



MRS/AQR Recruiter Accreditation Scheme

FAQs – RAS & Recruiter Training Programme

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1. Why are you introducing a Recruiter Training Programme?

The Recruiter Accreditation Scheme (RAS) was developed by the Market Research Society (MRS) and the Association for Qualitative Research (AQR) to raise the profile and status of recruiters, by devising a training and accreditation scheme that recognises the knowledge, skills and competence of professional recruiters. The Scheme was launched in September 2020, its now four years on and we feel that our offering to recruiters can be expanded to offer the Recruiter Training Programme alongside the existing established Recruiter Accreditation Scheme.

MRS/AQR will continue to offer RAS alongside a standalone Recruiter Training Programme, giving recruiters the opportunity to complete the training programme only, if they wish to do so.

2. Who was consulted in making the decision to implement a Recruiter Training Programme alongside an accreditation scheme?

A *Proposal* document was produced by the MRS team responsible for managing RAS, a consultation was then held with the key stakeholders - RAS Steering Group, AQR and the MRS Accredited Company Partner Council. All agreed that the Recruiter Training Programme should be developed to run alongside the existing Recruiter Accreditation Scheme.

3. When will the Recruiter Training Programme be introduced?

The plan is from April 2025.

4. I am an accredited recruiter can I continue to be RAS accredited?

Yes, RAS Accreditation via completion of the online assessment will still be available for existing RAS Accredited Recruiters to maintain their accreditation. You will still need to renew your membership on an annual basis for the 3-year accreditation period to maintain RAS Accredited Status.

5. What are the benefits of maintaining my RAS Accreditation?

	RAS Accredited Recruiter	Recruiter Training Programme Completer
MRS Member – Regulated by the MRS Code of Conduct	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Listed in the RAS Recruiter Register	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Pathway into the profession	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Certificate of Accreditation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Certificate of Completion of Training	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Use of MRS Accreditation Logo	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Demonstration of Competence and Professionalism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Eligibility to enter Recruitment Excellence Award	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

6. I am a recruiter who has not yet completed the RAS Assessment, Can I still become RAS accredited?

Yes, RAS Accreditation via completion of the online assessment will still be available for recruiters who wish to either become accredited. You will need to be an MRS member to access the assessment and renew your membership on an annual basis for the 3-year accreditation period to maintain RAS Accredited Status.

7. Will the discounted membership fee still be available for RAS Accredited Recruiters?

Yes, the 50% discounted fee membership option will remain available. Membership and regulation underpins RAS accreditation. Accredited Recruiters by being members demonstrate their commitment and compliance with the MRS Code of Conduct and agree to adhere to the MRS Disciplinary Regulations (for individuals) or MRS Company Partner Complaint Procedure (for organisations).

8. Will the RAS online Register of Accredited Recruiters continue in its current form?

Yes, the RAS online will continue to exist. The online RAS Register will only list details of those recruiters who have attained and maintained their RAS Accreditation and will not include those that have only completed the RAS Recruiter Training Programme.

9. I have only just renewed my membership; I do not want to remain RAS Accredited can I get a refund?

Any Accredited Recruiters who decide to cease being accredited and no longer wish to be MRS members maybe eligible for a pro-rata refund for the remaining period of their MRS membership up to 12 months preceding the announcement after which they renewed; this is an extension of the MRS' standard membership terms and conditions which allows refund only after 14 working days of a payment being made. Please contact ras@mrs.org.uk for further details.

10. Why was I asked to undertake re-accreditation at the end of my 3-year period if you knew that RAS was no longer going to be a requirement to undertake recruitment serves for MRS Company Partners?

The consultation was a lengthy process, whilst it was in progress, and until we had approval for the proposal to proceed, we continued to administer RAS processes to ensure that the Regulatory Guidelines continued to be adhered to, and that RAS Recruiters continued to be able to demonstrate competence and compliance in their recruitment practices.

11. I let my RAS Accreditation lapse before the Recruiter Training Programme was launched, am I eligible for you to send me a Training Completion Certificate?

No. Only recruiters that were accredited at the time the Recruiter Training Programme was launched and decided not to maintain their accreditation going forward will be eligible to receive a Training Certificate. To qualify for the *Training Certificate of Completion* as a lapsed Accredited Recruiters, you will need to re-take the online Recruiter Training Programme which includes completing each of the short multiple-choice tests at the end of each topic within the 5 modules.

12. I am currently RAS Accredited, if I let my membership lapse and/or do not re-take assessment at the end of the 3-year accreditation will I be issued with a Recruiter Training Programme Certificate of Completion?

Yes, Recruiters who were accredited at the time the Recruiter Training Programme was launched and decide not to maintain their accreditation going forward will be eligible to receive a *Training Certificate of Completion*.

13.How much does it cost to do the Recruiter Training Programme?

There is no fee to undertake the Recruiter Training Programme.

14.Who can use the Recruiter Training Materials?

The Recruiter Training Programme is a valuable resource which can be used by companies to train new recruiters and refresh more experienced recruiters, and for independent recruiters to use to train and refresh their competence. Materials will continue to be updated to ensure they are robust, fit for purpose and reflective of emerging techniques and professional standards.

Those who complete the training will receive a 'Certificate of Completion' (they will need to complete each of the short multiple-choice tests at the end of each topic within the 5 modules) – this can then be used as proof of competence. Companies may stipulate completion of the Recruiter Training Programme as a minimum requirement to undertake recruitment services on their behalf.

15.Are the training materials the same if you are working towards RAS Accreditation or the Recruiter Training Programme?

Yes, these are the existing materials that have been available to assist recruiters work towards RAS Accreditation. Whether you are planning on sitting the RAS Assessment or to just complete the Training Programme you will use the same materials.

16.How often do Recruiters have to complete the Recruiter Training Programme?

Once the training has been completed there will be no requirement for recruiters to repeat the training. However, MRS will recommend if training materials are updated to reflect changes in emerging techniques and professional standards recruiters then use the materials to update their knowledge. Certificates will be dated, so employers and clients can see how long ago an individual completed their training.

17.We are an MRS Company Partner, what now is our obligation for buying recruitment services?

It is no longer a mandatory obligation for MRS Company Partners and RAS Accredited Companies, to use RAS Accredited Recruiters when buying qualitative research recruitment services. Although it would be best practice for you to use RAS Accredited Recruiters where possible, to ensure the highest levels of recruitment excellence or as a minimum those recruiters who have completed the RAS Recruiter Training Programme.

The following Regulatory Guidelines will be updated to reflect this:

Qualitative Research Recruitment – Legal Requirements and Best Practice: Regulations for Recruiters

MRS Regulations for Buying of Qualitative Research Recruitment Services

The Company Partner Quality Commitment Form will also be updated to reflect the change in obligation.

18.We are a RAS Accredited Company – What happens now?

The differentiation between In-house and External no longer exists as there is no longer the requirement to have 50% of external recruiters RAS accredited.

As a result, all RAS-accredited companies are now referred to as "Recruiter Accredited Companies" and accreditation is awarded based upon 50% of internal recruiters being either

RAS accredited or having completed the Recruiter Training Programme. There must also be an MRS Member as part of the In-House Recruiter Team.

When working with MRS Company Partners, RAS Accredited Companies best practice would be to use recruiters who are accredited or who have completed the RAS Recruiter Training Programme. This however is a recommendation and is not a compulsory requirement.

19. As a RAS Accredited Company will we still be required to complete an Annual Update to maintain our accreditation?

Yes, there will still be the requirement to submit an Annual Update to confirm:

- Number of total staff in-house undertaking recruitment.
- Number of in-house staff undertaking recruitment that are RAS Accredited or have completed the Recruiter Training Programme.
- Name of MRS Member in the Recruitment Team.
- Names of in-house RAS Accredited Recruiters.

20. As a RAS Accredited Company, what is the benefit in maintaining our accreditation?

Recruiter Accredited Company status allows you to use the MRS Accredited Centre Logo. Being an RAS Accredited Company supports organisations in the development, structure and benchmarking of recruiter training programmes, demonstrates professional development commitment to clients and employees and most importantly demonstrates corporate adherence to the MRS Code of Conduct and a commitment to the highest of professional standards when offering recruitment services.

MRS Company Partners may also continue to want to purchase recruitment services only from RAS Accredited Companies using RAS Accredited Recruiters or those certificated via the Recruiter Training Programme.

21. Will the RAS Register of Accredited Companies continue in its current form?

Yes, the online register will continue to list all Recruiter Accredited Companies.

22. I have further queries; how can I find out more?

Please send any queries you may have to ras@mrs.org.uk. We will be hosting a webinar on Wednesday 26th February 2025 to outline the new Recruiter Training Programme option.