

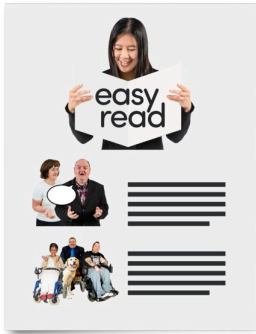


A guide for Accreditation Mentors



**An Easy Read booklet about
our Accreditation Scheme
for museums**





This booklet is an Easy Read version of some information. It has words and pictures.



You might want help to read this booklet. You can ask someone to help you.

words

In this booklet, some words are



- **black and bold**

These words might be hard to understand. We explain what these words mean.

- **blue and bold**

These words are links to websites or email addresses. If you are reading online, you can click on these links.



Who we are and what this booklet tells you about



We are **Arts Council England**.
We help people and organisations in England to be creative and make art and culture.



We have an **Accreditation** Scheme for museums.



Accreditation is a way to officially approve something and show it meets a certain **standard**.

A **standard** is the best way to do something.



Click this link to read information about our Accreditation Scheme.



This booklet is a guide for **Accreditation Mentors**.



A **mentor** is a person with the right skills to give advice and support about a certain thing.



An **Accreditation Mentor** gives support to certain types of museum.



This booklet tells you information

- if you are already an Accreditation Mentor
- if you might become an Accreditation Mentor.

Other useful booklets

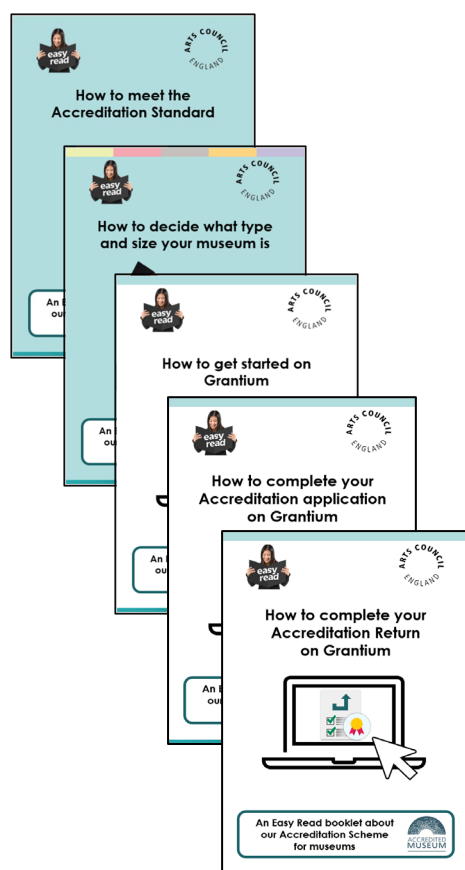


This booklet is part of a group of Easy Read booklets about our Accreditation Scheme.

Some of the booklets will help when you read this booklet.

The booklets are called

- **How to meet the Accreditation Standard**
- **How to decide what type and size your museum is**
- **How to get started on Grantium**
- **How to complete your Accreditation application on Grantium**
- **How to complete your Accreditation Return on Grantium.**



We tell you when to use these booklets in a box like this.

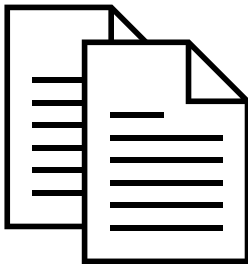
About our Accreditation Scheme



Our Accreditation Scheme is a way for museums to show they follow the best way to do things.



When museums take part in our Accreditation Scheme and are successful, they get Accredited.



When museums are Accredited, it shows they

- have good **policies**, plans and **processes**
- are good for **users**
- are good for the people who work for them
- can be trusted by people and organisations who work with them
- have good **collections**.





Policies are sets of rules for your organisation.

Processes are official ways to do something.

Users are the people who visit a museum or take part in the activities they do.

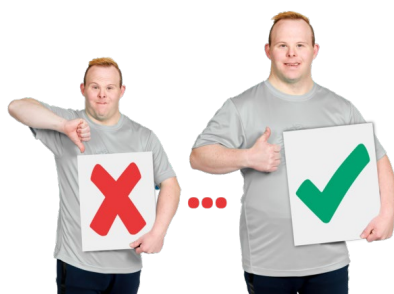
Collections are the objects a museum has.



Our Accreditation Scheme is a way to make sure the **public** can visit museums and see good collections for a long time ahead.



The **public** means all the people in an area, like a country.



Our Accreditation Scheme supports museums. It helps them check how good they are and make their services better.

About our Accreditation Standard



Museums must meet our **Accreditation Standard** to get Accredited.



When museums get Accredited, they have to work hard to keep the Accreditation Standard.



The ideas and rules museums must follow to meet our Accreditation Standard are called our **Requirements**.



There are 9 main Requirements. Each main Requirement is split into smaller Requirements.

3

There are 3 main areas our Requirements are about.



1 Organisational Health

This area is about the museum. It includes Requirements 1, 2 and 3.



2 Managing Collections

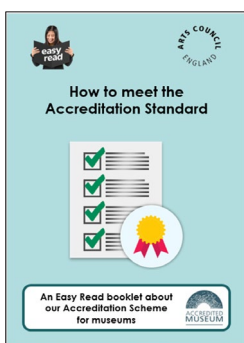
This area is about collections a museum has. It includes Requirements 4, 5 and 6.



3 Users and their Experiences

Experiences are things that happen to you in life and how they affect you.

This area is about the people who use a museum. It includes Requirements 7, 8 and 9.



Use **How to meet the Accreditation Standard.**

About our Accreditation Partnership



Our Accreditation **Partnership** decides which museums can get Accredited.

A **partnership** is when organisations work together.



It is made up of 4 organisations, called **assessing organisations**.



Each assessing organisation looks after museums in a different part of the UK.



We tell you what each assessing organisation is called, and the email address you should use to contact them on the **next page**.



For **England**, the assessing organisation is **Arts Council England**.

Send an email to this address accreditation@artscouncil.org.uk.



For **Northern Ireland**, the assessing organisation is the **Northern Ireland Museums Council**.

Send an email to this address devofficer@nimc.co.uk.



For **Scotland**, the assessing organisation is **Museum Galleries Scotland**.

Send an email to this address accreditation@museums-galleriesscotland.org.uk.



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

For **Wales**, the assessing organisation is the **Welsh Government**.

Send an email to this address MuseumDevelopment@gov.wales.

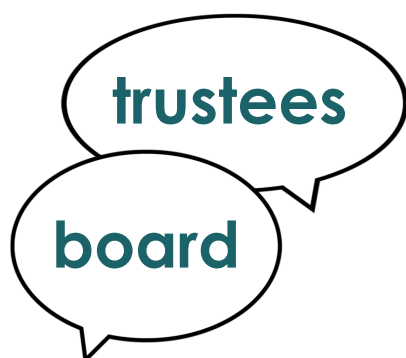
About Accreditation Mentors



Requirement 1.3 of our Accreditation Standard says museums must show that their **governing body** gets advice from **museum professionals**.



A **governing body** is a group of people who make official decisions about how an organisation is run.



Another name for a **governing body** might be **trustees** or **board of directors**.



Museum professionals are people who have worked in a manager job at a museum for more than 3 years.



Some types of museums must **employ** a museum professional.

Employ means pay someone to work for you.



Museums that do not have to employ a museum professional must have an Accreditation Mentor instead.



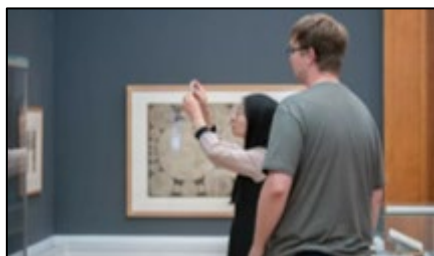
An Accreditation Mentor is a museum professional who agrees to do a certain amount of work to support a museum for free.



When you are an Accreditation Mentor, your museum should pay your **expenses**.

Expenses are costs you might have to pay to do your work, like travel or food costs.

Which museums have an Accreditation Mentor



We want our Accreditation Scheme to be useful for all types of **public museum**.

Public museums are museums the public can visit and use.



For our Accreditation Scheme, there are different types of museum, and there are different sizes called **Type 1**, **Type 2** or **Type 3**.



Most museums that have an Accreditation Mentor are **Type 1**. These are smaller museums.



Use **How to decide what type and size your museum is**.

What Accreditation Mentors do



Accreditation Mentors support smaller museums to get and stay Accredited.



You might support your museum to get Accredited for the first time. This is called a **first application**.



Or you might support your museum to stay Accredited. This is called a **return application**.



You do not need to know about every part of our Accreditation Standard.



If there are parts you do not know about, it is your job to find other information, people or organisations that can help.



You need to

- give about 4 days support each year
- go to 1 or more governing body meetings each year
- visit the museum 1 or more times each year
- write a report to send with the Accreditation application for your museum.



You should decide with your museum how long you will be their Accreditation Mentor for.



A good amount of time is from 3 to 7 years.



You might decide to be an Accreditation Mentor for more than 1 museum.



You should make sure you have the time to do this.



What Accreditation Mentors do not do

When you are an Accreditation Mentor, you do not have to complete the Accreditation application.



This should be done by the governing body.



You also do not have to go to museum events.

Who can be an Accreditation Mentor



To meet the rules to be an Accreditation Mentor, you must

- be a museum professional
- be able to show that you keep learning and that your knowledge and skills are up-to-date.



If you do not meet the rules to be an Accreditation Mentor, you might be able to help in a different way.



Contact museum organisations in your area for advice.



Retired museum professionals

If you are a **retired** museum professional, you can be an Accreditation Mentor.

Retired means you have stopped working. People normally retire when they get to a certain age.



Being an Accreditation Mentor is a good way to share your knowledge and skills and stay involved with museum work.



Trustees

If you are a museum trustee, you might be able to be an Accreditation Mentor as well.



When this happens, there should be an official agreement about what you must do for each role.



It is important that decisions you make as a trustee are not affected by what you do as an Accreditation Mentor.

How to become an Accreditation Mentor



Adverts for Accreditation Mentor roles are normally put on the websites of arts organisations.



You can also contact museums and tell them you want to become an Accreditation Mentor.



You need to complete our **Expression of Interest form** and send it to the right assessing organisation. We tell you how to contact assessing organisations on **page 11** of this booklet.



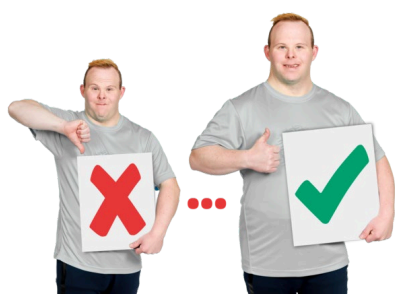
Click this link to go to the page of our website with the Accreditation Mentor Expression of Interest form.

How being an Accreditation Mentor can help you



Being an Accreditation Mentor can help you

- **develop** your knowledge and skills
- share your knowledge and skills
- find out about areas of work you might not do in your museum job
- work with different types of museums
- work with different types of collections
- meet new people from museum organisations
- become more **confident**.



Develop means grow and get better.

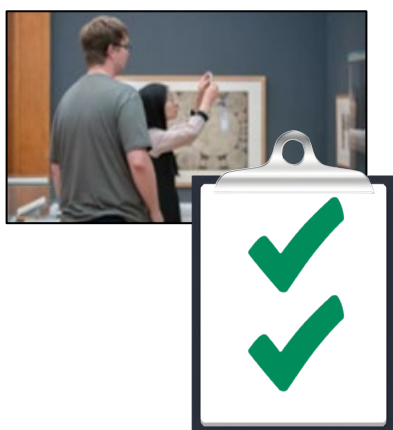
When you are **confident**, it means you believe in yourself and what you can do.

How to start supporting your museum



When you become an Accreditation Mentor, the first thing you should do is

- talk with your museum's governing body and decide what support you will give them
- find out how ready your museum is for Accreditation.



We think it is a good idea to do these things in person at your museum. This will help you

- get to know the people at your museum
- see your museum and find out how it is run.

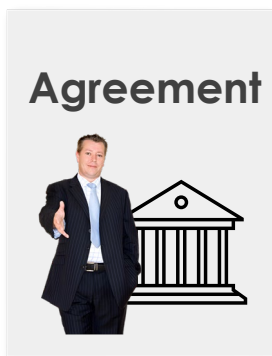


You can also read our Easy Read booklet called **A guide for Museums who work with Accreditation Mentors.**

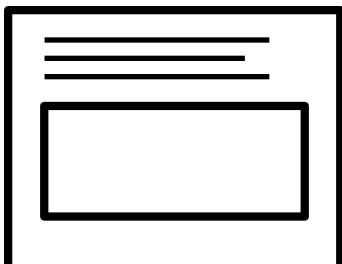
The Museum Accreditation Mentoring Agreement



You should have an official agreement with your museum about what support you will give them.



This agreement is called the **Museum Accreditation Mentoring Agreement**.



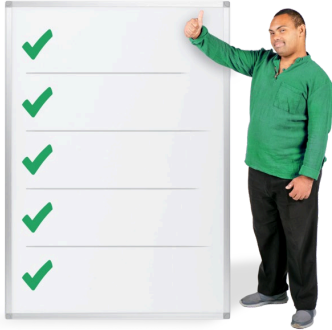
We have a **template** you can follow when you make your agreement.

A **template** is an example version you can use as a useful guide.



Click this link to go to the page of our website with our Museum Accreditation Mentoring Agreement template.

Find out how ready your museum is for Accreditation

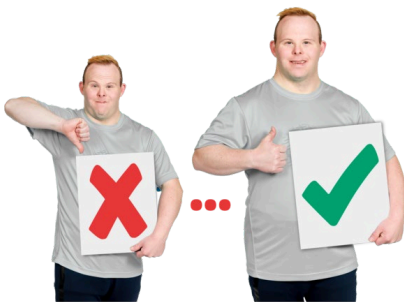


Our Accreditation Standard has a checklist you can use to find out how ready your museum is for Accreditation.



It can help you find out

- which areas of our Accreditation Standard your museum does well, and which areas need more work
- which areas are shown as **Areas for Development** in the museum's **forward or business plan** or in their last **outcome letter**
- which areas you can support your museum with
- which areas need support from someone else, and who that should be.

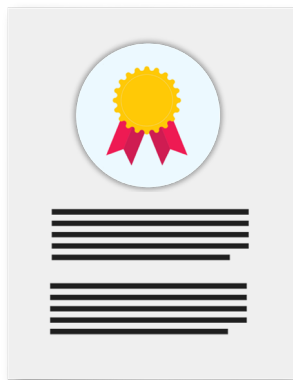




Areas for Development are things a museum already does but we think they could do better.



A **forward or business plan** is a plan about the aims of an organisation and how they will make them happen.



We send an **outcome letter** after we check Accreditation applications. The letter says what we think organisations need to do to get Accredited.



Each type and size of museum must follow different rules when they apply for Accreditation.



Make sure you know what rules are right for your museum.



Think about how big or small your museum is and what this means they can or cannot do.



Use

- **How to meet the Accreditation Standard**
- **How to decide what type and size your museum is.**

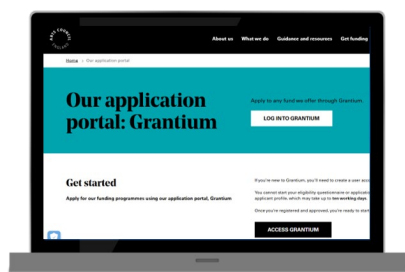


If you are supporting your museum with a first application, you can help them understand the Requirements and the application process.



If you are supporting your museum with a return application, you can look at their last award letter and help them with their Areas for Development.

About the Accreditation application



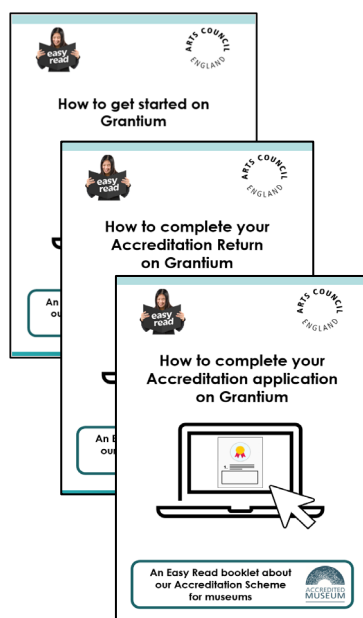
All Accreditation applications are completed online, using our **Grantium application portal**.



It is not your job to complete the application for your museum. Your job is to support them to be ready to do it themselves.



If your governing body are worried about using Grantium, you can tell them about our guidance booklets.



Use

- **How to get started on Grantium**
- **How to complete your Accreditation application on Grantium**
- **How to complete your Accreditation Return on Grantium.**



You can also tell them to contact our Customer Services department. They can answer questions about Grantium.

Click this link to contact us.



Accreditation Mentor Report

You must write a report that is sent with the Accreditation application for your museum.



The report should say

- what you have done to support your museum
- how well you think your museum meets the Requirements for our Accreditation Standard.



You can talk to your museum about what you will say in your report. You do not have to share it with them if you do not want to.

How to talk about Areas for Development



When you are an Accreditation Mentor, you must find out which areas of our Accreditation Standard your museum does well, and which areas need more work.



The governing body for your museum will be happy to hear about the areas they do well, but they might not like being told about the areas that need more work.



To make it easier to talk to your governing body about the areas that need more work, you should make sure they trust you.



You can also

- ask them to say which areas they think need more work, so they are included
- give them ideas about how to make things better
- make sure they know that what you tell them is to help them
- not let them **blame** each other for things that might have gone wrong.

Blame is when you say someone else is the reason something went wrong.

Support you will give



As well as the visits and meetings you have at your museum, you will also give **ad hoc** and **remote** support.



Ad hoc means support you give when your museum asks for it.

Remote means support you give away from the museum building, like by computer or on the phone.



Your ad hoc and remote support should be part of the 4 days support you give each year.



You do not have to answer every question your museum asks you. You can tell them about other information, people or organisations that can help.

Support you can get



There is support you can get when you are an Accreditation Mentor.



The support might be things like

- useful online information
- training to help you develop
- advice from an expert.



Contact your assessing organisation to find out what support you can get.



We tell you how to contact assessing organisations on **page 11** of this booklet.

Changes at your museum



There will be changes at your museum during the time you are the Accreditation Mentor.



These might be things like

- if you fix or find Areas for Development
- if people leave or join the governing body
- if the museum decides it will close.



If the changes are big, you might want to update your Museum Accreditation Mentoring Agreement.



Your museum should tell their assessing organisation about changes that might affect how well it meets our Accreditation Standard.

Problems with your museum



There might be problems with your museum during the time you are the Accreditation Mentor.



These might be things like

- if your museum does not like the advice you give them
- if your museum does not follow the advice you give them
- if you are not told about meetings or sent information you need.



You should talk to your main contact at the museum if you are worried about anything.



You can also check your Museum Accreditation Mentoring Agreement with your museum to make sure everything is clear and being done in the right way.

When you stop being an Accreditation Mentor



Normally, you or your museum will decide when it is time for you to stop being the Accreditation Mentor.



This might happen because

- your knowledge and skills are not right for the museum anymore
- your knowledge and skills have changed and are better for a different museum
- you do not have time to be an Accreditation Mentor anymore
- there are problems between you and your museum that cannot be fixed.





When you know you will stop being the Accreditation Mentor, you should have a meeting with your museum to



- think about everything you have done together
- talk about what has gone well, and what could have been done better



- decide who will tell the assessing organisation
- decide if there are ways you can still support each other.



Thank you for the work you do as an Accreditation Mentor. You help small museums to become better and stronger.

Other useful information



You can find other useful information on the websites for the organisations shown below.

Collections
Trust

Collections Trust

Information about our Accreditation Scheme.

[Click this link to go to the Collections Trust website.](#)

NCVO

National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

Information about how to have a good governing body.

[Click this link to go to the NCVO website.](#)

SCVO

Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)

Information for organisations in Scotland about how to have a good governing body.

[Click this link to go to the SCVO website.](#)



Charity Commission

Information about how set up and run a charity.

[Click this link to go to the Charity Commission website.](#)



Subject Specialist Networks

Information about collections.

[Click this link to go to the Subject Specialist Networks website.](#)



AIM Success Guides

Information about how to run a museum.

[Click this link to go to the AIM Success Guides website.](#)

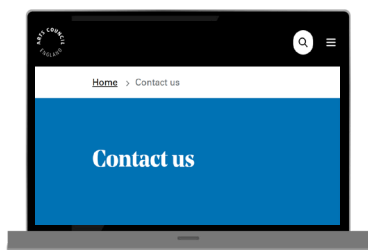
How to contact us



Send an email to this address
enquiries@artscouncil.org.uk.



Call this telephone number
0161 934 4317
You can call from 10am to 4pm.



[Click this link to go to the contact us page of our website.](#)

About this booklet



This booklet was written in
June 2025.

Thank you to **A2i** for the words **a2i.co.uk** Ref. 42439a