



Welcome to COSCA's Recognition Scheme:

Demonstrating Excellence in Member Organisations

COSCA has nine ethical principles (elaborated in the COSCA Statement of Ethics and Code of Practice). The Recognition Scheme is a chance for COSCA Member Organisations, large and small, to build upon your existing COSCA membership by demonstrating how you meet those principles and what effect you have on the community you serve. The Recognition Scheme is open to either wholly counselling, psychotherapy or counselling skills organisations or to those parts of your organisation that offer counselling, psychotherapy or counselling skills and their administrative support. Recognition is assessed by the Recognition Scheme Development Officer, alongside an external Assessor and Verifier from COSCA's dedicated team.

Once Recognised, the Scheme offers the opportunity for your organisation to review your practice using COSCA annual monitoring and feedback from the Development Officer. Organisations are encouraged to share innovation, ideas and inspiration from collaborative relationships with both COSCA and other Recognised Organisations. This can be through the Annual Standards Event, COSCA Recognition Scheme Survey, Spring and Autumn Newsletters and one to one support from the Development Officer.

Be the best that you can be with support from COSCA's Recognition Scheme community.

Procedure

Stage 1 – Registration

We have received your *Registration Form* and fee (see *About Us* on COSCA's website) and you are ready to progress to stage 2.

Stage 2 – Evidence Gathering

You now need to gather evidence to show how you meet each of COSCA's Nine Ethical Principles by completing the *Evidencing Outcomes and Assessing Impact Report Form* (appendix 8) for review by and feedback from the Recognition Scheme Development Officer. You have nine months from registration to submit your evidence. **If you exceed nine months you will need to re-register along with the fee.**

Stage 3 – Site Visit

Once you have submitted all of the Principles, and they have been approved by the Development Officer, you are ready for the site visit. Once the *Assessment Registration Form* (appendix 9) and fee (see *About Us* on COSCA's website) have been received, a mutually agreeable date will be arranged for a full day visit, by the Development Officer and one of COSCA's team of external Assessors.

In exceptional circumstances an e-assessment may be carried out via video call and this will be agreed prior to the Assessment Registration.

Stage 4 – Assessment Report

An *Assessment Report*, containing the findings from the policies and procedures and the site visit, will be written by the Development Officer and the External Assessor. This is sent to you to review and inform the Development Officer of any inaccuracies. It must then be shared with your workforce (all relevant staff and volunteers within the organisation, including all of those who participated in the Assessment Visit), for them to be given the opportunity to comment, and you must complete the *Assessment Report Declaration* (appendix 10) and return it to the

Development Officer. All of your evidence and the *Assessment Report* are then submitted to a COSCA External Verifier for independent confirmation.

Stage 5 – Recognition

We aim to inform you about the result of your application for Recognition within eight weeks of the Assessment Visit.

There are three conclusions to the Assessment:

- **Recognition granted** – All Principles are considered to have been met and you will be sent your Award Letter and Certificate. Your organisation will be listed on COSCA’s Register of Recognised Organisations on our website and you will be required to display the Recognition Scheme logo on all (and only) Recognised parts of your service.
- **Recognition deferred** – Significant Principles are considered to have been missed, but there are achievable recommendations that, if followed by the mutually agreed deadline, would enable your organisation to gain Recognition. This may involve further information and/ or another assessment visit. Any additional visit will incur another fee (see *About Us* on COSCA’s website).
- **Recognition not granted** – A large number of Principles are considered to have been missed. Recognition is not granted and the process will need to be repeated along with all relevant fees. The Development Officer will offer advice and support for your resubmission and endeavour to address any reservations that you may have about the initial process. An appeals procedure can be found on COSCA’s website under *Complaints* if you are dissatisfied with the outcome.