

Foundation Training Endorsement Guide

for recognition by
REPs Ireland

*Strength & Conditioning
Specialist Exercise Instructor
Special Populations*



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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in submitting your programme to PD:Approval (PDA) for Foundation Training endorsement, which is the prerequisite for REPs Ireland members who wish to undertake other approved continuing professional development (CPD) in that discipline.

Foundation Training must map fully to the relevant REPs Ireland standards to ensure an industry benchmark is met, but endorsement allows you the autonomy to add more contextualised content to the course and assessment – a huge benefit when developing your universal selling point to learners. If you are in the early stages of developing your programme then the standards are a great way to provide the initial structure and guidance.

The main outcome of Foundation Training endorsement is to provide a standardised level of knowledge and skills for learners to enable them to build on that knowledge with additional endorsed CPD. All Foundation Training is certificated by PD:Approval, and those certificates will be recognised by other ICREPs member countries. Please note that Foundation Training does not give entry to any REPs but it will be recognised as continuing professional development.

This document sets out the endorsement submission process for Foundation Training in the following three areas – for ease of reference where there are specific areas relating to either one of the disciplines, they are colour coded:

1. **Strength & Conditioning**
2. **Aqua**
3. **Specialist Exercise Instructor:**
 - Cardiac Disease
 - Falls prevention
 - Stroke
 - Mental health
 - Back pain
 - Obesity & diabetes
 - Chronic respiratory disease
 - Cancer rehabilitation
 - Long term neurological conditions
4. **Special Populations:**
 - Pre and Postnatal
 - Older Adults
 - Disability
 - Youth

You will find this key in the footer of each page as a reminder. Areas of black text relate to all of the above disciplines.

This guidance pack will give you all the information needed to support you towards a successful submission, but please [contact us](#) should you require any further assistance.

We look forward to working with you.

The Professional Development Team
PD:Approval

Section 1: Background Information

1.1 Introduction to the REPs Ireland and PD:Approval

The **Register of Exercise Professionals** (REPs Ireland) has been established to professionalise the fitness industry through the promotion of standards. REPs Ireland ensures that registered members are appropriately qualified with the knowledge, skills and competencies required to perform their role effectively.



REPs Ireland accepts exercise professionals onto the professional register when they fulfil 4 key criteria:

1. Achieve qualifications and awards that meet industry standards and have been independently Quality Assured
2. Maintain professional standing by ongoing CPD
3. Maintain appropriate insurance cover
4. Adhere to a code of ethical practice

The industry standards used by REPs Ireland are based upon the European standards developed by Europe Active <https://www.ehfa-standards.eu/es-standards>.

REPs Ireland operates independently of all Education Providers and facilities and works to maintain professional standards in the industry.

REPs Ireland is governed by a council which has been established by Ireland Active, to oversee and support the function of the Register of Exercise Professionals in Ireland. The specific role of the council is to inform the setting of policy and standards in relation to professional registration, and provide advice in regard to industry trends, needs and opportunities that will enhance professional and industry development.

PD:Approval (PDA) is an independent quality assurance service working with new and established membership organisations in numerous sectors. We have an uncompromising approach to quality and unbiased objective quality checks to ensure that the learner benefits from the best learning experience and can take advantage of employability skills that are also identifiably transferable.

PD:Approval
Endorsed

PDA's expertise lies in embedding robust processes and structures to drive up excellence, increasing employability and career advancement for members within the UK and internationally. The approval process is administered by PDA, licensed by REPs Ireland.

1.2 REPs Ireland Framework

The categories that are currently available on the register are as follows:

- Fitness Instructor (IE L4/EQF L3/UK L2)
- Group Fitness Instructor (IE L4/EQF L3/UK L2)
- Personal Trainer (IE L5/EQF L4/UK L3)
- Pilates Teacher (IE L5/EQF L4/UK L3)
- Exercise for Health Specialist (IE L5/EQF L4/UK L3)

Further categories are in development that will reflect the knowledge, competency and skills currently in the exercise sector. These new categories will seek to reflect the job roles that are in existence or in need within the exercise sector. These will be published as the standards for entry to each category are agreed.

1.3 Terminology

It is important that providers understand the terminology used in CPD endorsement so that their marketing and social media is correct when describing their endorsed programme or the relationship with REPS Ireland.

Below is a list of the terms used in education – please make yourself familiar with them to ensure that you do not mislead your learners or inaccurately describe the status of your training:

Term	Explanation
Endorsed/ Endorsement	All foundation training that successfully completes the submission process is 'endorsed' by PD:Approval (not REPS India) and is referred to as an 'endorsement'.
Approved/ Approval	Training providers need to gain 'approval' for their submission in order to become endorsed.
Recognised	An endorsed foundation training award is 'recognised' by REPS India (not endorsed, approved or accredited).
Awarded	CPD points are 'awarded' to endorsed foundation programmes and then the endorsed provider will 'award' those points to learners who are REPS India members and have successfully complete their endorsed training.
Beware!	Beware of the word 'accredited' – it cannot be used to describe any type of CPD endorsement and is used in the context of qualifications only.

An example of a correct marketing statement:

XXX Training Company is excited to announce the arrival of the Foundation Award in XXX, which will provide you with the skills to run a class with your XXX clients. XXX foundation training has been endorsed by PD:Approval and is recognised by REPS India. Upon completion, register members will be awarded # CPD points.

What's right with this statement? This statement uses all the correct terminology for an endorsed foundation training award and clarifies that only REPS India members will be awarded the CPD points.

An example of an incorrect marketing statement:

XXX Training Company is excited to announce the arrival of XXX Fitness Course which will qualify you to deliver XXX to your clients. XXX Fitness Course is accredited and endorsed by REPS India. Upon completion you will receive # CPD points.

Section 2: Foundation Training Endorsement

2.1 Disciplines

Foundation Training is for three specific areas, and for ease of reference any part of this guide that relates only to any one area is colour coded as follows:

1. **Strength & Conditioning**
2. **Aqua**
3. **Specialist Exercise Instructor:**
 - Cardiac Disease
 - Falls prevention
 - Stroke
 - Mental health
 - Back pain
 - Obesity & diabetes
 - Chronic respiratory disease
 - Cancer rehabilitation
 - Long term neurological conditions
4. **Special Populations:**
 - Pre and Postnatal
 - Older Adults
 - Disability
 - Youth

Endorsed Foundation Training is the mandatory prerequisite for REPs Ireland members to undertake any other endorsed CPD in the same discipline.

All endorsed Foundation Training must be mapped 100% to REPs Ireland standards and is awarded 16 CPD points which REPs Ireland members can use to maintain their membership.

Endorsement lasts for one year and the CPD points awarded will only benefit members of REPs Ireland. Endorsement is not transferrable so if you want your programme to be endorsed and recognised in a different country you will need to complete the endorsement process that operates in the country of your choice. If you choose an [ICREPs member country](#), we may be able to support you with a letter of approval once your training is endorsed, which may help fast track your application.

2.2 Foundation Training award titles

Your Foundation Training must have one of the following titles, please ensure that this is consistent throughout your materials and marketing. It will also be displayed on the Certificate of Achievement:

- **Foundation Award in Strength and Conditioning**
- **Foundation Award in Aqua**
- **Foundation Award in Cardiac Disease**
- **Foundation Award in Older Adult Exercise Instructing**
- **Foundation Award in Disability Instructing**
- **Foundation Award in Youth Exercise Instructing**
- **Foundation Award in Older Adult Exercise Instructing**

2.3 Endorsement options

Foundation Training is available as two options:

1. Pay As You Go (PAYG)

You can submit your training as a single endorsement, which we term Pay As You Go (PAYG). This means that you will be submitting for approval one programme; if you would like to gain approval for another one later it would mean an additional full submission. The cost of Foundation Training PAYG is £700 (approximately €780) per annum.

2. Unlimited (Special Populations, Aqua and Strength & Conditioning only)

Alternatively, if you also have other training you would like to endorse, you could consider the **Unlimited option**. This means you will submit an application for your Foundation Training and, once approved, will be able to gain endorsement for all your other training (Assessed, Non-Assessed, Informal, Events), including additional Foundation Training (Special Populations, Aqua or Strength & Conditioning only), without having to pay additional submission fees. The cost of Foundation Training Unlimited is £2200 (approximately €2460) per annum.

2.4 International training providers

PDA invites applications from providers who are based outside of Ireland, however the training must be delivered in Ireland and marketing must clearly show that the endorsement and the accompanying CPD points are for REPs Ireland members only.

It is important to note that your programme will only be endorsed and recognised in Ireland, not internationally.

2.5 International endorsement with other REPs

REPs Ireland is a member of the International Confederation of Registers of Exercise Professionals ([ICREPS](#)). If you wish to gain endorsement in other ICREPs member countries, you must apply for approval through their own endorsement submission process. Once you have gained approval with PDA, we will be able to provide you with a letter of approval to support your application which may help speed up the process.

Section 3: The Endorsement Process

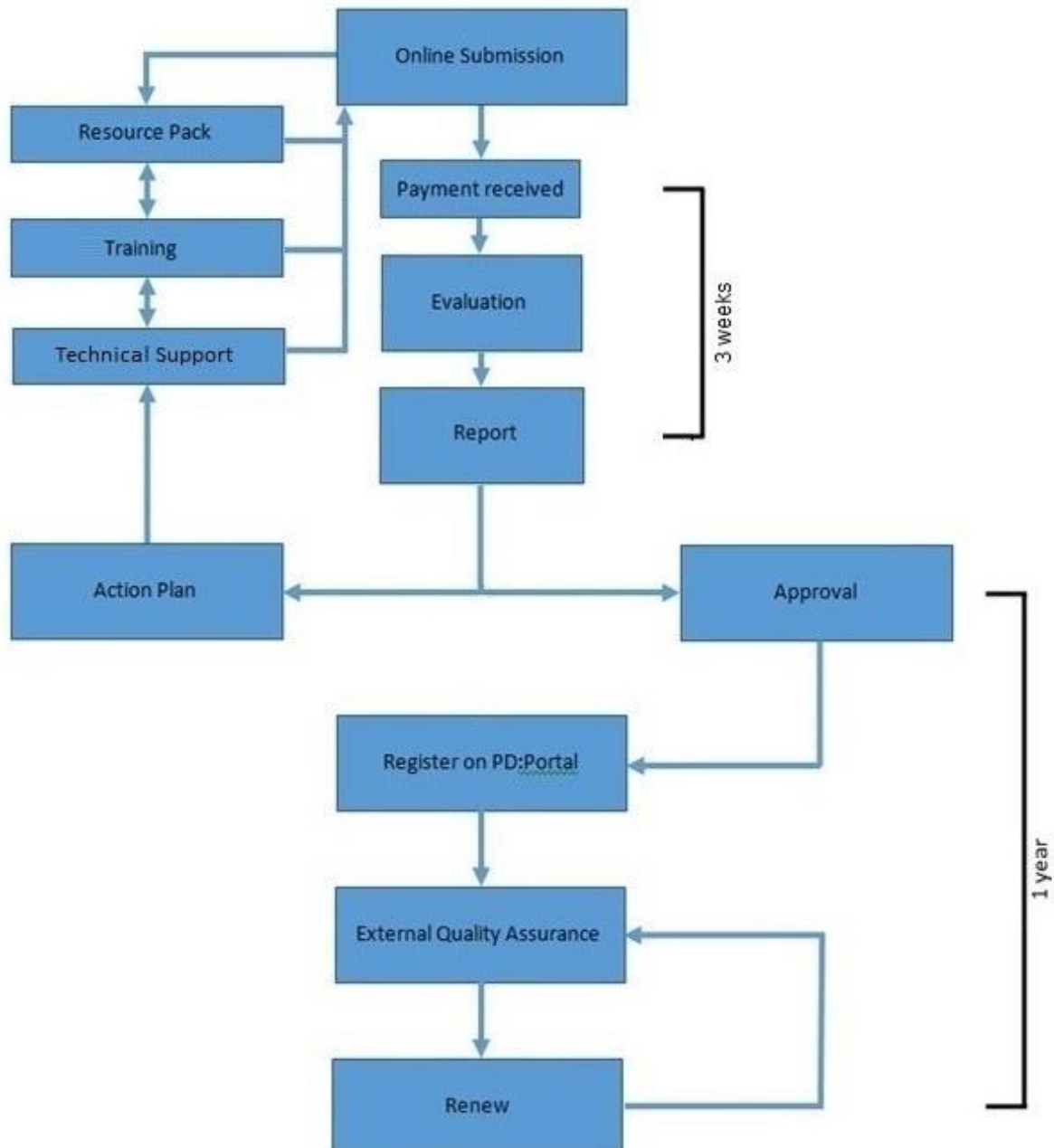
3.1 Submission details

The online submission process has been structured to make it as streamlined as possible. There are however a few key pieces of evidence required which will be explained in detail later.

Each submission will be evaluated by a PDA appointed Technical Evaluator who will cross reference your evidence against robust criteria. Once complete, they will produce a report and, if required, an action plan which will need to be addressed by the training provider to proceed to approval. The action plan will be detailed and have deadlines attributed to each criterion. Our initial evaluation process will take a maximum of 3 weeks. On approval you will be formally notified with a letter of endorsement and a Certificate of Authentication, along with relevant logos.

3.2 The Foundation Training endorsement flowchart

This flowchart illustrates the endorsement journey in Year 1.



3.3 The submission process

The submission process is all online through our website at www.pdapproval.com/repshireland. Take a moment to read through the features and benefits as this will ensure that you make full use of your endorsement.

When you are ready, go to the [Get Endorsed](#) page, select the Foundation Training tab and click on the Submit button to open up the sign-in page.

Input your contact details including email address and then press submit to receive access details to your personal application form via an automated secure HTML link which will be emailed to the email account you specified. Ensure that you create a username and password so that you can use this unique link to return to your form whenever you wish before you submit. Click on the link in the email and it will take you through to the submission form builder.

***Handy Hint:** Bookmark the secure link in your browser so that you don't have to keep going back to your email each time. Also, make sure you use the Save feature on the first page of the form.*

Continue filling in the relevant boxes and, when you reach the upload area, hover over each criterion to reveal a pop up information box to remind you how best to meet the evidence requirements. Full details of these requirements can be found in the next section.

3.4 Confidentiality

All members of the PDA team have signed a Code of Confidentiality agreement. PDA will endeavour to ensure that there is no conflict of interest between you and any PDA team member working with you. However, if you feel there may be a conflict of interest between yourselves and any member of the PDA team, please inform us immediately.

Read on for a full breakdown of the criteria required for your successful endorsement.

***Handy Hint:** Use our online instant chat which is on every page of the website should you get stuck. If we are offline then we will be notified and one of the team will make it a priority to respond.*

Section 4: Criteria for Approval

4.1 Evidence required

The following details the evidence required through the online application form for Foundation Training endorsement.

Please refer to this guide as you work through the submission form to ensure you have satisfied all criteria:

1. Contact details

We require a nominated Main Contact who we will be able to call, email or send any correspondence by post regarding endorsement. There are also areas to record invoicing and administrative contacts, which help towards a speedy and efficient approval. Please remember to let us know if these details change once you are endorsed to ensure that you always get the communications we send you.

2. Organisation details

This ensures that our records hold the correct information for the name and the location of the endorsed provider. You also have the option in this section to fill in the correct invoicing and administrator contact details if they are different from those of the main contact. If you are a sole trader you will be the contact for all these roles. Please remember to let us know if these details change once you are endorsed to ensure that you always get the communications we send you.

3. Website address

Please provide the website address where your endorsed programme will be advertised.

4. Where you plan to deliver the endorsed programme

For our records and data collection purposes we ask you to record the regions in which you will be delivering your training. Please note that you will be asked to provide details and a short video of a venue in each of the regions you select.

5. Do you own the intellectual property of the programme you are submitting?

If you don't own the intellectual property of the programme you wish to have endorsed, you will need to upload a letter of authority from the person who does, allowing you to deliver or distribute it under your company name. The letter of authority is available as a download on the submission form or you can download it [here](#).

6. Criminal convictions

You will be asked if you have or are likely to have a criminal conviction, or been refused recognition with another body. If you answer yes to this you will need to send us details before you can carry on with your submission.

7. Discipline

You will be asked to select the discipline you are submitting for, which includes how the title of the training must be displayed once approved, and which will appear on the Certificate of Achievement. The options you see will be determined by the Foundation Training option you have chosen:

- Foundation Award in Strength & Conditioning
- Foundation Award in Aqua
- Foundation Award in Pre and Postnatal Exercise Instructing
- Foundation Award in Older Adult Exercise Instructing
- Foundation Award in Youth Exercise Instructing
- Foundation Award in Disability Exercise Instructing
- Foundation Award in Cardiac Disease

8. When do you want to deliver the programme?

Let us know the date you are intending to start delivering your endorsed programme, or if you are already delivering it.

9. Description of the training

You are asked to provide a brief overview of your training to include research sources and the target market.

10. Is your training online/blended

If it is, you will be asked to provide login details so the evaluator can check it out. Please ensure they don't need to answer any questions, they just need to see the learner journey and check that your training meets the learning aims and outcomes.

11. Learning aims and outcomes

Here you will need to specify the learning aims and outcomes of your programme ie what the purpose of the training is and what the learner will be able to do once they have completed it.

The learning outcomes state what it is that the learner should achieve, which include knowledge, understanding and application:

- **Knowledge:** these should describe the areas of knowledge that learners will be expected to acquire by the end of the course.
- **Understanding:** these should describe what learners will do during the course in order to develop their knowledge.
- **Application:** these should describe the technical and transferable skills that learners should be able to demonstrate by the end of the course

Course Aims are statements that describe the overarching intentions of a course. They should try to answer the following questions:

- What is the purpose of the course?
- What is the course trying to achieve?

The 'type' or format of assessment must be reflected in the language used in your learning aims ie 'demonstrate' for a practical assessment, 'understand' for a theory assessment, 'explain' for a theory and/or practical assessment. It is essential that the learning aims and outcomes are embedded within the assessment.

12. Tutor:student ratio

The tutor to candidate ratio for Foundation Training is recommended to be no greater than 1:15. This means that where a single tutor fulfils all the requirements of the tutor team and only one tutor delivers a course, the maximum number of candidates per course should be 15. Where two tutors are used, the maximum number should be 30. Numbers on Foundation Training should not exceed 30 candidates and if you wish to exceed this number you must supply further evidence to support this choice so that the evaluator can make a decision.

13. Prerequisites

Minimum prerequisites are mandatory for REPs Ireland members to undertake your Foundation Training. These prerequisites are also recommended for all your other learners, however it is up to your own discretion if you wish to make them mandatory for all:

Strength & Conditioning: EQF L4 Personal Trainer

Aqua: EQF L3 Fitness Instructor

Specialist Exercise instructor: EQF L5 Exercise for Health Specialist

Special Populations: EQF L4 Personal Trainer

14. Guided Learning Hours (GLH) requirement

The number of GLH and Face to Face Tutor Hours (FTH) is dictated by the time required for learners to achieve the course learning outcomes and to gain a high level of practical competence .

- **Strength & Conditioning:** 150 GLH, to include at least 30 hours practice in a setting
- **Aqua:** 150 GLH, to include at least 75 FTH, of which at least 25 must be practical
- **Specialist Exercise instructor:** 150 GLH, to include at least 30 hours practice in a setting
- **Special Populations:**
 - Pre and Postnatal: 160 GLH, to include 120 FTH of which at least 65 must be practical
 - Older Adult: 50 GLH, to include 35 hours face to face tuition hours (FTH) of which at least 25 must be practical
 - Disability: 50 GLH, to include 35 hours face to face tuition hours (FTH) of which at least 25 must be practical
 - Youth: 50 GLH, to include 35 hours face to face tuition hours (FTH) of which at least 25 must be practical.

GLH must include the total duration of the course in hours, including formal contact time as well as any additional independent study (e.g. pre-course reading, homework, on-line tasks, assessment preparation etc).

Under no circumstances can **Strength & Conditioning**, **Aqua** or **Specialist Exercise Instructor** Foundation Training be delivered wholly via distance or on-line learning.

15. Facilities, Equipment and Venues

Use our [template](#) to detail the facilities and equipment required to run your programme and upload it to your submission form. You can also download a copy from the submission form.

Facilities: The following facilities should be considered as a basic requirement of endorsement and each centre must provide access to them for all learners during training and assessment.

- Access to drinking water
- Toilet/shower facilities
- Adequate changing facilities
- Well ventilated classroom(s)
- All equipment (including delivery of the training) is in good working order and aligned to your health and safety policy and risk assessments.

Equipment: Any specialist equipment required for training and assessment must be available for all learners and be in good working order.

Venues: Please also give details of the venues that will be used to deliver training and provide a short video (no more than 5 minutes) that shows the equipment, facilities and area/s that you will use for the training and/or assessment. Please note you must provide a template and video for venues in each of the regions you select on the form.

16. Biographies and certificates

You must upload a completed [biography template](#) along with supporting certificates for each member of your team to detail the experience, training and qualifications of everyone involved in the delivery of your training, including the programme's author if applicable. Download the template now (a copy is also available to download from the submission form).

PLEASE DO NOT SEND IN CVs; if you send in a CV instead of a completed Biography Template and supporting certificates you will be actioned in the evaluator's report and may face a further fee.

Your evaluator will be looking to see that the delivery team and author (if applicable) are technically competent and qualified to write, deliver and/or assess the training.

Tutors, assessors and IQAs must have or be working towards a full qualification for their role in the delivery team Below is a list of the qualifications acceptable for tutors, assessors and IQAs:

Tutors:

- Level 3 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF) (PTTLS)
- Level 3 Award in Education and Training (QCF)
- Level 4 Award in Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF) (PTTLS)
- Level 4 Certificate in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF) (CTTLS)
- Level 4 Certificate in Education and Training
- Level 5 Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (QCF) (DTTLS)
- Level 5 Diploma in Education and Training
- Certificate in Education

Assessors:

- Level 3 Award in Understanding the Principles and Practices of Assessment (QCF)
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Vocationally Related Achievement (QCF)
- Level 3 Award in Assessing Competence in the Work Environment (QCF)
- Level 3 Certificate in Assessing Vocational Achievement (QCF)
- A1 (previously D32, D33)

IQA:

- Level 4 Award in Understanding the IQA of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF)
- Level 4 Award in the IQA of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF)
- Level 4 Certificate in Leading the IQA of Assessment Processes and Practice (QCF)
- V1 (previously D34)

For more information on the role of the IQA and who to appoint, see [section 6.2](#).

Additional minimum requirements that the delivery teams must include for Foundation Training:

1. The tutor team for Strength & Conditioning Foundation Training must also fulfill the following additional minimum requirements:

- a. Include a strength and conditioning specialist who is involved in the delivery of contact time* in the application of concepts, theories and strength and conditioning practice.
- b. Include an exercise instructor with expertise and experience in the specialist area (direct industry experience for at least 2 years) who is at least EQF Level 4/UK L3 Personal Trainer qualified and holds or is working towards a qualification** in the specialist area, who is present throughout the direct delivery of contact time. *This could be the strength and conditioning specialist if they satisfy this criteria as well as (1).*
- c. Include an appropriately qualified assessor and internal verifier with expertise and experience in the specialist area (direct industry experience for at least 2 years) who is at least Level 3 qualified and holds or is working towards a qualification** in the specialist area.

* The contact time with the strength and conditioning specialist can consist of e-learning modalities but must be interactive and in real time (for example a strength and conditioning specialist led webinar scheduled at set points throughout the year which students are required to participate in prior to certification).

2. The tutor team for Specialist Exercise Instructor Foundation Training must also fulfill the following additional minimum requirements:

- a. Include a practicing/former NHS clinical/healthcare specialist with significant expertise in the physiology, treatment and management of the disease (e.g. a physiotherapist or nurse specialist) who is involved in sufficient direct delivery of contact time.

- b. Include a REPs registered exercise instructor with expertise and experience in the specialist area who is at least an EQF L5 Exercise for Health Specialist or UK L3 Exercise Referral and holds or is working towards a qualification** in the specialist area, who is present throughout the direct delivery of contact time. Must have direct industry experience for at least 6 months.
- c. Include an appropriately qualified assessor and internal verifier with recent experience/understanding of the specialist area and ideally a qualification** in the specialist area.

3. The tutor team for Special Populations Foundation Training must also fulfill the following additional minimum requirements:

Have an accredited qualification** relevant to the special population their training relates to:

- Pre and Postnatal
- Older Adults
- Disability
- Youth

** Other accredited learning will also be taken into consideration if appropriate.

Handy Hint: If any member of the delivery team is not qualified in tutoring, assessing or internal quality assuring then PDA offers YMCA Award accredited qualifications for each role.. [Contact us](#) for more details of our qualifications.

17. Tutor pack

This is everything that a tutor will need to deliver your endorsed programme, and is essential for anyone who needs to step in if the usual tutor is unable to take any class (approved by us first if not already approved).

The Tutor Pack must include:

- a lesson plan for **each session** (see [Appendix 4](#) for an example)
- a tutor:learner agreement
- learner feedback form
- summary of learner feedback
- a PARQ / Informed consent (if applicable)
- delivery team roles and responsibilities matrix
- attendance register
- health and safety checklist
- [Patient Consent Form \(see 18\)](#)
- [Athlete Consent Form \(see 21\)](#)
- additional resources such as PowerPoints, tutor notes

It's also useful to include a Delivery Team Roles & Responsibilities Matrix, and a template for the tutor to self-reflect on the training session.

Handy Hint: Our Resource Bundle includes a Tutor Pack with templates and guidance to save you time. Visit our [Shop](#) for more information on this and the other resources included.

18. Learner Pack

This is the pack of information that the learner needs once they sign up to your endorsed programme. Your Learner Pack must include:

- An overview of your organisation, accolades, values and ethos, along with relevant contact details
- A contents page and page numbers
- Relevant company policies ie equal opportunities, complaints, appeals etc
- An overview of the training programme

- The programme timetable
- Pre-course instructions
- Resources the learner needs to bring with them on the training (pens, paper, gym kit etc)
- The main technical element which details the training, with illustrations and clear instructions - ensure that you try to incorporate different learning styles (VAK)
- An overview of the assessment and the criteria (if applicable)
- An appendix for forms, etc

PDA has created a digital manual and hard copy assessment pack for the Foundation Award in Pre and Postnatal Exercise Instructing (manuals for the other disciplines will be created in due course) which you can use instead of creating your own:

- The **digital manual** is available at £30 (approximately €34) per learner and a minimum order of 50 copies is required when you gain approval or renew. Once the 50 copies have been used, you will be charged per learner at registration ([see 7.2 Registration and Certification](#)). If you do not use the 50 credits during the endorsement period they will be carried over to the following year and added to your new purchase of 50 manuals which will be combined with your renewal fee. You can order **hard copy manuals** from PDA by [contacting us](#) for details of the price and shipping costs of the quantity you require. Once you have paid the invoice we will arrange for the copies to be sent to you.
- The **assessment pack** is £200 (approximately €223) and contains the full Learner Assessment Pack (worksheets, observation checklist etc), Multiple Choice Questions and Short Questions (mock and live versions) plus answers (Assessment Packs for the other disciplines will be created in due course). You will be able to choose this on your submission form and the cost will be added to the submission fee.

NB: You must use the same resources for the whole of each of your annual endorsement periods, but can switch at renewal as long as you provide us with the new materials to review before renewal takes place.

Your learner pack must be grammatically correct with no spelling errors. If applicable, remember to upload anything your learners receive **before** the course and **after** they have passed.

It is a requirement that the **Specialist Exercise Instructor** candidate has supervised engagement and interaction with the target population group. This aspect does NOT have to be formally assessed by the course tutor/assessor, and can be achieved using a variety of methods, for example through:

- observation of the patient group or a placement in a clinical setting or specialist community programme, signed-off by a clinician or course tutor
- shadowing of a qualified instructor in the specialist area, signed-off by a clinician or course tutor
- working with a real patient in completion of the assessed case-study, signed-off by a clinician or course tutor (e.g. a one-to-one meeting between the candidate and a patient to enable the candidate to collect all relevant information required to design a tailored, safe and effective exercise programme for the patient. **NB:** it is not expected that the candidate will instruct the patient through an exercise programme)

In special circumstances where sufficient justification can be provided that direct engagement and interaction with the target population is proving impracticable in fulfilling this requirement, e.g the use of videos of real patients in real programmes *may* be permitted providing the case study assessment requires the candidate to directly engage with a real patient (i.e. it is not *based* on a real clinical case).

Gaining patient consent

Where case study assessments require candidates to work with a real patient, training providers will need to ensure they develop a patient consent form to fully inform patients as to how personal information collected will be used by the candidate in the completion of their case study.

For a person's consent to be valid, the person must be:

- capable of taking that particular decision ('competent')
- acting voluntarily (not under pressure or duress from anyone)
- provided with enough information to enable them to make the decision

These aspects need to be carefully considered when selecting patients for case study assessments (e.g. particularly where the patient has a medical condition that could impact on their ability to make 'competent' decisions).

Further information:

1. Use of images

All images used MUST be your own. If they have been taken from other sources, permission must be sought from the owner and they must be appropriately referenced (see below).

2. Referencing (applicable to all submissions)

- All figures/diagrams/illustrations and material used from other sources must be acknowledged and correctly referenced. A page providing a summary of references and named authors must be included. Any training provider found to be using another's work without permission will have their submission referred for resubmission.
- Although there are many different systems of referencing, the Harvard system is the most commonly used; you may wish to refer to this. Whatever method you choose to reference your work, the most important factors are consistency, and the fact that you are acknowledging where you sourced the information from.

3. Bibliography (applicable to all submissions)

- A bibliography is a list of books, articles, and other sources you have used when writing a manual or learning resource. It is normally positioned at the end of the document.
- Bibliographies must be presented in a specific style. They are essential to any manual/learning resource in order to:
 - give credit to/acknowledge your information sources;
 - help readers to find and read your sources;
 - avoid being accused of plagiarism.

Handy Hint: Our Resource Bundle includes a guide on creating your Learner Pack. Visit our [Shop](#) for more information on this and the other resources included.

19. Administration Pack

The administration pack ensures you have all the necessary systems and processes in place to guarantee that you can process, support and deliver training to the learners efficiently and effectively. This contributes to safeguarding your organisation against complaints and appeals. These must include policies and procedures for:

- Equal Opportunities
- Appeals and Complaints
- Learning Support & Reasonable Adjustments
- Quality Assurance

- Recording & Retaining Evidence
- Data Protection
- Training Cancellation
- Health & Safety
- Safeguarding
- Learner Contact & Support
- Media
- Social Media

It is important that you cover both the policy (what you are committing to do) and what the procedure is (how you are going to do it).

Handy Hint: Our Resource Bundle includes a template Administration Pack and guidance to save you time. It also includes templates to assist you in your internal quality assurance process. Visit our [Shop](#) for more information on this and the other resources included.

20. Assessment

PDA has created a hard copy assessment pack for Pre and Postnatal Foundation Training which you can use instead of creating your own. The Assessment Pack is £200 (approximately €223) and contains the full Learner Assessment Pack (worksheets, observation checklist etc), Multiple Choice Questions and Short Questions (mock and live versions) plus answers (Assessment Packs for the other disciplines will be created in due course). If you would like to use PDA's assessment pack rather than your own, you will be able to choose this on your submission form and the cost will be added to the submission fee.

Assessment details need to be provided to the learner of the following:

- How candidates are informed of the assessment task(s)
- Duration of assessment per candidate
- Invigilation procedures
- Process if candidates fail
- Appeals process
- Pass marks
- How the outcome of assessment is fed back to candidates

Evaluators will be checking that the candidates are provided with sufficient information about the task(s), that the assessment is appropriate to achieve the learning outcomes of the course, and that there are appropriate mechanisms in place to support candidates if they fail and/or if they need to appeal a decision.

For guidance regarding the requirements for assessments and invigilation procedures see [Appendix 2](#). Assessments practical and theory must be carried out under invigilated conditions and face-to-face. Please also refer to the assessment strategy in the relevant mapping toolkit/s.

Your Foundation Training must include the following assessments as a minimum – please also refer to the relevant mapping toolkit/s for the **full assessment strategy**:

1. **Theory exam:** Where a Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) paper is the chosen method it must also include short and/or long answer questions and be invigilated under exam conditions.
2. **Practical observation:** An assessor observed strength and conditioning session (short term goals). We recommend assessment is face to face, however in special circumstances filmed evidence may be acceptable. If this is the chosen and approved method it must be an unedited recording, include live audible coaching instructions by the strength and conditioning coach and it must not be edited.

3. **Case study (medium term goals – 8 -12 weeks):** This should be based on an 8 – 12 week mesocycle and should be designed around, or in preparation for the competition schedule. It may include one or more, but not all, of the following phases of training: preparation; first transition; competition; second transition (active rest).
4. **Presentation and viva (Long term goals – 12 months):** This should be based on a 12 month macrocycle and include ALL of the following phases of training: preparation; first transition; competition; second transition (active rest).
5. **Case study** – this can be based on real clinical cases (i.e. a set case study patient) or by directly engaging with real patients (i.e. a patient undergoing cardiac rehabilitation)
6. **Practical observation:** An assessor observed practical assessment
7. **Pre and Postnatal:** Option 1: Practical observation with a live client (not pre or post natal); Option 2: Case study.
8. **Older Adult:** Practical observation - the learner must be assessed working with one apparently healthy older adult
9. **Disability:** Practical observation - your learner must be assessed working with one apparently healthy adult who has a form of disability
10. **Children:** Practical observation - you must be assessed working with a group of 6 children (6-11 yrs) and 6 young people (12-17 yrs)

N.B. The pass mark across all written/theoretical assessments must be a minimum of 70%.

Please refer to the relevant mapping toolkit for the full assessment strategy.

Handy Hint: Our Resource Bundle includes a range of Assessment templates to save you time. Visit our [Shop](#) for more information on this and the other resources included.

21. Athlete consent form

Case study assessments require candidates to work with a real athlete, therefore training providers will need to ensure they develop an appropriate consent form to fully inform athletes as to how personal information collected will be used by the learner in the completion of their case study.

For an athlete's consent to be valid, the athlete must be:

- capable of taking that particular decision ('competent')
- acting voluntarily (not under pressure or duress from anyone)
- provided with enough information to enable them to make the decision
- have autonomy to take part without contravening any contract or sponsorship restrictions.

These aspects need to be carefully considered when selecting athletes for case study assessments (e.g. particularly where the athlete has a pre-existing condition that could impact on their ability to make 'competent' decisions).

22. TWO formal letters of support for the technical content of health-related programmes

Submitting organisations must provide letters of support for the technical content of the programme from at least TWO clinical medical specialists with expertise in the field which is covered by the course.

Preferably the specialists will be of national or international standing and acting in an advisory capacity to and with the knowledge and support of the major national charities/ associations linked to the disease category. **NB:** The specialists should not have been involved in writing any aspect of the course or have direct links to the training provider.

PD:Approval expects the technical experts to have carried out appropriate checks on the content. The letters must confirm that the technical content of the learning and teaching materials is informed by up to date and relevant literature and is in line with current thinking and best practice.

23. Mapping to REPs Ireland standards

If you are using PDA's manual, you don't have to complete any mapping.

The REPs Ireland occupational standards establish the benchmark of competence required in the sector. Developed in conjunction with technical experts and employers, they focus on the employers' needs to ensure employability skills are reflected in training.

You must map your Foundation Training programme 100% to the standards using the toolkits on our [website](#).

Mapping is simply providing an index of where course content covers the standards. Content can map from a number of resources within your programme, such as PowerPoint presentations, manuals, lesson plans or books.

See [Appendix 3](#) for an example of how to complete a mapping toolkit.

Handy Hint: When developing Foundation Training, use the standards in the mapping toolkit/s to help guide and structure the content. Remember you cannot do less than the minimum standards but you can go over and above.

24. Marketing

Marketing materials e.g. course leaflet/flier/website address hyperlink, must be submitted that clearly show the following information:

1. Purpose/aim of the course to include key learning outcomes
2. Cost
3. Prerequisite requirements
4. Assessment details
5. Please also indicate where you will put the REPs Ireland Training Provider and CPD point logos, and the PD:Approval Endorsed logo – post approval you will be required to resend with the actual logos in place.

25. Agreements

At the end of the submission you will be asked to confirm your agreement to the following:

- That any venues, facilities and physical resources have met health & safety guidelines and venues are covered by any necessary insurances
- That you have read and understood the requirements of endorsement and agree to pay the non-refundable fee
- That you agree to the [Contract Terms including Endorsement and Code](#)

Section 5: The Evaluation & Approval

Once payment is received for your submission, PDA will appoint an independent Technical Evaluator to review your evidence. They will review it in line with PDA's endorsement criteria and the standards set by REPs Ireland and you will receive their report within 3 weeks.

5.1 The evaluation result

The technical evaluator will rate your submission with one of the following:

- **Approve:** this means that your evidence has met all requirements and your training is endorsed – congratulations, we will be in touch!
- **Approval Pending:** this means that parts of your submission fall just short of meeting all the requirements and your report contains actions and a deadline for them to be completed by. There is no fee however should you fail to meet the deadline or fail to fulfil the criteria, your status will move to Further Evidence Required
- **Further Evidence Required:** this means that parts of your submission has failed to meet the standards by some way, so your report contains actions and a deadline for them to be completed by. In order to proceed with the submission, you will be required to pay an additional fee of £200 (approx. €230) to cover the evaluator's time in reviewing the new evidence, should you decide to go ahead. If you haven't already, at this stage you should consider purchasing the [Resource Pack](#) or using our [Technical Support](#) to help you achieve a successful submission. **NB** you may also have a Further Evidence Required status if you fail to adhere to the deadlines on an Approval Pending report. Should you fail to either meet the deadline or fail to fulfil the criteria, your status will move to Not Approved.
- **Not Approved:** this means that unfortunately your submission has failed to reach the standards set by PD:Approval and REPs Ireland despite the support of the evaluator, or that you have failed to complete actions set for you in your Further Evidence Required report or missed the deadline. The submission process for the programme in question will end and you will need to start a new submission if you wish to become endorsed. Your report will guide you on what you must do to improve a future submission, and a period of six months will be imposed to give you time to fully reflect on the process before resubmitting.

Once your submission has been approved, PDA will issue you with your REPs Ireland and endorsement logos and a Certificate of Authentication for you to display. You will receive access to your own Endorsement Dropbox – see [7.1 Dropbox](#) for more information - and will also be able to create an account on the [PD:Portal](#) to promote your organisation and endorsed training – see [7.3 PD:Portal](#) for more information. In addition, the Main Contact you have specified in your application will be added to the REPs Ireland member newsletter distribution list. If you would like to be contacted for article content once you are approved, [do let us know](#).

5.2 Appeals

If you are unhappy with a decision made by PDA you can appeal by following the process outlined in [7.10 Complaints & Appeals](#).

Section 6: Quality Assurance

6.1 External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Your endorsement will last one year during which time you will receive a quality assurance check from PDA – either a visit or desk-based review – which will focus on the practical skills as well as the assessments/assessment portfolio and internal quality assurance. You will be notified of your allocated External Quality Assurer (EQA) upon approval and will receive guidance from them as to what to expect before the check takes place.

Your EQA report will grade you according to PDA's [quality framework](#): Outstanding, Good, Requires improvement, Unsatisfactory. A detailed report will be compiled after the visit and, if actions are required, deadlines will be set for receiving evidence. The report will offer structured guidance on how we can help support you in a timely manner to achieve an improved quality status. Please note that if an additional EQA visit is required as part of this process, a fee will be incurred and mandatory training may be required.

6.2 Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

The Internal Quality Assurer - or IQA for short - has a very important role in your team in ensuring that the quality and consistency of your training remains at the same level every time you deliver it, and that internal processes such as team meetings, following up on evaluation feedback and record keeping are maintained.

The minimum amount of IQA that should be carried out each year is 20% of delivery - so if you deliver your programme 10 times during your 12 month endorsement period, you would need your IQA to come in and run their checks twice during that time. They would observe delivery, check through the assessments, have a chat with some of the learners, and meet with the delivery team to look at meeting minutes, go through your systems and processes, and generally make sure that everything is running smoothly.

Who can undertake the role of the IQA?

Anyone who has a full IQA qualification and relevant fitness qualifications can carry out the role of IQA for your endorsed Foundation Training.

Small training providers

If the IQA is also the tutor and/or assessor, they cannot quality assure themselves so you will need to employ someone else for the IQA role. However, where there are at least two members of the team performing tutor/assessor roles, the tutor/assessor on course 1 can be the IQA on course 2, although this is not recommended as best practice.

Where your training team consists of one tutor and one assessor, or simply a tutor, there are three options to enable you to meet the IQA requirements:

1. Hire a freelance qualified IQA – the minimum amount of IQA required is 20% of delivery, so you might only require an IQA 2 or 3 times a year. You will need to provide us with their details.
2. Where there are two members of the team, the tutor can also assess (or vice versa) for a particular cohort so that the other team member can IQA. That person would need gain an IQA qualification if they are not already qualified.
3. Send a peer to gain an IQA qualification who would be willing to be available to IQA you when required. They would need to satisfy the endorsement criteria with regard to their occupational competence.

Strategies to internally quality assure your endorsed training

1. **Video** - Providing that you have been given permission to film then this can be a great way to reflect on one's own delivery as a tutor or assessor. Additionally, it can be a great training tool to train new assessors or to provide a standardisation task.

Handy Hint: Video the practical element, get your assessors to assess it and then come up with their decisions. See how different people assess and then have an open discussion when replaying it back to ensure everyone at the end comes to the same conclusion.

2. **Team Meetings** - Simple yet effective. It is important that all those involved in the programme as well as those who are involved with other parts of the business eg administrators, marketing, etc, come to meet regularly to ensure that any changes, amendments, learner feedback etc are all recorded in official minutes and that there is evidence of actions been completed against timeframes. It is recommended that Team Meetings are held once a month.
3. **Learner Feedback** - This is essential to ensure that you are meeting the needs of your learners. All learner feedback must be recorded.

Handy Hint: Learner feedback is invaluable especially when incorporated during the course of the programme as this is more personal, or done anonymously using for instance Survey Monkey as a tool. Anonymous surveys will sometimes come up with more honest feedback as it removes the fear of possible reprisals for negative feedback. Survey Monkey provides analysis of the results to save time. Plus it's free.

Section 7: Now you have Full Approval

Once you have achieved Full Approval, there are some responsibilities you must be aware of, some of which have already been detailed but are listed here as a reminder.

7.1 Dropbox

At approval you will receive access to your Endorsement Dropbox, which will be shared with the Main Contact you specify, the PDA Team, and the EQA we appoint to you. The Dropbox will be used to store all documentation and records relating to your endorsement. If you are already endorsed by us, a new folder for Foundation Training will be added to your existing Dropbox to hold the details of this endorsement. If you aren't already endorsed by us, please read the rest of this section.

Creating your Dropbox:

You will need a Dropbox account opened with the email address of the Main Contact in order to access it. Your Dropbox will only be shared with your organisation via the Main Contact you have specified, at their email address. If the Main Contact wishes anyone else to have access to the Endorsement Dropbox, they must [email us](#) with authorisation and details for us to share the Dropbox with them.

To create your own Dropbox, the Main Contact must visit the Dropbox website [here](#), complete the First Name, Last Name and email boxes (with the Main Contact's email address), then create a password. Once you have gained Interim Approval, we will 'share' your PDA Endorsement Dropbox with the Main Contact, who will receive an email with a link which will provide them with full access.

Your Endorsement Dropbox is the property of PDA. Please note that whilst you may add any information you feel is relevant to your Dropbox, nothing can be deleted without the prior consent of PDA.

7.2 Registration and Certification

You must register your learners on the [PDA website](#) within 7 days of the start of date of the Foundation Training, ie the Course Start Date you will provide when registering). If you are using PDA's digital manual and you still have credit from the 50 copy minimum order, there will be no charge to register. Once the credit is used, you will be charged per learner at registration. If you do not use the 50 credits during the endorsement period they will be carried over to the following year and added to your new purchase of 50 manuals which will be combined with your renewal fee.

PDA will provide you with an official, secure Certificate of Achievement for each of those learners who have successfully passed their final assessment where payment has been received. The certificate will contain a hologram logo and QR Code to protect against copying, and will have a unique certificate number, the name of the Foundation Training, your provider name and the date the learner passed their final assessment.

When scanned, the QR Code will show:

- the learner's name
- their unique learner number
- the certificate number
- the qualification they have achieved
- the date achieved
- your training provider name

For learners whose status is recorded as 'passed' on the website by the bi-weekly cut-off date (or the first following working day) and payment has been received, we will send certificates by recorded delivery 3 days later (or the first following working day):

Status update and payment cut-off date	Certificates posting date
1 st of each month	3 rd of each month
15 th of each month	18 th of each month

Certificates will be posted to the Main Contact in a package which will require a signature upon delivery. The Main Contact is responsible for ensuring your learners receive their copy of their certificate. Replacement of a lost certificate will incur a fee of £25 (approximately €28).

7.3 PD:Portal

Once you have Full Approval, you can register for an account on the [PD:Portal](#), which is available for anyone to find quality assured training internationally. Please download our [step-by-step guide](#) to help you navigate the system.

Your PD:Portal account will enable you to create a Trainer page to promote your organisation, and a Course page to promote your endorsed training. Once both are approved the information will be live on the site. Look out for some great features:

- Direct referral form
- Learner review area
- Learner star grading
- Gallery for images of your training and facilities
- GPS navigation

7.4 Newsletter

As well as being promoted through the PD:Portal, you also have the opportunity to contribute to REPs Ireland's member newsletter. In addition, the Main Contact you have specified in your application will be added to the REPs Ireland newsletter distribution list. If you would like to be contacted for article content once you are approved, do let us know.

7.5 Making amendments to content or team members

If you plan to make any major changes to your programme during the endorsement period, you must make these known to PDA before they take effect. This could include for instance new delivery team members (if unqualified for their role, they must be working towards a qualification and be shadowed by a qualified team member), changes to policies and procedures, or changes to the course content or delivery.

Evidence must be uploaded to the Amendments folder or Delivery Team folder in your Endorsement Dropbox, whichever is appropriate, so that we can check it meets our criteria and doesn't affect your current endorsement. Be sure to create a new folder with a relevant name to hold your evidence ie for new team members, create a folder with the person's name in the Delivery Team folder. Then contact the [Professional Development Team](#) to let us know about the changes and where to find the evidence, so that it can be reviewed and approved. Once approved, you can then incorporate the changes.

Continuing to deliver endorsed training when changes have occurred without informing us and gaining approval could result in a sanction or termination of your endorsement and may affect REPs Ireland members' insurance to practice.

7.6 Change to contact details

During the submission process you will have provided us with name, email and telephone details for your team as follows:

- **Main Contact:** the person to whom all communications from PDA will be sent
- **Finance Contact:** the person to whom all invoices from PDA will be sent – this may be the same person as the Main Contact
- **Administrator Contact:** the person who we would contact if we are unable to reach the Main Contact

If any of these contacts change, as well as any physical or social media addresses you have provided to us, you must let us know immediately, otherwise you risk missing important communications from PDA which may jeopardise your annual renewal or ongoing endorsement.

7.7 Delivering at new centres

If you would like to use a new training centre to deliver your programme or run assessments for your learners, you must first provide their details for approval. The evidence you must provide for each new centre is as follows - ***you must not use a new centre until it has been approved by PDA.***

1. Details of the equipment and facilities at the venue – download [this form](#), complete it and add it to the Centre Approval folder in your Endorsement Dropbox. Use the name of the centre as the name of the file so it is easily identifiable.
2. Create a short video showing the equipment and facilities at the centre; any equipment with moving parts must be shown being used. Once complete, add the video to the Centre Approvals folder or [send a link](#) so that we can view it for approval – please ensure that you label the video with the name of the centre.
3. **Please note:** Applications without a video will be returned. If your application is referred twice, it will be closed and you cannot reapply for the same centre for a period of four months.

7.8 Adding new programmes

If you have gained approval for an Unlimited endorsement, you can add new programmes by uploading them to your PD:Portal account. You will also need to save some evidence in the Endorsement Dropbox we share with you. The evidence we require depends on the level of endorsement you would like:

- **Foundation:** Learner manual, lesson plans, assessment, mapping and Biography Templates for each of the team involved in delivery and quality assurance
- **Assessed** (at least 8 hours with an assessment): Learner manual, lesson plans and assessment
- **Non-Assessed** (at least 4 hours, no assessment): Learner manual and lesson plans
- **Informal** (1-3 hours, no assessment): Lesson plans and marketing
- **Event:** Marketing

If any of the evidence is online, you must provide login details.

7.9 Renewal

Endorsement is renewable annually at the cost of £700 (approximately €785), plus the cost of manuals if using PDA's. Your renewal fee provides a new period of endorsement and continuing support from your EQA, including their annual quality assurance visit or desk-based check. It also provides you with continuing exposure via the PD:Portal if you have created an account.

Please make a note of your renewal date, which will be communicated to you first in your Full Approval confirmation email and then annually in your renewal confirmation. PDA will provide timely renewal reminders to the Main Contact specified in the submission form, so if this changes please ensure you let us know immediately.

As long as payment for your renewal is received before the endorsement expiry date your new period of approval will continue without interruption.

Please ensure you contact us well before you need to use them.

7.10 Ordering additional hard copy learner manuals

If you are using PDA's hard copy manual/s and require additional copies please [contact us](#) for details of the price and shipping costs of the quantity you require. Once you have paid the invoice we will arrange for the copies to be sent to you. Please ensure you contact us in good time so that you do not run out.

7.11 Complaints and Appeals

In the event of a complaint or appeal against PDA or against one of our endorsed training providers, we will do all we can to reach an amicable resolution. Any upheld complaints or appeals will be sent to our licensing body as part of our annual independent assessment. An upheld complaint against an endorsed provider may result in a [Sanction](#).

To make an appeal against a decision by PDA or to complain about either PDA or another endorsed provider, please follow our [Complaints and Appeals](#) process.

Section 8: Appendices

Appendix 1 - Price list

Product	Price	€*	Details
Foundation Training submission – PAYG	£700	780	Per annum
Foundation Training submission - Unlimited	£2200	2460	Per annum
1-2-1 Technical Support	£40	44	Per hour
Resource Bundle (includes all the packs listed below or they can be purchased individually)	£200	224	NA
Administration Pack	£85	93	NA
Learner Pack	£85	93	NA
Assessment Pack	£50	56	NA
Quality Assurance Pack	£50	56	NA
Tutor Pack	£50	56	NA
Learner Manual – digital	£30	34	Per manual
Learner Manual – hard copy	Price on application		
Assessment Pack	£200	224	Per pack
Certification – per learner	£25	28	Per learner
External Quality Assurance support visit (incurred if an investigation is required; expenses will also be charged)	£380	418	1 day

* Approximate € cost

Appendix 2 - Guidance on assessment

Assessments must meet the following criteria:

1. Assessments must test competence 100% against the standards.
2. Clear marking criteria/model answers must be developed for each assessment.
3. Assessor-observed practical assessments require an observation checklist, which records the candidate's planning and performance and the assessor's decision and comments.
4. Where MCQ papers are used to test theoretical knowledge they must include a minimum of 30 questions and must also include short/long answer questions that test comprehension, application and analysis.
5. If an assessment is taking place at the end, the candidate must be given reasonable time to prepare for this summative assessment (it is standard practice to schedule an assessment day at a later date).
6. Candidates must be practically assessed individually (if applicable).
7. The pass mark across all written/theoretical assessments must be a minimum of 70%.
8. All procedures and relevant paperwork for assessments must be included in the candidate's manual; this must include a copy of the practical observation checklist, where required, and the appeals process.
9. Case study assessments must reflect the course learning outcomes and adhere to fair and reasonable assessment principles. Case study assessments may be completed online. Theory assessments must adhere to PDA's invigilation guidelines (see above) and be completed in a test centre.
10. **Online training** with a theory assessment must be invigilated under exam conditions (see below). If you have a practical assessment which is online please include links in your submission.

Formative Practical Assessing

Formative assessing is on-going learner checks that take place during the training. The results of these checks are not to be included in any final mark, only the Summative Assessment at the end of the qualification will show if the learner has passed. Formative checks need to be robust enough to ensure that the learners are competent and have the necessary practical skills and/or experience. For formative practical assessment, in most cases an observation checklist will be created that covers the practical learning outcomes in the Qualification Syllabus.

Summative Practical Assessing

Summative assessing takes place when the syllabus has been completed against an observation checklist. The qualified assessor will have the discretion to mark the learner as either a pass or fail against the criteria on the checklist. With all assessments, including practical, there needs to be a marking criterion to ensure that the assessor can arrive at a decision to pass or fail the learner. The pass rate for practical competency is generally 100% as it is expected that the learner is able to meet all the criteria set. However, they may have areas that need improvement - these can be marked as a pass but with a comment from the assessor regarding the areas they need to work on or improve.

All practical observations must cater for the ability to 'viva question' the learner if there is some doubt on their competence in the criteria. However, it is essential the assessor writes the question in the comments box as well as the learner's answer, and the learner must also sign after receiving feedback to ensure that this is a true reflection of their answer. It is also important to remember that the learner is completing a practical competency check, therefore if they do not show the ability to meet the criteria fully it may not be appropriate to question them instead - for example if the criteria states 'The learner must be able to demonstrate safe and effective lifting techniques' and the learner does not demonstrate this, it is not appropriate to question them i.e. 'why is it important to lift safely' or 'how should you lift safely', they need to be able to show you their ability to demonstrate this.

Handy Hint: Whilst it might sound obvious, please ensure that you cover in your assessment the learning aims and outcomes as this will ensure that the course achieves them.

All assessment paperwork produced for the learner must have marking criteria so that both the learner and assessor(s) are aware of what competences they have to meet.

It is also essential that the learner receives feedback on an assessment action plan which can be linked to the observation checklist. Both the assessor and learner must sign to say that they agree with the decision.

Handy Hint: Place details of the appeal policy on the reverse of the assessment sheet so that the learner is aware of the process should they be referred. This also means that they have a copy of the feedback and marking criteria to hand if required.

How to complete a Summative Practical assessment

1. Ensure the learner has had plenty of time to prepare for the assessment. A time, date and venue must be agreed in advance.
2. Ensure the learner has a good understanding of the assessment criteria. The assessment marking checklist must be available to the learner from the start of the course.
3. Before the actual assessment the assessor must brief the learner. This gives the assessor an opportunity to discuss with the learner the marking criteria, the process for the assessment, how long each section should last, any safety issues regarding the client, instructor or venue.
4. Before starting the assessment, the assessor must check if the learner has any questions.
5. Once the assessment formally begins the assessor should not interfere with the assessment, the learner should show an ability to manage their timings and the 'client' or group of 'clients'. However if the assessor becomes concerned that the 'client' is at risk of injury due to the instruction from the learner, they must stop the assessment. The learner would require feedback and the assessment would have to be redone.
6. The assessor may move the learner on during the assessment, for example the learner may plan to do 2 sets of an exercise but the assessor could choose to ask the learner to move on to the next exercise and not complete the second set. This could be done a couple of reasons:
 - a. the assessor has seen that the learner is competent and therefore does not need to see the second set
 - b. the learner is teaching the exercise incorrectly and is not showing a clear understanding or competency. To prevent the 'clients' becoming injured the assessor will refer the learner for this exercise and so could move them onto the next exercise.
7. The learner must not look to the assessor to ask questions, for example if they planned to do a certain exercise and either the piece of equipment is not free (as in the gym) or not available (i.e. mats in the studio). It is up to the learner to decide what to do as in a real life scenario, ideally the learner as part of the assessment should have checked that all equipment (where possible) is available, clean and suitable for use. The learner should not rely on the assessor to tell them what to do, however the assessor may feel for the safety of the 'client'(s) it is essential they step in and make a recommendation. This however could mean that the learner has now not met the competency criteria.
8. The assessor must ensure the assessment runs for the appropriate amount of time. Most practical assessments must be a minimum of 30 minutes, this detail should appear in the Learner's Assessment Pack (LAP).
9. At the end of the session the assessor must ask the learner to end their session, this indicates that the learner must give feedback to the 'clients' on their performance and to gain feedback from the 'clients'.
10. The assessor should then expect the learner to clear and tidy the area before the assessment is finished.
11. If deemed appropriate, the assessor can now 'viva question' the learner if there is some doubt on their competence in any area of the criteria. However, it is essential the assessor writes the question in the

comments box as well as the learner's answer, and the learner must also sign after receiving feedback to ensure that this is a true reflection of their answer.

12. The learner must then be given time and a private place to complete a reflection or evaluation of their performance/instructing.
13. Feedback must be given to the learner face to face as soon as possible. It is generally considered good practice to tell the learner straightaway if they have passed or been referred. This enables the learner to listen to the feedback and take on board the feedback in relation to the assessment decision.
14. If the learner is referred try to give feedback sensitively. Be positive and set an action plan and discuss arrangements for a re-assessment.
15. Ensure all paperwork is signed and dated by the learner and the assessor, and the IQA if present.

Guidance for writing Multiple Choice Questions

The following tips have been adapted from [The E-learning Coach](#).

- 1. Test comprehension and critical thinking, not just recall**

Multiple choice questions (MCQ) are criticised for testing the superficial recall of knowledge. You can go beyond this by asking learners to interpret facts, evaluate situations, explain cause and effect, make inferences, and predict results.

- 2. Use simple sentence structure and precise wording**

Write test questions in a simple structure that is easy to understand and try to be as accurate as possible in your word choices. Words can have many meanings depending on colloquial usage and context.

- 3. Make all distracters plausible**

All of the wrong answer choices should be completely reasonable. This can be very hard to accomplish but avoid throwing in those give-away distracters as it detracts from the test's validity.

- 4. Keep all answer choices the same length**

This can be difficult to achieve, but expert test-takers can use answer length as a hint to the correct answer. Often the longest answer is the correct one. If you can't get all four answers to the same length, use two short and two long.

- 5. Avoid double negatives**

Don't use combinations of these words in the same question: not, no, nor, the -un prefix, etc. For example, this type of question could confuse test-takers: 'Which of the following comments would NOT be unwelcome in a work situation?' Flip it around and write it in the positive form: 'Which of the following comments are acceptable in a work situation?'

- 6. Mix up the order of the correct answers**

Make sure that most of your correct answers aren't in the "b" and "c" positions, which can often happen. Keep correct answers in random positions and don't let them fall into a pattern that can be detected. When your test is written, go through and reorder where the correct answers are placed, if necessary.

- 7. Keep the number of options consistent**

Making the number of options consistent from question to question helps learners know what to expect. Research doesn't seem to agree on whether 3 or 4 or 5 options is best. We recommend 4 options as a fair choice.

8. Avoid tricking test-takers

As faulty as they are, tests exist to measure knowledge. Never use questions or answer options that could trick a learner. If a question or its options can be interpreted in two ways or if the difference between options is too subtle, then find a way to rewrite it.

9. Use 'All of the Above' and 'None of the Above' with caution

All of the Above and *None of the Above* can come in handy. But they may not promote good instruction. Here's why. *All of the Above* can be an obvious give-away answer when it's not used consistently. Also, the *All of the Above* option can encourage guessing if the learner thinks one or two answers are correct. In addition, the downside to *None of the Above* is that you can't tell if the learner really knew the correct answer.

Invigilation for written exams

1. The Multiple Choice Question papers (MCQs) must be closed book and held under invigilated exam conditions. This means that the learners are not able to take any text books or learning resources into the exam. Please note some forms of assessment are open book such as the worksheets, however for these qualifications all of the MCQ's are closed book.
2. The assessment of learners and the integrity of the exam process is of paramount importance to PDA. Invigilators play a key role in helping to ensure the security of the exam papers and that the exams are conducted in a fair and appropriate manner.
3. Invigilators must NOT cause any unnecessary disturbance in the exam room - try to avoid noisy shoes or discussions between other invigilators or staff.
4. Invigilators must NOT read or do marking during the exam unless the paperwork is relevant to the exam process. The invigilators must watch the learners throughout the exam to be able to offer any support (see below) and to ensure cheating is not occurring.

Written Exam procedure

Set up the room

1. The invigilator must arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam to allow time to set up the room. There may be a sitting plan to ensure learners are seated in appropriate places, learners needing additional support may be seated towards the back of the room (see below - *Supporting learners during the exam*).
2. Ensure a clock is visible to all learners and that the time is correct.
3. Check fire exits are clear and the room is tidy. You may have a designated area for learners to put bags and coats.
4. Place blank answer sheets on each desk – NOT THE EXAM PAPER.
5. Place a pen on each desk. They may have brought their own but it saves disruption later if their pen stops working.
6. A whiteboard or flipchart must be visible for the learners, with the following information written on it:
 - a. Training Provider Name and code (learners need to complete this on the paperwork)
 - b. Today's date
 - c. Time allocation for the exam
 - d. Some learners may be given extra time, ideally their seat number is recorded and their times noted (see Support for learners during exam).
 - e. Start time (to be written in once exam starts).
 - f. Finish times (based on their given time – consider those given extra time).

Admitting the learners to the exam

1. Learners may be required to show photo ID depending on the size of your company. If their tutor/assessor is available to confirm their identify this should be sufficient.
2. All phones must be turned off and put in their bags, phones are NOT allowed on their desk.
3. Bags, coats etc must be put in the allocated area.
4. No learner can be admitted to the exam more than 15 minutes after the exam has begun. Any learner who arrives late (but within 15 minutes) will not be given any extra time unless this had been agreed in advance.

Starting the exam

1. Before the exam starts, the invigilator must read instructions relating to the exam, for example if the fire alarms goes what the learners need to do. If the fire alarm does go, the invigilator must record the time, if possible lock the room or take the exam papers with them. Remember safety first so if needs be leave the papers and another exam will have to be arranged. Other instructions should be regarding leaving the room, please see *Invigilator's announcements/instructions*.
2. Guide the learners in completing the relevant information of their answer sheet paperwork i.e. "Write your name in capitals at the top of the paper, add the date as on the board, add the centre name and number as on the board".
3. Ask if anyone has any questions and answer them as fully as possible so everyone is clear on the process. Be clear that you can support them in certain ways during the exam for instance if they feel sick or need a tissue, but you CANNOT read the questions (unless previously agreed – see *Supporting learners during the exam*) or help with choosing answers.
4. Once the room is quiet, inform the learners the exam is about to start, anyone talking will be asked to leave the exam.
5. Hand out the exam papers but do not let them open the paper.
6. Once everyone has their papers, check the time and record it, then instruct the learners to start.

Ending the exam

1. The invigilator could announce when there is 15 minutes left. This is up to each individual centre, some learners may find this distracting and some may find it useful.
2. Once the allocated time is completed the invigilator must clearly announce "Stop, put down your pens and close your paperwork". Learners must remain seated until papers have been collected.
3. The invigilator must collect all paperwork and return it to the relevant envelope for the marking team.

Leaving the exam before the finish time

1. Learners are able to leave before the end of the exam. They are reminded in the invigilator's instructions that they must first raise their hand, and the invigilator will come over and whisper quietly, "Are you sure you are finished?". If the learner is happy they have finished, the invigilator must take the paper and ask the learner to quietly get their bags and leave the room and the outside area so as not to disturb other learners.
2. Learners are not allowed back into the room once they have left.

Supporting learners during the exam

1. Leaving during the exam

Unless previously agreed no learner can leave the exam and then be re-admitted. This includes toilet breaks, however some learners may have a medical condition or an anxiety issue will means that they need to leave the room. If this is the case, this must be confirmed in writing before the exam, and another member of staff must be present for the exam. If the learner needs to leave the room for the

toilet or for anxiety reasons the additional member of staff must go with them and stay with them the whole time they are out of the room, these means being outside the toilet cubicle. If the member of staff stays with them they will be allowed back into the room.

2. **Extra time**

If a learner requires extra time, this must be pre-arranged with the learner, head of centre and assessor/tutor. There are a few reasons why your learner may be entitled to extra time:

- a. Mother tongue is different to the exam
- b. Confirmed additional needs such as dyslexia, anxiety
- c. Health issues that may require them to leave the room to take medication or visit the toilet.

There may be more reasons, this is for the centre to confirm. If you are unsure if a learner can have extra time please [contact PDA](#).

Extra time is generally considered as 25% more time.

3. **A reader**

Some learners may be entitled to have a reader, ideally a member of the team who is not the assessor or tutor who will read the questions to the learner. There are many reasons why a learner may require a reader, but this is an arrangement that must be made in advance of the exam. The learner and the reader must be in a separate room so as not to disturb the other students. This learner will be entitled to extra time, generally 25%.

4. **A scribe**

Some learners may need someone to write for them. This could be for many reasons such as an injury to their writing hand. The role of the scribe is to record everything the learner states, and generally this will be just ticking a box for the MCQ papers. The learner and the scribe must be in a separate room so as not to disturb the other students. This learner will be entitled to extra time, generally 25%.

Invigilation guidelines for theory assessment

No specific knowledge or experience is required to be an invigilator – often providers will nominate tutors as invigilators.

The invigilator role includes:

- Registration (register signed)
- Theory/practical assessment environment set-up
- Checking the identity of each learner
- Ensuring personal belongings/bags are left in a secure place
- Accompanying learners who must leave the room temporarily (there must be more than one invigilator for this to happen)
- Ensuring there are no disruptions that may put off others who are being assessed
- Ensuring that any previously identified reasonable adjustments for specified individual learning needs are provided-
- Explaining the emergency procedures in place
- Communicating what resources are allowed e.g. dictionary
- Ensuring that a clock is visible and timings given
- Providing instructions on the procedure for late arrivals, illness whilst taking exam and contravening the instructions given.

Invigilator's announcements/instructions

The following instructions must be given to your learners (you can adapt these to your own circumstances where required):

1. Please ensure mobile phones are switched off, not on silent but turned off then placed in your bag or coat or in the supplied phone box. All bags and coats should be placed in the relevant area (this may be inside the room or somewhere else, ensure people's belongings are safe). Smart watches and similar must also be removed and switched off.
2. Check your pockets to make sure you do not have any revision notes in your pockets, place these with your belongings.
3. Please take your seat, (possibly numbered or named). In the event of a fire, exits are located xxxx. If we are forced to leave the room, please stay together as a group and await instructions from me.
4. You are allowed a water bottle, however the label should be removed. Pencil cases are not allowed so take out any pens or pencils you need and place the case with your belongings. You may have a calculator but not your phone.
5. Please raise your hand now if you have anything on or around your desk which should not be there.
6. Any learners believed to be conferring or using unauthorised material or notes will have their papers removed.
7. If you require any assistance, including additional paper, please raise your hand and speak to an invigilator. Invigilators cannot give assistance on the meaning or interpretation of questions.
8. Please do not disturb other learners in any way. Please be aware that some learners may continue to work after the main exam end time. Please be considerate and remain quiet until you have left the exam room and are away from the immediate area.
9. Clocks are located xxxx. This exam will last xxxx hours/minutes.
10. I will notify you when you have 15 minutes remaining (if applicable).
11. If you complete your exam before the allocated time, please raise your hand and wait for the invigilator to collect your answer paper before you leave.
12. Please complete the relevant details on the top of your answer worksheet.

The invigilator must then place exam papers on each desk, and remind learners this is exam conditions and no one should be talking.

13. Any questions?
14. The time is now xxxx. The exam will end at xxxx. You may now open your question paper and begin.

Guidance on Re-sits

Learners must pass both the practical and theory elements of the qualification to gain a pass status.

If a learner has not met the required standard of at least 70% on their theory paper or 100% on their practical assessment, the feedback action plan must clearly and positively/constructively help the learner understand what criteria they did not meet and areas within the module that they should focus more on. Information on next steps i.e. re-sits, will also appear here.

List the process and the next assessment dates, if available. If no dates are available then we would suggest that you provide contact details of how to book in. In most cases the learner will be allowed to re-sit one assessment, however if there is a second then a fee may be charged. It is important that before learners undertake the assessment they are made aware of this.

If the learner has failed the assessment it might also be a good opportunity to introduce a few tutorials before they take the re-sit to ensure the best chance of success. It is also a good way to ensure that the learner is on track with revision, and can ask any outstanding questions that they are not clear on.

Appendix 3 - Example of mapping to REPs Ireland standards

The example below gives an indication of how to map to the standards.

Professional roles and responsibilities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to manage healthcare referrals • Professional responsibilities 	
Performance Criteria Exercise professionals must be able to:	Mapping to assessments
Task 1: Understand professional role boundaries in relation to working with pregnant and postnatal clients	
P1. Describe the place of the Pregnancy and Postnatal Exercise Instructor in the healthcare system and the cooperation of a multidisciplinary task force of health care professionals	Professional roles and responsibilities worksheet
P2. Explain the importance of understanding and respecting own professional role boundaries and limitations when working with pregnant and postnatal clients	Professional roles and responsibilities worksheet
P3. Explain asymptomatic in relation to a pregnant and postnatal client	Professional roles and responsibilities worksheet
P4. Describe the importance of working within the remit of the specific role being undertaken	Professional roles and responsibilities worksheet
P5. Identify legislation, policies, guidance and ethical issues relating to the provision of exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients	Professional roles and responsibilities worksheet
Knowledge and Understanding Exercise professionals must know and understand:	Mapping to Learning resources
Task 1: Understand professional role boundaries in relation to working with pregnant and postnatal clients	
K1. The place of the PPEI in the healthcare system and the cooperation of a multidisciplinary task force of health care professionals (Gynecologist, Midwife, Nutritionist, Exercise Specialist, Exercise Psychologist, Physiotherapist)	Page 4-6 of the manual
K2. Professional role boundaries and limitations when working with pregnant and postnatal clients	PowerPoint B slide 2
K3. The definition of an asymptomatic pregnant and postnatal client	Page 15 of the manual
K4. The importance of working within the remit of the specific role being undertaken	Page 16 of the manual
K5. Legislation, policies, guidance and ethical issues relating to the provision of exercise for pregnant and postnatal clients	PowerPoint C slide 7

Appendix 4 - Example lesson plan

A lesson plan is required for each 'session' in your training. The lesson plans must be realistic, and timings suitable for the information being delivered.

Programme Name:	Foundation Strength & Conditioning		Tutor:	A. Tutor				
Lesson plan title/no:	Introductions I		Time:	9.00am - 9.45am				
The key resources required for this session			Key health and safety considerations this session					
Wipe board Flipchart paper Marker pens Workbooks Steps and mats for students to sit on			Room layout is hazard free Bags and coats safely stored out of the way No scheduled fire practice Fire exits identified Relevant housekeeping covered					
Time	Subject matter/ content	Teaching activities	Learning styles addressed			Student learning activities	Resources	Assessments formative/ summative
			V	A	K			
8.30-8.45	Registration	Meet and greet				N/A	Registration sheet Tea/coffee	N/A
8.45-9.00	Welcome	Welcome and introductions				N/A	Name badges	N/A
9.00-9.20	What type of people may you meet	Lead a group discussion, making notes on board, and prompting overall involvement	✓	✓	✓	Interact with group discussion, take notes	Workbook	Group discussion
9.20-9.30	What might be their expectations of you?	Introduce open discussion and group work	✓	✓	✓	Interact with group discussion, create a spider gram	Workbook and plain paper	Group discussion
9.30-9.45	What might they need from you?	Put into small groups, give them a client type then give flip paper to each group and get them to come up with a list of needs for their client type	✓	✓	✓	Work in small groups to look at ideas, group discussion to present findings	Flipchart paper and marker pens	Group discussion
9.45-10.00	End of lesson - break for refreshments	Circulate				N/A	Tea/coffee	N/A


Learning styles key: V = Visual, A = Auditory and K = Kinesthetic

Appendix 5 - Sample certificate

Please see below a suggested format for your certificate for learners successfully completing the Foundation Training. Please note that official REPs Ireland CPD point and PD:Approval Endorsed logos cannot be inserted until you have received them via approval. Remember to list the standards you have mapped to on the reverse of the certificate.

Your certificate must include the words: **'The logos on this certificate are not an indication that the recipient has a full fitness qualification'** to cover certificates given to non-REPs Ireland members.

NB: If you are using PDA's manual, your learners will be certified by PDA.



Your
Logo

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

This is to certify that

.....

has successfully completed the following training programme

FULL NAME OF ENDORSED PROGRAMME

which contained the following modules

1. Module title
2. Module title
3. Module title
4. Module title
5. Module title

which are mapped to the standards listed overleaf

Signed:
(Tutor)

Date:

PD:Approval Endorsed logo

REPs
Ireland
Training
Provider
logo

CPD
Point Logo

The logos on this certificate are not an indication that the recipient has a full fitness qualification.

Appendix 6 - Example of marking criteria and practical assessment checklist

Example Marking Criteria

Energy Balance:

1. Explain the three factors involved in energy output. (6 marks)

Example model answer (2 marks to be attributed to each factor):

Basal Metabolic Rate (BMR)

- BMR is influenced particularly by lean body mass, so any alteration in this will affect the rate of metabolism.
- Ageing is accompanied by a reduction in lean body mass (mainly linked to loss of lean mass) and therefore, there is a gradual fall in BMR.
- Training which involves exercising the whole body or specific muscles will result in a reduction of age related muscular atrophy and also an increase in lean muscle mass which will result in a corresponding elevation of the metabolic rate.

Thermogenesis

- The thermic effect of food is energy utilised in breaking the food down and converting it into useable forms for the body.
- Often estimated to be approximately 10 per cent of the energy consumed therefore for every 100kcal consumed 10 kcal are used in the process so that the net Kcal gain from 100 kcal of food would normally be 90kcal.
- The thermic loss is relative to the macro-nutrient consumed. Fat is estimated to have a thermic effect of 3%, protein approximately 20% and carbohydrate 10%. Subsequently 100kcal consumed as fat would provide 97kcal of usable energy where 100kcal of protein would provide only 80 kcal.

Physical Activity

- This aspect of daily energy output is the most variable but also provides the greatest potential to manipulate.
- The levels of physical activity that people carry out have changed in a major way over the last decade. This is due to a number of factors such as advances in technology reducing the need for physical effort in work, transport and leisure.
- Many everyday tasks are now less physically demanding and leisure activities themselves have become more sedentary.

Appendix 7 - Example Foundation Training Practical Observation Checklist

(Please note this is example criteria only and NOT a complete checklist).

Candidate Name		Date	
Course Name		Course Code	

Practical Assessment	Warm-up	Dynamic Endurance	Dynamic Balance	Seated & Standing Resistance	Backward Chaining	Functional Floor work	Cool-down Flexibility	Cool-down Adapted Tai Chi	Overall Result
(3) TEACHING - The candidate:									
T1. Engaged participants in order to encourage motivate and promote confidence									
T2. Appropriately arranged the group, individual and resources									
T3. Selected safe and effective exercises appropriate to the component									
T4. Selected the appropriate speed for the exercises									
T5. Gave effective visual and verbal instructions									
T6. Provided specific relevant teaching points to enhance technique and effectiveness									
T7. Provided specific relevant teaching points to enhance postural stability									
T8. Reinforced the specific relevant teaching points at regular intervals									
T9. Provided safe transitions between exercises and session components									
T10. Demonstrated and performed exercises accurately and with good posture									
T11. Changed teaching position to improve observation and enhance communication									
T12. Demonstrated the use of observation and effective correction									
T13. Explained the purpose of the exercises, relating them to postural stability and to daily life									
T14. Asked questions and encouraged interactive communication, to check or clarify understanding, with group and one to one									
T15. Spoke clearly, audibly and at an appropriate pace									
T16. Adapted exercises to meet the need of participants with postural stability challenges									
T17. Offered alternatives to allow for different levels of ability and where relevant, tailored exercises for individuals									

KEY: P / V = PASS * = PASS WITH COMMENT Q = QUESTION R = REFERRED

PASS	
REFER	

Candidate Signature	
Assessor signature	
Internal Quality Assurer Signature	

Appendix 8 - Contact Us

For support with anything to do with your endorsement, please contact PD:Approval at:

E: repsireland@pdapproval.com

T: +44 (0) 333 577 0908

You can also use Instant Chat on any of the pages of our [website](#) during working hours.