



**CMC - GLOBAL**

# **Training and Guidance for Assessors of Accredited Consultancy Practices**

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## The role of the Assessor in the accreditation process

The ultimate stage of the process of accreditation of a prospective ACP practice is the formal audit.

This is normally carried out through a full day visit to the practice in its own offices by an independent assessor appointed by the Institute (who may be accompanied by a member of Institute staff).

This should only be undertaken after discussions with the practice have shown that it fully understands the ACP requirements, and the institute is reasonably sure that it is likely to meet these.

When not ready, an assessor of the Institute can give guidance to the further development process of internal professional standards and assurance processes.

The assessor will be guided by a formal framework which sets out a structured consistent approach.

The candidate ACP has to fill in completely the ACP Statement of Equivalence – Professional Development and the ACP Statement of Equivalence – Professional Certification.

The assessor will establish that a competency framework exists around which the training and development procedures are structured. And he will also undertake a comprehensive mapping of that framework against the institute's ICMCI compliant framework, in order to assure that it is at least equivalent to that standard.

The assessor will also look for evidence that the practice has in place processes and procedures

The assessor will also look for evidence that the practice has in place processes and procedures for the training and development of professional consulting staff.

The processes will start at recruitment and induction and run continuously thereafter. They should include procedures for periodic appraisal and assessment as well as routine feedback loops.

It is expected that the consultants themselves will take a major role in formulating their training and development. The evidence may be presented either as hard copy or in electronic format.

An important feature of the audit is to agree with the prospective ACP the criteria for making an individual recommendation for the award of CMC i.e. the level of assessment or qualification within the ACP which is judged as equivalent to the CMC level. The practice should table proposals for consideration.

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The assessor will interview at least three consultants in the practice, at various stages of development. The assessor will also interview those in the practice who will undertake key roles in respect of the ACP arrangement:

- The Practice Assessor: the senior person in the prospective ACP who takes responsibility for maintenance of the audited professional standard
- The In-practice Assessors: those within the prospective ACP responsible for the competence based assessment of consultants (the assessor will want to interview at least one or two).
- The Mentors: those within the prospective ACP who undertake a mentoring role for more junior
- The Mentors: those within the prospective ACP who undertake a mentoring role for more junior staff, outside their direct line management. (again, the assessor will want to interview at least one or two).

It is a condition of the audit that these people will be made available at the time of the audit.

The assessor will submit a structured report in template form covering each of the requirements of the audit framework, and including a recommendation for acceptance as an ACP or not, to the Institute.

The practice will be informed in writing by the Institute about the outcome of the audit and their application for accreditation has been successful. The practice should also be given a copy of the assessor's report: if a practice is not successful, this will provide guidance on what it needs to improve.

### Time requirements

Each audit will take a full day, with half a day's preparation before and half a day's report writing subsequently.

### Quality Assurance

The auditors' basic skills as professionals in the field of competence based assessment and professional learning and development are established at the recruitment stage. The selected auditors should then undergo training in the institute's ACP accreditation process, its CMC standard (particularly its competence framework), and the audit requirements. Normally this is undertaken through a one day course.

Quality is assured through this training, and through being accompanied by an institute staff member. In addition, the institute should exercise its right to regularly examine a sample number of CMC recommendations from ACPs. A triennial re-audit of each ACP also assures maintenance of standards. This is supplemented by an annual visit by a staff member to each ACP to discuss any changes to its standard or processes.

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## The requirements and training for ACP auditors

The requirement is that an ACP assessor should:

- be an active management consultant or have been an active consultant within the last two years *OR* have a good working knowledge of professional management consultancy.
- have demonstrated experience in structured competency based assessment techniques.
- have demonstrated experience in interview techniques.
- have working knowledge of HR practices and processes.
- be confident and assured in dealing with consultants and HR professionals up to the most senior level.
- have good written and oral communication skills.
- be a Member of the Institute.
- be a CMC.
- have access to personal computer technology and an e-mail address.
- be available to travel to all parts of the Member country
- be available at six week's notice up to four times per year.
- be prepared to undergo up to two day's training on an expenses only basis, at four week's notice.

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