

# **Continuing Professional Development Endorsement Guide**

for recognition by the  
Sports Therapy Association



## Contents

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Section 1: Background Information .....</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Introduction to the Sports Therapy Association and PD:Approval .....	2
1.2 STA registration categories .....	3
1.3 Terminology .....	3
<b>Section 2: CPD Endorsement .....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Endorsement products .....	5
2.2 Purchasing options.....	5
2.3 Tutor, Assessor and IQA Training.....	6
<b>Section 3: The Endorsement Process .....</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Submission details.....	7
3.2 The CPD endorsement flowchart .....	7
3.3 The submission process .....	8
3.4 Confidentiality.....	8
<b>Section 4: Criteria for Approval .....</b>	<b>9</b>
4.1 The evidence checklist .....	9
1. Contact details .....	9
2. Organisation details .....	10
3. Website address.....	10
4. Where you deliver the CPD programme.....	10
5. Do you own the intellectual property of the programme you are submitting? .....	10
6. When do you want to deliver the programme? .....	10
7. Title of your training .....	10
8. Target market.....	10
9. Description of training .....	10
10. Is your training online/blended: .....	10
11. Learning aims and outcomes .....	10
12. Learner registration process .....	10
13. Prerequisites .....	10
14. Guided Learning Hours .....	10
15. Facilities & Equipment .....	11
16. Biography and certificates .....	11
17. Team Matrix.....	12
18. Tutor Pack .....	12
19. Learner Pack.....	12
20. Administration Pack .....	12
21. Assessment .....	13
22. Agreements.....	13
<b>Section 5: The Evaluation .....</b>	<b>14</b>
5.1 The evaluation result .....	14
5.2 Approval.....	14
<b>Section 6: Quality Assurance .....</b>	<b>15</b>
6.1 External Quality Assurance (EQA) .....	15

6.2 Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) .....	15
<b>Section 7: Now you are endorsed.....</b>	<b>17</b>
7.1 Dropbox.....	17
7.2 PD:Portal .....	17
7.3 Changes to your endorsement.....	17
7.4 Adding new programmes.....	17
7.5 Adding new team members.....	18
7.6 Change to Contact Details.....	18
7.6 Renewal.....	18
7.7 Complaints and Appeals .....	18
<b>Section 8: Appendices .....</b>	<b>20</b>
Appendix 1 - Price list.....	20
Appendix 2 - The Internal Quality Assurer role.....	21
Appendix 3 - Guidance on assessment .....	23
Appendix 4 - Example of mapping to National Occupational Standards.....	27
Appendix 5 - Sample certificate .....	28
Appendix 6 - Contact us .....	29

## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in submitting your Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programme(s) for endorsement by PD:Approval (PDA) in order to gain recognition for your training from the Sports Therapy Association (STA).

This document sets out the endorsement submission process required for CPD, and also provides important information on how to manage your endorsement after you have gained approval.

Training providers wishing to become endorsed are required to satisfy PDA's submission criteria according to the endorsement product selected, which will be detailed in this guide.

### IMPORTANT

If you haven't already got a team that is qualified in their roles as **tutor, assessor** or **internal quality assurer**, you must have this training in place before you start your application for endorsement. Contact us using the details below to discuss the webinars we run for these roles (fees apply) or check out our [Shop](#) for more information.

Endorsement is available across multiple disciplines e.g. Sports Massage, Sports Therapy, Sports Rehabilitation etc. and successful completion of the process will enable you to advertise your endorsed training through the STA website.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at [sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com](mailto:sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com).

We look forward to working with you.

**The Professional Development Team**  
**PD:Approval**

## Section 1: Background Information

### 1.1 Introduction to the Sports Therapy Association and PD:Approval

The *Sports Therapy Association* (STA) has worked passionately to develop a truly independent and ethical association that is committed to raising standards across the industry and progressing opportunities for their valued members.



#### **'Promoting excellence in Sports Therapy'**

The STA is a public association with a system of self-regulation which aims to ensure that all exercise professionals are suitably knowledgeable and industry qualified to safeguard and promote the health of those who use their services.

Employers look for kitemarks of quality and the STA supports all employers looking for guidance when recruiting the right staff who will best fit their organisation.

As practicing Sports Therapists, working in an increasingly challenging political climate, the STA identified the need for a new, dynamic, forward thinking and proactive professional association - a body that could voice the opinions of practitioners and lobby for positive change, crucially without the bias associated with direct links to HEIs and training providers.

The STA is proud of what it represents and continues to work tirelessly on behalf of its members and to fulfil its commitment to promote excellence in the field of Sports Therapy.

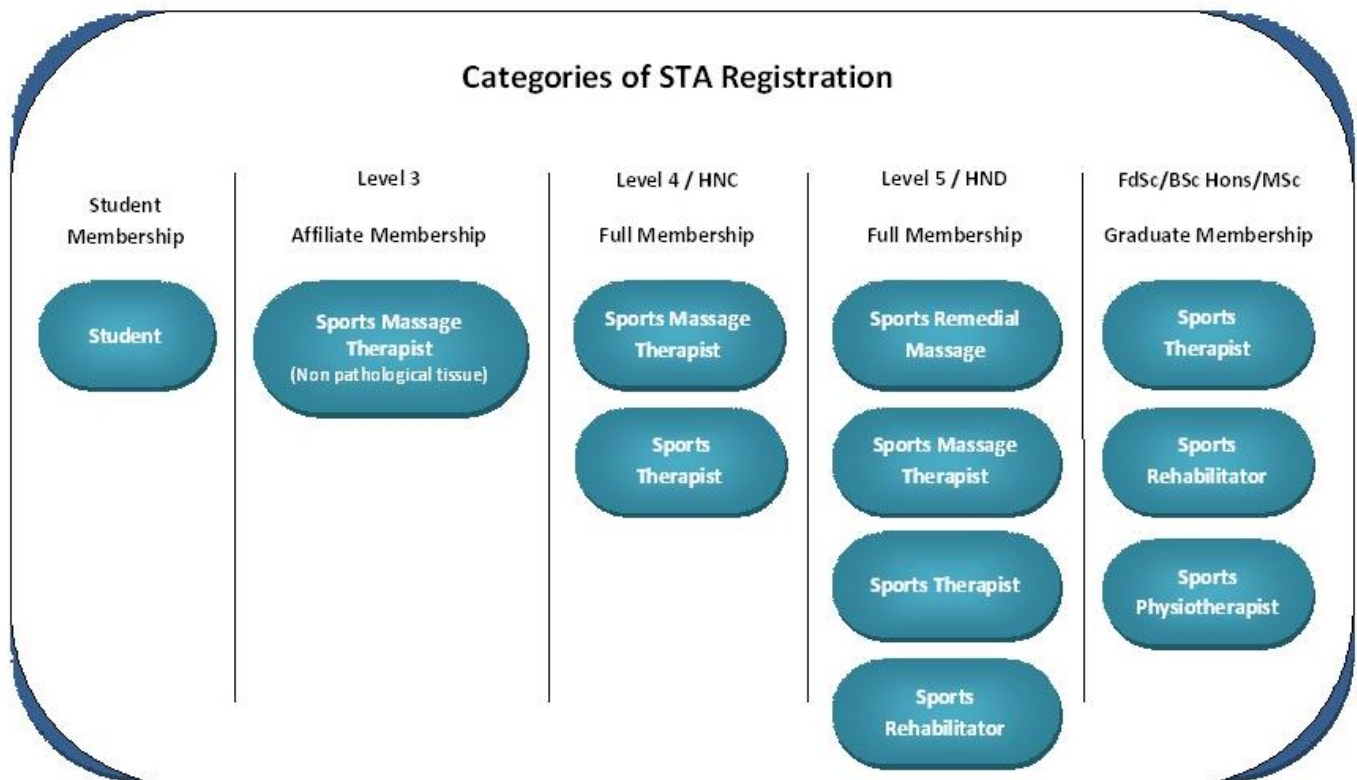
*PD:Approval* (PDA) is an independent quality assurance service working with new and established membership organisations in numerous sectors. We have an uncompromising approach to quality and unbiased objective quality checks to ensure that the learner benefits from the best learning experience and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

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 the STA.

**PD:Approval**  
**Endorsed**

## 1.2 STA registration categories

The table below demonstrates the different levels of membership available to those wishing to join the association. Every endorsed training provider will be able to access the portal to upload their training once approved.



## 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 the STA.

Below is a list of the terms used in CPD endorsement – 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
<b>Endorsed/Endorsement</b>	All training that successfully completes the CPD submission process is 'endorsed' by PD:Approval and is referred to as an 'endorsement'.
<b>Approved/Approval</b>	Training providers need to gain 'approval' for their submission in order to become endorsed.
<b>Recognised</b>	An endorsed programme is 'recognised' by the STA (not endorsed, approved or accredited).
<b>Awarded</b>	CPD points are 'awarded' to endorsed programmes and then the endorsed provider will 'award' those points to learners who successfully complete their endorsed training.
<b>Course/workshop</b>	These words can be used to describe your training programme, although a course usually means one that is more in depth than a workshop. Do not use 'qualification' to describe your training programme as this is misleading and incorrect: qualifications are 100% mapped to National Occupational Standards and appear on the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) ie Level 3 Sports Massage.
<b>Beware!</b>	Beware of the word 'accredited' – it cannot be used to describe any type of CPD endorsement and is used in the educational world only in the context of qualifications.

## Examples

### An example of a correct marketing statement:

XXX Therapy Company is excited to announce the arrival of XXX Therapy Course, which will provide you with the skills to run an XXX class with your clients. XXX Fitness Course has been endorsed by PD:Approval and is recognised by the Sports Therapy Association (STA). 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 training programme and clarifies that only STA members will be awarded STA points.*

### An example of an incorrect marketing statement:

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

**What's wrong with this statement?** *You can't use 'qualify' as that implies this is a qualification, not a training course. The STA does not 'accredit' (used only for qualifications) or 'endorse' (that's the role of PD:Approval); not all your learners will be awarded STA points, they are only for STA members. You must have two versions of achievement certificates, one with the STA logo and CPD points for STA members, and one without for non-members (although it can have the PD:Approval Endorsed logo).*

## Section 2: CPD Endorsement

Endorsement lasts for one year and can be for just one programme or multiple programmes. All endorsed training is awarded CPD points that STA members can use to maintain their membership. CPD points are calculated on the basis of learning hours up to the maximums indicated below.

### 2.1 Endorsement products

There is a range of endorsement products to choose from:

#### 1. Assessed Training (8-16 CPD points)

An assessed training programme must have a mandatory assessment (formative or summative) linked to the programme learning aims and outcomes. Guided learning hours (GLH) must be a minimum of 8 hours and may incorporate the assessment, pre-course study and break times. All training must be underpinned by current, valid research and be evidence based.

#### 2. Non-Assessed Training (4-7 CPD points)

A non-assessed programme must have formative learning checks (for example, quizzes, scenarios, questions, group work) that are linked to the learning aims and outcomes. Guided learning hours (GLH) must be a minimum of 5 hours. Non-assessed training programmes that are of a practical nature may be delivered online, however face to face delivery is encouraged. All training content must be underpinned by current valid research and be evidenced based.

#### 3. Informal Training (1-3 CPD points)

Informal training does not require formal learning checks as it is predominantly research, practical training or self-directed learning e.g. short workshops, master classes, pod casts, book reviews. However, all training in this category must be underpinned by current, valid research and be evidence based.

#### 4. Event (1-2 CPD points)

Event endorsement is for organised shared learning opportunities, including online e.g. conferences, seminars, forums, webinars and practical demonstrations. Providers who wish to endorse a full event including any training that takes place during the event, e.g. seminars, workshops, etc., should purchase the Event Package. For more information contact [PDA](#).

**All those responsible for the creation as well as the delivery of any training programme submitted for Assessed, Non-Assessed and Informal endorsement must be suitably qualified. Authors, tutors, assessors and the internal quality assurers must hold relevant qualifications or acceptable alternatives. In the case of Event endorsement, all those involved in delivering presentations or workshops at the event must have suitable credentials and all training must be underpinned by current, valid research and be evidence based.**

### 2.2 Purchasing options

To provide flexibility we have created two options so that you can choose the one that most suits your budget:

#### 1. Pay as you go

Selecting the Pay As You Go option (PAYG) allows you to take advantage of the benefits of endorsement for one or just a few training programmes and build up your delivery portfolio gradually.

*If you plan to offer a number of training programmes and want to have more flexibility with your endorsement, then take a look at the **Unlimited** option.*



## 2. Unlimited

Unlimited gives you as many endorsements as you need in your chosen CPD endorsement category (Assessed, Non-Assessed or Informal) with just one full submission (subject to approval).

- If you choose Assessed Unlimited, you must submit one full Assessed endorsement application and can then gain approval for all your other programmes whether they come under the Assessed, Non-Assessed, Informal or Event category.
- If you choose Non-Assessed Unlimited, you must submit one full Non-Assessed endorsement application, but can then only gain approval for Non-Assessed, Informal or Event programmes.
- If you choose Informal Unlimited, you must submit one full Informal endorsement application, but can then only gain approval for other Informal or Event programmes.

All additional submitted training is endorsed to the end of the endorsement year it is approved in, so that all your training is renewed together on one date. For more information, see [7.4 Adding New Programmes](#).

Providers can upgrade or downgrade their endorsement product at any time during their endorsement.

See [Appendix 1](#) for details of the cost of your chosen endorsement package.

**Please note:** All fees associated with endorsement are non-refundable once the service has been started or after the 14 day cooling-off period, if applicable.

### 2.3 Tutor, Assessor and IQA Training

If members of your training team do not already hold qualifications for their roles, PDA offers tutor, assessor and internal quality assurer training (fees apply) that provides the knowledge they need to deliver CPD. It is essential that you organise this training before you start the endorsement application process as it will support you in providing the correct evidence in your submission.

Contact PDA for more information or visit our [Shop](#) to book your places. Please note, you must have at least a tutor and assessor (for CPD delivery this can be the same person) and an internal quality assurer (IQA). For more information on the IQA role see [Appendix 2](#).

## Section 3: The Endorsement Process

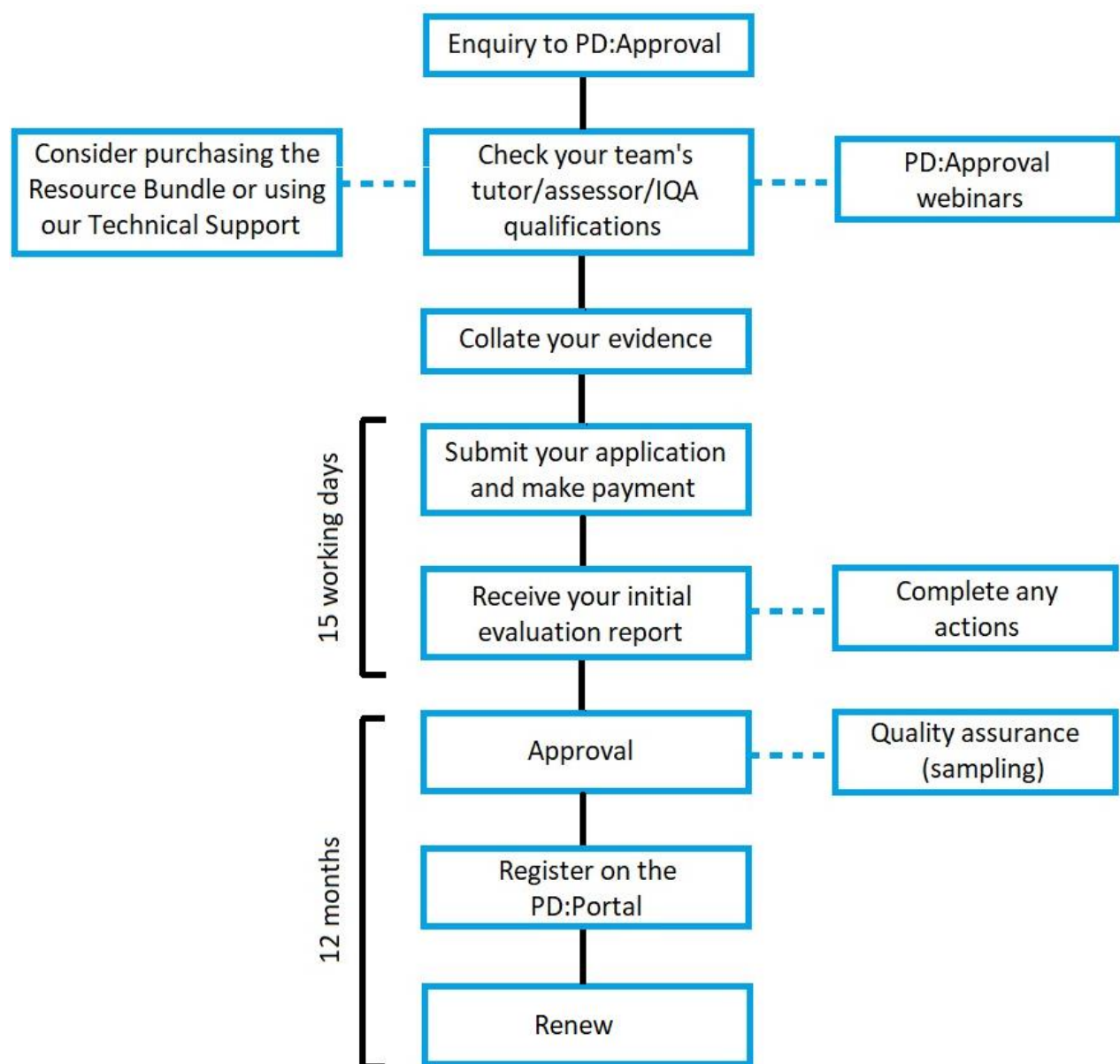
### 3.1 Submission details

The online submission process has been structured to make it as streamlined as possible, and requires you to provide us with a few key pieces of evidence 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 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, and will be able to register on the [PD:Portal](#).

### 3.2 The CPD 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 – visit [www.pdapproval.com/sta](http://www.pdapproval.com/sta) and 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 our [Get Endorsed](#) page and select your product (Assessed, Non-Assessed, Informal, Event).

**Any training that includes invasive procedures must be endorsed under Assessed Training.**

Select which package you would like (PAYG or Unlimited). You will then be taken to a sign-in page. Input your contact details including email address and then press submit to receive access details to your personal application form.

**Handy Hint:** Please be aware that once you have submitted this first part of the application form to receive your access details, you cannot start another application, for instance if you change your mind regarding the product you want. If this happens, please contact us at [sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com](mailto:sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com) so we can reset the system.

An automated secure HTML link will be emailed to the email account you specified. This unique link will enable you to return to your form whenever you wish before you submit, and all information you upload will be saved automatically. 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.

Continue filling in the relevant boxes and, when you reach the upload area, hover over each criteria to reveal a pop up information box on how best to meet the evidence requirements.

**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.

### 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.

## Section 4: Criteria for Approval

### 4.1 The evidence checklist

Below is a table showing all our endorsement products and the criteria that is required for each one.

	Assessed	Non-Assessed	Informal	Event	Events Package
Contact details	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Organisation details	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Website address	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Area of delivery	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ownership of intellectual property	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Time of delivery	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Title of training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Target market	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Description of training	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Learning Aims & Outcomes	✓	✓	✓		
Is your training online/blended	✓	✓	✓		
Tutor:student ratio	✓	✓	✓		
Pre-requisites	✓	✓	✓		
Total Learning Time	✓	✓	✓		
Facilities and equipment	✓	✓			
Biography and certificates	✓	✓	✓		
Team Matrix	✓	✓	✓		
Tutor Information Pack	✓	✓			
Learner Information Pack	✓	✓	✓		
Administration Pack	✓	✓			
Assessment	✓				
Evaluation form				✓	✓
Quality assurance policy			✓	✓	✓
Biographies				✓	✓
Marketing	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The criteria is explained in full on the submission forms in pop-ups, and a summary of each one can be found here:

#### 1. Contact details

This part of the form is mandatory, so that we have full details of the centre contact should we need 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 mandatory information ensures that our records hold the correct information for the location of the endorsed provider. You also have the option to fill in the correct invoicing and administrator contact details if they are different from those of the main contact. 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.

**Please note:** the organisation name you use in completing the application form is the organisation which will be endorsed, if successful. If you are working with another organisation to gain endorsement, you must ensure you apply under the correct name.

**3. Website address**

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

**4. Where you deliver the CPD programme**

For our records and data collection purposes we ask you to record the regions in which you deliver your CPD programmes.

**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.

**6. When do you want to deliver the programme?**

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

**7. Title of your training**

Ensure the title you enter is exactly the same as it appears on your learning materials as this is how we will record it on our system and on the STA members area.

**8. Target market**

Let us know who you are aiming your training at.

**9. Description of training**

You will be asked to provide a brief overview of your training to include research sources.

**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!

**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.

**12. Learner registration process**

Please give details of your learner registration process, what records you keep and how you maintain its security.

**13. Prerequisites**

This is where you can stipulate any prior learning that the learner needs to have in order to undertake your training.

**14. Guided Learning Hours**

Guided learning hours (GLH) must be a consistent with the requirement of your product ie Assessed = minimum 8 hours, and may incorporate the assessment, pre-course study and break times.

## 15. Facilities & Equipment

Use the template provided on the submission form to detail the facilities and equipment required to run your programme.

## 16. Biography and certificates

Use the [Biography Template](#) (copy also provided on the submission form) to detail the experience, training and qualifications of everyone involved in your delivery team, including the programme's author if applicable. For Event endorsement, this includes the presenters and speakers at the event.

Below is a list of the qualifications that we will accept:

### 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)

### Internal Quality Assurers:

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

For more information on the role of the IQA and who to appoint, see [Appendix 2](#).

**Please note:** Your delivery team must include at least one tutor, one assessor and one IQA who must all have completed training with PDA if not qualified. In addition, the Internal Quality Assurer cannot be either the tutor or assessor on the cohort of students that they are quality assuring due to conflict of interest.

**Handy Hint:** If any member of the delivery team is not qualified in tutoring, assessing (if applicable) or internal quality assuring then PDA offers [training](#) to cover the fundamental skills to ensure that the minimum criteria has been met. We also offer accredited qualifications through [PD:Education](#) with a free year's membership on [PD:Verified](#) once qualified.

### 17. Team Matrix

Please upload a spreadsheet showing the team you have submitted biography templates for, the roles they will be undertaking, and any training they are undergoing for those roles.

### 18. 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. It must include a lesson plan, tutor:learner agreement, learner register, health and safety checklist, PARQs (if applicable), certificate of achievement. Although you won't have the official STA/endorsement logos at this point, you will need to indicate where they will be placed on your certificate for those who are members of STA. Other learners will have the same certificate but without the STA/endorsement logos. See [Appendix 5](#) for an example certificate. You must also attach any additional resources such as PowerPoints.

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

### 19. Learner Pack

This is the pack of information that the learner needs once they sign up to your endorsed programme, and must include:

- Contents page and page numbers for ease of reference
- Overview of the organisation, your accolades, values and ethos, along with company department contact numbers.
- Company policies (equal opportunities, complaints, appeals etc)
- Training programme overview
- Timetable
- Resources to bring (pens, paper, gym kit etc)
- Pre-course instructions
- Main resources relating to the training programme - ensure that you try to incorporate everyone's learning style (VAK)
- Overview of the assessment and the criteria (if applicable)
- Appendix - policy forms

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

### 20. Administration Pack

The administration pack ensures you have all of 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:

- Quality Assurance
- Equal Opportunities
- Appeals and Complaints
- Data Protection
- Information Recording
- Reasonable Adjustments



**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.

## 21. Assessment

Please provide the practical and/or theory assessments. When submitting the assessments be sure to show the marking criteria. We will also need to know how you are going to conduct the assessment, known as the assessment strategy. Training that includes practical skills is required to include a practical assessment. Practical assessments should, where possible, be conducted in a face to face setting. Video assessments may be used (see [Appendix 3](#)).

Knowledge-based training requires a suitable theory assessment e.g. multiple choice theory paper or case study. 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 [Appendix 3](#)) and be completed in a test centre.

Online training with a theory assessment must be invigilated under exam conditions (see [Appendix 3](#)). If your assessment is online please include links as well as access to the assessments and the standard answers.

### Assessment marking criteria

When assessing learners, either throughout the Course (formatively) or at the end (summatively), it is essential that there is some indication of how many points each question in an assessment is worth. Marking criteria is equally important for the tutor/assessor as they can ensure that all staff are marking the same and therefore give a standardised mark.

### Points to remember when creating assessments:

- Ensure you provide clear marking criteria which is followed by the assessor.
- Practical assessments require an observation checklist which records the learner's planning and/or performance and the assessor's decision and comments – ensure that there is space for feedback, time, date and signatures.
- If an assessment is taking place at the end of the programme, learners should be given reasonable time to prepare for their assessment.
- All procedures and relevant paperwork for assessments should be included in the Learner Pack, including a copy of the practical observation checklist.
- The suitability of the chosen assessment tool will be reviewed by the evaluator at the submission stage.

**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.

## 22. 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 the Code of Conduct & Practice](#). ***You must ensure that you are fully aware of your commitments under these terms.***



## Section 5: The Evaluation

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 STA and you will receive their report within 3 weeks.

### 5.1 The evaluation result

- **Approve:** this means that your evidence has met all requirements and your training is endorsed – congratulations!
- **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.
- **Further Evidence Required:** this means that parts of your submission have 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+VAT 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 Bundle](#) 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.
- **Not Approved:** this means that unfortunately your submission has failed to reach the standards set by PD:Approval and STA 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.

### 5.2 Approval

Once your submission has been approved, PDA will issue you with your STA and endorsement logos and a Certificate of Authentication for you to display. You will receive access to your Endorsement Dropbox – see [Section 7.1](#) for more information - and will also be able to create an account on the PD:Portal to promote your organisation and endorsed training – see [Section 7.3](#) for more information.

## Section 6: Quality Assurance

### 6.1 External Quality Assurance (EQA)

Endorsement lasts for one year and during that time all endorsed providers will be required to take part in our quality assurance process, depending on the product purchased:

- **Unlimited**

If you have an Assessed, Non-Assessed or Informal endorsement under either Unlimited option, you will receive a quality assurance visit from PDA during your first year of endorsement. You will be notified of your allocated External Quality Assurer (EQA) upon approval and will receive guidance before their visit.

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.

- **PAYG**

If you have an Assessed, Non-Assessed or Informal endorsement under the PAYG option, you will be required to carry out self-evaluation during the approval year. Full details will be provided with your endorsement approval and you can find more details on our [website](#).

### 6.2 Internal Quality Assurance (IQA)

Endorsed providers are required to conduct their own internal quality assurance process to ensure that the standard of training and assessment that learners are receiving is of a consistently high standard.

The IQA role cannot be undertaken by a member of the delivery team for the same set of learners.

#### **Small training providers**

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 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 to attend our [IQA training day](#) if they are not already qualified.
3. Send a peer onto the IQA training day 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.

For more information on the role of the IQA and who to appoint, see [Appendix 2](#).

## Section 7: Now you are endorsed

### 7.1 Dropbox

On approval your submission and evaluation report/s will be saved in your own personal Endorsement Dropbox account, provided by PDA and shared with the main contact on the submission form. The Dropbox will be used to store all documentation and records relating to your endorsement, for example your original and approved submissions, your approval confirmation, your renewal documents and any relating to quality assurance. The Dropbox will also contain a spreadsheet for you to record the members of your approved delivery team which must be updated as and when members change, subject to prior approval by PDA. It also includes a Programme Amendments spreadsheet to record any changes you wish to make to your endorsed programme. You will also need to save evidence in your Dropbox if you submit any new programmes for endorsement (Unlimited only).

### 7.2 PD:Portal

Once endorsed, you can register for an account on the [PD:Portal](#). This is an additional service provided by PD:Approval as a platform on which to promote your endorsed training. It is freely available for anyone looking for education in the fitness sector and is directly accessed from the STA website. Please download our [step-by-step guide](#) to help you navigate the system - look out for some great features:

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

### 7.3 Changes to your endorsement

If you make any major changes to your endorsed programme once it has been approved, you must make these known to PDA as soon as possible using the Programme Amendments spreadsheet in your Dropbox. **No changes to your endorsed programmes can be put in place before gaining approval from PDA.**

Follow this process for recording changes to your endorsed programme:

- Enter the details of the changes you wish to make on the Programme Amendment spreadsheet in your Endorsement Dropbox (Amendments folder)
- Create a folder with the name of the programme
- Save the new materials or other evidence of changes in the programme folder
- Contact [sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com](mailto:sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com) to let us know so that we can review the changes

As well as changes to the content or delivery time, this includes changes to policies and procedures. Continuing to deliver endorsed training when major changes have occurred without informing us could result in a sanction or termination of your endorsement.

### 7.4 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:

- 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.

All additional submitted training is endorsed to the end of the endorsement year it is approved in, so that all your training is renewed together on one date.

### 7.5 Adding new team members

If you add or change any of your tutors, assessors or IQAs from those who have already gained approval, you must send us details to approve before they are able to deliver your programme as endorsed.

You will find in your Endorsement Dropbox, which will be shared with you once approved, a copy of the Biography Template and a spreadsheet for you to list your current and new team members. When you have a new team member, please use the following Dropbox process:

- Create a folder with their name in the Delivery Team folder
- Complete a Biography template with their details.
- Save the Biography template and the relevant certificates in their named folder.
- Add their details to the Delivery Team template.
- Contact [sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com](mailto:sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com) so that we can check the details and indicate approval on the Delivery Team template.

Only those who have been approved by PD:Approval can be part of the team delivering the endorsed programme. Using unapproved team members to deliver, assess or quality assure your endorsed training will result in a sanction and possible termination of your endorsement.

**Handy Hint:** If any member of your team is not qualified in tutoring, assessing (if applicable) or internal quality assuring then PDA offers [training](#) to cover the fundamental skills to ensure that the minimum criteria has been met. We also offer accredited qualifications through [PD:Education](#) with a free year's membership on [PD:Verified](#) once qualified.

### 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.

### 7.6 Renewal

Please make a note of your renewal date, which will be communicated to you on approval. PDA will provide timely reminders to the 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 renewal date your new period of approval will continue without interruption. The cost of your renewal is the same as the submission price, unless your product is PAYG. See our prices [here](#).

### 7.7 Complaints and Appeals

In the event of a complaint or appeal against PDA or against one of our accredited 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 accredited provider may result in a [Sanction](#).

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

## Section 8: Appendices

### Appendix 1 - Price list

Below are all the prices associated with CPD endorsement. Annual renewal is at the same price.

Product	Endorsement Type	Price	Price inc VAT	Renewal Inc VAT
<b>Pay As You Go</b> (Annual single endorsement)	Assessed	£250	£300	£250
	Non-Assessed	£175	£210	£175
	Informal	£125	£150	£125
	Event	£100	£120	£100
<b>Unlimited</b> (Annual multiple endorsement)	Assessed	£600	£720	Same price
	Non-Assessed	£500	£600	
	Informal	£400	£480	
<b>1-2-1 Technical Support – per hour</b>		£40	£48	NA
<b>Tutor Training webinar (2.5 hr) – price per webinar, per learner</b>		£120	£144	
<b>Assessor Training webinar (2.5 hr) – price per webinar, per learner</b>		£120	£144	
<b>IQA Training webinar (2.5 hr) – price per webinar, per learner</b>		£120	£144	
<b>Professional Awards (non-accredited) - price per webinar, per learner</b> (Accredited qualifications available through <a href="#">PD:Education</a> )		£220	NA	
<b>Resource Bundle</b> (includes all the packs listed below)		£250	£300	
<b>Administration Pack</b>		£85	£102	
<b>Learner Pack</b>		£85	£102	
<b>Assessment Pack</b>		£50	£60	
<b>Quality Assurance Pack</b>		£50	£60	
<b>Tutor Pack</b>		£50	£60	
<b>External Quality Assurance support visit</b> (incurred if investigation required)		£380	£456	

## Appendix 2 - The Internal Quality Assurer role

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.

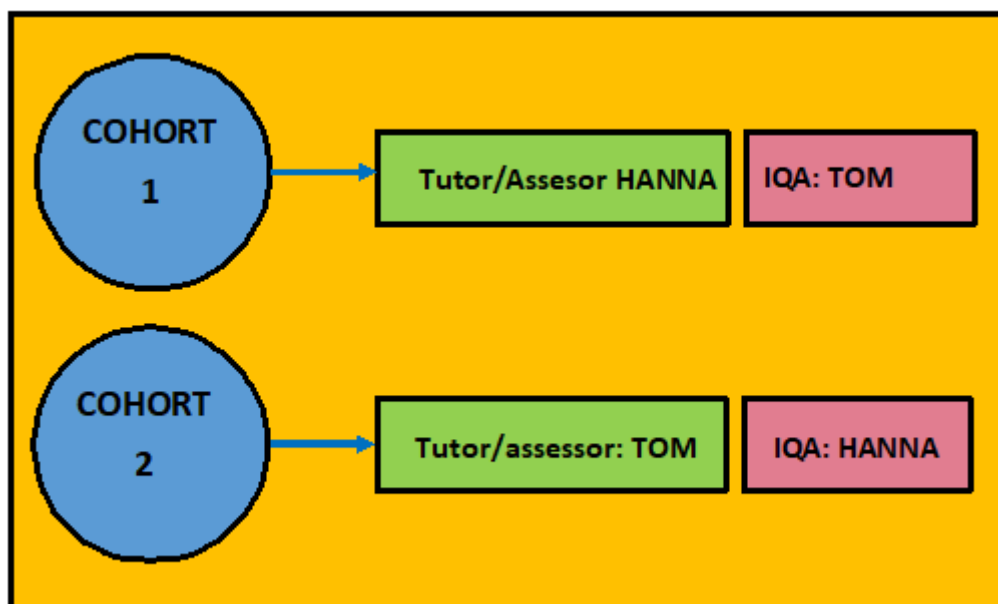
The minimum amount of IQA that should be carried out each year is 20% of delivery - so if you deliver your programme 10 times during your 12 month endorsement period, you would need your IQA to come in and run their checks twice during that time. They would observe delivery, check through the assessments, 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 either a full IQA qualification or has attended our [training](#) and who has completed your training can carry out the role of IQA for your endorsed training.

We endorse a lot of small providers and sole traders with a brilliant idea they want to share with others, so where there is a small team (more than one) the tutor or assessor can perform the role in the first year of endorsement. This isn't best practice however, so you would be required to have a separate IQA appointed by the time you renew for your second year of endorsement.

Please note: **If the IQA is also the tutor and/or assessor, they cannot quality assure themselves, but 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:**



Again one person performing the role of both tutor and assessor is not best practice but we recognise that small providers just starting out may not be in a position to employ other staff. However if the portfolio of training grows so must your delivery team. It's worth pointing out that if you are thinking of delivering qualifications this is not a model that could be put into practice - the tutor and assessor would need to be different people and have suitable qualifications.



Anyone performing the role of IQA who is not formally qualified must come on our training day to ensure they have the knowledge to carry out the tasks required, just like with the roles of tutor and assessor. Dates and further details can be found in our [Shop](#). The IQA must also complete the programme they are quality assuring before they can IQA it.

### **Where can you find an IQA?**

If you are a one-man band, or simply don't know where to start looking, there are a couple of options for finding someone to carry out IQA for you:

- Hire a freelance 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.
- 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 to attend our [IQA training webinar](#) (fees apply) if they are not already qualified.
- Send a peer onto the [IQA training webinar](#) (fees apply) 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.
- Visit [PD:Verified](#), a professional register run by PDA for qualified tutors, assessors and IQAs, to see if there is someone who would be interested in working for you.

## Appendix 3 - Guidance on assessment

### Practical Assessment

#### **Formative Practical Assessment** (assessing throughout the course)

This form of assessment needs to be robust enough to ensure that the learners are competent and have the necessary practical skills and/or experience, when being assessed throughout the course. For example, it is important that the assessor has seen sufficient evidence that they have completed a practical skill without support or interference from other learners and that this is done under assessment conditions. It is not sufficient to assess in a group setting when the learner is unaware they are being assessed.

It is also important that if the training provider decides to undertake formative assessment then the skills that they are assessing must be fully assessed and not learn new skills later on. For example, an assessor assesses one learner doing a squat under exam conditions - the learner must complete the squat fully to the competencies required. If the learner passes, then the course cannot later cover new information on the squat e.g. “perfect squat technique” as the learner will have already covered this skill but will not have been sufficiently assessed.

Your Technical Evaluator will decide if this form of assessment is fit for purpose. If they do not deem it appropriate then they will explain why in their report and provide the necessary information for the training provider to amend if required in order to continue assessing formatively.

**Handy hint:** When formatively assessing continually refer back to the lesson plan, learning aims and outcomes to structure a sound assessment and avoid teaching new skills after the learner has already been assessed.

#### **Summative Practical Assessment:** (assessing at the end of the course (online/off-line))

In most cases an observation checklist will be created that covers the practical learning outcomes in the standards e.g. “demonstrate and explain”. These will also appear in your learning aims and outcomes.

Please note that 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 criteria to ensure that the assessor can arrive at a decision to pass or fail the learner.

Summative assessments are somewhat favoured as you can ensure that the learner has covered all areas on the course, and has had time to practise and reflect before their assessment.

**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 ‘does what it says on the tin’.

**All practical observations** should 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.

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

### **Guidance on Re-sits**

When a learner has not met the required standard, the feedback action plan must clearly and positively/constructively help the learner understand what criteria they did not meet and areas within the training 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 for another. 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 that 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, can ask any outstanding questions that they are not clear on.

### **Guidance on learner certification**

Upon passing their theory and practical assessments it is important that the learner is issued with their certificate as soon as possible so that they can register it against their STA membership for CPD hours. It is important that you only issue certificates with the STA and PDA logos to learners who are members. Please see [Appendix 5](#) for a sample of an acceptable certificate.

Certificates for training that have been mapped to NOS must list all those that have been covered (these can go on the back of the certificate).

### **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. Place most of the words in the question stem**

If you're using a question stem, rather than an entire question, ensure that most of the words are in the stem. This way, the answer options can be short, making them less confusing and more legible.

#### **4. 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. If you're really stuck, get help from your friendly SME.

#### **5. 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.

#### **6. 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?'

**7. 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.

**8. Keep the number of options consistent**

Did you ever have to convince a SME that he or she can't have answer choices that go to 'h' in one question and 'c' in the next? It's something of a user interface issue. 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.

**9. 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.

**10. Use 'All of the Above' and 'None of the Above' with caution**

When you run out of distracters, *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.

**Online video assessment**

If you are considering using video as part of the assessment, please be aware that all filmed assessments MUST conform to the following guidelines:

- Must be presented in a viewable format for PC or Mac.
- The training provider must provide a secure platform to view video that is password protected
- Clearly labeled and include full personal details including: full name, date of birth, assessment date, candidate number (if applicable) and CPD Course title.
- Contain footage of the assessment ONLY, which must commence at the beginning of the video.
- Filmed in ONE take. Learners should be asked to resubmit if their video contains any edits.
- Contain a minimum of six participants for a group exercise setting e.g. a Pilates class, or exercise to music session.
- Ensure that the video shows the learner and their participants in full view (camera shot) at all times throughout the filming.
- Ensure that the learner's voice and any relevant music must be clearly audible at all times throughout the filming. If the learner's instructions are inaudible, the video will be referred for resubmission. Comments made by participants need to be audible.
- Be conducted in a suitable environment e.g. a hall or commercial health and fitness centre. If the venue is deemed to be unsatisfactory, the learner's assessment will be referred for resubmission.
- Be accompanied by a copy of the practical plan, exercise program or session plan if applicable.
- Be accompanied by a copy of the health and safety and risk assessment plan.

- Be accompanied by a legally recognised form of identification including a photograph e.g. driving licence or passport.

#### **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
- 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

## Appendix 4 - Example of mapping to National Occupational Standards

The example below gives an indication of how to map to the NOS using toolkits provided by PDA.

### Level 3 Sports Massage Mapping Toolkit

#### Optional Unit

#### A334

#### Apply accepted standards and continuously develop own practice in preventing and managing injuries in sport and active recreation

Practitioners who use their skills to assist clients to prevent and/or manage injuries in sport and active recreation must work to accepted standards. They should also ensure that they establish and maintain relationships with their clients that assist performance and/or recovery and that they continuously reflect on and seek to develop their practice by keeping up with developments in the field.

The unit is divided into two parts. The first part describes the three things you have to do. These are:

**A334.1** Apply accepted standards of practice

**A334.2** Establish and develop effective working relationships with clients

**A334.3** Reflect on and develop own practice

The second part covers the unit specific knowledge and understanding you must have.

#### How to use this Mapping Toolkit

Using the right hand column, indicate where in your training materials the evaluator can see the relevant criteria evidenced.

Performance Criteria	Mapping
<b>You must be able to: Apply accepted standards of practice</b>	
1. Apply accepted standards of personal hygiene, dress and appearance	
2. Ensure all areas of your work comply with legal and regulatory requirements	
3. Ensure there is adequate public liability and professional indemnity insurance for the work you are doing	Slide 9 of PowerPoint
4. Work within your scope of practice	
5. Respect professional boundaries	Learner Pack p8
6. Use an evidence-based approach to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>techniques you select and apply</li> </ul>	

### Appendix 5 - Sample certificate

Please see below a suggested format for your certificate for students successfully completing the endorsed vocational element of your degree programme.

**Please note that official STA and PDA logos cannot be inserted until you have received them via approval.**

Your  
Logo

## CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

This is to certify that

.....

has successfully completed the following one day 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

These modules are mapped to National Occupational Standards, details overleaf

Signed: .....

Date: .....

(Tutor)

Membership  
Organisation  
Logo

CPD  
Point Logo

Endorsed Logo



## Appendix 6 - Contact us

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

E: [sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com](mailto:sta.endorsement@pdapproval.com)

T: 0333 577 0908

Instant Chat: accessible on each page of our [website](#)