

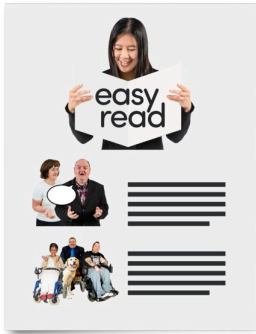


A guide for Museums who work with Accreditation Mentors



**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.



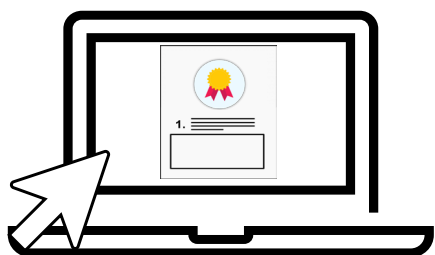
Click this link to read information about our Accreditation Scheme.



This booklet is a guide for museums who work with **Accreditation Mentors**.



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



Accreditation Mentors support museums to **apply** to our Accreditation Scheme.



Apply means officially ask for something.

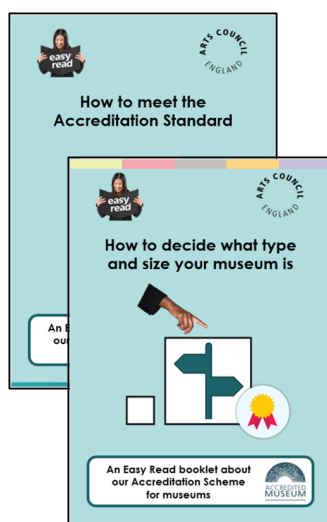
Other useful booklets



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.**



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



When you read this booklet, you should also read our Easy Read booklet called **A Guide for Accreditation Mentors.**

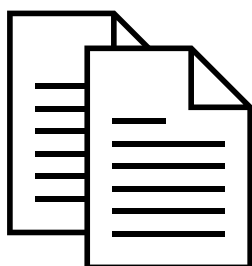
About our Accreditation Scheme



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

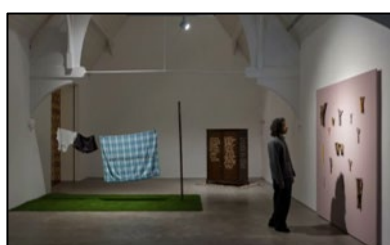


When museums take part in our Accreditation Scheme and are successful, they get Accredited.



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.

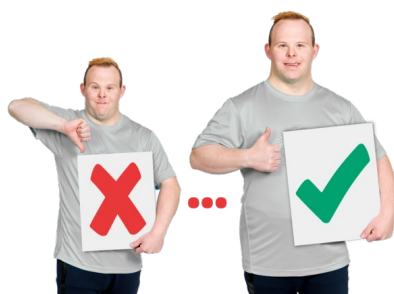
Collections are the objects a museum has.



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.



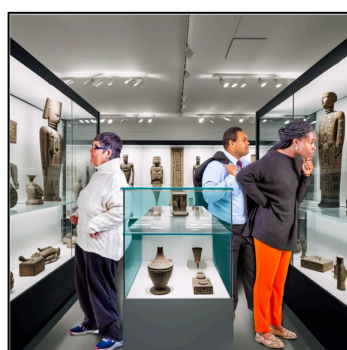
1 Organisational Health

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



2 Managing Collections

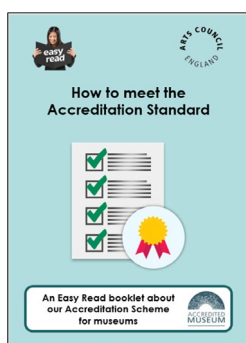
This area is about collections a museum has. It includes Requirements 4, 5 and 6.



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.

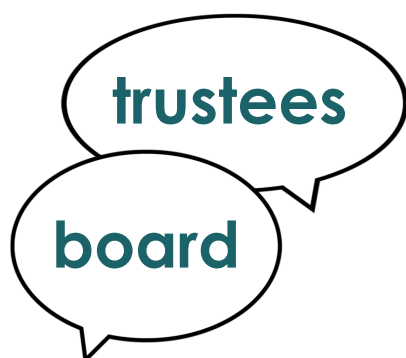
About Accreditation Mentors



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. This is called a **volunteer role**.

Which museums have an Accreditation Mentor

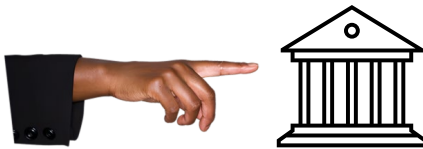


We want our Accreditation Scheme to be useful for all types of **public museum**.

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.



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



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



Their job is to share what they know about our Accreditation Standard with you.

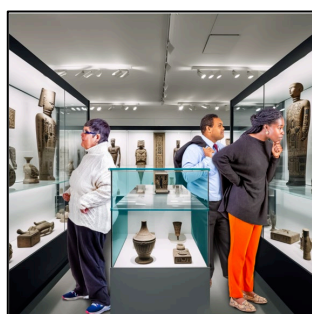


If they do not know about an area of our Accreditation Standard, they should find other information, people or organisations that can help.



Accreditation Mentors should

- 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.



Some of the support your Accreditation Mentor gives will be **ad hoc** or **remote**.

Ad hoc means support that is given as and when it is needed.

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





What Accreditation Mentors do not do

Accreditation Mentors do not have to complete your Accreditation application.

Your governing body should do this.



They also do not have to go to museum events.

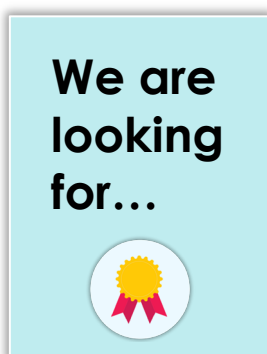
Other advisers

You might get support from other people who have museum knowledge and skills. Or you might get support from larger museums in your area.



These advisers will support your museum in a different way to your Accreditation Mentor.

How to find an Accreditation Mentor for your museum



To find an Accreditation Mentor for your museum, you can write an **advert**.



An **advert** is a piece of writing that tells people about something. Adverts are put in places where the right people will see them, like in newspapers or on websites.



You can contact your assessing organisation and ask them to tell you about organisations or websites that could show your advert.



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



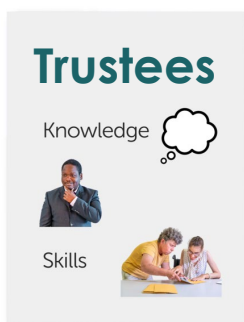
You can also contact museum professionals you think might be right for the role.



Or you can talk to larger museums and ask if any of the museum professionals who work for them might be right for the role.



If you need support with certain areas of our Accreditation Standard, try to find an Accreditation Mentor who can help.



Trustees

The trustees who are part of your governing body will have different types of knowledge and skills.



If any of your trustees are museum professionals, they can also be your Accreditation Mentor.

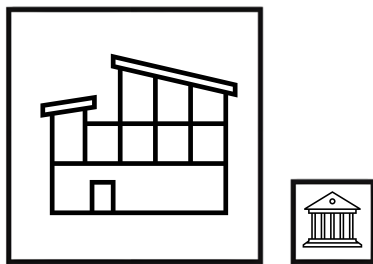


Local Authority Accreditation Mentors

In some parts of the UK, **Local Authorities** choose Accreditation Mentors for museums.



Local Authorities are in charge of services in their local area. They are also called **councils**.



They choose a museum professional from a larger museum to be the Accreditation Mentor for a smaller museum.



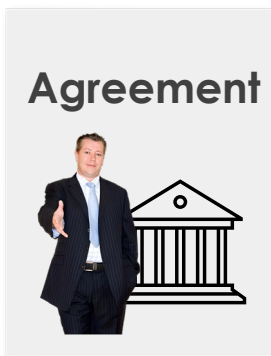
Other museum advisers as Accreditation Mentors

In some parts of England, other types of museum adviser, like **Museum Development Officers** or **County Museum Advisers**, might also be the Accreditation Mentor for a museum.

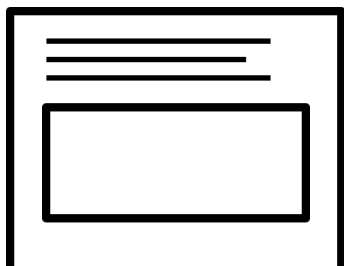
The Museum Accreditation Mentoring Agreement



You should have an official agreement with your Accreditation Mentor about what support they will give your museum.



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.

How to start working with your Accreditation Mentor



The work your Accreditation Mentor does for your museum is a volunteer role.



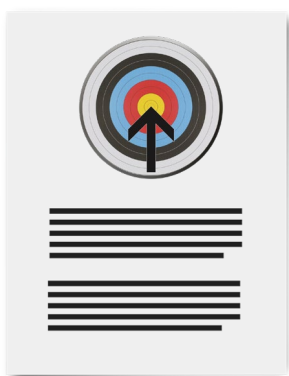
This means you should give your Accreditation Mentor the same **induction** as other volunteers for your museum.



Induction is the training people get when they start to do work for an organisation.



As part of the induction for your Accreditation Mentor, there are certain things you should do. We tell you more on the **next 3 pages**.

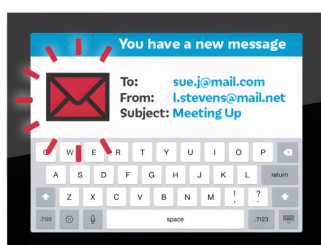


You should give your Accreditation Mentor certain documents or copies of certain documents, like

- your governing document, which might be called your **Constitution** or **Articles of Association**
- notes from the last governing body meeting, called **minutes**
- finance information for your museum
- a chart that shows the different people who work at your museum and what they do
- contact information for the right people, like trustees
- useful museum reports
- other information for volunteers, like a volunteer handbook.

You should make sure your Accreditation Mentor has met certain people, like

- your governing body
- people who work or volunteer at your museum.



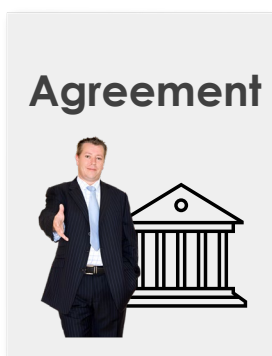
You should make sure your Accreditation Mentor has seen different parts of your museum, like

- the main museum
- the place collections that are not on show are kept
- offices
- other buildings you use.

You should make sure your Accreditation Mentor

- is added to email groups and other lists so they get sent information they need
- is told about certain policies, like **Health and Safety** or **Data Protection**
- is protected by museum **insurance**
- can look at online information for your museum.

Insurance is an amount you pay to protect something in case it gets damaged or hurt.



You should complete and sign the Museum Accreditation Mentoring Agreement with your Accreditation Mentor. Find out more on **page 21** of this booklet.

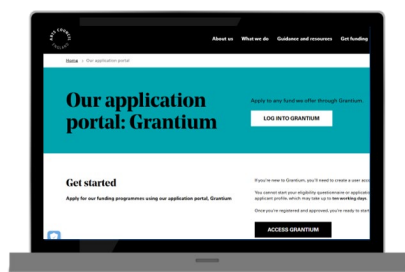


You should decide what **expenses** you will pay for your Accreditation Mentor.



Expenses are costs a person might have to pay to do their work, like travel or food costs.

About the Accreditation application



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



Your Accreditation Mentor should not complete your application. Your governing body should do this.

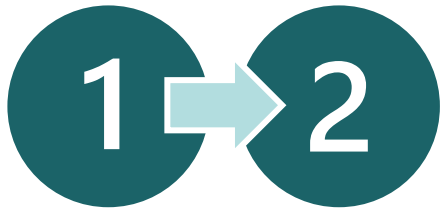


First applications

If your museum is completing a first application, your Accreditation Mentor will support you through each **stage** of the process.



A **stage** means a part of something.



There are 2 stages when you apply to our Accreditation Scheme, called

- Eligibility Questionnaire
- Accreditation application.



1 Eligibility Questionnaire

This asks questions to find out if your museum is **eligible** for our Accreditation Scheme.

Eligible means meet the rules for something.

If your museum is eligible, you move to stage 2.



2 Accreditation application

You have 3 years to complete and send your Accreditation application.

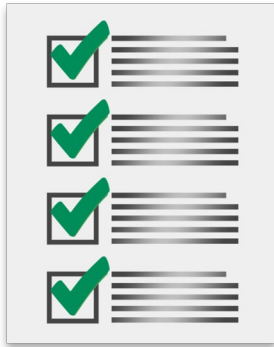
You will need a lot of support from your Accreditation Mentor during this time.





Return applications

If your museum gets Accredited, you must complete a return application about every 5 years.

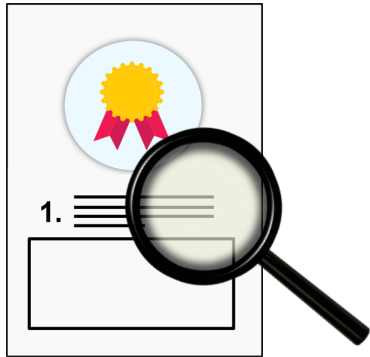


You must do this to show that your museum still meets the rules for our Accreditation Standard.



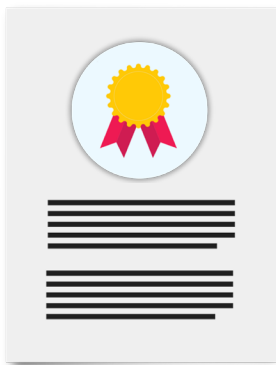
There is less work for a return application, but your Accreditation Mentor can still support you to be ready to complete it.

After you send your Accreditation application



After you send your Accreditation application, we will **assess** it.

Assess means check something.



When we have assessed your Accreditation application, we will send you an **outcome letter**.



Your **outcome letter** tells you what we thought about your application.



It tells you the **Required Actions** and **Areas for Development** we have for your museum. These are the things we want you to do so you can get Accredited.

Changes at your museum



Some types of changes at your museum might affect how well you meet the rules for our Accreditation Standard.



The changes might be things like, if your museum

- closes to have building work done
- does less work the public can visit or take part in
- changes the way it is run.



You must tell your assessing organisation about these types of changes. We tell you how to contact assessing organisations on **page 11** of this booklet.



Your assessing organisation might change the type of Accreditation you have while the changes happen at your museum.



You must also tell your Accreditation Mentor.



They can help you find ways to still meet our Accreditation Standard.



If you think you will need to close your museum for good, tell your Accreditation Mentor as soon as you can.



They can tell you about other organisations that can give support and advice.

When your agreement with your Accreditation Mentor ends



Normally, you or your Accreditation Mentor will decide when it is time to stop working together.



This might happen because

- their knowledge and skills are not right for your museum anymore
- their knowledge and skills have changed and are better for a different museum
- they do not have time to be an Accreditation Mentor anymore
- a museum professional has joined your museum
- your museum has left our Accreditation Scheme
- there are problems between you and your Accreditation Mentor that cannot be fixed.





When you stop working together, you should have a meeting with your Accreditation Mentor 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.



Accreditation Mentors help small museums to become better and stronger. You can thank your Accreditation Mentor for the work they have done for you.

Other useful information



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



Collections Trust

Information about our Accreditation Scheme.

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



National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO)

Information about how to have a good governing body.

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



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.](#)

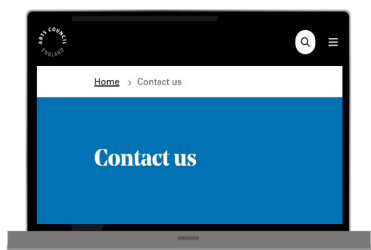
How to contact us



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