



# **BASES High Performance Sport Accreditation (HPSA)**

## **Applicant Guidelines**

Supported by UK Sport



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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This document provides applicants with the necessary information, guidance and portfolio application form for the British Association of Sport and Exercise Sciences (BASES) High Performance Sport Accreditation (HPSA).

HPSA is a specialist accreditation, specifically tailored to those providing sport science support services to high performance sport (e.g., World Class Pathway Programmes, professional sport and other elite programmes). HPSA provides a level of accreditation higher than BASES Sport and Exercise Scientist Accreditation and serves to recognise excellence in sport science support work delivered to high performance sport.

HPSA assesses competencies identified by the high performance sport sector as being essential to work effectively as a sport scientist in the high performance sport environment. The HPSA scheme is a quality assurance process that ensures the high performance sport sector can employ sport scientists of the highest calibre. Importantly, HPSA also serves to guide the continuing professional development (CPD) of sport scientists working in, or wishing to work in, high performance sport.

HPSA is a BASES scheme and is recognised by the British Olympic Association (BOA), the British Paralympic Association (BPA), the Home Country Sports Institutes and UK Sport as the highest accreditation available in the high performance sport sector. Representatives from the Home Country Sports Institutes, UK Sport and many Sport National Governing Bodies World Class Programmes were extensively consulted in the development of HPSA.

## 2 BASES HPSA COMPETENCIES

An overview of the HPSA application and assessment procedures is provided in Figure 1. Applications are assessed against the 10 HPSA competencies, which are presented in Table 1. Applicants must demonstrate evidence of achieving all competencies through a combination of the following four methods of assessment:

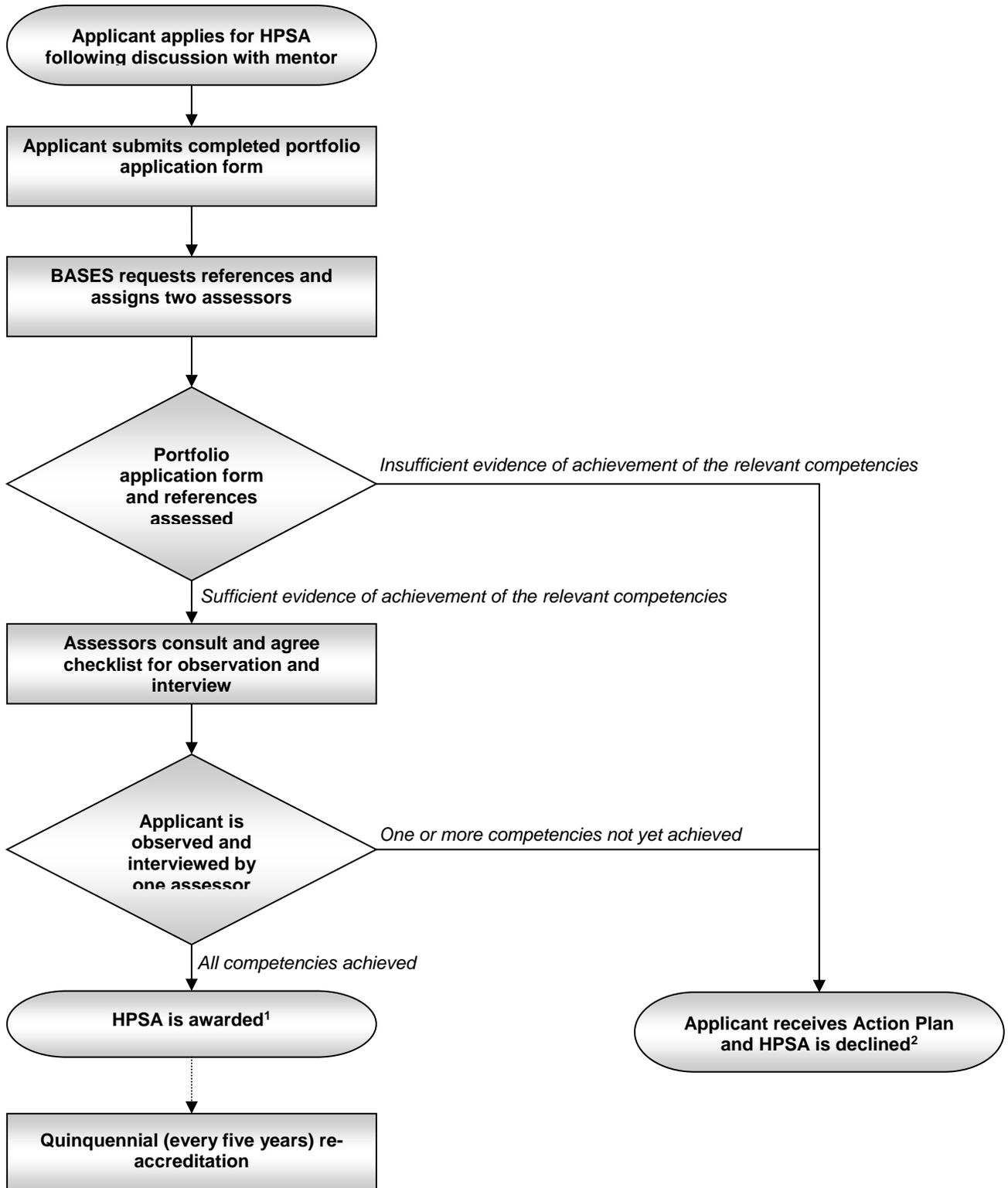
1. A portfolio application form
2. References from four referees nominated by the applicant
3. Observation of practice by an assessor
4. Interview by an assessor.

The methods by which each competency criteria is assessed are indicated in the right hand column of Table 1 (P = portfolio application form, R = references, O = observation, I = interview).

Achievement of any competency cannot be gained solely from evidence provided at the interview. The main purpose of the interview is to confirm competency achievement and fill in any minor gaps in the evidence.

It is important to note that HPSA is awarded based upon the achievement of all of the 10 HPSA competencies and that in order to achieve these, applicants will be expected to have at least 5 years of experience of providing structured and on-going scientific support to high performance athletes preferably as a BASES accredited sport and exercise scientist although this is not an essential requirement.

**Figure 1. Schematic of the BASES High Performance Sport Accreditation Procedures**



1. Applicants awarded HPSA will either maintain or receive the appropriate BASES Sport and Exercise Science Accreditation for the period that they hold HPSA. Accreditation is only valid whilst being a Professional Member of BASES.

2. If the applicant believes that the correct HPSA assessment process has not been followed, then s/he is entitled to appeal the decision by writing to the BASES Office within 2 weeks of being informed of the decision. The appeal must outline in detail where due process has not been followed.

**Table 1. BASES High Performance Sport Accreditation Competencies**

<b>Competency</b>	<b>Competency Criteria</b>	<b>Evidence provided in Application Form</b>	<b>Methods of Assessment</b>
<b>1: Practical experience</b>	1A Provide structured and on-going scientific support to high performance athletes		P, R, I
	1B Demonstrate how work has impacted on sports performance		P, R, I
<b>2: Knowledge and scientific training</b>	2A Demonstrate advanced knowledge and training in a relevant scientific discipline		P, I
	2B Demonstrate the use of specialist knowledge to optimise the application of existing and emerging research and technology		P, R, I
<b>3: Knowledge of and commitment to high performance sport</b>	3A Demonstrate significant knowledge of high performance sport		P, R, I
	3B Demonstrate commitment to sporting success in high performance sport		P, R, I
	3C Demonstrate openness to learning from coaches and support staff		P,R, I
<b>4: Knowledge of the role of sport science in high performance sport</b>	4A Demonstrate an understanding of the role of sport science support within high performance sport		P, R, I
	4B Demonstrate an understanding of how sport science support integrates into the coaching structures and processes		P, R, I
<b>5: Communication skills</b>	5A Demonstrate effective communication, both orally and on paper, with high performance coaches, athletes, peers and other support staff		R, P, O, I
<b>6: Professional relationships</b>	6A Build understanding and trust of high performance coaches, athletes, peers and other support staff		P, R, O, I
	6B Demonstrate diplomacy, sensitivity and tact in working with high performance coaches, athletes, peers and support staff		P, R, O, I
	6C Demonstrate approachability, empathy and the ability to listen actively and accurately		P, R, O, I
	6D Demonstrate open-mindedness and adaptability in working with others		P, R, I
	6E Adopt and maintain professional behaviour		P, R, O, I
<b>7: Teamwork</b>	7A Work cooperatively with high performance coaches, athletes, peers and other support staff to provide structured and ongoing scientific support		P, R, O, I
	8A Conduct scientific support provision in a range of high performance environments		P, R, O, I

<b>8: High performance sport environments</b>	8B Comply with and promote policies and protocols relating to health, safety, security and all relevant regulatory requirements and standards		P, R
<b>9: Problem solving and interdisciplinarity</b>	9A Demonstrate critical and innovative thinking to provide solutions to problems		P, R, I
	9B Demonstrate ability to problem solve in an interdisciplinary way with a team of practitioners from other disciplines		P, R, I
<b>10: Evaluation and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)</b>	10A Self-evaluate the quality and impact of scientific support provision		P, R, I
	10B Seek and review feedback on performance and contribution; using this to develop skills		P, R, I
	10C Demonstrate ongoing engagement in CPD to enhance own and others' scientific support provision		R, P, I

Notes: (P = portfolio application form, R = references, O = observation, I = interview).

Achievement of any competency cannot be gained solely from evidence provided at the interview.

### 3 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Applications must be submitted by to the BASES Office by one of the following deadlines:

- 6 January
- 1 July

The HPSA scheme is a not for profit accreditation scheme. Fees are set to cover the cost of assessing applications and administering the scheme. The HPSA application fee is £500, which includes all elements of the comprehensive assessment process (see Section 4) and the provision of an Action Plan (see Section 4.4). Application fees are non-refundable at any stage after application unless either: (a) the application is declined due to references not being received within the 3-week period; in which case the refund is £400; or (b) the application is declined because the portfolio application form and references do not demonstrate sufficient evidence of achievement of the identified HPSA competencies and the competencies cannot be adequately demonstrated through the observation and/or interview. In this case the refund is £300.

It is important that prior to an application these guidelines are read carefully, and where appropriate, the applicant selects a mentor to provide appropriate guidance (see Section 3.1 Portfolio Application Form – Section 10 Referees).

Given the number of methods by which applicants are assessed, as well as the need for receipt of references and the scheduling of the observation and interview, the applicant should expect the assessment process to take approximately 3 months. Nominating referees who have agreed to provide references within 3 weeks and ensuring availability (of both you and the client(s)) for the observation and the interview will expedite the assessment process.

In the ***BASES High Performance Sport Accreditation Portfolio Application Form*** (see Appendix 1), the applicant must provide evidence of achieving the HPSA competencies that are assessed through the portfolio application form (marked as 'P' in Table 1). The guidance notes provided in Section 3.1 of this document will help the applicant provide the necessary evidence in his or her application. However, these notes are not exhaustive and the applicant should use his or her judgement to ensure that sufficient information and evidence is provided in the portfolio application form necessary for the assessors to review the application against the competencies.

Applications may be made with respect to sport science support provided to either a single sport or to multi-sports. The nature of the applicant's work in this regard will determine the evidence presented in the portfolio application form and the choice of referees.

#### 3.1 Portfolio Application Form

This section provides guidance on the completion of the portfolio application form. The form has been created for applicants to view and complete in Microsoft Word. Spaces are reserved for entering information. The spaces are a mixture of text fields, check boxes and drop-down lists. The tab button should be used to move the cursor between spaces.

In order to apply for HPSA the applicant is required to be an up-to-date Professional Member of BASES. If the applicant has a specialist scientific discipline (e.g., biomechanics), then this should be included in the box provided in the application form. If the application is successful, this specialism will be recognised in official records (e.g., BASES High Performance Sport Accredited Biomechanist).

#### A. Qualifications

This section allows the applicant to provide evidence towards partial fulfilment of competencies 2 and 3 (see Table 1).

Copies of relevant degree certificates should be submitted with the portfolio application form, as well as any other relevant qualifications or awards.

## **B. Employment and Experience**

This section allows the applicant to provide evidence towards partial fulfilment of competencies 1, 3 and 8 (see Table 1).

The applicant should provide as much detail as possible about the client groups with which s/he has worked, the role, dates and the approximate amount of time (e.g., in hours or days if part-time) worked. It is important to distinguish between direct contact time and indirect support time with clients. Accuracy is important because the assessors require this level of detail to assess evidence provided.

## **C. Work Philosophy**

This section allows the applicant to provide evidence towards partial fulfilment of competencies 3 and 4 (see Table 1).

The applicant should provide an outline of his or her philosophy to sport science support work, including his or her approach to providing effective support and any specific goals and objectives.

## **D. Professional Relationships**

This section allows the applicant to provide evidence towards partial fulfilment of competencies 5 and 6 (see Table 1).

The applicant should describe, and where possible provide evidence of, his or her effective professional relationships with high performance athletes, coaches, peers and other support staff.

## **E. Problem Solving and Interdisciplinarity**

This section allows the applicant to provide evidence towards partial fulfilment of competencies 7 and 9 (see Table 1).

The applicant should provide examples of his or her critical and innovative thinking to provide solutions to problems, and how s/he has worked with other support staff to provide interdisciplinary solutions. Although it is normally expected that sport science support work be underpinned by sound scientific principles, the assessors will be interested in any evidence that demonstrates either innovative thinking or the novel application of knowledge to problem-solving in high performance sport.

## **F. Communications**

This section allows the applicant to provide evidence towards partial fulfilment of competencies 2, 3, 5 and 10 (see Table 1).

Written and oral communication skills are separated for convenience; whilst the applicant is required to provide evidence for both written and oral communication, these elements will be considered together in the overall assessment of this competency. The assessors will look for evidence that the applicant is able to effectively broadcast scientific information both to scientific peers and, more importantly, to clients in high performance sport.

### **Section F.i**

The applicant should list a maximum of 15 key articles related to sport science that s/he published in the last 3 years that demonstrates ability to effectively communicate with high performance coaches,

athletes, peers and other support staff. This may include scientific papers published in peer-reviewed journals (although this is not a requirement for HPSA and BASES recognises that for some practitioners in high performance sport, sharing of work done except to the client will not always be possible) and/or articles on sport science published in coaching or sport-specific magazines, club newsletters, etc. As much detail as possible should be provided (e.g., authors, title of article, year of publication, name of journal or magazine, page numbers or website address). The applicant needs to be able to produce these articles on request.

### **Section F.ii**

The applicant should list a maximum of 15 presentations given in person over the last 3 years that demonstrate ability to effectively communicate with high performance coaches, athletes, peers and other support staff. This list might include: presentations at scientific or coaching conferences; contributions to scientific, coaching, or sport-specific workshops or symposia; and/or presentations to groups of coaches, athletes, or other high performance sport programme staff. It is important that if this information is requested, then the applicant has some way of verifying that the presentation took place.

### **G. Self-evaluation**

This section allows the applicant to provide evidence towards partial fulfilment of competency 10 (see Table 1).

The applicant should provide an outline of the steps taken to evaluate the quality and impact of sport science support work. This should include an outline of the ways that feedback on performance is sought and used. Assessors will consider any evidence presented of engaging in reflective practice and critical evaluation of work.

### **H. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

This section allows the applicant to provide evidence towards partial fulfilment of competency 10 (see Table 1).

Assessors will look for evidence that the applicant is continually updating knowledge and skills to enhance professional practice. The applicant should provide as much detail as possible with regard to the dates of the activity, the body providing the training or CPD, and its relevance to practice. The applicant should be able to provide evidence of undertaking this CPD (e.g., certificates of attendance) upon request.

### **I. Referees**

The applicant should provide contact details for four referees: a mentor, a senior coach or Performance Director, a second coach and employer (preferably the line manager). All four nominated referees should have intimate knowledge of the nature and quality of the applicant's sport science support work to high performance sport.

The mentor is someone with whom the applicant regularly engages with for personal, professional and/or technical advice and guidance. The mentor should normally be either BASES HPSA accredited or of equivalent experience and professional standing, and have recent (for at least the last 2 years) and extensive knowledge of the applicant's work and professional development. The applicant is advised to consult with the mentor in the preparation of the application. The experience of the mentor should aid the application process and help the applicant identify any areas that require development prior to application. If the applicant is unable to identify a mentor, then four referees from the other parties will be accepted (a senior coach, Performance Director, a second coach and employer (preferably the line manager)).

BASES will request references from these referees (see below) and forward the references to the assessors. It is important for the applicant to ensure that the nominated referees are willing and able to provide a reference within 3 weeks.

BASES will write to the listed referees to secure references on the applicant's professional conduct and the quality and efficacy of his or her scientific support work. Specifically, the referees will be asked how long they have known the applicant and in what capacity and will be given the opportunity to comment on the HPSA competencies assessed through the references (marked as 'R' in Table 1).

In the event of references not being received within a 3-week period, the applicant will be notified of an additional 1-week period in which references must be received. Thereafter, the application will not progress to the observation and interview stage and will be declined with a refund of £260.

## **4 ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Portfolio Application Form and References**

The portfolio application form and references will be assessed by two assessors, both of whom will have been trained as assessors and hold HPSA. Where an applicant is applying to be accredited through work with Paralympic or aspirant Paralympic athletes, one of the assessors will normally have relevant disability experience.

Once the information in the portfolio application form and the supporting references has been assessed, the applicant will be informed by the BASES Office whether or not the application may progress to the next stage of the observation and interview.

If further evidence is required before a decision can be made, then the applicant will be informed by the BASES Office and will be required to provide such information within a 2-week period.

If either the required further evidence is not received within a 2-week period, or the portfolio application form and references do not demonstrate sufficient evidence of achievement of the identified HPSA competencies and the competencies cannot be adequately demonstrated through the observation and/or interview, then the application will be declined with a refund of £180. If the application is declined, then the applicant will receive feedback in the form of an Action Plan, outlining which competencies were not yet achieved and providing recommendations for future experience and CPD. The Action Plan should help the applicant improve any future application for HPSA.

### **4.2 Observation and Interview**

Applications that meet those HPSA competencies assessed through the portfolio application form and references (as outlined in Table 1) will progress to the observation and interview stage. One of the assessors who reviewed the portfolio application form and references will make an observation of the applicant's support work with an appropriate client(s) and will conduct an interview. This assessor will normally hold HPSA in the applicant's discipline. The observation and interview will provide the applicant with the opportunity to demonstrate further competency criteria necessary for HPSA, as identified in Table 1 (marked 'O' and 'I'). In addition, the interview will allow the assessor to follow-up on any matters arising from the review of the portfolio application form, the references and the observation.

The observation should be structured to allow the assessor to observe the applicant working with a typical client(s). This should be one or more high performance athletes from one of the client groups that formed the basis of the applicant's portfolio application form. If possible, the coach(es) of the client(s) should also attend. It is imperative that the applicant gains consent from the client(s) in advance of the observation. Normally, the observation should last up to 2 hours and take place where

sport science support is usually delivered; this may be in either a laboratory or 'field' environment'. The applicant may select both the client(s) and the environment but must ensure that the observation allows demonstration of the competencies to be assessed during the observation (marked 'O' in Table 1).

The BASES Office will liaise with the applicant and assessor conducting the observation and interview to agree a mutually convenient date for the observation and interview. The applicant will be responsible for coordinating his or her availability with that of an appropriate client(s). BASES will coordinate the availability of the assessor. It is the joint responsibility of the applicant and assessor to agree a date for the observation and interview session.

The assessor will contact the applicant to brief him or her on any matters arising from the portfolio application form and references that warrant follow-up at the observation and/or interview.

At least 1 week in advance of the observation session, the applicant must provide the assessor with background information, including aims and objectives, of the planned session and details of the client(s) so that the activity can be properly contextualised.

The process is rigorous, but it should be a positive one, designed to identify high performance sport practitioners, as opposed to seeking to fail people. The assessor will provide the applicant with every opportunity to demonstrate that s/he has the appropriate competencies for HPSA. The assessor will not interrupt the session, although s/he may wish to talk informally with the applicant and/or the client(s) both before (to explain the procedure) and after (to debrief) the session.

#### **4.3 Conflicts of Interest**

BASES will try to take into account any potential conflicts of either sporting or professional interest when assigning assessors, but such decisions may also be based upon the availability of appropriate assessors.

#### **4.4 Outcome**

Based on all the evidence presented in the portfolio application form, the references, the observation and interview, one of the following decisions will be made:

1. BASES HPSA Awarded – all competencies achieved
2. BASES HPSA Awarded Subject to Conditions – additional evidence required to determine outcome; this must be presented by the applicant to the BASES Office within 2 weeks
3. BASES HPSA Declined – one or more competencies not yet achieved.

Whenever possible, the applicant will be informed of the decision by the assessor following the interview. The applicant will also receive formal notification from BASES.

If the outcome is BASES HPSA Awarded, then the applicant will hold BASES HPSA in his or her selected discipline for a period of 2 years; thereafter s/he will be required to apply for re-licensing (see Section 5). In addition, BASES Sport and Exercise Scientist accreditation in the relevant discipline will be either awarded or maintained for the duration of HPSA, without the need for re-application. Accreditation is only valid whilst being a Professional Member of BASES.

If the outcome is BASES HPSA Awarded Subject to Conditions, then the applicant will be informed by BASES of any additional evidence required to reach a final decision. This additional evidence must be provided to the BASES Office within a 2-week period. On receipt and review of this additional evidence, the assessor will make one of the following decisions:

1. BASES HPSA Awarded – all competencies achieved
2. BASES HPSA Declined – one or more competencies not yet achieved.

If the additional evidence is not received from the applicant within the 2-week period, then the outcome is BASES HPSA Declined.

In all cases, irrespective of the outcome, the applicant will receive an Action Plan. When the outcome is BASES HPSA is Awarded, the Action Plan will provide guidance for CPD and future HPSA re-licensing. When the outcome is BASES HPSA is Declined, the Action Plan will provide clear identification of shortcomings in relation to the HPSA competencies and guidance with respect to any CPD that may be required to support any future application for HPSA. The Action Plan will be sent to the applicant from the BASES Office.

## **5 RE-ACCREDITATION**

Accreditation under HPSA is for 5 years, with subsequent re-accreditation (i.e., every 5 years).

Re-accreditation will require the submission of an updated portfolio application form, detailing relevant sport science support work and any further qualifications, communications and CPD undertaken in the 5-year period. References will also be reviewed to support the application for re-licensing. In some instances a telephone interview by an HPSA assessor may also be included in the assessment for re-licensing. Re-accreditation will be successful if the applicant can provide evidence of continued demonstration of the HPSA competencies.

Fees for HPSA re-accreditation will be set to cover the cost of assessing applications and administering the scheme and as such will be significantly less than the cost of application.

## **6 APPEALS PROCEDURE**

Appeal is **not** seen as the automatic route if the outcome is BASES HPSA Declined. However, if the applicant believes that the correct HPSA assessment process has not been followed, then s/he is entitled to appeal the decision by writing to the BASES Office within 2 weeks of being informed of the decision. The appeal must outline in detail where due process has not been followed. This appeal will be referred to a third HPSA assessor who will review all the paperwork against the grounds put forward for the appeal. The third assessor will either decline or uphold the appeal on the basis of the presented evidence and this decision will be final.

## **7 CHARTERED SCIENTIST**

### **7.1 Awarding of Chartered Scientist (CSci) to successful HPSA applicants**

BASES is a licenced awarding body that works in partnership with the Science Council to award Chartered Scientist (CSci) status to members who meet the CSci competencies. The Science Council has approved the awarding of CSci to members who obtain BASES Accreditation. No additional evidence is required to obtain CSci status in addition to the HPSA application, as the CSci competencies (below) are assessed as part of the HPSA application review process.

HPSA applicants who want to become a Chartered Scientist will need to indicate this on the online application form and make payment (£60 fee) when submitting their HPSA application.

### **7.1 Chartered Scientist (CSci) competencies**

The tables below show how each of the Chartered Scientist competencies have been mapped to the HPSA competencies that are required to be demonstrated within a successful HPSA application, thus simultaneously achieving the standards required to obtain Chartered Scientist status.

## A: Application of Knowledge and Understanding

<b>Chartered Scientist Competency</b>	<b>HPSA Competency</b>
A1: Use specialist experiential knowledge and broader scientific understanding to optimise the application of existing and emerging science and technology	2A, 2B
A2: Exercise sound judgement in the absence of complete information and in complex or unpredictable situations.	4A, 9A, 9B
A3: Demonstrate critical evaluation of relevant scientific information and concepts to propose solutions to problems	4A, 9A, 9B

## B: Personal Responsibility

<b>Chartered Scientist Competency</b>	<b>HPSA Competency</b>
B1: Work autonomously and take responsibility for the work of self and others	7A, 10A, 10B
B2: Promote and implement policies and protocols relating to health, safety and security	8A, 8B
B3: Promote and ensure compliance with all relevant regulatory requirements and quality standards	8A, 8B
B4: Oversee the implementation of solutions with due regard to the wider environment and broader context	4A, 4B, 7A

## C: Interpersonal Skills

<b>Chartered Scientist Competency</b>	<b>HPSA Competency</b>
C1: Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with specialist and non-specialist audiences	5A, 6C, 6D, 7A, 9B
C2: Demonstrate effective leadership through the ability to guide, influence, inspire and empathise with others	6A, 6B, 6C, 7A
C3: Demonstrate the ability to mediate, develop and maintain positive working relationships	6A, 6B, 7A, 10B

## D: Professional Practice

<b>Chartered Scientist Competency</b>	<b>HPSA Competency</b>
D1: Scope, plan and manage multifaceted projects	7A, 8A, 9B
D2: Demonstrate the achievement of desired outcomes with the effective management of resources and risks	1A, 1B, 4B
D3: Take responsibility for continuous performance improvement both at a personal level and in a wider organisational context	3B, 3C, 10A, 10B, 10C

## E: Professionalism

<b>Chartered Scientist Competency</b>	<b>HPSA Competency</b>
E1: Demonstrate understanding and compliance with relevant codes of conduct	6E, 8B
E2: Demonstrate a commitment to professional development through continuing advancement of own knowledge, understanding and competence	3C, 10B, 10C