

## Service Accreditation scheme

### Guide to renewing accreditation

All resources mentioned in this guidance are available under the corresponding title for download [online](#) or on request via [email](#)

#### Introduction

Accreditation is awarded for a five-year period, at which point the accreditation ends. This guide explains about the process of how to renew accreditation for a further five-year term for existing accredited services in the last year of their current accreditation term.

The assessment and outcomes process for renewal applications mirrors that for new applications. However, if successful, you will receive a new certificate of accreditation which displays your original award date, but a new end date five-years from the end of your previous term end. This is a key benefit of the renewal process.

Whether you are new to the service accreditation scheme or not, you may also find it useful to read through the [Guide to applying for and maintaining accreditation](#), as this details the application and assessment process for new applicants. You should also consider reading the Service Accreditation Scheme 2003, which sets out the criteria to be met (Part I), how to put an application together (Part II), the assessment process (Part III) and the requirements to maintain accreditation (Part IV). This guide assumes you have read the Scheme details and understand the requirements, simply offering further explanation.

All underlined text provides a direct link to the pertinent pages of the BACP website. Simply click on the link to access the information there.

As a BACP organisational member, you are held to account under our [Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions](#) and all applications are assessed within this in mind.

Please remember that BACP does not accredit organisations, it accredits counselling and psychotherapy services *provided* by organisations.

#### Renewal application

You will be emailed with an invitation to renew your accreditation term by completing an attached renewal application form within three months before the end of your current accreditation term. This takes account of the assessment process.

Although putting an application will take time to compile, it is anticipated that the process will be fairly straight-forward as all criteria have previously been met and should have been maintained over the five-year term. We provide you with five months' notice ahead of the deadline in order for you to schedule appropriate time in your busy diaries and source additional help from within your team, as necessary. The onus is on you as the accredited service named contact, to ensure you have sufficient time to complete this task. Only on rare occasions will we accept renewal applications after the end date of a current term.

Applications received after the end of an accreditation period will be treated as a new application and not as a renewal application. This means that your current accreditation will have lapsed. If your new application assessment is successful, you will be provided with a new accreditation start date and BACP records will indicate two periods of accreditation, rather than one continual period of accreditation that the renewal process allows.

Your renewal application will be assessed as a new application, independently from any previously submitted material. It will also be assessed by a different assessor where possible. So please assume that we know nothing about your service, even if this is your second or even third renewal application!

Remember that if your original or previous renewal application was deferred, you should refer to both assessment reports and also consider any feedback from your annual monitoring submission feedback reports. This will help you avoid any previous errors or oversights and pass without the need for resubmission.

Please write your self-statements in the application form itself and leave the appendices for your hard evidence. Do not assume that self-statements and supporting evidence that met criteria previously will be sufficient for a renewal application. Five years is a significant period of time in the business world and counselling and psychotherapy service delivery continues to develop in sophistication. You may even find your service has completely new policies and procedures in force. It will certainly have reviewed and revised documents in place.

Make sure the evidence you submit is dated and current, by which we mean no older than three years from the date of your renewal application.

We try wherever possible to support you through the accreditation renewal process. However, if you are unable to meet all criteria following a resubmission of papers, your accreditation will be withdrawn and you will need to re-apply with a new application, in order to regain the accreditation kite mark.

## Working with children and young people (CYP)

We expect that all practitioners who work with CYP, qualified or trainee, should have some training in working with this cohort. Appropriate training may include professional CYP training at diploma and post-graduate level, or specialised continuing professional development (CPD) training. CYP practitioners must also receive robust and appropriate supervision from supervisors who are themselves, competent to work with the CYP cohort.

Whilst there are currently no specific criteria on working with CYP in the service accreditation scheme, we would expect you to work within the *Ethical Framework for the Counselling Professions* and this will be assessed under criterion 6.2.1. Please refer to the [Guideline for Services Working with CYP](#), available from the website, for information about the criteria which will need specific address for CYP services.

### Student placements

Placement providers working with CYP should only allow trainee counsellors to undertake a placement with them if the student has been assessed, either by the training provider or by you as the placement provider, as having the basic competences to practice safely and ethically with CYP. You will need to detail your requirements of students before offering a

placement under criterion 4.3.3, or you will be requested to do so under criterion 6.2.1 with regard ethical practice.

Further information on the basic standards expected by BACP can be found on our website under [Information /Ethics and Standards /Competencies & Curricula](#). This can either form part of student training or part of a placement provider induction and training process. This can also be supplemented by the [Counselling MindEd](#) resources which are free to access and provides a certificate of completion as evidence.

## Online (video) and telephone working

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the lockdown situation across the UK since March 2020, we are being flexible with regards to remote practices. However, if you are providing remote therapy services, we do expect to see that your practitioners have as a minimum, completed primer training for working online. Students on placement may also undertake some online or telephone practice as long as they have had some training and they have permission to do so from their training course.

All practitioners working online or by telephone must be assessed for their competency to work in this way and you will need to explain how you do this in your application. You will also need to ensure your policy, procedures and other documents reflect this way of working. For more information please visit our [working online resources](#) webpage.

You should also submit a copy of your completed 'Temporary Changes Report Form - Coronavirus' with your application under Criterion 2.

## Submitting your application

We only need one complete version of your application, which must be uploaded into the secure portal we will have provided a link to in your renewal invitation email. Your previous accreditation term papers will continue to be held there within one folder, until three months after you have been notified of your successful renewal of accreditation.

Please ensure that your application form is provided as a Microsoft Word document as this will be used by the assessors to complete their assessment report. Your supporting evidence should be numbered and provided in an 'appendices' folder and be accompanied with a list showing appendix number and document titles as stated in your application form.

The submission date will be taken from the date of the email you send to confirm your papers have been uploaded.

As a condition of making your application you agree that BACP reserves the right to ask for further evidence if required. The Service Accreditation terms and conditions are accessible from the [Applying for Accreditation](#) webpage.

## Application fee

Please see the website or contact us to check the current fee at the time of your submission.

Payments are preferred by BACS transfer whenever possible (our details are provided on request). We also accept payment over the phone by debit/credit card by contacting our

Customer Services Team on 01455 883300. Do ensure all correspondence with us states your organisational membership number and reason for contact.

## Assessment process

We will acknowledge receipt of your application by email by return. Before assessment, we will carry out a routine check to ensure that:

- Part A - Eligibility Criteria 1-3 are met
- The declaration of honesty has been signed and dated
- The foundation details are sufficiently clear
- Your declaration of support is appropriate
- Presentation of the application is ordered and appears complete
- The submission fee has been paid

If there are any queries, we will contact you by email to address these before forwarding your application on for assessment.

Your application will then be assessed by our trained Assessors, against the Service Accreditation Scheme Part B - Operational Criteria. Points of clarification and additional information may be requested by email. If requests cannot be met within the specified time, we may determine that the pertinent criteria have not or cannot be met.

The assessor will then complete their section of the application form submitted.

Ten per cent of applications are randomly chosen for moderation, which ensures the assessment standards are maintained by all assessors and across time.

## Timetable for the assessment process

It is difficult to predict precisely how long the process will take from the time an application is received by BACP, to the issue of the assessment report. It will depend partly on the number of queries we have, how long you take to respond, whether your application requires moderation as part of the ongoing standardisation process, and on the total number of accreditation applications awaiting assessment at any one time.

BACP's aim is to make the process run as quickly as reasonably possible. We endeavour to issue your assessment report within four months of receiving your application.

## Assessment outcomes

Once the assessor has completed their sections of your application, we will upload the report into your secure portal and inform you of this by email, along with a reminder of the link for access.

If your service has met all the criteria, then your current accreditation will be renewed for a further five-year term, to run consecutively from the end of your previous term. You will receive a new certificate along with your assessment report, which will continue to show your original accreditation award date but with a new term end date.

If the assessors consider that some criteria have been insufficiently evidenced, they will set conditions for you to address before accreditation can be renewed and these will be detailed at the end of your application assessment report. You will be provided with a

resubmission template and a deadline in which to complete and submit. The conditions will specify what is needed in order to satisfy outstanding criteria requirements.

Resubmissions are assessed by the same assessor wherever possible and follow the same assessment process. There is no fee for a resubmission of papers.

Assessors may also make recommendations for improvement or development, which do not impact on whether a criterion is being met or not. However, you will be asked to feedback on your considerations and any resultant actions within your first annual monitoring submission once accreditation has been renewed.

If, following a resubmission, there are any unmet conditions, your application will be deemed to be unsuccessful. However, this is rare because you have already met the criteria and usually these remain continue to be met throughout the previous accreditation term, unless significant restructuring as not fully considered the accreditation standards. However, a full new application can be submitted as soon as you feel you are once again meeting the criteria standards.

You may appeal the final decision if you have grounds. Please note that disagreement with the assessor decision is not grounds for appeal. You will have three months in which to submit an appeal. Further details are provided in Part III of the Service Accreditation Scheme.

## Maintaining accreditation

Organisational membership needs to be maintained and we will continue to request an annual monitoring submission from you using a template provided. Remember, this is in line with your annual organisational membership renewal date and *not* your accreditation award date. An invitation to renew your annual organisational membership will be sent separately by our membership team.

You will be asked to tell us about any changes that have taken place within the accredited service during the previous year, so you will need to refer back to the criteria as you complete the form.

Following assessment of your annual submission, you will continue to receive an assessor feedback report. Any questions should be addressed within the specified time and we may require you to submit further evidence if necessary. Failure to provide an annual monitoring submission or offer a satisfactory response to any queries we have raised, may result in the withdrawal of your accredited status.

***BACP reserves the right to conduct a quality assurance visit where a service has failed to comply with the requirements for maintenance of accreditation, the cost of which will be met by that service.***

At the end of your accreditation term you will be invited to submit an application to renew your accreditation term for a further five-year period and how to go about that.

## Data protection and confidentiality

All applications and annual monitoring submissions are treated as confidential with access restricted to named individuals. The onus is on the applicant to ensure that the materials used as part of their application are GDPR compliant.

Once accreditation has been awarded, all application and assessment papers will be retained in your secure portal and on BACPs limited access operations drive, for the duration of your accreditation term. These will be deleted in full, within three months of the successful renewal of accreditation or when an accreditation has lapsed.

You can access the secure portal at any time during your accreditation term. Access to your secure portal can be changed at any time by emailing a request to [accred.service@bacp.co.uk](mailto:accred.service@bacp.co.uk)

All email correspondence, unless saved in your secure portal, will be deleted within three months of when we have notified you of your application decision.

***BACP reserves the right to ask you about your working practices at any time throughout your accreditation term.***

Under GDPR, individuals have the right to be informed about the collection and use of their personal data, it is a key transparency requirement under the regulations. This is communicated via our Privacy notice that is on our website [here](#) and on the footer of our external emails.

## Further information

Please visit the [Service Accreditation](#) webpages of the [BACP website](#).

If you wish to discuss any particular criterion or element of the assessment process in more detail, please contact us as [accred.service@bacp.co.uk](mailto:accred.service@bacp.co.uk)

General information about BACP services and resources should be directed to our [Customer Services team](#) at [bacp@bacp.co.uk](mailto:bacp@bacp.co.uk) or by phone on 01455 883300.

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