

Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia

Application for continuing professional development course endorsement

Guidance notes

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For further information, please email endorsement@pacfa.org.au.

Proposals for amendments or additions to this document should be sent to the Education Project Officer, Endorsement.

PACFA acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of this nation. We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, as the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we work and live. Our office is on the land of the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung people of the Kulin nation in Naarm/Melbourne and we thank them for their enduring and continuing contribution to the life of this place. We recognise that First Peoples' sovereignty was never ceded.

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Introduction

The Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia (PACFA) *Application for continuing professional development endorsement guidance notes* supplements the PACFA *Continuing professional development endorsement guidelines*. The purpose of the guidance notes is to assist education and training providers (providers) with the application process and are designed to be read in conjunction with the [PACFA Continuing professional development endorsement guidelines](#) (Guidelines).

Continuing professional development course endorsement

What will PACFA endorse?

PACFA will endorse continuing professional development (CPD) courses that consistently demonstrate outcomes aligned to a relevant psychotherapy, counselling and Indigenous Healing Practices methodology, and reflect professional standards and current best practice. These CPD courses are required to demonstrate a commitment to professional development, support PACFA members in the advancement of emerging practices and to maintain high standards of client care through competent practice.

CPD courses covered by the Guidelines fall under two categories. PACFA will only endorse CPD courses that:

- meet the criteria for endorsement for either Category A or Category B,
- meet the course duration requirements (standard or extended), and
- are less than 10 weeks in duration for standard courses or 20 weeks or 100 hours for extended duration courses.

Please refer to the [Guidelines](#) for further information.

It is important to note that PACFA does not endorse providers. PACFA CPD endorsement only applies to the CPD courses being delivered.

Once a provider has a CPD course endorsed by PACFA they are referred to as a provider of an endorsed CPD course, or provider of endorsed CPD courses.

How long does the endorsement period last?

CPD course endorsement is provided in accordance with the Guidelines. The endorsed CPD course(s) will be published on the PACFA CPD website and be included in the CPD section for the following periods, provided that the CPD course remains current:

- **Standard duration courses:** up to two (2) editions of the monthly PACFA eNews, or
- **Extended duration courses:** up to three (3) editions of the monthly PACFA eNews.

CPD course endorsement is only valid for the specified endorsement period selected during the application, which could be standard, extended or annual. When endorsement expires, the provider will need to reapply for CPD course endorsement and pay the endorsement fee to commence the process.

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Providers who successfully apply for CPD course endorsement will be issued with an approval outcome notification for each individual CPD course along with a digital badge. Providers are entitled to use the PACFA endorsed CPD digital badge to advertising and course material for the duration of the endorsement period only.

What are the rules for use of the PACFA endorsed CPD course digital badge?

The PACFA endorsed CPD course digital badge is issued to providers following approval of a CPD course endorsement. The badge may be used only to indicate that the specific CPD course has been endorsed by PACFA and holds current endorsement.

Use of the badge is subject to the following conditions:

- The PACFA endorsed CPD course digital badge may only be used by the approved provider in connection with the specific CPD course or courses, that currently hold PACFA endorsement.
- The badge indicates the specific course holds current PACFA endorsement. It does not confer PACFA membership, registration, program accreditation, or endorsement of the provider, its organisation, practitioners, or any other courses, services or products.
- The badge may be displayed on course webpages, brochures, presentations, email communications, websites, social media and other course related materials, provided the material relates only to the endorsed CPD course.
- The badge must be used in its original form and must not be edited, cropped, distorted, recoloured, or otherwise modified.
- The badge must not be used in a misleading manner or in any way that suggests PACFA endorses the provider, its organisation, practitioners, or any course, service, or product other than the specific PACFA endorsed CPD course.
- The provider must immediately cease using the badge if the course endorsement expires, is suspended, revoked, or otherwise ceases to be current. The badge must also be removed from any materials that no longer relate to a currently endorsed course.

PACFA reserves the right to require the provider to amend, remove or discontinue use of the digital badge where it is used inappropriately, misleadingly, or in a manner that may bring PACFA into disrepute. Failure to remove the badge when required may affect future applications for CPD course endorsement.

For more information on accessing, using and sharing the digital badge, please refer to [PACFA's digital badge guidance](#) or contact endorsement@pacfa.org.au.

Applying for continuing professional development course endorsement

What is the application process?

Prior to applying for CPD endorsement or re-endorsement, providers are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the guidance notes for the endorsement process.

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For any queries regarding the application process, please contact the PACFA office on 03 9046 2270 or email at endorsement@pacfa.org.au.

Providers seeking CPD course endorsement are strongly encouraged to submit their completed online application form along with payment of the endorsement fee well in advance of the commencement of the CPD course. The recommended timelines are:

- for standard duration CPD courses, **at least three (3) months prior** to the start of the course, and
- for extended duration CPD courses, **at least (4) months prior** to the start of the course.

This allows sufficient time for PACFA to review the application, advise providers of the approval outcome, and where approved, the inclusion of the endorsed CPD course in the appropriate number of editions of eNews:

- **standard duration courses:** up to two (2) editions of eNews, or
- **extended duration courses:** up to three (3) editions of eNews.

PACFA aims to process a complete CPD course endorsement applications within two (2) weeks. During peak periods or where further information is required, processing may take up to three (3) weeks.

Once an application is approved, PACFA will arrange for the endorse CPD course information to be published on PACFA's CPD website, subject to the provider supplying all required course listing information and visual identify material.

It is important to note that applications received within 30 days of the course commencement date may still be accepted. However, depending on the timing of approval and publication deadlines, inclusion may be limited to one (1) edition of PACFA's eNews.

The application process is as follows and note that **only online applications will be accepted**:

Step 1: online application

Providers are required to apply for CPD endorsement via the online application form - [Apply for CPD course endorsement](#) page. The online application should include all necessary provider and relevant CPD course details. Providers are required to confirm that they agree to the Guidelines, including, but not limited to CPD course endorsement fees and the rules for use of the PACFA endorsed CPD course digital badge.

Step 2: submission of course materials

Providers are encouraged to upload a copy of the CPD course materials, supporting documents and company logo as part of the online application process.

Step 3: payment of endorsement fee

Payment of the endorsement fee is required at the time of application. Please refer to the [Guidelines](#) for the schedule of fees.

Please note that an application fee cannot be refunded if a CPD course is cancelled once the endorsement period has commenced.

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Step 4: review of course materials

Upon the receipt of confirmation that all the materials have been uploaded, the PACFA office will review the provider's online application, CPD course details for endorsement form, and the course materials submitted. The review may take up to two (2) weeks, provided that the course materials and relevant documentation have been submitted with the application.

Step 5: review outcome and finalising course endorsement

PACFA will endeavour to complete the application assessment for CPD course endorsement process within two (2) weeks following the receipt of the application. This timeframe may vary depending on the amount of course material to be reviewed and the completeness of the documentation submitted.

Upon completion of the application form and review, PACFA will advise the provider of the approval outcome decision, and if successful, will issue a digital 'Endorsed CPD course' digital badge.

Please refer to the [CPD endorsement application process flowchart](#) for a visual representation of the CPD endorsement application process.

How is confidentiality maintained?

Information collected during the application process is used only for the purpose for which it is obtained. The course training material will remain the intellectual property of the provider. If a provider requires a confidentiality agreement to be signed prior to PACFA receiving its course materials, the confidentiality agreement should be emailed to endorsement@pacfa.org.au when the online application is submitted.

FAQs

How are CPD courses reviewed?

PACFA will review the application together with the CPD course materials to either approve or decline the CPD course for endorsement.

Please note that if an application is declined, PACFA will refund the endorsement fee to the provider.

How do I know if my CPD course fulfils PACFA guidelines?

Providers must demonstrate that:

- the aims of the CPD course and relationship to counselling, psychotherapy and/or Indigenous healing practices are clearly defined,
- learning outcomes are clear and related to counselling, psychotherapy and/or Indigenous healing practices,
- the marketing materials are accurate, ethical and clear,

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- course material is written in a clear and easy to read format (from the participants' perspective) and enable participants to refer to the documentation if they are unable to participate in part of the CPD course for any reason,
- the course reflects either the Category A or Category B requirements outlined in the Guidelines,
- addresses issues relating to ethical conduct, diversity and emerging practice, and
- trainers and/or facilitators hold the relevant qualifications and experience.

What does it mean to address ethical conduct, diversity, and emerging practice in a CPD course?

To effectively address these elements, the CPD course content should:

- **Ethical conduct:** include discussions on ethical principles and dilemmas that practitioners may face in their work. For example, include case studies, guidelines on professional conduct and strategies for maintaining ethical integrity in practice.
- **Diversity:** cover topics related to cultural responsiveness, inclusion and working effectively with diverse populations. For example, include training on understanding and respecting different cultural backgrounds, addressing biases and implementing inclusive practices that consider a wide range of diversity, including cultural, racial, gender, sexual orientation and other forms of diversity.
- **Emerging practice:** Highlight new and evolving practices in the field of counselling, psychotherapy, and Indigenous healing practices. For example, introducing new therapeutic techniques, discussing recent research findings, and exploring innovative approaches to practice.

How can I ensure my CPD course adequately addresses these elements?

To ensure your CPD course meets these criteria, you might consider the following approaches:

- incorporate real world examples and case studies that demonstrate ethical dilemmas, diversity issues and emerging practices.
- include guest speakers or facilitators who have expertise in ethics, diversity and new therapeutic approaches.
- offer participants additional resources, such as articles, research papers and guidelines on ethical conduct, diversity and emerging practices.
- use interactive elements like group discussions, role plays and workshops to engage participants in these topics actively.

What are the requirements for trainers and facilitators?

PACFA endorsed CPD courses are expected to be developed and delivered by trainers and/or facilitators who are suitably qualified, highly skilled and have the relevant experience.

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Trainers and/or facilitators are required to hold at least:

- a current counselling, psychotherapy and/or Indigenous healing practices qualification at least to the level being delivered and assessed,
- current professional experience in counselling, psychotherapy and/or Indigenous healing practices, and
- current professional qualifications and experience in training within a cognate field.

What course materials do I need to submit?

Providers are encouraged to upload the following course materials with their application:

- course brochure and/or outline
- sample of PowerPoint slides
- participant workbook
- session plan(s)
- details of the delivery methodology

How do I submit course materials?

Providers are encouraged to upload their course materials for each course electronically as part of the online application process.

Please note that PACFA uses an engagement management system and there are restrictions and limitations that apply to file names and size. File names should not exceed 259 characters, and all files should be submitted in .zip file format to avoid PACFA encountering issues downloading and saving these files.

How much does course endorsement cost?

The endorsement fee is set out in the [Guidelines](#) and is applicable for each CPD course and/or licensed CPD course to be endorsed. Fees are payable at the time of application.

What if I need to submit an amendment to a CPD course advertisement after it has been approved for endorsement?

PACFA uses the details submitted within the CPD course details for endorsement form as it will appear for endorsement on PACFA's website and in eNews. Amendments to any part of the CPD course advertisement after PACFA has advised the provider of the approval outcome decision may incur a fee of \$50.00 excluding GST.

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Definitions

CPD course - standard duration

A CPD course is a short, non-accredited training course of up to a maximum duration of 37.5 hours, or equivalent to five (5) days total. This can include events, conferences, seminars, webinars, workshops, etc. CPD courses must not exceed a 10-week learning period.

CPD course - extended duration

CPD courses that exceed 37.5 hours and can extend up to a maximum duration of 20 weeks or 100 hours. These courses provide substantial professional development opportunities but cannot be applied towards the entry requirements for PACFA Colleges.

CPD course contact

The CPD course contact is the person with whom PACFA will liaise in relation to the endorsement of the CPD course. In some cases, this may be the same as the CPD course facilitator.

Delivery information

Where the CPD course is delivered, e.g., in-person, online or hybrid formats. For in-person formats, please indicate location including in which state(s) of Australia.

Endorsed CPD course

A course as defined above that has successfully met the PACFA endorsement criteria as set out in the Guidelines. Please note that a CPD course can only be endorsed when the endorsement criteria for either a Category A or Category B course has been demonstrated.

Endorsement fee

The endorsement fee is a non-refundable fee payable to PACFA by the provider to undertake the application for endorsement review process.

Licence fee

A CPD course that is intended to be delivered multiple times within Australia for up to 12 months are subject to an endorsement fee as well as a licence agreement fee. Please refer to the [Guidelines](#) for further information regarding the fee structure.

