



Endorsement Guidance: Higher Education Partners

Version 1

Publication Date: August 2025

CIMSPA members and their professional practice is an integral part of CIMSPA's work towards achieving the vision of creating a recognised, valued and inclusive sport and physical activity sector that everyone can be a part of.



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1. Introduction

This guidance is for CIMSPA Higher Education Partners (HE) and those involved in the design, delivery, or submission of degrees, professional qualifications, or continuous professional development (CPD) courses for CIMSPA endorsement.

The aim of this document is to provide clear and practical guidance for CIMSPA HE partners seeking CIMSPA endorsement. It outlines the endorsement process, the moderator review framework, and expectations for the submission. It also signposts to additional resources and policies to help partners align with professional standards, improve their education product offer, and achieve recognised endorsement status with confidence.

CIMSPA endorsement is a nationally recognised quality mark. It confirms that an education product has met the required professional standards and has been reviewed by an industry led expert. Endorsed education products demonstrate relevance, credibility, and quality, giving employers and learners confidence in its value.

Commented [AR1]: Higher Education

Commented [AR2]: Degree / CPD / professional qualifications

2. Endorsement Submissions

Prior to submitting any endorsement request, support for endorsement can be sought via the endorsement team; endorsement@cimspa.co.uk.

2.1 New Endorsements

When submitting a new education product for CIMSPA endorsement, it must be a product that has not been submitted for endorsement before. Examples include:

- An education product with a distinct title and curriculum.
- Products aimed at enhancing/developing an occupational, population, environment, and/or technical specialism competence.

To submit a brand new product for CIMSPA endorsement, please see steps below:

1. **Organise** the documentation into the following folders:
 - a. Programme Documentation; must include programme specification and mapping documentation.
 - b. Module Documentation; must include module specification, and/or a scheme of work, and a sample of the assessments (summative & formative).
 - c. Additional Documentation; any further documents and resources that you believe will support your endorsement submission.
2. **Map** the education product to one or more CIMSPA professional standards (full mapping required for degree/ professional qualification submissions, while partial mapping is required for CPD submissions).
3. **Submit** the education product for endorsement by completing all required fields within the 'Endorsement Submission Form' [here](#), and submit all required documentation to support the review via this link [here](#).
4. **A review** will be undertaken by a CIMSPA moderator and feedback will typically be provided within 30 working days from the date of a complete submission. Please note, the HE partner may be contacted for clarification/questions on the submission during that time or post review.
5. **Outcome and feedback** will be shared by email, and if approved, relevant logos and a course certificate (if endorsed degree) will also be shared and the education product will be published on the [Endorsed Training Directory](#).

2.2 Modifications

Throughout the lifecycle of any education product, it is expected that changes will be made. A modification involves updates to an existing education product while maintaining its core structure. Examples include:

- Minor adjustments to title, course content or assessment methods.
- Changes in delivery format, such as moving from in person to hybrid learning.
- Curriculum reviews that refine existing delivery without altering learning outcomes.
- Professional standard(s), including the introduction of a new professional standard, revision of an existing one, or enhancement to increase the percentage of mapped content.

An HE Partner must inform CIMSPA of any changes as soon as possible of the amendments going live.

To inform CIMSPA of these changes, the AO Partner must follow the below steps:

1. **Organise** the updated documentation to clearly define the updates that have taken place into one or more of the following folders:
 - a. Programme Documentation; programme specification and mapping documentation.
 - b. Module Documentation; module specification, and/or a scheme of work, and a sample of the assessments (summative & formative).
 - c. Additional Documentation; further documents and resources that you believe will support your endorsement submission.
2. **Submit** the modification form [here](#), and submit the documentation [here](#).
3. **A review** will be undertaken by a CIMSPA moderator and feedback will be provided typically within 30 working days from the date of a complete submission. Please note, the HE partner may be contacted for clarification/questions on the submission during that time or post review.
4. **Outcome and feedback** will be shared by email, and if approved, relevant logos and a course certificate (if endorsed degree) will also be shared and the education product will be published on the [Endorsed Training Directory](#)

2.3 Conferences/ Webinars

CIMSPA can endorse conferences and webinars, these must be submitted with a clear educational structure and include:

- Agenda/ conference proceedings or programme
- An outline of speaker qualifications and session content

To submit a webinar or conference, please follow the steps below:

1. **Organise** three types of evidence to support your application:
 - Conference or webinar overview (including the agenda or programme),
 - Speaker biographies
 - Supporting resources such as handouts, slides, or any other relevant materials.
2. **Submit** the endorsement request form [here](#), and submit the documentation [here](#).
3. **A review** will be undertaken by a CIMSPA moderator who will provide feedback typically within 30 working days from the date of a complete submission. Please note, the Further Education Partner may be contacted for clarification/questions on the submission during that time or post review.
4. **Outcome** will be shared by email, and if approved, the webinar/ conference will receive endorsement.

3. Moderator Review Framework

The criteria that CIMSPA moderators provide feedback on is detailed in table 1 and table 2. All sections must receive pass to be awarded with an overall endorsement.

	Delivery	Assessment	Professional Standard	Pre-Requisite	Sector Relevance
Pass	The submission provides clear and sufficient evidence that the CPD product will be effectively delivered with clear learning outcomes that guide structured and purposeful learning	The submission provides clear and sufficient evidence that the learning outcomes will be adequately assessed, or there is a clear rationale for why no assessment is included.	The submission provides clear and sufficient evidence that the CPD product currently maps to a professional standard or has the potential to partially/fully map.	The submission provides clear and sufficient evidence that an appropriate pre-requisite is included, or there is a clear rationale for why it is not.	The submission provides clear evidence that the content is current and relevant to the UK Sport and Physical Activity sector, aligning with industry standards.
Refer	The submission lacks sufficient evidence or clarity regarding how the CPD product will be delivered, while the learning outcomes lack structure that guide purposeful learning.	The submission lacks sufficient evidence or clarity regarding how the learning outcomes will be assessed, and no clear rationale is provided for excluding assessment.	The submission lacks sufficient evidence or clarity regarding how the CPD product maps to a professional standard, either partially or fully.	The submission lacks sufficient evidence or clarity regarding the inclusion of a pre-requisite or a rationale for its absence.	The submission lacks sufficient evidence or clarity on how the content is current and relevant to the UK Sport and Physical Activity sector.

Table 1. Marking rubric for CIMSPA CPD endorsement

	Delivery	Assessment
Endorse <i>Evidence clearly demonstrates that all components of the professional standard are addressed in a logical and structured manner.</i>	The submission provides clear and sufficient evidence that the professional standards will be fully delivered.	The submission provides clear and sufficient evidence that the professional standards will be appropriately assessed.
Refer <i>Evidence is incomplete, inconsistent, or lacks clear alignment with the professional standard.</i>	The submission lacks sufficient evidence or clarity regarding how the professional standards will be delivered. Evidence may be incomplete, inconsistent, or missing alignment with the standards.	The submission lacks sufficient evidence or clarity regarding how the professional standards will be assessed. Assessment plans may be incomplete, unclear, or fail to align with the standards.

Table 2. Marking rubric for endorsed degrees, and professional qualifications.

4. Endorsement Outcomes

Outcome 1 – Education product is approved and endorsed – The HE partner receives confirmation, relevant logos, and course certificate (applicable for endorsed degrees) from the endorsements team via endorsements@cimspa.co.uk. The endorsed product will become accessible for CIMSPA members via the online system and will be uploaded to the [CIMSPA Endorsed Training Directory](#).

Outcome 2 – Education product is not yet endorsed – The HE partner receives correspondence from the endorsements team with clear feedback, to enable the HE partner to review and address the feedback. A follow up meeting can be arranged to discuss next steps/areas of feedback.

The HE partner has two options

1. **Revise and resubmit:** Make amendments to the endorsement submission based on the feedback and resubmit within two months.
2. **Appeal the outcome:** If you disagree with the decision, you may appeal within **five** working days of receiving the outcome. You can view CIMSPA's full Appeals Policy [here](#).

5. Professional Standard Guidance

CIMSPA Professional Standards define the knowledge and skills required for job roles across the sport and physical activity sector. They underpin CIMSPA membership, professional status, and standards for deployment.

Endorsements can be mapped against:

- **Occupational standards** (e.g., Gym Instructor)
- **Population standards** (e.g., Working with Children)
- **Environment standards** (e.g., Working in the Community Environment)
- **Technical specialism standards** (e.g., Safeguarding Adults at Risk)

5.1 What is Mapping?

Mapping is the process of showing how an education product meets the competency and learning outcome(s) within the chosen CIMSPA professional standard(s) (Figure 1).

Professional Standard: Personal Trainer			
Topic	Competency		Learning Outcome(s)
7. Information technology	K7.1	Business operations	• Understand how IT systems support: - Finance and accounting - Marketing and sales • Know how to keep record and manage data.
	K7.2	Available technology	• Understand how data can be monitored and interpreted using a range of available systems: e.g. CRM, social media. • Understand how technological advancements can be used to support the customer experience to increase physical activity levels, motivation and focus: e.g. wearable technology, pedometers, mobile phone applications.
	K7.3	Ethical and legislative practice	• Understand current legislation and ethical practice that affects the use of technology: e.g. Data Protection Act, intellectual property (IP), patents and copyright.

Figure 1: New headings clearly displaying topic, competency and learning outcome(s).

Following a review, a moderator will review the mapping and provide:

- **Mapping percentage** against the professional standard
- **Scores** against each learning outcome
- **Feedback** on areas for improvement

5.2 How to Complete Mapping?

1. Choose one or more professional standard that the course maps to.
2. Use the most up to date CIMSPA mapping template(s) provided via the [professional standard library](#).
3. Input evidence directly into the mapping template(s) by following the below:
 - Clearly signpost to the specific areas of the course overview. For each learning outcome, sign post to the specific area of the resource(s) where the evidence can be found. Where you are duplicating evidence, please state "as above" or "as below" (figure 2)
 - Identify how each learning outcome will be assessed, include both formative and summative methods where appropriate.
 - Knowledge: e.g., assignment, portfolio, written test, online test
 - Skills: e.g., performance/practical, simulations, professional discussion
 - Use the comment box (optional) to expand how each criterion is met and clarify any points to further strengthen the evidence.
4. Please label evidence clearly and consistently across all documentation so moderators can easily follow the evidence trail.

Ref	Competency	Learning Outcome(s)	Evidence (sign post to SOW / course specification / supporting documents)	Assessment Method	Further Comments (expand on evidence within column E)
ST1.3	Building local relationships	Utilise knowledge of the customer experience and the impact of health inequalities to ensure empathy with, and appropriate signposting for, participants throughout their journey into, through and out of the service.	Async 1- case study city wide provision, Day 2 session 1 and 2. However it is important to note that developing professional relationships will feature throughout the course and be applied and reflected on in many situations	Multiple	Formative: In class application, role plays, reflecting on best practice examples Summative: Case study, practical assessment and viva
		Build strong relationships with a range of health professionals (both managers and practitioners) who are working in local primary, secondary or tertiary care services, and the wider workforce including social care, third sector professionals and carers to ensure a smooth customer journey.	As above	Multiple	As above

Figure 2: Signposting evidence in partner mapping section of a mapping document.

6. Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA)	The professional development body for the UK's sport and physical activity sector, responsible for setting professional standards and recognising quality education through endorsement.
CIMSPA Endorsement	Formal recognition that an education product meets CIMSPA's professional standards and/or is aligned to industry expectations for job roles or specialisms.
Competency	A defined area within CIMSPA professional standards, made up of specific learning outcomes. Partners align education products to relevant competencies to showcase alignment to a standard.
Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	Learning aimed at maintaining, developing or enhancing a professional's knowledge and skills.
CPD Point	CIMSPA award points based on learning hours and alignment to a CIMSPA professional standard
Delivery Staff	Individuals responsible for delivering an education product. Under CIMSPA's model, all delivery staff must be internally quality assured by the endorsed education provider.
Education Product	Any learning product submitted for endorsement, such as CPD courses, webinars, qualifications.
Endorsement Submission	The process of applying for CIMSPA endorsement for an education product. Includes submitting documentation, mapping to standards (if required), and undergoing moderation.
Higher Education Partner (HE)	A CIMSPA partner and recognised Higher Education Institution that designs and awards degrees and professional qualifications.

Joint Intellectual Property (Joint IP)	When two organisations share legal ownership of an education product, including rights to use, commercialise, modify, and protect the content. Joint IP is a prerequisite for joint endorsement submissions.
Learning and Development Requirements (LDRs)	Detailed knowledge and skill outcomes defined within CIMSPA's professional standards. Used to assess alignment when mapping education products for endorsement.
Mapping	The process of showing how an education product aligns with CIMSPA's Learning and Development Requirements (LDRs). Required for CPD and qualifications
Moderation	The process by which CIMSPA reviews an endorsement submission to check for quality, compliance, and alignment with relevant standards. Feedback is given within 30 working days from the point of moderator review.
Moderator	An industry expert appointed by CIMSPA to review endorsement submissions. Moderators are selected for their sector expertise and assess whether an education product meets professional standards and quality expectations.
Pre-requisite	Prior learning, qualifications or experience required before undertaking an education product.
Professional Standard	A nationally recognised framework developed by the sector and managed by CIMSPA that defines the knowledge, skills and behaviours expected for specific job roles or specialisms in the sector.
Regulated Qualification	A qualification approved and overseen by a regulatory body (e.g., Ofqual) and awarded by an AO. Must fully align to a professional standard and be submitted by an AO for CIMSPA endorsement.
Standards for Deployment	A CIMSPA policy that determines whether a professional standard must be delivered through a regulated qualification or can be achieved via

	endorsed CPD. Based on risk level associated with deployment in practice.
Submission Window	There are no submissions windows and education products can now be submitted year round.
Third Party	An organisation or individual not directly involved in a joint endorsement submission and who does not hold joint IP over the product. Cannot be recognised in endorsement unless formally partnered with CIMSPA or brought under the lead provider's delivery model.

Table 3. Overview of glossary of terms within Further Education Partner Endorsement Guide



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