

Guidelines for Becoming a Professional Member of ISMA^{UK}

Professional Membership of ISMA^{UK} is open to individuals who have demonstrated their proficiency in skills, knowledge, and understanding related to stress prevention and management of mental health, wellbeing and resilience, across the workplace and other environments.

To qualify for Professional Membership, applicants must undertake a professional training course that demonstrates considerable skills, knowledge and understanding, and complies with ISMA^{UK}'s guidelines.

Applicants must have successfully completed a comprehensive training programme, consisting of a minimum of 14 hours of instructor-led sessions and 20 hours of self-directed study, which would include activities such as reading and pre/post-course work.

Such training programmes should provide evidence that applicants are able to deliver a range of professional stress management services to individuals, organisations, or both, in one or more of the following categories:

Category A requires Topics 1 and 3 to be included in the training course (see below)

- A. Practitioner who works in private practice to support individuals and small groups

Categories B, C, and D require Topics 1 and 2 to be included in the training course (see below)

- B. Practitioner or consultant who provides training for employees and small groups within organisations
- C. Trainer or consultant who provides managers with skills and knowledge to support employees, with appropriate interventions in recognising and managing stress in the workplace (HSE)
- D. Trainer or consultant who provides services for organisational development e.g. stress risk assessments, support for senior management in implementing identified changes

If you wish to be able to work in all four categories (A, B, C, and D) then you need to have a training course(s) that includes all three topics.

The topic headings outlined below indicate the comprehensive coverage required in training courses to qualify for ISMA^{UK} Professional Membership. Topic 1 is mandatory, and at least two more topics from the list should be included, based on individual objectives.

Topic 1. Understanding Stress

Content: This is the core requirement for all training courses

- Definitions of stress, resilience and wellbeing: ISMA^{UK} requires that the HSE 1999 definition of stress is used – see PDF download [here](#).
- Fight or flight
- Models of stress
- Basic anatomy and physiology
- Physiological impact of stress
- Impact of stress on emotional and mental health
- Internal and external causes of stress
- Symptoms of stress - physical, psychological, emotional and behavioural
- Resilience - what makes a person resilient

Topic 2. Framework for Stress Prevention, intended for Managers – Organisational

Content to include:

- The wellbeing and performance agenda is to include the role of line managers, building a positive workplace culture and creating a healthy working environment, e.g. accessibility, flexible working
- The legal framework, specifically related to stress in the workplace
- Organisational stress risk factors (see the overview of [HSE Management Standards](#) 2009)
- Absence and psychological presenteeism
- The organisational costs of workplace stress, including financial implications, effects on employee wellbeing, and the impact on resources
- Strategies to reduce stress at work, e.g. stress risk assessment, individual and/or organisational
- The three HSE levels of intervention: primary, secondary and tertiary
- Establish the connection between wellbeing, mental health, and resilience and their impact on performance; explore strategies for implementing the ISMA^{UK} Charter within an organisational context
- Strategies for monitoring and assessing the effectiveness of implemented changes
- The importance of communication and listening at all levels
- Examples of useful resources

Topic 3. Framework for Stress Prevention, Results and Outcomes - Individual

Content to include:

- The legal framework, using an overview of the [HSE standards \(2009\)](#)
- Evidence-based tools for effective interventions (physical, mental, behavioural, emotional)
- Linking wellbeing and mental health to performance and how resilience plays a part
- Connecting expert knowledge of stress and the ISMA^{UK} Charter to implement best practice
- How to monitor and evaluate progress - understanding how changes affect outcomes
- Useful resources

Advisory Note

- There are many courses available, offering varied content at different price points. Online, in-person, or a blend of both are acceptable
- Courses, whether labelled as 'certificate' or 'diploma in stress management', should be evaluated based on their content to determine suitability for ISMA^{UK} membership, rather than relying solely on the title or the minimum number of hours offered
- The extent and comprehensiveness of the curriculum can offer insights into the time commitment needed, whether this involves in-person sessions, online components such as webinars and videos, or a combination, incorporating self-directed study
- Assessing the accreditation of the course is valuable, along with understanding the methods of evaluation employed at the end of the programme, such as examinations, internal or external assessments

Qualifying Member Criteria

- You will have successfully completed a qualifying programme(s) of relevant training, in accordance with ISMA^{UK}'s Guidelines, to be eligible for ISMA^{UK} Professional Membership
 - * Please also see the Advisory Note above
- On becoming a Professional Member, you will comply with ISMA^{UK}'s Professional Code of Conduct and facilitate the implementation of the ISMA^{UK} Charter, within the scope of your own professional practice
- On becoming an ISMA^{UK} Professional Member, you will confirm that you have current professional indemnity insurance, and will renew and maintain your PI insurance **for the duration of your membership**
- Two professional / character references are required, such as tutors, clients or senior colleagues, and they should have known and/or worked with you for a minimum of one year

Benefits of Professional Membership

- ISMA^{UK} Professional Membership Certificate
- Use of ISMA^{UK} Professional Member logo on publicity materials and on your website
- Designation of MISMA after your name
- Use of ISMA^{UK} Charter Certificate and logo on publicity materials and on your website
- Two one-hour free mentoring sessions with an ISMA^{UK} Fellow, within the first year of your membership
- Access to preferential PI insurance rates
- Access to *The International Journal of Stress Prevention & Wellbeing* (digital)
- Access to the ISMA^{UK} Hub, a community forum and resources library
- Online listing of your courses bearing the Course Recognition Certificate
- Inclusion in the website register of members and consultants' businesses
- Your books and publications listed in our online library



International Stress Management Association^{UK}

Promoting Stress Prevention and Wellbeing

- Discounted ticket prices to ISMA^{UK} annual Stress Summit
- Eligible to participate in International Stress Awareness Week and National Stress Awareness Day and use both logos
- Free registration for ISMA^{UK} webinars (non-members pay £10)
- Professional peer networking
- Your right to vote at the AGM (and on other occasions when required)

Your Next Step

It's easy to join ISMA^{UK} as a Professional Member:

Please download the Application Form [here](#).

Don't hesitate to contact membership@isma.org.uk or get in touch with Claire, our administrator, at admin@isma.org.uk if you have questions.

ISMA^{UK} looks forward to giving you a warm welcome into our professional community.