

ASIA PROFESSIONAL SPEAKERS SINGAPORE

Professional Development Handbook

Your guide to growing as a speaker, trainer and facilitator, from Associate Member to Professional Member and beyond

Expertise

Eloquence

Enterprise

Ethics

Six components | Four skill areas | **4 Core Competencies** | 26 electives

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HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

You do not need to read it cover to cover. If you are new, read parts 1, 4 and 9 first. They take about twenty minutes and tell you what to do this year.

When you want detail on a course, go to part 5. When you want a number, go to part 10.

This handbook follows the APSS Professional Development Compass, as updated on 29 August 2026, and the PD Pillar's published documents. Where the two ever differ, the PD Pillar's published documents and the APSS constitution prevail. Anything the APSS Executive Committee or the PD Pillar has not yet confirmed is marked in a yellow "Still being decided" box.

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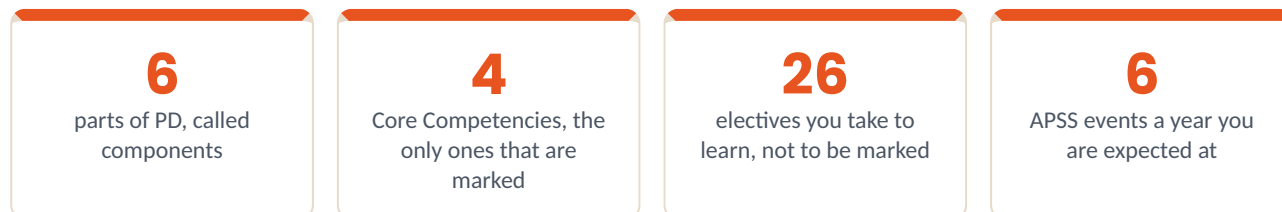
Start here

You have joined APSS. There is a lot going on, and no obvious place to begin. So begin here.

In this part: What PD is | The one idea worth knowing first | What it costs | A word from the PD Chair

What Professional Development is

Professional Development, or PD for short, is not one course you sign up for. It is six things that work together. You do not need to be a working speaker to start. Many members were not.



This handbook is written for new Associate Members. It is just as useful for Professional Members working through the Professional Member pathway. It covers every course you can take, the four skill areas they sit in, and the stages of growth you pass through.

Nothing here is a test, and nobody is watching how you read it.

The one thing worth knowing first

Getting certified is not the same as developing. Certification means you finished two of the six parts: learning the skill (Competency) and having it checked (Assessment). PD is all six parts. So:

- you can collect every certificate and still have most of your growing ahead of you
- you can grow a great deal in a year without being marked once

Both happen. We keep the two apart on purpose, because mixing them up is the easiest mistake to make in your first year.

Competency + Assessment = Certification. The other four components are how the work actually gets done.

What it will cost you

One course is **\$180 for members in year one**. That price includes your assessment, and one free second try if you do not pass. Everything else costs nothing:

- your small peer group (mastermind) is free
- your mentor is free
- turning up to events is free

The real work on yourself costs time instead of money, and time is usually the harder one to find. Full fees are in part 10.

A WORD FROM THE PD CHAIR

Every speaker you admire in this association was once exactly where you are. The ones who moved were the ones who started. PD gives you a clear next step, people who know the craft to check your work, a mentor who has walked the road, and peers who will hold you to what you said you would do.

One course a year is enough to begin. Pick the one that matches where you are, and let this be the year things moved.

Andrew Chow, CSP

Chair, Professional Development Pillar, Term July 2026 to July 2027

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Where PD sits in APSS

Membership says where you stand. Certification says what you have proved. Neither one gives you the other.

About APSS

Asia Professional Speakers Singapore is the professional association for Singapore's keynote speakers, corporate trainers and facilitators.

Its aim is to grow, facilitate, encourage, develop and contribute to the community of speaking professionals in Singapore. Members are subject matter experts who already speak or train professionally, or who want to.

APSS is affiliated to the Global Speakers Federation (GSF), which it joined in 2002. The GSF was founded in 1997 and also confers the Global Speaking Fellow designation.



Your membership path. Certification through the 4 Core Competencies sits between Associate and Professional.

Membership tiers

	Associate Member (AM)	Professional Member (PM)
Who it is for	All who aspire to become speakers	Established professional speakers
Annual fee	S\$350 a year	S\$390 a year
AGM vote	One vote	Two votes
Holding office	Eligible, except President, Vice President and Secretary	Eligible for any office
Events	Monthly meetings, networking, mastermind groups and members only events	All AM benefits
Conventions	Member rates for international conventions	Member rates for international conventions
Other benefits	Free eSpeakers.com registration, NSA magazine	Profile and photo on the APSS website, the right to call yourself a Professional Member, use of the APSS logo, speaker leads from external organisations

Membership fees and benefits are set by APSS. Please check asiaspeakers.org for the current figures.

How you become a Professional Member

This is the single most useful fact for most Associate Members. There are three conditions, and **all three are required**.

1

Show up

Attend at least **3 APSS events** in the 12 months before you apply.

2

Earn from speaking

Earn at least **\$50,000 from at least 10 paid presentations**, each to an audience of at least 6 people and each paying at least \$1,000. Or earn at least \$50,000 as a salaried employee where speaking is a significant part of your job, with at least 10 presentations to audiences of at least 6.

3

Get certified

Complete all **4 Core Competencies** (AM01, AM07, AM08 and AM13), one per skill area, and pass the assessment on each.

The Executive Committee may consider applications that meet other criteria, case by case.

HOW THIS CONNECTS TO PD

- The 3 events condition is component 5, Serving and Showing Up.
- The \$50,000 is what the Enterprise skill area is for.
- The 4 Core Competencies are Certification, which is Competency plus Assessment.

Progression to Professional Member runs on all three, and they are the same things PD is built from.

Certified Speaking Professional (CSP)

CSP is the speaking profession's highest earned international measure of professional platform competence. Fewer than 700 people hold an active CSP worldwide.

- It stays valid only while the holder keeps active financial membership of APSS or another Global Speakers Federation association.
- Applications take one to two months.
- CSP has no competency courses of its own. It is the final designation.
- CSP criteria are set by APSS and the Global Speakers Federation. The full criteria are in the APSS CSP Criteria and Requirements document on [asiaspeakers.org](https://www.asiaspeakers.org).

The 4 Core Competencies use the same four skill areas the CSP is built on. Working through them now means you are not starting from scratch when you decide to go for it, and you find out early which area is your weakest.

3

The Four Es

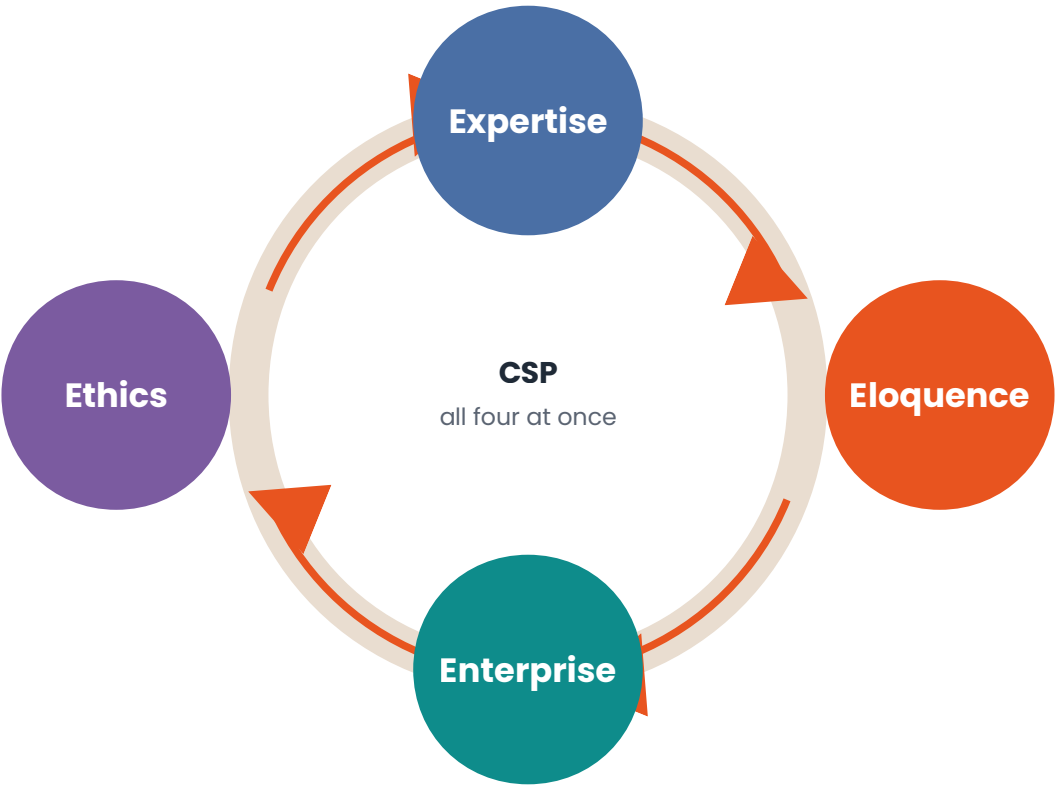
Expertise, delivered eloquently, within an enterprise, conducted ethically. That is the whole profession in one sentence.

In this part: The four skill areas | How they feed each other | What is in each one

Four skill areas, one loop

Everything you can learn in PD sits in one of four skill areas. Each area is called an E.

Each E has one required course, the only course in that area that is marked, plus optional courses you take just to learn. The four required courses also match the four areas used by the CSP designation.



The four Es feed each other in a loop. All four at once is what a CSP looks like.

From	What happens
Expertise to Eloquence	You work out what you have to say, then learn to say it well, so your ideas become a talk.
Eloquence to Enterprise	Saying it well gets you booked and paid, so the skill becomes a living.
Enterprise to Ethics	Once you are earning, you are held to a professional standard, so you do well and do it right.
Ethics to Expertise	Behaving well keeps people trusting you, which sharpens what you are known for and takes you back to the start.

What is inside each E

Expertise

Something worth saying

Having something worth saying. Your niche, your frameworks, your content, and the teaching craft behind it: adult learning, facilitation, activity design and writing.

Core Competency: AM08 Developing Your Expert Content

Electives: 8 (AM14, AM16, AM17, AM18, AM19, PM04, PM05, PM10)

Eloquence

Saying it powerfully

Saying it powerfully. Voice, presence, story, openings and closings, slides and AV, stage mindset and virtual delivery.

Core Competency: AM01 Foundational Stage Delivery (Voice & Presence)

Electives: 7 (AM02, AM03, AM04, AM05, AM06, PM01, PM02)

Enterprise

The business of speaking

The business of speaking. Brand assets, sales, pricing, proposals, finance, events, products, clients, media and business planning.

Core Competency: AM07 Speaker Brand Assets

Electives: 10 (AM09, AM10, AM11, AM12, AM15, PM03, PM06, PM07, PM08, PM09)

Ethics

Doing it with integrity

Doing it with integrity. The APSS Code of Ethics, honest marketing, confidentiality, AI disclosure, and contributing to the community.

Core Competency: AM13 Ethics & Professional Standards

Electives: 1 (AM20)

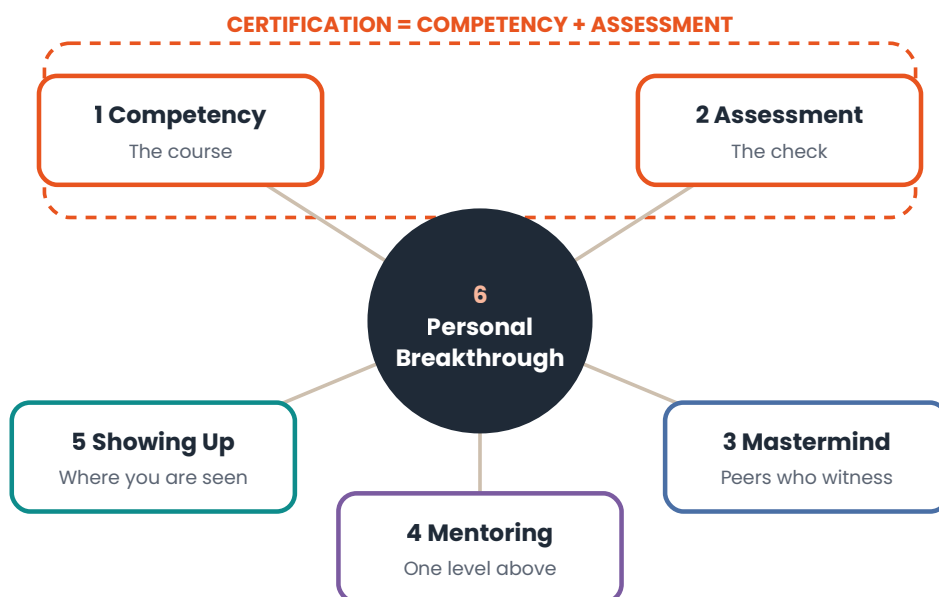
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The six components

PD comes in six parts. Two are assessed, and together those two are Certification. The other four are how the assessed work actually gets done.

In this part: The map | Each component in one page | How the Es run through every component

The map



Five components serve the sixth. Competency and Assessment together make Certification.

IN PLAIN WORDS

Take a course. Get it marked. Find four or five peers to keep you honest. Get a mentor who has been where you are. Keep turning up. Do the private work nobody else can do for you. That is PD.

#	Component	Status	What it is
1	Competency The course	Assessed	4 Core Competencies, one for each skill area, plus 26 optional courses. Each one gives you a clear next task, a date to work towards and a standard to meet.
2	Assessment The check	Assessed	A named CSP marks your work against criteria you saw before you enrolled. It turns 'I can do this' into proof that you can. Once you pass, you have passed for good. Applies to the 4 Core Competencies only.
3	Mastermind Group Peers who witness	Not monitored	Four or five peers at a similar stage who witness what you said you would do. Monthly is typical. Mixed across the four Es, so an Expertise question meets an Enterprise answer.
4	Mentoring One level above	Not monitored	Someone one level above you who has already been through your season. AMs are mentored by PMs, and PMs by CSPs. Six month cycles, matched on the eight seasons of growth.
5	Serving and Showing Up Where competence becomes reputation	Recorded	Monthly meetings, the Convention, Special Interest Groups, Kampongs and committees. Six events a year is the expectation.
6	Personal Breakthrough The deep work	Not monitored	The deep work, in the season you are in. Every other component exists to make this work focused, honest, witnessed and visible.

Assessed means someone marks it and it can be passed. **Recorded** means it is logged but never marked. **Not monitored** means nobody tracks it. It is yours.

How the Es run through every component

Every E runs through every component. This table shows what each skill area looks like inside each part of PD.

Component	Expertise	Eloquence	Enterprise	Ethics
Competency	You build the substance: domain frameworks, adult learning, facilitation, book and content design, so you have something worth saying.	You learn the modules that build stage command: openings, closings, presence, virtual delivery, so the talk lands every time.	You learn the business: sales, pricing, proposals, products, partnerships, so the speaking becomes a sustainable business.	You learn the standards: professional conduct, AI declaration, peer contribution, so the work is done with integrity.
Assessment	A CSP reviews your framework and content against published criteria and tells you whether the idea holds weight.	A CSP watches you deliver against the APSS Delivery Rubric and tells you exactly where the talk is strong and where it slips.	A CSP reviews your brand assets, proposals and business plan against published criteria and tells you if you are ready for the market.	AI assistance declared, conjunctive scoring, nobody assesses a cohort they taught: the standard is applied, not assumed.
Mastermind Group	Four peers stress-test your content: an Enterprise member asks the commercial question an Expertise member would miss.	You rehearse the talk in front of four peers before you rehearse it in front of a client.	Four peers challenge your pricing and pipeline: the accountability that turns a plan into booked work.	Peers hold you to what you said you would do: the witness that keeps the work honest.
Mentoring	A mentor who has been through your season can tell you which part of your content is actually the idea.	A mentor who has held a thousand audiences tells you which moments lose the room and why.	A mentor one revenue band above you tells you which deal to chase and which to walk away from.	A mentor models the standard: how a CSP conducts themselves when no one is watching.
Serving and Showing Up	You share frameworks in SIGs and Kampongs: the rooms where your ideas get sharpened by other experts.	You deliver at monthly meetings and the Convention: the stage time that turns practice into polish.	The room where you show up is where the referral comes from: bookings track to faces people have seen.	You serve on committees and contribute to the community: integrity made visible through contribution.
Personal Breakthrough	The deep work is the idea itself: named, structured, and deep enough to carry a keynote and a body of work.	The deep work is the talk itself: shaped, rehearsed, witnessed, and delivered with power.	The deep work is the business: a pipeline, a price, and a product portfolio that does not depend on the next gig.	The deep work is conducted honourably: credibility renewed, so what you are known for stays true.

Only the first two rows are assessed. The other four rows are how the assessed work gets done.

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The 4 Core Competencies

There are 4 Core Competencies. They are required and they are the only courses that are marked. Alongside them sit 26 electives you take to learn.

In this part: The 4 Core Competencies at a glance | Full dossier for each Core Competency | The 26 electives, by skill area

The 4 Core Competencies

One Core Competency per skill area, and all four are required. They are the only assessed courses in the whole framework.

Take at least one a year. Faster is fine. Each is taught by one CSP and assessed by a different CSP, so the person who teaches you never marks you. Pass all four and you are certified, permanently.

Code	Module	Question it answers	How you are assessed	Faculty
AM08	Developing Your Expert Content Expertise	<i>Do I have substance and depth?</i>	Portfolio or artefact submission	Andrea Edwards, CSP Assessor: Nick Jonsson, CSP
AM01	Foundational Stage Delivery (Voice & Presence) Eloquence	<i>Can I hold the stage and audience?</i>	Live or recorded performance review	Cathy Johnson, CSP Assessor: Cynthia Zhai, CSP
AM07	Speaker Brand Assets Enterprise	<i>Do I look credible and ready for business?</i>	Portfolio or artefact submission	Eugene Seah, CSP Assessor: Andrew Chow, CSP
AM13	Ethics & Professional Standards Ethics	<i>Will I conduct myself honourably?</i>	Simulation and scenario response	Su-Yen Wong, CSP Assessor: Ron Kaufman, CSP

Which one should I take first?

"I can't clearly explain what my expertise is"

Start with AM08 Developing Your Expert Content.

"I know my topic but struggle to hold an audience"

Start with AM01 Foundational Stage Delivery.

You only need to choose one to begin with. The order is up to you.

Format and fees for every Core Competency

FORMAT

Full day workshop, 7 hours, live on Zoom, plus assessment

MEMBER FEE

S\$180 (year 1)
S\$280 (year 2)

NON MEMBER FEE

S\$360 (year 1)
S\$560 (year 2)

CPD ON A PASS

5 points, recorded for good

Register and submit through the APSS CPD Manager. The first assessment is inside the fee and the first resit is free. All prices are nett.

Developing Your Expert Content

"Do I have substance and depth?"

TRAINER

Andrea Edwards, CSP

ASSESSOR

Nick Jonsson, CSP

FORMAT

1 day, 7 hours, Zoom

ASSESSED BY

Portfolio or artefact submission

WHY IT MATTERS

Your niche decides what content to collect, and the content you collect proves your niche. This module gives you a clear expert position you can defend.

WHAT IT COVERS

- Choosing your niche with the niche matrix: expertise, credibility, personality and demand, and where they meet
- Your proclamation statement: your audience, their problem and your unique angle, in one line
- Positioning: specialist or generalist, and a point of view you can own
- A content curation system: alerts, following thought leaders, saving and tagging sources
- Continuous learning: a book a month, courses, your own research
- Capturing ideas and turning them into original angles
- Basic content creation, including a LinkedIn posting rhythm
- Building authority with early frameworks and consistent themes
- Credibility evidence: case studies, results and proof

WHAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DO

- Write a niche proclamation that names audience, problem and unique angle
- Run a working content curation library
- Publish substantive, niche relevant content on LinkedIn

HOW YOU ARE ASSESSED

Method: Niche Statement and Content Portfolio Review. You present your domain framework.

What you submit or do: Your completed niche matrix, a one paragraph proclamation, your content library, and your LinkedIn profile link.

What assessors look for:

- A proclamation that names the audience, the problem you solve and your unique angle
- A completed niche matrix with honest self ratings on all four dimensions
- A curated library of 15 or more saved, sorted resources
- Three or more substantive LinkedIn posts in the past 30 days

PASS STANDARD

The proclamation must name an audience AND a transformation. "Leadership speaker" on its own does not pass. Posts must be your own substance, not shares.

WHAT FAILS YOU

A vague proclamation, or posts that are shares rather than real content.

FACULTY PROFILE

A niche and content strategy specialist who can coach a proclamation statement and a content curation habit.

This module does not assess: Delivery or business skills. It certifies thought leadership foundations.

HOW IT LINKS TO THE REST OF PD

- Season 1 (Clarity) is the season this module serves.
- Your mastermind group is where the proclamation gets tested out loud before an assessor sees it.

Foundational Stage Delivery (Voice & Presence)

"Can I hold the stage and audience?"

TRAINER

Cathy Johnson, CSP

ASSESSOR

Cynthia Zhai, CSP

FORMAT

1 day, 7 hours, Zoom

ASSESSED BY

Live or recorded
performance review

WHY IT MATTERS

Good delivery joins voice and body into one. This module builds the instrument every speaker relies on: a projected, controlled voice and a grounded, intentional presence.

WHAT IT COVERS

- Breath and vocal foundation: diaphragmatic breathing, breath support, posture that frees the voice
- Projection: filling a room with and without a microphone, without straining
- Vocal dynamics: pace, deliberate pause and silence, pitch, emphasis
- Removing filler words: spotting crutch words and using a silent pause instead
- Vocal health and warm up before you go on
- Grounded presence: a neutral ready position, purposeful movement, no nervous gestures
- Gesture: open and pointed gestures, matched to the message and scaled to the room
- Eye contact: holding one person at a time and covering the whole room
- Bringing voice and body together

WHAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DO

- Project your voice clearly, with varied pace and deliberate pauses, free of filler words
- Hold a grounded stance with open gestures that support what you say
- Hold and spread eye contact across a room
- Run your own vocal warm up and pre stage routine

HOW YOU ARE ASSESSED

Method: Live Performance Review, scored on the APSS Delivery Rubric (Voice, Presence, Gesture).

What you submit or do: A 20 minute speech, live or on video, in front of a small audience.

What assessors look for:

- A clearly projected voice with varied pace and deliberate pauses, and no filler words
- A grounded stance with intentional, open gestures
- Eye contact that is held and spread, not fixed and not randomly scanning
- Evidence of a vocal warm up or pre stage routine, as a written reflection or video log

PASS STANDARD

A score of 3 or more out of 5 on ALL rubric dimensions.

WHAT FAILS YOU

Sustained filler words, or gripping the lectern throughout. Either one is an automatic Not Yet Competent. Fixed or randomly scanning eye contact is also a common failure.

FACULTY PROFILE

A delivery coach with strong voice and presence craft, able to run live performance labs and give precise feedback on voice and body.

This module does not assess: Content design (AM02), visuals and AV (AM04), or the business competencies.

HOW IT LINKS TO THE REST OF PD

- Your mastermind group is where you rehearse the 20 minute speech before it is assessed.
- Serving and Showing Up is where you find a real audience to perform in front of.
- A mentor in Season 3 can tell you which part of the talk is actually the idea.

Speaker Brand Assets

"Do I look credible and ready for business?"

TRAINER
Eugene Seah, CSP

ASSESSOR
Andrew Chow, CSP

FORMAT
1 day, 7 hours, Zoom

ASSESSED BY
Portfolio or artefact
submission

WHY IT MATTERS

Your bio, your professional image and your One Sheet work together as your core marketing. This module produces the things a buyer sees first.

WHAT IT COVERS

- Professional image: dressing one level above your audience, colour, Asian and regional dress codes, grooming for stage and camera
- Brand positioning: the change you deliver, your promise, what makes you different
- A set of three bios (50, 150 and 300 words), written in the third person, focused on outcomes, reading as a story rather than a CV
- The One Sheet: hero photo, a headline about the change you create, topics with outcomes, testimonials, contact details
- Your speaker website: home, topics, about, media, booking page
- A 90 second showreel of you on stage
- Headshots and photography
- Naming and framing two or three signature talks around audience outcomes
- Social proof: testimonials, client logos, results
- Digital presence: LinkedIn headline and About section, speaker page, consistent handles
- Logo, tagline and unique selling point (optional)
- Keeping every asset consistent

WHAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DO

- Write three outcome focused, third person bios at the right lengths
- Build a complete One Sheet built around the change you create
- Present a consistent professional image for stage and camera

HOW YOU ARE ASSESSED

Method: Brand Asset Portfolio Review against the APSS Brand Asset Checklist. Your assets are submitted, not presented live.

What you submit or do: Your brand portfolio. The course dossier asks for all three bio versions and one completed One Sheet as a PDF. The assessment summary also names your website and speaker highlight reels. Bring all of them.

What assessors look for:

- Three bios at the correct word counts, third person, focused on outcomes
- A One Sheet with hero photo, a transformation headline, topics with outcomes, a testimonial and contact details
- A bio that reads as a compelling story, not a CV
- A One Sheet headline that describes the change you create, not just your name and title

PASS STANDARD

Every checklist item is present. The bio must not begin with "I" or use the first person. The One Sheet headline must describe a transformation.

WHAT FAILS YOU

A CV style bio, a first person voice, or a headline that only states your name and title.

FACULTY PROFILE

A personal branding authority, strong on bios, One Sheets and professional positioning.

This module does not assess: Sales conversations (AM09) or pricing (AM10).

HOW IT LINKS TO THE REST OF PD

- Season 5 (Visibility) is the season this module serves.
- Serving and Showing Up is where the testimonials on your One Sheet come from.

Ethics & Professional Standards

"Will I conduct myself honourably?"

TRAINER
Su-Yen Wong, CSP

ASSESSOR
Ron Kaufman, CSP

FORMAT
1 day, 7 hours, Zoom

ASSESSED BY
Simulation and
scenario response

WHY IT MATTERS

Professional standing rests on ethics. This module sets the standard of conduct for every APSS member.

WHAT IT COVERS

- The APSS Code of Ethics, its principles, and why a professional standard matters
- Honesty in marketing: truthful claims, testimonials and credentials
- Client confidentiality
- Intellectual honesty: crediting sources and ideas, and avoiding plagiarism
- AI disclosure: when and how to say you used AI
- Peer conduct: collegiality, not poaching, referrals, fair competition
- Conflicts of interest
- Duty of care: audience safety, inclusive content that does no harm
- Handling breaches and the APSS process

WHAT YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DO

- Summarise the APSS Code of Ethics in your own words
- Apply the AI disclosure requirements correctly
- Handle peer conduct and confidentiality situations well

HOW YOU ARE ASSESSED

Method: Ethics Knowledge Check plus Scenario Response. These are two separate parts and you must pass both.

What you submit or do: An ethics knowledge check and a written response to an assigned scenario. The format confirmed after the Town Hall of 25 August 2026 is a short interview plus ten short written answers.

What assessors look for:

- An accurate summary of the APSS Code of Ethics
- Correct identification of when AI use must be disclosed
- A sound response to a scenario about crediting someone else's work
- Understanding of your duty of client confidentiality

PASS STANDARD

80% or above on the knowledge check, AND a scenario response that names the ethical issue, names the principle involved, and proposes a clear course of action. Each part is passed on its own, with no averaging between them.

WHAT FAILS YOU

A scenario answer that describes feelings but does not name the principle or state a clear action.

FACULTY PROFILE

A senior member able to teach the APSS Code of Ethics, AI disclosure and confidentiality through real scenarios.

This module does not assess: Legal advice. It certifies conduct standards, not legal competence.

HOW IT LINKS TO THE REST OF PD

- Ethics is a standing requirement, kept current regardless of other passes.
- This is the module that sets the conduct rules for assessment itself.
- It is under discussion as a prerequisite for entering mentoring.

The 26 electives

Electives are optional. Nobody marks them, and you do not need them to be certified. You take one because you want to learn that thing.

16

electives for Associate Members (AM codes)

10

electives for Professional Members (PM codes)

2

electives running first: AM02 and AM09

Each elective is still built around a practical piece of work, listed with each course below, so you leave with something you have made or practised. It is simply not graded. Fees are the same as a Core Competency: you are paying for the same full day of teaching.

STILL BEING DECIDED

How CPD points work for electives, since there is no pass to count. Faculty for most electives. Until the PD Pillar confirms, no points figure is given and faculty show as to be confirmed.

Expertise: 8 electives

AM14 AI Literacy & Prompt Basics

Associate Member
Checklist, knowledge check or log

Using AI well and honestly. The main AI tools, writing useful prompts, fitting AI into your workflow, disclosure, and the line between getting help and passing off AI work as your own.

Practical work in the course: Practical Prompt Exercise + Reflection. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM16 Basic Facilitation Skills

Associate Member
Live or recorded performance review

Moving from presenter to facilitator. Asking before telling, paraphrasing, think pair share, and handling people who dominate a discussion.

Practical work in the course: Facilitated Session Observation. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM17 Adult Learning Principles

Associate Member
Written exercise, plan or proposal

How adults learn. Knowles' six principles, Kolb's learning cycle, the "how will they use this on Monday morning" test, and Kirkpatrick evaluation levels 1 and 2.

Practical work in the course: Written Application Exercise. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM18 Activity Design Basics

Associate Member
Portfolio or artefact submission

Designing activities that work. Ten activity formats, debrief questions, matching an activity to the outcome you want, and realistic timing.

Practical work in the course: Activity Design Portfolio. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM19 Book Writing Introduction

Associate Member
Portfolio or artefact submission

Getting started as an author. Shaping a book concept and position, structuring a short work, and producing your first ebook.

Practical work in the course: Ebook Submission + Concept Statement. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM04 Immersive Learning Experience Design

Professional Member
Written exercise, plan or proposal

Designing full day and multi day learning. The energy arc of a day, overnight assignments, workbooks and exercises as products, energisers, break timing, world café and fishbowl formats.

Practical work in the course: Full Programme Design Submission. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM05 Training Impact: Coaching & Measurement

Professional Member
Simulation and scenario response

Proving training works. Coaching moments inside training (listen, clarify, ask, action), holding silence, Kirkpatrick levels 1 and 2, pre and post testing, and feedback forms that tell you something.

Practical work in the course: Coaching Demonstration + Assessment Design. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM10 Thought Leadership Amplification: Data & Platforms

Professional Member
Portfolio or artefact submission

Bigger platforms and data. TEDx and conference applications, the 18 minute idea structure, data slides that lead with the insight, and infographics.

Practical work in the course: Platform Application + Data Storytelling Sample. | Faculty to be confirmed

Eloquence: 7 electives

AM02 Core Content & Narrative Design

Associate Member
Portfolio or artefact submission

Building a talk around one clear argument. You use a four part story arc (context, tension, resolution, bridge), a problem, agitation and solution structure, a set of openings and closings, and you start your own story bank.

Practical work in the course: Script and Story Bank Review: talk outline, one CTRB story, Story Bank of 5+. | Faculty: Coen Tan, CSP and Sha-En Yeo, CSP **First elective to run**

AM03 Engaging Deliverables: Openings, Closings & Audience Interaction

Associate Member
Live or recorded performance
review

Keeping an audience involved. Ten engagement techniques such as show of hands, pair discussion, polls, call and response, movement and prediction, twelve ways to open, twelve ways to close, and building a closing library.

Practical work in the course: Live or Recorded Delivery + Written Library. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM04 Presentation Logistics: Visuals & Technicals

Associate Member
Portfolio or artefact submission

Slides and technical set up. One message per slide, strong full screen images with readable text, font pairing, handheld, lapel and headset microphones, sound checks, working with AV crews and using a clicker.

Practical work in the course: Slide Deck Audit + AV Competency Check. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM05 Stage Mastery: Mindset & Presence

Associate Member
Live or recorded performance review

Managing nerves and reading the room. Why stage fright happens, a personal pre stage routine, gradual exposure, memorising your first 30 seconds, spotting energy drops and bringing the room back.

Practical work in the course: Reflective Journal + Live Observation. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM06 Virtual Delivery Basics

Associate Member
Live or recorded performance review

Presenting on screen. Camera at eye level, a clean background, good front lighting, looking at the lens, cutting the talk by about a third, and lifting your expressiveness for the camera.

Practical work in the course: Recorded Virtual Delivery Review. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM01 Advanced Program Design & Narrative Mastery

Professional Member
Written exercise, plan or proposal

Advanced talk design. Vignettes, story stacks, client case studies and callbacks, five keynote structures, a pre event questionnaire, modular versions of a talk (20, 45 and 90 minutes) and restructuring on the fly.

Practical work in the course: Full Keynote Submission + Design Document. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM02 Advanced Delivery & Audience Navigation

Professional Member
Live or recorded performance review

Advanced delivery. Reliable humour, humour that works with Asian audiences, comic timing, callbacks, where to place Q&A, pairing first with quiet audiences, and handling hostile questions without getting defensive.

Practical work in the course: Live or Recorded Performance + Q&A Simulation. | Faculty to be confirmed

Enterprise: 10 electives

AM09 Sales & First Paid Gig Strategy

Associate Member
Simulation and scenario response

Winning your first paid work. Consultative selling, a 30 second pitch that leads with the change you create, a 5 minute discovery conversation, ten strategies for first bookings, and LinkedIn visibility.

Practical work in the course: Sales Simulation and Written Strategy: 30-second pitch, 5-minute discovery, 10 strategies. | Faculty: Christian Chua, CSP and Avi Liran, CSP **First elective to run**

AM10 Pricing Fundamentals

Associate Member
Written exercise, plan or proposal

Setting your fees. Cost plus, market and value based pricing, Singapore benchmarks, and a fee calculator you can use for different formats.

Practical work in the course: Fee Calculation Exercise + Written Rationale. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM11 Proposal Writing Basics

Associate Member
Written exercise, plan or proposal

Writing proposals that win. Four sections: Understanding, Programme, Profile and Investment. The golden rule: never send a fee without context.

Practical work in the course: Proposal Submission & Review. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM12 Business Foundations: Finance & Compliance

Associate Member
Checklist, knowledge check or log

Running a sound business. A separate business account, tracking income and costs, your effective hourly rate, Singapore tax basics, business structures (sole proprietorship, LLP, private limited company), professional indemnity insurance and basic intellectual property.

Practical work in the course: Business Readiness Checklist + Knowledge Check. | Faculty to be confirmed

AM15 Event Lifecycle Management

Associate Member
Checklist, knowledge check or log

Handling an engagement from start to finish. Before: research the client, brief with the organiser, arrive early, check the room, meet the AV team. After: a thank you within 24 hours, testimonial requests, LinkedIn, and follow ups on day 1, 5, 30 and 90.

Practical work in the course: Event Management Checklist + Post-Event Artefacts. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM03 Emceeing, Hosting & Panel Moderation

Professional Member
Live or recorded performance review

MC and panel work. Finding your MC style, interviewing speakers on stage, smooth transitions, moderating panels, and building MC work into a separate revenue stream.

Practical work in the course: Live or Recorded MC/Panel Segment. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM06 Product Creation & Digital Revenue

Professional Member
Checklist, knowledge check or log

Building your first digital product. A course, toolkit or assessment, pricing it, writing a sales page, and a plan to find your first ten buyers.

Practical work in the course: Digital Product Launch Review. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM07 Strategic Client & Partnership Development

Professional Member
Checklist, knowledge check or log

Managing clients and bureaus. A client management system, quarterly check ins, an upsell ladder from keynote to workshop to programme to retainer, bureau ready materials and etiquette, and exclusive versus non exclusive arrangements.

Practical work in the course: Client System Review + Bureau Readiness Audit. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM08 Revenue Diversification & Business Planning

Professional Member
Written exercise, plan or proposal

Planning your business. A revenue diversification planner, the three horizon model, an annual business plan, and a fee calculator across several formats.

Practical work in the course: Business Plan Submission. | Faculty to be confirmed

PM09 Media Engagement & Thought Leadership Amplification

Professional Member
Portfolio or artefact
submission

Media and your own platform. Short answers, soundbites, bridging, pitching, the three sentence answer (headline, evidence, bridge), launching a podcast or channel, podcast guesting, and turning each episode into several posts.

Practical work in the course: Media Portfolio + Pitch Submission. | Faculty to be confirmed

Ethics: 1 electives

AM20 Peer-to-Peer Community & Contribution

Associate Member
Checklist, knowledge check or log

Contributing to the community. The APSS peer to peer Kampong spirit, Kampong groups, school outreach, and building your contribution story from day one.

Practical work in the course: Contribution Log + Peer Endorsement. | Faculty to be confirmed

6

How assessment works

Sitting the course is Competency. Being marked is Assessment. Put the two together and that is Certification.

In this part: Five methods | What happens to one submission | How marking is kept fair | Results, resits and appeals

Five ways you can be assessed

Assessment applies to the 4 Core Competencies only. Each of the 4 Core Competencies is assessed by one of these five methods. The practical work in each elective follows one of them too, but electives are not marked.

1. Live or recorded performance review

You perform, live or on video, and are marked against the rubric.

2. Portfolio or artefact submission

You submit what you have built: a website, a One Sheet, a framework, a reel.

3. Written exercise, plan or proposal

You write it: a plan, a proposal, a designed programme.

4. Simulation and scenario response

You are given a situation and asked how you would handle it.

5. Checklist, knowledge check or log

You show you know the material, or show your record of doing it.

The 4 Core Competencies

AM01: a 20 minute speech, on video, in front of a small audience.

AM07: your brand portfolio.

AM08: your domain framework, niche matrix, proclamation, content library and LinkedIn.

AM13: a short interview plus ten short written answers.

What happens to one submission

1

Before

You read the rubric. The method, the criteria and the pass standard are published before you enrol, so nothing on the day is a surprise.

2

The workshop

Seven hours, live over Zoom, taught by a CSP. You practise the skill and get feedback while you still have time to use it.

3

The assessment

You perform, submit or write, depending on the module. Some assessments happen in the room. Portfolio and written ones are submitted afterwards through the APSS CPD Manager. An assessment can take as little as 20 minutes or up to 2 hours, depending on the module and how many questions the assessors want to ask.

4

The marking

A different assessor, never your trainer, scores your work against each criterion on the published rubric. The Assessment Coordinator assigns your assessor under a conflict of interest rule.

5

The result

You get your score criterion by criterion, with written comments, so you are never left guessing where you stood.

What assessors mark

- **Your work, not your personality.** Assessors mark the speech, the portfolio, the plan or the answers in front of them.
- **Each criterion separately.** Scoring is conjunctive: every criterion must clear its own floor. A strength in one area cannot cover a weakness in another.
- **Against a fixed standard, not your cohort.** You are not ranked against other members and there is no quota of passes.
- **One competency at a time.** A pass is permanent and recorded. You never resit something you have already passed.

How marking is kept fair

The standard is published first

Method, criteria and pass standard are printed before you enrol, so you always know what you are measured against.

Your trainer never marks you

Each Core Competency is taught by one CSP and assessed by another. Nobody assesses a cohort they taught.

Your mentor never marks you

Mentoring develops you and assessment evaluates you. A mentor may help you prepare, but the pass decision sits with an independent assessor. No assessor scores a direct mentee.

A second look when it matters

If you fail or are borderline, a second person reviews it, and you can appeal.

The work must be yours

You must say if you used AI to help. AM13 sets these integrity rules, and they apply across every module.

Outcome	What happens
You pass	The competency is recorded permanently and earns 5 CPD points. Pass all 4 Core Competencies and you are certified. It never expires.
Not Yet Competent	This is a verdict on one submission, not on you. You keep the criterion by criterion feedback and can be assessed again. Your first resit is free, and a re pass earns full points with no penalty.
You disagree with the result	You can appeal through the PD Assessment Appeals route. An appeal is reviewed by someone who was not involved in your marking.

STILL BEING DECIDED

- Resubmission windows, fees for any attempt after the free first resit, and the number of attempts allowed
- The formal appeal route, timeline and form

Not Yet Competent is a verdict on one submission, not on you.

7

Mastermind, mentoring and showing up

A mentor pulls you up, a mastermind keeps you honest, and showing up puts you in reach of both.

In this part: Component 3: Mastermind Group | Component 4: Mentoring | Component 5: Serving and Showing Up

Mastermind Group

A small group of peers who meet regularly, in confidence, to work on each other's real problems. It is the one room where you are not the expert, and that is the point.

Why it matters to a working speaker

It solves what a workshop cannot

A course teaches you how to price. A mastermind is where you read out the actual email from the client asking for half your fee, and four people who have had that email tell you what they did.

Nobody there is protecting you

Your peers owe you nothing but honesty, so the feedback lands harder. That is uncomfortable, and it is the value.

It handles the loneliness

Speaking is a solo business dressed up as a public one. A standing group is often the only structure that stops the drift between gigs.

Accountability, not insight

The real product is being asked about what you said you would do. Deep work only ships when someone notices if it does not.

You choose each other

This is the only component you form yourself. Nobody assigns you a group. Like minded members get together and decide who they want in it. It works on chemistry, so a group of impressive people who do not gel will not last. You can say no, and so can they. Because you built it, the group belongs to you, and keeping it alive is your job too.

It is

- Self formed: you choose your members and they choose you
- Peers at roughly your own level
- Confidential: what is said in the room stays there
- Problem led: members bring live, specific situations
- Regular, so accountability has somewhere to land
- Reciprocal: you give as much airtime as you take

It is not

- Mentoring. A mentor is a step ahead and guides you. Peers question you.
- Assessment. A mastermind never marks or certifies you.
- A networking event. No pitching, no lead swapping.
- Allocated. No committee places you in a group.
- A class. No trainer, no syllabus.

What a session looks like

Part	What happens
Check in	Each member says briefly what has moved since last time, including what did not.
The hot seat	One or two members put a real problem on the table, with enough detail to be useful.
Questions before advice	The group questions the problem before anyone offers a solution. Most hot seats change shape here.
Commitments	Everyone names one thing they will have done by the next session.
Follow up	The next check in opens with those commitments, which is what makes them real.

Ground rules

- Confidentiality is absolute. Nothing leaves the room, including who said it.
- Come with something. A member with nothing to work on takes airtime from someone who has.
- Ask before you advise. Advice given too early usually solves the wrong problem.
- Turn up. A group of six with three present is not a mastermind.
- No selling to each other. Ever.

STILL BEING DECIDED

A suggested group size, how often groups should meet, and whether APSS will help members find each other. Logistics for the 2027 cycle are still being finalised.

Mentoring

One experienced speaker walks alongside you for six months. They do not teach a curriculum and they never mark your work. They tell you what they learned the hard way, and point at the thing you cannot yet see.

1

cycle a year, January to June 2027

6

one hour sessions over six months

3

mentees per mentor, at most

\$S\$0

it is free of charge

Two tiers, one ladder. Associate Members are mentored by Professional Members who have already been through the climb. Professional Members are mentored by CSPs. Mentoring is matched to your season of growth, so the work goes deep instead of wide. There is one cycle a year on purpose: the old two cycle model burned mentors out.

Mentoring is

- A professional relationship built on respect and trust
- A mentor sharing their experience and judgement
- Help seeing what you cannot yet see yourself
- A model of professional speaking standards
- One concrete action step after every session
- Someone who checks you followed through

Mentoring is not

- Coaching: there are no contracted outcomes
- Teaching: the foundations are learned in PD courses
- Assessment: a mentor never marks their own mentee
- Therapy: it is professional development only
- Admin: the committee handles scheduling and matching

Five principles behind the programme

Quality over quantity	Fewer, stronger relationships.
Earned, not entitled	You qualify through commitment, not membership alone.
Mentor energy is protected	Mentors do not chase mentees or handle admin.
Mentors choose	No mentee is assigned without the mentor's consent.
Confidentiality	What is discussed in mentoring stays in mentoring.

How you get a mentor

1

Browse the mentor library

Each profile shows the mentor's name, tier, the skill areas they mentor on, and an intro video if they made one. Pick up to 3 and rank them. Mentors never see your ranking.

2

Record two videos

A self introduction of 1 to 3 minutes (who am I, what is my value, why should people pay me), plus a separate 1 minute video for each mentor you chose, explaining why you want them.

3

Pass the screening gate

The committee checks your self introduction against a 5 point yes or no rubric before any mentor sees it. Once you are through, the mentor's decision is purely about fit. Your videos for mentors are not screened.

4

The cascade

All applications reach mentors at the same time. Your first choice replies within a week. If they decline, your application moves automatically to your second, then your third.

5

The Cupid pool

Still unmatched? The committee looks at who is still waiting and makes introductions. Not being picked in the cascade is common and says nothing about your potential.

What the six months look like**First session**

Within 4 weeks of matching. Get to know each other, talk through your goals, pick 2 or 3 competencies to focus on, agree schedule and expectations, and leave with one action step.

Ongoing sessions

You set the agenda and bring topics or challenges. Every session ends with at least one action step, and your mentor checks on the last one. Expect candid feedback. It is the most valuable thing on offer.

Concluding

Either of you may finish early once objectives are met. A short reflection conversation at the end is encouraged. Neither side has to continue next cycle. A completed cycle is recorded as **5 CPD points for you and 15 for your mentor**, with no minimum required of either of you.

Who owes what**Expected of you**

- Come prepared with topics or questions
- Set the agenda: your mentor guides and you drive
- Follow through on action items
- Say so if you need to reschedule
- Treat the relationship professionally

What your mentor commits to

- Available for all six sessions, January to June 2027
- Replies to applications within a week
- Holds sessions at the agreed pace
- Gives you an action step each session
- Keeps everything confidential

NO SHOWS ARE TAKEN SERIOUSLY

Miss an agreed meeting twice without a reasonable explanation and you are removed from the programme. Mentors are told not to chase.

Three safeguards

- **Confidential, both ways.** The committee does not access session content. Your mentor will not share your challenges or progress without consent, and you owe them the same.
- **Your mentor never assesses you.** Your mentor can help you prepare, but the pass decision sits with an independent assessor.
- **If it is not working,** have a quiet word with the Mentorship Lead, Avi Liran. Matches can be changed, and nobody thinks less of you for asking.

Becoming a mentor later

Mentors are CSPs and Professional Members who volunteer. You register through the Mentor Registration Form (an intro video is optional but strongly recommended), choose how many mentees to take up to 3, and choose who you accept. A full cycle with one mentee earns 15 CPD points under Give Back. PMs are encouraged, not required, to pay it forward.

UNDER DISCUSSION

Whether passing AM13 Ethics becomes a prerequisite for entering mentoring.

Source: APSS Mentor Handbook, Version 1.0, August 2026, compiled by Jun Han Chin on behalf of the APSS Mentorship Subcommittee. Mentorship Lead: Avi Liran.

Serving and Showing Up

The one component you cannot study for. You turn up, you help, you sit in the audience for someone else's session. It is measured in presence, not in evidence of skill.

6

APSS events a year: the PD expectation

3

events in 12 months: a hard condition for Professional Membership

0

marks. It is recorded, never assessed

Why it matters more than it looks

It powers the other five

Your mastermind forms out of people you met in the room. A mentor picks you because they have watched you show up. Neither happens to a member nobody has met.

Referrals come from faces

Speaking work travels by trust. Members refer the person they know, and knowing you starts with you being there.

You learn by watching

Sitting in the audience for a peer's session, then hearing the room's reaction, teaches things no module can.

You can start today

Of the three conditions for Professional Membership, this is the only one you can begin meeting this month, at no extra cost.

From turning up to running the place

Most members stop at the first rung. The value climbs steeply after it.

#	Rung	What it looks like
1	Attend	Turn up, stay to the end, and meet two people you did not know.
2	Participate	Ask a question, volunteer for the exercise, offer feedback when it is invited.
3	Help run something	Registration desk, room set up, timekeeping, hosting a guest. Small jobs with high visibility.
4	Serve on a committee	Take a share of the work that keeps APSS running for everyone else.
5	Lead	Chair a pillar or a portfolio. This is where the association is actually built.

Where you show up

Event	Why go
Monthly meetings	Learning, networking and stage time with peers.
Keynote Lab	Work on your talk alongside other speakers.
Professional Development Weekend	Concentrated development time with the community.
Special Interest Groups, including the Coaching Club	Share frameworks and sharpen ideas with other experts.
Kampongs and the APSS Kampong Spirit	Small peer communities built on contribution.
Annual Convention, next on 30 April to 1 May 2027	The biggest room of the year, and the best stage time.

Event list from asiaspeakers.org. Check there for current dates.

STILL BEING DECIDED

Whether committee service and volunteering are recorded differently from plain attendance, and how attendance is logged for a Professional Membership application.

8

Personal breakthrough and the eight seasons

Every season has a skill problem on the surface and a personal one underneath. Courses fix the first. This part is about the second.

In this part: Component 6: Personal Breakthrough | The eight seasons of growth | Which season are you in?

Personal Breakthrough

Deep, one to one work on the thing that is actually holding you back. Never assessed, never certified, never on a slide. It is the quietest component, and often the one that changes the most.

Every other component has someone on the other side of it. A course has a trainer, an assessment has an assessor, a mastermind has peers, mentoring has a mentor, and showing up has a room full of members. This one has nobody but you. Nobody schedules it, nobody marks it, and nobody will notice if you never start. That is exactly why it is yours.

Focused by Competency. Honest because of Assessment. Witnessed by peers. Guided by a mentor. Visible in the room.

Why this component exists

- **Skill is rarely what stops a speaker.** Most members who plateau already know what to do. They do not do it. A course cannot reach that, because the gap is not knowledge.
- **You cannot see your own ceiling.** The limit feels like realism, or the market, or being busy. Someone else has to name it.
- **A group will not go this deep.** A mastermind is superb on business problems and blunt on private ones. Some things only get said one to one.
- **It compounds everything else.** Raise the fee ceiling in your head and the Enterprise skill area suddenly works.

How to work on it

1

Name the season honestly

Use the diagnostic later in this part. The season you resist reading is usually the one you are in.

2

Separate the two problems

Write the surface problem and the inner one on the same page. Only one of them needs a course.

3

Take it one to one

A mentor, a coach, or one trusted peer. Not a group, and not the person who assesses you.

4

Name one behaviour, not a feeling

"I will quote my full fee on the next three calls" is workable. "I will be more confident" is not.

5

Journal it

Write the limit, the step and the date. What is not written down is not worked on. It is only worried about.

6

Let someone check on you

Report it to your mastermind or your mentor. Breakthroughs nobody witnesses tend to quietly fade.

Keep a breakthrough journal

A journal is the whole method. A notebook or one document, revisited on a fixed day, is enough.

Five questions to write against

1. What season am I in, and what is the private limit underneath it?
2. Where did that limit show up this week, in a call, a fee, a stage, or an email I did not send?
3. What did I actually do differently, and what did it cost me?
4. What am I still avoiding, and what would the smallest honest step be?
5. What has changed since a month ago that I would not have believed then?

How to keep it

- Fix a day, in the calendar, like a booking.
- Date every entry. Dates let you see movement you cannot feel.
- Write plainly, for nobody. This is not content.
- Read the last three entries before writing a new one.
- Every quarter, read it all and write one line: what actually moved.
- Keep it private. Take a line to your mentor when you want a witness, never the whole book.

It is

- As private as you need it to be
- Aimed at the limit underneath the skill gap
- Behavioural, so it ends in something you do differently
- Yours to start
- Written down and dated

It is not

- Assessed: there is nothing to submit or pass
- Therapy: it stays on your professional practice, and anything deeper belongs with a professional
- A mastermind: the group solves business problems, this is the private one underneath
- A one off event: breakthroughs usually take a season

STILL BEING DECIDED

Whether APSS will offer a formal breakthrough session, panel or facilitator, and how members would sign up.

The eight seasons of growth

A tree grows in seasons, not in a straight line. A season is the stage you are at right now, and the one piece of work that matters most while you are in it.

Knowing your season saves you from working hard on the wrong thing. The same eight seasons frame Personal Breakthrough and the matching of mentors to mentees.

NOT A LADDER CLIMBED ONCE

Nothing is locked. Members often return to an earlier season when they change topic, audience or market. You may be in Season 7 and return to Season 1 when the market shifts.

Which season are you in?

Read the eight statements and pick the one that sounds most like you today. Pick the sentence that stings, not the season you would like to be in.

#	Season	If this sounds like you, this is your season
1	Clarity Sweet spot of value	"You can describe what you do, but you cannot clearly explain what your expertise is."
2	Story Signature story	"You have a message, but audiences do not remember it."
3	Expertise Keynote	"You have stories, but no keynote that gets booked."
4	Build Product funnel or portfolio	"You get booked, but have nothing else to sell."
5	Visibility Branding and marketing	"You have products, but nobody finds them."
6	Connection Community building and sales	"You are visible, but bookings do not follow."
7	Expansion Going global and scaling up	"You have run out of room in Singapore, and your calendar cannot take any more."
8	Regeneration Passive income and legacy	"You want income and influence that do not depend on the next gig."

You can also take this diagnostic online in the My Season tool on the PD Compass. Your answer is not saved.

THE DEEP WORK

Naming your expertise clearly: what problem you solve, who it is for, and why it matters.

SIGNS YOU ARE HERE

- You describe yourself by your job title, not by the problem you solve.
- Different people describe what you do in different ways.
- You say yes to almost any topic you are asked about.

THE LIMIT UNDERNEATH

You are afraid that choosing one thing closes every other door, so you stay broad and stay unbookable.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN Someone else can introduce you accurately, in one sentence, without your help.

WATCH OUT Do not skip ahead to slides, websites or pricing. Everything downstream is built on this sentence.

LEAN INTO Expertise

COURSES THAT HELP AM08 Developing Your Expert Content, AM13 Ethics &

Professional Standards

ASK A MENTOR FOR Help naming the one problem you solve. **ASK YOUR MASTERMIND TO** Witness your proclamation and tell you if it is actually clear.

USUALLY LEADS TO Story. Once you can name your expertise, find the story that carries it.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Write one sentence: I help [who] to [what change], so that [why it matters]. Rewrite it ten times until it stops sounding like a brochure.
- List the last five things you were paid or thanked for. Circle the one you would happily do every week.
- Test the sentence on five people who could actually hire you. If they can repeat it back, it works.

THE DEEP WORK

Finding and shaping the story only you can tell.

SIGNS YOU ARE HERE

- People enjoy your talk but cannot say afterwards what it was about.
- You use other people's examples more than your own.
- You avoid talking about anything personal on stage.

THE LIMIT UNDERNEATH

The story that would land is the one you do not want to tell in public. You are protecting yourself, and the audience feels the distance.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN You can tell one story that lands the point of your whole message, from memory, in five minutes.

WATCH OUT A story that makes you the hero rarely helps the audience. The audience should be the hero.

LEAN INTO **Eloquence** **COURSES THAT HELP** AM02 Core Content & Narrative Design, AM05 Stage Mastery: Mindset & Presence

ASK A MENTOR FOR Help finding the story that only you can tell. **ASK YOUR MASTERMIND TO** Hear you rehearse your signature story before a client does.

USUALLY LEADS TO Expertise. Build the keynote your story belongs in.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Write down three turning points that changed how you see your topic. One of them is your signature story.
- Draft it in four beats: where you were, what happened, what it cost you, what it taught the audience.
- Say it out loud and time it. Cut it to under five minutes without losing the turn.
- Tell it three times to small, friendly rooms before you put it in a paid talk.

THE DEEP WORK

Building the talk that carries your idea, and delivering it. You already have the expert material, so the work here is delivery, which is why you lean into Eloquence.

SIGNS YOU ARE HERE

- You have plenty of material but no single talk you can name and sell.
- Each booking means building something new from scratch.
- You are not sure what you would be marked on if someone assessed you.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Pick one idea worth an hour of someone's life. Give the talk a title a buyer would understand.
- Build it as an opening hook, three moves, one story per move, and one clear action at the end.
- Rehearse standing up, out loud, with a timer, not in your head.
- Take AM01 and get assessed on this keynote.

THE LIMIT UNDERNEATH

Naming it means being judged on it. Staying flexible is a way of never being fully accountable.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN You can deliver the same named keynote twice and get the same reaction both times.

WATCH OUT Do not put four talks into one. One idea, delivered well, beats a tour of everything you know.

LEAN INTO Eloquence **COURSES THAT HELP** AM01 Foundational Stage Delivery (Voice & Presence), AM03 Engaging Deliverables: Openings, Closings & Audience Interaction, PM01 Advanced Program Design & Narrative Mastery

ASK A MENTOR FOR Read your keynote structure and point at the idea. **ASK YOUR MASTERMIND TO** Watch you deliver the keynote and score it against the rubric.

USUALLY LEADS TO Build. Turn the talk into things people can buy beyond the stage.

THE DEEP WORK

Turning the idea into things people can buy beyond the stage.

SIGNS YOU ARE HERE

- Your income stops the moment you stop standing on stages.
- People ask what else you offer and you have no answer.
- You are busy but the work does not add up to anything.

THE LIMIT UNDERNEATH

Your worth is tied to being applauded. A product does not clap, so you keep chasing the platform.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN You have one thing besides a keynote that someone has paid for at least once.

WATCH OUT Building a course nobody asked for is the most common expensive detour in this profession.

LEAN INTO Expertise Enterprise **COURSES THAT HELP** AM19 Book Writing Introduction, PM04

Immersive Learning Experience Design, PM06 Product Creation & Digital Revenue

ASK A MENTOR FOR Advice on which product to build first for your stage. **ASK YOUR MASTERMIND TO** Compare product funnels with you.

USUALLY LEADS TO Visibility. Make sure the right people can find what you have built.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- List everything you already deliver. Sort it into a small, a main and a big paid offer.
- Build only the one your existing buyers already ask for. Do not build the whole ladder.
- Put a price on it, in writing, and say it to a buyer without apologising.
- Look at AM19 and the PM courses on products, and compare notes with peers at your stage.

THE DEEP WORK

Making the right people able to find you.

SIGNS YOU ARE HERE

- People who meet you buy; people who have not met you never find you.
- Your website, One Sheet and LinkedIn each say something different.
- You rely on word of mouth and hope it keeps up.

THE LIMIT UNDERNEATH

Some part of you does not want to be found and then found wanting. Quiet feels safer than exposed.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN A stranger can find you, understand you and contact you in under two minutes.

WATCH OUT More posting will not fix an unclear message. Season 1 first, then visibility.

LEAN INTO Enterprise

COURSES THAT HELP AM07 Speaker Brand Assets, PM09 Media Engagement & Thought Leadership Amplification

ASK A MENTOR FOR A review of your brand assets against the bar. **ASK YOUR MASTERMIND TO** Look at your One Sheet and website and say what a buyer would do next.

USUALLY LEADS TO Connection. Turn attention into conversations and bookings.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Fix the basics: a clear photo, a clear sentence, a clear offer, an obvious way to contact you.
- Make a one page One Sheet a buyer could forward to their boss without explaining you.
- Get video of you on a real stage in front of a real audience. Two good minutes beats an hour of nothing.
- Take AM07 and have your assets reviewed.

THE DEEP WORK

Turning attention into relationships and bookings.

SIGNS YOU ARE HERE

- You get enquiries but they go quiet after the first call.
- You feel awkward talking about money.
- You are collecting followers instead of relationships.

THE LIMIT UNDERNEATH

You believe asking for money makes you less of a professional, so you soften the number and lose the room.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN You can take an enquiry from first message to signed booking without guessing what to say.

WATCH OUT Discounting to win the first job sets the price for every job after it.

LEAN INTO Enterprise **COURSES THAT HELP** AM09 Sales & First Paid Gig Strategy, AM11 Proposal

Writing Basics, AM20 Peer-to-Peer Community & Contribution

ASK A MENTOR FOR A role play of your discovery call. **ASK YOUR MASTERMIND TO** Hear your 30 second pitch and find the gap.

USUALLY LEADS TO Expansion. Take what works to a bigger market or a new format.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Write out what you ask in a first call: what they want to change, who is in the room, the budget range, and when they decide.
- Practise saying your fee as a plain fact, then stop talking.
- Follow up twice, politely, in writing. Most lost work is simply never followed up.
- Role play a discovery call with a mentor, then run your pitch past four peers.

THE DEEP WORK

Growing beyond one market and one format.

SIGNS YOU ARE HERE

- The Singapore market feels small and repetitive.
- Your calendar is full and your income has stopped growing.
- You only earn when you are personally in the room.

THE LIMIT UNDERNEATH

Busy has become your identity. Slowing down long enough to change direction feels like failing.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN You have earned money in a market or format that is new to you.

WATCH OUT Scaling a message that is not yet clear just spreads the confusion wider.

LEAN INTO Enterprise

COURSES THAT HELP PM07 Strategic Client & Partnership Development, PM08

Revenue Diversification & Business Planning, PM10 Thought Leadership Amplification: Data & Platforms

ASK A MENTOR FOR Advice from someone who has gone regional on where the next market actually is. **ASK**

YOUR MASTERMIND TO Test your scaling plan, with peers one step behind and one step ahead.

USUALLY LEADS TO Regeneration. Build what outlasts your calendar and hand it on.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Pick one new market or one new format, not both at once.
- Find two people already working in it and ask what they wish they had known.
- Adapt your material: local examples, local references, and a fee that reflects travel.
- Test the plan with peers one step ahead of you before you spend money on it.

THE DEEP WORK

Building what outlasts the calendar, and giving back.

SIGNS YOU ARE HERE

- You want income that does not depend on the next booking.
- You are asked to mentor and judge more than to perform.
- You want the work to outlast your calendar.

THE LIMIT UNDERNEATH

Handing knowledge on feels like handing over relevance, so the legacy work never becomes urgent.

WHAT TO DO NEXT

- Choose one asset, such as a book, a licensed programme, a certification or a body of recorded work, and give it a finish date.
- Decide who you are handing your knowledge to, and start the handover this year.
- Mentor formally through APSS so it actually happens.
- Set a limit on how many live dates a year you will do from now on.

YOU ARE DONE WHEN Money and influence keep arriving in a month when you did not step on a stage.

WATCH OUT Legacy work never gets urgent by itself. If it is not in the calendar, it will not happen.

LEAN INTO **Ethics**

COURSES THAT HELP PM06 Product Creation & Digital Revenue, AM20 Peer-to-Peer

Community & Contribution

ASK A MENTOR FOR How they built revenue that outlasts the calendar. **ASK YOUR MASTERMIND TO** Hold you to the legacy work you said you would do.

USUALLY LEADS TO Back to Clarity. Most established members return here as their message changes.

9

Your first steps

Eight steps looks like a lot on a page. In practice it is one course a year, one mentor, and a room you keep turning up to.

Eight steps, and submitting comes last

You are an Associate Member who wants to make a living from speaking. Here is what to do, in the order we suggest.

Professional Members working through the PM pathway: the same steps apply, and your electives are the PM ones in part 5.

1

Pick one Core Competency

There are four, one for each skill area. You only need one to begin. Most Associate Members start with AM08 if they cannot yet explain what their expertise is, or AM01 if they know their topic but struggle to hold an audience.

2

Enrol and pay

S\$180 for members in year one. The first assessment is inside the fee, and the first resit is free. Enrolment for the Core Competencies is handled by APSS through asiaspeakers.org.

3

Attend the full day

Seven hours, live over Zoom. The workshop is led by a CSP and marked by a different CSP. The person who teaches you is never the person who marks you.

4

Join a mastermind group

Four or five fellow speakers who meet regularly. It is free, and nobody marks anything. This is where you say out loud what you plan to do, and practise it long before anyone assesses you.

5

Show up

Six APSS events a year is the expectation. Three in twelve months is also a hard condition for Professional Membership. This is where you meet your future mentor, your assessor and your referrals.

6

Register for mentoring

A six month programme from January to June 2027: six one hour sessions, free, with a mentor matched to your season.

7

Do the deep work

The thinking, writing, rehearsing and positioning that nobody can do for you. This is component 6, and the other five exist to serve it.

8

Submit your evidence

A named CSP marks it against criteria published before you enrolled. A pass earns 5 CPD points and is permanent. If the result is Not Yet Competent, you get written feedback, a free first resit, full points on a re pass, and the right to appeal.

NOTICE THE ORDER

Submitting comes last, not fourth. Your mastermind, your mentor, the rooms you show up in and your own quiet work are what your evidence is made of. Do steps four to seven first and step eight stops feeling like an exam. One module a year is the minimum, not the limit.

Who PD is for

Find the line that sounds most like you.

You have a corporate job and are thinking of moving across

"I speak at work and people say I am good at it. Should I go professional?"

PD is the cheapest way to test that idea before you resign. You try the real work (building a talk, being watched, getting honest feedback, pricing a job, writing a proposal) while your salary is still coming in. If the business side does not suit you, you learn that for the cost of a few modules instead of a year of lost income.

You have been speaking a while but never learned it properly

"I get booked, but I am winging it."

Experience teaches you what works. It rarely teaches you why. The four Es give you language for what you do on instinct, so you can repeat your good days on purpose. Most people a few years in find one or two holes they did not know about, usually in Enterprise or Expertise rather than delivery.

You want mentoring from a CSP

"Can you match me with someone senior?"

Mentoring only works if you can say what you need help with. Turn up with "help me get better" and you get generic advice. Work out your season first and name the one thing blocking you. Then mentoring becomes specific and fast.

You want to be in a mastermind group

"Put me in a group with other speakers."

Same rule. Without clarity on what you are working on, the group turns into a chat. With it, five people spend an hour a month pushing your problem forward.

You are aiming at CSP one day

"I want the CSP designation eventually."

The 4 Core Competencies use the same four areas CSP is built on. Working through them now means you are not starting from scratch, and you find out early which area is your weakest.

Already a Professional Member? Why PD is still worth it

You have already met the bar for Professional membership, so PD is a separate choice. It costs money and evenings. Membership gives you standing, access and a logo. PD adds proof, guidance and a permanent record.

1. It tells you what you do not know

Being assessed by someone experienced is the fastest way to find out whether your problem is content, delivery, pricing or follow up. Guessing costs years.

2. It gives you shared language

Once you and the people around you say Expertise or Enterprise and mean the same thing, feedback stops being vague. "That was nice" becomes "your structure was fine, your close was weak".

3. It makes mentoring worth someone's time

Senior speakers give their hours for free. Arriving with a named season, a named gap and a specific question respects that.

4. It makes mastermind groups productive

A group only holds you to account if you have said out loud what you are trying to do. PD gives you that statement.

5. It covers the business, not just the stage

Most people who leave a salaried job to speak do not fail at speaking. They fail at pricing, pipeline, contracts and cash flow.

6. It gives you evidence, not just claims

A pass is something you can point to when you ask for a fee, apply for a panel, or tell a client why you are the safe choice.

7. It is a rehearsal room with no client in it

You get to be bad at something in front of people whose job is to help, not in front of a paying audience.

8. It puts you in the room with people who book work

Referrals, co delivery and sub contract work come out of hours spent alongside working speakers.

9. It sets a pace when nobody else will

Nobody chases a self employed speaker to improve. A course with dates and an assessment does.

10. It shortens the transition

It compresses the time between "I am thinking about this" and "I am charging properly for this".

WHAT PD WILL NOT DO

- It will not get you bookings. Nobody hands you work for finishing a module. You still have to sell.
- It is not the same as being certified. Only the 4 Core Competencies are assessed.
- It will not upgrade your membership. PD is about craft and business, not your tier.
- It will not do the practice for you. The hours on your feet are still yours.
- It will not tell you whether to quit your job. It gives you far better information to decide with.

Decide and enrol

You have the whole picture now. Here is a quick way to decide whether to start this year.

You are ready to start if you can say yes to three of these

Tick	Statement
☐	I want to earn from speaking, training or facilitating, now or in the next few years.
☐	I can give one full day, live on Zoom, plus time to prepare my evidence.
☐	I would rather have my work checked by an experienced CSP than keep guessing.
☐	I can get to six APSS events a year, or at least three.
☐	I want to become a Professional Member, or one day a CSP.
☐	I am willing to hear honest feedback from a mentor and from peers.

If you ticked fewer than three, you can still take part. Come to events, find your season, and join a mastermind group. Enrol in a course when the timing is right.

How to enrol

1

Find your season

Use the table in part 8, or the My Season tool on the PD Compass. It points you to the right first module.

2

Choose your first Core Competency

AM08 if you cannot yet explain your expertise clearly. AM01 if you know your topic but struggle to hold a room. AM07 or AM13 are also fine starting points.

3

Enrol through APSS

Enrolment for the Core Competencies is handled by APSS through asiaspeakers.org. Members pay S\$180 in year one, or S\$540 for all four. Confirm dates and fees when you enrol.

4

Set up the rest, for free

Register for mentoring for the January to June 2027 cycle, start talking to members about a mastermind group, and put six APSS events in your calendar.

One course a year. Pass all four and you are certified for good.

Questions? Call APSS on (+65) 9199 9075 or visit asiaspeakers.org

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Rules, fees and CPD

Every figure the programme runs on, in one place. Fees are always quoted with the year they apply to.

The whole thing in numbers

What you can take

- **4 Core Competencies:** AM01, AM07, AM08 and AM13, one from each skill area. They are required, and they are the only courses that are marked. One a year is the minimum pace. Faster is fine.
- **26 electives:** 16 for Associate Members and 10 for Professional Members. Nobody marks them and you do not need them to be certified.
- **Being certified** means you have taken and passed all four required courses. Nothing more, nothing less.

Format

- Each course is one full day of 7 hours, live on Zoom.
- The four required courses also include the assessment.
- Once you pass, you have passed for good. It never expires.
- If you do not pass the first time, your second try is free.

Fees

Per	Member, Year 1	Member, Year 2	Non member, Year 1	Non member, Year 2
One course	S\$180	S\$280	S\$360	S\$560
Package of all four required courses	S\$540	S\$840	S\$1,180	S\$1,680

- All prices are nett.
- The same price applies to a required course and an optional one. You are paying for the same full day of teaching.
- On a required course, the marking is included at no extra cost. On an optional course there is nothing to mark, so the price covers the teaching.
- Mentoring, mastermind groups and showing up at events cost nothing extra.
- Fees, dates, content and faculty can change and are confirmed at enrolment.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points

CPD points are simply a record of the learning you have done during the year.

Activity	Points recorded
Pass one of the 4 Core Competencies	5 points (Area A), full value on a re pass
Complete a mentoring cycle as a mentee	5 points
Complete a mentoring cycle as a mentor, per mentee	15 points (Give Back)
Take an elective	Still being decided

Points are grouped in three kinds of activity: **Keep Learning, Give Back and Move Forward**. Your points are recorded for you in the APSS CPD Manager, so you can always see your own year.

RECORDED IS NOT THE SAME AS REQUIRED

- Since 23 August 2026 there is no minimum number of points to hit.
- No target, no catching up and no audit.
- The record is for your own use. It does not unlock or block anything.

Attendance

You are expected at six APSS events a year. Being in the room is part of your development, not an extra. Three events in twelve months is a hard condition for Professional Membership.

How marking is kept fair

- You can see exactly what you will be marked on before you sign up.
- Every part of the standard must be met on its own. A strong score in one area cannot cover a weak one.
- The person who taught you does not mark you, and a mentor never marks their own mentee.
- If you fail or are borderline, a second person reviews it and you can appeal.
- The work must be yours, and you must say if you used AI to help.

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Questions, glossary and contacts

Plain answers to the questions members ask most.

Frequently asked questions

Do I need to be a working speaker to start PD?

No. Many members were not. PD is written for new Associate Members with no assumption that you already speak or train professionally.

Do I have to take the electives?

No. Only the 4 Core Competencies are required for certification. The 26 electives are optional.

How fast do I have to go?

One Core Competency a year is the minimum pace. You can go faster.

Does certification make me a Professional Member?

Not on its own. It is one of three conditions. You also need 3 APSS events in 12 months and the earnings condition in part 2.

Who teaches and who marks?

Each Core Competency is taught by one CSP and marked by a different CSP. Your trainer never marks you, and your mentor never marks you.

What if I do not pass?

Not Yet Competent is a verdict on one submission, not on you. You get written feedback for every criterion, a free first resit, and full points on a re pass. You can also appeal.

Does a pass expire?

No. Once you pass, it is recorded permanently.

Do I have to earn a minimum number of CPD points?

No. Since 23 August 2026 there is no minimum, no target and no audit. Points are a record for your own use.

Are electives marked?

No. You take an elective to learn. Each is still built around a practical piece of work.

Can I use AI in my work?

Yes, but the work must be yours and you must say if you used AI to help. AM13 covers when and how to disclose.

How much does mentoring cost?

Nothing. It is free. You apply, and mentors choose who they accept.

How do I join a mastermind group?

You form it yourself with members you meet at APSS events. Nobody assigns you to one.

Is the Compass website a contract?

No. It is an information resource. Nothing on it enrolls you or grants certification. Fees and details are confirmed at enrolment.

Where do I enrol?

Enrolment for the 4 Core Competencies is handled by APSS through asiaspeakers.org. You register and submit your evidence through the APSS CPD Manager.

Still being decided

PD is still being rolled out. These details had not been confirmed when this handbook was published. We will update the handbook as each one is settled.

Area	What is still open
Electives	How CPD points work for electives. Faculty for most electives.
Assessment	Resubmission windows, fees for attempts after the free first resit, and the number of attempts allowed.
Appeals	The formal appeal route, timeline and form.
Mastermind groups	Suggested group size, how often groups meet, and whether APSS will help members find each other.
Mentoring	Whether AM13 Ethics becomes a prerequisite for entering mentoring.
Showing up	How attendance is logged for a Professional Membership application, and whether committee service is recorded differently from attendance.
Personal Breakthrough	Whether APSS will offer a formal breakthrough session, panel or facilitator.

Glossary

Term	Meaning
AM	Associate Member. The membership tier for all who aspire to become speakers.
PM	Professional Member. The tier for established professional speakers.
CSP	Certified Speaking Professional. The profession's top earned designation, held by fewer than 700 people worldwide.
GSF	Global Speakers Federation. The international body APSS joined in 2002.
PD	Professional Development. The six components described in this handbook.
CPD	Continuing Professional Development. Points that record your learning. No minimum applies.
CPD Manager	The APSS system where you register, submit evidence and see your points.
Component	One of the six parts of PD.
The Four Es	Expertise, Eloquence, Enterprise and Ethics. The four skill areas.
Competency	A course, and component 1 of PD.
Core Competency	One of the four required, assessed courses: AM01, AM07, AM08 and AM13.

Elective	One of the 26 optional courses. Not marked.
Certification	Competency plus Assessment. Passing all 4 Core Competencies.
Conjunctive scoring	Every criterion must pass on its own. Scores are not averaged.
Not Yet Competent	The result when a submission does not meet the standard. It can be resubmitted.
Mastermind group	Four or five peers who meet in confidence and hold each other to account.
Season	One of eight stages of growth, from Clarity to Regeneration.
One Sheet	A single page a buyer can forward: photo, headline, topics, testimonials, contact.
Proclamation	One line naming your audience, their problem and your unique angle.
Kampong	A small APSS peer community built on the Kampong Spirit of contribution.
SIG	Special Interest Group, such as the Coaching Club.

Contacts and sources

Professional Development Pillar

Chair: Andrew Chow, CSP
Term: July 2026 to July 2027

Mentoring

Mentorship Lead: Avi Liran, CSP
Programme runs January to June 2027

APSS

Phone: (+65) 9199 9075
Web: asiaspeakers.org

Online guide

APSS Professional Development Compass, including the My Season tool and the full course catalogue.

Where the facts come from

- Professional Development facts: the APSS Professional Development Pillar's published documents and the PD Compass, as updated 29 August 2026.
- Assessment details: the APSS Professional Development 2026 hub, after the Town Hall of 25 August 2026.
- Mentoring details: the APSS Mentor Handbook, Version 1.0, August 2026.
- Association facts, membership tiers and CSP: asiaspeakers.org.

Please note

- This handbook is general information about the APSS Professional Development framework. It is not professional, legal, financial or career advice.
- It is not a contract for training, assessment or membership. Where it differs from the PD Pillar's published documents or the APSS constitution, those documents prevail.
- Fees, dates, content and faculty can change. They are confirmed at enrolment.
- Certification is awarded only on assessment by a named assessor.
- Taking any module promises no outcome: not certification, not Professional Membership, not CSP, not bookings and not income. Outcomes depend on your own work and on decisions made by APSS, assessors and the market.
- Membership criteria are set by APSS. CSP criteria are set by APSS and the Global Speakers Federation.
- The APSS name, logo, the PD framework and course materials are the intellectual property of APSS and its members. Trainers keep the IP in their own training materials.

If you spot an error in this handbook, please tell APSS and say which page it is on.

Find your season. Pick your first module. Start this year.

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