

Continuing Professional Development Frequently Asked Questions

What is Continuing Professional Development?

CPD has been defined by the DTI as *"the means by which members of professional associations maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge and skills and develop the personal qualities required in their professional lives."*

Why does the CIEH have a CPD scheme?

The competence of members is vital to the development and credibility of the environmental health profession. Professional members of the CIEH have a personal responsibility to maintain their competence to the collective benefit of all members, their employers and to the general public.

CPD is a feature of all the main professions. In recent years there has been a renewed focus on CPD, as professional bodies seek to emphasise their quality assurance systems.

Who must undertake CPD?

All members (except student and associate members, and people who have moved to retired membership) have to undertake CPD, but the number of hours varies. The standard requirement for members is 20 hours a year. For members with Chartered status the requirement is 30 hours and for Accredited Associate members it is 10 hours.

Is that a calendar year?

Yes. All records should be collated by calendar year.

How are the hours of CPD calculated?

Core CPD hours are calculated by the hour. Supplementary CPD attracts CPD credits at a rate of 50% - i.e. one hour of supplementary CPD provides 0.5 hours' credit against the standard 20 hour requirement. At least half of the CPD undertaken in any year must be core hours.

What is the difference between core and supplementary CPD?

Core CPD includes any structured activity which assists you directly in your professional / working capacity. It includes technical and management courses, training on new and existing legislation and all environmental health subjects.

Supplementary CPD includes activities such as learning languages or IT skills which support your professionalism. There are shades of grey between core and supplementary categories and it may depend on the purpose for which the course is undertaken. For instance, learning a language for personal leisure purposes is clearly supplementary CPD, whilst learning a language to improve, say, delivery of the port health function may be justified as core CPD.

What records should be kept?

For each CPD activity, members should record the subject or title, the duration in hours, whether the activity was core or supplementary and also retain some proof of attendance such as a CPD certificate.

The Chartered Institute has a template CPD record sheet for members which can be downloaded from our website.

Can I 'bank' CPD from earlier years?

You can accumulate CPD over a three-year period so that you can demonstrate 60 hours overall, based on 20 hours x 3 years (or 90 hours overall if you have Chartered status, or 30 hours overall if you are an Accredited Associate member).

For example members who had achieved 25 hours during both 2004 and 2005, but only 10 hours during 2006 will have met their requirement for 2006, despite not achieving 20 hours in that year.

What should I do if I attended a course and a CPD certificate was not provided?

We are flexible about how members can certify their CPD. If no certificate has been issued, we would accept some form of documentation which originates from a 3rd party that shows that you attended an event. For example attendance lists or minutes of meetings with your name on. Or a signed declaration from the organiser of the event.

Failing that, any gaps in your record sheet can be signed off by your line manager or training officer, on the proviso that their name and contact details appear alongside their signature, and that they are happy to confirm your attendance at the CPD activity.

What if I do not work full time?

There is no reduction to your CPD requirements.

What about career breaks, illness, maternity leave?

Any member who is required to undertake CPD but is able to anticipate exceptional personal circumstances which may preclude them from fulfilling their CPD obligations may apply in writing to the Chief Executive seeking a temporary dispensation. Such requests for a dispensation will be considered by a CPD Compliance Panel.

Members who have not been able to anticipate exceptional personal circumstances who are asked to submit their records should state their difficulties in writing so that they can be considered by a CPD Compliance Panel.

What if my work no longer relates to environmental health?

Members may make an annual declaration stating that none of their work relates in any way to environmental health (i.e. that they do not utilise any of their environmental health knowledge or skills in the course of their current work). Such members will be exempt from the CPD requirements in that calendar year. Members must also undertake to inform the Chartered Institute if their circumstances change.

How does the CIEH ensure that members comply with their CPD obligations?

Members with Chartered Status must sign an annual declaration saying that they have met their CPD requirements during the previous year.

We also conduct an annual random sample of 10% of all members who are required to undertake CPD. Members who are selected as part of the sample are required to submit their CPD records and certification for the previous year.

Members who submit compliant records are issued with certificate. Members who have not fulfilled their obligations are referred to a CPD Compliance Panel.

What is a CPD Compliance Panel? What can it do?

The panels consist of 3 members of the CIEH, who have volunteered to take part and have shown compliance with CPD themselves.

Panels' primary aim is to assist members who have experienced difficulties with their CPD and to make recommendations about future conduct. The Panels will of course take into consideration any extenuating circumstances which have prevented members from undertaking CPD.

If the Panel is not able to resolve a member's difficulties with CPD in a mutually agreeable manner, then the Panel can make a complaint against the member – turning the matter into a disciplinary issue.

What happens if a CPD issue becomes a disciplinary matter?

The issue will be considered under the Disciplinary Regulations by a Disciplinary Committee. As undertaking CPD is a condition of membership, the Chartered Institute has the power to remove from membership those members who have not undertaken CPD, and who have not been able to rectify this satisfactorily via undertakings or other means. It should be pointed out that such removals from membership are extremely rare.

Where can I get further information?

'CPD – A Guide for Members' is available for download on our website: <http://www.cieh.org>

You may also contact the membership section on 020 7827 5815 or membership@cieh.org for guidance on your own situation or issues.