

**CITY & GUILDS**

**ACCREDITATION**

**POLICY**

Version 1.1  
December 2015  
For internal and  
external use

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## Document change history

This is Version 1.1 of the *City & Guilds Accreditation Policy*.

It is the centre's responsibility to ensure that all staff involved in the provision of City & Guilds accredited training programmes comply with the requirements set out in this version of the policy.

This policy is subject to regular revision, and maintained electronically. Electronic copies are version controlled.

### Version 1.1, December 2015

Section No.	Change
n/a	Version 1.1 of this policy has all references to 'Endorsement' and related quality assurance activities removed. This policy now only refers to the Accreditation service offer.
Introduction / 3.4	Reference is made to the <i>Accreditation Quality Assurance Manual</i> the document that explains the Accreditation approval and renewal process, and details the Accreditation approval criteria.

## **Section 1**

### **Introduction**

This document details the policy for the City & Guilds Accreditation service. It outlines the range and scope of the service and explains the quality assurance requirements for organisations wishing to apply for the service). This policy should be read along with the *Accreditation Quality Assurance Manual* which is available in the *Quality Documents* section of the City & Guilds website. This document explains the Accreditation approval and renewal process, and details the Accreditation approval criteria.

#### **1.1 City & Guilds Accreditation service**

City & Guilds Accreditation is a globally recognised benchmark of quality for bespoke training programmes.

City & Guilds will evaluate the training materials and/or quality assurance processes, and provide consultant support to ensure that they meet the standards of recognition.

The Accreditation Service is for bespoke training programmes that result in a certificate being issued at the completion of the programme that recognises individual learner achievement. Learners are required to be assessed in order to claim certification.

#### **1.2 Why we offer an Accreditation service**

Accreditation is a way for organisations to demonstrate that their training programmes meet City & Guilds quality standards. Use of the City & Guilds logo provides value and integrity to training programmes and materials.

City & Guilds will advise whether the Accreditation service is appropriate for an organisation's needs upon initial expression of interest. In some instances, for example, it may be that there is an existing product or service that better suits the needs of the organisation.

#### **1.3 Who the Accreditation service is for**

The City & Guilds Accreditation service is available to our full range of UK and international customers, including;

- Schools / FE colleges
- Employers
- Training Providers

## Section 2

### Legal

This section details the legal requirements for the City & Guilds Accreditation service.

#### 2.1 City & Guilds 'Accredited' logo

The terms and conditions of the use of the 'Accredited' logo are detailed in the contract between City & Guilds and the customer. Any breach of these terms and conditions or misuse of the logo may result in the accreditation offer being withdrawn.

Once the accreditation contract is signed, organisations can use the relevant City & Guilds logo on promotional and training materials, as well as learner certificates (in the case of accreditation). Use of the 'Accreditation' logo is restricted to the organisation that makes the original approved application.

Please note that the accreditation approval offer only extends to the original application and that any further use of the materials with the inclusion of the City & Guilds logo included would necessitate a separate application.

#### 2.2 Third parties

Where organisations use third parties in the design or delivery of their training programme, details of the contractual relationship between the organisation and the third party (including responsibilities) must be communicated, in writing, to City & Guilds.

Where organisations use third parties are, these third parties shall be subject to the same quality assurance requirements of the original party. Third parties include satellite centres, sub-centres, and additional assessment sites. It also includes subcontracted providers, such as those who write training materials.

City & Guilds accredited training programmes may only be used by the original organisation, and may not be used by any third parties.

#### 2.3 Fees & Charges

The City & Guilds Accreditation service is subject to the following fees and charges. These will vary depending on the type of service that customers are applying for. These include:-

- Initial Approval fee; this is payable once the Accreditation approval process begins, and is non-refundable
- Renewal fee; this is charged if organisations wish to extend the period of Accreditation for their training programme.
- Additional consultancy fees; this is subject to charge, depending on the type of support
- Certificate fee; Issuing learner certificates for accredited training programmes, if required

Fees & Charges may be charged as individual elements as a monthly subscription or an upfront fee depending on customer/business preference.

## **Section 3**

### **The Approval process**

This section outlines the key approval process stages for organisations requiring Accreditation.

#### **3.1 Expression of interest**

Organisations wishing to apply for accreditation must first submit an expression of interest to relevant member of the City & Guilds Group (City & Guilds International Limited for overseas organisations, the City and Guilds of London Institute for FE colleges and private training providers and City and Guilds Kineo Limited for employers.

A Business or Customer Service manager will review this expression of interest and advise whether the Accreditation service fit the organisation's needs and requirements. It may be at this point that they decide that another existing City & Guilds product or service may be more suitable.

#### **3.2 Application**

If the Accreditation service is assessed to be suitable for an organisation's requirements, they will be required to complete the appropriate application form. This includes details of the training programme or training materials. At this stage a non-refundable approval fee is paid.

This application must also include details of the type and method of assessment that learners will be required to undertake.

#### **3.3 Consultant support**

Organisations applying for accreditation will receive support from City & Guilds consultants as part of the approval application process. Whilst organisations applying for accreditation do not need to be approved City & Guilds centres, they need to provide evidence that they have the staff, resources and systems needed to support the delivery of the specific service they wish to provide.

If an organisation applying for the accreditation of their training programme is not already an approved City & Guilds centre, as part of the support they receive they may receive an advisory visit to ensure that they have the appropriate systems in place to deliver the programme.

Consultants will also review training materials and assessment materials for accredited training programmes to ensure that they are robust, fit-for-purpose and valid. Further information on the criteria for review can be found in *Section 4* of this document.

### **3.4 Approval**

Approval for accreditation will be granted where the relevant approval criteria as detailed in this document and in the *Accreditation Quality Assurance Manual*, are fully met by an organisation. At this stage, the relevant member of the City & Guilds group will issue the contract to the organisation.

Accreditation will be approved for an agreed period beginning from the date indicated in the contract and will be subject to external monitoring and regular internal self-assessment. If an organisation wishes to extend the period of approval, they will need to apply for renewal. Further information on this is included in *Section 4* of this document.

### **3.5 Titling**

The title of an accredited training programme must reflect its contents, and must not reflect the naming conventions of existing general and vocational qualifications. As part of the accreditation approval process, City & Guilds will advise on the suitability of training programme titles.

### **3.6 Learner certificates**

Learners who complete accredited training programmes will be issued a certificate, featuring the City & Guilds Accredited logo. Approved organisations have the option to either issue these themselves, or have them issued by City & Guilds. This must be agreed as part of the approval agreement.

Where an organisation wishes City & Guilds to print certificates on their behalf, this will be subject to an additional charge.

### **3.7 Renewal of Accreditation**

Accreditation will last for a specified period of time. Once this expires organisations who wish to extend this period will need to apply for renewal. City & Guilds will contact organisations 8 weeks prior to the end date of their agreement period to discuss renewal arrangements, where required.

#### **3.7.1 Renewal of accredited training programmes**

This will involve self-assessment by the organisation, as well as external review by City & Guilds. Organisations will need to demonstrate that their training programmes are valid and reliable and provide value to learners.

Where quality issues are identified through this self-assessment and external review, City & Guilds will offer consultation and support to aid the renewal application. Additional consultancy activities may be subject to a charge.

Renewal will be granted when the issues identified have been corrected.

### **3.7.2 Changes to assessment or training materials**

Organisations shall not make any changes or amendments to accredited training and assessment materials without the prior consent of City & Guilds.



## **Section 4**

### **Quality Assurance**

This section outlines our quality assurance requirements for the Accreditation service in detail. Organisations must demonstrate that they will adhere to the relevant requirements for initial approval to be granted. They must also be able to demonstrate that they continue to do so on an ongoing basis for the approval offer to remain in place.

City & Guilds will monitor and evaluate approved organisations according to the relevant quality assurance criteria and there is a requirement that organisations undertake systematic self-assessment to ensure ongoing quality assurance underpins their delivery of accredited training programmes.

City & Guilds reserves the right to suspend or remove the Accreditation approval offer if organisations fail to meet these quality assurance requirements at any point.

#### **4.1 Organisation structure**

Organisations must have the appropriate internal management structure and governance to support the delivery of accredited training programmes. This includes:-

- A head of centre / chief officer / responsible manager
- A named quality contact appointed to act on behalf of the organisation in matters relating to quality assurance
- Documented policies and procedures to support delivery & assessment (for accredited training programmes)
- An organisational structure, showing key roles and accountabilities involved in delivery

Where any of these details change, or any other relevant information related to the original approval application, the organisation must inform City & Guilds in writing.

#### **4.2 Organisation resources**

Organisations must be able to demonstrate that they have appropriate resources for delivery of the accredited training programmes. This includes:-

- Technology
- Appropriately skilled or qualified staff
- Quality assurance management
- Financial resources
- Other physical resources (ie equipment, assessment / training sites)

If a training programme requires any other additional resources, the organisation must be able to demonstrate that they have these in place as part of the approval process.

### **4.3 Data management**

All organisations must have systems in place to collect and retain accurate, up to date and relevant data. Data systems must be reliable and auditable and will be subject to internal and external quality assurance. Organisations must provide this data to City & Guilds as and when required.

#### **4.3.1 Accreditation data requirements**

Organisations delivering accredited training programmes must have systems in place for the secure storage and transfer of the following data:-

- learner registrations (including the site they will be assessed at)
- transfer of learner data and results
- version control and change history for all training and assessment materials
- records for learner progression
- recorded assessment decisions

### **4.4 Review of materials**

City & Guilds consultants will review training and assessment materials to ensure that they are robust, fit-for-purpose and valid. The criteria for review will differ depending on which service an organisation is opting for.

#### **4.4.1 Accredited training & assessment materials review**

As part of this review, consultants will consider:

- Programme objectives, structure and duration
- Method of assessment
- Assessment objectives & criteria
- Agreed programme outcomes
- Subject / sector knowledge
- Accessibility

Assessment and training materials may be subject to actions (in the form of revisions and amendments) as part of this review. This will take the form of a written action plan detailing the requirements, along with an agreed realistic timescale for these to be completed.

City & Guilds reserves the right to reject applications if organisations fail to complete these actions. Further consultancy support will be available and may be subject to additional charges.

#### **4.4.3 Updating materials**

All training and assessment materials are subject to regular systematic internal review, to ensure their ongoing validity and suitability. Where these materials are updated, organisations must ensure that they are of comparable standards to previous versions and will require the prior written approval of City & Guilds before the updated materials are made available.

City & Guilds will also sample these materials as part of their external quality assurance activities.

### **4.5 Monitoring and self-assessment**

City & Guilds uses a range of monitoring and evaluation to ensure that the validity, reliability and integrity of training programmes is maintained. In addition organisations will be required to undertake self-assessment and internal review to demonstrate that they have taken ownership of quality assurance. Failure to undertake self-assessment will be considered non-compliance and may result in suspension or removal of the Accreditation offer.

#### **4.5.1 External monitoring for accredited training programmes**

City & Guilds will undertake external monitoring activities to ensure the ongoing quality assurance of accredited training programmes. This could include monitoring visits, observing assessment practice and sampling assessment decisions.

City & Guilds will arrange these activities with organisations as part of the approval process. However additional monitoring activities may also be arranged at short notice if required.

#### **4.5.2 Non-compliance**

If external quality assurance activities reveal any issues of non-compliance, City & Guilds will take the appropriate follow up actions. This could be in the form of a written action plan, with agreed realistic timescales for completion of these actions. Organisations that fail to do so may have their Accreditation offer suspended or removed.

#### **4.5.3 Internal monitoring and self-assessment for accredited training programmes**

Organisations are required to undertake regular monitoring activities and self-assessment to ensure that the initial aims and objectives of the accredited training programme are still being met. This must be undertaken on an annual basis, as a

minimum requirement, although this may change according to the specific requirements of the programme.

This self-assessment might take the form of an internal peer review, or similar, and must be agreed with City & Guilds as part of the approval application.

In these instances, a review panel could be used which consists of a subject / sector specialist, and a representative for quality assurance. All training and assessment materials should be included in this self-assessment.

Where internal monitoring and self-assessment reveals quality issues, the expectation is that they will take the necessary corrective issues, and communicate these to City & Guilds.

#### **4.6 Equality, diversity & accessibility**

Organisations must have documented policies that comply with relevant and up-to-date legislation ensuring equality, diversity and accessibility for their accredited training programmes.

Organisations must have in place appropriate access arrangements procedures to ensure there are no barriers to entry and assessment for accredited training programmes and that no learners are disadvantaged.

Organisations delivering accredited training programmes must also be able to demonstrate that they have a clear policy and procedure for reasonable adjustments and special considerations for learners who are disadvantaged during assessment. This must include the specific criteria for eligibility and the related reasonable adjustment that would be applied.

Further information is available on the *Access arrangements and reasonable adjustments* section of the City & Guilds website.

#### **4.7 Malpractice**

City & Guilds requires all staff involved in the delivery of accredited training programmes to demonstrate honesty and integrity.

Organisations must therefore have clearly defined, documented procedures for dealing with cases of suspected malpractice. These should be managed by the organisation in the first instance and upon their discovery should be reported to City & Guilds. City & Guilds will then agree the next steps for investigation. Appropriate actions must be taken that reflect the severity of the malpractice, and corrective measures should be put in place to prevent further occurrences.

Where this results in learner certificates being removed or invalidated, then this must be formally reported to City & Guilds.

Further guidance can be found in the City & Guilds *Managing cases of suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments* document.

#### **4.8 Issuing certificates (accredited training programmes)**

Organisations must have a system in place that ensures that all certification claims are valid and signed off by an appropriately skilled or qualified person. Learners can only claim certificates upon full completion of the training programme.

Certificates must include the name of the organisation, the name of the training programme and the learner who is claiming it. Use of the City & Guilds logo on these certificates is subject to the terms and conditions of the contract.

Where certificates are issued that are found to be invalid, City & Guilds must be informed. In the event of lost, or misplaced learner certificates, organisations must also have a facility for issuing replacement certificates.

#### **4.9 Complaints & Appeals**

Organisations delivering accredited training programmes have a responsibility to protect their learners, and must have in place robust documented complaints and appeals procedures.

Information about the complaints and appeals procedures must be made publicly available and communicated to learners.

##### **4.9.1 Complaints**

Where complaints are upheld, organisations must ensure that appropriate follow up corrective actions are taken. If a complaint reveals non-compliance or malpractice, this should be formally communicated to City & Guilds.

##### **4.9.2 Appeals**

If learners wish to appeal the results of assessment decisions, organisations must ensure that a documented appeals process is available to them. This should include details of:-

- Timescales for the appeal
- The circumstances that an appeal can be made
- Who will be involved in the independent review

These procedures are subject to external audit by City & Guilds to ensure that they are fit for purpose.

Where learner appeals are upheld, organisations must ensure that the appropriate follow up actions are taken, including identifying whether additional learners have

been affected, and implementing measures to ensure that it does not happen in the future.

Where an appeal leads to a change in learner certification, City & Guilds must be informed.