



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) process.

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 assesses competencies identified as essential to delivering or leading excellent and innovative sport science services that impact in high performance environments

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 and support the continuing professional development (CPD) of sport scientists working, or wishing to work, in high performance sport.

HPSA is a BASES scheme recognised by Home Country Sports Institute's, UK Sport, National Governing Bodies, the British Olympic Association (BOA) and the British Paralympic Association (BPA), and is the highest accreditation available in the high performance sport sector.

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:

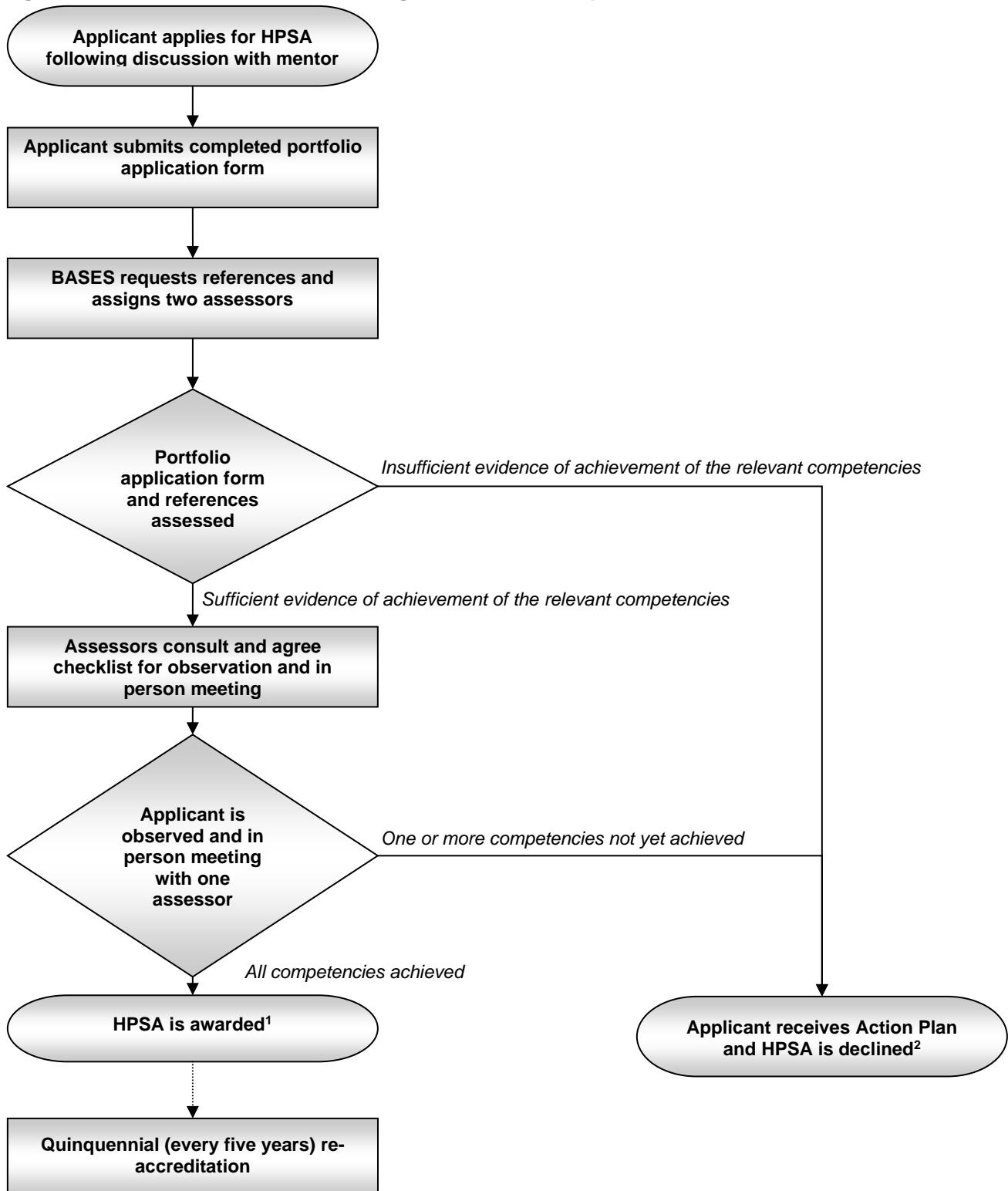
1. A portfolio application form
2. References from four referees nominated by the applicant
3. Observation of practice with competency based enquiry by an assessor
4. In person meeting

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

Achievement of any competency must be gained across the methods. The purpose of the in person meeting is to confirm achievement for competencies that are best evaluated and supported by in person discussion.

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

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

Competency	Competency Criteria	Evidence provided in Application Form	Methods of Assessment
1: Practical experience	1A: Evidence contribution to the provision of impactful scientific support to high performance athletes and coaches on sports performance		P, R, I
2: Knowledge and scientific training	2A: Demonstrate advanced knowledge and training in a relevant scientific discipline		P, I
	2B: Demonstrate how you use knowledge, experience, skills and broader scientific understanding to optimise the application of existing and emerging science and technology 2C: Demonstrate critical evaluation of relevant scientific information and concepts to propose solutions to problems 2D: Promote, implement and take responsibility for robust policies and protocols relating to health, safety and sustainability		P, R, I
3: Knowledge of and commitment to high performance sport	3A: Evidence personal contribution to develop specific and meaningful area(s) of work in high performance sport		P, R, I
	3B: Demonstrate commitment to sporting success in high performance sport		P, R, I
4: Knowledge of the role of sport science in high performance sport	4A: Demonstrate an understanding of the role of sport science support within high performance sport		P, R, I
	4B: Demonstrate collaborative and interdisciplinary approach to high performance sport. Evidence integration of sport science support with other disciplines (e.g., coaching, medicine) to deliver Impactful high performance support		P, R, I

5: Communication skills	<p>5A: Demonstrate effective communication, through a variety of platforms, with high performance coaches, athletes, peers and athlete support personnel</p> <p>5B: Demonstrate the ability to communicate effectively with specialist and non- specialist audiences</p> <p>5C: Demonstrate effective leadership through the ability to guide, influence, inspire and empathise with others</p>		R, P, O, I
6: Professional relationships	6A: Build understanding and trust of high performance coaches, athletes, peers and other support staff		P, R, O, I
	6B: Demonstrate an ability to work in a dynamic environment with skills in conflict resolution, facing challenge and finding solutions		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 behaviours 6F: Demonstrate the ability to mediate, develop and maintain positive working relationships		P, R, O, I
7: Teamwork & leadership	<p>7A: Work cooperatively and effectively lead or manage high performance coaches, athletes, peers and other support staff to provide structured and ongoing scientific support</p> <p>7B: Work autonomously and take responsibility for the work of self and others</p>		P, R, O, I

	7C: Comply with and promote relevant codes of conduct and practice		
8: High performance sport environments	8A: Deliver, coordinate, lead or manage scientific support provision within required high performance sport environments		P, R, O, I
	8B: Promote and ensure compliance with all relevant regulatory requirements and quality standards		P, R
	8C: Oversee the implementation of solutions and demonstrate an understanding of potential and actual impacts of your work on your organisation, on the profession and on the wider community.		P, R, O, I
9: Problem solving and interdisciplinarity	9A: Demonstrate critical and innovative thinking to provide meaningful solutions to priority problems		P, R, I
	9B: Exercise sound judgement and understand principles of uncertainty in complex and unpredictable situations		P, R, I
	9C: Demonstrate how you scope, plan and manage projects 9D: Demonstrate the achievement of desired outcomes with the effective management of resources and risks		
10: Evaluation and Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	10A: Self-evaluate and evidence formal and informal reflection on the quality and impact of high performance interventions		P, R, I
	10B: Take responsibility for continuous improvement within a scientific or technical environment		R, P, I

10C: Demonstrate a commitment to professional development through continuing advancement of your own knowledge, understanding and competence		
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Notes: (P = portfolio application form, R = references, O = observation, I = In person meeting).

3 APPLICATION GUIDELINES

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

- 6 January
- 1 July

The HPSA application fee is £500, and is set to cover the cost of assessing applications and administering the scheme. This includes all elements of the comprehensive assessment process (see Section 4) and the provision of an Action Plan (see Section 4.4). The fee is non-refundable after application unless:

- (a) the application is declined due to references not being received within the 3-week period. The refund is £400
- (b) the application is declined because the portfolio and references do not demonstrate sufficient evidence of achievement, and the competencies cannot be adequately demonstrated through the observation and in person meeting. 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).

The methods and robustness by which applicants are assessed means 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 in person meeting will expedite the assessment process.

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 they have worked with, 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 their philosophy to sport science support work, including their 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, their 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 their critical and innovative thinking to provide solutions to problems, and how they have 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 5 key articles or, outputs related to sport science that they may have published in the last 3 years that demonstrate their ability to effectively communicate within academic settings or, alternatively they may have delivered when communicating key information to high performance coaches, athletes, peers and other support staff.

The articles/outputs 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 completed except to the client, will not always be possible). Alternatively, sport science related articles published within the high performance sport sector or, in the coaching sector, 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/outputs on request.

Section F.ii

The applicant should list a maximum of 5 presentations given in person over the last 3 years that demonstrate their ability to effectively communicate with high performance coaches, athletes, peers and other support staff. This list could 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 support 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 all 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 three referees: a mentor, a senior coach or Performance Director, a second coach and employer (preferably the line manager). All three 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 in person meeting 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 the application may progress to the next stage of the observation and in person meeting.

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 in person meeting, 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 In Person Meeting

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 in person meeting 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 in person meeting. This assessor will normally hold HPSA in the applicant's discipline. The observation and in person meeting 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 in person meeting 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 in person meeting to agree a mutually convenient date for both. The applicant will be responsible for coordinating their 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 in person meeting.

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

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 they have the appropriate competencies for HPSA. The assessor will not interrupt the session, although they 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 in person meeting, 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 in person meeting. The applicant will also receive formal notification from BASES.

If the outcome is BASES HPSA Awarded, then the applicant will hold BASES HPSA in their selected discipline for a period of 5 years; thereafter they 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 that BASES HPSA is Awarded, the Action Plan will provide guidance for CPD and future HPSA re-licensing. When the outcome is that 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 they are 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 evidence presented 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 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.

