

Kirkpatrick Certified Organization

Frequently Asked Questions

Everything you need to know about the accreditation process, requirements, and what comes next.



PROCESS

01 What happens if I don't pass the accreditation review?

You will receive a detailed gap report identifying which of the 10 domains did not meet the standard and why. You can remediate on your own and reapply at no additional cost — your first reapplication fee is waived. If you would like Kirkpatrick Partners' support in closing those gaps, that can be scoped as a separate consulting engagement.

02 What is the fee to reapply if I don't meet the requirements?

There is no fee for your first reapplication. We want organizations to succeed and recognize that the gap report is the beginning of that process, not the end of it. Subsequent reapplications may incur a processing fee, which will be communicated at that time.

03 How long does the accreditation review take?

Review timelines depend on organization size and the completeness of your submission. Smaller organizations can typically expect a turnaround of 4–6 weeks. Mid-size and enterprise organizations should plan for 8–12+ weeks. Details will be discussed at time of submission. Incomplete submissions will pause the review clock until all required evidence is received.

04 Who conducts the review — is it Kirkpatrick Partners staff?

Yes. All accreditation reviews are conducted by Kirkpatrick Partners' certified experts. This ensures consistency, rigor, and alignment with the official Kirkpatrick standard. You will have a designated point of contact throughout the process.

05 How do I submit my evidence — is there a portal or template?

Kirkpatrick Partners will provide a structured evidence submission template upon application. You will compile documentation across the 10 domains and submit it directly to your designated reviewer. A submission guide is included to help you organize and present your evidence effectively.

SCOPE & ELIGIBILITY

06 Do I need to be individually Kirkpatrick certified, and why?

Yes. Individual certification is a required prerequisite for organizational accreditation. The Kirkpatrick Certified Organization designation is built on the premise that your people actually know and practice the **updated** model — not just that your systems reflect it. Certification thresholds apply to all L&D, HR, and training staff: 50% must hold Bronze, 30% Performance Designer, and 50% must hold or be on a documented path to Silver and Gold. This ensures the capability is always embedded in your workforce, not just your documents or in specific people who may leave the organization or team.

07 What counts as an "eligible employee" for the certification thresholds?

Eligible employees include all staff in L&D, HR, and training functions — anyone whose role involves designing, delivering, evaluating, or managing learning and performance initiatives. Kirkpatrick Partners will work with you to confirm your eligible headcount as part of the application process.

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What if we're mid-way through getting people certified — can we still apply?

Yes. The standard allows employees to be “on a documented path” to Silver or Gold certification and still count toward those thresholds. Bronze and Performance Designer certifications must be on path when applying and completed by time of accreditation issuance. A documented path means an active enrollment or a signed commitment with a defined completion timeline.

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Do all 10 domains need to be strong, or is there a minimum threshold per domain?

Each domain is evaluated against a defined standard, and there is no provision to offset a weak domain with a strong one elsewhere. That said, gaps are expected — the review is designed to identify them, not penalize you for having them. Organizations that are strong in most domains but have one or two gaps will receive targeted remediation guidance rather than a blanket rejection.

ONGOING MAINTENANCE

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What does the annual maintenance check-in look like — how much work is it?

Annual maintenance is intentionally lightweight. It consists of a structured survey that confirms your continued adherence to the standard across the 10 domains, along with any updates to your certified personnel counts. We also expect to be fully engaged with you through meet ups and check ins, so there is no full audit. The 3-year mark includes a more thorough review, but organizations that have remained active and responsive throughout the cycle typically find it straightforward.

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What happens if we let our accreditation lapse?

If your accreditation lapses due to missed maintenance or a failed check-in, your status will move to a grace period during which you can remediate and restore it. If the grace period passes without resolution, accreditation is formally revoked and you would need to reapply. Kirkpatrick Partners will notify you well in advance of any lapse risk and work with you on a path forward before taking that step.

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Can we lose our accreditation mid-cycle?

Yes, in significant cases — such as a material change in your L&D infrastructure, a substantial drop in certified personnel, or evidence that the Kirkpatrick Model is no longer being actively applied. Kirkpatrick Partners will always notify you first and provide an opportunity to remediate before accreditation is revoked.

VALUE & RECOGNITION

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How is this different from individual Kirkpatrick certification?

Individual certification builds practitioner-level expertise in applying the Kirkpatrick Four Levels®. Organizational accreditation recognizes that your entire L&D ecosystem — your systems, culture, leadership alignment, and practices — operates at the Kirkpatrick standard. One elevates people; the other elevates the organization. Accreditation requires individual certification as a foundation, but goes significantly further. It also ensures that although people may come and go, the application, scalability, and sustainability is maintained with the organization.

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Is the Kirkpatrick CoE accreditation recognized externally — can we use the badge publicly?

Yes. Accredited organizations receive the official Kirkpatrick Center of Excellence badge and are publicly recognized by Kirkpatrick Partners. You may use the badge in your marketing materials, proposals, websites, and internal communications. You will also be listed in the Kirkpatrick Partners directory of certified organizations and recognized at the annual Kirkpatrick Summit.