

NRCPD | Practitioners' Forum

Meeting 30 September 2014 | Agenda

1. Apologies
2. Approved notes of 10 June 2014 meeting (for information)
3. Board decision on strengthening registration (for information)
4. CPD next steps (for information)
5. Code of conduct and complaint process consultations (for information)
6. Practice breaks policy (for agreement)
7. Any other business
8. Date and time of next meeting

Approved notes of 10 June 2014 meeting (for information)

1. The notes of the 10 June meeting were approved by email. They are at Appendix 1.

Board decision on strengthening registration (for information)

2. At its July meeting, the NRCPD Board reaffirmed its short term aim of meeting the standards expected of a regulator. We are judging ourselves against objective criteria so we are prepared for the next stage.
3. Even though accreditation by the Professional Standards Authority (PSA) is not being sought, those criteria are based on the Standards for Accreditation by the PSA. However, we are looking at the standards either expected by or adhered to by a mix of regulators and other organisations. This is to make sure the criteria are the right ones for NRCPD.
4. The long term aim remains the same: statutory regulation. But how long that will take is not clear.

CPD next steps (for information)

5. At its July meeting, the NRCPD Board heard that a recent survey made it clear registrants thought the current continuing professional development (CPD) policy needed improvement. It's what we have also heard from the professional associations.
6. As a result of this feedback, we will pilot a policy based on reflective practice in 2016. This will shift the focus from outputs (number of hours) to outcomes (how your practice has developed as a result of what you did).
7. Members of the Board will begin the process by developing a CPD session. Participants will reflect on the reflective model and make some recommendations.
8. Until then, the requirement will be frozen at 24 hours for all registrants. At least 12 of those hours have to be structured activity, such as training courses, conferences and AGMs. The rest can be unstructured, such as meetings, reflective work and reading relevant material.

9. We also understand registrants need better guidance on what CPD can help them meet the requirements. We'll be working with the professional associations to provide that.

Code of conduct and complaint process consultations (for information)

10. We are preparing consultations on a new code of conduct and complaint process. They will be launched during October.
11. The code of conduct consultation will be aimed at registrants, unregistered communication professionals, and individual and organisational service users.
12. The complaint process consultation will be aimed at potential complainants and registrants.

Practice breaks policy (for comment)

13. At the last meeting, the Practitioners' Forum was asked for feedback on the draft returning to practice policy. Since then, the policy has been reviewed.
14. The policy was inconsistent and unclear in some places. It has been redrafted as a practice breaks policy.
15. The main focus has been to have a single policy that clearly applies to anyone who wishes to register after a break from practice. It applies whether someone was previously registered with NRCPD or not.
16. The Forum is asked for comment on the practice breaks policy (Appendix 2).

Appendix 1 | Minutes of the 10 June 2014 meeting

Members present

- Natasha Charles (Association of Notetaking Professionals)
- Alan Haythornthwaite (Visual Language Professionals)
- Jayne Oakes (Representative for deafblind area)
- Tracey Pycroft (Association of Lipspeakers)
- Gail Dixon: (Association of Sign Language Interpreters)

In attendance

- Jim Edwards, on behalf of NRCPD board
- Janice Spalding and Angela Nunn (secretariat)

Introductions and apologies

1. Apologies were received from Jean Gough, AVSTTR. Everyone introduced themselves.

Notes of November 2013 Meeting

2. The notes had been accepted as a correct record of the meeting by all members via email shortly after the meeting.

Matters Arising not appearing elsewhere on the agenda

DBS checks

3. DBS has made it clear to NRCPD that it is not an employer and should not therefore view these certificates. Further information about [DBS checks](#) was put on the NRCPD website in March 2014 to answer some of the queries raised by registrants.

Online forum

4. Due to budgetary constraints this may not now be possible until the next financial year.

Changes/additions to online register

5. NRCPD to consider the appropriateness and costs of the changes suggested at the last meeting.

CPD

6. ALS asked whether they could view the CPD record their members input as part of their NRCPD online registration. NRCPD confirmed this is not possible and have written to ALS separately.

Update on policy development

Code of Conduct

7. The first draft should be completed by the beginning of July 2014. It will be considered at the July board meeting and then circulated to Forum representatives for feedback.

Complaints Procedure

8. The flowchart with proposed changes to the complaints process was circulated with the agenda. The main changes include the following:
 - In line with other statutory regulators, if a case goes before a complaints committee, NRCPD will present the case for the complainant. The complainant may be called as a witness in the case if required.
 - The lodging period for complaints will be 5 years (effective from the date of the new policy and the person would have to be registered at the time of the complaint).
 - Two independent case examiners (or one independent case examiner plus the Registrar) will determine next steps for complaints after investigation stage complete.
 - A mediation stage has been introduced before the complaints committee stage.
9. NRCPD is drafting a complaints handbook. This will give an explanation of what mediation is and how it will work. It will be a simple step by step process for everyone to use but particularly service users.
10. NRCPD will also produce a more detailed internal complaints guide including recommended timescales for each stage of the process. NRCPD to circulate the

recommended timescales for each stage of the process to forum members for information.

11. The views of forum members are important to make sure that the process is clear, manageable, fair and reasonable. The procedure will be distributed to all registrants for feedback at a later stage.
12. It was noted that the third box on the flowchart should read ii) and iii) rather than i), ii) and iii)
13. The new procedure will be piloted for a year with a view to amending if required after feedback.
14. It was noted that someone who had already been through the process previously could not resubmit the same complaint in the hope of mediation taking place.
15. Forum members were asked to send any further comments on the flowchart to NRCPD by 1 July 2014.

Draft returning to practise policy

16. Extracts from the draft policy were circulated with the agenda. The main changes are as follows:
 - If not practising and want to be on the register registrant pays the full fee and meets the CPD requirements in full. This can happen for up to 2 years. After 2 years registrant has to come off the register/can no longer stay on the register
 - For a gap of 2 – 5 years the registrant must complete double the CPD
 - For a gap of 5 years plus the registrant must complete double the CPD again.
 - For registration categories who do not have assessors new requirements in draft.
17. NRCPD asked for comments/feedback from members on the above.
18. For registrants who continuously renew their registration late and do not have a valid reason/do not notify NRCPD, it was agreed that the registration year should run for the same year and registrants pay for the full year irrespective of whether they take a month, or two month's gap. For example, registration renewal is June, registrant

renews in September. Their registration year still runs from June to June and they pay the full fee from June to June.

19. Noted importance of mentoring at every stage for returners.

20. It was agreed that the character reference should not be included.

CPD audit outcomes

21. The first CPD audit was completed in May 2014. A paper summarising the outcome of this audit was circulated to members with the agenda. NRCPD asked for comments from members particularly on the recommendations of the audit panel.

22. ANP commented that it is difficult for non sign language interpreters to find CPD opportunities. As so few notetakers are on the register CPD is not high profile in this area. Also said for someone who works 1 day a week, it will be very difficult to undertake 30 hours of CPD (2015 onwards) requirement.

23. STTRs, notetakers and lipspeakers generally find 30 hours difficult to achieve due to limited opportunities.

24. ALS asked if there could be more flexibility in the 24 hours required. Instead of splitting it into 12 structured and 12 unstructured hours, it would be better to have 24 hours in total but leave it up to individuals to decide which type they undertake.

25. VLP asked if there was evidence to show that CPD was improving standards. There is no testing of practical skills of interpreting. Thought more emphasis should be placed on feedback as that is a way for someone to demonstrate competence rather than attending information training courses.

26. Examples of CPD activities are listed in the document.

27. It was agreed that NRCPD should continue with the inputs based CPD system it has at the moment but improve on the guidance it offers. It could look at the possibility of downloading evidence to online revalidation account?

28. NRCPD may introduce voluntary feedback forms which professionals hand to their clients after a booking. Registrants could claim 1 hour towards their CPD if demonstrate received feedback and acted on it.

29. NRCPD asked members to email them any further suggestions for consideration.

Update on route to registration for notetakers

30. NRCPD handed out a document showing the routes to registration in each profession. The Board has asked to consider ways it can open up the routes to registration.

31. Lipspeakers: A new qualification for lipspeakers is soon to be available. This is based on the NOS for lipspeakers and NRCPD should consider accepting it for registration purposes.

32. STTRs: no change

33. Notetakers: NRCPD is hoping to map the OCN Level 3 Notetaking for disabled people qualification against the old CACDP Level 3 notetaking qualification to allow it to be approved for notetakers to register. It is currently seeking a consultant to undertake this piece of work.

34. Deafblind area: Signature is developing 5 new qualifications in this area.

35. It was noted that anyone on the register who has already met the criteria would not be expected to undertake the new qualifications.

36. Members asked to let NRCPD know of any other ideas for possible routes to register.

Strengthening registration update on activities and next steps

37. A paper was circulated with the agenda outlining recent activities undertaken in relation to strengthening registration and the next steps to be taken. NRCPD board will meet in July 2014 to consider progress made since the March meeting. This will include the following:

- hear what stakeholders have been saying;
- hear how it's doing compared with the standards expected of a regulator;

- consider the changes it's made to the complaints procedure and code of conduct; and
- think about the future composition of the Board.

Any other business

38. VLP asked for clarification about who David Wolfenden is representing on the NRCPD board. NRCPD confirmed DW is on the board as an individual who has the skills required. Dan Sumners, Senior Policy Officer will clarify this on the NRCPD website.

Date and venue of next meeting

39. The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 30 September 2014, at the Directory of Social Change, London.

The numbers of registered communication professionals at 31/05/2014 are as follows:

	31/05/2014
Registered Sign Language Interpreters	876
Trainee Sign Language Interpreters	240
Registered Sign Language Translators	11
Trainee Sign Language Translators	2
Registered Lipspeakers	35
Registered Speech to Text Reporters	26
Registered Interpreters for Deafblind People	16
Registered Electronic Notetakers	11
Registered Manual Notetakers	12
Total	1229

Appendix 2 | Draft practice breaks policy

1. In this document
 - a. 'we' refers to NRCPD;
 - b. 'you' refers to a communication professional who is not practising;
 - c. 'communication professional' includes sign language interpreters, sign language translators, speech to text reporters, lipspeakers, interpreters for deafblind people and notetakers; and
 - d. 'practice break' or 'break' means a period of time in which a communication professional is not being paid for providing professional communication services.

Purpose

2. This policy is for communication professionals who
 - a. have taken a break from practising and intend to start practising again;
 - b. are not registered with NRCPD; and
 - c. want to apply for registration.
3. It might also be useful for communication professionals who are
 - a. registered with NRCPD but have not been practising;
 - b. considering a break in practice and thinking about what it might mean in the future; or
 - c. considering supervising or employing someone who is returning to practice.

Taking a break from practice for less than a year

4. You can take a break from practising but stay on the register if
 - a. your break is less than one year;
 - b. you have paid the annual registration fee; and
 - c. you meet the annual CPD requirement.
5. Please tell us if you are prevented from practising due to illness, injury, maternity, bereavement or some other event. We will reduce your CPD requirement if

- a. you provide evidence for your inability to work; and
- b. the duration of the inability to work is not less than one month.

6. You are responsible for making sure you are fit to practise after your break.

Taking a break from practice for more than one year

7. You will be classed as taking a break from practice if

- a. you take a break from practice for more than one year; or
- b. you take a break from practice for less than a year but are unable to meet the CPD requirement.

8. If you are already registered with NRCPD and take a break from practice you will be removed from the register. You should notify us of your break as soon as possible, using the practice break notification form.

9. After your break from practice NRCPD needs to be confident your knowledge and skills are at the appropriate level before registering you. The length of your break determines what you need to do in addition to the usual registration requirements.

Registration requirements after a one to two year break from practice

10. A CPD profile of 24 hours of activity.

11. An assessment by a deaf service user and an A1 assessor in the same professional category (or suitably experienced communication professional in the case of STTRs, lipspeakers and notetakers).

12. Refreshing deaf awareness training and assessment may also be required.

Registration requirements after a two to five year break from practice

13. A CPD profile of 24 hours of activity that has been developed with, monitored by and verified by an experienced NRCPD-registered communication professional.

14. An assessment by a deaf service user and an A1 assessor in the same professional category (or suitably experienced communication professional in the case of STTRs, lipspeakers and notetakers).

15. Refreshing deaf awareness training and assessment may also be required.

Registration requirements after a break from practice of more than five years

16. A CPD profile of 48 hours of activity that has been developed with, monitored by and verified by an experienced NRCPD-registered communication professional.

17. An assessment by a deaf service user and an A1 assessor in the same professional category (or suitably experienced communication professional in the case of STTRs, lipspeakers and notetakers).

18. Refreshing deaf awareness training and assessment may also be required.

Continuing professional development

19. The CPD requirement must be fulfilled within the twelve months before you apply for registration.

20. Your CPD activity can include both structured and unstructured activity.

- a. At least half of the requirement must be structured activity.
- b. Supervision and mentoring must make up no more than half the unstructured requirement.

21. If you have been using your skills during your absence you can use that activity to complete your CPD profile. It might include

- a. a research or teaching position related to your profession; or
- b. remaining active by volunteering, outreach or consultancy work.

22. After more than two years out of practice, your CPD profile must be developed with, monitored by and verified by an experienced NRCPD-registered communication professional. They must have suitable additional qualifications e.g. supervisor, mentor, assessor, verifier. Or they should be a suitably experienced communication professional in the categories where such qualifications are not available, ie STTRs, lipspeakers, notetakers.

23. Full guidance on developing a CPD profile can be found in the CPD handbook on the NRCPD website.