



Accreditation from the Faculty of Physician Associates for external category CPD events

Guidelines for applicants

Background

Continuing professional development (CPD) is the educative means of updating, developing and enhancing how individuals apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes required in their job role. For physician associates (PAs) this will include a variety of educational opportunities, including not only those relating to clinical competencies but also broader areas such as teaching, research, audit, service improvement and national contributions to the development of the profession.

All PAs are currently required to complete CPD to remain on the Physician Associate Managed Voluntary Register (PAMVR). The PAMVR is a precursor to regulation and ensures that PAs on the register have met a certain level of training or experience and that they adhere to agreed standards for their professional skills and behaviour. The Education Subcommittee of the Faculty of Physician Associates (FPA) is the body responsible for auditing members CPD against current requirements. Members failing to meet their CPD requirements may be referred to the professional standards subcommittee of the Faculty of Physician Associates as this is a requirement to be on the PAMVR.

Current CPD requirements and applying for accreditation of external category events

All physician associates are currently required to complete, on average, 50 hours of CPD per year. Please refer to the Faculty of Physician Associates 'Continuing professional development guidance for physician associates' for further information. This CPD is logged by the PA within their RCP CPD diary.

External category credits are given for participation in events such as external conferences and study days. Individuals or organisations can apply to the Education Subcommittee of the FPA for external category CPD accreditation of their event.

Requirements for accreditation of external category CPD events

Organisations or individuals who wish to seek FPA accreditation for their external category CPD event should fill out the application form at least 6 weeks prior to the event date. Retrospective approval will not be granted if the form received more than 6 weeks after the event date.

The completed application form should be submitted to the FPA for the attention of the chair of the Education Committee (via email to fpacpdqueries@rcp.ac.uk).

Please note that any support, sponsorship, funding or involvement by a commercial organisation must be declared in the application. Any support, sponsorship, funding or involvement by commercial organisations must not influence the structure or content of the programme. For applications from not-for-profit organisations, please stipulate on the application form how these proceeds will be allocated, eg used to fund external placements for physician associate/student training or development opportunities.

Guidance for completing the application form

Course organisers should provide as much detail as possible in order to assist with timely accreditation of the event.

The application form should clearly identify and state the target audience. This will primarily be physician associates, but it is hoped to encourage multidisciplinary CPD events in the future.

The learning objectives for the event and session components must be clearly stated as well as how these are intended to be met through the event. An objective is a statement that describes what the learner will be able to do at the end of the session that they cannot do at the beginning.

The teaching methods used should be aligned with the stated learning objectives. Ideally the key principles of adult learning should be incorporated to enhance knowledge, attitudes and skills and to develop understanding of content and context.

As part of the event, it is also vital that facilities are provided to enable users to evaluate the programme. How this is to be achieved should be described in the application. In order to ensure quality of the events approved the Education Subcommittee may ask for details about the feedback from participants.

The accreditation process

All applications must be sent for approval at least 6-8 weeks prior to the event date.

Once received, the application form will be referred to the Education Subcommittee of the FPA for review.

The accreditation process will focus on ensuring that the planned activities offer good quality content covering the subject matter and will seek to ensure that the presenters and/or facilitators have the expertise to deliver the learning objectives asked of them.

In looking at accreditation for events the Education Subcommittee will seek to ensure that provider's evaluation records for previous or ongoing events must be satisfactory or, where not, reasons for unsatisfactory ratings must have been addressed.

Providing all the required information is submitted the Education Subcommittee chair will respond to the applicant with the outcome of their application within 2 weeks of receipt.

Upon successful completion of the programme, the participants must be provided with a certificate. Only when the Education Subcommittee's accreditation has been granted can the certificate indicate that the event will allow participants to use the CPD points from the event towards their external category CPD requirements. The FPA membership team will contact members to let them know that an accredited event is running and will circulate flyers via email to members at the organisers' request.

This will be closely monitored by the Professional Standards Subcommittee of the FPA through the CPD audit. Any organisers found to be promoting events suggesting the Education Subcommittee has provided accreditation for external category CPD when accreditation has not been granted, will be referred to the Professional Standards Subcommittee for action.

The provider must keep records of attendance and agree to provide, upon request, confirmation of physician associate participation any time up to 2 years after the event has taken place.

It is vital that the course organiser provides up-to-date contact information on the application so they can be contacted to answer any queries or deal with any issues that may arise to avoid delays to the application. The Education Subcommittee will also confirm in writing (via email) the outcome of the CPD accreditation request within 2 weeks. Event approvals will be provided free of charge.

Retrospective approval

All applications must be submitted to the FPA for approval within 6 weeks of the event date. The Education Subcommittee will not approve any applications for events held more than 6 weeks prior.