

# **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, evidence and explanation 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 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. Should 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;
- explain how your CPD activity has helped you develop your professional practice;
- enter the details of your CPD on the portal; 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 may 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'. [Appendix A](#) contains examples and explains what evidence you need to collect.

Structured activities are usually easy to identify. They are organised by associations, employers, training providers or other organisations, and they have stated learning outcomes.

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

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.

In all cases, you must be able to explain why you chose to do something and how it contributed to your professional development.

### 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. What if I'm unsure if an activity will count as CPD?

If you are unsure if an activity you will count as CPD, please [contact us](#) and we will give you advice.

### 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.

But you must keep a record, evidence and explanation of your CPD activity in case we select you for audit. 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 B](#) of this handbook.

### 3.6. Reflective notes

For all unstructured activities and some structured activities your evidence will be reflective notes.

Reflective notes explain

- what you have learned; and
- what you might put into practice in the future.

The time you take writing reflective notes about unstructured activity counts as unstructured activity. So if you spend half an hour reading a journal article and half an hour writing reflective notes about it, that's one hour of CPD.

## 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 see our [practice breaks policy](#).

## 6. CPD audit

Every year we examine – ‘audit’ - the CPD records and evidence of 10 per cent of the Registrants on each Register to make sure they have met the requirement.

The audit is of the previous year. For example, in 2015 we audited 2013-14. It is therefore important that you keep your record and evidence for at least two years.

The audit is done by [Professional Standards Advisors](#) selected for their relevant knowledge and expertise. They examine the records and evidence of a mix of new Registrants and those who have been registered for a number of years.

### 6.1. What happens if I’m selected for audit?

If you’re selected for audit we’ll tell you by email. We’ll tell you which year we’re auditing so you can send the correct record and evidence. [Appendix A](#) contains examples of activity and explains what evidence you need to collect.

You then have two weeks to send us your record, evidence and explanation in electronic or paper form. It is therefore a good idea to keep your record and evidence up-to-date so you don’t have a lot of work to do at the last minute.

Remember, 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 B](#) of this handbook.

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

### 6.2. 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.

### **6.3. 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.

### **6.4. Will I be selected for audit two years in a row?**

No. If you have been selected for audit you will be automatically exempt the following year. The exception to this is if there were concerns over the quality of your CPD record and evidence. In this case you may be audited two years in a row to ensure you put into practice the panel's recommendations.

## 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 see our [practice breaks policy](#)

**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. You need to complete 24 hours of CPD during your first year in order to renew your registration the following year.

**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 in to your online NRCPD account](#), and select 'manage CPD'. Here you will see what you have already recorded and can add new activities. 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 have done 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 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 until you meet the CPD requirement in full.

**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. However, if you are on more than one Register your CPD must help you develop your various practices.

**I sometimes volunteer, does this count as CPD?**

No. Volunteering does not count as CPD, in the same way normal paid work does not count. However, time spent on reflecting on new knowledge or skills learnt during volunteering and paid work can count as CPD. You must make reflective notes and keep them as evidence.

## Contact us

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## Appendix A | Examples of structured and unstructured activity

Structured activity	Evidence required in addition to the stated learning outcomes of the activity
Attending a training course	Certificate with date and hours of attendance. If no certificate is issued you will need other evidence that you attended, such as an email from the organiser. If the course is not obviously related to your profession, then you need to explain how it helped you develop your professional practice.
Formal observation by another Registrant	Detailed notes of the feedback from the other Registrant, with action points. Date and times of the observation.
Being formally supervised or mentored	Notes of the session, with date and times.
Attending seminars or webinars	Certificate with date and hours of attendance. If no certificate is issued you will need other evidence that you attended, such as an email from the organiser. If you buy a recorded webinar, you will need your notes from the webinar as proof of attendance.
Completing a qualification	Certificate with date and hours of attendance. If the course is not obviously related to your profession, then you need to explain how it helped you develop your professional practice.
Attending a conference or AGM with stated learning outcomes	Certificate of attendance with dates and hours of attendance. If no certificate is issued you will need other evidence that you attended, such as an email from the organiser.
Attending formal meetings of communication professionals to discuss practice	Minutes confirming date and time, and that evidence clear learning outcomes. Plus an email confirming attendance from the chair.

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Unstructured activity	Evidence required in addition to reflective notes
Reading articles, books, journals, reports, research papers and similar	Dates and times.
Observing other professionals	Name of other professional(s) plus dates and times.
Attending informal meetings of communication professionals to discuss practice	Minutes confirming date, time and attendance.
Getting and reflecting on feedback from clients	Copy of feedback plus dates and times.
Receiving informal mentoring or supervision, including informal / non-facilitated peer group supervision.	Name(s) plus dates and times.
Giving formal mentoring or supervision	Dates and times
Shadowing other professionals	Name(s) plus dates and times.
Private study	Dates and times.
Reflecting on new knowledge or skills (e.g. post assignment or post voluntary work reflection)	No additional evidence. Ensure you do not count time spent on assignments (paid and voluntary) as CPD.
Attending a conference or AGM that does not have stated learning outcomes	Certificate with dates and hours of attendance. If no certificate is issued you will need other evidence that you attended, such as an email from the organiser.
Watching a demonstration	Dates and times.
Researching and writing an article, paper, book or similar	Copy of work plus dates and time spent.
Development and first delivery of a training course, workshop, seminar or similar	Summary of the training course, such as a PowerPoint presentation, plus dates and times.
Being involved with an association or other activity that helps develop the profession	Dates and times.
Preparing for assignments – ONLY if follow up research and development work post-assignment takes place	Dates and times.

## Appendix B | 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.

But you must keep a record, evidence and explanation of your CPD activity in case we select you for audit. 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 chose to do it;
- what you learnt;
- how you have put the learning into practice;
- what difference the learning has made to your practice; and
- what additional learning you might do as a result.

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Record of CPD activity			Name:				Year:			
What I did	When I did it	Where I did it	Number of structured hours	Number of unstructured hours	Stated learning outcomes (structured activity only)	Why I chose to do it	What I learnt	How I have put the learning into practice	The difference the learning has made to my practice	Additional learning I might do