CIMSPA®

Swimming Teacher

OCCUPATION PROFESSIONAL STANDARD

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VERSION HISTORY

This edition: V1.1 – January 2026
Previous edition: V1.0 – October 2017

PUBLISHED BY

The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity
Incorporated by Royal Charter Charity Registration No. 1144545 www.cimspa.co.uk

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Evidencing this occupation professional standard enables professional status for:

PRACTITIONERS

1. Overview

1.1 Occupation professional standard: Swimming Teacher

This professional standard outlines the occupation and scope of a Swimming Teacher and the essential knowledge, understanding and skills that are needed to perform the role.

This standard provides guidance for:

- the development of education products that can be submitted for CIMSPA endorsement
- relevant level descriptors.

This standard can also be a useful tool for employers to curate job descriptions, use as an appraisal tool, help with training needs analysis or for developing career planning frameworks.

The Swimming Teacher occupation sits in the sport and physical activity sector as part of the leisure operations industry.

The agreed industry prerequisite to become a Swimming Teacher is to have achieved a CIMSPA-endorsed education product or products that evidence required competency statements within this professional standard.

This professional standard is underpinned by the principles of inclusive practice, equity, and respect for individual dignity. Swimming Teachers are expected to recognise and respond to the diversity of individuals' backgrounds, lived experiences and health journeys.

1.2 Participant needs

Throughout this standard the term "participants needs" is used. This term is intended to refer to all of those who may require and be entitled to adjustments or adaptations to the standard "learn to swim" programme to ensure equitable access.

Examples include, although are not limited to:

- educational needs and disabilities
- adult learn to swim
- participant abilities
- cultural needs
- those with a fear of water.

1.3 Participant scope

For the purpose of this professional standard, references to participants include teaching adult and child participants learning to swim, however, baby and preschool (with responsible adult in the water) lessons and advanced sessions are out of the scope of practice for this professional standard.

1.4 Endorsed qualification logo

Education products that evidence the competency statements of this CIMSPA professional standard will display this CIMSPA endorsement logo.

CIMSPA® Endorsed | Professional Standards

2. Occupational competence and professional status

2.1 Occupation context

The role of the Swimming Teacher is to plan, deliver and evaluate safe, fun, progressive and inclusive lessons and a positive learning environment appropriate to the participant's needs across all ability groups (see appendix).

Within the scope of their role, a Swimming Teacher will be able to:

- introduce, develop and refine all aquatic skills across all three ability groups
- introduce, develop and refine all four swimming strokes across all three ability groups
- plan and prepare a series of lessons and individual lessons across all three ability groups
- evaluate their own performance as well as participant performance identifying areas of future development
- provide participants with opportunities to experience and develop aquatics skills across a range of aquatics pathways
- adapt swimming lessons to meet the range of participant needs and environment they are working within
- work with other staff within the swimming teaching environment
- provide high levels of customer care and engagement and will assist with any customer feedback.

This professional standard sets out the core knowledge, understanding and skills required for a Swimming Teacher to deliver safe, inclusive and enjoyable sessions to their participants.

2.2 What those who have evidenced this standard know and can do

Those who have evidenced the professional standard:

- Understand how to teach all four swimming strokes and aquatic skills to a broad range of participant abilities (non-swimmer through to improvers), to be able to plan, deliver and evaluate safe, fun, progressive and inclusive lessons and offer opportunities across a range of aquatic pathways.
- Have demonstrated competence of teaching all four swimming strokes and aquatic skills across the range of participant abilities (non-swimmer to improver) and the ability to plan deliver and evaluate safe, fun, progressive and inclusive lessons.

2.3 Professional status

Individuals who have evidenced all required competency statements in this professional standard will meet the requirements to hold the professional status of:

- Swimming Teacher Practitioner

Evidencing competency statements is typically achieved by completing a CIMSPA-endorsed educational product or products.

By evidencing this professional standard, it provides the Swimming Teacher opportunity for future progression which may enable them to achieve a higher grade of professional status such as:

- Swimming Teacher Advanced Practitioner
- Swimming Teacher Senior Practitioner

3. Standard-specific product development guidance

3.1 Product development guidance

CIMSPA education partners developing education products that evidence completion of this professional standard should reference the following guidance:

CIMSPA Product Development Guidance

3.2 Education product usage and combinations

This professional standard can be used as follows:

- to create a standalone education product that can be used as evidence to gain practitioner professional status, for example:
  - Swimming Teacher Qualification
- combined with a specialism to form an educational product, for example:
  - occupation: Swimming Teacher
  - population specialism: Working with Children
- combined with additional specialism(s) to form an educational product, for example:
  - occupation: Swimming Teacher
  - environment specialism: Working in the School Environment (Out of Curriculum)
  - population specialism: Working with Children.

This may then open opportunities to gain a higher grade of professional status, for example advanced or senior practitioner.

3.3 Assessment minimums

Education partners should determine the total qualification time for the qualification/unit and outline the minimum requirements for practical assessment.

For the role of Swimming Teacher, the minimum practical requirements have been outlined as below.

- Plan and prepare individual lessons which are safe, fun, progressive and inclusive, that cover a range of aquatic skills and strokes appropriate to the participant's needs. The individual plans must cover:
  - a non-swimmer lesson plan
  - a beginner lesson plan
  - an improver lesson plan.
- Evaluate teaching performance following the delivery of swimming lessons.
- Develop a personal action plan.

The above assessment requirements do not cover all the theoretical knowledge and understanding statements, as detailed in the learning and assessment requirements.

Knowledge and understanding

Education partners need to ensure that all the knowledge and understanding learning and assessment requirements are assessed via formative or summative assessment. A sufficient range of these requirements must be assessed via summative assessment.

Skills

All learning and assessment requirements that are skill-based must be summatively assessed and the learner must be deemed competent against all elements.

As a minimum, all learners must be assessed on the following:

Practical teaching

- Assessor observed delivery for a minimum of six planned 30-minute lessons (3 hours in total). All must be safe, fun, progressive and inclusive and appropriate to the participant's needs. The practical assessed sessions must cover:
  - a non-swimmer lesson
  - a beginner lesson
  - an improver lesson
  - a range of aquatics skills and strokes.
- Five lessons must have a minimum of 4 participants, and one lesson must have a minimum of 8 participants.
- Learners must teach all aquatic skills and strokes (see appendix).

This information will be captured within the mapping document and reviewed as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process to ensure suitability.

3.4 Assessment authenticity

It is essential that practical assessment is authentic.

Practical assessment must be conducted where possible in a real-world environment – ideally, 'on the job' at work, or an environment that is as close to being as 'real world' as possible.

- Practical assessments should be conducted using suitable participants.
- Where possible these participants should be those the learner regularly coaches or teaches, or similar types of participants.
- To maintain authenticity, for the six assessed lessons, the participants must not be friends or family, and where practically possible not other learners.
- Assessments should be undertaken using suitable populations and environments, for example undertaking swimming lessons with a group of children.
- Remote practical assessment is not permitted.

Reasonable adjustments can be applied where specific circumstances make this impractical, for example delivery in the prison sector.

3.5 Quality assurance

Education providers must ensure that their quality assurance meets the appropriate regulators' guidance. This includes internal and external quality assurance processes, appropriate staffing requirements and assessment generation/evidence.

3.6 Level descriptors

The table below shows level descriptors and explanations of what can be expected from a learner on completion of an education product evidencing knowledge and skills for employment in the sector occupation of:

- Swimming Teacher

These are intended to be directive, rather than prescriptive, to avoid simply reproducing identical language in the education partner's design approach, without considering the intent and purpose of the education partner's product and therefore help with benchmarking expected outcomes.

For this standard the level descriptor is:

- Technical Group 1 Practitioner (level 2 equivalent)

Further information

Education providers seeking CIMSPA endorsement for a product against this occupation professional standard are asked to determine and justify the level of the product they have developed, in line with guidance provided by the level descriptor below.

Where a provider is seeking CPD endorsement, covering part of the professional standard with competency assessment included, the same level of assessment rigour must be applied as described in the level descriptors. Evidence of the type and rigour of assessment must be presented as part of CIMSPA's CPD endorsement process.

Please refer to the product development guidance for further information.

Level Descriptors Technical Group 1 Practitioner (level 2 equivalent)

Descriptors	Generic operational context
Responsibility and level of expected autonomy	• Work under supervision (indirectly, and not in all sector roles) with responsibility for organising or negotiating their own work, dependent on customer priorities and/or organisation demands. May require completion of routine or familiar tasks, or non-routine, but in a familiar context. • Operate within standard procedures, making adjustments for circumstances. • Timescales affecting tasks usually short term.
Representative tasks and duties	• Planning and carrying out tasks and duties against standard operating procedures (SOPs). • Monitoring and taking responsibility for supplies/resources. • Acting as lead contact for well-defined services or procedures. • Preparing or carrying out well-defined technical tests. • Resolving recording or passing on straightforward customer queries or complaints/feedback. • Preparing or presenting standard reports.
Level of knowledge and understanding	• Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of facts, procedures, and ideas in specific area of study or occupational role. • Ability to interpret relevant information and ideas. • Awareness of a range of information that is relevant to the area of study or work.
Professional and practical skills (level of complexity)	• Select and use relevant cognitive and practical skills to complete well-defined, routine, and/or specific work-related tasks. • Address straightforward problems. • Identify, gather, and use relevant information to inform actions. • Identify how effective actions have been. • Ability to select tools, materials, and applications for specific tasks, adjusts when needed; uses safely. • Team and organisational work. • Ethical awareness/application.
Transferable skills	• Identifies personal strengths and weaknesses in relation to own responsibilities, and how these impact on others. • Interpersonal/communication skills. • Adapt behaviour when appropriate – ability to understand when that may be required. • Straightforward problem-solving.

4. Learning and assessment requirements

4.1 Key areas

This section outlines the key areas of learning and assessment (knowledge, understanding and skills) that should be contained within any educational product seeking CIMSPA endorsement against this occupation professional standard.

There are four key areas of knowledge, understanding and skills for the occupation of:

- Swimming Teacher

All are interconnected and mandatory. The key areas are:

- Key area 1: Professional practice
- Key area 2: Safe teaching practice, industry legislation and guidance
- Key area 3: Technical knowledge and skills
- Key area 4: Plan, deliver and review swimming lessons

4.2 Assessment coverage

Where examples: "for example" are used in the competency statement tables below this is to provide an overview of the knowledge, understanding and skills most relevant to the role – it is not mandatory to assess learners against 100% of the examples provided.

However, sufficient coverage to ensure occupational competence on achievement must be ensured. This will be reviewed as part of the CIMSPA endorsement process.

Key area 1: Professional practice

Ref	Knowledge and understanding	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
K1.1.1	Professional conduct	• identify the roles and responsibilities of a Swimming Teacher.
K1.1.2		• identify the professional boundaries of a Swimming Teacher, including adherence to the code of conduct, maintaining appropriate personal behaviour, and working within the scope of the role.
K1.1.3		• identify the roles and responsibilities of other staff within the swimming teaching environment, for example: — assistant/helper — swim coordinator/managers — lifeguards — first aiders — reception — management.
K1.1.4		• explain how to work with other staff within the swimming teaching environment.
K1.2.1	Mental health awareness	• describe key concepts related to mental health, to include: — mental health — mental wellbeing — mental health problems.
K1.2.2		• recognise professional boundaries and identify which specialists can provide additional health and wellbeing support.
K1.2.3		• describe how to provide relevant support to an individual struggling with their mental health, to include: — the immediate support a swimming teacher can offer — the process for signposting to professional support services.
K1.2.4		• identify strategies for maintaining personal mental health and wellbeing.

Ref	Knowledge and understanding	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
K1.3	Communication	• describe different methods of communication and when they should be used in the swimming lesson environment.
K1.4.1	Customer service	• describe the swimming teacher's role in providing high levels of customer care and engagement.
K1.4.2		• identify a range of swimming-related programmes and services, for example: — 1-1 lessons — intensive lessons — specialist lessons — advanced swimming lessons.
K1.4.3		• describe the importance of participant retention and how swimming teachers can support this through positive engagement, including signposting or referring participants when necessary.
K1.4.4		• describe the importance of reporting feedback from customers.
K1.5.1	Developing self	• describe the importance of ongoing learning and development for swimming teachers, using both formal and informal methods such as mentoring, observing others, training, research, and reading to stay current in professional practice.
K1.5.2		• identify learning and development opportunities for a swimming teacher. For example, continuous professional development through: — mentoring — observing — undertaking other education and training — personal research — reading.

Ref	Skills	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
S1.1	Professional practice	• demonstrate a professional manner as a swimming teacher, for example: — effective customer care and engagement — appropriate body language — appropriate attire — suitable use of language — time management.
S1.2.1	Teamwork	• demonstrate teamwork skills when teaching with other swimming teachers and/or assistants/helpers.
S1.2.2		• demonstrate communication skills when teaching with other swimming teachers and/or assistants/ helpers.

Key area 2: Safe teaching practice, industry legislation and guidance

Ref	Knowledge and understanding	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
K2.1.1	Safe working environment and practices	• identify the policies and procedures relevant to a swimming teacher, to include: — normal operating plans (NOPs) — emergency action plans (EAPs) — health and safety — data protection — safeguarding — equality, diversity and inclusion.
K2.1.2		• identify components of standard operating procedures including normal operating plans and emergency action plans, relevant to the role of a swimming teacher.
K2.2.1	Safe teaching practice	• identify safety aspects of teaching from the poolside and in the water.
K2.2.2		• identify operational procedures of swimming equipment, to include: — safe set up — use and storage of equipment — adhering to manufacturers' guidelines — safe manual handling techniques.
K2.2.3		• explain advantages and disadvantages of different types of equipment used for swimming lessons.

Ref	Knowledge and understanding	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
K2.3.1		• identify potential hazards relating to swimming lessons, to include: — environment — people — equipment.
K2.3.2	Hazards	• describe how to mitigate against swimming lesson hazards, to include: — environment — people — equipment.
K2.3.3		• describe the process of risk assessing swimming lessons.
K2.4	Key legislation	• identify how to comply with legal and regulatory requirements relevant to a swimming teacher, to include: — Equality Act (2010) — Health and Safety at Work Act (1974) — General Data Protection Regulations (2018) — safeguarding children and adults at risk legislation.
K2.5	Sector bodies and guidance	• identify the sector bodies and guidance relevant to a swimming teacher, to include: — sector bodies: ○ Aquatics GB ○ Home country sports councils ○ World Aquatics ○ CIMSPA — sector guidance: ○ Safeguarding children and adults at risk ○ Safe supervision ○ Health and safety ○ Governing bodies' guidance.

Ref	Skills	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
S2.1.1	Safe teaching practices	• demonstrate safe teaching practice from the poolside and in the water, including using manual support.
S2.1.2		• demonstrate the safe use of swimming equipment, to include: — safe set up — use and storage of equipment — adhering to manufacturers' guidelines — safe manual handling techniques.
S2.2	Hazards and risk assessment	• demonstrate appropriate action to deal with identified hazards based on the level of risk (risk assessment).
S2.3	Legal and regulatory requirements	• demonstrate adhering to relevant legal and regulatory policies and procedures.

Key area 3: Technical knowledge and skills

Ref	Knowledge and understanding	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
K3.1.1	Technical aquatics knowledge	• state progressive practices for the four swimming strokes across all three ability groups (see appendix).
K3.1.2		• state progressive practices for all aquatic skills across all three ability groups (see appendix).
K3.1.3		• identify faults and corrective practices for the four swimming strokes across all three ability groups (see appendix).
K3.1.4		• identify faults and corrective practices for all aquatic skills across all three ability groups (see appendix).
K3.2	Participant pathways	• describe participant pathways, to include: — learn to swim frameworks — additional aquatic pathways — school swimming — physical literacy.

Ref	Skills	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
S3.1.1	Technical aquatic skills	• demonstrate teaching progressive practices for the four strokes across all three ability groups (see appendix), to include: — body position — leg action — arm action — breathing — timing practices.
S3.1.2		• demonstrate teaching progressive practices for aquatic skills across all three ability groups (see appendix), to include: — entries and exits — movement and water confidence — submersion and breathing — streamlining — rotation and orientation — floatation — water safety skills.
S3.2.1	Corrective practice/ faults	• demonstrate suitable corrective practices for the four swimming strokes across all three ability groups (see appendix).
S3.2.2		• demonstrate analysis of strokes and determine the relevant fault/s across all four strokes (see appendix).
S3.2.3		• demonstrate analysis of aquatic skills and determine the relevant fault/s for each aquatic skill (see appendix).
S3.2.4		• demonstrate suitable corrective practices for all aquatic skills across all three ability groups (see appendix).

Key area 4: Plan, deliver and review swimming lessons

Ref	Knowledge and understanding	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
K4.1.1	Planning swimming lessons	• describe the importance of planning swimming lessons.
K4.1.2		• identify components of lessons plans, to include: — warm-up — main theme — contrasting activity.
K4.1.3		• describe the importance of planning for progression over time, suitable to participant's needs and the swimming lesson environment.
K4.1.4		• know how to plan for individual lessons which are safe, inclusive, fun, progressive and appropriate to the participant's needs including warm-up, main theme and contrasting activity across all three ability groups (see appendix).
K4.1.5		• know how to plan a scheme of work which is safe, fun, progressive, inclusive and appropriate to the participant's needs (see glossary).
K4.1.6		• identify different participant needs when planning swimming lessons, for example: — educational or cultural needs — disability — fear of water.
K4.1.7		• explain factors that can impact participant's progression and regression including scientific principles, stages of development and learning.

Ref	Knowledge and understanding	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
K4.2.1	Preparing to deliver swimming lessons	• identify how to prepare for the delivery of swimming lessons, for example: — collection and organisation of equipment — teaching area — collecting and returning participants.
K4.2.2		• know how to deliver swimming lessons which are safe, fun, progressive and inclusive appropriate to the participants needs across all three ability groups (see appendix).
K4.2.3		• identify different teaching methods and when to implement them. For example: — shallow versus deep — 1-1 versus group.
K4.2.4		• explain how to assess and progress participants.
K4.2.5		• identify ways to adapt relevant to participant's needs including adapting the lesson and progressive practices, for example: — change of equipment — change in activity — change in communication method.
K4.2.6		• explain ways to manage lessons, to include: — behavioural strategies — organisational methods — participant rapport — engagement and safety.
K4.3	Evaluate swimming lessons	• describe methods for evaluating swimming lessons and teaching performance.
K4.4.1	Record keeping	• identify the legislation regarding record keeping and how to keep records securely.
K4.4.2		• identify what records need to be kept.

Ref	Skills	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
S4.1.1	Plan swimming lessons	• plan a scheme of work which is safe, fun, progressive and inclusive and appropriate to the participants' needs (see glossary).
S4.1.2		• plan and prepare individual lessons which are safe, fun, progressive and inclusive swimming lessons appropriate to the participants' needs, across all three ability groups (see appendix).
S4.2.1	Prepare and deliver swimming lessons	• prepare for the delivery of swimming lessons.
S4.2.2		• demonstrate the ability to deliver swimming lessons which are safe, fun, progressive, inclusive and appropriate to the participants' needs, across all three ability groups (see appendix).
S4.2.3		• apply adaptations across all three ability groups, aquatics skills and strokes appropriate to the participants' needs, for example: — change of equipment — change in activity — change in communication method.
S4.2.4		• demonstrate problem solving skills and use of own initiative.
S4.2.5		• demonstrate effective time management when delivering swimming lessons, including maximising active movement time.
S4.2.6		• demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills whilst delivering swimming lessons, for example: — verbal instructions — hand signals — gestures — positive body language — tone of voice — animation.
S4.2.7		• demonstrate effective feedback skills whilst delivering lessons.

Ref	Skills	Competency statements – a Swimming Teacher must:
S4.2.8	Prepare and deliver swimming lessons	• perform accurate demonstrations for all aquatic skills and strokes, from recommended teaching positions, when delivering swimming lessons.
S4.2.9		• demonstrate effective lesson management including behavioural strategies, organisation methods, participant rapport and engagement and safety.
S4.3.1	Evaluation and personal Development	• evaluate teaching performance following the delivery of lessons.
S4.3.2		• develop a personal action plan.

5. Appendix

5.1 Ability group definitions for swimming teacher, aquatic skills and stroke coverage across ability groups

For the purpose of this professional standard, references to participants include teaching adult and child participants learning to swim, however, baby and preschool (with responsible adult in the water) lessons and advanced sessions are out of the scope of practice for this professional standard.

	Non-swimmer	Beginner	Improver
Participant starting point	Participants that are new to swimming lessons (without parent in the water), limited water experience.	Participants that are new to swimming lessons but will have some water experience, water confidence and some basic movement skills.	Participants that have swimming lesson experience, ability to perform some aquatic skills and have been introduced to all four strokes.
Progression	On the completion of all the below skills and strokes to a competent standard, the participant would become the next ability category.	On the completion of all the below skills and strokes to a competent standard, the participant would become the next ability category.	On the completion of all the below skills and strokes to a competent standard, the participant would become the next ability category or progress to other aquatic pathways.
Teaching of aquatic skills	• Entries and exits • Movement • Water confidence and water safety skills • Submersion and breathing patterns • Floatation • Streamlining • Rotation and orientation All with supervision/aid. Games with a purpose.	• Entries and exits • Movement and propulsion • Water confidence and water safety skills • Submersion and breathing patterns • Floatation • Streamlining • Rotation and orientation Some aids may be appropriate. Games with a purpose. Skill sequences.	• Entries and exits • Movement and propulsion • Water safety skills • Submersion and breathing patterns • Floatation • Streamlining • Rotation and orientation Games with a purpose. Skill sequences.

	Non-swimmer	Beginner	Improver
Teaching of strokes	• Introduce and develop body position • Introduce leg actions • Introduce basic arm actions, for example paddling All four strokes. Progressive practices.	• Refine body position • Develop leg actions • Develop arm actions • Introduce basic breathing patterns All four strokes. Progressive practices.	• Refine leg action • Refine arm actions • Refine breathing patterns • Introduce and develop timing All four strokes. Progressive practices. Building distance to 100m.

Note: All skills and strokes relevant to ability and developmental stage

5.2 Aquatic skills, strokes and sports

Aquatic skills that underpin all aquatic sports

Entries and exits, including:

- unassisted entry and exits from poolside
- jumping
- diving.

Movement and propulsion, including:

- movement activities
- paddling
- sculling head first and feet first
- swimming strokes (see below).

Water confidence and water safety including:

- water confidence activities
- float to live
- treading water
- shout and signal rescue
- self-rescue
- help and huddle
- swimming in clothes
- straddle entry.

Submersion and breathing patterns including:

- introductory submersion and breathing activities and patterns
- floatation, including:
  - floating on the front and back
  - tuck/mushroom float
- Streamlining, including:
  - push and glides on front and back, on the surface and under the water
  - push and glide to pool floor
  - head and feet first surface dives
- rotation and orientation, including:
  - regaining feet from front and back
  - log rolls
  - vertical rotations
  - forward and backward somersaults.

The four swimming strokes

- Backstroke
- Front crawl
- Breaststroke
- Butterfly

Aquatic sports

- Artistic swimming
- Competitive swimming
- Diving
- Water polo
- Open water swimming

6. Glossary

Term	Definition
Formative assessment	Also known as assessment for learning, this is an ongoing, developmental process that takes place during teaching and learning. It helps tutors and learners identify strengths, weaknesses, and progress, allowing teaching to be adapted and learners to respond to feedback. Formative assessments are designed to support learning without directly contributing to final grades and can be either formal or informal.
Participant needs	This term is intended to refer to all of those who may require and be entitled to adjustments or adaptations to the standard 'Learn to Swim' programme to ensure equitable access. Examples include, although are not limited to: educational needs and disabilities, Adult Learn to Swim, participant abilities, cultural needs and those with a fear of water.
Summative assessment	Also known as assessment of learning, this is an evaluative process that measures what a learner has achieved at the end of a period of learning (for example a unit, module, or course). It evaluates performance against clear, published criteria to determine how well the learner has met the intended learning outcomes.

7. Acknowledgements

CIMSPA would like to thank Swim England and the Swimming Teachers' Association for leading on the redevelopment of this professional standard.

CIMSPA values the contributions of all partners, board and committee members in the development and review of this professional standard.

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Shaping a recognised, valued and inclusive sport and physical activity sector that everyone can be a part of.

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