



Trusted Standard

CASE STUDY

YMCA

Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

TRUSTED
STANDARD MARK

NCVO



ABOUT YMCA TRINITY



We were fortunate to discuss YMCA Trinity Group's journey using the Trusted Standard with Lucy Watling, Quality and Development Manager. YMCA Trinity Group is part of over 90 members of the Federation of YMCAs across England and Wales.

They work with young people and communities across Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, and Suffolk. Their vision is to help create supportive, inclusive, and transforming communities where young people can truly belong, contribute, and thrive. Having previously been through the journey under PQASSO (the previous name for Trusted Standard) like many other organisations, YMCA Trinity Group has successfully moved to the Trusted Standard Accreditation.

THE PRE-ASSESSMENT SUPPORT

"ACCREDITATION IS BENEFICIAL NOT ONLY INTERNALLY BUT ALSO EXTERNALLY."

YMCA Trinity Group benefited from joining a programme of support organised and funded by YMCA England and Wales delivered by licenced Trusted Standard Practitioners. Firstly, Lucy joined other YMCA colleagues on a face-to-face workshop to learn about the Standard and how to complete the online Trusted Standard self-assessment. Lucy shared with us that she found this really beneficial. She commented it was reassuring that YMCA Trinity Group could build on the work they had previously done with PQASSO. They felt confident and **motivated to move on to complete the online self-assessment.**

Lucy also thought **networking** with other YMCAs attending was great, as "the challenge with YMCAs is that we are similar but also different. There was lots of talk about how you do this?" **"Ideas and policies were shared,** and conversations continued way past the workshops." This included YMCA England and Wales establishing a Quality and Assurance Development Group and Lucy is a representative on the national committee. Later Lucy joined other YMCAs on the programme for **webinars and 1:1 screen meeting surgery sessions** while progressing with their self-assessment ready for external assessment.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Lucy worked closely with her Deputy Chief Executive, to work through each of the 11 quality areas in the Standard, to identify the managers and teams across their organisations to talk through and **identify the evidence to support their findings of their self-assessment.** When considering evidence Lucy found it “beneficial to look for a consistent thread the assessor can find throughout the organisation” As the internal Trusted Standard Champion, Lucy found the self-assessment “such **a team effort.** My role was to keep it on the agenda and to keep everyone thinking about it and working on it.”

From completing the assessment Lucy found multiple internal benefits. “It made me think about all the areas of the organisation and good practices everywhere. There were specific criteria like social return on investment that we needed to develop beyond our policy and when we recruited a Data Impact Manager, we completely reviewed that policy and how we evaluate and measure our success. **It is much more powerful when we can link it to data.** We did similar with our environmental policies and procedures which impacted savings.”

Lucy reflected on completing the self-assessment, “knowing someone external to YMCA, a Trusted Standard Practitioner, is going to review it as part of an external assessment and will look beyond action and improvement is really valuable.” Lucy was very aware that **it was something that needed to be continuously happening** and the Practitioner was going to talk to colleagues about it as part of the external assessment, to assure it is being looked at and really lived.

Now that they have been through this journey, YMCA Trinity Group feels **ready to move on to another accreditation**, perhaps ISOs. The experience they have had with Trusted Standard has allowed them to experience what is involved in assessment; the benefits it has brought to even smaller aspects of the organisation and the actual gaining of the accreditation and celebration of the achievement.

**"THE
STANDARDS
ARE EASY TO
READ AND
UNDERSTAND"**

EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

WORKING WITH THE ASSESSORS TO ACHIEVE ACCREDITATION

Lucy had lots of positive feedback about going through the external assessment with the assessors. "The initial conversation was great; Gill was **very friendly and professional**. You could tell she was **extremely knowledgeable about the ins and outs of charities**, and how these types of organisations tend to work. It was insightful for me as well when Gill shared her experience working with charities too. While collaborating with her, she was always accessible. **It felt like she was there for us**, as I would send notes and she always responded to emails and queries." Lucy compared this with other experiences of being assessed and audited, **"Every single person mentioned what a lovely experience it was.**

The key aspect as to why it was so positive, was that it didn't feel like a test but a **genuine worthwhile conversation**. They also felt listened to, like they were talking to someone interested in what they were doing. The assessor even **encouraged them to talk about everything** even the challenges.

It was clear that they brought out the best of the staff. It is delightful for us to have had such positive feedback on the actual assessment since this is the part we usually hear little about. Overall, the assessors are so suitable to this type of working with others because of how emotionally intelligent and intuitive to what the organisations need to get the best from the assessment." YMCA Trinity Group fed back it felt "as though it wasn't so much as being assessed but **an opportunity to be recognised for the great work they do.**

ACHIEVING LEVEL ONE AND TWO

Being assessed against Levels One and Two of the Trusted Standard was YMCA Trinity Group's and Lucy's own ambition - "I believe it is essential for organisations to have a stretched target; something they can continuously be working towards even if it doesn't seem attainable in their current moment, it's always worthwhile spending time on your organisations next steps". Gaining feedback from the assessors to support continuous improvement for the future is part of the assessment service.



Thank you to Lucy Watling for taking the time to share your journey with us and congratulations to the team at YMCA Trinity Group on achieving BOTH level **one and **two** Trusted Standard!**

WISH TO SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE?

We are always interested in organisations' accreditation journey!

Whether it's about the challenges you faced, your experiences with the assessors or what gaining the accreditation means to you, we'd love to hear it all.

Your story may even help others in the same position you were in and motivate them to achieve their level one or two accreditation.

Contact us: trustedstandard@growthco.uk