



Accreditation Scheme and Policy

1. Background

The PCRS-UK has a policy on endorsement (see http://www.pcrs-uk.org/legal/october_2006/Endorsement_partnership%20_policy_Oct%2006.pdf). Key criteria for PCRS-UK to endorse an initiative are that the PCRS-UK is involved from the outset on the initiative and /or it has adequate time to review and make changes to the materials. PCRS-UK is, however, often asked to review and put its name to finished materials or programmes where there is no scope for input or change and which thus fall outside its endorsement policy.

The PCRS-UK recognises the value of many educational programmes developed by other organisations including pharmaceutical companies and it also recognises the potential value of its own name being used to support the dissemination of such programmes. Moreover, the PCRS-UK believes it can offer a valuable service to its members and other primary care health professionals by reviewing such programmes and advising on their value. With this in mind the PCRS-UK has developed a policy and scheme to accredit education programmes produced by other organisations relevant to primary care respiratory medicine

In developing this policy, the PCRS-UK sees an important opportunity to link with the continuing professional development scheme currently being developed by the RCGP (see http://www.rcgp.org.uk/continuing_the_gp_journey/professional_development.aspx).

The PCRS-UK also sees an opportunity to support the Nursing and Midwifery Council's standards for continuing professional development and maintenance of registration (PREP) (see <http://www.nmc-uk.org/aArticle.aspx?ArticleID=2793>) and support the NHS Knowledge and Skills Framework (KSF) personal development plan (PDP) (see http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/DH_4090843).

2. Purpose

This policy and scheme is intended firstly to help guide decision-making about accreditations within the PCRS-UK and to help the PCRS-UK come to a logical, thought-out conclusion about how to judge a particular initiative based on a set of criteria and whether or not to accredit it.

Secondly it is intended to provide guidance to those seeking accreditation from the PCRS-UK in terms of what the PCRS-UK requires.

There may be exceptions not covered by this policy.

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3. Scope

The policy deals with requests from both not-for-profit organizations and commercial companies for the PCRS-UK to accredit educational initiatives such as

- Books or other printed resources and publications
- Websites, CDs etc
- Courses and meetings
- Other educational programmes

4. Definition of accreditation

In this document, accreditation is understood to mean overall support for the educational value of a programme based on a thorough review.

5. Criteria for Accreditation

Programmes will be judged against the following criteria:

- Content
 - Appropriate evidence base and source material has been considered: all salient points are covered
 - Well balanced, giving equal weight to all relevant interventions, and management approaches
 - Appropriate links are included that enable the user to explore the subject further
 - Non promotional:
 - the use of brand names is generally discouraged.
 - photographs of company products will only be accepted if they are used appropriately for illustration purposes
- Relevance to respiratory medicine and primary care
- Usability:
 - The programme is of acceptable length, is well written and easily understood
- Self assessment
 - Self assessment exercise is included and is relevant to the material
- Sources of funding/authors and conflicts of interest are appropriately declared

6. The Scheme

- Programmes will be reviewed by two reviewers, appointed by the PCRS-UK Education Lead, who will complete a formal feedback form. Reviewers will be selected based on appropriateness and experience of the item/material being reviewed, for example, where the programme relates to a nurse-specific education course at least one of the reviewers will have a nursing qualification and experience of the item/material being reviewed
- A decision of whether or not to accredit will then be made by the Education Lead

- Programmes will be accredited for a period of 12 months and will need to be re-accredited on an annual basis
- In the case of meetings and courses, an initial decision to accredit or not will be based on the materials supplied and will be subject to PCRS-UK attendance at the meeting(s) or course to validate the programme in practice
- An indication will be given as part of the accreditation of the approximate 'continuing professional development'(CPD) time the programme is worth
- Feedback will be provided from the review allowing materials to be revised and resubmitted as appropriate

7. Fees

- The fee for accreditation will vary according to the size of the programme and the amount of work involved to review. Discounts on the standard fees will be available to PCRS-UK Corporate Supporter Scheme members and also to not-for-profit organisations.
- The minimum standard fee charged will be £750 for 12 months accreditation
- The same fee will be charged regardless of whether the application is successful as the same level of work is involved and the PCRS-UK wishes to avoid any incentives that could be seen to bias its decision.
- Where programmes fail to meet the necessary criteria on first submission, they can be re submitted for review indicating where changes have been made for an additional fee. The additional fee will be based on the amount of additional work involved for the PCRS-UK in reviewing the materials
- The fee charged for annual re-accreditation will be 25% of the original fee

8. Process for applying for accreditation

- Requests for accreditation should be made to the PCRS-UK secretariat via info@pcrs-uk.org. The Secretariat will acknowledge the request and forward it to the Chief executive, and PCRS-UK Education Lead
- The chief executive in conjunction with the PCRS-UK Education Lead will review requests for accreditation, identify appropriate individual experts to review and confirm the fee /process to the requesting organisation.
- When the appropriate PCRS-UK experts have completed their review, their recommendations will be forwarded to the CE and the PCRS-UK Education Lead for approval. Advice will be sought from the General Committee Chair as appropriate. The General Committee and trustees will receive a report at each meeting on what accreditations have been granted
- The secretariat or chief executive will let the organisation know of the decision, and in the case of a positive decision, discuss how the PCRS-UK can support the initiative more broadly (e.g. promoting it to its members) and make any necessary arrangements involving use of the PCRS-UK name and logo.

9. Use of PCRS-UK name and logo

- All use of the PCRS-UK name and logo must be approved by the PCRS-UK. This includes any press, publicity or promotional materials produced in connection with the programme. All draft materials must be reviewed, and agreed by the PCRS-UK before printing.

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- If the PCRS-UK agrees to have its logo appear, it must be printed in its official livery and fonts (contact PCRS-UK secretariat at info@pcrs-uk.org for details). The PCRS-UK will provide high resolution image files upon request.
- The precise wording will be confirmed upon accreditation but will be along the lines of 'the educational content of this programme is accredited by the PCRS-UK'

Approved by General Committee: 24 June 2008

Approved by Trustees: 5 September 2008

Next Review Date September 2009

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