



Quality Assurance Framework; Further Education Partners

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Introduction

The Chartered Institute for the Management of Sport and Physical Activity (CIMSPA) recognises that Further Education (FE) Partners are already regulated by a combination of government agencies, legal regulations and governance guidelines.

CIMSPA has created this quality assurance process as part of our ongoing work to professionalise our sector.

CIMSPA is keen to work collaboratively whilst recognising our own role and responsibility to provide assurance to our stakeholders that entities in partnership with CIMSPA accede to the vision of both offering and operating at the highest standards, whilst - wherever possible - taking a practical and pragmatic approach to the burden of such activity.

This policy should be read in conjunction with CIMSPA's Quality Assurance Strategy.

The CIMSPA Quality Assurance (QA) Process is a multi-staged approach:

- Initial onboarding quality checks for all Further Education Partners,
- Quality assurance review, at least annually for each Further Education partner,
- On the ground experience,
- Renewal of partnership.

Scope

The aim of this policy is to explain the effective, consistent, and fair procedures that will be followed by CIMSPA when conducting quality assurance activities for CIMSPA FE Partners in relation to their endorsed curriculum and to implement the terms of the partnership agreement between CIMSPA and the CIMSPA FE Partner.

Policy

The role of the Further Education Partner

The FE partner is responsible for monitoring and evaluating its internal systems, policies and procedures for the delivery of its endorsed products on offer. This is to ensure that provision operates in line with the requirements set out by CIMSPA and/or the specific requirements of CIMSPA Awarding Organisation partners and that each FE partner implements an internal quality assurance process for curriculum delivery mapped to professional standards.

Once a FE partner has approved staff to deliver its endorsed curriculum, specific requirements must be met in order to maintain alignment with CIMSPA expectations. CIMSPA FE partners have responsibility to students undertaking endorsed provision to ensure that teaching, academic and assessment staff deliver content accurately and in accordance with the intent of the relevant professional standard.

The role of CIMSPA

Quality Assurance (QA) is fundamental to CIMSPA processes, products and services. The purpose of QA activity is to support the ongoing professionalisation of the sport and physical activity sector, provide assurance of academic quality within endorsed provision, and support rigour and consistency in each FE partner's quality assurance arrangements. CIMSPA will continue to support and monitor FE partners through annual QA reviews and ongoing quality assurance activity.

Risk

CIMSPA will adopt a risk and need based model for quality assurance activity. By quality assuring a FE partner it reduces the negative consequences for both the organisation itself and for the community it serves. CIMSPA's approach to working with our FE partners is to successfully identify and manage risks that may be associated with the delivery of CIMSPA Professional Standards embedded within the endorsed curriculum. Therefore, CIMSPA will work with the FE partner to successfully identify and manage the exposure to risk.

To mitigate some risks, FE partners should implement robust quality assurance measures including regular audits and evaluations, adherence to best practices, fair and consistent rule enforcement, workforce protocols, and ethical conduct standard. Quality assurance not only helps maintain the integrity of the organisation but also ensure its long-term viability and success.

Process

The aim of the quality assurance activities is to collaboratively manage the risk exposure by taking preventive actions to keep the exposure at an acceptable level. CIMSPA will primarily identify risks through our quality assurance activity; however, some risks may be identified by other sources (whistle-blower, complaints etc.).

A Further Education Partner's overall risk rating will be informed using a holistic approach that considers the probability, the impact and mitigations of any individual risks identified through the quality assurance activity.

It is a requirement that upon seeking endorsement the partner must submit all relevant documentation on the endorsement submission form and endorsement guidance documents.

Quality assurance review

The quality assurance review will be split into three categories:

1. Quality of education
2. Student journey
3. Marketing and promotion

Quality of education

CIMSPA will make judgements on the quality of provision by evaluating the extent to which the FE partner has aligned, delivered and assessed the endorsed curriculum against the relevant sector-agreed professional standard(s).

- 1.1 The FE partner designs and delivers provision that meets employer and/or industry needs within the areas in which they provide training.
- 1.2 The FE partner adopts an inclusive approach across its institutional culture, the accessibility of its education provision and the delivery of the endorsed curriculum.
- 1.3 The FE partner delivers the endorsed curriculum in line with endorsement conditions and the approved programme specification, module information and delivery documentation.
- 1.4 The FE partner's method(s) of delivery for the endorsed curriculum enable students to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required to meet the intended learning outcomes, aims and objectives.
- 1.5 The FE partner's assessment methods validly assess students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the intended learning outcomes of the endorsed curriculum.
- 1.6 The FE partner ensures that tutors and assessors undertake appropriate continuing professional development (CPD).
- 1.7 The FE partner adheres to its quality assurance processes to ensure the quality and continuous improvement of the endorsed product(s).

Student journey

- 2.1 The FE partner is transparent with students regarding its operations, processes, and practices.
- 2.2 The FE partner ensures that appropriate academic, pastoral and learning support is available to enable students to complete their programme of study.
- 2.3 The FE partner provides opportunities that support students' future learning, progression and career development.
- 2.4 The FE partner uses student feedback to inform enhancement of provision and the wider student experience.
- 2.5 The FE partner ensures that students who successfully complete the provision receive appropriate recognition or certification for their achievement.

Marketing and promotion

- 3.1. The FE partner markets its endorsed curriculum in line with CIMSPA expectations.
- 3.2. The FE partner promotes its endorsed curriculum accurately, transparently and in line with published programme information.

The evidence framework, set out in [Appendix A](#) provides examples of evidence that CIMSPA may review as part of the quality assurance process. The examples listed show indicative evidence only and are not meant to be exhaustive and because FE partners operate within varying contexts, the relevance of different types of evidence is likely to be different for each organisation. For that reason, we do not prescribe a standard set of evidence that we will use within the review.

During the QA review, the Quality Assurance Advisor will assess the FE partner's current level of compliance for these areas and record a judgement in the QA report based on the FE partners performance at the time of the review.

The FE partner's overall risk rating is a simple measure to improve the visibility of risks and allow CIMSPA to assist the FE partners in proactively addressing any emerging risks.

Outcome of review

The outcomes that will be used to evaluate the quality of the provision offered will be either Enhancing, Enabling or Emerging.

- **Enhancing** – FE partners that are identified as Enhancing demonstrate established and embedded best practice across their academic provision. They provide a high-quality student experience and demonstrate a strong commitment to continuous enhancement of learning, teaching and student outcomes.

- **Enabling** – FE partners identified as Enabling demonstrate good practice across their academic provision, with a limited number of identified areas which could be developed. CIMSPA will provide recommendations and/or actions to support continuous improvement and further enhancement of the student experience and endorsed provision.
- **Emerging** – FE partners identified as Emerging demonstrate that minimum CIMSPA requirements and expectations are being met across their endorsed provision. While the provision is operating within the required standards, opportunities for further enhancement have been identified. CIMSPA will provide recommendations and/or actions to encourage continuous improvement and progression towards an Enabling or Enhancing outcome at future quality assurance reviews.

Quality assurance outcomes will be published on the [CIMSPA course directory](#). This supports transparency and enables prospective students, employers and other stakeholders make informed decisions regarding endorsed courses and FE partners.

How your outcome is achieved

The Quality Assurance Advisor will determine the outcome for each criterion based on the evidence submitted as part of the review. The overall outcome will be determined through a holistic evaluation of all review criteria and associated evidence, informed by a weighted scoring methodology. The three areas of the framework, **Quality of Education**, **Student Journey** and **Marketing and Promotion**, carry weightings of 45%, 45% and 10% respectively.

The Lead Quality Manager will confirm the overall outcome to the FE partner following consideration of the Quality Assurance Advisor's report.

Please note that where one or more criteria within the **Quality of Education** category are assessed as **Emerging**, the highest overall outcome that can be achieved is **Enabling**.

Following completion of the annual quality assurance review, FE partners have one opportunity to submit additional evidence in support of a revised outcome. The outcome determined following review of the additional evidence will be final and will remain in place until the next scheduled quality assurance review.

Annual review approach

A quality assurance review of each FE partner will take place on an annual basis. The review will take the form of a desk-based evaluation. The desk-based evaluation will consider information supplied and agreed by the FE Partner. The review will be undertaken by a Quality Assurance Advisor who forms part of a team of independent quality assurance specialists contracted by CIMSPA to conduct review activity on its behalf.

Following completion of the review, CIMSPA will issue a quality assurance report outlining the review findings and the overall outcome. A follow up meeting will be offered with the FE partner to discuss the findings and where appropriate agree recommendations and enhancement actions to support continuous improvement and ongoing alignment with CIMSPA requirements and expectations for endorsed provision.

CIMSPA and its Quality Assurance Advisors will work collaboratively with FE partners to ensure that the quality assurance review is proportionate and does not place unnecessary burden on institutional quality assurance arrangements.

FE partners will be provided with a three-month review window. The FE partner will be required to agree a review date within this period with the Quality Assurance Advisor.

CIMSPA will provide a deadline for the initial information to be received. Where required the Quality Assurance Advisor will provide a deadline by which any additional requested evidence must be received from the FE partner.

The following circumstances may be treated as non-compliance (see following section), unless CIMSPA determines that there are exceptional circumstances:

- Evidence for the desk-based review is not provided by the FE partner by the given deadline

Non-Compliance

Failure to comply with this policy is a material breach of the CIMSPA Partnership Contract for Further Education Partners and as such the FE partner will be given written notice by CIMSPA to remedy the breach within 14 days. If the breach is not remedied within that period, then the contract will be terminated.

Review

The CIMSPA Policy; Quality Assurance Review of Further Education Partners will be reviewed in September 2027 unless a change in policy, governance or other circumstance requires a review prior to this date.

Appendix A- Evidence Framework

Quality of education

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
1.1 The FE partner designs and delivers provision that meets employer and/or industry needs within the areas in which they provide training.	• Examples of how employers or alumni are being used to support the curriculum of the endorsed product(s).	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the endorsed product(s) meet employer/employer needs.
	• Evidence of student destination data.	Enabling There is some evidence that the endorsed product(s) meet the employer/employer needs.
	• Examples of alumni testimony outlining how the course has supported their career progression.	Emerging There is limited evidence that the endorsed product(s) meet employer/employer need.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
1.2. The FE partner adopts an inclusive approach across its institutional culture, the accessibility of its education provision and the delivery of the endorsed curriculum.	- Examples of how equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) policy is actively implemented in practice, ensuring alignment with current legislation and promoting inclusive behaviours across the organisation (Access/ Reasonable Adjustments). - Awareness and use of the Employability Leisure Guide/ Activity Alliance Key Inclusive Principles (or equivalent).	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the FE partner embeds an inclusive approach across institutional culture, accessibility of education provision and delivery of the endorsed curriculum. Enabling There is sufficient evidence that the FE partner has an inclusive approach across institutional culture, accessibility of education provision and delivery of the endorsed curriculum. Emerging There is evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to further embed inclusive practice across institutional culture, accessibility and curriculum delivery.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
1.3. The FE partner delivers the endorsed curriculum in line with endorsement conditions and the approved specification/ module information and delivery documentation.	• Evidence that the endorsed curriculum is delivered in line with the approved specification/module information and delivery documentation. • Examples of updates to delivery method, learning resources and/or assessment materials	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the endorsed curriculum is delivered in line with the approved specification, module information and delivery documentation. Enabling There is sufficient evidence that the endorsed curriculum is delivered in line the approved specification, module information and delivery documentation. Emerging There is evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to strengthen alignment between curriculum delivery, and approved delivery documentation.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
1.4. The FE partner's method(s) of delivery for the endorsed curriculum enable students to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required to meet the intended learning outcomes, aims and objectives.	Examples of learning resources used for content delivery.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that delivery of the endorsed curriculum enables students to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required to meet the intended learning outcomes, aims and objectives. Enabling There is sufficient evidence that delivery of the endorsed curriculum enables students to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding required to meet the intended learning outcomes, aims and objectives. Emerging There is evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to further strengthen delivery in support of intended learning outcomes, aims and objectives.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
1.5. The FE partner's assessment methods validly assess students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the intended learning outcomes of the endorsed curriculum.	• Evidence that assessment methods are aligned to the endorsed specification and professional standards and relevant sector practice. • Evidence that the assessment methods are in line with real life scenarios (where applicable).	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the assessment method(s) are well considered to ensure knowledge, skills and understanding are checked. Enabling There is some evidence that the assessment method(s) are well considered to ensure knowledge, skills and understanding are checked. Emerging There is evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to develop the assessment method(s) to ensure knowledge, skills and understanding are checked.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
1.6 The FE partner ensures that tutors and assessors undertake appropriate continuing professional development (CPD).	• Examples of tutor and assessor CPD records, showing internal and external training and development in the previous 12 months. (Equality, Diversity Inclusion, Safeguarding, GDPR etc.) • Examples of Professional Body Membership held by tutors/ assessors (Where applicable).	Enhancing There are comprehensive practices seen to show that tutors and assessors undergo relevant CPD for their roles. Enabling There are some practices seen to show that tutors and assessors undergo relevant CPD for their roles. Emerging There is evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to develop showcase that tutors and assessors undergo relevant CPD for their roles.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
1.7 The FE partner adheres to its quality assurance processes to ensure the quality and continuous improvement of the endorsed product(s).	• Evidence quality assurance activity relevant to the organisation and endorsed product. For example, sampling plan, standardisation schedule, meeting minutes etc. • Examples of actions and/or recommendations being completed through CIMSPA's quality assurance activity. • Examples of actions and/or recommendations being completed through Awarding Organisations quality assurance activity.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the FE partner implements a robust quality assurance process. Enabling There is some evidence that the FE partner implements a robust quality assurance process. Emerging There is evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to improve the robustness of the partners quality assurance process.

Student journey

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
2.1 The FE partner is transparent with students regarding its operations, processes, and practices.	• Evidence of partner enrolment information given to students prior to course starting.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the FE partner is transparent with their operations processes and practices to the student which means these are fully compliant and easily found.
	• Evidence of induction content provided to students.	
	• Examples of signposting students to CIMSPA student membership	Enabling There is some evidence that the FE partner is transparent with operations processes and practices to the students.
		Emerging There is evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met that with opportunities identified to increase transparency with operations processes and practices to the students.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
2.2 The FE partner ensures that appropriate academic, pastoral and learning support is available to enable students to complete their programme of study.	Examples of academic, pastoral and learning support available to enable students to progress and complete their programme of study.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the FE partner provides appropriate academic, pastoral and learning support to enable students to complete their programme of study. Enabling There is sufficient evidence that the FE partner provides appropriate academic, pastoral and learning support to enable students to complete their programme of study. Emerging There is sufficient evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to strengthen academic, pastoral and learning support for students.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
2.3 The FE partner provides opportunities that support students' future learning, progression and career development.	- Examples of information advice and guidance for students upon completion of provision. - Evidence of signposting students to further developments/training or employment opportunities. This may include CIMSPA Careers Hub/Endorsed Training.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence to support that they provide opportunities for future learning and career development to students.
		Enabling There is some evidence that the FE partner provides opportunities for future learning and career development to students.
		Emerging There is sufficient evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to develop the opportunities shared for future learning and career development to students.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
2.4The FE partner uses student feedback to inform enhancement of provision and the wider student experience.	• Evidence of student voice opportunities available. • Evidence of completed programme or module evaluations, including content relating to the student experience. • Evidence that student voice has been considered and acted upon where appropriate.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that students have meaningful opportunities to provide feedback on their student experience, and that feedback is systematically considered and acted upon to support enhancement. Enabling There is sufficient evidence that students have opportunities to provide feedback on their student experience, and that feedback is considered and acted upon where appropriate. Emerging There is sufficient evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to further strengthen student feedback mechanisms and the use of feedback to enhance the student experience.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Outcome
2.5 The FE partner ensures that students who successfully complete the provision receive appropriate recognition or certification for their achievement.	• Student enrolment numbers for the previous 12 months. • Student certification numbers in the previous 12 months. • Students receive appropriate recognition or certification in a timely manner following successful completion of the endorsed provision.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that students who successfully complete the endorsed provision receive appropriate recognition or certification for their achievement. Enabling There is sufficient evidence that students who successfully complete the endorsed provision receive appropriate recognition or certification for their achievement. Emerging There is sufficient evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to strengthen processes for recognising or certifying student achievement.

Marketing and promotion

Criteria	Indicative Content	Enhancing
3.1 The FE partner markets its endorsed curriculum in line with CIMSPA expectations.	- Evidence of compliance to CIMSPA brand guidelines. - Consistent marketing of the endorsed curriculum.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the FE partner markets its endorsed programme in line with CIMSPA requirements and expectations. Enabling There is good evidence that the FE partner markets its endorsed programme in line with CIMSPA requirements and expectations. Emerging There is sufficient evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to strengthen marketing of endorsed programme provision.

Criteria	Indicative Content	Enhancing
3.2 The FE partner promotes its endorsed curriculum accurately, transparently and in line with published programme information.	• Accurate representation of their endorsed curriculum. ○ For example, the FE partner is transparent in its published programme information, including entry requirements, programme duration, achievement obtained.	Enhancing There is comprehensive evidence that the FE partner promotes its endorsed curriculum accurately, transparently and in line with published programme information. Enabling There is sufficient evidence that the FE partner promotes its endorsed curriculum accurately, transparently and in line with published programme information. Emerging There is sufficient evidence that minimum CIMSPA requirements are met, with opportunities identified to strengthen the accuracy, transparency and consistency of published programme information.



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