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## Conservation Accreditation: The story so far.

The Conservation Forum (from now on renamed the Association of British and Irish Conservators, or ABC) are currently reviewing systems for accreditation with UKIC who will be implementing their scheme sometime this year (1998). Work is also underway to produce a unified view on S/NVQs and their relevance to the conservation profession with input from the Conservation Teacher's Forum.

MTI has carried out a research project with ABC to establish a universal system of membership criteria incorporating their occupational standards with the aim of evolving a cross-sector accreditation system. ABC member bodies participated in the research and representatives were invited to a seminar in April 1997. The Parameter Harmonisation Project Report investigates S/NVQ incorporation into membership and accreditation structures.

Four of the ABC constituent organisations have accreditation schemes already in place. They are as follows:

ABPR, *The Association of British Picture Restorers* (Member, Fellow)

Fellowship requires an associate member to have at least 7 years full time experience and can pass an examination of their work (portfolio), knowledge and professional attitude by Council members before election.

BAFRA, *British Antique Furniture Restorers' Association* (Full, Associate, Employed, Student)  
Full Membership requires working within the profession for at least 5 years and passing of the BAFRA Entry Assessment.

BSMGP, *British Society of Master Glass Painters, Conservation Committee* (Accredited Member)  
Accredited Membership requires registration on the Conservation Register and passing of the BSMGP Assessment.

SoA, P&CG, *Society of Archivists, Preservation and Conservation Group* (Full, Registered Conservator, Honorary, Institutional, Student)  
Registered Membership requires three years relevant experience plus approved course of qualification and 12 credits of the

pre-registration training and development scheme.

A further two are close to setting up accreditation schemes:-

IPC, *Institute of Paper Conservation* (Individual, Corporate, Student, Honorary)

UKIC, *United Kingdom Institute of Conservation* (Full, Associate, Student, Unemployed)

The remaining five organisations are in the early stages of development if at all:-

ICHAWI, *Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works in Ireland*

IPCRA, *Irish Professional Conservators' and Restorers' Association*

NSCG, *Natural Sciences Conservation Group* (Personal, Overseas Personal, Institutional)  
PhMCG, *Photographic Materials Conservation Group* (Individual, Institutional)

SSRC, *Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration* (Professional, Associate, Institutional, Student)

UKIC decided at its AGM on 10th June 1997 to go for implementation

of their accreditation scheme during 1998 and are looking to incorporate S/NVQs in the existing and proposed systems. UKIC hopes thus to provide a national benchmark scheme broadly appropriate to the needs of all conservators with the flexibility to adapt to the specific requirements of each discipline. Members of ABC organisations will have a diversity of routes to accreditation.

The report studies the key issues for NVQ inclusion, resources to manage a system, quality of assessors, assessment methods and availability of training. Studies are made of other organisations including the new AMA and the differing accreditation systems used. An outline for a Voluntary Independent Accreditation Scheme is also provided, based on the MTI's national occupational standards as utilised in the NVQs available. An individual could be assessed for professional body membership at the same time as for NVQ and all accredited members would join a new conservation register.

Paul Brown, Secretary NSCG

