**Money and Pensions Service**

**Debt Advice Quality Framework**

**Individual Post Accreditation Information Guide**

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**End of Award Period**

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**Overview – Trigger for Action**

Accreditation to the MaPS Debt Advice Quality Framework is awarded for a period of three years. To maintain the integrity of the Quality Framework, occasional and cyclical reassessment is required in order to ensure that Accredited Programmes are continually aligned with the MaPS Debt Advice Quality Framework.

At the end of the current award period Accredited Programme owners will be required to participate in a full reaccreditation assessment against the MaPS Debt Advice Quality Framework.

**Action required**

Accredited Programme owners will be notified 6 months prior to the end of a current award period of their expiration date. This notification will set out the next steps and timeframes involved in renewal of award.

At least 3 months (90 calendar days) prior to the end of award period, a formal invitation will be extended to Accredited Programme owners to confirm they wish for the programme to continue to be accredited against the MaPS Debt Advice Quality Framework and what if any changes have been made to the Accredited Programme.

Where an Accredited Programme owner does not wish to seek to renew an award, they should notify the Money and Pensions Service as per the process described in the ‘Withdrawal of Award’ section of this guide.

**Frequency**

End of award assessment activity for Accredited Programmes will occur on a minimum of a 3-yearly basis as per the maximum award period.

**Outcomes at end of Award period**

Upon completion of the full reassessment, both the Accredited Programme owner and the Money and Pensions Service will receive a copy of a report recommending a renewal of award, or detailing corrective action required in order to maintain accreditation as appropriate. Accredited Programme owners will be given a maximum of 90 calendar days or until the end of the current award period, whichever is shorter, to complete all actions.

Failure to engage in the process, or completion of corrective actions by agreed deadlines will ultimately result in withdrawal of the award at end of the current award period.

**Change to Accredited Programme**

* Overview – Trigger for Action
* Action required
* Frequency and Timescales
* Outcomes of Assessment

**Overview**

Accreditation against the MaPS Debt Advice Quality Framework is awarded for a period of three years. To maintain the integrity of the Quality Framework, occasional and cyclical reassessment is required in order to ensure that Accredited Programmes are continually aligned with the MaPS Quality Framework.

Therefore, any changes to an Accredited Programme will trigger the need for a reassessment to ensure it still maps as compliant to the MaPS Quality Framework.

**Action required**

The Money and Pensions Service’s assessor body should be notified of any plans to review and/or amend an Accredited Programme at the earliest opportunity and before any changes have been operationalised. This helps to ensure there is no gap in accredited status. Contact details can be found at the end of this Information Pack.

The application process in the event of changes being planned or made to an Accredited Programme is set out in the Accreditation Reassessment Guidance.

In order to submit an Accredited Programme for reassessment, Accredited Programme owners are required to complete, sign and return the reassessment application form and include all supporting documentation as described in the accreditation Individual Initial and Full Reaccreditation Application Form.

## Frequency

Where the Accredited Programme is amended by the respective owner the onus is on said owner to notify MaPS’s assessor body to begin the reassessment process. Should an Accredited Programme owner have any doubt over whether a set of amends is sufficiently substantial to warrant reassessment please contact Recognising Excellence.

Reassessments of Programmes will take a maximum of 15 working days to complete. Please see the Service Level Agreement section for more information.

**Outcomes of reassessment**

Following reassessment, an Accredited Programme owner will receive a report detailing the mapping exercise and highlighting any particular areas of strength, suggestions for improvement as well as any corrective action required to maintain accreditation.

Where the Accredited Programme itself requires corrective action, Accredited Programme owners will be given up 90 calendar days to do so depending on the level of change required. Failure to complete any corrective action within prescribed timescales will trigger the withdrawal process.

Following reassessment, a decision will be made on the impact on of reassessment on the current award period. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis

**Service Levels**

* Timeframes for each stage of the assessment

Below is an indicative outline of the timescales that Recognsing Excellence, as the MaPS assessor, will work within, to ensure your application is turned around as quickly as possible:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Application Stage** | **Turnaround Time (working day)** |
| **Application received and first stage check completed** | 2 days |
| **1:1 between Applicant and Contract Manager (subject to applicant availability)** | 2 days |
| **Allocation to Assessor** | 2 days |
| **Assessor and Applicant 1:1 (subject to applicant availability)** | 5 days |
| **Re-assessment completed and interim findings shared** | 15 days |
| **Assessor to finalise report and submit to RE for moderation** | 5 days |
| **RE to undertake moderation activity** | 5 days |
| **Final report and recommendation shared with MaPS** | 2 days |
| **Applicant to receive final report** | 2 days |
| **Total time from application submission to interim assessment outcome is therefore 28 working days** | |

**Variation of timeframes where assessment decision is Referred / Not Met:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Missing documentation omitted from initial application (content exists)** | **5 days** |
| **Corrective Action Period (where applicable)** | **Up to 90 days (3 months)** |

**Promotion**

* Referencing Accreditation
* Use of Money and Pensions Service Name and Logo
* Declaring promotional activity

**Overview**

This section aims to provide guidance to Accredited Programme owners on the conditions of accreditation regarding promotion and branding.

**External Programmes**

Promotion should focus on the accreditation of the Accredited Programme only. It is not permissible to refer to advice delivery organisations when promoting accreditation. For clarity examples are provided below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| *[name of Accredited Programme] has been awarded full accreditation to the Money and Pensions Service Debt Advice Quality Framework.* | *Individuals undertaking [ name of Accredited Programme] will not be accredited to the Money and Pensions Service Quality Debt Advice Framework .* |

Full accreditation to the Money and Pensions Service Debt Advice Quality Framework can be referred to using the following word pattern:

The Money and Pensions Service does not award accreditation to individual advisers. Owners of Accredited Programmes should not make any suggestion to the idea that undertaking the Programme will grant accreditation to the individual delegate.

**Internal Programmes**

Internal Programmes are subject to the same conditions regarding the promotion of MaPS -accreditation as external-facing Programmes.

**Requirement to notify MaPS of promotional activity**

There is no requirement for Accredited Programme owners to notify the Money and Pensions Service of promotional updates/activity where this follows the guidance above.

**Use of the Money and Pensions Service Logo**

Accredited Programme owners are not permitted to use the Money and Pensions Service logo in any circumstances.

**Communication**

* Communication strategy
* Frequency of Contact
* Opportunities to input
* Opportunities to describe assessment experience

**Overview**

The Money and Pensions Service considers ongoing and two-way communication with owners of Accredited Programmes essential to the effectiveness of the MaPS Debt Advice Quality Framework.

This will be encouraged and facilitated in a number of ways and these are described later in this document. Ongoing contact is also encouraged where appropriate, outside of the processes described herein. Communications may involve the Money and Pensions Service and/or Recognising Excellence, as the accreditation assessment body.

**Communication cycle**

The following defines the current communication plan for the Individual Quality Framework. Schedule may differ depending on initial accreditation date.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Frequency** | **Format** | **Medium** | **Responsibility** | **Purpose** |
| **Quarterly** | **Update** | **Email** | **MaPS** | **Inform stakeholders** |
| **Annually** | **Round table** | **Conference call** | **MaPS** | **Stakeholder input** |
| **Round table** | **Meeting** | **MaPS** | **Stakeholder input/feedback** |
| **End of award period** | **Invitation to reapply for accreditation** | **Direct communication with owner** | **MaPS** | **Support awardees through reassessment** |
| **Ad hoc** | **Notification of change to standard/ code** | **Contact with MaPS accreditor body** | **Standard/ code owner** | **Ensure continued alignment to Quality Framework** |

**Feedback**

On an annual basis, to coincide with the face-to-face round table meeting, owners will also be invited to provide input into the processes that comprise the Quality Framework as part of the MaPS commitment to continuous improvement. This will focus solely on processes and will not seek comment on the Framework itself as this is conducted as per the five-year Framework review cycle.

**Quality Assurance during the assessment process**

Following any reassessment activity, owners of Accredited Programmes will be invited to complete a process satisfaction survey relating specifically to their experience of the reassessment process. A satisfaction survey will be sent to Accredited Programme owners following any reassessment activity.

**Changes to the MaPS Debt Advice Quality Framework**

* Overview – Trigger for Action
* Action Required
* Frequency and Timescales
* Outcomes of Assessment

**Overview**

As per scheme rules, a review of the Money and Pensions Service Debt Advice Quality Framework will be conducted on a 5-yearly basis or when prompted by a change in legislation. To maintain the integrity of the Quality Framework, occasional and cyclical reassessment is required in order to ensure that Accredited Programmes are continually aligned with the MaPS Quality Framework.

Therefore, any changes to the MaPS Quality Framework will trigger the need for a reassessment to ensure an Accredited Programme still maps as compliant to the MaPS Quality Framework.

**Action required**

The Money and Pensions Service will inform the owners of all Accredited Programmes, as well as those in the assessment pipeline, at the point a decision to review the Quality Framework is made.

Accredited Programme owners will be consulted on any review and subsequent suggested amends to the Quality Framework. Where changes are made to the Quality Framework as a result of this review all Accredited Programmes will be reassessed through the standard reassessment process using the Individual Framework Initial and Full Reaccreditation Application Form and Reassessment Guidance.

## Frequency

A review of the Money and Pensions Service Debt Advice Quality Framework will be conducted on a 5-yearly basis or when prompted by a change in legislation.

Reassessments of Accredited Programmes will take a maximum of 40 working days to complete.

**Withdrawal**

* Informal withdrawal stage
* Formal withdrawal stage
* Post withdrawal
* Accredited programme owner wishing to withdraw

The Money and Pensions Service has created an accreditation withdrawal process in order to ensure transparency around what will happen in the event of an Accredited Programme owner not satisfying these conditions within the stipulated timescales.

**Informal**

An informal approach to compliance concerns will take place in the first instance. The aim of this informal stage is to meet with the Accredited Programme owner, identify any barriers to compliance and agree actions to overcome these. MaPS will seek to work with the Accredited Programme owner to identify appropriate actions. MaPS will allow up to 28 calendar days following non-compliance for an informal meeting to take place. A further 28 calendar days will be provided for actions to be completed. Should these conditions not be met a formal process will commence.

**Formal**

The formal stage of the withdrawal process is set out in the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Week 1 | Letter confirming formal process has started and inviting Accredited Programme owner to formal meeting |
| Week 2 | Formal meeting scheduled to agree corrective actions required to resolve situation |
| Weeks 3 and 4 | Formal touchpoints to establish progress against action plan |
| Week 5 | If action plan incomplete or Accredited Programme owner has not engaged with process to date then withdrawal of accreditation will be confirmed in writing. |

**Post-withdrawal**

Following withdrawal of accreditation, an Accredited Programme owner must remove all reference to the Money and Pensions Service and accreditation against the Quality Framework from all materials including digital content. The Money and Pensions Service will also update its own estate to reflect the change.

**Accredited Programme wishing to withdraw**

In the event of an Accredited Programme owner wishing to withdraw from the accreditation scheme, written confirmation of this request should be made to one of the following:

**Sureyya Kilic** | Quality Manager | Money & Pensions Service, 120 Holborn, London EC1N 2TD  
T: +442081324641 | E: [sureyya.kilic@maps.org.uk](mailto:sureyya.kilic@maps.org.uk)

OR

**Elizabeth Morris** | Contract Manager | Recognising Excellence Unit 3, Twigworth Court Business Centre,Tewkesbury Road, Twigworth, Gloucester GL2 9PG   
T: 07394 563357 | E: [liz.morris@recognisingexcellence.co.uk](mailto:liz.morris@recognisingexcellence.co.uk)