

# **NRCPD**

The National Registers of Communication Professionals  
working with Deaf and Deafblind People

## **Continuing Professional Development Handbook**

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## **What is this handbook for?**

This handbook explains to Registrants what continuing professional development (CPD) they must do to stay on a Register.

This handbook does not apply to Regulated Trainees as we do not require them to do CPD.

## **What are the main things I need to know?**

Registrants must do 24 hours of CPD in a year.

Registrants must do at least 12 hours of structured CPD in a year.

Registrants can do up to 12 hours of unstructured CPD in a year.

Registrants must keep a record and evidence of their CPD activity.

Registrants must comply with any request from NRCPD to audit how they have met the CPD requirement.

If a Registrant does not meet our CPD requirement they will not be able to renew their registration.

## 1. Introduction

Our role is to protect the public, in particular the deaf and deafblind people who use the services of Registered communication and language professionals. We want to make sure you act safely and in a way that makes the most of your knowledge and skills.

We therefore promote high standards of training, conduct and practice. Continuing professional development (CPD) is central to that, as it is for most skilled professions.

Our Code of Conduct requires you to “...keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date ...use your CPD to maintain and develop your competence and performance.” This handbook will help you do that.

Before you can renew your registration you need to tell us you have met our CPD requirement. If you do not meet our CPD requirement you will not be able to renew your registration.

Whilst we have set requirements for CPD, we have also tried to make it flexible. But if you have any difficulty meeting the requirement, or are unsure if an activity is acceptable as CPD, please do contact us.

### 1.1. What is CPD?

CPD is defined by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) as “a combination of approaches, ideas and techniques that will help you manage your own learning and growth”. It means “setting yourself objectives for development and then charting your progress towards achieving them”.<sup>1</sup>

So CPD is a planned, ongoing development of professional knowledge and skills throughout your working life. Many people find it useful to structure it in the form of an evolving personal development plan.

It is also an inclusive approach to learning that recognises everyday experiences as learning opportunities. By reflecting on the things you have done and that happened to you in the past, you can make decisions about your future that will help you be better at what you do.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cipd.co.uk/cpd/about/default.aspx>, accessed 17 February 2015

## 1.2. What are the benefits of CPD?

The benefits to you can include

- increased confidence as you see your progression;
- increased credibility with clients and employers;
- greater earnings;
- achieving your goals;
- developing a new career pathway; and
- keeping up-to-date with emerging ideas and best practice.

The benefits to your clients can include

- an excellent standard and breadth of service;
- improved access to employment, education and other areas of society; and
- confidence from the knowledge they are working with someone who takes their professional development seriously.

## 2. How should I approach my CPD?

We encourage you to

- develop your own **personal development plan**;
- adopt a **reflective practice** approach to developing your professional skills; and
- keep a **learning journal**.

Reflective practice means thinking critically about your professional and personal experiences to gain understanding. You then use that understanding to change how you do things and evolve your development objectives.

There are various theories and models of reflective practice. We encourage you to research them, speak to people who have used them and make a decision about what's right for you. That research could even count as part of your required CPD activity.

A learning journal is a good way to record and support reflective practice. It works with a personal development plan to help you evolve your development objectives.

For example, the aims in your personal development plan lead you to a learning activity. You record and reflect on that activity in your journal. The outcome of your reflection is a new aim in your plan.

### 3. What do I have to do?

To stay on a Register you must

- do 24 hours CPD activity in a year that helps you develop your professional practice, including at least 12 hours of structured activity and some unstructured activity;
- keep a record and evidence of your CPD activity; and
- comply with any request from NRCPD to audit how you have met the CPD requirement.

#### 3.1. Why a set number of hours?

Whilst there isn't a fixed way to do CPD, as a regulator we need to set some basic rules. That's so we and the people who use your services can make a judgement about your skills and experience.

We understand not everyone agrees with a system based on the number of hours spent doing CPD. That's why we're exploring approaches to CPD that focus only on what has been learned.

But whilst we do currently require Registrants to complete 24 hours of CPD a year, a broad range of activities count as CPD.

#### 3.2. What counts as CPD?

The most important part of CPD is setting your objectives for developing your professional practice. You then decide how you are going to achieve them.

Any activity can count as CPD as long as it helps you achieve those objectives. It is up to you to explain how it does that.

### 3.3. Structured and unstructured activity

We split activity into 'structured' and 'unstructured'. Examples of each are below.

Most of the time it will be clear if the activity is structured or unstructured, but sometimes you will have to make a judgement. For example, a conference might be structured if it includes stated learning outcomes and unstructured if it doesn't.

#### 3.3.1. What is structured activity?

Structured activities are usually easy to identify. They

- include prearranged courses, workshops, seminars and similar;
- are usually organised by associations, employers, training providers or other organisations; and
- have stated learning outcomes.

Examples of structured activity are

- attending a training course, workshop, seminar, webinar or similar;
- attending a conference or AGM that has stated learning outcomes;
- completing a qualification; and
- being formally supervised, coached or mentored (with written feedback).

#### 3.3.2. What is unstructured activity?

Unstructured activity is anything without a stated learning outcome that helps you achieve your CPD objectives and develop your professional practice.

Examples of unstructured activity are

- mentoring or being informally mentored;
- coaching or being informally coached;
- supervising or being informally supervised;
- shadowing;
- private study;
- using and reflecting on new knowledge or skills;
- getting and reflecting on feedback from clients or other professionals;

- attending meetings of communication and language professionals to discuss practice;
- observing other professionals at work;
- attending a conference or AGM that doesn't have stated learning outcomes;
- watching a demonstration;
- reading relevant articles, text books, reports, research papers and similar;
- researching and writing an article, paper, book or section of a book and similar;
- preparing for assignments;
- being involved with an association or other activity that helps develop the profession; and
- developing a training course, workshop, seminar or similar.

### **3.4. Can I do 24 hours of structured activity?**

Whilst you are not required to do a specific number of hours of unstructured activity, it is important that you do some. Ideally you will do 12 hours of each.

A good balance of structured and unstructured activity will help you develop in different ways and stay interested. It will also expose you to a variety of environments, people and opportunities.

### **3.5. Can all my unstructured activity be meetings?**

In the same way it's important to do a mix of structured and unstructured activity, your unstructured activity must be varied.

As the list above shows, a lot of activities can contribute towards your development. You will benefit the most from doing different things with different people in different environments.

### 3.6. How should I record my activity?

It's important to record your activity for your own benefit. That's why we recommend you develop a personal development plan and keep a learning journal.

We may also ask you for evidence of your CPD activity. We will want to know

- what you did;
- when you did it;
- why you chose to do it; and
- how it contributed to your professional development.

How you record your activity is up to you, as it is primarily for your own benefit. However, we have developed a template that is at Appendix A of this handbook. Guidance on collecting evidence is at Appendix B.

## 4. Client feedback and CPD

Feedback from clients is an important and useful way of monitoring the quality of your skills and services. It helps you identify your strengths and decide how you can improve through CPD.

We therefore encourage you to ask all your clients to provide you with feedback. It might help to tell them why you're doing it: so you can be even better at what you do.

For example, a simple feedback form could ask:

- Did I meet your needs? Why?
- What could I do differently next time?
- What worked well for you?
- What didn't work well for you?
- What else do you want to say?

Regularly collecting feedback counts as one hour of unstructured CPD. And, of course, reflecting on what you're told will help you decide what other activity to do.

## 5. Practice breaks and CPD

If you are going to stop practising for an extended period of time you need to tell us. We call it a 'practice break'.

If your break is for less than one year we will reduce the number of hours of CPD activity you need to do.

If your break is for one year or more you will need to meet certain CPD requirements before you can register again. What you have to do depends on the length of your break.

For more information please [contact us](#).

## 6. CPD audit

Every year we will look at – 'audit' - the CPD records and evidence of 10 per cent of professionals from each Register to make sure they have met the requirement. The audit is done by standards advisors selected for their relevant knowledge and expertise.

We will look at a mix of new Registrants and those who have been registered for a number of years. If you are asked to take part in the audit, you will need to give us your record of your CPD. We will contact you to let you know how to do that. You will have ten days notice.

We will want to know

- what you did;
- when you did it;
- why you chose to do it; and
- how it contributed to your professional development.

How you record your activity is up to you, as it is primarily for your own benefit. However, we have developed a template that is at Appendix A of this handbook. Guidance on collecting evidence is at Appendix B.

Your record must contain evidence that you have undertaken the activity. You need to routinely collect things such as appraisals, proof of attendance, feedback forms and completion certificates.

Evidence will be different for unstructured and structured activity. For structured activity things like certificates are important. For unstructured activity, your account of how it contributed to your professional development will be more important.

We will only use the record of your CPD activity for the purpose of monitoring CPD.

## **6.1. What if I haven't met the requirement?**

If you haven't met the requirement when we audit the record of your CPD, you will be offered the opportunity to provide additional evidence.

If you can't provide more evidence and no satisfactory explanation is offered, such as extenuating circumstances, you will be suspended from the Register(s) until you can demonstrate you have met the requirement. You can appeal against this action.

## **6.2. What happens if I submit false or fraudulent information?**

If a false declaration is made, you will immediately be suspended from the Register(s) for a minimum of one year. You can appeal against this action.

If you submit fraudulent information we may commence fitness to practise proceedings against you.

You will be allowed to renew your registration after suspension if you can demonstrate you have completed the requisite CPD hours. Your record will also be included in the next CPD audit.

## 7. Frequently Asked Questions

**I'm newly qualified and registering for the first time. Do I need to demonstrate I have done CPD?**

No.

**I'm not newly qualified but I'm registering for the first time. Do I need to demonstrate I have done CPD?**

If you've been practising since you qualified you don't have to demonstrate you have done CPD.

If you haven't been practising recently please [contact us](#).

**I'm newly qualified and have registered for the first time. Do I need to meet the CPD requirement in my first year of registration?**

Yes.

**I'm a Regulated Trainee, do I have to do CPD?**

No.

**When does my CPD record have to be completed by?**

Your CPD record for the year needs to be completed before you submit your application to renew your registration.

**How do I tell you what CPD activity I've done?**

[Log into your online NRCPD account](#), click on the revalidation icon and follow the screen instructions. We suggest you record your activity throughout the year.

**Can I include my travel time to attend a CPD activity as part of my CPD record?**

No.

**Can I record activity I did more than a year ago?**

No, only activity you undertake in the 12 months prior to your renewal application is eligible.

**What happens if I complete more hours than the minimum required in a year?**

You should add all the CPD you do to your online registration account. We will reduce your unstructured requirement for the following year by up to five hours.

**What happens if I don't meet the revalidation requirements in full?**

You will be unable to submit an application to renew your registration.

**I work part time, how many hours do I need to record?**

Our CPD requirement is the same no matter how many hours you work.

**I'm registered as a Sign Language Interpreter and a Lipspeaker. Do I have to record twice as many CPD hours?**

No.

## Contact us

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## Appendix A | Recording your CPD activity

It's important to record your activity for your own benefit. That's why we recommend you develop a personal development plan and keep a learning journal.

We may also ask you for evidence of your CPD activity. We will want to know

- what you did;
- when you did it;
- why you chose to do it; and
- how it contributed to your professional development.

How you record your activity is up to you, as it is primarily for your own benefit. However, the guidance and template below may be helpful.

We suggest your record covers

- what you did;
- when you did it;
- where you did it;
- how many hours of structured or unstructured CPD it counts as;
- the stated learning outcome(s) (structured activity only);
- why you did it;
- what you learnt;
- how you have put the learning into practice;
- what difference the learning has made to your practice;
- what additional learning you might do as a result.



## **Annex B | Collecting evidence of your CPD activity**

### **Structured activity**

For structured activity you should collect evidence that you attended and for how many hours.

If it is not obvious why the structured activity is relevant to your practice you should include a brief explanation of the benefits to your professional development.

### **Unstructured activity**

For unstructured activity, evidence may be in the form of notes, a reflective journal, learning log or minutes of meetings as appropriate. It could be as short as a paragraph or as long as several sides of A4. The important thing is to clearly explain what you learned.

### **Mentoring, supervision and coaching**

If the activity counts as structured you should provide the formal notes produced by you and your mentor, supervisor or coach.

If the activity counts as unstructured, you should explain how it contributed to your professional development.