

ACCREDIT Solutions

Your Definitive Guide to Event Accreditation

Learn from the best in their field – accreditation experts working with some of the best-known sports teams, sporting competitions, stadiums, venues and live events in the world.

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Introduction

Accreditation. It's more than badge printing.

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When accreditation is done badly, the consequences can be grave. Accreditation, security, operations and media managers grapple with staff spreadsheets from contractors. Background checks aren't made on workers. Temporary staff roam freely because access zones aren't used. Badges are easily forged. Security is compromised, operations are inefficient, legal requirements are ignored, and the accreditation team is at a breaking point.

A robust accreditation procedure will stop all of that.

Accreditation is an end-to-end solution that the most progressive sports clubs, leagues, live events and venues understand and rely on.

When done properly, the impact on your business is far-reaching. It will automate and simplify labour-intensive tasks. It will improve operational efficiency and event security. It will save you time and money. It makes sure you process data legally. It prevents you from unknowingly employing illegal workers. It helps you to fulfil a duty of care to workers and visitors and can lower insurance premiums.

There are many accreditation managers who know what they should be doing but don't have a plan or the tools and resources. This guide takes you through every step needed to implement a world-class accreditation procedure and gives you what you need to make it happen.

About Accredited Solutions

It has always been our mission to build the best accreditation platform, access control and workforce identity in the world, combining powerful technology with deep operational expertise.

Accredit Solutions delivers complete control over accreditation, access, and identity for leading events, venues and organisations worldwide. Our accreditation software and secure identity ecosystem give leaders complete ownership. Accredit OS connects event accreditation, workforce access, visitor management, inductions, training, and media accreditation through one source of truth.

What truly sets the Accredit platform apart is our experience: a team that has lived and led accreditation from every angle, bringing insight that makes a real difference to our clients. Members of our team have managed accreditation departments, defined accreditation procedures, and implemented systems for some of the world's largest and most complex events, including the Cricket World Cup, Rugby World Cup, Commonwealth Games, and the Olympic and Paralympic Games. Together, we bring a deep understanding of how accreditation shapes safety, efficiency, and control, and how to make accreditation work for your organisation.

That experience powers a global network of secure, intelligent accreditation systems used across the entire NFL, clubs across MLS and Premier League, and by leading organisations such as Cricket Australia, New Zealand Rugby, and major NBA teams.

From tournament organisers and national federations to governments and venue operators, the Accredit platform delivers total visibility, efficiency, and authority in the environments where it matters most.

Founded in the UK and headquarters in England, Accredit Solutions operates globally, with offices in the UK, the US, Brazil, Dubai, Saudi Arabia, and Australia. Our multi-lingual teams support clients across time zones. Working across four industries – sports, stadiums and arenas, events and government – our technology powers secure, efficient operations worldwide, uniting a global standard of accreditation excellence.

Real-time data and control through a single source of truth

Satisfied customers 88+	Trusted by 120+	Award winning NCS4	Committed to security
Net Promoter Score.	Global clients.	2025 Golden Eagle Award winner.	ISO 27001 certified. DHS SAFETY Act Designated and Certified. Cyber Essentials

See [who we work with](#)

Getting Started

Here are our five top tips for where to begin with accreditation:

1. Look at the big picture?

Decide on your priorities, as this will affect who needs to be involved and how the entire system is set up.

Do you need a solution to collect and manage your data more effectively? Is the priority to make the movement of staff around the event more efficient with badge scanning and access controls? Are background checks and reducing threat levels a priority? Do you need to make the accreditation process significantly faster?

Define what you need your accreditation procedure to achieve before you do anything else.

2. Consult all departments affected

Keeping a venue or major event safe is a team effort. A robust accreditation procedure will need input and buy-in from venue and event managers, security, IT and operations teams. If everyone understands the benefits of a better accreditation process and knows who is being accredited and why, it will save everyone a lot of questions.

3. Map out your access control zones

Visualise your venue. Get a floor plan and map out who needs access. Where do they need to enter? Where do they need to get to? Where should they not be allowed to go?

Consider everyone who isn't a ticket holder, including building contractors, catering teams, stewards, security officers, venue staff, cleaners, event organisers, retail outlet staff, volunteers, members of the media and VIP guests.

Use this information to map out your matrix zones and areas that need controlled entry and build a list of who needs accrediting and what access permissions they should have.

4. Find a software supplier

Gone are the days of spreadsheets, endless emails and uploading sets of data to a badge printer. To do accreditation effectively and efficiently, you need the right platform from a technology company that specialises in accreditation.

"I can tell you my findings over the years have been that accreditation is generally not being done well. Staff are being employed without adequate background checks...People security is the most easily overlooked aspect of protecting an event. And yet employing someone who is a threat to you is one of the most dangerous risks your organisation can take."

Chris Phillips, Ex-Head of the National Counter Terrorism Security Office

Here are some things to consider when comparing solutions:

- What functionality do you need?
- Do they have any experience working on similar projects to yours?
- Is the system cloud-based so you can access it from anywhere, from any device?
- How do they keep your data and files secure?
- What level of customer support can you expect, and how quickly do they respond to client queries, and what time zones do they operate in?
- Can they integrate with your other systems, such as access control, workforce management and security services?
- Do they have partnerships with other software, consumable, and hardware suppliers?
- What do their other clients think, and would they recommend the platform?
- How long will it take to get your system set up?
- Do they have an in-house development team that can adapt the platform for your future needs?
- How much will it cost, and is that cost inclusive?

Here's a simple system functionality checklist to help you:

Custom setup and data management

- Create unlimited custom forms for staff, contractors, media, or volunteers
- Upload unlimited data, images, and documents securely in the cloud
- Give contractors group accounts to manage and reuse vetted staff
- Offer custom-branded portals and dashboards by role or department
- Available in multiple languages for global teams

Automation and workflow intelligence

- Automate approvals, document checks, and expiry alerts
- Send smart notifications by email or SMS
- Clone event setups in seconds for recurring or multi-site use
- Enable real-time monitoring and alerts for restricted access or breaches

Access control and credential oversight

- Design unlimited badge and wristband templates
- Activate or deactivate credentials instantly
- Integrate with mobile scanning, biometric, and access systems
- Manage blacklists and watchlists automatically
- Support multi-site credentials across leagues or venue networks

Compliance, safeguarding and workforce assurance

- Track training, safeguarding, and right-to-work documents
- Integrate with LMS and incident management tools
- Keep a complete, auditable compliance record

Reporting, insights and analytics

- View live dashboards of credentials and workforce activity
- Generate custom access and compliance reports
- Export event or multi-event data instantly
- Identify efficiency gains and risk trends across events

5. Build your accreditation team

Find yourself a champion of the accreditation process. Whether it be a dedicated accreditation manager or someone from within your security or operations team. They need experience, they need to work well under pressure, they need to be a good project manager, and they need to be able to have conversations at a senior level and across all job functions. For large events and tournaments, many experienced accreditation managers operate on a freelance basis as they move from event to event. If you find this to be the case, then consider employing someone temporarily to develop and implement your accreditation procedure and build a team that can manage it on a full-time basis in the future.

"A great accreditation manager will need resilience, patience, attention to detail, and the ability to handle robust conversations at all levels."

Darren Jootun, Global Head of Event Services, Reddoor Live

"The main ingredient to a successful accreditation procedure is the platform that hosts the process. If this is set up correctly then you can run the majority of your procedure through this central hub."

Jamie Betts, Venue Operations Manager, Wimbledon

Using your accreditation system

Get training

Get to know the ins and outs of the system at an early stage. Then, if any product development is needed to fulfil your requirements, it can be scheduled with the development team well in advance of your go-live date.

Ensure you nominate a super-user, someone who uses the system daily, who can help other users and third-party group account managers get the best out of the system, and liaise with the software supplier when needed.

Set-up your system

Your software supplier may well do this for you for your first event on their platform, but you're going to need to know a few things:

- Who is using the system internally, and what do they need to be able to do? Get together a list of staff needing access and agree on what they need to do so that access permissions can be set.
- Define your privilege matrix, who is being accredited, and what access permissions they have
- Put content together for all your communication templates. These might include emails and SMS messages inviting people to register, approving and rejecting applications, distributing documentation, consent forms, terms and conditions, and reminders to submit documents.

Collecting data

You can upload your data into your accreditation system in three ways:

1. **Via online forms:** where people apply for an accreditation pass. Make sure you can set up unlimited bespoke forms for the various groups of people that you need to accredit. You're going to be asking the media a different set of questions than volunteers, so make sure you can easily and quickly create new forms when you need them. Make sure you can invite individuals to register via an encrypted link or via a bulk upload, where you can send invitations to multiple individuals at once.

You'll need to decide who needs a group account set up. Get a list together of all your third-party contractors and organisations who will manage their own accreditation requirements. They will use their own account within the system to upload data, send invitations to register, add documents and approve staff. This will free up your time to focus on making your event memorable.

2. **Import data and files via spreadsheet:** you may have historical data to add, or a list of pre-approved people. Make sure you can easily import them, along with supporting documents and files if required. You don't want to have to upload 1,000 photographs or permits to work individually; you want to upload them in a single zip file that maps to each corresponding contact.
3. **Using historical data:** once data is in the system, it will save everyone a lot of time on future events if group account managers can assign new and multiple events to existing individuals.

Accreditation forms

Ask the right questions, get the right answers. In the world of accreditation and venue security, you often have to ask intrusive questions and gather sensitive documents. Contractor licenses, insurance documents, worker IDs, photos, permits to work, qualification certificates – there is a lot of information to collect efficiently, and store securely if you want to know exactly who is in your venue, and be sure that they are safe and legal.

Make it simple

It's all about the user. A simple front-end user interface is paramount. You're potentially asking them lots of questions and requiring them to upload documentation, so the entire application process needs to be easy for the user to access. A password-protected login portal should allow users to update details and add documents when needed. And let's not forget photos. If you want photos on badges, they must be a certain size and follow certain criteria. If your system can resize and crop photos once uploaded and gives you the opportunity to accept or reject them, you'll be saving time.

Ask the right questions

The questions to be asked and the documents to collect via an accreditation form will be driven by operational and security requirements and need to be GDPR compliant. But contractors, workers, security personnel, sporting teams, broadcasters, journalists, and volunteers all need a slightly different vetting process. So, your accreditation system needs to accommodate different categories of personnel with unique application forms. Only ask what you need to know and always explain why you need it.

Keep information secure

Gathering sensitive information isn't something you can take lightly. Users trust that you won't lose it or abuse it. Make your privacy policy clear, encrypt information where possible and ensure your systems are protected against cyber-attacks.

"Accreditation software will reduce the need for paperwork and spreadsheets, automates the straightforward tasks allowing you to focus on the more complicated ones. Clients can submit data directly into the system, meaning that you don't need to be involved in the transaction of data, which is more secure as well as saving time. And it creates one source of truth, and stores in one easy to access location historic event information as a basis to plan for the next event."

Darren Jootun, Global Head of Event Services, Reddoor Live

"You know your accreditation procedure is working when everyone knows what is happening. Organising staff, contractors, volunteers and media all have a clear idea of the entry procedure and access requirements for the event. Without this, there will be confusion and changing requirements, presenting a lot of challenges for your operational, security and event management teams."

Edwin Saayeng, Head of Major Events, Accredited Solutions

Managing contractors

Contractors present challenges. The timescales for employing them are often relatively short, and there is potential for security arrangements to be confused or overlooked due to subcontracting. But on a busy event day, you need temporary staff and volunteers to do their job. You need to know who they are, that they are legally allowed to work, and aren't suspected criminals or terrorists. This is easier said than done when you're working with multiple contractors and agencies. So, how do you streamline contractor accreditation?

1. **Make your staff screening procedure clear from the outset.** Contractors must have the same level of pre-employment screening as permanent employees. Contracts should outline the type of checks required for each post and requirements cascaded to subcontractors. Where pre-employment checks or other personnel security measures are carried out by the contracting agency, a detailed account of the checks to be undertaken and the standards achieved must be incorporated into the contract. The process conducted by the contractor should be audited regularly.
2. **Make it easy for your contractors to give you the right information.** Use accreditation software that will allow you to set up an account for each contractor or agency. Then assign a single administrator for each account who then has the ability and responsibility to import their staff data, send application invitations, update worker details, and control their own allocation of passes and zone restrictions. You want to be able to allocate a set number of passes per account and monitor their usage in real time. No more spreadsheets, de-duping or bits of paper. Just a single database that you can view anytime, on any device.
3. **Define access zones and required documents for each type of attendee.** Identify the different groups entering your venue, such as press, catering, VIPs, security, first aiders, and players, and tag access zones against each group within your accreditation system to keep people where they need to be. Establish the documents you need to be able to approve applications, including permits to work and ID photographs and use a system that will allow applicants to upload the required information as part of the application process, and store it securely for review and reference.

Finally, issue accreditation badges to all temporary workers and stipulate that they must always be worn. To keep staff moving efficiently around your venue, and ensure restricted areas remain secure, scan badges at each access control point. Find an accreditation system that integrates with your existing access control solution or use a mobile system for real-time scanning and approvals.

What you should know about the people working at your event

If you attend a music concert or major sports fixture, you are used to tickets, bag searches, metal detectors and police dogs when you enter. But what do you know about the staff and contractors you employ?

Knowing the right information solves two problems. Firstly, it minimises security threats. Some criminal or terrorist activity could rely on the cooperation of an insider, and this could be any employee, contractor or member of agency staff who has access to your premises. Secondly, it gives attendees, staff, contractors and VIPs efficient access to the right areas of your event.

So, what should you know about your workers? And how do you use this information to improve operational efficiency?

1. Verify their identity

Confirm their full name, date of birth and address with supporting documents such as a current passport or driving license and check for any criminal records. A conviction may not be a barrier to employment, but ask for details subject to local laws, particularly if the post involves working with children or vulnerable adults, in which case you are also going to want to check and collect their DBS accreditation.

2. Verify their right to work.

For non-citizens, ask to see their national identity card or passport and documentation confirming immigration status and permission to work and collect any information relevant to their role, such as qualifications, security certificates or first aid certificates. Make it a contractual obligation that contractors validate the identities of their staff and submit photo ID for everyone needing entry.

Collecting personal information and applying security procedures to prevent criminal activity may be seen as unwelcome or intrusive. But if you have the correct systems in place to store and process this data securely, and communicate any changes with staff ahead of implementation, they should understand the risks and accept the measures taken to mitigate them.

Managing approvals

The first step to approving someone for an accreditation pass must be determining whether they are eligible to work for your event. Do they have a history that could cause a problem for your operation? Are they a security risk? A decision needs to be made on whether any flagged individuals can participate.

The second step is to decide whether the default access provided meets the requirements of their role. If they need additional access, authorisation needs to be sought by the relevant parties to accept or reject additional privileges.

Communications

Sending communications via an accreditation system will soon empty your inbox. It should also mean that you can automate messages to individuals or groups according to actions defined within the system. For other ad-hoc communications, you can set up message templates. Missing a suitable photo? With one click you can send an email requesting an alternative.

Integrations

If you have existing access control hardware, online security checks with the local police, workforce management systems, facial recognition software or vehicle access checks, your accreditation software supplier may be able to integrate with existing systems to create a seamless journey for the customer. APIs can pull data in and push it out of your accreditation system to third parties.

Producing your badges

The result of your accreditation process will be a printed badge or credential for everyone who needs access to your venue or event. This is often a pain point for organisations just before event day, so use a system that does the hard work for you. If you can send badges to print in individual or bulk mode to a laser printer directly from your accreditation system, that will save you a lot of time. Make sure your system can carry multiple badge templates and merge all the details you need to display, such as names, companies, bar codes and access zones. Most importantly, you want to be able to create, manage and edit these badges at the touch of a button within the same system.

- **Best-practice design:** your marketing team need them to reflect brand guidelines, and your security team need the ID and access permissions to be clear. A correctly designed badge that contains anti-counterfeit measures and the right information will give your contractors, staff and media efficient access to your event and help keep illegal workers, ticket fraudsters and potential criminals out.
- **Branding:** badges are the gateway to your event, so you want them to look good. Make sure there is room for your logo and try to incorporate brand colours where possible.
- **Photo:** a quick and easy way for your security team to check whether a person is who they say they are.
- **Credentials:** make sure there is sufficient space to print someone's name, plus job title and company if required.
- **Badge type:** different groups of people will have different privileges, so add an icon or a colour strip to signify whether someone is media, a VIP, or part of the catering team.
- **Access permissions:** whether it's a green dot to signal backstage access, a dinner plate icon to get into the kitchens, or an initial to indicate a specific access zone, make sure access permissions are clear on the badge.
- **Unique ID:** hide a unique ID number for every person in a bar code, QR code or RFID chip and a quick scan at your access control points will instantly tell you if that pass is valid, and whether that person can enter a specific area of the event.
- **Anti-counterfeit measures:** the addition of a hologram, black light ink, micro printing or thermal ink makes it very difficult for anyone to forge a badge or ticket.
- **Use large badges:** to make the ID of photos and access zones easy for your security team.

"Use good practice for badging staff. Ensure that badges are used. Include a photo, add access permissions, use anti-counterfeiting measures, add a unique ID and change designs regularly."

Chris Phillips, Ex-Head of the National Counter Terrorism Security Office

7 things you can do to stop your badges being forged

Go to you-tube and you can find plenty of videos demonstrating how easy it can be to enter a high-profile event by forging badly designed badges. These are usually fans finding images of credentials online and trying their luck getting into an event they want to be at. But the risk is real and the consequences potentially deadly if you allow illegal workers, criminals or terrorists into restricted areas of your event.

1. **Stamp out the Insider Threat.** A proper accreditation procedure will tell you exactly who the workers and temporary staff entering your venue are. You'll know they are legally allowed to work, have the necessary qualifications and are not suspected criminals or terrorists. Do this, and you'll drastically reduce the chance of an insider helping others to forge credentials.
2. **Use a unique identifier.** If you hide a unique ID number for every person in a bar code, QR code or RFID chip, a quick scan at your access control points will instantly be able to tell you if that pass is valid, and whether that person can enter a specific area of the event. If you leave allocation of ID numbers until the last minute, you'll cut the risk of an insider being able to leak information.
3. **Prohibit the sharing of badge images online.** Make it company policy. Your staff, contractors and volunteers need to know that they are prohibited from sharing images of their credentials online. If you catch them bragging about their next job at Sunday's rugby match, they need to go.
4. **Put something on the back.** Put something on the back of the pass. Maybe a map of the venue or important timings. When people share photos of their badges online, they almost always display the front. No one knows what is on the back.
5. **Release badges as late as possible.** At large multi-venue events, it's often easier to ask contractors to collect and distribute the badges to their workers in advance. But do this as late as possible to keep designs confidential and ensure that they give you a record of exactly who is in possession of their badge and who is not.
6. **Keep new designs confidential.** It's a good idea to change designs periodically. A simple change in background colour will do but keep the change confidential until you need to print and distribute badges.
7. **Add anti-counterfeit measures.** A strip of microtext, or the use of a hologram, black light ink or thermal ink, will make it virtually impossible to forge a badge correctly. Just make sure your security and access control teams are briefed on what to look for and how to check badges are the real deal.

"The accreditation process keeps things simple. Your project is clean and organised, your data is in a single platform, your event is safe and secure, and by automating labour intensive tasks, it drastically reduces the amount of manual intervention required to deliver the event."

Edwin Saayeng, Head of Major Events, Accredited Solutions

Printing your badges

It's vital to be able to print badges in bulk and individual mode, reprint or create new badges onsite, and check your badge stock. Is it robust enough to look good for the whole event? Will it withstand rain? Can it be recycled? And don't forget to check the toner and ink levels in your printer.

Using the right accreditation system and printer, you can print all badges in-house. If you need a third party to print, make sure you can export all your badges into a PDF.

Distribution of your badges

At large multi-venue events, it's often easier to ask contractors to collect and distribute the badges to workers in advance. But do this as late as possible to keep designs confidential and make sure they give you a record of exactly who has their badge and who has not. Use your system to generate a sign-in and sign-out sheet or use a function in your database for easy reporting.

Everyone else will need to collect their badges in advance from an accreditation point. Make sure your accreditation team is present to deal with queries and make decisions on new staff and reprints.

Access control

Check ID and access privileges each time a worker enters a new access zone by scanning badges. Names, photos and access levels can be checked on the spot to receive instant approvals or rejections. This ensures that restricted areas are secure and that only people with valid permits are allowed access.

Use an accreditation system that integrates with existing access control hardware to avoid having to invest in new systems and scanners.

"Accreditation processes are at the forefront of venue security and a robust accreditation process allows a venue to control the flow of people into and around their venue. The application process allows you to vet all staff before any accreditation is issued. On event days your access control system enables you to control and monitor all staff access into a venue and with accreditation zones or access areas you are able to further control where within the venue staff can access ensuring that key areas are monitored closely."

Jamie Betts, Venue Operations Manager, Wimbledon

"Large venues or recurring events are sure to have a high churn of temporary staff. Don't issue 'season' badges. Changing the colour of your badge for each event will make it easy for your security team to see if anyone is re-using old passes. Even better, issue a new unique ID for staff at every event and a quick scan of the badge will tell you if their pass is valid."

Chris Phillips, Ex-Head of the National Counter Terrorism Security Office

Future-proofing your accreditation procedure

Implementing a strong accreditation process is a major achievement but keeping it future-ready is where real leadership shows. Accreditation now moves faster, streamlines operations, and relies on intelligent data and automation. Choose a system that evolves continuously, adapts to new risks, and integrates seamlessly with the tools that run your operation.

Key capabilities shaping modern accreditation:

- Biometric verification for fast, secure ID confirmation
- Integrated access control across badges, wristbands, and mobile credentials
- Live credential tracking with instant activation and deactivation
- Automated data flows linking HR, workforce, and incident systems
- Real-time dashboards showing operational and compliance insights
- Scalable design for multi-site and multi-event environments
- Regular updates driven by changing security and operational standards

Future-ready accreditation isn't static, it's built to adapt.

"You must have a clear plan of what you are using accreditation for, and what you need your accreditation procedure to achieve. Understand who the accreditation process applies to, and why it is needed. Finally, you need to know how you want the physical accreditation to look and operate for the event."

Edwin Saayeng, Head of Major Events, Accredited Solutions

"When looking for an accreditation platform, get a demo and make sure the system is intuitive and easy to use. Ask what experience they have with similar events and make sure the system is secure and easy to access. Find out how well they work under pressure and what level of support they offer. Check that they are future-proofing their product with continuous development and that you'll benefit from regular upgrades. Finally, try to speak to someone else that is using them and ask for honest feedback."

Edwin Saayeng, Head of Major Events, Accredited Solutions

Accreditation troubleshooting

How to manage media accreditation like a pro

Any major live events attract a lot of media attention. To ensure you have the right media in the right places at the right time, it's important to direct media through an accreditation process. This ensures you have the right press covering your event, can control their access efficiently and securely, and aren't giving passes to people who should be paying to attend.

1. Confirm your restricted areas

You'll need to know the capacity of each area to ensure you don't approve too many camera operator requests. And areas set aside for media must be clearly defined, signposted and entry-controlled by the security team. It's not just about controlling the movement of media but protecting them from external threats so they can safely carry out their job.

2. Set clear guidelines to attract the right media

The media often gain access to restricted areas of a venue to get closer to the action and meet with VIPs, so accreditation must be strictly reserved for those who represent a bona fide media organisation. This doesn't include non-editorial contacts from publishing companies, PR agencies, or communications professionals from NGOs or corporates.

Do you want to see a commission letter from the Editor-in-Chief? Do they need to have had an article published in the last month? Does their website need a minimum amount of traffic? Does their blog need a certain number of subscribers?

Define your entry guidelines and display them clearly on your website where you are asking media to apply for accreditation.

3. Ask the media to complete an online accreditation form

Set up an online accreditation form on your website that allows media to set up an account they can access again to update and edit information and submit all the documents needed to approve a media badge. This will give you a GDPR compliant way to collect data and keep all your applications and supporting documents secure in a single system.

In addition to basic contact information, other information that you may want to collect:

- Photo ID
- Commission letter
- Details of whether the applicant is a journalist, photographer, camera operator, or blogger
- Information on a publication, such as circulation, frequency, or readership
- Website traffic and audience size for blogs or social media accounts
- Proof of previous coverage
- Evidence of recently published articles
- Public Liability Insurance certificate for photographers

If you have large numbers of press attending from a particular broadcaster or media outlet, use a system that allows you to set up a group account for them to upload contacts and manage pass allocation.

4. Send clear instructions before the event

For successful applicants, it's vital to give them all the information they need to do their job. What events they have been approved for, timetable of activity, map of the venue, where to collect their accreditation badges, where the media centre is, and who they contact with any questions.

5. Issue badges and put security first

Don't email or post badges in advance, as this opens the possibility of them landing on the wrong desk or being forged. If you have room, set up a dedicated media accreditation desk at the event and make sure the press know where and when to collect their badges.

How to keep accreditation on track when stadium use changes

Often, stadiums are built to house sports clubs and host sporting fixtures. Week in week out, stadium operators can use the same credentialing software, access control zones, user groups, badge design and accreditation forms.

But what happens when the venue use changes? Or when different tenants take over? Large and new stadiums are now multi-space venues that are routinely hired out to third parties for concerts, theatrical productions, awards ceremonies and corporate hospitality. This brings new event organisers, contractors, access zones, badges, and more.

Regardless of the tenant, stadiums must still be secure. Ensure that the accreditation system installed for your regular timetable of sporting fixtures is adaptable to cover events held by third parties.

Contractors will change: concerts will need AV companies, riggers, or stage build crews. If your accreditation software uses group accounts for contractors to submit security documentation, then set these new user groups up well in advance and make sure new contractors are familiar with the procedure and documents required before you need to start processing applications.

Your access control zones may change: you might suddenly have backstage areas, dressing rooms, VIP suites, and pitch-side bars. Top up high-security areas with a mobile access control solution to ensure all your workers and staff are in the right spaces.

Your badge artwork will change: as well as the access zones to include, badge types, and perhaps security features. Liaise with the concert organiser and security teams well in advance to get this right.

How to overcome accreditation challenges for tournament organisers

Tournaments present a unique set of challenges for accreditation managers. When considering who needs access to a sporting venue, as well as ticket holders, the numbers can be staggering.

For the NFL 2024 – 2025 season, we:

- Accredited 553k individuals across 284 games
- Processed over 2 million applications
- Conducted 296k biometric scans to secure critical zones, league-wide
- Made 5 million access control decisions with real-time intelligence.

Intense media attention and the presence of large crowds in restricted areas have made sporting events prominent terrorism targets. Tournament organisers have had to commit to heightened security measures not just inside the stadiums and arenas, but also in fan zones and high-traffic areas for people and vehicles.

The number of temporary workers and volunteers to accredit at a multi-venue tournament can be an impossible task without a refined and strict accreditation procedure.

Venue infrastructure can pose operational challenges. You need to get people into each venue safely and efficiently, but rarely do tournament organisers operate the venues. Stadiums are hired along with whatever infrastructure is in place at the time. Wi-Fi connections, ICT systems, venue managers, security teams, access control technology and contractors will often differ each time.

A central online accreditation system that can be used by all contractors, venue and security teams across all stadiums and matches will solve many of these challenges.

"The key to any accreditation platform is end user accessibility. The system needs to be simple enough to use that staff can apply for an accreditation without too much assistance. Coupled with this, the platform needs to offer efficient functionality for the administrators so that they can carry out their tasks in a timely manner, including; application review; pass production; access control; and reporting."

Jamie Betts, Venue Operations Manager, Wimbledon

"I can tell you my findings over the years have been that accreditation is generally not being done well. Staff are being employed without adequate background checks...People security is the most easily overlooked aspect of protecting an event. And yet employing someone who is a threat to you is one of the most dangerous risks your organisation can take."

Chris Phillips, Ex-Head of the National Counter Terrorism Security Office



How accreditation keeps you on the right side of the law

Operating a large venue or organising an event that hosts tens of thousands of people is a huge responsibility. From GDPR compliance to preventing illegal workers, here are four ways the accreditation process can help keep you on the right side of the law:

Illegal workers

For large venues and events, there is no way of avoiding the employment of contractors and temporary staff, and this leaves organisers vulnerable to illegal workers. The current fine in the UK is up to £45k per worker for a first breach and £60k for a repeat breach for employing illegal workers. That includes students with expired visas and people who work on a visit visa. So, it's imperative to be sure that everyone working in your stadium has the right to work.

Identities must be verified, immigration status confirmed, and contractors must employ the same level of screening. An accreditation platform will provide an incredibly efficient way to collect this information by allowing applicants to securely submit documents for further verification. It will also produce alerts when documents are due to expire or need updating.

Duty of care

Venue operators are obligated to protect members of the public from terrorists and provide a safe and secure environment for staff and workers. Accreditation practices establish rigorous standards that venues and event organisers must meet to ensure operational safety and competence. Duty of care places a legal and moral obligation on those responsible to take all reasonable steps to protect the wellbeing of attendees, staff, and the public.

Martyn's Law, named after Martyn Hett, who was killed in the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing, seeks to strengthen these frameworks by requiring public venues and events to have robust counter-terrorism security plans in place, embedding protective security as a fundamental component of event management and duty of care obligations. It will become enforceable in 2027.

Use an accreditation platform to assign security levels, access zone privileges, and produce badges with this information clearly visible. Scan badges or check details every time someone needs to access a secure zone. This ensures that restricted areas are secure and that only people with valid permits are allowed access.

Data protection

GDPR imposes strict requirements about how data is collected, stored and processed. At a basic level, GDPR requires you to know where all the personal information and data you have collected from people is stored. Businesses must consolidate all documents holding personal data in a secure space or cloud storage. It also recommends proper encryption to protect data from exposure and unauthorised access.

If you are collecting accreditation applications via email or have spreadsheets being sent by contractors, you could be breaking the rules. Accreditation software will take this headache away by allowing workers and contractors to submit registrations through a secure system, record all processing activities and store data in an encrypted environment.

Data collection

The personal data you collect must be adequate, relevant and not excessive. The accreditation process invariably means asking for sensitive information and documentation, but the information you need from someone requiring access to a restricted area may be very different to the information you need from a steward outside the stadium. An accreditation system should allow you to build different application forms for different groups, meaning that your accreditation forms only collect relevant information.

How to manage accreditation in a crisis

When it comes to a crisis, it's all about operational readiness and real-time response. Every major venue or event will face unexpected challenges, from weather disruption and power loss to security incidents or data breaches. In these moments, control and visibility become the difference between confusion and command.

Modern accreditation systems now play a direct role in crisis management. When credentials, people, and access data are unified in one platform, you gain the ability to act instantly and intelligently. How accreditation supports real-time response:

- Instant credential control: suspend, reissue, or reassign passes in seconds to restrict or restore access as situations change
- Live location visibility: track who is on site, where they are, and when they entered or exited key zones
- Blacklist and watchlist integration: automatically block unauthorised or high-risk individuals from entry
- Targeted communications: send immediate alerts or instructions to specific groups, departments, or zones
- Automated audit trails: maintain full logs of every access action for post-incident reporting and insurance validation.
- Cross-system readiness: integrate with access control, workforce, and incident-management systems for coordinated decision-making.

A well-built accreditation framework doesn't just manage access, it safeguards operations, ensures accountability, and helps leadership respond with clarity and speed.

In a crisis, accreditation is no longer a formality. It's your operational command centre.

ACCREDIT Solutions

Discover our platform

Accredit OS is the single environment that houses the entire Accredit platform and the modules and enhancement packs within it. It's a completely secure identity infrastructure that supports sports fixtures, permanent venues, government events, and everyday operations.

Accredit

Deliver flawless live events with streamlined accreditation. No delays, mistakes, or workarounds – just outstanding events that exceed expectations and keep everyone safe.

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Manage media and broadcaster requests, verify credentials, issue press passes and badges, and create seating plans efficiently.

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Make inductions, safety briefings, role-based training and regulatory requirements enforceable for events and year-round operations, with full audit trail and compliance reporting.

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