

Quality Accreditation Standards



NAVCA wants everyone to be able to take action on the things that matter to them. Our mission is to strengthen and champion social action, through effective voluntary and community sector infrastructure support. Strong local infrastructure enables communities to influence decision-making, builds partnerships and networks, and encourages volunteering opportunities. When this support is accessible locally, individuals and communities thrive.

To support this, we provide quality accreditation services for organisations providing local VCSE infrastructure and volunteer centres functions. Our comprehensive and independently assessed standards enable organisations delivering this essential local support to assure themselves of their quality, demonstrate this to those that use and fund their services, and seek opportunities to develop their offer.

How does it work?

Organisations can choose from two accreditation schemes based on what's most relevant to their purpose and focus. Whilst there is some overlap between the two, there is clear distinction in the breadth of areas assessed.

The **Local Infrastructure Quality Accreditation (LIQA)** focuses on the *four functions of infrastructure*, which characterise the fundamental roles Local Infrastructure Organisations play within their area of operation.



The **Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation (VCQA)** focuses on the *five functions of volunteer centres*, which characterise the fundamental roles Volunteer Centres play within their area of operation.



Applicants collate and submit a portfolio of evidence demonstrating their delivery against a comprehensive assessment criteria. This will include a range of internal and external documentation such as strategies, business plans, policies and procedures, alongside evidence of service delivery and local impact. The assessment process is undertaken by a trained and independent assessor who reviews the evidence, and holds interviews with the organisation's personnel and key stakeholder to explore and audit the information provided. The process to takes around five months to complete and, once achieved, accreditation last for three years.

What are the benefits?

For applicants and accreditation holders

The standards are *a badge of prestige* that celebrate excellence and good practice, and *give holders confidence* their organisation meets local needs, is reflective and reviews and learns from best practice.

The process itself *supports organisational development*, providing opportunities to gain invaluable insights into organisational strengths and areas for development. Feedback and reflection is a key part of the process and throughout, we offer applicants support directly from NAVCA as well from their peers, and holders become part of a national network of accredited providers.

For communities and local VCSE sector organisations

Members of local communities and VCSE organisation accessing services can be *confident of receiving effective, high-quality support that meets their needs* and is *informed by best practice* from across the country.

Accreditation fosters *better connections within local VCSE sectors*, building local organisations' knowledge and confidence on where to go to reach sector leaders and those who drive collaborations and partnerships.

For statutory partners, commissioners and funders

Our standards support stakeholders including local authorities, health systems and other commissioners and funders to be *confident they are investing in, and working alongside effective local partners* linked in to a national network of support and information. They provide assurance the services will be high-quality and effective in *supporting local community needs*.

The LIQA and VCQA assessment frameworks also offer support to *shape local commissioning and funding intentions*; guiding development of service specifications and helping describe expectations to potential providers.

Want to know more or get involved?

We're keen to work closely with partners to develop our services, take collective action to support local communities and address national priorities.

Get support to embed quality in your local services - Our standards are intended to support local commissioning and funding organisations to achieve the best value for their investment. If you'd like to talk to us about how you might incorporate the standards into your local plans, we'd be delighted to offer advice.

Support us to spread recognition of quality VCSE support - We are always seeking to expand the knowledge and recognition of good quality local VCSE infrastructure and volunteer centre services. If your interested in supporting us to spread awareness of the LIQA or VCQA, or want to add your organisation to the growing list of national agencies who've endorsed these standards, we'd love to hear from you.

Join our network of independent assessors - We are always seeking to expand our network of independent assessors. Drawn from a wide and diverse range of backgrounds, we regularly accept applications and deliver training so, if you're interested in applying to become an LIQA or VCQA assessor, don't hesitate to get in touch.

For more information, contact us at quality@navca.org.uk or on 0114 278 6636.