

Regulations for the accreditation of degree programmes

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Regulations for the accreditation of degree programmes

1 Introduction

- 1.1** The scheme for the accreditation of degree programmes is governed by the provisions in these regulations. The regulations governing the scheme may be changed as the Board of Directors see fit from time to time.
- 1.2** The object of the scheme for the accreditation of degree programmes is to recognise academic programmes, or pathways through programmes, which equip students with appropriate skills relevant to a career in the historic environment and provide the opportunity to acquire competence at Practitioner (PCIfA) level.
- 1.3** Accreditation is conferred by ClfA but the scheme is delivered in partnership with University Archaeology UK (UAUK) as the body representing departments of archaeology in UK Universities.

2 The Accredited Degree committee

- 2.1** The Accredited Degree committee shall have delegated authority from the Board of Directors to determine applications for accreditation in accordance with these regulations.
- 2.2** The Accredited Degree committee may also consider general matters relating to the running of the Accredited Degree scheme and make proposals for revisions to the Board of Directors.
- 2.3** The Accredited Degree committee will consist of accredited members appointed to the committee by the Board of Directors. The committee should include a balance of employers' and academic perspectives. The Board of Directors may also invite any other person to advise the Accredited Degree committee on the determination of applications.
- 2.4** The Accredited Degree committee shall elect a Chair and Vice-chair.
- 2.5** The quorum for meetings of the Accredited Degree committee is five: the Accredited Degree committee may for a single meeting appoint a relevant member of staff who is a voting member to step in to ensure a quorum.
- 2.6** All documents reviewed and information discussed at the inspections and committee meetings shall be treated as confidential within the accreditation process.
- 2.7** The Accredited Degree committee shall meet as required and at a frequency sufficient to ensure that applications are processed on a reasonable timescale.

- 2.8** The Accredited Degree committee shall be impartial in its decisions. Any potentially prejudicial interest should be declared before discussion of an application and recorded in the committee minutes. In these cases, it may be appropriate for a committee member to leave the room during the discussion.
- 2.9** Where an application involves a Registered Organisation or an accredited member and assessment indicates that there may have been a potentially significant breach of the Code of conduct the matter shall be referred to the Institute to consider whether an allegation of misconduct should be made. Should this happen, the application for accreditation will normally be deferred pending the outcome of the professional conduct procedure. Applications may be similarly deferred pending criminal or other legal proceedings.

3 Accreditation

- 3.1** A list of accredited degree programmes shall be maintained and published on the ClfA website.
- 3.2** The period of accreditation for a degree programme shall be up to five years, providing that the programme continues to meet the criteria for accreditation.
- 3.3** In addition to the obligations imposed under regulation 3.2, university departments offering an accredited degree programme(s) shall report any change in programme or delivery which might affect their ability to meet the criteria for accreditation. University departments shall nominate a single point of contact responsible for reporting changes as required.
- 3.4** A fee will be levied on university departments seeking to accredit their degree programmes. Accreditation of a degree programme does not imply that the university is a member of or registered by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- 3.5** The charge will be set by the Board of Directors of the Institute. It will include a nonreturnable fee which must accompany submission of the application form. Failure to pay the charge after a period to be determined by the Board of Directors may lead to removal of accreditation.
- 3.6** Accredited degree programmes will be entitled to use the Institute's Accredited Degree logo and the following designation
- 3.6.1** ClfA Accredited Degree
- The Institute may issue further binding instructions or guidance governing the use of the logo and designations at its discretion.
- 3.7** The logo and designation must not be used in a way which implies that the organisation is a member of or registered by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

4 Qualification for accreditation

- 4.1** The criteria for accreditation of degree programmes have been developed jointly by ClfA and UAUK.
- 4.2** The applicant must demonstrate to the Institute's satisfaction that it meets the criteria for accreditation through a written application, inspection and supporting information.
- 4.3** In addition, information supplied in support of an application must indicate practice consistent with professional and ethical standards as set out in the ClfA Code of conduct and Standards.
- 4.4** The university department must be a member of UAUK or an equivalent body for non-UK universities.
- 4.5** Applications will be assessed on the basis of
 - 4.5.1** five mapping exercises, mapping programme learning outcomes to National Occupational Standards (NOS) or equivalent for non-UK universities
 - 4.5.2** the facilities and resources available to deliver the learning outcomes
 - 4.5.3** the approach to supporting students' continuing professional development
 - 4.5.4** the appropriate competence of relevant staff

5 Applications

- 5.1** Applications for accreditation must be made on an application form published by the Institute and accompanied by supporting documents. An inspection by a panel of peers will normally be required (see section 6 below).
- 5.2** In applying for accreditation of a degree programme, the applicant accepts that the scheme operates on the basis of peer review and agrees to abide fully with these regulations and the decisions of the Accredited Degree committee, subject to appeals process set out in Section 9 below. It is the duty of the Head of Department and/or nominated contact to assist with any enquiries made by the Accredited Degree committee in response to issues raised during the accreditation process and to respond to them in a timely and substantive manner.

6 Assessment

- 6.1** Once the application has been received it will be assessed to determine whether it is complete and ready to be considered by an inspection panel of peers. The applicant may receive requests for additional documentation or information in advance of an inspection.
- 6.2** The panel will consist of one member representing an employer's perspective, one UAUK representative and one representative of ClfA, who may be a member of staff. The ClfA representative will participate in and guide the inspection, take minutes, and

write up the final reports. At least one panel member will normally be a member of the Accredited Degree committee.

- 6.3** The panel will undertake a review of paperwork submitted and will conduct an inspection to assess whether the criteria for accreditation have been met. The inspection will normally be conducted in person but may be conducted remotely where it is appropriate to do so.
- 6.4** Documentation such as programme specifications, module descriptions and examples of students' work must be available to the panel before and during the inspection. Failure to provide documentation may result in the application being delayed.
- 6.5** Applicants will be given the opportunity to express concerns about the potential panel, and the Institute will consider reasonable requests. The final decision will rest with the Institute.
- 6.6** On completion of the inspection the panel will discuss the findings of the assessment and decide on the recommendations to the committee. The applicant's representative will be given feedback on the outcome of the assessment, which may include the recommendation (or not) to accredit.
- 6.7** The applicant will be given an opportunity to comment on the report before it is submitted to the Accredited Degree committee.

7 Decisions

- 7.1** The findings of the report and recommendation(s) of the panel will be considered by the Accredited Degree committee, which will make the final decision on accreditation.
- 7.2** The outcomes of the committee's consideration of an application may be

Recommendation	Criterion
Accreditation	all criteria for accreditation have been met no obvious areas for improvement
Accreditation with encouragement and advice for improvement	implementation of advice likely to improve the quality or reliability of the department's practice in relation to the degree programme being accredited.
Accreditation refused	fails to meet the criteria for accreditation including failing to demonstrate that historic environment work is undertaken in accordance with the Code of conduct, policies and Standards of the Institute
Accreditation deferred	additional information or minor changes required to complete a successful application. Minor changes may include mapping to a different National Occupational Standard

- 7.3** An applicant refused accreditation for one or more of its degree programmes has a right of appeal (see below). If the appeal process is exhausted and the degree programme is not accredited, no new application will be considered unless and until appropriate changes to that degree programme have been made.

8 Removal of accreditation

- 8.1** accreditation of any degree programme may be removed
- 8.1.1** if during the period of accreditation the programme fails to meet the criteria for accreditation and has failed to rectify the situation within a reasonable timescale
 - 8.1.2** if false information is found to have been supplied in support of an application
 - 8.1.3** if the applicant fails to provide on request updated information within a reasonable timeframe, or fails to notify the Institute of a substantive change in its ability to meet the criteria and/or deliver the accredited degree programme
 - 8.1.4** if the university department fails to pay the accreditation fee by the due date (regulation 3.5)
- 8.2** If accreditation is removed in accordance with 8.1 above, ClfA will consider and seek to minimise any disadvantage to students already enrolled on the course.

9 Appeals

- 9.1** The applying organisation may appeal under these regulations against
- 9.1.1** a refusal of accreditation
 - 9.1.2** removal of accreditation under 8.1 of these regulations
- 9.2** Appeals against decisions set out in 9.1 shall be heard according to the provisions below by an appeals panel convened by the Board of Directors. The panel shall consist of five members of the Advisory Council, who are not also members of the Accredited Degree committee, of which three shall constitute a quorum.
- 9.3** No member shall serve on the appeals panel if they have a relationship with relevant staff at the university department, an Accredited Degree committee member involved in the decision, a member of the inspection panel or staff member involved in the decision, which might reasonably be considered a conflict of interest/prejudicial interest in the case.
- 9.4** Appeals shall be lodged in writing with the Institute's Office by the Head of Department, or their nominated contact, within 28 days of being notified of the Accredited Degree committee decision.
- 9.5** The Institute's Office shall acknowledge the receipt of the request for an appeal or request to reconsider in writing and shall keep the Head of Department or their nominated contact informed about the progress of the appeal.

- 9.6** The role of the appeals panel is to determine whether the Institute has followed its procedure, and in doing so has not reached a decision that might reasonably be considered perverse. If substantial new evidence is brought before the appeals panel which has not been seen before by the Accredited Degree committee, the appeals panel may determine to return the application to the committee
- 9.7** The documentation supplied to the panel shall consist of
- 9.7.1** the original application form as supplied
 - 9.7.2** records and correspondence generated by the accreditation panel and Accredited Degree committee
 - 9.7.3** any subsequent supporting information sent with the letter of appeal
 - 9.7.4** any additional information sought by the panel
- 9.8** The panel members shall destroy all paper copies of documentation after the decision is made and delete any electronic copies.
- 9.9** The decision will be arrived at by a majority vote of those attending the meeting.
- 9.10** The decisions that the appeals panel may make are as follows
- 9.10.1** to reject the appeal
 - 9.10.2** to refer the application back to the Accredited Degree committee, with any observations as to how the application has been considered and the decision reached, and direct the committee to reconsider the application
 - 9.10.3** to make any other recommendations to the Accredited Degree committee or Board of Directors relevant to the way in which the Institute determines applications for accreditation.

10 Reporting

- 10.1** In order to ensure that the profession benefits from lessons learned and for the scheme to be open and transparent, ClfA may communicate information about the accreditation process including, where appropriate, reasons for a degree programme being refused accreditation or having accreditation removed under these regulations.
- 10.2** Information about refusal or removal of accreditation of a degree programme may only be published if the 28 days allowed to lodge an appeal have passed or following the conclusion of an appeal.