

Applying for accreditation

(updated February 2019)

This document contains instructions for those wishing to apply to AEA-Europe for the status of Associate, Practitioner or Fellow of the Association

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INTRODUCTION

AEA-Europe's professional accreditation scheme was first launched in 2007. The scheme provides members of the Association with the opportunity to have their assessment knowledge, skills and expertise recognised through the award of the status of Associate, Practitioner and Fellow of the Association.

This document describes the scheme in more detail and particularly provides information for those wishing to apply for accreditation at the two higher levels of Practitioner and Fellow.

Those who wish to apply for accreditation at any level should either be individual members of AEA-Europe or named individuals from a corporate member. They should show that they are willing to participate in the activities of AEA-Europe and also to support its principles and objectives.

Applications should be uploaded to the AEA-Europe website (www.AEA-Europe.net), via the submissions area. Applications can be submitted at any time, but if made by 31 August an evaluation decision will be guaranteed in time for the award to be presented at the November conference in that same year.

Language of submission

Generally the applications for accreditation will be in English. However, supporting materials, such as published papers, can be submitted in their original language.

The evaluation process

Applications for accreditation will be evaluated independently by two Fellows of the Association, using the evaluation criteria outlined in detail in following sections. If the two evaluations have different conclusions, a third review will be conducted by a new Fellow. Should an applicant wish to appeal a negative decision the Council will serve as the Appeals Board.

Appeals

Where candidates feel that they have been refused accreditation unjustly, they can appeal on the following grounds:

- (a) the agreed procedures have not been followed
- (b) the evaluators have not considered particular pieces of evidence.

Appeals cannot be made against the collective view of the evaluating committee that the evidence supplied did not demonstrate that the criteria had been met.

Appeals will need to be made in writing, giving grounds for the appeal, to the Council of AEA-Europe. The Council will discuss the case at the first available Council Meeting. If the Council is satisfied that the correct procedure has not been followed or that proper consideration has not been given to the evidence, then the matter will be referred back for re-evaluation. If the Council is satisfied that the correct procedure has been followed and proper consideration given to the evidence, the appeal will be dismissed.

ASSOCIATE STATUS

Applicants for Associate status will generally be starting to work professionally in assessment, in universities, examination boards, development agencies, publishers and similar.

They should

- be in a position in which they can put into effect their knowledge of the principles and practice of assessment (see below);
- draw up a professional development plan to show how they intend to improve their professional knowledge and competence in assessment. This could include an outline of courses in assessment that the applicant intends to attend;

Criteria for applicants for Associate Status

Assessment practitioners applying for Associate status are expected to engage in activities in which they:

- acquire relevant knowledge and skills in assessment;
- gain experience relevant to the development, use, analysis or evaluation of assessments (this may include teaching experience at an appropriate level);
- identify appropriate ranges of assessment methods that will deliver fair, valid and reliable results, in line with the agreed purpose of each assessment, ensuring equality of opportunity in the design and application of assessment procedures;
- gain some experience of developing and constructing assessment materials, and/or of designing test trials;
- contribute to writing project materials and/or reports;
- start to contribute to proposals for the development of assessment materials;
- conduct assessments according to agreed procedures in a fair, consistent and equal manner and/or analyse performance data from them appropriately;
- apply, as part of a project team, assessment principles and come to understand the contribution of their work to meeting project targets.

Teachers applying for Associate status are expected to engage in activities in which they:

- ensure that the assessment process they use in their teaching and assessment practice is, as a whole, coherent and understandable to learners;
- create realistic and relevant assessment activities that encourage learning as well as assessing specified outcomes that meet institutional and external requirements;
- establish the required conditions for assessment and provide the necessary resources;
- record assessment results following their institution's procedures;
- encourage learners to feel ownership of their assessment records in monitoring and reviewing their own progress;
- ensure that learners are provided with clear and constructive feedback on assessment outcomes within an appropriate timescale.

In reflecting on the outcomes of assessments, Associates will

- make effective use of assessment information to identify the ways in which the assessed activities might be improved;
- provide assessment information to appropriate stakeholders;
- evaluate their own theoretical and practical knowledge of assessment;
- draw up an outline for a portfolio of work that can eventually be used to apply for AEA-Europe Practitioner status.

Applications must be accompanied by a statement of intent to develop professionally in the field of assessment and to apply in due course for Practitioner status. An application form is included as Appendix 1.

PRACTITIONER STATUS

Criteria for applications for Practitioner status

Candidates for Practitioner status will be assessed on the basis of evidence which shows that they:

- have a breadth of professional **knowledge** of assessment and understand the wider professional context of their work;
- are able to reflect critically on and **evaluate** their own service performance;
- are committed to continuing **professional development** for themselves and, where possible, for others;
- are able to analyse their professional performance and progression with reference to **sound developmental goals**.

Applicants will be able to show that in the course of their work they have been involved in some of the following activities:

- gained a first and normally a higher degree;
- gained a range of relevant experience, knowledge and skills in assessment development, administration or research. If relevant, this may include teaching experience at an appropriate level;
- written assessment materials for different purposes and contributed as a writer to the publication of these. Such materials might include those relating to test development, assessment administration, policy and planning, or research (see appendix 2 concerning content);
- understood the process for a full cycle of development and delivery of a test, assessment or examination, and been responsible for parts of it;
- worked independently through a range of established assessment or examination procedures, and reflected on and written evaluations of them;
- prepared written materials for test users, and written reports for or participated in presentations at meetings and review groups.

Cross reference to European Qualifications Framework

With reference to level 5* of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), these are the kinds of outcome expected for accreditation as an AEA-Europe Practitioner:

- **Knowledge.** Comprehensive, specialised, factual and theoretical knowledge within a field of work or study, and an awareness of the boundaries of that knowledge
- **Skills.** A comprehensive range of cognitive and practical skills required to develop creative solutions to abstract problems
- **Competence.** Exercise management and supervision in contexts of work or study activities where there is unpredictable change. Review and develop performance of self and others.

*The level of performance expected for Practitioner status will be at the border between the current Levels 4 and 5 in the EQF.

Form of application

Applications for Practitioner status should be supported by a portfolio of work which illustrates the applicant's professional development. The expected elements in the portfolio are shown in the box below.

Portfolio structure

The application portfolio should have a lead document (max. 5 pages) containing:

- a table of contents;
- A brief personal statement which sets out why the applicant believes a Practitioner status should be awarded, and shows how the applicant's professional contributions address each of the criteria. This would include:
 - A condensed personal bio (current and previous relevant position, work duties, responsibilities etc.);
 - evidence which shows that the applicant understands the principles underlying high-quality in assessment and is able to analyse and apply these in the context of his/her work;
 - a personal, evaluative statement about the applicant's experience in assessment which briefly explains why the materials in the portfolio were chosen;
 - describes outcomes of the professional development work the applicant has been involved with;
 - evaluates the contribution of that work to the applicant's professional development;
 - provides evidence of participation in training, consultancy or mentoring in assessment for his/her own self-development, as well as for others;
 - a personal professional development plan;

Note:

The Association welcomes applications from those in administrative as well as in academic posts. However, the Association is aware of the difficulties of providing suitable evidence for those who do not have the opportunity to publish. Where an applicant's contribution is not in the form of publications, the content of the personal statement and letters of support will be particularly important.

It is also recognised that applicants are often reluctant to claim their contribution in the case of shared authorship. On this occasion they are encouraged to claim and to describe their personal contributions in order to facilitate evaluation. The letters of support should endorse the applicants' claims in this regard.

Attachments to support the application

Evidence will generally include articles published or other relevant professional writings; courses run or attended; relevant work undertaken as part of employment (including both servicing assessment and examination development and teaching). Support from others for the application is required; this can take the form of employer's statements, colleagues' endorsements, certificates of course attendance, etc. The portfolio should include:

- A complete CV;
- written support from *two* other assessment professionals, or senior colleagues or employers, who can comment on the applicant's suitability for admission to the register of Practitioners. These comments will refer to the person's commitment to his/her own professional development in assessment. *The supporters should understand that they are being asked specifically to confirm the original and substantial nature of the applicant's personal contribution in cases where it might not be easy for the evaluators to decide on published evidence alone.*

In addition to these the actual evidence provided with the application will be determined by the candidate, and would typically include some of the following:

- (a) In the case of articles (or other documents) authored by the candidate, a full bibliography and a selected set of **three** documents in full (which the candidate believes to be particularly relevant as evidence of meeting the criteria) should be provided.
- (b) In the case of formal courses attended, the following would normally be provided: the name and dates of the course; the institution running it; the syllabus (or list of content covered); the names and qualifications of the teachers; proof of attendance; any certificate demonstrating successful participation in the course.
- (c) In the case of assessment research undertaken (but not published), an account of the research should be provided, together with a statement from the Research Director indicating the applicant's role in the project(s).
- (d) In the case of teaching, a statement of the content covered, the teaching methods, a selection of lecture notes or similar and a statement from the Head of Department should be provided.
- (e) In the case of assessment development work, an account of the project or product or course which was worked on should be provided, together with a statement from the Project Director (or similar) stating the applicant's role.

In all cases, supporting statements from relevant managers or colleagues would provide additional evidence.

FELLOW STATUS

Fellowship is the highest professional recognition given by AEA-Europe. It shows that a member has demonstrated a high level of professionalism in his/her personal practice and made important contributions to the assessment profession as a whole.

Candidates for a Fellowship will be assessed on the basis of evidence which shows their:

- substantial **achievement** in professional practice;
- significant **contribution** to all or (a specialised) part of the assessment profession;
- active commitment to continuing **professional development** for themselves and for others;
- evidence of significant participation in **training**, mentoring or informing other assessment professionals;
- current membership of AEA-Europe, and **willingness to participate** in the Association (for example, by contributing to AEA-Europe conferences).

Applicants will be able to show that in the course of their career they have:

- gained the range of knowledge and competencies required for admission as a Practitioner, or a high level of specialisation in one or more areas;
- enhanced their evaluative and analytical skills and applied them in the sphere of professional activity reflected in the application;
- made an original contribution to the development of professional knowledge, through professional practice, research or publication;
- developed and improved existing skills and acquired and applied new ones;
- continued to develop both professionally and intellectually, with growing evidence of innovative or original approaches to problems or applications of professional skills;
- within their own field made an important national or international contribution to assessment.

Cross reference to European Qualifications Framework

With reference to level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF), these are the kinds of outcome expected for accreditation as an AEA-Europe Fellow:

- **Knowledge.** Highly specialised knowledge some of which is at the forefront of knowledge in a field of work or study, as the basis for original thinking. Critical awareness of knowledge issues in a field and at the interface between different fields.
- **Skills.** Specialised problem-solving skills required in research or innovation in order to develop new knowledge and procedures and to integrate knowledge from different fields
- **Competence.** Manage and transform work or study contexts that are complex, unpredictable and require new strategic approaches. Take responsibility for contributing to professional knowledge and practice and/or for reviewing the strategic performance of teams.

Form of application

Applications for the status of Fellow should be supported by a portfolio of work which illustrates the applicant's professional status and merits. The expected elements in the portfolio are shown in the box below.

Portfolio structure

The application portfolio should have a lead document (max. 5 pages) containing:

- a table of contents;
- a brief personal statement which sets out why the applicant believes a Fellowship should be awarded, and shows how the applicant's professional contributions address each of the criteria. This would include:
 - condensed personal bio (current and previous relevant position, work duties, responsibilities etc.);
 - description of past, present and future involvement in AEA-Europe activities
 - description of research contributions in the form of a thesis or dissertation which has been accepted by a university or equivalent body for the award of a research degree, or which demonstrates a significant contribution to the profession;
 - description of other published material (papers, conference contributions, reports, etc.)
 - other merits (awards or other recognitions);
 - accounts of professional work with supporting evidence (e.g. involvement/responsibility for test development or other projects of relevance);
 - description of teaching, mentoring or other activities which have assisted the professional development of others, including where applicable contribution to AEA-Europe or IAEA events.

The Association is aware of the difficulties of providing suitable evidence for those who do not have the opportunity to publish. Where an applicant's contribution is not in the form of publications, the content of the personal statement and letters of support will be particularly important.

Attachments to support the application

The portfolio should include:

- A complete CV;
- written support from **two** others who are actively involved in the field of assessment, who can comment on the applicant's suitability for admission to the register of Fellows. These comments will refer to the applicant's wider professional contribution to the field of assessment and the impact of his / her work. *The supporters should understand that they are being asked specifically to confirm the original and substantial nature of the applicant's personal contribution in cases where it is not easy for external evaluators to decide on published evidence alone.*

In addition to these documents the actual evidence provided with the application will be determined by the candidate, and would typically include:

- Articles published or other relevant professional writings (a maximum of **three**);
- list of publications;
- syllabus or plans for courses run.

For applicants whose contribution to the field is not mainly through academic or other scientific publications, supporting material would be needed evidencing how the person has made important contributions to the assessment profession as a whole.

Applicants who already hold a practitioner status may re-use some of the material in their Fellowship application that they presented in their earlier Practitioner application. However, the Fellowship application must fulfil the more demanding criteria. Applicants should therefore look closely at the differences between the criteria for Fellows and for Practitioners. This will indicate to them what more they should add to their application in order to gain the Fellowship award.

APPENDIX I

APPLICATION FOR AEA-EUROPE ASSOCIATE STATUS

[Please submit the completed form via the submissions area of the AEA-Europe website: www.aea-europe.net]

Name:

Home address:

e-mail address:

Highest educational qualification obtained:

I am an individual member of AEA-Europe: Yes / No

My employer is a corporate member of AEA-Europe Yes / No

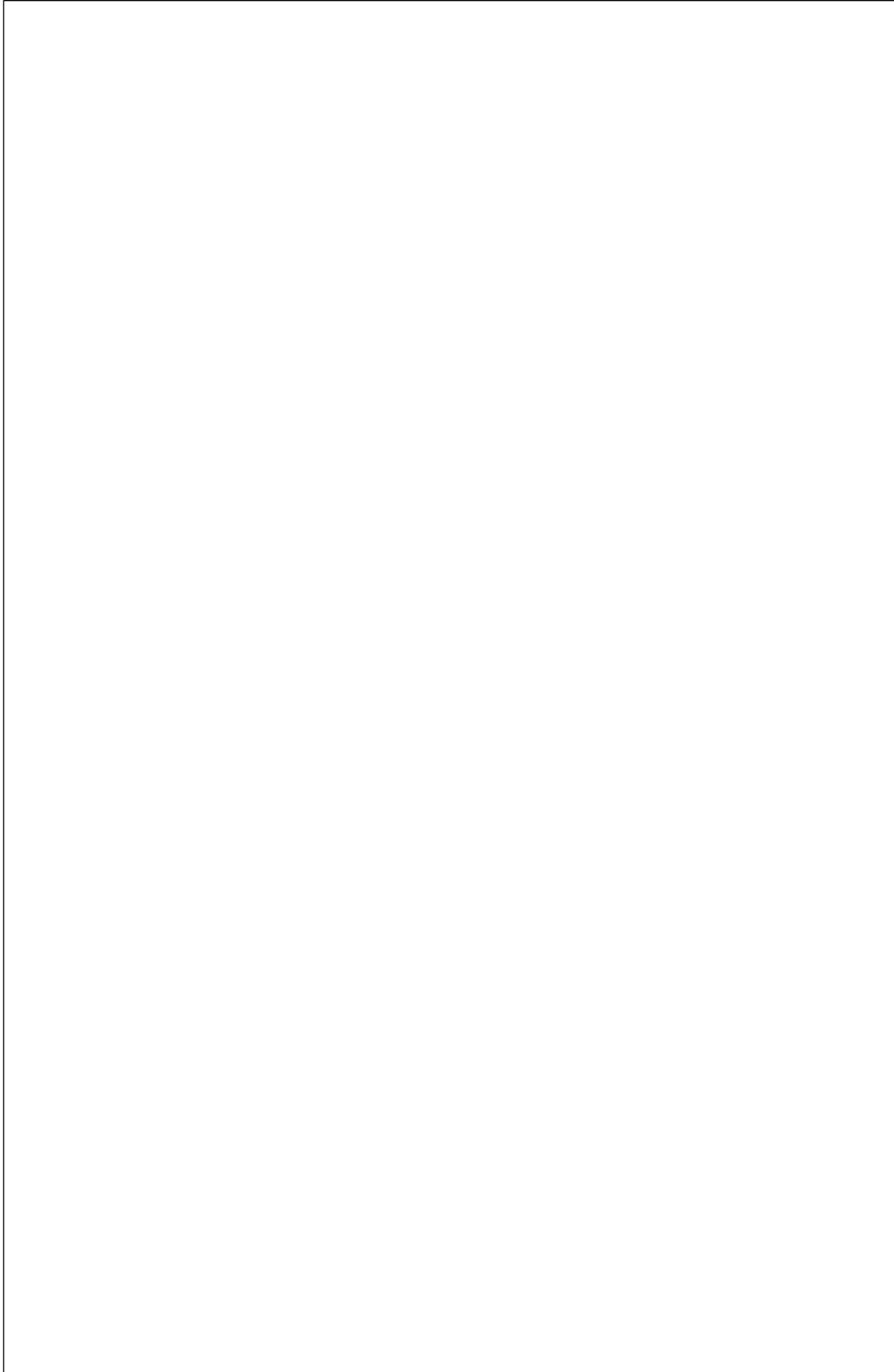
Employer's name and address (if applicable):

Present position in employment:.....

Review the criteria for Associate status. Then describe briefly how in your present position you will be able to put into effect your knowledge of the principles and practice of assessment.

Professional development plan

I intend to develop my knowledge and competence in assessment in the following ways. (You could refer here to courses you intend to enroll on.)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the student to write their professional development plan. The box is currently blank.

Please look at the criteria for acceptance as a Practitioner of AEA-Europe given in this document, and particularly at the description of the portfolio required from applicants for Practitioner status. Then complete the following statement.

I have looked at the requirements for a portfolio of work which I would need to put together in order to apply for Practitioner status. I believe I would be ready to make such an application within years.

Signed:

Date:

APPENDIX 2

The following list is indicative of the knowledge a Practitioner of AEA-Europe would seek to acquire.

While it is not expected that applicants for Practitioner status will all be involved in full-time test development or research, it nevertheless will be expected that they will in their own sphere, for example in assessment policy making, planning or administration, demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of key elements in the assessment process, such as:

- Specification of the purpose of an assessment
- Item development
- Organising trials / pre-tests
- Interpreting analyses
- Level setting
- Writing reports / dissemination of results:
- Conducting evaluation projects

More detailed examples of topics:

Specification of the purpose of an assessment, e.g.

Summative
Formative
Predictive
Diagnostic

Item development, e.g.

Organising and training groups of item writers / teachers;
Item writing;
Item review / revision;
Preparation of mark schemes;
Item selection;
Finalising items for trial or production.

Organising trials / pre-tests, e.g.

- Specifying samples;
- Preparing administration instructions, pupil data forms, etc;
- Specifying analyses, including reliability analyses;
- Recruiting markers and supervising marking;
- Organising coding / handling qualitative data.

Interpreting analyses, e.g.

- Item analysis (including subgroups);
- Item response modelling;
- Generalizability analysis;
- Multilevel modelling;
- Factor analysis;
- Validation studies;
- Questionnaire analysis.

Level setting, e.g.

- Linear / equipercentile equating;
- Angoff; Bookmarking;
- Script placement; Script scrutiny;
- Level setting / confirmation procedures.

Writing / dissemination, e.g.

- Writing reports;
- Writing test manual / teacher guide;
- Writing technical manuals;
- Writing articles for publication;
- Making presentations.

Conducting evaluation projects, e.g.

- Devising interview / observation schedules;
- Fieldwork;
- Synthesis of qualitative data.