

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

Professional Membership of ISMA^{UK} is available to those persons who have satisfied ISMA^{UK} regarding their level of skills, knowledge and experience in relation to the prevention and management of stress, both at work and in other settings.

This may be achieved by demonstrating the acquisition of skills, knowledge and experience based on recognised professional training, plus two years' relevant experience.

To meet the criteria of Professional Membership, applicants should have successfully completed a programme of relevant training, comprising no less than 14 hours of being taught and 20 hours of self-directed study (e.g. reading, pre/post-course work).

Such training programmes should offer evidence that applicants are able to provide professional stress management services in one or more of the following categories:

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

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

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

- B. Employee or consultant providing support to individuals and small groups
C. External consultant providing services for organisational development: strategic development and personal development support
D. Employee or consultant providing services for organisational development e.g. strategic development and personal development support

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

Advisory Note:

- There are numerous courses available with varied content and prices. Online, physical attendance and combinations of both are acceptable
- Courses may be called 'certificate' or 'diploma in stress management', but it is the course content that provides the criteria for finding a suitable course for ISMA^{UK} membership, rather than the title or the minimum number of hours offered
- The depth and breadth of the material taught may provide an indication as to the number of hours required, be it contact, online with webinars and videos, or combined with self-study
- Evaluating the accreditation of the course itself is useful, including how your work is assessed at the end of the course e.g. via examination, internal or external assessment

Relevant topic headings, listed below, are those that should be covered on any training course to qualify for ISMA^{UK} membership. They need to include at least two of the following topics:

Topic 1. Understanding Stress

Content: This is a 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)
- 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. Frameworks for Stress Prevention and Management - Organisational

Content:

- The wellbeing and performance agenda (culture, management, including the role of line managers, and working environment)
- The legal framework
- Organisational risk factors (overview of HSE Standards 2009)
- Cost to organisation (financial and human resources)
- Psychological presenteeism
- Stress risk assessment, individual and/or organisational
- Strategies available - (individual and organisational)
- Three levels of intervention (HSE primary, secondary and tertiary)
- Linking to wellbeing and performance - how to implement the ISMA^{UK} Charter within an organisation
- Ways to monitor and evaluate progress
- Examples of useful resources

Topic 3. Frameworks for Stress Prevention and Management - Individual

Content

- The legal framework (an overview of the HSE standards)
- Evidence base for effective interventions (physical, mental, behavioural, emotional)
- Linking to wellbeing and performance
- Linking specialist area into the ISMA^{UK} Charter framework (implementation and best practice)
- How to monitor and evaluate progress
- Useful resources

Qualifying Member Criteria

- Two years' relevant experience (please contact the membership secretary if you have a question regarding your experience).
- Have successfully completed a qualifying programme(s) of relevant training, which means you are eligible for Professional Membership of ISMA^{UK}. *See the above content sections
- On becoming a member, agreeing to comply with ISMA^{UK}'s Professional Code of Conduct and to facilitate the implementation ISMA^{UK} Charter, as it applies to your own professional practice.
- You confirm and agree that, by accepting membership of ISMA^{UK}, you will have current and valid Professional Indemnity Insurance for the duration of your membership.
- Two professional references are required. They should have known, and/or worked with you, for a minimum of one year, e.g. clients or senior colleagues in places where you have worked.

Membership Benefits

- ISMA^{UK} Membership Certificate
- Use of ISMA^{UK} Professional Member logo to be used on publicity materials and on your website
- Designation of MISMA after your name
- ISMA^{UK} Charter Certificate and logo to be used on publicity materials and on your website
- Access to a professional journal 'The International Journal of Stress Prevention & Wellbeing' [*digital*]
- Free listing on ISMA^{UK} Register of Practitioners
- Free listing of your books in our online library
- Discounted annual conference tickets
- Eligible to participate in International Stress Awareness Week and use of the National Stress Awareness Day logo (NSAD, held during International Stress Awareness Week)
- Professional peer networking
- Your right to vote at the AGM and on other occasions when required

Your Next Step

Don't hesitate to contact us if you need any help and we look forward to hearing from you soon.

Email Helen Johns, Membership Secretary, at membership@isma.org.uk

Email Claire Parkinson, Administrator for general enquiries, admin@isma.org.uk