

## ARE YOU READY FOR ACCREDITATION? Forty Questions To Help You Prepare For Your Application

This checklist of questions is designed to help you assess your organisation against the Accreditation Standard. By completing the form you will be able to discover what areas of work need to be dealt with prior to your application, and start working on them. It is intended to give you a clear overview of your situation and identify your training needs.

It should take only 20 minutes to fill it in but it will help you speed up the process of your application. It will guide you to identify any potential difficulties that may arise. It gives information on what action you should take depending on your answer. Be aware that these notes are intended to help, however they are just a general guide. If you need more information please contact us. We hope that the completion of this form will help you plan your Accreditation application so that the process is as easy as possible. So please start working through this checklist NOW.

In no circumstance this form replaces the application form nor the full statements and requirements set out in the Accreditation Standard.

If you require any support or advice on The Accreditation Scheme for Museums in the United Kingdom then please contact MLA North West's Development Officer (Standards), Paul Fraser Webb

E: <u>paulfraser.webb@mlanorthwest.org.uk</u> T: 01925 625054 M: 07738 311962

The Accreditation Standard itself can be downloaded at: <u>http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//A/accreditation\_standard\_pdf\_5640.pdf</u> and a sample application form can be found at: <u>http://www.mla.gov.uk/resources/assets//A/accreditation\_sample\_form\_pdf\_5641.pdf</u>

The suite of Accreditation Documents can be found on the MLA Council Website via: <u>http://www.mla.gov.uk/webdav/harmonise?Page/@id=73&Document/@id=19066&Section[@stateId\_eq\_left\_hand\_root]/@id=4332</u>

and further information can be found at the MLA North West Accreditation web pages: <u>http://www.mlanorthwest.org.uk/ourwork/standards/index.asp?id=283,300,11,300</u>



Section	1. Governance and Museum Management Question	Yes	No
1.1	<ul> <li>Does your museum have an acceptable constitution?</li> <li>If you are a new organisation to the scheme submit your most recent constitution.</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Has your museum's constitution been altered since you last applied for Registration?</li> <li>If Yes, please submit your most recent copy of the constitution.</li> </ul>		
1.2	<ul> <li>Can you provide evidence as to which body or individual has powers to approve policy (eg minute or part of the constitution describing the procedures for approving policy)?</li> <li>If Yes, submit them with your application.</li> <li>If No, you need to revise your managing arrangements to include who has authority to approve the policy documents and formalise this arrangement</li> </ul>		
1.3	<ul> <li>Does the museum manage collections owned by others?</li> <li>If Yes, ensure a copy of any written agreement is sent with your application.</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Do you know what percentage of the collection held by the museum is on loan from other organisations or individuals?</li> <li>If you do not know please check now and be prepared to provide this information with your application.</li> </ul>		
1.4	<ul> <li>Do you have written occupancy terms?</li> <li>If No, occupation must be secured before application</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Does your lease or tenancy agreement expire within 12 months?</li> <li>If Yes, you need to provide information in your application about your future plans.</li> </ul>		
1.5	<ul> <li>Are the museum's collections used as security or collateral for a loan or other such purpose?</li> <li>If Yes, arrangements should be made to remove any such charge previous to your application.</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Does the museum have audited accounts available for the past two years?</li> <li>If Yes, you will need to submit them with your application.</li> <li>If No, contact MLA North West to discuss your situation.</li> </ul>		

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Section	Question	Yes	No
1.6	Does your museum have a forward plan?		
	<ul> <li>Does it include all of the following:</li> <li>a) statement of purpose?</li> <li>b) key aims relating to the museum?</li> <li>c) specific objectives for the museum, to be achieved within the current planning cycle?</li> <li>d) spending plan?</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>If Yes, submit it with your application.</li> <li>If No, you need to develop one to include with your application.</li> </ul>		
1.7	Does the museum have an emergency plan (or disaster plan)?		
	<ul> <li>Does it include all of the following:</li> <li>a) arrangements for staff and visitors?</li> <li>b) arrangements for collections and buildings?</li> <li>c) risk assessments of threats such as fire, water, theft and vandalism or other disasters?</li> </ul>		
	d) procedures to be followed by staff on discovery of an emergency?		
	• If No, you need to prepare an emergency plan and have it ready for inspection.		
1.8	<ul> <li>Have there been changes in the level of staffing (paid and volunteer)?</li> <li>If Yes you will need to explain the effect of such changes on the museum's programmes</li> </ul>		
1.9	Does the museum have Investors in People status (this is optional) • If Yes, submit a copy of the award letter.		
	<ul> <li>Do you offer induction training to all new staff and members of the governing body?</li> <li>If No, you will need to draw up and implement an induction training program.</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Do you offer training to staff?</li> <li>If No, you will need to assess the training needs of your staff and start planning for their training.</li> </ul>		
1.10	<ul> <li>Does your museum employ a person trained and qualified as a museum curator and/or a Curatorial Adviser?</li> <li>If No, you should take steps to secure such professional advice.</li> <li>(If Yes,) submit a copy of a signed and dated minute confirming the appointment of the Curatorial Adviser.</li> </ul>		



Section	Question	Yes	No
1.11	<ul> <li>Does the museum curator/ Curatorial Advisor have access to the museum's governing body when museum policy is discussed?</li> <li>If No, you will need to demonstrate that alternative arrangements are in place to ensure that the museum's governing body receives reliable expert advice when making decisions on museum policy.</li> </ul>		
	2. User Services		
Section	Question	Yes	No
2.1	<ul> <li>Do you have published information on location, opening arrangements and services?</li> <li>If No, you will need to publish information about the museum's opening arrangements, location and the services it provides either by producing leaflets, posters, website or any other means.</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Does the published information cover all of the following:</li> <li>a) Museum location and how to get there</li> <li>b) Details of services and visitor facilities</li> <li>c) Opening times and arrangements</li> <li>d) Out-of hours opening and appointment-only arrangements, if the museum has limited opening times</li> <li>e) Access arrangements for disabled people</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>If No, then you should make arrangements so that all of the above are included.</li> </ul>		
2.2	Do you have a mechanism for finding out who your users are (eg visitor books, exit surveys, market research, etc)?		
	<ul> <li>Do you have a method for identifying any physical or other access issues?</li> <li>If Yes, then you need to describe what you are doing to address those issues.</li> <li>If No, then you must ensure that you set up a system for assessing who your users are and what are the access barriers.</li> </ul>		
2.3	<ul> <li>Do you consult your users/visitors to find out what they think about the range of services you provide? (Examples of methods of consultation are: visitor books, comment cards, complaint mechanisms, consultation with Friends groups, interviews etc.)</li> <li>If Yes, then you need to describe how often you consult them and how you analyse their feedback and respond to the results.</li> <li>If No, then you must start carrying out consultation on setting up a system before your application.</li> </ul>		



Section	Question	Yes	No
2.4	<ul> <li>Does the museum display items from the museum's collection at least annually?</li> <li>If Yes, then you will need to give a brief description of the current collections and subject areas on display and also how you provide information about them (eg labels, display panels, oral information by staff etc) in your application.</li> <li>If No, you must make arrangements to display items from the museum's collection and provide information about them.</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>Are the stored collections accessible to the public?</li> <li>If Yes, you will need to describe how in your application.</li> <li>If No, you will need to take measures to provide access to material held in storage, and describe how in your application</li> </ul>		
2.5	<ul> <li>Does the museum have at least two methods of interpreting the collection on display (eg. Lectures, study packs, guided tours, interactive activities, role play etc)?</li> <li>If No, then you must provide a range of approaches to interpretation before your application.</li> </ul>		
	3. Visitor Facilities		
Section	Question	Yes	No
<u>Optional</u>	<ul> <li>Is the museum accredited by the Visit Britain's Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme?</li> <li>If Yes, submit a copy of the accreditation letter with the application. You <u>do not</u> need to fill in Section 3 on the form.</li> <li>If No, will need to complete Section 3 of the application.</li> </ul>		
3.1	<ul> <li>Does the museum offer a range of accessible public facilities (eg toilets, parking refreshments etc)?</li> <li>If No, you will need to describe how you inform you visitors what is available nearby and how to get there.</li> </ul>		
3.2	Are there external signs to guide visitors to the museum (eg name plates, information boards, directional signs etc)?		
	• If the external signage is outside the museum's control you will need to describe how the appropriate information is available.		



Section	Question	Yes	No
3.3	<ul> <li>Do you have the appropriate policies and practices in place for the supervision of children?</li> <li>If no you need to consider the legal issues and prepare the</li> </ul>		
	appropriate policies so that you meet your legal requirements.		
3.4	Do you have formal arrangements for the maintenance of areas used by visitors?		
	<ul> <li>If No, you need to make arrangements for the regular cleanliness and tidiness of areas used by the visitors.</li> </ul>		
	4. Collections Management		
Section	Question	Yes	No
4.1	<ul> <li>Does the museum have an Acquisition and Disposal policy that meets the Accreditation standard and that is not overdue for review?</li> <li>If No, you need to write one. A draft outline is provided in the appendix of the guidelines and then,</li> <li>(If Yes,) submit a copy with your application.</li> <li>Make sure you review your Acquisition and Disposal policy to meet the requirements set out in the Accreditation Scheme. You will find a draft outline of what must be included in the policy in appendix 6 of the Accreditation Standard.</li> <li>Has the reviewed Acquisition and Disposal policy been formally approved by the Governing Body?</li> </ul>		
	<ul> <li>If No, take action for approval by the Governing Body and then,</li> <li>(If Yes,) ensure that signed copies of the appropriate minute are available to send with the application.</li> </ul>		
4.2	<ul> <li>Does the museum have a documentation procedural manual?</li> <li>If No, you will need to write one.</li> <li>If Yes, make sure it is up to date.</li> </ul>		
4.3	<ul> <li>Does the museum have the following documentation systems in place?</li> <li>a) Object Entry</li> <li>b) Object Exit</li> <li>c) Accession register</li> <li>d) Security copy of the accession register</li> <li>e) Marking/labelling objects with accession numbers</li> <li>f) Location and movement control records</li> <li>g) Cataloguing –provision of appropriate indexing</li> <li>h) Loans In</li> <li>i) Loans Out</li> <li>If No, such systems must be in place in place before an application is being made.</li> </ul>		



Section	Question	Yes	No
4.4	<ul> <li>Does the museum have a written documentation plan that sets the scales of the backlog and describes how the Primary Procedures will be implemented, the Spectrum minimum standards will be met and the timescales for this work?</li> <li>If No, you will need to prepare one to assist tackling the backlogs in documentation.</li> </ul>		
4.5	<ul> <li>Does the museum have in place the following basic practice requirements to minimise the risk of damage?</li> <li>a) Collection condition overview</li> <li>b) Environmental monitoring</li> <li>c) Environmental control</li> <li>d) Provision of suitable building conditions</li> <li>e) Housekeeping</li> <li>f) Planned programme to institute improvements in collection care</li> <li>g) Conservation and collection care advice and services</li> <li>If Yes you will need to describe how you are meeting these basic practice requirements.</li> <li>If No, you will need to provide evidence of the steps you are taking to implement these basic practice requirements.</li> </ul>		
4.6	<ul> <li>Have you had an advisory visit in respect of fire and security from an expert (eg crime prevention officer, in-house specialist, etc) in the last five years?</li> <li>If No, you must get specialist advice before your application.</li> </ul>		

Acknowledgements This guide has been adapted from an original work by Katerina Kremmida, Accreditation Advisor for the West Midlands region.