ALERC Accreditation Criteria Documentation
Summary of changes and updates

Previously published version of document		Updated published Version of document
1.2		2.1
Criterion	Previous Version	New Version
2	Engage stakeholders	
Evidence Constitution or equivalent document in an LRC hosted by another organisation. Terms of reference of any separate Steering Group/ Advisory Group. Evidence that steering group is meeting and providing direction, e.g. minutes of meetings.		**Evidence** Constitution or equivalent document in an LERC hosted by another organisation. Terms of reference of a group or board acting to govern, direct, advise or steer the LERC. Evidence that this group is providing direction, e.g. minutes of meetings. Evidence that any stakeholders outside of the governance board are being engaged, e.g. minutes of meetings, memoranda of agreement, proceedings from stakeholder groups.
4	Compliant with legislations	
Interpretation/ Thresholds At least 90% of enquiries should be answered within 20 working days. The LRC should give reasons to the enquirer for any that cannot be met in this timeframe. Responses for planning enquiries should normally be automated and made well within 20 days, the standard being set out in Service Level Agreements between the LRC and the planning authority.		**Interpretation/ Thresholds** At least 90% of enquiries should be answered within 10 working days. Whilst the statutory obligation for public bodies is to answer all enquiries within 20 days, a good level of service is to exceed this. The LERC should give reasons to the enquirer for any that cannot be met in this timeframe. Responses for planning enquiries should normally be automated and made well within 10 days, the standard being set out in Service Level Agreements between the LERC and the planning authority.
7	No geographical overlap	
Interpretation/ Thresholds LRC boundaries should normally follow local authority boundaries rather than recording areas. Non-overlapping should be from the users' perspective; LRCs may establish arrangements with neighbouring LRCs to service needs of organisations not following administrative boundaries. For example, a recording group using a vice-county boundary could supply all of its records to the LRC covering the majority of its area, with the LRC passing on relevant records to its neighbouring LRC. Access to records for users would always be on a strict geographical basis following LRC boundaries. Such arrangements should be in the form of written agreements. This criterion should not preclude ∙ Two tier arrangements, where, for example, smaller LRCs engage with their local recorders and work with a regional LRC providing services to		**Interpretation/ Thresholds** LERC boundaries should normally follow local authority boundaries rather than recording areas. Non-overlapping should be from the users' perspective; LERCs may establish arrangements with neighbouring LERCs to service needs of organisations not following administrative boundaries. For example, a recording group using a vicecounty boundary could supply all of its records to the LERC covering the majority of its area, with the LERC passing on relevant records to its neighbouring LERC. Access to records for users would always be on a strict geographical basis following LERC boundaries. Such arrangements should be in the form of written agreements. This criterion should not preclude: ∙ Two tier arrangements, where, for example, smaller LERCs engage with their local recorders and work with a regional LERC providing services to users across the region.

users across the region · Collaboration between LRCs and established Geological Records Centres and Partnerships, working together in partnership to meet the user requirements of criterion 19. · LRCs offering short term contract services over wider areas. Stakeholder groups for coastal LRCs should agree the marine limit for the LRC's geographical coverage. An LRC seeking accreditation should seek to resolve any overlap issues with neighbouring LRCs before applying for accreditation. It will be required to submit a map of its proposed area and seek to resolve any boundary disputes before applying. If any dispute cannot be resolved it should describe any other claims to parts of that area. It should submit the views of the local authority, statutory conservation agency and any National Park Authority covering disputed areas. ALERC will be the arbiter of any disputes and will seek the views of the neighbouring LRC in disputed cases. **Evidence** LRC Boundary Map, including the extent of marine coverage for coastal LRCs. Details of any disputed areas.	· Collaboration between LERCs and established Geological Records Centres and Partnerships, working together in partnership to meet the user requirements of criterion 19. · LERCs offering short term contract services over wider areas. Stakeholder groups for coastal LERCs should agree the marine limit for the LERC's geographical coverage. An LERC seeking accreditation should seek to resolve any overlap issues with neighbouring LERCs before applying for accreditation. It will be required to submit a map of its proposed area and seek to resolve any boundary disputes before applying. Where recording areas (e.g. vice counties) overlap more than one LERC boundary, a data sharing agreement should be in place to ensure that data sent to one LERC reaches all other necessary LERCs. **Evidence** LERC Boundary Map, including the extent of marine coverage for coastal LERCs. Details of any disputed areas. Data sharing agreements.	
9	**Sufficiently staffed**	
9. The LRC employs sufficient professional staff, including a manager or equivalent, to maintain efficient and effective service to its users and providers.	9. The LERC employs sufficient professional staff, including a manager or equivalent, to provide an efficient and sustainable service to its users and providers.	
10	**Process orientated**	
Interpretation/ Thresholds Much of the work of an LRC can be broken down into a series of processes. Examination of these can lead to more efficient and effective organisation. A Process Orientated Organisation is a development stage in the Business Excellence Model (European Foundation for Quality Management, EFQM). Working to the Business Excellence Model would be a good way of showing that the LRC meets this criterion. There are other models with similar approaches that may be more suitable, especially where a host organisation wishes to include LRC staff in its training and personal development programme. In the case of smaller LRCs there may be other ways to demonstrate the use of processes to improve the services offered.	*Interpretation/ Thresholds* Much of the work of an LERC can be broken down into a series of processes. Examination of these can lead to more efficient and effective organisation.	
10.4	**All staff undertake CPD**	

Interpretation/ Thresholds	Interpretation/ Thresholds
Staff CPD summary shows a number of days training suitable to the needs of the individual, including one day for the manager on the Business Excellence Model or equivalent on the subject of process-orientated organisations. The benefits of a targeted training programme for all LRC staff and key volunteers should be recognised.	Staff CPD summary shows a number of training events to the needs of the individual. The benefits of a targeted training programme for all LERC staff and key volunteers should be recognised.

General changes

- References to LRC changed to LERC.
- Insertion of "Why Accredit" section with testimonies.
- Removal of advanced level criteria.
- Insertion of new (May 2015) ALERC definition of LERCs.
- Changes to accreditation process
    - Notification that all criteria are mandatory.
    - Notification that appointment of a mentor is not mandatory.
    - Notification that assessor may request clarification on the submission in person or by receipt of further documentation.
- Removal of the term "rejected" in favour of "LERC cannot be accredited at this time".
- Notification that accredited LERCs must apply for renewal 4.5 years after their first accreditation.
- Removal of annex 1, example of preferred data flow for a taxonomic group.