# BCS Accreditation Requirements Manual

# 1. Introduction

BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, operates under a royal charter and is committed to making IT good for society. BCS is a trusted, powerful and positive reference point for the IT sector and is focused on driving positive change in the industry.

We do this by promoting Excellence, Leadership and Communities.
As BCS, we are the leading global awarding body for IT, tech and digital qualifications and certifications. We use our expertise to create an international framework of excellence from which all members of society can build their digital competency, capability and confidence.

We want to help everyone from those in education, at home or at work, to develop lifelong digital, tech and IT skills. To do this, we identify skill gaps and risks in the industry and provide training, consultancy and assessment services to meet those needs.

Our aim is to help people and organisations thrive in the digital world and use the driving force of technology to their advantage. We aim to empower everyone to be ready for, and optimise, their digital future.

BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT is an Ofqual Approved Awarding Organisation, an approved licensee of the Skills Funding Agency, and an ISTQB Approved Organisation.

BCS Learning & Development Ltd is a wholly owned subsidiary of BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT.

# 2. Contact Details

To support providers throughout their application for accreditation we have a specialised team.

The **Channel Partner Quality Team** will assist you with enquires such as;

- New applications
- Registering and training staff
- Organisation and/or staff amendments
- Reaccreditation

The Channel Partner Quality Team can be contacted via email at: cpqt@bcs.uk or telephone: 01793 417560

# 3. Key Operating Principles

To assist you in gaining and maintaining your accreditation status, here are some key operating principles you must abide by.

As a BCS Accredited Provider you must:

- behave in a way that reflects the BCS values and does not misrepresent

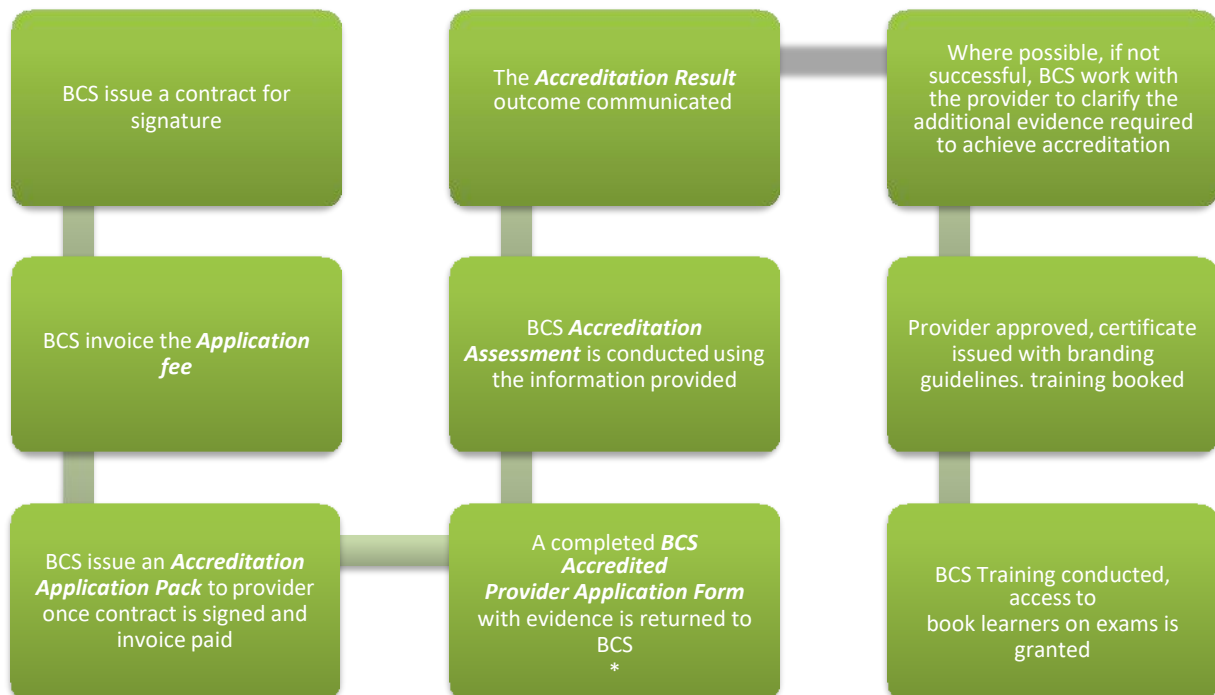BCS. The BCS values can be found on our [website](website)

- maintain an auditable record of provider activity
- ensure staff are trained and competent to perform their role
- keep BCS up to date with training / testing locations and staff details
- where possible, ensure candidates are registered with BCS before they take their first assessment
- ensure assessments are taken under the required test conditions
- maintain the security and the confidentiality of the assessment materials
- have appropriate internal quality assurance arrangements in place
- adhere to BCS policies and have associated provider-level policies including appeals and complaints, access to assessment, quality assurance and equal opportunities

## 4. The Accreditation Process

To deliver any BCS qualifications, standard and certifications, your organisation must be accredited with BCS.

This manual details our accreditation requirements to help you achieve your accredited status as a BCS Accredited Provider.

The accreditation process is designed to ensure a high standard of training, assessment and certification offered by BCS, the ECDL Foundation and ISTQB.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| BCS issue a contract for signature | The *Accreditation Result* outcome communicated | Where possible, if not successful, BCS work with the provider to clarify the additional evidence required to achieve accreditation |
| BCS invoice the *Application fee* | BCS *Accreditation Assessment* is conducted using the information provided | Provider approved, certificate issued with branding guidelines. training booked |
| BCS issue an *Accreditation Application Pack* to provider once contract is signed and invoice paid | A completed *BCS Accredited Provider Application Form* with evidence is returned to BCS * | BCS Training conducted, access to book learners on exams is granted |

Following an initial assessment BCS may require additional supportive policies or processes, this will be dependent on the qualifications, standards or certifications that you are applying to deliver and the results of our initial assessment. We will contact you to clarify what these requirements may be.

Each of the processes highlighted above are expanded in the information provided in the sections below.

*If you are applying for Professional Level Business Analysis and/or

ISTQB/ASTQB Software Testing certifications you will also be required to submit your course materials

## 4.1  Applying to be Accredited with BCS

At the beginning of the Accreditation process you will be required to sign a contract/agreement with BCS. This agreement outlines your responsibilities as an Accredited Provider offering BCS qualifications and certifications. Following the successful signing of your agreement with BCS you will be sent an Application Pack. The Application Pack contains the following:

| Document Name | Education Qualifications | Apprenticeship | Professional Certifications |
|---|---|---|---|
| BCS Accredited Provider Application Form | Y | Y | Y |
| BCS Accreditation Requirements Manual (this document) | Y | Y | Y |
| BCS Brand Guidelines | Y | Y | Y |
| IT User Approved Centre Operational Requirements Manual | Y | | |
| Digital IT Apprenticeship Approved Centre Operational Requirements Manual | | Y | |

You will need to complete the '*BCS Accredited Provider Application Form*' which will provide BCS with the information required to process your application. Your completed form needs to be submitted electronically to **cpqt@bcs.uk.**

As part of the application process, a validation will be conducted by one of our Channel Partner Quality Team or a BCS Auditor.

When applying, you must state **what** accreditation you are applying for:

| Education | Apprenticeship | Professional Certification |
|---|---|---|
| A full list of qualifications can be found here.<br><br>Qualifications include:<br><li>ECDL</li><li>ITQ</li><li>Digital Skills</li><li>Higher Education Exams</li> | A full list of standards can be found here.<br><br>Standards include:<br><li>Network Engineer</li><li>Software Developer</li><li>Infrastructure Technician</li><li>Cyber Security Technologist</li><li>Software Developer Technician</li><li>Software Tester</li><li>Digital Marketer</li><li>Data Analyst</li><li>Unified Communications Technician</li><li>Cyber intrusion Analyst</li><li>IT Technical Sales</li><li>IS Business Analyst</li> | A full list of certifications can be found here.<br><br>Certifications include:<br><li>Business Analysis</li><li>Solution Development and Architecture</li><li>Information Security</li><li>Software Testing</li><li>IT Service Management</li><li>Programme or Project Management</li> |

If your organisation meets the requirements, you may apply to deliver all BCS qualifications and certifications. If you are initially applying for one product set, you can add another at any time throughout your accreditation. For more information on adding a product set to your accreditation, please contact your Account Manager.

Please note: there are additional accreditation requirements for the Professional Level Business Analysis and ISTQB/ASTQB certifications. The additional requirements will be signposted throughout this manual.

## 4.2    Application Fees

### 4.2.1    Initial Application Fee

As you will have discussed with your Account Manager, you will be required to pay an application fee. This will cover your Organisation Accreditation, plus the product area (Education, Apprenticeships, Professional Certifications) that you are applying to deliver. If you have any questions about the fees, please speak to your Account Manager.



Organisation Accreditation  ➕  Product Area  ➖  Initial Application Fee

All providers will be required to apply for Organisation Accreditation plus the Accreditation type.

Package fees exist for applications made for more than one type of accreditation or all three accreditations.

For Apprenticeships and BCS Professional Certifications: at the point of application a provider may wish to apply to deliver all standards and/or certifications. Approval to deliver will be provided on the basis of evidence submitted. This initial accreditation charge will be applied irrespective of the number of standards/certifications applied for in the initial application. After this, providers may request to add additional BCS standards/certifications. There will be no further charge for this, but a contract addendum will be required.

However, any new Professional Level Business Analysis or ISTQB/ASTQB professional certifications will each require the courseware accreditation fee, per certification.

Please be aware that the application fee does not guarantee accreditation. No refunds on any application fees will be paid if accreditation is not granted. BCS will however, work with providers to clarify the additional evidence required to gain accreditation.  All BCS requirements and standards must be met before accreditation will be granted.

If your application is unsuccessful, you will not be permitted to reapply for accreditation for a minimum of 6 months. Upon reapplication, the full application fee will be payable.

### 4.2.2　　　Renewal Fees

An annual renewal fee of £500 is applicable.

For Education providers, a charge is also payable for the number of approved satellite sites registered on application.
A Satellite Site could be, for example, an adult learning centre if your organisation is a college, another academy if you are part of a multi-academies trust, a hospital site if your organisation is an NHS Centre, or a training site if you are a private training organisation.

If you are delivering Professional Level Business Analysis and/or ISTQB/ASTQB Software Testing Certifications, you will also be required to pay an annual renewal fee of £260 for your courseware accreditation. Please see the Course and Trainer Requirements Manual for full details of this process.

To renew your accreditation, you will need to provide either a purchase order number or a reference to be displayed on your invoice. Renewal fees must be paid within the terms set out on the invoice. Non-payment may result in sanctions being applied which may include suspension of services.

We will not offer refunds on renewal fees for providers that withdraw or close part way through the re-accreditation period.

## 4.3　　Required Documentation

As part of your application you will be required to provide documentation on your policies and procedures. A list of the documents you will need to supply can be found below.

Exemplar policies and procedures are available.

| Document List by Accreditation type | Description | Education | Apprenticeship | Professional Certifications |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Appeals Procedure | Details how Learners appeals are managed within your organisation. | Y | Y | Y |
| Assessment Security | Details your commitment to ensure the security of assessment material before, during and after an examination. | Y | Y | Y |
| Awarding Organisation Certificate | If you are not accredited with another Awarding Organisation, we may conduct an onsite visit as part of our pre-accreditation checks, as outlined in this document. | Y | Y | |
| Awarding Organisation Other | Dated letter, invoice or other official document from the Awarding Organisation. | Y | Y | |
| Awarding Organisation Prior Evaluations Report | Not older than 1 year. | Y | Y | |
| Complaints Procedure | Details how Learners complaints are managed within your organisation. | Y | Y | Y |

| | | Y | Y | Y |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Employer and Public Liability Insurance Certificate | | Y | Y | Y |
| Equalities Policy | Details your commitment to provide equal opportunities and how this is demonstrated through working practices. | Y | Y | Y |
| Identification Checks Procedure | Details your processes for checking Learner Identification (if applicable). | Y | Y | Y |
| Malpractice & Maladministration Policy | Details how malpractice and/or maladministration is managed within your organisation. | Y | Y | Y |
| Quality Assurance Policy | Details your commitment to quality assurance and references processes that support this. | Y | Y | Y |
| Reasonable Adjustments and Special Considerations Policy | Details how Learner requirements are met within your organisation. | Y | Y | Y |
| Safe Guarding policy and practices | Details your commitment to protecting children, young people and vulnerable adults whilst a learner of your organisation. | Y | Y | Y |

## 4.4    Pre-Accreditation Check

On receipt of your application, we will check that all the required information and supporting documentation has been provided and that the eligibility requirements are met.

To do this, BCS have a risk framework that all applications are assessed against. The framework will look at a number of things including, governance, compliance, reputation, product diversity and delivery model. We will also conduct a financial check of your organisation.

As part of the pre-accreditation checks a validation will be conducted by one of our Channel Partner Quality Team or a BCS Auditor. This validation will be either an onsite visit or a remote meeting via telephone or video conferencing.

The purpose of the validation is to ensure that the information provided on the application form meets BCS requirements.

## 4.5    Accreditation Result

When your application, as set out above, is approved you will be sent a welcome pack. This pack will include a letter confirming the dates of your accreditation, your Accredited Provider certificate, logos to be used on your website and marketing materials relevant for the qualifications/certifications that you are delivering.

> If you are applying for Professional Level Business Analysis and/or ISTQB/ASTQB Software Testing Certifications, your accreditation will only be granted once your course materials have been accredited as per the Course and Trainer Requirements Manual

Your BCS accreditation status will be awarded for a period of one year, subject to you continuing to meet with all requirements and satisfactory audits.

If your application is not successful, we will work with you, if appropriate, to clarify the additional evidence that is required to meet the accreditation requirements. If this is not appropriate, you must wait 6 months, after which you can reapply to become accredited with BCS.

## 4.6    Staff Training

Before you can begin delivering BCS qualifications or certifications, your staff must complete BCS training. The objective of the training is to ensure that all staff fully understand the operational requirements they must follow for the qualifications or certifications they are delivering. There is an Operational Requirements Manual for each qualification and certification area to support this training.

If your application is successful you will receive information on how to access the training.

The training that is required to be completed is dependent on the product set you are delivering. Details of the training that you and your staff need to complete will be sent to you once you are accredited.

All formats of training can be completed online from within your organisation and should take no longer than two hours.

We do offer a one2one training session that can be tailored for the requirements of your organisation. For more information on this, including cost, please contact us.

## 5. Staff Roles

All staff members who are involved in the management or invigilation of BCS qualifications and certifications must be registered with us. You must meet the minimum staff requirements, outlined in the table below, for the qualifications/certifications you are delivering, in order for you to retain Accredited Provider status.

Staff members may be registered with us in one or more staff role as long as the quality assurance requirements are met.

BCS will conduct quality assurance checks and request supporting evidence to demonstrate compliance. The table sets out the staff requirements by type.

Please note:
Trainers who deliver ISTQB / ASTQB certifications cannot invigilate these examinations.
BCS will source the invigilators for the Business Analysis Professional examinations – you cannot use your own invigilators.

| Staff Requirements | Details | Education | | | Apprenticeships | Professional Certifications |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | IT User / ECDL | Evidence Based Assessment | Higher Education | | |
| Main Contact | They are not required to be operating at senior manager level within the organisation | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Centre Manager | If different from Main Contact<br>If the Centre Manager is to be involved in the delivery of assessments, such as invigilating and/or marking, they must be registered for these roles separately | Max 1 | Max 1 | Max 1 | Max 1 | |
| Invigilators | Required to oversee assessments, ensuring that they are completed under assessment conditions. | Min 2 | Min 2 | Min 2 | Min 2 | Min 2<br>(not applicable if delivering Professional Business Analysis only) |
| Tutors/Trainers | For all Digital IT Apprenticeship standards and BCS Professional Certifications | | | | Min 2 per standard | Min 1 per certification |
| Tutors/Trainers | For Business Analysis Professional Level and ISTQB/ASTQB | | | | | Min 2 per certification |
| Administrator | Assists with administration tasks within your organisation such as purchasing registration credits, registering learners and record keeping | Y | | Y | | Y |
| Internal Verifier | | | Min 1 | | Min 1 per standard | |
| Assessor | | | Min 1 | | | |
| Business Coach | | | | | Y | |

# 6. Third Party Relationships

You must advise us if you enter into third party relationships detailed below. It is your responsibility for ensuring that these organisations abide by BCS requirements when delivering training and running the examinations. This also includes compliance with advertising in accordance with our Brand Guidelines.

### 6.1     Affiliates

Where an organisation does not wish to apply for accreditation in its own right it may offer BCS Professional Certifications as an affiliate of an Accredited Provider. In these cases, a formal agreement must exist between the Accredited Provider and the Affiliate. Affiliates must only deliver training using the approved course materials and trainers registered with BCS by the Accredited Provider. All exams must be booked by the Accredited Provider on behalf of the affiliate.

### 6.2     Brokers / Resellers

A broker or reseller is a third-party organisation which enters into a formal agreement with an Accredited Provider to advertise, sell or schedule courses on behalf of the Accredited Provider.

### 6.3     Training Companies (Education Only)

An Accredited Provider may use a third-party training company to deliver the learning of BCS qualification and certifications.
For example, a School may contract a training company to teach the content of a BCS qualification/certification.

It is important for Accredited Providers to note that third-party training companies cannot be involved in any aspect of live assessments.

## 7.  Maintaining your Accreditation

As an Accredited Provider you will be periodically audited to ensure that our requirements are being successfully met and that you and we remain compliant with our regulators.

Audits are undertaken in a number of ways; as a planned visit from one of our Auditors or by telephone from an Auditor or a member of the Channel Partner Quality Team. Our approach will be risk based and will take into account your organisational structure, output and history.

We also reserve the right to conduct unannounced audit visits and to contact your learners for their feedback. Learners under the age of 18 will not be contacted without prior consent.

The audit will review:

- Management and Controls, staff management and quality assurance procedures
- Data held by BCS about your organisation, sites and staff
- Adherence to BCS policies and procedures
- Qualifications and/or certifications being delivered now and, in the future,
- Training and assessment process and practices carried out
- Appropriate record keeping and information security
- Performance reviews per qualification/certification and trainer/tutor
- Course quality (including review of courseware and learning materials)

Following completion of the audit, the Main Contact and/or Centre Manager will be provided with a report detailing the outcome and findings. The report will also include any actions required to maintain your accreditation.

BCS reserve the right to suspend or withdraw your accreditation completely or for specific qualifications and/or certifications if you are not meeting the requirements set out in the Operational Requirements Manual or are in breach of contract.

# 8. Course Materials

For all qualifications and certifications that you are delivering, you should have one complete set of course materials.

Typical course materials include:

- Session plan and/or timetable, cross referenced to the syllabus
- Slide deck
- Candidate hand-outs, including exercises and answers

You may choose to use other material as part of the course materials such as glossaries, sample papers and answer keys written by your organisation, books, pocket guides, pre- reading recommendations, apps, study aids or revision material.

Your courseware may be subject to a full review as part of your audit. This will be requested by the Auditor as part of your audit preparation.

If you are delivering the Professional Level Business Analysis or the ISTQB/ASTQB Software Testing certifications, your course materials must be approved by BCS prior to accreditation being granted. This courseware will go through a comprehensive review to ensure that it meets the requirements of the syllabus. If during the review, it is identified that changes are required, we will provide a report outlining the areas to be addressed. Depending on the nature of the changes, you may need to resubmit the amended material for a partial review if the changes are minor or a full review if the changes are significant. There is no fee payable for a partial review, however a full review would incur a charge.

Accredited Providers may licence their course materials to other organisations which may then apply for accreditation. Such organisations will be required to undergo the entire accreditation process. There must be a formal agreement in place between the licensor and licensee.

Full requirements of the courseware for these certifications are available in the Course and Trainer Requirements Manual l. These can also be used as a guide for developing your own courseware even if your materials do not require assessment.

# 9. Advertising and Promotion

One of the benefits of being an Accredited Training Provider is that you will be given access to use the BCS logo once accreditation has been given. Unless you are accredited by BCS as a Training Provider you are not authorised to use the logo and we will take appropriate steps to enforce this. Training Providers who enter relationships with Affiliates or Brokers will be required by BCS to ensure that they do not use BCS logos. You must not state that you have or are about to get accreditation by BCS until you have the letter of confirmation.

Your accreditation may be withdrawn if you, do not comply with the IP requirements as laid out in the BCS Brand Guidelines.

For the Professional Level Business Analysis and ISTQB/ASTQB Software Testing certifications, you are not permitted to advertise more courses than you are able to deliver at any one time, i.e. the number of adverts for a particular course on a particular date cannot exceed the number of approved trainers you have available for that course.

We will monitor your website and your affiliates and brokers to ensure they are compliant with the relevant IPR and advertising requirements.