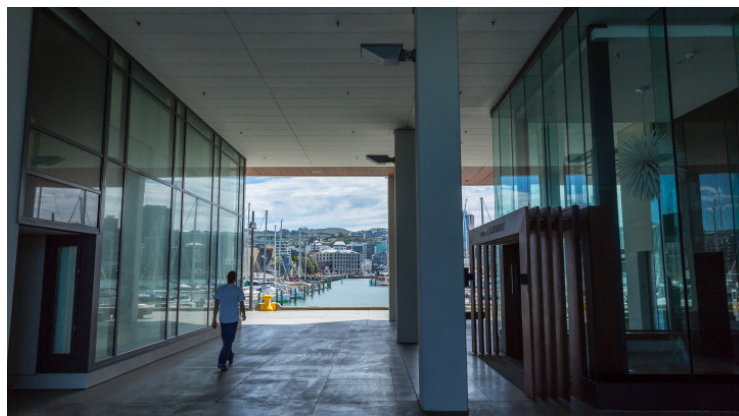
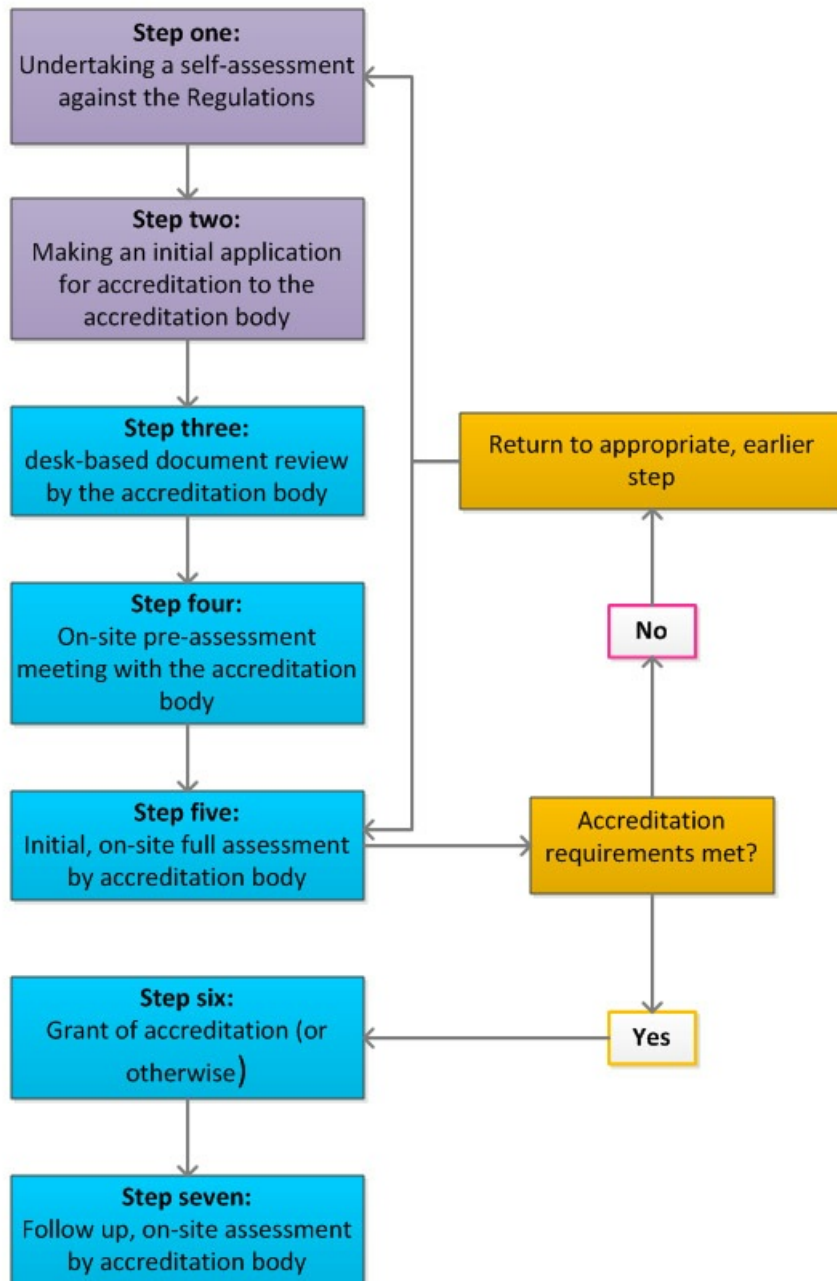


Key steps in the accreditation process

Last updated: 10 April 2017

There are up to seven key steps in the process to become an accredited organisation. It is important to note that to become a building consent authority, an accredited organisation must also be registered.





Step one: undertaking a self-assessment

Organisations or individuals that want to become an accredited organisation or building consent authority (BCA) should undertake a self-assessment of their policies, procedures and systems against the accreditation requirements set out in the Building (Accreditation of Building Consent Authorities) Regulations 2006 (the Regulations) and in the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's (MBIE) regulatory guidance. MBIE's guidance details what is appropriate for purpose for each of the Regulations to support applicants, accredited organisations and BCAs to gain and maintain compliance with accreditation requirements. The regulatory guidance includes checklists for the minimum criteria that must be met – these can be used to undertake a self-assessment.

Undertaking a thorough self-assessment should support an applicant to be prepared for the next steps in the accreditation process and assist in making an application for accreditation.

Potential applicants can seek further clarification on the accreditation requirements before making a formal application. Information on making a request for further advice or guidance can be found in the regulatory guidance. Applicants should also contact the accreditation body to discuss the accreditation process in more detail.

At the self-assessment stage a potential applicant should communicate about a prospective application for accreditation to all employees and contractors who might be involved in the application process and initial assessment. Key stakeholders should be informed about the:

- requirements of the Regulations, and the minimum standards and criteria for accreditation
- upcoming pre-assessment meeting that will enable questions to be asked about the accreditation process
- fact that they may be interviewed and observed as part of the assessment process.

Potential applicants should also think about whether to communicate with, for example:

- human resources, which may hold records of job descriptions, performance and training plans
- ICT, which may be responsible for electronic record systems
- procurement, which may be responsible for organisation-wide procurement protocols and practice
- other technical teams, which may support the delivery of building control functions.

The Building (Accreditation of Building Consent Authorities) Regulations 2006 (<http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2006/0399/latest/DLM424665.html>) are available on the Legislation website.

Detailed regulatory guidance on the BCA accreditation scheme (<https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/detailed-regulatory-guidance/>) has further information.

Contact details for the accreditation body (<http://www.ianz.govt.nz/contact/>) can be found on their website.

Step two: making an initial application

Applications for accreditation must be made to the accreditation body. They must be addressed to:

Programme Manager: Building Consent Authority Accreditation
International Accreditation New Zealand
Private Bag 28908, Remuera, Auckland 1541

The applicant must be confident of meeting all the accreditation requirements and applications must be made supplying all available information requested in the application form.

Please note that all available information requested to accompany the application form must be provided to the accreditation body in hard copy, printed single-sided, un-bound and appropriately indexed.

Before making an application, an applicant should ensure that they understand the application fee structure. The accreditation body will provide a fee estimate in advance of their assessment of an application. A detailed invoice will be provided when their request for payment is made.

Applying as a BCA cluster

It is possible for accredited BCAs that are part of a territorial authority or regional authority to join together as a cluster and use a single set of policies, procedures and systems to deliver their consenting functions. An application can be made for them to be assessed and accredited as a BCA cluster.

To make an application for accreditation as a BCA cluster, the cluster must:

- **nominate a single authorised representative** for their engagement with the accreditation body and provide evidence that the person has the endorsement of all the BCAs within the cluster. This evidence could include a Memorandum of Understanding or Terms of Reference (or an equivalent document) setting out the cluster's agreements for delivering its consenting functions
- **provide all of the information required on the application form** with an organisational chart clearly detailing the:
 - management structure for the cluster (and across all the BCAs) – the administrative and management authorities should be clear
 - roles of employees and contractors who will be performing building control functions within the cluster.

Form 1: Initial application for accreditation

[DOCX 106 KB]

<https://www.building.govt.nz/assets/Uploads/building-officials/bca-accreditation/form1-initial-application-accreditation.docx>

<https://www.building.govt.nz> Applying for a limited scope of accreditation

Section 252 of the Building Act 2004 (the Act) requires that the accreditation body determine the scope of accreditation for a private organisation or person applying to be a BCA. It states that the scope of accreditation can relate to one or more types of building the private organisation or person can undertake consenting functions for. The initial application for accreditation includes the requirement for a private organisation or person to provide a statement of the scope of accreditation they are applying for.

To apply for a limited scope of accreditation, the applicant must detail the:

- types of buildings they wish to undertake building control functions for, and
- building control functions they wish to undertake.

Detailing the types of building

The National BCA competency assessment system assessment levels provide the foundation for limited, technical scopes of accreditation.

Level	Description
Residential 1	Residential outbuildings and ancillary buildings as defined by the Building Regulations 1992. This includes single household detached dwellings designed to a common standard that are single storey and have an E2/AS1 risk matrix score less than or equal to 6.
Residential 2	Detached dwellings designed to a common standard that are less than or equal to two storeys and have an E2/AS1 risk matrix score less than or equal to 12.
Residential 3	Detached dwellings or other dwellings that are less than or equal to three storeys but limited to vertical plane fire separation and direct egress to the outside and have an E2/AS1 risk matrix score of 13–20. This level also includes specifically designed residential cladding systems, components, detailing and junctions where a risk matrix score of greater than 20 has been calculated.
Commercial 1	Commercial, industrial and communal non-residential buildings and their associated outbuildings and ancillary buildings equal to or less than two storeys and an occupancy load of equal to or less than 100 people. Sleeping Residential or Sleeping Accommodation buildings up to two stories and with horizontal fire separation.
Commercial 2	Commercial, industrial, communal residential and communal non-residential buildings equal to or less than four storeys and an occupancy load of equal to or less than 500 people. Sleeping care or sleeping detention facilities that are single storey.
Commercial 3	All uses of buildings that are over four storeys high, or contain over 500 occupants, or sleeping care or sleeping detention facilities greater than single storey.
Other	Building control functions that are not consent, inspection or code compliance decision making including applications for project information memoranda (PIM), the issuing of compliance schedules and the making of notices to fix (NTF).

It is also possible for an applicant to apply for a limited scope of accreditation for a specific building type or building component as long as it can be clearly defined and delineated. For example, domestic solid fuel burning appliances being installed consistently with AS/NZS 2918: 2001 Domestic solid fuel burning appliances – installation with no modifications.

Building control functions

The building control functions that an applicant may be accredited to undertake are listed in regulation 3 of the Regulations and include:

- building consent application processing
- building inspections
- code compliance certificate inspections.

The applicant must make specific reference to the sections in the Act detailing the functions they wish to be accredited to undertake.

Where an application is made for a limited scope of accreditation, the applicant's policies, procedures and/or systems must show that the organisation has a clear understanding of its potential scope of accreditation. An applicant should also have policies and procedures to ensure that it does not accept applications that fall outside of its accredited scope – they should include the mechanism they will use to inform potential customers of their scope.

Note that a private organisation must be accredited to process building consent applications, undertake building inspections and issue code compliance certificates for one or more types of buildings in order to subsequently be registered as a BCA.

Applying under the ISO Standard

Applications for accreditation can be made under the AS/NZS/ISO/IEC: 17020:2013 Conformity assessment – Requirements for the operation of various types of bodies performing inspection (the ISO Standard). Where this is the case, the accreditation requirements of the scheme continue to apply to delivery of all the building control functions described in regulation 3 of the Regulations. This means:

- any application for accreditation under the ISO Standard must include all the requirements on the application form but the accreditation body may require additional information to satisfy any further requirements of the ISO Standard

- all the accreditation requirements in the Regulations must be met for the accreditation body to be satisfied that the applicant has met the accreditation requirements. Meeting these accreditation requirements is all that is required for accreditation and these requirements take precedence. The accreditation body may apply further requirements to satisfy the requirements of the ISO Standard.

Where an application is made for accreditation under the ISO Standard, the organisation's delivery of its building control functions will be assessed as a scope of accreditation. The fees for accreditation assessments will be payable for the assessment of the BCA scope. There may be additional fees for additional matters related to the accreditation assessment under the ISO Standard.

Further detail about applying for accreditation under the ISO Standard may be sought from the accreditation body. But, if there is a disagreement about the accreditation requirements for the BCA scope, the accreditation scheme's agreed approach to resolving the issues must be followed.

The following can be found on the Legislation website:

- [The Building Act 2004 \(http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2004/0072/latest/DLM306036.html\)](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/2004/0072/latest/DLM306036.html)
- [Building Regulations 1992 \(http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/1992/0150/latest/DLM162570.html\)](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/1992/0150/latest/DLM162570.html)

[National BCA competency assessment system \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/national-bca-competency-assessment-system/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/national-bca-competency-assessment-system/) has further information.

[External moisture – a guide to using the risk matrix \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/e-moisture/e2-external-moisture/external-moisture-guide-to-e2as1-risk-matrix/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-code-compliance/e-moisture/e2-external-moisture/external-moisture-guide-to-e2as1-risk-matrix/) provides guidance on the E2/AS1 approach to weathertightness.

Step three: desk-based document review by the accreditation body

Once an application has been made to the accreditation body, it will conduct a desk-based documentation review of the information provided. This will include reviewing the policies, procedures and systems that will support the applicant's delivery of building control functions. The review will assess whether the policies, procedures and systems comply with the accreditation requirements that are set out in the Regulations and further clarified in MBIE's regulatory guidance.

The accreditation body may identify examples of non-compliance in the applicant's documentation. Where this is the case, the lead assessor will advise the authorised representative. The lead assessor will agree on the evidence required for the accreditation body to be satisfied that the non-compliance has been addressed. A timeframe for the provision of the evidence must also be agreed, however, the onus is on the applicant as the application process will not progress until all policies, procedures and systems are considered to meet accreditation requirements.

Requests for additional information

The accreditation body may seek further information from an applicant during its document review if it considers this to be necessary to ascertain compliance with accreditation requirements. Where this is the case, the lead assessor will advise the authorised representative of the:

- additional information required
- accreditation requirement that necessitates the collection of the information
- timeframe in which the information is to be provided to the accreditation body.

Step four: on-site, pre-assessment meeting

The accreditation body will arrange an on-site, pre-assessment meeting between the accreditation body's lead assessor and the applicant's authorised representative, along with any employees, contractors and other key organisational representatives. Examples of key organisational representatives could include human resources, ICT, procurement and any technical teams that will support the delivery of the applicant's building control functions.

The purpose of the pre-assessment meeting is to discuss the next steps in the accreditation process which involves an initial, on-site full assessment (and may involve a follow up, on-site assessment). It provides an opportunity for the accreditation body and the applicant to have a shared understanding of the assessment process.

The lead assessor may also use the meeting, and time at the applicant's office, to:

- familiarise themselves with the applicant's offices, equipment and physical systems
- consider and plan potential case study visits to be undertaken during the on-site full assessment
- confirm other logistical or administrative arrangements for the on-site assessment.

A full day should be set aside for this meeting (although it may not take this long and not all staff will be required at all times). The lead assessor and authorised representative should work together to plan an agenda for the day.

Step five: initial, on-site full assessment

The accreditation body will undertake an initial, on-site full assessment of the applicant. Applicants will be asked to provide an appropriate liaison person for the lead assessor and assessment team to work with for the duration of the assessment. This person should hold sufficient authority to ensure assessors have access to all relevant documents, records, facilities and equipment, and employees or contractors.

First time applicants: Applicants being assessed for the first time should not be independently performing building control functions because they are not accredited and therefore not registered as a BCA. A BCA must be registered and maintain registration to independently perform building control functions. It is otherwise an offence under section 199 of the Act. An applicant will initially be assessed on the documentation they provide and the policies, procedures and system they have put in place to support future operations.

The stages within the on-site full assessment are detailed below and include:

- an entry meeting
- review of records of implemented policies, procedures and systems
- interviews with employees and contractors and other key organisational representatives
- the witnessing of activities
- an exit meeting.

As at step three, the accreditation body may identify examples of non-compliance during the on-site assessment. Where this is the case, it will request evidence that it has been addressed before moving to step six.

The entry meeting

The on-site, full assessment will begin with an entry meeting between the accreditation body's assessment team and the applicant's management team including the responsible manager and authorised representative. If the responsible manager is unavailable, they may delegate to another manager or senior employee. MBIE may also attend the entry meeting and any assessments.

Those attending the entry meeting will, among other matters:

- confirm and finalise the timetable and scope of the assessment
- address any immediate queries that the assessment team or applicant may have.

The review of records

The assessment will include a review of records of the implementation of all policies, procedures and systems if they are available. This may include examining:

- human resource records, including job descriptions, performance and training plans
- ICT systems and records
- procurement records, which may include records of requests for services and contracts
- other technical records that are relevant to the delivery of building control functions.

The assessment will also include an examination of the required facilities and equipment.

Some of the systems and records that the assessment team will examine may be personally or commercially sensitive. The team will be aware of this and have an obligation to maintain all confidences.

Interviews with employees and contractors

The assessment will include interviews, where possible, with:

- managers leading teams that perform building control work
- consent processing, inspection or code compliance certificate employees or contractors
- technical leaders and those doing technical jobs
- the quality assurance manager/s.

Interviews are intended to assure the assessment team that the policies, procedures and systems required for accreditation have been consistently and effectively implemented. In some cases, the systems required will not be 'owned' by the applicant or BCA, but by a different person or department in the parent organisation. Where this is the case, the assessment team may need to interview the organisational representatives responsible for a policy, procedure or system.

The witnessing of activities

The assessment will include, where possible, the witnessing of the activities of employees or contractors performing building control functions. This may include witnessing of consent decision-making and inspections where permission has been granted to the assessment team.

The witnessing of decision-making will generally be through discussion with the decision-maker. The assessor will choose a sample of applications or decisions to be witnessed that are representative of the decisions made by the organisation or BCA.

Throughout the on-site full assessment applicants should ensure there is frequent and robust engagement with the lead assessor and assessment team members to enable discussion about:

- opportunities for improvements to the required policies, procedures and systems
- the scope and range of building control functions performed
- clarification of possible non-compliance with accreditation requirements.

Any discussions about improvements will not affect the granting of accreditation where the accreditation requirements have been met.

The exit meeting

Following the review of records, interview and witnessing of activities, the lead assessor and assessment team will hold a private meeting to discuss the assessment results. This is a usual practice and the meeting may be held on-site at the applicant's premise. At this stage, the assessment team must gather the necessary evidence to support any non-compliance it has found.

Following the private meeting, the accreditation team will hold an exit meeting with the authorised representative. The purpose of the meeting is to share the results of assessment that will then be written up and formally sent to the Chief Executive and the authorised representative.

An applicant's responsible manager and other key organisational representatives should attend the exit meeting, along with the authorised representative. This ensures a shared understanding of the assessment results and agreement to the next steps.

If there are no areas of non-compliance with accreditation requirements, the accreditation body will move on to step six in the initial application process – granting accreditation.

Where non-compliance has been found, the lead assessor will detail this in the exit meeting and provide evidence. Where the applicant disagrees with the finding, this will be discussed with the lead assessor. If agreement cannot be reached, the process for disagreements about accreditation requirements will be followed.

When agreement about the non-compliance is reached, the lead assessor will provide guidance on the type of evidence that will be required to demonstrate that the non-compliance has been corrected and agree a timeframe in which it will be corrected with the authorised representative. It is not usual practice for the lead assessor to direct an applicant to take a particular course of action to address non-compliance. However, they may provide advice as to best practice or good practice in comparable BCAs.

Any non-compliance that is determined to be:

- serious non-compliance may result in the need for further on-site assessment to demonstrate that it has been corrected
- general non-compliance may not result in the need for further on-site assessment unless the non-compliances result in a concern about ongoing compliance with accreditation requirements.

The accreditation body will not move to step six in the initial application process unless satisfied that all non-compliance has been corrected.

[Disagreements about accreditation requirements and processes \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/disagreements-about-accreditation-requirements-and-processes/\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/disagreements-about-accreditation-requirements-and-processes/)

The following definitions can be found in the glossary:

- [Independently perform building control functions \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/terms-and-abbreviations/#independently\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/terms-and-abbreviations/#independently)
- [Serious non-compliance \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/terms-and-abbreviations/#serious\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/terms-and-abbreviations/#serious)
- [General non-compliance \(https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/terms-and-abbreviations/#general\)](https://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/bca-accreditation/terms-and-abbreviations/#general)

Step six: grant of accreditation (or otherwise)

After the initial on-site assessment process, and the applicant satisfactorily addressing any non-compliance, the accreditation body will determine:

- whether it is satisfied that the applicant has met the accreditation requirements
- any limitations of scope that might be applied to the applicant.

The application will then be referred to a member of the Professional Advisory Committee (the PAC). The PAC member will review the application file, from an accreditation system perspective, to ensure the accreditation process followed by the lead assessor and assessment team was objective and appropriate.

The accreditation body will grant accreditation to an applicant when it:

- is satisfied that the applicant has met all of the accreditation requirements
- receives confirmation from the PAC member that the process was appropriate
- receives formal notification stating the applicant agrees to comply with accreditation requirements
- has received full payment of the accreditation fees.

The Certificate of Accreditation

A Certificate of Accreditation will be supplied to the accredited organisation, along with the notification of the organisation's next accreditation assessment. MBIE will also be notified of the grant of accreditation consistent with section 255 of the Act. A copy of the assessment report will also be sent to MBIE for information (and any follow up actions that it may consider necessary).

Accredited organisations must not use their accreditation to imply:

- that they are a BCA unless they have applied for and been granted registration
- approval by MBIE or the accreditation body of any consented or inspected building.

Accreditation reports or certificates (or parts of them) issued by the accreditation body may be made public but must be accurately described.

Section 193 of the Act provides that a person whose name is entered on the Register of Building Consent Authorities may perform the functions of a BCA. It is otherwise an offence to independently perform the functions of a BCA.

[Building Consent Authorities Register \(http://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/find-a-bca/\)](http://www.building.govt.nz/building-officials/find-a-bca/)

Step seven: follow up, on-site assessment

The accreditation body may undertake a follow up on-site assessment, within a six-month timeframe of the initial assessment, of an accredited organisation. At this assessment, the accreditation body will confirm that the organisation has maintained compliance with the accreditation requirements while actually performing building control functions under authority from a registered BCA, or after the organisation has registered as a BCA. They may undertake one or more of the steps in an initial, on-site full assessment.

As with the earlier steps, the accreditation body may identify examples of non-compliance and request evidence that they have been addressed. If the organisation fails to address non-compliance, the accreditation body will notify the Chief Executive and the authorised representative. The accreditation body will also notify MBIE.

- with compliance with the Building Act, it is published under section 175 of the Building Act
- with a Weathertight Services claim, it is published under section 12 of the Weathertight Homes Resolution Services Act 2006.