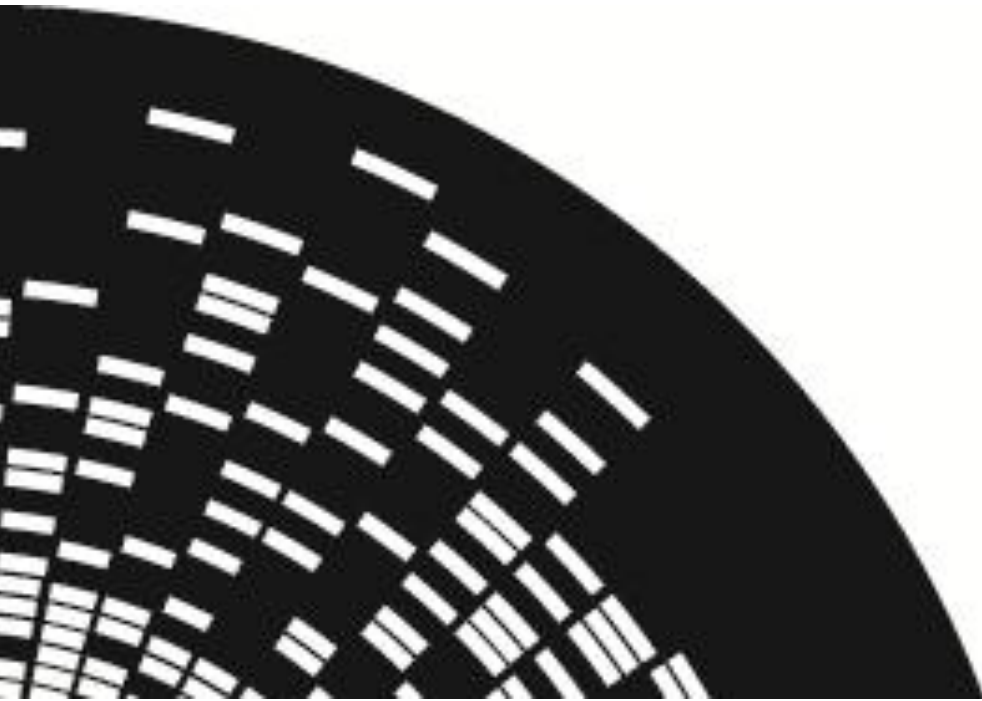




Accreditation guidance

Section one:
Organisational health

June 2014



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Introduction

This document is part of a set of guidance documents produced to support museums that are preparing an application or return for Accreditation, to help them understand how their application or return will be assessed.

This version of the 'Guidance – section one' dated June 2014 replaces the previously published version dated February 2013. The Accreditation guidance documents supplement the Accreditation Standard (2011) and outline how you might approach completing your return. The guidance documents are reviewed annually to ensure they remain current and relevant. Should you have any feedback on the guidance please email accreditation@artscouncil.org.uk at any time. The guidance will next be re-published with revision where appropriate in February 2015. All substantive changes are contained within dated boxes for clarity.

This document provides guidance on meeting the requirements of the first section of Accreditation, Organisational Health, and should be read alongside the Accreditation Standard, the guidance introduction document, and the guidance documents for the two other sections of the standard – Collections, and Users and their experiences. These documents are available to download from the Arts Council website at www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-museums/accreditation-scheme/.

The Accreditation Standard states organisational health as one of three sections that a museum must meet to gain Accreditation. This section is broken down into 10 requirements, and each of these is listed here, along with:

- 1 General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums**
- 2 Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types (where appropriate):** The scales are explained fully in the main introduction to the guidance (see 'Scalability indicators', page 13). Scales will not apply to each requirement, and are intended as a guide only.
- 3 Documentation and information needed for this requirement and where that information may be found**
- 4 Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment:** These questions are not the ones that will be asked on your application form and are not additional requirements. However, your assessor will be using them when considering the information you provide through an application or return form. Ensure each is addressed clearly and in an appropriate way for your organisation.

Where it is relevant, questions from the Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) Quality Improvement System¹, a self-assessment tool for museums and galleries, have been included. These questions are preceded by the letters 'QIS'.

¹ www.museumsgallerysscotland.org.uk/the-programmes/quality-improvement-system/

Clear statement of purpose

'The museum must be guided by a statement of purpose that defines why the museum exists and who it is for.'

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

- a) The museum's statement of purpose will typically be located within its governance document.
- b) The statement of purpose will also appear within key policy and planning documents required by Accreditation such as the forward plan (see requirement 1.4) and the collections development policy (see requirement 2.2).

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

Independent museums

Charities are guided by a charitable constitution which will include its statement of purpose, known as the 'object' or 'objects'. In many cases the statement of purpose may have been written some time ago, and may have been re-written as a mission statement for use in policy and planning documents. This is typically due to changes in emphasis and use of language. Where the charitable object/statement of purpose has been re-written in this manner, its meaning should not be changed.

Local authority museums:

There may be several different statements of purpose, at different levels within the organisation. There may well be up to three layers:

- a statement of purpose guiding the Council's cultural strategy (or equivalent)
- a statement of purpose drawn from the cultural strategy (or equivalent) guiding the museum service planning document
- a statement of purpose for the individual museum supporting the museum service statement of purpose

University museums

The statement of purpose will typically be located within the relevant committee terms of reference or the terms of an endowment or bequest.

National museums

These are typically governed by an Act of Parliament or Royal Charter and constituted as charities. They are guided by a statement of purpose, and are also known as the 'object' or 'objects' within their governance document. In many cases the statement of purpose may have been written some time ago, and may have been re-written as a mission statement for use in policy and planning documents. This is typically due to changes in emphasis and use of language. Where the charitable object/statement of purpose has been re-written in this manner, its meaning should not be changed.

Nationally styled museums

Refer to the relevant constitutional type.

Documentation and information needed Where it may be found

Information on application/return form	Forward plan
Governance document	Governance document
Forward plan	Collections development policy
Collections development policy	Other policies and plans

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- is the statement of purpose clearly carried through from the governing document to the appropriate plans and policies?
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- where a 'simple' statement of purpose has been developed from a more complex statement, has the core purpose been retained?
 - where appropriate, is the primary statement of purpose supported by a more detailed or focused subsidiary statement or mission (for example, local authorities working to a service level plan?)

Acceptable constitution for the governing body

‘The museum must be a long-term organisation that exists to benefit the public and protect collections. It must have an appropriate and acceptable constitution for the governing body.’

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

- a) Accredited museums must be clear regarding their governing body. In some circumstances governance is complicated and multiple organisations are involved in a partnership, for example, where front of house management is contracted to another party or where multiple committee tiers exist for decision-making. Museums are expected to demonstrate a good understanding of their governance arrangements.
- b) It is possible that the name of the governing body and the name of the museum may not be the same; however, the names that are used should be clear within the governance, policy, planning documents and in advocacy and marketing materials. The name provided for the governing body should be the same as that on the governing document.

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

Independent museums

Any charitable constitution should give the power to hold and/or own a collection and to operate a museum within either primary objects or a subordinate clause. Museums that are registered/recognised charities must be registered with the Charities Commission or the Office of the Scottish Regulator (OSCR) and provide the relevant registration numbers. Where registration is not possible, the museum should evidence charitable recognition from HMRC.

Where a local authority has transferred its museum provision to a charitable trust, the governing body of the museum is deemed to be the charitable trust, although funding agreements or service level agreement, formal loan or management agreements for the collections should be provided as evidence for requirements 1.3 and 2.1. Where a local authority has outsourced the operation of the museum to a third party for a set fee, and retains responsibility for policy decisions, the governing body remains the local authority.

In certain cases where running a museum is not an obvious function of an organisation, for example, the Cooperative Society, the governing body has been asked to pass a resolution confirming that it runs a museum. In other circumstances national charities with a non-museum primary focus have set up a subsidiary charity, for example, ‘a heritage trust’ to govern the museum.

Local authority museums:

Local authority museums are deemed to have the power to operate museums through the relevant Act of Parliament or Order (Northern Ireland) listed below (accurate at time of publication):

England and Wales

Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964

Local Government Act 1972

Scotland

Public Libraries Consolidation (Scotland) Act 1887

Northern Ireland

The Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998

Local authorities may also have powers to operate museums through an appropriate Local Authority Act.

Local authorities should be aware of the constitutional arrangements for the museums they manage, whether through the 1964 Act, or where museum provision has been granted through a local act, or where the authority acts as a sole trustee to a charitably constituted museum.

2014

Where a local authority has transferred its museum provision to a charitable trust, the governing body of the museum is deemed to be the charitable trust, although funding agreements or service level agreement, formal loan or management agreements for the collections should be provided as evidence for requirements 1.3 and 2.1. Where a local authority has outsourced the operation of the museum to a third party for a set fee, and retains responsibility for policy decisions, the governing body remains the local authority.

University museums

Deemed to have the power to operate museums.

National museums

Usually governed by an Act of Parliament or Royal Charter and constituted as charities. The regulatory body may be the Parliament from which the Act originated, whether UK Parliament or devolved, rather than the Charities Commission or the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

Nationally styled museums

Refer to the relevant constitutional type above, independent, local authority or university.

Documentation and information needed

Where it may be found

Information on application or return form

Charitable constitution and registered charity number

Governance document

Recognised charitable purposes confirmation from HMRC

HM Revenue and Customs Number (Northern Ireland)

Act of Parliament

Royal Charter

Constitution of Local Authority Joint Committee

Other type of constitution as appropriate

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- has the correct governance document been provided?
- is the governing document clear?
- is the museum operating under an assumed constitutional structure rather than the actual/legal body?
- is the name of the organisation consistent with its governing body?
- does the evidence provided match information held by the relevant regulatory bodies such as the Charities Commission, the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator, HMRC, Companies House or Act of Parliament?
- for applications from museums which are associated with major public and charitable institutions for example police services and national charities, does the museum form a genuine part of the organisation and perform a specific function, rather than a tolerated 'hobby' of an individual?
- are there any linked or subsidiary organisations (for example, a collections holding trust)?

Appropriate management arrangements

'The museum must be an effective organisation that is well managed and able to provide evidence of the following:

- 1.3.1 that it has a satisfactory management structure, from the governing body to the user
- 1.3.2 that it has formally approved any authorities or responsibilities that the governing body has delegated to sub-committees, members of staff or volunteers
- 1.3.3 that the management structure makes sure there is appropriate professional input into decision making and policy development
- 1.3.4 that succession procedures are sufficient to ensure business continuity and accountability
- 1.3.5 the person or organisation that has powers to approve documents such as the forward plan and policies on managing collections
- 1.3.6 any approved agreement under which a separate organisation runs the museum'

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

- a) While museum management structures may range from straightforward through to very complex, they should be flexible and evidence participation as appropriate from their senior museum professional and the wider workforce. Some museums will be managed directly by their governing body, such as with some charity trustee boards; in other cases the governing body may have delegated day-to-day management to a management or executive committee, or group of committees, or a tiered workforce structure. In all cases the management structure (form, composition, remit, and responsibilities – whether advisory or delegated) must be clear, and the governing body will retain overall responsibility for the actions of the museum. This is especially important for managing committees which are part of public bodies where the primary focus is not providing a museum, for example, universities or the police.
- b) The governing body or its management committee or structure as appropriate should be aware of issues relating to succession. Planning, with associated procedures, should be present to ensure that the museum has resilient long-term governance. This could include how, and how frequently, the museum reviews the performance of its governing body, how core information is maintained and preserved and the flexibility of the museum to respond to new opportunities that support long term sustainability.
- c) Where the governing body has contracted a separately constituted organisation to manage the museum, any agreement should identify who is responsible for what functions and who pays for what, as well as where any monies generated are directed. Responsibility for collecting, as well as ownership of collected items, must be clear. This must be consistent with the collections management framework and effectively and consistently implemented.

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

Independent museums types one and two

Management arrangements may be relatively flat, with the governing body (trustees) directly managing the museum, and with trustees/directors assuming specific roles. Where there are sub-committees or individual members of the workforce with delegated responsibilities, for example, finance, exhibitions, learning, collections etc, clear and agreed terms of reference from the governing body must be evidenced.

Evidence must be provided regarding the governing body's interaction with its Museum Mentor, as appropriate (see requirement 1.8).

Independent museums types three

For these museums, it is likely that the trustees will have implemented not only several sub-committees with specific responsibilities, but that there will also be a salaried or contracted element to the workforce, including a director, to manage the museum. Approved terms of reference and responsibility must be present, as well as a link to workforce responsibilities within a management team (see requirement 1.7).

Local authority museums:

Management arrangements can be complex, and will vary significantly between local authorities. Whether a cabinet or full council model is in operation, any delegated powers for policy approval to senior officers must be evidenced from the portfolio holder or council. These will typically start within the Council's own terms of reference and its delegation scheme (usually published online within a 'democracy' section of the website). Assessment must establish a clear line of authority from the governing body (Council) to museum activities; evidence focusing only on the museum service/division is not acceptable. Assessors will be aware that museum services may not be a high priority service run by a Council, and it is accepted that the clear line of authority may be light touch, but must be present.

University museums

Similar to local authority museums, the management structure may be complex. The ultimate governing body will typically be the university council or university senate, and not individual departments. A clear line of authority must be established from the governing body to museum activities. The collections development policy should be approved by the governing body or through delegated authority. University museums may have a specific committee or may report to a committee which oversees several stand-alone museums.

National and nationally styled museums

Refer to appropriate governance type.

Documentation and information needed

Where it may be found

Information on application or return form

Organisation chart

Management chart
committee terms of reference

Committee minutes

Evidence of delegated responsibility (minutes
or actions)

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- is the organisation structure provided coherent, appropriate for its size and up to date?
- is there clear evidence of delegated powers?
- do all committees and sub-committees operate within their approved terms of reference?
- are there clear reporting structures in place between committees and are these followed?
- if there is a significant long term loan or loans are there clear reporting structures in place between the management and the owner?
- is the process for approving the collections development policy clear and appropriate?
Where a museum does not own any collections, for example, all of the collections used are on loan from another organisation (such as when local authorities have moved heritage provision to an independent Trust) it is usual for the primary collection owner/s to approve the collections development policy as part of the service level agreement (SLA) or collections loan/management agreement. In both cases, evidence of the approval of the SLA or collections loan/management agreement by the museum's governing body will be required.
- is it clear who, or which group, has responsibility for approving policies?
- are there clear details about which committees/workforce members or sections of the Board are responsible for the three sections of Accreditation?
- is there evidence of succession planning?
- how often do committees convene? Is this appropriate? Is the structure regularly reviewed?
- **QIS** How effective are the lines of communication between leaders and workforce at other levels of the organisation?

Effective forward planning

'The museum must plan effectively for long-term success and to make sure it can adapt in a changing environment in order to survive. Its approved forward plans must include or cover the following:

- 1.4.1 the museum's statement of purpose
- 1.4.2 a review of the previous forward plan
- 1.4.3 an analysis of the environment in which it exists
- 1.4.4 consultation and an analysis of views
- 1.4.5 its key aims
- 1.4.6 the specific objectives beneath each key aim
- 1.4.7 how it will achieve its objectives
- 1.4.8 a resource plan showing the people and money available to meet its objectives
- 1.4.9 the date the plan will be reviewed

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

a) Format

Forward plans come in many sizes, shapes and formats; there is therefore no standard template for forward planning.

b) Approval

The statement of purpose and key aims must be approved in all cases by the governing body or under appropriately evidenced delegated powers (see requirement 1.3).

Accreditation recognises that specific objectives and budgets may change within a year. To support management flexibility it is therefore not a requirement for these elements to be formally approved.

Museums should provide appropriate **signed** evidence of approval for the forward plan which must explicitly state approval has been given. Appropriate evidence may take several forms, such as:

- a signed copy of a full set of minutes
- a signed copy of a redacted set of minutes
- a signed copy of an extract from the minutes that includes the date of the meeting the item number (the extract should include the full item discussion minus any redactions)
- a published (internet) decision document (typically Local Authorities) - these might not actually be signed but publication to be deemed evidence of approval
- a signed but unpublished decision document (typically Local Authorities and universities)

Within Accreditation 'signed' may be defined as any of the following:

- an actual signature from the appropriate individual on a paper document
- a photocopy or scan of a document on which an actual signature exists
- an identifiable email from the appropriate individual with unsigned minutes attached that states that those minutes, or those redacted minutes, or the attached extract from the minutes was approved on a particular date.
- an identifiable email from the appropriate individual that states that the relevant minutes, redacted minutes, or extract from the minutes was approved on a particular date.
- an identifiable email from the appropriate individual that states that the document (plan, policy etc.) has been approved by the governing body.

c) Plan duration

Accredited museums will be guided by forward plans that cover the museum's current and subsequent planning year. We recognise that objectives and resource planning may be at an early stage of planning for the subsequent year. However, the strategic framework (statement of purpose and key aims) must be clear.

It is recommended that effective organisations operate within a three to five year planning cycle with annual reviews of achievement. Strategic visions may cover a longer time period, for example, Arts Council England's 10 year vision 'Achieving great art and culture for everyone'.

Museums should plan within a timescale appropriate to their own working cycles and should not provide a forward plan solely for the purposes of Accreditation.

Effective plans will include a statement of purpose, key aims, specific objectives and a resource plan. Where any of the forward planning elements introduced within the 2011 edition of the standard are not in place at the time of assessment the museum must indicate how those elements will be developed in support of the next planning review.

The Accreditation Committee recognises that some museums may be constrained to a formal one year planning cycle, whether due to planning controls or budget setting timescales. In these circumstances the museum should evidence local indicative planning for at least the current and subsequent planning period. This indicative longer term local planning does not need to be formally approved as it will form part of the Accreditation requirement for 'specific objectives' and 'resource planning'.

d) Analysis – plan preparation

A forward plan should be written through consultation with the workforce, stakeholders and users and non-users. By working this way the Board gets a much truer perspective on the museum, rather than just assuming they know what customers may want.

All museums must gather and analyse user data, using visitor books, comments cards and local community groups invited in for consultation, etc. Some larger museums, or those with greater access to funding, may buy in consultation support, but this is not a requirement of Accreditation. Further information is available in *Guidance for section three – users and their experiences*², requirement 3.1.

² www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-museums/accreditation-scheme

Analysis of the operating environment can be achieved and evidenced using straightforward tools such as SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) or PESTLE (political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental).

The review of the previous forward plan (which might be found in the museum's annual report), a risk analysis of the operating environment, and presentation of collated consultation analysis may or may not feature within the approved forward plan and might be provided separately or form a group of supporting documents. Planning activity should refer to the relevant external strategies and policies, such as a national museums strategy, a local authority heritage and/or tourism strategy or similar.

In all cases the forward plan must evidence planning compliant with the governing body's constitution (see requirement 1.2). For charities there may be legal implications if the plan moves the museum's activities away from the charitable objects.

e) Specific objectives, achievement of objectives, resource planning

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The museum's objectives and resource plan should reflect the museum's plans with regard to all sections of the Accreditation Standard, and should include explicit reference to the museum's policy regarding governance, management, secure occupancy of all premises, environmental sustainability, collections development, collections documentation, collections care and conservation and access to the collections and associated information.

These elements may be located within separate documents, or within one single action plan. Resource planning should detail the financial, workforce and time resources needed to achieve each objective. In all cases museum budgets and financial planning must be clearly understandable.

f) External funding

Where museums receive a large proportion of their funding as project funding or regular grant funding from external organisations, the governing body should be careful to avoid neglecting the core service offer of the organisation linked to its statement of purpose. The aims of project and other additional funding should complement the organisation's core purpose, and not inadvertently dilute or replace it. Museums must demonstrate consideration of the associated risks, and have a clear mitigation strategy in place should this funding be no longer available.

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

Independent museums type one

Smaller organisations will not be expected to provide similar scale forward plans to those provided by much larger institutions.

The requirement to demonstrate consultation with users and non-users does not mean resource-heavy market research should be 'bought in'. Where smaller museums are embedded within their local and/or specialist communities, views on activities and partnerships, etc, gathered from local and/or specialist stakeholders, friends groups, organisations and community groups is acceptable

as evidence (see requirement 3.1.1). Many museums will be undertaking much of this activity already, and to meet the Accreditation requirement, museums should formalise partnership meetings by taking notes, minutes and recording opinions for use in developing the forward plan.

Reviews of previous planning periods will typically be found within the charity accounts as required by the Charities Commission or similar.

Independent museums types two and three

Larger independents should consider formalising consultation such as regular focus groups from various sections of users and non-user communities and/or formal gathering of feedback. Reviews of previous planning periods will typically be found within the charity accounts as required by the Charities Commission or similar.

Local authority museums:

Multiple plans and planning cycles may exist. It is typical for a cultural strategy or similar to provide the policy context for planning. A museum service may respond to this strategy with a service/division plan, and may also have individual site action plans drawn from this plan where more than one museum is operated. All levels of the plan, along with the appropriate approvals, must be provided as part of the Accreditation application/return.

Within each of these strategies and plans will sit a statement of purpose which guides the museum. This may not always be the museum specific statement of purpose, but one outlining the Council's entire cultural provision. The assessment will recognise that while the Council's mission statement will not change, it may be appropriate for additional, more focused, statements to accompany it as the plan approaches more detailed planning at service or site level. Consultation processes will follow both the basic museum practice of visitor books, comments cards, exit surveys, etc, but will also reflect the governing body (local authority) consultation and public engagement requirements.

University museums

May work within multiple plans and planning cycles. It is typical for a university strategy or similar to be present, providing the policy context for planning. The school or department may respond to this with their own plan, in which case, the museum should also have an action plan drawn from the school or departmental plan. All levels of the plan, along with the appropriate approvals, must be provided as part of the Accreditation application/return.

Within each of these strategies and plans will sit a statement of purpose which guides the museum. This may not always be the museum specific statement of purpose, but one outlining the university's entire cultural provision. The assessment will recognise that while the university's mission statement will not change, it may be appropriate for additional, more focused statements to accompany it as the plan approaches more detailed planning at school or museum level. Consultation processes will follow both the basic museum practice of visitor books, comments cards, exit surveys, etc, but will also reflect the governing body's consultation and public engagement requirements.

National museums

Usually work within a planning cycle that is dictated by the relevant regulatory body. Typically wider political agendas provide the policy context for planning as articulated through strategies, consultations and legislation. The policy context should be clearly explained in the forward plan. It is not practical to submit all relevant documents for the purposes of Accreditation, but evidence of appropriate approvals must be provided. Consultation processes will follow both the basic museum practice of visitor books, comments cards, exit surveys etc, but should also include more sophisticated consultation and public engagement.

Nationally styled museums

The process for approval of the forward plan needs to be appropriate for the governance type, and appropriate evidence of approval should be supplied. Planning must clearly demonstrate national aspiration, reach and delivery.

Documentation and information needed Where it may be found

Information on application/return form	Forward plan
Forward plan	Cultural strategy
Signed document/s	Regional plan
	Service/division plan
	Property management plan
	Action plans
	Business continuity plan

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- is the statement of purpose consistent with the governing document?
- does the review demonstrate that the museum is aware of what has worked or not worked and what has been achieved in the previous year and plan?
- is there explanation for any un-met aims and objectives of the previous plan?
- has the museum undertaken a risk analysis of its operating environment?
- is there evidence of effective and appropriate consultation with internal and external stakeholders? Is consultation built in to the planning cycles? Are all elements present in appropriate detail?

- have SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely) principles been applied to the objectives?
- is there a clear link between aims, objectives and resources? Are aims and objectives given the resources outlined?
- is the resource plan sufficiently detailed? Is the museum overly dependent on one source of funding? Is there a realistic income diversification strategy or plan? Has the museum considered the risk of the funding being reduced or withdrawn?
- is there an appropriate review mechanism in place? Are review periods/cycles built in?
- is the length and scope appropriate for the size and plans of the organisation?
- does the forward plan cover the current and subsequent years (led by the museums own financial and planning cycles)?
- does the plan indicate a confident, outward facing organisation, or an inward-looking one?
- does the plan link effectively to associated strategies, plans and policies?
- does the forward plan comply with the constitution and statement of purpose?
- is approval appropriate?
- **QIS** How well does the forward plan set out a clear vision and identify objectives and actions and the expected impact these will have?
- **QIS** How well does the organisation monitor its performance and use this information to improve services?
- **QIS** How well does the museum or service involve the workforce, users and partners in the planning and development of the museum?

Secure occupancy of all premises containing collections

'The terms under which the museum occupies the buildings or sites must be long-term (usually at least 12 months) and be sufficient to keep the collections secure and allow effective forward planning.

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

- a) Assessors will not normally ask to see written terms of occupancy, other than in complex cases or where challenges have been highlighted as part of previous assessments. Occupancy information must be provided for all buildings utilised for holding collections.
- b) In exceptional cases, agreements between the museum and members of its governing body or other supporters, in relation to the temporary storage of collections within private homes can be accepted, usually linked to contingency plans for short notice periods, or in support of the museum's emergency plan arrangements. In all cases, the actual arrangements must be in writing and signed with fixed terms and review dates.
- c) Legal definitions and meaning in relation to Land Law and ownership vary across the UK, particularly between Scotland and England. This is reflected below in the 'Where it may be found' section.
- d) Where occupancy arrangements are for less than 12 months, or an agreement will come due for review or end within 12 months the museum should outline its contingency planning to ensure the long term protection of the collection. This will usually be included within the museum's forward plan.

2014

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

There is no scalability in this section.

Documentation and information needed

Where it may be found

Information on application/return form	Freehold documentation absolute interests in land (Scotland)
Detail of each premises	Tenancies
Notice periods for tenancy, lease, licence and permission to occupy.	Leaseholds
	Licences
	Permissions to occupy (Ministry of Defence)
	Other forms of tenancy agreement

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- are all buildings housing collections accounted for within application form?
- do any of the agreements expire within 12 months of the date of application or return? If so, what evidence has been provided to demonstrate appropriateness?
- what actions are present in the forward plan to ensure a secure long term home for the collections?
- do any of the agreements have short or very short notice periods (less than 12 months)? If so, is this risk managed within the forward plan (see requirement 1.4)?
- are any buildings occupied without formal written agreements? What evidence or explanation has been provided?

Demonstration of financial basis

The museum must be able to show that it is financially stable and that it meets the relevant financial regulations or standards and the requirements of its constitution. The museum must have enough funds available, and collections must not be used as security for a loan.

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

- a) All museums must provide evidence of financial accounting (paper or electronic). Museums will not be asked to provide information which is not required by the relevant financial regulator, other than where accounting is unclear, or in the assessor's view in need of reform or improvement.
- b) Accounts should explicitly outline spend on museum related activities, such as exhibitions, collections acquisition, care and conservation work, as well as workforce and other overheads.
- c) Activity at individual sites, where several sites are managed by a larger organisation or museum service, should be clearly identifiable.
- d) Museums should demonstrate solvency with sufficient funds to operate. Income must be generated solely for museum activities, compliant with regulator and governing body rules.
- e) Collections must not be used as collateral or security for financial arrangements.
- f) Museums must provide, at the point of assessment, two years of relevant accounts appropriate to their constitutional arrangements. In all cases assessment of finances will be guided by the applicant organisation's financial year rather than a generic fiscal year analysis.
- g) Where a museum management organisation has been contracted by the museum governing body, its accounts for the previous two years must be provided in addition to those of the governing body. Where the museum is run by a larger corporate body, museum activities should be clearly distinguished from others. An estimated summary of museum expenditure for the previous two years must be submitted if the museum's finances are consolidated within a larger organisational or financial system.
- h) Museums cannot be considered to have failed the requirement on the basis of what may happen to their financial position in the future. If a museum is currently in financial difficulties assessors should request evidence that plans are in place to address the problems.
- i) New applicants unable to evidence two years of operating expenditure are ineligible. Where a museum has existed for less than two years, evidence of a sound financial basis for the governing body, where that body has existed for longer than two years, will enable the museum to meet the eligibility for this requirement.

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

Independent museums type one

Last two years of audited accounts as required by the Charities Commission or the Office of the Scottish Regulator. Where a museum's operating budget is below the charity regulator's reporting thresholds (www.charity-commission.gov.uk/library/threshold.pdf), accounts need not be audited, but it is advisable that a competent and independent person reviews them. Income and expenditure must be clear, regardless of the size of the budget.

Local authority museums

Actual final income and expenditure for previous two years. Council budget books are not acceptable, although evidence should remain compliant with governing body procedures.

Detail of cost centre breakdowns for specific museum related activity and expenditure should be provided. This should not include identifiable salary details.

University museums

Actual final income and expenditure for previous two years.

National museums

Annual accounts for the previous two years as published.

Nationally styled museums

Annual accounts for the previous two years as published.

Documentation and information needed	Where it may be found
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Information on application or return form	Annual accounts
Previous two years accounts or similar documentation	Annual reports
	Charities Commission website
	Museum's website

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- are the accounts submitted the correct accounts for the organisation?
- does the information provided cover the previous two financial years (based on the museum's own financial cycle)?
- do the accounts mention (as appropriate) FRS30 and include 'Heritage Asset' statements?
Note: including 'Heritage Assets' on accounts is not a requirement of Accreditation.
- If the collections are recorded as 'fixed' or 'heritage' assets in the accounts, is there evidence that these valuations are being used as collateral?
- has financial information for all sites in the service been provided? Check whether expenditure is allocated on a service-wide or site basis or combination of both.
- has the museum operated in a solvent manner for the previous two years?
- does the museum have an appropriate reserve fund? Does an appropriate reserves policy exist?
- are restricted funds (for example, acquisition funds) being applied appropriately?
- are the accounts sufficiently detailed to show expenditure on conservation, exhibitions and other museum activities as well as the premises maintenance and operation?
- **QIS** How well does the museum service manage its finances, secure funds and allocate these to identified priorities?

Appropriate workforce, in numbers and experience, for the museum's responsibilities and plans

The museum must have an appropriate workforce to run it effectively. It must have effective employment procedures and roles in place to meet its responsibilities. The museum must have:

- 1.7.1 an appropriate workforce
- 1.7.2 clear agreements for each member of the workforce, setting out their roles and responsibilities
- 1.7.3 formal induction procedures for new recruits to ensure that all members of the workforce have basic information about the museum and understand their role in it'
- 1.7.4 appropriate development opportunities for its workforce

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

a) Workforce includes both volunteer and paid staff. The workforce structure may not be the same as an organisational structure (see requirement 1.3). To comply with this requirement the workforce structure must show roles and team responsibilities, etc, rather than management roles, and committees. This might be represented as an 'organogram' which includes a short description of the roles.

2014 b) The workforce structure should be clearly demonstrated as part of an application or a return. This can be in the form of a workforce diagram or description.

c) Information must be provided regarding workforce numbers and approximate hours as well as the nature of the work, whether paid or unpaid, outsourced or carried out by another department of a larger organisation. Information must be provided explaining vacant or frozen posts.

d) Evidence of effective employment and management procedures for both paid and volunteer staff is required. Evidence must be provided that the workforce is aware of the need to follow relevant policies and demonstrates a commitment to equalities across the organisation.

e) To meet the standard all paid workers must have a signed employment contract that sets out their role, responsibilities and expectations. Workers are defined within the National Minimum Wage legislation, and further information can be found at www.gov.uk/.

f) All volunteers must have clear written agreements with the museum they are volunteering for setting out the nature of the relationship between them and the museum and what the volunteer can expect from the museum, and vice versa. For further information please see the publications 'Volunteers and the law'³ and 'Volunteering in the Arts toolkit'⁴.

³ See www.volunteering.org.uk/images/stories/Volunteering-England/Documents/Publications/Volunteers_and_the_Law_rev.pdf

⁴ www.voluntaryarts.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/Volunteering-in-the-Arts-toolkit-FINAL.pdf

- g) In order to avoid inadvertently allowing practice and behaviour to set up what might be seen by implication as an employment contract, the agreement should state that it is voluntary, reflects the hopes, intentions and available skills of the volunteer and what the organisation would intend to make available to them, but that the agreement is not contractually binding in any way on either party. No minimum time commitment should be made for example but volunteers should confirm that they will follow any policies which are applicable to their voluntary status.⁵
- h) The museum will be able to demonstrate that all members of the workforce have been suitably inducted and trained and made aware of key museum policy, for example, safeguarding, health and safety etc.
- i) A formal induction must be provided to all members of the workforce including members of the governing body. All induction materials should include appropriate legislative requirements and should be revisited annually or updated in line with relevant major policy changes (see requirement 3.1.4).

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- j) A formal approach to supporting development opportunities for members of the workforce must be outlined, which includes the basis on which development needs are assessed.
- k) Within Accreditation, the term 'museum professional' is defined as:
- a minimum of five years' experience working in museums, with recent experience at curator/manager level. At least three years should be in an area of competence relating to Accreditation - organisational health, collections, or users and their experiences
 - a relevant or linked qualification
 - a commitment to career-long continuing professional development (CPD). This could be through participation in formal CPD channels, such as the Museums Association's AMA and CPD+ schemes, or through logging CPD activity on a CV
- l) Collection owners contracting a third party to manage their museum should include suitable workforce arrangements within their agreement. This can include paid museum professionals or volunteers.

⁵ You should ensure that any agreements are appropriate for your organisation. However, whether or not an Employment Tribunal would find that a document is, in fact, legally binding depends on the facts of each case. You may wish to seek your own independent legal advice.

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

Independent museums

Typically staffed largely by volunteers, regardless of size. Procedures should be appropriate to the scale of the workforce and comply with legal and regulatory obligations.

Local authority museums

A suitably qualified museum professional must be present. Increasingly, this employment is supported by volunteers. Where a museum is managed by the authority acting as a sole trustee, or where the operational management of the museum has been 'outsourced' to a trust or community group, this direct employment expectation may not apply. An expectation will exist that the authority will provide support and advice to those museums in a variety of ways.

Local authority museums may employ a single professional member of staff or a team to run a number of museums. It is not expected that each individual museum will have its own dedicated staff but this depends on the size and scale of such 'branch' museums.

University museums

Typically managed by university staff as part of their other roles, such as a professor or lecturer. In most circumstances it is accepted that these individuals will not be able to give their full attention to running the museum and may well be supported by other staff members or volunteers, either from the local or subject community or from university students and alumni. Their role in relation to the museum, however, must be clearly stated in their job description.

National and nationally styled museums

Employment of a range of professional staff to undertake core activities. Volunteers may be used to provide value-added services such as guided tours. There is an expectation that professional staff in these institutions will provide expert advice to other museums, galleries and collections.

Documentation and information needed

Where it may be found

Information on application/return form	Workforce charts
Detail of the workforce structure	Example volunteering agreement or job description
	Volunteer/employee handbook
	Investors in people (IiP) award
	Skills audit
	Workforce development plan

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- are sufficient skills present to enable effective delivery of the forward plan (see requirement 1.4)?
- is it clear which members of the workforce are volunteers, which are on short term contracts and which are paid through grants?
- if there are vacant posts, how is the effect of these being mitigated and what steps are being taken to re-appoint?
- are there effective recruiting procedures in place to ensure an appropriate workforce, both in number and skills?
- is there evidence that elected members or senior officers with delegated authority consult the senior museum professional before making decisions?
- is a workforce handbook available?
- are the training and development opportunities sufficient for the size of the organisation and workforce?
- is training and development linked back to the delivery of the museum's plans?
- **QIS** How well does the organisation identify roles and responsibilities and implement its plans?

Access to professional advice and input to policy development and decision making

The museum's governing body must have access to advice and guidance from a museum professional. If the museum does not employ a museum professional, it must have a written agreement between itself and a Museum Mentor.

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

- a) When referring to museum professionals, the standard expects individuals with sufficient experience in multiple aspects of museum operations.
- b) A Museum Mentor, like a museum professional, is required to meet the following definition:
 - a minimum of five years' experience working professionally in museums, with recent experience at curator/manager level. At least three years should be in an area of competence relating to Accreditation – organisational health, collections, or users and their experiences
 - a relevant or linked qualification
 - a commitment to career-long continuing professional development (CPD). This could be through participation in formal CPD channels, such as the Museums Association's AMA and CPD+ schemes, or through logging CPD activity on a CV
- c) It should be clear that the senior museum professional or Museum Mentor is providing advice directly to the governing body (committee, elected member, or officer mandated to take management decisions). This is especially important when changes in the workforce take place.
- d) Any Museum Mentor appointment must be in line with the Museum Mentor handbook, with the Museum Mentor providing evidence as to their professional expertise within the museum or heritage sector. The Museum Mentor handbook is available at <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-museums/accreditation-scheme/>.
- e) The Museum Mentor role may be undertaken by a variety of people who must demonstrate how they maintain knowledge of the museum sector. For those who are actively participating within the museum sector only through a Museum Mentor role, consideration should be given by the museum as to whether this is the most beneficial relationship available.
- f) Museum Mentors provide impartial support to the governing body. In no circumstances should the Museum Mentor be a voting member of the governing body or exert undue influence over the strategic direction of the museum. Where a Museum Mentor is appointed to the Governing body, the Mentor should step down from the Mentor role and a replacement identified and appointed.
- g) The Museum Mentor must attend at least one governing body meeting each year.

- h) The Museum Mentor will provide a report to accompany any application or return. This can be uploaded to the online form or provided separately to the Accreditation assessing organisation.

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

Independent museums types one and two

The Museum may have a Museum Mentor or employ a museum professional. Evidence will be provided of how they input directly into policy development and decision making of the museum. There will be a clear line of communication between the senior museum professional (employed or Museum Mentor) and the appropriate committee or individual (see requirement 1.3).

Independent museums type three

Evidence of Museum Mentor or employed museum professional with direct input into policy development and decision making through an efficient line of communication between senior museum professional and the appropriate committee or individual (see requirement 1.3).

Local authority museums

Evidence of the employment of a museum professional as defined above who has relevant skills and knowledge relating to the collections and experience in relation to managing a museum. Evidence of direct input into policy development and decision making through an efficient line of communication between the senior museum professional and the appropriate committee or individual (see requirement 1.3).

University museums

Evidence of Museum Mentor or employed museum professional with direct input into policy development and decision making through an efficient line of communication between senior museum professional and the appropriate committee or individual (see requirement 1.3). Evidence for collections specialists who meet the definition of a museum professional.

National and nationally styled museums

Evidence of the employment of multiple museum professionals. Evidence of direct input into policy development and decision making through an efficient line of communication between senior museum professional and the appropriate committee or individual (see requirement 1.3).

Documentation and information needed

Where it may be found

Information on application/return form

Workforce structure

Workforce structure (see requirement 1.7)

List of qualifications and experience of museum professional

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Signed Museum Mentor agreement

Signed appointment minute

Museum Mentor's report

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- do the qualifications and experience of the museum professional meet the definition above?

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- are there conflicts of interest arising if the mentor is a member of the governing body?
- is a Museum Mentor required? Is there evidence of appointment in the form of a governing body minute and a signed agreement? Is the agreement current?
- is there evidence for effective engagement with and by the Museum Mentor in the form of visits, and an annual review process?
- is there a clear line of communication between the museum professional/Museum Mentor and the governing body?

Clear, workable emergency plan

'The museum must be able to respond effectively to emergency or disaster situations. It must have an emergency plan, relating to all buildings that house collections and services, which includes or refers to:

- 1.9.1 arrangements for the workforce, visitors and collections
- 1.9.2 risk assessments of threats
- 1.9.3 information about how emergency plans are authorised, maintained, communicated, tested and made available to the workforce and emergency services
- 1.9.4 evidence of how the museum works with the emergency services, and of any other relevant emergency plans
- 1.9.5 an effective procedure for reviewing the emergency plan'

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

- a) Museums must have an emergency plan available for inspection by their assessor. The plan will typically only be requested where the assessor has concerns, where a museum has been selected to be visited on site as part of the verification process, or where the museum has undergone a major redevelopment. Museums must evidence that the plan is reviewed at least every five years, and immediately after any significant changes to the building or its contents, for example, a new or updated exhibition or redevelopment.
- b) Museums must consider and assess the potential threats to its operation. Typically threats include those from fire, water, theft and vandalism. Where elements such as risk assessments are within other documents, the museum should be able to provide evidence of their existence.
- c) The workforce must be aware of the emergency plan through regular communication and testing.
- d) Museums must confirm that copies of the plan have been distributed to relevant locations, for example, front desk, partner museum or site, curator's/director's home or the emergency services.
- e) Emergency plans may have data protected, security or commercially sensitive information within them; the locations where copies of the plan are held should be secure.
- f) In all cases there should be correlation between emergency plan activity and wider collections care processes and procedures, for example when considering the selection of priority objects for salvage and retrieval.
- g) Many museums use a common model plan or format. In these circumstances while the assessor may recognise the model format used, the plan should not be a carbon copy of the model document.

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

There is no scalability in this section.

Documentation and information needed

Where it may be found

Information on application/return form	Application form
Confirmed date of last review within the past three years	Emergency or disaster plan
	Governing body minute
	Training plan
	Risk assessments

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- does the emergency planning include all buildings in which the collections are used? (see requirement 1.5)
- does the plan include, in appropriate detail, arrangements for workforce, visitors and the collections? Are evacuation procedures clear? Are priority object sheets present?
- are risk assessments present – either within the plan or as part of a separate document pack?
- does the plan include salvage procedures, during and after the emergency?
- is an emergency box or similar present? Are procedures in place to stop it being emptied for non-emergency use?
- what review procedures are present? When was the plan last reviewed? Have any major re-developments or changes occurred within the museum since last review?
- is there a sufficient and appropriate training plan to support the implementation and use of the emergency plan?
- how is the plan communicated to the workforce?
- how is the plan communicated to relevant external stakeholders such as the emergency services, local resilience forums, shared space partners?
- how often is the plan tested, and what format is used, for example, walk through, scenario, presence of emergency services?

Organisational approach to environmental sustainability

The museum must be environmentally conscious. Its approach to minimising waste and reducing its effect on the environment is a matter for the governing body. The museum must be guided by a policy statement about its approach to environmental sustainability, and that policy statement must be appropriate to its statement of purpose.

General guidance on this requirement, relevant to all museums

- a) Responding to issues of environmental sustainability can be a legal obligation for some organisations, such as national museums and local authorities. It may become a legal responsibility for other types of organisations in the future.
- b) Where the museum is part of a larger organisation with an environmental sustainability policy, the museum should evidence how this wider policy will be implemented at the museum.
- c) The museum's environmental sustainability approach should reflect and guide the collections care and conservation policy and plan (see requirements 2.4 and 2.6).
- d) A separate policy document is not a requirement in all cases, and for many museums the approach to environmental sustainability will be directed by their governing body, and form part of a broader policy document or the museum's forward plan.
- e) Assessment will recognise that many industrial, living history or social history museums may undertake special events such as steaming days, use of coal fired locomotives and coal or wood fires within historic buildings as part of the fulfilment of their core purpose. Consideration should be given to balancing the environmental impact of the museum's visitor offer with activities aimed at reducing environmental impact, as defined with the museum's environmental policy statement.
- f) Accreditation recognises that open air, industrial, living history or social history museums may have buildings in which only very limited improvements can be made to improve energy efficiency.
- g) A policy directive may be relevant for all major actions, for example, special events should include consideration of environmental sustainability during the planning process.
- h) Museums should provide appropriate **signed** evidence of approval for the environmental policy statement which must explicitly state approval has been given. Appropriate evidence may take several forms, such as:
 - a signed copy of a full set of minutes
 - a signed copy of a redacted set of minutes
 - a signed copy of an extract from the minutes that includes the date of the meeting the item number (the extract should include the full item discussion minus any redactions)

- a published (internet) decision document (typically Local Authorities) - these might not actually be signed but publication to be deemed evidence of approval
- a signed but unpublished decision document (typically Local Authorities and universities)

Within Accreditation 'signed' may be defined as any of the following:

- an actual signature from the appropriate individual on a paper document
- a photocopy or scan of a document on which an actual signature exists
- an identifiable email from the appropriate individual with unsigned minutes attached that states that those minutes, or those redacted minutes, or the attached extract from the minutes was approved on a particular date.
- an identifiable email from the appropriate individual that states that the relevant minutes, redacted minutes, or extract from the minutes was approved on a particular date.
- an identifiable email from the appropriate individual that states that the document (plan, policy etc.) has been approved by the governing body.

Scaled guidance on this requirement, relevant to specific museum types

Independent museums

A basic approved policy statement within a broader policy document or minute of the governing body will be acceptable. This should be supported by specific reference within the museum's forward planning objectives. Smaller organisations may include environmental considerations within other management documentation, and approaches may be in development, but could include, for example, the use of low energy bulbs, turning the heating down, reconsideration of environmental control of collections storage areas, etc.

Local authority, university, national and nationally styled museums

Evidence for a policy statement supported by an action plan approved by the governing body. This should be supported by specific reference within the museum's forward planning objectives.

Documentation and information needed

Where it may be found

Information on application/return form

Forward plan

Environmental sustainability policy statement

Environmental sustainability policy

Signed approval

Questions about this requirement that will be considered as part of the assessment

- is the statement realistic to the scale of the organisation?
- is the policy statement reflected within the forward plan?
- does the museum's approach reflect the collections care and conservation policy and plan?