



The Money Advice Service
Quality Framework for Organisations
Accreditation Reassessment Guidance



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Overview

This document contains details of:

- the application process for reassessment against the MAS Quality Framework
- criteria for making a successful application
- guidance on how the application form and supporting evidence should be completed and compiled

Glossary of Terms

Accredited Standard	Third Party Standard and/or Membership Code accredited against the Money Advice Service Quality Framework
MAS	The Money Advice Service
Quality Framework	The Money Advice Service Quality Framework
RE	Recognising Excellence

Appointed Assessment and Mapping Organisation

The Money Advice Service has appointed Recognising Excellence as its assessment body.

All application enquiries and submissions should be made to:

Lucie Rainford
Recognising Excellence
Unit 3 Twigworth Court Business Centre
Tewkesbury Road
Twigworth
Gloucester, GL2 9PG

Helpline: 07930 987 674
lucie.rainford@recognisingexcellence.co.uk
www.recognisingexcellence.co.uk

All application documentation is available to download from the [Recognising Excellence website](#).

1. Under what circumstances is a reassessment required?

As described in the accompanying fact sheets, the following scenarios will trigger reassessment:

- [Planned change\(s\) to the Accredited Standard](#)
- [Change\(s\) to the Quality Framework](#)



2. How submissions for reassessment should be made

Prior to submitting an application for reassessment, please contact RE to discuss the extent of changes to be made to the Accredited Standard and the intended implementation date of the revised version. A reassessment will be required in the event of any change, made to one or more of the following:

- Accredited Standard criteria
- Delivery model
- Assessor and assessment guidance
- Assessment Outcome reporting template

We strongly advise all reassessment activity is considered and discussed with RE prior to operationalising changes. If the proposed changes do not fully align to the requirements of the Quality Framework, there will be opportunity for refinement and revision to evidence compliance.

3. Service Level Agreement

Please refer to the [accompanying fact sheet](#) which outline the timescales of the reassessment process.

4. Cost of Reassessment

The full cost of the application and reassessment process against the Quality Framework for Organisations will be borne by MAS. This policy applies to all resubmitted applications and no charges will be incurred by you as the applicant organisation. It will be at the discretion of MAS to apply a charge for any resubmitted applications which fall outside of the time period detailed in below - see Stage 4 b) and may require a full reassessment.

5. The application and reassessment process

The reassessment process consists of several stages and interventions. Each of the stages is explained as follows:

Stage 1 - Making an application for Reassessment

Applications for reassessment should be made using the [Accreditation Reassessment Application Form](#) and submitted to RE. Hard copy submissions are acceptable; however, it is preferred in electronic form. Supporting documentation may be provided through an online portal or via 'drop box' facilities, and via email. Please ensure instructions of how to access materials are included within your completed application. The contact details for making an application are provided above.



Documentation required to support your application

The following documentation will be required to support your application:

- A copy of the Accredited Standard
- Assessor Terms of Reference/Guidance
- Assessment Outcome reporting template/s

Stage 2 - The Reassessment process

A lead Assessor will be appointed to manage your application for reassessment. Assessment activity will commence with an introductory meeting (telephone/Skype) during which the reassessment approach will be explained. This initial meeting will also provide the opportunity to share background information with the Assessor, contextualising the changes that are proposed to the Accredited Standard

The lead Assessor will remain in contact throughout the reassessment exercise to ensure the evidence presented has been identified. Any need for clarification on the application will be achieved through discussions with the nominated point of contact within the application form.

The Assessor will consider the summary of changes identified within the application, making a systematic comparison between the requirements of the Quality Framework and the evidence provided. Consideration will extend not only to the specific requirements and criteria of the Accredited Standard, but also to the rigour and frequency of the delivery model which underpins this.

Stage 3 - Assessment outcomes and feedback process

A recommendation for maintaining accreditation can only be made in cases where all areas of the Quality Framework are met in full.

Upon conclusion of the reassessment activity, the Assessor will prepare a draft interim report, which will identify the areas of the Quality Framework that are met in full, and any areas where additional information is required. Assessment reports are subject to internal verification and will form the basis of a follow up feedback meeting with the applicant. This intervention will ensure the Assessor's interpretation of the evidence presented is factual, provides an opportunity to address any points raised, and for additional or revised content to be submitted.

The interim report will determine an outcome against each criterion in the Quality Framework. The potential outcomes are:

Definition	Meaning
Met	The evidence presented fully meets and/or exceeds the criteria in the MAS Quality Framework. There may be suggestions for improvement but will not be subject to further review.
Partially Met	The evidence presented meets some of the criteria within the Quality Framework. There are minor concerns and /or inference has had to be made by the Assessor as some points are not fully demonstrated or evidenced.
Not Met	Does not meet any of the criteria.

Stage 4 - Decisions and Recommendations

a) Recommendations for Maintaining Accreditation

Once the Assessor has verified the criteria of the Quality Framework have been evidenced in full, a final report will be prepared. Subject to internal verification, a recommendation will be made to MAS for accreditation to be re-awarded. A copy of the final report will be submitted to MAS and to the applicant.

b) Corrective Action (Partially Met / Not Met)

Following reassessment, further refinements may be required to either the Accredited Standard or associated guidance in order to demonstrate full compliance. The interim report will detail areas of strength, in addition to suggestions for improvement, along with appropriate corrective actions required to maintain accreditation. There will be a period of up to 90 days to make any required changes and resubmit the revised documentation for further assessment.

It is essential that any corrective actions identified are completed within the 90-day period as any re-submissions outside of the timeframes may be subject to full reassessment and a discretionary fee of up to £1500 + VAT may apply.

Stage 5 - Renewal and Future Reassessments

Upon completion of the reassessment activity a new cycle of accreditation will begin. An updated certificate of accreditation will be sent and further reassessment will not be required for a period of 3 years (subject to no further revisions being made).

Completing the Reassessment Application form (to be read in conjunction with the Reassessment Application Form)

The application form must contain sufficient depth of information, and should be supported by additional documentation to enable the assessment activity to commence. Any missing or incomplete documentation will result in a delay in processing your application.

The submitted application must include:

- The completed Reassessment Application Form
- Copy of the Quality Standard / Membership Code criteria
- Copy of any revised Assessor Terms of Reference/Guidance
- Copy of revised Assessor report/assessment summary templates

Where available, the application should also include:

- Copy of any revised organisational guidance / publications to support | Accredited Standards
- Assessment cycle flowchart/ accreditation cycle

The following guidance is intended to support with the completion of the Application Form:

Page 1	Applicant Details	
Page 2	Quality Standard/Membership Code Overview	The application form requests basic details including address, contact information and the identity of the main point of contact to deal with any queries. This individual should have sufficient knowledge and authority to be able to manage the assessment process and answer any queries from either RE or the appointed Assessor.
Page 2	Summarise the extent of the changes made to the Accredited Standard	Where relevant, the application should detail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposed changes to be made to the assessment delivery model or mechanisms ▪ Proposed changes to the requirements of the Accredited Standard ▪ Potential impact of changes to be made on the scope, timeframes and/or duration of the assessment activity ▪ Consideration of any impact on the Accredited Standard assessment team, (Assessor terms of reference / Refresher training where appropriate)
Page 3	Assessment Approach & Mandatory Criteria	In addition to the mandatory assessment criteria of the Quality Framework, there are a series of overarching requirements which should underpin any delivery model. When submitting the application for reassessment, confirmation should be provided to demonstrate that these mandatory criteria continue to be met. The mandatory criteria are:

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 year assessment cycle • Remedial/Corrective Action Period • File Review Process • Assessment Outcome/Reporting • Adviser technical knowledge assessment
Pages 4 -6	Requirements of the MAS Quality Framework	<p>When submitting an application for reassessment, the impact of any changes on maintaining accreditation against the three mandatory areas of the Quality Framework should be considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section One – Meeting Clients Needs • Section Two – Well Governed • Section Three – A Learning Organisation <p>The application form should evidence that self-assessment has been undertaken to ensure continued alignment with each section of the Quality Framework. Please click here to view</p>
Page 7	Assessor Terms of Reference/Guidance	<p>Consideration should extend to the impact of any tools used by the Assessor team, in order to facilitate a consistent and robust assessment process.</p>
Page 7	Please outline any further information to support the application	<p>Please detail any unique terminology that RE should be aware of when conducting the assessment.</p>
Page 8	Supporting documents	<p>Details of relevant documentation that should be submitted for considered as part of the assessment process.</p>
Page 9	Document Checklist	
Page 10-11	Conditions of Accreditation Award	<p>Accreditation is awarded for a 3-year period and is subject to the following conditions. In addition to those set out below, and in advance of the 3-year anniversary of award, owners of accredited standards/codes will be invited to reapply for accreditation.</p> <p>Condition 1: Regular submission of organisational data Condition 2: Audit report assessment process Condition 3: Promotion of accreditation Condition 4: Changes to standard/code Condition 5: Amendment of MAS Quality Framework</p>



Conditions of Accreditation Award

The following conditions apply to all quality standard and membership codes awarded accreditation to the Money Advice Service Quality Framework. There may be additional conditions, tailored to the specific standard/code and based on recommendations from MAS's assessor body following reassessment. Any additional conditions will apply alongside those detailed below. All conditions will be set out in the award letter.

Accreditation is awarded for a 3-year period and is subject to the following conditions. In addition to those set out below, and in advance of the 3-year anniversary of award, owners of accredited standards/codes will be invited to reapply for accreditation.

Condition 1: Regular submission of organisational data

Owners of accredited standards and codes are required to return, on an annual basis, a complete and accurate spreadsheet detailing all organisations holding the standard or code including all assessment activity. On a quarterly basis, owners of accredited standards and codes are required to update this list by exception.

See [data submission fact sheet](#) for more detail.

Condition 2: Audit report assessment process

Owners of accredited standards and codes are required to submit a minimum of 5 audit reports, in addition to current assessor guidance, when requested during the award period (maximum annually). Organisations will be given 28 calendar days' notice prior to submission. Following assessment, written feedback will be provided by the Money Advice Service assessor body within 28 calendar days of submission. Outcomes of this process may include one of the following:

- confirmation of continued MAS accreditation
- a meeting with MAS within 28 calendar days to discuss and agree potential actions to maintain accreditation award

Both the submission of the audit reports and closing out any corrective action form part of this condition.

See [audit report assessment fact sheet](#) for more detail.

Condition 3: Promotion of accreditation

Owners of accredited standards and codes are required to comply with instructions on promotional activity relating to the MAS Quality Framework and the accreditation award.

See [promotion fact sheet](#) for more detail.

Condition 4: Changes to standard/code

Owners of accredited standards and codes are required to notify the Money Advice Service, and follow the reassessment process, in the event of changes being made to the standard/code.



See [change to standard/code fact sheet](#) for more detail.



Condition 5: Amendment of MAS Quality Framework

When there are changes to the MAS Quality Framework, owners of accredited standards and codes are required to follow the reassessment process.

See [change to Quality Framework fact sheet](#) and [end of award fact sheet](#).