



How will the Accredited Professionals Scheme affect me as a council employee?

Under the Accredited Professionals Scheme, all council employees who are involved in assessing development applications will need to be appropriately qualified in order to make key decisions.

What decisions can I make as an accredited council employee?

There are four classes of accreditation applicable to council employees under the Scheme, each with different levels of decision-making power. These classes are outlined in the infographic below.

ACCREDITATION CLASSES FOR PLANNING PROFESSIONALS



How do I become accredited?

To become an accredited professional, you must be accredited by the Accreditation Authority, which in this case is the Chief Executive of the Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure (DPTI).

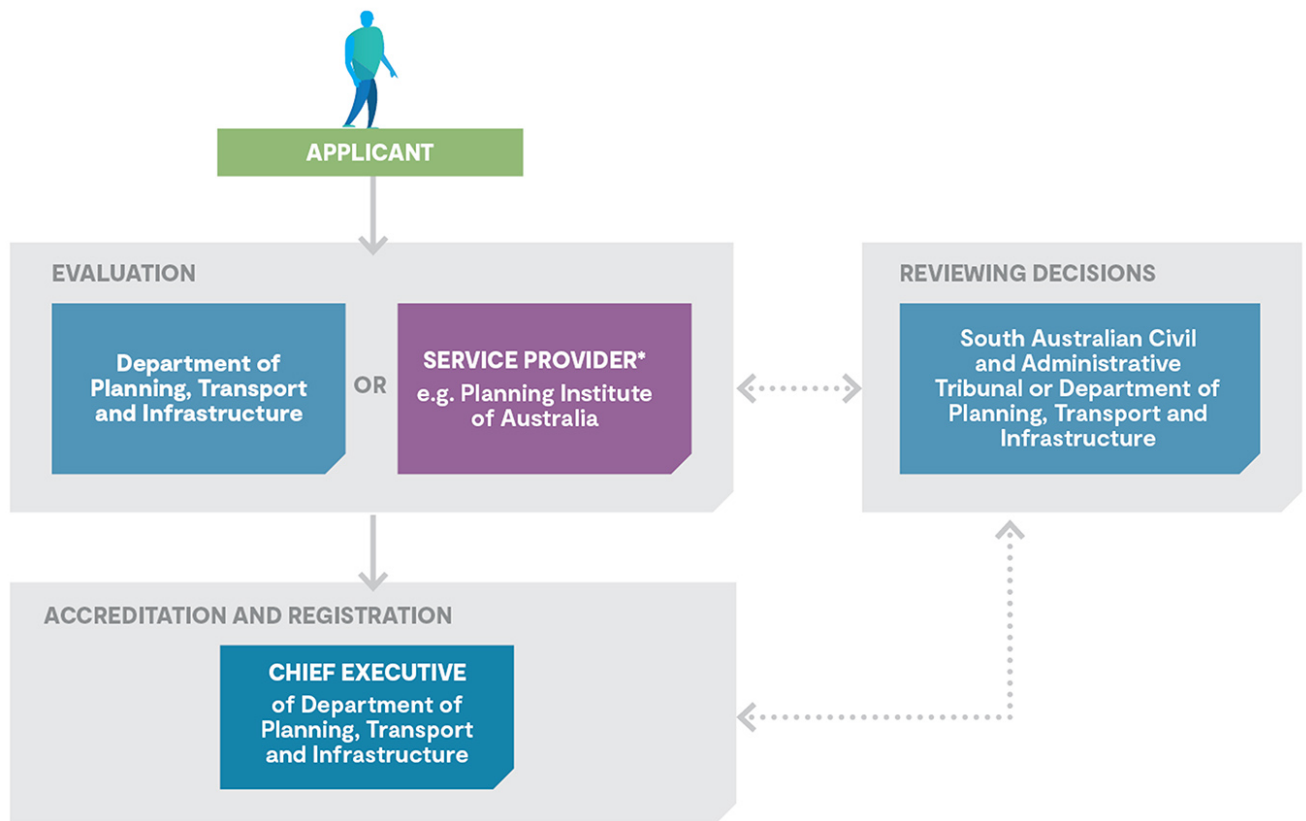
An application for accreditation must first be lodged in the correct form and accompanied by evidence that supports your eligibility to become accredited in the class that you request.

As previously described, there are four classes of accreditation applicable to planning professionals under the Accredited Professionals Scheme, and each requires a different level of qualifications and experience.

All applications will be evaluated by either DPTI or a service provider in agreement with DPTI.

Applicants will become accredited by the Accreditation Authority when they demonstrate that they are suitably skilled and qualified; hold an appropriate level of insurance; and are a fit and proper person.

How the Accredited Professionals Scheme will work



*Subject to agreement with Department of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure

Does a council need to accredit all planning officers in their team?

Each council planning officer within a team can become accredited if they wish. Alternatively, an Assessment Manager who is accredited under the Scheme can delegate their role as a relevant authority to individual members of their team.

When do I need to become accredited?

The Accredited Professionals Scheme will be implemented in stages. It became operational under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* on 1 April 2019. Although planning professionals, building professionals and land surveyors may apply for accreditation at this time, they will not need to do so straight away.

Different practitioners will need to become accredited at different times.

Existing council planning officers

- Existing council planning officers may not need to be accredited at all if they are operating under the delegation of an assessment manager, who will be accredited at Accredited Professional Level 1. However, some assessment managers may want their council planning officers to be independently accredited at Planning Level 3 or 4 (this will be at the discretion of the assessment manager).

Assessment managers and assessment panel members

- Assessment managers and assessment panel members will not need to become accredited until the 'designated day' is declared by the Governor. This date is not yet known but is anticipated to be in late 2019.

What if I am already accredited with an industry body?

If you are already a member of a professional association that runs an equivalent scheme, as recognised by the Accreditation Authority under the Planning, Development and Infrastructure (Accredited Professionals) Regulations 2019, you may be eligible for accreditation in one of the classes outlined in the table below.

The Accreditation Authority may also approve alternative schemes *not* included in the table below, provided they meet the relevant criteria for professional accreditation.

New classes in the Accredited Professionals Scheme	Proposed recognised equivalent schemes
Accredited professional—Planning Level 1	Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) Registered Planner
Accredited professional—Planning Level 1 (Conditional)	PIA Full Member - must complete the transition to PIA Registered Planner within 24 months
Accredited professional—Planning Level 2	PIA Full Member PIA Registered Planner
Accredited professional—Planning Level 3	PIA Full Member - Member must demonstrate the minimum 3-years' experience requirement before a 'Statement of Membership Equivalency' is provided. PIA Registered Planner

New classes in the Accredited Professionals Scheme	Proposed recognised equivalent schemes
<p>Accredited professional—Planning Level 4</p>	<p>PIA Full Member</p> <p>PIA Registered Planner</p> <p>Affiliate*</p> <p>Graduate*</p> <p>* Members must demonstrate the following experience requirements before a 'Statement of Membership Equivalency' is provided by PIA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIA accredited course – 1-year experience • Non-accredited course – 2-years experience • Planning related course – 4-years experience • None/Non-related course – 6-years experience
<p>Note: PIA will provide applicants with a 'Statement of Membership Equivalency' for use in the Accredited Professionals application process.</p>	
<p>Accredited professional—Surveyor</p>	<p>Licensed Surveyor with the Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute (SSSI) General Certification</p>

What happens after I am accredited?

Once you become an accredited professional, you will be registered with the Accreditation Authority.

A database of registrants will be housed on the SA Planning Portal (www.saplanningportal.sa.gov.au).

Accredited professionals will be able to log in to a special area of the SA Planning Portal to update their details and confirm compliance with conditions of accreditation.

Will there be fees for accreditation?

Fees attributed to the Scheme are set out in the Planning, Development and Infrastructure (Fees, Charges and Contributions) Regulations 2019. These came into operation on 1 April 2019.

The fee charged by DPTI for the evaluation and registration of an accredited planning professional at levels 2, 3 and 4 will be \$560. For evaluation and registration of an accredited planning professional at level 1, the fee will be \$760.

Where an applicant is a member of a professional association that operates a recognised equivalent scheme, the evaluation and registration fee will be \$270.

A fee of \$180 will be payable annually thereafter to DPTI for the continuation of professional accreditation.

Will there be conditions attached to my accreditation?

All accredited professionals will have conditions attached to their accreditation.

Specifically, they will be required to:

- hold all necessary Professional Indemnity Insurance

- undertake mandatory Continuing Professional Development (CPD) units
- comply with the Accredited Professionals Scheme Code of Conduct
- notify the Accreditation Authority of any change in their professional circumstances.

Other conditions may be set down by the Accreditation Authority. It will be an offence to fail to comply with any of the conditions of accreditation.

Do I need to apply for continuance every year?

You will only need to attain accreditation once under the Accredited Professionals Scheme, unless you wish to change or modify your class of accreditation.

However, all accredited professionals will need to prove that they comply with the conditions of their accreditation by providing evidence of compliance annually.

Accredited professionals who fail to comply with the conditions of their accreditation may be de-registered and any decisions they make during a period of de-registration may be deemed to be invalid.

The Accreditation Authority may temporarily dispense with the requirement for an annual compliance check in cases where a registrant has taken extended leave from work, or under other mitigating circumstances determined by the Accreditation Authority.

Are there any ongoing education requirements?

To ensure the maintenance of professional standards of accredited professionals, there will be a requirement to undertake prescribed Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on an ongoing basis. One CPD unit equates to one hour of professional development.

PLANNING	
Planning level 1, Planning level 3, Planning level 4 and Surveyor	Planning level 2
20 CPD units in each 12 month period of which 8 units of CPD must be included from the following professional competencies as a part of the total 20 units: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 units in performance based planning • 2 units in decision making in development assessment • 2 units in legislative compliance • 2 units in ethics in planning. 	10 CPD units in each 12 month period of which 4 CPD units must be completed from the following professional competencies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 unit in performance based planning • 1 unit in decision making in development assessment • 1 unit in governance • 1 unit in ethics in planning.

What if I am already required by my industry body to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD)?

If you are already required to undertake CPD as part of your professional membership with an industry body, then this can count towards your accreditation under the Accredited Professionals Scheme, as long as it aligns with the requirements of the Scheme (as outlined in the table above).

Will I be audited as an accredited professional?

Periodic audits will be a condition of accreditation for all accredited professionals.

All accredited professionals will undergo an initial audit within the first five years of their accreditation and will then be audited at least once every five years thereafter.

Audits will be conducted by a qualified auditor, primarily for the purpose of checking whether the processes and procedures associated with the assessment of development, and the granting of any relevant consents, have been undertaken in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*.

What kind of insurance do I need?

All accredited professionals employed by a council will continue to be covered by the Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme. This will cover the requirement for Professional Indemnity Insurance under the Accredited Professionals Scheme.

If you act as an accredited professional in a private capacity (i.e. outside your role as an accredited professional for a council), you will need to hold separate Professional Indemnity Insurance, just as private sector planners are required to do.

As an accredited professional, you will need to provide evidence that your insurance has been maintained and is current at every periodic audit or when applying for continuance. You may also be required to produce proof of insurance in between compliance checks, at the request of the Accreditation Authority.

If your insurance lapses while registered under the Accredited Professionals Scheme, your registration as an accredited professional may be void.

Will there be a code of conduct?

All accredited professionals will be expected to comply with an Accredited Professionals Scheme Code of Conduct. Breach of the code of conduct may result in fines and other penalties.

A complaints policy will be developed to deal with complaints against accredited professionals.

An investigations and sanctions policy will also be developed that details the procedures undertaken in an investigation and the sanctions that may result from an investigation. These sanctions may include suspension or cancellation of accreditation.

What will ePlanning mean for me?

Accredited professionals will be able to access the ePlanning platform via the SA Planning Portal to assess development applications (see www.saplanningportal.sa.gov.au).

The ePlanning platform will support a more efficient and centralised workflow whereby building plans can be uploaded; applications can be tracked; fees can be paid; council notifications can be lodged; historical records can be archived and communication with development applicants can occur more readily.

Where can I find more information?

For more information, applicants can visit the Accredited Professionals Scheme page on the SA Planning Portal at www.saplanningportal.sa.gov.au.