accreditation scheme visit protocol. The assessors will agree the timetable following any necessary amendments, make their travel arrangements and book accommodation where necessary.



The visit

The assessors will arrive on site to meet with staff, students, observe teaching and review coursework. The assessors may be able to offer the course team some initial feedback at the close of the visit.



Reporting stage

Any queries arising from the visit will be taken up with the course at this stage. The assessors will discuss their findings and the lead assessor will write the course report.



Report issued

The accreditation report will give the assessment findings and outcome of the assessment process to date. The report may recommend the course for accreditation with or without recommendations for consideration. However, if any criterion is not met, the report will contain a time-limited condition which satisfied before the course can be accredited. Failure to meet conditions as specified will result in the application being withdrawn from the assessment process and accreditation will not be awarded.



Accreditation

Once all criteria are deemed met, accreditation can be awarded, usually for a five-year period. A course is required to maintain and renew its accredited status as per BACP requirements.

Please remember that course accreditation is not a 'no-fail' scheme and accreditation is not a guaranteed outcome of the process.