

AASW

CONDITONAL ACCREDITATION GUIDE



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Australian Association
of Social Workers

Introduction

This document is designed to support Higher Education Providers with information relating to the accreditation outcome decision of ***conditional accreditation***.

The following pages are noted to help Providers understand this outcome and how to identify, plan and rectify these non-compliances, once noted through a conditional accreditation assessment.

For self-assurance and continuous improvement, it is important to clearly understand why the non-compliance(s) have been identified by the Accreditation Assessment Panel. The non-compliances are identified to assist a Provider improve their practices and processes and successfully return to full accreditation status within the specified timeframe. The Provider should always strive to sustain compliance, monitor and evaluate whilst looking for ways to improve the quality of training outcomes and performance of their social work programs against the standards.

It is not the role of AASW to advise how you should demonstrate compliance with the standards, as this will look different for each Provider depending on their individual processes and systems. The AASW would not be able to develop a compliance guide that suits every Provider. The AASW provides autonomy for each Provider to demonstrate their best practice which reflects the quality of their social work delivered programs.

CONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION

What does it mean to have conditional accreditation?

When a Final Accreditation Report is tabled at an Accreditation Council meeting for approval, the accreditation outcome decisions which can be assigned are: -

- Full accreditation
- Conditional accreditation
- Provisional accreditation
- Provisional accreditation – conditions apply
- Approve/Not approve
- Revoke accreditation

In this document we are looking at the ***Conditional accreditation or Provisional accreditation-conditions apply***. This outcome is when the recommendation of the Accreditation Assessment Panel is that the Provider be granted conditional accreditation for a specified time, as the accredited program does not meet one or more of the standards in the ASWEAS. This includes a program that substantially meets the requirements for accreditation, however the AASW through the Accreditation Assessment Panel determines identified non-compliance(s) which are areas of deficit or weakness that can be addressed within a specified limited time.

In these instances, providers will be required to resubmit against nominated specific non-compliance condition(s) recommended by the Accreditation Assessment Panel within the Final Report. The Provider would look to formulate a formal response addressing the conditions and the Accreditation Assessment Panel will then assess the responses and support evidence for alignment to the conditions and ASWEAS. This is most likely to be a desktop assessment not including a site visit, as that would have already occurred through the original accreditation assessment.

Will the conditional accreditation outcome impact students?

The conditional accreditation does not impact students. The conditional accreditation is at a course level and students are still seen to be completing an accredited course and therefore are still eligible for AASW membership if completion occurs under a conditional accreditation status.

What happens at end of conditional period if conditions are not met?

If the conditions were not met and an Accreditation Assessment Panel recommend to the Accreditation Council that the accreditation status should be removed, and this is accepted by the Accreditation Council and AASW Board, then there would be an impact on students as from the date of accreditation expiration the course would no longer be accredited. The students yet to complete would be in a non-accredited course. This would have implications for the Provider which would need to be worked through.

Does the Provider need to advertise the change in accreditation status?

Yes, it is expected that the Provider will update the course website and any materials provided to the existing or prospective students in the act of transparency and to ensure that all students can utilise this information to make an informed decision of their study choice.

How the Provider respond to the outcome accreditation decision?

When the Provider receives a conditional accreditation outcome decision, the AASW outcome letter will specify a timeframe for the formal Provider response. The response does not need to be the same size as a full accreditation submission, however, should respond to the specific non-compliance conditions. This submission can be presented on Provider letterhead, as there is no AASW report template. It should be noted that the timeframe end date is for the completion of the process; therefore, the Provider in formulating your response timings, should allow enough time for the formal conditional response to be reviewed by an Accreditation Assessment Panel and for the completion of the reporting period and Council approval (approx. 2-3 months).

NEXT STEPS: CONDITIONAL ACCREDITATION

If your Provider receives a conditional accreditation outcome, the following steps are provided to assist with the planning of the formal response to ensure completion by the specified timeframe.

Step 1: Review final report to ensure that you understand the non-compliances, which led to conditional accreditation outcome.

Step 2: Identify the main reason or gap which was the cause of the non-compliance. e.g. process or operational

Step 3: Understand the gap identified against the ASWEAS so that you know what is required to meet compliance and determine actions to comply.

Step 4: Create an action plan and supporting evidence portfolio including resources, roles and timeframe to demonstrate how the non compliance has been fixed.

Step 5: Develop your formal response to the conditional accreditation and cross check to ensure all specifics are detailed and addressed regarding the rectification.

Step 6: Submit your formal response to the AASW for assessment by the Accreditation Assessment Panel. Ensure you have attached all supporting evidence.

Once the submission is received by the AASW, the Assessment Accreditation Panel will assess the formal response and supporting documentation against the non-compliance conditions and a draft final report will be provided to the Provider for factual checking response.

Once the Provider has checked the draft final report, the report will be finalised and tabled at the next available Accreditation Council meeting.

The Provider will be notified of the outcome of Accreditation Council as soon as practicable by an official outcome letter from the AASW Accreditation Officer.

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