

Continuing Professional Development

Learning for Life



What is CPD?

Every time you act in a professional capacity you make judgements based on your current knowledge, skills and expertise. Participating in continuing professional development (CPD) shows you are committed to keeping up to date and maintaining the skills and knowledge necessary for the execution of your professional and technical duties.

Our CPD scheme has been designed to provide a framework to formally recognise the ways in which you update and maintain your expertise. This formal recognition is important because there is increasing pressure for professionals within the workplace not only to achieve excellence but also to show evidence of their competence at all stages of their career and professional life.

CPD engenders public confidence in professionals and gives employers' confidence in their employees. Via our CPD scheme, the Royal Society of Biology is aiming to enhance the recognition, status and employability of our members.

Royal Society of Biology CPD will enable you to:

- Retain control over your development activities
- Demonstrate your commitment to maintaining and developing competence
- Reflect on what you have learned in the past and identify new areas for development in the future
- Provide support for appraisals and pay negotiations
- Maintain your reputation as a professional
- Maintain a competitive edge
- Progress through RSB membership and maintain a professional registration

How does Royal Society of Biology CPD work?

Our CPD scheme provides you with tools to establish your own personal development plan and to build up a portfolio. The scheme will complement other programmes run by your employer or other professional bodies. Activities that you already engage in for other schemes will form valid contributions to our scheme.

Our scheme is based on a CPD cycle of 'think, plan, do, reflect':

- **Think:** Analyse your present situation and identify areas for development
- **Plan:** Decide what formal and informal activities will help you to achieve your goals
- **Do:** Carry out and record these activities
- **Reflect:** Evaluate how the activities benefited your professional practice and, where appropriate, how it will benefit others (such as colleagues, students or the community) as a result

The CPD system is maintained online, via the members' area and we would encourage you to upload each activity as it is completed rather than at the end of your CPD year. Activities can fall under one of the 5 areas below:

1. Work-based learning
2. Professional activity
3. Formal/educational
4. Self-directed learning
5. Other

When you select the area your activity falls under, you will also be shown various sub-categories for your activity. Once selected, this will allocate the appropriate number of points that can be claimed for each hour you have spent on your activity.

To pass the CPD year, a minimum of 50 points must be gained. There are restrictions on the number of points that can be claimed in each of the five areas. The tables overleaf contain more information on the CPD areas, sub-categories and point limits.



How do I record my CPD activities?

To maintain your status on the Registered Science Technician (RSciTech), Registered Scientist (RSci), Chartered Scientist (CSci), Chartered Science Teacher (CSciTeach), Chartered Biologist (CBiol) and UK Register of Toxicologists (UKRT) professional registers you must undertake and record your CPD activities throughout the year. Your annual CPD return must comply with the following 4 CPD standards.

Standard 1: A registrant must maintain a continuous, up-to-date, accurate and reflective record of their CPD activities and be able to provide supporting evidence if requested.

This can be met by recording your CPD activities throughout the year via mySociety, and achieving a minimum of 50 CPD points. Evidence may include but is not limited to certificates, articles, training materials or feedback.

Standard 2: A registrant must demonstrate that their CPD activities are a mixture of learning activities relevant to current or future practice.

This can be met by ensuring that the activities undertaken fall under more than two of the five activity areas (see table overleaf).

Standard 3: A registrant must seek to ensure that their CPD has contributed to the quality of their practice and reflect upon this.

In the 'My Reflection' section you should reflect upon the ways in which your CPD activities have or will improve the quality of your work. Be sure to say why you think that your work has been or will be improved by your chosen CPD activities. There might be some cases where you had expected your CPD activities to improve your work but this did not happen as planned, and you may discuss these circumstances also. How will you change your approach to planning CPD activities to reduce the chance of this happening in future?

Standard 4: A registrant must seek to ensure that their CPD benefits the users of their work, and reflect upon this (employee, customer, student etc.).

In the 'My Reflection' section you should reflect upon the ways in which your CPD activities have or will benefit the users of your work. Be sure to say why you think that these activities have already or will provide this benefit. You can provide evidence of a direct benefit, for example feedback from a student. You may also describe indirect benefits, for example your enrolment on a training course may indirectly benefit clients or colleagues through changes in your approach to interactions with them.



CPD: The five activity areas and their categories

1/5

Work-based learning (a maximum of 20 CPD points can be claimed under this heading)			
Category	Additional Guidance	Points / Hour	Evidence Required
Experiential learning	(e.g. on the job learning; learning from experience; expanding job role)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
In-service training	(e.g. orientation programmes; operating procedures; employee development)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Receiving coaching from others		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Work shadowing		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Peer review of own work	(e.g. presentations to colleagues; direction on created documents)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Review of case studies and literature		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Participation in journal club		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Discussions with colleagues	(e.g. idea generation, problem solving)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Presentations	(e.g. to external clients, regulators or policymakers)	2	Copy of presentation
Supervising colleagues or students		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Job rotation, secondments or sabbaticals		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Involvement in employer work	(e.g. beyond scope of role)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Lesson learnt activities		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Request and analysis of feedback	(on your performance from colleagues or clients)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Participation in appraisal and goal setting		1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Preparation of bids	(preparation and submission of research or financial bids)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Course development	(produce a new course, substantially revise existing or revise based on evaluation)	2	Summary of course / revisions / evaluation
Other	Any other activity that takes place in the fulfilling of your current role	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained

CPD: The five activity areas and their categories

2/5

Professional activity (a maximum of 20 CPD points can be claimed under this heading)			
Category	Additional Guidance	Points / Hour	Evidence Required
Professional body involvement	(e.g. officer; organiser; committee member; working group member)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Organiser	(e.g. conference, scientific meeting or course)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Being an examiner		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Being a referee for a journal		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Technical group membership	(e.g. special interest group; section or study group)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Being an expert witness		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Lecturing or teaching	(specifically new material)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Presentation giving or discussant	(at conferences or scientific meetings)	2	Copy of presentation / programme of event
Networking with other professionals		1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Coaching or mentoring		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Other	Any other activity that aids your professional development through a professional body or develops the skills of others	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained



CPD: The five activity areas and their categories

3/5

Formal/educational (a maximum of 30 CPD points can be claimed under this heading)			
Category	Additional Guidance	Points / Hour	Evidence Required
Programme of learning for academic qualification		2	Certificate of attendance / achievement
Attendance at training course		2	Certificate of attendance
Attendance at Royal Society of Biology approved events		3	Certificate of attendance
Attendance at conferences or scientific meetings		2	Certificate of attendance
Distance learning	(including e-learning)	2	Certificate of achievement / registering
Reading professional framework	(e.g. understanding legal or regulatory frameworks)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Maintenance/development of specialist skills		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Writing articles or papers		2	Copy of article / paper
Presentation preparation	(e.g. for conferences of scientific meetings)	2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained / copy of presentation
Training material preparation		2	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Other	Other activities that lead to qualifications or involve attendance at structured learning activities	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained



CPD: The five activity areas and their categories

4/5 and 5/5

Self-directed learning (a maximum of 10 CPD points can be claimed under this heading)			
Category	Additional Guidance	Points / Hour	Evidence Required
Reading	(e.g. books, journals or articles)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Reviewing and summarising	(e.g. books or articles)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Upgrading knowledge	(e.g. through internet searches or other electronic resources)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Reflective practice	(e.g. assessing CPD benefit and identifying next steps)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Other	Any other activity where you have taken initiative to diagnose your needs, formulated goals using resources or evaluated the outcome	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained

Other (a maximum of 10 CPD points can be claimed under this heading)			
Category	Additional Guidance	Points / Hour	Evidence Required
Finance skills	(e.g. treasurer for club or society)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Strategic thinking	(e.g. a role in organisational restructuring; strategic planning; faculty development; external or community relations)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Leadership skills	(e.g. manager for sports or children's team; leader at Scouts or Guides; chairperson at a club or society)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Coaching and counselling skills	(e.g. sports coach; Samaritans volunteer; mentoring; tutoring)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Organisation and planning skills	(e.g. secretary for club or society; school government; PTA organiser; church parish organiser)	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained
Other	Any other activity that develops transferable skills valuable in your current role or future career	1	Summary of activity details and benefits gained

What happens at the end of my CPD year?

After 50 points have been entered onto your CPD area, a certificate will become available for you to save or print as appropriate. This certificate will be saved on your members' area for five years, allowing you easy access if you require it.

Completing CPD can also mean entry into an exciting new stage of your professional career. Two years of CPD allow progression onto the next stage of membership, as highlighted in our progress chart below.



What happens at the end of my CPD year? *continued*

CPD audit

Royal Society of Biology will randomly audit up to 2.5% of all CPD records for quality control across each classification of our Professional Recognition Awards (RSciTech, RSci, CSci, CSciTeach and CBiol) each year.

If your CPD submission is selected for audit you will be notified by the Society. Your most recently competed year's record will then be assessed by CPD assessors who will review your activities to ensure you meet the required standards (see page 5).

Following the review process, you will receive one of three possible outcomes:

- CPD record approved
- CPD record approved with advice for next year
- Request for further information

If your CPD record is approved, you will not need to take any further action and should continue to fill out your CPD record as before. If your CPD record is approved with advice for next year you should ensure that you follow this advice when completing next year's record. If you were requested to provide further information on your record, you will need to address the assessors' recommendations and resubmit your CPD record for review.

In an audit we will provide support to help you develop your submission appropriately and ensure your evidence conveys the required information. You will be given a period of three months to successfully meet the audit requirements. If an audit reveals that applicants cannot sufficiently illustrate maintenance of their Professional Recognition standards, the award may have to be removed. In some cases, a record may be approved on the basis that you are included in the audit again next year.



Frequently asked questions

Why should I do CPD?

CPD provides a useful framework on which you can build your professional development and demonstrate your commitment to keeping your knowledge up to date. Engaging in CPD can demonstrate to your employer that you are keeping abreast of developments in your field and give you a competitive edge.

I'm used to taking opportunities to develop myself as and when they come up. Why should I make more work for myself by planning ahead and reflecting on it?

Formally planning your CPD gives you better control of your development and demonstrates to others that you take responsibility for your learning. Whilst opportunistic development has its own value, actively thinking about your needs, planning, recording and reflecting on them is a powerful learning tool.

Why do I have to keep records? It's a waste of my time.

Maintaining a record of your CPD is an important part of a learning cycle and will help you identify strengths and those areas that still need development. Records are a visible way of proving your engagement with CPD and may support you during an appraisal or interview, for example.

What counts as CPD?

Any activity that has resulted in development of knowledge and skills counts as CPD. It can be formal (like attending conferences) or informal (like reading relevant journals). It is for you to decide what CPD you need. If you are in doubt as to whether an activity counts towards CPD, if you can demonstrate that it has enhanced skills or knowledge relevant to your work, then it will likely count.

What if I'm unemployed?

CPD is a good way of showing potential employers that you take your learning and development seriously, even when not employed. Our scheme accepts informal CPD as well as formal so there are opportunities to find activities that enhance your skills and evaluate their benefit.

What if I'm retired or semi-retired?

You are still able to engage with the CPD programme, and use it to maintain your professional registration in retirement. The Science Council uses the term "professionally active" which indicates that an individual is performing a role that requires them to keep their knowledge and competence up to date. It does not need to be full-time or paid work and so members who are notionally retired but engaged in volunteering, outreach or consultancy, for example, should consider themselves as professionally active and undertake relevant CPD.

I'm studying for a Master's or PhD, does this count as CPD?

Studying can count as CPD. Depending on your work, this may count as formal or informal. However, your CPD record shouldn't be solely based on academic studies and should contain a mixture of professional development activities.

I might not implement what I've learnt in this CPD activity until the future. How can I complete the 'reflection' section?

You can write about the potential benefits and this will be adequate reflection. For example, "Having completed a course on dissections this summer will enable me to better teach practical lessons to my A-level class from September, aiding their understanding and potentially boosting their exam grades".

What is a CPD approved event?

Our CPD event approval service values activities offered by external providers and grants CPD approval to those who meet certain criteria. Such activities may include talks, lectures, conferences, courses, workshops and other activities for training and development purposes. Approved events are counted at 3 credits an hour, allowing participants to meet their 50 point requirement more quickly. Approved events carry the statement, "Approved by the Royal Society of Biology for purposes of CPD, this event may be counted as X CPD points".

50 points seems small, can I do more?

Many of our members quickly meet and exceed our minimum requirement of 50 points and this is no reason to stop recording your CPD. Activities should continue to be logged throughout the year, allowing you to illustrate to yourself and others the wide-ranging activities you have engaged in throughout the year to develop your professional skills.

Still have questions?

Should you have any questions regarding the information provided in this document, please contact cpd@rsb.org.uk and we will be happy to advise further.



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