

# Accreditation Process

## Fact Sheet for Service Providers

### What is accreditation?

Accreditation is a detailed assessment by the service provider of a registered residential service and Regulatory Services of how well the service meets the accreditation standards. The accreditation program also focuses on continuous quality improvement strategies.

This process involves:

- Self-assessment by the service provider;
- Review and assessment of performance against pre-determined standards;
- Monitoring of ongoing performance against the standards by the department.

### The role of the service provider

The accreditation process requires you to actively assess the service against the accreditation standards. Once you have assessed the service and made an application for accreditation there will be an external evaluation by Regulatory Services.

It is important that you understand that it is your responsibility to demonstrate how you meet each standard and to provide supporting evidence.

Developing policies and procedures is not the only way of demonstrating compliance with the standards.

In developing responses to the standards, you should:

- Think about how your service meets each accreditation standard;
- Consult with residents and key stakeholders to get their views;
- Write down the documents you have that show how you meet each accreditation standard and describe how you meet the standard on a day-to-day basis (practices).

### The role of Regulatory Services

Regulatory Services is responsible for developing and implementing the accreditation system. The Department of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy has an obligation to make sure that the system it implements is consistent with the *Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002* and *Residential Services (Accreditation) Regulation 2018* and that accreditation decisions are made in a fair and unbiased manner.

Regulatory Services will:

- Assist you in understanding the self-assessment process, relevant forms and the requirements of the standards for your service;
- Conduct desk audits of the self-assessment documentation;
- Coordinate and conduct accreditation site audits including:
  - talking to residents, stakeholders and staff of the service;
  - assessing how well the service is performing against the accreditation standards;
  - viewing and assessing other relevant documentation;
  - explaining the assessment of your service;
- Make accreditation decisions based on the findings of the site audit and evidence provided.

## Continuous quality improvement

Continuous quality improvement means being constantly on the lookout on how to improve practices.

Continuous quality improvement is an important component of the accreditation process and you may be required to prepare a quality improvement plan dealing with particular aspects of your service.

The key principles of continuous quality improvement are:

- Responsiveness to residents, their rights and needs;
- Organisational improvement which is driven by management;
- Focus on processes and systems and how they can improve outcomes for residents;
- Ongoing use of data and information that allows the quality of your service to be measured;
- Development and involvement of staff (if applicable) in contributing to better outcomes;
- Quality improvement and self-assessment ingrained in your culture.

## Steps towards Accreditation

<p>Step 1: Registration</p>	<p>The first part of the Accreditation process is the finalisation of the registration of the residential service.</p> <p>You will be provided with a registration certificate which must be displayed at the premises at all times.</p> <p>You will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• informed of the due date for accreditation;</li> <li>• provided with documentation about the process.</li> </ul>
<p>Step 2: Monitoring of Accreditation due date</p>	<p>A Regulatory Analyst will maintain contact with you regarding the accreditation process and due date for accreditation.</p> <p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if your application is not received by the due date, the registration of the residential service will automatically be cancelled;</li> <li>• you will be required to re-apply for registration and you will not be permitted to operate until the re-registration process has been completed.</li> </ul>
<p>Step 3: Self-Assessment Checklist</p>	<p>The next part of the accreditation process involves a Self-Assessment Checklist where you measure your service against the accreditation standards to identify what your service does well and what areas require improvement.</p> <p>The process is key to directing continuous improvement through identifying achievements, gaps or deficiencies and forms the basis for a quality improvement plan.</p> <p>Self-assessment can drive quality improvement because it helps management and staff to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pause and think about the way the residential service works and what results are being achieved;</li> <li>• identify what areas are working well;</li> <li>• identify what areas are not working well;</li> <li>• identify what activities could be incorporated into an improvement plan.</li> </ul>



<p>Step 4: Application for Accreditation of a Residential Service</p>	<p>To apply for accreditation, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• complete the Application Form;</li> <li>• complete the Self-Assessment Checklist;</li> <li>• pay any required fees;</li> <li>• provide any other information requested.</li> </ul> <p>When the department receives your application, an immediate examination is made to ensure that all information has been provided.</p> <p>You will be contacted by a Regulatory Analyst to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• acknowledge receipt of the application and other documents;</li> <li>• detail any information that you have not provided;</li> <li>• confirm a timeframe for the assessment.</li> </ul> <p>Please note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if your application is not complete, your accreditation may lapse;</li> <li>• you will be required to re-apply for registration and you will not be permitted to operate until the re-registration process has been completed.</li> </ul>
<p>Step 5: Desk Audit</p>	<p>A desk audit will be conducted by a Regulatory Analyst.</p> <p>The self-assessment material is reviewed along with any other supporting documentation. Any issues which should specifically be addressed before or during the site audit are noted.</p> <p>If insufficient evidence or documentation is provided to enable a desk audit you will be contacted and may need to provide further information.</p>
<p>Step 6: Preparing for the Site Audit</p>	<p>Prior to undertaking a site audit preliminary inquiries with any external stakeholders are undertaken. For example, telephone interviews may be conducted with key external stakeholders such as case workers, advocates, or local government representatives, to seek comment on the operation and performance of the service.</p> <p>Any complaints made in relation to your service may also be considered.</p> <p>The Regulatory Analyst will be aware of any discrepancies or gaps identified in the desk audit and will prepare a list of questions to ensure all outstanding issues are thoroughly canvassed during the site audit.</p> <p>You will be contacted to arrange a suitable time for the site audit which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visiting and inspecting the service (photographs will be taken);</li> <li>• meeting with you to discuss any outstanding issues identified in the desk audit;</li> <li>• meeting with residents and staff to seek their views and feedback on the services provided;</li> <li>• inspecting 'live' documents.</li> </ul> <p>Sufficient notice will be given to avoid adversely affecting the operations of the residential service.</p>

## Step 7: Site Audit

The amount of time necessary to conduct a site audit will depend on the size and location of the premises, the number of residents accommodated and if any issues are identified.

The site audit will require an examination of records and interviewing residents to assess whether the service meets the requirements of the accreditation standards.

Interviewing residents and other stakeholders and making observations during the site audit allows the Regulatory Analyst to compare what actually happens in the service on a daily basis with the documentary evidence and responses provided in the self-assessment material.

You will be requested to inform all residents of the visit and notify the residents that the information they provide will remain confidential.

Ideally, about 10 per cent of residents will be interviewed but this will vary depending on the information required and the size of the service. No fixed number is prescribed to allow flexibility in conducting the assessment.

Before leaving the premises, you will have an exit interview with the Regulatory Analyst to discuss their findings and the next steps in the accreditation process.

If any serious risks or problems are identified which may impact adversely on the accreditation decision, you will be informed immediately.

### *Where a serious risk is identified*

Serious risk is defined as a situation that causes harm or illness or has the potential to cause harm or illness to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person residing in a residential service.

Serious risk may be caused by hazardous situations associated with:

- substances such as medication or chemicals being inappropriately used, secured or stored;
- equipment or machinery not being properly maintained or being placed in unsafe locations;
- inadequate work processes/practices resulting in unsatisfactory food or health safety standards;
- aspects of living and/or other external hazards;
- environmental factors or practices used by the service impacting on the health of residents;
- conduct of staff.

The accreditation of a residential service would not be appropriate if it became apparent during a site visit that conditions existed which may result in a serious risk to residents.

If a serious risk is identified by the Regulatory Analyst, you should ensure the removal of that risk in accordance with any stated timeframe to avoid any delay in finalising the accreditation process.

If the serious risk is removed immediately or within the stated timeframe, the Regulatory Analyst will take this into account when

	<p>making a recommendation for accreditation. However, accreditation will be refused if the serious risk is not removed.</p>
<p>Step 8: Accreditation Report</p>	<p>Within 10 working days of the site audit, the Regulatory Analyst will prepare an Accreditation Report which will include a recommendation about whether to accredit the service.</p> <p>The recommendation will take into account the residential service's compliance with the accreditation criteria and the standards established in the <i>Residential Services (Accreditation) Regulation 2018</i>.</p> <p>In developing a recommendation, the Regulatory Analyst will consider all information and evidence gathered during the assessment process.</p>
<p>Step 9: Accreditation Decision</p>	<p>Residential Services differ vastly and many issues will need to be taken into account in reaching a decision.</p> <p>Each level of accreditation sought will be assessed separately.</p> <p>The accreditation decision is based on facts and evidence presented to the assessors and the detailed accreditation report.</p> <p>The decision may be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grant accreditation, for a period up to 3 years. Conditions may be imposed if considered appropriate;</li> <li>• refuse to accredit the entire service or a particular level of the service.</li> </ul> <p><b>Accreditation granted</b></p> <p>If you are granted accreditation, you will be provided with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a Certificate of Accreditation which must be displayed at the premises at all times;</li> <li>• details of any conditions which you must abide by (if any);</li> <li>• the due date for your renewal of accreditation.</li> </ul> <p><b>Accreditation refused</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the decision is to refuse accreditation, you will be given notice of the decision and advised when the service must be stopped (at least seven days after the date of the notice):</li> <li>• if Level 1 accreditation is refused, you must stop conducting the residential service;</li> <li>• if Level 2 accreditation is refused, you must stop providing a food service;</li> <li>• if Level 3 accreditation is refused, you must stop providing personal care services.</li> </ul> <p>The notice will also advise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the reasons for the decision;</li> <li>• that you may apply for a review (within 28 days);</li> <li>• how to apply for the review;</li> <li>• if you apply for a review of the decision and the matter is not resolved on review, you may appeal against the decision to the Queensland Civil and Administrative Tribunal (QCAT).</li> </ul>

## Review and appeal of accreditation decisions

The *Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002* details that certain accreditation decisions are reviewable. These include:

- Refusal to accredit a service;
- To accredit the service on a condition;
- Refusal to renew accreditation;
- Refusal to amend accreditation in the way the service provider has applied for;
- Amending accreditation in a way other than the service provider has applied for;
- Cancelling accreditation;
- Refusing an application for replacement accreditation certificate.

## For more information

You can contact Regulatory Services on (07) 3013 2666



or email [RegulatoryServices@chde.qld.gov.au](mailto:RegulatoryServices@chde.qld.gov.au)



The *Residential Services (Accreditation) Act 2002* and the *Residential Services (Accreditation) Regulation 2018* are available at [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au)

