Organising an event

Now that you’ve decided the what, where, who and when, you need to start organising your event.

Planning content and delivery

At this point, you can start to work on your session plan and continue to develop your programme for the day. Writing a session plan helps to give structure to the event, prompting you to think about the overall flow of the event – from beginning to end. Add timings to the session plan to help you and any speaker(s) to stay on track. Here are some top tips for session planning:

* Set clear learning outcomes that you’d like to be achieved – what do you want attendees to get out of the session/ day?
* Allow time for welcome and introductions.
* Consider including some ice breakers at the start.
* Allow plenty of networking time during in person sessions.
* Consider the frequency and length of breaks during your session. The number of breaks will depend on the type of event you are running (in person or online) and the length of your event.
* Think about the flow of the session; what order of topics and speakers makes sense.
* Space out interactive or activity-based parts of the day to keep your audience engaged. Are you able to include a mixture of learning activities, which also supports attendees to meet HCPC CPD standards?
* Have part(s) you can adjust, for example, an activity you can lengthen or shorten to ensure everything is running to time.
* Can you embed time for shared and/ or individual reflection so attendees can think about key take away messages and actions they will take? It’s a great time to remind everyone to open their CPD portfolio and add a diary entry and/ or reflection.
* Allow time for thanks and closing of the session at the end if you want to have this.

We have a session plan template available that you can use. Session plans might not be finalised the first time you work on it. You may need to collaborate with others, and it might be something you re-visit a couple of times before finalising it.

Evaluation of the event

It’s important to encourage delegates to evaluate the content and delivery of the learning resource or opportunity, to support continuous improvement.

In an event evaluation, you could include questions and answers with options such as:

* How would you rate this session? (excellent, good, average, poor, not to standard)
* Was the amount of information shared with you today… (not enough, just right, too much)
* The session covered content I was expecting, as outlined in the event description (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)
* The session was relevant and useful (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)
* The session was well structured and paced (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree)
* How would you rate the speaker(s)/facilitator(s)? (excellent, good, average, poor, not to standard)

If you’re planning an in person event, you could use [MS Forms](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/create-a-form-39a23830-452d-474c-ae1f-47a6ebefa21a) or [Google Forms](https://support.google.com/a/users/answer/9303071?hl=en) to create a feedback questionnaire that can be completed online and share a QR code on the day. RCOT promotes sustainability and has a digital first approach so please try not to have printed documents unless this can’t be avoided.

If your event is virtual, you could creating a poll to gather feedback.

* How to [create a poll in MS Teams](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/create-a-poll-in-microsoft-teams-92bc2481-b5e4-4650-8a87-d90103ee95a1)
* How to [create a poll in zoom](https://support.zoom.com/hc/en/article?id=zm_kb&sysparm_article=KB0066150)

You can ask delegates to comment in the chat if they have identified any key reflections or actions they will take after the session. You could add that if delegates have any other comments including any ideas or suggestions for future events to please add these to the chat as well.

# Booking your chosen venue

If you have sourced some funding and decided in *planning an event* to have an in person event, you will have looked at a few potential venues to see what they would be able to offer and their costs. Before you book your venue, you should check their cancellation policy and note any key dates for confirming numbers. This will help determine a closing date for your event registration and allow you to make a decision on the viability of the event if minimum numbers are not reached.

Ask for a breakdown of cost so you know what is included in your booking, and check for dates when payment is required, as sometimes this is prior to the event taking place.

Health and safety – what you need to consider

Prior to your in person event taking place, there are some health and safety aspects to your event that you need to consider. Think about what steps you need to take to make sure you do this safely to avoid any potential injury to you or the person moving the items to your venue.

Check if your venue has a risk assessment. If they don’t, contact us and we can help with a template that you can use.

Contacting your speakers

Now that you have drafted your event in the session plan, you need to consider identifying people who could present or speak. From the decisions you made in the last section, you will have an idea of the format of the day, so you should know how many speakers you want. Any speakers you approach should be credible and have expertise in the topic that you’re asking them to cover.

When contacting a speaker, we recommend you share the theme of the day along with the topic you would like them to speak about or present on with a brief outline. It’s also good practice to let them know how long you would like them to speak for and a deadline for coming back to you. Use the speaker profile form to collect information on your speaker.

## Do…

* Do some research to make sure your speaker is credible and has the right expertise in the area that you’re asking them to speak on.
* Contact speakers with all the necessary information to allow them to consider if they can attend (including a topic to speak on and length of time). We’ve drafted a speaker profile and information form to gather all the necessary information.
* Check if your speaker is credible. If you want any help with this, contact the [Professional Development team](mailto:prof.dev@rcot.co.uk) who will be able to help.
* Contact them by email if possible.
* Give them a deadline of when to respond.

## Don’t…

* Contact lots of speakers and hope someone can come along. You could end up with lots of speakers and no slots for them.
* Leave an open response time.

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| Who are your proposed speakers (include contact details if you have them) |
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When a speaker confirms, make sure you have all the information you need from them and give them a deadline of when to send you their session slides. You may need to factor in accessibility if an attendee requests the slides early.

Finalise the content

Before you open your event for registrations or invite attendees, you’ll need to finalise your session plan and share a copy with those who need it. It’s also good practice to ensure someone else has access to any slide deck ahead of the day. Consider contingency planning, for example, what will you do if a confirmed speaker(s) can’t attend at very short notice. Is it necessary or possible to get a recording of the content beforehand, or can you have other content prepared to deliver as a backup?

Once your session plan is finalised, you can start to draft the programme for the day. This will outline the agenda and can be shared with delegates ahead of the event and share with the venue if applicable, so it can be displayed on the day.

We have a template you can use to plan your event programme.

Supporting documents

* [EDB Strategy - RCOT](https://www.rcot.co.uk/node/7253)
* Session plan template
* Programme template
* Speaker profile and information form
* [RCOT Branches PowerPoint Template (PPTX, 2.63MB)](https://www.rcot.co.uk/file/9331/download?token=ge2mxN_d) \*\*is this something that can be available?

Checklist

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|  | Have you… |
|  | Confirmed speakers, their topic and timeframe? |
|  | Asked your speaker to complete the speaker profile and information form? |
|  | Written and finalised the session plan? |
|  | Drafted the programme? |
|  | Booked the venue? |
|  | Set up the meeting on the chosen virtual platform (if applicable)? |
|  | Considered contingency plans for different scenarios? |
|  | Planned how your delegates will give feedback on the event? |
|  | Made sure the event is inclusive? |

Time for reflection

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| Use this space to record your reflections on the this next step of planning your event. For example, are there any resources that would help you plan your next event? |
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