ACCREDITED MEMBER

Icon Accreditation

Candidate and Volunteer Handbook

January 2021

THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Version control

Date	Update
April 2020	To update information on stages of the accreditation process.
October 2020	Update Icon Professional Standards in line with 2020 review
January 2021	To update icon email addresses.

Contents

Overview of the Icon Accreditation Framework

Icon Accreditation consists of three components:

1) An assessment process for accrediting professional capability against explicit standards.

2) A system for ensuring maintenance and enhancement of professional capability through Continuing Professional Development

3) A means of removing Accredited status from practitioners who fail to maintain a minimum standard of practice and ethics

This handbook focuses focused on the application and assessment process.

Professional practice assessment is a demanding and rigorous process which reflects the high level of competence and professionalism required of conservator-restorers. It is designed to be of an equivalent standard to the assessment processes in other professions, including the chartered professions. It is therefore likely to require a significant investment of time and commitment from applicants to undertake.

Being an accredited conservator is worthwhile and offers professional rewards, such as public recognition to demonstrate a high degree of competence, sound judgement and an in-depth knowledge of the principles which underpin conservation practice.

The accreditation framework applies a common standard across the profession, regardless of how the applicant has reached a professional level of capability, the specialism of the conservator-restorer, or the context in which they practice, as well as providing an audit against nationally recognised professional standards

For Icon Accreditation Applicants

Pathway Membership

Pathway membership is a dedicated Icon membership category open to all conservators who are working towards becoming an Accredited Member of Icon - Accredited Conservator-Restorers (ACR). In order to begin working towards accreditation applicants must join Icon's Pathway membership category and demonstrate that they either have a formal conservation qualification or at least five years' relevant experience working as a conservator. They have not however been formally assessed by Icon against Icon's Professional Standards but will be self-assessing their progress towards meeting them at the 'proficient' level prior to applying. Other benefits of the category include:

The ability to demonstrate that you are actively pursuing accreditation regardless of your employment position (employed / self-employed, between posts or unemployed).

- Support from an Icon Mentor (if desired) with experience of the assessment process.
- Dedicated professional development opportunities and advice.
- An annual review to help you understand how you are progressing towards submitting an application.
- Support in monitoring and managing your own continuing professional development.

- The ability to attend events across the UK to help you as you go through the accreditation process.

Application

The Icon Accreditation Application process is a robust peer review process through which you submit your formal application, are assessed by trained assessors who are Accredited Conservators which is then reviewed and conferred by the Accreditation Committee. This handbook provides comprehensive advice and support on applying for ACR Status.

For Accredited Members

Promoting your accredited status

As an accredited conservator you should use 'ACR' after your name. If you want to describe your accredited membership, please state that you are an: 'Accredited member of Icon'.

Accredited members, who want to promote their ACR status on their business literature, need to identify separately those who are accredited members, you should not indicate that it is the business that is accredited.

Use of Icon Logo

As an accredited conservator (ACR) you may advertise your status with the use of the logo below:

Full guidance is available on request for the correct use of the logo. Please do not use the Icon logo in any circumstance to demonstrate your membership of Icon or ACR status.

Continuing Professional Development

Accredited members are required to submit regular Continuing Professional Development (CPD) recalls to maintain their accredited status. This requires you to demonstrate how you have acted to ensure that you are continually developing your practice and remaining at the top of your profession.

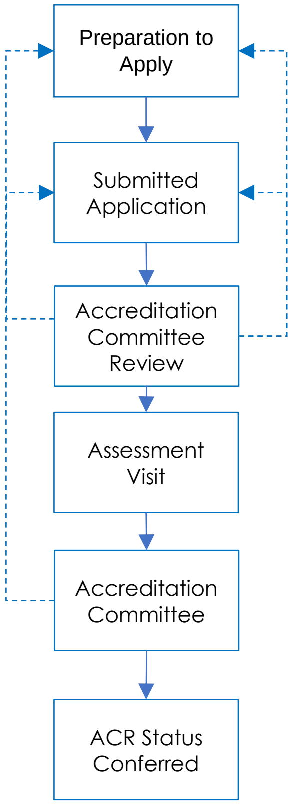
Time Out

As an ACR, if you are professionally inactive (due to illness, maternity, career break or similar reason) for a period longer than one calendar year and up to three years, you may apply for ‘Time Out’. In this case you may not practise conservation, and you will suspend both your ACR status and your requirement to submit CPD reviews for the duration of your Time Out period. During this Time Out period your membership type will revert from ‘Accredited’ to ‘Associate’ and will remain as such until accredited status is reinstated.

Stages of the Icon Accreditation application and assessment process

The stages of the Icon Accreditation professional practice assessment are outlined below.

Through this handbook we will run through each of these steps in order.



Preparation to Apply

Before you start to think of applying, ensuring you have thoroughly prepared will ensure that your experience of the accreditation process is as smooth as possible. Indeed, we want to ensure that it is as straight forward as possible for you to apply for Accreditation.

In order to be eligible for Icon Accreditation you must:

- Be a cultural heritage conservation professional.
- Be an 'Pathway Member' of the Institute of Conservation (Icon).

There is no restriction to the type of professional conservator who can be assessed. All conservators who apply are assessed using the same criteria whether in the private / commercial / public / or institutional sectors, in remedial conservation, preventive conservation, in conservation management, conservation science, in an advisory or consultancy capacity or in teaching or training.

To be eligible for accreditation you need to be able to take responsibility for your standard of work, decisions and conduct, regardless of whether you are an employee without responsibility for others, a manager or head of studio, a teacher, or a self-employed sole practitioner. You should have a broad range of conservation experience that has included working successfully with complex conservation problems and have taken overall responsibility for at least small projects.

Identify your specialism

To be assessed fairly it is necessary to assign appropriate assessors. To do this we need to know on which area of conservation you want your assessment to focus. You will be asked to indicate in which specialism you work, and it is important to be clear in your mind what you consider to be your main area of work and conservation discipline. For example, if you are a textile conservator who has responsibility for practical treatments, your specialism will be 'textiles conservation'. If your main responsibility is for preventive care your specialism will be 'preventive'. If you are a conservator who works as a manager or teacher of conservators your specialism will be 'conservation management' or 'conservation education'.

You may be in a position where more than one area of work is relevant—please make sure that this is clear on your application form (Section 1 specialism and Section 2 Applicant's summary of experience). It is important to do this so that you are given appropriate assessors. Please make sure, if you do decide you have more than one specialism, that you are able to provide evidence at the ‘proficient’ level for each specialism.

Understand the professional standards

Applying for accreditation means that you are confident that your experience and knowledge meet the professional conservation-restoration standards (the professional standards). You must demonstrate that you understand the professional standards in full and how you apply them to your work. You must be able to show that you have the depth of conservation expertise and knowledge required by the professional standards (as opposed to being able to rely on the judgement of others). You also need to show how your intentions and expertise translate effectively into practice.

You will be asked to demonstrate understanding of the professional standards as applied to dealing effectively with complex conservation problems.

Complex conservation problems are typically those which:

- Require choices between options which lead to significantly different outcomes.
- Present dilemmas and value-conflicts or require significant value-judgements.
- Present substantial technical problems, for instance in relation to unstable or degraded materials or the level of risk associated with treatments or strategies.
- Require a deep level of practical understanding to be applied to the situation.
- Require the marshalling and management of a wide range of resources.

To be ‘complex’ a conservation problem need not contain all these factors, but it is likely to include more than one or have one present to a high degree.

The professional conservation-restoration standards and the professional judgement and ethics have been designed to be applicable to all conservation roles regardless of an applicant's specialism(s).

Understand your level of skill within the novice-to-expert scale

The level of skill used for assessment of your professional practice flows from novice, to beginner, to competent, to proficient, to expert (see Table on p40).

Within your specialism(s) you should be at least 'proficient' across the points described in the professional standards including judgement and ethics (J&E). You are allowed to demonstrate ‘competent’ level in one of the professional standards only, provided that this does not form a major part of your work, e.g. is not in J&E or in professional standard 3. 'Beginner' or 'novice' levels are not acceptable in your main area(s) of work.

You should have a broad theoretical base from which to draw as well as a deep level of practical knowledge about your area of work. You will also need to show that you apply considered analysis and synthesis to conservation problems. You must be able to show that you can deal effectively with complex situations. You can use the table on page 41 to relate your level of skill to the professional standards.

Icon Accreditation Application Guidance

Your completed Icon Accreditation Application will be the only information available to the Accreditation Committee to assess your application in the first instance; it will also be the basis against which your Assessment Visit is organised. It is therefore very important that the information that is included on this form is accurate and shows your abilities at its very best.

General Notes

- There is no set style for the application structure. How you show projects is completely up to you. You may choose to use specific subheadings or bullet points to emphasise points. Please however ensure that your application does not simply read as a list of projects or activities.
- Your application must be completed in Arial size 11 font. The formatting of the form must not be changed, and all text must fit in the boxes provided.
- Ensure your application is clear and can be understood by both specialists in your sector as well as other accredited conservators.
- Speak with a mentor, colleague or other professional before you submit your application, they will be able to be a ‘critical friend’ helping you really consider why you have included some projects and not others. If you try and make a project fit a standard it is unlikely to work, however there are likely to be a wealth of projects which do.

Section 1: Application Details

This section is relatively self-explanatory. Applicant's details will be used for administrative and correspondence purposes; so please ensure that they are accurate.

Full Name	**(1)**
Membership Number	**(2)**
Address for Correspondence	**(3)**
Email	**(4)**
Telephone (daytime)	**(5)**

Sector (6)	Private / Commercial / Public / Institutional
Specialism (7) *Explain briefly your main area/s of work and conservation discipline, this will help identify your assessors*	
Location for Assessment Visit (8) *(If different from address*	
Application Round (9)	October 2020 / March 2021 / October 2021
Are there any periods when you are unlikely to be available for assessment?	**(10)**

Have you worked with an Icon Mentor? (11)	Yes / No
Have you worked with an Icon ACR who is not on the mentor list? (12)	Yes / No
Have you attended an Icon Accreditation Clinic? (13)	Yes / No
Are there any reasonable adjustments or arrangements required to support you during the accreditation process or in the assessment visit?	Yes / No

Payment details (15)	**PayPal**		
	Or		
	Invoice		Purchase Order:
			Invoice Address:
			Invoice Contact:

1) Please note that the name you use here will be used on your certificate.

2) Please note that you must be an ‘Pathway Member’ of Icon to apply for Accreditation. Please call 020 3142 6799 or visit www.icon.org.uk if you are unsure of your membership level.

3) Please use an address which you are able to check regularly and is secure.

4) We will primarily contact you via email. Please ensure this is an address you check regularly and are able to access during the day.

5) As with the email address please ensure that this is a number which we can contact you on during the day.

6) Please delete as appropriate.

7) Please be as specific as possible. Please see page 5 for further details on identifying your specialism.

8) It may be necessary for your assessment visit to take place at a venue which is not your workplace. If this is the case it is essential your whole assessment can take place at the same location.

9) Please indicate to which round this application relates. Note: Applications for the March round will be assessed between May and September, and those for the October round will be assessed between December and April.

10) The assessment window is three months long. To allow us to identify the right assessors for you please do let us know of any specific days or weeks when you would not be available for assessment.

11) Whist you don’t have to work with a mentor to apply, please indicate whether or not you are.

12) As above

13) You don’t have to attend a clinic, but it is useful for us to know.

14) We are able to accommodate many different situations. If this applies, please read our Reasonable Adjustments policy at www.icon.org.uk

15) Payment must be made prior to submitting, this can either be made via PayPal on the Icon Website http://icon.org.uk/professional-development/accreditation. Alternatively, if you would rather pay by invoice, please ensure you include relevant purchase order details.

Section 2: Applicant’s summary of experience

‘Applicant's summary of experience’ is your opportunity to give your application context so that those on the Accreditation Committee can understand the environment in which you operate and the experiences which you’ve had.

It also provides them with a context for the more detailed information you will provide later. Before completing this section make sure you are familiar with the professional conservation-restoration standards (the professional standards) including Judgement and ethics (J&E) so that you can emphasise relevant areas of experience.

Section 2: Applicant's summary of experience

Your organisation or the name of your practice	(1)
Your job title or main area of work	(2)
Please give a brief outline of your current work responsibilities and activities. You do not need to use all this space: do not describe individual projects in detail here, but give an idea of the breadth of work you do. (3)	

1) If you work freelance rather than for an organisation, please list this here.

2) We recognise that in some situations people's roles are broader than practical conservation. Please include reference to this throughout this section to ensure that the Accreditation Committee and assessors can get a full understanding of your role.

Section 3: Projects and Activities

- This section will form the bulk of your application. It is worth taking some time to consider the projects you intend to include carefully. We will run through more detail through this section, however a few key points to consider when selecting your projects are:

- There is no age limit to the projects which you can include as part of your application, however they will all need to be supported by full documentary evidence, and you will need to reflect on how you would approach these projects given current thinking. You will be expected to show some current work alongside any older projects.

- You need to bear in mind that you must show at least one physical completed project/activity at your assessment day.

- You will need to ensure you address each element of the professional standards and judgement and ethics through the body of projects/activities which you use.

- Particularly if you work on larger projects, the 'project / activity' you present can just be an element of the whole. For example, if the project was the conservation of a series of stained glass windows within a church, your project / activity could be how you met the professional standards when assessing and working on one of them.

Standard		Standard 1					Standard 2			Standard 3						Standard 4				
		a	b	c	d	e	a	b	c	a	b	c	d	e	f	a	b	c	d	e
Ref.	**Description**																			
A	Organisation & Management	X														X	X	X	X	X
B	Project Title B		X	X		X	X	X	X		X		X						X	
C	Project Title C	X	X		X	X				X		X		X	X					
D	Project Title D	X				X					X	X	X				X	X		
E	Project Title E			X	X			X		X			X	X	X					X
F																				
additional activities if needed																				
G																				
H																				
I																				
J																				

Standard		Standard 5				Professional Judgement & Ethics													
		a	b	c	d	i	ii	iii	iv	v	vi	vii	viii	ix	x	xi	xii	xiii	xiv
Ref.	**Description**																		
A	Organisation & Management															X			
B	Project Title B		X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X		X		X	X
C	Project Title C	X	X				X			X	X		X	X	X		X		X
D	Project Title D				X	X					X	X		X	X		X		X
E	Project Title E				X		X					X			X			X	
F																			
additional activities if needed																			
G																			
H																			
I																			
J																			

- You will need to complete the Project Matrix on page 5 of the application form as in the example above, as part of the application. This requires you to cross reference which elements of each of the professional standards and judgement & ethics (J&E) have been met in each of the projects you've used. You might also find this to be a useful tool to use when selecting the actual projects themselves.

- The projects / activities you choose as evidence should be identified as being complex conservation problems. Complex conservation problems are typically those which:

  - Require choices between options which lead to significantly different outcomes;
  - Present dilemmas and value-conflicts or require significant value-judgements;
  - Present substantial technical problems, for instance in relation to unstable or degraded materials or the level of risk associated with treatments or strategies;
  - Require a deep level of practical understanding to be applied to the situation, and
  - Require the marshalling and management of a wide range of resources.

- To be 'complex' a situation need not contain all these factors, but it is likely to include more than one or have one present to a high degree.

- Evidence is given in the form of a written description of specific projects / activities which in your opinion meet the professional standards including J&E and demonstrate your competence as a conservation professional. The typical number of projects used is five, although it does depend on how they cover the professional standards. Less may be sufficient if they are significant projects which demonstrate substantial breadth and complexity. If the physical evidence for any of the projects is likely to be unavailable at the time of the visit (e.g. objects that have been returned to clients) make this clear on your form; the assessors will however expect to see comparable evidence from other activities, and they may ask you for further details in the form of additional project pages from the application document and possibly other information e.g. a treatment report, prior to the visit.

- If you need to, you can use the optional page entitled 'Additional projects / activities' to describe additional, short activities that contribute to the professional standards. Only use this page if there are areas of the professional standards that you have not covered already in your main projects / activities and Section 4 (CPD) of the application form.

- To assist with clarification, you could use the professional standards as headings to provide a clear statement for each project. You do not have to use headings but remember to incorporate the aspects of the professional standards including J&E you employed by using key words of the professional standards and J&E when describing your projects / activities.

Type in the J&E and other professional standards that this activity addresses e.g. (J&E i v vii) (1 a c) (3 a b e f)					
J&E **i ii iv vi vii, ix, x, xi, xii**	**1** **a, b, d, e**	**2** **a, b, c**	**3** **a, b, c, d, e**	**4** **a, d, e, f, g**	**5** **c, d, e**

- At the bottom of each project you must also reference which standards this project refers to. This should then be directly reflected in the 'Project Matrix' as well.

- The range of projects / activities, when taken together, should show convincingly that you are following and implementing the professional standards including J&E at the 'proficient' level. This might be shown directly or by implication depending on which aspects of the professional standards including J&E the project / activity relates and the nature of your work. The details you provide here will help the assessors understand the work you are putting forward to identify potential strong points and areas for discussion during the visit.

- Project A asks you to describe how you organise and manage your work. It is the only project / activity that requires you to relate it to a specific professional standard, which is Standard 4 and must be completed. Consider what evidence you are able to show the assessors. In addition to physical evidence and documents, you may find it useful to include one or more statements from colleagues or clients in the form of 'Witness statements'. Do not forget to show also how this project / activity relates to J&E.

- Projects B–F should be based on conservation-restoration activities. The project / activities you select should demonstrate between them understanding of the professional standards and J&E. Remember to indicate only the main professional standard(s) and J&E reflected by that project.

- Although some projects / activities may seem to fulfil most or all of the professional standards, including J&E it is important that you choose only the most prominent of the professional standards and J&E that can be easily demonstrated by that project / activity. When the application form is complete the projects / activities should cover between them all the professional standards and J&E.

Notes for Selecting Projects

Advisory reports: Evidence would be typically your report, plus notes, investigation, analyses etc. that had informed it. Photographs can be useful if assessors do not have access to the relevant objects/site.

Draw out as relevant your assessment (Standard 1), your reasoning behind the option/s proposed (Standard 2), and your recommendations and expertise relating to implementation (Standard 3). You may also be able to show how the report contributes to professional Standards 4 or 5.

Commissioning conservation work: Evidence might include your specification, the analysis and reasoning behind it (Standards 1 and 2, and J&E) and documents relating to contracting and monitoring (Standard 4). Photographs can be useful if assessors do not have access to the relevant objects/site or if the work is finished.

Draw out the conservation reasoning, professional standards to be applied and how you manage the contract. You may also be able to show your conservation expertise and specification / monitoring of measures and standards (Standard 3).

Preparing a proposal: evidence might include the proposal (and any documentation about how it meets the brief etc.), evidence of dialogue with the client, the expected outcome and measures/treatments proposed, and details of resourcing the project — particularly relating to how you will ensure quality (Standards 1, 2, J&E, possibly Standards 3, 4, and 5). Photographs can be useful if assessors do not have access to the relevant objects/site.

Draw out areas that are not apparent from the documentation, particularly around the thinking behind the proposal and the practicalities of implementing the work (with reference to Standard 3).

Conservation policy/strategy: Evidence might include the policy/strategy itself, assessment of need, source material/consultation etc., approval, evidence of communication and implementation, any relevant sources that demonstrate conservation expertise.

Indicate on the application form how the policy/strategy reflects relevant professional standards (Standard 4), ethics, legal and safety requirements (J&E); any assessment of heritage (Standard 1); options and strategies considered (Standard 2); how you have worked with and influenced others in drawing it up (Standards 4 and 5). You may also be able to show how you have implemented the policy/strategy and its impact on conservation measures (Standard 3).

Disaster plans: Evidence might include the disaster plan itself, plus any paperwork showing the analysis and reasoning behind it, the options considered and relevant consultation and communication (professional Standards 1, 2, 3 and 4). Draw out your reasoning and conservation expertise.

Introducing change: Change ‘projects’ that have an impact on conservation practice and the quality of work can be a good source of evidence.

Evidence might include any papers explaining the rationale for the change, its objectives and success measures, your implementation plan, and any records of monitoring or evaluation (Standard 4). Objects or sites (or photographs) can provide useful confirmatory evidence.

Draw out your conservation expertise and associated reasoning, in particular your analysis (and relate this to Standard 1), what you proposed to do and why (Standard 2), and the intended effects on conservation practice (Standard 3). You may also be able to show the impact of the change on conservation practice (Standard 3) and show assessors relevant physical evidence.

Managing a project: Evidence might include any project documents particularly those that cover scope, analysis, conservation options and quality control etc., evidence of dialogue with the client, and details of how you resourced the project and monitored the quality of work (potentially all areas of the standards). Photographs can be useful if assessors do not have access to the relevant objects/site. Where possible enable the assessors to see the physical results of the project.

Draw out areas that are not apparent from the documentation, particularly around decisions you made about conservation work and setting acceptable expectations/standards of work (Standard 3 and/or J&E.)

Managing staff: Evidence might include recruitment criteria, staff development practices you are responsible for, details of how you have delegated responsibilities and allocated projects, any reviews of conservation work, advice and guidance you have given to staff, etc.

Draw out how you ensure relevant professional standards (Standard 3) and J&E are maintained, and how you communicate, delegate and organise work (Standard 4). You may also be able to show how any specific advice and guidance you have given demonstrates your expertise and judgement (Standards 1, 2 and 3, J&E), or have available physical evidence or photographs of conservation work you have evaluated (Standard 3).

'Objects' as a specialism: 'Objects' is recognised as a distinct specialism. There is no expectation that an objects conservator will be working towards greater material specialisation to demonstrate the 'proficient' level, in the same way that a GP is not working towards becoming an oncologist.

With 'Objects' as your specialism it denotes that you are recognising and requesting recognition of being at the 'proficient' level (see N-E scale) across a wide range of object materials. These can include, but are not limited to, organic materials, metals, ceramics / glass, stone, and painted surfaces. Object context may also be very varied, e.g. historical, archaeological, natural history, social history.

Therefore, you would need to understand:

- the differences related to each context, for instance, between social history collections and decorative arts objects and how this might influence decisions about level and type of treatment (i.e. aesthetic value vs object history and use)
- the possible effect of treatment of one material on another in a complex object and how this might influence your choice of treatment
- the impact of context and decay over time (i.e. archaeological, historical) needs to be evidenced, as opposed to issues relating to the material alone, for example bone can be treated and considered in different ways depending on if it's from a burial or part of a larger object like an inlay

Treatment based measures are expected to be evidenced in relation to all the materials that you present in your projects, but you may not be expected to show the full scope of autonomous treatment experience in every material, which may be looked for from a material-specific candidate. Awareness and application of cross-disciplinary techniques and skills will be expected. You should demonstrate confidence in your own ability and skills so that they are not influenced by other's opinions to the point that you show no critical thinking. When knowledge and understanding are beyond your skills, it will need to be clearly demonstrated how you recognise your limitations, seek out support or opinion from others if required and retain your role in the decision-making process.

Demonstrating complexity may relate to the variety of materials, mixed media issues & conflicting conservation / environmental / resource needs.

Projects and activities based on practical treatments: If you are currently involved in practical conservation-restoration treatments, examples of your work, not just descriptions and records, will be expected. This must be conservation-restoration work, e.g. not the crafting of replacement parts or new objects.

In private practice, evidence may be weighted more towards records and successfully completed contracts rather than objects which are available for inspection, although the assessors will still expect to see objects — while recognising that the projects you are working on at the time of the visit may be different from what you have described in your application.

If you are involved primarily in preventive conservation, evidence will be needed of how strategies and decisions have been, or are being, interpreted into practice. This normally requires the assessors to have access to a collection, site or group of objects relating to your work.

For some candidates involved primarily in conservation management it may be fairly easy to identify physical conservation projects that can be used for assessment. Others will need to pick out aspects of their work from ongoing activities that are not strictly speaking projects, for example, how you have implemented a conservation policy/strategy and its impact on conservation measures (Standard 3). You can also show how you promote high quality conservation as carried out by others; and how your work actually results in high quality conservation.

Teaching: Evidence, which could possibly be split across more than one 'project', might include programmes of work, teaching notes, objects and other resources used for demonstration, objects on which students are working (draw out how you promote the professional standards and evaluate their work), courses or sessions you have devised, studio/laboratory equipment, and so on. It might be possible to organise the assessment visit so that the assessors see you supervising a practical session, though this should not take up too much of the time.

Draw out your conservation expertise and what you do in relation to each of the professional Standards 1, 2 and 3. Your evidence is also likely to cover professional Standard 4 and parts of 5.

Section 4: Continuing Professional Development

Continuing professional development (CPD) asks that you to provide a reflective account of your learning and development over at least the two years up to the time of your application and how this has enhanced your approach as a conservation professional. You should consider the opportunities and challenges facing you and identify how you will continue your development over the next two years. Your plan will form the basis of your mandatory CPD recall two years after you have been accredited.

See CPD on the Icon website.

CPD is all your ongoing development relevant to your work from the time you start to practise. It can come from experience, personal research or investigation, courses or seminars, reading, discussion with colleagues, work-based training, voluntary work etc. You may find it useful to consider three kinds of learning (after Gear et al, 1994).

Specific learning concerns particular cases or problems, typically 'finding out as you go along,' reading up on specific objects or problems, asking colleagues about treatments, checking sources of supply, and so on. This kind of learning is important for day-to-day practice but often becomes out of date quickly. It should not normally be included in your CPD review, unless it has a longer-term impact on your work or leads to findings that are of more general interest to you or to others.

General learning concerns keeping up-to-date and abreast of trends and developments in the profession and affecting it. This kind of learning might involve reading journals and email discussions, networking and discussion with colleagues, and attending courses and conferences. Your CPD review should show that you are keeping up-to-date in your field, without needing to cite every example in detail.

Developmental learning is learning which takes forward your practice, creates new opportunities and develops extended professionalism. It may involve undertaking a major study, advanced course or programme of research, be generated through a new job or major project, or come from becoming involved in activities outside your normal work. Although it is useful to plan developmental activities, the value of developmental learning is often only apparent on reflection.

Declaration and submission

It is essential that you print your name and date the form prior to submission. Completed forms must be emailed to accreditation@icon.org.uk no later than midday on the day of the deadline.

You must also ensure that you pay the associated application fee at the same time either my telephoning the Icon Office on 020 3142 6799 or by including a Purchase Order or invoice request along with your submitted application.

Applications received after the deadline will not be accepted.

Icon Accreditation Assessment

Once the Application has been reviewed by the Accreditation Committee, the next stage is for the application to be assessed by two Accredited Conservators who will review the application and continue to verify the 'proficient' level of the candidate.

The Assessment Stage is not an interview; it is intended to be a professional discussion as part of the Icon Accreditation peer review process.

Indeed, the purposes of this stage are to: Verify the statements made by the candidate on your application form; to provide you the opportunity to answer any questions that the assessors may have arisen from the candidate's application. Allow the assessors to gauge where you sit on the novice-to-expert scale through professional discussion and assessment of relevant work you present to them. Provide enough information to enable the assessors formally to report back to the Accreditation Committee.

It is very important to note that the assessors do not decide whether one should or should not be accredited. They will document what they identify on the assessment day and produce a report for the Accreditation Committee. It is the Accreditation Committee which makes the final decision about whether an applicant has met the professional standards and should be given accredited status.

In the following section, there is a full overview of the role of the assessors and how the assessment visit is carried out.

Principles of Assessment

Assessment is based on five core values, to ensure consistency of approach and fairness across all assessments which take place.

1) **Valid:** Assessment decisions must be based on the professional standards and criteria; not for instance on the assessors' personal standards or preferences, or the applicant's background, length of experience or qualifications. Assessment should concentrate on central issues of professional competence, understanding and judgement rather than trivial detail.

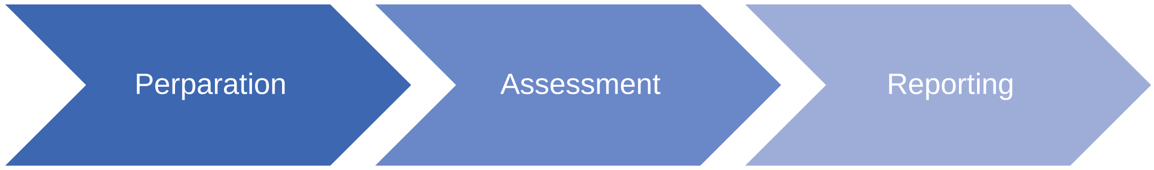
2) **Fair:** Assessment must not discriminate against applicants on grounds other than that they don't meet the professional standards and criteria.

3) **Consistent:** The process is designed to ensure that the same standards are applied to different applicants and by different assessors.

4) **Open:** The assessment process should be as open as possible, involving the applicant in discussion throughout. If you think an area of the standards is not being met, discuss the issues with the applicant and give him or her an opportunity to explain further.

5) **Justifiable.** The assessment findings should withstand external scrutiny and be backed by sufficient information and comment to show why you arrived at your decisions.

Assessment Process and notes for candidate and assessors



Assigning assessors

After the application has been considered by the Accreditation Committee and the candidate is encouraged to go forward for assessment the candidate will be allocated two trained Icon Accreditation assessors, both accredited conservator-restorers. One (the specialist assessor) will be from the same specialist field of conservation, while the other will normally be from a different specialism. At least one assessor will have experience in a similar setting (private/commercial or public/institutional) to your current work context.

The candidate may object to either of their assessors if they have reason to think they will not assess them fairly or if there is a conflict (including one relating to commercial confidentiality. Equally the assessors are required to declare any conflict of interest with the applicant they are allocated, and to refuse applicants where they think their judgement could be unduly influenced by prior knowledge. In either case the assessor or candidate should make their objection in writing (by email) to the Training and Development Manager (pwhife@icon.org.uk), stating your reasons; it need not be detailed and will not be discussed with the assessor, unless you ask it to be. However, objecting to more than one lead assessor may make your application difficult to take forward.

- It is also important to note, that regardless of the advice given to applicants from the AC, to defer or resubmit, an assessment may still be carried out at the applicant's request.

Notes for assessors

- The Assessor will first be sent a copy of the candidate's application form and the assessors' checklist which will note their contact details and actions required which may include a request by the Accreditation Committee to provide specific feedback on areas that require more investigation.

Arranging the assessment visit

Once the assessors have read through the application form, they will make contact with the candidate to agree when and where the assessment will take place within the assessment period (see the Icon Accreditation timetable) and what they will look at. They may also ask for clarification or additional information before the visit.

You will need to reserve a whole day for the visit and ensure that you can avoid interruptions and be able to talk in confidence: there will be a lot to fit in the time — approximately five to six hours. If it has been arranged for the assessors to meet a colleague (as a 'witness'), this needs to be scheduled carefully unless the colleague will be available at any time in the day. Do not plan for more than 20 minutes for the assessors to talk with a colleague.

Notes for assessors

- The specialist assessor should contact the applicant as soon as possible and arrange a mutually convenient time for the assessment visit. At this stage do not enter into detailed discussion about the content of the application form but check with the applicant that the evidence you will need to see will be available on the day. If any objects or other major items of evidence detailed on the form are not going to be available on the day, ensure that there are suitable substitute project / activities and ask the applicant to write up and send you additional information relating to the substitute evidence.

- It is good practice to send a copy of your CV as a means of introducing yourself to the applicant and your co-assessor.

- You will need to inform the Training and Development Manager and Professional Development Officer of the assessment date. In some cases, the Training and Development Manager may attend the assessment to observe the process, subject to the applicant's and the assessors' agreement.

- Both assessors need to read through the application in depth before the visit. You may find it helpful to make notes about areas where you want to see evidence or discuss points to back up the application, as well as any areas where what is written on the form is less convincing and needs to be investigated more deeply.

- When arranging the visit please do bear in mind that you will need to allow time shortly afterwards to prepare your assessment report.

Assembling evidence

The assessment process is based on examining ‘evidence’ against the professional standards. The evidence likely to be available include:

- the applicant’s application form
- objects and other visible evidence of practical activity
- paper or file-based products or evidence of the applicant’s work, e.g. photographs, records and documentation, conference or similar papers, records from training
- discussion with the applicant, and possibly,
- statements from or discussion with others who know the applicant’s work
- visual (PowerPoint) or audio recordings.

Using the application form as a reference-point, the candidate will need to make sure that the objects, documents, records, equipment and any other evidence necessary will be available for the assessors to see, and for the candidate to draw on, in discussion with them.

The evidence needs to show that the candidate is currently ‘proficient’ (see novice-to-expert range). This normally means that evidence should be fairly recent; the exception to this is where one has not undertaken a particular area of work recently. If evidence is being used which is not recent, for instance from a previous job, it needs to be detailed and convincing. Good-quality witness statements may be essential if you are asking the assessors to take things on trust, for instance if you do not have the objects that you worked on. If any of the evidence relates to activities the candidate has undertaken as part of a team, they will need to make clear their role in them.

Finally, once the evidence is prepared it is essential to check that again that it actually demonstrates things which are relevant to the professional standards including J&E and avoid taking up time on trivial or minimally relevant matters. Avoid too much of the same kind of evidence that demonstrates the same thing.

Notes on key evidence types are outlined below. It is important however that the candidate discusses the evidence they intend to collate with their assessors (and mentors) to ensure they have everything they need with them on the day.

Product evidence / Evidence of actual conservation work
A strong type of evidence, as it shows the candidates ability to undertake work and can be used as a basis for further questioning and discussion. You must present at least one physical completed project/activity at your assessment.

Written Evidence
This could be from a variety of different sources such as emails, minutes of meetings or reports and can demonstrate areas such as the extent of the candidate's own responsibilities or decision making.

Photographic evidence
This could include quality detailed images illustrating the condition of an item and conservation work carried out or a PowerPoint presentation of images

Documentation
This is an important contributing element of the evidence. Preventive conservation projects do not always lend themselves to reports as easily as remedial conservation but documentation is an essential part of accreditation. Applicants should be able to produce data, assessments of data, records of meetings, progress charts, plans, condition sheets and other documentation or reports which they can use during their assessment.

Witness statements
It may be necessary to obtain more specific comments and endorsements from people familiar with the candidate's work in order to verify their evidence or add weight to the application. These 'witnesses' may be a mentor, other conservators, colleagues such as curators, archivists or architects, or clients, staff or members of the public. Witness statements should not be enclosed within the application but included as part of the evidence for the assessors on the day.

Alternatively, or in addition, it may be possible for the assessors to meet a key witness, such as a manager, during the visit. Do not rely on this in case it is impossible to arrange.

The witness statement should be written on either an official letterhead (and include personal contact details and qualifications etc. as appropriate), or the template available on the Icon website.

In general, a witness statement should be:

- Used only when it adds to the credibility of your evidence, typically, when your other evidence is relatively weak, or you want to back up what you have said about a particular skill or ability.
- From an appropriate 'expert' (e.g. an accredited conservator-restorer) can be essential if you are relying on evidence that is not recent, for instance, objects/projects you worked on some time ago.
- Relevant and to-the-point; it is your responsibility to ensure that the statement does not simply state that the witness thinks your work is good.

Notes for candidate

- The assessor can briefly advise on the types of evidence they might expect to see on an initial telephone call. It is however the candidate's responsibility to ensure that all evidence is prepared in advance.

- Evidence should be available on the day. Reports may be easily assessable on a tablet or laptop. Alternatively, other candidates prefer to prepare hard copies. Whichever option you choose please ensure you discuss this with your assessor,

Notes for assessors

- As an assessor you would expect to see a range of different evidence types to support the statements made by the candidate through their application form and discussion.

- Please do ensure you encourage the candidate to allow enough time to collate and prepare their evidence.

- Please try and avoid asking to see evidence in advance as this could be seen as pre-assessment. However, in some instances this is unavoidable, e.g. if one the projects the candidate details specifically references a report, having sight of this prior to the assessment will allow you more time for discussion.

- In particular, applicants who are not working in a 'hands on' role should be able to talk you through projects in the same way that interventive conservation is assessed. You will be looking for the initial gathering of information and the use of the information to guide decisions and the communication to relevant personnel. The project(s) may be ongoing rather than complete, but the applicant should be able to demonstrate that he or she is able to evaluate the effectiveness of the project and his or her role in it.

- Some projects may be complicated and often include a team of people. It is not always easy to demonstrate the extent of the applicant's own work, their contribution to the project and what was done or decided by others. The evidence will need to indicate the applicant's role in the project and you will have the opportunity during the visit to establish that they are clear about the division of responsibilities. It may help to consult a simple organisation structure of the management of a project where appropriate.

- Applicants involved in practical conservation-restoration treatments, will need to show examples of their work, not just descriptions and records. This must be conservation-restoration work, i.e. not the crafting of replacement parts or new objects.

- For those working in private practice, evidence may be weighted more towards records and successfully completed contracts rather than objects which are available for inspection, although you should still expect to see objects—while recognising that the projects they are working on at the time of the visit may be different from those that have been described in the application form.

- For applicants involved primarily in preventive conservation, evidence will be needed of how strategies and decisions have been, or are being, interpreted into practice. This normally requires you to have access to a collection, site or group of objects relating to their work.

- For some applicants involved primarily in conservation management it may be fairly easy to identify physical conservation projects that can be used for assessment. Others will need to pick out aspects of their work from ongoing activities that are not strictly speaking projects, for example, how they have implemented a conservation policy/strategy and its impact on conservation measures (Standard 3). They can also show how they promote high quality conservation as carried out by others; and how their work actually results in high quality conservation.

Assessment visit

On the day of the assessment it is the candidate who must ensure that all rooms are booked and that evidence is in place ready for the assessment to take place.

The assessment visit is likely to take between five to six hours, including lunch and time for the assessors to discuss what they have seen. Different assessors will have different preferences for how they approach the day, both parties should ensure that a full timetable has been agreed before the visit and confirm it again at the beginning of the day which will enable the candidate to confirm they are happy with and understand the process. While the assessors will aim to see and discuss everything they need, it is up to the candidate to make their case.

The visit will involve a balance of examining documents and objects, discussion with the applicant, and if required, a short discussion (no more than 20 minutes) with the applicant's manager or colleagues (with the applicant's permission). As a guide expect to spend four hours on discussion and examining evidence, allowing one hour for review and queries.

There is no specific format for the assessment provided that all areas of the application and the Professional Standards are covered.

The two assessors will have different roles but equal input into the assessment itself. The Specialist will cover all standards, but specifically standards 1, 2, and 3. The other assessor will probably not be able to make as informed a judgement about Standard 3 as the specialist assessor, but will be able to do so about Standards 4 and 5 and the professional judgements and ethics. The other assessor may be the main note-taker, but will also have an important role in the 'general' areas where the presence of someone from another discipline can be useful - particularly in asking intelligent questions from an 'outside' viewpoint. Otherwise, the assessors share the workload, and the specialist assessor will also be taking notes.

A suggested format for the visit is:

- A short discussion (no more than half an hour) on work and experience, based on your statement in the application, plus any relevant information about the candidate's role, institution, or practice.

- A longer period discussing the projects / activities which you included in the application, backed by your evidence. This should avoid repetition caused by going through the professional standards one at a time. Following this the assessors may want to confer in order to identify which areas of the standards need further discussion and examination of evidence.

- A session discussing and examining evidence to follow up these queries.

- Towards the end of the assessment the assessors will confer privately to agree any further queries they need to raise. The candidate should also raise any points that they think have been missed during the day.

- The assessors may also agree that you can provide additional information after the visit, but before they send their report to the Accreditation Committee; this should normally be completed within a week of the visit.

Notes for the assessors

- Applicants can be uneasy at the beginning of the assessment, even those who have prepared well. The assessors should strive to put them at ease and remind them that the assessment visit is not a test, but the opportunity for the candidate to show off their work.

- Assessors can have different expectations of what evidence is needed in advance of an assessment. It is important for assessors to be specific in their request for further information prior to an assessment. For example, if the projects presented in the application form are not available to see, and other projects will be presented on the assessment day, then it is fair to ask for a project sheet so that you know what to expect on the day. Also, some specialist areas may need more detailed reports to digest in advance, such as for preventive. DO NOT ask for full documentation of all projects in advance.

- If the application is quite light on evidence, you can request more information in advance. A telephone discussion should be enough in most cases. However, the aim is to have enough to have an overview of the applicant's work and know what to look for on the day and what you should be able to view on the day.

- NB: Don't ask for full reports except when assessing conservators who work in preventive or conservation mangers/ advisors/ tutor roles - even then you will probably only need relevant extracts. This material will help you to prepare and understand detailed documents which you would not have time to consider properly during the assessment visit.

- There isn't often a need for this to take place, however if it does happen it must be agreed with the candidate in advance. It is also important that the focus is on the candidate, so any conversations with their mangers or colleagues should be kept to a minimum.

- If the application includes a project or activity in an area where neither you nor your partner assessor are knowledgeable, there should be no problem in discussing it confidentially and in principle with someone else. Keep in mind the confidentiality of the applicant:

    - Do not reveal the identity of the applicant or other information which would identify him or her, and don't show the application to anyone other than your partner assessor
    - It would be unfair and unethical for someone who is not known to the applicant to influence your assessment decision, it is up to you to broaden your knowledge using their expertise, so that you can make a professional judgement.

- Please bear in mind however that you should not accept a specialist assessor role for applicants where you are not competent to make judgements about their area of work.

- Throughout, it is important that you assess to the professional standards, and not to standards that you might like to see implemented. This means having a good knowledge of the standards before you start the assessment and being prepared to refer to them in detail before you record a decision.

- You are assessing the applicant, not their work situation. Clearly, poor practice cannot be excused if it is the applicant's responsibility, but do not penalise the applicant for matters beyond his or her control.

- Equally, you are assessing the person rather than their business or studio. A poorly-run business or badly-equipped studio may be evidence of poor practice and therefore relevant to the assessment, but as an Icon Accreditation assessor you are not being asked to comment on things such as type of equipment or whether the applicant makes tax returns on time.

- If you disagree with a treatment or technique that an applicant is using, check that the applicant has thought through why he or she is using the particular technique, and whether he or she is aware of alternatives. You would be justified in marking down an applicant for using a technique that is generally regarded as out-of-date or harmful, unless he or she has an overriding rationale for doing so; however, using a treatment that you personally wouldn't use may not be a good reason for not making a 'no' decision; you would need to check the applicant's understanding and rationale.

- Ensure that you interpret the standards in context. For instance, a small private studio used by only the applicant would not be expected to have the same breadth/depth of health and safety documentation as a large studio or institution; but at the same time this does not excuse the practitioner from following safe working practices. Equally, don't expect treatments that are out of proportion to the significance and value of the object.

- Because the designation ‘accredited conservator-restorer’ implies an ability to practise to ‘proficient’ level, applicants cannot be excused from meeting any part of the standards because the standards no longer reflect their role: however, it may be possible for them to do this in a way that draws, in part, on past experience.

Reporting

Once the assessment has been completed the findings must be written up and submitted to the Accreditation Officer within two weeks. If there are reasons that this is not possible, the assessor must contact the Training & Development Manager. At this stage the assessors should not contact the applicant directly.

Notes for assessors

The assessment report is divided into two main sections.

1) Assessor Comments
Your comments should provide evidence of each standard to substantiate how you reached your decision. Refer to the candidate’s referenced projects / activities as necessary. Comment on the quality of the work put forward as evidence and how the professional standards were met in relation to the Novice to Expert scale.

This section requires the assessors to agree whether on the balance of evidence seen through both the application and the assessment whether the applicant meets the ‘proficient’ level across each element of each of the professional standards. NB: if the assessors feel the candidate is competent for one area of a standard then the whole standard must be marked as such. On each standard, the assessors can assess the applicant as either:

- Proficient: meets standards throughout

- Competent: generally, meets standards but some significant reservations
- Novice: does not meet standards
- No Decision: there was not enough evidence to make a decision

2) Summary

The summary must be a true reflection of the whole report. It is sent to the candidate as soon as the report is received. Key points to include in the summary are:

- How each standard has been met (or not) in general terms.
- In cases where substandard(s) have not been met, the summary must highlight these specifically with evidence.
- Only include information which is in the main report.
- Include constructive feedback which is in the main body of the report that can support their further development.
- The summary is coherent when read in isolation to the full report.

Please note that the details included in the assessment report will be used to inform specific feedback to an applicant. In the case where an applicant is not accredited, they may ask to see a copy of the whole assessment report.

Deferral of Assessment

On occasion candidates may need to delay their assessment to a subsequent assessment round. If the deferral is:

- under a year (within next 2 rounds): The candidate may proceed with assessment with no additional AC involvement required. They must however update CPD Section 4 for assessors to receive prior to assessment.
- between one and two years (between subsequent two rounds): The candidates must revise Section 4 (CPD) and may choose to include additional projects to ensure evidence of current practice can be seen at assessment. This is to be reviewed and approved by the AC.
- over two years: The candidate is required to resubmit full revised Stage Two application form which shall be reviewed as new Application by the AC.

NB: Candidates must still pay the assessment fee at the prevailing rate at the time of their assessment.

Accreditation Committee

The role of the Accreditation Committee (AC) is to ascertain based on the balance of evidence whether a candidate should be awarded Accredited Conservator-Restorer Status. They do this through:

- Considering each new application and advising whether an applicant is ready for assessment or recommend further revision. Written feedback is provided for an applicant via the Training & Development Manager, based on the advice given by the AC.

- Recommending the appropriate assessors to undertake the assessments (although the candidate does have the final say as to who will be their assessors).

- Providing feedback to assessors on their reports and any feedback received from their applicants about the assessment.

- Examining the assessors' reports and records and the applicant's application (and any statement the applicant may submit about the assessment) following the assessment visit; requesting further information or clarification as necessary from the assessors, and making a decision as to whether the applicant meets the professional standards.

- Performing the role of a moderation board. The AC can moderate assessors' decisions to ensure that there is consistency in the final assessment outcomes and recommendations.

- Considering ACRs who have taken 'Time Out' and apply to be re-instated subject to a satisfactory continuing professional development (CPD) review.

Role at application stage

Each of the applications is read by three members of the Accreditation Committee (AC), one from the same specialist area as the applicant. The other two are there to provide an overall view of the applicant.

- Not suitable. The applicant is given a full rationale for this decision as well as guidance for how they could improve their application.

- Borderline. There will be a discussion at the AC, if the recommendation is not to proceed then full guidance is to be provided to the applicant.

- Suitable. The main discussion will be about who to appoint as the assessors.

Role at the assessment stage

The assessment report for each applicant is reviewed by members of the AC in the same way as the application forms, i.e. read by one specialist in the same area as the applicant and two other AC members. This time the AC gives one of four outcomes:

- Yes. Accreditation approved

- Borderline. Partial reassessment needed – this would require the candidate to resubmit an application, but only in reference to the specific standards where the candidate was not marked as 'Proficient'.

- Unsatisfactory assessment. Full reassessment is needed before a decision can be made.

- No, standards not met. Not to be accredited this round.

Queries and moderation

Part of the role of the Accreditation Committee (AC) is to moderate assessors' decisions, i.e. to ensure that decisions are consistent with the evidence the assessors examined, and there is consistency in the assessment standard being applied. The AC can adjust any decisions which were particularly harsh or lenient to mitigate such inconsistencies.

Members of the AC should consider when reading the application form and assessors' report:

- What is the overall balance of the application and assessment report? Does the report suggest that clear decisions were made by the assessors or that more trivial points were used to suggest either a harsh or lenient assessment? For instance, has an applicant been given a ‘borderline’ when there is written evidence that the applicant has met the proficient level or has an applicant been 'let through' despite what appear to be significant gaps or questionable practices described in the report? If your appraisal suggests changing the decisions from those given by the assessors, on what specifically would you base your decision?

- Do the applicant's statement, the assessors' comments, and the assessors' decisions correspond? If not, is this an isolated case or does it occur in more than one place? If the assessors appear unduly harsh, or pedantic, or too lenient, or there are errors in the assessors' report, discussion with the assessors will be necessary.

- If an applicant looks likely to be refused accreditation, what is the justification? Does the recommendation of the AC look to be justified by the assessors' comments and reflected in the applicant's statements?

- Are there any areas that appear weak but have been marked 'Yes,' without adequate explanation?

- Have the assessors used 'Borderline' or 'No decision' when they should have used 'No'?

- If the AC has doubts about the assessment or agree it may need moderation, the AC will need to query it with the assessors and if necessary, the applicant.

Accreditation Committee recommendations

There are four basic decisions that can be made:

- Yes—recommend accreditation.
- Borderline—require partial reassessment.
- Unsatisfactory assessment—require or offer complete reassessment.
- No, standards not met—recommend that the applicant should not be accredited on this occasion.

To arrive at a decision, the AC should examine the application form and assessors' report, plus any comments made by the applicant about the assessment and decide whether the applicant has met the requirements of the professional standards. Unless the AC disagrees with the assessors' conclusions (i.e. there is good reason to moderate the assessors' decision up or down), the decision of the AC should reflect on the following assessors’ findings:

- Recommend accreditation if ‘Yes' throughout or no more than one area has been marked as 'Borderline'. However, a borderline mark is not normally acceptable in judgement and ethics, or in professional standard 3.

- Borderline in more than one area—usually requires a partial re-assessment. For a partial re-assessment to consider further documentation there will be no extra costs incurred. If, however a further assessment visit is required, the applicant will be required to pay the assessors' fees which must be paid in advance of the assessment. This fee will not have to be paid if the AC agrees that the assessors have been found wanting in their role.

- 'No' in any area normally means that the applicant will not be accredited.

- 'No decision' normally occurs because the applicant has not provided sufficient evidence for the assessors to make a judgement: the assessors have not actually seen anything that suggests the applicant is sufficiently proficient i.e. there is not enough evidence for the assessors to record a 'Yes' with any confidence. If there is a 'No decision' in one area, it may be possible for the AC to request further evidence from the applicant by post / email or to arrange a further, partial re-assessment. If there is a 'No decision' in more than one area it may not be feasible to carry out a partial reassessment.

With a 'No', particularly for applicants with one or two 'Borderline' decisions, check that accreditation is not being refused for trivial reasons: examine the assessors' comments to ensure that the 'Borderline' decisions are fully justified.

To summarise, the AC's decision will be one of the following:

- To recommend accreditation. The final decision is made by the relevant accrediting professional body, which will not dispute the AC's decision, but it will need to ensure that the applicant is up to date with membership fees and that there are no disciplinary investigations pending against them.

  or

- To request further evidence or require a further assessment (partial or full re-assessment) before a decision is made.

  or

- Not to approve accreditation. In this case the AC must supply reasons and feedback, which will be sent to the applicant by the Accreditation Manager, to assist him or her in meeting the professional standards including judgement and ethics for re-application.

It is important that the decision made by the AC is consistent with the assessment principles and rules stated in the Icon Accreditation documents, as these provide the reference-point for all parties involved in the Icon Accreditation process.

Decisions should concentrate on critical issues ('is this person a proficient professional, as represented by the professional standards'), not on trivia such as the quality of form-filling.

Decisions must be consistent, rigorous (i.e. based on all the available evidence), open and confident:

- It is in no-one's interest to accredit applicants who do not meet the professional standards.

- Applicants who are not accredited have a right to know why, and what they need to do to meet the standards; this should be clear from the assessors' comments and the AC's feedback to the applicant.

- The AC should have confidence in its decisions and communicate this to applicants by being straightforward and clear without being either defensive or negatively critical.

Alongside the decision of the AC, a check should be made by the Accreditation Manager, with the relevant professional body, to ensure that there are no reasons (such as non-payment of membership fees or pending disciplinary actions) that the applicant should not be accredited.

Accreditation Committee feedback to the applicant

Feedback should be in writing and sent on behalf of the AC by the Accreditation Manager, within two weeks of the AC meeting.

- The AC recommendation—for accreditation; partial or full re-assessment required; or not recommended.
- Where the AC has been unable to recommend accreditation, more detailed information—normally reflecting the assessors' comments, and showing clearly how the AC arrived at its decision—should be provided to help the applicant in any future application.
- If a partial or full re-assessment is needed, further details on what is required, when the re-assessment will be likely to take place, and any other information should be provided to help the applicant prepare for it.
- The applicant can request to see the assessors' report in full after the AC meeting.

Accreditation Committee feedback to the assessors

The applicant’s assessors should be informed of the decision. An email will be sent to each assessor from the Chair of the AC to thank assessors and to provide feedback based on applicant feedback and discussion at the AC meeting. This feedback should be constructive and geared to improving the standard of assessment and recording. New assessors, in particular, will be wanting to receive feedback on whether they are conducting assessments correctly.

If any comments provided by an applicant have not previously been seen by the assessors, they can be released to them at this stage.

Applicants who are not accredited

Applicants who are refused accreditation can re-apply after a gap of twelve months. This period is stipulated because it is expected that new learning, modification of practice or generation of new evidence will be needed, and applicants will need approximately this length of time to make changes. The twelve-month rule need not be applied rigidly, although it can be used to prevent applicants from re-applying immediately if they need to address a number of issues. Applicants who have significant gaps to make up, or whose judgement or ethical standards need to be improved, can be advised that a longer period may be needed.

Reapplying if accreditation is refused

An unsuccessful application will be regarded as closed, and you will not be able to reapply within 12 months after the date of the assessment visit (or referral visit if applicable). However, you should ensure you allow yourself enough time to address the reasons for non-accreditation, particularly if they are significant. Reapplications are treated in the same way as new applications and will have to be paid for in full.

Appeals

If you are not accredited following the assessment and deliberation by the Accreditation Committee, there is a right of appeal via Icon

The first point of recourse for formal appeal is through the Chair of the Icon Professional Standards and Development Committee. A formal written appeal should be addressed to the Head of Professional Development, Institute of Conservation.

The Chair of PSD will convene an appeals committee to include an Icon assessor in the same specialism as you but not the assessor involved in your assessment, and a PSD committee member who must be a member of Icon and an ACR. At the discretion of the PSD Chair another relevant member may be invited.

Please note that you cannot invoke the formal appeals process if you are asked to provide further evidence or undergo partial reassessment.

You should address queries, or register your intention to appeal by letter, with Icon, within 30 days after receiving the decision of the Accreditation Committee. A formal written appeal, with full details of the grounds for the appeal, should be lodged with the professional body within 90 days after receipt of the Accreditation Committee's decision. Extensions to this period will only be made for exceptional reasons, for instance if you are outside the UK at the time of the decision or your professional body has not followed your instructions regarding where you can be contacted.

Icon Accreditation Re-assessments

Occasionally a partial or full re-assessment (rather than a re-application) of an applicant is required. Partial or full re-assessment of an applicant may take place because the assessment visit was felt by the assessors to be unsatisfactory (normally in areas where there was insufficient evidence available to the assessors, or because the applicant was dissatisfied with the assessment visit and has complained, or as a result of an appeals panel decision).

If a partial or full re-assessment, is needed, this can take place as soon as it can be arranged with the assessors, if the applicant does not need to submit new projects / activities. If new projects / activities are required, the re-assessment would need to take place at a time convenient to the AC, the applicant and the assessors.

Regardless of when the partial or full re-assessment takes place the AC can only agree the final assessment outcome when it is scheduled to meet, as noted in the assessment timetable.

Partial re-assessments may occur when:

- Up to 3 professional standards, or 2 professional standards and Professional Judgement & Ethics has been evaluated as being 'Borderline' (competent) by the assessors after the assessment visit and based on this evidence, the AC recommends a partial re-assessment in those areas.

- An appeals panel recommends a partial re-assessment.

The process of a partial re-assessment is dependent on each individual case and may be carried out, as determined by the AC or an appeal panel either by:

- The applicant submitting further documentary and photographic evidence (e.g. records or reports) with written explanations for the assessors to examine without a face-to-face meeting.

- The applicant meeting the assessors to discuss documentary and photographic evidence in the form of a ‘Viva’ at a venue agreed by the applicant.

- The assessors making a further visit to a site or the applicant's workplace, to examine actual practical conservation work.

If a meeting or visit is required, the applicant will be required to pay the assessors' fees in advance of the assessment. This fee will not have to be paid if the AC or appeal panel agrees that the assessors have been found wanting in their role.

A full re-assessment should be treated as a new application and probably with new assessors who are likely to have either the applicant's original application or an updated version of it (e.g. with different projects / activities) but without the original assessment record.

Other variables that need to be considered for re-assessments (partial or full)

- New assessors may need to be identified by the AC (if either the original assessment was not satisfactory, or the applicant requested new assessors) or the original assessors may be used.

- The original application form and the assessor report may be used as the basis for seeking evidence to fill previous gaps.

- Further documentation can be based on the same projects /activities that have been examined previously and / or new projects / activities can be presented to demonstrate the standards marked ‘Borderline’ in the previous assessment.

- If new projects / activities are required, prior to a partial re-assessment, the AC will consider the new projects / activities, as it does for a new application and may provide feedback, via the Accreditation Manager, as a means of support and guidance for the applicant.

- If new assessors are required, the AC will select suitable assessors. The applicant will need to agree the assessors selected, and providing that the assessors are also content, the Accreditation Manager will notify the applicant of the timetable and an assessment date will be fixed.

- The assessment report will only address the professional standards considered at the partial re-assessment. A summary report will be sent to the applicant two weeks after the visit and the full report considered at the next scheduled AC meeting. The applicant will be informed of the AC’s decision in writing, via the Training & Development Manager, within two weeks of its meeting.

Icon Professional Standards and Judgement & Ethics

Applying for accreditation means that you are confident that your experience and knowledge meet the professional conservation-restoration standards (the professional standards). You must demonstrate that you understand the professional standards in full and how you apply them to your work. You must be able to show that you have the depth of conservation expertise and knowledge required by the professional standards (as opposed to being able to rely on the judgement of others). You also need to show how your intentions and expertise translate effectively into practice.

You will be asked to demonstrate understanding of the professional standards as applied to dealing effectively with complex conservation problems.

1) Complex conservation problems are typically those which:
2) Require choices between options which lead to significantly different outcomes.
3) Present dilemmas and value-conflicts or require significant value-judgements.
4) Present substantial technical problems, for instance in relation to unstable or degraded materials or the level of risk associated with treatments or strategies.
5) Require a deep level of practical understanding to be applied to the situation.
6) Require the marshalling and management of a wide range of resources.

To be ‘complex’ a conservation problem need not contain all these factors, but it is likely to include more than one or have one present to a high degree.

The professional conservation-restoration standards and the professional judgement and ethics have been designed to be applicable to all conservation roles regardless of an applicant's specialism(s).

Standard 1) Assessment of cultural heritage: A conservator has the ability to assess cultural heritage that presents complex conservation problems.

Standard 2) Conservation options and strategies: A conservator is able to evaluate options and negotiate actions in contexts that present complex conservation problems.

Standard 3) Conservation measures: A conservator, regardless of role, can work effectively with situations and aspects of heritage that present complex conservation problems, and can deal effectively with any unanticipated problems or findings.

Standard 4) Organisation and management: A conservator, regardless of position, can manage conservation work that presents complex conservation problems.

Standard 5) Professional development: A conservator can demonstrate through continuing professional development (CPD) active maintenance and improvement of professional knowledge and skills.

Professional judgement & ethics: These a core component of professional practice and are evidenced across all the Professional Standards.

Standard 1: Assessment of cultural heritage

Standard 1 (points a–e below) requires you to demonstrate the ability to assess cultural heritage, including in situations that present complex conservation problems. The standard should be applied according to your work context, for instance your work might involve examining objects brought to a studio for treatment or advice, or it might call for you to provide the detailed assessment of a collection or structure, or a strategic assessment of a series of collections or defined area of cultural heritage.

Depending on the situation, you may need more than one level of assessment: for example, an initial, visual assessment followed by more detailed investigation and analysis or by ongoing monitoring and audit.

You must be able to:

1a) Understand the significance and context of the heritage to be assessed, along with any implications for potential conservation measures.

- Depending on context this may include considering how the heritage is used or displayed; the design and environmental context of the heritage; any personal, cultural, historic, spiritual, symbolic, intangible, aesthetic or economic significance; artist intent; previous conservation work; and the interests of current and where relevant past owners, custodians and other stakeholders.
- You may need to undertake research, which could be for instance visual, material, historic, archival or testimonial.

1b) Assess the physical nature and condition of the heritage.

- The methods used for assessment must not have an adverse impact on the condition or integrity of the heritage.
- You must refer to other competent sources where analysis lies outside of your area of personal competence or requires specialist resources.
- You must demonstrate an understanding of the material properties and typical degradation patterns of heritage appropriate to the area in which you work.

1c) Assess the impact of the environment and potential changes on the heritage.

- This needs to be applied as appropriate to the context of your work, for example it may involve asking the owner or custodian of an object about its current and proposed environment and use, it could involve carrying out a detailed assessment of a collection or site, or assessing the impact of development proposals, changes to the environment, or other potential changes affecting a site or structure.
- It should include an adequate assessment of risks in the context of its proposed environment and use.
- You must refer to other competent sources where analysis lies outside of your area of personal competence or requires specialist resources.

1d) Assess the implications of taking no further action.

- This will include implications, risks and benefits for the heritage under consideration and, as relevant to the situation, any risks to other objects or structures, the environment or surroundings, and to health and safety.

1e) Report on the findings of the assessment.

- The coverage, presentation and detail of the report or record need to be appropriate to the context of the assessment and the intended readership.
- Depending on context, the report or record may be for your own use, for the information of others, or for formal presentation or publication.

Standard 2: Conservation options and strategies

Standard 2 (points a–c below) builds on the assessment undertaken in standard 1. It requires evaluation and negotiation in contexts that present complex conservation problems. The standard should be applied according to your work context, for instance it could apply to decisions discussed with a client about objects brought to a studio for treatment or advice, a strategy for the management of a collection or building, or a response to a specific threat or conservation issue.

You must be able to:

2a) Identify and evaluate conservation options.

- Options could include managing the use, display, transportation, storage or method of assessment of the heritage differently; physical conservation treatments and measures; or preventive or protective measures.
- Options should be based on adequate assessment and research, and follow an explicit rationale.
- You should be able to identify options that require novel or adapted measures, and know how you would develop and implement or commission these.
- Evaluation will include identifying the risks, benefits and wider implications associated with the different options, including the degree of reversibility or retreatability, resilience to changes in environmental conditions however these are caused, implications for current and future use, and implications for subsequent conservation measures.

2b) Develop advice, recommendations or policies relating to the different options available.

- This will include considering the resource implications of the various options, their environmental impact, any implications for project management or development, and where relevant identifying sources of resourcing or funding.
- You should be able to advise on any legislation, official guidance or organisational policy that affects your area of conservation. Your advice or decisions will need to communicate and promote good conservation practice.

2c) Develop or negotiate a considered course of action for implementation.

- You should be able to negotiate with organisations and individuals as relevant to your area of practice.
- Actions should be open to renegotiation in the light of any new findings that emerge once conservation measures are under way.
- The agreed action should be recorded in a format and level of detail appropriate to the context.

Standard 3: Conservation measures

Standard 3 (points a–f below) requires a detailed knowledge of conservation along with the ability to implement conservation measures effectively, whether by carrying out treatments and protective measures directly or through an advisory, managerial or educational role. Meeting points a–f will show that you can work effectively with situations that present complex conservation problems, and that you can deal effectively with any unanticipated problems or findings.

You must be able to:

3a) Communicate appropriate practice in the care, protection and treatment of cultural heritage.

- Communication could for instance be in the form of advice, policies, strategies, recommendations, or educational inputs.
- Care, protection and treatment may relate to ongoing or exceptional situations, anticipating or responding to disasters or emergencies, or responding to external proposals and changes.
- You should be able to communicate knowledgably the conservation implications of any policy or plan for the heritage in your area of work.
- You should be able to advise on requirements for the ongoing protection of heritage that has left your care.

3b) Implement conservation measures.

- This includes being able to advise on the physical and chemical characteristics of materials and causes of decay, the measures and techniques to be used, and the use of relevant resources, skills and equipment.
- Measures may be for instance physical, chemical, environmental or statutory, or relate to managing or influencing the interaction of others with the heritage.
- You should be able to advise on new and developing techniques and their practical implications.
- The methods and techniques used should take into account relevant contextual and ethical factors as well as current research and guidance in the field concerned.
- You will need to understand the perspectives and roles of others who have an impact on the protection and care of the heritage, where necessary working with them to ensure that measures are effective.

3c) Ensure that measures and advice follow recognised conservation standards.

- This includes meeting relevant Icon standards or codes of practice, along with taking account of any applicable national, local or organisational standards, guidelines and policies.
- You will need to ensure that measures are implemented ethically and to the relevant standard regardless of whether you are carrying them out yourself, delegating or commissioning, or managing more broadly.

3d) Monitor and evaluate the effect of conservation measures.

- This requires you to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of measures that you have applied, using methods appropriate to the context of your work. This could be carried out for instance through continuous or periodic monitoring, by arrangement, or on an ad-hoc basis.
- It includes adjusting or renegotiating measures should findings indicate that this is necessary.

3e) Document conservation measures.

- Documentation should be of a form, level of detail and clarity appropriate to its intended use and value as a resource in its own right.
- It should be designed with the aim of enabling it to be maintained and accessed on an ongoing basis.

3f) Recommend appropriate sources of further analysis, treatment or preventive care where these lie outside your remit or area of expertise.

- This could relate, for instance, to remedial treatment, scientific analysis or specialist monitoring, or specialist preventive, preservation or legislative expertise.

Standard 4: Organisation and management

Standard 4 (points a–e below) is concerned with organising and managing work in a way that is effective, ethical and legal, applicable to all conservation professionals. It should be applied as relevant to your work role, ensuring that you meet the standards across the areas for which you are responsible.

You must be able to:

4a) Organise and manage work to ensure that it is completed appropriately.

- This applies to your own work, as well as to any work that you lead or delegate.
- It could be applied to your own work planning, project scheduling, the work-plan for a department or for a new development, timetabling and lesson-planning for a course, or how you manage consultancy or contract work (from the client or contractor/consultant perspective).
- It includes agreeing and meeting timescales, resourcing requirements and where appropriate budgets, keeping stakeholders informed of progress and renegotiating where necessary.

4b) Ensure that your work practices and any you promote comply with applicable legal and contractual requirements.

- This includes having an awareness and working knowledge of the legal requirements that are relevant to your work.
- It includes as relevant environmental protection and employment regulations, and ensuring work is covered by adequate insurance or indemnity.

4c) Ensure that your work practices and the area for which you are responsible comply with relevant Health & Safety regulations and guidelines, minimising risk to yourself and others.

- This includes the ability to carry out and act on risk assessments.

4d) Adhere to good business or internal practice in dealing with clients, colleagues and other stakeholders.

- This includes maintaining good working relationships, effective and open communication, and where applicable following good practice in managing people.
- Stakeholders can include for instance internal clients (e.g. curators, archivists, architects, elected members or trustees) and contractors, as appropriate.

4e) Ensure that adequate and accessible records are maintained.

- Records include conservation records, statutory records, records required by your organisation or needed for running your business, and any records that you or your colleagues need to work effectively.
- Recording should use relevant methods and formats including, where relevant, the use of appropriate technology and software.
- Records must be available and intelligible to the people who need access to them.
- Records must be maintained for an adequate period for their purpose, taking account of any statutory requirements, conservation guidelines and organisational policies.
- Appropriate levels of security and confidentiality should be maintained in accordance with the law on data protection, privacy and intellectual property.

Standard 5: Continuing Professional Development

Standard 5 (points a–d below) requires you to demonstrate active maintenance and improvement of your professional knowledge and abilities.
You must be able to:

5a) Keep yourself informed on changes in the profession as well as broader developments relevant to your work context.

- This includes maintaining familiarity and where appropriate contact with relevant bodies in the conservation field and beyond as relevant to your area of practice.
- It includes keeping track of emerging developments and research, in particular to be able to identify areas where further exploration is relevant to developing your practice and expertise.

5b) Ensure that your practice, knowledge, skills and techniques are up-to-date, both at a general level and in relation to individual projects and tasks that you undertake.

- Updating needs to be appropriate to your work context, e.g. if you carry out treatments you would be expected to understand and be able to use new techniques in your field where they are applicable to your work; if you are a manager or advisor you would be expected to understand what is available and where they are appropriate, but not to be able to carry them out; if you are an educator or trainer you would be expected to keep up-to-date in the areas in which you teach or train.

5c) Reflect on and learn from your practice.

- This includes identifying learning points and areas for further investigation or development from your work.

5d) Promote conservation and the care of cultural heritage to expert and general audiences.

- This includes being able to provide training or instruction to others where necessary.
- It could include contributing to the profession or cultural heritage field in various ways, providing demonstrations and expositions, or contributing to publications and web sites.

Professional Judgement & Ethics

Professional judgement and ethics (J&E) (points a-n below) are a core component of the professional standards. Your understanding and application of J&E should be evident across your work.

You can demonstrate your professionalism by showing convincing evidence of the application of professional judgement and ethical standards based on a substantial foundation of conservation knowledge and principles. Knowing when and how to seek relevant information is an important aspect of showing professional judgement. You should be able to handle a wide range of situations professionally, and apply ethical principles in practice. It is not sufficient to demonstrate knowledge of Icon's code of ethics or practice.

You must:

i. Understand the principles of conservation and demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the specific area(s) of your practice.
ii. Be conversant with national and international principles, philosophies and guidelines relevant to your practice.
iii. Understand the ethical basis of the profession and the responsibilities of the conservation professional to cultural heritage and to wider society.
iv. Understand and observe the Icon Code of Conduct.
v. Use an adequate level of critical thinking, analysis and synthesis in approaching conservation problems and developing appropriate solutions.
vi. Appreciate and be prepared to consider alternative, valid methods and approaches that are relevant to your practice.
vii. Observe legal requirements and obligations, including those relating to health and safety, the environment, employment and contract law, and international agreements.
viii. Take responsibility for the care of cultural heritage within your influence.
ix. Act with responsibility towards the environment, promoting environmental sustainability in conservation practice and minimising adverse environmental impact.
x. Act responsibly and ethically in dealings with the public, employers, clients and colleagues.
xi. Act with awareness of and respect for the cultural, historic and spiritual context of objects and structures.
xii. Understand how the context in which conservation is carried out influences the practices and measures that are appropriate and acceptable.
xiii. Handle value-conflicts and ethical dilemmas in a manner which maintains the interests of cultural heritage.
xiv. Understand the limits of your own knowledge and abilities, and practise within them.

Novice-to-Expert Scale

The novice to expert scale is used in conjunction with the Professional Standards and Judgement and ethics to ascertain your level along the 'Novice-to-Expert Scale' in order to be accredited you must be at least at the 'proficient' level across each element of each of the professional standards and J&E.

	Knowledge	**Standard of work**	**Autonomy**	**Coping with complexity**	**Perception of context**
1. Novice	Minimal, or 'textbook' knowledge without connecting it to practice	Unlikely to be satisfactory unless closely supervised	Needs close supervision or instruction	Little or no conception of dealing with complexity	Tends to see actions in isolation
2. Beginner	Working knowledge of key aspects of practice	Straightforward tasks likely to be completed to an acceptable standard	Able to achieve some steps using own judgement, but supervision needed for overall task	Appreciates complex situations but only able to achieve partial resolution	Sees actions as a series of steps
3. Competent	Good working and background knowledge of area of practice	Fit for purpose, though may lack refinement	Able to achieve most tasks using own judgement	Copes with complex situations through deliberate analysis and planning	Sees actions at least partly in terms of longer-term goals
4. Proficient	Depth of understanding of discipline and area of practice	Fully acceptable standard achieved routinely	Able to take full responsibility for own work (and that of others where applicable)	Deals with complex situations holistically, decision-making more confident	Sees overall 'picture' and how individual actions fit within it
5. Expert	Authoritative knowledge of discipline and deep tacit understanding across area of practice	Excellence achieved with relative ease	Able to take responsibility for going beyond existing standards and creating own interpretations	Holistic grasp of complex situations, moves between intuitive and analytical approaches with ease	Sees overall 'picture' and alternative approaches; vision of what may be possible

Figure 1: Adapted from the Dreyfus model of skills acquisition: Dreyfus, S.E. (1981) and Dreyfus, H.L. & Dreyfus, S.E. (1984).

Table for relating level of skill to the professional standards

This table is a tool for your own use and is not part of the application form.
You can use it to relate your level of skill against the professional standards and judgement and ethics (J&E) for each project activity you identify. It will also help you to see whether you are ready for accreditation — if you are ticking the novice to beginner boxes you may need to develop these areas before applying for accreditation.

Project / activity title:									
				Novice	**Beginner**	**Competent**	**Proficient**	**Expert**
J&E	**Professional standards**								
	1.	Assessment of objects, collections and sites	1a. 1b. 1c. 1d. 1e.					
	2.	Conservation options and strategies	2a. 2b. 2c.					
	3.	Conservation measures	3a. 3b. 3c. 3d. 3e. 3f.					
	4.	Organisation and management	4a. 4b. 4c. 4d. 4e. 4f. 4g.					
	5.	Professional development	5a. 5b. 5c. 5d. 5e.					
	Professional judgement and ethics (J&E)							

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