



# ABE GUIDE TO CENTRE ACCREDITATION

Version 9.0

## Contents

Introduction .....	3
The application process for new Centre accreditation.....	3
Decision making.....	4
Types of Accreditation.....	5
Centre Accreditation.....	5
Satellite Site Accreditation.....	5
Additional Product Approval.....	5
Annual Renewal of Centre Accreditation.....	6
Key Aspects of the ABE Accreditation Application Process .....	7
Centre Details .....	7
Payment .....	7
Communications.....	7
Learners.....	7
External Quality Assurance .....	8
Organisation information .....	9
Administrative Policies .....	9
Conflict of Interest Policy.....	9
Malpractice Policy.....	9
Equality and Diversity Policy Statement .....	9
Marketing/Promotion.....	10
Recognitions/Approvals.....	10
Centre Practices .....	10
Teaching Staff.....	10
Centre Agreement .....	11
Newly Operational Centres .....	11
Accreditation Forms Checklist .....	12
New Centre Accreditation Application.....	12
Contact us .....	12

## Introduction

The purpose of this guide is to outline the ABE Centre Accreditation process, which is now conducted through our centre management system, ABE Core. In this document you will also find some guidance on the kind of information and documentation that we are looking for in the application.

## The application process for new Centre accreditation

Organisations applying to become an ABE accredited centre must complete, sign and submit the following documents:

- ABE Centre Accreditation Request Form (CARF)
- ABE Centre Agreement
- ABE Conflict of Interest (Col) Statement
- ABE Conflict of Interest Declaration (only completed when declaring a Col)

Please submit this documentation to: [accreditation@abeuk.com](mailto:accreditation@abeuk.com)

Once received we will create a centre profile on ABE Core and initial login details will be sent to you via an automated email within 2 working days, you will also receive a separate confirmation email from ABE Head Office to confirm this. \*\*To note the automated email may go into a 'junk' or 'other' folder, so please check all inboxes before contacting ABE\*\*. Please follow the instructions in this email, log into your account and set a memorable password. \*\*To note, from time to time, ABE may require a centre to complete a paper based centre accreditation form, notification of this will be received in the initial contact email\*\*.

Once logged in, the details of how to complete the ABE Centre Accreditation Form can be found in the *Centre Guide to ABE Core\_Centre Accreditation\_New Centre\_Sep22\_Final*. This guide is located in the 'Documents' section of ABE Core, or in the email reply received after filling out the online enquiry form on the ABE website.

Alongside the documentation above, staff CVs, Certificates and Centre Policies are required to be submitted alongside the application. Details of what is required and how to upload it to the system can be found in the *Centre Guide to ABE Core\_Centre Accreditation\_New Centre\_Sep22\_Final*.

Once completed, ABE will acknowledge receipt and the application will be reviewed by a member of the Products and Services Team. If you pass the initial review of the paperwork, you will be invoiced the accreditation fee.

If necessary, we may request more details or additional information. It is important that requests for additional information are actioned promptly, and all communication is timely. Failure to do so may mean your application is delayed, or in some cases rejected. Once this information has been received, and if it meets our requirements, the application will be passed to a Products and Services Manager - who will contact you regarding the arrangement of a New Centre Evaluation Meeting.

The New Centre Evaluation Meeting will be conducted by either a Products and Services Manager based at ABE Head Office (remote through video call technology), or an in-country ABE External Quality Assurer. A report is produced from this meeting and sent to you; any Actions identified may need to be resolved before the application can proceed to final sign off.

## Decision making

Following the final sign off meeting, if accreditation is granted, the Centre will receive a Confirmation Letter, and details of how to access all relevant ABE systems (e.g., ABE portal), where policies, procedures, resources and other relevant assessment information to support the delivery of ABE qualifications will be available. The Centre Accreditation Certificate will also be made available for download through ABE Core, this may also be emailed to you.

When a centre accreditation application is rejected, ABE will provide feedback as to the reasons why, and may on occasion provide an action plan for the centre to complete prior to reapplying. ABE does not have a set timescale for rejected centres to wait before reapplying, however before the application can be reviewed the centre will need to provide proof that the feedback/actions identified in the original application have been resolved. Failure to do so will result in the application being rejected.

If a centre is not satisfied with the outcome they have a right to Appeal, further information on this can be found in the ABE Appeal Policy, which is available on the ABE website (<https://www.abeuk.com/about-us/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/principles-policies>).

## Types of Accreditation

### Centre Accreditation

Centres that achieve ABE accreditation are able to offer learners ABE's outstanding portfolio of internationally recognised business and management qualifications regulated in the UK by Ofqual.

Our accreditation process is simple but robust. It ensures that being ABE accredited enhances a centre's reputation for quality and we can work together to create the best experience for learners.

### Satellite Site Accreditation

ABE considers each 'site' that a centre uses for the delivery of qualifications as separate, and therefore needs to be approved. If a new centre making an application intends to deliver ABE qualifications at more than one site, they may be asked to complete a New Centre Accreditation Application for each site via ABE Core. For information on this process see 'The application process for new Centre accreditation' on page 3 of this document.

Alternatively, you may be required to complete a Satellite Site Accreditation Form - for each additional site. There is a section on the Centre Accreditation Enquiry Form to note any additional site details. Where additional sites have been indicated you will be contacted separately regarding which process to follow. An additional fee is charged for all additional Satellite Site Accreditations.

For centres that are already accredited, they may wish to start delivering ABE qualifications at a site that was not included in the original accreditation application. As outlined above, each delivery site needs to be approved individually, so if you would like to add an additional 'site' please contact ABE ([accreditation@abeuk.com](mailto:accreditation@abeuk.com)) and you will be notified of the process to follow.

**\*\*To note during the approval process additional information or a site visit may be required\*\*.**

### Additional Product Approval

A centre can add more qualifications to its portfolio at any time after accreditation has been confirmed. To do so, an Additional Product Approval form should be completed through ABE Core. Details of how to complete this process can be found in the *Centre Guide to ABE Core\_Additional Product Approval\_Sept22\_Final*. This guide is located in the 'Documents' section of ABE Core.

Alternatively you may be required to complete a paper based Product Approval Form. Once accredited if a centre would like to request approval to offer more ABE products, please contact us at [accreditation@abeuk.com](mailto:accreditation@abeuk.com) and you will be notified of the process to follow.

The process for approving an application is similar to that outlined above for a new centre accreditation. Further information or a site visit maybe required.

## Annual Renewal of Centre Accreditation

Centre accreditation needs to be renewed each year on the anniversary of the original accreditation date. Approximately, one month prior to this date centres will be contacted regarding the completion of the following renewal documentation:

- ABE Accreditation Renewal Form (through ABE Core)
- ABE Centre Agreement
- ABE Conflict of Interest (Col) Statement
- ABE Conflict of Interest Declaration (only completed when declaring a Col)

Details of how to complete this process can be found in the *Centre Guide to ABE Core\_Centre Accreditation\_Annual Renewal\_Sept22\_Final*. This guide is located in the 'Documents' section of ABE Core.

Centres are required to pay an annual renewal fee, an invoice will be sent alongside the renewal documentation.

Centres will be asked to confirm whether their current situation has changed since the last EQA monitoring activity. Where changes have been made additional information or a site visit maybe required.

Assuming ABE requirements continue to be met the centre will be reaccredited for the same qualifications as the previous year. Centres can apply for approval to offer additional qualifications, for more information see the 'Additional Product Approval' section above.

Continued accreditation is subject to the satisfactory completion of the centre accreditation renewal documentation, and payment of the renewal fee. The renewal documentation and process should be completed via ABE Core before the accreditation period listed on the certificate expires. All questions on the form must be answered.

Centres that do not wish to renew can surrender their accreditation with ABE. Where this is the case, ABE will seek further information as to the centre's current circumstances in relation to any outstanding 'live' learners. A teach-out period can be agreed between ABE and the centre where outstanding learners exist. More often than not this is for 12 months, however the situation will be monitored throughout, and adjustments can be made where necessary. To notify ABE of your intention to withdraw your accreditation, please contact us at [accreditation@abeuk.com](mailto:accreditation@abeuk.com)

# Key Aspects of the ABE Accreditation Application Process

## Centre Details

Please give full contact details of the organisation where delivery of ABE qualifications and assessment will take place. We need to know from the application that the organisation has the necessary level of financial, technical and staffing resources and systems necessary to support the delivery of ABE qualifications. It is important that we have up to date contact details for staff at the centre who are performing the roles on the application form.

## Payment

All fees relating to New Centre Accreditation, Additional Satellite Site Approval, and Annual Accreditation Renewal processes must only be made on receipt of an ABE invoice. Payments received beforehand will not in any way influence the decision of the respective processes.

There is no fee payable for Additional Product Approvals.

Please understand that ABE requires centres to pay in accordance with the payment terms associated with its qualifications. Failure to do so may result in services being suspended and/or sanctions being applied.

The fee is an application fee and is only refundable according to the terms of the accreditation fees refund policy which is detailed on the ABE website.

## Communications

We expect Centres to have effective communications arrangements in place to ensure that learners and staff are fully informed of the requirements associated with ABE qualifications.

***ABEs primary communication method is email therefore it is crucial at the point of completing any applications that current/ live email addresses are provided. Once accredited it is critical that you check these email addresses at least every other day to ensure that you have not missed important ABE communications.***

Please include in your policies and processes for submission some details about how and when you will notify ABE if necessary.

## Learners

ABE Global Ltd requires all new and existing centres to commit to registering a minimum of 30 new learner registrations (NLRs) per year. ABE is keen to work with centres to reach this target; additional support with sales and marketing can be discussed with your in country Business Development Manager/Director.

New, and existing centres that consistently do not achieve this commitment, may be required to pay for 30 learners at the point of renewing/beginning their centre accreditation. For more information about this process, please contact ABE Head Office, or your in country Business Development Manager/Director.

## External Quality Assurance

We expect centres to fully commit to and assist ABE in the conduction of any reasonable monitoring activity, which includes physical on site or remote visits to your centre. External Quality Assurance Visits will be carried at least once each year by an ABE External Quality Assurer. Where possible and safe to do so, this will be someone in country that is able to carry out the visit on site. Where this is not possible a remote visit via video technology will take place. Once accredited you receive an introductory email outlining who your EQA is, how to contact them, and the expectations you will need to adhere to.

The purpose of the EQA monitoring is to provide assurance to ABE that your centre is operating within the terms, conditions and requirements outlined in the ABE Centre Agreement. Failure to engage with this process may result in centre accreditation being withdrawn. Where noncompliance is identified centre actions will be raised and possible sanctions may be imposed. For further information see the ABE Centre Sanctions Policy on the ABE website: <https://www.abeuk.com/about-us/principles-policies>.

In your centre policies we need to see evidence that you have processes in place to ensure that your centre will promptly notify ABE when it has cause to believe there has, or is likely to be, a major non-compliance with our documented processes and requirements and/or associated regulatory requirements.



## Organisation information

Please give details of all sites from where you intend to deliver ABE qualifications. Please see the 'Satellite Centre Approval' section above for more information.

## Administrative Policies

Please check that you have sent the following policies with your application.

- Refund Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Malpractice Policy

## Conflict of Interest Policy

Please refer to the ABE Centre Agreement (section 11) for details of the centres' responsibilities regarding managing conflicts of interest.

## Malpractice Policy

Please make sure that your Malpractice Policy includes information on the following:

- the arrangements/internal procedures you have in place to prevent and investigate instances of malpractice and maladministration
- an explanation of the approach taken to handling suggestions of malpractice and/or maladministration
- your procedure for taking all reasonable steps to investigate any suspected incidents of malpractice or maladministration and rectify any negative impact of these incidents
- details of the organisation's process for notifying ABE of any identified incidents of malpractice or maladministration, in accordance with ABE's Malpractice and Maladministration Policy.
- confirmation that you will provide access to documents, records, data, staff, third parties, sub- contractors, learners, additional campuses/sites or any other resource required by ABE and/or the regulatory authorities during an investigation of Centre malpractice or maladministration.

## Equality and Diversity Policy Statement

Please send us a copy of your Equalities/Disability Policy if you have one. ABE has an Equality and Diversity Policy, please ensure you read it before applying. This policy can be found on the ABE website: <https://www.abeuk.com/about-us/who-we-are-and-what-we-do/principles-policies> .

If possible, tell us about how the buildings you use provide access for Learners for assessment purposes, in accordance with your local Equalities legislation.

## Marketing/Promotion

We are also interested in knowing how you are planning to market the ABE programme if your Centre is accredited. Centres must register at least 30 new learners each year.

We expect Centres to refrain from making any statements, advertisements or promotions in relation to our qualifications that are likely to mislead Learners and other users of the qualifications.

## Recognitions/Approvals

Please give us details of all national regulatory authorities that you are recognised by (e.g., MQA, ACTT, Ofqual etc)

Please provide details of any other awarding organisation you are recognised and approved by to offer qualifications by (including the title of the qualifications).

If you have ever had approval to operate refused, suspended or withdrawn by another awarding organisation/regulatory body, please tell us.

Please provide details, and the current status, of any sanction(s)/restriction(s) imposed by any other awarding organisation within the last 18 months (note that any misleading information may impact on your approval status and/or lead to your recognition being removed if it is found later that this question was not answered honestly).

## Centre Practices

Please provide a summary of your typical learner profile, and how your organisation recruits to ABE programmes. Please include information on your registration and enrolment processes, and how you check and confirm learner identity, and that learners are registered on the appropriate qualification for them.

Please summarise how you go about monitoring and tracking the progress of Learners and what assistance you give to struggling Learners.

We expect the Centre to maintain all Learner records and details of achievement in an accurate and secure manner in line with the requirements of ABE and GDPR Legislation and make these records available for external quality assurance and auditing purposes, as required.

The Centre will keep relevant assessment and learner records, for at least three years from the end of the year to which they relate, for all qualifications and make these available to ABE upon request.

We expect Centres to take all reasonable steps to prevent the loss, theft of, or breach of confidentiality in assessment materials and should such an incident occur then the centre must immediately inform ABE.

## Teaching Staff

All centres must ensure at the point of application that they have a workforce of appropriate size and competence to undertake the delivery of the qualification. This includes taking reasonable steps to ensure occupational competence where this is required by ABE for the assessment of specific qualifications.

ABE has centres throughout the world; therefore it is not possible to assign a standard qualification requirement of all tutors. The decision therefore of whether a tutor is sufficiently competent to meet ABE qualification requirements is based on the following criteria: subject knowledge (occupational competence, experience, qualifications), teaching experience and/or qualifications, experience of delivering UK regulated qualifications (individually and as an organisation as a whole), UK regulated assessment experience (individually and as an organisation as a whole), Continuous Professional Development (maintain the relevant expertise and competence), and Internal Quality Assurance knowledge. Tutors are assessed both individually and collectively, in relation to the qualifications they will be delivering, and to the volume of anticipated learners each year.

When providing Staff CVs please ensure that they are current and include information relevant to the above criteria. Certificates will also need to be submitted, only those current and relevant to the staff members role are needed.

## Centre Agreement

ABE has an agreement in place with all Centres which sets out the requirements with which the Centre must comply to continue to deliver qualifications. This agreement is called the ABE Centre Agreement. Compliance with the Centre Agreement is checked via External Quality Assurance visits and other related quality assurance activities. If a centre fails to comply with the requirements, ABE will apply its Sanctions Policy according to the severity of the breach and its effect on the interests of Learners and the integrity of the qualifications.

One of the requirements of the Centre Agreement is that the Centre agrees to notify ABE promptly if a change of control occurs in relation to the ownership of the Centre (e.g. taken over by another organisation/individual; a material change in the governance structure or legal status; a merger between the Centre and another body; or any insolvency or bankruptcy proceedings have commenced in relation to the Centre).

If a Centre fails to inform ABE of a change of control, the ability to register Learners and receive certificates may be suspended until an appropriate course of action is determined.

Centres are required to inform ABE of any changes or potential issues that may affect the ability to meet requirements for delivery and assessment of ABE qualifications as soon as they become evident.

## Newly Operational Centres

If you are a newly operational centre (less than 2 years) you may be asked to provide additional information before being invited to fill out the centre accreditation application. The delivery of ABE regulated qualifications requires centres to have comprehensive and robust processes already in place, and ideally operational, prior to accreditation.

Based on the additional information provided centres will be given one of the following outcomes:

1. The centre is not invited to apply for centre accreditation, and is given guidance and timescales (where possible) of what would need to be in place before attempting to reapply
2. The centre will be asked to submit draft documentation such as processes, timetables, and schemes of work to be reviewed alongside the centre accreditation application.

Alongside these requirements you may also be asked to provide a 3 year business case to show how you intend to establish/sustain yourself in the market, what differentiates you from your competitors, and how you intend to grow the business over a 3 year period. This document will be shared with your in country Business Development Manager/Director, who may request additional information. There are two possible outcomes of this process:

1. Your business plan is accepted and you will be invited to complete the rest of the centre accreditation application
2. Your business plan is not accepted and at this stage you are not invited to apply for centre accreditation. In this situation you will be given a rationale for the decision, and where possible guidance on the steps you would need to take in order to be invited to apply for centre accreditation in the future.

**\*\*To note ABE reserves the right to request supporting documentation such as a business plan from any centre applying for centre accreditation\*\***

# Accreditation Forms Checklist

## New Centre Accreditation Application

### Documentation to submit to ABE Core

- ABE Centre Agreement
- ABE Conflict of Interest (CoI) Statement
- ABE Conflict of Interest Declaration (only completed when declaring a CoI)
- Teaching Staff CVs & relevant Certificates
- Refund Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Appeals Policy
- Data Protection Policy
- Conflict of Interest Policy
- Malpractice Policy
- Equalities and Diversity Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

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## Contact us

If you have questions about the accreditation process, please contact us at [accreditation@abeuk.com](mailto:accreditation@abeuk.com)