Museum Accreditation Scheme, 2024 Return Schedule Frequently Asked Questions.

This document includes answers to common questions about the Return Schedule for the Museum Accreditation Scheme.

It will be reviewed and updated when we receive new queries. It was last updated on **30June 2023**.

**Why was the previous schedule disrupted?**

Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 in March 2020, museums across the UK closed their sites because of the impact of the pandemic and in line with Government guidance.

In response, the UK Accreditation partners – Arts Council England; Museums Galleries Scotland, Northern Ireland Museums Council and the Welsh Government (Museums Archives Libraries Division) – paused the Accreditation Scheme from April 2020 until October 2021. All Accredited museums in the UK had their current award status extended.

In England we began our phased re-opening of the scheme in October 2021. We have focused on processing applications that were submitted to us before the scheme paused in February 2020 and worked with those museums to get their applications updated.

Last year we released an interim schedule, which covers our expected rollout until December 2023. This group mostly includes museums whose last award date was before February 2015. You can see the full list here [link].

In the Autumn of 2023, we are aiming to publish the schedule for 2024.

All schedule updates will be published here: [Link to the new return schedule page]

**Why can’t you publish a full schedule yet?**

We are taking care to make sure that the schedule is properly paced for museums and for us, and that we can complete assessment of all applications (including new applicants and provisional reviews) in good time.

**Will you be publishing a 5-year schedule as was done previously?**

It is unlikely that we will continue to publish 5-year schedules. This is because we need to plan our time carefully over the coming years to ensure that we can respond effectively as the sector recovers and resets from the Covid-19 pandemic and responds to new challenges. We want to make sure we can process all the returns we receive, alongside new applications, and supporting an increased number of museums working through changes.

We expect to continue to publish schedules in advance, but we will do so more frequently with a shorter timeframe.

**I need to submit my return ahead of schedule, can I submit right away?**

If you need to submit your Return ahead of schedule, please email us at accreditation@artscouncil.org.uk and tell us why you’ll need to submit early. We’ll review you request and check if we can accommodate a submission ahead of schedule.

**The last person to submit a return has since left the museum and I’m not sure when our last award was granted, or where our last outcome letter is…**

You can check your last award date on the list here [https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/uk-museum-accreditation-scheme/about-accreditation#t-in-page-nav-4]. This list will also tell you your Accreditation Number.

If you need another copy of your last outcome letter, please contact us on accreditation@artscouncil.org.uk, quoting your AN number where possible, and we can check if we still have it on file.

**I need help or advice to review my documents and prepare my return.**

Advice and support are available from your local Museum Development team Their contact details are available here [https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-arts-museums-and-libraries/supporting-collections-and-cultural-property].

If you have an Accreditation mentor (previously called a museum mentor) you can ask them for support. If you don’t have a mentor, but think you might need one, now is a good time to contact your Museum Development team who can help link you up with a mentor.

**What can I do now to ensure we continue to meet the requirements of the Standard?**

We expect museums that hold a Full Accreditation award to continue to meet the requirements of the Standard for the duration of their award period. To ensure you continue to meet the requirements and to help you plan and start to prepare your Accreditation Return, please see our*Maintaining the requirements of the Accreditation standard between returns* [link to the new page] page.

**There have been a lot of changes at my museum since our last award, when should we report them?**

If you have experienced significant changes (such as a move, major refurbishment, or governance change) since your last return or if you are expecting significant changes in the next 6 months, you should tell us as soon as possible by emailing accreditation@artscouncil.org.uk.

We can then advise the best way for you to tell us about the changes and when, as well as how changes may affect your award.

**Our last award was over five years ago, but we’ve not been invited to submit our Return yet – will out award expire?**

Due to the pause of the scheme during the Covid-19 pandemic, there are some museums who have held their Full Accreditation award for longer than 5 years.

This is ok, and your award will be maintained until we ask for a return.