BFS CPD Provider Accreditation Scheme

Bureau of Fitness Standards (BFS) · Document BFS-SCH-01 · Edition 1.0 (interim) · 21 November 2026

Document	BFS-SCH-01 · BFS CPD Provider Accreditation Scheme
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Owner	BFS Accreditation Committee (CPD and Providers)
Related documents	BFS-FRM-03 Application Form · BFS-FRM-04 Assessor Checklist · BFS-AGR-01 Provider Agreement · BFS CPD Framework · BFS-POL-10 Accredited Provider Quality Standard · BFS-POL-12 Use of Certificates and Marks · BFS-POL-02 Conflict of Interest · BFS-POL-04 Appeals · BFS-POL-05 Complaints
Review	At least every 3 years, or sooner if the requirements or the evidence change
Contact	info@bureauoffitness.org · https://bureauoffitness.org

> **Status.** This is **BFS's own scheme**. It is operated by BFS under rules that BFS publishes. It is not a regulated qualification, not a government recognition, and BFS is not itself accredited for this scheme by any external accreditation body. Edition 1.0 is issued by BFS management as an interim edition and will be ratified by the Governing Board at its first meeting after the committees are constituted. Until the Provider Assessment Panel and the Accreditation Committee are seated, BFS accepts enquiries and applications and confirms the assessment timetable to each applicant in writing. No provider has been accredited yet.

1. Purpose

1.1 Fitness professionals choose from a large and uneven market of courses, workshops, conferences and online learning. The BFS CPD Provider Accreditation Scheme gives them, and the public, a clear signal: an organisation shown as a **BFS Accredited CPD Provider** has been independently checked against published criteria, and each activity shown as **BFS CPD Approved** has been reviewed for educational value, accuracy, safety and scope of practice.

1.2 The scheme has two levels:

- **Provider accreditation**: the organisation is assessed against the provider criteria (section 4). An accredited provider receives an accreditation number in the form **BFS-ACP-YYYY-NNN**, a certificate, and a directory listing, and may use the words "BFS Accredited CPD Provider" under the rules in section 12.
- **Activity approval**: each course, workshop, conference session, webinar or e-learning module is assessed against the activity criteria (section 5). An approved activity receives an activity number in the form **BFS-CPD-YYYY-NNNN** and a CPD points value, and counts as Category A learning under the BFS CPD Framework.

1.3 Activity approval is available only to accredited providers, or to an applicant whose provider accreditation is assessed at the same time.

1.4 The scheme is open to providers in India and in every other country. Assessments are carried out in English; materials in other languages may be assessed where a qualified assessor is available, or with a certified translation.

2. Principles

- **Independence.** Assessors and decision makers have no link to the provider they assess (section 7).
- **Separation of training and certification.** Providers deliver learning. BFS certification examinations are designed and run only by BFS. CPD approval is not approval of a course as preparation for a BFS examination, and does not lead to BFS certification.
- **Published criteria.** Providers are judged only against the criteria in this document and the documents it refers to.
- **Proportionality.** Evidence asked for is proportionate to the size of the provider and the risk of the activity.
- **Transparency.** Decisions, current status and expiry dates are shown in a public directory.
- **Not for profit.** Fees are set to cover the cost of running the scheme; they are not linked to the outcome of any assessment.

3. Who can apply

3.1 Eligible applicants include training academies and institutes, universities and colleges, the education arm of a gym or fitness chain, online learning providers, conference and event organisers, and professional associations, that deliver learning relevant to fitness, exercise, strength and conditioning, yoga, movement or related practice within the scope of fitness professionals.

3.2 An applicant must be a legally constituted organisation or a registered sole trader with a named responsible person.

3.3 BFS does not accept applications for activities whose main purpose is to sell a product or supplement, or that promote practice outside the scope of a fitness professional (for example diagnosis or treatment of disease, prescription of medicines, or the use, dosing or sourcing of substances prohibited in sport).

4. Criteria for providers

An accredited provider must meet all of these criteria and keep meeting them for the whole accreditation period. (Codes P1–P12 correspond to criteria Q1–Q12 of BFS-POL-10.)

No.	Criterion	Evidence required
P1	**Legal and accountable.** A legally constituted organisation (or registered sole trader) with a named responsible person and a published contact address.	Registration certificate or equivalent; name and role of the responsible person; published address and email

No.	Criterion	Evidence required
P2	**Quality lead.** A named person signs off each activity before it is submitted and is accountable for corrections.	Name, role and short CV of the quality lead; description of internal sign-off
P3	**Learning design.** Each activity states its audience, learning outcomes, timetable and how outcomes link to the BFS competency units.	Template or example activity outline
P4	**Qualified faculty.** Presenters hold a relevant qualification and at least 3 years of relevant practice, or demonstrable expertise; CVs are kept on file.	Faculty list; CVs and qualification certificates for each presenter
P5	**Evidence-based content.** Content is accurate, current and referenced; materials are reviewed at least every 3 years or when the evidence changes.	Content review procedure; reference lists from sample materials
P6	**Safety and scope.** No content that encourages unsafe practice, practice outside a professional's scope, medical claims, or the use, dosing or sourcing of prohibited performance-enhancing substances.	Safety and scope statement; sample materials
P7	**Learning check.** Structured activities include a check of learning (for example a quiz, practical sign-off or reflective task).	Example learning checks
P8	**Records and certificates.** Attendance and completion are recorded and kept for 6 years; certificates show the learner's name, activity title, provider, BFS activity number, date and points.	Description of the record system; specimen certificate
P9	**Feedback and complaints.** Learner feedback is collected for every delivery and acted on; there is a written complaints process for learners.	Feedback form; recent feedback summary; complaints procedure
P10	**Fair promotion.** Marketing is honest, uses BFS wording and marks only as permitted, and discloses sponsorship or commercial interest in products mentioned.	Marketing samples (web pages, brochures, social posts)
P11	**Accessibility and data protection.** Reasonable adjustments are offered, and learner data is handled lawfully and securely.	Accessibility statement or policy; privacy notice
P12	**Co-operation with surveillance.** The provider files the annual return, allows sampling of deliveries (announced or unannounced) and reports material changes within 30 days.	Signed Provider Agreement (BFS-AGR-01)

5. Criteria for individual CPD activities

Every activity submitted for approval must meet all of these criteria.

No.	Criterion	Evidence required
A1	**Relevance.** The activity relates to one or more BFS competency units, or to the knowledge and skills of fitness professionals generally.	Mapping of learning outcomes to units
A2	**Clear outcomes.** Learning objectives and measurable outcomes are stated for the stated audience and level.	Activity outline
A3	**Coherent structure and realistic timing.** The timetable shows the active learning time; the content can be delivered in that time.	Timetable or run sheet; tested completion time for e-learning
A4	**Accurate and current content.** Content is consistent with current evidence and referenced where claims are made.	Slides, scripts, handouts, reference list
A5	**Safety, scope and anti-doping.** Practical content is safe; nothing teaches practice outside scope or promotes prohibited substances.	Materials; practical session plan and risk notes
A6	**Qualified presenters.** Each presenter meets criterion P4 for the topic taught.	Presenter CVs
A7	**Learning check.** There is a check of learning appropriate to the format.	Quiz, practical checklist or reflective task
A8	**Fair balance.** Where products, equipment or services are mentioned, the activity is educational, not promotional, and any commercial interest is disclosed to learners.	Disclosure statement
A9	**Accessible delivery.** Reasonable adjustments are available; online delivery is usable on common devices.	Accessibility note
A10	**Certificate.** The certificate meets criterion P8.	Specimen certificate

How points are set. One CPD point equals one hour of active learning, rounded down to the nearest half point. Breaks, meals, registration and networking do not count. For e-learning, the provider states a tested completion time and the assessor checks it. For conferences, points are set per approved session so that learners claim only the sessions they attend.

6. Application and assessment process

Step	What happens	Target time
1. Enquiry	The provider uses the enquiry form at bureauoffitness.org or emails info@bureauoffitness.org. BFS sends the application pack and confirms the fee in writing. Making an enquiry is free.	Reply within 5 working days
2. Application	The provider returns the Application Form (BFS-FRM-03), the evidence in sections 4 and 5, and at least one activity for approval.	—

Step	What happens	Target time
3. Completeness check	The BFS office checks that the application is complete and asks once, in writing, for anything missing. The 30-day clock starts when the application is complete and any fee confirmed in writing has been paid.	5 working days
4. Assessor appointment	Two assessors from the Provider Assessment Panel are appointed, each confirming in writing that they have no conflict of interest (section 7).	3 working days
5. Assessment	The assessors review the evidence independently using the Assessor Checklist (BFS-FRM-04), then agree a joint recommendation. They may ask the provider questions or hold a short online interview. Where changes are needed, the provider receives written feedback and up to 30 days to respond; the clock pauses while BFS waits for the response.	Within the 30-day target
6. Decision	The Accreditation Committee (not the assessors) decides: accredit; accredit with conditions; defer for further information; or refuse. Reasons are given in writing.	**Decision within 30 calendar days of a complete application**
7. Agreement and listing	The provider signs the Provider Agreement (BFS-AGR-01). BFS issues the certificate, accreditation number and activity numbers and lists the provider in the public directory.	5 working days after decision

Later activities from an accredited provider are submitted one at a time with the activity evidence in section 5 and are assessed by one assessor from the panel, with a decision by the Accreditation Committee (or by a committee member who is not conflicted, under delegated authority). The target is **15 working days** from a complete submission.

7. Provider Assessment Panel and conflicts of interest

7.1 **Composition.** BFS maintains a Provider Assessment Panel of **at least three assessors**. Assessors are appointed by the Accreditation Committee against the BFS Assessor and Examiner Standard (BFS-POL-09). Between them, panel members cover exercise science, practical coaching, adult education and, where possible, more than one country. Members of the International Advisory Board may serve as assessors if they meet the standard and have no conflict.

7.2 **Assessor competence.** Each assessor holds a relevant degree or professional qualification, has at least 5 years of relevant practice or teaching, completes BFS assessor induction (scheme criteria, checklist, writing reasons, conflicts and confidentiality), and takes part in an annual calibration exercise in which all assessors score the same sample application.

7.3 **Two assessors per provider application.** Each provider application is reviewed independently by two assessors. If they disagree on whether a criterion is met, a third assessor reviews the point. The Accreditation Committee sees all assessor reports.

7.4 **Conflict-of-interest rules.** An assessor or committee member must not take part in any assessment or decision about a provider if, within the previous **2 years**, they have:

- been employed by, contracted to, or paid by the provider, or by a direct competitor of the provider in the same market;
- taught, presented or developed materials for the provider;
- held shares, a directorship, a trusteeship or any financial interest in the provider;
- a close family or personal relationship with an owner, director or quality lead of the provider;
- given the provider consultancy or advice on meeting this scheme; or
- any other interest that a reasonable person would see as likely to affect their judgement.

7.5 Every assessor signs the BFS Conflict of Interest Declaration (BFS-FRM-01) and Confidentiality Undertaking (BFS-FRM-02) on appointment and every year, and confirms in writing before each assignment that they have no conflict. A conflict that arises during an assessment must be declared at once; the assessor withdraws and is replaced. Declarations are recorded.

7.6 Assessors are not paid by the provider, and no payment to an assessor depends on the outcome. Any honorarium is fixed in advance and reported in the BFS annual impartiality report.

7.7 A provider may object to a named assessor on grounds of conflict within 5 working days of being told who has been appointed. The BFS office decides, and if the objection is upheld appoints a replacement.

7.8 Assessors do not give the provider consultancy on how to pass. They may explain the criteria and give written reasons for their findings.

8. Decisions

Decision	Meaning
Accredited	All criteria met. Certificate issued for 3 years, subject to annual surveillance.
Accredited with conditions	Criteria substantially met; minor actions to be completed within a stated time (normally 60 days) and verified by BFS.
Deferred	Further information or changes needed before a decision; the provider has up to 30 days to respond.
Refused	One or more criteria not met. Reasons are given. The provider may reapply after addressing the reasons, normally not sooner than 3 months later, and may appeal (section 11).

Activity approvals last **2 years**, or until the activity changes materially, whichever comes first, and never beyond the end of the provider's accreditation.

9. Annual surveillance and renewal

9.1 **Annual return.** Within 30 days of each anniversary of accreditation, the provider files an annual return listing deliveries of approved activities (dates, format, number of learners), a summary of learner feedback, complaints received and how they were resolved, changes to faculty or materials, and confirmation that the criteria are still met.

9.2 **Annual desk review.** An assessor reviews each annual return. BFS also samples at least one approved activity per provider per year (materials, certificates and records; observation of a live or recorded delivery where possible). Sampling may be unannounced.

9.3 **For-cause review.** BFS may review a provider at any time after a complaint, a report of mark misuse, a material change, or information suggesting the criteria are not being met.

9.4 **Material changes** (ownership, legal name, quality lead, major change to an approved activity, or a regulatory action against the provider) must be reported to BFS within 30 days.

9.5 **Renewal.** Accreditation lasts 3 years. The provider applies for renewal at least 90 days before expiry; renewal follows the process in section 6, taking account of surveillance results. If renewal is not completed by the expiry date, the accreditation expires and the directory shows it as expired.

10. Suspension and withdrawal

10.1 **Grounds.** BFS may suspend or withdraw provider accreditation or an activity approval if the provider: stops meeting the criteria; misuses BFS wording, marks, accreditation or activity numbers; does not file the annual return or co-operate with surveillance; issues false or misleading CPD certificates; makes false statements to BFS or the public; does not complete conditions on time; does not pay a fee confirmed in writing; or acts in a way that brings the scheme into disrepute or puts learners or the public at risk.

10.2 **Procedure.** BFS tells the provider in writing what the concern is and the evidence, and gives at least 14 days to respond and, where suitable, to agree corrective action (normally within 60 days). The Accreditation Committee then decides. Where there is a serious risk to learners or the public, BFS may suspend immediately as an interim measure and then follow this procedure.

10.3 **Effect of suspension.** During suspension the provider must not issue new BFS CPD certificates or use BFS wording or marks for new deliveries; the directory shows the status as **Suspended**. Suspension is lifted when BFS has verified that the reasons have been resolved. A suspension that is not resolved within 6 months normally leads to withdrawal.

10.4 **Effect of withdrawal or expiry.** The provider must stop using BFS wording, marks and numbers immediately, remove them from websites and digital channels within 7 days, and stop distributing printed materials that carry them. Certificates issued for deliveries completed before the effective date remain valid for learners. The directory shows the status as **Withdrawn** or **Expired** for 12 months.

10.5 **Voluntary withdrawal.** A provider may end its accreditation by written notice. The directory shows it as **Withdrawn at the provider's request**.

11. Appeals and complaints

11.1 **Appeals.** A provider may appeal a refusal, condition, suspension or withdrawal within **30 days** of the written decision, giving its grounds. Appeals are heard by the BFS Appeals Panel under BFS-POL-04 by people who took no part in the original decision. The target for an appeal decision is 30 working days. Suspension or withdrawal for serious risk stays in effect during an appeal.

11.2 **Complaints about a provider.** Anyone may complain to info@bureauoffitness.org about an accredited provider or an approved activity. Complaints are acknowledged and handled under BFS-POL-05 (response target 10 working days) and may lead to a for-cause review.

11.3 **Complaints about BFS.** Complaints about how BFS ran an assessment are also handled under BFS-POL-05.

12. BFS wording and marks: use and misuse

12.1 **Accredited providers may:**

- describe themselves as a "BFS Accredited CPD Provider" with their accreditation number (BFS-ACP-YYYY-NNN), while accreditation is current;
- display the "BFS Accredited CPD Provider" mark, as supplied by BFS with the certificate, on their website and organisational materials, without altering its proportions, colours or wording;
- use the "BFS CPD Approved" mark and the activity number (BFS-CPD-YYYY-NNNN) and points value on materials and certificates for that approved activity only;
- link to their entry in the BFS public directory.

12.2 **Accredited providers must not:**

- use any BFS wording, mark or number before accreditation is granted, after it has expired, or while it is suspended or withdrawn;
- use the "BFS CPD Approved" mark or a BFS activity number on any activity that has not been approved, or after the approval has expired;
- say or imply that BFS certifies, licenses or qualifies learners who complete their activities, or that their courses lead to BFS certification, make a BFS examination easier, or are required for it;
- say or imply that BFS endorses their products, equipment, supplements or services;
- use the BFS logo itself (as distinct from the marks supplied under this scheme), or create their own version of any BFS mark;
- describe the accreditation as "government approved", "regulated", "internationally accredited" or "accredited by" any body other than BFS;
- transfer the accreditation or the marks to another organisation, a franchise or a partner.

12.3 **Misuse.** Misuse by an accredited provider is handled under section 10 and may lead to suspension or withdrawal. Misuse by anyone else is a misrepresentation. BFS may ask for correction, publish a notice of misuse on its website, inform affected learners, and take legal action. Report suspected misuse to info@bureauoffitness.org.

13. Public directory

13.1 BFS publishes a directory of accredited providers at bureauoffitness.org. Each entry shows: provider name; country; website; accreditation number; scope (types of activity); approved activities with activity numbers and points; date first accredited; expiry date; and status (Accredited, Accredited with conditions, Suspended, Withdrawn, Expired).

13.2 The directory is updated within 5 working days of any decision. Entries for withdrawn or expired providers remain visible with that status for 12 months.

13.3 Learners and employers should check the directory to confirm that a provider's accreditation or an activity approval is current.

14. Fees

Fees are **available on request** and confirmed to the applicant in writing before assessment starts. Fees cover the cost of assessment, surveillance and the directory; they are the same whatever the outcome and are not refunded if accreditation is refused. Making an enquiry is free. BFS publishes its fee schedule once the Governing Board has approved it.

15. Confidentiality and records

Application materials are confidential to BFS staff, assessors, committee members and appeal panel members who need them, all of whom sign the BFS Confidentiality Undertaking. Course materials remain the provider's intellectual property and are used only for assessment and surveillance. Assessment records, decisions and reasons are kept for 6 years after accreditation ends, in line with BFS-POL-13. Personal data is handled under the BFS Privacy Notice.

16. Review of the scheme

The Accreditation Committee reviews the scheme at least every 3 years, and after any significant complaint or appeal trend, taking account of feedback from providers, learners, assessors and the Impartiality Committee. Changes are published with an effective date; accredited providers are given at least 60 days' notice of material changes.

Annex A. Glossary

- **Accredited provider**: an organisation granted accreditation under this scheme.
- **Approved activity**: a specific learning activity approved for BFS CPD points.
- **Assessor**: a member of the Provider Assessment Panel who reviews evidence and makes a recommendation.
- **Accreditation Committee**: the BFS committee that decides on provider accreditation and activity approval (BFS-TOR-04).
- **CPD point**: one hour of active learning.
- **Material change**: a change that could affect whether the criteria are met.