

The PDTI supports the KCAI Scheme – what does that actually mean?

It means that our courses provide evidence of personal continual professional development (CPD) and it does not mean that the Kennel Club (KC) or their Accreditation Scheme for Instructors endorse us.

In our personal previously involved opinion, the Kennel Club Accreditation Scheme for Instructors in Dog Training and Canine Behaviour is potentially the best and most comprehensive award around. It is a scheme that everyone with a working interest in dogs should join up to, if only to benefit from the integrated self-assessment points programme. It is especially valuable to those who wish to help other people work with, live with, relate to or have fun with their dogs, in understanding the levels of knowledge and experience necessary for the role. The KCAI Scheme is not a Course ... it is much, much more, and as such, it is in a unique position to provide peer recognition second to none. KCAI Members are guided by the points programme and in collecting evidence of expertise, apply for accreditation when they feel ready and satisfy the standard set, which must include a minimum of 5 years practical experience in the field.

Sue Evans, who has been instrumental in the development of the PDTI, designed the initial KCAI programme before accepting the position of Scheme Administrator, then Specialist with the KC to help develop it. Having a deep prior understanding of the industry and a personal interest in instructor qualifications and awards since starting to gain some herself in 1992, Sue saw over 30 members qualify as a KCAI before she parted from the Kennel Club in 2008, with a flattering reference. Sue remains a Scheme member, working towards her own accreditation when time allows, and she is a Kennel Club Associate. We were lucky to have Sue join the PDTI team in 2005 at its inception, as our technical advisor, helping to make the PDTI what it is today. Sue is currently a PDTI Director and one of our Advanced Instructors; she is directly involved in running bespoke workshops for clubs and individuals as well as managing our assessment courses.

Sue works as a Behavioural Trainer and Specialist Advisor in Canine Education, and is available to give independent career advice. She firmly believes that all those involved should research the wider canine industries to develop their own knowledge and experience, and should consider joining other organisations to network and gain support for their learning and services. Course Providers and Membership organisations are all there to help, and they are passionate about education and offer support for their students / members. The PDTI is no exception; it has grown rapidly over the last few years and fills a specific slot within the industry, dedicated to improve teaching standards specifically for Pet / Companion Dog Training.

Chris Bloomfield, our other Director, has over 40 years of Dog Training experience and considerable involvement with Competitive Obedience. He was the first male to achieve KC Accreditation in 2005, awarded for Companion Dog Training^{Adv} and Competitive Obedience^{Adv}. He was appointed to the KCAI Membership Working Party for four years, prior to it being rested in 2011, following the appointment of Regional Mentors. He actively mentored at many meetings and assisted since, he also participated during that time in the accreditation process. He is a member and currently the nominated Treasurer of the newly formed Registration Council for Dog Training and Behaviour Practitioners.

PDTI courses provide people with the opportunity to gain and share knowledge and expertise, learning and justifying their skills in a safe environment, with experienced non-judgmental tutors. Our practical courses provide stand-alone achievement awards in providing a suitable service for today's dog owners, as well providing supporting evidence towards the KCAI award, mostly with relevance to Section C. Our courses and membership criteria build over time, significantly enhancing individual confidence in what they are teaching (instructing / advising) whilst participating in, and understanding the benefits of peer review.

The PDTI, along with others, was invited to apply for evaluation for KCAI – PEPs (Preferred Educational Provider Status), which aims to evaluate the way various courses fit in with the scheme and to help ensure appropriate delivery. We are questioning an unfinished, unsatisfactory report for Category 3, and criteria which was 'not set in stone' at the time, like needing a full teaching certificate, making it beyond our reach in the first place. With application, evaluation and annual fees to consider, we must ensure the benefits outweigh the costs in both our time and money. We are very proud of the PDTI, our Instructor and bespoke courses, our members and our dedicated and highly experienced Tutors, and regardless, we remain committed to provide the best support possible to all wishing to help dogs and their families live in harmony.