

SOP 1: New Membership Applications

Status:	Published	Version:	2
Audience:	Internal and external audiences		
Owner:	SAWC	Author:	Central Team
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Further guidance can be obtained from ADCH staff (enquiries@adch.org.uk)

1. After reading the eligibility criteria and guidance on the website, applicants complete and submit their application online during one of ADCH's published opening period for new applications.
2. Applicants will be provided with the ADCH Minimum Welfare and Operational Standards and asked to self-assess against these. The application form asks about the result of their self-assessment.
3. Relevant accompanying documents should be uploaded to the web form. The documents requested are:
 - a. A copy of the organisation's constitution
 - b. Two years of accounts. Where accounts are not available, such as for newly formed organisations, recent bank statements for all bank accounts of the prospective Member should be submitted. Recently formed organisations who do not have two years of accounts will still be considered.
4. The Standards and Operations Officer will:
 - a. check and acknowledge receipt of the application form and supporting information, advising that they will be contacted in the near future with regard to the next steps, or request any further information if needed.
 - b. contact referees to ensure they are happy to endorse the application.
 - c. email all Trustees with basic information about the organisation
 - d. arrange for the invoice of the organisation's application fee, as set out on the ADCH website.,
5. Where possible, the assessment will be carried out within 8 weeks of the closing of the application period. However, in circumstances outside of ADCH's control (including restrictions caused by disease outbreak), this may not be possible, and assessors will be asked to complete new member assessments in their area as a priority over routine assessments of existing members, to reduce waiting time to as little as practicable. If ADCH cannot assign assessors to you within 6-8 weeks, we will keep you informed. Applicants are asked to cooperate with setting a date for their assessment and should have agreed a date within 6 weeks of the initial introduction. If this is not possible for any reason the applicant should advise ADCH, who will decide at their discretion whether or not to continue with the application. If the applicant does not facilitate the agreement of an assessment date within 6 weeks, the application shall be terminated.

When carrying out assessments, Assessors are acting for and representing the views of ADCH, and not their employer (if applicable). Applicants and assessors will be made aware of ADCH's risk assessment for carrying out onsite assessments.

6. Within 7 days of the visit, the assessors will submit a fully completed assessment report.
7. The prospective member's plans to resolve areas scoring less than two must be included in the assessment paperwork (in complex cases requiring significant facility rebuild, an application may be placed on hold pending further details).
8. A copy of the completed assessment form will be sent to the applicant.
9. The reports and relevant documents are submitted to SAWC for approval by email or discussion and decision at their next Committee meeting.
10. SAWC can either approve or decline applications for membership or, in some cases, an application may be referred to the Board of Trustees for a decision.
11. If accepted, the Standards and Operations Officer confirms ADCH's decision to the applicant in writing.
12. If the applicant is accepted, the Bookkeeper issues an invoice for the membership fee, according to the current fee schedule and on a pro-rata basis for the remainder of the membership year.
13. Admittance to membership may be temporarily paused where an assessment concludes that an applicant needs to carry outwork in order to meet the Minimum Welfare and Operational Standards. This will be at the discretion of SAWC. Once the changes have taken place, the applicant is asked to submit evidence (such as photographs), and membership can then begin as above.
14. For new member applicants with multiple sites, please refer to SOP 4 for additional steps in the assessment process.
15. If the application is to be declined, SOP 7 applies.

Version History

Version	Changes Made	Date	Made by
V.1	Published	16/04/2022	Central Team
V2	Revised	31/07/2026	CR