

Accredited Training Premier Provider status – Questions and Answers

1. How does the CISI assure the quality of its Accredited Training Providers (ATPs)?

The CISI has a rigorous process for accrediting its training providers, in the UK and internationally. Accreditation is voluntary and the CISI only recommends those training providers that it accredits, and they are the only training providers listed on the CISI website. Potential ATPs must prove that they have the appropriate expertise and resources to support candidates undertaking CISI examinations, and they are subject to an annual review and a three-yearly re-accreditation process (provisional ATPs are on the pathway to full accreditation and are subject to closer monitoring).

All our ATPs have attained a benchmark standard for approval which enables candidates, their employers and regulators to have confidence in the training offered.

2. What value is added to this by the designation Premier Provider?

Some ATPs may wish to demonstrate that they go beyond this benchmark, providing a consistently excellent service to their candidates and those that fund candidates, across all criteria below. This includes comprehensive analysis of feedback and monitoring of training quality as well as achieving very good results. The Premier Provider scheme is designed to encourage and recognise that achievement.

3. What benefits does Premier Provider Status confer on the ATP?

Premier Provider ATPs will enjoy:

- A prominent position on the ATP page of the CISI website
- Promotional opportunities at local CISI events eg award ceremonies, seminars etc.
- Use of a premier status logo.
- The first opportunity to work with the CISI on innovative projects where a close partnership is needed.

4. Is there a quota of Premier Status ATPS?

No, there is no quota, the evaluation of applications is evidenced based, and criterion referenced.

5. What are the criteria for Premier Provider Status?

5.1 Tutors Sitting Exams

All tutors must sit and pass at least one exam in the subject(s) for which they are accredited, attaining a pass mark of 75% or above for a computer based tested exam, and a pass grade in a narrative exam.

Premier Provider ATPs must also demonstrate that individual trainers are monitored, feedback given, and that they are subject to development and review

5.2 CISI Exam Policies and Accreditation Conditions

Premier Providers ATPS must demonstrate not only adherence to CISI exam policies and accreditation conditions set out in the original agreements, but a proactive approach to identifying any difficulties including a declaration to the CISI in the event of any malpractices.

5.3 Examination Results

ATPS must demonstrate that the examination results of the candidates they train are higher than the examination results published on the CISI Website for each subject. Where an ATP trains for a large number of subjects, some variation may be acceptable between subjects.

Where the ATP is working in a jurisdiction where examination results for professional qualifications are lower than in the UK, and can be demonstrated to be so, the CISI may base its judgement on the performance of that ATP in terms of increasing the percentage of CISI passes year on year.

5.4 Candidate Feedback

Evidence must be supplied that the ATP operates a fair candidate feedback system. The ATP will submit a sample set of completed candidate course questionnaires to the CISI together with an overall analysis and evidence of steps taken to address feedback. Annual statistics on the number of complaints received, and number substantiated, must be provided. Analysis of feedback is expected to cover each of the examinations offered

5.5 Volumes

It is anticipated that because of the significance of the designation, ATPs should have a minimum 300 CISI examination candidates per annum and usually significantly more.

5.6. Membership

One permanent employee from the ATP's tutoring staff must be a member of the CISI at MCSI or above to demonstrate adherence to the CISI Code of Conduct at a senior level of CISI membership. In addition the Premier Provider ATP is expected to encourage membership of the CISI amongst its tutor staff and use of the CISI's CPD scheme, which is free of charge to members.

5.7 Course Materials

Sample course materials should be submitted to the CISI for review, as requested eg mock tests, training course slides etc.

5.8 Annual Report

The Annual Report must be returned promptly, and must include the fuller analysis expected of a premier Provider, including recent training, mentoring/peer review activities in relation to new tutors as well as the fuller analysis of performance and candidate volumes.

5.9 Support for Tutors

Evidence must be provided of commitment to development of tutors, eg courses attended, continuing professional development.

5.10 Marketing

Evidence must be provided of a marketing plan for CISI qualifications and associated marketing materials.

5.11 Cooperation and participation

Premier Providers are expected to be prepared to participate in CISI quality assurance activities, eg in subject panels, workbook review, CISI events.

6. How should applications be made?

An application form can be used. ATPs may make their application in another written format if preferred.

7. What is the deadline for applications?

Applications will be considered annually. The deadline for applications is 1st September, following the Annual Review process. ATPs are encouraged to include their application with their Annual Review. Applications should be sent to qualifications@cisi.org. You will receive an acknowledgement within 48 hours.

8. Who evaluates the applications?

The applications are considered by a Committee of Senior CISI Staff the panel includes a CISI Senior Adviser, senior staff from the Qualifications department and one or more members of the CISI's examination subject panels who have no connection with any ATP. The recommendations are referred to the Managing Director for final decision.

9. How are the different criteria weighted during the evaluation process?

Some of the criteria are quantitative, most are qualitative, and the evaluative process will necessarily be a judgemental, holistic one. The CISI relies on the expertise of the evaluation panel to come to a reasonable assessment of the appropriateness of the application in any given case. ATPs whose candidates have consistently poor examination results are unlikely to gain Premier Provider status even if other aspects of their work are excellent. The decision is final.

10. Is there an appeal process where an application is not successful?

The CISI will give feedback on the areas where improvement is required and the ATP may apply again in the following year. In exceptional circumstances, where additional information is supplied, the ATP may not be required to wait a full year.

11. Confidentiality

Applications for ATP status will be treated with confidentiality by the CISI. Information on applications will not be shared with other ATPs.