

# ACCREDITATION PROCESS GUIDE

## TOP TIPS AND FAQs

### **My organisation is interested in becoming ONF Accredited – where can I find more information?**

Read about the ONF Towards Excellence Accreditation award on our website: [Accreditation \(onenhsfinance.nhs.uk\)](https://www.onenhsfinance.nhs.uk/accr)

### **I have downloaded the proformas and am ready to start the process, where should I begin?**

Decide which level you are able to apply for and consult the corresponding proforma. Review your organisation's performance against each of the criteria in the six standards and make a note of what evidence you can produce to support your assessment. This will help you to identify which areas you need to work on before you apply.

### **What would be the best way to get others involved?**

Many organisations find it easier to set up a small working group, with each member of the group taking responsibility for a different section of the proforma. Each of the group members can then discuss the proforma with their teams and use the process to identify areas for improvement. Apprentices or students may wish to get involved and use the process as part of their studies. Consider feeding back progress during regular team meetings and celebrate together the successes you achieve during the process.

### **Is any kind of formal sign-off required before we can submit our application?**

For level one, once you have completed your review, discuss it with your FD/CFO and ask them to confirm in writing that they agree with your assessment. When you have your FD/ CFO's sign-off please email it with the completed proforma to the ONF team at [one.finance@nhs.net](mailto:one.finance@nhs.net). They will then review your application and may contact you for further information. When your application has been reviewed and sufficient evidence has been provided, your application will be presented at one of the Finance Leadership Council (FLC) meetings which occur three times a year.

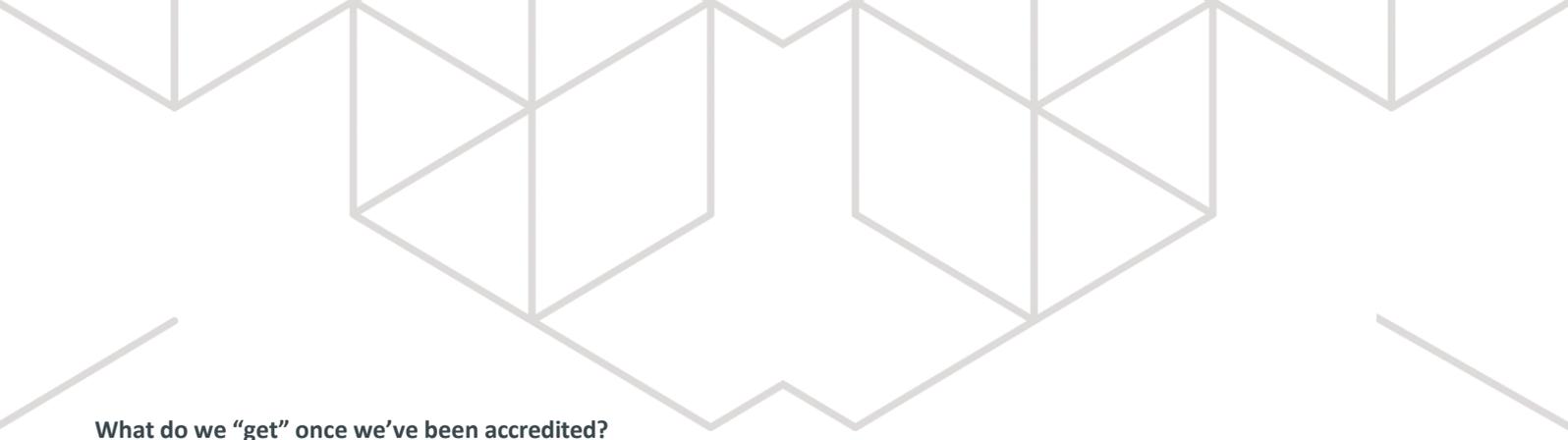
For levels two and three, your application needs to be peer-reviewed by a colleague from an accredited organisation. When you have completed your evidence proforma, please contact the ONF team at [one.finance@nhs.net](mailto:one.finance@nhs.net) and we will arrange for a peer-reviewer to go through your evidence with you. When the reviewer confirms you have completed the proforma correctly and given sufficient evidence, they will write a brief report approving your organisation's application. Your application will then be sent to the next FLC meeting for formal approval.

“Having been part of the North West Towards Excellence Accreditation process and being awarded Level 3 accreditation, both the finance team and the wider organisation at NHS Bolton CCG recognise the importance of the external recognition that we have the very best finance skills development culture and practices in place. ONF accreditation has allowed us to build on the North West scheme and bring an added focus on promoting the national work of ONF and making the best use of the ONF toolkits available.

We are proud to have been the first organisation in the country to have been awarded ONF Accreditation.”

Jackie Murray

Deputy Chief Finance Officer, NHS Bolton  
Clinical Commissioning Group



### **What do we “get” once we’ve been accredited?**

After formal approval has been given by FLC, a certificate will be sent to you to recognise that your organisation has the very best finance skills development culture and practices in place. Staff in your finance team will also be entitled to display the relevant ONF Accreditation logo on emails and letters.

### **How long does accreditation last?**

The ONF Towards Excellence Accreditation award lasts for three years, after which you will need to seek re-accreditation by following the same process.

### **Can our organisation go for level two or three straight away?**

To achieve level two accreditation, you should be able to demonstrate that you meet the all the criteria for level one as well as level two, and for level three you must meet the criteria for all three levels. It is recommended that you leave up to a year before reapplying to ensure you have gathered sufficient evidence for level two and three applications.

### **Our organisation has been accredited, or is seeking accreditation, as part of the North West Towards Excellence scheme. What should we do next?**

Organisations in the patch covered by North West FSD should contact the FSD team in the first instance, as we have worked with them to ensure that our Accreditation process works together with the North West’s Towards Excellence process.

